

(KQED sonic ID)

(soft music with melancholy piano and synth)

[Chinaka Hodge] Dear dancer,  
you've got to count yourself in.

Remember that every fold of  
you is a roadmap to freedom.

That you are a wave under a cloud,

under a sharp blue sky,

but also you are flesh and skin

and trusted guardian of this overlap.

You're a dervish, a holy feat, a revolver.

Don't let the spin get you down,

don't forget you are a switchblade,

or a lighthouse depending on your glint.

Dancer, convex over yourself,

expand for you, be your own protection,

and spend these days inverting old norms

(medium tempo hip hop beat driven by drums)

and making news.

Remember, your people weren't  
afraid of kicking down doors,  
  
of moving through tough water,  
  
of accents, of rhythm work and undulation,  
  
You dancer, are strong stock,  
  
are not to be trifled with.

Bound to the earth,  
pushing at the heavens.

You, dancer, hold your teacher,

and your teacher's teachers  
in the balls of your feet.

You six step a library,  
keep the ancient relevant.

You pick up queues,  
use them as ammunition,

feel the steel of them, make them weapons.

Roll them through your body,

hold them without fear and you freeze.

You take a phrase, let  
it speak on sentences.

You articulate the distance  
between hooping and ring shout,

commonplace and ritual,  
fighting and loving.

You let your body do the talking

and the world takes notice say word.

Dance incorporates ASL while dancing: "My heart, our heart, we dream together  
America. Express."

Dear dancer, you are  
the center of the wheel.

The eye of the storm, a cycle unbroken.

And fresh as you wanna be, all things.

All things, light and dark.

Eons old tradition, brand new kicks.

Dancer, don't stop moving, please.

Even if this air makes the river choppy,

you be tree on shore,

be moved by the breeze  
but never displaced,

you be spring at your crown  
and summer in your torso,

fall at the knees and winter in your toes,

all seasons, all ways.

Dancer, you poppin',

you young gifted and and colorful,

you the promise that breaks day,

you flower blooming to be seen,

you are your own cure.

upbeat trap groove with synth swells,sparkling textures)

You know there's power,  
even in your isolations,

you know you got real life magic

in every one of your extensions.

You know you draw in the  
light, that they stay jockin',

that you make a painted  
lady stop and stare,

you always en vogue, always  
touching from a distance,

you make a whip rethink your hair.

Give yourself the right  
to unfurl and break down.

You dancer, put your back to the ground,

or to the wall, or to the bark.

You dancer, laugh in the face of can't.

You shimmy on the boughs of discontent.

You defy all odds, so why not these too?

Why today, not the day.

You move the movement.

You've turned callouses into assets,

you've turned cowbells into ashe.

You are your people's unthinkable joy,

all the history they hoped would survive.

See how they taught you how to hold an emotion,

an outlet, a jook, a weave, a dodge, a parry.

You dancer, have already stepped too far

into your power to turn back.

You are an archive of movements.

In stepping revolution to troubled 45s.

You know your best potion is

in the curve of your back,

in the tendu and pirouette,

in the sweat and stretch,

in the breaths after five before one.

Dancer, the beat is coming back.

The roda and cipher, the jacks and slides.

The time will be steady again.

You will be there to greet it.

Don't forget to count yourself in.

(hip hop music with female vocalist)

♪ Oh ♪

♪ Oh ♪

♪ Oh ♪

♪ Oh ♪