



Literary & Visual Arts Magazine

Cabbages & Kings

70th



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PROSE:

Superman At 40	4
Dream A Little More	6
The Weight Of Memory	12
Virtues	18
Fade To Blue	22
The Feline Hammer Throw And The Car Of Eternal Stench	31
Bloody Jeans	34
Fur	57

POEMS:

Musings Of Annihilated Intellect	11
It Bleeds	32
Tejano	33
Going Home	42
I Hope We Die	46
Before Giving Thanks	50
Where Is My Son (Villanelle)	52
For A Reaper, They Reaped	54

ART:

Piano Keys	5
Maturity	8
Moonlight	13
Jellyfish	15
Oasis	17
Eagle w/ Books	19
Electra Complex	20
Skyscraper	23
48 Otters	25
Eye	27
Zombie	29
Things	35
Turtles	37
New Vice	39
We Love the Spice Girls	40

Big Dog

43

Amelia Earhart

45

Screw Off

47

Friends

48

Heroes & Villains

51

Cold Stone

53

Caroline

55

The Sands of Time—Interregnum

58

Bio-Luminescence

61

INTERVIEW:

New York Meets Oklahoma

60

Superman at 40

She closed the front door with the tips of her fingers and sniffed her collar to check for cologne. In the darkness of the entryway, she placed her heels in careful unison beside the door and straightened a pair of men's sandals.

As she passed the living room, her feet laced with pantyhose silent against the floorboards, she saw the faint blue illumination of her husband's face nestled into a couch cushion in front of the television. His eyes were closed. He was naked aside from a pair of loose boxers with a red heart imprinted on the crotch. Soundless images of cartoon rabbits and ducks fighting and exploding on the screen illuminated the pristine packages of superhero collectables scattered across the floor.

She stared at the packages. Her mind fell back to their first apartment. Once a week her husband would come home with a new toy, figure, or comic, and arrange the boxes in a neat row. For hours he would gawk or gaze at a Star Trek original particle-beam phaser or a Wolverine action figure frozen in clamshell plastic. She would lie on him, cradled in his solid arms, and trace the outline of his tight stomach with her fingers as he stroked her hair. She would listen eagerly as he talked about

the day they would sell the goldmine of his collection and move to New York. Kryptonite coursed through her body and centered in her knees, as she shook faint in her Superman's arms.

Now, as she looked at him, his hair-riden belly overflowed his silken boxers, his thick, naked chest heaved up and down and up in laborious breathing, and a tumultuous snore rattled through the empty living room and rang in her ears. She realized he had been exposed. Exposed to air, to late-night potato chips, to stress, to sickness, to long hours, to long naps, to a mortgage, to credit-card debt, and to age.

She pushed a button on the television. With a static sizzle the screen fizzled out, and from the couch her husband's eyes shot open and he let out a deep yawn.

"What time is it?" he asked.

"Eight thirty."

He propped himself up on a chubby arm and said, "you're home kinda late."

"My boss had me filling out forms."

"Oh...You smell nice. New perfume?"

"Yeah," she said.



ASHLEY BOHM, Piano Keys, Charcoal, 18"x24"

"I got some stuff done here."

"Did you sell anything?"

"Well...no, not yet," he said, and then picked up one of his boxes, "but I have a bidder in Houston for this Han Solo with two left hands."

She stood silent, staring at him from the far side of the living room.

"Goodnight," she said.

"I love you," he yawned.

"I know."

• • •

CYNTHIA
ROGERS-HARRISON

Dream a Little More

Wearing her morning smile, Kim heads down the hallway. Roll call is her favorite time of the day.

"Good morning Carl," she says. One.

"Hey Gloria, you're looking mighty nice today." Two.

"Blanche, is your knee bothering you again?" Three. Her youthful legs pick up their pace.

George lies still in his bed lost in a dream. He sees a telephone booth halfway down the block and hopes he can make it there. He's tired. He hasn't sold a single vacuum cleaner all week. He feels disheveled in his worn brown pinstriped suit. Sweat rolls from the brim of his hat and washes his tired face. Cars go by and the sun beats him down even more. As a traffic light changes, a Coke bottle is thrown from a passing car. George steps back and the broken bottle lands near his brown wing-tip shoes.

He stares at it for a moment, puts his heavy suitcase down, and then wipes his face with a white handkerchief.

"Did you see the breakfast menu today?" asks Maggie.

"Yes," Kim answers and winks. Maggie, one of the oldest residents, is usually the first in the dining hall. Today's breakfast is her favorite.

"Sausage, biscuits and gravy. Just like the ones my grandma used to make," Maggie says.

"Yes, I remember," Kim replies. Four.

She's heard that story before. The seniors, whether she loves them or hates them, have so many stories to tell.

Still dreaming, George walks by a bus stop. On the bench, an old man reads. Next to the old man stands a woman talking non-stop on a cell phone. A milk truck pulls up to the curb and a delivery man, dressed in white, jumps out. He hands milk to a pretty young mother who wears a red-and-white gingham apron and waits at the door, a little boy standing at her side. George observes the child, stops, pulls out his wallet and looks inside at a photograph of a young child. A jogger approaches and snatches the wallet from his

hand, then picks up speed. George wants to run after the jogger but instead looks towards the telephone booth, not far away now. He turns and reconsiders the jogger farther away.

Kim looks around for their newest resident, George, who has some of the best stories to tell. Not seeing him, she knocks on his door. No response. She can hear his alarm clock ringing.

George, still asleep, hears the telephone begin to ring. He knows the call is for him. He wants to answer it, but the telephone booth still is too far away. The telephone continues to ring.

Kim opens the door and sees George, lying there, underneath his sheets. She remembers him saying he had little time to rest in the old days, as a salesman, constantly on the go. When he returned home his wife would be standing at the door, their little boy at her side. She always wore an old red-and-white gingham apron. He'd lost them all. It broke Kim's heart. George could sleep a little longer, she thinks. Dream a little more. She turns the alarm clock off. She lowers the window shade, dimming the morning light, and quietly closes the door. Five.

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CORY PAINÉ,

Maturity, Photograph, Nikon D7200
120mm (18-200 mm f/3.5-5.6)

I was driving my old blue car down a rough country road on a bright spring day when my eyes fell upon beauty. I spent an hour getting to know this symbol of yesterday, I loved her and hope to see her again.

MAUREEN

OBERMAN

Musings of Annihilated Intellect

We Strolled the campus, young,
colliding forms, our minds engaged.
Plans, big plans, lavishly shrouded by
blithe bantering and demure debauchery, that
could and would either flourish or falter. Days
now distant and nearly forgotten.

Where is that photograph? I've almost forgotten
how we looked. Our bodies moved, as only the young
dare. His eyes in those days,
bright blue, keenly contemplative, engaged
in collection and convergence. Could he see then, that
our future would be fraught with calamity, spurred by
seduction? I stroked his cheek, wrinkled and faded by
neglect. It was a parade of pants pockets, dusty drawers and forgotten
shoeboxes stored in damp dank basements that
fashioned the rumpled remains. Our young
selves slogged a similar route to disregard. Engaged
in reckless abandon, days
morphed into years of an opiate induced daze.
Surreptitious summoning by

purveyors of poison and illicit elixirs engaged
our simple spirits, normalcy numbed and forgotten.
Fresh faced innocence transformed into young
savage fiends, fighting for anything that

would plug the gaping fissure that
left us hollow. Incapacitated by desire for days
past, grasping for any reminder of our young
hearts now trampled. The lineage of love passed by,
silently reminiscent of forgotten
ambition and integrity. If only the disengaged

musings of annihilated intellect could once again become engaged
in unfettered, uncompromising demands. He knew that
when reclined in halcyon dreams, forgotten
aspirations dissipate and the thought of days
ahead evaporate in fear, loathed by
the very essence of capitulation. The not so young
upstart departed, passing quietly, unnoticed. Except I noticed, the days
void of our hapless camaraderie. Forgotten miscreants piloted by
collective misgivings, engaged in unworldly undertakings of the young.

• • •

JEANA DANAECLOCKSIN

The Weight of Memory

I drank a bottle of wine the morning I left Haiti.

To be clear, I don't make a habit of drinking, especially not in such vast quantities. But that morning, I needed a little fire in my throat to chase the fire in my stomach. And it worked. I didn't shed a tear. Well, at least not on the plane. It wasn't until I flopped onto my painfully comfortable bed in Rochester, New York that the tears came. And still they come.

Why, I've asked myself so many times, why did it turn out like this? Why am I back where I started? A year and a half ago, I thought I basically understood what poverty and faith and joy and pain and love were. I was so ignorant.

I thought I was seeing wrong.

No, I wasn't. There was a man standing in front of the house where I stayed, completely and utterly naked, ebony skin glistening under the relentless Haitian sun. I averted my gaze as I walked by, too ashamed to look him in the eyes. I was offended by his presence, but he was completely unaware of mine. He didn't even flinch under the gaze of the neighbors, who had gathered as onlookers. I went to talk to them. Quickly the man's

story unfolded. Respected teacher from Saint-Marc...went crazy after the earthquake...was taking medicine and teaching again...ran out of medicine...somehow ended up in Gonaives...not in his right mind...And then the neighbors put their heads together to try to feed, clothe, and help him. I think they did, but I never saw that man again.

