

TOTEM

2010-2011





LA county wildlife #3

by Abigail Green

the cricket in the kitchen
has finally found the light
this morning i saw his silhouette
tracing slow circles in the frosted globe
that mutes the 60 watt bulb

after all the days he spent
singing under the sink
I did not know he had
the same yearning
as the small beasts who leave
the imprints of their soft wings
on the porch light each night

and now this dilemma:
climb onto a chair and release him
or leave him to pace
the harsh glow of his beloved --

who am i to tell him it's false?



Surrounded by alien beings | Digital Photgraphy | Kakani Young

Enchanting Flurry | Digital Photography | Joseph Donovan

By and By

by Max Loewinger

When we were young, and were not wise
While skipping, hunting dragonflies
Out from the grass, I you spied:
You came upon me, by and by

A pretty kite! You exclaimed,
Though not unlike that you had tamed,
But time is long and winds are wide
What is the earth without the sky?

And how, exactly, you to me?
Throw me up, though I'll stay free
But in the air, my talent shows,
In your hold our bounty grows

So then, perhaps we'll stay a bit,
I will fly, and you can sit,
Floating through the warm twilight,
Your gentle pull, your tugging slight

A partnership we can form
The earth is cool, the sky is warm,
And on the earth, you best can see,
The people looking up at me

Yet, grasses grow and polish fades
And in the wind the line now sways
I spy mid-dance, from up above,
You listless on the land you love

So I fade; I bob and spin,
It's now clear, you reel me in,
There is no joy down below,
If I am bouncing to and fro,

So I'll fly low and stay with you
Closer still, though shorter, too
There's nothing left else to try,
What is the earth without the sky?

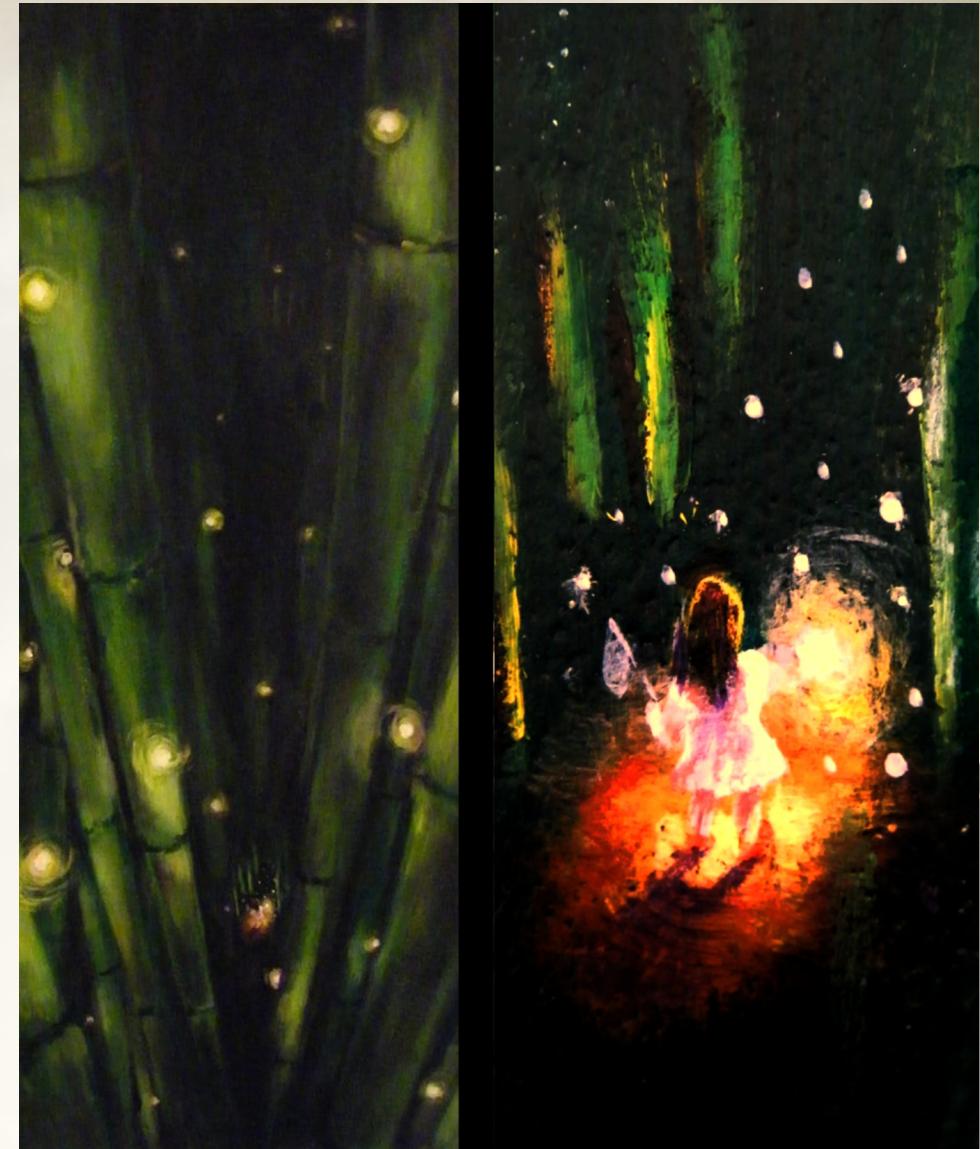
Summer passes and we find,
Much more slack now in the line
Though in sight, you let me fly,
The earth is low, the sky is high

And so you unclench the grip,
Then we feel the feelings slip,
Morning at the end of night,
We cannot find the perfect height

While I float, wary, free
The spinning spool turns and weaves,
The line grows longer and I wince
Bracing, tepid, for its last inch

Suspended, static, held by you
We are tied, now this is true
So then lets fly! Reel me in;
What is the ground without the wind?

But if we cannot sustain this glide:
Well, time is long, the winds are wide
Take one last look up at the sky,
And let me go now, by and by



Untitled | Oil Painting | Irene Yang

Quarter Century

by David Nichols

Seconds that once were unceasing
Became minutes that endured,
Hours that came and went,
And days that disappeared.

[The quotidian no longer distracts
From the fortnightly and seasonal;
Yearly reflections come as easily
As shorter introspections.]

Lessons once quickly forgotten
Turn to memories set in stone;
Patterns appear across the years
When every time scale lengthens.

