



Anthology²⁰¹⁸

A COLLECTION OF WORKS BY STUDENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 214



ARTS UNLIMITED

The mission of Arts Unlimited 214 is to provide all students with exposure to process-oriented perspectives through an ongoing celebration of the fine and performing arts.

Arts Unlimited 214 strives to inspire imagination and creativity amongst the District's diverse student body and foster an awareness of the arts within our community.

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Longing for Warmth DOMINIKA CZACKOWSKA

October

BELLA BERNS

I found a poem in a pile of auburn leaves
spilling out of the brown bags lining the street curb.
Red wagons carry giddy children
through rows of illuminated jack-o-lanterns.
The aroma of apple cider donuts
fill the nostrils of nephews and nieces.
Red and black flannel,
the screeching saw and giggling clowns
consume haunted houses and hollow corn mazes.
My poem floats through the fall breeze
landing between the Golden Delicious tree and the Granny Smith.
Children gallop among the stalky corn and giant scarecrows
hearing the faint whisper of parents telling them it's time to go home.
Dressed as princesses and ninjas,
They skip from house to house,
hoping to snatch king size Kit-Kats and Reese's,
taking a handful of candy instead of "just 2 pieces."
Dusty clouds loom over the full moon.
You wake up the next day to Christmas carols on the television,
signaling the end of the season that has just begun.

The Life

MARIANO ALANIS

Heart racing.
Fingers shaking and mind spacing
Life knocks me hard on the floor
But save grief and haste because
I am back for more. Concentration seems to be
Like a wandering ship in the middle of a storm
But alert and prepared for whatever obstacles are thrown at me.
Never mind, I am not prepared for anything
As these problems seem to take any form
"Make America Great Again" the tv speaks.
The words echo through my body as a bucket falling down a well
Well, they don't like us now and they didn't like us then. I ponder
Looking at my life and politics with great similarities and wonder.
Always dreaming and planning on achieving
Yet, those goals could hang on to me like rotting plants who lacked attention
As the difference between a break and neglect turned out to be quite deceiving
Hoping to be guided in the right direction
I attempt to clean up the "mess"
Grasping my problems and hoping to solve them,
Only who would have thought that trying to do the right thing would induce
more stress
But after all one's inner problems can coalesce with the world's peace and strife
And in the end, I say to myself, "That is just life."



Hive Mind ANNA SLEZAK



Jacqueline DuPre DHEYA S. PIO

Land of Imagination

NICOLE KEEFER

Childhood is in the land of Imagination
10ft tall dragons prowl the sunbathed meadows
Invisible people keep you company
And fairies dressed in petals soar through the sky

The wretched stench of five-star mudpies
Clumped into a perfect sticky, dripping ball
Are around every corner
With only the finest
And sweetest sugar-water
To be served with it

Running through hundreds of universes
Like sprinting to the finish line
In search of the next adventure
To save the galaxy?
Or to become the next master of the elements?

Yet the sky floods with colors of orange,
And the fluffy frosted clouds vanish
The seemingly endless world
Crumbles against time

Childhood is replaced
With money and knowledge
But never forget
To let your childhood out
From the cage of memories
And create worlds to share and enjoy

Morning Coffee

KYLE CARY

The scent of coffee
fills that room
like a sinking boat fills with water.
The room you'd always sit in
as I stood
getting ready for school.

The dark black liquid
resting in front of you
on that brown placemat.

Memories of you pressing your lips
to the warm mug
with the picture of a beagle,
faded and cracked,
holding it with two
wrinkled hands
with light blue
painted nails.

Filled,
always filled
with that black liquid.

You sitting at that glass table,
the steam from the black liquid
flowering towards you,
flowering towards the sky.
It all disappears.

Filled,
always filled.
Until it wasn't
that last morning.



Parrot CAROLINE BROWN

The Girl

EVELINA PODKOWA

The rain came down in sheets, and the wind howled. Ace ran down the dirt road, mud lapping at his ankles. A house rose up from beyond a small hill. Illuminated by a flash of lightning, the house welcomed Ace. The front gate was left open in an inviting manner. Ace was tired of running from his imaginary demons. He walked on the porch, acutely aware that he was trespassing. The stone facade was interlaced with a couple of cracks. The bugs buzzed ominously around a single bare bulb. He squinted his eyes, trying to make out where he was. The house was silent except for the pattering of the rain on the roof. No lights were visible inside. The front door flung open. A girl in a flowing nightgown emerged. Ace jumped a couple feet backwards.

“Hey, would you like to come in?” came a soft voice from the girl. Her voice sounded distant and hollow.

Ace could only nod his head in agreement and mutter “Yeah, that would be nice.” The girl’s long, dark hair hung in clumps. Her skin was almost translucent. Ace’s heartbeat filled his ears. He followed the girl into the living room, making sure to walk a couple steps behind her. The girl led Ace to a parlor, and they sat and began to talk about the storm. Ace’s voice quivered, trying to catch the rhythm of the conversation.

The minutes ticked by, and Ace’s words flowed out more naturally. The two even laughed over a couple of jokes.

Finally Ace asked, “How come I have never seen you before? We surely go to the same school.” Silence followed.

The girl straightened in her chair before replying, “I think you should leave.”

“Um, ok?” Ace replied indignantly.

Ace was able to find his way home in the soft dawn light.

When Ace went to school the next day, he told his friend John about his encounter.

“You went into the house? You do know what happened there right?”

“Yeah, of course!” Ace lied.

Ace could not keep himself from wondering about what strange occurrences happened at the property. When he got home, he went on his laptop and typed in the address of the lonesome house. The results included news stories about the unsolved case of a girl murdered in her sleep. He clicked on the first result. He noticed that he shared the same last name as her. Intrigued, Ace kept scrolling through the article until he found a picture of the house dressed in police tape. He looked at the picture for a few seconds before continuing. Ace fidgeted in his chair as he found more photographs depicting the various rooms of the house.

Ace felt his stomach drop when he got to the crime scene photographs. Long, dark hair was flayed out from under the pillow that covered the face. Ace then typed in the girl’s name. She looked uncannily like the girl Ace had talked with yesterday. Is it the same girl? No, it can’t be! That’s not possible! thought Ace. He quickly slammed his laptop closed. Maybe I’m just tired.

Ace went to bed, but he was only greeted with a fitful sleep. The next morning before school, Ace walked to the house. It was different than he remembered. The front gate was gone. The house’s exterior was redone with metal siding. Ace decided to knock on the door. No response. He cautiously turned the doorknob and surprisingly, the door opened.

In the middle of the room was a handwritten letter. A single ray of sunlight illuminated half of it. It read, “Ace- I had fun with you last night. I don’t want you to be upset over my faith. Love, your cousin. “My cousin?” Ace never saw his cousin again, but he was glad he met her, even if it was slightly unconventional.

A Vacation Upon the Waters

HAVEN LUIS

It is the sunlight bleeding through the swaying curtains
Mirroring off the surrounding deep blue waters that extend for miles
As bubbling laughter rises to the surface
And the midday heat drips from the crystal clear blue above

It is the dehydrated air
Sprinkled with the salt from the watery ground beneath
That is relieved with the creamy cold dessert
As it climbs down your tongue

It is the swoosh of the lurking waters n' waves
Just below the balconies creeping edge
As the massive structure slices through the earth with ease
Like a crisp knife cutting perfect cubes of cherry red jello

It is the desperate heat permeating from within the soggy wood
Scorching the same soft, gentle feet
That slap the neverending, soft, hall floors as we race from stern to bow
And the discomfort of our toasted flesh against our light, summer garments

Time Strike

GABRIEL STEPHAN CURRY

This is the year that you fail for the first time
as your luck strikes out on the fourth question.
A pond breaks out and streams across your face
as the stench inflicts pain into your eyes
making the paper damp.
Lights beat down on your desk
casting a shadow along the test.
As you fill in numbers and guess
the letter B) along the columns
until the bell rings.
You start to miss the needless chatter in the halls
Not even the soda machine outside the gym is making a peep.
Scribbles create ashes as eraser shavings cover the desk
as you fill in answers and start to guess.
You peek to your side to look at the clock
that hasn't ticked its way past an hour
---- Tick ----- Tick ----- Tick ----- Tick ---
As your peaceful world starts to crumble
all you can do is sit and watch as time slowly ticks by
and fill the letter E) down the column.
Tick ---- Tick ---- RING --
"Time's up, turn your tests in."



