

STILLPOINT  
LITERARY  
MAGAZINE

*vol. 48*  
*2017*

# EDITORIAL STAFF

Manisha Banga  
*Senior Editor*

Jianna Justice  
*Junior Editor*

Annie Ho  
*Junior Editor*

Killian Wyatt  
*Design Editor*

Jeffrey Mann  
*Music Editor*

Victoria Pekala  
*Submissions Editor*

Matthias Wilder  
*Submissions Editor*

Ethan Crane  
*PR Editor*

Mia Falcon  
Alexander Sheldon

Alena Skyer

Jesse Riley

Maggie Shaw

Maxwell Rabb

Olivia Black

Rachel Nipp

Sherry Luo

Cover Art: "Critter" by May Hitchings, intaglio

Design and layouts by Killian Wyatt

with additional layouts by Olivia Black, Sherry Luo, Rachel Nipp, Maxwell Rabb, and Jesse Riley

Copyright 2017; All Rights Reserved by individual authors and artists

# DEAR READER,

I believe, more than anything, in the inexorable power of art. I believe that when students come together to think and write and express they are at their most powerful. And I feel so thankful to be a part of *Stillpoint*, which engenders and nurtures the power of literature and art at the University of Georgia.

We are named *Stillpoint* after a poem by T. S. Eliot. He writes,

*At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.*

Whether or not this magazine takes place at the all-encompassing still point, I couldn't tell you. But I can tell you this—the beauty of our 2017 issue of *Stillpoint* is in its span. This magazine was written and edited by undergraduate students at the University of Georgia with vastly different experiences and interests, different skill sets and opinions, dif

ferent aspirations and pastimes. And every single one of these students, different as they may be, saw the immeasurable value of creating and sharing works of literature and art.

Today is tumultuous, and tomorrow will be too. I firmly believe that now, more than ever, so much of this world hinges on art. I believe that art will save us, empower us, guide us—just as it always has.

We received work from numerous incredible undergraduates who believed the same, and who poured their love into many brilliant pieces from which we could unfortunately only select a few. I'd like to give my sincerest thanks to everyone who contributed—we wish we could publish every single one of you.

The writers that we have ultimately selected are simple and imaginative, elegant and coarse, brief and long-winded. The artists are equally diverse. Since 1967, *Stillpoint* has been committed to sharing diverse ideas from UGA's incredible undergraduates, both in print and online. To see what we share online, please see our website at [stillpointuga.com](http://stillpointuga.com).

I am so incredibly proud to present to you the forty-eighth issue of *Stillpoint*, the result of so much hard work and love and, more than anything, the belief that the art we create matters, in an infallible way.

I hope you hold this book close to your heart.

Manisha Banga  
Senior Editor

*Happy  
reading*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>in tribute to shel silverstein</b> .....	1
<i>Victoria Pekala</i>	
<b>In the Name of God</b> .....	2
<i>Roma Parikh</i>	
<b>Mail Comes Today</b> .....	3
<i>Maxwell Rabb</i>	
<b>Mr. Nobody</b> .....	4
<i>Jin Kim</i>	
<b>Garrett</b> .....	6
<i>Killian Wyatt</i>	
<b>letters like flowers</b> .....	7
<i>Marcus Keith</i>	
<b>inventory on the square</b> .....	8
<i>Chart Rigall</i>	
<b>mentoring</b> .....	10
<i>Maggie George</i>	
<b>lemons</b> .....	11
<i>Mia Falcon</i>	
<b>mirabile dictu</b> .....	14
<i>Marianna Hagler</i>	
<b>Flightless Bird</b> .....	15
<i>May Hitchings</i>	
<b>moth light</b> .....	16
<i>Jianna Justice</i>	

<b>Drunken Dream</b> .....	18
<i>Maria Camila Ortiz</i>	
<b>UNTITLED</b> .....	20
<i>Allia Siler</i>	
<b>Synthesis</b> .....	21
<i>Alena Skyer</i>	
<b>red eye of morning</b> .....	22
<i>Nicole Schlabach</i>	
<b>Copper Corpse</b> .....	23
<i>Sherry Luo</i>	
<b>The Forbidden Sound</b> .....	24
<i>Sherry Luo</i>	
<b>via</b> .....	27
<i>May Hitchings</i>	
<b>too tired to love</b> .....	28
<i>Abbigayle Mathis</i>	
<b>on the loveseat she told me</b> .....	29
<i>Marianna Hagler</i>	
<b>crested lake</b> .....	30
<i>Ruth Pannill</i>	
<b>they say america</b> .....	32
<i>Jesse Riley</i>	
<b>Thrill</b> .....	36
<i>Jin Kim</i>	
<b>Day 1: Party Scene</b> .....	37
<i>Killian Wyatt</i>	
<b>untitled</b> .....	38
<i>Jeffrey Mann</i>	
<b>validate me!</b> .....	39
<i>Victoria Pekala</i>	
<b>venus in ferns</b> .....	40
<i>Marcus Keith</i>	
<b>waiting on the blue line</b> .....	41
<i>Abbigayle Mathis</i>	

<b>Western Nation</b> .....	42
<i>Roma Parikh</i>	
<b>mind on the mountains</b> .....	43
<i>Margaret Scruggs</i>	
<b>streetlight orange</b> .....	44
<i>Meredith Brasher</i>	
<b>Ravel</b> .....	45
<i>Alena Skyer</i>	
<b>eatheat</b> .....	46
<i>May Hitchings</i>	
<b>Seismic</b> .....	48
<i>Ethan Crane</i>	
<b>Aim</b> .....	49
<i>Sherry Luo</i>	
<b>social experiment</b> .....	50
<i>Margaret Scruggs</i>	
<b>Sizeable Shitholes</b> .....	51
<i>Matthew McClintock</i>	
<b>Gut</b> .....	53
<i>Jeffrey Mann</i>	
<b>EXCERPT.,</b> .....	54
<i>Amanda Cameron</i>	
<b>edifice - excerpt</b> .....	55
<i>Meredith Brasher</i>	
<b>orb</b> .....	56
<i>May Hitchings</i>	
<b>helga, olga, and jesus christ</b> .....	57
<i>Manisha Banga</i>	
<b>WATERMARK.AQUAMARINE</b> .....	58
<i>Amanda Cameron</i>	
<b>I don't know what fruit my body is</b> .....	59
<i>Abbigayle Mathis</i>	
<b>£49.97</b> .....	60
<i>Maxwell Rabb</i>	

<b>&amp; a kiwi</b> .....	61
<i>Manisha Banga</i>	
<b>for your thoughts</b> .....	62
<i>Chart Rigall</i>	
<b>a grand experiment</b> .....	63
<i>Chart Rigall</i>	
<b>Gourmet</b> .....	68
<i>Ethan Crane</i>	
<b>self-portrait on a sunday morning</b> .....	69
<i>Jianna Justice</i>	
<b>Fake News</b> .....	70
<i>Alena Skyer</i>	
<b>Grocery List</b> .....	71
<i>Maggie Shaw</i>	
<b>krill song</b> .....	72
<i>Manisha Banga</i>	
<b>The More Grotesque I Make Myself the More I Love Myself</b> ....	73
<i>Isabella Ballew</i>	
<b>the rainforest</b> .....	74
<i>Ruth Pannill</i>	
<b>amazon prime poem</b> .....	76
<i>Marianna Hagler</i>	
<b>Mallards on Quack</b> .....	78
<i>Sherry Luo</i>	
<b>come all ye mo(u)ring stars</b> .....	80
<i>Marcus Keith</i>	
<b>bacucata</b> .....	81
<i>Allia Siler</i>	
<b>its january 2017 and she's allergic to apples</b> .....	82
<i>Isabella Ballew</i>	
<b>Commute</b> .....	83
<i>Maggie Shaw</i>	
<b>Think; not of me -excerpt</b> .....	84
<i>Maria Camila Ortiz</i>	

**Contributor Biographies..... 87**  
**About *Stillpoint* ..... 92**  
**Acknowledgments..... 92**  
**For More Information..... 93**



STILLPOINT  
LITERARY  
MAGAZINE

*vol. 48*  
*2017*



*in tribute to shel*  
*silverstein*

I'm at the end of the sidewalk  
constructing sentences backwards  
right to left  
when life resumes

layers of meaning scatter  
like so many endsheets or onion skins  
but I stand one toe over the precipice

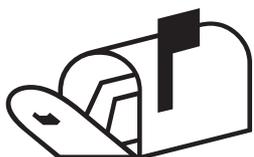
l e a n i n g

Victoria Pekala



*In the Name of God* / Roma Parikh  
sculpture and brass

# MAIL COMES TODAY



my tears were  
delivered to

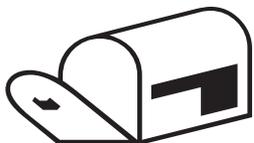
the address left  
on my doorstep



don't you check  
the mail, I

promise it made  
it I delivered it

myself



Maxwell Rabb

# MR. NOBODY

Jin Kim

“He is a nobody...a filthy trash...” she says; but I anticipate to meet the “rotten” man, whom I call, “Mr. Nobody.”

Stingy bees roaming and flying around his head that are filled with lies--which donate and serve hungry children with tribulation and wounds.

On the phone, no answer--simply calling and conversating to play the appeasement game as if World War II is about to erupt and explode in the house.

Desolated and disappointed with his lies and the words from a firing and unfavorable tiger throat, I let my dry salty crystallized tears down my flat cheeks, but Prima Donna says, “he’s a nobody.”

No sir, no “abba”--but, a nobody who acts as a blank junk that is helpless and pointless to our lives; all we do is patiently anxiously wait for his calls, but our patience dry off.

Can’t remember a time when I sat on his hairy and muscular fat thighs; nor can I have a small simple memory of his laughter or pleasurable face that explains his joy of my presence in his living.

On his birthday, 12 long needle-like candles on a chocolate cake, while he may have wished for freedom, I wished for eternal merriment and opportunities to solely and freely call him “abba.”

Always missing in professionally sealed and perfectly framed family portraits; only a memory of his two-faced words and actions as each plums in a bowl gradually rot like cream diffusing in a coffee.

