

# LUX

undergraduate creative review

vol.16 | 2019



Front cover artwork, *Anger* by Dallas Rogers

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# LUX

**undergraduate creative review**

**vol.16 | 2019**

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to those who have helped bring this magazine to life, and for the continued support we've received over the years to ensure *Lux*'s success. It's astonishing to know that we've entered our sixteenth year! We've had a strong fifteen years under our belt, and I hope to see this continuation for years to come. As Editor-in-Chief, I hope to continue paving the vision that *Lux* was founded on: highlighting the artistic merit of all our peers, whether you consider yourself an artist or not, and creating a safe space for expression and experimentation.

*Lux* has undergone a few changes in the last few years, but one thing has stayed the same: our fervent desire to showcase the talent of our undergraduate classmates here at Arizona State. *Lux* is a conglomeration of different perspectives, ideals, and voices. We are not bound by one idea, by one voice. We are a theme-less creative review, but I find that this is our greatest strength. *Lux* is a heterogenous mixture, where nothing is the same. We value diversity, originality, and passion. And the pieces that we've curated for this year's issue definitely showcase that.

Given our current global pandemic, we hope to bring you a little peace of mind during these trying times. We know that the power of art and literature is strong, and we hope that we can provide some solace and inspiration for you to get by--no matter how small. We hope you can enjoy and appreciate the contents of this year's volume, just as we have.

*Aprovecho,*

*Anabí Herrera*  
Editor-in-Chief

# MISSION STATEMENT

*Lux* encourages the emerging talent of undergraduate students by providing a creative outlet for their literary, artistic, and musical work. The review is produced annually with the help of Barrett, The Honors College at Arizona State University. *Lux* accepts fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, visual art, song lyrics, screenplays, music, film, and other modes of expression beyond the bounds of traditional genres. We value originality, individuality, artistry, diversity and passion.

# SUBMISSION CRITERIA

Submission guidelines can be found on our website at:  
[luxcreativereview.wixsite.com/digitalmag](http://luxcreativereview.wixsite.com/digitalmag).

Contact the editors at [luxcreativereview@gmail.com](mailto:luxcreativereview@gmail.com).  
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# AWARDS

## FICTION

This year's winner of the Jane Shaw Jacobs prize for fiction award goes to "River Bend" by Chris Clements. *Lux* thanks Dr. Mark Jacobs, Vice Provost and Dean of Barrett, The Honors College, for honoring the winning submission.

## POETRY

This year's poetry award goes to "Reptile House" by Andrea Nicole Vidales. *Lux* thanks Barrett, The Honors College, for honoring the winning submission.

## NONFICTION

This year's nonfiction award goes to "The Sea at Inishmaan" by Rachel Hagerman. *Lux* thanks Barrett, The Honors College, for honoring the winning submission.

## ART

This year's art award goes to "Clowning Around" by Rachel Kennedy. *Lux* thanks Barrett, The Honors College, for honoring the winning submission.

## FILM

This year's film award goes to "Arizona Room" by Rachel Kennedy. *Lux* thanks Barrett, The Honors College, for honoring the winning submission.

## MUSIC

This year's music award goes to "The Spaceman" by Paraíso Drive (composed of Nathan Tesman + Adrian Galan). *Lux* thanks Barrett, The Honors College, for honoring the winning submission.

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# REPTILE HOUSE

ANDREA NICOLE VIDALES

*For Jeff—*

*because maybe in another life, Flagstaff with you, would have been nice.*

My lover asked his bearded dragons not to tell on us and their pebble eyes crossed like a promise. Pinkies meant blood, at seventeen, and pressed palms meant fire, like oranges do. When wiped clean of motor oil and cigarettes, he pleaded, with a Dr. Pepper mouth, for me to let him inside, and when he locked his bare chest, and my first, behind an Aerosmith poster, the weight of a self-conscious girl was lifted above my head, and any innocence still piercing through was unhooked at my back and tossed onto the floor. And through a sliver of crinkled blinds, my left eye caught the tortoise in the backyard, sitting in its plastic pool, while a snake's tongue unbuttoned my jeans. Before this boy, I was a white feeder mouse. As July ends, I succumb to drive-in theaters and archery bows. But he cracks knuckles, believes his fluid dreams, says a love like ours, tastes like nickel, and not ripe fruit— paranoia, even then was his favorite flavor. But promises are not porphyria, I say. Instead, suck on the blackberry seed stuck in my teeth, not on the doubt blisters blooming on your arms. I promise you black claws, thick blood, fluorescent beams— this is the summer you explore the territory of me. I'll let my scent tell stories of campfires and northern freight trains, while static from the fleece terrain cause my hips, the match, to strike against your doubt, as a sweet cherry bursts in your cheek.

# MY HEAD IS FULL OF DISHWATER

ANDREA NICOLE VIDALES

I.

I found the plastic groom in the freezer today. His little rose chipped my tooth and his body

scraped against my gums. I chewed him and bled over my husband's favorite things—

his cold breakfast, his coke plates, his poured-out Patron, our dirty water.

II.

We rinsed off Sunday morning together. I unclogged the drain and trained his shaky hands to

reach down deep and pull out arms of dead flowers and soiled wedding cake.

There, in our kitchen, our toes sunk into the hardwood floor, or sand, like I had hoped for,

while waves of dishwater crashed into us.

III.

I swallowed my fears in a charcoal Ford pickup and vomited our marriage into its front seat.

And before I headed toward the sunflowers, I stopped and covered myself with caterpillars.

On the way to Kansas, my tires wrote entries on black cake and the box of orange peels I

had next to me, began to rot— rot like my husband's cracked mouth hanging from my neck.

Teeth and tongue and cancer followed me.

IV.

I sped through the bright field and sprouted from the truck like a weed. I stole the tallest

flower and rubbed its stigma on my breasts and wiped my husband's dead skin and milky

sweat off with August petals.

For lunch, I plucked another flower and ate it, like a wild woman should eat  
the man

she doesn't want to fuck or touch or need anymore.

And at midnight, when a hazy vacancy lured me down the road, I drew a  
bath full of

blackberries and spiced red wine and shook out the cocaine he hid in my hair.

V.

I felt like myself only after I returned to the desert to burn. There, I removed  
the brick from the brake and watched his truck roll down the cliff like I had  
once, down our stairs, after he said the drinking wasn't his fault.

# RIVER BEND

CHRIS CLEMENTS

I stand on a boulder in a river.

The current runs fast and foamy on either side of me, but my gaze lies upward, upriver. The sun has finally set, I think, falling past the horizon unseen behind a pigeon-gray carpet of clouds.

I am shivering.

Behind me's Pa. The arc of his fishing rod whistles gently over his shoulder. Gravel crunches under his feet as he takes a quarter turn toward the bank to take a sidearm cast.

'You always want to cast sidearm in tight spaces,' Pa would tell me. 'Overhand casting's strictly for your oceans, your tidal inlets, your lakes.'

I am wearing a pair of JCPenney jeans; a hole has been worn into the cotton at each knee. My black top is frayed and my hair has been tied in a ponytail. I did not bring my beige hoodie.

And around us, crowding the horizon as twilight drags on, is the forest.

You've got your cattails, your boxelders.

'For fuck's sake, Nellie, quit fuckin' around and bring the other bait,' Pa says, hunching over his fishing pole to fiddle with something.

He's a squat, red-faced man who wears mud-stained boots and high white socks. His wheezing breath is turning silently to fog in the autumnal Arizona air.

You've got your sycamores, your willows.

I look at Pa and his wet-caterpillar mustache and realize I forgot to bring the extra bait. We'd been in a rush to, in the words of my father, 'fly the fuck outta Cottonwood.' I had been searching in my dresser for my beige hoodie instead of rummaging through the shed to find what he asked for.

I hop from rock to rock across the river to the other side, imagining myself as graceful and sublime. That grace ends, of course, the minute my Converse press into the reality of riverbank mud.

‘I don’t know where it is,’ I say after a while.

‘You don’t know where it is? How you don’t know where it is?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘Shit, either it here or it ain’t. Did you bring it like I told you, or not?’

I’m silent. A mosquito buzzes loudly in my ear as my face turns a mottled pink and white.

‘Christ, if you ain’t just like your mama was,’ he says, shaking his head. ‘You know she was dumber than all hell, too.’

‘Don’t talk about her like that,’ I say as my voice cracks open. ‘You know it’s not my fault.’

‘Uh-huh. And how you figure that?’

‘You were rushin’ me out of the house—you know you were.’

‘What I know is, I told you to do something and you ain’t done it. Now we way the hell out here, no bait, and I’m playing wet nurse to a child who can’t remember jack shit. That’s what I know.’

A nighthawk flies past us overhead, a black shape silhouetted against the low clouds. Pa’s face has gone all still and sad; his eyes are cold with fury, but they’re lost in something.

‘See, you really are just like mama was,’ he says. ‘It ain’t enough for her not to be around no more. That ain’t enough. I mean, are you really that stupid?’

He lets the question hang in the air, bait on a hook, perhaps expecting my confirmation.

But I don’t answer him. I turn and walk away, my fists clenched so tightly my nails have bitten into skin. Against my wishes, tears trace warm paths down the side of my cheek.

I walk a little farther downstream and sit on the gravel near the bank. The river here is a smooth blue velvet, its current moving more in theory than in reality. We’re at the point in the evening when the air actually smells cold.

My legs are folded up against my chest, my arms locked securely around them. In the distance echoes the clanging and whumping of Pa

packing up the fishing gear, cursing all the while. *Motherfucker* echoes over to me. *Dumbass bitch*.

His jibes mix and mingle with the evening birdsong. Perhaps that's what they're saying, too, those birds. Maybe something in their calls gets lost in our translations—some vital component—and they change from slander to symphony.

The frozen November air stings my skin and sharpens my senses. It's nightfall now. Though it's shrouded by a grove of sycamores, the yellow light of our lantern is growing slowly brighter as Pa turns it on.

I drive us home underneath the stars. The sky is thick with them, all bright and scattered. Pa is slumped over in the passenger seat, watching me drive and taking the occasional swig of whiskey from his calfskin flask. We drive in silence, for the most part, me still fuming and him still drinking.

'Cut around this shithead,' Pa orders, meaning the semi-truck that's directly ahead on the highway.

'Fine.'

'And don't drive so slow.'

'I ain't.'

'You arguing with me?'

'No.'

'Better not be.'

He pauses after this ultimatum to pivot sharply, asking me if I like driving the Buick on day trips like this.

'It's fine,' I say, glancing sideways at him.

'I bet your friends' parents don't let them drive they cars. Or skip high school, neither.'

'I guess.'

'My daddy let me drive his car.' I can hear the weight of the grain alcohol in his voice. 'It was a Chrysler. That's it. It was this real fuck-ugly thing. This beat-up station wagon from, like, '69 or '68. Used to make this rattle noise.'

'How old were you? When you drove it?'

This sets him to pondering. In front of us, the open road stretches out like the tongue of some great gray lizard. Rising and winding, writhing. We're very close to Camp Verde now, because the "Love Jesus" billboard just passed by on our right. Jesus' right hand is raised and open, like he's waving at us, and his eyes seem to latch on and follow as we pass him. What does he think of the two of us?

'Twelve,' he finally says, and burps. 'Twelve-years-old. We had a piece of driftwood for me to set on so I could see.'

'Driftwood,' I repeat, smiling.

'You know,' Pa says suddenly, 'I guess you a pretty fine driver. All things considered.'

I don't reply; I don't know what to say to that. When I look over at him again, his eyes are closed and his big mustached mouth is open.

On the ground, near my feet, there's a black cassette Pa has of Mahler's 5th Symphony in C-sharp Minor. Mama used to play that cassette on our household stereo all the time. Reaching down with one hand on the wheel, I grab it, put it in the console and press play. I know Pa won't be bothered by it.

The I-17 is beginning its ascent through the Black Hills. Our car is blanketed by the formless void of the mountain range at night—but even so, the golden twinkle of Camp Verde remains upon my rearview mirror. It's funny how drive-by shitholes gleam like Spanish bullion from a distance. You've got to get up real close to them before you can understand what it really is you're dealing with.

My mind tends to wander when I drive. I'm thinking now about two months back, right after Mama died, when I had a dream I couldn't make heads nor tails of.

I dreamt I was standing near a group of people outside our old house in the suburbs, on the street corner near that broken elm tree. They were in a circle, these people, all looking in on something I couldn't quite see.

In the dream, it was twilight, and the air was cool and fragrant like right after a monsoon rain, and the sun was obscured by a passing cloud, but it wasn't cold. I remember I didn't feel sad about being there so much as numb, like from cold river water. The crowd was made up of mostly faceless

people—just dark shapes leering over at me in their dark clothes. Some were crying.

Pa was also there, standing next to me in that dream. I remember that because he cried harder than anyone. After a while I moved away from him and closer to the center of the circle.

I could see that what we were huddled around was Mama's coffin. It was open.

Her eyes had closed for the last time, and she wasn't smiling or frowning. Someone had laid her violin next to her in the coffin, near her arm. She looked deep in thought. In the dream, I turned from the coffin, crowd, and Pa to walk away. The group of mourners had grown by then; people were streaming past me, all of them headed to pay their respects, seeming to come from everywhere and nowhere all at once.