[Glorifying every sunrise and sunset
Gives way to beatifying
The subtle softness of a fall morning,
The easy clarity of a winter day.]

First attempts at wisdom
Seem far less forced;
Insight creeps into a relaxed,
Open and inquisitive mind.

[The incoherent and the sage
Mix to make mystique;
The ineffable and the invisible
Meld to make poetry.]



Buy Eco-Products | Digital Photography | Joon Young Yoon



Daisies | Digital Photography | Donatela Bellone



Silhouettes | Digital Photography | Donatela Bellone

Because I Love You

by Anonymous

It cannot be another night
Never *just* another night
Not with you
It's never *just* another night

Only with you

But in a minute I will know

The linger of your fingertips
The final brush against your lips

And then I turn
To walk alone

Because I cannot turn

back to see you
until I see you

Because I miss you

Again.

Until again is then another night
(Never *just* another night)
Until again I miss you

and

thoughts
I hold you in my heart safely
prayers

Because, I love you because I love you

Ah, be vain, whirling rain

by *Pedra Rodriguez*

The quiet Californian rain feels like melancholy, especially this late at night. There is a chill through the air, but it is subtle and slight, not intense or bitter. The rain itself is far from those gusty winter storms, real winter storms, of the Northeast; here there is no wind at this dead hour of night, much less any windchill factor. But—and this is what you do not expect—the chill is no less penetrating than a winter storm.

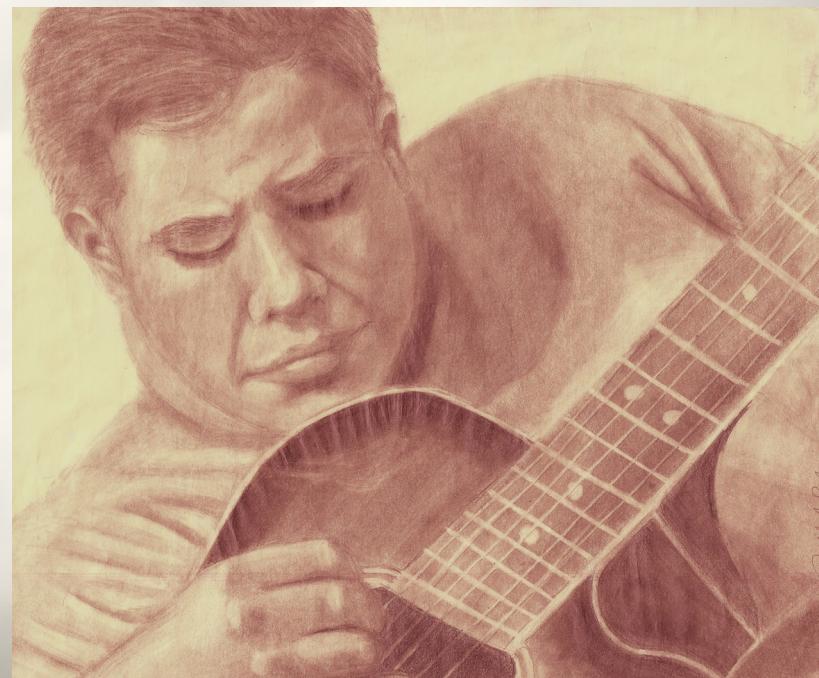
The rain smells like weariness, so innocent but so debilitating, the feeling you get stumbling between the narrow divide of wakefulness and sleep—when you grasp for the last remaining bits of consciousness before realizing that you are grasping from within your dreams. You have already lost.

Watching this rain reminds you of watching wheat fly through a combine harvester, except with the startling difference that everything seems to be on mute. Gone is the familiar fwip-fwip-fwip when the stalks pass through the machine. This sends a shudder through your body—not from the coolness of the night breeze, but from the unfulfilled expectancy of sound. Slightly, slightly, slowly, slowly, up, up through the spine. Why is the rain not more violent? The question goes unanswered; the rain remains as silent as ever, as if mocking your anger.

The only light shining in the night radiates as a halo from one sole streetlamp, and creates an illusion of materializing threads of silver, not water, falling out of—nowhere?—but the saturated thickness of the night itself, onto the damp, damp, slightly more damp tiles of the sidewalk leading back to... somewhere. Maybe, you hope, one day this sidewalk will finally lead back home.



My Little Plants | Pencil | Dahye Song



El Musico | Pencil | Rachel Salaiz

The Tangle

by Anonymous

the smell of red wine and
cigarette smoke fills the scene.
breath saturated with fumes of
whiskey on my tongue

a tantalizing
fear of the mistakes we
keep making.