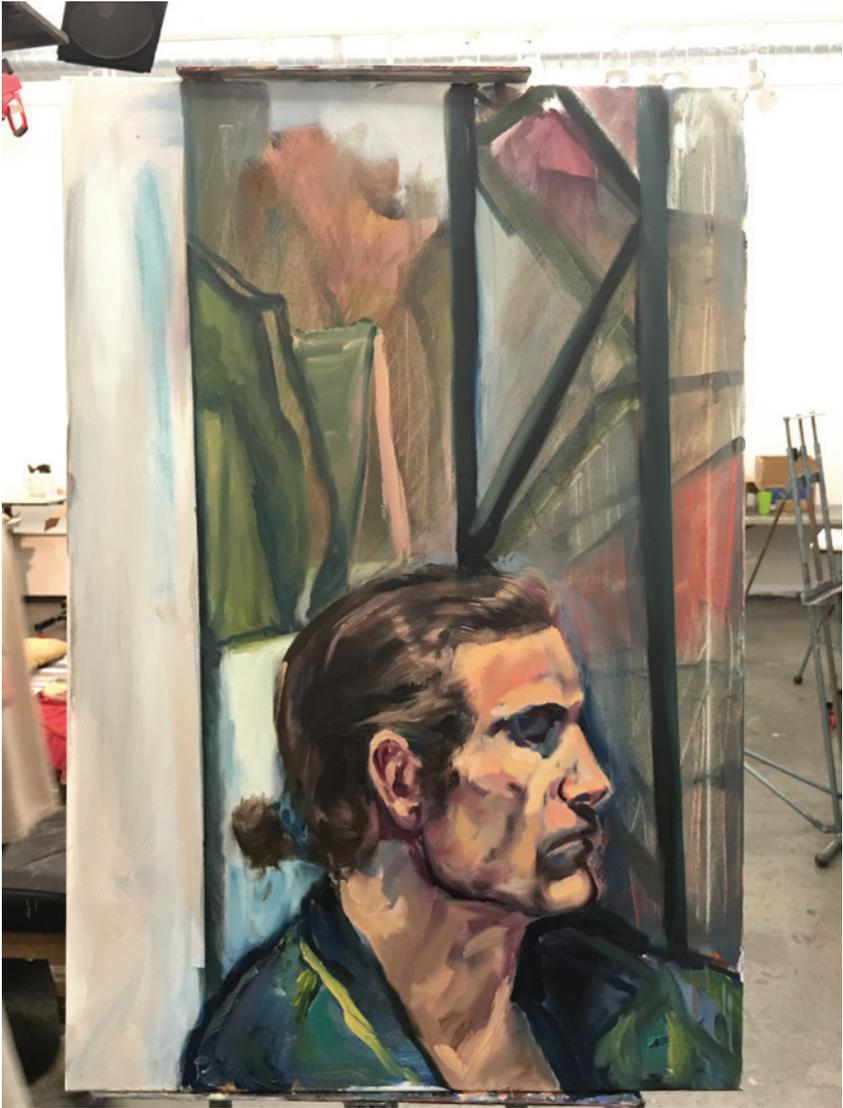
Can't remember sharing a scrumptious meal at a round table  
But only the time when he took us out for a dinner that later turned into a messy, dreary, and forbidding atmosphere during sunset.

“He is a junk, piece of glass on a floor, and a nobody”  
says Prima donna and her assistant, but I rethink the words as they can tear and kindly, harmfully craft our bodies.

Abandoned since I was five, and now am alive and grown to understand his perspective, but he won't give me a call; all he does is ignore and appease me with his tender voice and words.

I am tired and worried as I am a humble bee who is curious of his views instead of only listening to Prima Donna's opera voice--her opinions of him. Can he perhaps hear my violin crying?

In the opera house, under Prima Donna, he is a nobody and will always be a junk as he has impaired Donna's lost mind and enervated body; but for me, somehow, he will always be ... Mister Nobody.

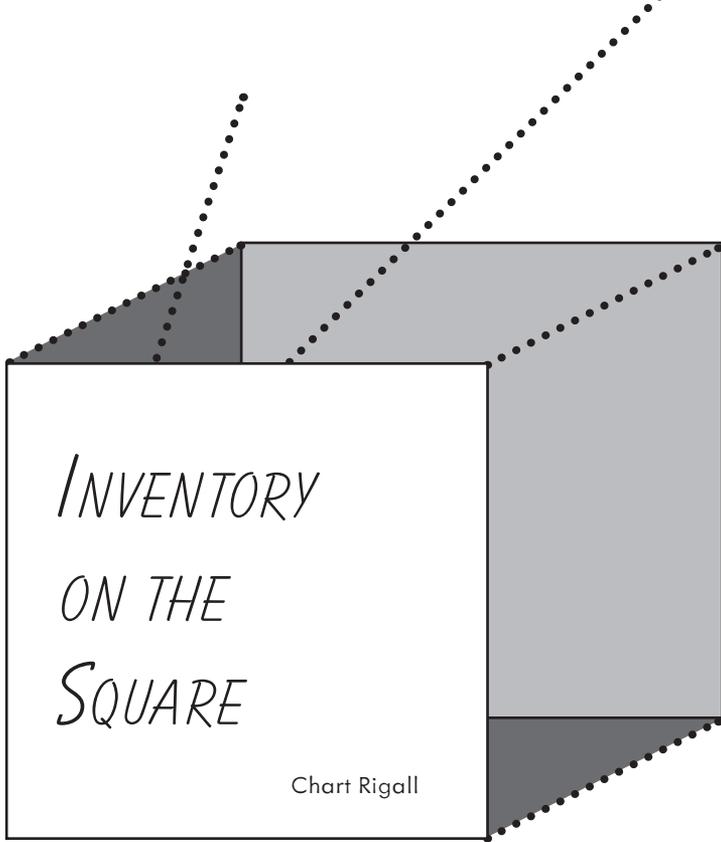


**Garrett/** Killian Wyatt  
oil paint on canvas

# Letters like flowers

Letters like flowers pressed  
In needle thick  
    thock - louder  
    thoughts stamped into each  
Petal after page; yellowed with age  
    (Golden for the sage)  
    -red for the rose  
    -colored for the prose  
Embroidered; embroiled  
Into another entity now  
    nouns  
    sounds  
    (re)sound-ing a rhetoric  
for the synesthetic

Marcus Keith



Out front of the shoe-shine  
well-oiled men  
chat, leaning on wingtips  
flaunting chain-mail of gingham  
fragments of  
investment advice, course into  
the storm drains.

It's before  
noon. Blood-stained celery sticks stare back at an expectant DUI lawyer –  
I overhear him thinking today will be slow.

“Left-communism  
is an infantile disorder,” grumbles  
a behemoth. He clutches a  
neglected moleskine like a  
politician does a Bible.  
He used to write lines from Howl on dormitory doors, he  
is a self-vacant individualist  
and depressed.

The sun sags mightily:  
whispering “last call” for people with no place to be.  
And I imagine my first 100 days  
as mayor. The asphalt  
would be stripped away  
as if it were gauze;  
Grass given free range.  
The sidewalks would be full  
of two-person tables  
like a Parisian square.  
The state would supply  
every home  
with a weekly gallon of orange juice,

And I would hitch the  
Sun to a series of pulleys  
terminating  
at a Ford pickup,  
and set it a bit higher  
each afternoon.

# mentoring

he is in awe of my jump rope skills  
i can go criss-cross and backwards  
doesn't matter  
i want to tell him  
you can't put that on a resume

Maggie George

# Lemons

Mia Falcon



**C**harles, the artist, married the beautiful Florence and painted their house bright yellow. He was going to be the Next Big Thing. He couldn't afford to go to college so he worked as window trimmer, finding beauty in both sides of the glass.



He took photos of his family and developed them himself, and wrote poetry for Florence, the love of his life. He crafted an image of her and his life that could survive an eternity. Her golden hair. A green yard in the summer. Two red headed girls on blue swings. But his memories were to be limited by blacks and whites, no color. He would have to write that in.



Hair like a crown. Hair like a sunset. Hair like diamonds. Charles conquered death this way. Through art and through loving.

And to his oldest daughter he passed some form of the artistic burden, the camera lens that was always blinking and never missing anything. The art stayed alive, and even when she went grey she dyed her hair red again.



Hair like Mars, so bright you can see it from heaven. She married an actor, who she would love endlessly like a Shakespearean Sonnet.

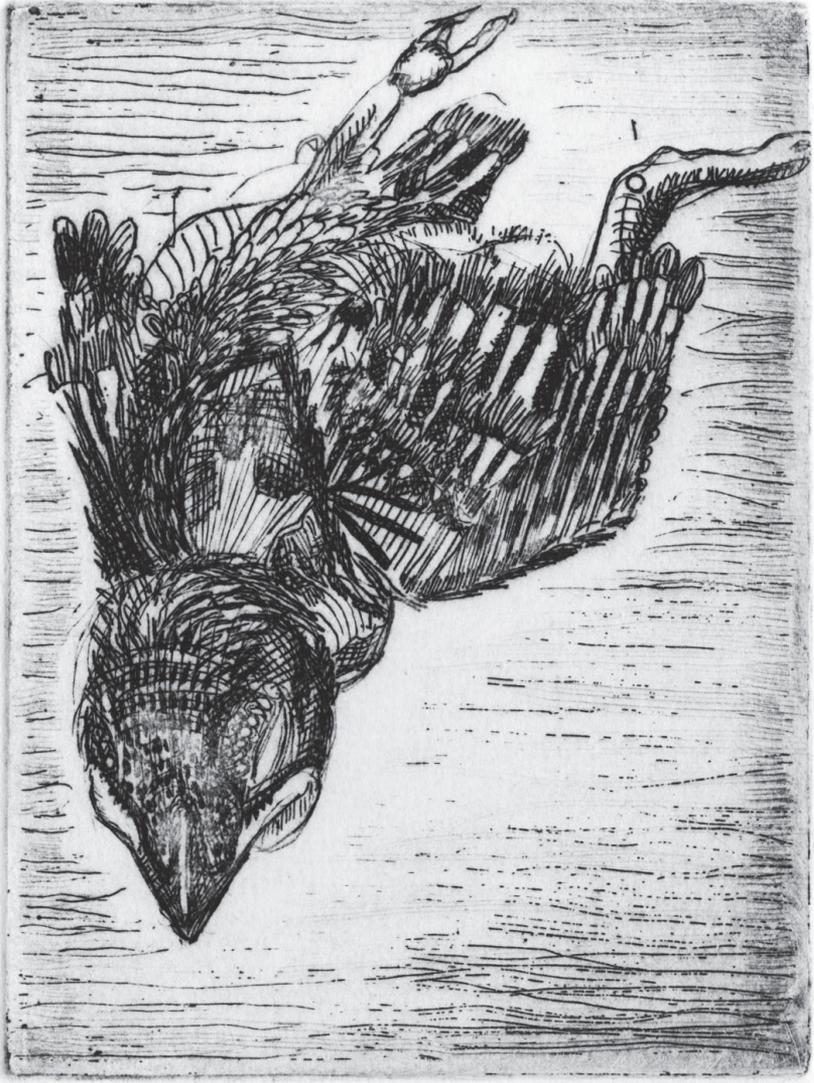


And she held on to her father's book of poetry as if it were his remains. Ballads, bones, odes, organs, and a sketch of a self portrait, a face from his own imagination. She held on to it tightly.

