

Memorial Hall Library's 8th Annual Teen Poetry Contest
Award Winning Poems
Selected by Gayle C. Heney, North Andover's 2-Term Poet Laureate

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Middle School Top Honors

1st Place

"I am my Mother's Daughter (tribute to Dylan Thomas)" by Rachel McIntosh, Wood Hill, Grade 7

I am my Mother's Daughter (tribute to Dylan Thomas)

A thousand suns ago
When I could clearly remember
The raised voices
And aggressive words
That cut like daggers against sensitive ears
Anger trapped in condensation
As two adults scream at each other
Through a mahogany door
While I just sat and listened
Curled up in defeat
On the dark blue suede couch.
Then,
There were two houses
And a cracked blue slide phone
And I was the yellor
But not out loud
Because it's always safer to hide
The hurt and want and need
And you'll always have time to think,
To not give in,
And to break away,
When they're just words on a screen
And I can pretend
It's not my life
That just shattered
Into a million sharp edged pieces.

2nd Place**"Mad" by Hannah Muhlfelder, Wood Hill, Grade 8*****Mad***

I'm mad

Because you're mad

At him

And that makes me mad

At you both

Now we're all mad

At each other

And at life

It's not just your fault

It's mine

And his too

Blow out the candle

Because the smoke

Is dark

But

It keeps us safe

From the fire

3rd Place

“My First Arrow” by Sophie Uluatam, West Middle, Grade 7

My First Arrow

The first time my hand brushes across the sleek, glossy wood of a bow,
it's instinctive,
second nature,
a sixth sense.

My hearing becomes so focused that the only thing audible is the clip
of my arrow, feathered like the wings of an eagle,
as it attaches to my bowstring,
and the high-pitched voices of the birds as they harmonize their song.
Chirp, chirp, chirp.

My vision is narrowing; zooming in on my target,
and leaving all other distractions out of focus.
I've never felt this sensation before,
but I know it is my body preparing to shoot.

As slow as a snail creeping across the ground, I raise my loaded bow,
the weight of the crescent wood resting in my hands.
The bow and I are one.

I don't know how long I stand
with the bowstring drawn back to the downturned corners of my mouth,
waiting for the perfect moment to shoot.
waiting
waiting

The pungent scent of the oaks and pines that surround me
waft up my nostrils. I welcome the sweet smell.
The moisture in the air dampens my dry mouth.
It is cool, fresh, and has a sweet tang of nature.
My olive skin is sticky with humidity and warm, despite the lack of sun.
Rain is coming, I think.

On an exhale, I release my bowstring,
sending my arrow sailing through the forest air.
Whoosh

I wait for the sensation of shooting to subside
before I locate my arrow.
It is probably planted in the ground far off in the surrounding woods,
I predict.

When my vision normalizes, I peer at the target in front of me.
My calloused hands gently rub my disbelieving eyes.
Once,
twice.
What I see can not be real.
Because piercing the center of my target's face is an arrow.
My arrow
My first arrow.
And it's a perfect bull's-eye.



Middle School Honorable Mentions

"I didn't forget" by Catalina Aycardi, Wood Hill, Grade 7

I didn't forget

I just wanted to tell you I didn't forget
I might've been mad
But I never forgot
The advice and the talks you gave me

I know that it seemed as if I shut you out
I know that it seemed as if I didn't listen
But believe it or not
Every word you said
And every talk you gave me
Have been carved forever in my heart

"The Picture" by Sam Bird, Wood Hill, Grade 7

The Picture

Going through his stuff
The person I never knew
It feels as though it's wrong
To see the faces,
Of sorrow and grief
And how easy
To break, to have a child's grip slip
What you don't know is important, the last relic
But yet so hard to put back together
The picture you had loved,
The picture of your grandfather

"Dazzled" by Dena Brody, Wood Hill, Grade 8

Dazzled

My brother Adam
Dirty blonde hair
Sea blue eyes
I am dazzled

His modesty is comforting,
Kind,
Reassuring
Likeable in every way
I am dazzled

He carries himself
With a head held high
He is bright-
Not just intelligent-
But bright
Like the sun in the sky
Always positive
In a good mood
I am dazzled