Landscape RIEZZEALYN FERNANDEZ



Casa de Conejos AARON BERNACHO



1st Place at the Rodeo ELIZABETH HEDRICK

Anxiety
ANNA INDELLI

Anxiety, you choke me.
You push the air from my lungs and through the burning in my chest,
Push harder still.
You take my clarity and muddle it,
The bright skies of my optimism darkened by life's cruel rainstorms.
You rattle my confidence and pin it down,
weakening it until it's huddled fearfully in the recesses of my thoughts,
Too worried to try and present itself to the world.
But I am what gives you the strength to cripple me.
The shackles that bind me were crafted by my own hands,
Driven by the truth that all anyone wants to be is good enough.
All I want to be is good enough.
Your strength comes from the fear that I am not.
And so I will tell myself that no storm lasts forever,
And the winds that you have sent to ravage me will soon subside.
I will tell myself that I am worth more than you think,
And that being true to who I am will one day make me able to overpower you.
I will tell myself that I am good enough.
I always have been.
And so I will grasp opportunities with both hands, pull them to my chest,
And know that I have done the best I could.
All the judgments I fear come from those who don't know me,
The me that I am deep down in my soul and strive every day to bring to light.
When I finally meet this version of myself, I will gently poke you awake,
And thank you for helping me become who I was meant to be.

Fenders

EMILY HARTMAN

Bottom-heavy, gray clouds sluggishly crept above our heads, water from the night prior dripping from gutters and past our ears, but we didn't mind. We leaned against the small cement wall, legs heavy with the fatigue of a day spent running about, chives tickling our elbows. We let our eyes drag along the paths that passing cars carve out with their wet tires. Usually we house ourselves in the water-stained basement, dancing around the open space, but today we lounge outside in the mist. We play a game, a game where we pick out the faces made by the fronts of cars— lights and bumper.

Cars have always sent a spiral of dread through the hollow pit of my stomach and to the ends of my toes; the long distance from foot to pedal and the dashboard threatening to blink its hypnotic, orange lights didn't send happy adrenaline through my veins as it did for everyone around me. A peer's eyes would alight with excitement and adoration for the hunks of aluminum sitting in Mom's Garage or on Dad's Driveway; my family's musty garage housed the black Honda Pilot that I loved taking joyrides in but could never fathom guiding down twisting roads myself.

My tiny hands used to grasp the chilled steering wheel (while my parents relaxed in the living room, snacking on crackers and dip, Dad watching the game and mom knitting a new dishrag), and the typical "car-driving" noises would spurt from my mouth in between nervous laughter. Occasionally when I'd finally work up the nerve to fake-push the key into its place, my finger would slip and the car would rumble its warning, sending me scrambling to yank the key out and shaking all the way through my house's back door. My heart would knock around behind my ribs for hours after.

"That one is smiling at me," my friend whispers as if it's something to be kept within our circle, an unvoiced pinky-promise. The driver's gaze remains on the streets ahead of them, so we suppose it's safe to raise our volume. "It's smiling- it's so happy! It's smiling at me, look!" We point. He gifts me with a smile, and she taps me on the arm and their eyes squint, both of them huffing identical nose-laugh. The cars continue streaming by, some too fast for our glimmering eyes to catch.

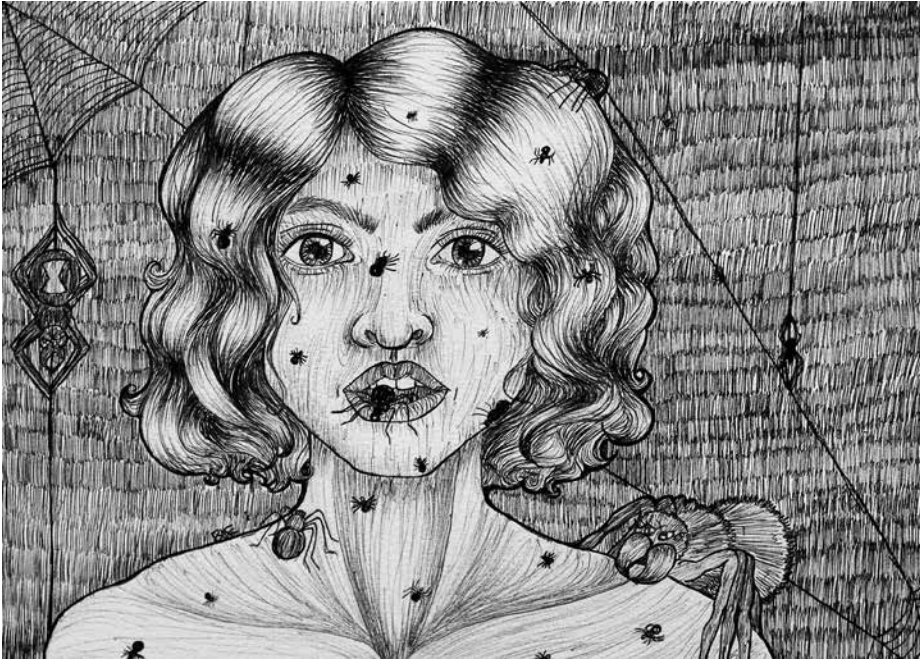
Sometimes, when the vehicles only creep down our cracked, suburban streets like fingernails scraping down the valleys of a warm back, abandoning speed in trade for safety, I see the faces that own the wheels and their contrasting emotions. The bumper curls up in a grin, but the lips through the window are pursed in stress. The lights give off a honey glow, and yet inside metal doors the eyelashes sit above deep eye circles. I consider sending them a smile— to invite them to play our little game— but by the time the corners of my mouth get the chance to bunch up my cheeks the car is gone and all that's left is the slick, black asphalt with puddles gathering beside the curb.



French Fries THAIS CENTENO



Metal Shears TETIANA HRAB



Arachnophobia BRIANNA EVERS

My Operation

IZABELLA JANIK

The sun peeks through the window
and curiously watches my operation.
Earlier the floral blanket
was taken out of the dryer
and placed on the queen size bed.
I open the dusty ivory album
and find inside my photograph,
knowing that this is what I would do for the rest of my life.
I didn't know this then, of course,
but I did know to practice on my baby brother.
Now I sit signing the bottom of my college applications
knowing that this is what truly electrifies every one of my heartbeats.
If one looks to the right you can see a plastic stethoscope and a yellow syringe.
My brother's angelic giggle bounces off the walls as I touch his belly
with my oversized blue gloves.
I go on, grinning, showing my missing two front teeth.
I slide the picture back into its clear pocket along with the others
and give my attention to the blue bird trilling its symphony
just outside the patio door.
Then, I can't help myself;
I glance once more at the picture,
the frizzy curls, the lab coat,
the sparkle in my hazel eyes.

Time is Ticking

ROSE JOHNSON-MERTZ

From here I see blood red numbers,
counting down the minutes aching slowly.
Paint chips from the white-now-grey wall,
enclose a room of shaggy chairs and computers from 2007.

His desk sinks into a hypnotic carpet,
cherry wood peeking out,
suffocated by papers and a disheveled laptop.

He stalks around us.
His eyes shoot through our craniums.
Long legs and wide feet,
softly thump between the pencil scratches and keys typing.

Our fingers beat down on evenly spaced letters,
shifting in the squeaky, maroon seats.
Smiles fading, we feel his tall, dark, presence loom over us,
almost feeling the sharp scruff on his face and acidic breath.