# *Mirabile Dictu*

supine, she  
traces patterns  
on her grand  
mother's talcum  
powder floor—elsewhere,  
with sweating lips,  
she whispers *ask and*  
*you shall receive*

Marianna Hagler



*flightless bird* / May Hitchings  
intaglio

*moth  
light*

Jianna Justice

on this day I am made  
of explanations, giving them  
out for free, why I sink

my teeth into the carpet  
why I am a saint, a piece  
of lint made to moralize

the way your sweater  
caught a new button  
it was proud of, I kept

my ground, so as not  
to be mistaken for loose  
change shining on the car floor.

# Drunk

Maria Camila Ortiz

the tinted wine  
stains the rims  
of my lips,  
and drips at every  
lasting sip.

Then, I fall asleep.

the chill of dream  
sweeps across my brow

with the stroke of his tail,  
a peppered cat  
read me a tale in braille

tiger's blood  
plows through the  
Messiah's garden.  
every other Tuesday.

# Dream

over a cup of coffee,  
the leaky larks  
warble at him, but  
he fails to answer.  
he's too consumed.

I wake up.

ink smeared  
across my forehead.

pondering at the thin  
lines in parallel,  
I start writing.

my mind, in splotches,  
spreads, seeps,  
through the sheets  
of my red notebook.

~~my aertowiefan-  
wenhoew;an  
untitled~~

i don't really know what  
you mean.  
But they're swaying.  
dark but equally vibrant  
An interpretive Dance.

/baby/

I can't mow the lawn  
i locked my bedroom door.  
and they're just watching me  
And my acid-wash jean jacket  
gyrating

/unless you move it/

just in case.  
Pablo was staring at me as I left  
Like always i  
Bought it on a whim  
It's a forest of flowers,  
really.

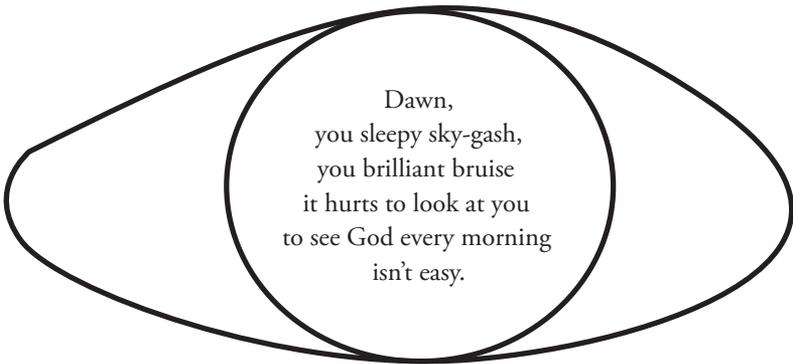
Allia Siler



**Synthesis** / Alena Skyer  
red clay, slip, colored underglaze

# Red eye of morning

Nicole Schlabach



Dawn,  
you sleepy sky-gash,  
you brilliant bruise  
it hurts to look at you  
to see God every morning  
isn't easy.



*Copper Corpse* / Sherry Luo  
photo

# The Forbidden Sound

Sherry Luo

I love to take my daughter to the pool, even though she complains that the chlorinated water makes her hair brittle. As someone who cannot swim, I walk small, slow laps in the three- or four- foot-deep sections, always near the stairs or the concrete ledge that lines the eerily bright blue water. If she is feeling tolerant, my daughter will hold my hands to make sure I stay afloat as I gracelessly kick my short, thick calves. Her patience and my energy only last two laps' worth.

My daughter, who I forced to take swimming lessons and join the neighborhood swim team, learned to swim when she was four years old, about the same age I was when I had an accident that left me mortally afraid of deep water. My daughter knows freedom in the water, can leap and splash like a wild carp. At the beach, the dark green waves welcome her. I scream at her to not swim too far from the shore, where I dare not let the salty water go above my thighs. I fear that the current will take her hostage. She returns each time sulkier than the last; I know that in her head she thinks I am a coward, but I have never told her the story of when I nearly drowned, of when an owl almost snatched my soul away.

In China, the owl is a creature of death, not of intelligence like it is in America. We Chinese call it *māotóuyīng*, a hawk with the head of a cat. Its call resembles a woman's sobbing. Hu, hu, hu. Its call is a warning of death.

I was very superstitious as a child. I still am, as a grown woman, just less so. My mother warned me every night to go to bed early so that I would not hear the owl's fatal hooting. I did as I was told, more out of fear than obedience. But sometimes, there are nights when you just cannot sleep, no matter how hard you try or how tired you are. I remember that night very well. It was a hot, muggy midsummer's night. The air was swollen with rain-to-be, and my little sister, with whom I shared a bed, was unusually fidgety in her sleep that night and kept me awake into the early morning hours. I was half-asleep, just on the edge of the dream realm, when I heard the ill-boding hu, hu, hu. I thought that perhaps the sound had been an echo from a shallow dream, but then I heard it again very clearly; it came from right outside the window, which was nothing more than a square hole in the wall covered by an old cloth to keep out mosquitoes. Flapping noises signaled that the owl had flown away, but this did not comfort me. The forbidden sound had already entered my ears. A terrible fate awaited me.

Later that week, my parents and sister wanted to go the nearby lake for a swim and to wash the summer heat from their skins. I still had a niggling uneasiness that tickled the bottom of my stomach from that night, so I came up with an excuse, any excuse: a clammy forehead, an itchy throat, burning, a drippy nose. If anything, my fake symptoms seemed to convince them that I needed the fresh air, that my illness was a result of too much time spent inside.

Once there, I refused to enter the steel gray lake waters, convinced that I would find my end there. I did not bend to the jibes of my sister or my parents, who thought it ridiculous of me to come all this way just to sit on the hot, itchy sand. Eventually, however, the merciless sun broke my resolve; my burnt, peeling skin needed respite. I firmly told myself that I would not let the water rise above my knees, but as a child, I did not have any real self-discipline. The cool water felt so satisfying, so soothing against my calves, my thighs, my stomach, my chest, my shoulders, my neck. I was a babe once again, swaddled in a clear, liquid blanket. Relief, pure physical relief, won over superstition in the end.

But suddenly, my feet could not find the ground. My toes reached and felt nothing but the bowels of the lake. I flapped my arms as if try-

ing to fly but only succeeded in splashing gritty water into my eyes and up my nose. I could not call for help because when I opened my mouth, out and in flowed water. It came through my ears and extinguished any clamorous thoughts that I had.

Soon I could not see the sky, only a watery film and something that resembled sunlight.

Hu, hu, hu.

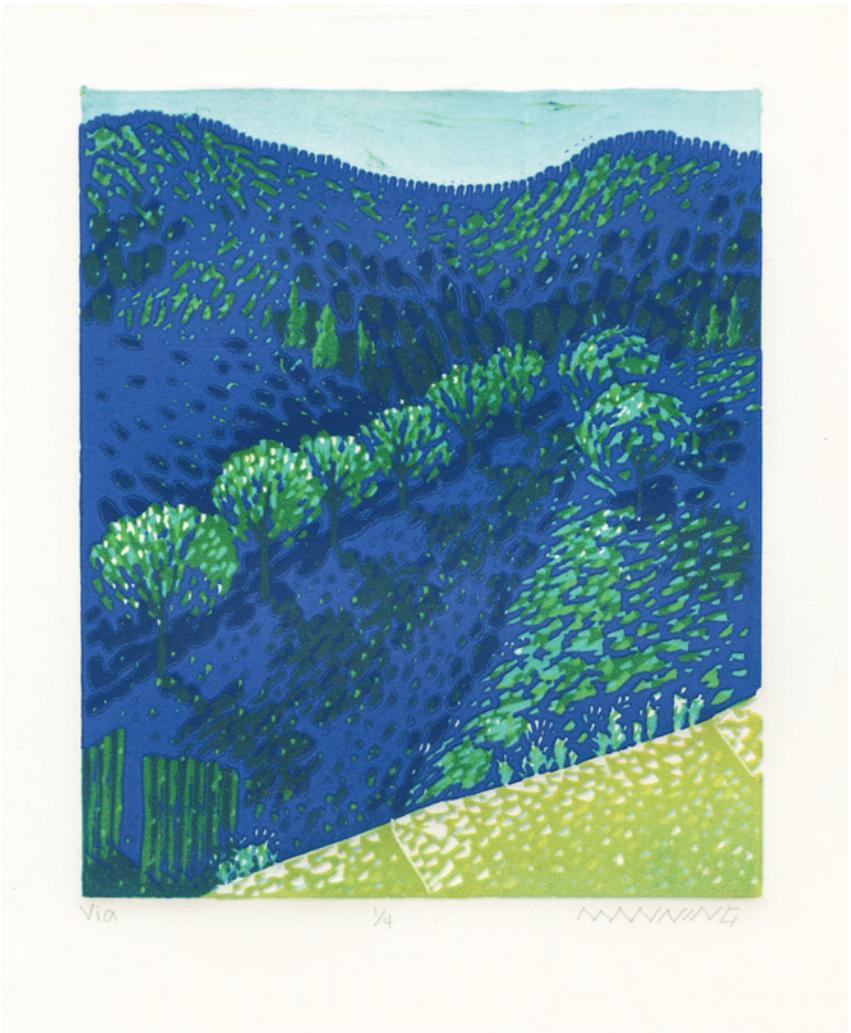
Two strong arms. A coiling water dragon pulling me, not down, but up?

