

Inside Out

2024



18 23

Carmel by the Sea - May 2023
Meryem Guler
Film photography

Inside Out

Jefferson Literary/Arts Journal 2024

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Content Warning: This magazine includes some written pieces with possibly sensitive subject matter. If anyone is experiencing difficulty with issues that you feel are hard to manage, consider using the following resources:

Student Counseling Center (SCC): 215-955-HELP (4357)
National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-8255 (available 24 hours a day)
Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 for free, 24/7 crisis counseling

Foreword

Welcome to the 2024 issue of *Inside Out*!

Inside Out is the literary and arts journal of the Jefferson student body. As such, it gives voice to our scholars as they migrate through their educational experience at our University. The creativity and vision of our students is featured within the pages of this book. Showcased is student work that was created in the intervals between classes and notebooks, dorm rooms and city streets. Please enjoy this issue of *Inside Out*, as our students offer a unique view of their world using images, colors, words, and light.

Charles A. Pohl, MD

Senior Vice Provost for Student Affairs, Thomas Jefferson University

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Editor's Statement

It is with great pleasure that we share with all of you the 2024 edition of *Inside Out*. As our world continues to hurtle from one momentous event to the next, it becomes challenging to pause and appreciate the potent emotions pulsating in the ordinary seconds in between. This year, we proudly present a collection of visual art and original literature that seeks to create a space for reflection on the full tapestry of the experiences within the Jefferson community, from the mundane to the profound. Within these pages, our friends, peers, and mentors have captured the essence of their everyday lives, celebrating the wonder found in moments that would otherwise not receive a second glance. They transform their frustrations into expressions of beauty and strength, hold fast to their mourning and empathy for loved ones and strangers alike, and celebrate the simple joys of everyday victories. From the intricacies of hair to the grandeur of architecture, the serenity of nature, and even the contemplation of mortality, our artists and writers capture significance in every moment.

We are sincerely grateful to each contributor for their unique perspective and are honored to be able to share these beautiful pieces. To our readers, thank you for being a part of this creative journey, and we hope you enjoy *Inside Out*.

Alice Wu & Connor Crutchfield
Chief Editors

Nancy Dinh and Joyce Bian
Literary Directors

Roselind Ni and Lauren Kelsey
Art Directors



Scavenger
Jacob Schwell
Photography

Submission Information

Inside Out is a presentation of artwork, photography, short stories, poems and essays that is published annually. All full-time and part-time Jefferson students are welcome to submit work and to apply to serve on the magazine's editorial board. Submissions may be submitted to jefferson.submittable.com.

Photographic submissions should be saved as a .jpeg file using the highest resolution possible. Artwork should be photographed from a direct angle, without glare or visible background, and saved in the same manner as photographs. Artists who submit non-photographic material will be given the opportunity to have their accepted pieces professionally photographed by a Jefferson photographer to assure the best presentation in the printed magazine. Manuscripts (prose, poetry, translations, short plays, etc.) should be submitted in a Word-compatible document, and saved under the name of the piece (or "untitled," if applicable).

All submissions will be reviewed anonymously; not all submissions will be printed. Please note that entries will be judged as submitted; *Inside Out* will not crop, sharpen, or otherwise adjust an improperly-saved graphic submission.

All submissions must include:

- Author's or artist's name
- Email address and local phone number
- College, department or undergraduate program and year in school
- Genre/medium and title of each submission

View the online version of *Inside Out* at: Jefferson.edu/InsideOut

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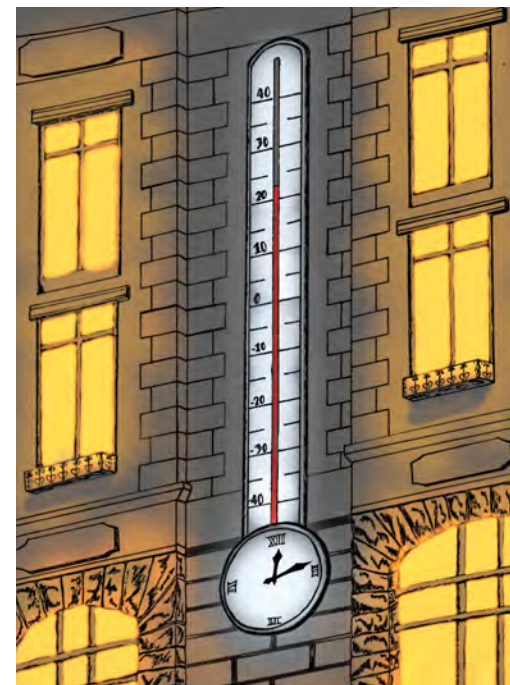
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Annie Ho
Photography

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Time Stood Still
Conor Dougherty
Drawing and Photoshop







Chasing Reflections
Gabriela Thomas
Photography



Claustrophilia
Jessica Dragonetti
Digital Drawing, Procreate

Do I still know how to scream?

Katharyn Kemether

The laughter and screaming
Permeates my window
The high shriek and shrill
Of a child showing excitement
The echo of a giggle
Bounces across the room
As I turn to look out the window
At the children down
On the playground below

I stand above them
I am older
And I know more about the world

Yet I stand here
Watching the children
Skip and dance around
And yelp and cheer
All over a game of tag

They move in slow motion
As I process what is going on
Like I came in halfway though of
A movie that I used to know before

I used to laugh like that, too, didn't I?
I used to know how to scream.
I used to run until my legs felt like rubber
Gulping water from

 A tiny pink plastic cup
 That my mother would bring out to me

 As I would play
 In the lawn
 In the trees
 Dancing vigorously
 Running through the weeds
 Playing hide and go seek

 Calming my racing heart

 As my counterpart chased me
 All the way back to base

When was the last time I knew that fun, fast-paced life of a child?

Do I still know how to laugh like that?

Do I still know how to scream?

I crack my crooked window more

And take a glean out

When did that world not become mine anymore?

Do I dare leave my ivory tower?

Of minimalist decor

And throw rugs

And emails

Do I go outside?

Do I dare to step back in time?

Like I was a child

Without a care in the world

Screaming when I wanted

Cause I wanted something

Cause I liked something

Would that world even take me back?

Did Peter ever come back for Wendy?

Am I too old to play at twenty?

The laughter brings me back

As it catches one's attention

Like a dolphin's giggle

Playful as a creative mind

With no sense of time

I decide to be brave and go

Outside

For the first time in a while

I want to smile again

I want to laugh again

I want to scream again

I want to be a kid

once again.