I knew Roseline was poor; I knew she was only twenty; I knew she was taking care of four orphans. But somehow, the notion was somewhat abstract and glamorously altruistic to me. Then I visited her home. Down this road, down that road, go through the little gate, walk past the sheet metal doors, keep going, there's the sewer, to the left, that little cement square, that's it. Inside was one mattress with some clothes piled on it, a jug of water, some charcoal, a curtain hung here, there, and then a chair.

We sat inside and talked like we weren't in a slum. We talked about our dreams, dreams so much brighter than the room in which we sat. Then I gave her some bread for the kids.

A few days later, Roseline came to my house with a backpack full of mangoes and crackers for me.



OLIVIA DOERR, *Moonlight*, Acrylic, 9"x12"

The stage shook in the wind, and a streak of lighting illuminated its precarious structure. The Haitians at Mont-Blanc had set up the stage on top of the mountain for their church's anniversary service. As they celebrated outside, wind blew to the rhythm of their dancing and thunder harmonized with their singing. They did not stop when the rain came. I longed to be in the rain with them, but they insisted that I couldn't get wet. They seemed to think that I was too delicately American to be in the elements. So I watched from inside a concrete building.

One night after church, I stood waiting outside for someone to walk me home through the dark streets. My friend Wilny came alongside me. As we were leaving, a little boy ran up to us, took our hands, and put them together. He stepped back and smiled at his work. Embarrassed, I disentangled my hand from Wilny's and laughed.

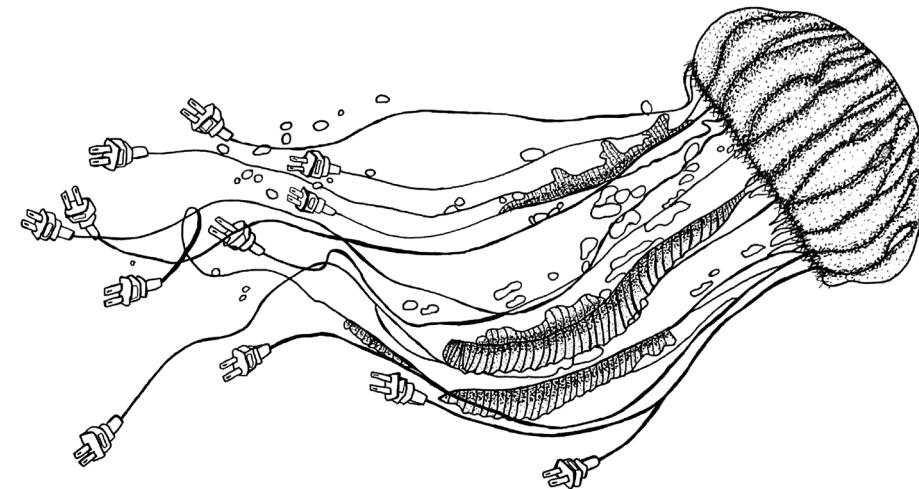
She was the last patient that day at the clinic. Her name was Evlande and she was cringing in pain and obviously pregnant. The doctor started a routine prenatal exam, listening for the heartbeat and feeling for the baby's position. But there was no baby. I translated as the American doctor asked questions and Evlande responded. Years ago, she had seen a doctor who told her she had a small tumor in her stomach. For \$30USD, it could have been removed. Neither she nor anyone else could pay.

Five years later, she stumbled into our clinic pregnant with her massive tumor. She cringed with pain, and she smiled.

Christmas Eve, and I was alone. Everyone in my host's family had left to adventure downtown as all Haitians do to celebrate. Somehow I had been forgotten, or ignored. In the three-story house, there was only me and the servant named Lucy. Roseline showed up. Her eyes flashed with anger when she realized I was alone.

I found myself downtown with her and two other girls, eating pâté and drinking Tampico and ignoring everyone who called me "blàn"—white. Later, when I returned to the house, Wilny came and sat with me on the porch. Outside the gate, the partying continued; inside the gate, two friends spoke. Eventually everyone else came home and he left. But that night I knew that, at least to two people, I was not just a blàn.

Madame Tian and her family lived next to the medical clinic where I translated. In the mornings when I passed by, Madame Tian would always be at her roadside stand selling cookies, candy and notebooks to school kids. She would never let me pass by without giving me something; some crackers one day, a lollipop the next. Once, I brought her some clothes. She held them over her head and danced wildly, moving her large, old body with rhythm and



TAYLOR SHUTTS, Jellyfish, Ink, 17"x11"

joy, shouting, “Mèsi Jezu! Mèsi Jezu!”—
Thank You Jesus! Thank You Jesus!

“You didn’t come here for nothing. Try to
get that into your head. You didn’t come
here for nothing,” Wilny told me once.

I put my head into the water and
opened my eyes: a flounder, a school
of minnows, a king crab. I tilted my
head slightly and saw a dark hol-
low looming just ahead of me. My
breath caught in terror and awe. If I
hadn’t swum to the drop-off, I never
would have seen those fish.

We made a decision. It was not well
received by others. As it turned out, I
was free to love the Haitians, but not
to love a Haitian. To watch them dance
in the rain, but not to dance with them.

Madame Tian greeted me as I passed
by, but not with her usual spunk. As
it turned out, a robber had stolen all
of her money, photographs—even
her Bible. After she told me this, she
raised up her hands and waved them
in the air saying, “Mèsi Jezu!” Thank
you Jesus! After all, as she said, the
robber could have taken her life.

A few weeks before I left Haiti, Evlante
walked from the other side of the
city to say goodbye to me, carry-
ing her tumor and a smile for me.

Madame Tian gave me a few
of the precious photos she had
left to remember her by.

*The last time I saw Wilny was from
the roof of my host family’s house.
He was sitting across the street on a
ledge surrounded by rubble. He was
wearing yellow, light yellow, not the
burning yellow of the sun. I was on
the roof, he was on the ground, and
we saw each other, but we could
not say a word, except through our
phones. It was like I had already left.*

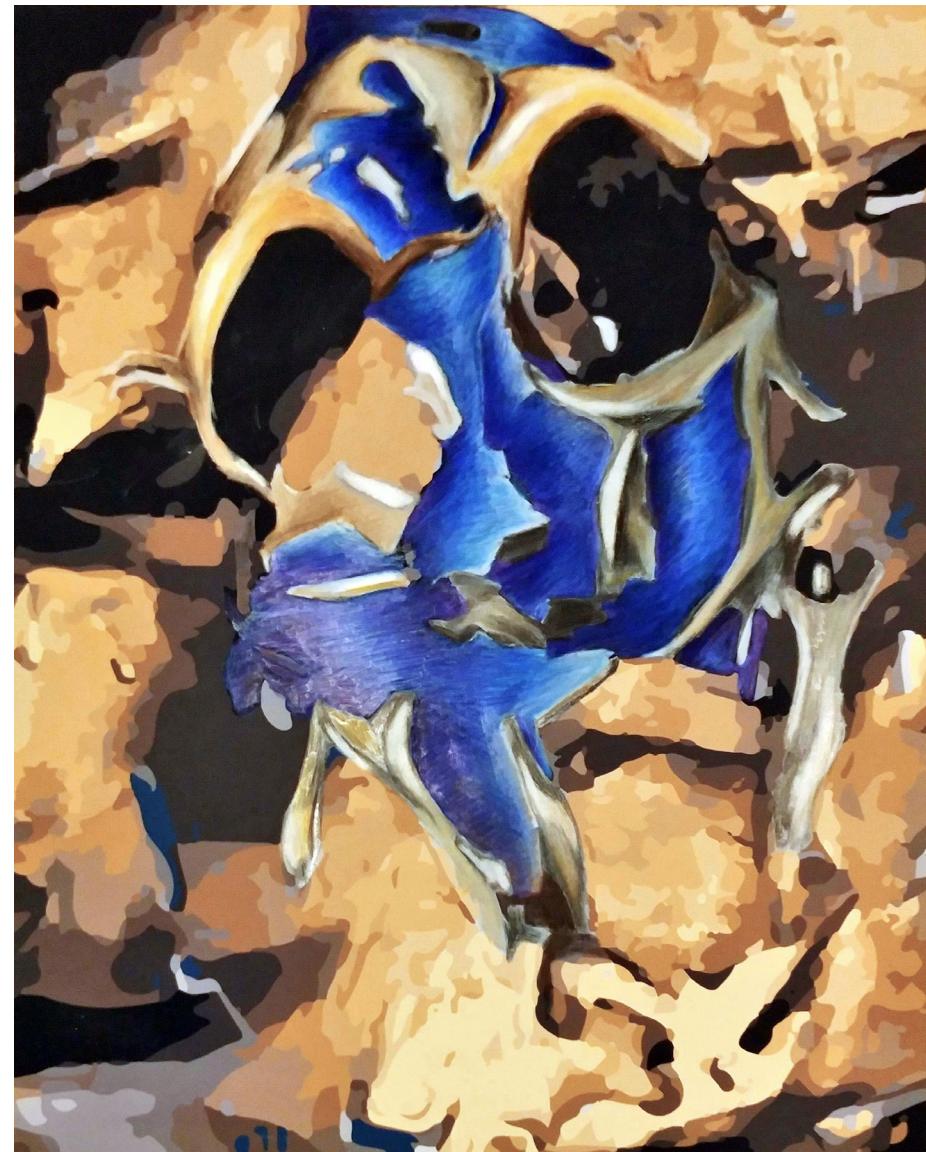
I’m back on that rooftop each time
I hear Wilny on the phone. I’m back
on the rocky road in Gonaïves each
time I close my eyes. Each day, I
remember; I am here, I am there; I’m
not quite sure where I am. All I can
conclude is that I had to leave be-
cause I couldn’t stay. I had pushed
a little too hard against the cultural
wall. No one told me to leave, but I
knew I had overstayed my welcome.

