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The Bridge

A Student Journal of Fine Arts
Volume 12

We dedicate this volume to

L o r i L e C o m t e ,

whose long and ongoing commitment
to this journal is unrivaled.

Table of Contents

Mission Statement – x i
Letter From the Editors – x i i
Bridge Awards – x v

L i t e r a t u r e

YOU ONLY REMEMBER THAT THE CASTLE IN YOUR
DREAMS IS MADE OUT OF KNIVES WHEN YOU
DREAM OF IT AGAIN

- Benches
- Tuesday Mornings at the Diner
- Tired Flavored Pollex
- Catch Up
- Pity
- Thrice Blessed
- 8 Months of Moonbombs
- Dictionary Definition
- Ash
- Dighton Rock Translate
- My Aunt’s Psychiatrist Keyed a Piano
- The Fairy Tale Character’s Book
of Proper Etiquette and Manual of Politeness
- The Boardwalk at Midnight’s
Not as Safe as I’d Hoped



- Sunset Queen
- Countercultural Mainstream: an Interview with Former
Music Festival Art Coordinator Tia Christiansen
- Little Five Points
- Nappy Headed Fool
- Bones
- Season of the Heart
- Dog Days
- The Bicycle Thief
- Nineteen
- I’ve Always Taken My Medication
- In Between the Pages of A Cocktail Menu
- Terminal
- The Way Willows Weep
- Your Father’s Funeral





Contributors' Notes – 118

V11 Honors – 123

Mission Statement

The Bridge is managed entirely by students in fields of editing and design. Our charge is to serve, as we are dedicated to showcasing the artistic talents of our student body. Our goal is to excel, as we wish to pay a debt to our alumni, keep a promise to ourselves, and set an example for our successors.

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Letter From The Editors

Here you are with the Twelfth Volume of *The Bridge* in your hands. Turn it over. Feel the spine. Let the pages tickle your fingers. Touch each page carefully with your eyes and you may just hear a voice you only find in the uninhibited spaces of yourself. The work inside this journal presents a challenging invitation to confront the universal yet unspoken narrative of the human mind.

This year's campaign played a large role in the final piece curated from our ever-growing community of artists at Bridgewater State University. Through interactive multimedia, including a time-based poster campaign, social media, and a spray paint promo series, we turned on the light for students and alum. Piece by piece, poem after story, painting after sculpture, our contributors revealed to us a raw and honest representation of human experience.

We crafted this year's journal around the intelligent and bizarre work submitted; the accepted pieces grew into one cohesive narrative body to which we were determined to give a voice. Elements of the surreal exhibited in the work created an unanticipated disconnect between internal perspective and external reality. We incorporated a flawed yet organic element of human touch in the work and complimented it with our design by representing the introspective.

We were able to make these decisions confidently with the guiding expertise of our new art advisor, BSU alum, and former *Bridge* editor, Stephen Plummer. His experience helped us gain a greater understanding of working as a team and we thank him for joining us on this journey once again. In his fifth year as literature advisor, Professor John Mulrooney continues to provide us with an arsenal of avenues to travel down in means of finding this journal exactly where we, as student editors, would like it to be. We continue to thank him for his guidance and dedication.

It is not without the help of administration and faculty that this journal lives and we would like to thank them for providing us that breath, year after year. We wish our longstanding supporter

President Dana Mohler-Faria luck on his graduation from Bridgewater State University and are looking forward to working with former Bridgewater graduate and new BSU President Frederick Clark, (83') in the years to come. We thank Dean Paula Krebs. We admire Associate Dean Rita Miller's respect for the scope of this project. Our submissions week would not have run so smoothly without the informative photo training from a staple in the Art Department, Ivana George, and irreplaceable help from Maxwell Library's Digital Services Librarian, Ellen Dubinsky. We are vehemently grateful for the kindness and understanding of the maintainers of Hunt Hall for keeping the lights on for us during late nights.

Explore with us the dark beauty to be found within the pages in your hands.
Go ahead now, begin.

The Bridge Awards

L i t e r a t u r e

Bicycle Thief

Sarah Walker

Dictionary Definition

The Fairy Tale Characters Book
of Manual Politeness & Proper Etiquette

Dog Days

The Way Willows Weep

Matty O’Brien

A r t

Shannon Collings: Artist Portfolio - Special Feature

Shannon Collings

Sugar Ants

Heather McNamara

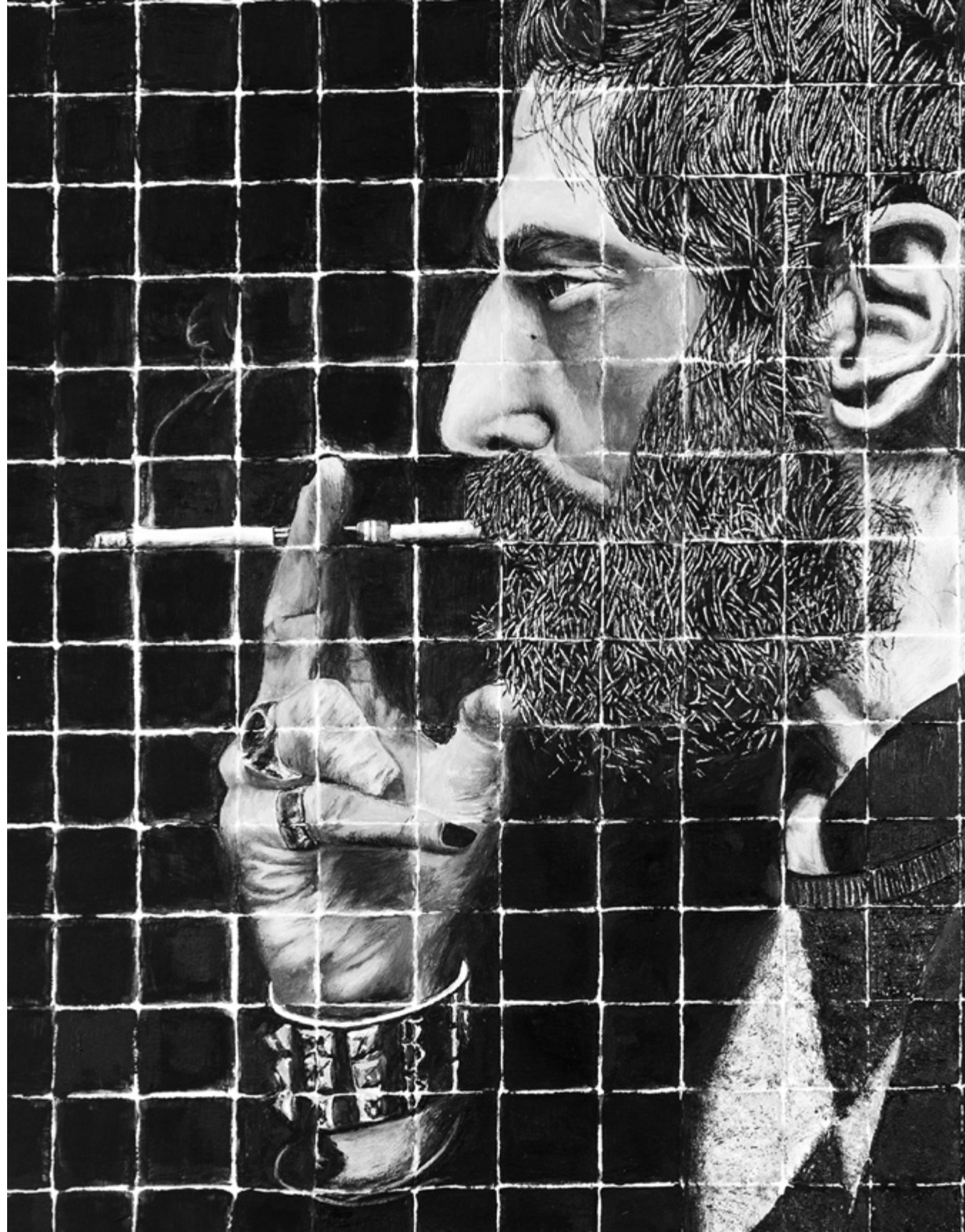
Bluefish Cove

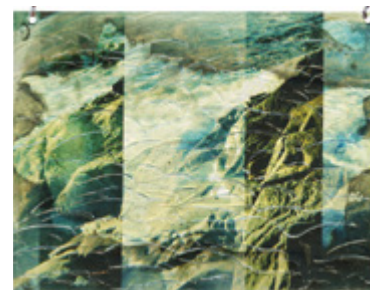
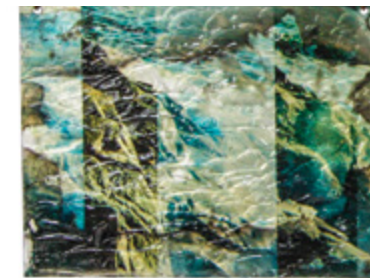
Old Driftway Pier

Rexham Dune

Erin O’Donnell

SMOKE
Acrylic
Damian Bellotti





BLUEFISH COVE

Medium Format Film on Metal
(Diana Lomography and Multi-Pinhole Holga)

Erin O'Donnell

Chris Lindstrom
Poetry

YOU ONLY REMEMBER THAT
CASTLE IN YOUR DREAMS
IS MADE OUT OF KNIVES
WHEN YOU DREAM OF IT
AGAIN

my co-workers pretend not to notice me
I'm stuck in an apologetic shrug motion
and I keep spilling straws on the ground
whenever I change the straw things
and when I ask them how they're doing
they just say hi
so I bumble around
between the coffee pots
and the cooler
like a neglected puppy
lost in the shadow
of an ugly divorce
who doesn't understand
why dad now gets to smoke weed in the house

still there is hope
the world might end one day
and if the world ends
we can wear tunics again
and chase mutated bison off cliffs

still
it's okay
if you get the life you deserve
the nicest thing
I've ever done for a woman
is show her pictures
of my dog

still there is xanax
still there are bees
that can sting you over and over in the face
until your face closes into your face
they can do that
if you want to
if you let them

PLAY BALL

Photography

MaryEllen Cavella



UNCOMFORTABLY EMPTY

Oil

Tory Santilli





ME IN A POLAROID

Oil

April MacDonald

BENCHES

Nathaniel Gordon

Fiction

As I was cutting through the Boston Common, I decided I'd earned a minute for myself to just breathe.

I looked around for the closest bench. A cacophony of geese honking cut through the soft sound of the breeze, and drawing my attention to their flying V-shape. They barely stood out against the gray blanket of clouds hanging low over the city. Then I spotted my bench: one of three forming a triangle around the walkway running through the park.

There was a man on the bench diagonal to me reading a newspaper. The wind kept trying to fold the paper in on itself, but the man kept snapping it erect. He wore a long overcoat and, judging by his black dress pants and shiny black leather shoes, he had a suit on under it. I guessed he was in his fifties. His thin salt and pepper hair was combed over. With the weather and the bare trees behind him, he looked like a black and white photograph.

A man sitting on a bench directly across the walkway from him seemed to have just been awoken from a nap. He threw off his newspaper blanket, raised a strong looking hand to his bushy gray beard, and scratched aggressively. He was startled having to recalibrate after his dream. The rustling and crunching of his budget bedspread caused the well-dressed man to look up over his paper. The homeless man sat up straight, rubbed his eyes, and looked down to his left and to his right. I figured he wanted to check that his trash bag of recyclables and his pair of surprisingly brand-new-looking, Asics running shoes were still beside him on the bench. The sight of the shoes drew my attention to his feet, which were bare. His khaki pants were splattered with drops of dried paint. The man sported a corduroy jacket with a burn mark just above the right elbow, which he wore over a bright red t-shirt that read: “YOUR WORKOUT IS MY WARMUP.”

The well-dressed man across the walkway audibly cleared his throat and turned the page of his newspaper. I looked back to see the homeless man chuckling to himself, shaking his head as though he had just remembered some past injustice he could only laugh at now. There was no way, I thought, he had taken offense to that throat clearing. He threw his head back and cackled at the sky. Across the path the well-dressed man lowered his paper. Ceasing in

his laughter, the homeless man planted both bare feet squarely on the cold November ground. He leaned forward, dropping his elbows to his knees, and fashioned his smile into a tight frown.

The business man shifted his position on the bench, scratched his temple, and gazed up to accidentally meet the heavy stare of green eyes. The well-dressed man visibly swallowed and the homeless man held his unblinking stare. The scrawny corporate man took a deep breath and slowly lowered his eyes, once again, back to his paper.

“What are you, a cop?” the homeless man shouted, leaning further forward. I smirked and looked around to find that I was the only person witnessing this, noticing then how unoccupied the park was. The man kept his blank eyes on the paper. “Huh? You wanna search me, big man? Come search me!”

Happy Friday, I thought.

“You wanna take these shoes?” I’m sure the wind stopped to listen. “You wanna take these shoes? Huh?”

The well-dressed man self-consciously adjusted his spectacles and peered over to me skittishly seeking confirmation that this was, in fact, actually happening. He saw that I was brimming with laughter and concluded that I was of no help.

The old man jumped to his feet with his chest puffed out.

“Bet I won’t see your skinny ass at the marathon, fucker!”

He turned and took off in a sprint down the path with his corduroy jacket flapping like Superman’s cape behind him, leaving his shoes and his bag of recyclables on the bench. The clouds to the west opened up as if to lead this homeless runner to freedom. For a moment, he looked, to me, majestic against the warm pink and orange sunset.

I laughed, turning to the alleged narc, who was staring down the walkway with his paper lowered. He turned to me and said in a nasally voice: “My doctor would never let me run a marathon. Not with these bad knees.”



TUESDAY MORNINGS AT THE DINER

Jessica Melendy

Poetry

I resist the urge to throw this apple over
her head for fear that I'll miss the trashcan

and hit the mirror, so I walk over, avoiding
my reflection, focusing only on my muffin

top, and drop it in the bin. "Black Tea,"
customer requests and I nod, burning my hand,

as BREAKING NEWS scrolls across
the diner TV. Just like that: sinking. Sneaking

to the hallway, dialing Dad, no answer,
sinking, hoping nobody will see me, nobody

does. Planes crash every day. Every day
planes crash. Just like that. "Order up."