Hu, hu, hu....

Blinding sunlight. In what little time I had been submerged (Thirty seconds? Two hours? A year?) I had forgotten how to breathe and had to get used to the feeling of air instead of water in my lungs. My father was yelling at me, but I could not hear his words through my water-clogged ears. It had been he, not a dragon of my imagination, who had saved me. Even though it was unbearably hot above the surface, I trembled as if on a winter's night. I cried in my father's arms. On the shore, my mother and sister also cried out of joy and relief.

When I had calmed down, I told my parents of the owl I had heard. They nodded solemnly, understanding perfectly. It was not my foolishness that had led me to wander to such deep water but the call of the deathly owl that had inevitably caused me to do so. I had been spared, and I have never taken that for granted.

This is why I am morbidly afraid of deep, open water. I do not tell my daughter this because I do not wish her to have such dark thoughts of drowning when she is swimming, for that will surely cause her to encounter trouble in the water. I continue to fear the water quietly as I always have, but there are owls here in America, or at least so I have heard.



Via / Mary May Hitchings  
Relief

# *too tired to love*

when sitting by  
boys I want  
to love me  
I feel tired  
I think of  
stretched mouths over  
tiny bones I see  
the girl I want  
to love me and I feel  
like thirty pounds  
of feathers  
I fill myself  
with grape leaves until  
my belly swells out  
and the mouths of  
everyone I love  
are too far away  
I fill myself  
with soft pink smiles  
in case I am  
too tired to love

Abbigayle Mathis

on  
the  
loveseat

she  
told  
me

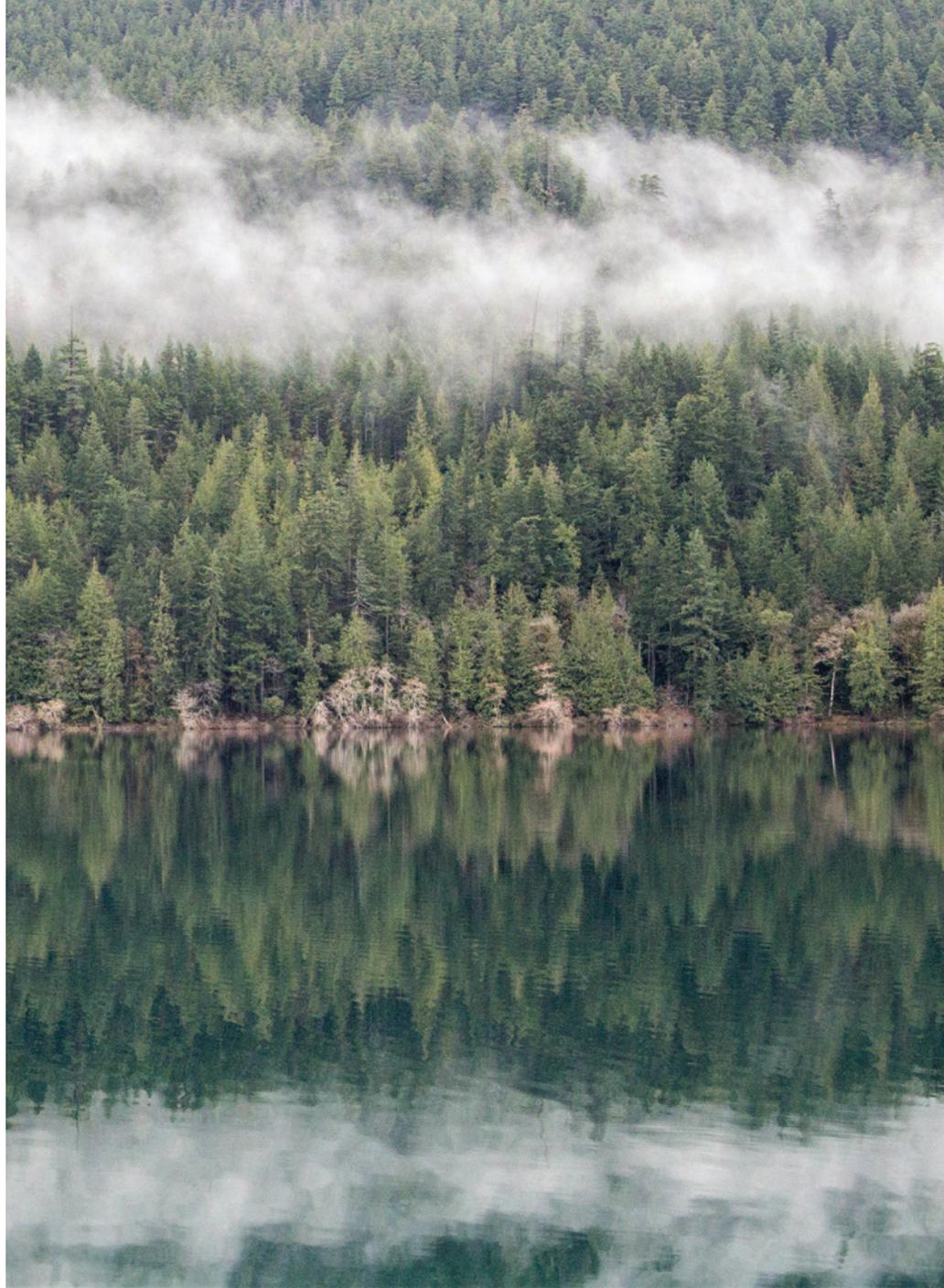
before menarche, little bodies  
still empty—tchotchkes in  
the pretty sitting room

on the loveseat she told  
me a person's brains  
begin to rot when she  
turns twelve  
we turn twelve  
we rot

Marianna Hagler



*crescent lake* / Ruth Pannill  
photo



THEY

SAY

AMORE

-IGA

Jesse Riley

inside the woods lies an  
abandoned steeple  
on fire  
years ago i used to play  
in the pews  
at the altar

when the priestess was there,  
we would knock, you and i,  
do you remember  
screaming curse words  
until she pounded out  
the door, shaking her fist

i climb the tree  
now where our playhouse stood,  
long since rotted and crushed  
to dust  
i climb  
the tree, watch the steeple burn

it is pleasant to see old things in a new  
light  
juts out through the stained glass  
looks like the sun  
shines inside  
the belly of the night

i gorge myself, pull  
the skin of the belly  
with my teeth  
and feel stars ooze down my chin like syrup  
spit the night's veil  
from my mouth  
search for fire,

some burning sensation  
i can  
light a cigarette  
inhale as my flesh  
turns to ash  
from the feet up  
belly up  
the cigarette will hit  
its end  
as the fire takes my lungs

would it be holier  
to douse myself in oil?

i have known god  
for eternity  
she likes to use  
her thumb  
mostly  
when fucking  
but she's not selfless  
i die every time  
and called it off once  
when she gave me  
prayers to answer  
i never asked for a people  
i whispered  
*you made your own mess*  
i laughed  
fucked her again

it's been years since i've seen her  
i wonder if i  
douse myself in oil  
enter her flaming steeple

will she notice?

from the tree,  
i search  
for you,  
old friend  
i've grown up  
a thousand  
times from the  
ash, and i  
still remember  
her fist and  
your laughing  
lips. you told me  
everything  
i search for  
you now, even a whisper  
of your name, your fist

from the tree  
i see you  
in the fourth row wondering  
*how did I get to be so  
armless?*

i find you in the belly  
of the sun

i find you feasting  
on the arms of god

# Thrill

Jin Kim

*(Inspired by one of Sylvia Plath's poem Cut)*

What a thrill—  
Kept my round buttons  
Inside a quiet fringe  
Leapt through a disjointed hinge

The latter stood  
Of wood,  
Hard outside without weather  
But, gentle inside as of feather

Warmth of a cuddle  
Water buffalo waddles  
White seagull sighs  
A trillion lies

O my cries  
I have ate some fries

Gaining more pounds  
Will I be found?  
Salty—  
One is haughty  
Or, with thin ears  
Passing through countless years.

Changing with wiggles  
Sour like your pickles  
I confront on it,  
Secretly, celebrating.

Screams,  
Out of tuned harp  
Vision is sharp  
I jump with a thrill.



**day one: party scene** / Killian Wyatt  
oil on canvas



# *validate me!*

contingent self-definition  
hardly based on  
    words self-said  
    image self-wrought  
but needing  
    illuminated moments  
    of other-recognition

because

rising noise in hollow spaces  
into which it otherwise spoken:  
    *identification only occurs with detritus*  
    *ignored and unimportant.*

so

fill the hollow room  
slowly with cement.

