

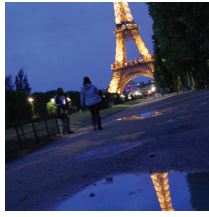
WINGED

Spring 2010

Nation







Winged Nation is an artistic and literary forum for the unspoken and the unexpressed.
We seek to showcase students' unique view of the world through art, literature, and design.

Winged

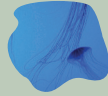
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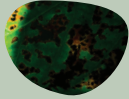
Piazza Signoria - Nichole Lidstrom **06**



Jellies - Mariah Walker **09**



Dichotomy - Mariah Walker **10**



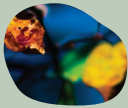
Lost Leaves - Benjamin David Novak **13**



Bug - Delaney Snyder **14**



Frolic - Caitlin Clements **16**



Color of Autumn 1 - Benjamin David Novak **18**



Aran - Caitlin Clements **23**

02



On the Road - Caitlin Clements **24**



Duomo - Nichole Lidstrom **27**



Pacific - Virginia McLane **28**



Venetian Cat - Nichole Lidstrom **31**



untitled - Caitlin Clements **32**



Winchester - Caitlin Clements **36**



Mt. Ranier - Virginia McLane **38**



Boatmen - Delaney Snyder **43**



Art



untitled (mixed media) - Anna Wagner **21**



untitled (mixed media) - Anna Wagner **34**



Steps (photo manipulation) - Mariah Walker **41**

03

other



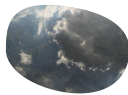
Cascade - Virginia McLane **44**



Chalk Primavera - Nichole Lidstrom **47**



Color of Autumn 4 - Benjamin David Novak **48**



Summer Sky - Virginia McLane **50**



11 AM - Mariah Walker **52**



Monastery - Nichole Lidstrom **54**



Pink Flowers - Delaney Snyder **56**

Literature

poetry

- 04
- | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 07 | Morphine | Logan Wamsley |
| 10 | after grandmother dies | Linda Zou |
| 15 | Brain Bead | Julia Schaumburg |
| 17 | The Beloved Poems | Huy Ho |
| 20 | The Rolling Tongue | Erik Barbieri |
| 29 | Offshore Freeze | Jill McLaughlin |
| 30 | Narrow | Becky Koenig |
| 22 | #11 | McKayla Watkins |
| 33 | Left Scriptless | Samantha Roth |
| 35 | And they eat her tulips | Jill McLaughlin |
| 36 | Blueprints for A Convent | Linda Zou |
| 41 | Too Late | Becky Koenig |
| 43 | An Daingean, County Kerry | Jill McLaughlin |
| 44 | Reflections by the Bank of a River | Maureen McNabb |
| 46 | Mirror Me | Shelly Holder |
| 49 | Exfoliation of Another Self | Jill McLaughlin |
| 51 | forget thirst | Linda Zou |
| 52 | An Afternoon Painting | Jen Garrott |
| 56 | My Lovely | Shelly Holder |

prose

A Pirate's Life	Erik Talbot	08
untitled	Delaney Snyder	11
The Chair	Maya Gueron	20
An Entrance, An Exit	Kristen Verge	24
In Her Mind	Linda Zou	39
Today's Thought	Irene Morrison-Moncure	55

Morphine

06



You may not come today.
The fears in my veins feed sweat down my brow.
Two minutes bleed past—you promised!—three now—
A Madman counts beat on beat of his pulse—
Repeating that love was always mutual.
Time pumps from vampire bites on his wide Hollow heart.
One more day still I can breathe
Poisoned haze,
Knowing the siren comes and is never far apart.

Your smile is not for me—
Politeness, a taunting sick social stain
i blanket with the greed of April rain,
For love offers me no choice. How fire warms and burns!
Is it joy of the hunt, scents of the lame?
Your kiss, a key to chains of a cold eager slave
Too yellow to see if you,
With glass eyes,
Reflect the warmth he wants to feel, what he so craves.

But you hide in my arms—
i clutch ghosts, strangle, cling to sense so weak.
Turn your lips but offer blush of your cheek
To sate my selfish touch. Lost and blind i remain,
Unable to accept things God can't change—
Yet your light leads my feet—freely back I fall
On rimed steel of needle ends
That inject
Till i smile for one, and that one becomes all.

Patterns warp my beat—
But you don't dance— silence heals the fresh scar.
You're asleep but I'm twinkling with the stars
Alone, wondering who and where in Love I am.
Then I'm your foundation with no name—
A commanding spine making planets align.
And so here you are in me,
Half a will,
You lovely, loving, lonesome morphine of mine.

Logan Wamsley



Piazza Signoria - Photography - Nichole Lidstrom

A Pirate's Life

Erik Talbot

He slips on the black eye patch with skull and crossbones to complete the look. Adjusting his pirate hat so it is just right, he stands in front of the full-length mirror to admire himself. *A scallywag indeed.* The white ruffles on his shirt protrude from his chest like the plumage of a bird trying to impress a potential mate. Gold buttons strewn along in two columns down line the middle of his coat. Fingering the antique flintlock pistol, he remarks at the great deal he got for it on eBay. On the other side of his belt sits a cutlass. He takes it out of its holder and makes a slashing motion. *Another great investment from eBay.* His pants tuck into the boots just below knee level. Dressed in full pirate regalia, he knows it will impress with a total price tag of \$215.

Walking down the stairs, his dad simply shakes his head. Other than that they do not acknowledge each other. He is about to take his first step out the door when he hears his mom.

"Wait, Edward!"

"What is it Mom. I'm gonna be late."

"You gotta take your lunch."

Edward takes the bag and looks in it. "Mom, I can't take an apple, especially to the convention. How am I supposed to get scurvey if I'm eating all of these fruits? It's just not in the spirit of piracy."

"You're gonna stop your complaining right now or you're not gonna be going to any sort of convention. You need to start eating healthy, I don't care what your pirate friends will say."

"Crewmates, mom. And I could be forced to walk the plank."

"Okay you choose. Either you can take the risk of walking the plank or you can just march right back upstairs and miss the convention altogether. You really should be doing homework anyways."

"Humph."

"You remember what your teacher said. It's senior year but you can't be slacking. I don't want you to throw it all away just as you're about to go to college. I'm just worried."

"You can't tell me what to do. You're not my captain. Heck you're not even a first mate."

His mother glares at him with an intensity that would scare even Blackbeard himself.

Edward takes a bite out of the apple as he trudges down the street to the bus stop. *I guess I can just eat it before I get there so no one'll notice.* He works the delicious red down to its core just as he reaches the bus stop. Only one other person is sitting at the stop. Edward at first only looks at the sparkling red heels that appear to have been taken from the Wicked Witch of the East herself. The neon green fishnet stockings stretch from heels to the upper thigh, barely meeting the red mini skirt. He follows the sparkling tight shirt up to the pearl necklaces adorning the neck. Edward turns up to look this person in the face who is wearing such an elaborate outfit. The five o'clock shadow gives it away. He immediately averts eye contact.

"You're dressed up all fancy like a pirate and you think I look ridiculous."

Edward blushes. "It's just . . . umm . . ."

"Don't worry about it. I'm just giving you a hard time. I've learned that not everyone wants to take the time to understand, Honey."

"No . . . it just . . ."

"You don't need to explain. I know it is shocking for many people. But they don't understand how it is for people like us." The drag queen flashes him a smile.

Edward looks away. He sees his pistol sitting in its holster, the cutlass swinging by his side. He

twists the toe of his black pirate boot into the pavement. He takes off the eye patch glances down the road, willing the bus to come faster. It finally reaches the stop. The drag queen, multiple necklaces dangling from his neck, sashays onto the bus in front of Edward. The bus is packed. *Boston really needs to get some more city buses.* The only seat left is next to the drag queen. Quickly he double checks to see if there is any other space available. He turns back to the drag queen who is motioning for him to come over. *It's not a long bus ride. It won't be that awkward.*

"Ah, don't you just love the weekend? Get to be whoever you want. The real you."