Barely noticing my blistering hand under the hot
plate, BREAKING NEWS scrolls across

the diner TV. Just like that. Dialing Dad.
No answer. Sinking. Nobody sees me. Nobody

notices the rotting apple core, the broken mug,
the muffin top, the sinking, the blisters,

the phone. Just like that, everything
is sinking. No answer. BREAKING

Tired Flavored Pollex

Iris Lapaix

P o e t r y

States to a new face, a new name.

Hello, My Name is...leave a message after the beep.

Beep :

1. This is long overdue.

Way before the useless war against Mexico

it was supposed to be left for your cousin

and your aunts, your uncles, your grandmother.

And your grandmothers' grandmother

to let you know

they are tired.

2. Tired of yo-yoing their genes back and forth

like a cool kid being decisive while he figures out

if his jeans are too long or too short,

needing you when they're in desperate need

leaving you when they're in lack of what you feed.

3. Tired of being locked out of their home,

the west side of the west, when the

lease had been scribed onto sandpaper rough hands

bruises and cuts that were witnesses

sweat and heavy breathing.

4. Tired of families ricochet with no return

because your deceiving doggy treats are

the only ones on the menu other than a slice of illusion.

The American Dreams' façade in which now

only 47% of adults own a job supplement

to your sugar coated recipe

that even Martha Stewart can't whip up.

5. Tired of being your punch line to your janitorial jokes

and calling every female Maria

or every man José or Carlos

when you couldn't even cast a Latina Maria or Bernardo in

the classic West Side Story.

6. Tired of ignorance flooding the streets fighting for their "right"

to their homeland when they don't even know

that they are sitting in our chairs

they are sleeping in our beds

they are walking on our ground,

our soil,

but they're too busy

to notice

5. They too are humans

4. With a daughter they would chase the rainbow for
A son that they still look for gone missing
With the rest of those 42 students.

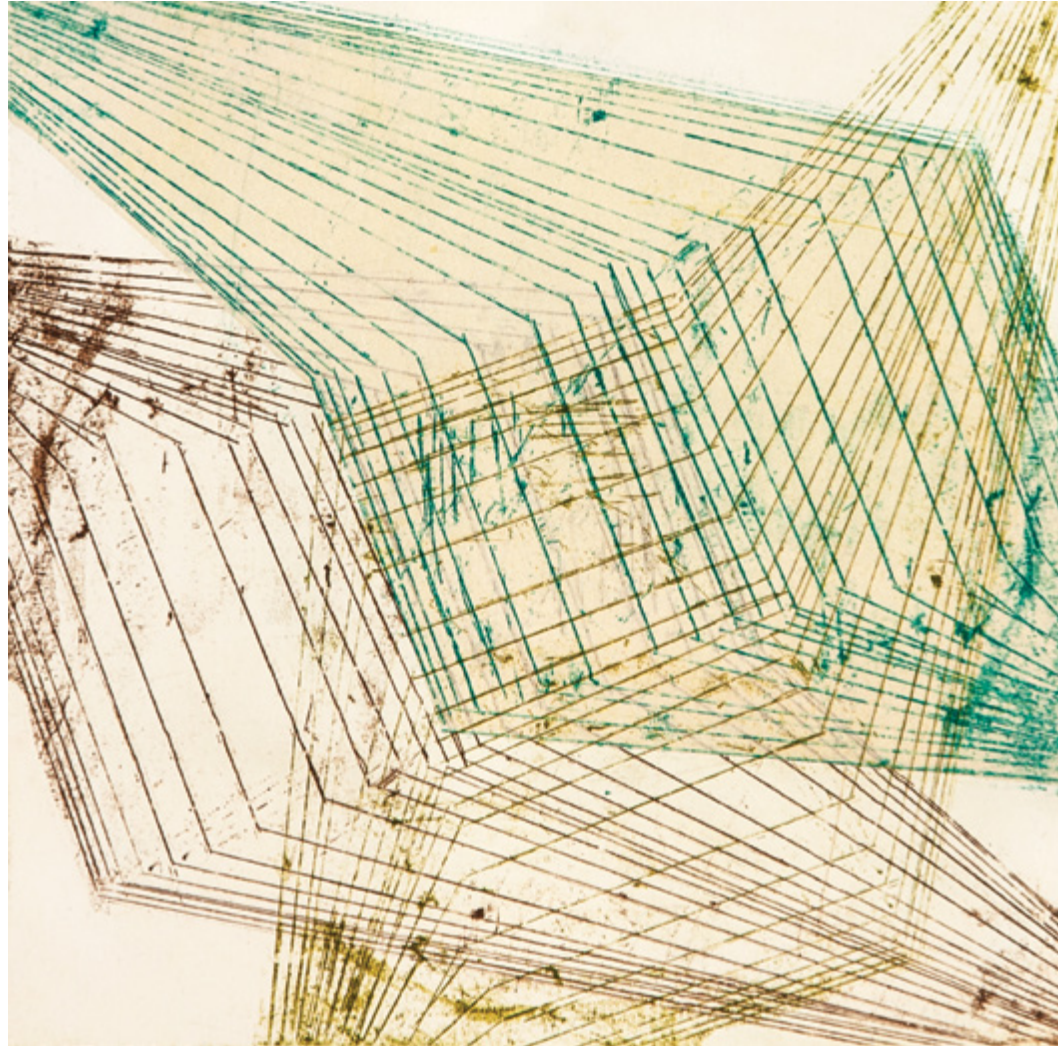
3. With the jobs you're not willing to work
but they're still willing to die for if it means
being able to feed themselves or others.
With inspirations such as Gloria Anzualda
and Pedro Pietri who establish the importance
of cultural life and roots.

2. With eyes balls and thumbs just
like every other color, position on the pyramid,
scent of your fragrance.
Trying to be their child's hero,
trying to survive.

1. We are humans too.



INTER DIMENSIONAL PORTAL
Light Painting Photography
Caitlin Marshall



THE BREAK THROUGH

Intaglio and Chine-collé Printmaking
Tory Santilli



PERSPECTIVE

Mixed Media/Photography
Brittany Fontaine



Gabriella Diniz: Graphic Design Thesis - Special Feature

Vector Illustration, Typography, Adhesive Vinyl, and 24" x 36" Clear Acrylic Panels



Emily Duchaney
Fiction

I found myself lying in a giant hot dog roll. I'd been doused in ketchup. No mustard. I sat up. The roll was soft, pliable like angel food. It might have been blood. I tasted it.

It might have been ketchup.

I finagled my way out of the roll, hands and feet sinking into the bread.

I jumped down off the ledge, plummeted through the window of my Corolla, and sped onto the highway.

Red oozed down the steering wheel. My hands slipped off again and again.

Blue lights glittered in my rearview mirror. I pulled over. A male police officer in a provocative nurse's ensemble approached the side of my Corolla, tapping a club lightly against his left palm. Four syringes jostled against the metal holsters on his hips. The needles were filled with fluorescent-colored liquids.

"What up, girl!" He dipped into my driver's side window. "Where'd you get that ketchup? Yum!" He reached into my snarled hair, grabbed a glob of ketchup with his fingers and slurped it into fluttering lips.

"I think its ketchup. Might be blood."

"Sweet. I'm totally jealous." I watched him saunter back towards his cruiser, shaking his hips like a cheap hooker and swinging the club. I waited until the clank of his white pumps ceased and drove off.

I collided with a moose.

Uninjured, I exited the smoldering vehicle and walked away, looking back at the moose. Insulted, the moose jeered in aggravation, eyeballing me.

I left a trail of red footprints. I heard a lapping sound and turned around to see the moose, not far behind, licking up my residue. He continued to eyeball me, and suddenly hopped away like a buoyant gazelle.

I got a call from the secretary at my psychiatrist's office. I had an appointment. My shrink nodded while dicing up two lines of cocaine with my health insurance card.

"Bump?" He held the top of an Altoids tin beneath my nose. I politely declined. Shrugging, he mumbled "more for the doctor" and snorted both lines.

I left. It was 4:30 A.M. so I drove home and took a hot shower. Blood spiraled down the drain in monochrome. I felt sick dizzy, hollow, and dissociated.

When the vertigo passed, I found myself in a tropical croissant, on my front lawn, waiting for the sunrise.



A windows-down Autumn car ride designed
to accumulate miles between dead ends tickling
a mother's scalp and a drowsy-eyed child fixated
on his 4th hour of PBS, half-face planted in the couch,
because his mother needs to get away again.

Her hand jerks against the wind, flapping wild
to the tune of whatever classic rock song is playing
on whatever classic rock station she has preset. Cars
approach and she flattens her palm to wave, nonchalant,
humming songs from her youth.

She punches 'San Diego' into Google Maps. 1 d 20 hr.
Sweaty-palmed and heavy-armed, she clutches the wheel
and presses the gas. Ramp comes. Ramp goes. Tracing
last week's skid marks, she jerks the car back to unwanted
territory and screams to get off this ride.

Hearing his mother's keys scrape the doorknob, he leaps
up and runs to the door. It's been hours. Muffled sobs grow less
muffled. Keys drop to the floor. He stops smiling
and crouches beside the door, desperate to feel her, hungry,
but cautious to stay unseen, unfelt and unheard.

PITY

Jessica Melendy
Poetry

MORE TEA, MR. CTHULHU?

Digital Illustration
Nicholas Maskell

THRICE BLESSED

Ryan DiPetta

Poetry

I wake up & there's no such thing as stable appetizers.

I wake up & I am afraid I've forgotten you. I mean that sounds so impossible when you think about it. It's a total mess.

I wake up & I remember this dream I had where I went on a date with someone who was not you & she introduced me to her daughter. Her daughter was so small like an action figure or a doll. Aggressively speaking, she talked just like an adult. She sat in a high-chair. We pet her with our index fingers. This daughter was also not you.

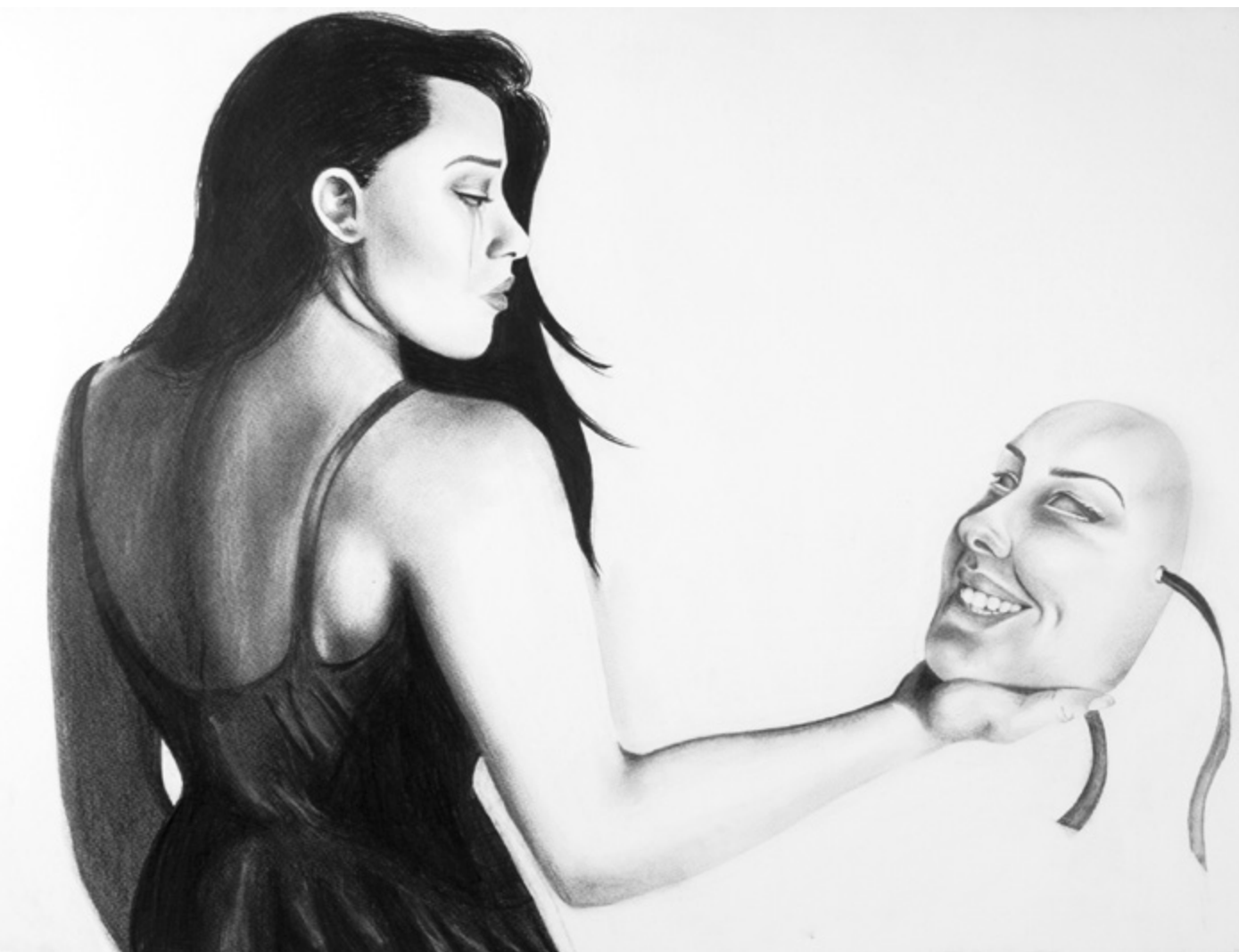
I tell John I'll never drink again, but then I'll lose these weird fever dreams, which are kind of enlightening when you're desperately trying to get your own shit together. It's probably a good idea anyway. I should not drink again.

I remember that band, pressed around your finger, too. Two owls, two owls, two heads, four wings, four talons, maybe more talons. If it's still there I've barred myself from seeing it, because the difficulty of letting something go is itself a sort of respect. I don't feel like it's so far away. I'll stencil out those silhouettes & that will be my retention.