Everything he is and does comes
Naturally
He says he doesn't try
It's just who he is
He sets his priorities
And always succeeds
I am inspired and dazzled

"The Sad Shy Girl" by Evan Christopulos, Wood Hill, Grade 7

The Sad Shy Girl

Her brother was popular
Had the looks
The Athleticism
The whole nine yards
But her,
Huh,
She was shy

When her brother asked
If she wanted to play,
She just turned her head
His 14 year old friends
Thought she had the looks
They couldn't get to know her
Because she never expressed herself

She knew from within
That if she was going to live
In this place we call Earth
Well,
Maybe she needs to open her eyes,
Crawl out from under the covers,
And be more like her brother
Open
After all, it all starts
With a first step

"The Glassblower's Secret" by Sara Clark, Doherty Middle, Grade 8

The Glassblower's Secret

He sits in a sweltering room,
Patiently molding liquid glass
Into a vase that someone will buy.

Beads of glass are added,
A few scarlets, a sprinkle of saffron,
And he swirls it all together.

The room smells of metal and campfire,
Of sweat and of passion,
With the subtle scent of secrecy.

The molten glass glows on the end of the pole
As it is rolled back and forth
Along a metal table.

The glassblower sets it back in the furnace,
Long enough so that he can blow the glass out,
As easily as a balloon.

Swiftly, he breathes air into the vase,
And it expands like magic.
Finally, the ordeal is over.

He places the glass in a metal box to cool,
And meanders outside to gaze at the ocean,
And feel the cool sea air on his face.

Once the two of them have prepared themselves,
The glassblower knocks the vase off of the rod,
Praying that it doesn't shatter.

It doesn't, and later, a hundred people bid on the vase,
With its warm summer tone, somehow infused with love.
His secrets safe in his studio, the glassblower smiles.

“Picture worth a thousand words” by Meg Davis, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Picture worth a thousand words

I couldn't help it Sneaking just one little peek The faded blues and greens Your smiles Which aren't fake
Young love Before the pain And the fading One less character in life All from one picture Hidden in your
dresser drawer I know you loved him But I know that now You are happy



“Summer Camp” by Daniel Gealow, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Summer Camp

8 p.m.
at camp Wah-Tut-Ca
walking back from the shower house
a dirty towel slung over my shoulder
I looked out
past the boathouse
with the dials and gauges
past the canoes
on the rusty rack
and
I saw the sunset
across the lake
the perfect blend
of white, pink, and amber
bringing in the indigo of night.

"Never Let Them" by Kara Hayward, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Never Let Them

I love how they try to mold me
And twist me
So unnaturally
Because they think they can

When I don't come out
The way they want me to
They try to pull me apart, again and again
But I'm the one who will never let them

Then they fake a smile
Because it's all just a show
And I smile back
Because that hurts them most

"Ballad of Jonas, the Receiver of Memory" by Pippa Johnson, Doherty Middle, Grade 8

Ballad of Jonas, the Receiver of Memory

He stands apart,
With a heavy heart.
The memories he keeps,
So the others can sleep.

Life began in white and black,
Until the day he had that snack.
He saw the apple shiny red,
And wondered, is this in my head?

He learned to take away the pain,
But his life couldn't be the same.
Sad memories he kept away,
While his friends went out to play.

He stands apart,
With a heavy heart.
The memories he keeps,
So the others can sleep.

Soon he learned his community,
was not all that peaceful and free.
Everything was devilish hues.
This life was all just a big ruse.

He thought this pain would never end,

Off he ran with his little friend.
A brand new town, nice warm bed,
and wondered, is this in my head?

He stands apart,
With a heavy heart.
The memories he keeps,
So the others can sleep.

"Tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks, My Grandmother" by Leah Keamy, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks, My Grandmother

It might just be in,
Your croaking laugh,
That changes into a horrifying cough,
Or your turtle-neck sweaters,
Maybe the wrinkles that,
Dance all over your face,
When you smile,
It could be in,
Your shaky hands,
Or your wobbly walking,
Possibly your huffing breaths,
Or the way you stand up to my mom,
When she yells at me,
It could be in,
The way you want to,
Get me every gift in the word,
Or the way you want to be,
Part of my life as much as you can,
Your love is everywhere



"Foolish" by Natalie Kushner, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Foolish

I remember sitting on the stair
In your cottage,
Giggling as you made cookies
And my fingers picked
At the murky, cracking, floral wallpaper.
Why didn't I spend more time with you?

I remember sitting on the leather seats
Of the silver car.
You were languid,
As you trudged your way
To the car door,
As slow as the changing seasons.
I signed impatiently.
"Go faster"
I urged in my mind.
Why hadn't I realized?

I can still hear,
My dad's voice in my mind
When he heard the news
For the first time.
"She was like a second mom to me"
That was when I realized.
Why had I been so foolish?

"The Silver Bracelet" by Amanda LaMacchia, Wood Hill, Grade 7

The Silver Bracelet

I remember racing to
My room to put the
Bracelet on.
The metal tarnished,
The silver butterfly in
The middle a little bent.
It was the kind with
An opening so small
You had to bend it just
A little
To put it on.
I bent it a little more
Than I should have
And just like that,
It snapped in two.
The tarnished metal pieces
Still sit
In a Ziploc bag
Where no one can see it.

"Berkeley" by Sarah MacGregor, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Berkeley

Watching the goodbyes like a movie
But you already know the end
The happiness
Trapped within the broken body
Without hope of release
If a single wish were ever offered
To let it out
It would be accepted
And like a bright light
The images of
Sorrowful faces
Burned forever into
Closed eyes

"My Grandmother" by Julia McBride, Wood Hill, Grade 7

My Grandmother

You would kneel
Ivory comb in hand
Over the old rug in the
Dining room
The one from Germany
And you would carefully
Bring the comb down
Screeching the teeth
Against the
Scratched wood floor
But you couldn't hear
All you could see was
The perfect alignment
Of the frayed tassels
Smiling, you moved onto
The next set
All the way around.
You're not here now
There is no one to comb
The disarray
And no one to be my grandmother



"That Kind Is my Kind Now" by Rachel McIntosh, Wood Hill, Grade 7

That Kind is my Kind Now (tribute to Anne Sexton and William Blake)

I have paced the confines of my cage
A tyger looking to hurt
Have stalked grimy, shadowed alleyways
Searching for the fight.
I have been that kind.

I have risen against the traitor
Waiting for the sting of a slap
Or the mind clearing jolt
Of love spilling blood
To finally realize whose side I'm on
And received comforting arms instead.
I have been that kind.

I have burned the night
With deep orange slashes
And have slaughtered the Lamb
With my own dread hand.
I have been that kind.

I have beaten the asphalt
With raging bright red energy
Running from our demons
Human desire screaming,
"Don't ever leave me."
I have been that kind.

"Two Generations Back" by Rachel McIntosh, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Two Generations Back

Her voice is harsh,
A cheese grater scraping
Against my ear drums
And wheezing,
Stale, muggy breath slipping out with a hiss
At the end of each phrase
And she's loud
Always loud
Even when she's silent
Her opinion announcing itself
With a quick look of disdain.
She thinks life is clear cut,
All straight lines and distinct boundaries
Separating black and white.
But as she rants and raves,
For the third time tonight
Droplets of spit launching onto
Tonight's special, pork and mashed potatoes
She does not realize
That I, her own flesh and blood
Have anything but straight lines
And made of
A million shades of grey.
I don't tell her so.
She's stuck in 1966.