When I reached the edge of the crowd is when I noticed her.

I didn't know what to make of it at first. I could see Mama wasn't dead after all—she was standing there, smiling slightly and looking more alive than I'd seen her look in years. I don't think anybody around us recognized her except for me. Her eyes were gleaming bright, like embers in a campfire that'd only just gone out. She didn't speak to me, nor I to her. There wasn't anything to say.

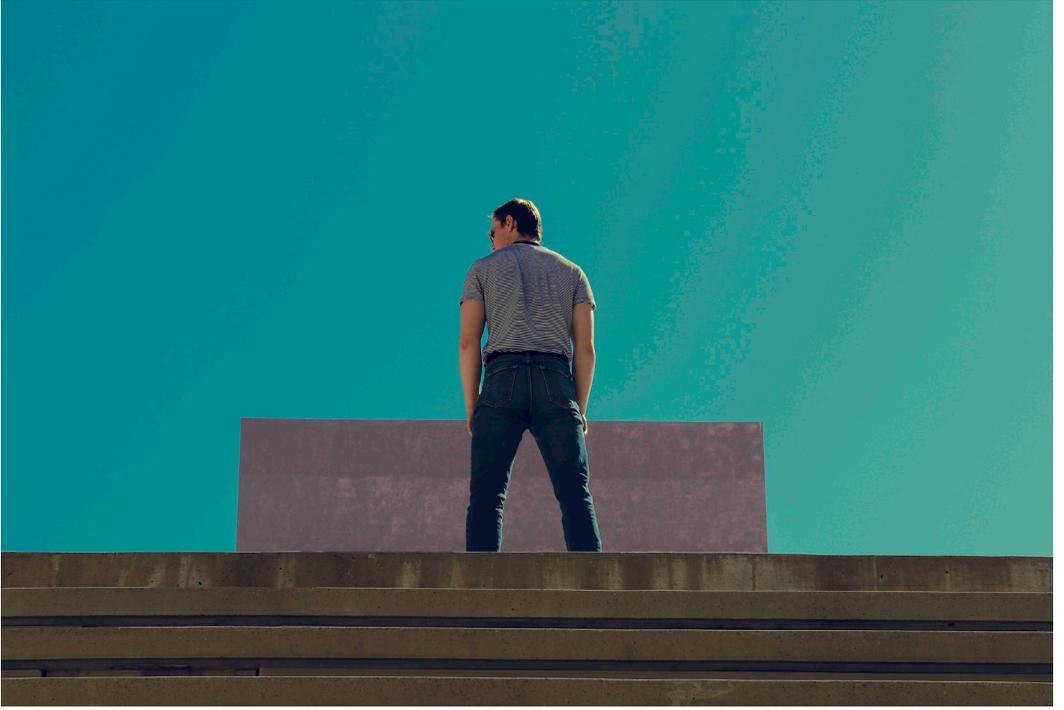
I've been thinking about that dream a lot lately. I'm glad I have it. Sometimes dreams are all we have.

The cassette playing in the car has reached Mahler's Adagietto, a movement I like to think was written in the crucible of some brutal German night and under heavy emotional duress. The strings crescendo and decrescendo gently, tinged with an edge of hissing static.

I chance a few glances over at Pa as I drive on into the blackness of the mountains. Just barely, I think I can see his gaping mouth close, and the corners of those lipless cheeks lift into what I guess you could call a smile.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: ANNA DALESIO

Each of these photos has been an emotional landmark for myself in the last year. The use of different places, people, and stories make each of them unique from the other. I walk around with a camera at all times in case a perfect moment appears. I find there to be beauty everywhere, even in mud puddles. On a dull day in Half Moon Bay, I found a cream colored house while aimlessly walking. Something about the house drew me in. I could not bring myself to leave without a photo and making it my own. A common color story throughout my work is pink and blue. The combination of the two evokes nostalgia in me, even in places I'd never been to. It creates a sense of harmony and tranquility in places that lack such emotions. These colors are not found in nature, so I create them. I edit my photos to tell this story. It takes several hours to produce one photo because I tend to every detail. While my subject matter may differ, the story behind each of them does not.



*Untitled*, digital photography



*Untitled*, digital photography



*Untitled*, digital photography



*Untitled*, digital photography



*Untitled*, digital photography



*Untitled*, digital photography

# ADRIFT

JONATHAN FIGUEROA

Shaun glanced at the clock again. The snow was falling harder than ever, but he needed to make it home. His delayed flight and lost baggage had cost him almost six hours, and his father was expecting him; since his mom died, his father had little else to look forward too. Shaun stepped on the gas and leaned forward in his seat; the heater was struggling to keep up with the cold, already most of the windshield was obscured with thick ice. Snowflakes whipped by like stars in an endless universe as Shaun struggled to find his course through an ever-shrinking porthole.

Compulsively, Shaun looked toward the clock again, but just in that moment, the back end came loose. Shaun could feel it graze a patch of ice, and then swing out to the left where it collided with a drift of snow. A bitter taste filled the back of his mouth—he was twelve years old being tested for strep throat—and there in the headlights was a deer. His eyes were shut, or else the world had ended; only the rending of its foundations remained. Shaun felt himself thrown over, again and again. Blades of glass and plastic and steel scraped across his face and arms. A numbness took over his body, and he remembered no more.

Shaun's mind exploded back into consciousness, and he wrenched his eyes open. He was hanging sideways by his seatbelt, the shredded material straining against his weight. Like a discarded grocery bag, the now crumpled air bag waved in the wind as snow steadily filled the cabin through the missing windshield. The engine was dead, buried amid a ruined heap of its own carcass, and no heat was blowing from the vents. Already, the cold was biting greedily at Shaun's exposed face and arms. Countless scratches and cuts fought painfully for his attention. Blood dripped along his forehead, down into his ear.

Shaun's heart was racing, he had spent his childhood here and knew

what the cold could do to a man. Understanding he had no choice, he reached for the release of his seatbelt and let himself fall gingerly against the side of the car. Carefully, he climbed through the open windshield, each handful of snow like a hot coal, and forced his way into the night.

How far from the road he was he had no way to know, but he made his way as best he could along the scattering of flesh his car had left behind. He trudged on for ten minutes, muttering prayers upon frozen breath. His bare arms and face burned fiercely at first but passed slowly into numbness. A little way ahead, he could see a turn-off from the highway: his only hope. He had little time. Each breath came shallower than the last, and Shaun felt an unnatural sleepiness spreading across his body. A gentle will urged him to lay quietly upon the snow.

Shaun stumbled and fell. It felt almost peaceful there in the snow. No longer did it burn and gnaw at his body—it welcomed him as a familiar bed after a long day's journey. Something inside his brain roused him, reminding him that only death would find him if he stayed in the snow. Shaking beyond control, he forced his arms deep into the snow and pushed his body up. Suddenly, there appeared before him a large wooden house. He stared at it, hardly believing his eyes.

Shaun tried to call out for help, but his lungs were struggling so hard for breath that none could be spared. Slowly, he brought himself to his knees and then to his feet. He stumbled forward; arms wrapped vainly about himself, he knew he could make it.

At last, he reached a set of wooden steps protected from the storm from a sweeping overhang. He followed them onto a small porch set with a heavy oak door.

Shaun collapsed into the door, pounding his fists against it with all his remaining effort. He thought that he could hear a voice from the other side, but it was lost in the din he was creating. Every second was agony and finally his strength gave out. No longer able to beat upon the door, he collapsed upon it in defeat.

As his eyes closed, he noticed as for the first time a large window beside the door. A fierce surging of power welled inside him, strengthening him, drawing him to his feet. In a last act of desperation, he threw his body

against the glass. With a crash and a shower of glass, he fell through and into the house. Shaun felt the warmth engulf him, but his body convulsed violently. When it stopped, he laid exhausted on the floor for a long time as the burning heat of tears clawed down his frostbitten face.

At long last, he felt some of his strength return and pushed himself up on his knees. It was still quite dark, but the room gleamed with the pale light of an unseen moon. He found himself in a large sitting room, carefully decorated with delicate furniture. Before him there was a large brick fireplace blackened with soot, its mantle thick with dust and grime. Heavy curtains hung quietly on a thick iron rod over the window he had broken. Although the storm outside continued, not even the slightest breath of wind whispered into the house. Steadily, Shaun noticed the warmth of the room begin to press against his face, stale and fetid.

Shaun heard the voice again, behind him and distant.

“Please help me,” Shaun called out, “I’m not a burglar.”

Shaun stood up slowly and turned. At the far end of the room he could see a plain wooden door. He was certain now that there was a voice murmuring just on the other side, but it sounded as though it were underwater, whispering secrets not meant for him. The door grew larger with every step.

“Hello?”

There was no response, but the voice continued its steady stream, ebbing and flowing in some imperceptible tongue.

“Please, I’ve been in an accident,” Shaun said to the voice. “I didn’t mean to break the window, but I was going to freeze out there.” Shaun stopped just before the door. “I just need to use the phone. My father needs to pick me up—he can bring money for the window. Please, I’m not dangerous.”

Shaun put his hand on the cold brass handle of the door. The voice stopped abruptly and the silence pressed on him from all sides. The room was getting hotter, but Shaun was shivering again, fighting with a sudden urge to spit. He was salivating at an alarming rate and he could taste bile in the bitter flood. At last he twisted the handle and wrenched open the door.

A rush of cool air met him as he stood at the open door, peering into the next room. It was not difficult to see that the owner of the voice was not

here. It was quite empty; its only decoration was a card table coupled with a collapsible chair. The walls and floors were bare concrete, with no windows or lamps, yet the room glimmered with the same sickly light of the sitting room. Shaun moved slowly toward the chair and sank into it, helpless and exhausted, resisting the urge to slouch upon the table and shut his eyes.

Shaun gazed lazily toward the sitting room, but with a stabbing shock he discovered that the plain wooden door had vanished. There now stood an intricately crafted door of heavy wood. Shaun sprang up and stumbled toward the door, his mind reeling, an anchor dropping in his stomach. He was overcome by a sudden fear and hovered before the door in trepidation for a long time.

Steeling himself, he slowly and soundlessly pulled the door open, revealing the top of a steep staircase. Far below, he could see a faint light, as from a candle or fireplace. A sweet smell drifted up from below, reminding him at once of his mother's baking and his father's aftershave. Each breath was carried up to him upon a warm breeze, washing him with memory after memory. A smile flitted across his lips and his foot hung heavily above the top step.

"No."

Shaun froze. The voice had come from beside him, or, the more he thought, it had come from inside him. Suddenly, the sweet scent started to change. Beneath its charm, he could now smell something dank and putrid. The warm breath transformed into a scorching belch of hot air, stinging his eyes and choking him. Shaun stumbled back from the stair and slammed the door shut.

Now, just beside it, another door appeared, identical in its carving, yet older, and more beautiful. It had no handle, but even as Shaun moved towards it, it swung slowly inward. Shaun was no longer afraid; he stood at threshold of the door and found himself looking up a vast staircase, fading into the distant gloom. The voice was back, somewhere beyond, the voice that had saved him from descent. Shaun began to climb, tired as ever, but gradually he felt a subtle sensation of weightlessness.

At last, the stair ended at a small flat before a delicately carved wooden archway. The voice was gone, but Shaun was certain that its owner

was just through the passage. He proceeded cautiously with bated breath.

He crossed into a small bedroom—one he knew very well. Once more, a pale light filled the room, but unlike the pallid gleam below, here it shimmered as moonlight upon the ocean, bathing the room in beautiful light. The walls were obscured, every inch covered in framed photographs. Some huge, some the size of matchboxes, they all showed images from Shaun's life.

Here he was riding his first bike. Here he was accepting a little league trophy. Here he was graduating high school. He stopped before a picture of him and his father sitting on the couch watching television, the remnants of a forgotten joke resting upon their faces. Everywhere he looked, he greedily drank in each memory. The photographs went on and on forever, disappearing into darkness far above.

“It's time, Shaun.” He knew the voice now.

He was weak. At last, Shaun withdrew his gaze from the photographs and found that he was standing before a small bed, turned down and welcoming. Shaun was unthinkably tired, but rest was coming. With one last look around the room, his whole life before his eyes, he sank into the soft embrace of the bed.