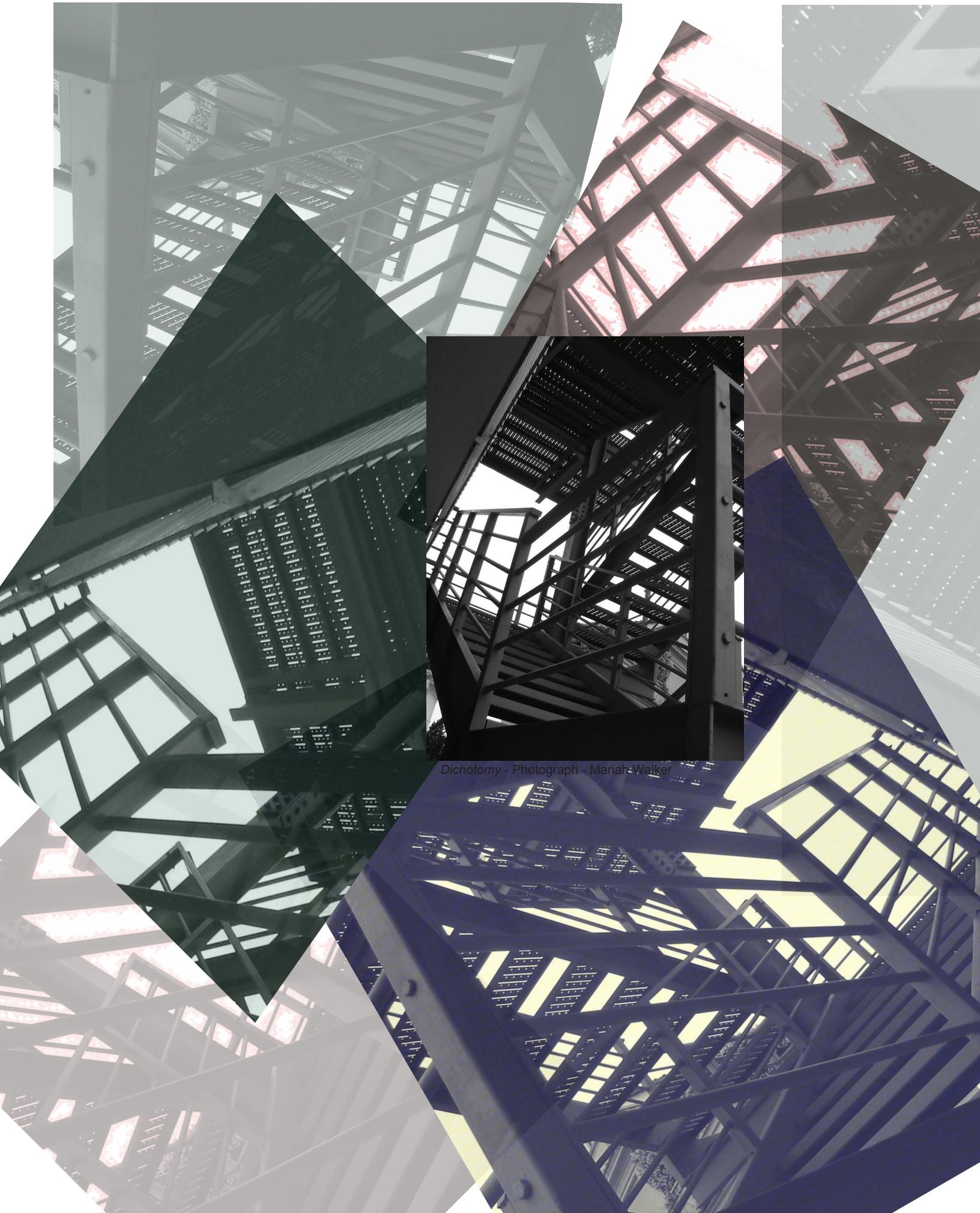
"Yeh I guess." Edward again looks over his own attire.

"It's nice to know who we are. Not trying to hide our true selves. All those fakes out there are just putting on a façade. They've lost who they are. We're the lucky ones. We haven't lost touch with reality. Well, unless the new Louis Vuitton bag comes out. Then I practically die and go to heaven," he laughs. "It's all about what's important. Sure I could invest in some mutual funds for retirement or whatever, but I'm a janitor. And you kids are always making messes at school. Talk about great job security."

Edward laughs nervously. The drag queen gives him a friendly pat on the back. Edward pulls the rope that signals the driver to stop. He sprints off the bus. As the bus drives away, he sees the drag queen flip open a pocket mirror and coat her lips with long, deliberate strokes of lipstick. She puckers up her lips and blows her mirror a kiss as the bus carries her into the heart of the city.



Jellies - Photograph - Mariah Walker



Dichotomy - Photograph - Mariah Walker

Untitled

I took a lot of pictures of the grass that day.
It thrived in old drainage ditches, lush and green with life.
The ditches flanked the cold steel of the railroad tracks, and I walked along the wooden ties. My world narrowed to include nothing but the space between this tie and that.
The rest was rubble.
Blocks of crumbling brick and barbed wire.
Fresh and wilted flowers.
Memories that should burn—crumble to ashes in the furnace of time.
Like their bodies.
I will go to the places they lived and loved, and I will scatter the ashes of memory on the wind.

I would that I could end the horror.

But it lives on today in Darfur, Georgia and Gaza, drug trafficking and water boarding. It's ambition, dissent, and fear. It's the pungent odor of humiliation and decay that rises in the heat from this display case, piled high with rotting human hair.

Our tour guide is brisk and professional: 50% of everyone who came here died. Jews were extremely lucky to last 5 months. These are the starvation and suffocation cells for criminals. The gallows is over there. Dr. Carl Clauberg conducted sterilization experiments here. You are now standing in a gas chamber.

Go ahead, touch the walls. Trace the gouges of this man's fingernails with your hand. Relive the final moments of his life. His possessions are preserved for your perusal. You saw his worn leather suitcase on display, name printed in bold, white letters. You probably saw his toothbrush too, lying unobtrusively in the corner of the case, blue and dust-covered, bristles brown with age.

But you'll never know what he was thinking.

Delaney Snyder

after grandmother dies

Linda Zhou

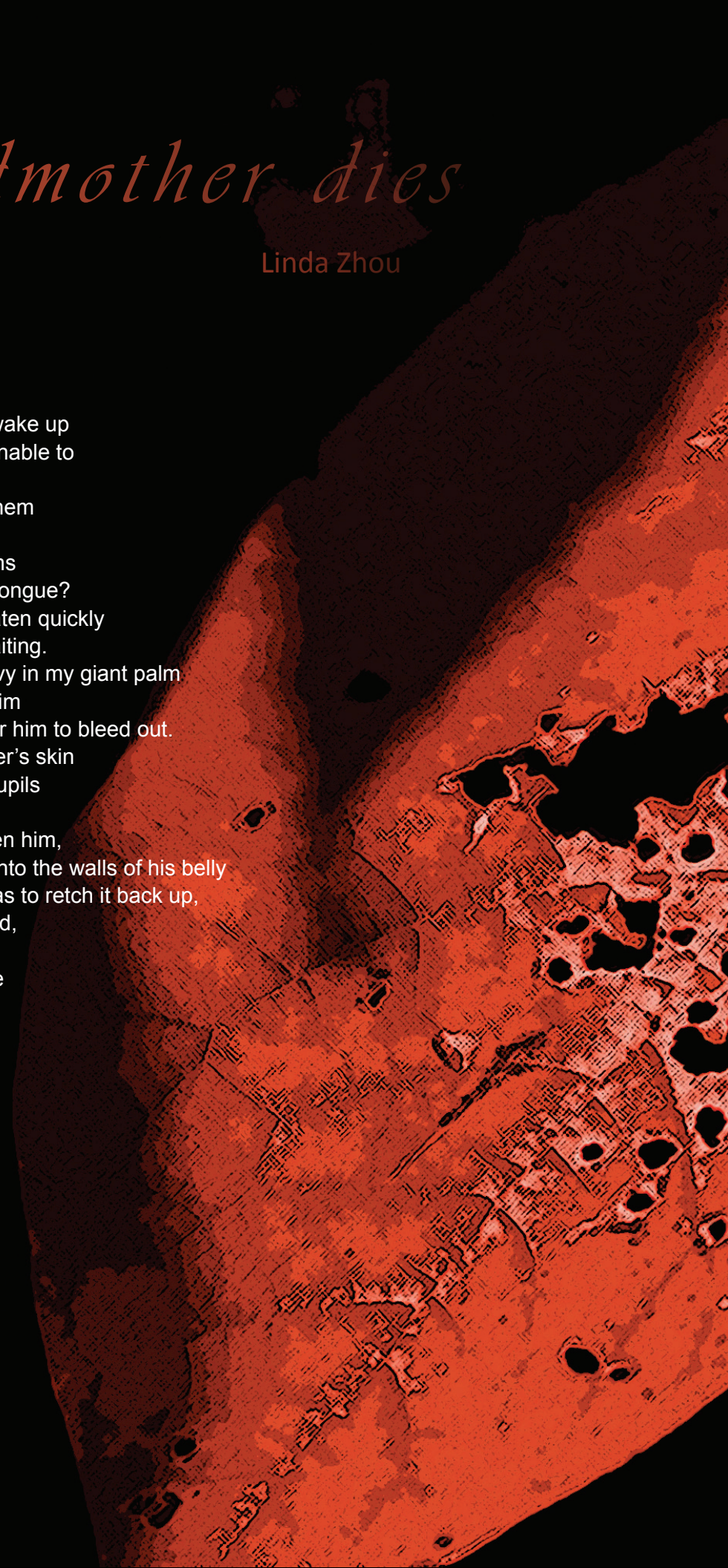
For weeks I dream that I am Cronus
about to devour his son, but I always wake up
just as I raise the body to my mouth, unable to
decide which part to eat first.

