

### Q & A WITH POET MAXWELL SHELL

**OCFB:** How old were you when you wrote your first poem, and who or what inspired you to write?

**MS:** in 5th grade I wrote A poem entitled "too short". it was part of a class project. it was well received because of its humorous under tones & obvious jesteresque jabs at my height & other shortcomings at such a young age.

**OCFB:** I love that your poetry is so visual. Do you have a favorite poem?

**MS:** my favorite poem is the next one I'm working on.

**OCFB:** Your latest book, *The World As Love: Collector's ED*, is a collection of poems written 2013-2017. Was it difficult to decide which poems to include?

**MS:** the collections came thru an organic process. A true labor of love where all original expressions have been left in tact.

**OCFB:** Your poetry shows an extensive capacity for the English language; your love of the language comes shining through your works. Have you always had a way with words?

**MS:** in 3rd grade i wrote a short story about a scuba diver & a shark. when my teacher showed the other teachers, they thought she wrote it. I've always had the gift.

**OCFB:** You are also a musician. How does being a musician affect your writing?

**MS:** the bass-line for my writings will AllWays have A certain rhythm within them. the way I write is set up for readers to eventually fall into their own rhythm along the way.

**OCFB:** I've read that to see the world with complete honesty, one should look to comedians, artists and poets. What do you want readers to take from your work?

**MS:** I want readers to be refreshed & inspired upon entering & exiting my work. my biggest & best work will AllWays lead people to learning to lead themselves. one by one. individual study is priceless.

**OCFB:** What is your writing process like? Do you have a particular method?

my method is: get an idea I want to execute & then figure how much I want to elaborate on said subject. my favorite form of expression is short & sharp.

**OCFB:** How long does it generally take you to finish a poem?

**MS:** depends on the moment. some shoot out in 5 minutes. some take a few days of me looking at it with the critical crazy eye. I like to start what I finish for the most part. however, there are old notebooks of mine, filled with plenty cliff hangers.

**OCFB:** Any advice for those new to writing poetry?

only write if you feel you have to.  
it has to be A necessary evil.  
it has to burn inside you until  
you have to let it go. to breathe.  
to be bold & boldly go & look deeper & deeper is the only way to write  
poetry.

**OCFB:** You have a wonderful sense of humor when you read your work. How old were you when you first read before an audience?

**MS:** I've had the curse of too cool for comfort when dealing with A crowd. always the internal joke is on me. they have no clue how much I love them & want them to be excited about their life. they have no clue how much I'd love to shut up if I could.

**OCFB:** Any advice to those who are a little apprehensive about standing before an audience?

**MS:** the Audience is what you turn them into.  
they are malleable love thoughts in your Artist hands, Anticipating your Greatness. & they were all born babies.