

Labyrinth 2004

Volume 33, Number 2



T.C. Williams High School

Dreams and REALITY

Submission Policy

The contents of the magazine are chosen and designed by students in Journalism 2M, a year-long English elective open to all students at T.C. Williams High School. All students are welcome to submit their writing, artwork and photography for publication. A writing contest was held with prizes to the top works in each genre: non-fiction, fiction and poetry. Prizes were also awarded to the creators of the front cover and inside cover images. Students enrolled in Journalism 2M were required to propose and write a feature or to create another piece of work for publication in this magazine. *Labyrinth* also produced a calendar in December.

Colophon

This magazine was created in Adobe PageMaker 7.0 using eMac machines. Adobe Photoshop 7.0 was also used for graphics. The text font is 12 point Palatino. Headlines for the Reality section are in **CAPITALS**, and headlines for the Dreams section are in *Apple Chancery*. The text is 80 # Mead Anthem gloss text and the cover is 100 # Mead Anthem gloss cover. The cover, middle signature and outside half-signature were printed using 4-color process. The printing was offset process and was done by Charter Printing of Alexandria, Virginia. The run of the 60-page magazine was 300. Magazines cost \$5. Patrons receive our fall calendar and this magazine for free.



Labyrinth 2004

Volume 33, Number 2

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Human Rights Award, 2001



Front Cover

Reflection on Life

Digital Photography

Adrien Prophete

Back Cover

One

Mixed Media

Michaela Murphy

Inside Covers

Surreal Cityscape

Watercolor

Cara Reiner

Dreams and REALITY

High school is a means of reaching the threshold to the rest of your life. As such, students often wonder about where they'll go, what they'll do, and how they'll make the best of their future.

Some students give up hope, believing that they'll never amount to anything. They look around themselves and see nothing but the harsh world, full of disappointment and sorrow. This is why dreams are most often equated with good, and reality with bad. This is why the general perception of dreaming is directly linked to optimism.

Labyrinth chose "Dreams and Reality" as the 2004 theme because we wanted to disprove this notion. In these pages you will find dreams that haunt and realities that inspire; pessimism as well as optimism. The result is what we hope is a well-rounded magazine that embraces the ideals and truths of the students of T.C. Williams High School.