REMEMBERING

Photography
MaryEllen Cavella



MASK

Graphite

Heather McNamara

8 MONTHS OF MOON BOMBS

Jessica Melendy

Poetry

Engines were silent as the pilot steered
us down, in a spiral, toward the dusty
landing pad. I closed my eyes and tried to
hide my frantic expression from last night's
card game friends. Games before this bomb
carrier became our home in midday Kuwait sun.

Stepping on Iraq soil for the first time, the sun
oppressed my squinting eyes against blatant stares
from Iraqi locals and soldiers who bombed
towards our group for inprocessing before the dust
could settle beneath our feet. It was after midnight
when we settled in for the night and past two
when the entire base was forced into
alarm red, as mortars crashed like sunshine
on the flight line, making day out of night.
I spent an hour, belly down, staring
at girls I never met, new roommates, through dust
bunnies and the extermination of enemy bombers.

There were three alarm reds, three bombings,
the next day and I became accustomed to
seeking shelter in whatever dust-covered
concrete bunker I could find, sleep-deprived eyes sunken
deep in their sockets, as perimeter gunners steered
their weapons towards moving targets until nightfall.

To escape May's scald, we worked nights
on the flight line, ideal targets for bomb
practice. Our spotlights were like bull's eyes steering
launchers to direct their mortars into
our construction sites until sunrise
coaxed us out of hiding to sweep up the sawdust.

We became zombified creatures with dusty
complexions by the time November came and nighttime
work was unnecessary, pale faces rejecting sunlight,
dejected by nocturnal existence, bombarded
by conversation instead of bombs, too
detached to keep up. Just blank staring.

The onset of a dust storm slowed the bombings,
blanketing the base in night, keeping us there for two
extra sunless weeks. Nothing more to do but stare.



UNTITLED, 2014

Mixed Media

Douglas Breault

DICTIONARY DEFINITION

Matty O'Brien

Poetry

I wish I knew better words.

All the others seem to.

Can't seem to say anything
With these cheap, ordinary words.



LAVENDER FOREST

Acrylic

Brooke Kelly

ASH

Ryan DiPetta
Poetry

Did your hair fall out, or did it stay
more white than gray, less
dark than mine. I mean, maybe
it was different than one remembers:
more so now, after
the ethereal song no body sustains
another dozen conversations we never had
about Prince. The dance
felt the same as always: I woke up no
stranger than though being dead,
which was a little disappointing.

Anyway:
without a body
your head rolled off
in your hands
a dimension ago,
is smiling. This
you is not the you of the body.

I'm only a bunch of giggly essence,
what was the question? I have followed the line
& now I'm all lost & fucked up. Tonight,
there will be no more time to stitch
the wrinkles out the party
will last forever.

This thread creeps & sings its way
behind my eye, an itch, momentarily
unpleasant & forgotten. What fresh
hell is this? What fresh vegetables.

HAIRBALL

Mixed Media/Printmaking
Tory Santilli





CHEVROLET

Oil

Nichole B. Manfredi

DIGHTON ROCK TRANSLATE

Poetry
Ryan Austin

~Credo quia absurdum~

We have a long way to go before tomorrow
The milky way will dig in its spiraling no good heels
and the concealed compartments of this roll top nebula
will stretch our fingers across ½ galaxies
There is no one tangled thing to be pulled
to untangle us.
No chained apparatus that unchanges us.

The sun never rises,
and an old song beats the dead horses
with the sound of inoculative joints and sinew instruments.
We find breath the loudest here,
autoderanged,
amongst collapsed noble gases in the atmosphere.

We sing,
a chatter in the ice box, a shiver in the hearth.
Instigating the bomb, the black hole, the economy, the disease, to come get us,
we insist peace but it is that peace insists of us.
Buried down in the drumlins of ourselves,
where echos heard from hills will now make them mountains.
My shore,
louder than a pissed off Atlantic crashing,
“Come and Get It! Perfect alignment would never be enough!
Come punch the jaws of life in the mouth, and get an all you can eat buffet of knuckle
sandwiches!”

We eat pieces of the universe for breakfast.



SUGAR ANTS

Graphic Design/Package Design

Heather McNamara





CHESHIRE CAT
Digital Illustration
Nicholas Maskell

MY AUNT'S PSYCHIATRIST KEYED A PIANO

Chris Lindstrom

Poetry

If I'm a person at all
a person who lives and sweats
and eats french toast sticks on occasion
it's only because that is the default
and french toast sticks can be found in the freezer sometimes

I keep getting headaches
everyday there is headaches
or migraines
and I keep accidentally buying doughnuts
and I have this recurring dream
where I chew tree bark
and it lets me breathe underwater
and if it isn't all connected
nothing is

When I'm 37
my dog will be 14
there are more things to not handle with every passing day

I wish I gave a shit during college
I wish riverboats made affordable homes
I wish I was born a sunflower
and only had to do sunflower type things

nobody stares into the sun anymore
we don't go blind that way anymore
nobody drinks ocean water
or falls into quicksand
in the woods near their house
nobody shakes their parents out of sleep
to beg them not to die ever
nobody should ever die ever
we should all be so very mad that we do

Do you need air?
Do you need to be outside right now?
It is too cold, you will freeze
Are you hungry?
Do you need snacks?
There might be potatoes somewhere
You'd have to make them
You can do that, right?
Do you need more air?
Different air?
The air is probably fine
How is the light quality in the room?
Is it fine?
Is it okay?
Do you need money?
Do you have to buy something right now?
Do you owe somebody right now?
Are you okay?
Are you okay?
Water
How about water?



SKATER BOYS

Photography

Emily Gauvin

THE FAIRY TALE
OF
PROPER
CHARACTER'S BOOK
ETIQUETTE
MANUAL
OF
POLITENESS

Matty O'Brien
Poetry

White widowed rabbits
Dressed in dapper bowties
Drink tea and debate proper
Carrot protocol.
Meanwhile,
The mermaids reef coral
And talk shit about the one who
Gave up her tail
For a man.

THE BOARDWALK
AT MIDNIGHT'S NOT AS
SAFE AS I'D HOPED

Katherine Nazzaro
Poetry

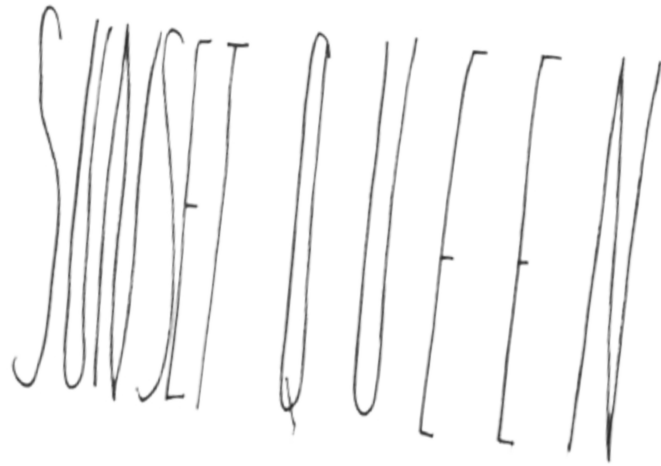
Clawed hands close around your throat
as your own hand closes around
your sister's wrist.
A heartbeat like war
drums in your ears.
And the man in front of you
smiles like a cartoon villain.

They tell you there is
safety in numbers,
but that is only true when you
outnumber the opposing side.
And so the waiting turns your shoulders
to porcelain.

but does it turn you fists to marble?

Remember, you have more to lose
than these red-eyed beasts
and your fangs are venomous.
Their claws are not sharper than yours.

You have been conditioned
to plan your escape.



Rachel-Beth Gagnon
Fiction

To any foolish spectator, I must have looked as though I was boiling alive, but really I was floating. I was a hot air balloon and I rose up to my kingdom on the pink clouds.

You see, I was the Sunset Queen and my kingdom existed only at the moment of dusk when the sky turns orange and the clouds become cotton candy – helpful, because I remember having to chew my way up through them on occasion. It was a small kingdom that hovered above the land, composed of the most brilliant glass towers. They were champagne bottles flipped upside-down so clouds floated out of it like millions of tiny pink bubbles. Before I could properly observe the world below from my god’s-eye view, I was greeted by the most odious of advisors. He had the head of a donkey with human eyes behind the long rectangular lenses of his glasses, but his body was that of a scrawny man in a purple and red pinstripe suit made from the softest velvets.

“What do you want?” I demanded as I stroked the lapel of his suit. I didn’t make eye contact because I wanted him to know I was stroking it for the suit’s sake, not his.

“My lady,” he said in that sniveling tone of his, “our kingdom faces a great crisis, even greater than the champagne shortage a few months ago.”

“Ah yes, the Great Sobriety. I remember, now get on with it,” I said.

“Well, you see, my lady, we have a bit of an infestation on our hands.”

“Infestation? I shall have no vermin nibbling away at my perfect kingdom,” I cried.

“Well, you see, it’s the little elephants.”

“Little elephants? You require my royal genius to solve a problem? You simpleton, the solution is obvious.”

“What solution, my lady?”

“We’ll simply destroy them all. Call Vice Chancellor Snickers, have him assemble the Rat Cavaliers.”

“But my lady, they are harmless,” he said, as one scurried about. It was a tiny elephant, no larger than a mouse from the world below. Its skin was so pale that I could see a network of purple veins under the surface. The wrinkles and creases all over its body gave it the appearance of cracked plaster. It was an abomination.

“No, no,” I said. “It simply won’t do. How do you expect the fine women of my kingdom to walk around like this?”

“I-I’m sorry?”

I shouted at him, “Heels, you fool, heels.” I stepped down on the elephant and pierced it with the stiletto of my shoe. Little streams flowed from the wound, and I was surprised to see the thing bled red instead of purple. It let out a shriek too small to be horrifying as it remained on my heel despite the twitching. “See?” I cried and held my foot up to my advisor and shook it. “See?” I flicked red all over his stupid donkey face. “How are dignified women supposed to walk around with these nasty things getting stuck on our heels?”

“Well,” he said, wiping the blood off with a white handkerchief, “I supposed you could stop wearing heels until we relocate.”

“For such scum? I should banish you. Why did I hire a donkey-man anyway? Where is Vice Chancellor Snickers?”

“Coming, Your Majesty,” said a squeaky voice behind me.

A squadron of pixies carried the Vice Chancellor Snickers. They struggled to fly under his weight while each grabbed on to a corner of his red, military garbs. The pixies plopped him down in front of us before collapsing onto the ground in gasping fits. He took a moment to adjust his hat, which was about twice the size of his head.

“My lady,” he said, taking a long bow. “I hear you have sought out my help with your pest problem, and I assure you I shall have them eliminated with the swiftest brutality. My Cavaliers have already ransacked colonies of elephants. The war is in our favor.”

“Good,” I said.

“But,” Donkey-man said, “they aren’t enemies, they just need somewhere to go.”

“Watch out, my friend,” Snickers shouted, pouncing on a little elephant that was rubbing against my advisor’s leg. He held the struggling beast in his claws. “See, it was going right for you.”

“It was just.”

“Now hush, Donkey-man,” I said. “Snickers has just bravely saved your life.”

“’Twas nothing my lady.”

“I hope killing them isn’t going to make a mess. I don’t want my kingdom covered in blood.”

“Nonsense. We kill them in a manner so celebrated by nature that there shall be no mess, observe.” He bit into the back of the little beast with his sharp front teeth and red confetti sprang up out of the wound. “See? No blood,” he said, and spat a mouthful on the ground.

“How lovely,” I cried. “It’ll be like a carnival.”

“Your Majesty,” the Donkey-man said. “I really think you should reconsider.”

“Now then, Snickers,” I said, “I want these vermin exterminated by Wednesday. Can you do that?”

“Yes, my lady. At once.”

He ran off, leaving me with my advisor, who had fallen into a deep sorrow, causing the clouds around his feet to turn gray and his ears to flop stupidly down the sides of his head.

“Don’t mope,” I said. “Your face is long enough as it is.”

“Yes, my lady,” he said. “What shall you do now?”

“Go, prepare the Bubble Garden.”

He sighed. “Must I, Your Majesty?”

I didn’t answer; I was too busy imagining my wonderful evening in the Bubble Garden. I would be bouncing on a mass of giant pink bubbles while tiny ones rained down upon me from champagne fountains, which would make everything disgustingly sticky but in the best way imaginable.

“Your Majesty?”

I looked at my advisor. “Oh, you’re still here? What is it?”

“I was just saying you need to attend to your responsibility first.”

“Hm? What are you blathering about?”

“It’s hungry,” he said. “It needs to eat.”

“What?”

“It needs to eat.”

He pointed to a slithering mass. When it came into focus, I shrieked. It was a shivering mound of flesh that wriggled over to us on its belly because its stunted limbs appeared useless. It had no head, but its body was covered in holes that I realized were toothless mouths. Some were spewing green, chunky

ooze that appeared to be vomit, acrid smelling to the point where I think my nose hairs became singed. The other mouths appeared to be leaking various fluids, but I didn’t care to look because I was too stunned by the horrific sounds the thing produced. All of the mouths were screaming, some clear high pitched shrieks and others gargled by their spew.

“G-get that thing away from me,” I cried.

“But it’s your responsibility. It needs to eat.”

I began screaming and crying and running away and doing all the things I would do if I were terrified enough to piss myself. I must have passed out.

When I woke up, the ground was hard tile. I felt cold porcelain against my cheek and could smell faded bleach mixed with fresh vomit. The smell of urine and the hot wet feeling in the seat of my pants informed me that I actually had pissed myself. I peeled my face from the toilet and tried to keep my head from floating away from the rest of my body as the world wavered around me. I fixed my sight on the figure in front of me and my husband slowly came into focus. I wished that the rest of the world stayed at a distance because the muffled sounds of nagging and screaming became clearer.

He looked down on me, wiping baby vomit off his glasses with a wet paper towel while our infant daughter woke up every one of our neighbors.

“She’s hungry,” he finally said.