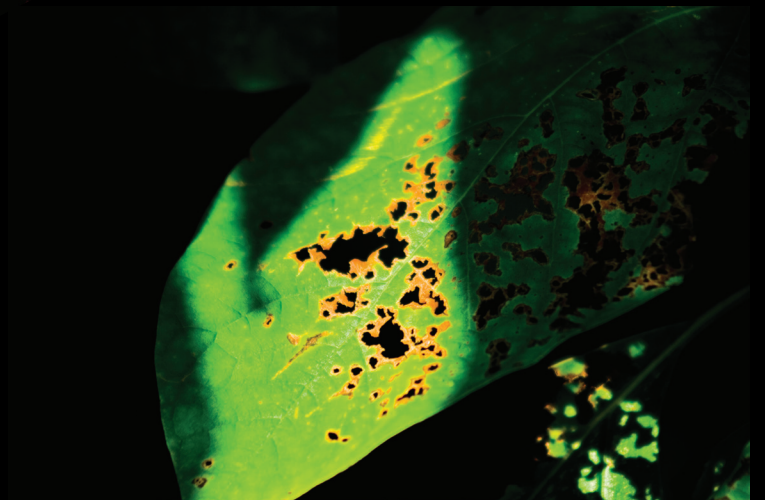
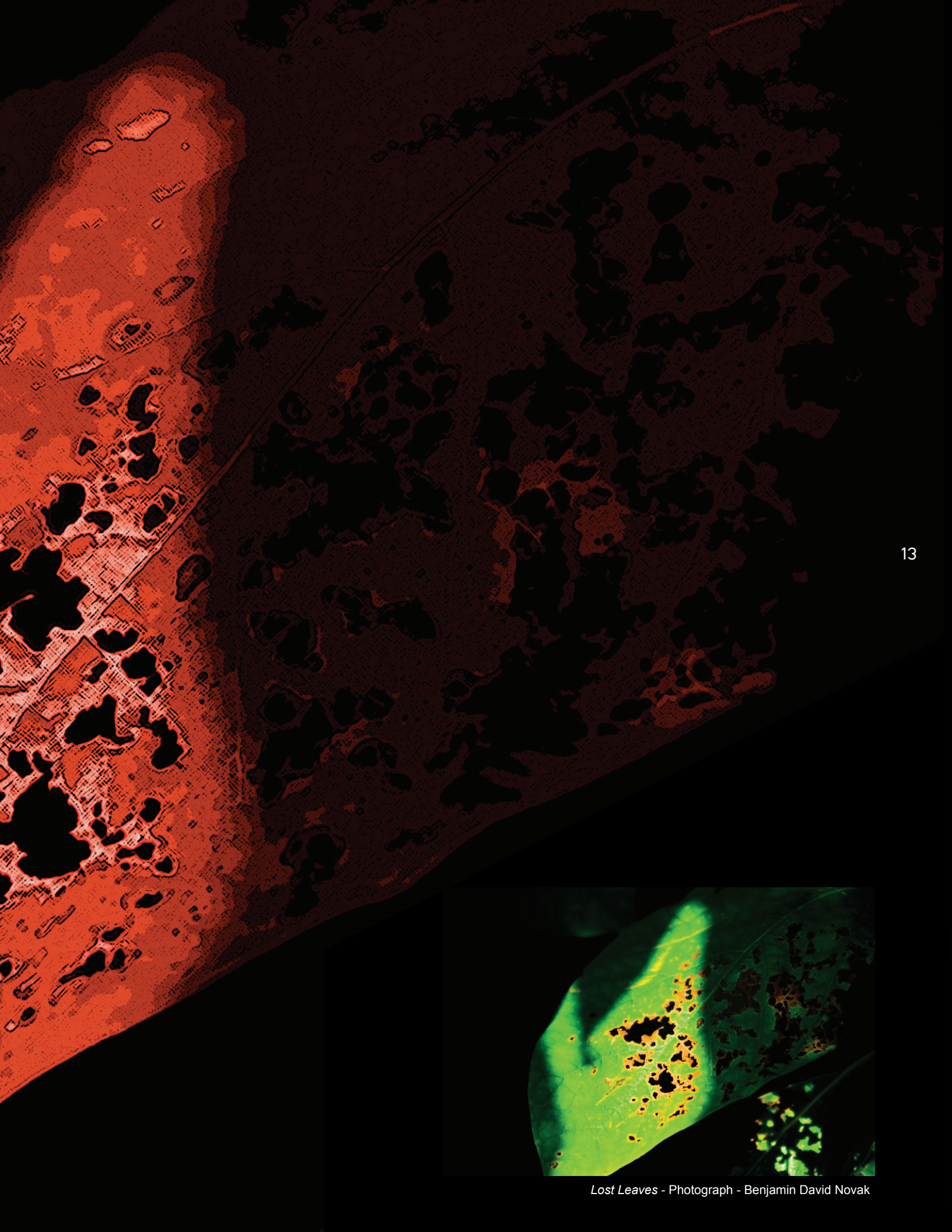
Do I begin with his fingers and savor them
like a punch to the throat, or do I let
the bones of his skull cut open my gums
and the fluid of his brain marinate my tongue?
Remember that the heart should be eaten quickly
before it can become too bitter with waiting.

In some dreams he is broken and heavy in my giant palm
and all I want is to bite open a line in him
from his collar to his crotch and wait for him to bleed out.

In the daylight Cronus wears my mother's skin
and the black grief of her mouth and pupils
smudged onto her face.

What a stomachache it must have given him,
his son's tiny hands and feet pushing into the walls of his belly
until it got so bad that all he wanted was to retch it back up,
onto the clouds or grass in a great flood,
as many times as he needed
to finally remember what it meant to be
cleansed.





Lost Leaves - Photograph - Benjamin David Novak

Brain Bead



Bug - Photograph - Delaney Snyder

When I was young, I believed
a small person was sat in the center
of my brain like a pit in a peach-

that person was me, steering
a machine of flesh.
Now, there is an urge

For intimacy. Conquest.
To strip bare your imperfection,
your grit and grain, to

round-saw my way through your sternum,

trace up the knobs of your spine,
find the crucial interior
blood-dark.

and in my delight, sink my fingers
into the plushy greypink pith-
twist apart the hemispheres

and grasp the pit of you.

I know
when I hold the hard round marble
to the light, I will see inside it
a very small person.

Julia Schaumburg



The “Beloved” Poems

POEMS ABOUT WANTING

HUY HO



Frolic - Photograph - Caitlin Clements



I. Speaking

I want to know you
more than words,
in words I cannot speak,
in moments kept for you alone,
in thoughts I cannot speak.

I want to know you
more than words,
in touches touching back,
in measured breaths upon my skin,
in glances glancing back.

I want to know you
more than words
that speak, or glance, or touch
Because there are no words;
no words that mean that much.

III. Asking

I would have dropped the world,
(had you only asked)
not thinking twice about it
but then you said goodbye.

I would have wanted, want to give more
than just receive
yet I cannot
do more than what
you did not ask or want or need.

If all I could
but give is time, (had you only asked) I
would have sat to wait
for waiting,
waiting just
for you.

If you had but only asked,
there's nothing I'd not do
but all there is
is just goodbye and silence
waiting, too.

II. Knowing

To see the quiet thoughts of yours
but what I would not give;
a part of me, or me completely,
to you, or just a part of you.
I'd want to know than simply want
to think in touches or in words.

I want your thoughts left unspoken
so I would know, and not just want
a part of you or all of you so all of me,
completely, could simply rest in knowing.

IV. Waiting

I used to love you (for awhile)
or maybe I still do
because these words are left unsaid,
maybe I still do.

I used to think, or maybe do,
that I could be much more
but I cannot be what you want
if wanting nothing more.