Tower
John Curran
Photography



reflections

Jen Le

when you come back from the journey, everything around you begins to fall silent: the birds no longer sing in the morning, your phone becomes a graveyard for conversations, and no-one ever hears you approaching.

your body feels lighter. the deal you made at the end of it all seemed to have worked out. you don't have the near-unbearable burden; your fingers no longer pluck at your heartstrings, trying to desperately find purchase on the teeth of the maw of your desires and despairs.

it's an easy decision. you are tired of breaking your own heart, tired of drawing blood from your own suffering and calling it art.

remember: the pain is only real if you let it be. to deprive yourself of its physical manifestation - through long-drawn out sentences and waning poetics - would make it easier to bear.

the sun rises and its golden light catches upon your butter knife. the tranquil hours end as you see your candid reflection upon the gleaming metal.

your eyes are dull despite the brightness of the room. they're flat and tepid like a stagnant pool of water upon asphalt. you can only bear the sight for a split second before you set the knife down, your fists clenched around the handle. across from you is your reflection in full, on the window panes stained with water-marks.

all you see is a stranger.

Bryce
John Curran
Photography





Prayer to Dionysus

Blake Weil

I'm unsure how to start this.

Dear Dionysus,

Right there on the page, makes me sound like a teenybopper doesn't it?
Legs kicked back lying on my belly, twirling my hair dreaming he might write back
Let's start it that way then, shall we? In the most honest mode of yearning

Dear Dionysus,

Place this golden day firm in the past, beautiful and calcified
I was a hard worker, a clever clogs, a good boy
Now let me shed my skin like the snake scales of the coat I wear now
This theatrical cape that reminds me to keep playing pretend

Rejoice that I'm a cheap date
Let the two glass soju haze carry me on the spring breeze from the student apartments
Flying on cherry tree winds with ears full of music and hips unshackled
Kiss my neuroses on the forehead as they drift to sleep while my body dances on

Let me put this clinical brain on the shelf, along with logic
And give me rhythm in its place, pounding drums and clicking buttons at the neon bright arcade
Alive, awake, alert, each reflex unstifled and ready to pounce when my duties are settled
Reduce joys like juice reduces to syrup, complexity distilled to sweetest liquor

Make my eyes not those of a child, locked up in their bedroom dreaming of what they might see
Let them be a college junior's again, studying abroad
Each sensation in high definition, without the static of experience
No haze keeping me from the beauty of being

In the name of my jaw unclenching,
Amen

Masks

Sam Schepps

He's sitting upright in his bed on Friday night. Again. The sheets are gray, the walls are bleak and barren. It's only him and his masks, the ones he wears each day when he's working, pretending to be the person they expect him to be. They're arranged like a puzzle without a solution, sticking out at odd angles with mismatching sides that don't fit, that will never make an image he can see.

There's the one he wears to be funny, when he puts memes and sarcastic witticisms into his presentations to stave off boredom. There's the one he wears to be social, when he hangs around the edges of conversations because he never knows the right things to say until they hit him the next day. There's the one he wears to be smart, when he needs to learn and then recall what "internuclear ophthalmoplegia" is, and the one he wears to be around the people who knew him before he knew what an "internuclear" anything was. There's more than he can count, and many that he no longer recognizes. Even his name is a mask, an abbreviated version of itself, a part that obscures the whole, out of sight, sound, and mind.

He's everything, one thing at a time, and nothing, all of the time. He's a boy in a man's skin, who knows he is not who they expect him to be, because he knows not who he is.

Outside, the city is effervescent. Alive. Aglow in such a way as to clog the air and block the stars from shining, creating an island of energy in a sea of calm. He rises, walks over to the window and glances out, once, then again. Then, he goes back to the bed, grabs a mask, and goes to work.

Burnout
Abdulaziz Alhussein
Painting



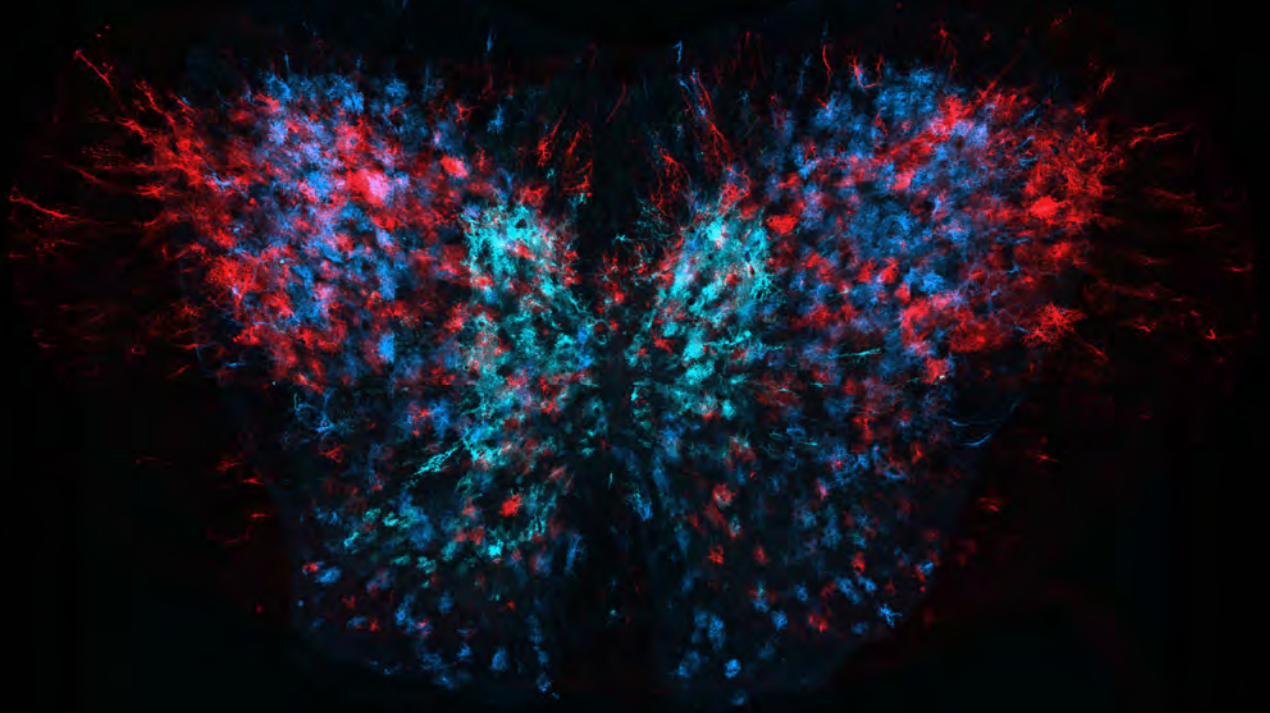
A Day at the Market
Madison Woods
Acrylic Painting