"Hidden Sanctuary" by Angela McNamara, Wood Hill, Grade 8

Hidden Sanctuary

Faded pictures
Hang on the wall
Faces and places
From so long ago

Letters from family
And friends now gone
The letters they sent
Are the last reminder
That they were ever real
That they found this hidden sanctuary
High in the mountains

Man's evil clutches
Have not spread here
Have not tainted this raw beautiful land
Have not burned the trees
And trampled the flowers
Is this the last place on earth
That we have not killed
Have not molded to suit our needs
Only to leave
When we have drained it of its wealth
Once its people are starving
Dying
Because of the very people sent to help them

The ones that said everything would be okay
The ones that lied

"The Story of Reality" by Angela McNamara, Wood Hill, Grade 8

The Story of Reality

Blank paper glares at me
Waiting to be filled with words
Waiting for me
To weave ordinary letters
Into magical stories
Of dragons and knights
Adventure and romance
True love and happy endings

But today the letters are stubborn
Refusing to become words
Protesting being sentences
Becoming a story I didn't write
One of horror and death
Sickness and poverty
The letters have written
The story of reality.



"This Poem" by Angela McNamara, Wood Hill, Grade 8

This Poem

Should I write this poem
Or leave it an idea
One of a hundred
Running through my head

Should I write this poem
Or leave it to wither
Simply because it wasn't always perfect,
Wasn't worth seeing where it could take me

No.
I think I'll write this poem
Not because I was told to
Or even because I had an idea
Because when all is said and done
I really never had an idea
I had a beat up notebook
And a spark of inspiration
To lead me in the dark
Towards this poem

"Me, Myself and My Mind" by Jenna Manning, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Me, Myself and My Mind

The way it is to sit
And get lost in a thought
And to forget all that is going on
To be lost in
Me, myself and my mind

To think about anything
Anything that doesn't matter
No looks
No nothing, just
Me, myself and my mind

To not think about others
Be lost in myself and
In what I feel
Be lost in
Me, myself and my mind

To not have a care in my mind
And to not know where you're going
Or where you're being led
Even if you're thinking about a poem
Like this one
I have no clue
Where I'm going with it
I guess it's just to
My mind, myself and me

“Fire-Orange” by Evelyn Mesler, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Fire- Orange

I knew
From the first time
I saw your fire-orange
Beiber hair flip,
That
You
Were the one.
You winked at me,
In the play.
It was
Scripted, but
It still counts.
Over the last month,
I have plastered my
Bedroom walls with
Carefully crafted pictures
Of your
Baby soft
Ears.