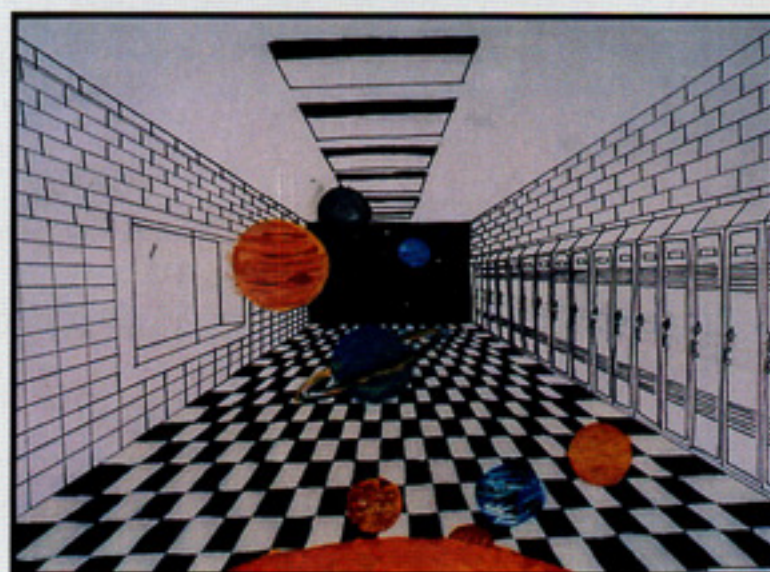
Table of Contents

POETRY

5	<i>Eating It</i>	Lynne Wilson
8	<i>Untitled</i>	Yuri Delima
12	<i>The Poet and His Thoughts</i>	Mujhid Shukur
13	<i>The Forgotten</i>	Edam N. Colon
24	<i>The Ugly Donut Lament</i>	Alma Jean Mitchell
25	<i>If Gandhi Were Alive Today</i>	Joe Fierstos
28	<i>The Changing of the Season</i>	Sarah Schaffer
	<i>Serenity Lake</i>	Rachel Brown-Glazner
36	<i>Destination Out of Mind</i>	Erin Lutz
37	<i>Christmas Fire</i>	Herve Villechaize
	<i>All Hallows' Eve</i>	Vicki Fraser
39	<i>Dream Succumb</i>	Danielle Ausems
	<i>Unforeseen Obsolescence</i>	Sarah Schaffer
40	<i>Smitten, Battered, Beaten, Torn</i>	Keegan Zacharie
	<i>In Dreams</i>	Ralph de la Rosa
41	<i>Unknown</i>	Iris A. Esteves
	<i>The Point Field</i>	Alex Totoiu
42	<i>October Musing</i>	Dylan Colligan
	<i>Dark</i>	Rachel Hobbie
43	<i>April in Love</i>	Alex Totoiu
	<i>Murder in the Dark</i>	Kevin Dua
44	<i>A SENSEsational Car Ride</i>	Stacy Schilling
45	<i>The Ocean Breathes</i>	Lauren Abramson
46	<i>9:05AM</i>	Megan Coyle
	<i>576</i>	Kevin Dua
52	<i>Addiction</i>	Emma Van de Water
53	<i>Weapon of Many Faces</i>	Steve Escobar
		Kat Milyko

PHOTOGRAPHY

Front Cover	<i>Reflection on Life</i>	Adrien Prophete
13	<i>Ninja Woods</i>	Liz Blount
14	<i>Cartwheel</i>	Allyson Browning
17	<i>Self-Portrait</i>	Allyson Browning
32	<i>Child of Mine</i>	Jessica Miller
36	<i>A Train</i>	Daniel Romero
43	<i>Roses</i>	Kendra Keith
44	<i>Old Town</i>	Erika Marquina
52	<i>Little Brother</i>	Jessica Miller
56	<i>Fairy Princess</i>	Colleen Cassidy



PROSE

6	<i>Ballerinas, Hollywood and Fluffy Bunies</i>	Non-Fiction	Megan Coyle
9	<i>In a Word, Gay</i>	Non-Fiction	Kat Milyko
10	<i>Crawling Their Way to Fame: Chameleon</i>	Feature	Christy Johnson
14	<i>Growing Up</i>	Non-Fiction	Cecilia Lopez
15	<i>2004: Seniors on the Rise</i>	Feature	Kristen Brinegar
16	<i>My Life, Unedited</i>	Non-Fiction	Susana Marquina
18	<i>The Governorator Reigns!</i>	Feature	Roberto Ramirez
20	<i>One Hell of a Conversation</i>	Fiction	Bobby Rhoades
26	<i>We Think Not</i>	Fiction	Rachel Hobbie
29	<i>Joe Writes!</i>	Non-Fiction	Genny Loutinsky
32	<i>Paranoia</i>	Fiction	Joe Fierstos
34	<i>High Seas Adventure</i>	Fiction	Will Cooper
38	<i>The Book</i>	Fiction	Matt Given
48	<i>Brown Eyes</i>	Fiction	Rachel Hobbie
50	<i>Rebels with a Cause</i>	Feature	Crystal Judkins
51	<i>When the Students Call "Action!"</i>	Feature	Jessica Miller
54	<i>Where is the Love?</i>	Feature	Erika Marquina
56	<i>All of Life's a Stage</i>	Fiction	Crystal Thompson
58	<i>VACO Remembers its Roots</i>	Feature	Dadrian Haley
			Lauren Shaw
			Casey McClelland

