

Tatz

ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui

Da bois write tatz
all up dea ahmz
an down dea thighz
across dea backz
tappin experience
into dea skin
like genealogy
dea personal history
names of dead ancestors
tapped into skin
inoa pō mix wit blood
invisible DNA
made visible
dey cahv images of ancestahs
like kalo
hahts wit dea ipo's namez
love an ancestry tapped
tru Tutu's sewing needle
wrapped in cotton tred
like
dey no moa pepa in da house
like
dey scade fo'get something
like
who dey are
wea dey come from
wea dey stay
wea dey goin
cuz
mo'olelo fade wit memory

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so
mix ink wit blood wit pain
equal
no fo’get

Glossary

inoa pō: name of a baby given by a relative who has a dream before the baby is born or soon after; literally, “night name.” In Hawaiian cultural practice, names came in dreams to an older relative (like an aunt or grandfather) in literal form, as well as metaphoric (the dream is interpreted).

kalo: taro

mo‘olelo: both story and history