While teachers hunch over and grade papers quietly,
the teenagers, in the other room, are frying every last brain cell,
learning about past wars from 1939-1945,
or how Odysseus blinded the cyclops.

I know he's thinking of that glorious sound,
that one-toned ring, signaling the herd to flee.
He will escape to the scent of oak and french fries,
and listen to the hum of started engines.

Aftermath

TIFFANY KAJIWARA

The lightning did not carve these
wounds; I braced myself for
its writhing, static veins, so
I was ready when its
fingernails clutched my heart,

but when the
towering veil of
clouds had parted,
and dawn's syrupy sunlight
revealed all that was lost,
my glass spine
turned to sand.



Still Life BROOKE BALDASSARRE



Break Time JULIA KUPPERMAN

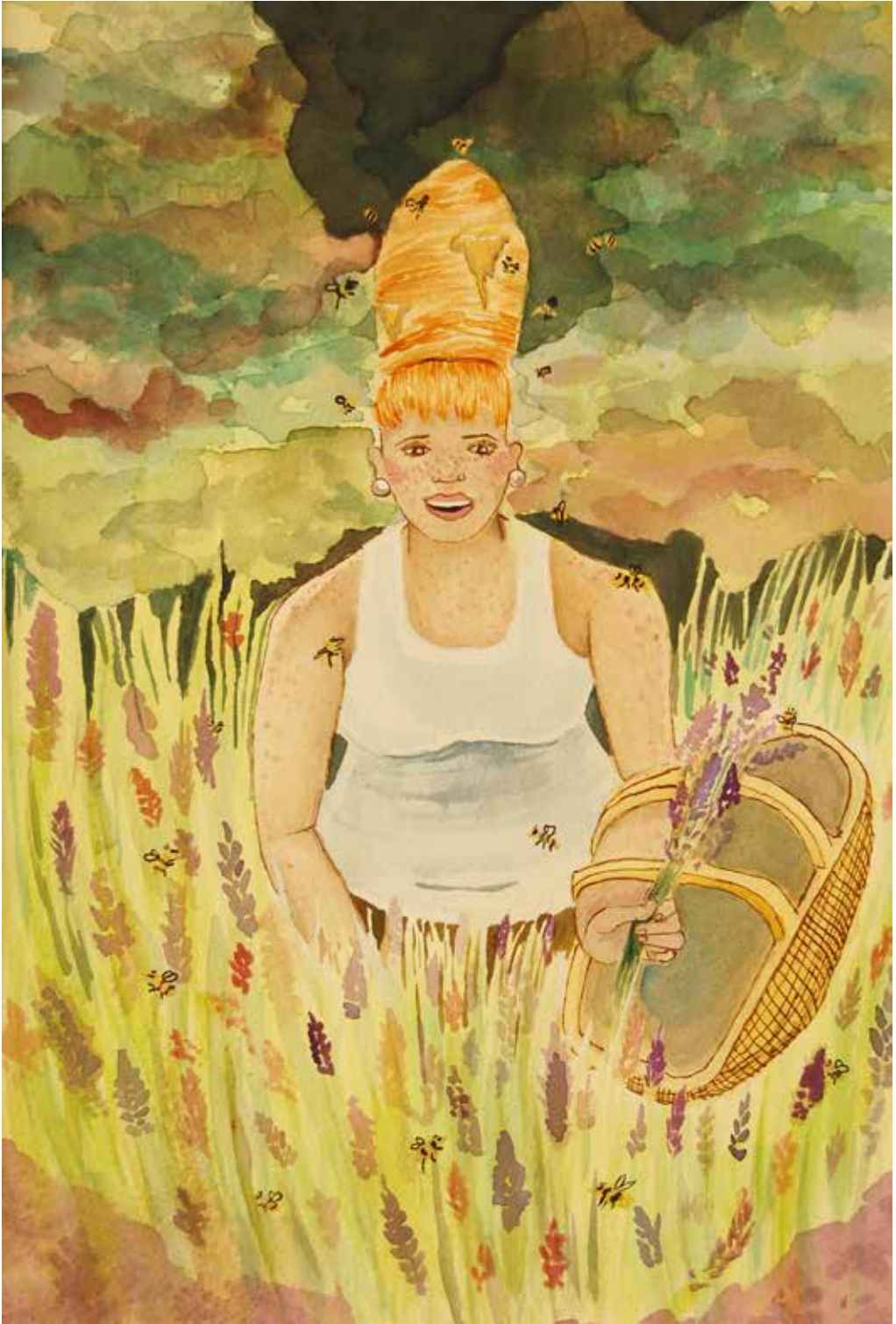
Doctor Cures Patients with Salt and Pepper

JD MINDYKOWSKI

“Doctor Goodman, Please call
Doctor Goodman, Please call
Doctor Goodman, Please call
Doct-,”
“Yes, I’m here,” Dr. Goodman said
Annoyed and angered
Like the audience of Batman v. Superman.
“A horrible
Costly, Catastrophic
car crash caused countless casualties.
Need all doctors to the helm.”
Goodman ran,
for he knew the importance of this.
He ran past the ward
He ran past the men’s room
He past the gift shop
And the janitor, Steve.
And the little gift shop
And the pathogen room
And the sick bay
All the way to the patients.

There was well within a hundred patients
All reeling in from what happened
All waiting for help.
Goodman called for his assistants
Nurse Lyssa Salt
And Dr. Jean Pepper of surgery
To help him treat the patients
After all available able bodied staff had been assigned
Dr. Goodman started with his trusty Salt and
Pepper.

The work took all through the night.
By the end, five patients had died.
Thankfully, none had been with Goodman
With his assistants, they had saved fifteen lives.
Goodman diagnosed the patients
And assisted Dr. Pepper
With the surgery and medicine
And Nurse Salt rushed back and forward
Supplying them
with the necessary equipment
And comforting patients.
This system went on
And on, And on, And on
All through the night
When it was all over
It was no surprise
That the three were found in the lounge
Sleeping deeply on the sofas.



Bee Hive LAURYN CIULLA



Fall ARELI VELIZ

Prayers Not Heard

MADY COHODES

My grandmother reminds me of chocolate candy wrappers and white carpet with ginger ale stains. She never laughed and had long yellow toenails. There was always a spot of bed head in her black curls that she dyed until she feared that she would stroke at the hair salon before she could patronize my father one more time. She loved telling stories of running away to New York and how she took six months of notes in Yiddish before quitting on her sexist boss, leaving him to decipher a language he didn't know existed. When she looked you in the eye you had to look back because that's what her father told her to do before he abandoned her in the chaos of 1941. I remember pausing at the door and always being afraid to say I love you because I wasn't sure if she would see it wasn't true. I hope she believed it was true because when I think of love, I think of Elizabeth's hands that are dry and cracked without a speck of polish on her fingernails. Elizabeth bringing two scrambled eggs and an English muffin every morning to grandma's side. Elizabeth with her deep scratchy Polish accent that I hope never fades. The way she mutters "I give you my energy" as a response to my prone body crying on the couch while she runs her fingers through my curls. And when I hear my brother's acidic voice quoting men he's never met, warping the silence of the living room, ricocheting off cabinets, I feel disgust.

My brother's voice, the revving of his engine down the skid stained driveway. My brother who drank away his law degree away until an FBI agent in Louisiana pulled all his contraband out of the trunk along with the last drops out of the bottle. His collection of graphic tees that show off his personality like a resume. When I see my brother I see not one ounce of my father.

My father who organizes the kitchen cupboards when he gets stressed. Tomatoes on top of beans and pasta next to rice. He always bumps his head on the top shelf, his kippah precariously clinging to his curls. Those swirling curls that always framed my grandmother's face except that one spot of bed head popping up each morning. But while I can tell you of my grandmother and father and brother and each one of Elizabeth's seven siblings, I can't tell you a single thing about my great great anyone. Killed before pogrom was even uttered by a czar. I can't tell you the color of their eyes or if they liked English muffins because no one will ever know. I don't know if their laughter echoed across sound waves, marbles rolling on a wooden floor, like my dad's. I clip out newspaper miracles of Holocaust survivors and tape them to my wall wishing that I could reach into the past and rewrite everyone's stories while desperately editing my own.