"Bright Bunch of Flowers" by Jonathan Monderer, Doherty Middle School, Grade 8

Bright Bunch of Flowers

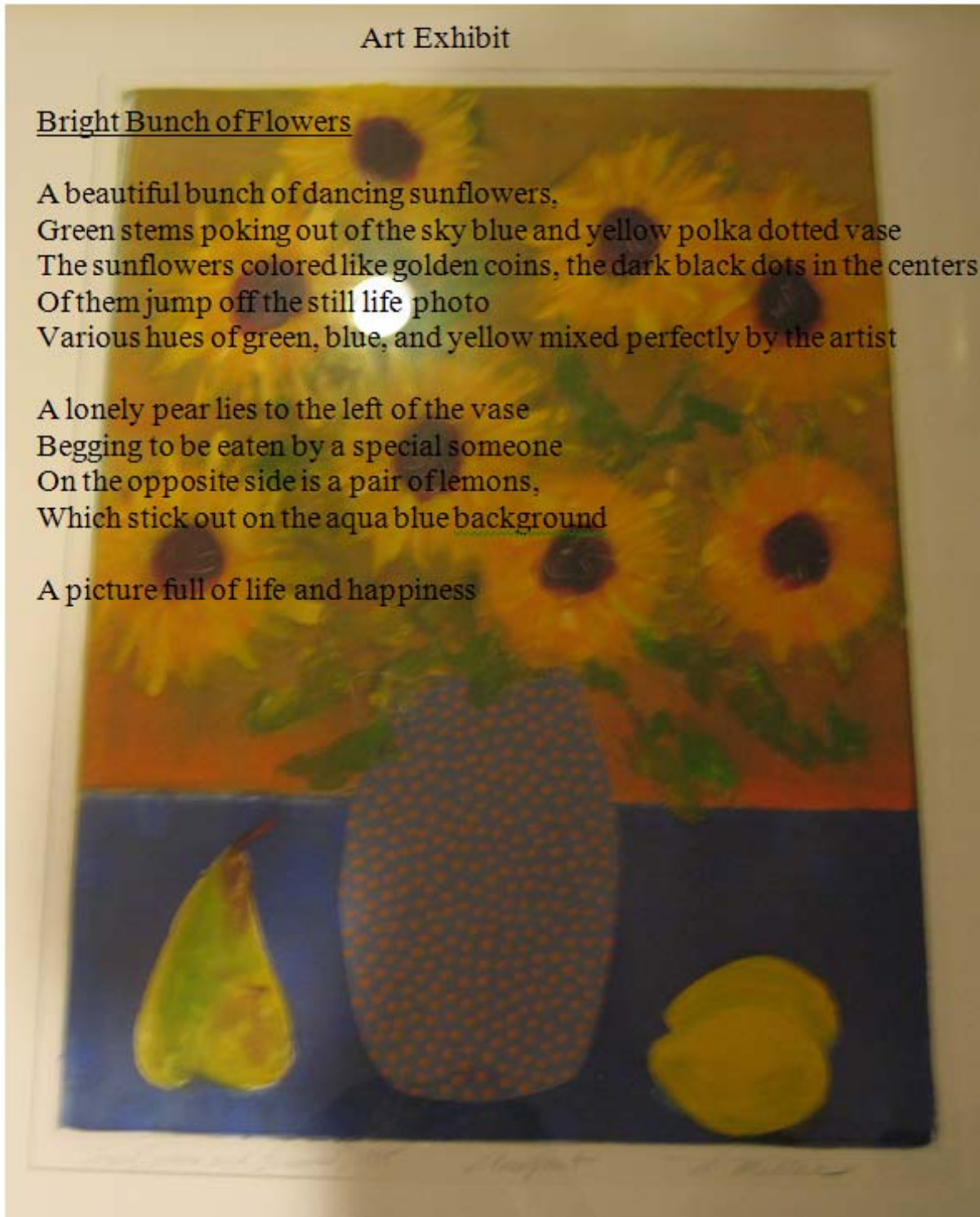
Art Exhibit

Bright Bunch of Flowers

A beautiful bunch of dancing sunflowers,
Green stems poking out of the sky blue and yellow polka dotted vase
The sunflowers colored like golden coins, the dark black dots in the centers
Of them jump off the still life photo
Various hues of green, blue, and yellow mixed perfectly by the artist

A lonely pear lies to the left of the vase
Begging to be eaten by a special someone
On the opposite side is a pair of lemons,
Which stick out on the aqua blue background

A picture full of life and happiness



"Car Crash" by Cara Moynihan, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Car Crash

One last thought
A flashback
Before the crash
The air bag explodes
I scream
The car skids
Sparks spit out of the engine
The whole world
Spinning in circles
Until I come to a halt
My vision blurs
I can hear the siren
The pain settles in
I roll my head to the side
And give in to the darkness



“Grandpa” by Nicole Poirier, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Grandpa

He sits there
In his worn recliner
Reading the sports section in the Boston Globe newspaper
Eyes glued
Glasses perched
Glasses perched on nose
Then looking out
Onto his world
With a lake to fish on
The sun shining to wake him up
To begin another morning
One after another
Days go by
Still watching
His beloved lake
Like a time machine
Bringing him back to his childhood
Fishing with his father
On an old, color washed boat
With worn, beat-up paddles
That still took him
On the shimmering lake
In Canada
Waiting patiently and quietly
For the fish to be caught

“The Misfit” by Joe Rockwell, Wood Hill, Grade 7

The Misfit

I dance when others sing.
I sing when others dance.
I’m a fruit loop in a world of cheerios.
I’m a white chocolate in a Hershey’s factory.
I’m not like everyone else.
I am myself and I’m ok with that.