Banquet
Sydney Kornbleuth
Colored pencil

Layered Mouse Spinal Cord
(Infected Astrocyte Staining)
Abhijeet Sambangi
Confocal Microscopy Imaging





Yin Yang
Amanda Rose Farese
Oil on wood

Amanda
Farese



7
11:23

Maybe

Blake Weil

Maybe it was 450 BC, and we were in Athens

I would have been a decadent noble spoiled by years as someone or another's lover, and
you would have been a controversial philosopher arguing day in day out at the lyceum
And when the days duties were done, I'd have brought figs, and you'd have brought cheese,
snacking and laughing while we watched the wine-dark waves, and the world would be large

Maybe it was 1891, and we were in Vienna

I would have been a rising lawyer, wishing every moment I was back at the concert hall, and
you would have been an overwhelmed publisher drowning in a sea of words
And despite the mountains of paperwork, we'd find time for that afternoon einspänner, and we
would have sipped and understood, and the the world would march forward

Maybe it was 1916, and we were in Flanders

I would have been a bedraggled medic jotting down a few pretty words to try to find meaning
in it all, and you would have been a tired officer trying to understand another suicidal charge
And on a quiet night when we both had watch, we'd play chess with trinkets, and though we
couldn't say a word, we wouldn't have to, and the world would burn itself down

Maybe it was 1969 and we were in New York

I'd have been a fuming critic, annoyed at whatever Warhol spat out, and you would have been a
resolute protester, certain you were secure but still willing to fight against a pointless war
And one hot summer day, I'd grab us some Carvel and we'd watch the first steps on the moon,
all mortal problems poofed in an instant, and the world would be small

Maybe it was last night, and we were on your porch

I would have been a beat up medical student after an exhausting few months, and you
would have been a steadfast night-shifter spending a day off on a kindness
And when I finally parked, I'd have brought us for water ice, and you'd cook a salmon steak,
light music lost on new vernal air, and the world would be warm

Of course I don't remember Athens or the rest

But I do remember your kindness on the porch, indulging my rambling visions of our
treasured fascinations with a patient ear
And I do remember the taste of water ice, ripe peach sweet in the equinox sun
And I do remember that friendships can last a very long time So

Maybe

Blue Mosque Istanbul - July 2023

Meryem Guler

Film photography



Interlaken
Teresa Duong
Photography



What's That?
Parker Davis
Photography



autumnal echos

Allison Chang

when i think of precious days i see the burning
october foliage blurring, blending as i gaze
through the speeding train's window. i think
of a brisk, cool breeze biting my ears, whispers
of the first signs of seasons turning. precious
days is the sound of cackling laughter in the
distance, the initial sip of black tea, and the next
moment when warmth seeps down my throat
and curls around my bones. it is the fleeting
dappled sunlight that paints lawns golden and
illuminates deep inky lakes. it is the tears on
your cheeks and crease in my brow, the ache
in your chest and our tight hug goodbye. it is a
longing hope and a grit to survive, whorled into
one and ever changing, like the autumn leaves,
free and dancing in the wind.

Untitled
Elizabeth Upton
Oil on canvas



Aster & Solidago

Katharyn Kemether

You could have been pretty on your own
But you chose to be stunning with me
It was as if mother nature had known
The perfection our pairing would be

My golden good fortune
And your versatility
Both thrive in harsh environments
And rise to adversity

The graceful starlike aster
The pioneering solidago
It must be more than chance
To end up in the same meadow

Your regal shade of iris
Happenstance is blind
Similar to Lady Justice
Yet our alliance is divine

The violet marks the luxury
That exudes out from your soul
It pairs so well with generosity
And the power held in gold

The rarest color for a century
Grows intertwined with me
The metal chosen to mean victory
And it's yours unconditionally

Soft buzzing from the bees
The sound of perfect harmony
They love us for our contrast

Growing together is strategy
The very fiber of our dichotomy
The spark of a twin flame
The feeling of lived reciprocity
And finding one and the same

And just as a dash of you
Can bring out the best in me
It's safe to say true friendship lies
Between the complementary

Light purple and bright gold
What's the chance of you and me?
They say fortune favors the bold
If you believe in destiny

And now that our roots
Are forever intertwined
Can I say just how happy
I am that you're mine?

It's once in a lifetime
To find someone true blue
But mother nature made sure
That for me, it'd be you