“Well good for her.” I laughed. “So am I.”

I pulled an orange container from my pocket and let the pills fall down my throat. They were bright pink and had the shape of tiny balloons, slowly deflating.



SELF PORTRAIT

Watercolor

Jose Gouveia

Countercultural Mainstream:

*an Interview with Former Music Festival
Art Coordinator Tia Christiansen*

Kate Pallis

Rothbury, Michigan, is a village less than 1 square mile in size and home to 424 residents. Every summer, Rothbury hosts over 50,000 people who attend the 4 day Electric Forest Festival, formerly known as the Rothbury Festival. The multi-genre event has featured a wide variety of visual and performance artists as well as electronic and jam band musicians since 2008. It is held at Double JJ Ranch and is produced by Insomniac Events and Madison House Incorporated.

Freedom of expression exists at the intersection between the revolutionary and the free market. This tension is best represented in the growing music festival scene, which blurs the lines between artist and performer and the real and synthetic. Electric Forest highlights a synthesis between the production and interactive design of music festivals. We had the opportunity to talk with their former art coordinator, Tia Christiansen.



Photo Credit: Bennett Sell-Kline

Christiansen filled the position from 2010 until 2014, collaborating with artists from around the country to coordinate a united vision of their creativity and produce a unique festival experience. She organized the event's Sherwood Forest, which serves as shelter from the sun and an interactive stage for theatre troupes and evening light shows. Its busy paths suggest a crossroad between the technological (electronic music and holographic laser light projection) and the natural (organic-inspired art installations). Surrounded by thousands of campsites, Electric Forest takes place in a large venue that holds multiple stages used for scheduled musical performances. Productions are executed in time with the musical performances accompanied by pyrotechnics, fireworks and other special effects.

Christiansen's job involved maintaining balance in vision and sound in contributing to the larger scheme of the collaborative production. An example includes the centerpiece of 2014's Sherwood Forest, a massive statue of a woman draped in red cloth referred to as "the queen of the forest," which was incorporated into light shows after dark. Installation pieces like these are common at Electric Forest.

Festival attendees are encouraged to produce "offerings" gifts of self-expression. Artists work in a variety of mediums from 2-dimensional to 3D while also networking and promoting their work. Electric Forest seeks to discover strength in community while embracing individual self-expression. Christiansen and her team valued unified experience, and encouraged connectivity among

attendees. Electric Forest ascribes to these ideals as a part of the contemporary music festival scene, which is influenced by Burning Man.

Burning Man, the week-long music and arts festival in the Black Rock Desert where attendees celebrate the arts and burn a giant wooden effigy, laid the foundation for today's culture. With no separation between art space and living space, Burning Man began an American Festival tradition of synthesis between production and interaction. Burning Man started out as a free event, but has become so large that to accommodate its growth the organizers have had to create rules in addition to selling tickets to the Burner community. As an event based in anti-consumerism, Burning Man has received heavy criticism for the corporate changes in its practice.

This leaves music and arts festivals like Electric Forest in an ambiguous territory where evading consumer culture still has a price. Though festivals deny the market's order, they use similar marketing techniques to promote their brand and those of their sponsors. The ritual rebellion of contemporary music festival culture still reinforces the market system with labor and purchases. With 1 in 5 Americans ages 18-34 attending a music festival last year, this culture makes up 20% of the country's most highly marketed to population. Because of this, festivals like Electric Forest require a defined brand: artwork curated by Christiansen demonstrated radical self-expression in a way that exposed the tension of the binary relationships between the creative and the commercial market forces.



Photo Credit: Bennett Sell-Kline

Christiansen made the switch from corporate America to music festivals and back. In her move to Live Nation, she demonstrates the transitory relationship between underground as it becomes mainstream. Since Electric Forest, Christiansen was hired to use the skills she forged as art coordinator to design installations for corporate sponsors. Creative counterculture ideas are generally more

authentic than those generated for profit. Despite this difference, however, a connection between subcultures and commercialism remains.

Festivals like Electric Forest have become ritual demonstrations of a costly and hyperreal counterculture built on a philosophy riddled with paradoxes. Christiansen's role in the music festival subculture embodies the scene for these reasons.

Electric Forest does not occur in spite of the market itself, but in spite of the social institutions that have been embedded in American consciousness by commercialism.



Photo Credit: Marc Van Der AA

The Bridge: So how did you get into festivals and events management?

Christiansen: It started when I was doing my undergraduate work at the University of Oregon. I moved out there from the east coast.

The Bridge: Why did you choose to attend the University of Oregon?

Christiansen: I always knew, even as a child, that I wanted to be involved with music somehow. The producing of festivals, the gathering and community of people, is very close to my heart. I grew up in Western Massachusetts in North Hampton.

I was in corporate America, had the corner office, had a fabulous team I was working with. I literally went into my office one day and it just struck me that it wasn't really what I wanted to be doing for the rest of my life. I decided I wanted to speed up the educational process, so I moved out west to Oregon. I qualified for work-study and stumbled into the cultural forum, the student run program where all the students provide programming for the national regional comedy theatre acts that come through the University of Oregon.

The Bridge: Rothbury Festival was the original music and arts festival held at the Double JJ Ranch before Electric Forest. What inspired the transition of the festival into Electric Forest?

Christiansen: Part of it had to do with partnership on the producer level and the promoter level. There was a partnership change and some things going on at the corporate level; they decided to take a year off while planning and generating ideas for the next phase and the next incarnation of what Rothbury could be. From the very grassroots level, our first conversation about Rothbury was about not importing everyone from the bay area or from LA; we didn't want to just bring everybody out from New York. We wanted what was going on in the nation, specifically Chicago and Detroit, because not only is Rothbury right there, but Detroit at the time was in the throes of very severe economic hardship, as it still is. There has always been this consciousness of how to reach out and offer a platform to the artists in that area so that they can come and join in their hometown festival so that there can be a very eclectic and unique experience in regards to visual and performance art. Electric Forest was a platform to take the vision

that came from that year and really bring it out into the festival community at large. With such strong partners as Insomniac, who are so embedded in the music festival scene and were really the forerunners of Electronic Dance Music here in the United States, there can be a very eclectic and unique experience in regards to visual and performance art. We wanted to make sure that every year we gave an avenue for what we call "emerging artists" artists who are beginning their path or are midway through their path or as the Burner community would say, "are on the first part of their burn" into unlocking their imagination, unlocking their artistic intuition. I get lots of stories

where the artists will have conversations at the event and then get invited to other events and get to experience things that they otherwise would not have experienced without that connection.

The Bridge: The more extravagant performances of the bigger names headlining are usually held on the last couple nights of the event. Would you say that this is intentional and that Electric Forest Festival follows a narrative?

Christiansen: Yes. We plugged back into nature and we had nature-generating visuals coming to the stage. The theatrical presentation on Saturday



Photo Credit: Vladimir Zaytsev

night at the 2014 Electric Forest was very specifically timed. I wanted to do the history of arcade games and video games visually and have it fit the jam band, The String Cheese Incident. We started with the concept of pong, which we only showed for a split second because it's a slow game, and then we transitioned into Galaga, then into Pac-Man and Donkey Kong along with a few others. We worked with an amazing videographer who was able to take the idea and help us make the video representation of transitioning multidimensional and more visually appealing. I went out and took snippets from the songs of each of those video games so that the band would have them for reference and so that they could incorporate them into their set. During their performance, we threw out giant foam Donkey Kong cubes into the audience

and we had the Pac-Man ghosts floating out there as well. That was very specific and thematic. So the idea being that we are in such a digital age moving through all of that digital video-type of stuff and then we had that moment where we completely stopped it and went through a series of imagery projected onto the large screens surrounding the main stage that said "no cell phones," "connect," "put down your cell phones" because here you are at Electric Forest surrounded by all this beauty with all of these beautiful people. Instead of looking at your phone and just watching the performance, we wanted the audience to put away their phones and experience the performance itself. After this moment we plugged back into nature and we had all of those jungle noises and nature visuals coming to the stage in the place of

the video game imagery. The band was progressing, the energy was flowing, and I had eight different confetti blowers spurring out yellow butterflies. Butterflies were everywhere and then we immediately went into the fireworks. So that was a systematically planned situation and I worked with our fireworks provider, Pyrotechnics, and we selected a very specific firework presentation. We wanted to represent spring so we used fireworks like chrysanthemums or jellyfish, which were inspired by natural elements in their visual presentation.

The Bridge: How is balance maintained between the physical and digital aspects of the festival experience? Do the physical tactics inspire more emotional connections than the technical? Is technology changing the industry?

Christiansen: Technology is amazing. I think each festival drives the kind of technology that is incorporated into that event. Three years ago, Electric Forest introduced 3D projection, which has a lot of movement. When you take a look at festivals like Tomorrow World, its main stage is mostly video projection. If you're going to see Ozzy Osbourne, do you expect to see an LED panel laid out like if you were going to see Skrillex or Diplo? Absolutely not. Digital production elements are definitely genre-specific, and there is a real overlap where the division of genres is becoming less and less noticeable. Projection mapping is popular right now and is pre-scripted and rehearsed. Everyone wants to do holograms now but it's a very expensive technology. However, it's something that everyone latches onto because it's the shiny new toy in visual technology. We had to ask what technology fits, and in Electric Forest its motion lighting and lasers. We want to

bring the forest to life without it being overwhelming, without it being so intense that you can't stand to be in there or it overshadows the art installations. It's an art installation in itself. It's a complement; everything within the forest is its own unique main stage, its own unique gem. So the Forest Stage was not the main stage of the Forest, it was one art installation. It was one offering in that Forest. However, we purposely did not want to bring in a lot of video mapping and projection into Sherwood Forest. We wanted to maintain organic feeling at the stages. That was really important to us because it could really just turn into chaos with sound everywhere, lights and flashing. At that point, it does not become the place of organic inspirational activation and wouldn't have been authentic to what we were presenting.

The Bridge: It's often times difficult to differentiate between the people who were attending the festival and between those who were working as performers. How is it that you made the selections for whose work were going to be incorporated in Electric Forest and how does the audience factor into that decision?

Christiansen: We're at events, we're talking to people, and it's always a conversation. It's going to shows in New York, it's going to shows in LA, it's what's happening out there. We have to figure out if certain performances or installations are the right fit and determine whether these folks can take their show or their project and convert it into a festival environment without the theatrical tech that they are used to. Then I would send out the inquiry to sort of vet them, put together a portfolio, and my team and I would review it. We would focus on our top selections, confirm those artists, and then I'd ask



Photo Credit: Bennett Sell-Kline

others if they wouldn't mind being on the waiting list because it usually all boiled down to budget, especially pertaining to at least gas money and tickets in exchange for the gift of art. It's not uncommon for the general managers to maybe offer up a bit more money to bring in another art installation. Sometimes that just takes time and that's dependent on a number of factors, some of which are ticket sales. I would put together a portfolio and my partner Jeremy and I would review it and make some decisions about some of the key performance art troupes that we could bring in. I would again try to offer for both visual and performance art as many ticket trade opportunities as possible. Sometimes an attendee wants to come and spin with their glow-balls and sometimes that's not really fit for ticket trade with us. We try and bring in ticket trade but like I said, it's a tradeoff. Of course this comes out of the Burning Man community, which is at heart about attendees being a part of the overall offering. I think Electric Forest's participant interactions really go back to the roots of that community. People now come to Electric Forest and they know that they are a part of the partnership, a part of the experience. The first year of Rothbury, people were, in my opinion, suspicious and they weren't really sure what to expect. There were a lot of people who attended, saw some of our very avant-garde offerings and were a little bit uncomfortable. It was very new for that region, the central Midwest, and for some people they had never experienced anything like that before.



Photo Credit: Brian Spady



Photo Credit: Dylan Langille



Photo Credit: Andre Valdez

The Bridge: Have you developed the characters that are performed in the Forest yourself at all?

Christiansen: I have. We were in constant conversation about what some of the characters for Electric Forest would be each year and we would develop a theme. After talking to a good number of troupes that had been generous enough to come back every single year and partner with us, we'd really dive into the execution of these interactive performances. In the past two years we've really moved the performance art troupes into more interactive ideas for how they can connect more individually with attendees. Two years ago, we had a scavenger hunt, last year we focused on the concept of an attendee running into some of our performers in costume throughout the forest and being asked where they are at on their journey. We work with some of our performance art troupes to have them take on these ideas when in character, go out into the forest and interact with attendees so that [the attendees] can have a moment to stop and think. For me, it's always been about how we can offer an opportunity for attendees to have that inspirational moment.

The Bridge: How do you maintain the authenticity of visual and performance artists?

Christiansen: I think a part of it is allowing the artist the latitude to create their vision and not micromanaging it. As an art director, it's guiding their process to fit the performance into the overall vision of the festival, which is a conversation I've always had with all the artists I've ever worked with. I'll say: "here's thematically what we want to do. We want you to go back to your team and brainstorm what you, as a community, can bring to that theme." There is continued check-ins with the visual artists unless it's

someone we've worked with for a number of years. We ask them to give us a sketch or give us a photo of where they're at when they're building something. I call and check-in and ask where they are at in the process, what they're thinking, and you know artists are always going through inspiration on an every moment basis.

The Bridge: Would you say Electric Forest had a theme every year?

Christiansen: It was more of an eternal theme. I think for us it was more of a discussion of what our marquee art installation was going to be. We had a variety of things such as the bell tower, which was in the middle of the pathway three years ago. The artist, Doxen Jojo, came to us in 2013 through Collaboration out of Chicago. Last year we had the Queen of the forest statue, made by an artist who actually came up from Brazil and created a beautiful female image. So that marquee installation sort of functions as our thematic inspiration during that year within the forest.

The Bridge: You mentioned Collaboration. Who are they and what's their role in the forest?

Christiansen: Collaboration Theatre Company is an organization that I am so thankful that I was connected with about four years ago. They are an arts organization out of Chicago. Anthony Mosely, the executive artistic director, is a creative juggernaut and has all kinds of amazing connections within the Chicago region. They do everything from theatre presentation to interesting and interactive art installations. They also work with the municipalities of Chicago to bring an interactive theatre project out to some of the hardest socioeconomic areas.