Now I know the troubled thoughts,
the ones we shared in touch,
in silence and in broken breaths (or maybe
broken hearts),
the ones you keep and only keep;
keeping only you

So now I wait (for awhile)
waiting just to wait,
because I loved you for awhile
and maybe I still do.

The Chair

18





John saw himself in objects. The chair across the room, the discarded refrigerator resting heavily in the concrete basement, his daughter's aged teddy bear on the top shelf—all these things dull grey carcasses that loomed about the house like ghosts in purgatory. His wife too looked at him this way. With tired eyes she stared at him, barely hoping that some life lurked still behind the weak dry leather of his skin and too-still blue eyes. There was no doubt she loved him—what was once bubbly euphoria in youth had transformed into a deep-seated loyalty like a sapling having grown strong wiry roots in the earth. But there was no affection left in her gaze. And every day that her once innocent eyes turned to him holding only fatigued speculation, he felt the chasm between himself and the living grow greater still.

Once upon a time he was an athlete. His six-foot-three frame, holding one hundred seventy five pounds of lean muscle and a gold medal for swimming, was presently encased in the glass china cabinet by the couch. The photograph was grainy but showed the healthy glow of youth upon his wet cheekbones and then heaving chest, a clear expanse of tan skin that met with broad shoulders and thick thighs. He was poised on the side of the pool where a great swab of bright blue swept behind him, making it appear as though he were floating like a god above the water. What was most foreign about the man in the photo, however, was his face: a wide grin that pulled at red cheeks and exposed faint crinkles at the corners of moon shaped eyes, a rosy tongue that pushed a muted laugh against the contours of hard white teeth. A breeze tousled the young man's hair and the whole scene, bright with captured youth and sunlight, was so perfectly infectious that one might, peering close to the thin black frame, expect the same cool air to blow softly against their eyelashes. But there was no breeze in the living room; the house's temperature was maintained by the buzzing outdoor AC unit which pumped a vaguely odorous stream of filtered air into the vent at the foot of the wall. John hated it, the perpetual humming reminding him of what his life had become: an artificial machine making poor work of Mother Nature. Indeed, stranded in his wheelchair and fixating upon the stranger in the cabinet, John had realized long ago that life was not meant to be imitated: that it either existed in the spontaneous throws of laughter and the flexing of pulsing muscles or not at all. For John's immobile flesh, there was no life to be had, certainly when he could not even tell his wife to turn off the goddamn air conditioning.

John stared at the French doors that led from the adjoining dining room into the outdoor terrace. His wife had left them slightly ajar after gardening earlier that afternoon, stubbornly inserting a patch of red poppies into the small plot next to the pool. They were her favorite flowers—a token of lost girlhood and long hours spent in front of the TV eyeing Judy Garland's red shoes—and John had watched her through the glass as she furiously scraped at the baked earth, sweat pouring from her brow and grit winding beneath her fingernails. Now the flowers drooped in the heat, already weak from their hasty implantation. They could use a drink, John thought. The chair advanced toward the light, rolling sluggishly over the matted carpet and finally traversing the door step into the garden where John let out a shallow breath and squinted at the unfamiliar glare. As the shade of the house receded, sweat began to seep from his pores and John swallowed dryly as his stale body withered under the hot and heavy air. A few yards away, the pool glistened. Its stark immaculacy beckoned to John and he imagined the once familiar feeling of sinking into cool nothingness and listening to the gentle lap of water against smooth tile. He imagined the weightlessness of swimming. Rolling forward, John breathed roughly and tuned to the sound of barely rustling leaves and the faint patter of life across distant tree branches as the humming of the AC faded from perception. He felt his heart beat heavy against his thin chest and a twitch near his right eye. He smelled chlorine and red poppies. These were John's last experiences as he pushed past the garden hose and into the pool.

Maya Gueron

The Rolling Tongue

The Butcher's Parable

ERIK BARBIERI

Left laying, lonely
Listening to the low lift of love and liberation
The libretto.
Left laying, crying,
Cragged cracks coralling the common case
Of conviviality.
Crying, helping hands
Hurl at him in the humid air
Hands haggard and hands holy, the hands
Of a whore.
Helping hands, whispers
Wailing on the walls of whim and wit
Wrestling the wrath from weathered wounds
Weeping wet.
Whispers,
The lucid, lurid, mind too crass, too candid, to be hemmed in by hope, the want,
the wish
To move on.
Love eats the brain like a poison, like a greedy baker
Feasting on his pastries with wild abandon, like a corpulent butcher
Stripping the fats and stuffing his mouth with greasy, uncooked flesh.
Take the best, leave the rest, leave it to rot and waste away on a bottom shelf
Where no one finds it till the smell makes it too hard to keep out.
Try to find a way to move on, toss the meat, the moldy bread
But the smell stays
Like perfume between the knuckles
Like the perfume's gone bad, gone sour.
And instead of love
There is sordid desire.



untitled - Mixed Media - Anna Wagner



I find you in paint stained jeans and ragged ripped knees
kneeling on unfinished floors fixing towards five o'clock

I find your callused hands enclosing my little girl fingers
your blue eyes brimming, while we say 'stay'
we say 'take us with you'

I find you against snowy Massachusetts backgrounds
in the frost-bitten yard chopping firewood to feed flickering
flames heating up January

I find you mowing grass and the sun coloring you red
summer days spent planting corn and spreading ashes on the field
thinking maybe the whole world should live rooted

I find you with rusted t-birds, younger years protected in black print
on crinkled yellow newspaper in game points and game saves
saved your team but never could give up enough (freedom) to save us

I find you year by silent year and forgotten promises by miles
peter pan by growing up in candles and inches marked on the wall
in pencil evaporating like breath on a winter day, 15 degrees and dropping

I find you honking and looking back at the three of us in our nightgowns,
waving you on even though we said 'stay' and we said 'take us with you'
but there—you're driving off alone yet not lonely
watching for highway signs and state lines and low gas prices
only this much more to go—
we'll pick up our hearts hitchhiking their way home

McKayla Watkins





Aran - Photograph - Caitlin Clements



An Entrance, An Exit

Kristen Verge

The glass windshield of his '89 Camry probably wouldn't break if you smashed your head into it. If you put your hands on the ledge of the dashboard and flung your neck forward, you'd only crack the double-plated glass. If you were going to do something like that, you'd want the glass to shatter, explode from the windshield and fall around you like a mix of falling blossoms and hail, sprinkling over your face and arms. You decide to sit and wait for him instead.

You've been waiting for twenty minutes. The heat from the car is stifling and your bare legs stick together with sweat under your dress. You unfold your legs, then refold them; unfold and refold. Open, close, open, close. He needed new windshield wipers, he said. The others squeaked too much. When it rained, they dragged themselves across the glass whining "kay-tee, kay-tee," and it was a sound that neither of you wanted to hear.

You sit in the front seat and sweat. He took the keys with him. God forbid you turn on the air conditioning. You open the heavy door with a creak and swivel in the torn seat to stick your legs out. You pull your dress up above your knees to feel the hot breeze. Your hand runs along the inside of your thighs, warm and slick. That emptiness between your legs is still sore, even though it happened more than two weeks ago. You never told him.

The stale air mixes with the hot, blowing into the car and up your dress. You look through the window of the auto shop and see him mulling over prices, staring stupidly at identical packages.



A hot, stale room in the summer. The windows are open and the slow breeze, a hot breath, strokes your knees and the bottom of your cotton dress. Maybe they'd let you leave your dress on.

A sweaty forehead, plastic fingers, white walls with pink flowers painted on them.

"Please, try to relax."

Open.

You close your eyes as the hot air from outside pushes against your face. Your fingers play against the latch to the glove compartment. Open. That little hairpin with the red enamel daisy is gone. He must have taken it out last week. It had been in there for a few days; you guess he finally found it. You don't own a red enamel daisy hairpin. Close.

He finally comes out of the store, grinning stupidly at you and waving the wipers like a prize he had to rip from the sales clerk's hands.

"No more of that damn squeaking," he says, throwing the bag with the new wipers down on the white hood and forcefully yanking off the old. You watch his body tremble with weakness, panting as he tries to rip the old wipers off the car. The Camry hangs on tightly to its appendages until he finally loosens one and the car gives off a rusty cough. The part where the wiper blade once rested juts out awkwardly, exposed and embarrassed. The old blade looks lost and frightened in his hand. He throws it on the ground where it seems to curl up into itself, finally dying. He looks at you and smiles triumphantly, his grin toothy like a child's. The process is repeated again, with the second wiper yanked away and the gentle shake and metal scream of the car as it is plucked off. The blinding white hood, glowing in the bright sunlight, becomes flecked with drops of dirty sweat and you squint your eyes away.