Inspired by "Asters and Goldenrod"
from *Braiding Sweetgrass*





Sure?
Parker Davis
Photography

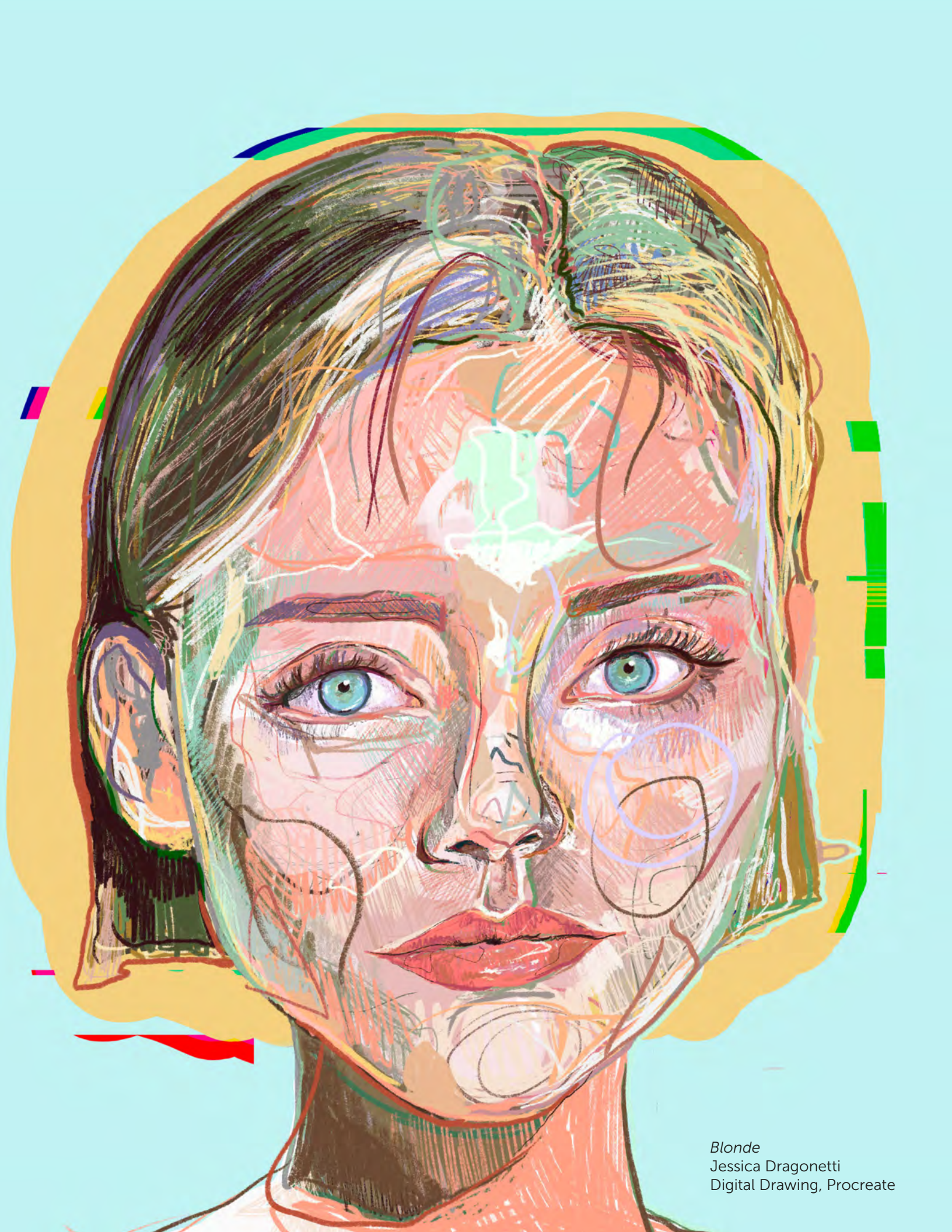
Dear Peach Fuzz

Blake Weil

I want you to keep that big dopey grin that your face hasn't grown into
I want the midnight Wawa run to delight again and again
I want your dad's green Jeep to be your chariot forevermore
I want Coca Cola to always taste as good as it does this quiet sticky night in the suburbs

You'll have a smaller world in the morning
You'll have two more pages to write of your last summer homework
You'll have tomatoes your mom wants you to get from the store
You'll have a meager dinner that doesn't fill your hunger

But tonight, in the parking lot
underneath the bright red letters of the True Value Hardware Center
everything is possible



Blonde
Jessica Dragonetti
Digital Drawing, Procreate

Permission Not To Remember
Grace McCaughey
Photoshop collage



The Unordered Home

Nephtalie Marceant

The Landlord is coming for inspection.
It's time to fix the cracks found deep in the foundation formed
by blows of "I hate you" boxing matches
Which turned into boxes of matches,
Lighting uncontrollable fires
to altars of resentment,
like a family of arsonists,
leaving ashes of mold to build up in your lungs,
with a smell under your breath
that's too strong to ignore anymore
like that beeping pattern of the smoke alarm
warning you to rise up and change the batteries.
You're so used to that sound in your home
that it became the melody of your family.
But can you hear that music beating loudly
on the drums of your daughter's ears,
drowning out the voices that are telling her
to end her lease on life?
You also need to arise and pray.
Don't rely on the home insurance prayers
hidden deep underneath your grandmother's mattress.
There's more to be done
to keep the house from collapsing.
It's time to send eviction notices to the wicked tenants
that have overstayed their welcome.
For the Landlord is coming, and
He's coming for inspection.

Tribute to a Memory

Maritza Rivera

When first they broke the news,
I was changed in so many ways.
You left me just one big bruise,
Upset and losing track of days.

Not the first to leave me,
But definitely the least expected.
This ending I failed to foresee,
But my entire world was affected.

As I've moved along my life's road
Perhaps it seemed I'd forgotten you.
Rest assured I'm just in survival mode,
Hiding emotions so as not to get too blue.

Time kept on doing its thing,
And one year became fifteen.
Life more joys and sorrows did bring,
So much I wish you could have seen.

Bittersweet are the memories I hold.
Too early Death took you away.
In silence, in private, I let the pain unfold.
With one tear, then two, I honor you this day.