In doing so they give youth a theatrical platform to express themselves in open parks and to talk about the things that are happening in their lives, such as shootings, seeing their friends killed or being the victim of abuse, or their families being victims of abuse, or bearing witness to those things. Acting out these situations in a theatre setting gives them the opportunity to express what's happening to them.

The Bridge: Would you say there is a political dimension to experiencing Electric Forest?

Christiansen: I think most producers are very conscientious about not stepping into politics one way or another because the point is that we are creating a platform and a community for people to come together and have freedom of expression and to freely express whatever it is that they are thinking. One of the most amazing programs we incorporated was the Wounded Warriors program. It was amazing to have a group of vets come in and just sort of share what their experience was. I think it came out of a conversation, if I remember correctly, with two Afghanistan war vets who had lost limbs while serving abroad. They had gone to Electric Forest and it was a transformative and healing experience for them. We don't have a pathway for vets to come back in and get back into the workforce. If they have been injured, we come to find out that they are not getting the care that they need. Also, as a veteran, being in the military you're so intensely connected with the people that you're with, especially if you've been in Afghanistan or Iraq or a war. You're relying on those people for your life and that's an intense connection, so when they come back to the States, where is that? Festival attendees come together and form a community based on emotional connection during

celebrations or enjoying events like Electric Forest. So, this vet was able to come and have this experience and feel completely connected to the event, to the Forest, and to the people within the Forest. From what I understand, it was this completely cathartic experience and it bubbled up between a couple different people. So, it's not a political situation, but out of a political decision that was made by our government it gave us the opportunity to reach out to people that are looking for community and a way to reconnect and share their stories.

The Bridge: What would you say is your mission?

Christiansen: Our mission, as a group of people coming together in a manifesting festival community, is to create a very magical environment for people to come and feel free to express themselves in any way that they like as long as it's safe and good. We're there to offer that platform for inspiration, to give a little bit of guidance through the performers and the visual artists that we bring in who can help them along their journey. Everyone is an artist; it lives within all of us. Sometimes we get busy throughout our days or maybe we were told when we were younger that we weren't artistic and it's those kinds of stories that made me embark on a journey to open doorways for people. Not in a dogmatic or overt way, but just offering the opportunity for people to incorporate a little bit of inspiration into their lives. I've seen the moment where their perspective has shifted and that's what it's all about. I'm bringing those concepts and kinds of ideas with me into this new path that I have with LiveNation. I now have to consider if an activation is a fit for the brand; it's got to be a fit for the company, and it has to be a fit for the event. There

are marketing people who aren't necessarily thinking about it the way that I am, but I am trying to plant a seed so we can do more things like a 32-foot tall totem pole and a body shop like we just finished working on in Las Vegas for a client. It's been a very interesting challenge to pull out of the community I've been working with for so long to bring it out to the world at large and not just to our community of people.

The Bridge: How is this transition going from working on something that is more within a subculture to working in a more commercial corporation?

Christiansen: It'll take some time, but when I look back upon my life, every project I've taken on has been a project that has brought a huge transition and has been something completely different than I've done before. I'm working with a wonderful team of amazing people that have been in the sponsorship group for longer than I have, and in brainstorming they help me take ideas that I have and make them more palatable for the brand. We work together to create some really exciting opportunities, then the sales team has to go back and pitch it to the brand, get the client to understand what we're trying to do and how we are trying to help them create an experience that allows for the emotional connection they're looking for with the attendee. A car with a tent and a banner parked at an event becomes white noise; it doesn't get noticed and the attendee does not find it interesting. The sponsor then doesn't get what they're looking for as far as connecting with their potential purchaser. I see working with Live Nation as a global opportunity, an opportunity to reach and collaborate with ten times the number of

people than I would have been able to before only because the organization is so large. The 5 people I'm working with are talking to 20 other people and those 20 other people are talking to 50 other people so it's exponentially growing and it's a chance to create an even larger container platform for collaborative inspiration. My new challenge is always bringing it back to the brand. I could sit here and talk about visual and performance art all day but now I have added this new exciting dimension to challenge myself into always bringing it back to the brand, the clients. The client is still the attendee; the client is the event. I now have to add what Fiat, Honda, 7up and Coca-Cola are trying to get across. That's really defined the transition. I've got a wonderful team I get to brainstorm with who will laugh, say, "That's a great idea Tia, but we got to bring it back to the brand," and then I'll just say, "give me a minute or maybe five minutes and I'll come back to you and you can help me figure it out."

The Bridge: How do you develop your artistic vision?

Christiansen: Being present and aware. For instance, yesterday I was walking through the airport, and I've seen more interesting art pieces in airports than I could say, whether it's a fountain, or something that's lighting, or that Christian Dior sampling area. I'll flip through restoration hardware catalogues and I flip through a lot of fashion magazines, colors, textures, clothing lines for costumes, but for me that can also translate into visual art. I'm not saying high fashion should drive everything, but there's definitely some inspirational things out there. Conversation, meditating. I'll walk into thrift stores and antiques shops and those generate ideas, especially for Electric

Forest. Old movies can be visually inspiration and I even use kids movies; I have two younger nephews and I went to a lot of kids movies with them and would pick out a little something here or there that I would never have even thought of myself. Then we'd be planning something and I'd be like "wait a minute, what if we take this idea," and turned it on its head and recreated it.

The Bridge: Are there any lessons you've learned throughout your career that have changed everything for you? Is there any advice that you would give someone starting a career in art coordination and event production?

Christiansen: No one is infallible. We all make mistakes and this is, I think, true for life. It's about the people we have around us; it's about creating a team. Creating that collaborative atmosphere where everyone feels their ideas have value and that they're going to get credit for what they've contributed. As we move forward in life it's all a collaborative effort, if one of us succeeds then we all succeed. What's really important is to be into your passion, stand in your integrity, be collaborative, and good things will come.



Photo Credit: Brian Spady



FALLING FORWARD

Ink

Cidalia Pina

LITTLE FIVE POINTS

Patrick Simas

Poetry

The sole truth I felt was found in the street,
The cobblestones of Little Five Points art;
There music played along with stomping feet,
Broken strings strung out like a broken heart.

When she left my lips numb that December;
When the doctor said it's all in my head;
When cancer consumed each family member;
When the nurses said I should have been dead;

When college couldn't cope with my actions;
When I tried to flee towards the West Coast;
When I went through hospitalization;
When I pushed away the ones who loved most.

There is a truth a melody to control.
There's a hope a harmony for the soul.

Shannon Collings:
Artist Portfolio - Special Feature
Metal and Found Objects

66

Charm Bracelet

67

Crow Comb

Altar

68



ALTAR



CHARM BRACELET



CROW COMB

NAPPY HEADED FOOL

Poetry

Marlene Price

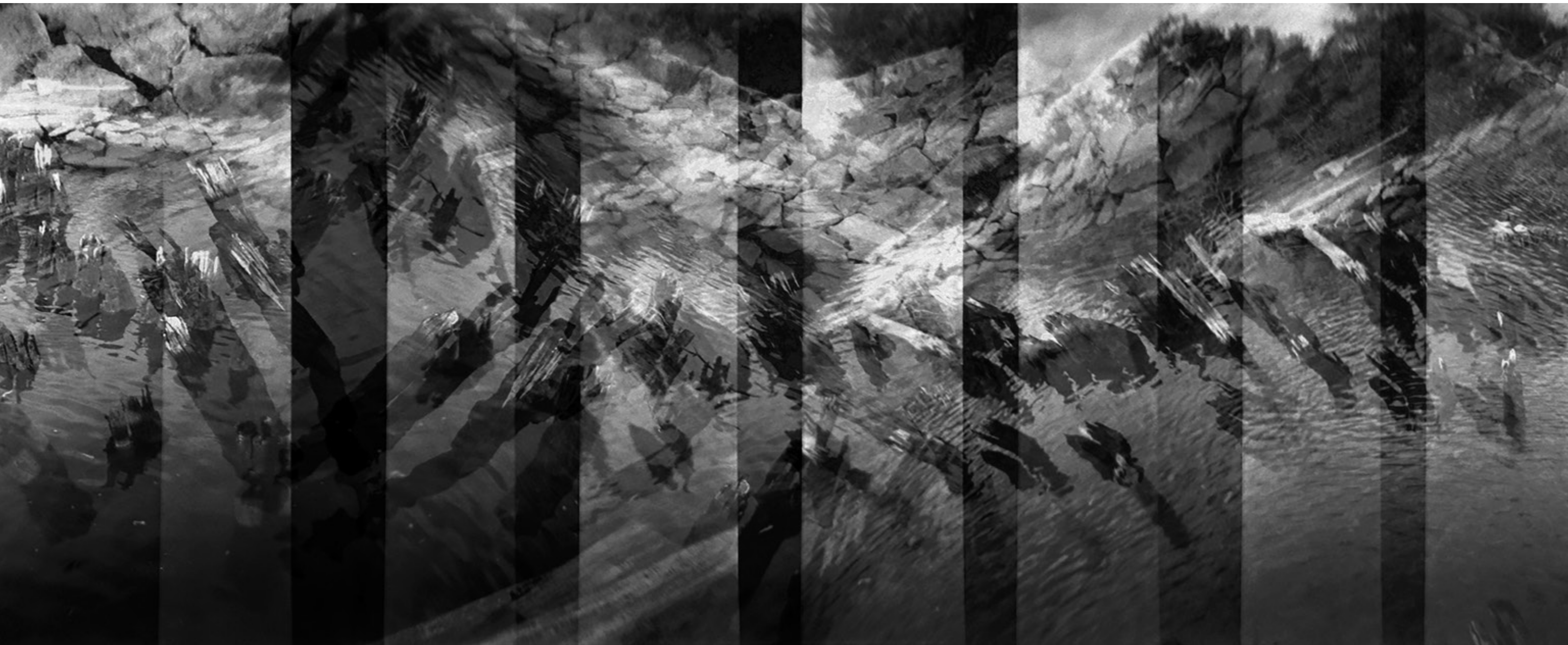
From baby to 7 years of age, this head was combed, greased, and cornrowed
stories of creativity never fully used,
the ends of my hair in colored beading.
Music was made every time I turned my head.
Age 8 to 10, coarse hair grew wilder and longer and more time-consuming.
This is when I first heard the word: Perm.
My friends had them as long as I could remember, their black hair stripped of its
identity and told to do as America said: Conform.
Images of dark skin and long straight hair had filled my psyche.
I thought I was the freak. How come my hair doesn't do that?
How come my hair can't be that straight?
Naive lips whisper, mommy can I have a perm?
Years of brainwashing and manipulation
conflicted with what she thought was the best for me.
so instead of saying no, she said, "We'll wait until you're 13."
3 years of combs breaking, eyes watering, burns marking the edges where stylists
kissed me with a magic wand that turned Lauryn Hills to Lauren Conrads.
White cream scraped against my scalp, slicing away my ancestry.
Hair blow-dried, wrapped and sent away like slaves who learned
the way to make master happy is to behave,
not to be nappy.
But I have decided to break my chains,
to reclaim my name
as Queen.
So I cut off curtains of conformity and in place hang chandeliers of truth.
I make sure that my ends match my roots.



NANTASKET MORNING

Photography

Coleen O'Hanley



OLD DRIFTAWAY PIER

Medium Format Film, Holga

Erin O'Donnell

BONES

Taylor Almeida

Prose Poetry

i. You used to sit in her bedroom laughing over video games neither of you were good at. She excused herself to the bathroom and you tried to keep laughing so you wouldn't have to hear the retches, teaching you everything you know.

ii. You wear your father's self-hatred on your back. You thought he was a superhero, but he had you tricked all along. You don't know how to remove his cloak now. It is stitched jaggedly into the pale skin of your shoulders.

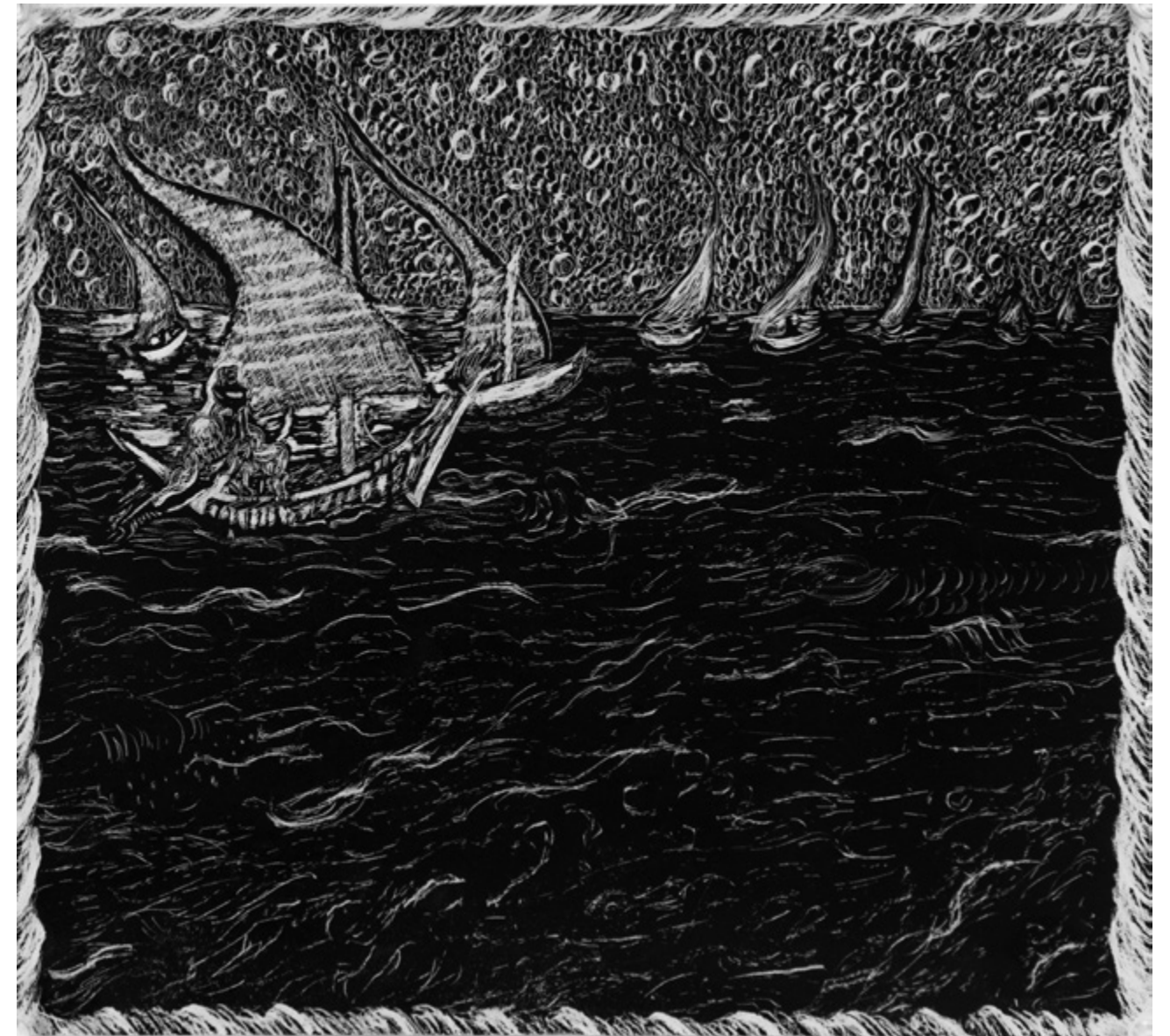
iii. You only continued because of the girls who whispered that you starved yourself during lunch hour.