The white ceiling tiles are spattered with water marks. You close your eyes and squeeze handfuls of the limp sheets.

Pinching, silence.

"All done."

Close.

"All done." He throws his body into the car and leans over to kiss you, his face wet and dirty. HE kisses you. He reaches for your hand and you let him hold it. He doesn't even know.

His hand is hot and wet in yours. He squeezes it and his touch irritates you. He doesn't notice, and his voice begins to vibrate, telling you things you don't care about. How much windshield wipers cost. How the kid behind the counter was an asshole. Why he shouldn't be fixing his car on Sundays. How he should be studying for his biology test.

You don't care for biology. He goes to community college—you dropped out. The classes were easy, the kids were all drug addicts. You didn't want to be around those idiots. Your job at the daycare center is full of dripping noses and sticky faces and hands you don't want to touch, but you need the money for a real school that you'll go to someday. Small voices lisp out your name and it makes you want to stand over the changing tables and cry.

He babbles. You shift in the hot seat and brush your hair back with your hand. You pull stray hairs from the headrest. They are long and strawberry-blond. You flip the lid to the vanity mirror to see your face. Open. Your

forehead sweats and your eye-makeup is roughly smudged from the heat. Your lips are dull pink-gray. Your hair is dark and cropped just below your ears. Your hair is not strawberry-blond. Close.

As you look out the window, you realize his whining syllables have stopped cluttering the air. You turn your head to him. He grins stupidly and makes the left turn into the park behind the hospital. He stops the car in the corner of the lot, shaded by trees and overgrown grass, so the people driving by won't see.

His hand throws the car into park then slinks its way to the back of your neck.

"You're looking good today," he tries to croon as he pushes you closer to him and engulfs your face in his. It's too hot, you don't feel like it.

"Oh, come on." His tongue pries open the lips that you want to keep closed and presses against the inside of your mouth. You are tired and hot, and it's easier just to give in. It's not like it matters anymore. You let him.

The sweat of his face brushes coldly against your cheeks and you wince. His hand travels down your sticky arms, over your trembling belly, up your dress. He touches your thin panties and you flinch away. His fingers are sharp against you. You lock your legs tight and his hand gets caught between your knees. Close.

He places his hand between your knees and slowly spreads your legs apart. He succeeds, and you do not struggle anymore. It burns between your legs but it is easier this way. Open.

An entrance.

Soon you are in the backseat and his body throbs and drips unto yours. He heaves and rocks over you like he is trying desperately to push something up deep inside of you, into your stomach and through your arms and legs.

When he is done he hoarsely whispers "I love you" and strokes your not-strawberry-blond hair. He rests his head on your stomach and you want to strangle him, to scratch and bite. Your whole body feels grimy and the heat is nearly unbearable. His breath returns to normal and he turns his head to look at the clock in the dash. "Oh shit, I've got to go meet Kaitlyn to study for biology."

He pats your stomach once and your shudder, the sore emptiness throbbing. He opens the car door to get dressed. You lay still, your legs spread. Katie McGregor is good at biology. You never understood science. She goes to community college, too. You saw her talking to him once when you picked him up from classes after his piece of shit car had broken down. She touched his arm and he smiled. Her eyelashes curl without mascara and she wears skirts that show her freckled thighs. Katie McGregor had strawberry blond hair. Katie McGregor wears a red enamel daisy hair pin. But you knew all of that already. You bring your knees together. Close.

You sit up and let your dress fall over your body and it sticks against your wet stomach and legs. You climb back in the front seat and join him.

"Let's get you home."

When he pulls up to your house, a little down the road, dust from the arid driveway comes up from under his tires.

"See you later, babe." He kisses you goodbye on the cheek and you climb out of the car, turning around and standing in the open door, staring at him. You imagine hands touching his face. Hands that are small and soft and unknowing, and then hands that are long and white and freckled. He looks back ignorantly.

"You want something?" His face looks uncaring now, and you want to scratch it, to kick him and scream.

"No." You push the door shut.

Close.

And he leaves you in the driveway, a cloud of warm dust swirling around your legs and up your dress, resting against your thin panties.

An exit.

Kristen Verge
"An Entrance, An Exit"




Duomo - Photograph - Nichole Lidstrom

Offshore Freeze

Jill McLaughlin



Pacific - Photograph - Virginia McLane

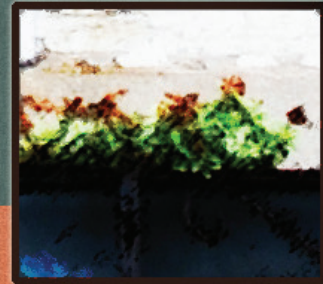
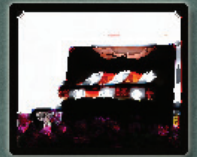


Here, where the faint current swirls
with the cold dark depths, two
marsh cormorants lift off in unison,
wings beating to the pulse of waves.

This, when the snow-cloud of gulls
stalk the lonely trawler and the frost-tipped
buoys drown in their hope. See
how the swells rush to shore, hidden
below their knit white caps.

The late afternoon leaves low grey skies as
receding water calls to us, pulled under layers of
frozen salt. Only the pale mirrored
sea, trapped in her silent wanderings, and the
fresh death of fallen snow.

And now
the twin cormorants soar higher.



dreams

rubbed out of her eyes,
she takes coffee
(caffeine her only vice)
and toast
unbuttered.

the newspaper
crisply folded
lies beside her
balanced checkbook,
front page skimmed

thinking ahead
to her commute
she sighs
reaches
for the sugar,

then retreats:

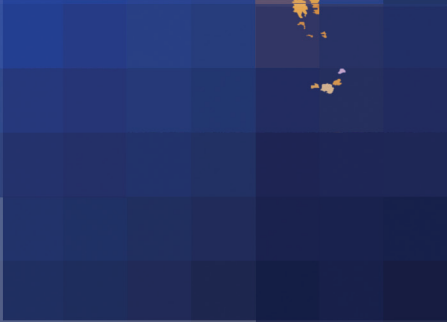
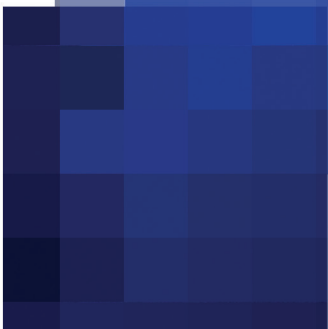
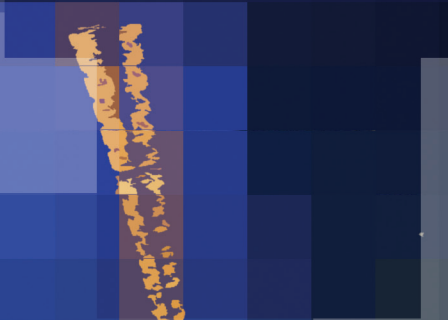
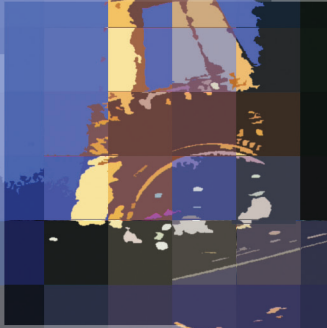
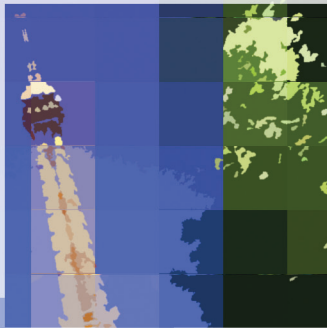
it tastes
too much like

dreams.