I try not to think about the posterity of my words as I sit on the porch tucked into my mother's crocheted blanket with my dog curled around my feet. Acrid November air clings to the steaming coffee cup.

I like looking at the leaves falling from the sugar maple and slight ripples in the koi pond. The thought that the same wind furrowing my blanket could have shaken my grandmother's curls or brushed the nose of a great great anyone...

My heart tightens. I grind my teeth to combat the passage of time. What will my epitaph say? Overwhelmed by existentialism, by the thought of a life regrettably lived, by the realization that my very existence could mean as little as the frost bitten water lily bobbing in the koi pond; I turn back to my writing. Because while history can cross out names and scratch out faces, reducing entire lifetimes into piles of ash and discarded wedding rings, nothing will be able to destroy the prayers of hope and fear -words of Yiddish once uttered on to deaf ears- that I now commit to paper.

Invisible

EMILY FRASCO

He knew
Years ago back when things were better
She watched him
Place his hand on her
 the man's fingers
 were familiar
She liked the way he touched her
His lips arrived
To call
As the hand on
Her back
Comforted beneath the edges
He was the best she could do
A gift
He gave her
Waking up
Was
 Easy
She had to stay silent
Again
And Again
To secure him
And to feel
How she felt now
That she had lost him
Invisible
Was how she felt.

Hate

JEOVANI RIVERA

He hides
Deep
Deep
Inside
Wearing his hair spiked tall
With big polished dark leather boots
Ready to pounce at any moment
He teases people quietly whispering
"Let me out" into their ear
Sometimes people can control him
Sometimes he may escape with a big eruption
Other times it will seem he isn't there
But he follows you
like a shadow
with his spiked hair
and dark leather boots
Hiding
Deep
Deep
Inside



Untitled KATHERINE WIEMOLD



Untitled KATE KOHUT

Fake Friendship

HAILEY MURO

You told me to stop writing
And I saw that as an invitation to stop loving and dreaming
And feeling. At all.

You expected me to pick you over my passion
You left me over and over
And I apologized each and every time

You occupied my mind
From slitting your wrists
To leaving the words dangling on your lips

You still left me and I still apologized
Me, hiding behind worries
And watching you hide behind lies

All I ever did was try
After the final fight, all I did was cry
And all you did was continue your life

I try to smile
But you took my happiness away
I gave up writing for weeks, expecting a smile to creep onto your cheeks

I expected you to be proud of what you did
And how I hid any trace of poetry from my fingertips
But happiness still doesn't drip from my words or lips

We've been off and on for 5 years
But every time, you're the one to disappear
I am so scared that you'll leave again

Your mind drips stars
And they're beautiful, but they burn me
You're not used to how you can melt my thoughts and change me, so easily

You tell me to stop writing, and I listened with glistening eyes
And a heart that grew with the insults you threw
But my thoughts didn't smolder at the sight of yours this time

Yin and Yang

SARA KOLB

I am the stormy waters of tear filled eyes
You are the sunlight streaming over lush hillsides

I am the clamour of pots and pans in a raucous kitchen
You are the warmth of steaming hot chocolate felt from within

I am the bitter taste of old, watered down coffee
You are beautiful and radiant, the epitome of free

I am chained in the confines of this solitary mind
You are loving whispers and hugs from behind

I am the ache of a cut and the sting of scraped knees
You are the soft blades of grass and blossoming trees

I am the drunken screams cutting through calm, misty air
You are the loving gaze of a mother combing through her child's hair

I am the darkness of a movie theater left abandoned at twilight
You are dreams of guardian angels sheathed in white light

I am the sting of a papercut grazing burning fingertips
You are the sweet taste of honey dripping from sticky-fingered children's lips

You are the picture of utter perfection
But why can't I see you in my reflection



Diana JAKE ESTES



Reflections PRINCESS GONZALEZ ESPARZA



Wither KATE KALAFATIS

Carpe Diem

FRANCESCO VALENZANO

Summer's love from a new stream
Encapsulated by crashing waves and crackling firewood
Hair traced in the wind
Echoes of music
Booming of the beat

It is to be taken away
Rhythm intertwined in our spirit
Dialing in on the frequency

Crash through the barrier
Create a new perception
A new vision
Shadowed with laughter and your mother's perfume
Rising anticipation with ecstatic setting hues of orange and blue

To expose a new state of being
Gifted the ability
To see the good in the evil

I dare you
Absorb the electric presence

Fish Guck

SEAN BOBROV

California Rolls and Dragon Rolls
with tempura crunch and edamame.
A tower of empty plates.
No fish guts in sight
but my gut is about to
let go.

Chills, five heavy blankets, and a wastebasket
prepped for the worst.
Teeth chattering like the mouths
of creepy wind-up Chucky dolls.
Thermometer screen displays 98.6.
99.4, 101, 103.2, 104.4.
Sweat drips down the side of my head,
a lump clots my throat
blocks everything, making it hard
to swallow and breathe.

I squirm out of my fuzzy ice fortress.
Mid-flight, I splatter on the floor,
missing the rim as white as rice.
I see fish tails swimming out
a fish eye sludges against my esophagus
finally pushing through and splattering,
creating burnt ripples.

No more raw Tokyo for me.



Door 6 MAEVE TERRANOVA

It's Burning Baby

NINA ASTORINO

It started with a fire; a lot of things do. Not usually an Easy Bake Oven, but still. Billows of black smoke forced their way out of the two tiny openings. Marlene tucked her head into her shirt, desperately trying to avoid breathing in the dark smoke. The plastic handle from the oven fell, spreading the fire to the floor. The smell of melting plastic was absolutely vile; it reminded her of what she imagined rotting flesh would smell like. With that image in mind, she hiccuped, bile burning her throat as it attempted to get out. She couldn't throw up; she wouldn't. That would just make everything worse. But the picture remained-- flesh burning until all that remained was dirty white bone, stained with the blood gushing out of her body. The bile rose again, getting trapped midway; it felt like it was burning a hole in her esophagus.

Smoke burned her eyes, pooling tears that flooded her ashy cheeks. She dropped to the ground; her knees dug into the kitchen tiles as she crawled out of the room. By the time she got to the kitchen door, hot tile marks had left deep red imprints in her knees. Momentarily distracted, Marlene traced the lines until she reached the bottom of her leg. The crevices were dark gray where they had collected soot from the ground. As she let out a deep hacking cough, she sounded like an old lady with smoker's lung, gasping for breath.

Once she regained control of her breathing, her eyes scanned the room. Her eyes focused on random family portraits. Mr. and Mrs. Milton stood tall and unmoving. No love shined in their eyes, just a blank mindlessness, as if they were taking the photo out of necessity rather than compassion. Mrs. Milton held a small baby girl; the only one who looked happy to be there. Annie's emerald eyes sparkled with a childish joy, still free of the burden of her parents' unyielding expectations.

Marlene crawled towards the leather couch in the center of the room. She needed to rest, to catch her breath, if only for a moment. All Marlene could hear was the crunching of the fire as it consumed what was probably the kitchen table. Her heartbeat slowed. She tried to think. It was all too much for her; the smell of roasted flesh and the burning plastic was nauseating. She heaved up all that was left from her lunch until all she could do was choke up air. As Marlene attempted to get to her feet, she slid from the slick vomit now covering the hardwood floor. Marlene crawled towards the pristine white carpet under the couch. Her thoughts turned to panic as she turned back, her eyes tracing the trail of puke which now soiled the carpet.