iv. One time you read a book about a woman who fell in love with her kidnapper. Being caged was the only thing she knew. You learned that maybe it isn't so bad to be bound by a double-edged sword.

v. Alive or dead, you never knew how to define yourself, so you labeled yourself as nothing.

vi. Your brother tilted his chin up to the night sky and told you that most of the stars you wished on were dead. They wouldn't go out for years here on Earth, and you wondered if maybe you were a star too.

vii. There are abandoned parks in Disney World, and you think lying down at Discovery Island wouldn't be so bad. Maybe you can stay there until the dusky seaside sparrow sits on the top of your toes. Maybe then you'll finally know what it's like to be extinct.



V. SHANNON'S TAKE ON V. VAN GOGH

Etching on Black Scratchboard

Victoria Shannon

SEASON OF THE HEART

Chris Lindstrom

Poetry

If you put on The Muppet Christmas Carol
two times in july
Netflix will send you an email
asking if you're okay

If you watch The Muppet Christmas Carol
two times in july
the end credits will be replaced
with a list of names
of people you only remember
thanks to the list
and that you forgot about them
only makes the absence worse
rewind back to a part
where Gonzo is chilling

If you watch The Muppet Christmas Carol
one time in july and then immediately you watch it again
and it's also july
and you try to climb into your tv so you can flee
from your bullshit life and your
unripe clementines
that you bought for 9 dollars
your tv will let you
climb in
just this once
but you cannot bring your shoes



MONOCHROMATIC EMMA

Acrylic

Cidalia Pina



PELICAN SOUP

Rose Alabaster Stone
Laurie Mathews



WINTER TABLE RUNNER

Weaving
Kasey Glavin



AMID AUTUMN NIGHT'S DREAM

Acrylic

Alexandria Mignone

DOG DAYS

Matty O'Brien

Poetry

One day

Milk bottles

Left by

The Paperboy

Will make sense.



BEAR

Fiber-100% Worsted Wool

Fallon Keenan



PINC PAINT

Graphic Design/Package Design

Bethany Clare Matern



RIPTIDE

Metal

Nelia Borden

THE BICYCLE THIEF

Sarah Walker

Fiction

When I think of my daughter, I think of her blonde hair fluttering around her tiny face like feathers falling off a fluffy bird. Her head always vibrates with contagious laughter.

When I think of my wife, I think of a woman who lies beside me every night missing the one thing she actually liked about herself: her soft, rounded breasts. Her chest is as flat as a board now and when she turns over each morning her face looks green and her eyes are dark as she glares at me through the morning light. That ugly look. As if I was the doctor who cut off her breasts and left her with nothing.

When I think of myself, I see an overweight man too lazy to shave his ratty facial hair and someone too pathetic to make a decent living for his family of two. I'm a man who saves his leftover coins in a mason jar. It's not for something fun like taking my family to Disney Land but because I have to.

Our trailer smells like old socks and dust bunnies. I watch Katie as she plays with two dolls on the carpet. One has half the hair torn out of her head. The other's was cut off by dull kitchen scissors last weekend.

“Where’s Mom? Kitchen?” I ask her.

Katie points to our bedroom without looking up and moves the dolls’ heads together.

I find Abby with her head straight down in a pillow on our bed. When I sit beside her, she turns over and has one long red line imprinted down the center of her face.

“You couldn’t do this on the couch? Katie is out there alone.”

“She’s not two, Adam,” Abby says and puts her face back in the pillow.

I grab her shoulder and turn her back again. She’s crying now.

“What is it? Did something happen today?”

“She’s turning five tomorrow.”

“I know. You really think I ”

“And we have nothing to give her. There aren’t even enough pennies in that stupid jar to buy her a lollipop.”

I fished the last of the quarters out of the jar a few days ago to buy a pack of Marlboros. Abby doesn’t even know I started smoking again. I hold my breath, fearing she might smell my guilt or the cigarette that still lingers on my tongue from the drive home. To distract her, I think of sputtering off about the health care system in America, our greedy country that took all our money when Abby got sick. Every time I see those little pink ribbons plastered on car bumpers or hanging in coffee shop windows, I want to tear them off and light them on fire. We haven’t seen one dime from those pink shirts or ribbon magnets that were sold. Not one dime to go in our coin jar. Last time I said that aloud though, Abby slapped me across my face. That’s when I realized I was pitiful. I was the pit full of worthlessness. I made up excuses because I couldn’t fix the things that weren’t fair. There were

millions of women like Abby and I was probably the only man who had a sour taste in my mouth once we learned she would survive, all because it meant even more struggle.

“I’ll find something to give her.”

“Oh yeah? What are you gonna give her? A birthday card addressed to the wrong place?”

Abby secretly hates that I am a mailman. She thinks I prance through the dry California air getting a suntan and petting friendly dogs in pretty neighborhoods while she is trapped inside with a toddler who cuts off all the hair of her toy dolls.

She rolls her head back into the pillow and I don’t turn her over this time but examine her hair that has grown back fast after a year. There are still little tufts on the back that are shorter and I spin my finger through the clumps of hair. Her sobs start back up but are muffled in the pillow. I lean back, close my eyes, and try to listen to Katie who is talking to her dolls in the living room. Except Abby chokes on a few tears, hiccups loud, not letting me forget even for just a moment that I have failed.

The best part of being a mailman is knowing the quickest routes. I really don’t know where I am heading the next morning, but as I walk past the Sheraton on Duckhorn Drive I spot the bike resting against a trailer attached to a white Ram and decide it is exactly where I need to be.

I am wearing a windbreaker, the kind of jacket that talks in loud whispers when I move, and I realize it was a terrible decision as I walk across the parking lot of the hotel and come closer to the bike. But there’s no one around and only a few other cars are parked nearby.

I move my hand along the bike’s black bars and imagine Katie riding it when she’s older. She will whip through our trailer park, trying to run over stray cats and baby birds that are already dead. When she parks it and struts up to the stairs, she will have the same look that Abby does when she wakes up. I take my hands off the bike, leaving that image, and lift myself into the trailer.

Five more bikes are inside. They look less intimidating than the black beauty outside, but I spot the winner leaning to the left. The handles are yellow and so is the thin metal around the tires.

Katie will love this bike. I can see her face already when I kneel down, the yellow bars peaking out from behind me. Her face will be flushed pink with excitement. Even if she can’t ride it now, just knowing something this fancy is her own will bring years of happiness.

The bike is surprisingly light as I lift it down. The owner is probably some skinny man who cruises around Sacramento whistling and zipping through the air like a butterfly. He won’t get to transform anymore when he comes back and realizes his bike is gone, but if he knew Katie, knew it was her birthday and that we didn’t have anything to give her, he would



understand. If he ever got the chance to look around our trailer and see the stained floors, the ugly cracks running down the bedroom doors, the stagnant smell that hangs in the air, he would give the bike to us.

I look around once more. My jacket swishes through the parking lot and once I reach the sidewalk, I hop on the black and yellow bike and ride home.

Before I am even up the stairs, Abby whips open the door.

“What is that?”

“A bike.”

“You bought yourself a bike?”

“It’s for Katie.”

I see Katie on the carpet behind Abby. She is wearing the same clothing as yesterday and her hair is in uneven tangles. I smile as she leans her little body to the side and tries to see past Abby.

“You can’t be serious.” Abby walks closer and touches the bike. She leans down and examines the tires, the metal rims. “Adam, how did you get this?”

Katie comes to the door and her tiny, sleepy eyes are huge now. “Is that mine?”

“It is ”

“Katie, go back inside,” Abby says, cutting me off.

Katie doesn’t move but twines her fingers together and licks her lips.

“I said go back inside. Now.”

When Katie runs back, I lift the bike and follow. “Excuse me,” I say, but Abby moves so she completely blocks the door.

“Adam, I swear. Do not bring that in there. Where on earth ”

The handlebars hit her abdomen and our eyes

meet directly. You hate me, I think as she squints and her face turns a little paler. I press the bike forward again and she has no choice but to move and follows me through the door, yelling my name. AdamAdamAdam.

“This is yours,” I say above my screaming wife. Katie’s loud sobs shake the walls, and I kneel down and brush the blonde hair back from her red face. “Why are you crying?” “I want the bike,” she whimpers. “But why is everyone mad?”

“We’re not mad.” I put Katie’s hands on the black metal. “Happy Birthday.” Abby walks to our bedroom in just a few steps, opens the door and slams it shut. Katie flinches, her hands coming back from the bike like it stung her.

I lay down on the carpet next to Katie. “It’s your bike, Katie. Go ahead, do whatever you want with it.” I wonder if she will go fetch a pair of scissors and try to cut through the spokes or stab holes in the tires. Instead, she walks into the kitchen. I hear the step stool being dragged across the floor and the sink water turn on. Next, Katie is carrying a bucket of soapy water through the living room. Handfuls drop from the bucket and splash on the rug, but she’s biting her lip again and smiling at the same time, almost laughing.

“What’s that for?” “I need to wash the bike,” she says and dips a dish towel into the bucket. She tilts her head and delicately runs the rag over the black bars. “I like this better than my dolls.”

The TV is on when I finally make my way into our bedroom and Abby reaches for the remote, turning up

the sound. I wonder why she hasn’t said anything or why she hasn’t thrown anything sharp, thick, or heavy at my head. Then I turn and see what she’s watching. “Armstrong’s bike has been missing since noontime today. Police have no suspects at this time. If anyone has seen any suspicious activity after the race, please contact the Sacramento Police Department. There will be a reward given to anyone who finds the bicycle.”

The blonde news anchor keeps a stiff smile as photographs of Armstrong’s bike appear on the left side of the screen. My stomach twirls as I see the yellow handles and the same black bars my daughter is soaking with soapy water this very moment. “Was this your plan?” My wife’s voice is so calm it frightens me. I am afraid to look at her, afraid her eyes may have turned completely black, matching her pupils. “To get some reward from this? Make up some story and get money?”

I shake my head. “Adam, what is wrong with you?” “It’s not a big deal. Relax. It was left. No one was even ”

Abby laughs. “This is just like you. The way you used to be. So relaxed.” She takes a deep breath. “It’s not fine. This is insane. Imagine what’s going to happen. To all of us.”

I know it can’t be any worse than what it is now. I’ll be locked behind some metal bars with the rest of the thieves. Katie will come and visit, place her small hand on the glass and try to touch my cold skin through the barrier. Abby would be too embarrassed to even look at her ugly, sad husband deteriorating more than her this time.

I get up and walk back into the living room with

Abby at my heels. “Where are you going?” Katie doesn’t take her eyes off the bike, even when she dips her rag back in the bucket, but I lift it away from her. “It’s mine! You said it was mine!” “It was yours,” I say as I carry the bike to the front door. “But now it’s not.”

When I open the door of the Sacramento Police Department with one hand and pull the bike in with the other, a man slouched in one of the blue chairs snaps his head up. His face is hidden underneath a brown baseball cap, the sides frayed and ugly, but he lifts his head higher when he sees the bike. He takes the hat off and furls his eyebrows.

The officer at the counter puts his hands on his hips, leans back a little. “Can I help you?” “I found the bike.” “What?” “The bike. The one missing from the um the race.” “Oh, shit. The Armstrong bike?” The man in the chair snorts and starts laughing, but I ignore him and nod. “How did you? Where’d you find it?”

I take advantage of the officer’s confusion and step away from the bike that I leaned against the counter and inch closer to the door. “It was only a block away.” I point with my thumb behind me. “Just down there, leaning up against some guardrail. A fence. Something like that.”

I turn around, walk past the man in the chair. He’s quiet now, scuffing his feet on the floor and shaking his head. “Wait,” the officer says, coming around the

counter. “Do you mind if we ask you some questions?” I raise my hand. “Gotta run. It’s my daughter’s birthday.” The door closes and I hear his voice shrink. “What about the reward?”

When I get back home, the outside lamps are on and they light up the trailer park’s driveways. They’re more like roads, though, not really our own. I could be leaving these driveways behind if I went inside with my windbreaker full of cash. I would have stuffed the money in the jar and left it on the counter, under the kitchen spotlight for Abby and Katie to see first thing in the morning.

I know all that’s in the jar are three pennies and two nickels. But I find a quarter in my pocket right before I walk inside. Instead, I’ll drop it in and listen to the new coin fall against old copper.



