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Author

Sonksen, Mike

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Running Around the City

Mike The Poet

My autobiography laced with poetry
accelerated at 18 running around the city
UCLA sociology understanding urban
Planning jumping geography creative
nonfiction flipping spoken word diction
Backpack rap underground hip hop
Garage band punk rock new left review
Kerouac blues Bukowski coffeehouse crews
open mic news choose your own adventure
enter the stage from the page wordplay
for days reading everyday about ancestors
an ongoing oral history always listening
keeping my ear around sacred ground
every part of town I could be found

By the late 90s I wanted to write professionally
but I wasn't quite sure how or where to do it
so I started hitting open mics anywhere I could
while in the daytime giving city tours & freelance
writing about neighborhoods & local music
Every year I was moving from 18 to 30
Westwood, Sawtelle, Culver City, Hollywood,
Pico, Koreatown, Inglewood, Monterey Park
friendships the heart expansion & art
finding peace in public space & architecture
wishing the weather a window of inner work
I did an internet search for self worth
I found it on my shirt written in my heart
running around the city kickstarted the art