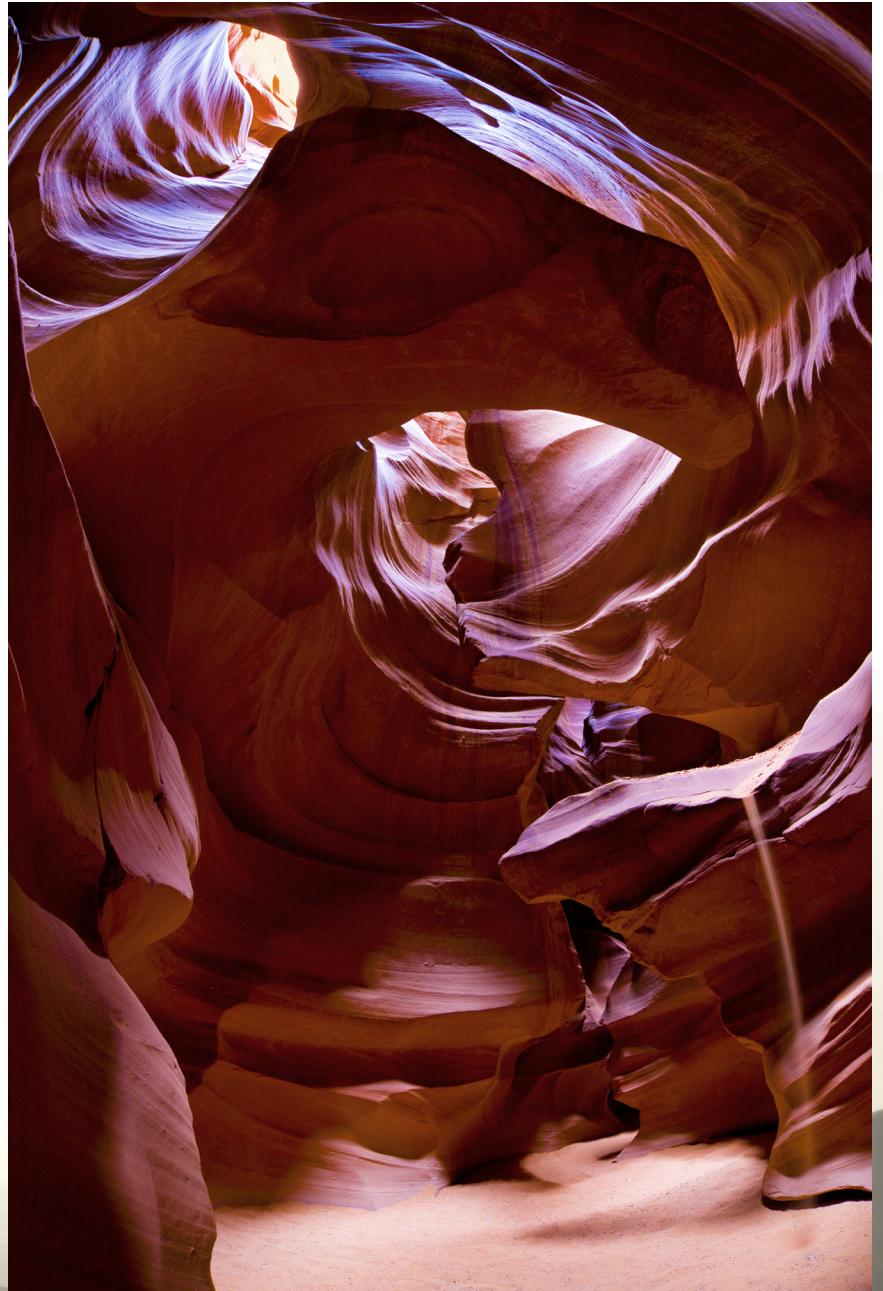
sheets cling to flesh
as beads of sweat adorn my thighs.
exposed and entwined
a hand emerges from the tangle
of limbs and fabric.

but reality always overcomes
this delicate equilibrium – a
shifting of limbs.
fingers unlock themselves
and bodies roll apart.
until all that remains
is the smell of my own perfume;
the faint scent of
your sweat left over on my skin;

and secrets a stranger's
tongue could not comprehend.



Butterfly | Scratch Board | Vicky Tian



Earthly Organs | Photography | Floris Van Breugel



Untitled | Digital Photography | Wubing Ye

A musical evening

by Uday Khankhoje

1

I witnessed a rain drop fall
from the heavens,
to the soft earth
Fleeting existence
infinite vulnerability,
that rain drop was I

2

Sitting under my shade
with the gushing river
keeping drone,
your sitar played
As you elaborated,
I disintegrated
into bits immensely tiny
What mischievous melody
floated in the wind
only you and the river knew
The wind,
drunk in your music
teased my leaves at first
They shivered in delight
then in fright, until
in surrender complete
Riding on this wind

each note swirled around
like the beads on the skirt
of a whirling dervish
You left me no choice
all that was untrue
had to be shed,
and as my leaves
fell at your feet,
the pretty birds
took flight, for
disguised as mischief
your melody was
the song of my soul
Leaves and birds come,
only to go
But you and I
and our music
in this twilight hour
shall be forever

Me

by Peter Buhler

I don't know what possessed me to enter the store
It was little and new, one I hadn't seen before

Upon the quaint red door a bell tinkled on the pane
And after looking all around, I thought I was insane

On each and every endless shelf I could plainly see
A trillion tiny people where the merchandise should be
After the surprise wore off I looked more carefully
Only to receive another shock—all of them were me

There were young mes and old mes
And mes all in between
Happy mes and sad mes
The nice mes and the mean
Quiet mes and loud mes
And mes I'd never seen

The old and gnarly shopkeep hobbled up to me
"Pick out who you want to be, everyone is free"

That made them start to clamor and shout out to me my name
Excited and determined, running after me they came
What a fantastic selection screaming all about
I'd have to pick the happiest, of that there was no doubt

I pondered on my choice for quite a little while
Sat, inspecting all my miniatures running down the aisle
They were wrestling with artistry to try to prove their guile
Scrambling all over me and speaking of their wile
I noticed a special two or three and I began to smile

I plucked off all the stubborn ones as I began to stand
I'd decided which of all of me would be the greatest and most grand

So I left empty-handed, every me upon his shelf
There was only ever one of me who could ever be myself



Self Portrait | Colored Pencil | Dahye Song

The Spider's Web

by Miceala Shocklee

Oh how the green mountains roll but drums do too
and rolling thunder cries behind eyes of blue,
just don't forget the flight young spiders flew.

When war and violence are human allowances
and our distraught has made the elephant's memory dead,
just don't destroy the spider's web.

But do you see the struggle on the briar-scratched slope,
the sweat and the fears that still cry in their hope?
Oh please – don't let go of the spider's web rope.

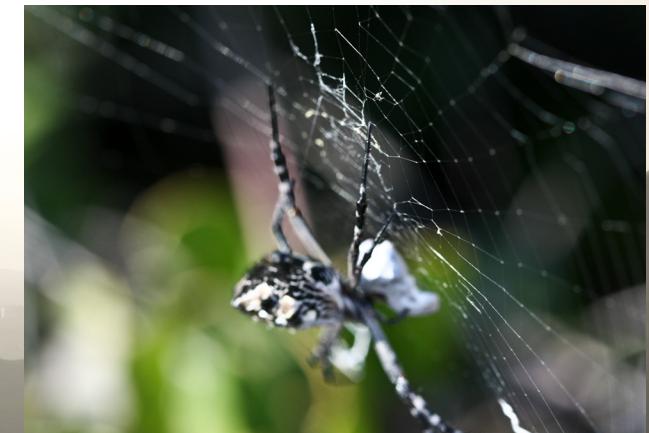
Young hearts, they break and mend again
and will we cower or defy caws to bring out the dead?
While all the while the spider's web.

Lying under the laundry as it billows in the breeze
oh yes dear, you may ask as you get on your knees.
Just don't blow away the spider's thread dreams.

To live life with a lemon tree in the front yard,
and make bitter sweet out of bitter hard,
oh softly, we entwine our fingers in the spider's silk shard.