Just as Marlene was hanging her head in defeat, deafening cries echoed from the adjoining room. Her heartbeat skyrocketed as the image of a burning nursery came to mind. As the cries got louder, she knew she would have to go and get the baby, but the second floor seemed miles away. Marlene scanned the room and saw what must have been Mrs. Milton's evening slippers. She slid them on, the cool interior silk quenching the intense burning that consumed her feet. The trek up the stairs felt like it took hours, each step burning as her charred flesh stuck to the silk of the slipper. To avoid more pain, Marlene shoved her foot down on on the slipper so that she didn't have to feel the burn of her flesh pulling up with each step. Marlene stopped in front of a cayenne door; heartbreaking sobs came from within.

The spacious room was filled with dozens of small trinkets, glow-in-the-dark stars sticking to the ceiling. In the center of the ornate room was a silver crib that was worth more than Marlene's college tuition. She walked over to the gorgeous centerpiece, holding the most precious person of the night. Little baby Annie lay on a fluffy white pillow, tears streaming down her face, mouth opened, releasing a desperate wail. Marlene rubbed the baby's back, soothing her until the cries became snuffles, then snores. A small smile rested on Annie's face, and everything felt at peace. Should they try and make a break for it? Visions of national tv sparkled in her eyes, headlines reading, "Girl Saves Baby from Burning House--A National Hero." But when did good deeds ever make the news? It was always death and tragedy that made the front page. Maybe it would be better if they just burned. Her train of thought was broken by the sound of a car as it pulled into the long driveway. The fire continued to rage downstairs, but the baby was safe and sound. Maybe she'd earn her babysitting money after all.



Contemplation NINA WROBLEWSKI



Jar Still Life ZOE HUBBARD

Dusty, Pink, Lava Blobs

KAYLEIGH PADAR

Nostalgia gazes at the lava lamp from the garage sale,
recalls the red-popsicle-dripping-on-sticky-hands day,
the spend-wisely-5-dollars-from-her-dad afternoon,
when bobbling shapes drifted
over closed eyelids the first night.

Nostalgia pumps her legs on the swing in the backyard,
tattered Little House on the Prairie book
still tucked under the slide.
Bucket of long since abandoned mud stew
planted in the dirt.
Rusting bike leaned up,
against the side of the house.

Nostalgia sits cross legged on the bedroom floor,
flicks through construction paper photo albums,
giggles at his face, her pose,
shaky hands brushing
and thighs touching under the table.

Nostalgia screams the lyrics to old songs.
Songs that sound like
thinking she's in love in seventh grade,
or running away from home as a freshman.
Songs that sound like
the first time she slammed her door on her mom,
or a red cup gripped in a basement.

Nostalgia writes letters on scrap paper,
in notebook margins,
to people
who lost her number,
who don't turn up to dinner anymore,
who she taped on her wall at 12 years old.

Letters that look like,
"Do you know I still write stories about you?"
and our long hours spent hidden
behind the dryer and the wall.
Begged grandma not to give away our spot,
giggly wet kisses against
the beating noise of dirty play clothes.

Letters that look like,
"I'll always save our hiding place,"
or swing,
or cardstock page,
with a clear view
of dusty, pink, lava blobs.



Eerie Evenings MISAEL RUIZ

#Passion

JOSUE CAZARES

I would rather die of passion, than of boredom.

A growing flame, burning in my soul.
A growling scream, ambers bursting from coal.
A bright ascension, blue flames of ethanol.
A strike of lighting, piercing through a pole.

A gentle and soft baby flame is then born.
to a burst of flame when ashes are torn.
A blinding bright flash that covers its form.
A burning passion like a phoenix reborn.

A warmth from the soul, fueling the body.
Striking adrenaline, that's flowing through me.
A shiver of cold, lighting pulsing inside me.
Numbness throughout, warmth engulfing the body.

A craving. A need. A desire to feel complete.
A passion to thrive, to not become obsolete.
A feeling, a sense, my life's incomplete.
My future. My dream. My passion burning in me.

I would rather die of passion than of boredom.

Under the Wave

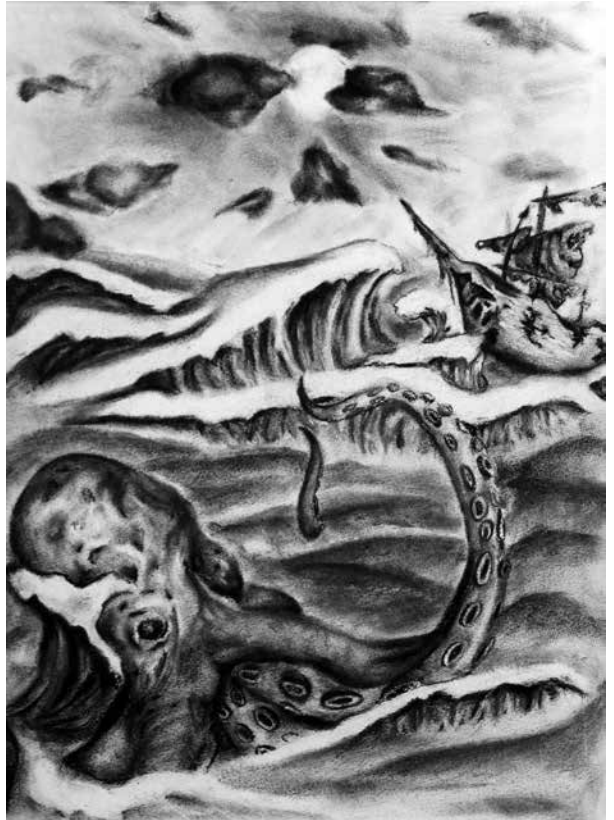
ABBY CITTERMAN

I am drowning.
I am drowning
In study guides
For upcoming tests.
I am drowning in homework --
Busy work, menial tasks
That waste my time.
Time:
My limiting factor,
My most valuable resource.
I'm running out of time.

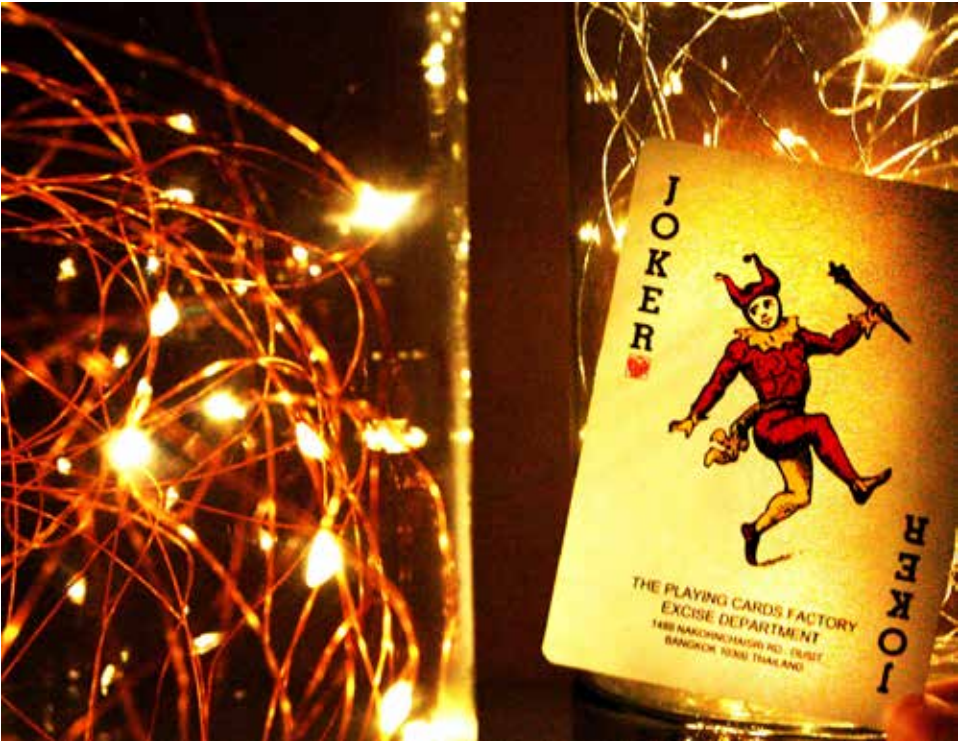
I am drowning
In a torrential downpour
Of college emails,
Plaguing my inbox.
I am drowning
In a sea of short answer questions,
Where every single word counts,
But I can never find the right ones.