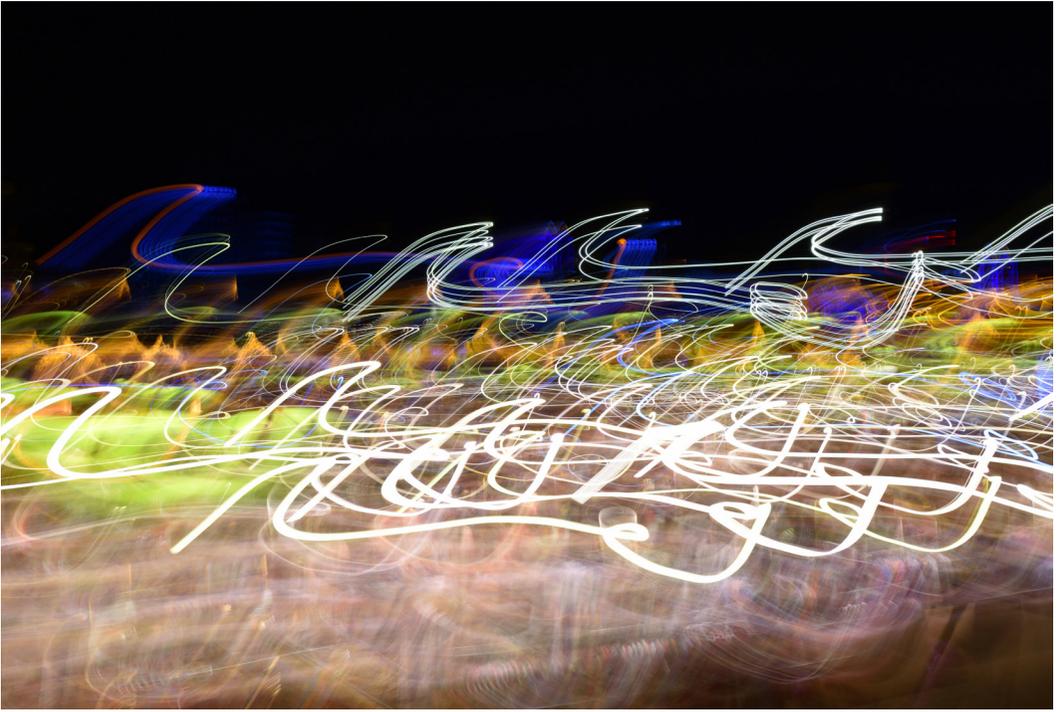
Shaun lay still and looked up into the darkness. Snow was falling around him again; he could feel the gentle flakes gently kissing his face and arms. Already, a thick blanket covered his legs and body. He could feel a warm trickling on his cheeks again, but he was not afraid—he could hear his mother's voice.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: LUCY SONG

Photography grounds me. As a college student juggling never-ending piles of responsibilities, it is difficult not to become swept away with the fast-paced lifestyle. It's soothing to retreat from the bustling city into nature, but oftentimes I still find myself mentally preoccupied thinking of my next homework assignment or research objective. Thus, the act of being surrounded by nature doesn't always help me temporarily detach from the outside world. One of the most magical elements of photography is its ability to capture swift, fleeting moments to last for a lifetime. To tap into this, I need to be fully aware of my surroundings to ensure I do not miss crucial moments. Thus, photography encourages me to live in the moment. "Daydreams" was taken last November when it had suddenly snowed in the Superstition Mountains. Although I was swamped with homework, I knew I had to capture the rare snowy scenery.

I often combine photography with my love for hiking. On any occasion, half of my hiking backpack is filled with camera equipment. As a nature photographer, I want to share the beauty I see in our desert landscape with others, and hopefully change their perspective on the stereotypically "barren" scenery and encourage them to enjoy the outdoors more often. Although it can be hard work to hike up to 10-15 miles in the heat, the destination is its own reward. There's something so captivating about having the chance to gaze up into the celestial heavens and spot constellations and the Milky Way Galaxy. Accordingly, I consider stargazing a bucket list item that isn't necessarily hard to achieve; it only requires a few hours' drive outside the city. My photos "Emboss" and "Sparks Fly" were both taken near Flagstaff, where the Milky Way could be seen with the naked eye.

I also love exploring other genres, such as the more abstract light-painting technique shown in the photo "Waves". In my work, I want to demonstrate that seemingly simple subjects, such as the night street in the background of "Waves", can be transformed into so much more—if given the chance.



*Waves*, July. 2018; digital photography



*Emboss, May. 2019; digital photography*



*Sparks Fly*, May. 2019; digital photography



*Daydreams*, Nov. 2019; digital photography

# LIFE OF A ROSE

PAIGE SAVORY

I was once beautiful with my delicate crimson skin.  
I swayed in the wind, the cool breeze determining my path.  
I had a few thorns on my side to protect me from deceit,  
But one day, the thorns didn't work.  
A pair of callused hands took me by the throat.  
Days passed.  
Each day, my skin wrinkled.  
Each day, the cardinal turned bronze.  
Each day, parts of me fell to the ground that had once held me tight.  
I looked into the eyes of the human whose hands held my fate,  
And watched as they threw me away.

# ARTIST'S STATEMENT: DANIEL GROSSMAN

## "HOLLOW NIGHT"

My name's Daniel and I'm a sophomore in Barrett studying Psychology and Neuroscience. Although I'm not learning about the arts, I believe they are the perfect medium for presenting the complexities of human behavior. Art is a vessel for experience, and I'm fascinated by its ability to unite people of all backgrounds into delving in the mind of the creator and themselves. In my art, I try to convey an interpretative mind-state that forces one to examine how others find meaning in the piece. It is my goal to use this induced empathy to foster greater emotional intelligence and tolerance among people, along with sparking creativity.



*Asa*, Nov. 2019; 35 mm



*Lonesome Dusk*, Nov. 2019; 35 mm



*Long Walk*, Nov. 2019; 35 mm





*Jerry's*, Nov. 2019; 35 mm



*Home, Nov. 2019; 35 mm*

# THOUGHTS ON BEING A MAN-HATER

GENEVIEVE WITTER

my wife has a tattoo

beneath her tits—little swords

with pointed tips:

FEMME

FATALE

all the boys she ever loved—

all the boys she thought she loved—

said, i'm sorry, when they stuck their swords

into flesh that wasn't her's

she calls them "thots" and "neckbeards," and says, "i

hate them," while i call them "men," and

"dicks just flapping

their gums”

she likes to hold my head

on her chest, and stroke my hair—i

want to be able to hold

her close— hold her

tight, but “i have twiggy arms”, i joke,

she says, it’s alright—i

don’t need to protect her from

the past—i’m more worried about

shadows that pass us— projectile glances,

swords pointed—the words:

“you just haven’t been with a real man.”

# PISCEZ

RUTHIE BEADLE

I am a pisces so I like being in a relationship

so much that I have never even had one.

But with my emotional imagination,

it almost feels like I've been in a hundred:

my teammate, the smart guy in my biology class,

my other teammate, Jordan from third grade,

Gale Hawthorne, Michael B. Jordan, Troy Bolton,

Zac Efron as Troy Bolton, that one dude jogging on the beach,

the dog walker, car wash man, goodwill retailer, etc.

The only real reason that nothing has come of anything

is because I am super flaky,

as I am water and I go with whatever I am feeling

at the moment. I also love being around water,

as it is my emotional spirit guide.

My delusional, shining inner self is a great writer,

just like the other great pisces,

so anything I write

will be gobbled up by the intellectuals and Twitter experts alike.

I wouldn't want to be like the other star signs,

because I am much more in touch with the realities of human life,

though I completely understand where everyone else is coming from.

I wish I could do more to help without crying over their troubles.

# ARTIST'S STATEMENT: DALLAS ROGERS

## “THE CREATIVE PROCESS OF AN UNCONFIDENT ARTIST”

This series of images depicts the emotions I faced during my most recent creative process. I've always struggled to overcome self-doubt, but now more than ever. I allowed one hateful comment about my art to evolve into a monstrous thought that infected my brain, causing me to question my artistic abilities.

Each image depicts an emotion felt during the rediscovery of my creative process: vulnerability, melancholy, self-doubt, sadness, reflectiveness, and anger: I felt vulnerable when presenting my art before my peers. After my art was displayed, melancholy began to cloud my thoughts after letting the negative comment get under my skin. Self-doubt, then, crept in. This doubt created a mental tug-of-war: I have always wanted to be successful as a photographer but I felt that I never would be, simply because I gave power to one person's comment. Naturally, I plunged into sadness. I soon reflected on when and where I had let go of my individuality and drive, and then I grew angry at how I let myself devolve rather than evolve as a creator.

This model perfectly embodied the character I wanted to portray: a young girl who dreams to prosper as a photographer, yet is torn down emotionally by her and other's voices. The model's petite stature and round face give this character a childish look, as desired. I wanted the dress to be oversized on her, symbolic of my feeling as a 'misfit' in the art world.

The harsh, golden hour lighting creates a sense of drama because the lighting accentuates the contrast between shadows and highlights. This lighting enhances the emotions depicted. Specifically, the shadow in the 'Anger' picture is longer and darker; knowing this, my intent was to position the shot so we see this other character casted on the wall behind my model. I used an 85 mm lens, allowing me to get a close up image of her to really capture her emotion. All this considered - the combination of lighting, composition, outfit choice, and model selection - this series accurately displays the emotions I felt during this most recent creative process.



*Anger*, digital photography

# OF THE DESERT

BENNETT SCOTT

I'm of the desert now

Sand and cacti

Burnt blue sky

See I'm supposed to be burning

With passion

Wrapped up in sunshine and someone else's arms

But I just can't seem to forget the snow

Like unique falling tears

Freezing a jagged horizon

Flakes and memories

Swirl around me, I want to catch them all

But the heat calls for me

Melting you away

A snowy memory for a rainy day

The pitter patter of falling drops and falling in love

No monsoons, those merciless things,

Just a slow rolling rain, kissing my cheek

Everything planted in the sanded dunes

Is bound to shrivel up, die in the summer sky

But the oak tree bends,

A sensual curve across the starry night

See this tastes like home, book shops and tea

But I can't seem to get the dust out

It coats my lungs and lips,

But my blood is still thin with the altitude

Pulsing through my heart

You speak that unspoken truth between us

In mountains wrapping around me

On those trails and paths

Trees holding me tight,

Whispering, my how they have grown,

I saw saplings sprout

But now firm woods stand, scraping skyward

They are mother nature, in her barky flesh

Whittled away by

Streams I once drank from

But I am of the desert now

Bound to thirst and sand and dust

Mountains crumbled into dunes

Blistering heat without a cool embrace

I am of the desert now

I want to put down my sand scarf

And breathe your clean air,

Climb those mountains

Explore the paths I never saw before

Find myself at home once more

But I am of the desert now

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: KYRA SALEY

Photography has the powerful ability to perpetuate a fleeting moment. My body of work consists of, but not limited to, portrait photography. I investigate the concept of a person's relationships with other individuals. Recently, I expanded to landscapes as subject matter due to the Arizona desert's underappreciation. Social structures are representations of human collaboration and the bridges between distances. Influences come from family culture and heritage, past encounters, and communication psychology. I become ambitious to answer these open-ended questions: How do relationships grow or break? What are the catalysts behind these relationships? What is my role when capturing these moments?

Capturing with color negative film brings authenticity and an honest message that digital sometimes can never preserve. Warm tones best represent Arizona's scorching temperature, but in a more soft and comforting way. I continue to be inspired by the meaningful connection between two people outside of the conventional norm. I challenge myself to empathize behind the camera and to encourage strengthening relationships in a symbolic and poetic tone.



*Sep. 2019, digital photography*



*Sep. 2019, digital photography*



*Oct. 2019, 35mm*

# GRIMM IS LOVE

TARA KRAFT

You might be thinking how cruel this decision is but trust me – it’s for the best. My reasons for keeping you away from fairytales is for your safety, your inner peace. I say this not because I feel that these stories are demeaning or teach young girls to be dependent on men, but because they paint such a skewed picture of what love is. Traditional stories all follow the same line: perfect damsel needs rescuing, perfect prince rescues the damsel, and both live a perfectly happy life of limitless sunshine and carefree days. Reality is immensely different though, my dear. The prince and princess are not perfect, they are not always even perfect for each other, though they may be close. But most importantly – love is not perfect. Here is where I hope to save you, if even just a few tears.

I grew up in a fairytale. Truly. My parents were – still are – the happiest couple you have ever met, straight out of a chapter book. My father worshipped the ground my mother walked on and all of us kids knew it. Evenings were filled with more laughter around the dinner table than anything else. On Sunday mornings, we would wake up and find mom and dad still curled up in bed together just talking and giggling together like they were still teenagers and had no responsibilities – nor obligations. Diligently, Dad called Mom every day at lunch and again on his way home, and kissed her as soon as he walked in the door. They were perfect in my eyes and in the eyes of my siblings.

It’s a dangerous combination. That happy life, my loving family coupled with tales of forever lasting love, selfless and adoring. I bought it though, soaked up every last drop of it and waited patiently for my prince to come. My fantasy unraveled slowly for the most part. Reality exposed itself gradually, introducing me to what really was in store for those who fall in love. The real trouble begins when you are about three months into seeing

someone. All the awkward newness has begun to wear off and you feel perfectly at home. Rose-tinted glasses distract you from aspects of his personality that drive you to the edge like the way he still speaks with his mouth full of food or throws his clothes beside the laundry basket. But right now, your partner is perfect; you have made him perfect. This is your prince come at last. Unfortunately, princes do not stay on imaginary white horses long and princesses – the creators of these illusions – are hardly blameless themselves.

My struggle with the “happily ever after” scenario is that we, independent and strong women, subconsciously continue to force our relationships, our partners, into a mold that was not created for us. I keep trying to cram myself into the beautiful picture my parents portrayed, but it doesn’t fit. That story isn’t mine; it isn’t ours. It belongs to no one besides my parents. Love is not perfect, nor does it give a clear pattern to follow. It’s a trail with endless uphill treks whose captivating views take your breath away, forcing you to stop and appreciate what is before you. So, you keep climbing even though around the corner, you know there’s another summit waiting. In between these peaks there will be valleys, and the time taken traversing through them may be filled with sunshine and laughter or it may be filled with trials. Be ready, please, for the valleys. They are lurking closer than evil Step-Mothers and envious witches to capture your heart and turn you against the world, against others. Castles and glass slippers may be unattainable, but companionship is not; friendship is not. Focus here, and let love come later.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: RACHEL KENNEDY

I've been drawing, painting, and creating for as long as I can remember. It's a way for me to keep sane and express my emotions physically. I often feel that what I create reveals to me hidden emotions and allows me to accept and release them in the most cathartic and pure way.