“Bloody Walls” by Zyel Silva, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Bloody walls

I sit there
 Waiting for it to be over
 Words being yelled at me
 And they think I’m listening
 But I’m really not
 The only words I hear are
 Bad, bad, bad
 I feel the words
 Passing through me
 And cannot do anything...
 And then
 “Zyel are you listening?”
 I always respond with a yes
 Finally they all be quiet...
 I run to my room
 Punch my walls as I do everyday
 Sometimes the blood gushing from my hand
 Feels nice
 And then I take a nap
 For the rest of the day
 Until the next day
 When it all starts again...

“Imagine” by Gianna Truchon, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Imagine

She sits there leaning back
 In the old red chair
 Listening to the rhythm of the cars
 And the tweets of the birds
 She closes her eyes and
 Imagines fields of perfume
 Scented flowers
 Dreaming about her childhood
 Playing with her siblings
 Never moving a muscle

“Sewing Machine” by Gianna Truchon, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Sewing Machine

Behind the old fashioned gray sewing machine
Sat an old wrinkled smiling face
Her frail hands lightly pushing pink
Fabric through
A slight push on the pedal
With her strawberry shoes
The click, click, click of the machine
That sewed yards and yards of fabric
In its' life



"Inspiration" by Sophie Uluatam, West Middle, Grade 7

Inspiration

The first day
I was unsuspecting
I walked into that room
I smelled the melted crayons
I watched the dripping paint
drip
drip
drip
out of it's can.

Day two
my oblivion was less.
I saw you for the first time.
Still
I did not know it would be you
who changed my life.

Day three
and I knew.
I saw you for what you really are
to me.
I saw you
as my motive.
As my inspiration

Those weeks went by all too fast.
Then I left.
But it was almost like *you*
were the one
who
left.
And with you
went
inspiration.

"The Little Things" by Sophie Uluatam, West Middle, Grade 7

The Little Things

I breathed in the cool, mountain air.
It was refreshing.
It awakened my mind.
I straightened my slick skis
and I began to slide.
Down
Down
Down the giant,
racing over its icy coat.
And the faster I went
down that mountain
the more I felt
like I was gliding
on air.

Now I am trapped in a room
that reeks of putrid sweat.
Tendrils of moisture wrap around my limbs.
And all the while I am hearing
the odious comments
made by my peers
who watch me trip head over heels
as I scramble for a basketball.
Again.

But as I sit on the floor
having fallen once more,
I remember the howling mountain wind
and my skis coasting over the crystal snow.
Suddenly I don't care about my incompetence.
I know I am talented at other things.
These thoughts remind me that
it is the little things
that we love
that give us the strength
to get through life.

"But Why" by Michelle Yamnitsky, Wood Hill, Grade 7

But Why

Why the Barking dog
In the ringing ear
That has been through enough?

Obsessing over pointing that
Yellow confession light at me
Over and over again

Getting the truth to come
From something
I didn't do

Expecting so much more,
More than what I have been
Doing?

Their mouths move like children
Dancing,
Pushing me out of their way,
Annoyed at me for no reason,
Is that why?

Then watching my worn out face
Clash against a pillow,
time and time again?

Responsible?
Nicer?
Their voices echo loudly
I try, I do
They blame it on me though

“Hand in the Wrong Hand” by Michelle Yamnitsky, Wood Hill, Grade 7

Hand In the Wrong Hand

Hand in hand
My fingers in your fingers
Not alone

But I find your hand in the wrong hand
Not mine

Your fingers intertwining with
Pink nail polish I would never wear,
Not me

Hands on eyes
Cupped over face
Leaning over knees
Fingers dripping with salty tears
Face aching with sorrow
me

“A Summer Shower” by Qiqi Zhang, Wood Hill, Grade 7

A Summer Shower

A summer rain
Is like a shower-only different
It's the oddball
The Clifford out of dogs
The warm out of the cold

But the only way to make it right again
Is to run right into the rain
Let it pour on you

Until the sun cuts through
Slicing and cutting
Until the rain is gone
Just gone
Until the next time-
Next time something dares to be different

High School Top Honors

1st Place

“Reminiscence” by Lauren Nastari, Andover High, Grade 12

Reminiscence

She presses her sweaty palm against the sharp glass
as if rubbing it against the shards would fix it,
back and forth, back and forth
like the hands of a clock,
slowly forgetting the time.