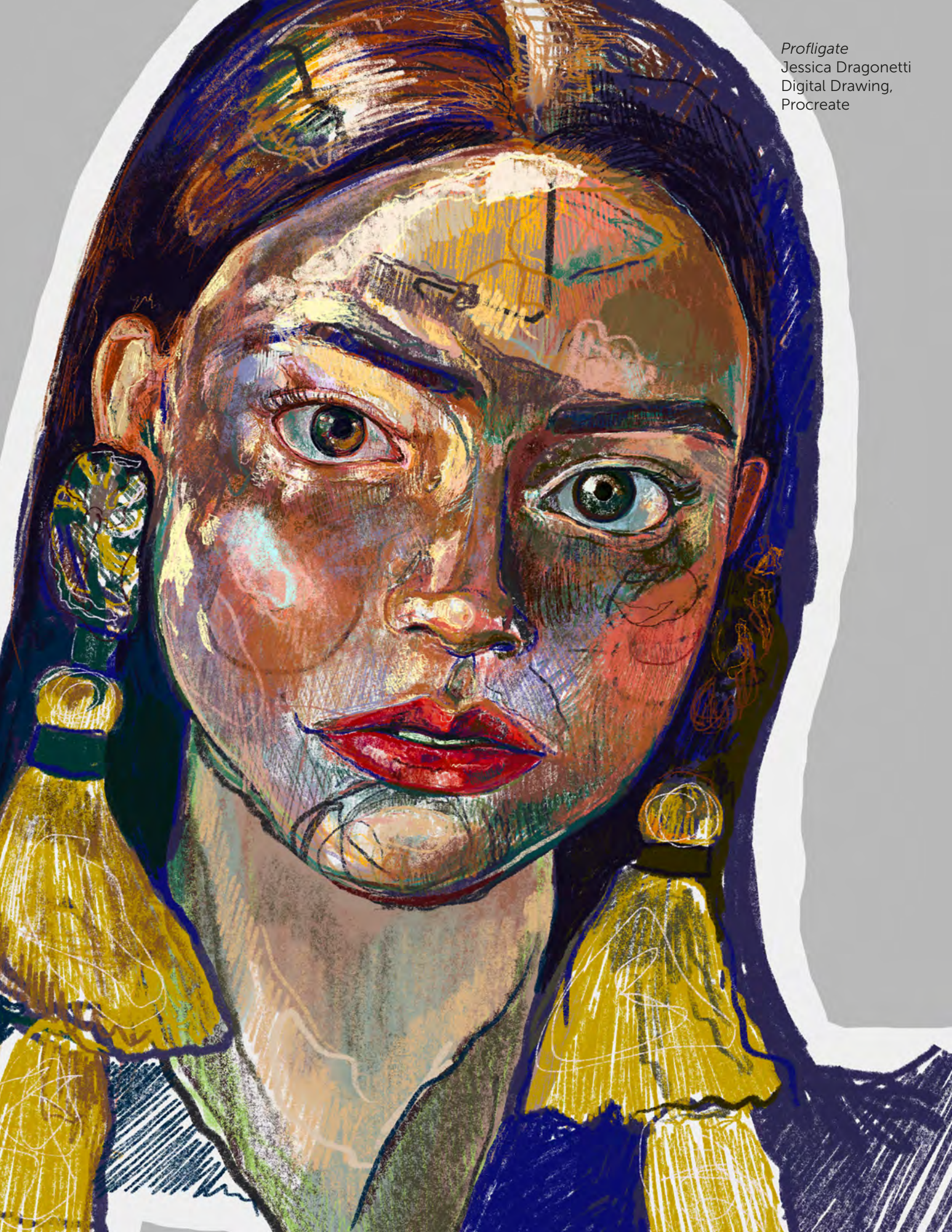


Rainy Daze - City Hall
Amanda Rose Farese
Photography

Analgesia
Jessica Dragonetti
Digital Drawing, Procreate



Profligate
Jessica Dragonetti
Digital Drawing,
Procreate



Monster

Talia Higgins

Sometimes

I'm a monster

Not the prickly, armored type

That slashes with long talons

But the mushy, slimy type

Picking away exoskeleton until a slug oozes out

Thick scaly skin means you can't be poked

My monster is as vulnerable to the elements

As an egg yolk without its whites

Exposed

Raw

Scratch at me, I'll bleed poison

It doesn't take much to break the eggshell

I didn't get the blue plate for dinner

Suddenly it's on the floor in pieces

Slipped right through my liquid hands

Noises like a drill through the soft spot of my skull

Where everyone else's became solid

I melt through the sewer grate

With the sound of a wounded gazelle

I'm not one for dramatics

But thrashing on the floor

Blows against the hard surface

Rattling my gelatinous form

Nails and screws stabbing my flesh

Solidifies me

Soon

Breath aligning with

The echoes of hardwood

I'm a girl again



PentaPaw
Lindsey Kuhl
Painting



Clearwater
Elizabeth Upton
Oil on canvas

Like I Was Your Mother

Hamd Mahmood

"I don't want you to give me the drugs before my meeting, I won't think straight, so just get out of here and come back after the meeting."

Black sponge, white sponge, vacuum, and tubes placed on the ground.

"Hey, so we still need to change the vac, if that's okay with you"

Medicine injected. Black sponge, white sponge, vacuum, and tubes moved to the table.

"Why does it matter. I'm going to die anyway. I don't want this anymore."

Daughters at bedside. Medicine injected. Black sponge, white sponge, vacuum, and tubes carefully unwrapped.

"You are alive now. You are talking to us. You are even getting mad at us. We just want you to be comfortable. We can talk about anything you want, what was your favorite snack growing up?"

.
.
.

Conversations had. Hands held. Daughters at bedside. Medicine injected. Black sponge, white sponge, vacuum, and tubes cut to size.

"Even as I was so mean to me earlier, you are still doing this for me. You treated me as if I was your own mother."

Tears flowed. Hands held. Daughters at bedside. Black sponge, white sponge, vacuum, and tubes placed one last time.



Symphony of Lanterns
Fatima Rizvi
Photography

Reflection
Sydney Kornbleuth
Mixed media



A Study of Texture
Connor Crutchfield
Oil on canvas





Night Meets Day
Annie Ho
Photography

City Strawberries

Nancy Dinh

For the majority of my childhood
My heart belonged to my hometown, a small town,
A strawberry nestled between grapevines and oil

To paint you a picture,
We had the cows and the county fair
We had the oil fields and the collared workers
We had that one wrong turn from pavement to dirt
That stretched into acres of scarlet strawberries
We breathed life from nothing

Then city swept me away
First school, then opportunities, then career
This was the only way, people would say
Escape! others cheered
I willingly drifted. I adapted
Planted roots and a life here out of nothing
And given the choice, I would do it again

But now, when these feet stroll familiar roads
On their biannual pilgrimage,
Past the farms and the oil,
From the pavement to the dirt,
My heart still longs for the strawberry fields
As my tongue tastes the melodies of what-if's

But even if I could go back
I wouldn't belong. Not anymore

I've more than adapted, I've changed
Tonight, I drive back to the city.

Death By Immortality

Sonali Persaud

Our days are fleeting, whisked away by clock hands
We seem to rush to nightfall

Tightly, the child's little fingers squeeze mine
Within the hospice, where life and death entwine

Tireless, hopeful, quickly stepping
I reach the quiet lab where

Sounds of shakers, whirring centrifuges
Fill the air with muted symphony

I must be ever so scrupulous
To handle these cells with immense care

Although, they do seem immortal in nature
Bringing humans closer to the close

I spoke with the child about a tumor
She asked if it would die

How shall I explain?
Their rapidly dividing nature?

How do I convey?
This indiscriminate affliction?

Ever in my mind, I ponder the paradoxical quandary
Of how these mutant cells achieve a feat we so desire

My father calls, he is asking if I have yet discovered
The elixir for immortality

Yet it is not immortality in human form I seek,
But to tame the maladies that mortality bespeaks.