Victoria Pekala

# Venus in Ferns

Marcus Keith

Stop at the with Mary

cube' n'sis; Lucy  
crack(s) ; the whip  
your own personal heroin(e)

Venus in Ferns

infers your desires  
(infernos from your ires)  
strings you up with pleather wires

while you

shoot up

fuck

up

– stress

to replace your

distress

take your sub-stance

be/for(e)

your – stitute

your do(o)m

your herm/aphrodite

it may not be love

but at least it's halfway

there

bite

harm

pulling hair

scratch

whip

switch

which are you

on

# waiting on the blue line

standing in Lake Station I heard  
the emphatic belting of  
a homeless man dancing and singing  
to the Gospel music blaring from  
his boom box around his trash bags he spun  
in circles interjecting  
yes Lord and praise Jesus  
into the mix singing  
with so much unreserved joy you  
would've thought  
God himself was standing there  
listening he exclaimed It's just  
like a good 'ole black church  
down here caught in  
the abruptness of it I  
didn't look I didn't want to  
be the sole witness of  
this scene I thought that  
this was my first real breath  
I thought that this was our  
first pure joy  
and I got on  
the train I watched  
the snow settle outside  
the city I saw  
the bodies in their Sunday best board  
the train

Abbigayle Mathis

# Western Nation

Roma Parikh

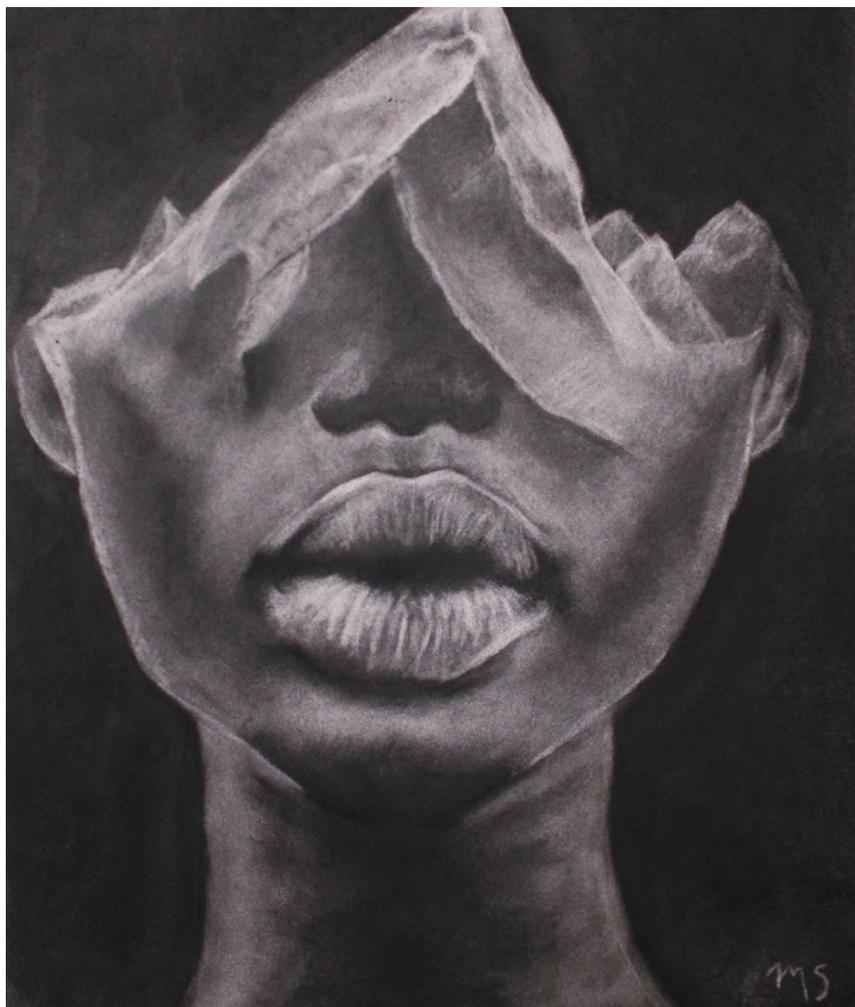
I trace Arabic script in class, I mouth  
the foreign sounds, letters stuck on  
my tongue, confusion caught in my throat.

We walked to the market, sun beating down  
how strange to be carried by my feet,  
never failing. My ears are alert to the catcalls,  
so I can ignore them – some things never change.

The stench of sweat, the tight press of bodies,  
the judgmental stares aboard public transit,  
well, I'm not a tourist!

But a stranger nevertheless, in this new country,  
in this Muslim nation west of the Middle East.  
A stranger in her skin, in her home, in the West.  
This loneliness is haunting me again,  
I feel it the way I felt in that Gueliz apartment,  
bathed in the streetlight lamps filtered by curtains  
austere, minimalist decor  
here, in Morocco,  
dusty streets and the blind and the poor,  
in sandstone and coral filter, in geometry,  
while I lay on crisp sheets–

I am unmoored.



*mind on the mountains* / Margaret Scruggs  
reductive charcoal, [inspired by a series of double exposure photos]

# streetlight orange

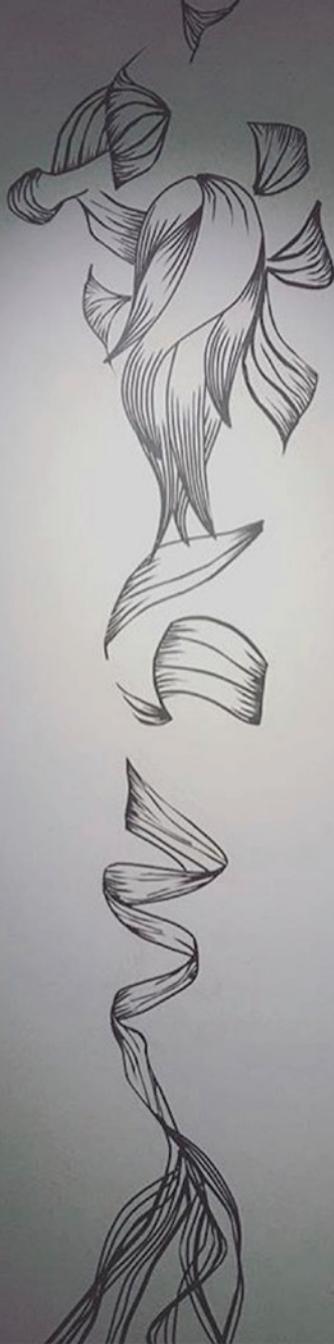
i listen to old love songs —  
songs that meant love for me and you —to draw blood.  
i satiate an appetite for closure here,  
my sheets strangle me all up  
sweat you out like a fever,

memories drenched in moon-light  
soaked, baby,  
bathed in streetlight orange  
and your heart on a platter,

i wanna be baptized in this warm melancholy,  
on the back of my eyelids  
i wanna paste a collage of your toothy smiles  
and pretend i've seen it all.

baptize me before the records fracture  
before the smoke turns your boy-teeth yellow  
i wanna keep missing you, baby,  
til your busy eyes scare me home again.

Meredith Brasher



**Ravel** / Alena Skyer

masking tape, (made in collaboration with Olivia Shuler and Vivi Carrasco)

*eatheat* / May Hitchings  
relief

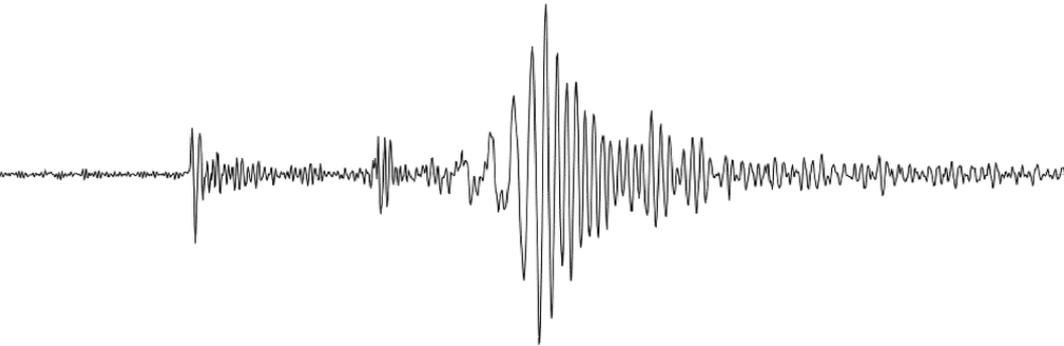




# Seismic

You and I are tectonic plates  
Crumpling together.  
Bumping naturally, violently.  
We're supposed to move this way,  
But that doesn't mean it's not a disaster.

You and I are twin volcanoes,  
My head is just below the water.  
When I erupt it will be loud and hot,  
And generations will never know  
I used to hold your hand.



Ethan Crane



*Aim* / Sherry Luo  
photo



**social experiment** / Margaret Scruggs  
acrylic, pastel, pen on canvas 8x10

# Sizeable Shitholes

Matthew McClintock

One after another until emptiness  
Presents relief  
An easier net neutrality  
Seamless greys all Not  
No fashion  
All afflictions instantly cured  
All coffee potent hyper  
Aware in hyper reality

Sweating my skin off in an open square-  
No, just a twenty-five-lane-highway.  
Nothing to do but die or  
Be killed trying  
This is a very hot morning  
AC apparatus puddled to polymers  
AS is mind body spirit reproductive  
Drive or Desire or

The other vats  
Of themselves  
Have little to offer-  
They've been for too long,  
sublimation  
Imminent,

I want to light my way with memories  
In the absolute heat stroke black-  
This sizeable shithole may look in- fine-  
But let me not look out to meet its gape

Spare me the indivisible isolation  
Invest in my forgone future  
Amazed and graced and suffocated  
Invest in a coffin  
Fold me into and into and  
Into the dirt as it flowers and flows  
Faster than the water's want to  
Empty to  
Give the sea what it cannot clean.

# Gut

I found a cyst in my pubic hair  
It reminded me of the polyps  
Growing in my gut  
Maybe that is why  
My belly has grown  
To hide my shame

The polyps feed on bowls of cereal  
In whole milk  
And entire sleeves of nabisco cookies  
And store them for the energy to engulf my entrails  
And come bursting through my tummy  
Looking for something else to feed on

They slither on streets wandering into storefronts  
Where they buy the largest burger patty not because they are that hungry  
But because they can  
They get drunk and stop mid conversation  
To vomit in the bathroom only to return to the table like nothing happened  
They begin the same movie over and over again  
Falling asleep halfway through  
And they never wash a dish

It was never my fault  
It's been growing inside me this whole time  
Metastasizing my soul

Jeffrey Mann



**EXCERPT.,.** / Amanda Cameron  
Acrylic, Watercolor

# Edifice

*An Excerpt*

I.

My cheap sheets, at last, feel like home. A small off-white escape.

Worry has grown teeth now; his canine sunk deep into my spine. But my corner room repels the bad. My corner room is vacuum sealed and soft. Soft light behind the blinds wakes me slowly from a dreamless sleep and I feel stainless.

The comfort here makes me want to cry the same way that my Grandfather does. I am over-whelmed by the safety.

Of fresh morning light.