Space Hallway
Ink

Ossana Wolff

Opposite Page:
Torn Hallway
Pencil
Kevin Dykes

ARTWORK

Back Cover

One

Inside Covers

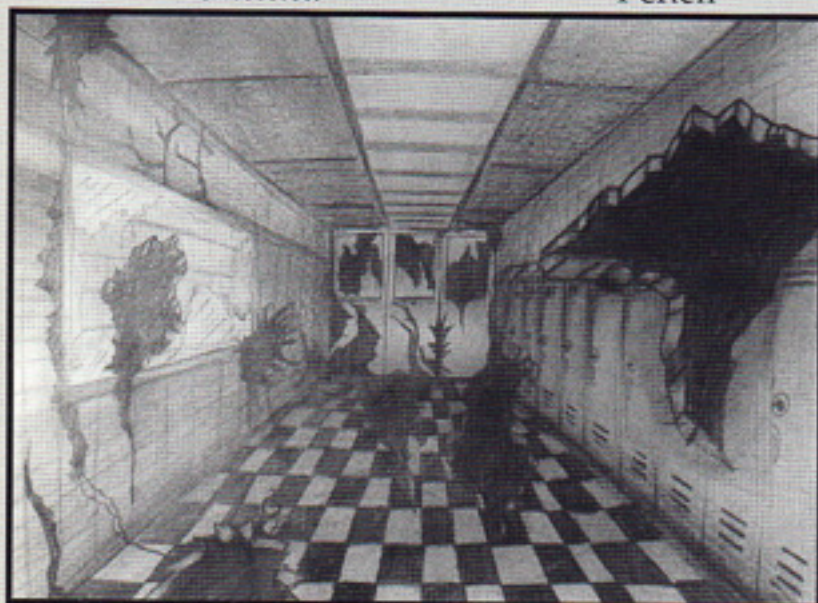
- 4 *Surreal Cityscape*
 5 *Self-Portrait*
 6 *Banana*
 7 *Untitled*
 8 *Ballerina*
 9 *Perspective*
 10 *Just Because...*
 11 *Confused Chameleon*
 12 *Jack's Groove*
 12 *Untitled*
 16 *Untitled*
 19 *The Governorator*
 21 *Untitled*
 22 *Ghosts*
 23 *Fire*
 24 *Nostalgic Fern*
 24 *The After Picture*
 25 *Gandhi*
 26 *Female Sculpture*
 27 *Untitled*