I am drowning
In a flood of clothes
Upon my bedroom floor,
My lack of motivation
Preventing me
From organizing my room.
I love to organize,
My room should be organized;
I don't like it disorganized,
But I can't organize it
Because I am drowning.

I am drowning
In a pit of commitments,
From school,
To work,
To band.
I love them all,
But they are drowning me,
Suffocating me in their relentless waves,
Incessantly pulling me under.
I don't know which way is up;
I can't see the sun.
I can't breathe.
I am drowning.



Neptunian Monsoon JASON MIRAKA



By the Lights SARANRAT RATTANAHATTAKUL



Self Love MARIA MADRONA ZAMORA

A Visit From the Devil

DANIELLE FIGUEROA

This room is supposed to make me feel safe. So why do I feel like I am going to die? Time stops as I hear breathing: raw, long gasps that I can't identify. My body feels tight and stiff, as though I could snap in two at any second. The only movement in my body is my stomach turning at the sounds flooding into my ear. Besides the ongoing deep breaths, creaks from my floorboards snap loudly in my ear, as if something is approaching to come and inspect my once sleeping body.

One by one.

Snap, snap, snap.

Closer and closer.

Although they feel heavy, my eyes run around the shadowed room searching for something, anything. Like wild animals, they frantically run from one end of the night to the other. A deer in headlights, they stop and stare at the masked figure at the foot of my bed. Why is it that all I can think about is my family at the moment? Maybe they will be the ones to find my stabbed body in the morning, cold and lonely. Perhaps I am the last warm and lonely human in this home as the rest of my family is lying lifeless in their own beds. The figure rises like a snake slowly slithering and growing larger in size.

A silhouette of a man.

As he rises I can see what seems to be a head upon a pair of broad shoulders. His tall, looming body is somehow darker than the shadows behind him. The deep breathing has gotten louder, the creaks of the floor much sharper. Like a symphony of terror, everything is crescendoing. I want to look away, but I can't; my eyes are glued to this intruder. A fight roars in me. I want my last moments to be lived in bravery, not in fear. However, I quickly find out I am a statue. As my mind tries to spring up and scream, my body stays firm and unmoving. I try to force my eyes closed, wanting to drift back to sleep, but -like my body- my eyes are frozen in time. Everything seems broken. A weight holds me down, and just as quickly as this nightmare began, my body breaks free of its invisible bonds. The covers are thrown off me, and I leap towards the only thing that will give me security: light. Light floods the room as soon as I flip the switch, bringing out the bright pinks of my walls; I turn around ready to face the monster. Aside from my tan floor boards, pure nothingness lies before me. Where the looming figure was before is now an empty void.

I am alone, confused and frightened, staring at nothing.

Get Out of My Head

TEODORA PRERADOVIC

My hippocampus flies a kite
Full of memories I avoid with delight.

They fly far, far away
Because who on earth would want them to stay.

Through those long nights of confusion and thought
Sleep deprived speculation was all it brought.

With my heart on one shoulder
And my ego on the other
I can't seem to figure out
What I want to discover.

Do I do things for myself,
Or do I do it for some image?
I take my book off the shelf
But can't remember the title page.

I want to rip apart my cerebrum
And fill it with answers.
I'm distracted by the chaotic banter.
I'm distracted by my left shoulder
And I'm distracted by my right
Because all which they both hold
Keeps me up at night.

Savoring Tradition

JACQUELINE SANCHEZ

The burning sensation
leaves trails down your throat.
Water only makes it worse.

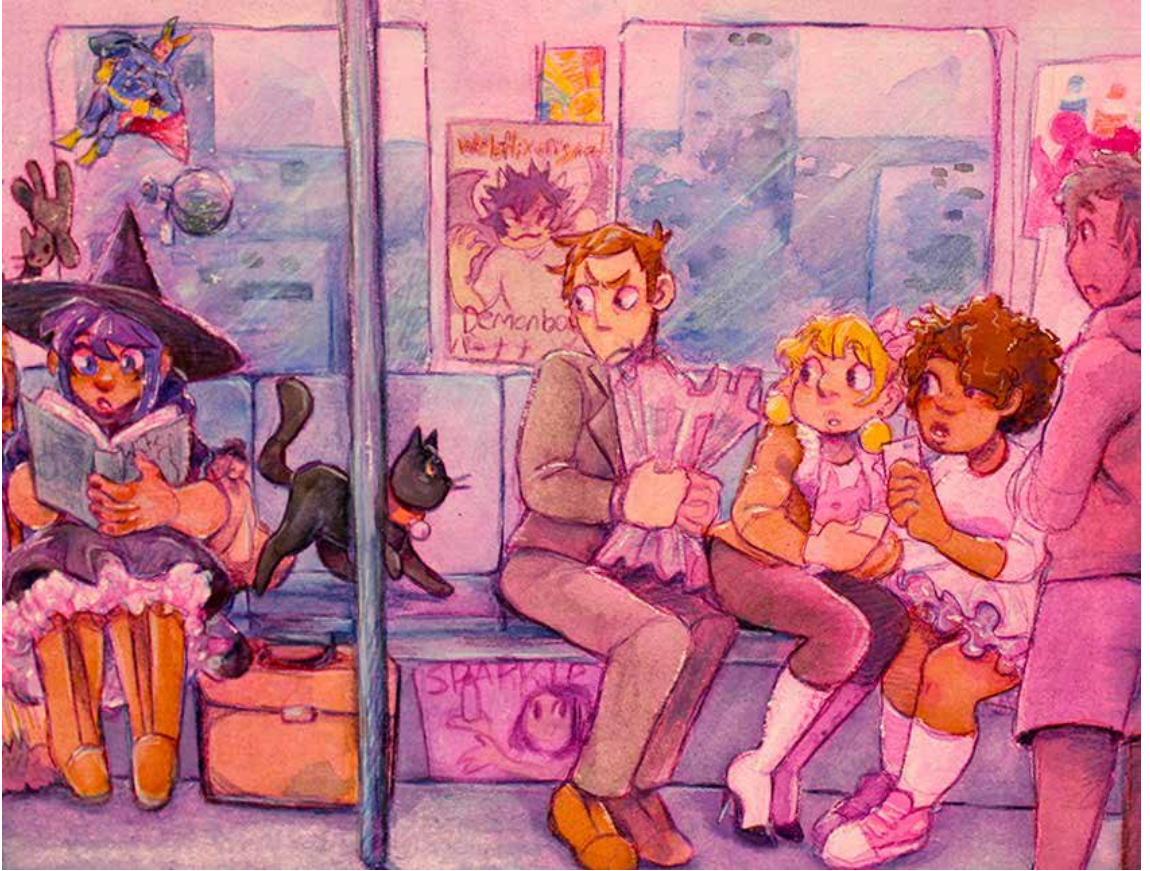
Slicing the midst of the cornstarch dough,
revealing the bittersweetness:
chocolate and spicy peppers.

The sauce flows
onto the green banana leaf
wrapped around the steamy tamale.

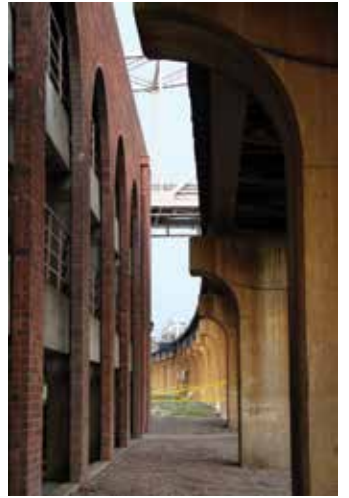
Mouths drool, noses turn runny.
Spiciness fills the airway to your lungs.