REXHAM DUNE

Medium Format Film
(Diana Lomography and Multi-Pinhole Holga)

Erin O'Donnell

NINETEEN

Poetry

Hannah Green

The air was tense as we gathered around
We gathered around the choking sound
We laughed and talked but ever-present
In the well-ignored background

We gathered around the choking sound
My sister's hand around mine wound
A nurse who would know better than
To try and stop the choking sound

My sister's hand around mine wound
We all talked over the choking sound
We talked of suction, of the source
Of the rattly, sticky, choking sound

We all talked over the choking sound
Till our facade became unbound
When something white spewed from his mouth
Silencing the choking sound

They gave us coffee and gave us food
To try and kill the guilty mood
We said goodbye, we planned the wake
Went home and ate more birthday cake

ARTERIAL

Acrylic

Melissa Thomas



STAY AWAY

Oil

Jillian Monska



CROC-O-DIAL

Stone

Sarah Newton



EXPOSED

Oil

Nichole Manfredi

Jessica Melendy

Poetry

IVE AIREADY TAKEN MY MEDICATION

and fear that I'll fade
halfway through drinks. I barely
see the Museum
of Islamic
Art.

Where's Doha City
at almost midnight?
With its ice cream children
and Christmas light boats
scattered about the bay?

I'm hearing sirens again
in that curtained bus
with loaded M16s pointed
from various directions:
heart pounding.

There's the top of the gunner's head
visible beyond the windshield.
I'm back at Ft. Carson
and footage of heads
severed
by bridge strings

rolling around slushing
like watermelons
under Humvee tires
blood spitting
"keep your weapons down."

Across from me
the fabric is moved
ever so slightly. I'm inside
the taxi on my way to the hotel
and flashing police lights
are speeding by me

and people buying ice cream.



WAR PAINT

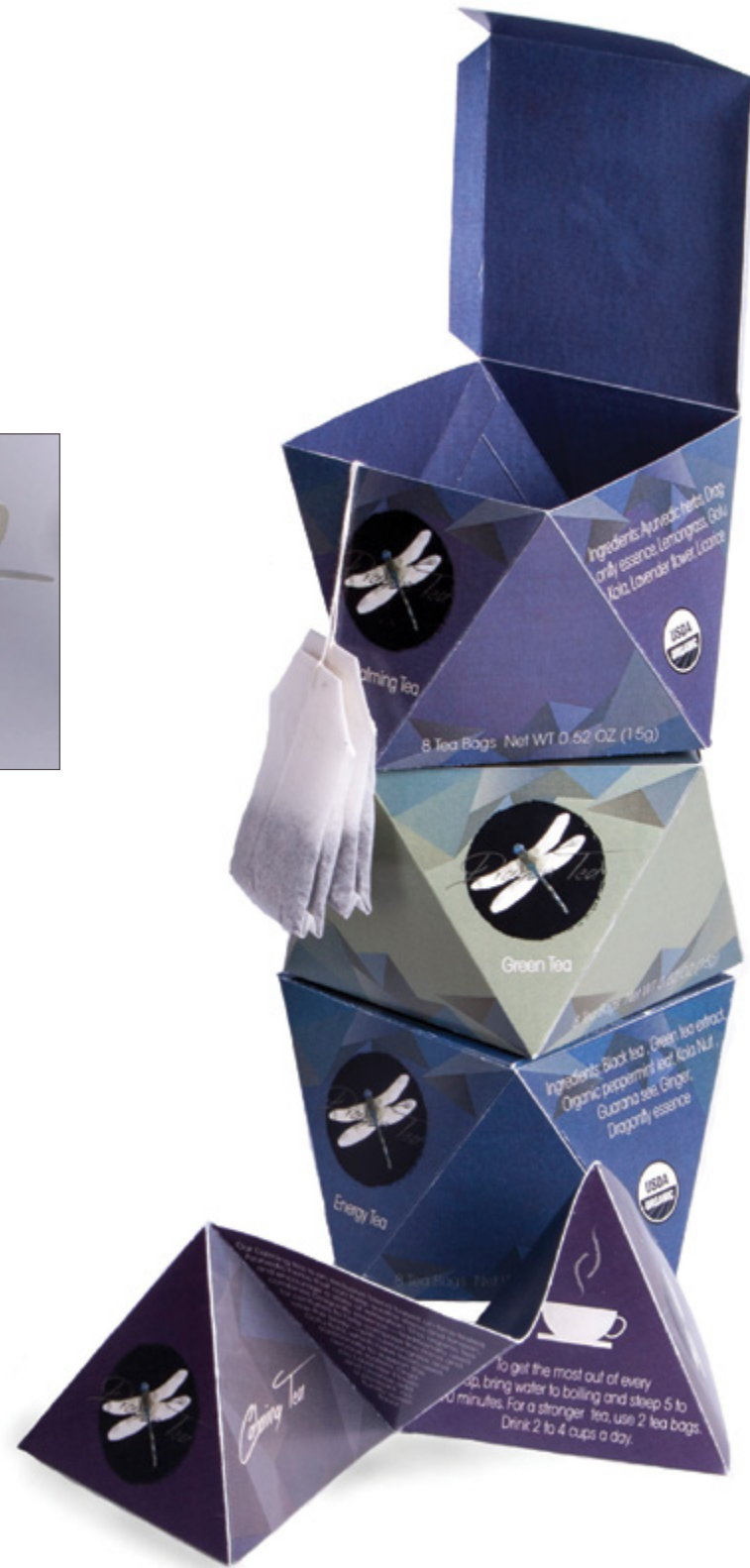
Foam, Acrylic Paint, Brushes and Tubes
Victoria Taylor



DRAGON TEA

Graphic Design/Package Design

Kerin Gaydou



IN BETWEEN THE PAGES OF A COCKTAIL MENU

Deanna Haas

Poetry

put your rough hands here
above my ribs and fill me
I have been empty.

TERMINAL

Shane Phillips

Fiction

My brother and I had been driving for eight hours when we finally reached Phoenix. Ezra had been asleep for almost three hours, which wasn't an odd occurrence. He slept whenever he could now, to keep his strength up and all. He was snoring softly when I pulled off the main road to stop at a diner. A few trucks were already sitting in the lot. I parked the Subaru and turned off the engine, glancing over at my brother. I gave him a shove on the shoulder.

"Wake up, Ezra. We're here."

Ezra took a deep breath and his eyes cracked open. His head cocked to the side for a moment, as if he had briefly forgotten where "here" was.

"Thank Christ. We've been driving forever," he said, opening the car door.

I stepped out of the car and leaned on the hood. "What the hell are you talking about? You slept like the whole time."

"Yeah, but I was still in that piece of shit car with you the whole time. Can we eat now?"

I laughed and punched him on the shoulder. The kid still had attitude, that was for sure. He grinned, and we walked across the dirt lot to the diner. I kept an eye on his gait until we got inside.

The bell jingled cheerfully as we stepped through the doorway. A young waitress peeked her head over the counter to look.

"Sit wherever you want," she said, and ducked back behind it.

We took a booth near a window and sat down. The plastic leather squeaked under our weight. Sunlight streamed in through the slotted blinds and fell over my brother's face. It made him seem even more pale than he already was.

The waitress came over to us with laminated menus in hand. She bent over the table and placed them in front of us, leaving a ghost of her perfume as she straightened up.

"Welcome to the Lizard Leap Café, boys," she said, smiling. "My name's Danielle, and I'll be serving you today."

Ezra looked up at me and raised his eyebrows. He began to cough and sputter like a frequent smoker. I'll admit, even I couldn't tell if he was faking it at first. The waitress

looked at him, concern entering her eye. Her smile instantly turned into a frown.

"Oh my God, are you okay?" she asked.

Ezra hacked a few more times and looked up sheepishly at the waitress.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'll be okay for now. It's just the cancer."

"Cancer?" she asked.

I rolled my eyes as Ezra released a deep sigh.

"Yeah, cancer," he sighed again. "The doctors say I only have a few more months, that's why we're here," he said, making a motion with his hands between himself and me. "But at least I got some of my hair back." Ezra rubbed the newly-formed fuzz that had grown on his head.

She gasped. "That's terrible!"

Ezra nodded. "But thank God for my brother right here. We've always talked about going to see the Grand Canyon, and when I got the news he up and quit his job just to take me," he said, snapping his fingers. "Just like that."

She looked at me and smiled again.

"That's so sweet of you. You're a great brother."

"He sure is," Ezra said with a grin.

"You know what? Let me get you boys some coconut cake. On the house."

"That would be great," Ezra said, placing a hand over his heart.

As soon as the waitress had walked behind the

counter, I shot my brother an angry look.

"You can't keep doing that, Ezra."

"What do you mean?"

"You know. That. The little manipulative thing you do. It's not fair."

"Oh, I'm sorry, Jack, and this is?" asked Ezra, motioning up and down his body. "Come on. It's just cake."

"Look, it was hard enough getting Dad to let us do this alone. I don't need us getting in trouble."

"You're not the one that's dying, Jack. I don't have the same luxuries as you do."

"Look, I'm just saying that."

"Here's your cake boys," the waitress said, placing the plates on the table. "I grabbed a couple ice waters too."

Ezra looked up. "Thanks, Danielle. It looks fantastic."

"Could I get you guys anything else?"

Ezra glanced at the menu. "Well, I could."

"We're fine, thanks," I said.

The waitress returned to the counter. Ezra looked at me and shook his head. I shrugged it off and prodded the slice of coconut cake with my fork.

He'd been like that since he was taken off chemo and the doctors gave him a time frame. I guess I don't blame him for being so bitter and dismissive. I would probably act the same way if I were going to die in a

month. He never talked about how he felt about his condition; other than the cancer, Ezra was his own worst enemy.

It was nearly seven o'clock by the time we reached a campsite just off the shore of Lake Pente. The sun was beginning to set over the mountains, casting a pinkish red light over everything. The tent was finally set up; each time we pitched it there was less of a struggle. Ezra was walking around looking for scrap wood and tinder for a fire while I unloaded some things from the car. We really didn't have much, except for our clothes and sleeping bags. We wanted to keep the trip as light as possible.

I watched from the tent as Ezra assembled some of the wood in the fire pit. He didn't really know what he was doing, but I let him give it a shot anyway. I saw him try to make some semblance of a teepee for a few minutes. After a few tries, the wood stood in place, and Ezra stared with his hands in front of him, as if coaxing it to stay put. He started crumpling paper and stuffing it wherever he found a space in the wood.

"Not bad, kid. When did you turn into a Boy Scout, huh?"

Ezra rolled his eyes. "It's not that hard. I just watched you and Dad a couple times and, well" he gestured to the stacked wood.

"Well, light it up," I said. "That's the final test."

He took my lighter and slowly lit the bottoms of the crumpled paper. It smoldered at first but eventually caught, and fire began to lick the wood.

"Ha, bitch!" he shouted, a smile crossing his face. I chuckled and sat next to him on a log by the fire pit. The sun had finally descended below the mountain, and the fire was now our only source of light. It ate away at the wood, reaching higher into the night sky. We stared into the fire for a long time without saying a word, as if it offered some sort of solace. The fire danced for some time, but soon it lost interest in us and died down. Ezra was still mesmerized.

"It's weird thinking we're almost there," I said, breaking my gaze with the fire to glance at Ezra.

"Yeah. It's weird, I feel like we left New York so long ago"

"It's been a long-ass trip," I said, clapping a hand on his back. He laughed.

"Yeah it fuckin' has." Ezra stared back into the fire.

Thinking about the last two weeks I laughed to myself.

"Don't forget to check your sleeping bag for snakes."

"Believe me, I have been ever since we left Texas. Holy shit, that was insane," Ezra said, clutching his stomach.

"You sounded like a little girl the way you screamed!"

"Yeah, yeah. Shut up." Ezra was still laughing despite his tone. "That girl though, Sherry," he whistled, "now she was something."

I glared at him. "You're such a little shit for making me sleep in the car in Louisiana."

I couldn't help but laugh. Sure, I was mad when it happened, but now it just didn't seem important.

"I'm gonna miss this, Ez," I said. "I love you, man."

Ezra suddenly turned back to the fire, nodding his head, a far off look in his eyes.

"I'm really tired. The ride takes a lot out of me. I think I'm just going to go to sleep," he said, still staring into the fire.

"Yeah. Yeah, me too."

Ezra got up and walked to the tent. He opened it, and climbed right into the sleeping bag, clothes and all. I put the fire out and came in after him. His eyes were already closed and I could hear his soft breath, but I knew he wasn't sleeping. It was so quiet out here, different than New York. More than anything, it was calm. I didn't sleep well that night.

The ride to the Grand Canyon only took a few hours. We listened to the mixtape I made for the trip three times the whole way through. We finally reached the parking lot, which was filled with travelers much like us: tired, cranky, yet excited. Ezra was tired too,

becoming weaker as the trip went on. I could see his frail bones through clothes that weren't as loose when we started our trip.

"You ready for this?" I asked

"I hope so. We just drove over two thousand miles to get here."

"Well let's go then," I said, offering him a hand to get out of the car.

We joined the groups of other obvious tourists starting the hike to the vantage points. They were dressed in flowery button up shirts and khaki shorts; binoculars dangled from their necks. One family passed us, and the husband nodded politely in our direction.

"Beautiful day," he said.

"Sure is."

The trails were mostly sand and loose rock, not sure footing for someone who was having trouble even walking on flat surfaces. Before long, our feet were blistered and our ankles ached. Sweat was beginning to soak through our shirts no matter how much water we sucked down. Bugs surrounded us in a swarm to attack the skin that was left uncovered. No matter how many times you swatted them away they always came back. It was a miserable walk, I looked at my brother, who was wheezing and stumbling over the loose rock.

“Why don’t you sit a minute, man,” I said, guiding my brother to a nearby rock.

Ezra nodded and took another sip of water from his canteen. “I didn’t know it would be this intense,” he said, still catching his breath.

“I mean, I knew it wouldn’t be a cakewalk, but we can do it.”

“I don’t think I can, Jack,” Ezra said, staring at his shoes.

“Come on, Ez. There’s no way we’re stopping now. We’re only a mile away from the ridge. Come on.”