Why, I ask myself, why did it turn out like
this? Why am I back where I started?

Then I remember Evlante, and I swal-
low the pain with a smile. I remember
Madame Tian, and I raise my arms in
faith. I remember Wilny, and I believe
that I did not go to Haiti for nothing.

No, I am definitely not back where
I started.

• • •



YEHIA AZAB, *Oasis*, Mixed Media, 8.5"x11"

JAMAL HENDERSON

Virtues

They finally let him outta lockdown yesterday. God most def heard my voice rise with the sun. Glad he remembered which bus would get him here. I could barely sleep. My mind couldn't stop moving. Of course I had to tell the others, especially my niece. The Lord lent all his strength to me as I got to cookin' up his favorite: dressing, leftover ham, string beans, carrots, cup of apple juice—the *plate of glory* as he always called it. “Welcome home, son,” I said. Hugged him, kissed him, froze. Smiled at my boy. Thank you, Jesus.

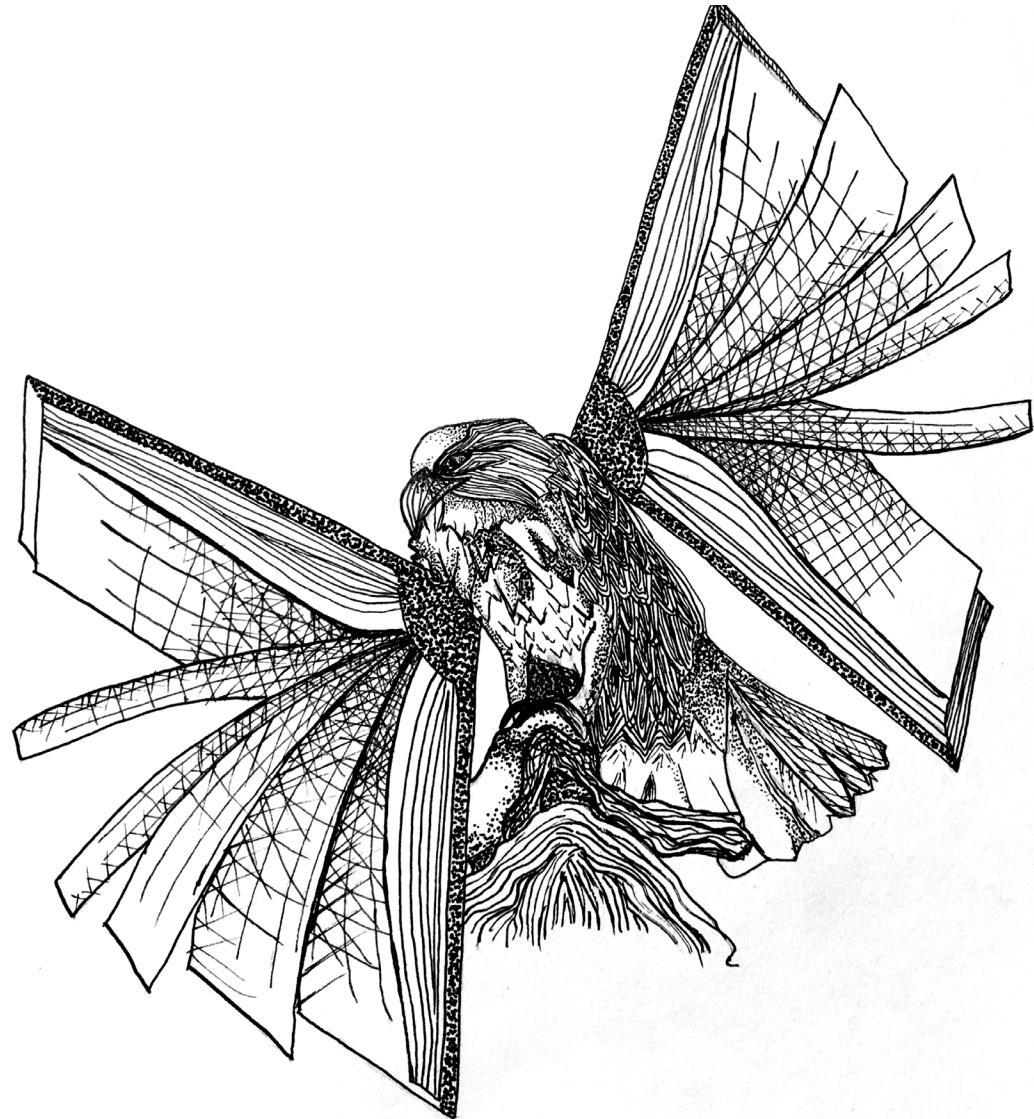
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Auntie told me he got out yesterday. God knew I needed him last night. I could barely breathe. My man laid hands on me. *Again*. I made my way to Auntie's house—I knew she was gon' throw down some of her soulful creations, but most importantly—to see my favorite cousin. My face told my cousin what happened, and his faces told me his feelings: confused, sympathetic, upset, vengeful—regretful. “I know he loves me. I don't know what to do,” I said. Hugged him, squeezed him, froze. Cried on his shoulder. Why me, Jesus?

• • •

My first sunrise on the other side of the bars. God knows I been waitin' too long. Momma asleep—kinda. She threw down with that plate of glory last night. Cousin knocked out too. She ain't wanna go home—not that I wanted her to anyway. I can barely focus. I'm looking at the shit that made me what I used to be: leather gloves, stain-free pistol, remorseless heart—a renegade menace with a renegade piece. “This the last time you disrespect my fam,” I say. Hug it, cock it, freeze. Take a deep breath. Shield me, Jesus.

• • •



ASHLEY BOHM, *Eagle w/ Books*, Ink, 11"x17"



EMAAN OMER,
Electra Complex, Digital Painting,
PaintTool SAI + Adobe Photoshop

The process I used to create this piece was probably the most organized I've ever been. It's because I had such a vivid image of what I wanted and the composition of the piece, which isn't complex, but I did want a feeling of intimacy between the interacting characters. I've always been one to lean towards more unconventional themes. I create my own characters and enjoy expanding upon their stories... it's a little esoteric but it's cathartic in a way. I suppose I just really wanted to draw what I would call a "perfect kiss," something I've wanted to draw since I was very young. But with age I guess the intentions behind that kiss changed along with my art itself.

CAITLIN DEFILIPPO

Fade to Blue

"Sara. Sara. Switch please?"

Sara jumped. Amelia was red-faced behind the checkout counter. Sara let go of the cart full of returned books and came around the side. Amelia sprinted to the nonfiction section, pushing the loaded cart as fast as her skinny body would let her. Sara sighed, rubbed her temples, and settled into the stool. They weren't supposed to switch, not until the end of a shift or until one of the librarians told them to, but Amelia could only deal with people for so long. Sara didn't mind people as much unless they asked intrusive questions. Sara rubbed at the back of her neck. This is the Lilton Public Library, the slow-beating heart of the small town, Sara reminded herself. The most intrusive question she ever got was if she had a favorite section to work in. The answer was no, unless there was something interesting going on with the sky. Then her favorite was the Adult Fiction section and reading area. That section had the biggest windows in the whole library.

Sara could catch a glimpse of the incoming storm from where she sat. The clouds were a cotton-soft grey. It was going to rain soon. Sara smiled and adjusted her hat. She remem-

bered when she was little, how she would always run outside to catch the rain on her tongue and her father would warn her about catching a cold. She bounced her leg under the counter. She still had that itch now.

Sara was so caught up in the storm she almost didn't notice a patron approach. Almost. It was hard to miss the head of neon blue hair. The girl was almost entirely blue, save her skin. Blue jeans, blue nails, blue eyes. Big, pretty blue eyes behind thick blue-framed glasses. The girl had three books in her arms, two books on the ocean and one book on painting.

"Hi there," Sara greeted. She leaned forward on the counter.

"Hello," the blue girl said. She slid the books toward Sara, her fingertips just barely pressing the edges.

"Interesting choices," Sara said as she scanned the books. "I don't think I've ever seen these books taken out at the same time."

"Really?"

"Yep. One of them is always here to hold down the fort," Sara said with a grin.



ZACH BOGART, Skyscraper, Graphite, 18"x24"

The blue girl's mouth pulled into a small frown. "Well, none of them are going to be left behind today."

Sara tilted her head, eyebrows raised. She tore the receipt off the printer and placed it in the book about painting. "That's one way of looking at it."

The blue girl looked at Sara, hesitating a moment before taking the books. Her eyes were swirling, like they couldn't decide whether they were the sea or the sky. She folded the books up in her arms. "Thank you."

"Yeah, no problem." Sara gave the blue girl a smile. "Your books are due on the 30th. You stay dry, okay?"