Apoptosis | Digital Photography | Floris van Breugel



Surfing the Web | Digital Photography | Leslie Tongi

Love is like a sad-faced clown

by Aditya Rajagopal

Love is like a sad-faced clown,
With salty tears that tumble down,
Her face, as they paint the world with cheer,
Trying to banish that awful drear.

Every day she prepares to play,
That false facade, that sweet charade,
Of happiness that can never be,
A wondrous joy that would set her free.

I am like a jester's frown,
Amiss amongst the vibrant life 'round.
Caught in this torrid misery,
Until my love returns to me.

I lived, I loved, I was her crown,
Yet, she left me and this town,
For that seductive tempter and his ilk,
Thinking greener pastures of that filth.

Now I hope to find that thug to strike,
He who stole my love, my life.
And so I famish, filled with tears,
With loneliness that only her heart could clear.



The angry swan | Digital Photography | Richard Wang



Almost Spring | Digital Photography | Donatela Bellone



Depths of My Eyes | Pencil | Stephany Lai

The Slippery Slope

by Perrin Considine

It was not to catch myself, or claw for mercy
but to feel how slippery it was; the kind you touch
for a moment then withdraw your hand; then forget
what it felt like, and must reach once again...

When I reached to pet the lumps in my bed
It was not to make them arch themselves in terror
Or anger, and make them desire to be thrust away into darkness
But because I wanted to tame it; somehow. The thing
That was many things, lying in my bed. The ones
That stole my sleep and made me dead.

Hopping to Harvard

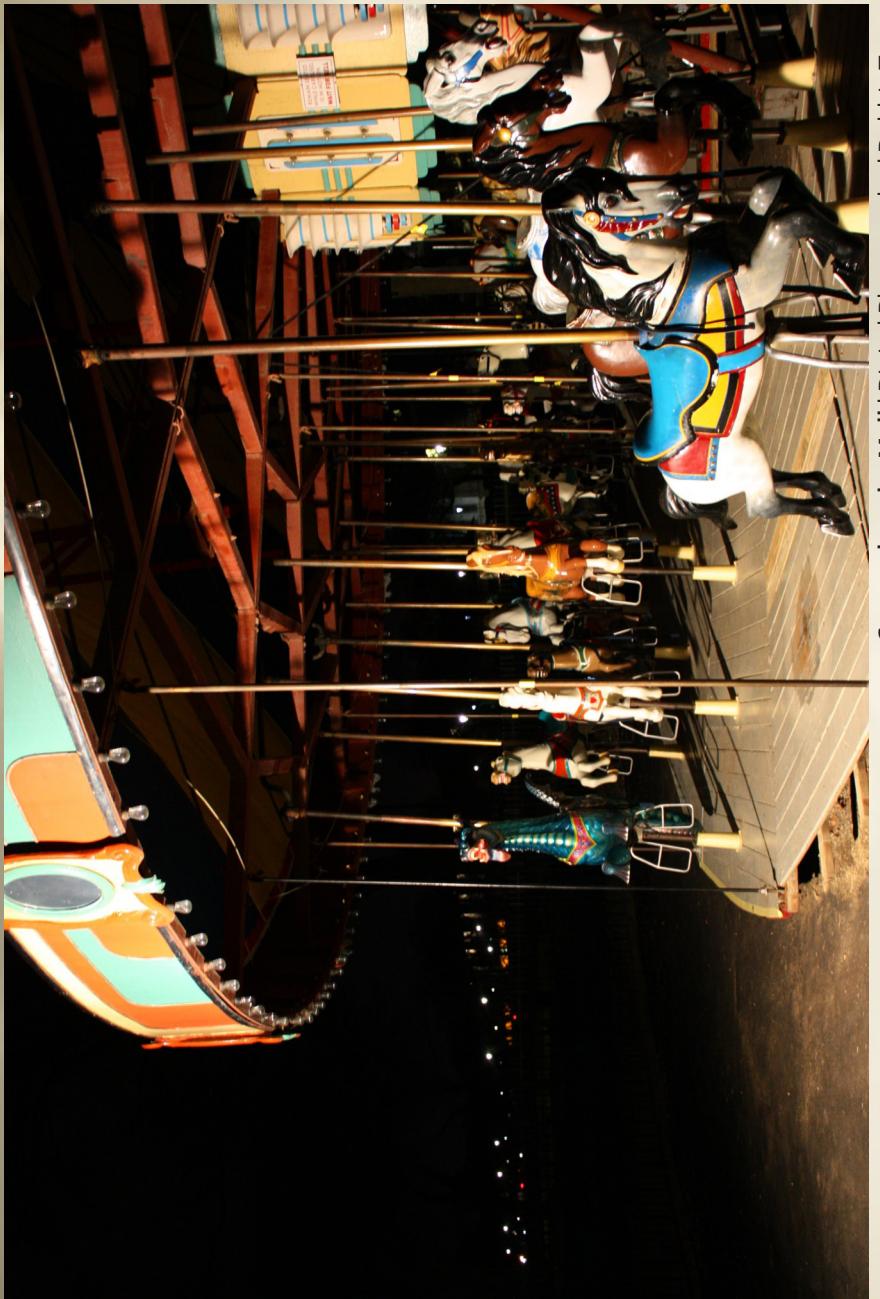
by Peter Buhler

Sang to and scribbled
And scattered aside
Perfectly patient
Picked up and plied
Magnificent marvels
More mixed up inside
Gripping gregarious
A grungy group guide
Tempest too tepid
Twisted, tongue-tied
Hopping to Harvard
Now hoping to hide
Ribald ran raunchy
The rarefied ride
Anything ancient
Accepted? Applied.
Bouncing and boisterous
A Brahman belied
Wassailing watched it:
Warmed it worldwide
Cantankerous kitten,
Can Country collide
Did David deliver?