Remember when?
The little finger-tips
would shakily clutch the green crayon
and the wax would melt off the paper
crying tears of shiny scribbles
but no one knew that the maze of lines
made up a picture.

Just like no one knew
that the sounds of the howls
disturbing the night,
were not animals at all.
And crayons weren't the only thing
she broke in half
when the drawings appeared too childish.

Questions are like little pieces,
bits sliced up to create easy-to-swallow foods
although no one was there to do that
or to tear the green crayon from her red little hand
before it ripped across the paper
and drew another picture

2nd Place

“green minivan, green children” by Rachel Aldrich, Andover High, Grade 12

green minivan, green children

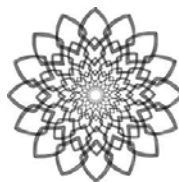
You drive too fast in your mother's car,
 Hands sweating, glued to leather,
 Circle toward the light.
 You hold her hand
 And I hold my own—
 And my tongue, I hold that too,
 Twisted tight against the roof of my mouth—
 And your words curl over,
 One, two,
 (blinker 500 feet, slow to stop, parking brake,)

and by then all you've said to me is useless,
 whispered words, promised at midnight, gone, all gone:
 tumbling out open windows
 and left behind on the glistening pavement
 —for the mist has fallen by now,
 over the town, streetlights
 catch the darkness
 in droplets over the canopy of pines—

so I slip outside,
 cold feet, cold ground,
 leaving you
 and your light, your *everything*
 within your warm glow in the front seat.

3rd Place**"Silence" by Connie Cung, Andover High, Grade 9*****Silence***

Through the bustling halls filled with others, Who would mock me for any sign of weakness. I smile to release myself: From those who have judged me, From those who have expectations of me, From those who have hurt me. Each day passes But nothing changes. Scurrying through the halls, I get a glimpse of you. You stand there with no frown, no smile, no emotion. I pass by but was stopped by a tug of my sleeve. You looked at me, Nor did not speak But I heard you. You, a stranger, tells me what I want to hear. Those words I've read in stories, Those words I've heard of, Those words I've never believed in. Through all the chaos and noise, you heard me.



High School Honorable Mention Awards

“To Dear” by Sophie Combs, Andover High, Grade 10

To Dear

Sometimes he'd pick through her diaries—scruffy pieces
 of paper pulled loose from their bindings— and implore
 “This? This?”

He held the bundles of parchment as if wads of cash he couldn't spend,
 so one wouldn't consider him rich in that regard, yet it was
 treasure enough to immerse himself
 in.

His companion would trace the strips of words...
 prose that looped in intangible ribbons, gnarled
 as roots, brittle as wintered branches...
 then confirming or denying.
 “Is this his too?”

Yes or no.

When it wasn't, the pages almost glittered with jewels of words haphazardly
 littered,
 the scribbles of lonely love poems, intelligible nonsense and whatever else her sister
 —his wife—
 had wrote.

The presence of the Other Man, clinging to similar strokes and stabs
 of the pen, riddled with similar emotions,
 was stark and wholly different
 the entries cut clean like surgery,
 infected
 mined.

“Is this him?” Sometimes it was, otherwise not.

Now in relapses of memory
 —misery—
 he was forced to confide in the only company available:
 the sister who never married. She was more valuable to him than
 the journals themselves, after all, what are ancient runes
 without a translator? If you cannot make sense of your own treasure
 map

So,
 the least lovely daughter would digest the scrawled text; puckered throttled bruised
 from years of fingerprints, with phrases that balanced on the surface like bobs or else
 bled through
 as passion tends to do.