Cashel Light
Conor Dougherty
Photography

Imposter

MaryElena Sumerau

Your cheeks flush when you see your classmates grimace at the photos up on those enormous projector screens. You tune out the professor as he preaches about how excruciating the condition is, how his patients can't sleep, can't shower, can't wear clothing without insufferable pain. You don't need to hear it, because you already know. You don't flinch at those bare bodies and their disfiguring lesions blown up for everyone to see, because the scars from the same angry splotches hide just beneath your scrubs. You've watched enough people grimace at your naked skin – doctors, friends, sweethearts, your own reflection in the mirror – and the recoiling never gets any easier. You feel it again as the professor points to one side of the board while announcing that everyone sitting in that lecture hall should have this lab result, while declaring that every patient with that disease would have values on the opposite side of the board. The lines are drawn in those neat tables and lecture slides – patients over there, doctors over here. You feel like a white coat-clad imposter. What would they do if they found out your blood belonged on the side of the board outlined in an angry red highlight? If they saw your name in the top corner of the scan? If the scars peeked out from your sleeve a bit too far? Would you lose the expertise and honor of your little white coat? Lose validity in the eyes of your peers and patients?

Patients – that's why we're here as medical practitioners. Patients are the ones we had to interact with enough to convince a board of Jefferson admissions representatives that we each deserved a spot in these lecture halls, that we loved patients enough to study them and diagnose them and treat them and support them for the rest of our lives. Now patients are everywhere – seated on the edge of the exam table, perched as a string of numbers in the top corner of CT scans, in the HIPPA-compliant initials presented in each mock case and practice question. Patients stay nicely on their side of that exam table, that imaging report, that lecture slide. Medical students and doctors are the ones on the other side. They are the ones in the white coats, the ones who are trained to read those scans and make the diagnoses, the ones who know the answers to the questions so they counsel those patients on the best treatments. They are the ones memorizing diseases by turning them into mnemonics and color-coded tables, made real only by the memories of what we see from the outside in the clinics. But what if you are both a med student and a patient?

You run through the structures in your head as you unzip the body bag in the cadaver lab, eager to see the incredible anatomy before you. You hope and pray the standing pre-lab lecture will be short this time, or at least that there may be a stool nearby. You hope the crackers you gobbled on the way here are enough, and that the capsules you downed will do their job today. All it would take is a foreboding feeling across your forehead or a twinge in the wrong joint, and you could end up in bed all afternoon instead of learning alongside your friends. Worse, you could end up on the floor. You chuckle to yourself as you realize the body you worry about most in a hall of cadavers is your own.

You stare at the same quarterly blood work you've been getting for years through a different gaze now. When you first agreed to the medication, the possible side effects the doctors disclosed were drowned under the roar of your pain. You would've traded anything to be able to walk, to run, to sleep, to laugh again, so you agreed to the drug and its regular monitoring without a second thought. A few blocks

of medical school later, and now you know better. You see the lab values not as numbers on a report, but as what you know them to be checking for. More cancers than you care to know. Silent infections ready to rear their ugly heads at any point. Your head hangs in relief as you scan through to the final line – you're in the clear until next time.

Your eyes roll back for the umpteenth time as the irksome hold music blares through the phone, blinking back frustrated tears as you spend another hour on the phone to coordinate your life-saving medication. The mail-order pharmacy needed multiple forms re-sent; the specialist's office ordered the more expensive 30-day supply by accident; the copay assistance program ran out and requires a new registration; the insurance company demands that you pay the medication's exorbitant cost upfront, and your body needs you to figure it all out before your next dose is due in three days. Plus you'll have to rush home from your clinical rotation to pick up the precious medicine, get it in the fridge, and scurry back to the hospital before you get scornful looks from your attending. You've become a master at navigating healthcare hoops out of necessity, knowing it never eases up just for an exam or assessment week. You have become an expert in advocating for your health. You've learned that if you don't, the consequences are for you and you alone.

You sit with the words on the tip of your tongue, rapidly running through the possible pros and cons in your mind. The same people who once praised you as a symbol of strength later labeled you a burden. Your condition has made you the empathetic expert, but it has also made you the butt of too many jokes, the recipient of too many resentful sighs and eye rolls. You know what it feels like to be gently celebrated just as much as it is to be resentfully tolerated by others. Should you share? What would this new friend, new class, new partner, new professor do with this major piece of yourself? Once you send it out there, it can never be reeled back in.

So when the nervous first-year student sat on your couch and spilled out worries alongside tears, you listened. I'm so grateful for whatever force of faith or fate brought us two together as two chronically ill medical students, because you walked me through it. You detailed each step I'd need to handle the beast that is applying for accommodations in medicine. You advised me which faculty to turn to in times of need, and which I might be better off avoiding. You reassured me that my experience in medical school and beyond would be different because of chronic illness, but that my conditions would never make me any less than my peers. You encouraged my confidence, my resilience, my sensitivity, my gentleness for myself, telling me that I'd need all of it. You reassured me with a hug that you just got it, and that you'd be here as a friend the whole time. I learned over time that there were more students like you and me here all along. I watched their faces light up when I told them about my experiences, telling me they understood without saying a thing. I felt their eyes shine in relief after sharing about their own complicated stories of medicine and illness. It made it a little less lonely to know there were other people who felt like us out there in the lecture halls, the labs, the libraries, and beyond. I hope we can one day heal that feeling of being white-coated imposters as a community, turning instead to celebrate the precious experience of simultaneously walking the paths of patient and physician.

Shutters

Grace Eddy

Unfamiliar with concentration
or contentment,
he was a young man
walking on tenth street,
which was covered only
by snow or dirt or needles
at this time of year
in the city he lived in.

Each time he turned a sidewalk corner,
the wind opposed him
and he shuddered,
wondering when it would end.
He dragged his feet until reaching respite
in a coffee shop
with white shutters on the windows.

He sat at the counter
and ordered a cinnamon roll,
which was exceptionally good.
And the espresso.
The barista had a calm kindness
and a natural likability to her
that lightened the room
like string lights
underneath the shutters outside.

