



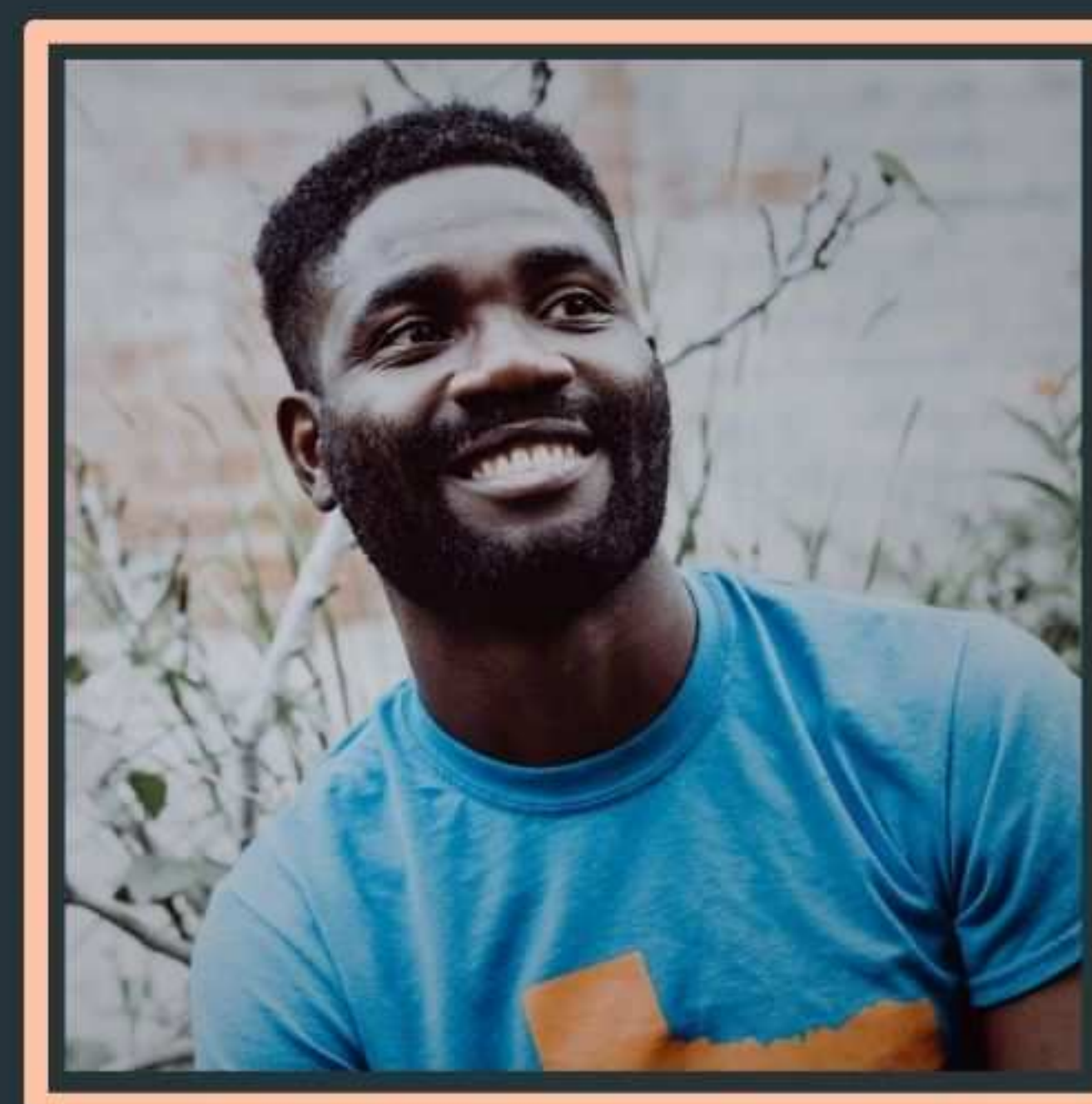
How does compassion inform your art?

As is often the case when I mention that I am a poet, I was recently asked what I typically write about. Here's one way to answer the question: At the heart of my work is a desire to understand how we can better relate to one another. It's what I have termed, for myself, a poetics of be(long)ing: i.e. being, longing, and belonging.

As a writer, my mission statement is to use my pen as a shovel to unearth what makes us human and this question of how to be/how to be together cannot be answered without considering compassion which, in the etymological sense, suggests suffering/enduring/experiencing with—something that can't be done in isolation.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Ayokunle Falomo



Ayokunle Falomo is Nigerian, American, and the author of *AFRICANAMERICAN* (FlowerSong Press, 2022), two self-published collections and *African, American* (New Delta Review, 2019; selected by Selah Saterstrom as the winner of New Delta Review's 8th annual chapbook contest). A recipient of fellowships from Vermont Studio Center, MacDowell, and the University of Michigan's Helen Zell Writers' Program, where he obtained his MFA in Creative Writing—Poetry, his work has been anthologized and widely published in print and online: *The New York Times*, *Houston Public Media*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *The Texas Review*, *New England Review*, *Write About Now* among others.

Finalist
Artist of the Year 2022

COMPASSION
Through The ARTS