She answers, “I can tell it's about him,”
 or “No, she wrote this for you.”

Sometimes he'd ask just so she'd scream "She loved you,
Richard! She did!" And whoever else as well. But
while diaries, so untarnished and absolute are lasting, both
those who wrote and those who read them are not.
In his old age
the widowed man
quelled. Came
loose from his bindings in pieces
puckered throttled bruised
gnarled as roots, brittle as wintered branches.
He learned to bury his treasure.
Only sometimes he demands "this?" so
the least lovely sister would cry "yes
she did,
but I swear I love you more."

“this is our summer” by Rachel Aldrich, Andover High, Grade 12

this is our summer

It’s one of those moments where you can taste the humidity,

sour and damp in your mouth, □

roll it over your teeth □

or □

pinch it in the air,

a dab underneath yellowing nails with chipped paint and edges gnawed by teeth

(a common misconception is that beavers chew logs for food, when really, they’re just trying to find some shelter) □

And one day, there might be nothing left except an empty, naked finger. But the point is, it is everywhere—

And it crawls with tired, lazy hands and tired, lazy feet all over everything □

tracking

its

quiet,

torturous □

heaviness through the windows, drowning and choking a line of plants by the glass panes □

(that’s how they got their names, after all, □

from destroying beautiful things) □

and it will wrap its little damp hands— □

although it is too small to have hands and to honestly do any damage with them—

around your neck... □

reaching... □

and you, the plant, the life, anything with any sort of inner luminosity, knows inherently that it is safe,

but somehow it still feels like suicide □

to not struggle a little and to not fight for oxygen untouched by heavy devil hands—□

Beelzebub as water, not a pig's head nor a horned beast.

But anyway, the air turns heavy and falls into the sea, angry and churning and blue blue cerulean blue like a blue bonnet or a blue bird or a recycling bin,□

(because the ocean is, after all, a massive receptacle for condensation in breath, for rainwater, for tears and for tares and for emptied gallon jugs of orange juice)□

the bluest of blues you can see from the sky to behind you and back.□

And the flecks of sun glinting, winking

□ —or you could say twinkling, like lights outside in the coldcoldcold and the white of a whipping winter evening, trudging home on weary feet and even though you're almost apathetic, you see something smiling in the distance and then you're smiling and your teeth are just as white and just as cold as the snow on the ground and the roads and the roofs—

□

closing its eyelids with a crash and opening in the calm, revealing nice little irises of blue.

And that is when you first realize that you are absolutely nothing

Mere nothingness embedded in a wall of sound—□

Birds chirping and grass growing and wind lightly whistling and children screaming and waves crash-crash-crashing—□

And as much as this nothingness is just noise and blue, it's green—□

So green that it hurts and so green that when you walk inside from steeping in the greenness you are stained green and your vision is stained red.

Fabric green at the corners, green at the junctures of your joints and the rims of your edges, green on the floor by the window where you crawled in one night with the crickets chirping behind you like a symphony (they keet-keet-keet all at once, a background hum all night and all nighttime-peripheries), green in your hair and green to the very tip of your nose.

It's green on the trees and the ground, green on the centipedes and green supporting the flowers and berries.

And sometimes it gets so warm that you're standing right on the surface of the sun,
glasses in one hand, □
sunscreen in the other and you wonder when will this end? except that it doesn't, □
there are sun spots and solar flares and it's hotter than the hottest place you can think of, □

sweat stains and bare feet, □

like you took a picture of the world and exposed it for point-zero-zero-one seconds so that everything is
so bright it's almost white.

So you see things like this with the scent of lilies heavy and heady in the air and you think "I am so tiny,
so very small, so insignificant" because everything is so much bigger than you and it's quite literally the
world and you are quite literally a mere fleck, mere nothingness.

It's green, green, green all around you and blue, blue, blue in the sky and in the water and there you are,
this little speck, this little thing with thoughts and ideas and a sunburn □
and you realize you are nothing more than this moment and

this is your summer.