The blue girl blinked. She stole a glance towards the Adult Fiction windows. "Oh, wow. Is it going to rain?"

"Probably," Sara said. "I don't think it's started yet, but soon."

"You know, I don't think I've ever been in here when it's rained." The blue girl smiled. "I think I'll wait it out. Thanks for the heads up."

"Okay. Let me know if you need anything," Sara said.

The blue girl nodded. "Sure."

Sara watched her walk back to the windows. The blue girl stood in front of one, silhouetted against the darkening clouds. It was as if things were inverted, the clear sky looking up at

the storm clouds. It was like the times when Sara would hang upside down on the swing set in her backyard before her parents called her in. The ground was the sky, the sky was the ground. The blue girl reminded her of this. Sara wondered if there was a way to approach the blue girl without seeming like a creeper. Well, the blue girl checked some books out. She'd have to return them eventually, right?

Sara didn't notice the grim woman was there until a thick, hardbound book was slammed on the counter. The woman's mouth was a thin, red gash and her eyebrows pointed downward so sharply Sara wondered if they would cut her skin. The woman wore clothes that could only be designed for a funeral. She threw her library card at Sara. Sara didn't recognize her. She couldn't even read the signature on the woman's library card. Sara wondered if all the people she didn't recognize had decided to visit the library today.

"Hi there," Sara said.

The woman didn't speak. Sara tried not to meet her gaze, better to concentrate and move on from this awkward situation, but the woman kept shifting into Sara's vision. The woman's eyes were hazel fire. She still wouldn't speak. Sara almost ripped the receipt in half taking it off the printer.

"Your book is due on the 30th. Have a nice day," Sara said. She



KIMMIE SHARPSTENE, 48 Otters, Watercolor + Gouache, 24"x18"

craned her neck, pretending to look for other patrons. Maybe the grim woman would lose interest if Sara didn't engage further.

"Take that hat off. You're not twelve." The woman crossed her arms. "You're too old to hide."

"Excuse me?" Sara edged as far back from the grim woman as she could without sliding off the stool.

"You heard me," the woman said.

Sara's cheeks were on fire. She shoved the book at the woman. "Have a nice day, ma'am. Don't get wet on your way out."

The woman narrowed her gaze. She turned and went to one of the seating areas. Sara just barely heard the rain over the thrumming of her pulse in her ears. She closed her eyes and tried to focus on the sound. She was back at home, clothes soaked, mother draping a towel over her shoulders. The rain was a hard drumbeat against the roof. Her father came in from the kitchen, thirty-two years old and already with a full head of grey hair, and gave her a light scolding. Everything was fine. No one had been left behind.

She ran her hands over her face and her neck. Her father had walked in from the kitchen and everything was fine. Amelia turned the corner and pushed the newly-emptied cart back behind the returns counter. Sara

gasped, pulled out of her thoughts, and slid off the stool. Her father was not in the kitchen. Sara needed air.

"Amelia, switch please," Sara said.

"Uh, sure. Sure thing." Amelia paled, swinging her head to scope out an escape, something that needed to be done. Sara thought for a moment about sucking it up, but she was reeling.

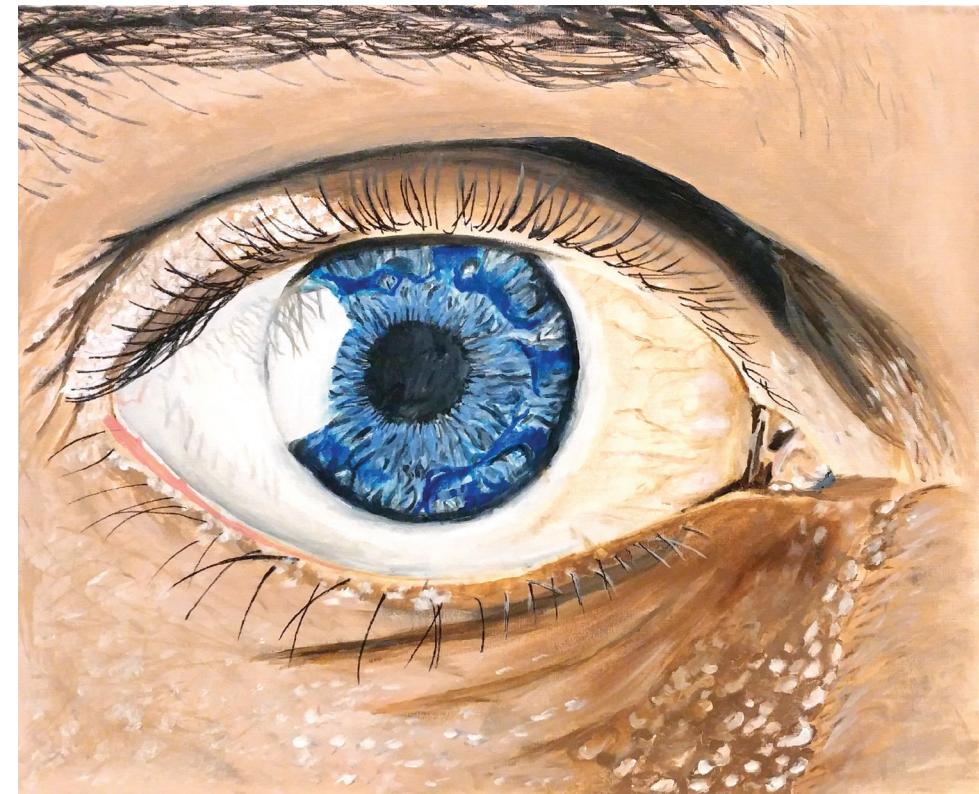
Everything was not okay.

"Thanks."

Sara ran towards the exit near the Adult Fiction reading area, which led outside. Rainwater coated the steps where the overhang stopped. Sara sat down. It was a cold, October rain. Sara pulled her hat off. Thick, grey strands cascaded down her back. She pulled her hair over her shoulder and wove her fingers through it.

"I'm not hiding," Sara said to herself. "I'm not. I'm not leaving either."

Sara remembered the night her father didn't come home. Thunder had raged through the air and cold, white light cascaded over the black leather couch through the windows. She had wanted to go out in it, but she imagined her father saying "No, Sara, you'll catch a cold," like he always did. It felt empty, though. The words didn't travel through her ears. It was as if they were coming from high up, the clouds and thin air in the atmosphere of her brain muffling



DAWN WILLIAMS, Eye, Acrylic, 22"x18"

them. She had sat on the living room floor, alone, staring out the window at the storm. Her father always came running after her when she was out in the rain. Could that make him appear?

"I'm almost seventeen now, and you still haven't come back," Sara mused. "I have your hair. Do you know that? I have your hair. That's all you left me."

Sara looked out in front of her, watching the streams of water roll down the storm drains. Her father didn't appear. She didn't know what she was expecting anymore, it wasn't like he was going to just drop out of the sky. She tugged on her hair a little harder.

"You're going to miss my graduation. If you don't come back soon you're probably going to miss my wedding too."

There was still no response. Sara sighed. Thunder rumbled in the distance, five miles away if Sara counted the seconds right. She shut her eyes tight, trying to get back to the kitchen, but all she could feel was the rain. It hit her skin like tiny, cold pebbles and raised goosebumps on her skin. Sara rubbed her forehead.

"Um, who were you talking to?"

Sara whirled on the steps, almost falling right down them. It was the blue girl, wedged between the doorway and the steps. Her eyes were wide and deep, and her hand pressed against the door just hard enough to give enough

space to be half-in and half-out. Sara took a deep breath and stood up.

"No one, really. Not anyone who's listening anyway," Sara said. She offered a small smile to the blue girl. "Do you need something?"

"No, I just-uh, I saw you run across the library. I wanted to make sure you were okay," the blue girl said. "Are you okay?"

A gust of wind blew cold, small pebbles of October rain at Sara and the blue girl. The blue girl let out a sound somewhere between a shriek and a laugh, her mouth turned upward into a smile. Sara remembered the squeals she'd make when her father picked her up out of the rain and brought her inside. Sara would throw half-hearted punches on his shoulder and he would laugh, a deep hearty laugh that Sara hadn't heard since she was five years old. The rain seeped through her jeans and into her skin. Her father had not been in the kitchen for over a decade.

"No," Sara said. "No, I'm not okay."

The blue girl's smile dropped. She pushed past the door as if it was nothing and stood opposite Sara. "What happened? Wait. No. You don't have to tell me if you don't want to. Is there anything I can do?"

Sara wrapped her arms around herself, shivering. "I don't think so. It happened a long time ago. You should go inside, it's cold out here."



DAWN WILLIAMS, *Zombie*, Acrylic, 22"x18"

"Are you going to go inside?" the blue girl asked.

"I don't know," Sara said.

"Then I'm more than willing to brave a few raindrops," the blue girl said.
"My name is Ellie, by the way."

"I'm Sara," Sara replied.

Ellie smiled. "It's good to meet you, Sara."

Sara nodded. She looked out at the rain. When she looked back Ellie was still there. She hadn't left. The sky was the ground and the ground was the sky, and Sara could feel the blades of grass on the tops of her hands. Ellie was real, right in front of Sara, and she wasn't leaving. Sara looked out at the rain one last time. Nothing had changed.

Sara opened the door. "Come on, let's go inside."