Did Daphne decide?
Nearly Nantucket
November denied
Lovingly lasting
Glad you never lied

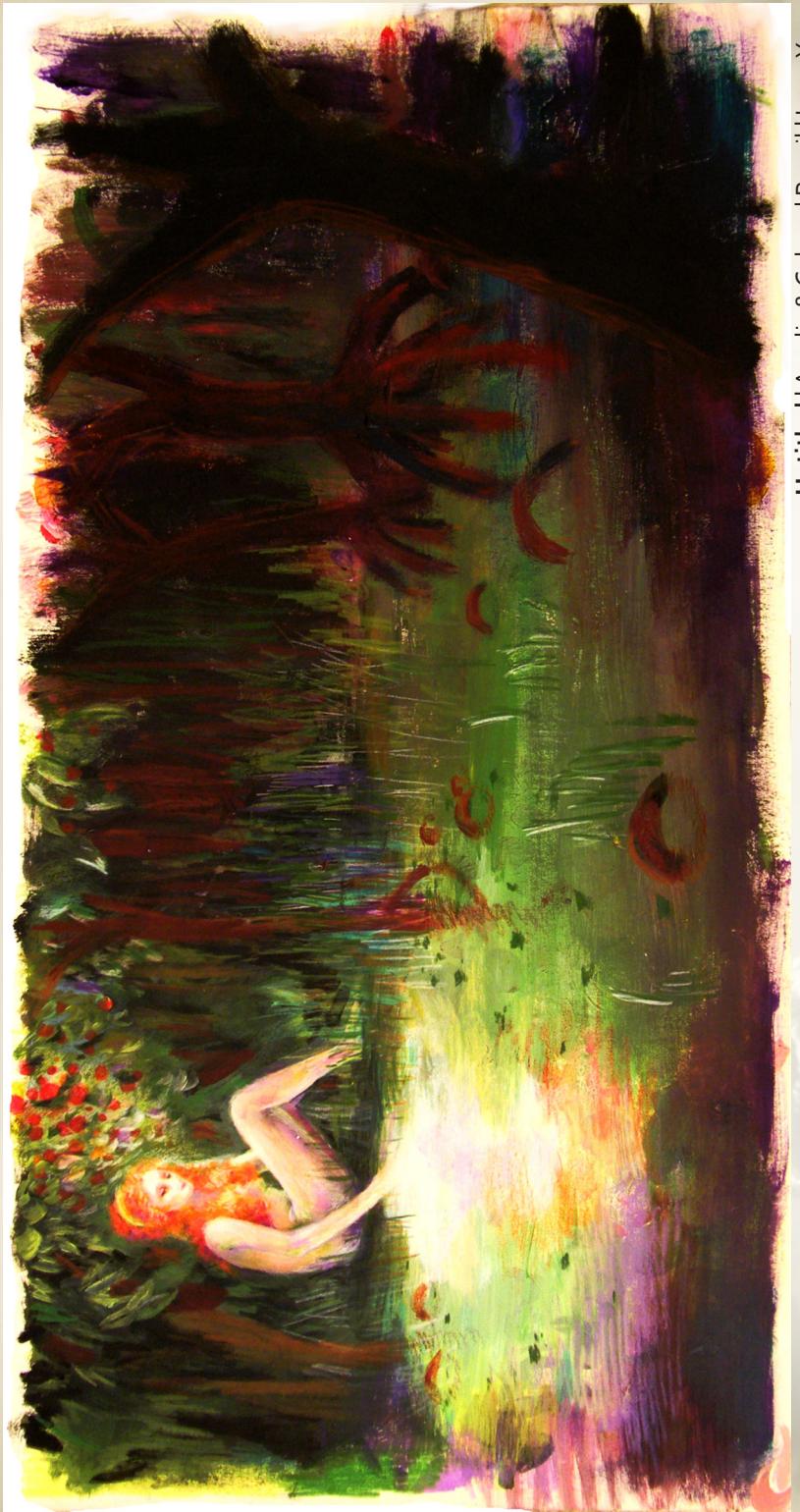


Dream Magritte | Sculpture (Face Cast) | Shiyi 'Teresa' Liu



Carousel on the Mall | Digital Photography | Debbie Tseng

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Independence Day 11	● 12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	○ 26	27	28	29	30	31
						july



Untitled | Acrylic & Colored Pencil | Irene Yang

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	● 10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	Ranadān 19	20	21
22	23	24	○ 25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

august

Song of Days

by Travis Schalven

When the rays of the newborn day crest the hills,
And the dewdrops slowly fade away,
I rise from my slumber to begin anew.
When the sun grazes its zenith,
And the hours stretch before me,
The weariness finds its way into my bones.
When the days run to their end
And the night falls on the silences,
My heady weights resolve to their essences.
When the moon rises in its song
And the winds wash on the hills,
The lonely sounds travel in their whispering ways.