NARROW

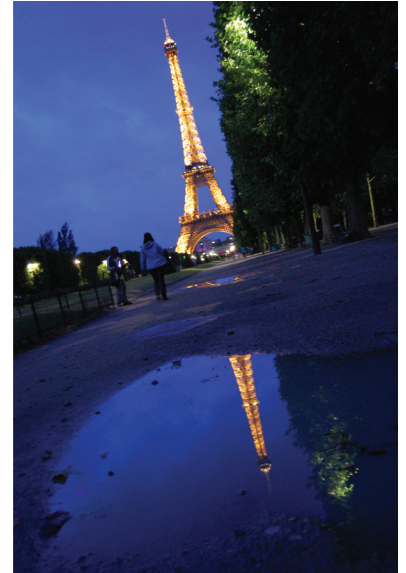
Becky Koenig





Left Scriptless

Samantha Roth

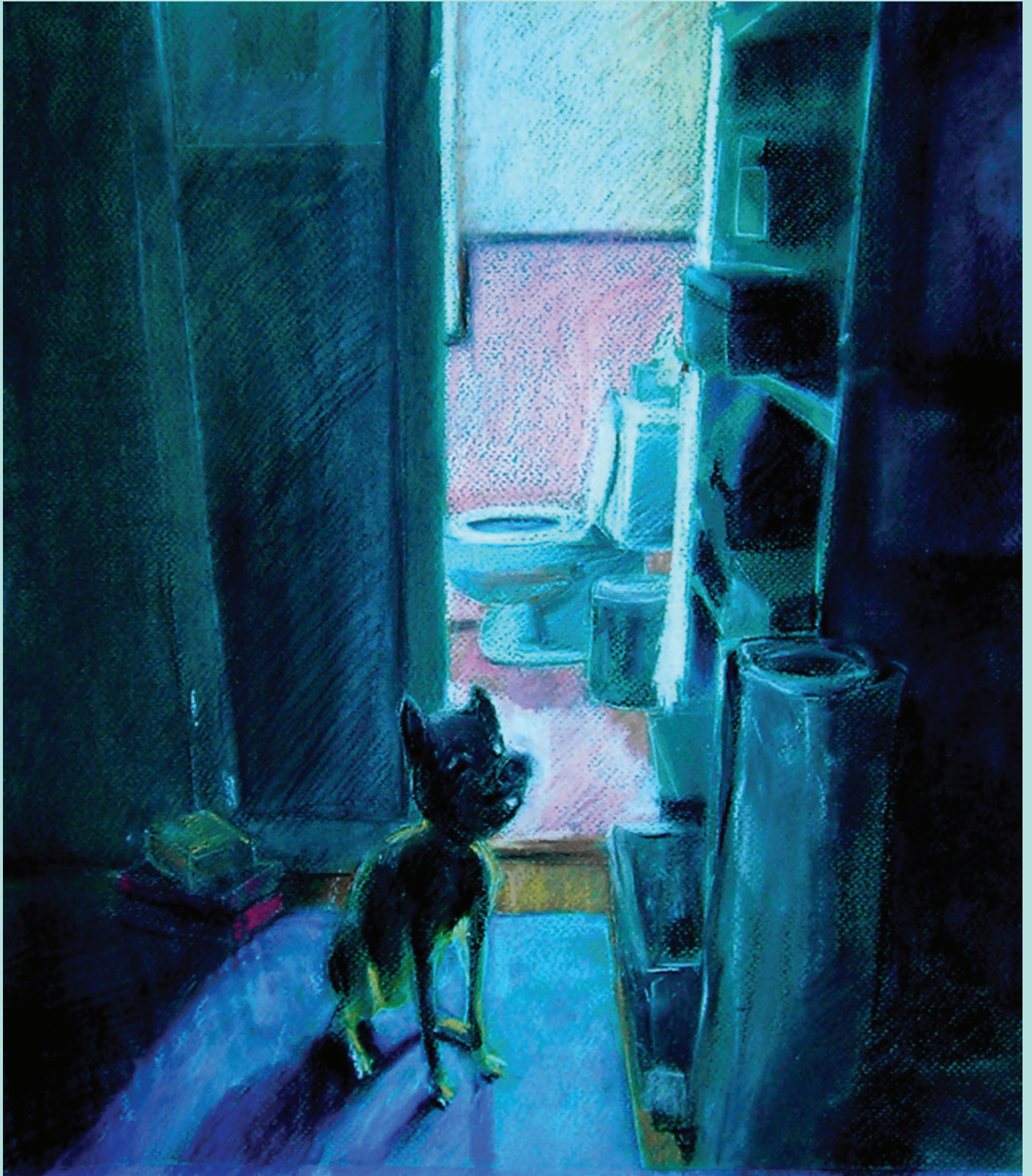


untitled - Photograph - Caitlin Clements

The Australian skyline at midnight is said to be a sight to behold
I wouldn't know
I've never seen it
Too slowly starving for attention in my own little opera box
I can't decide whether to keep the rose colored glasses on...
Or off...
Choir voices rise above the howls of the orchestra's pit of hell
And they change the music's tenor
To a soprano's purest siren call, that silver golden note, that golden silver key
"Oh, why aren't you here with me?"
Comes along with the yearning sounds of violins and flutes
All the world's a stage sometimes, it seems, and all the men and women are left scriptless
No words to guide their ways out of opera boxes
Shakespeare had it wrong, I think
Plays and stage tell you nothing of man.

And they eat her tulips

Jill McLaughlin



untitled - Mixed Media - Anna Wagner

that hot day I discover
the Lyme disease, we are supposed
to go sailing and Dad makes me run through
the woods and it's puddled, muddy,
but I run anyway to tell my uncle,

"We can't go sailing today, Mum has
a fever but maybe we can go
tomorrow." But we don't because

that hot night I discover
the dark bruise with Saturn's oval rings
and I know it immediately because,
after all, Mom's a doctor and tells us
important stuff like that.

She's just getting into the ice
bath to bring down the fever and
there it is, on the back of her leg and because in

that hot room I discover the
bull's eye, it's finally there,
after the bath, that she makes the call.
But those hospital smells -
they don't scare me like I know

they scare a lot of people, because I go
there with Mum, when she makes rounds
and we see the little babies she delivered. Under

that hot blanket I discover
the tiny smells of infants, so the hospital
I don't mind. But the last time, Mom didn't
call the hospital, she was too stubborn, and then
strep throat put her in ICU for a week and

even though she said it was only because she
was a doctor and had 'special privileges,'
Mom told me something a while ago. "In

that hot corner," I discover, "the
chances are fifty-fifty." And it reminds me
of the symbol game we used to play,
where Mom would draw an eye,
a C, and a wriggling arrow pointing

at me. ICU,
where you and your roommate are both fighting
for that one in two chance, it's there in

that hot hospital, I discover the
sterile corridors are inches
from nowhere, death. So I braid
twelve strands of hair, tight,
as Mom talks to the doctor on the phone and

I'm praying "Make a joyful noise to the Lord
all ye lands" because all I can think of now
are the halogen lights of the ICU

shining white in my future but then she hangs up,
and sends Dad to Rite-Aid

and says next week, after the tiny white
pills in the orange bottle are gone,
we can go sailing, if it's still
that hot.

blueprints for a convent

there are rooms in me that need cleaning
as often as confession, when dirt smothers
the furniture like plastic wrap and the door
hangs from its hinges as if a jumper
weighing the distance to the ground.
bless me, father, for i have wasted
another pack of sponges to wipe the floor,
bruised with the mud from broad shoulders
and big hands and the cold marble teeth of
guests.

while i fight the windows and coax them shut
i remember the way i watch the last
ten minutes of chick flicks first
to see meg ryan get her happy ending. don't tell me
you've forgotten being in the fourth grade
and using your hand to practice kissing,
as if your thumb and index finger together
made a toad's mouth which would make a prince,
the freckles on the back of your palm
forming his eyes.

Linda Zou



Winchester - Photograph - Caitlin Clements






In Her Mind

Delaney Snyder



Mt. Ranier - Photograph - Virginia McLane





Before she even saw him, on a subconscious mental plane, she knew that her estrogen levels had skyrocketed overnight. It was not readily apparent to the outside observer, the standard artistic soul who wandered into Starbucks on the corner of 9th and Tennyson in search of couplets, chords, and coffee. They came in from the rain wrapped in solitude, dark jackets dripping onto ceramic countertops, arms crossed, hands clenched into fists and balled beneath hairy arm pits. She watched them as they did not watch her, aware as they were not. She picked out prominent facial features to compose caricatures, unclenched tight muscles and looked through layers of dark, environmentally-friendly fabric to see down to the skin, down to the soul. Today, both glistened with rain water. She picked a random customer who also happened to be a heart-wrenchingly beautiful specimen of male, and she followed the curve of his muscular shoulder blade, leaning closer to chase the water from its shadowed contours. The juxtaposition of the goose bumps on his pale forearms, like moguls on a snow-white ski slope, and the slight black hairs that stood on end among them, peppering the slope with trees, aroused her body as well as her imagination.