The beautiful taste similar to the feeling
you get when your crush
turns back in his seat to look at you,
passionate eyes staring
deep into your soul.

The pain of food all
worth it for the taste
of our native tongue.



Girl on the Train RHIANNON MORRISON-NAYLOR



Archie EMMA SLATTERY



Through My Eyes JENNIFER KLIMOWICZ

Receding Relationship

GRACE MCKEVITT

on his profile i see his post
with a girl who shares my name.
another grace in another state.
he unposts with *grace no. 2*.
i uncry in the middle of a party.
he unleaves for college. he uncuts me off. i unread his message
revealing that he doesn't want to keep in touch.
i unimagine his hands holding mine or those hands playing guitar
as we lay on his beige basement couch.
he unadmits to sleeping with our mutual friend, he
unsleeps with that mutual friend. he unconfesses that
his feelings haven't gone away. we regain the possibility of ever
being just friends. he unkisses me one last time
when we reunite. tears drain my eyes in his rusted mustang.
three weeks of time rewinds.
he lets go of my hand and unspeaks his
final cliches. i unhear the "i will always love you"s and
the "i don't want to do this either"s, and those tears run back up
my cheeks and back into my eyes. he unleaves.

we are together again, i regain my high school sweetheart.
people untell me how great we are together and unconfess
how happy they are that i was the one who landed him. I unpin
boutonnieres onto his suits and our dance moves play
in reverse at the two proms we spent together.
we drive backwards out of the outdoor movie theater.
i unkiss him for the first time. he lets
go of my hand. my butterflies unflutter. he unsuggests
our first venture to frost gelato, he takes back his debit card from
the cashier and unpays for me. i unblush. he unstares
at me in rehearsals and our met glances are broken.
he unshakes my hand and unasks for my name.
i unwatch him play at the drum set for the first time.

Standard Issue

MAX HOFFMAN

Long sleeves, many pockets, standard olive drab green
Heavy like the weight you carry, heavy like the bodies on your stretcher
Seems too hot for the jungle

You wrote your name on it
The same way you write your name on the books you send
The letters too

The letters you take time to write
But I don't answer

Wearing history is hot and heavy

Mexico

ISABEL VAZQUEZ

Mexico is home. It is listening to the sound of the birds chirping throughout the day and looking at the stars all night. It's having music blasting so loud that you can feel the vibrations through the floor. It's people singing at the top of their lungs. It's having a party every day, meeting new relatives at each party. It's swaying your hips, dancing to bachata, feeling Romeo Santos' voice dance with you. Propuesta Indecente, aye como tu bailas amiga. Estando in Mexico means listening to "Amor Prohibido" by Selena and knowing all the words. It's playing soccer on a dirt road outside on our little farm, trying not to hit the chickens, the ducks, the dogs, and the plants in the garden. It's going to church on Sunday and feeling a blast of heat while sitting on the bench, feeling your thighs stick to it. It's staring out the stain glass window only to have your abuela smack you upside the head for not saying the starting prayer. It's going outside for a minute and you're already sweating. It's when you, abuela, and everyone else go out for helado after misa because it's so hot. It means having a race with your primos to see who gets to the playa the fastest. It's the ocean breeze, the cool sea green water, and getting chased by crabs. It's the place we go once in awhile; it's the place I call home.



The Final Stage MADELYN WACHOWSKI



I'm Talking to My Own Reflection TERESA HERNANDEZ

Soft Sweet Cinnamon

ERICA MARIA HERIN

spoiled fruit

WILLIAM "LIAM" SALUSKI

the thoughts of you
have reduced my heart to an
orange; peel away
the miserable distance
that separates me from you,
hold me, naked in your bare hands,
devour me; all teeth and fingertips.

on days you aren't around to touch me,
your absence holds me,
presses against me,
bruises on a peach.
i keep picking out hours like
seeds from a watermelon,
anxiously waiting for your return.

if angels were to split open my head,
all they would find is
honey and
sunflower and
thoughts of you.

i blend into you like
salt in the sea,
the splash of your tongue with mine.
you hold me,
and
i shatter into a riot of spring.

Soft ebony locks, collapsing
upon your shoulders and
emitting a fresh scent
of warm sweet lavender

Hidden white strands tucked
behind your ear, whispering
of Guatemala
These tales roll off your tongue
so smoothly
like warm frijoles
spread upon a tortilla
made by the neighbor that morning
with the terracotta roof
Tales of juice from oranges
picked fresh at sunrise

Comforting words and whispers
as your maroon lips perked up
and your obsidian eyes gleam
with the warmth of black beans in a burnt pot
Your dark flowing top and business pants contrast
your bright white smile
paired perfectly
with your cinnamon skin

Cinnamon and icing
sweet as can be
short as can be
I feel like a palm tree
an inviting figure below me
desiring a hug in the morning
sweet as can be
the only mom for me



Chaos EMILY CRUZ

No Escape

CAYLA WAGNER

I force my feet to keep walking. I know if I stop, I won't be able to do what I have to. Tears sting the corner of my eyes—bitter, sad tears. Thirty-six more steps now. I can feel the pull at my heart stretching to its breaking point. Ten more steps. I angrily wipe away the tears with the back of my hand. Five more steps. Three more. Fibers of my heart string snap. Two steps. One. The wind blows past my ears like a gasp, and I freeze, unable to take the last step. I want to turn around.

I can never go back. After what I did, I don't deserve to.

I take the last step and snap—the string breaks. I run now, my hair and clothes snagging on branches like tiny arms, reaching out to stop me.

The book, a lighter. Agonized screams. I tear through the trees.

Don't think about it. Don't think.

Flames licking the roof. The door blocked. Me, upstairs. Pages crinkling in the fire. Me, coughing from the smoke.

As if my lungs just remembered, I start coughing now, more like hacking, really. The dark smell of smoke fills me as if I'm still there. A pitiful cry comes from my throat as one particularly large branch catches my hair and tugs me to a stop.

The building was abandoned. I didn't know anyone was there.

A group of people downstairs. Teenagers, having fun, hanging out.

I didn't know.

A voice takes hold in my mind and forces me to listen: maybe you just didn't care. I scream to drown the voice out and yank my hair from the branch, ripping most of it. I keep running.

Sirens in the distance. Me, upstairs. Me, with the book. Me with the flames.

Don't think!

I'm sobbing now as I run. They'll catch me. They'll lock me up. The jury will decide capital punishment, I'm sure of it. I'll be on death row for years, festering in my own guilt. It's what I deserve. What I can't bear will be seeing all the forlorn faces of those parents. I stole their children.

I trip on a root and find myself sprawled across the ground. There's a large gash on my arm, and crimson blood pools there as I watch through eyes blurred by tears. I get back up and keep going. They'll find me. I can't face them.

I let my arm bleed. Thick drops of blood trail down and escape from my elbow. No one wants to be associated with me anymore, not even my own life force. It's what I deserve.

Me with the flames. Screaming from downstairs. Them with the flames. Me with the only way out.

Don't think about it! My head is roaring. My lungs clench, not getting enough oxygen. I cough again, and this time, blood splatters up from my throat. My head is spinning, or is it the world that's spinning? I can't tell. I collapse to the ground, my lungs unable, or unwilling, to sustain me any longer.

They'll find me here—my eyes glazed over, some forest animals gnawing away at my flesh. It's what I deserve.

Me, upstairs with the only way out. Me breaking the glass and climbing down the old oak tree by the window. Them, downstairs with the flames. Them screaming. Them trapped.

I shut my eyes. It's over now. My heart thu-thumps in my chest like it thinks I'm still running. I can't run anymore. I can't go back.