Meredith Brasher



**Orb** / May Hitchens  
relief

# helga, olga and jesus christ



my next door neighbors are three witches named  
helga, olga, and jesus christ.

helga is thirty-four

decades old, teeth sharp, eyes dull, tongue always bloody.

she has a nasty habit of gripping porcelain

so hard it shatters. she always leaves olga

to clean it up. olga fucking hates cleaning it up.

olga is seventeen with

hair the color of the ocean that night father robinson died.

she scatters dead animals

around the house like offerings,

like protection. they're always gone

in the morning, so olga knows she is keeping her family safe.

helga and olga have not spoken to jesus christ

in three years, not since jesus pinched helga too hard

when helga broke a porcelain vase from the ming dynasty.

jesus used to be quite forgiving, but lately she's been a real bitch.

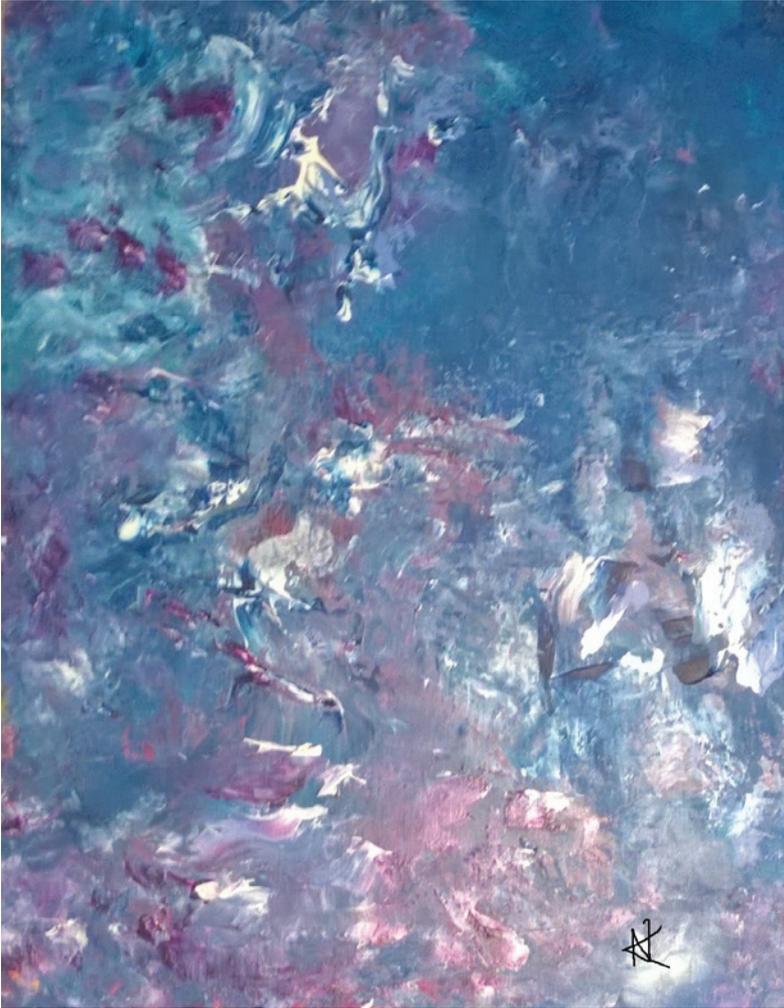
helga goes out every night

and picks up olga's dead animals, burns them,

makes sure they're gone in the morning.

she knows it gives olga peace of mind.

Manisha Banga



**WATERMARK AQUAMARINE** / Amanda Cameron  
acrylic, watercolor

# I don't know what fruit my body is

I have a list of men  
who have taken me  
on one date and ignored  
my texts and jeans  
sized double digits for the first time  
in my life and I have adult acne  
I have never owned a bra that fits  
properly I no longer wear bikinis  
or spaghetti straps and I don't know  
how to flatter myself and  
I am everyone's least favorite  
'before and after' because of it

I wear my retainers  
every night they are warped  
and starting to crack i am  
soft rock and leftover turkey fat  
and I don't know  
how to flatter myself  
in dress or in text I revel  
in cold weather and love  
my thighs in winter or  
when I'm dehydrated I am  
a pacifist except when driving or  
passing mirrors and picking away at  
myself has become my most  
honored art form and  
I don't know what fruit my body is and

I don't know  
how to flatter myself

Abbigayle Mathis

£49.97

the sheep outside  
the train  
window  
remind me of  
myself while  
they stare from  
the green hills do  
the sheep think  
about one another or  
ask themselves  
why am i here?  
what's beyond the fence?  
when they stare at  
the pond or glance at  
the train - do they  
destroy their reflection,  
do they drink  
from their own  
image to forget  
who they are or  
do they eat grass and  
live lavishly while  
trains speed by

Maxwell Rabb

# & a kiwi

I think of whale teeth  
for some reason when my teeth  
click against your earrings—

I think of how the sound is at  
once animalistic and vague,  
think of how I don't like restraint when,  
for a moment, my wrist  
tangles in your thong.

my lips were chapped afterward &  
I thought of parchment, and  
about how strange it is to write  
a poem in hopes that you'll make  
something meaningful of something simple.

I glide through the cracks I'm thinking up,  
ignore cuts from sharp ridges I've made,  
and remember the feeling of  
laughing into your mouth.

I remember how nothing ever tastes  
like peaches, but everything  
is the sharp-soft of a kiwi.

Manisha Banga

# FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

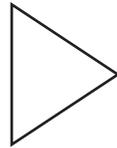
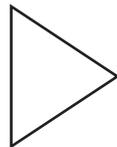
At night I lay in the rug and bitch and moan, rolling  
Like a lawnmower whose wife has made a big show of  
Pouring his gasoline out in the front yard.  
(Honey, the neighbors)  
Later, I wait immobile on your call  
Patient as a lobotomized sniper, a treed cat  
Somewhere across the Cambodian border.  
The next morning I think about  
How you should have split the wine with me  
And I would have bared myself  
Like Bogart's knuckled teeth  
When he wants to look sinister.  
That afternoon I sit in the shade  
My leg shakes, tectonically –  
My thigh is a cheap subwoofer.  
Someday, we will make eye contact and  
In this way, you will tease all my answers  
Like a third-rate game show host and  
Send me home with pennies.  
I will spend five years feeding them to  
A machine with your name on it,  
And watch it eat every one, grinning.

Chart Rigall

# *a grand experiment*

Chart Rigall  
*poem / collage*

**BEGINS ON THE NEXT PAGE**



2016 was the year clowns stopped being funny.

in which

THE

Clown

The thief,

The coward,

THE

hypocrite bandit of  
an oligarch,

The malignant cheap orange Popsicle

and

A long-haired traitor,

to

this government!

NO

THE

AMERICAN PRESIDENT

Walking Tall

This is not far-fetched.

THINGS HAPPEN FAST

There is no shelter

This is who we are.

'Does it hurt?'

give yourself more time than you think you need.

ten times as much.

**I**<sup>N</sup> ersatz campaign headquarters, **TALK OF** a new Southern strategy. more dynamic and severe:

**A** Yankee Boy Nazi **High KON** Friedrich Hayek **and** McCarthy **RUNS WILD** **in**

**Patriotic Wool** **Vintage-Style** **Trickle-Down Racism** **FOR SALE**

**A Grand Experiment** **A** Dangerously Unhinged." gentleman's agreement

a fucking tornado, **OF A Tribal King**

damage that takes decades to repair-

**MEANWHILE,** **the Sheriff** a friendless, phobic **sheep dog** **is** jailing opposition leaders **In Death Valley,**

DEATH SENTENCE

from

TRUMP

tower

By

telegram

THE Sheriff

SINGS LIKE A CROW

What glorious revelation from on high!

the

*Detainee*

a

Known and Suspected

Marxist-Islamist

by trade,

is

harnessed

TO

The

*machinery*

The Drumbeat Begins

A

LUMINOUS

Laser-Assisted

swarm OF

HORROR

rips a body open like a paper bag.

a wonderful array of sounds

like

JAZZ ON THE LOOSE

through

*Ripples*

The Desert Camp,

The landscape is stark and red and lovely:

He is

left for dead in broad bloody daylight

**This is NOT your Grandfather's**

*creeping*

*authoritarianism,*

**the message is clear.**

"Stay Out, Stay Alive."

# GOURMET



Dreams full of black pepper  
My empty spoon scraping on my teeth

Buying my ticket  
With pocket change  
My hands smell of nickel

I am taking apart my pen  
With expertise

You didn't know I was so good  
At going fast

Ethan Crane

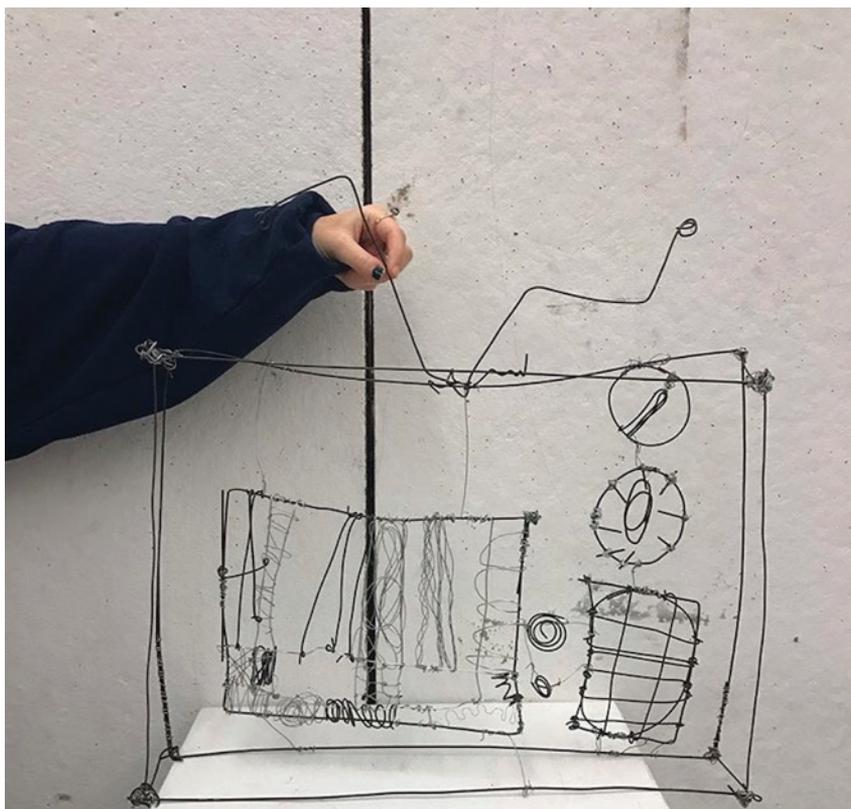
# self-portrait on a sunday morning

It was the time of want  
and I did not have  
two coffees;  
I couldn't write a poem  
if I tried.