Eastern Screech Owl | Digital Photography | Fleuris van Breugel

S

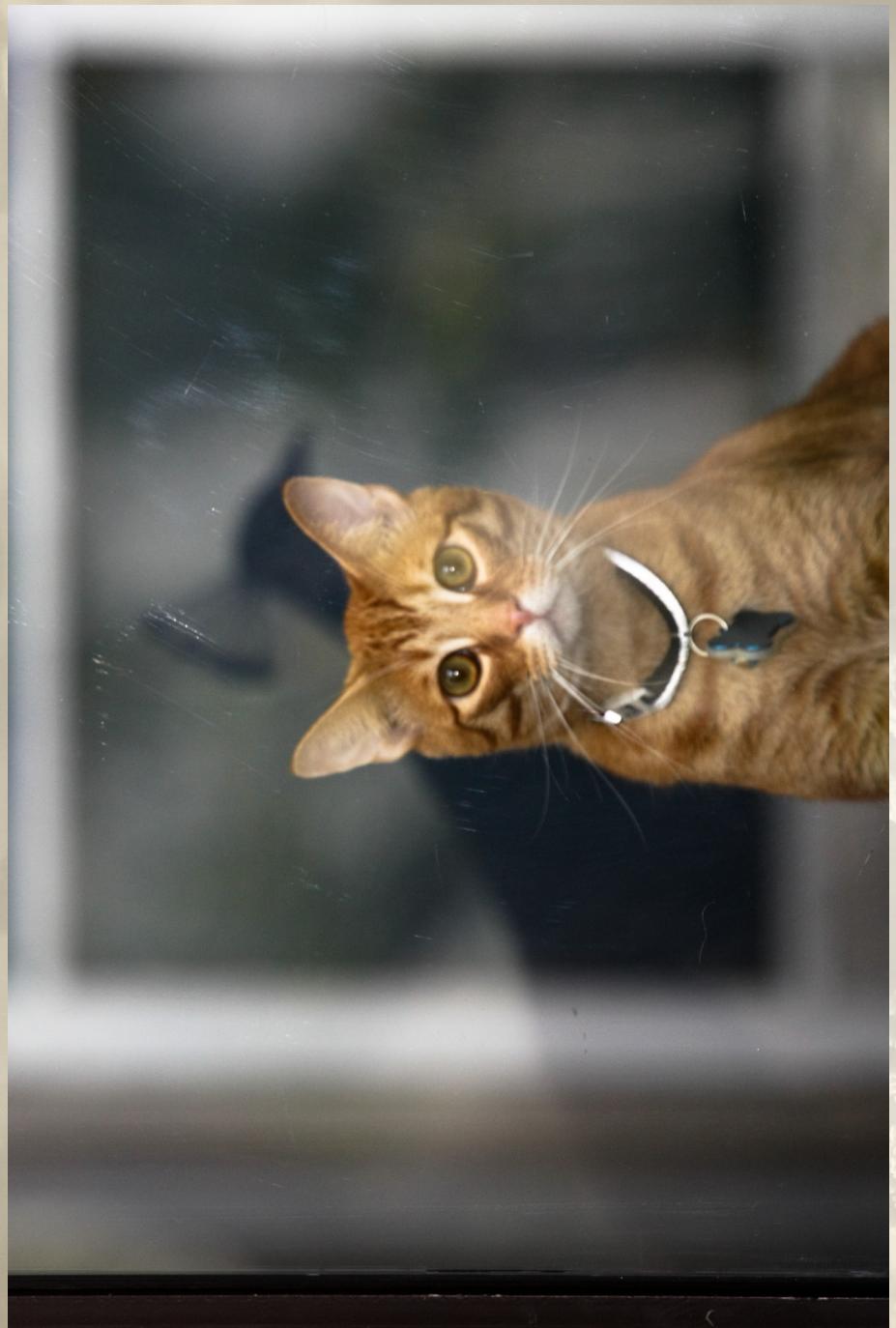
T

W

F

S

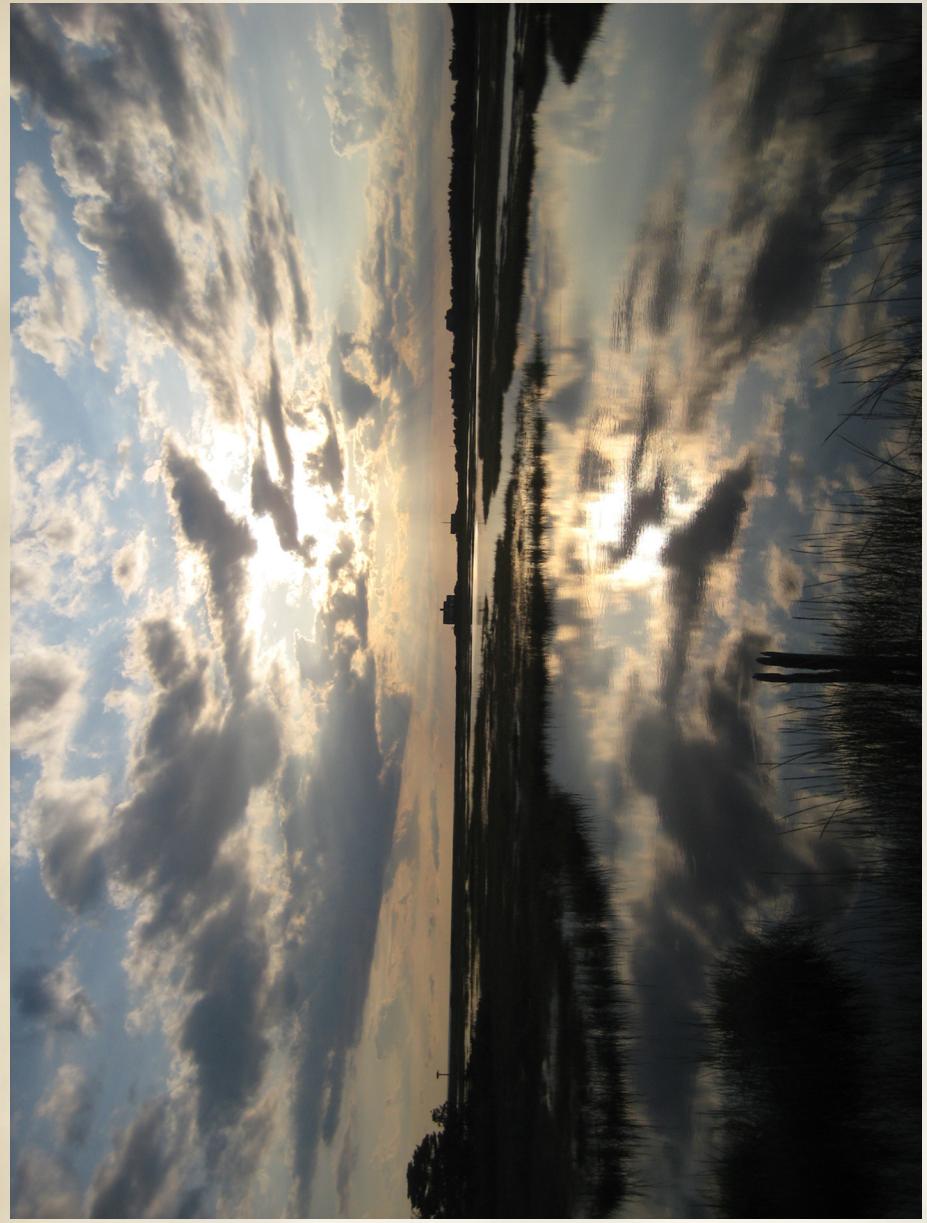
	1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	● 9	11
12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	○ 24
26	27	28	29	30	New Students Orientation Ends
					Fall Term Begins
					International Students Pre-Orientation Ends
					Patriot Day
					Yom Kippur (sundown)
					september



Reflecting on a Peacock | Digital Photography | Leslie Tong

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	● 8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	○ 23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
						Hallowe'en
						Midterm Exams Begin
						31