This piece is one that I did on a day that I was particularly emotionally frustrated. On these days, I can find stability through creation.

I have recently been interested in clown imagery. I enjoy the uncanny valley aspect of clowns in that they resemble humans but possess inhuman traits. Exaggerated expressions, colorful outfits, and creepy connotations make clowns an appealing subject to me.

My inspirations come from my life, as most art tends to. I prefer to draw human forms and faces because I can most efficiently portray emotions and states of mind. My work is frequently described as disturbing. This is not intentional on my part. If anything, I think that people are disturbed to see such raw and abstract portrayals of emotion.



*Clowning Around, 2020; acrylic on wood*

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: RACHEL KENNEDY "ARIZONA ROOM (2019)"

I directed this short film for a class at ASU. I am a film major and find that film is an interesting medium for emotional expression and dissemination. I had a very strong vision for this film and I am forever thankful to my cast and crew for carrying it out so well.

The film was planned for 3 months and shot over the course of two days. We went through about 15 popsicles, a small amount of fake blood, and several wardrobe changes. I tend to load my films with imagery and like to take time to associate color, place, and objects with emotions, characters, or time-periods within my films. I only want to improve when it comes to filmmaking, and this film taught me a lot. I was kind of nervous to show people at first, but I now embrace this film with all its flaws and quirks and am happy to share it. I think that the situation in the film is ambiguous but relatable. I hope everyone can relate to the feeling of losing a friend or lover and working to reclaim life alone.



*Synopsis by Valliappan Valliappan (Film Editor): After a breakup, a young woman yearningly reminisces in the happy, sunset days of a romantic relationship which is suggested to have been destructive for her partner.*

*Available on our website.*

# WINTERTIDE

ANDREA NAWROCKI

I'm with her  
Like pine trees are  
With the wind, chasing  
Through white to sit  
Through the seasons...  
And with a honey glow  
Dripping from the edge  
To her rose—  
She is the warmest thing  
December has set free.

She is snow before  
It paper things into frost,  
The ice before it sheds leaves;  
And with good tidings she brings  
The musky glitter of coffee  
Held hand over hearth.  
Just above the hand  
She left on my heart.

She rests in sweaters  
Of patchouli and sage,  
And like the cedar trees  
That bend their way back  
Through Autumn,  
She lasts without wilting.  
She's the knitting that ties

The knot in my stomach,  
The blanket that pulls it  
All together.

And should there be a moment  
That I can't feel her spirit,  
Maybe I'll just touch the sky.  
Come winter,  
They'll be the same,  
Anyways.

## ARTIST’S STATEMENT: RACHEL HAGERMAN

Rachel Hagerman is studying English (Writing, Rhetorics and Literacies) at Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University. She currently works as a freelance writer, teaching assistant, Superstition Review intern, and ASU Senior Writing Mentor. She is the founding editor of the ASU student-run book blog, The Spellbinding Shelf. In her creative work, Hagerman experiments with a variety of genres—including poetry, photography, fiction, and nonfiction—fitting her chosen genre to the topic, scene, or idea she wants to explore. She appreciates the joyful beauty in simplicity and hopes her musings and photography from Inishmaan remind readers to remain mindful in day-to-day interactions. Passionate about literature, she plans to pursue a career in publishing following graduation, helping produce books that inspire conversations and encourage a more loving, empathetic community.



*Inishmaan*, digital photography

# THE SEA AT INASHMAAN

RACHEL HAGERMAN

One windy road, wavy sea, and rocky hill later, we meet Maureen, Inishmaan's local historian.

"There are three Aran Islands, you see. Inisheer—that's the little one you passed on the ferry. Inishmaan—that's us. Inishmore—that's the large one to your left. See over there? Past Inishmore, there's nothing but water 'til your next stop: Boston," Maureen says, pointing toward the sea.

She waits with us on the side of a narrow road while the rest of the class comes up the green hill in a separate car. At age 77, Maureen stands about 5 foot 2 with short gray hair, although she prefers the term "silver-haired," she jokes. A light fleece jacket and sleeveless grey windbreaker shield her from the strong Aran winds, which whip my messy long hair into my face and envelop the side-chattering of my classmates.

Once the entire class has arrived at the top of the hill, Maureen turns around to lead us into the island's church, which stands at the center of Inishmaan. A hush falls over the class as we file into the pews and take in the building's detail. Intricate wood designs hold the roof above the supplicants' praying hands. A cloth decorated with stitched Irish language hangs over the wooden pulpit. Colorful light pours in through stained glass windows depicting the hallowed saints. She waits as we admire the artistry of the church before she begins to tell us about the building's construction.

"You see these floors here? Carpet! You know, years ago these used to be hardwood floors. Still are—under the carpet, I mean. I suppose they thought it would be nicer for the people."

She seems profoundly upset by this carpet, and it makes me wonder what the floors underneath look like. Would they match the patterned wood in the ceiling above? Maureen goes on to talk about the different parts of the church that the island residents built themselves—windows, walls,

everything was put together with care.

Maureen reflects on memories of the church and its community that cling to her mind like friendly viruses. Maureen laughs as she remembers the island's first barbecue. Many neighbors began installing toilets in their homes around the same time, and Maureen's father, outraged by the sudden changes, cried "The world's become backward! We're shitting inside and cooking outside! Yesterday, it was just the opposite!" She feigns embarrassment as she tells us about the first bicycle to enter Inishmann and how jealous she was of the child that had owned it. She weaves in and out of her memories like a skilled needle worker as she talks about the church, and it becomes obvious how much these colorfully lighted pews tie the island's history together. I suspect this is the reason Maureen decided to show us the church before we leave for a picnic at Dún Chonchúir.

Dún Chonchúir is a pre-Christian fort named after Conor, the brother of a mythical king who ruled over Inishmore from his own fort across the water. To get to Dún Chonchúir, you have to walk up a large grassy hill with a maze of walls made from balanced stones.

Before I tread up the hill, Maureen turns to me, and then to a peer next to me. "Are yeh happy?" She asks, and it catches me off guard. I answer yes, and so does my friend.

"Good!" she answers and turns around to talk to someone while the class heads up to the fort.

The ground is uneven with some incline, and I can hear many of my classmates getting short of breath towards the top. I'm surprised to turn around and see Maureen (who I thought was still caught in conversation at the bottom of the hill) not far behind us, scampering up to the fort like a young child.

The fort's grey rock walls are held together in a talented balancing act with gravity. In some seasons, the Aran islanders house cattle within this large fort to tame the meadowy grass that stubbornly sprouts up inside. The ancient walls looked strong and sturdy on the walk up the hill, so I'm surprised to find that no binding agent reinforces the structure. Thousands of

years after its inception, gravity continues to keep the fort standing.

While we munch on pre-made sandwiches and chips, Maureen says, “I wasn’t allowed to visit Dún Chonchúir when I was a child. Fairies lived here, you see. Well, or so my parents told me. ‘Don’t go up to Dún Chonchúir, Maureen! The fairies live there.’ All the children were told about the fairies. And the trick worked! Or, at least, it worked as long as it needed to. Kept us from climbing around and getting into trouble.”

An Iron Age fort filled with fairies. I like the sound of that and jot it down in my journal.

After finishing our picnic lunch, Maureen asks, “Now, do you want to climb the fort? The stone walls tops aren’t flat, but they’re sturdy. Been there for years.” At first, I think she might be joking, but she starts walking around the base of the fort and pointing out different points in the wall to step up and reach the top.

The view from Dún Chonchúir reveals miles upon miles of stone walls separating gardens and homes and pens for sheep and cattle. Everything looks so organized from up here. Organized and peaceful, blanketed in green.

The Aran winds are much stronger from the top of the fort, and I try not to think about how the wind is probably eroding away the three layers of concealer that are doing a pitiful job at hiding my dark circles. I laugh at my thoughts and decide this view is worth many a dark-circled sleepless night.

The next stop on our tour of Inishmaan is Synge’s Cottage, Teach Synge. But Maureen will explain that it’s not really Synge’s cottage at all. In fact, it’s Maureen’s grandparents’ cottage.

“Synge’s just a famous writer that happened to stay here in my grandparents’ cottage during the summer for his writing. This is not Synge’s cottage. It’s the cottage where Synge stayed,” she says, waving her hand side-to-side, shooing away the Irish sign that reads “Teach Synge.”

We enter the cottage to find warmth in the fireplace, old fishing nets peeking out from the upper loft, and an antique tea set hanging nicely in a decorative cupboard.

I can see Maureen’s excitement as she points out different elements of

her childhood home.

“This here’s where we’d hang our pampooties. You can see why? By the fire, they’d dry out and be ready for the next day,” she pointed.

And over there: “This is where the babies would sleep.”

And over here: “Here’s the loft with fishing supplies. When we were misbehaving, our parents would tell us we’d have to sleep up there with nothing to keep us company but the darkness. That was enough to change our behavior!”

She admires the tea set as she explains that the cups were only used when the priest would visit. Her eyes absorb the little painted details on the ceramic as she speaks.

Her face brightens as she tells her family’s Christmas traditions. “This chimney here? Before the eve of Christmas, our mother and all the kids would make sure the chimney was extra clean. We’d clean and whitewash for hours! And, come the night before Christmas, we’d leave the doors open—for Joseph and Mary to pass through—and go to bed early. Next morning, we would see that Santa had come! My father would get up in the middle of the night, you know, and stick his fingers in the soot, and make fingerprints down the chimney—to show how Santa had come down to leave gifts—and then he’d leave a trail of fingerprints going back up—to show how Santa had left. It was so so special to us that we wouldn’t clean off Santa’s fingerprints for two whole weeks after Christmas.”

Maureen sees each of us taking in the details of the electricity-free home. I suspect she reads my mind: I feel as if I have turned the clock backwards as I look at the well-worn house items.

She concludes, “It was a simple life. It was a happy life. And we survived.”

Next up on our adventure is Cathaoir Synge, or Synge’s Chair, which is where Synge is said to have written plays, such as his *Riders Out to Sea*.

Once again, Maureen corrects the sign on the stony chair that overlooked the North Atlantic Ocean.

“Synge’s Chair.” She translates for us. “This is not Synge’s chair. This

is a chair Synge sat in to write. The chair was here long before Synge was around. It was here before my parents. People used to sit here and—see Inishmore there?—watch the ocean. If there had been a storm or something, all the debris would come in this area right here between Inishmore and us. Sometimes they could salvage some of the debris for the island. Course, nowadays, that means we get the trash from the ocean in here. And plastic in our fish.” She pauses for a moment as if she wants to say something more but can’t find the right words.

Here, in this moment, the sea seems fragile and helpless. Easily destroyed. But it also has an air of power and mysticism to it all the same.

Maureen says, “When the boys would go out, my father would always say, ‘Remember, the sea is always watching.’ And it’s true. The sea is always watching. And dangerous too. We’ve lost people to the sea before.

“Do you know about the Aran stitches? The story goes that every mother has her own stitching pattern. And, if the island ever lost men at sea, when he floated up to shore over there,” she explained, pointing north, “people could see which pattern was used in his sweater and know his identity. All on account of his mother’s stitching.

“Course, the sea is good for us too. Did you know that not a single person died of hunger on Inishmaan during the Great Famine? We didn’t have to starve. We had the sea for our food. The fishing kept us safe from the blight.”

As she weaves together stories about the ocean, I look out over the green cliffside to its waters. The wind seems louder than the sea, and it’s difficult to imagine that this fragile, plastic-choked water saved the island from famine all while its more sinister, mythical side watched wandering children with dangerous eyes.

We make our last stop at a small shop near the center of the island. Maureen had insisted on buying each of us a lemonade or ice cream sandwich (ice burgers, Maureen called them).

I pick out a strawberry lemonade and sit outside with my peers while Maureen chats up the cashier in Irish. After my classmates and I talk for a bit,

there's a break in the conversation, and I listen to the island of Inishmaan. The wind muffles almost everything, but I can hear a few birds singing and a few ice burger wrappers crinkling.

I look around me at the island that once looked so tiny from the ferry. It's so green here, I think. The color overwhelms the grounds that the stone walls try to contain, and the sheep and cattle try to tame. It's a simple color. It's a happy color. And it thrives on this island.

Maureen walks outside the shop and sits at a bench near me. I'm still looking at all the green life the sea at Inishmaan embraces.

She asks me, "Are yeh happy?"

This time, I'm ready for the question.

I smile and nod.

# DYING STAR

ANDREA NAZARENO

I'll always  
Be behind

I will see your light the same way I see a star dying  
Eons after it happens  
But I'll revel in the sight  
Like it's happening right now

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: ZACHERY JAEGER

Zachery Jaeger is an undergraduate biology major at ASU that has a passion for art, specifically special effects makeup, digital illustration, and 3D digital environmental design. He has always wanted to create from a young age and wants to be able to combine science and art, reflected in his fantastical recreations of prehistoric creatures. He wants to show everyone the world from his point of view and strives to lift the veil that protects members of society from acknowledging their inner demons. He strives for attention to detail in all of his mediums, especially his work in video game design, which has garnered media attention from smaller video game coverage sites, such as DSOGaming.