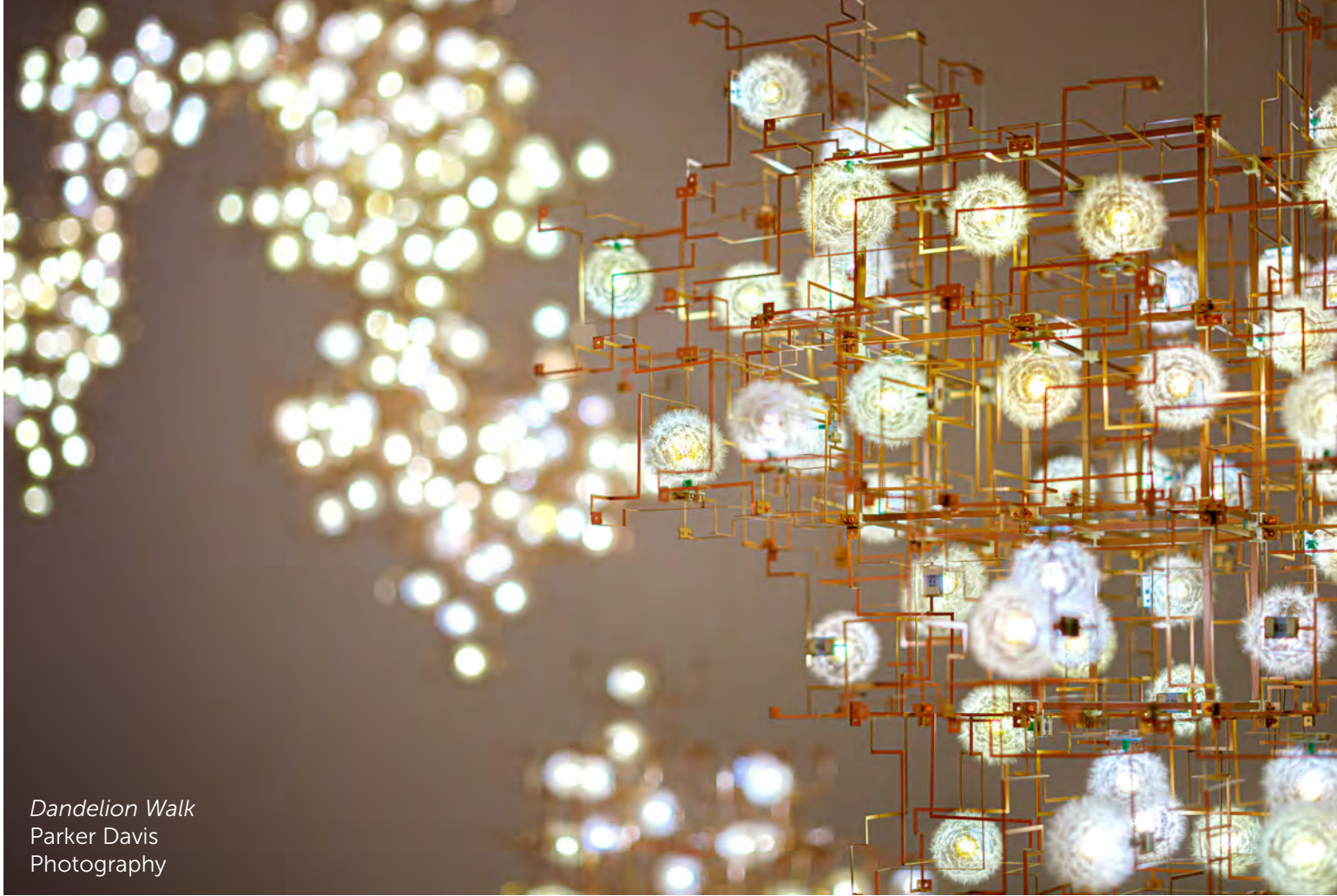
A dog in the shop barked and
smiled with its tongue out,
as if to say hello.

A baby behind him laughed and
cooed with excitement as if learning
how to make noise
for the first time.

The clock spun and the coffee shop began to close
and the man didn't want to leave.
In his chest, he felt the peculiar feeling that everything
he perceived
had a beauty of its own and
nothing hurt
and it never would again.

He thought, "I will just stay here."
But the young man stood up and
emerged from the coffee shop.
Walking away from the white shutters,
he watched the
other people on the streets of his city
frown and
shudder and
resist the cold winter wind.

They had not noticed the
beauty.
And the man could do nothing else
but shrug his shoulders
and walk down tenth street
and listen to the sound of the
cars roll by, the sound of the
dirt and snow and needles
under his shoes.



Dandelion Walk
Parker Davis
Photography

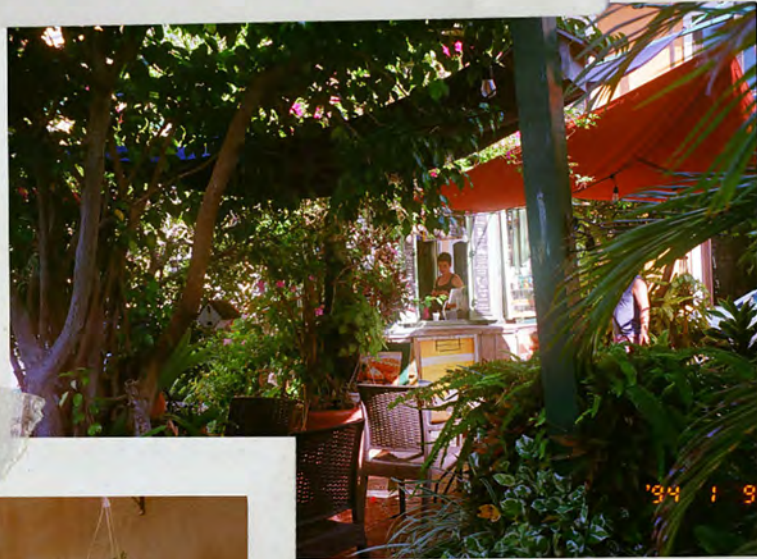


Halfway to Hell
Michael Keough
Photography

WARMING
ECHOES



Warming Echoes (1)
Abneil Alicea-Paunto
35mm Film Photography



Te recuerdo,
y las imágenes en mi cerebro
como tatuaje llenan el espacio
que nos separa.

I remember you,
and the images in my brain
like tattoos fill the emptiness
that separates us.