October



The sun paints the earth and water | Digital Photography |Kakani Young

S M T W T F S

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	All Saint's Day	Midterm Exams End	10	11	12	13
8	Daylight Savings Time Ends	9	16	17	18	Veterans Day
14	15	17	18	19	20	Registration for Winter Term Begins
21	○ 22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30		Thanksgiving Day		

november

Thunder Claps and Trees

by Uday Khanhiae

A tall leafy tree
is what I wish to be
with feet on the ground
and thoughts in the abound
a gentle breeze makes me fickle
as I shed my leaves in his tickle
my lover though, is the rain storm
I sense his arrival with winds strong
powerless, delirious, oblivious, I sway
finally I can take no more of this foreplay
wet is my bosom and joyful my dissolution



Caltech in the Red | Non-Visible Light Photography | Thomas A. Prince

S M T W T F S

	1	2	3	4		
5	● 6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Al-Hijra (Islamic New Year)	15 Final Examinations Begin	16 Hanukkah Ends (sundown)	17 Fall Term Ends	18
19	20	21 ○	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Christmas Eve	Christmas Day
					New Year's Eve	
					Kwanzaa Begins Boxing Day	

December



Black and White | Digital Photography | Aleks Palathnik

S M T W T F S

2	3	4	● 5	6	7	8
9	10	Winter Term Begins	11	12	13	14
16	17	18	19	○ 20	21	22
23	24	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	25	26	27	Add Day
30	31				28	29

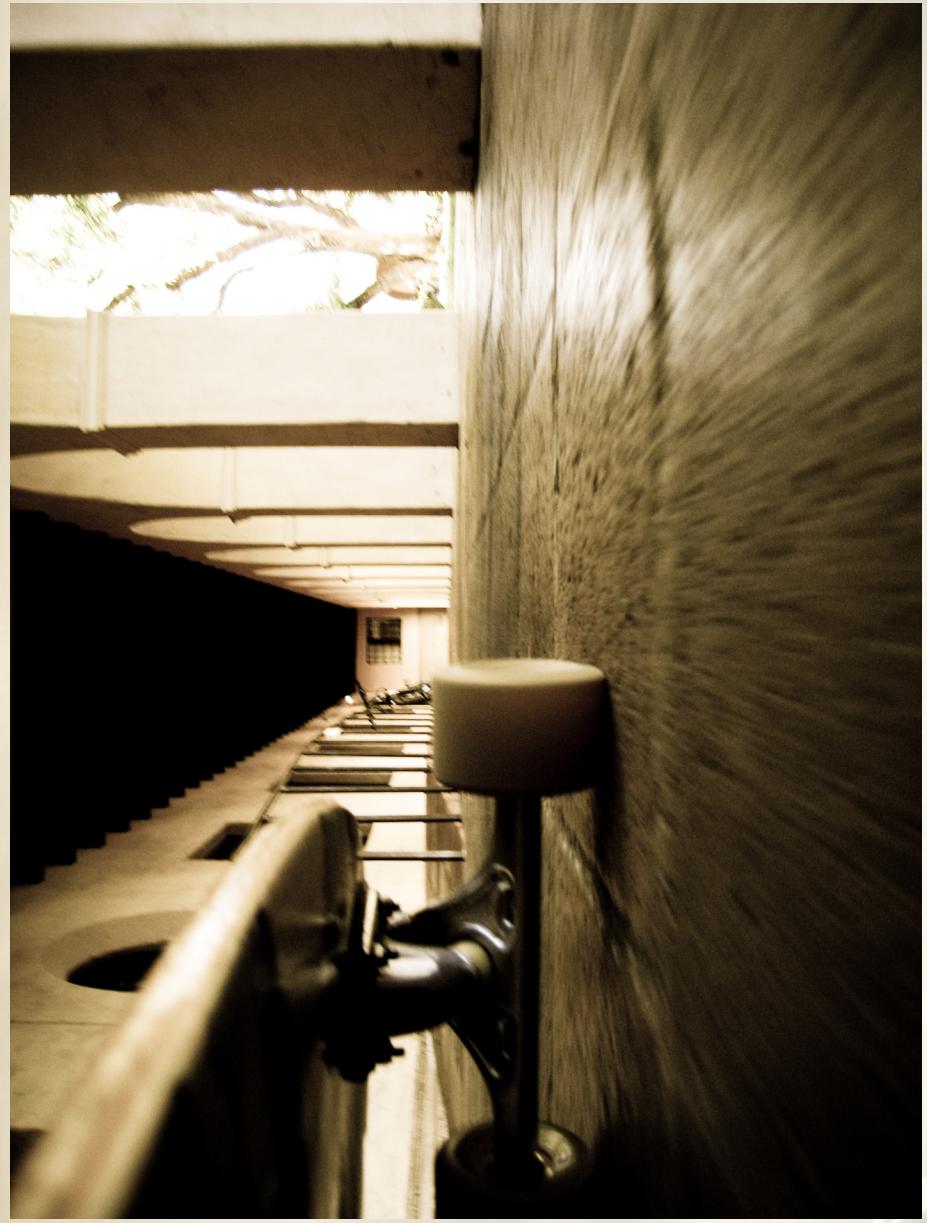
january



Inferno's Globe | Digital Photography | Joseph Donovan

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	● 3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	○ 19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28			Drop Day	Registration for Spring Term Begins	

february



Longboard Motion | Digital Photography | Richard Gianforte

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Ash Wednesday
Last Day of Classes for
Winter Term

Mardi Gras

Daylight Saving Time
Begins

Final Exams Begin

Winter Term Ends

St. Patrick's Day

Spring Term Begins

March

Listen to the rain

by Emily Kim

When you cry,
fairies of sympathy are born in your teardrops
and flow into your heart.
There is nowhere else they can survive
in this dry world.

When the world cries,
fairies are free to move into raindrops
and spread over the world.
They live in the raindrops, the teardrops
of the world.

When the world cries,
raindrops are loud
yet soothe your mind.
They carry fairies voicing your sympathy
to the world.