I was always turning  
towards windows, just to see my  
own self or hands, heavy

I was so desperate  
for words  
and loose endings,  
and you were just there  
clapping.

Jianna Justice



*fake news* / Alena Skyer  
wire, human

# Grocery List

Maggie Shaw

You bought me a  
round orange with a thick peel  
from a big grocery store

The orange is covered  
with dust shedding from drywall  
ceiling tiles

The roof is never  
steady over  
sacrilege

I took a knife that did not  
belong to me  
and sliced the chalky flesh

I picked up a  
piece my teeth pulled  
at the pulp

I winced as the cold juice  
assaulted the cavities  
inside my dirty mouth

The knife was in my fingers  
the orange on  
my tongue

you  
were already back  
at the supermarket

## krill song

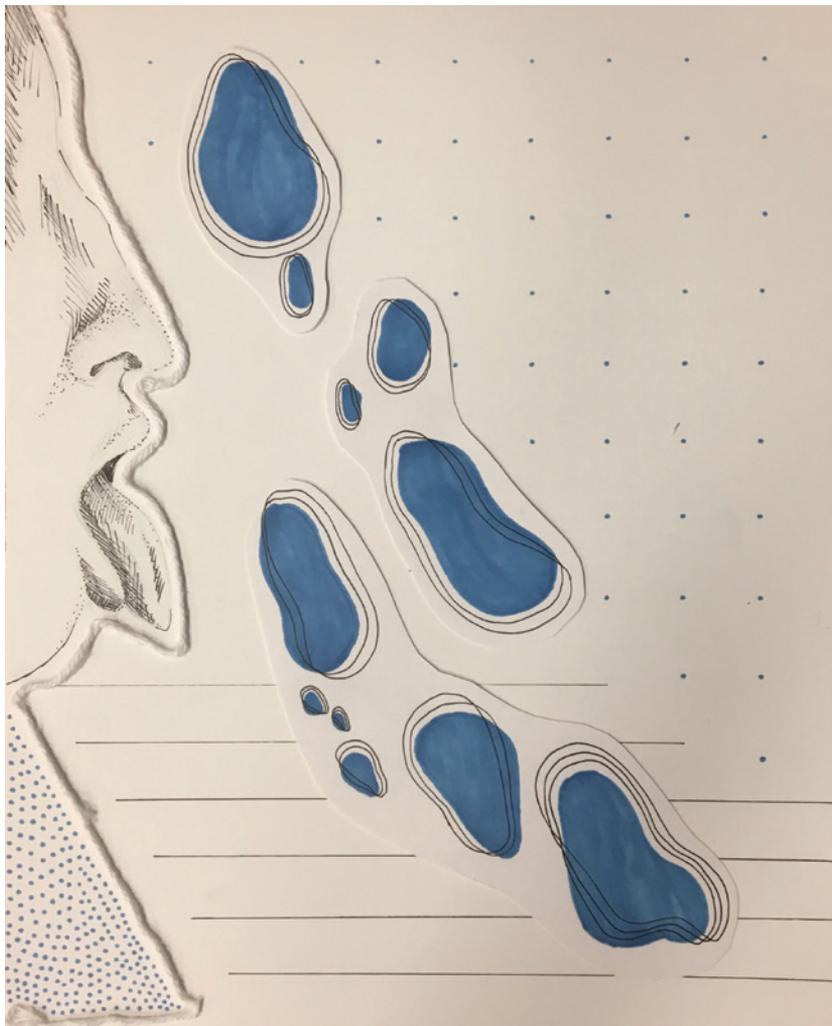
krill cringe over light blue-  
skinned whales w/  
icy grins && sweet repu-  
tations

krill grip lobster claws/  
talons/fingernails  
krill swim quick  
quicker

krill have too much  
red-hot heart &  
ugly sun-tanned  
crisp exteriors

&& I think of krill-curved  
ocean-deep sun damage  
and cherish my skin, my dirt  
brown, my sturdy earth

Manisha Banga



*The More Grotesque I Make Myself  
the More I Love Myself* / Isabella Ballew  
archival ink, permanent marker, yarn, 11 x 14 in



*The Rainforest* / Ruth Pannill  
photo



# Amazon Prime Poem

you can't say  
you hate late  
capitalism if  
what you love is

Marianna Hagler

Amazon Prime.

like everyone else,  
you are what  
you are—  
you are a 36-pack of Tampax Pearl  
with overnight shipping

a freezer full  
of Lean Cuisine (even  
though you know how  
to cook)

a softshelled body  
laid out sweating  
on too-long unlaundered sheets

somebody's teenage  
girlfriend on the come up  
at sundown—at sun up,  
a Sims family  
waking to a new graphics card

a quiet  
moment

a Quaa  
lude

an edible  
you're scared to eat

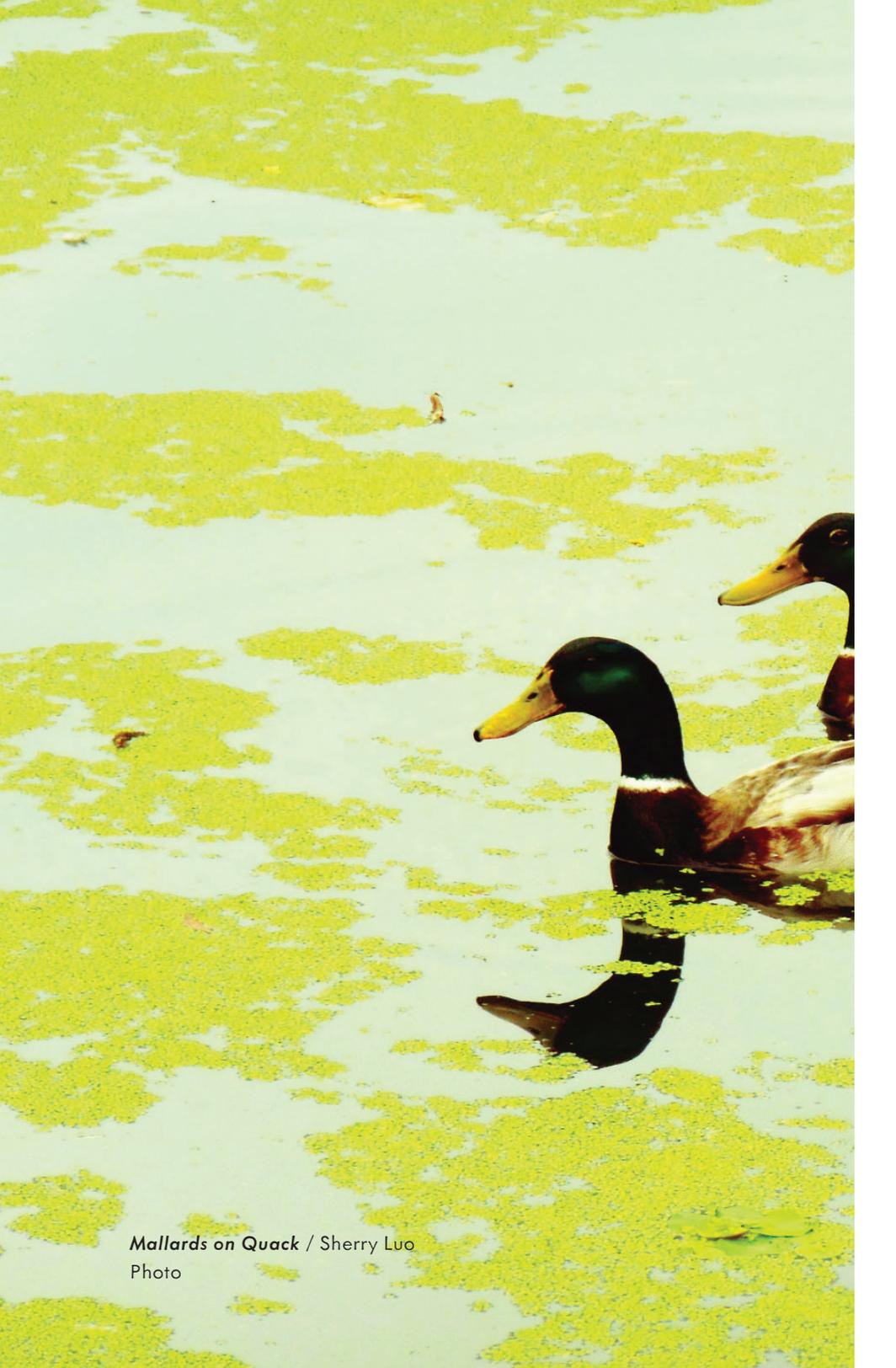
an unpainted index finger, Tweeting  
i'm all alone in this body—  
all alone in this body becoming  
all alone at this party drinking  
the last lukewarm Limerita  
through a straw

an underage liver metabolizing  
Limerita

an underage liver metabolizing  
non-essential amino acid

an endless parade of men

you are a fresh pair of batteries  
in your vibrator  
before the old ones  
had even  
given out.



*Mallards on Quack* / Sherry Luo  
Photo



# come all ye mo(u)rning stars

Marcus Keith

Come all ye mo(u)rning stars  
children of eternity; slaves to  
modernity  
staved off by your maternal wards  
of sex and salvation  
for what difference is there between the pervert and the pious  
nihilists; [{}nihi(l){est}] you  
kill your gods, hallelu-ja  
Zeus, YHWH, Jehovah  
Your-self  
must sacrifice the bull of heaven and lay it at the altar of the high  
priestess w(h)i(t)ch  
Beatr({ice}is) {}ein/ [so][f](it) to be  
that (anima)ting power which en(gender)s  
the prime movers of procreation and preservation of  
every treatise, tome, and book  
are but the bricks and mortar in our tower of babble  
{art}/ifices/ to /Ozy/{man}{de(us)}  
Which is the more noble?  
To thrust our obelisks into father sky and slither up the rungs to his  
wife?  
Or to follow the path of the living {daed}alus and remain atop the  
mausoleums of men?  
AmenΩ

# bacucata.

Allia Siler

make sure that your feet are turned out.