Rest
Makala Wang
Photography

There's a Stranger in My House

Nancy Dinh

There's a Stranger in my house
We've known each other for thirty-five years
And we both want to be free

He wasn't always a stranger
Five years ago, I once welcomed him with open arms
I feed and cloth him just as he once did for me
His medicine filled my cabinets
And as his body and his mind retreated
kept fighting. We kept fighting

Though his hands trembled and his feet dragged
And his eyes glazed at my name
Though he was no longer the strong, capable man
I once knew
I still cared for him because I loved him, the past him
And I will for the rest of his life

But I want out
He wants out
Nobody thought it would last this long
Yet duty and love lured us back in
Keeping us marching to a war we will never win
Desperately, reluctantly, and tired

My friend, there's a Stranger in my house
And sometimes I call him Dad

Dissection 7: Heart and Pericardium

Allison Chang

Lift the anterior chest wall. Identify the transversus thoracis muscle.

my partner unzips the blue canvas bag
by now I have grown used to the sight of your skin
marbled and pale, wrinkled in formaldehyde
stiff between my fingers as I fold open your chest

Dissect the mediastinal structures with the heart in situ

the first time I saw you I was numb
frozen like your hands, slightly curled
we observed your face and then covered it with a cloth
afterwards I went home and cried
the enormity of your life suddenly palpable

Even-Numbered tables will continue with Step 10: Removal of the Heart.

an instructor stops by
"Here, cut all the way across," she commands
the blade is met with great resistance
it takes several tries to free your heart
but then I am lifting it up and out into the air
cradling its strange mass between my hands

Identify the coronary arteries and cardiac veins.

your heart is heavy and solid
assured in its sacred role in life
there is a moment of awe, reverence
and I try not to think too hard about
what this heart has been through

so we clean out the blood clots
identify the valves, the chambers, the heart strings
grounded by the textbook reference pictures
returning to the safety
of scientific purposes

Identify the internal features of the heart.

finally we are finished
nestle your heart back into your chest
fold you closed and zip up your bag

as I exit the lab
the sting of formaldehyde eases
its burn in my eyes



Heart Strings
Amanda Rose Farese
Acrylic on canvas



Emo Night
John Curran
Photography





5:35 PM
Victoria Anderson
Photography

Diner Hymn

Blake Weil

Praise the squat little diner
Consecrate me in runny yolks and crown me in rosemary
Wash my sins away in the burning hot sauce, reborn orange fresh
Lay my troubles in the waiter's cheeky grin as he pours coffee number four
Turn my love to the squeaking speakers, or
Turn my thoughts heavenward to whatever podcast was waiting
Resting in this temple of chrome and crystal
I cleanse myself in the homemade jam and find
In this slowly dying land
Proof of the divine

Paint Sketch
Supriya Chouta
Acrylic on canvas



Asante Sana, Kilimanjaro
Annie Ho
Photography



The Nourisher
Sanskriti Dave
Graphite on paper



Chasing Sunsets

Katharyn Kemether

I find it curious,
Every time that I see
Someone rushing to catch
The sunset at the end of the day.

As if they haven't just
Neglected the rays of the sun,
And the breeze that remolds the clouds,
And the colors of the sky, all day.

Why now,
do you rush to catch
the sunset's orange, and pink,
And goodbye blush?

Squeezing out the last ray of sun
Like one grips an orange
Straining for just one last drop
Of thick golden juice.

Do you not value
the midday blue?
Or the way the sun ducks
in and out of the clouds

Making rays peek through,
like a mother does
When she plays peekaboo
with her baby.

What if this act says more about us,
Then it does the hue of the sky.
Is it that you forget about the world
All day when you're inside?

Rushing with desire to catch
The sunset blush and inspiring us
To run away from our responsibilities
As the sun says goodnight to us.

Why should we get to take in
The sky, when the sun is
At its most beautiful? But hide
Away from its rays every hour before.

To finally give the heavens
the attention that is deserved
Only when the sun is saying goodbye
What gave us the nerve?



Family
Chilton Chun
Photography



Fête des Tuileries
Julia Baran
Photography

To Grandfather:

Allison Chang

I still remember days in the summer blaze
splashing you with shimmering drops
while you tugged on my pool noodle
your laughter sonorous and gleeful
iridescent in the sunlight

those days we ate Breyer's by the half gallon
shelled pistachios while watching Chinese soap
operas
piling their salty husks in a glass bowl

these days there is no more swimming
my grandmother's words constantly
submerged in an undertone of alarm

in the wave after wave of appointments,
surgeries, hospitalizations,
finally - a light at the end of the tunnel -

and when I visit after many months
I realize I do not recall the last time
I had heard such joy in your voice.

The Olive Tree

Ayra Khan

The olive tree at
the bottom of the hill
was always and always
sturdy, unrelenting.

When I was
a child, friends would
climb its large branches, but I-
I would fashion wreaths
from the weaker ones
they would leave behind

My mother scolded me for
taking the lovely branches but
she would smile and
cherish every last
fallen leaf.

Fallen leaf.
Fallen leaves
surrounded the tree
Never before had it looked
so sickly.

The night before
it all came down
I sneaked out to grab the
fragrant branches, bare and old
I carved a string of beads.

The next day, a branch dropped
Without being cut
The last attempt
at peace

But they took it down.
Despite the fury of
the entire town.

It took weeks to remove
the stubborn tree.
Whirring chainsaws
Heavy trucks

The heavy trunk
they used to climb
was shaved to nothing

And the branches I
would steal
from the pile
as they yelled
broke so easily
crumbling
in my hands

But even now
while years have passed
Its stump still remains alive
along with my beads
that have never lost their scent

I carry them in a box
I'm careful not to show,
and my mother and I still treasure them
in remembrance

Friend
Connor Crutchfield
Watercolor



Waterfall Tree
Madison Woods
Acrylic painting





The Scrub Cap

Patricia Hayes

There is a beauty to the operating room.

Silver tools that glisten, lined in a row

Black thread and needles, to suture those below

Blue robes that enshroud, the people and tables

Beige gloves that ensure, the sterility of people

The OR is halted, in all its stark wonder

By a tiny piece of fabric, worn tightly by its wearer

The scrub cap covered, in its beautiful designs

Fiercely defies, the landscape of silver outside

Colors and mascots, funny jokes and cute puns

Holiday greetings for the season, furry friends with long tongues

Each one is different, as its wearers are too

Silently telling the patient, "its okay we're human too"

Frieda

Talia Higgins

I'm obsessed with my curly hair
Frieda in "Peanuts" obsessed
While most accept lovers
Caressing cascading clumps of curls
I'll break away from a kiss paired with
A well-intentioned grasp at my ringlets
I'd rather he appreciate the amount of time put in
Getting each one to lay just so
Put me in a case like a China doll
View my porcelain skin and brushstrokes of burnt umber
From afar
Growing up I was all frizz
I'd find things in my hair
Dandruff in the form of glitter and bits of Elmer's glue
Face a shade of scarlet
Upon hearing the phrase "Bird's nest"
I've since learned to give each curl
The love it has long deserved
At night
I carefully place each section
Into a bonnet
Each ringlet unique
A love letter to my ancestry
Keeping it safe while I sleep
A reminder that where there is tomorrow
I will be beautiful



Mayan Olorife

Photo Study 1
Mayanjesu Olorife
Charcoal on paper

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