Back Door MACKENZIE BURGESS

Migraine

JOSEPHINA LEVIN

Behind my right eye, a sun burns my skull
In barbs of heat,

like electricity it tears through the bone-
vessel of nerves, it lights up the nerve points
In its path

To sate its craving
As the skull groans containing it,
As the skull curls around
The matter of my brain

Like packaging around porcelain and it
Does touch the ache rushing,
The pressure, the jolting

Across: the skull impacting
And the heat searing brighter
Against the brain
And the pain glancing off it,

Pushing it away from the tissue, bouncing
It off the bone, the sting

Of fast and sun-like energy
Too quick across the mind,
It leaves dull buzzes through my head
In its wake.

And now I bend my chin to meet my neck,
My chin a conductor of pain
I connect against my skin,

And then my chin
A negative charge against
The growing pain in my throat,

the cavern there filling in a burst
And energy exploding
Towards the walls to touch

The fragility:
A current
That moves to cradle
Around porcelain tissue--

Borderless

NATALIA HABAS

I made my life a photograph,
With a half inch border surrounding it,
So that people never came too close,
And then I wondered,
Why the world started to pass me by,
I waited in pure silence for something to come,
But my high walls never allowed me to let anyone in,
And then so suddenly,
You came along.
And you made yourself the scissors
To my glossy, half inch border.
You watched me from afar
And moved quickly,
Shredding and snipping my glossy, half inch border
into pieces
Until nothing was left
And I was completely vulnerable

There were no walls,
No half inch border,
No more pushing people away,
But then your hands slipped
And the scissors cut into the beautiful photograph.
And so not only did you tear down my walls,
You torn away my happy mind
And my happy heart
And soon,
There was nothing left
Except a million of tiny little shreds
That I still find myself picking up every day.



Dream Safari RACHEL KEARNEY

Baby Monks
EMELIA PASCUAL

I coughed when the baby monks were silent
The disruption simply escaped
I tried to choke it down and keep it in its throat cave, but it crawled out with mucousy fingers.

We fought for a while,
The cough and I.
I held it off through the ancient chanting
The shared, planned silences
The Cham dance performed by unenthused preteens in traditional red robes

My fear of rudeness to the temple-goers realized
When the young monks toddled to the shrine
to lead a prayer.
My every muscle clenched and strained.
The sound was overwhelming, wet, vomit-like
I braced for the disapproving looks of Buddhist grandmothers
that would condemn me to outsidership more than my nose ring
More than my Converse waiting in the temple hall
More than my birth certificate

But, nothing.
No grandmother stopped mid-prayer to look
No shiny head so much as quarter-turned.

Cham dancers text in hoodies and sweatpants
As we eat samosas from the temple basement
On styrofoam plates.
We all chit-chat
More about it's-good-to-see-you and you've-grown-so-much
Than the Sutras

A grandmother puts a hand on my shoulder
Proud that I finished a second helping
Her eyes sparkle and her teeth show
As she unfolds her other hand
Her ringed fingers no longer shade
A honeycherry Ricola



Boy Stuff EMILY HARTMAN



Jamie Wiener

JOHN HERSEY HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS *Calisch Award for the Arts*

Jamie Wiener, a 2017 John Hersey High School graduate and resident of Arlington Heights, received the 2016-17 Richard W. Calisch Arts Unlimited Award. She was chosen from a field of six exceptional District 214 nominees.

This prestigious award was established more than 20 years ago in honor of Richard Calisch, a former English teacher and Arts Unlimited program coordinator. The annual award is given to the student who best exemplifies creative excellence in the arts—drama, speech, music, visual art, dance and creative writing.

This year's award recipient is Jamie Wiener. According to her teachers, Jamie Wiener was one of the most impressive and inspiring students at John Hersey High School. Jamie was a straight-A student who had a passion for creative writing and the arts. Among her peers, she was seen as a positive, caring and welcoming person who was always spending extra time with students who were struggling. In the Hersey band program, Jamie achieved at a very high level, performing at Carnegie Hall, receiving superior ratings at the Illinois High School Association's solo and ensemble contest and being the only first-year drum major to be named a finalist at the Sycamore Drum Major and Leadership Clinic. She was also a three-year member of Orchestis and twice performed at the State Orchestis Festival. Jamie's poetry was published in Teen Ink, the District 214 Arts Unlimited Anthology and the Anthology of Poetry by Young Americans. Her love of creative writing led her to start the Free Run Press, a creative writing club and literary magazine. For Jamie, it wasn't what she could get out of the art, but what art she could share to help others.

The other five District 214 candidates also were exceedingly talented in performing arts and academics and shared their time and talents with their communities. They received honorable mention recognition and include Buffalo Grove's **Michael Sauer**, Elk Grove's **Emily Franke**, Prospect's **Margaret Ward**, Rolling Meadows' **Kailynn Muhr** and Wheeling's **Gillian Garnowski**.



Kate Hutchinson

KATE HUTCHINSON RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS *D214's Friend of the Arts*

Kate Hutchinson has been a Friend of Arts District 214 throughout her extensive career in the district. Her commitment to the arts began when she was an award-winning fine arts student at Elk Grove High School where she appeared in many plays (including having her teeth knocked out a few days before her role in *Mame*—where she still went on!).

She also was involved in community theater for many years during and after high school. She directed plays at Buffalo Grove High School and during her first year of teaching at Jacobs. She spent many years as Fine & Performing Arts Coordinator at Buffalo Grove High School, where she advocated for all of the arts, helped to enrich the programs, and supported everyone in their creative endeavors.

For Kate, this support was an extension of her love of the arts. Kate is the consummate English teacher, that one who has read widely and deeply, loving the nuances of fiction and poetry, and seeing the invisible line that connects all of the arts and connects us to the universal experience. She writes passionately, and she recognizes the passion in others. Her classroom and her curriculum offer students myriad ways to experience the arts. Her poetry is accessible and tied to the literature in the curriculum, and department teachers have the students read her poetry as part of their learning.

She plays music and provides access to artwork for her students, teaching them to see the beauty of the arts. Kate supports the arts naturally because she is an artist. In her blog “Both Sides of the Window,” Kate often explores the inspiration she finds in the world and art; her reflection on Van Gogh and her son’s autism reveal just how deeply the arts matter in her life. More importantly, she encourages her students to experience the arts whether it is through poetry slams, Karaoke for Autism or community theater.

Additionally, Kate brings her gifts of poetry to the school, community, and fine arts programs. Her poetry has enhanced musical performances, art galleries and events, Arts Unlimited publications, and more. Kate has collaborated with colleagues across the district to enhance the fine arts programs. Kate has shared her respect and love for colleagues through poetry. She has written poems to celebrate retirements and to commemorate the loss of beloved friends/staff at BG. She participates in writing workshops every summer and is involved in groups where she gives poetry readings several times a year. On Sundays, she attends poetry readings and supports her fellow local poets. One of her poems appeared in the city of Highland Park (on a placard—outdoors) this summer as part of their arts festival. She has published two chapbooks of poetry and has several recently published poems. In addition, she “consumes” the arts, attending Shakespeare theater for 10+ years and attending plays when friends appear in smaller theater productions like City Lit theater. Finally, she is committing to writing a poem a week as she closes out her teaching career.

The annual Arts Unlimited Anthology collects poetry, prose and visual artwork created by District 214 students. English and art teachers from across the District submit work for consideration. Each school is invited to submit six pieces of writing and six works of art. Submissions are reviewed by the Arts Unlimited Committee which is comprised of seven teachers and one administrator. In reviewing the works, the goal of the committee is to ensure that the pieces selected for publication represent the excellence and diversity that is associated with the District's art and writing programs. Also, every effort is made to provide an authentic public forum for student expression. Finally, since this is a community publication, committee members also consider appropriateness of subject, style and length. Arts Unlimited publication will not distribute material that is obscene, libelous or will cause material and substantial disruption of school activities.

Colophon

Type set in American Typewriter, Mark My Words and The Inky Dodger.

Layout composed in Adobe InDesign CC

Printed by District Production Services - D214
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005



ARTS UNLIMITED