2 inch heels in a “V” .

5. 6. 7.

eight.

no- your hip pops on the

count, not the-

have you ever been to a

mental hospital?

focus. Eyes on your reflection

shirt cropped to see,

arms extended, fingers precise

and you fucking stab your big toe,

a familiar cut.

like the sight of your mother crying  
again.

Lia, she's doing it again.

You've almost got it, but

can you move it in a box?

Can she stay on her meds?

You can feel it in the  
Music now. The bump of  
the beat.

You can feel it coming

I bet she doesn't see it comng.

no, she'll be fine, you'll be okay.

You're here now.

She's finally home now.



*its january 2017 and she's allergic to apples / Isabella Ballew*  
 archival ink, permanent marker, plastic, metal foil, glitter collage on  
 8.5 x 11 paper

# Commute

Maggie Shaw

plastic flowers littered the altars up and down the interstate  
i hold the atlas of the world  
feigning appreciation  
and comprehension.  
masking a desperate  
fatigue.  
the car rolls on and i have no grip  
on real direction  
but apparently we should be headed straight down this 6-Lane Col-  
lective of transients  
opaque underworlds jettison past the rearview mirror  
callously.  
and my hobo soul  
hitchhiking on the tailgates of minivans and the hubcaps of sports  
cars  
desperately clutching to fresh paint jobs reeking of stale  
stoicism  
i hold the atlas of the world and see  
green and blue  
yet I float among the expressways  
smacked with speed-limits, asphalt and white lines  
gray and gray and gray and empty stares into the repetitive roadways  
reaching perpetually towards a hazy starless sky  
cars collide in spite of seat belts and safety tests  
cigarettes catapult through barely vented windows  
cops shoot the vehicles that hurtle past in an effort to make monthly  
quotas  
sirens orchestrate the madness of junctions and exits and lane chang-  
es  
this place emanates chaos  
this place exudes the inescapable debris of necktie shoe-polished life  
this place is daily/ regular / routine  
but it is wracked with entropy.

# Think; not of me

an excerpt

Speckle kissed  
tinted temples too.  
Droplets of sound rippling  
on slipping silence.  
Lips dip from dimpled ends  
    trace a curling crease.  
    Curling crease curves a crescent moon  
in a blazy sky  
under a blackberry veil.  
Where ideas softly sail.

Maria Camila Ortiz





# CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Isabella Ballew is 3rd year Computer Science and intended Art major from Cumming, Georgia. Isabella is garbage girl who feels things and turns emotions into textures.

Manisha Banga is a 4th year English and Classical Culture major from Duluth, Georgia. Manisha still hasn't made her point regarding the witches and monsters she's been writing about these past three years, but she has added ugly sea creatures to her repertoire.

Meredith Brasher is a 3rd year English and Political Science major from Atlanta, Georgia. A Gemini who likes to write, looks shorter on the Internet.

Amanda Cameron is a 4th year Applied Mathematics major from Suwanee, Georgia. Amanda hopes to do work in cybersecurity or enterprise architecture when she graduates. One unique part of her paintings is that they are completely finger painted. She uses a mixture of oil, watercolor, and acrylic. For updates on her work and life, feel free to follow her or check out her instagram at [instagram.com/thefedorapainter](https://www.instagram.com/thefedorapainter).

Ethan Crane is a 2nd year Linguistics and classics major from Athens, Georgia. Ethan Crane enjoys clicking through Wikipedia late at night, stir fries and etymologies. He is frequently paranoid he sounds too cliché, but also finds that damnably appropriate.

Mia Falcon is a 3rd year English and Entertainment Media Studies from Alpharetta Georgia, whose most frequent google search is “cool space facts.”

Maggie George is a 1st year Communications Studies major and Spanish minor from Marietta, Georgia. Maggie is a fan of peanut butter and a person who occasionally writes poetry. You may find her having dance parties in her room, reading a book, or walking down the street pretending to be in a music video. You can read more of her poetry at [therunawaywords.wordpress.com](http://therunawaywords.wordpress.com).

Jianna Justice is a 3rd year English and film studies major from Atlanta, Georgia. She loves Eileen Myles, green apples, and her dog Auggie.

Marianna Hagler is a 3rd year English major from Augusta, Georgia. Marianna is your ex-girlfriend.

May Hitchings is a 4th year Printmaking major from Lookout Mountain, Georgia. May likes to make things. Anything. Prints, paintings, ceramic work, sculptures, stories, poems, songs, websites, anything. She works by trial and error, learning by doing as often as possible.

Marcus Keith is a 1st year Cognitive Science major from Jacksonville, Florida. Self descriptions are self aggrandizing, but he guesses art is neat.

Jin Kim is a History major and African American studies minor from Atlanta, Georgia. Korean-American girl but a Southern-hip at heart. Writing has been a form of healing and self-discovering hobby since she was nine years old.

Sherry Luo is a 1st year Genetics and English major from Johns Creek, Georgia. She is also a staff member of Stillpoint. She is not afraid to admit that she enjoys her coffee with lots of cream and sugar and is a sneakerhead. She would gladly spend the rest of her life collecting hats, listening to electro swing, and defending the Oxford comma.

Jeffrey Mann is a student of Music Theory from Sandy Springs, Georgia. He writes poetry in his spare time and composes Electro-Acoustic pop music under the moniker of Rill Boy.

Abbigayle Mathis is a 3rd year English and Entertainment Media Studies major from Villa Rica, Georgia. Abbigayle's only New Year's resolution was to be more earnest. So far she's succeeding.

Matthew McClintock is a 4th year Environmental Economics & Management major from Snellville, Georgia. He likes to write the goops and less frequently the gops.

Maria Camila Ortiz is a 4th year Comparative Literature and Psychology major from Cumming, Georgia. She is Camila and words are fun to whittle with.

Ruth Pannill is a 4th year Environmental and Marine Chemistry major from Atlanta, Georgia. Ruth is a scientist with a love for fresh air, delicious cheese, chirping birds, and voting rights.

Roma Parikh is an international affairs and Arabic major. Just a girl who is obsessed with politics, love, and feminism. Her favorite color is purple and she hates turtlenecks, raisins, and people who don't use their turn signal.

Victoria Pekala is a 3rd year English and economics major with a Spanish minor from Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Fun fact: Victoria keeps a list of fun facts about herself memorized because icebreakers make her nervous.

Maxwell Rabb is a 2nd year English and History major from Atlanta, Georgia. Max loves root beer, tequila, food and his dogs: Ladybird and Diesel. He has an issue with selective hearing and people thinking that he is ignoring them.

Chart Rigall is a 4th year student from Atlanta, Georgia. He studies English and History.

Jesse Riley is a 4th year English major from Woodstock, Georgia. Jesse is a genderfluid poet who is addicted to caffeine, takes BuzzFeed quizzes as a serious form of therapy, and is very ready to graduate. They are an intern with Avid Bookshop and an editor on Stillpoint staff. They were recently accepted into the University of Massachusetts MFA program in poetry starting in the fall, and they are very excited to move to Amherst, MA.

Nicole Schlabach is a 3rd year Public Relations major from Marietta, Georgia. Nicole likes hot green tea, meaningful conversations and the way sunlight makes plant leaves glitter gold.

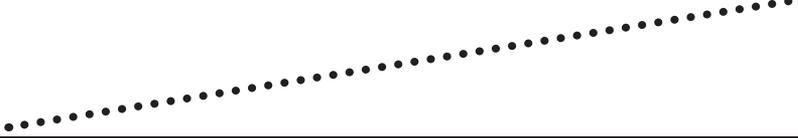
Margaret Scruggs is a 3rd year Journalism and Studio Art major from Valdosta, Georgia. She is an ambitious realist that loves to learn and create. A hot dog is not a sandwich. She is an artist, yogi, and introvert trying to figure out if people like her art or if it matters anyway.

Maggie Shaw is a 2nd year English and ecology major from Peachtree City, Georgia. She is a mostly normal human, mostly believes in aliens, mostly full of coffee and confusion

Allia Siler is a 3rd year senior at UGA. She aspires to be a counseling psychologist in addition to a writer. She primarily writes poetry but is currently trying her hand at fiction. You can also catch her ballroom dancing with UGA's Ballroom Performance Group and as the Vice President of the Ballroom Dance Club at UGA.

Alena Skyer is a 1st year Art Education major, with a double minor in Women's Studies and Human Services from Johns Creek, Georgia. As an artist, her primary medium is fabric, but also enjoys painting, photography, and sculpture.

Killian Wyatt is a 4th year Publication Management major and English and Studio Art minor from Atlanta, Georgia. He is always comfortably dressed.



## ABOUT STILLPOINT



Since 1967, Stillpoint Literary Magazine has served as a forum for undergraduate writers and visual artists at the University of Georgia. The pieces featured in the 2017 issue of Stillpoint were selected from a pool of blind submissions. Names were omitted during selection and staff members did not judge their own work. This issue was arranged by the Design Editor with the help of the Stillpoint staff and others using Adobe InDesign CC, Photoshop CC, and Illustrator CC on a MacBook Pro. The type is set in Metallophile Sp8, Adobe Garamond Pro, and others from Adobe Typekit.



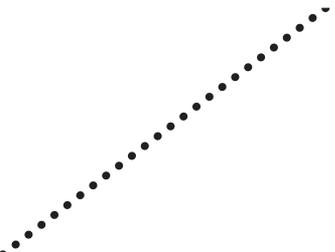
## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Stillpoint would like to thank the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, the English Department, the Creative Writing Program, and Bulldog Print and Design. Additional thanks is due to the Franklin College Fee Allocation Committee. We thank you all for this opportunity to share the student voice.

We'd like to extend a special thank you to our faculty advisors Christine Lasek-White, Dr. Andrew Zawacki, and Dr. Jed Rasula.

Finally, thank you to everyone who submitted work, attended an event, or read this magazine.



## *For more information*

stillpointuga.com

uga.stillpoint@gmail.com

twitter: @uga\_stillpoint

facebook: Stillpoint Literary Magazine at UGA