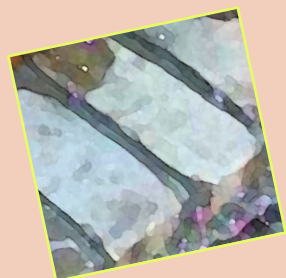
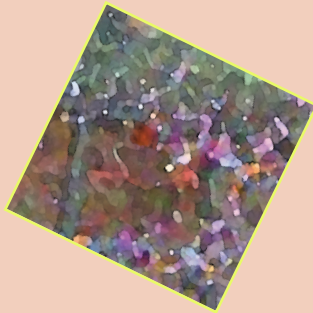
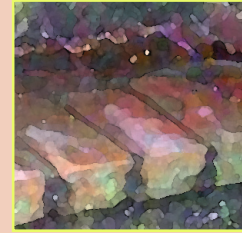
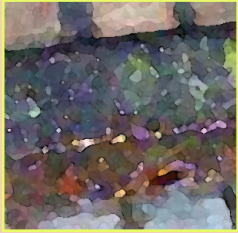
She froze. The warm, melting feeling in her pelvis subsided and icy fear trickled down her spine. Possibly she only imagined his expression. She felt that he looked at her, judged her, stripped away her clothes and then her skin, much the way she had been doing to him just a moment ago. She knew it would be most prudent to look away, but his eyes were hardly less captivating than his ski slope. *His ski slope*. She snickered involuntarily and rapped off the days with starched white knuckles. Day 11. Follicular phase. She observed herself for the first time in several weeks. She wore a rather low camisole, a partially zipped sweatshirt that flattered her chest, the tightest pair of jeans she owned, and... wiggling her toes in wonder, she noticed for the first time her fetching, pumpkin-colored toenails. She frowned; she had no memory of painting them. Anoop must have done it, then, while she was sleeping. Hence the dream about the caterpillars crawling over her toes in the abandoned button warehouse by the sea...

She marveled over her utter failure to monitor her own impulses, though they colored her judgment of others. She was possessed momentarily by a strong sexual urge to color *him*. Blue. Like the ocean. She recognized the inherent irony between her nearly-mature ovaries and her thoroughly immature behavior. Just as modern man is drawn to the intersection of field and forest by age-old instincts, for the former provides food and the latter security, and the presence of both ensure his survival, woman shall be eternally drawn to man on the eve of her childbearing period by her own hormones, which have evolved to ensure the propagation of his line.

When she accidentally made eye contact, she could not quite wrestle down her erratic heartbeats. She frowned morosely into her coffee mug, attempting to dispel the parade of pregnant teenagers that circled the rim. She tried again. She looked beneath his clothes and perceived his rigid posture, the knots in his back and the slight strain of his neck, inclined gracefully but sorrowfully over a mug of hot tea. His energy seemed centered over the tea, where he had closed his eyes and parted his lips in meditation. The steam condensed on his eye lashes, and he cupped the mug with both hands, as if for warmth. Under the fluorescent lights, his naked skin stood out stark and pale. She saw the chill he could not shake in the trail of goose bumps on his arm. Her cheeks flushed at the spectacle of such vulnerability. She looked away quickly and took a flustered and poorly executed slurp of coffee. It blistered across her tongue and splattered on the speckled ceramic counter.

Too Late

Becky Koenig



When I hand her the cookies
she seems mad,
as if she doesn't like the special
marzipan frosting I spent
all night making
just for her.

I ask what's wrong
but she rolls her eyes
kisses her father on the cheek
whispers in his ear
and he snorts the laugh he reserves
just for her

jokes. I try to smile.
If the only way they can bond
is at the expense
of crazy Mom
so be it. I let it pass
just for her

the student guide bounds
toward us with an impressive grin
considering it's eight a.m.
He waves and points to the check-in table
and when we try to move closer he cries
"Just for her!"

Of course.
She doesn't need me
to sign her permission slips now;
I carry her bag up the dorm stairs
and notice the initials I sewed
just for her

room is empty
like her room at home:
no posters on the walls
or clutter under the bed.
Good, I think, she'll have space
just for her

own thoughts.
At least until the boys discover
her, my beautiful daughter,
who cried every night in eighth grade
when she thought co-ed gym was meant
just for her

embarrassment.
"Mom!" she whispers angrily
"you are embarrassing me!"
I wipe my eyes and note the mascara
bought against my will
just for her

is unsmeared.
She hugs me, barely,
and as we walk down the hall
I hear her giggling
and I try to be excited
just for her

sake. At night the phone rings.
Not until we are two hundred miles
and eighteen years
apart does she say call to say, "Thank you"
and when her dad asks, "For what?" she replies,
"Just for her."



Steps - Photo Manipulation - Mariah Walker

An Daingean, County Kerry





That summer the bonsai grew a minute
and the foghorn with its lonely moan
below the canopy of tear soaked
maples. We watched another
terminal sailboat attempt to ride out
the ominous clouds (later returning,
mainsheets tattered as a peasants tunic,
clew snapping angrily against the proud mast),
cast away ashes on top of clovered ashes set adrift
in the perpetual dew. Where were we going? hurtling so
fast away from one ocean, crushing
fragile bleeding hearts as we raced barefoot
through the old gardens.

Jill McLaughlin

REFLECTIONS BY THE BANK OF A RIVER MAUREEN MCNABB

I sat by the river, alone,
and the damp breeze
buffeted my flesh and hair
like the corrosive memories
of past.

Farewell, nostalgia!
Fall from my conscience
like the leaves from
the trees, settling bright
upon the creek before
Fading to death below
the gentle waves.

And the wind blows one
By my feet, asking—

“Do you remember love?”
The visceral expanse
of future dreams
dripping clean as
vivid watercolors
Bleed.

“Do you remember joy?”
The brief pause
fostered when a
torpid deck yields
a Joker on the table.
Mirth.

I will tell you...
I remember lust.
A haunting pleasure,
a lingering glance
Which sets fire to
my limbs. You weren't
There.



Cascade - Photograph - Virginia McLane



“And flesh is flesh is flesh
is—“

FORGIVE ME.
Though it is no longer
Of consequence.

FORGIVE ME.
I have trespassed.

forgive me [a whisper]

Do you remember lies?

Do you remember lies?
The pain and sorrow?
Hate and personal gain?
At my expense (and yours).
We grimaced and laughed.
How could you forget?
Try.

A PLEA:
Do not leave me.
Love me.

THE PROMISE REVERBERATES:
Forever, forever.

“Do you remember lies?”
The ones we committed
under the guise
of innocence and purity,
While the Fates pulled
taut our string to sever.
I knew.

Forever, forever.

I knew.



Mirror Me

I'm not exactly what you'd call pretty but if you get the shadows just right the light slanted and angled just so then I might be called "interesting." I've tried for all my eighteen years and I think I finally perfected the perfect formula to create the better side of me: a lunge to the left, but my knee is bent and my opposite hip lifted, just a little with my chest thrust forward (and up) and my shoulders thrust back, arms out my neck craned up, my head tilted over yes, yes- like so and with my bangs dangling to the side... as limp as my useless hands, neither which have anything to do with the image I'm creating. My roommate drops something, clattering her Dior lip-gloss or Burberry perfume beauty and I lose myself to the harsh angles and bleak shadows normal confines and limits of my face all the bones that aren't structured right all wrong for that mythical "interesting" me I can only find in the dim bathroom mirror and not outside in sun and natural light.

Shelly Holder





Chalk Primavera - Photograph - Nichole Lidstrom






Color of Autumn 4 - Photograph - Benjamin David Novak

Exfoliation of Another Self

Jill McLaughlin



Tepid water sits around him in a china tub,
motionless until he draws his foot up, scrapes
away the dead and dying skin, pale flesh
falling into ripples. The skin beneath,
red and new. A surface coming
to life, different and raw.

Raw. He drinks heavily with the others,
wild and gone. Pounding of stereo bass
thick in his ears, fingers constantly
clenching an aluminum can.

Green crabs, *Carcinus maenas*, molt.
Thousands of pure, transparent
skins washed ashore, thousands of new
crabs alive in the sea.

Alive. He does not love any more,
nor even like. He lives night
to night, breathing the unknown,
and sleeping with the dark.

They peel the apples in coils,
long red skins falling in spirals,
browning in the compost heap, rotting
in the intense heat.

Intense. He inhales the smoke.
It is pure, thick, and it melds
with the dusk like two
living bodies.

Shreds of patterned skin float
in the filthy water, cling to walls. He lies in remnants
of himself. Bruises peeled back
scabs torn off. The new skin,
raw, alive, intense,
adjusts to his body, fades
to his paler tones,
begins to die again.



Summer Sky - Photograph - Virginia McLane



forget thirst

Ophelia died in Act 4, Scene 7, but she didn't drown.
Drowning is violent and panicked and cruel
and drowning is lonely.