*Demon, SFX makeup*



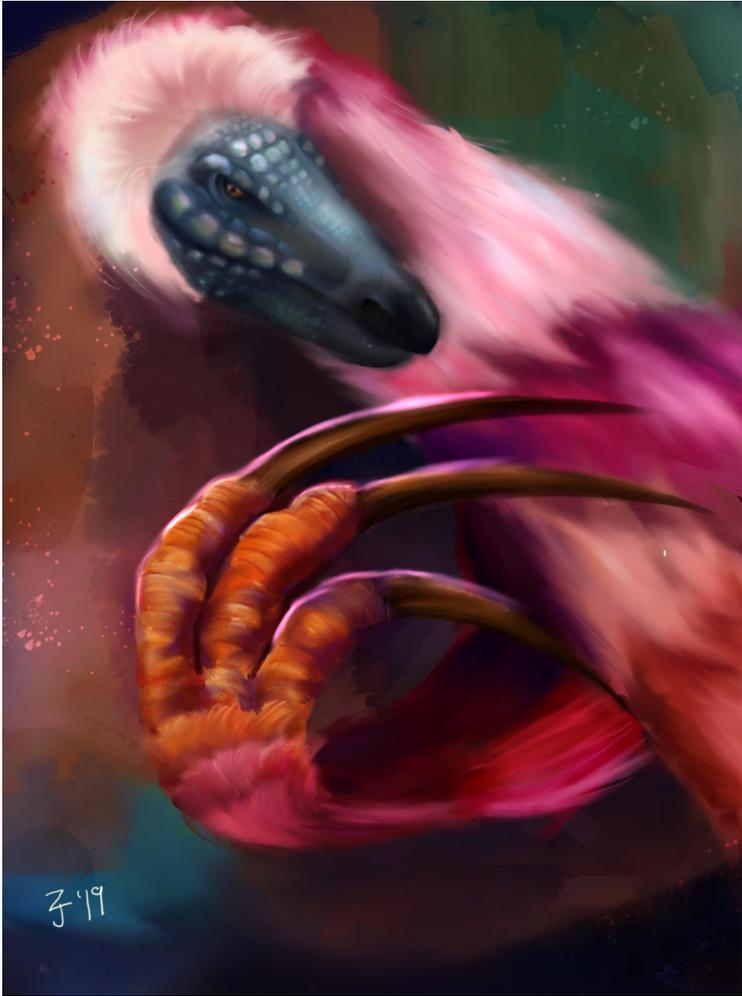
*Demon, SFX makeup*



*Arkham Asylum*, (Assets made in Blender, Textured in Substance Painter, and imported into Unreal Engine 4 for final renders)



*Arkham Asylum*, (Assets made in Blender, Textured in Substance Painter, and imported into Unreal Engine 4 for final renders)



*Therizinosaurus*, Autodesk Sketchbook

# ‘HEY YA’ BY OUTKAST PLAYS IN THE BACKGROUND

CHANDLER ARNDT

Nobody wants to hear the song  
and everybody dances.  
A room full of mouths turn to each other and the chorus

falls

from everyone’s tongue, A test of fidelity to the feeling  
of alone that kills.

Even I, the wallflower  
pressed  
into the  
snack table, know the lyrics before they invite me  
inside

The song never had lyrics  
before our hearts broke  
I don’t know how to stick  
together for long enough until the pictures are worth the  
memories  
We know we’re not happy here,  
and that’s okay for the night  
because we know the melody.  
This is the song everyone at the  
party dances to, even if only the

feet know the words.

Nobody wants to meet  
themselves in another face.

Nobody wants to hear the song.

But our heartbeats drain to the  
floor before the bottoms of our  
shoes turn cold.

We finally know what's cooler  
than being cool.

Everybody dances.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: KADEN DAWSON

Kaden Dawson was born in 1999 in Bisbee, a thriving creative community for artists and musicians. He has been interested in art for as long as he can remember. At an early age, he enjoyed fabricating works of art from recycled material. Currently he resides in Chandler and attends Arizona State University with a major in Management and a major in Marketing with an emphasis in Digital and Integrated Marketing Communications. He is the Brand Director for the Business of Fashion and a member of the American Marketing Association. He has worked in painting, drawing, watercolor, ceramics, and mixed media. Over the past seven years he has focused specifically on photography as his medium of choice for the expression of his creativity. He enjoys both digital and film photography, as well as experimenting with alternative printmaking. He took every photography class his high school had to offer, and was the president of the Chandler High Photography Club. He is an accomplished artist, and has received many honors and awards for his photography. His photography has appeared in numerous art galleries and exhibitions, and has frequently been published in digital and print magazines.



*Lavender Pit*, digital photography

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: NATHAN TESMAN

Paraíso Drive is a casual musical group open to collaboration with and incorporation of all artistic individuals and approaches whose discography has, thus far, been founded on the stylings of core members Nathan Tesman and Adrian Galan. Hoping to one day have an extensive discography, at present, Paraíso Drive is primarily focused on quality and making what they can afford to whenever they have the time. However, while new music is in the making, they look for every opportunity to share some of their past work.

Thus, the songs released with Lux Magazine are two of Paraíso Drive's tracks that have garnered less attention primarily due to the fact that, unlike some of their more developed songs found on Spotify and other platforms, "The Spaceman" and "The Supermarket" have yet to be completed or formally published. However, because these songs are on the more raw and obscure end of Paraíso Drive's musical stylings, it is most fitting to have them published through such an artistically diverse platform. Like their other songs, the tracks are inspired by progressive rock and draws from a multitude of other genres including jazz, psychedelia, and pop among others.

"The Spaceman" was recorded in a home studio with the intention of capturing themes of space and isolation both lyrically and through the use of synthesized piano and a saxophone with heavy reverb among other effects. Though the track is simple in nature, Paraíso Drive considers it to be their most poignant track in which less becomes more. "The Supermarket" in contrast, is a much more surreal and spontaneous piece that attempts to capture the spirit of commercialism and how it has coerced individuals to overindulge. While these songs are among the band's lesser known and more unpolished works, Paraíso Drive has deemed publicly displaying them a worthwhile means through which to present the pure, unadulterated styles and emotions found in the rest of their work and future projects.

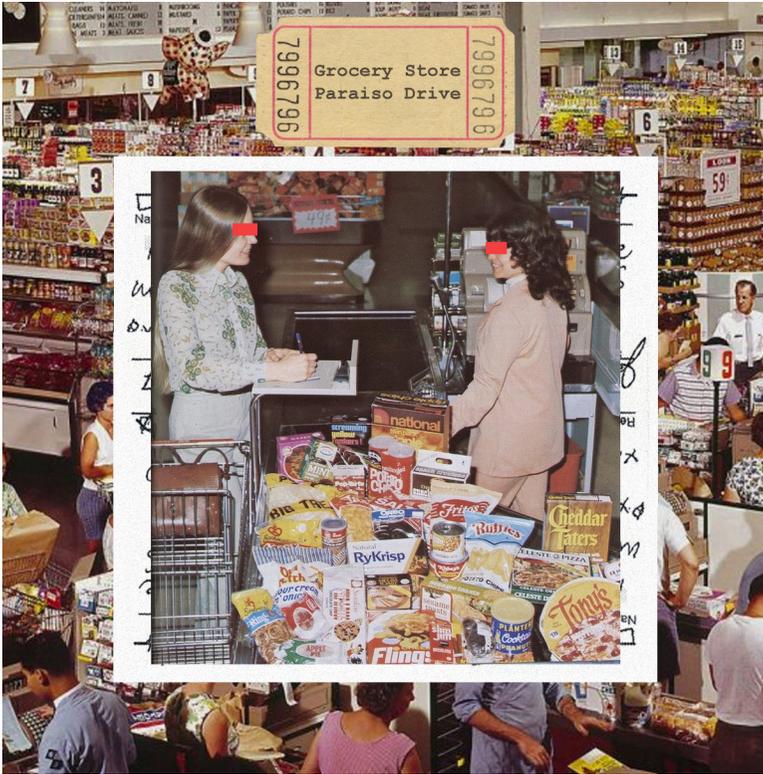


*Song: "The Spaceman"*

*By: Paraiso Drive (composed of Nathan Tesman + Adrian Galan)*

*Available on our website + Soundcloud: @luxcreativereview*

*Album cover by: Sebastian Vargas*



Song: "The Supermarket"

By: Paraiso Drive (composed of Nathan Tesman + Adrian Galan)

Available on our website + Soundcloud: @luxcreativereview

Album cover by: Sebastian Vargas

# THE RED BUS

PAIGE SHEETS

Raindrops were falling onto the puddles. When the drops hit, the water shook like Jell-O when you flick it. The traffic lights were reflecting on the puddles, and from where he stood on the curb at the corner of 50th & Duval, Isaac watched the lights so that, when they turned green, he and his Mom could cross the street, cut through the park, and go home. Isaac enjoyed walking through Audrey Park, in the last two weeks especially since the fair was in town, its bright red and yellow tents pitched just inside the gates, loud music and louder laughter rising high above the treetops and the fluttering flags, intermingled with the smell of fresh funnel cakes.

But the fair was closed down now because of the rain. The music was stilled, the lights, booths and games hidden away under faded and patched grey tarps that sagged under the weight of the falling rain. The only thing he could smell now was the reek of dank sewage coming from the nearby gutter, trapped low to the ground by the rain and the clouds. It was strange to Isaac to see something he knew should be one way look so different. It felt wrong. So wrong, in fact, that he didn't even want to go through the park. He'd asked back at Crowder's if they could ride the bus home, dreading the inevitable walk through the still, silent fair, but Mom had said she didn't have enough money and bit her bottom lip. When Isaac had protested that Dad got lots of money from his job, enough for tickets, his mother'd just stared straight ahead at the bologna on the grocery store shelf and frowned at it like it was her newest arch-nemesis.

"That's the same look she gives the back of Dad's head," Isaac thought with a little shiver. The look that caused the little line between her golden brows. She'd been cross since she'd picked him up from school. He'd noticed it the moment she took his hand, because, when she did, she squeezed it hard. Dad must've forgotten to give her money again—that was happening

a lot lately, almost as often as the tissue boxes needed to be replaced in the living room.

Mom was still squeezing his hand at the stoplight. She hadn't said much since the bologna aisle. She was still cross with him. He knew because the line was still there, on her forehead, like a pockmark in peerless pearl, but she'd bought the little bus from the checkout counter for him anyway. It was small and red, a wordless apology that fit in his hand, and it had numbers on the side like real buses: 3779. Together, that made twenty-six. Miss Waverley said Isaac was good at math, for a seven-year old. Mr. Thornton said he was good at deductive reasoning. And Mrs. Ellis said he had no impulse-control—but Isaac had laid her dear, sweet little Charlie out for calling Dad a castabout, so what else *would* she say? Anything to defend Charlie's dignity, probably; that kid'd gone down like a bowling pin and cried like a busted fire hydrant. Shameful. He'd tell Mom about that later, maybe after dinner... maybe before bed... maybe never. Dad didn't talk about his fights at work, so neither would he. A report card is just a little piece of paper, after all, and words are only ink. Mom didn't have time for that kind of thing anyway; not with everything else she already did. Doing Mrs. Bettison's laundry took up a lot of time, and so did all that knitting! Who knew knitting little sweaters the size of a girl's baby doll could take so much time? Besides, hearing someone talk that way about Dad would just make her cry. It always did. And Isaac hated to make her cry.

Isaac gazed down at the puddles beneath his shiny brown school shoes. The lights on the puddle were red, like his raincoat, like his bus.

"If I was a bus driver, I'd let you ride for free," he said, looking up at his Mom. She looked down at him, called back from wherever she'd been in her head, and smiled. It was that soft, sad smile he loved and hated to see all at once; the gentle curve of her rubied lips, the droop of her long lashes—a mingling of indescribable love and sorrow like that of the angels. She wasn't squeezing anymore and the line was gone.

"Can I carry the groceries since you've got the umbrella?" Isaac offered, reaching out his free hand. Mom shrugged and shook her head, causing her blonde curls to swing around her shoulders.

"It's alright, sweetness. Thanks. I'll manage fine by myself," she said

quietly. There was something in her eyes, something in her voice, that made her words drench Isaac's mind harder, more heavily, than any rainy torrent ever could. It was as if those words, those two, simple little words, had sealed the crypt, silenced the orchestra, broken the dam, closed the fair, and made everything he'd been knowing and ignoring, dreading and expecting, fighting against and praying for, finally clear in his mind. Dad was leaving. She was going to be "by myself" in every way. *By myself* at home, *by myself* away, a face without a mirror, a ring without a match, his mother, alone. "*By myself. By myself. By myself.*" Those words echoed in his head. They echoed in his heart. They echoed in the yawning abyss he felt in the place of his stomach: "*By myself. By myself. By myself.*"

The light turned green. Mom gave his hand a tug and stepped into the street. He followed her, but mechanically. How long had she known? Did she mean to let him know—did she know he knew? Isaac's head felt hot and his ears burned, but his body was cold and numb. His feet dragged like he was wearing cinderblocks instead of shoes. The little red bus in his hand felt like an icicle, freezing in his aching hand. Mom pulled him along.