• • •

JEFF WILLIS

Virginia, past. It was the year of the Olympics. I'm not sure which one. But I was a young lad, perhaps four, maybe six years old. The whole family and some friends were in the living room, on the T.V. was a big muscular man. He was warming up for the Hammer Throw. I was fascinated, everything else disappeared, just that man swinging around that hammer. With a mighty grunt and a heave, it flew high in the air. The ground was sundered when it landed. He raised his hands up in victory.

New York, present. We were in Brian's car. Cory and myself. We were on the way to a hockey game. I was pretty excited. The stress of the last few weeks was put off for a while. The sun had set, the air was cold, but the car was warm. Brian's favorite music was playing, Cory and I tolerated it as best we could. Suddenly my nose detected an odor of something that died, or died inside something that died a few weeks earlier. Windows were rolled down and blame was assigned. Normally the offender would take credit. But for an offense that severe no one admitted it. Windows were rolled up. But, a few minutes later...it happened again.

Virginia, past. I was fresh off watching the victory. As a lad, all I wanted to do was to imitate that feat of strength and claim some of the glory for myself. Alas, I could not find a hammer to throw. Ah!

There! My child's mind seizing on the simplicity of the situation. Consequences or possible hazards did not apply to my thinking. I had not experienced that particular event that would impart wisdom. I grabbed the hammer and swung it around. Faster and faster! The cold of the day forgotten, my hands started to slip but I could not let go yet. A noise was building but I could not give it thought I needed to finish the throw. With a yell and a heave the hammer flew out of my hands and sailed high into the air. I raised my hands and glory was mine! A small crowd of children were showering me with praise. The hammer landed and the land was sundered with a mighty meow. The Feline Hammer Throw was born.

(The kitty was fine.)

• • •

----- THE -----

Feline Hammer Throw

----- AND THE ----- Car of Eternal Stench

SAMMY CORIDDI

It Bleeds

It is unamused,
It feeds on the strife it set,
In the dark it bleeds.

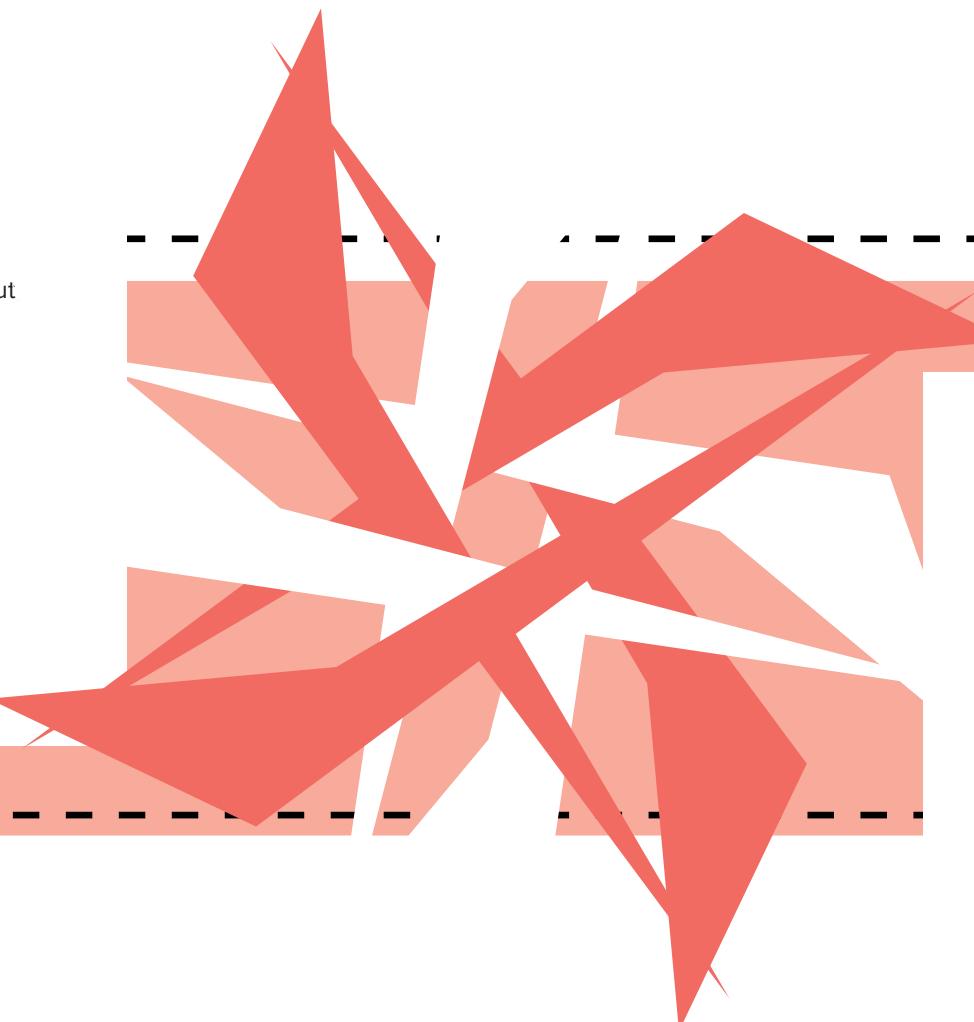
The land of the free,
Us versus them spread about
Gone is the love shared.

Never meant to be,
Hate, injustice, and daft,
The voracity.

Does it have to be?
For ourselves to be true to,
Realizable.

It bleeds in the light,
Imperishable the will,
The madcap people.

• • •



BRANDON FAIR

Tejano

Yellow tips of chamisa are flaring open.
An auto plant is opening in Hermosillo.
Federales are counting automatic weapons
while a 21-salute rings out from Dallas.
A 21 year-old mother crosses over
serape concealing a gold cross.
Missionaries labor with gilded hammers
while Hidalgo rests, awaiting a return.
Austin is drowning in gold tequila
and sorrowful drown in Cancun waters.
The Guadalupe is drying up by sunset.
Yellow tips of chamisa have wilted

• • •

CHRISTINA GRIECO

Bloody Jeans

Stumbling out of the bar, Dawson tripped on his untied shoes, landing face first into a puddle. The sound he made was close to a confused cry, one that got his friend, who stunk of straight up alcohol and vomit, stuck in a fit of laughter. Dawson spit up the murky leftovers from the rain the day before, getting to his feet with an immoral grin.

"Talk about making an entrance in reverse, huh?"

Lyell shook his head, seeing Dawson's cut up hands.

"Dude," he laughed, "you're bleeding bad."

Dawson glanced at his palms, seeing blood, but without any sensation of pain. Looking down, he saw broken bottle shards in the puddle he'd just made love to. Blinking back a surge of sadness, he wiped his hands on his jeans and sighed. Lyell was zoning off in a dizzy haze.

"You know, I liked her a lot," he said, leaning his sweat soaked back against the brick building.

"Huh?" Dawson coughed, losing his balance once again. Down on

the sidewalk, he scooted next to his friend's leg to rest upon it.

"She was just so pretty," Lyell continued, this whiney coating soaking each word dramatically. "I don't know what I did, you know? Like, I didn't even see it coming. I thought women made it obvious when they were upset."

Dawson couldn't focus on the man's words that droned on in the back of his mind, all he could see was this woman across the street, holding something tight to her nearly exposed breasts. He climbed up Lyell's body to stand, his stomach twisting.

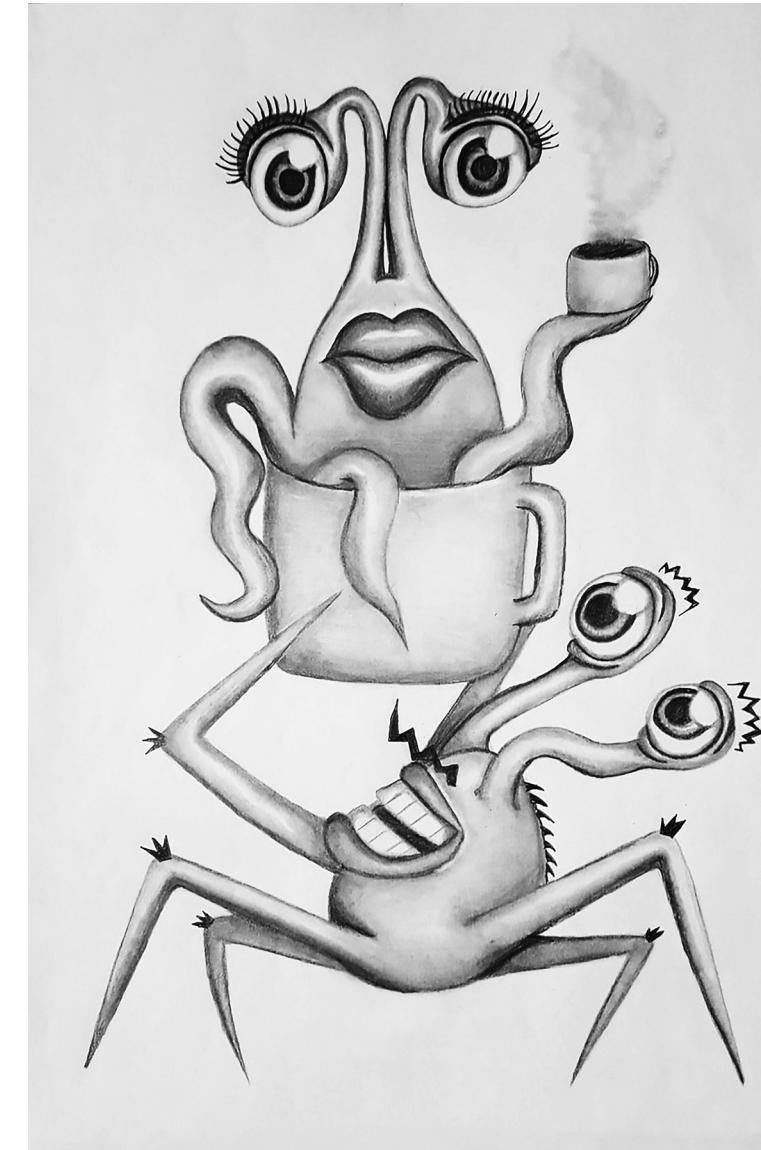
"And like the sex wasn't that bad," he said, rubbing his eyes. "You never got to meet her. And you know me and my anxiety. I just get nervous sometimes. It wasn't because she was..."