Bubbly | Acrylic | Stephany Lai

S M T W T F S

3	● 4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	○ 18	19	20	21	22	23
Palm Sunday	Passover (sundown)				Earth Day Good Friday	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Easter			Midterm Exams Begin			

april



JPL | Digital Photography | Wubing Ye

S M T W T F S

1	2	● 3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		Midterm Exams End		Cinco de Mayo		
15	16	17	○ 18	19	20	21
	Mother's Day		Drop Day	Registration for Fall Term Begins		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31		Last Day of Classes for Spring Term (SENIORS/GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY)		
			Memorial Day			

May

Instant Coffee

by Peter Nuhler

The wet newspaper pasted itself to the window
And obscured her view of the people on the sidewalk
Pitifully clutching their cheap, folding umbrellas
Mired in their own tedious agendas
Headless of the turgid river flowing into potholes
That they steered their Saabs and Jaguars through
Sending streaming geysers onto the wretched pedestrians

She looked down into her instant coffee
And watched the bitter brown brew swirl aimlessly
She wiped off the scarlet stain her lips had made
And decided that she hated her little three-walled fortress,
The hideous gray pattern on her cubicle,
The incessant phones and the lifeless recirculated air
So she raised her perfect little white ceramic mug
And dumped the contents unceremoniously into her keyboard

She stood up quickly and walked away
Off to her cozy, two-story house in the suburbs
To tell her husband the good news: she'd been fired



Chill | Digital Photography | Dongkook Lim

S

T

W

T

F

S

	1	2	3	4
5	Final Exams Begin (SENIORS)	8	9	Last Day of Classes for Spring Term (UNDERCLASSMEN)
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

june

Sonnet of a Scientist Saddened

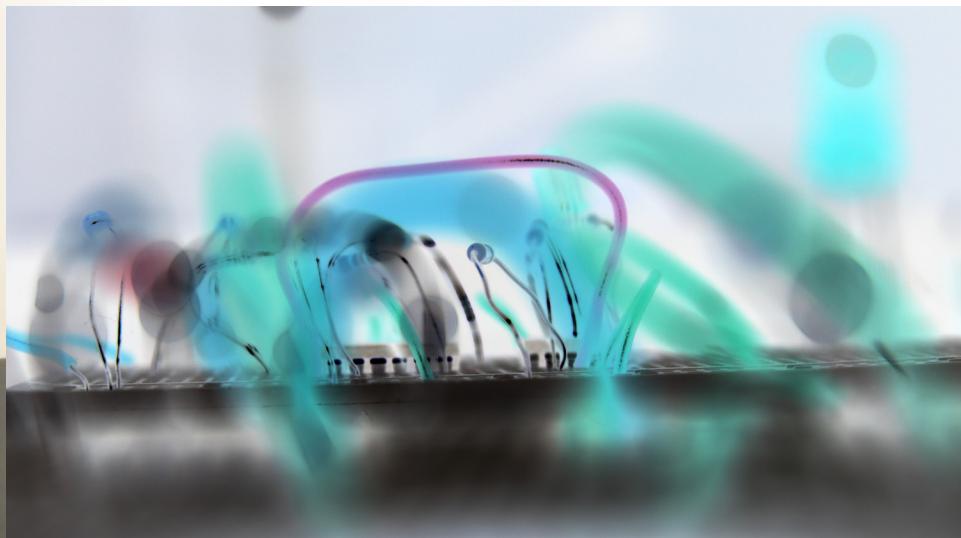
by Casey Glick

When you broke my heart, it cleaved in two
The fractured shards a pain, now we're apart.
Despite declaring you wished it were not true,
You were the plane of weakness in my heart.

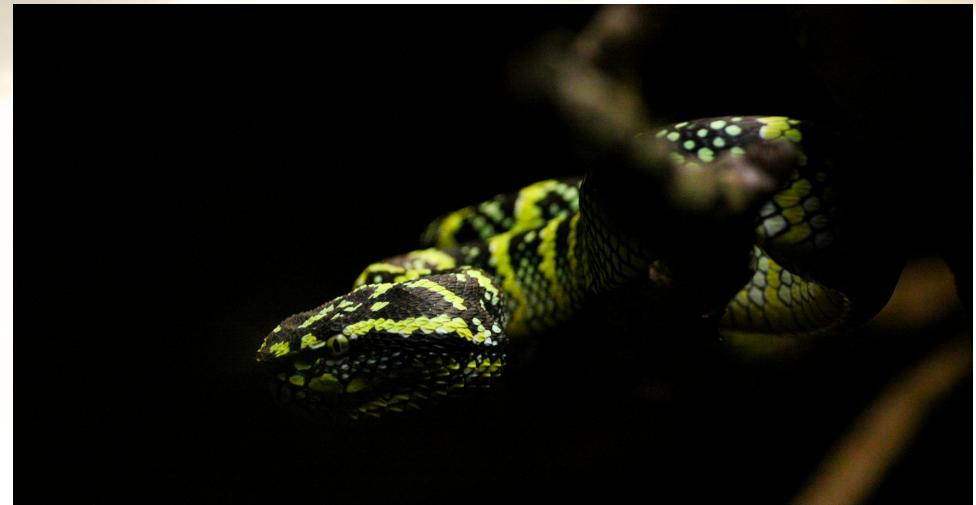
I thought we were a complementary pair,
You the complex conjugate to me,
But now it seems that I'm the worse for wear
Due to a sharp discontinuity.

I do not know if I can take the strain;
My tensile strength cannot survive this spell;
Of tidal forces causing endless pain,
As I escape my deep potential well.

My chemistry's imperfect, for I'm full
Of *aqua regia* eating at my soul.



Chebyshev Filter | Digital Photography | Lauren Kendrick



Poise | Digital Photography | Leslie Tong

Authors & Artists

Donatela Bellone | Peter Buhler | Perrin Considine | Joseph Donovan
Richard Gianforte | Casey Glick | Abigail Green | Lauren Kendrick
Uday Khankhoje | Emily Kim | Chethana Kulkarni | Stephany Lai | Dongkook Lim
Shiyi 'Teresa' Liu | Max Loewinger | David Nichols | Aleks Palatnik
Thomas A. Prince | Aditya Rajagopal | Pedro Rodriguez | Rachel Salaiz
Miceala Shocklee | Travis Scholten | Dahye Song | Vicky Tian | Leslie Tong
Debbie Tseng | Floris van Breugel | Richard Wang | Irene Yang | Wubing Ye
Joon Young Yoon | Kakani Young

Totem Staff

Ioana Aanei | Kimberley Ho | Michelle Jiang | Emily Kim

Professor Kevin Gilmartin

Sandhya Chandrasekaran | Stephany Lai | Shiyi 'Teresa' Liu
Miceala Shocklee | Melissa Xu

Sponsors

Susan Davis & the HSS Department | Student Affairs

Back Cover: The Monarchs | Digital Photography | Floris van Breugel