"Pick up your feet, sweetheart. We have to get across before the light..." All of a sudden, Mom stopped. Her face became white; her eyes went wide and she gasped between her teeth. She jumped backwards, pulling Isaac with her, back onto the sidewalk. A flash of headlights and the shriek of battered brakes—a car went by, faster than fast, leaving two deep furrows through the water in the street where they'd just been, and splashing a wall of water towards where they stood, Mom claspng Isaac by the hand and shoulder, staring after the speeding car before it disappeared with a squeal around the next street corner. Mom released her breath, slowly, shakily.

"Are you alright?" she asked Isaac, looking down at him with glassy eyes. He nodded.

"Are you?" he whispered.

"Yeah," she said. "I can't believe what almost just happened," she said. She let go of Isaac's hand to fix the groceries hanging askew in the crook of her elbow. The bars of soap she'd bought to use on Mrs. Bettison's laundry threatened to fall from the bag. A tumble into the puddles would ruin them completely. Isaac reached out to hold the umbrella for Mom, and realized

with dismay that his hands were empty. His bus was gone! Overcome by sudden impulse, he broke away from Mom and ran to the curb just in time to see his bus in the water, bobbing on its way to the gutter.

He ran after it, but the current was too fast and the sidewalk too slick and his school shoes too smooth. He skidded and slipped, then fell and came down hard on his ribs. Something inside his chest cinched and snapped—pain like a spoke of ice, sharp and numbing all at once, pierced through his body, causing the breath to burst out of his lungs like a balloon popping in a waffle-maker. The little red bus was only carried further away until it was swept right onto the grate—but it didn't just go over the edge just then; that would have been too merciful. Instead, it teetered on the brink of the gutter, and, for a moment, Isaac thought that, if he just got back up fast enough, just reached out and took hold of his bus, he might yet save it.

He tried to push himself off the sidewalk, but the pain in his side riveted him to the spot while the rain kept gushing towards the gutter. He watched the raindrops crash into each other, sweep into crests and sloop into eddies, gaining size and momentum with every churning gyration. All the while during that long, long moment, the little red bus just idled on the edge of the grate, tilting back and forth, back and forth—steadily, like the sway of a rocking chair—until the water slammed into its side and knocked it over the edge of the gutter and into darkness.

It was gone. Rain from without and tears from within blurred Isaac's vision, slurring the world around him into throbbing shapes—bleeding colors. The rain was seeping into his clothes, but he didn't feel it; cars were honking around him and someone somewhere was again and again crying his name; he didn't hear it. He didn't realize his mother was with him, by his side in the street, lifting him in her arms and holding his soaked body to herself. She wasn't holding the groceries or the umbrella anymore, and she was wet. She gripped her son by the shoulders and sobbed into his cold neck and cheek.

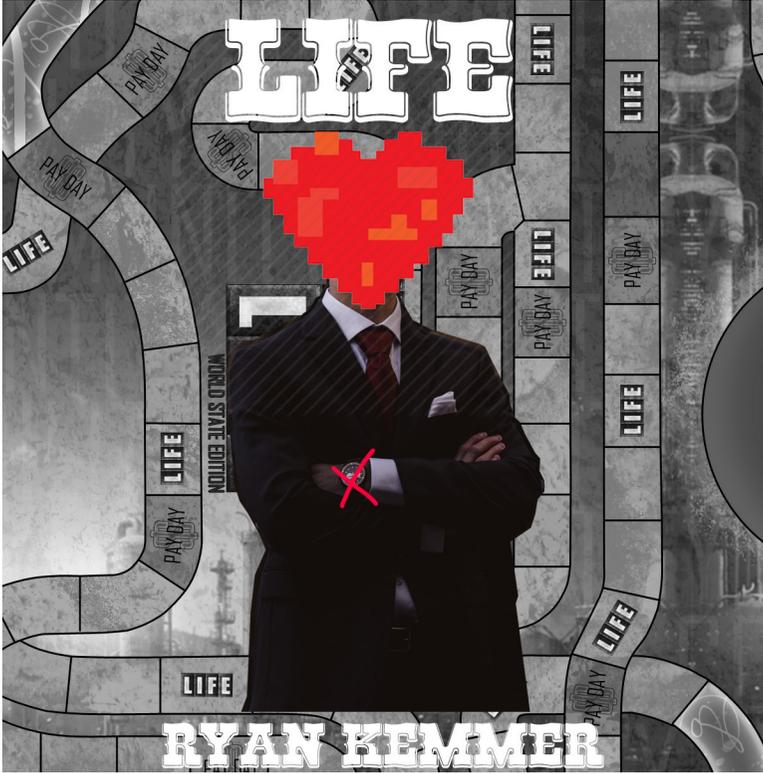
“What were you thinking, running into the street like that? Don't you know you might have been killed?”

Isaac didn't answer. He didn't cry. He didn't even feel the pain in his chest anymore. He just stared at the dirty, ugly, hungry gutter.

Mom took his hand, but she didn't squeeze it anymore. She didn't hold the umbrella up either. It was still raining, but they were both wet so there was no reason to. The umbrella point just dragged on the ground as they dripped and shivered and waited for the light to turn, red and green, red and green, looked upon but never seen, like the quiver in our smiles and the pain in our eyes. Mom looked up at the grey sky above that continues to rain and rain and rain on the righteous and the unrighteous and whispered: "It would have broken someday anyway."

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: RYAN KEMMER

Natural Flavors is a Tempe band composed of ASU students focused on making music that is raw and inspiring. Their mission is to create all natural musical experiences for their audience. The band was formed by singer/keyboardist Hunter Langenhorst, singer/percussionist Ryan Kemmer and singer/guitarist Sean Rollins during their sophomore year. Since its inception the band has added guitarist Andrew Lineweaver and bassist Josh Stovall. The band writes and records their own music and has played multiple shows around the valley showcasing their originals. All of their songs are completely recorded and produced DIY by the band themselves, which is important to maintaining their indie sound. This song, "Life" is about how important it is not to take life for granted, and to prioritize your piece of mind. The song was recorded by the band in the basement of the ASU music building.



*Song: "Life"*

*By: Ryan Kemmer (of Natural Flavors)*

*Available on our website + Soundcloud: @luxcreativereview*

*Album cover by: Sebastian Vargas*

# AMID IRANIAN PROTESTS (FROM A FATHER)

RYAN EGHLEMI

Wretched oil! How dare you must be  
the stemming bud of my misery  
I tend to my garden  
to relinquish this self  
till you grow and reach  
and vacant hands do meet

These hands, you see, cradled a mind  
who held claim in that amber of time  
A mosaic of faces laid beneath mine  
to sling a conscious merged with ghosts  
from a nation's blood my back does greet  
My son, do you weep? Can you feel me?

What does this world say? Must it be true?  
With night there is a return  
once the lips soften, brow eases, and eyes drift  
toward a family that does not shift  
but co-exist without touch  
as a shadow against the grass

# TO YOU, OF YOU

JAKOBI PIERRE

I stopped writing to you. I can't say why.

I could say it was my emotional cleansing; I needed a new muse to wash you away  
and so I dove into the cavity you used to occupy, sifting through my broken  
self or this broken  
world or the  
shards of glass that used to be our matching mugs. I could say I was broken.

I could say I found my self or my voice in that pain—this pain—and I just love  
the sound of grief when it drips from my lips.

I could say it was because of that time you posted on Facebook that you wanted  
*anything but a poem* for your birthday,  
which is something a person only says if they've had a particularly toxic person  
regularly write them poems. I could say I was leaving you alone.

But the truth is, it doesn't matter  
what I've written *to* or *of* or *about*  
because every step I've taken has been an attempt to be  
the person I couldn't be for you. Maybe I wasn't ready  
to separate, so when you left I held on to everything I could  
and now I don't know the difference between what I want to be  
and should have been.

I don't know if I'm capable of wanting anything in this world  
that you would disapprove. And it's fucking frightening  
knowing that every thought I have is partially foreign.

It frightens me, only when I say it...

So I can't or won't say if I started going to therapy to get over you  
or because of all those times you told me I should talk to someone.  
I don't know if it matters.      Either way, you were right.

I don't know where you are... But it's so like you to haunt me into being a better person.  
You once told me you hexed me. I always believed it.

# THE WEEK WE WATCHED THE DIRT THREE DAYS IN A ROW

JAKOBI PIERRE

Was not like the week we watched *The Passion of the Christ* three days in a row. It was not an idea unwillingly forced upon my TV for three nights just because the “intellectual” of our group decided we should get “immaculately stoned and watch some hella insightful shit,” which we did, ignoring the fact that the “immaculately stoned” part would make us fall asleep before the movie ended. So, after three days of failing to witness Jesus’ resurrection, I took the DVD and hid it away in an old *Harry Potter* case and we never spoke of it again.

I wish the week we watched *The Dirt* three days in a row was like the week we watched *Snow On Tha Bluff* three days in a row. I wish I had been watching from that same futon that was as black as the night Curtis ran up in that house waving machine guns even though he was two days fresh out the pen. We all sat in wonder as he turned a curse into a come up; we wished we could be that real. I wished I knew what real felt like—wished I could whip and churn it in my hands. I watched him live it, but I was watching a life I could never imagine; a life I hated. I hated the drugs, hated the guns, hated the money *and* the blood. I hated everything... but still

The week we watched *The Dirt* three days in a row was not the first step on the path to enlightenment. It was not a divine message telling me that I need to wake up and turn my life around or avoid certain influences or watch out for obstacles.

The week we watched *The Dirt* three days in a row was like staying to watch  
the dirt that buried Jesus  
and dying on the third day.  
Or like being anywhere in America and saying you got up out the hood.  
It was realizing everything eventually goes to waste.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: DELANEY KRANZ

I am a 21-year-old student double-majoring in English literature and computer science. My dad taught me how to use a camera when I was a teenager—we would go out on “photo walks” together in our neighborhood and discuss the composition of different pictures we took. He’s always my best critic. While my dad prefers landscapes (he doesn’t like people very much), I took an interest in taking portraits.

Two of these portraits are from Roosevelt Row in downtown Phoenix. (You know—the place where everyone goes to have their pictures taken.) The third is using a white backdrop and flash umbrellas, hastily set up in someone’s garage. During most of my shoots, I, at some point, will take a picture just shoulders-up, like all three of these. I also never tell anyone to smile, or really how to pose or anything—I don’t like making something artificial. This makes it difficult when a subject is unsure what to do with themselves. “Delaney, what do I do with my hands?” “I don’t know. What do you do with them normally?”

I am pleased with the three photos chosen for this collection, as their similar composition and subjects (women, looking displeased, staring directly at the camera in the center of the frame) work very well together, but their differences in colors and textures also illustrate the wildly different stories these women have.

One woman is someone from high school that I have had maybe two conversations with. (She is now married, her first child on the way, and has released her own indie-electronica album.) One woman is an Australian. (She runs her own dog-sitting company and is currently in a psychiatric ward.) The third is my coworker. (She’s sitting next to me as I type this up at the office.) I like that you don’t know who is who. You can guess, but I doubt you’ll guess right.



*Smush*, Jan. 2020; digital photography



*Cotton Candy*, Oct. 2019; digital photography



*Prism*, Jul. 2018; digital photography

# THE GRAND FINALE

BRIGETTE FINK

The air smelled of old musty costumes, cheap deodorant, and exhausted bodies. Daniel waited, hunched behind the vintage green stage curtain, staring at The Facade Performing Arts stage. The anxiety that had plagued him at the beginning of his acting career was barely existent, and it had been replaced with indifference. This was the last performance of, *The Heroic Man*, which had been showing for what he thought was seven months longer than it should have. The contempt he had for the play was showing on his face. The acting skills he had come to master were now paying off. He used them to hide the exhaustion and disgust lying under his stage makeup. He barely had the energy to walk on the stage, but the applause that he would receive at the end was pushing him forward.

The final scene was his least favorite; it included a monologue which he had recently described to one of his dear friends Ratul as, “poetic words that feed the wallet of my boss.” He heard his cue line, was quickly jolted out of his thoughts, and shuffled onto stage. The dreaded scene began as it always did - with his back to the audience. In this particular moment he felt as if he were the general of an army, leading the audience forward, towards something unknown. His monologue began:

*“In this time of great misery, we still push forward. We direct our gaze towards a hope of something beautiful. For this is the point of life, to find something worth dying for. For if there is no hope, if there is nothing beautiful drawing us forward and calling us onwards, we die of despair. We do not die a death of the flesh but that of the spirit. The weight of our misery would crush us, the absurd would paralyze our very movement. It is a beauty, the beauty of a life well lived, that gives us hope.”*

Upon finishing, he clenched his fists to the side and slowly lowered his head as if submitting to his own words. The curtain closed behind him and he stood there. Breathless. The words echoed in his heart as they never had. This night the audience was different. Instead of erupting in applause, a silence fell over the audience. He had never bowed his head before and thought that this might have changed the audience's reaction. "Maybe my exhaustion is creeping through" he thought as he turned around.