"Dude, look," Dawson cut off Lyell's trail of awkward depression, pointing at the girl, her back to them.

"It's just some slut, not my Amy." Lyell pulled out a pack of cigarettes from his shorts and lit one with shaky hands, not giving the girl his attention.

"I think she needs help."

"Yeah, but I'm outta cash, man."



ZACH BOGART, *Things*, Graphite, 8"x11"

"Not that help." Dawson smacked Lyell, pushing the man back a little.

"By the way she all alone over there and not over here proves that that's the help she wants."

Rolling his drunken eyes, Dawson glanced between Lyell and the girl across the street. He could feel the blood rushing under his skin, causing his breath to catch in his throat. An anxious heat flooded his head, clogging his senses with steam that was blinding him. Swaying, he grabbed Lyell's shirt, almost knocking the smoke from his hands and into the puddle.

A man fell from the doors to their left, dropping like a loaded box to the ground. His chin bounced from the gravel, probably leaving the same abrasion on his sweaty skin as it had on Dawson's hands. Lyell kept his weak childish humor within his chest, breathing out a thick cloud of gray into the air with a whistle, gazing up at the black sky.

"I don't think she's like that," he said in disbelief, fixing the collar on his polo. He regarded the red scratches puffed up with infection he could still not fear.

"Yo, like I said, I got no cash. She won't want you." He closed his eyes, shaking his head. "Like how no girl wants me." His eyes brimmed with blinding tears that paralyzed him in another memory of his ex, forgetting the poor dude cursing and spitting by the door.

Dawson waved him off, not even bothering to look both ways before jogging across the street and over to her. The girl's eyes widened when she turned around to the out of breath man, holding the book even closer to her tanned chest, the edges pressing deep into her skin.

"You okay, miss?" Dawson asked, running a nervous hand through his hair.

"Yeah. I'm fine." She swallowed, her eyes darting in every direction just in case she had to run.

"I'm not gunna hurt ya." Dawson took a step back. "You just looked lonely over here in the dark." His eyebrow rose and fell like a wolf, his body holding strong to his prowess that she could feel from where she stood.

The girl tried to emulate his form of confidence but failed, discouraging her with a frail sneer, shaking her head. "No, I'm okay. Honest."

"You sure?"

"Mhm," she mused, turning away.

"Hey, wait!" Dawson grabbed her arm. She gasped, dropping the book to the ground. "Oh man! I'm sorry," he said fast, bending over to grab it. A tiny picture lay next to the black leather binding. He hesitated there in that awkward position, the girl sobbing above him.

"It's...it's okay," she cried, stammering her words.



BROOKE COLE, *Turtles*, Acrylic on Plywood

Dawson stood erect, handing her the book. He stared at the picture though, not giving it back. A little girl with a flower headband smiled at him, her tan skin and dark features resembling the woman. His face froze, a cold burst of air the only sound audible.

"Is she yours?" he asked after a moment, holding the photo out for her.

She nodded, her red painted fingernails plucking the photo from his hands. Dabbing at the tears with her knuckles, she collected any sign of makeup that could have leaked from her painted eyes before slipping the memory back between its home in the yellowing pages.

The obstinate air laughed in their faces with a brisk and icy shiver. It caught Dawson off his guard. "Hey, so do you want a ride home?" he asked out of pure nervousness, his stomach turning the alcohol upside down.

"No, I'm okay."

The blushing tension filled the air, his heart beating so fast he felt faint. Her body looked too desirable to Dawson, he had to see all of it. His mind rushed him, he could feel his chances slipping away, especially after seeing something she obviously was hiding from the world. Tucking his dirty hands in his pockets, he straightened his shoulders and stared right at her face, the beauty combined with the weakness from the heavy liquid coursing through his

blood melted the fear from his muscles, the heat wiping clean his hesitation.

Biting the inside of his cheek, he asked with a pathetic refinement, "Can I have a ride home?"

The girl blinked her eyes, staring at him taken aback. "What?"

"I'm so drunk and I don't want to stay at his house again," he hitched a finger over his shoulder, Lyell puking his fifty dollars into the glass ridden puddle, the cigarette still burning in his left hand he had held out far from his body.

"Um..." she blinked again, biting her lip. With a hesitant and cold shrug that brought her whole body up and then fall, she said, "Sure. My car is down the road."

Dawson smiled, motioning with his head to start walking down the sidewalk. She followed with an uneasy grace, clicking on the cement, not letting the book loose from her hold this time.

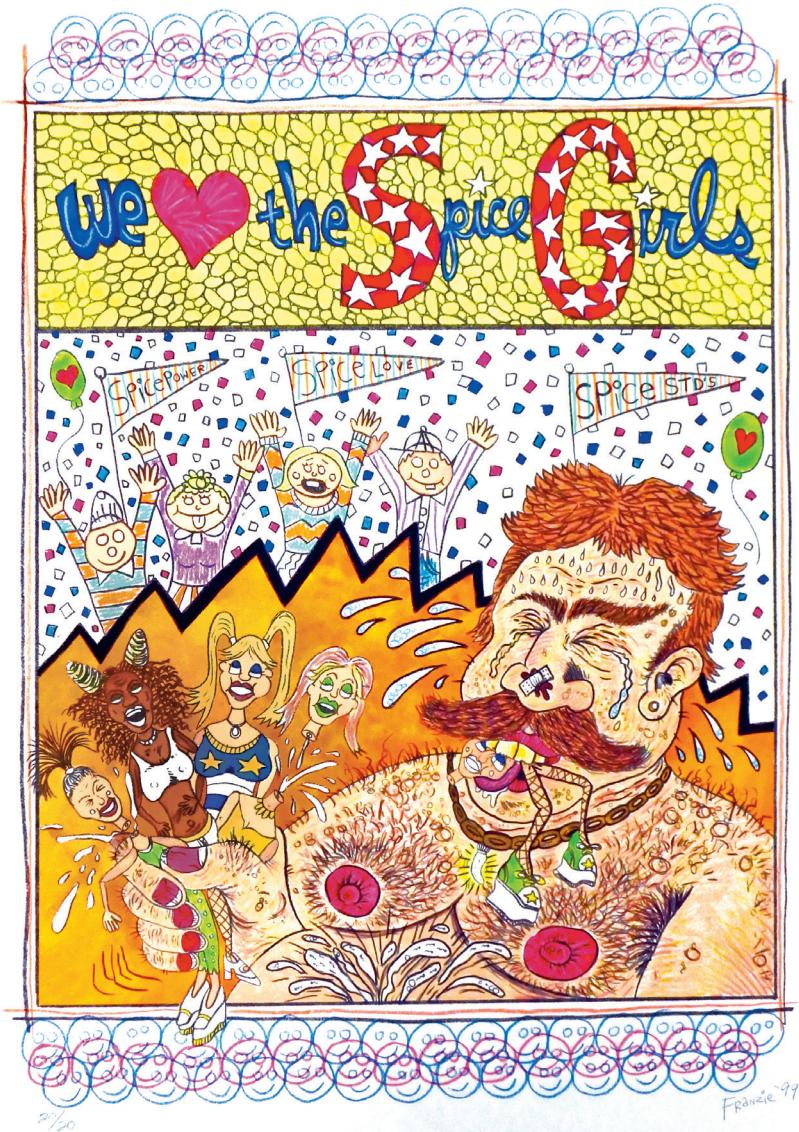
"Thanks, so, I'm Dawson," he announced his introduction with a head wiggle and sly smile the girl didn't see.

"I'm Amy."

• • •



ZACHARY COOTS, *New Vice*, Digital, 11"x17"



PROF. FRANZIE WELDGEN,

We Love the Spice Girls, Lithograph, 18"x24"

This lithograph was printed in 1999 as part of my thesis exhibit at the University of Arizona's Museum of Art. This print was one page of seven in an over-sized eight-page comic book titled, "MFA." The blacks on the print were printed in oil-based lithographic ink and the colors were hand painted with watercolors with prisma color highlights. The subject matter of the print shows its age by referencing the once popular singing sensation of the Spice Girls. I made a literary nod to Steinbeck's character, Lenny Small, from the novel *Of Mice & Men* as he sadly had a reoccurring problem of "loving someone to death." I decided to base the facial features of the shirtless Spice Girls fan off of my graduate school painting professor, Alfred Quiroz.