But Ophelia floated first.
She lay there with her face still above the surface
and her dress spreading into a nest
as each particle of water folded to accept her,
warming themselves on her skin and
holding her with their atom hands big enough for bombs.
Ophelia didn't drown so much as she
came home. They took her like a mother's arms or
a lover's body and spoke into her ear:
In the places where the things you've lost once were,
we will overflow with flowers, starfish, song.
Finally you will know the feeling of being full
until even your mouth and ears and eyes brim with light.
We will move and breathe so you don't have to.
Ophelia, we know you are peeling and parched on the inside.
Drink the share that you've been needing.
Let us take care of you.

Linda Zou

An Afternoon Painting

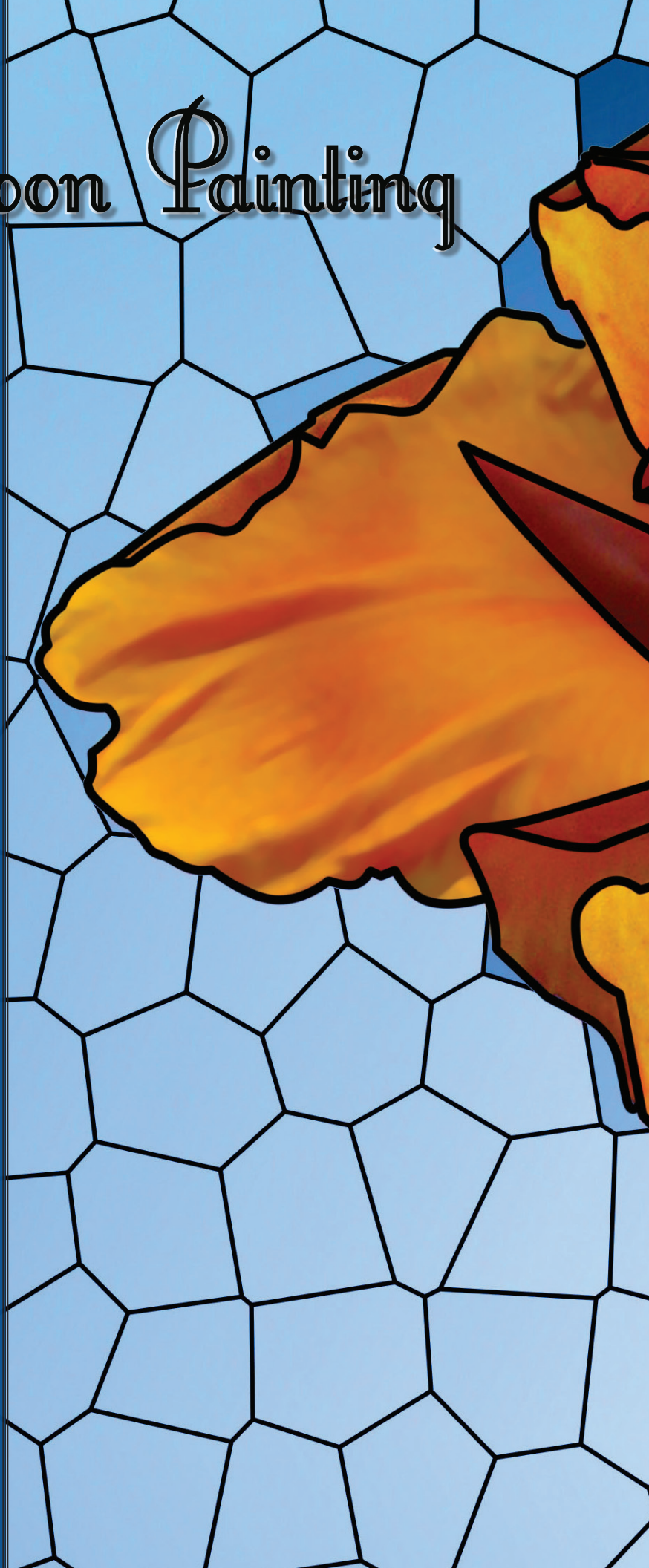
Splashes of color, two figures
On a blanket, speckled with petals
And helicopter wings, in turn surrounded
By a green frame, each blade bending and
Swaying to the dance of the wind
Each reaching up to their fluttering counterparts
Kept safely in the arms of the tree
And you and me
[Egging on the encroaching rumble
Appreciating and taunting nature]
Holding out as long as possible against
The sprinkles and rolling clouds
That chased away the sun drenched afternoon

We were sleepers in that moment
Drops of paint on a canvas
Disbelieving of time passed
Only hours earlier
Dipped in a swirl of
Sun, shade and sprinkler droplets
The flush had gone and yielded to
Wide eyes, observational wonder
As to why more people don't paint memories
Reclining under a tree
Looking up at the overlapping leaves
As their pale green figures shiver
Not quite in time with the hushing gusts
That settle in after the thunder
And dry the paint

Jen Garrott



11AM - Photograph - Mariah Walker







Monastery - Photograph - Nichole Lidstrom

TODAY'S THOUGHT

Λογος Ημερας

Irene Morrison-Moncure

I guess really, if you think about it, it's my fault.

The only reason I'm thinking about it is that it's gotten awfully boring down here. At first I could pass the time telling my life story to the other wandering souls, but after a few weeks (years? months? days?) you start to forget large patches and soon your story just becomes so incomprehensibly disinteresting no one cares anymore. I tried to keep a grasp on my memories; I spent an entire week (year? Let's just say a very long expanse of time) saying the alphabet over and over. First *chi* went, then *rho*, then *eta*, *zeta*, and *theta*. That's when I gave up and began to wallow in what little I had of my memories, like sucking the marrow from the bone. Don't judge. It gets you by, for a while.

I don't mean to sound so bad news bears, but that's really what it's like down here. Just warning you.

Anyway, I got to thinking and I came to the conclusion it was my fault. Not the death part, that was really no one's fault. Well, it was the snake's fault. No, I mean the part were he turned around. If I had just said something once in a while he would have known I was still there. Something. *Don't turn around. I'm still here. Cheerio. I'll make baklava when we get back.*

I'm an idiot. That's what they told me when I married a harper: "You're an idiot. Good luck."

Yeah well, they're just jealous. *And probably still alive.* It really was quite extraordinary for the whole five days we were married. I remember he would charm all the animals out of the forest with his music, make the trees grow and blossom, bring in a whole year's salary with one show. Wonderful man.

I just wish I could remember his name.

Hey girl
Hey beautiful, wonderful girl
Hey girl with perfect dark ringlets and sexy hips
with a model-worthy face and pouty red lips
with a slim, straight body made for the catwalk

Hey girl
Hey beautiful, wonderful girl
Hey girl with killer style and designer jeans
with amazing ankles to wear high, high heels
with trailing perfume and flawless makeup

Hey girl
Hey beautiful, wonderful girl
Hey girl with striking and fierce dance moves
with rhythm and instinct that lights up the room
with barely concealed sex appeal, enticing us all

Hey girl
Hey beautiful wonderful girl
Hey girl with popular friends and a tender caress
with those feminine qualities I'll never possess
with woman's intuition and woman's knowledge

So hey girl
Hey beautiful wonderful girl
Hey girl can you tell me why
with who you are and who I am
I was born a woman and you a man?



Pink Flowers - Photograph - Delaney Snyder



MY LOVELY
SHELLY HOLDER



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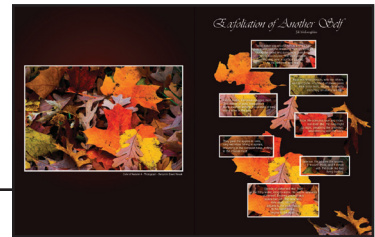
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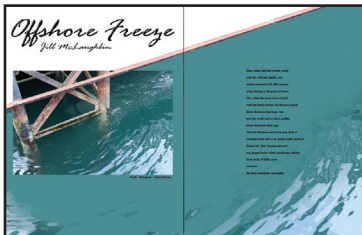
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Colophon

Winged Nation is created by students of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA. Our staff welcomes anyone who wants to share their voice, regardless of previous experience. *Winged Nation* was put together with the use of Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator CS4. This 60 page issue is set in Arial, but uses several fonts to highlight each piece. The cover is set in Times New Roman and Rage Italic. This magazine is printed by Printing Services, Inc. We would like to extend our thanks to Anita Hamlin, Mark Constantine, the Student Activities Office, and our publisher. We would also like to thank all of our contributors for their moving and insightful submissions.

62



Policy

Winged Nation is an artistic and literary forum for the student perspective. Through our publication, students are able to share and explore their experiences of a complicated and variegated society. All entries are the works of students and may not be the opinion of the College of William and Mary or *Winged Nation*.

(from cover)
untitled - Mixed Media - Anna Wagner





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