The night finished as it always did, with a rushed bow and changing into street clothes. Avoiding eye contact with fellow actors who might waste his time, he headed for the steel door in the back, which he frequently used for smoke breaks. Reaching the door, he let out a sigh of relief. He waited by the light at the street corner. He became irritated as the couple next to him loudly quarreled with each other, not noticing his presence. As he sat in aggravation, he couldn't help but smile, thinking, "huh, at least I never was stupid enough to get married, that poor idiot has to deal with the misery of himself and his wife." The light changed and he began a long walk back to his apartment. Walking was one of the few times in which his life made sense. Movement meant there was a destination - one that was clearly defined, and one that he was moving towards. This idea was never solid in his mind, but he abided nonetheless. The implicit reasoning he was using, but could not articulate was; *if life is an endless series of events then it would be true that when one is in movement, life would make more sense than if one were not in movement.* If anyone were to ask him, he might simply say that walking made him feel better. His thoughts were interrupted with the small sound of clanging tin, and he realized it had just begun to rain again. He hurried his steps. As he quickened his pace, small white pearls of ice began to fall from the sky. Impatient, he sighed and stopped his walk to huddle under the canopy of a small pub that he had never noticed before, *until it became something that he needed.*

A couple, which Daniel recognized as the same old bickering couple as before, brushed past him and entered the small pub. Realizing that he had not eaten since earlier this morning, he stopped inside. He thought this might be a good celebration for the end of that life draining play. It was an old style pub with cherry wood and stained glass chandeliers that were lined

with emerald green glass decor. He noticed a few other couples dispersed throughout the bar, subconsciously calculating the fact that he was the only person without a date in the entire place. There was an older man behind the bar who held his eyes with a glance of what seemed to be instant understanding, something that could not be clearly defined but only described with the heart. The man had a sturdy build with round glasses and was meticulously drying some wine glasses. He greeted Daniel warmly saying, “Welcome *son*, please take a seat anywhere, we are not very formal here.” Daniel took a seat at the bar, drawn towards this old man who had what seemed to be a rich spirit, and asked for a cup of coffee. The older man looked at him and said, “ah, ya must be one of them folk with that thick blood and a strong spirit, being able to stomach coffee this late into the evening.” Daniel responded with a shrug of the shoulders, “I guess I have never been called strong spirited.” “Well”, responded the old man, “it ain’t for the weak.”

The older man came back with a steaming cup of black coffee and a small glass of what looked like thick milk on the side. Handing it over with an innocent smirk he said, “that cream is on the house, just a little Irish tradition to show ya that God loves ya”. He winked and smiled to himself and began speaking again, “The name is Irvin, it means ‘handsome’ in the Celtic language. Bet ya never would have guessed, would ya have.” Leaning back as if to let Daniel get a better look at his wrinkle filled face, he continued, “Fooled my wife by telling her that same thing, still don’t know till this day how I tricked her.” Daniel laughed at his joke and responded with a polite introduction, thanking him for the cream. Irvin sat back down and began picking up his wine glasses, one at a time, looking at each one meticulously through his small round glasses. He inspected the clarity of each one as if his life depended on it. Daniel watched as Irvin picked up each glass so carefully, thinking, “crazy old man, why does he care so much? Huh, must be a little obsessive.” Irvin saw Daniel staring at him intently and started speaking, half to himself and half to Daniel, “ya know life is too chaotic not make the things within our grasp as stainless as we can, if ya know what I mean. By stainless I guess I mean putting some love into the work.” He kept talking, “I saw ya lookin at my drying skills, ya get pretty good after fifty years of it.” Daniel responded half- heartedly, not knowing if he was talking to, “Yes, I ah

guess you would.”

Daniel felt a little anxious sitting at the bar with this old man, but this old man’s humor kept him in his seat. There was something mysterious about Irvin’s essence, it’s as if life could not be any better than when drying glasses. There was a feeling in Daniel telling him that this man might waste his precious time, so he started putting on his coat. Irvin saw the intention behind the movement and interrupted him, “off so soon, why don’t ya stay, ya know this place could use a good man such as yourself to keep it alive for the night.” Daniel was taken aback as these thoughts ran through his mind, “how can he say I’m a good man, *he doesn’t know who I am.*” Daniel paused then put his black trench coat down on the bar and said, “I guess I could stay a little longer, maybe just one more cup of coffee.” Irvin cheered up and said, “that sounds more like it! I’ll be back with just the thing.” Getting off his stool he walked over to the opposite side of the bar and groaned as he bent over. He brought back a glass filled to the brim with what looked like red wine. Irvin leaned in close to Daniel, as if to not let his other guests hear him and said, “It’s homemade! The Holy Spirit must be with ya tonight *son* cause I’m feeling generous.” And inching closer he said, “and my wife says I gotta get rid of it so she don’t keep drinking it.” Daniel laughed and quickly looked around, feeling a bit self-conscious that he had made such an audible laugh in such a quiet place.

Daniel sat there sipping the wine in silence, still watching the old man work. There was something about the work that amazed him. Every time he set a finished glass down, he would shake his head and mumble under his breath, “A beautiful thing to behold.” There was something so pure about this man, something he had never seen. Daniel wanted to reach out and put his hand into the essence of the man to figure out what it was. Irvin looked up again, appearing almost surprised but delighted to see that Daniel was still seated before him. His mannerisms suggested that he had forgotten Daniel’s presence for a brief moment, entirely captivated by drying glasses.

He started speaking, while still continuing to work on his glasses saying, “Ya see I’m an artist of sorts, I’m an artist of the glass shining category. Ya know making them shine, knowing what towels to use and such, is all part of my craft.” He chuckled at himself and asked Daniel a question, “So, what

is it that you are an artist of?” Daniel was a little taken aback at the man guessing him to be an artist. He responded, “It is funny you should say that because I am an artist. *I am a professional artist*, a performance artist specifically.” Irvin became wide eyed saying, “Oh a real artist you say. I guess you probably had special training for that.” He then paused for a long time as if debating whether or not he should say what he was thinking. He continued, “Would you say that all people are artists of sorts, artists of love you might say?” Daniel was a little surprised by this oddly specific question, and Irvin could see that. Understanding that the question caught him off guard. Irvin turned away, “You just think about that for a little while you drink your wine. I’ll be back.”

As Irvin disappeared, Daniel sat thinking about what he had said, “artist of love, this seems a little romanticized.” As he sat in thought, the couple that had come into the pub earlier could clearly be heard raising their voices. The two, realizing they were drawing attention to themselves, quieted their voices quickly. “Artists of love!” he thought, “if we are artists of love then that couple over there had a pretty shitty teacher” and laughed at his own thoughts. As Irvin returned to his chair, Daniel was feeling a little enamored by his own snarky thought and leaned over the bar so as to make sure Irvin could hear what he had to say. Smiling as he started, Daniel looked directly at Irvin and said, “Well if everyone is an artist of love, then that couple over there must be like my niece and nephew holding two crayons, trying to draw the Mona Lisa.”

Irvin closed his eyes, smiled, shook his head back and forth. He let out a laugh that came from what seemed to be Irvin’s unmoving inner spirit - something that still perplexed Daniel. Opening his eyes wide, Irvin smiled and leaned in towards Daniel and in a humorous tone whispered, “Well now, you finally gave me something to work with!” Slightly confused, Daniel half smiled at Irvin and narrowed his eyebrows together, as if to ask what he meant by his remark with his eyes. Irvin leaned back and put his towel on the table starting to speak again, “you give me something to work with because now I can see more of the brush you’re using and maybe what color paint you’ve got, and possibly even a few of the strokes on your canvas.” Irvin paused but saw that Daniel was once again squeezing his eyebrows together

as if asking for more clarification. Irvin began again, “A trained and professional artist ya say, well so much for that! Ok, sorry, I won’t be so mean. My wife might be listening from upstairs.” He paused to laugh at his own joke, but quickly continued, “Listen now, I’ll break it down real simple for ya. Look at that couple over there trying to draw the Mona Lisa, as ya say. They try really hard, sometimes finding the perfect mix of colors for her hair, maybe little by little coming to know how to hold their wrist to perfectly push the brush across the canvas. After many years they finally figure out what colors are supposed to be used, the dimensions of the painting, and the frame it is going in and so on. Ya follow?”

“Yes, I’m following,” Daniel’s interest had peaked. Art was something he understood more than anything else. Irvin continued, more excitedly knowing he had an interested listener, “Now because each one has a different technique, maybe one can draw circles well and the other can draw straight lines, they learn to let one another do specific parts of the painting that the other is good at. And! To tell ya the truth, the most amazing part is that they see all the mistakes each is making along this long process, knowing the time and effort it took to master those brush strokes. Amazing! Knowing all the mistakes under the canvas and they can still see the finished piece as something beautiful. Ah, simply a beautiful thing to behold! What a life.” He continued, what now seemed more like a lengthy monologue, something Daniel was too familiar with. And Irvin, seeing that he was getting a little long winded began again, “Ah, my point, oh yes, sometimes I always seem to avoid that part! So, what I’m trying to get at is this, now that I know a few more of your thoughts, I can see a little more of your canvas and the techniques that you are a master of. This can let me see a little bit of the *beauty, the beauty of the life* that your trying to paint. And ya might ask what would be the most beautiful paint to use, and I would have to respond, love.”

After Irvin had finished, or briefly paused, the words Daniel had spoken just hours before flooded his mind,

*“We do not die a death of the flesh but that of the spirit. The weight of our misery would crush us, the absurd would paralyze our very movement. It is a beauty, the beauty of a life well lived, that gives us hope.”*

“Now”, Irvin continued, “every good artist needs a Master to study under and to study with, so that the Master’s hand can guide the student in learning the brush strokes. This is what real artists can recognize: they need a master of beauty to show them their own potential. It’s possible to try and do the work without a master, but then you really might be like your niece and nephew with two crayons trying to draw the Mona Lisa.”

There was something about this night, this man, this experience. It stirred Daniel’s heart. It’s as if he ached for whatever it was that gave Irvin life. It was uncomfortable. Daniel had never felt this before and not understanding what it was, he looked at Irvin and said, “Thank you for your interesting story, the wine, and the coffee. This has been an interesting evening. I best be going back to my walk. It looks like the rain has stopped.” “Ok,” responded Irvin, “if that is what you desire.” Daniel picked up his coat and began to walk towards the door. He paused and looked at the couple, as if this mysterious life that Irvin had just described could possibly be real. But remembering his comfortable apartment, Daniel quickly snapped out of this thought and almost laughed at himself for thinking such an absurd thing. He looked back at Irvin, gave a polite smile, and walked out the door without looking back again.

# THE BLUE

CHRIS MCCLUNG

I looked upon the desert day  
And slipped my eyes between my hand.  
The blue and white bequeathed my sight  
With sun so bright to pierce the skies.  
I did this till my eyes had close  
And suddenly, awake repose  
I saw a deeper rose and blue,  
For on its toes an evening new.  
Forthwith I stared upon the set;  
The scene but slowing not all yet  
And let upon the amber glare  
The night lay her lavender hair.  
And darken, darken did the blue  
In blackened space left to the few.  
The moon alone for stars unknown  
Held hidden within brightened sight.  
Upon this night I set the blame  
For false intents set from its name,  
Pretending bending poets' aim.  
So rest did I upon black sky  
To wait till blue finally came.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: JACQUIE SHEA

Jacquie Shea is a student double majoring in Sustainability and Spanish Linguistics planning to graduate in Spring of 2020. She works as a Residential Community Assistant in the freshman dormitories as well as for the Be Kind People Project, where she creates sustainability curriculum and garden presentations for elementary schools. In her free time, she enjoys writing stories and poetry that she often converts into songs. While she plays some piano, she prefers to use her voice as the primary instrument in her pieces by stacking vocal layers and harmonies to create a fuller sound. After graduation, she plans to pursue work in the non-profit or education sectors while continuing to create music off the clock.



*Song: "Surrender"*

*By: Jacquie Shea*

*Available on our website + Soundcloud: @luxcreativereview*

*Album cover by: Sebastian Vargas*

# TWO SIDES OF ONE COIN

PAIGE SAVORY

Within every aspect of life, there has always been a debate about the knowledge of the truth— whether what we know is certain or not. While some people wish to become curious and fight what others may know as fact, others stay within the lines and accept the certainty. In the words of William Lyon Phelps, certainty provides the confidence and accomplishment that is needed to personally advance. Doubt, on the other hand— according to Bertrand Russell— should always be considered as a litmus test to any thought and is necessary for societal advance. Much of the progression seen in the world is made by doubt within people, however, a variety of lifestyle aspects are made into classic traditions without it. While the words of Phelps and Russell contradict each other on this topic of certainty vs. doubt, there are more similarities between the two than one might think. Even though doubt and questioning provide the fuel for progress, and certainty promotes goals and accomplishment, together they are merely two sides of the same coin.