CYNTHIA ROGERS-HARRISON

Going Home

490 East Exit turn left.

Wegmans

not your average grocery store.

Speedway gas station regular \$2.32.

Wendy's old fashion hamburger
with the pretty little red-haired girl
two pigtails tied in two blue ribbons too.

Buckman car wash

home of the 24 hour guarantee.

Vogel's collision shop

quality repairs since 1948.

I wonder how many remember that date

United States post office Brighton station.

Tops Friendly market

they have people so you don't have to talk to yourself
but it usually takes twenty minutes to check-out with just three items in there
don't forget their Monopoly game Decision 2016.

Liberty family restaurant

lady Liberty sign outside with a us flag waving on each side.

cvs/Pharmacy dept. inside.

Tiffany Claire & more...salon & spa

momentarily, I consider going inside

Blossom road pub...red and navy blinking "open" sign

Mayer paint & hardware takes two buildings to manage their affairs

yellow on the left and forest green on the right

two green matching park benches

just in case someone needs to take a rest.

Winton village wine & spirits

If not opened, you're welcomed next door.

Colter bar...the place to be.

China garden chinese restaurant...please watch your step.

Hawn heating and air conditioning



RILEY HENWOOD, Big Dog, Charcoal, 18"x24"

fire places inside
red and navy blinking "open" sign.

Flashing N Winton village plaza sign too
3:02 PM 64 degrees outside
what a great day in May
Balsam bagels...more than just bagels inside.
houses houses houses
getting closer to where I want to be
Kwick fill red apple food market...gas \$2.339.
Captain tony's pizza.
houses houses houses
red, white and blue flags proudly mounted
Frank's barber shop is "open"
see the red and navy blinking sign

What's that ahead?
cars backed up
half the road not accessible
rubber orange cones force compliance
road crew, hard hats, flagmen
portable stop light in full control
Crawford funeral home
oh no, I don't want to go there
driving more carefully
fear of landing in a sink hole
thanks, Winton road improvement project

Getting really close
turn left at the public library
right across from the Mobile station
regular \$2.39
a little red brick building houses Trinity church
prepare to meet God
oh no, I hope not now
just a few more houses
and a few more flags
waving gladly
welcome me back

• • •



MARIAH ROSE, *Amelia Earhart*, Acrylic, 11.5" x 14.5"

JULIA PALOZZI

I Hope We Die

I hope I die on the porch next to you.
Like we've always planned. Old women
in rocking chairs, windpipes exploding
with laughter. Will talk about men we've loved,
and the ones we just wanted to fuck.
About the summer I broke both arms
and you wrapped my purple cast
with grocery bags and rubber bands.
Then we wouldn't miss skinny dipping
in the lake. Water seeped through the seal
anyways as it washed over bare goose flesh.

I hope we die with iced teas
in our hands, drops of condensation
leaving fresh dew in our laps.
The slick glasses held in our palms
will slip, our last breath heaving
from our chests. Feet soaking wet
in puddles of shattered glass.

I hope I die with wrinkles.
Like road maps of places
we never went—the cold shores
of California, the world's
largest ball of yarn. But we bought a map
to Kansas and left it
in your glove box. I'll dream
yarn between my fingertips
as I see you for the last time.
Slide coarse fibers between fore-finger
and thumb, reach over and
tangle our hands together.

• • •



DYLAN VERCROYSE, Screw Off, Watercolor + Ink, 24"x18"



EMAAN OMER,
Friends, Digital Painting,
PaintTool SAI + Adobe Photoshop

I was raised within a very conservative household and country. The first time I saw a woman in a bikini was when I was 7. Despite being shielded from all sorts of sexuality, there was always a morbid curiosity within me towards all things taboo. I never intend to offend with what I create; I simply create what I was not able to indulge in growing up. Erotic art is my passion and my driving force, whether it be conventional, tasteful or desired.

Before Giving Thanks

It's almost Thanksgiving, and I'm leaving for it soon, but my classes intercept me like the sun and moon. I want to hang at *Food for Thought* with all my friends, but I'm afraid I'll have to tie up some loose ends.

Losing my mind trying to write another essay. Feels somewhat redundant though, if I must say.
c-o-s class; where will we use it? Why do we do this? It feels so useless.

My cat went blind. Can almost barely walk. He fell off the deck. I almost yelled, "Fu--!"
Mondays are the easiest ways to spend my days alone, confused, strung-out, with no end.

Has me philosophizing; questioning my ways. A part insisting draped in play. Life existence, a point in persistence. I want to write more: practice my craft. It's got people watching me as if I'm daft.

I'm trying to read more; maybe the Nativity. I look at my shelf; Sense-and-Sensibility.

I gotta have my cat put in the ground, before I get my bags together to leave town, for now.

My dad found out about my trip in Connecticut. He laughed about it like it was basic human etiquette.
My mom's saying her goodbyes to Barack Obama. All I'm thinking is "Hello, Ivanka!"

My dad and I are gonna go bury my cat now, but then I looked up and said, "Oh shit, snow."

• • •



YEHIA AZAB, *Heroes & Villains*, Digital, Adobe Illustrator + Photoshop

MAUREEN OBERMAN

Where Is My Son (Villanelle)

I watch as faded footprints slowly disappear
behind maternal memories obscured, not lost.
Where is my son? Not here.

I sit with empty chairs around a table near
broken relics of childhood tossed
aside as I watch faded footprints slowly disappear.

Above the sink, pots dangle, empty. A queer
ache of forsaken feelings that exhaust.
Where is my son? Not here.

Heaped plates cascade with laughter and cheer
that echo through walls and rattle my thoughts.
I watch as faded footprints slowly disappear.

My tea, brewed of bittersweet recollections that appear
as divination at the bottom of my cup, unwashed.
Where is my son? Not here.

Through the window, shards of fractured light, clear
my path for passages yet to be crossed.
I watch as faded footprints disappear.
Where is my son? Not here.

• • •



ZACHARY COOTS, *Cold Stone*, Photo, Nikon 1 J5 (10-30mm VR)

JORDAN SPAKER

For a Reaper, They Reaped

A soldier wishes to fight
Against the evil, with all his might
He felt belligerence, but
Didn't know what to fight
Accepting the views of righteousness
Instilled in him
He sold himself to the fraudulent and shady
Thinking that he could maybe
Fight for his people, and the land that he knew
Merely a face in a crowd of fools
Used as corporate tools
All of us divided in a trivial duel
Love is was not Trumping, hate was the fuel.

His heart so lustful, wanting to trust
Snatched up by a government so out of touch
With the people's lives it held
In the palm of its hand, had nothing for us
Told him we needed something far away
Sent him on planes, ships
On trips for missions they told him to complete
So what wasn't ours, we could reap
Offered up sanity, currency and casualties
On the table before the hand
Their people shell shook, the humanity it took
From those who wanted to be one with the plan
Tightfisted fingers of the twisted almighty crook.

Waging wars inside inclined individuals
That never wanted to question the dirt
Swept under the rug
Never doubted the intentions
Of our ruler so smug
Dodging the shame that the household brewed



ZAC KREILICK, *Caroline*, Acrylic, 11"x17"

In our genuine hearts,
So we could play a part
In a conflict so farce.

But he was so ready to sign his life away
For the delicate heart that still swayed him
That was to be done with the moment he swore
He'd die before
He stopped to feel the shred of humanity
That lingered underneath
The signature that vowed he'd snipe his virtue
And for a reaper,
They reaped.

• • •

JULIA PALOZZI

Fur

"These cats have got to go," Timothy shouted from the hallway while I carefully extracted the diamonds from my ears. My long pencil skirt was unzipped at my waist, hanging loosely around my bare hips. The collared shirt I had been wearing sat atop my laundry heap, wrinkles brimming with fur.

"Do you hear me?" Timothy asked, sticking his head in the bathroom so the top of his red face appeared in the mirror next to mine.

"Yes," my earrings clinking as they landed in their dish.

"I can't stand the fucking fur balls any longer." He moved from the bathroom to the bedroom, began to unzip his ill fitting brown trousers and I watched as his stomach spilled over the line of

his pants. A dark trail of gnarled hairs ran askew down his hard belly. I reached up, avoiding the sight of him in the mirror, and undid my pearls. I remembered the night, my father reached for the pearls. They were fastened around my mother's neck the clasp glinting as she turned. His fingers grappled with the necklace, unable to grasp it. He reached again, pulling her to the floor with her hair between his white knuckles.

I cupped the necklace in my palm, my gaze lingering on my mother's initials carved into the clasp, as I reached to set them in their place next to the earrings a chorus of pings began to resonate within the walls of the bathroom. The string of pearls was now a sparkling bounty on the floor.

My throat tightened and I knelt, my body a hollow curve with ribs that rippled up my side. With every motion the pearls slid between tile grooves and more cat hair stuck to my slick palm. I rubbed my hands together, desperately trying to remove the hair. A few stray pieces floated through the air but the larger masses stuck stubbornly. I plucked a single bead between my

fingernails. It lingered for a moment and then sprung from my delicate grip.

"Ah!" I cried in frustration. I tried once more to sweep the beads into my hand, remembering in that second how my mother used to lay with me when I was upset, tracing her long fingers over my forehead.