I helped Ezra up and threw his arm across my shoulder. It took longer than expected, and we were well behind our group, but we made it. We crested the last hill and finally reached the top of the ridge.

The view was breathtaking: the different shades of reds and browns spread out before us for miles, sculpted earth and pure blue sky. A small river meandering its way through the canyon. I was not sure how the formations were made, but I imagined giants carving paths through the rock. The longer I stared at it, the more awestruck I became. The canyon was a true testament to the beauty nature could hold. My brother and I stood in silence, shoulder-to-shoulder, spellbound by the sheer beauty.

“Wow.”

“It’s beautiful,” he said, a smile forming on his tight, pale face. “Thanks, Jack. Thank you so much.”

I hugged my brother with one arm. “This was a good trip, Ez. I’ll never forget it.”

My brother nodded, took a step forward and stared into the distance for some time. His shoulders started to shake and he collapsed into a pile of flesh and bone onto the sandy ridge. He sat on the ground hugging himself, his head resting on his knees. I threw my arm around him. He was sobbing uncontrollably, staining his jeans with tears. I sat next to him for half an hour. He finally lifted his head and looked into my eyes.

“It’s not fair, Ez.”

Ezra laid his head into my shoulder, and we sat together on the ridge until the horizon turned red, then black.



Matty O’Brien
Poetry

Holy people possess no
Concrete answers.
They sing, “Have faith,” like
A broken skipping record
When confronted with questions
Of the holy presence when
Towers fall;
Or why
People are left cold and alone on the street of Brooklyn in January.
Even conversations with my Home Reason
Say that an artist
Does not birth their work into the world
Only to have it bow down to the creator.
They stand as equals
Painted from the same
Textures,
Colors,
Brush strokes.
Despite all this,
The evidence
Shows that life is just so,

How layers of rock and fire
 Come together in a perfectly
 Particular manner
 So that we may walk,
 With ease,
 Across its surface.
 Even the placement of our planet
 In the Just Right Zone
 Then
 There is Love,
 And the way a stranger gives their last dollar
 To the homeless woman on the street corner.
 The time
 When the scissors first
 Tasted my hips.
 Something in me keeled over
 And wept
 While I stayed stood.
 I don't believe in the tyrant
 Who makes their work bow,
 Nor,
 Can I ignore love
 And the way the willow trees weep.
 All I will say
 Is that
 Should there be a god
 Then they will be held accountable.
 And if there is nothing,
 Then nothing praise be.



VINTAGE MUGSHOT

Acrylic

Heather Haynes

JIGSAW

Furniture Design

Kristin Twigg



METAL PETALS BRACELET

Metal

Nelia Borden

FLUORESCENT EGG

Copper and Brass

Jebediah Field



THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR DESSERT

Oil

April MacDonald



YOUR FATHER'S FUNERAL

Lauren Kirby Connelly

Prose Poetry

What they don't tell you about your father's funeral is that the funeral home's toilets are always broken. You'll arrive for the wake with a belly full of seltzer water and animal crackers and face the horror of a handle that is all give and no take.

Your nose will run because you forgot to take your allergy medicine, even though you conquered your allergies years ago. The walls will close in as basket arrangements pile to the ceiling. You'll wonder how much your coworkers really spent on the miniature rhododendrons. Probably \$35.

They don't tell you that visitors paying their respects will bring you chocolates because they know how hard this must be for you. What they really won't tell you is how territorial you'll become when your diabetic aunt starts taking your chocolates without asking. Those are your chocolates. Yours.

Within the first hour your lips will dry out like snakeskin from the temperature-controlled viewing room. The only Chapstick you'll have is the remnants of the open mouth, on-the-lips kiss your mother's second cousin left on your mouth. It'll do.

What they don't tell you how devastated friends and family are for you and your loss. While they are hugging you tightly and weeping on your shoulder, you will wonder if the blister on your heel is ever going to pop. It will, but in its own time. Leave it alone.

What they don't tell you is that the wake, the funeral, and the condolences will come in and roll away just as quickly, much to your relief. You'll receive a cigar box filled with his ashes that you'll forget about and leave by the front door of your home. You'll stop seeing it and forget it's there until the pizza delivery boy accidentally kicks it and knocks him over. Keep the change.

They won't tell you that in time, even the sad memories correct themselves. You'll be reminded and laugh at the times your father called you from his hospice bed saying he needed to see you immediately. You mowed down every pedestrian on the streets to get to him, only to walk in to him laying in bed eating a popsicle, wiggling his feet to the soft music playing behind the golf tournament on TV.

But they will tell you how strong and how brave you are. They're right. They must be right. You've fought tooth and nail with your mother and siblings over which prayer cards to use. The Holy Mother with the Lord's Prayer? No, the American flag print with the Emerson quote. Timeless. You've really taken this death business by the horns. Well done, you. Well done.



LEAVE THE PAST BEHIND

Graphite

Nichole Manfredi

Contributors' Notes

Taylor Almeida is dual majoring in elementary education and English. In the future, she'd love to be a third grade teacher. In a perfect world, she'd even get a book published.

Ryan Austin is an alumni at Bridgewater State University. He currently works with the small non-profit press and print shop Salient Tooth. Ryan also teaches seventh grade English in Rockland and creative writing for the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Days in the arts program.

Damion J. Bellotti is in his junior year. He is an art major with a concentration in graphic design.

Nelia Borden is a senior art major with a concentration in art history. This past semester she took a metals and jewelry course and fell in love. She likes to make things that can be used and worn, especially things that are feminine and eye catching.

Douglas Breault is a former art major from the Bridgewater State University class of 2012. He currently lives in Providence, RI where he is affiliated with AS220, a nonprofit arts foundation.

MaryEllen Cavella is a senior art major concentrating in Photography. When she is not shooting images, she devotes her time to her son, and works as a floral designer. After graduating from Bridgewater State University, she plans to continue her exploration of the visual language of photography as an expressive tool of her thoughts and ideas.

Shannon Collings is an art major with a concentration in crafts. She is a senior.

Lauren Kirby Connelly is an alumni of Bridgewater State University, class of 2011. She majored in English with a writing concentration. She hopes to one day be considered a professional humorist.

Gabriella Diniz is a recent graduate planning to enter the world of art and graphic design professionally. During her time at BSU, she studied art with a concentration in graphic design with dual minors in art history and management.

Ryan DiPetta is an alumni of Bridgewater State University, Class of 2011, and a 2014 graduate of New York University's Draper Institute Interdisciplinary

Master's Program. He enjoys movies that star Vin Diesel and would sell a kidney to see One Direction in concert, probably.

Emily Jayne Duchaney is a graduate student majoring in English and will finish her degree the winter of 2014. She completed a master's thesis entitled, "Encountering Time: Selected Short Stories of J.G. Ballard and Paul Ricoeur's Time and Narrative," in the fall of 2014. Her plans after college are to work in the publishing field and continue writing short fiction.

Jebediah E. Field is an art major with a concentration in art metal. He is in his senior year. He loves playing with metal. Although he doesn't know where exactly that discipline will take him, he does know that he thoroughly enjoys the journey that he is taking getting there.

Brittany Fontaine is an art major with a concentration in photography and graphic design. After finishing school she plans to continue learning new photographic processes and finding new ways to combine them with what she already knows.

Rachel-Beth Gagnon is dual majoring in English with a concentration in writing and philosophy. After graduation, she plans to pursue a master's Degree in English and hopefully a career in creative writing. She typically writes in the dark fantasy genre, but also writes realist pieces. One of her future goals is learning how to write one of these "brief bios."

Emily T. Gauvin is a senior majoring in art with a concentration in photography and art history. Her passions include: playing tennis, reading, watching sports and, of course, taking pictures. She thoroughly enjoys street photography and the candid moments she is able to capture just by walking around observing others.

Kerrin Gaydou is a senior communications major with a graphic design minor. She is an aspiring astronaut with a backup plan of going into the creative advertising field. She likes pina coladas and getting caught in the rain. She loves being able to use her knowledge of design and graphics to encourage change and promote happiness.

Kasey K. Glavin is a senior art major with a concentration in graphic design. After finishing her degree, she hopes to get another in marketing.

Nathaniel Gordon is a junior majoring in English and is considering secondary education and a writing concentration. He started writing fiction this year and really loves it.

Jose Gouveia is an art education student. He has been interested and active in the arts since childhood and plans to one day make a living off of what he does best.

Hannah Green is a junior majoring in English with a writing concentration. She is interested in publishing, English as a second language, and became interested in the classics while studying Latin in high school.

Heather Haynes is an art major with a concentration in fine arts. She is in her senior year.

Deanna Haas is a fourth year English major with a concentration in writing and a minor public relations. Following her graduation in the fall, she hopes to pursue a career in communications. Besides her passion for writing, she is a lover of fashion, social media, and all art forms.

Fallon Keenan is an art major with a photography concentration and a minor in communications. He is in his senior year.

Brooke Kelly is an English major with a writing concentration and a minor in studio art. She is in her senior year.

Iris Lapaix is a history major with a Latin American and Caribbean studies minor, scheduled to graduate in the class of 2015 (if all goes well). She believes education is the necessity, and happiness should be a given.

Christopher Lindstrom is a poet and editor of Aegir Magazine from Bridgewater. He writes mostly about pretzels and grief.

April MacDonald is an art major with a concentration in graphic design. She is currently in her junior year.

Nichole B. Manfredi is an art major with a concentration in fine arts. She is in her senior year.

Caitlin Marshall is a senior art major with a concentration in photography. Her work displays her unique passion and ability to bring her love of imagery to light. She plans to pursue a career in the field of commercial photography and hopes to gain more experience through internships.

Nichole Maskell is an art major with a concentration in Fine Arts. He is finishing up his bachelor's degree as a senior. After college, he plans to work as an illustrator. Some favorite themes of his include: circuses, candy, monsters, and toys.

Bethany Clare Matern is a fourth year art major with a concentration in graphic design. She will graduate in the fall of 2015 and plans to find a job locally in her field of study. She hates everything to do with the city.

Laurie Mathews is a senior art major with a concentration in art education. She hopes to continue exploring and further developing her work through various mediums, such as: sculpture, painting, and printmaking. In addition to art, she is also involved in grass-roots activism as a means to counter social and environmental injustices.

Heather McNamara is an art major with a concentration in graphic design and a minor in art history. As a senior, she is ready to graduate in the spring of 2015.

Jessica Melendy is an alumni of Bridgewater State University, Class of 2013. She majored in English.

Alexandria Mignone is an English major in her senior year. She was named after the greatest library in human history and aspires not to be burned down.

Jillian M. Monska is an art major with a concentration in art education, hoping to become an elementary school art teacher when she finally graduates in 2016. She is currently a senior.

Katherine Nazzaro is an English major scheduled to graduate in 2017. She hopes to become a teacher after graduation.

Sarah D. Newton is a sophomore. She is an art major with a concentration in fine arts.

Matty O'Brien is a senior majoring in English with a concentration in writing. He will be graduating in the fall of 2015, after which he plans to attend an MFA program to get his masters in fiction and poetry. He still sleeps with the Winnie the Pooh Bear his aunt gave him when he was five.

Erin C. O'Donnell is an art major with a concentration in art education. Her future plans are to teach art to children. She enjoys being in nature and her love of being on or near the water is reflected in her artwork.

Coleen O'Hanley graduated with a BA in English and a writing concentration in 1991 and has worked in humanities book publishing for over seventeen years.

Shane J. Phillips is a senior majoring in English, with a concentration in writing. He hopes to publish a novel someday. His mother was quoted once saying that her son "is cool."

Cidalia E. Pina is an English major in her senior year.

Volume 11 Honors

Marlene M. Price is a political science major with hopes of helping youth get involved in politics to make it known to the world that the collective voice is more powerful than any check that can be written. Her future plans are to become a part of politics. Marlene can be found working out, procrastinating on a paper, or listening to J. Cole’s new album.

Tory L. Santilli is a senior art major concentrating in printmaking. She hopes to own her own studio someday to pass on the traditions of printmaking.

Victoria R. Shannon is a social work major completing her junior year. She currently works with at-risk youth and hopes to later become a director of an expressive arts therapy clinic for children.

Patrick Simas is a senior majoring in English. He’s been a punk rock troubadour striking chords along his Fender acoustic guitar since he was 11 years old. Writing and performing have always been a passion of his. He intends to teach, tour, and travel in upcoming years.

Victoria S. Taylor is a senior art major with a concentration in fine arts. She plans to attend Lesley University for graduate school to study art therapy.

Melissa Thomas is a senior Art major who loves the expressive qualities of art. Upon graduation in 2015, she looks forward to the adventure of traveling.

Kristin Twigg is a graduate student studying art education with a focus in sculpture. When not taking classes, Kristin teaches art at the Annie Sullivan Middle School in Franklin.

Sarah Walker is an alumni of Bridgewater State University. She studied English with a writing concentration and minored in film studies. Originally from Pennsylvania, Sarah now works and lives in Massachusetts.

Associated Collegiate Press

Pacemaker Award

Columbia Scholastic Press Association 11 Gold Circles:

Katherine Nazzaro, “Three Things to Remind a Mermaid”
Second Place for Poetry: Open Free Form

Lizz Wilson, “Sunday Morning”;
Certificate of Merit for Poetry: Open Free Form

The Bridge Staff, First Place for Overall Design:
Literary Magazine

The Bridge Staff, First Place for Cover Design

The Bridge Staff, First Place for Title Page:
Use of Typography on One Page or Spread

The Bridge Staff, “Slice of Life”; Certificate of Merit:
Use of Typography on One Page or Spread

Andrew Laverty, “Girl”;
Third Place for Single Illustration: Hand-Drawn

Mai Fung Elizabeth Chan, “Power of Friendship”;
Certificate of Merit for Single Illustration: Hand-Drawn

The Bridge Staff, “Slice of Life”;
First Place for Literary Single Spread Page Design

The Bridge Staff, “Gust”;
Second Place for Single Spread Page Design

The Bridge Staff, “Empty Cups”;
First Place for Literary Multi-Page Presentation