Innovators drive the future and life as we know it. What is their motivation if not doubt? Doubt is taking what is known and questioning the truth behind it. During the Enlightenment era between 1685 and 1750, many people began to challenge the ideas that were already well-known and began to develop their own. New technological, scientific, and medical advances were made —such as those of Sir Isaac Newton and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz —which provided looks into fields that, until them, had not yet been discovered. Voltaire, a quick-wit philosopher with much to say on the topic of politics and the church, once said “if you want to know who controls you, look to who you are not allowed to criticize”. With advocates such as Voltaire and other revolutionary thinkers, new religious and political beliefs were thrown into the mix, increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of government and forever influence the future of politics. Similarly, during the

Second Great Awakening in early America, people began to doubt their understanding of the church and God. They established new beliefs, even new branches of religion entirely in order to find appropriate religious duties. Even one of the most prestigious universities in the country, Harvard University, experienced numerous curriculum changes with the shift in ideology. It had originally been a school for ministers— the first degree of divinity being awarded to Increase Mather in 1692— but the Second Great Awakening caused the school to include a multitude of other classes with bases in logic and reason rather than religion or morality. The doubts sparked throughout history were able to produce pieces of society that are still seen today, as well as inspire new doubts to be formed. Doubt and questioning provide the fuel for change that is necessary for progress.

In comparison to doubt, certainty is not the driving force of innovation. It is, instead, the glue that holds together the foundation of our society. Traditions unite and define what people are, for they highlight generations of strong religious and/or cultural beliefs passed-down through history, no matter where the future may find each generation. Popular traditions, such as Christmas, are predicated upon the certainty that Christian beliefs are true and thus worthy of celebration. Such occasions promote businesses and spread cheer throughout Christian nations. The doubt that some people may have about established traditions do the opposite, and generally mean the demise of what many people hold dear through the creation of something new and more fitting. In the medical field, similarly, doctors and scientists must have certainty in order to prescribe medicines and tests and diagnose patients. Any level of doubt would not only cause conflicts and waste money but would deem social treatments unreliable. They would lose their business and cause harm to all of their patients. When Jonas Salk developed the polio vaccine in the 1950's, he had to be certain of its effectiveness and harmlessness before distributing it to himself, his family, and the general public. Had he not been certain of his vaccine's effects, Salk would have endangered numerous people, including his wife and three sons— adding to the problem he was looking to solve. When Galileo described the heliocentric theory he stuck to it, despite the opposition of the government and the Catholic Church. Galileo would later be proven right by modern scientists. In the case of the

and Catholic Church, certainty is what brings about personal promotion, unity, and safety within every community, even if it may be wrong at times. In comparison, doubt –Galileo’s findings –is what causes confusion and trouble— even if necessary for innovation.

Both distinct perspectives rely on each other, for if there are no “facts,” there can be no one to doubt them. Throughout history, the tension between certainty and doubt has presented itself, and it still persists to this day. Scientists, businessmen, doctors, and construction workers alike all know the importance of following rules and taking chances. Both certainty and doubt have their own perspectives, but they are both crucial to the development and advance of society, for it is only with both personal and societal progression that the future arrives.

# BROWN DREAMS

BEN AYALA

The vineyards, sharecrops, and orchards  
Have more above the brown soil  
That never stops producing fresh harvests  
That travel all over.

Simply peeking no one can see the shiny brown bodies  
That persevere with all their will to get all they can.  
Filling baskets and crates one after another  
To replenish the dream of a better future.

America,  
A pure place where peaceful fantasies  
Of foreign bodies that reach for the stars  
Can be fulfilled. Granting dreamers to dream  
And the freedom to live harmoniously amongst  
Incredible people who seek greatness.

The dream to be free of societal adversities  
Starts with the clock rattling the home  
Of the brown bodies that have to work  
Picking for the great American life  
Envisioned for their family.

The beauty and rise of today's dusk,  
Carries peace along the orange afternoon drive home.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: MICHELLE AILPORT

“BEYOND THE ALTAR”

My name is Michelle Ailport, and I am a journalism student on ASU's downtown campus. My work is inspired by my belief that there is always a new story to tell. Not only am I able to share my voice, but the voice of others. In my photojournalism, I like to capture the beauty within the culture and traditions of the greater community. These photos of Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli were captured at the Mikiztli Día de los Muertos Festival at Steele Indian School Park on Oct. 27, 2019.



*Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli at the Mikiztli Día de Muertos, Oct. 2019; digital photography*



*Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli at the Mikiztli Día de Muertos, Oct. 2019; digital photography*



*Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli at the Mikiztli Día de Muertos, Oct. 2019; digital photography*



*Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli at the Mikiztli Día de Muertos, Oct. 2019; digital photography*

# A LETTER MY FATHER NEVER WROTE TO ME

MISAKO YAMAZAKI

there are things / i can only write to you / misako-chan / in the dark of the dead  
of winter / how your mouth / is a music box / much like your father's / your  
hands are typewriters / set into motion / by your darkest moments / don't let  
anyone tell you / not to write about race / your name means / beautiful girl,  
beautiful voice / and sometimes you will be the siren / sometimes you will be  
the song / but most often you will be the scream / daughter always remember  
/ there are men who don't listen to music / they are the ones who will try to set  
you back / but you are not a clock / clocks cannot change by themselves / you  
need to be the one to change them / i know you can get lost / in every book  
you read / but do not forget where / you come from / the pacific weeps for you  
/ sakura fall for you / and some nights i swear / i can see / your lighthouse smile  
/ across this sea of space / between us / i dream of living / long enough / to see  
you succeed / alongside your american colleagues and classmates / a woman of  
color / of change / and don't you ever give yourself / an easy american name /  
when people ask you for it / you tell them that / your name was pulled / from  
the teeth / of an immigrant father / spat out onto the streets / of downtown  
phoenix in spring / tell them that / yes really / you were born here / tell them  
/ there is beauty in color / but no bliss in ignorance / do not settle / with racist  
treatment / like i did / and if they call you yellow / remind them / that sunlight  
/ is beautiful / but it can also / blind

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: ZAIRA CASTILLO

Being a visual person, creating art has been my form of storytelling. Through my art, I tell stories about my childhood, my family history, and about my culture. They have helped me discover who I am and who I hope to grow to be.

My choice of medium is primarily acrylic and ink. My work frequently includes a use of bright colors and a semi-abstract approach. My creative process involves an exploration in the cultural traditions of el Bajío, a region in Central Mexico. This is portrayed in my paintings *Fresas* and *La Cigarra*. They pay homage to my family, who migrated from Guanajuato, and the huapangos I grew up listening and singing along to. This creative process has helped me strengthen my connection with my past and the present.



*La Cigarra*, 2019; acrylic on canvas, 14" x 11"



*Fresas*, 2019; acrylic on canvas, 14" x 11"

# POEM ABOUT INHERITANCE

BREE HOFFMAN

*“The very emphasis of the commandment: Thou shalt not kill, makes it certain that we are descended from an endlessly long chain of generations of murderers, whose love of murder was in their blood as it is perhaps also in ours.” - Sigmund Freud*

he pled not guilty before i was born, before a clot of blood was shot shrapnel into my mother's womb, when the only title he wore was a number in a system of numbers. she married him less than a year after his release in '93 (sentenced to eight years but served only six, their little specter born almost nine months to the day after the ceremony, conceived in a vegas hotel room, just back from the chapel, fresh off a manslaughter charge) but maybe she didn't care that he allegedly shot and killed a man shitfaced back in '87 because that's what love is babycakes and this is what i know of where i come from. i am sitting in a car with my date, being choked with the seat belt when i think of mom raped at fourteen and if she thought she deserved all that came in the years after. and i think of things passed through bloodlines like cancer in grandma's lungs, the predisposition to violence that runs in dads, does it skip a generation if i bleed it like a wound and we regret to inform you that due to sins of the father this strand will keep spiraling way up and up, where it lands no one knows

# NAME OF GOD

BREE HOFFMAN

I am a restless vessel cast upon my mother's  
shore, calling her through a hazy dream to my tangled bed  
of sea foamed net. I seize her name between greedy

teeth and watch her slip ethereal from my lips, scatter across moon  
bleached beaches, on swollen sands of warm red clay. And I,  
too young to know she is woman (a synonym

for suffering), think she was born as Mother,  
named into existence, not born at all. Peeling back  
layers of wild manicata, following

the sound of her: to neon sunlight peeking through  
the cut of the bathroom door, to red clay smeared  
between her thighs,

waves of thunder rolling off her breasts.

I know it is her name before I ever learn it, but haven't  
the courage to speak it out loud.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: ELISA THOMAS

I am a freshman at Barrett, The Honors College at ASU. This is probably my favorite photograph I have ever taken and created. It was a combination of my photography and my juxtaposition editing that merged the photos together. I took both of these photos at the Phoenix Art Museum, and when I got home to edit, I realized that the image of the two women facing each other and the words were a perfect match. So I overlaid them and essentially married the two photos.



*Face Me I Face You*, Digital photography

# STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

## **Anahí Herrera**, Editor-in-Chief

*Anahí is a senior majoring in English with a concentration in Creative Writing. She was previously Lux's Fiction Editor ('18-'19) and Associate Fiction Editor ('17-'18), Superstition Review's Nonfiction Editor (Issue 22), and will be an editorial intern with Hayden's Ferry Review in the spring of '20. She is a recipient of the Jules J. Anatole Creative Writing Scholarship for her short story "The Rug," a '19 Swarthout Award recipient for her short story "solo un sueño," a '20 Swarthout recipient for her short story "on a pale blue day, the sky fell," and has been previously published in Lux and The Acentos Review. Anahí loves literature, film, music, and photography more than anything. In her lifetime, Anahí hopes to attend graduate school, work for an indie publishing press, found a literary magazine, snag a residency, and visit as much of the world as she can.*

## **Mariusz Biśta**, Assistant Editor-in-Chief

*Mariusz is a sophomore pursuing degrees in Civic + Economic Thought + Leadership and Art Studies at Arizona State University. Employed at local schools and youth programs, Mariusz was trained with the Love + Logic program and is interested in the developments of pedagogy. In their leisure time, Mariusz enjoys linocut printmaking, poetry, and philosophy.*

## **Rachael Kha**, Fiction Editor

*Rachael is currently a senior at ASU double majoring in Chemical Engineering and Philosophy. In addition to being Fiction Editor at Lux, she is a writer for Start It Up NYC, a New York based start-up accelerator. She values diversity, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary problem solving, which are reflected in her academic choices and attitude towards life. Rachael's decision to apply for the Fiction Editor position was inspired by her passion for both creativity and writing. She has had a passion for writing since high school, where she studied creative writing for two years. Since going to college, Rachael has learned the value of clear, effective writing, and has grown as both a writer and thinker. Through her position at Lux, she is hoping to contribute to the creative community and is happy that the role will enable her to help budding writers gain publishing experience and have their work read by other creative and passionate students.*

**Lilian Treacy**, Poetry Editor

*Lilian is a senior in ASU's Creative Writing program. Her concentration is in fiction, but she writes poetry as well. She was born in Philadelphia, and has spent time living in England, but was raised in Tempe, Arizona. She spends her time dancing ballet, writing, and loving on other people's dogs. She enjoys stories very much for their power to unite people over shared experience, and elicit compassion. Lilian has had fiction published in the undergraduate reviews Marooned and Lux.*

**Madeline Stull**, Nonfiction Editor

*Madeline Stull is currently a student at Arizona State University. As a part of ASU's 4+1 program, Madeline is completing the final year of her honors undergraduate degree while beginning the first year of her Master's, both in European History. Through an undergraduate research fellowship with the Center of Religion and Conflict and participation in the Center of Maghrib studies, her research interests were narrowed to the interplay of memory and space/place and the role of history in the resolution of geopolitical conflicts. Madeline has completed a minor in Arabic Studies and is linguistically trained in Arabic, Hebrew, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, and Spanish.*

**Gloria Chrisanty**, Art Editor

*Gloria is a Barrett sophomore studying Industrial Design and minoring in Art History. She's originally from Jakarta, Indonesia but lived in Columbus, Ohio for most of her life. She loves hiking, swimming, cycling, and all things art and design. You can most likely find her at the design school slaving away at the most recent project, marveling at a painting in an art museum, or jamming out at a concert. Her next big bucket list goal is to visit all 50 states before she graduates.*

**Valliappan Valliappan**, Film Editor

*Valliappan Valliappan is a first year Film Major from Seattle, Washington. He loves reading literary fiction by writers like Toni Morrison, William Faulkner, Arundhati Roy, and Kurt Vonnegut and also watching films by Paul Thomas Anderson, Stanley Kubrick, Francois Truffaut, Sydney Lumet, and David Fincher. His desperate hope for the future is to be an auteur filmmaker and make films that mean something to those who watch the films. One surprising thing about him is that he passionately dislikes all kinds of ice cream.*

*Anahí Herrera + Mariusz Biśta, Music Editor  
[Read above.]*

***Sebastian Vargas**, Marketing + Creative Director*

*Sebastian is currently a sophomore in Barrett, The Honors College, and is majoring in Design/Art Studies. He was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. Along with being involved with Lux, he is an independent artist in the fields of both design and music. Outside of studying and working with different mediums of art, he enjoys watching films, painting, listening to music, traveling and spending time with friends and family. Ultimately, Sebastian plans to attend graduate school after getting his degree while using his creative abilities and visions to not only express his artistic side but to also bring positive change to the world.*

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## featuring

chris clements • andrea nicole  
vidales • rachel hagerman • rachel  
kennedy • nathan tesman (of paraiso  
drive) • dallas rogers • misako  
yamazaki • anna dalesio • jakobi  
pierre • jonathan figueroa • bree  
hoffman

## LUX

(noun):  
a unit of  
illuminance,  
brightness, or intensity.