The beads now flew to the other side of the bathroom, three settling behind the toilet and one dropping down a slanted vent. Cat hair flew in the chaos.

"What's going on?" Timothy moved to the threshold of the bathroom door, he had unbuttoned his shirt. From where I knelt his belly was larger, a daunting shadow that looked as if it would barely fit in the door.

"My necklace b-broke," I said, choking on my words. I feverishly wiped my hands together, desperate to escape the clinging fur.

"And?" Without waiting for a reply, he sauntered out of the bathroom. I looked down as a glittering bead rolled and bumped carelessly into my knee.

• • •



PROF. PETER MONACELLI,

The Sands of Time—Interregnum, Collage, 15" x 19.5"

During my lifetime, (I was born in 1941) the changes have gone from a slower more manageable level to change at the speed of light. Jazz music since WWII has reflected this. The changes are a cultural explosion that has left us off balance. That encouraged us to deny the spirituality of human kind and grab all we can get.

The pieces I have made recognize these changes, this off balance. They look positive at first glance, as they express the deception of the uselessness of spirituality and worship the individual and what he or she can create.

The news of the last decade expresses exactly what can be created when individuals give in to the seven deadly sins: Enron, Lehman Brothers, Wachovia, Washington Mutual, General Motors, Bernard (made off) wars, dirty politics, controlling corporations too big to fail.

The Sands of Time—Interregnum, are a series of collages with oil paint and drawing mediums. These deal with lost worlds, changing times, and goodbyes. (Remember change does not necessarily mean progress.) They also express the current divisions and fragmentation that I sense pervades our society.

In a positive sense, they partially come from my love of illuminated manuscripts and Latin Gregorian chants.

CHANGE:

The substitution of one thing for another.

PROGRESS:

A movement toward a goal or to a further, higher stage.

INTERREGNUM:

Between the reigns.

CHRISTINA GRIECO

New York Meets Oklahoma



I met a woman who saw herself as “boring” and her name is Dinah Cox, the writer of *Remarkable*. In her readings she only used that hollow word to describe herself and I had to know why. She spoke in a clear, crisp manner and almost every line said had a smile attached. The basic questions began the interview we had tucked away in a small office on campus.

“What’s your favorite color and why?” I asked.

She laughed. “Green. I like green. The earth is green, you know? So it’s just everywhere.”

Biting at my pen, I nodded in total understanding. “What do you do?”

“I am a writer, but I actually work at Oklahoma State University and teach there.” Her smile was captivating, which fit alongside her smooth voice.

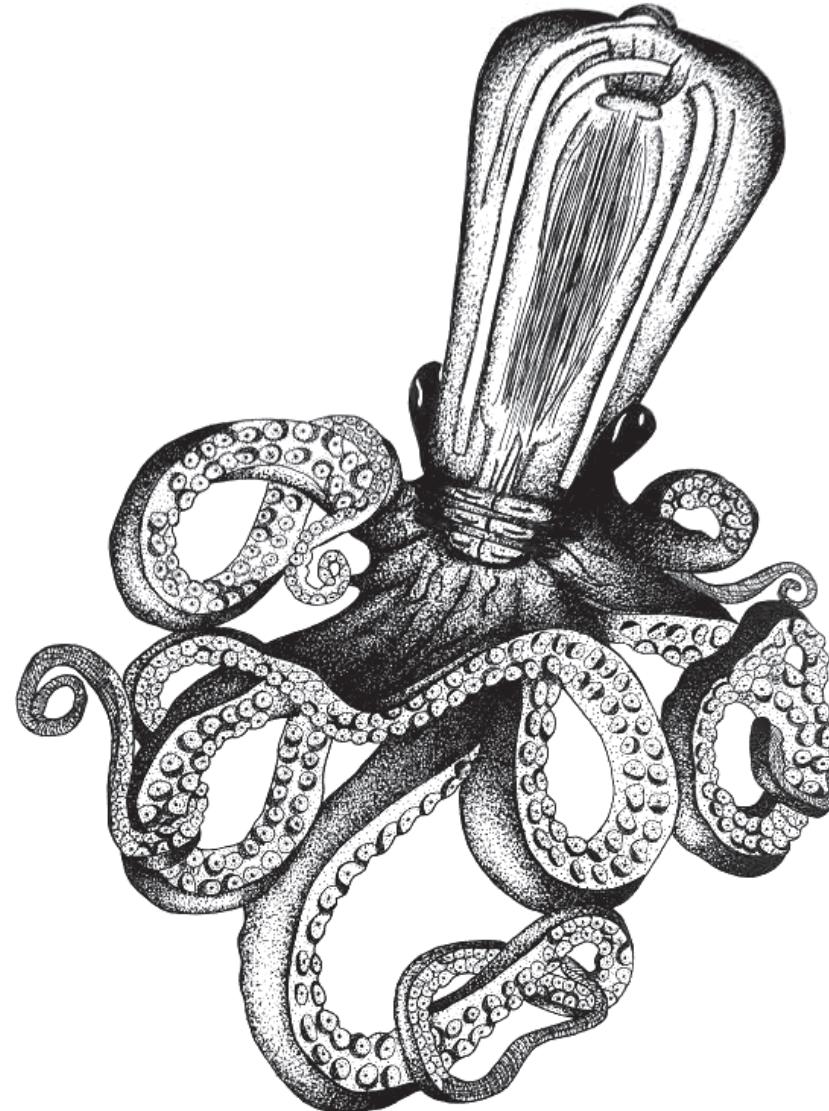
“Tell me about your process on getting to where you are today, where you went to school and what not.”

“I went to Richmond to get my master’s and then went to Oklahoma State to achieve my PhD. It’s crazy, my partner also works at the college with me as a poet. Poetry is actually a genre I am most afraid to write. Poets must be brilliant and have a better understanding of life while prose writers can roam around.”

“What’s your favorite music and TV shows?”

She giggled saying that she was boring and didn’t really have a favorite anything. I tried harder: “If you could live anywhere, where would that place be?”

She pondered this for quite a few moments before answering with a happy gleam in her eyes behind the glass frames. “On a beach. Doesn’t matter where. Maybe a beach town as long as it’s not polluted. I feel like I could write there. And really focus.”



COURTNEY BARBER, *Bio-Luminescence*, Ink, 11"x17"

She nodded her head, gazing off into the distance. "That would be nice."

"Describe yourself."

"Me?" she asked and laughed. "Well, I am a writer and a teacher, a friend, animal lover, especially to my own fur babies. I am someone who is afraid to go through life not doing everything I possibly can to enjoy life."

"Do you have a favorite author?"

"This is a very uncommon answer but it is Joan Silber, and she's an important figure to me. There's something about her work that's similar to mine but a lot better. (She gave a self-deprecating laugh after saying that.) An inspiration even. I wish I could really write like her. She isn't sold in all book stores but you can definitely order her work online."

"What feelings do you want to get from readers as they come across your novel?"

"Amused and inspired in a way that changes you. I want you to feel a little bit different after cracking open my book."

"You walk the line between showing and telling, what kind of advice would you give someone in hopes of them becoming better writers?"

"Follow your character. Be with them and be them. See what happens without deciding for them. Leave all that worry about having the best story

behind and see what your character has in store for you. My biggest issue at first was writing in a male perspective. I had to get hints and clues from men to see if what I was writing was actually something a man would think. But now, I think I do a pretty good job writing in the voice as a man." She sighed. "Just be inspired. Look for inspiration in anything. There's always a thread of my life in each of my stories, even if it's only 5% true."

Authentic and autobiographical with a tad of dramatic humor, that is the one and only Ms. Dinah Cox, and I am very glad I got to meet her for the short time she was here in our just as lovely state of New York. Being here, she missed her own home back in Oklahoma, but I think the change in scenery might play a role in one of her future books.

She truly is remarkable.

• • •

Cabbages & Kings is one of Monroe Community College's oldest student organizations. Founded nearly 50 years ago in 1968, *Cabbages & Kings'* sole purpose is to showcase the creative talent of our students, faculty, and alumni here at MCC.

Interested in learning more about us?

Join our team for the 2017–2018 Academic Year!

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Zach Bogart

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Special Thanks to Elizabeth Stewart
and MCC's Office of Student Life and
Leadership Development

Success. Failure. One cannot come without the other. However, instead of diving in head first to solve the problems we face, we run from our failure and cower from it. If we look back at all the previous issues of *Cabbages & Kings*—the ones that survived—it would be easy to focus on the small overlooked errors. All the obstacles and disasters they had to go through are invisible to us. So many stories will stay untold, but that's all right.

The purpose of this magazine is not to stroke egos, or to tell stories of budget woes and paper choices. The purpose of *Cabbages & Kings* magazine is to shine a light on the talent here at MCC.

As long as this magazine exists, there is a way for students to share their emotions and thoughts through the media they find comfort with, and we will strive to ensure its unbiased stance. Our team is here to ensure the survival of this establishment, as we take on the ever changing digital frontier, and our society deals with the erratic political climate.

So if you are an artist, a writer, or perhaps just a talented hobbyist that might not identify as either, go ahead and submit your work to us.

Right now.

Do your part by showing your community what you've been working on.

YEHIA AZAB,
Visual Editor & Co-President of
Cabbages & Kings Magazine