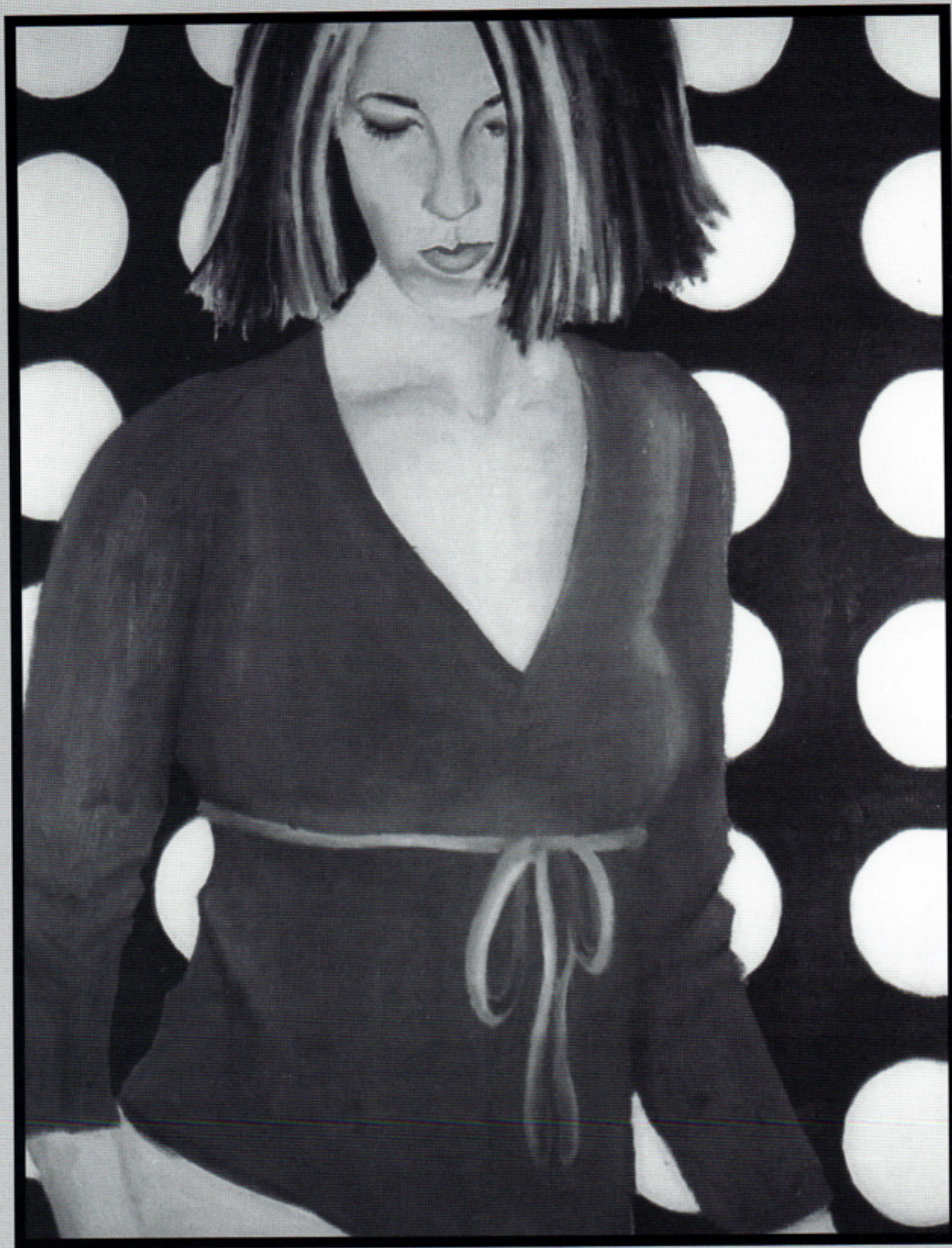
Mixed Media Michaela Murphy

- Watercolor Cara Reiner
 Oil on canvas Michaela Murphy
 Watercolor Michaela Murphy
 Color Pencil Annie Murphy
 Clay Jessica Arriaga
 Pencil Kelly Barnes
 Print Bradley Cook
 Ink Cecily Kidd
 Print Carol Cogliano
 Clay Krystal Hanner
 Oil on canvas Alana Noritake
 Pencil Emma Shapiro
 Digital Media Bobby Rhoades
 Watercolor Riley Walters
 Watercolor Hande Karaca
 Watercolor Dawit Getachew
 Embossing Cara Reiner
 Ink LaShawn Childs
 Pencil Kendall Rose-Gregg
 Clay Cara Reiner
 Pencil Narwan Aimen

- 28 *Lake* Watercolor Alla Zhulina
 29 *Feeling Blue* Acrylic Megan Coyle
 30 *Silhouette* Watercolor Darcy Byrnes
 Self-Portrait Mixed Media Megan Coyle
 Wolf on Mountain Acrylic Mujhid Shukur
 31 *Basket* Watercolor Alana Noritake
 Apples Watercolor Cara Reiner
 32 *Untitled* Watercolor Gillian Maniscalco
 33 *Untitled* Ink Ahzhela Matsyshe
 34 *Untitled* Clay Mujhid Shukur
 37 *Skeleton Man* Finger Paint Darcy Byrnes
 Shattered Dreams Pen April Carden
 38 *Self-Portrait* Acrylic Megan Coyle
 39 *Loved by a Stranger* Pencil Sam Phetsaenggam
 Android Ink Alana Noritake

- 40 *Hand thru Grid* Ink Darcy Byrnes
 Sarah Ink Austin Blakeslee
 Hands Mixed Media Michaela Murphy
 41 *Untitled* Watercolor Cecily Kidd
 42 *Sky and Moon* Acrylic Keriann Cassidy
 45 *Untitled* Acrylic Adilia Lara
 46 *Close Up* Oil Michaela Murphy
 47 *Boy* Charcoal Alana Noritake
 48 *Self-Portrait* Oil on canvas Dawit Getachew
 49 *Sharonda* Chalk LaVarr Carter
 51 *Man on Stool* Acrylic Alana Noritake
 53 *Untitled* Mixed Media Bradley Cook
 54 *Spirals* Acrylic Krystal Hanner
 Ice Cream Clay Brittney Knox
 59 *Rock* Acrylic Karla Parada
 Guitar Oil pastel Marina Munoz
 60 *Woman* Clay Emma Shapiro
 The Night is Cold and Delicate Clay Austin Blakeslee





Self-Portrait
Oil on canvas
Michaela Murphy

EATING IT

By Lynne Wilson

TI ǝNITAE

My mother made me
Dinner yesterday
She called it Meatloaf Casserole
But I knew there
Wasn't any meat in it
My mother wouldn't put
Meat in meatloaf casserole

She set it down proudly
In front of me, proud
Because she never cooks
Anymore, proud because she
Works all the time and
Forgot how to cook

My family sat down for dinner
All five of us
Together around the table
One happily saying grace
The other four staring at "It"

My mother was the first to take a bite
I watched my father
Who started on his
Peas and carrots instead

My sister's a vegetarian
She doesn't eat Meatloaf Casserole
So she didn't know she could
Have any of "It"

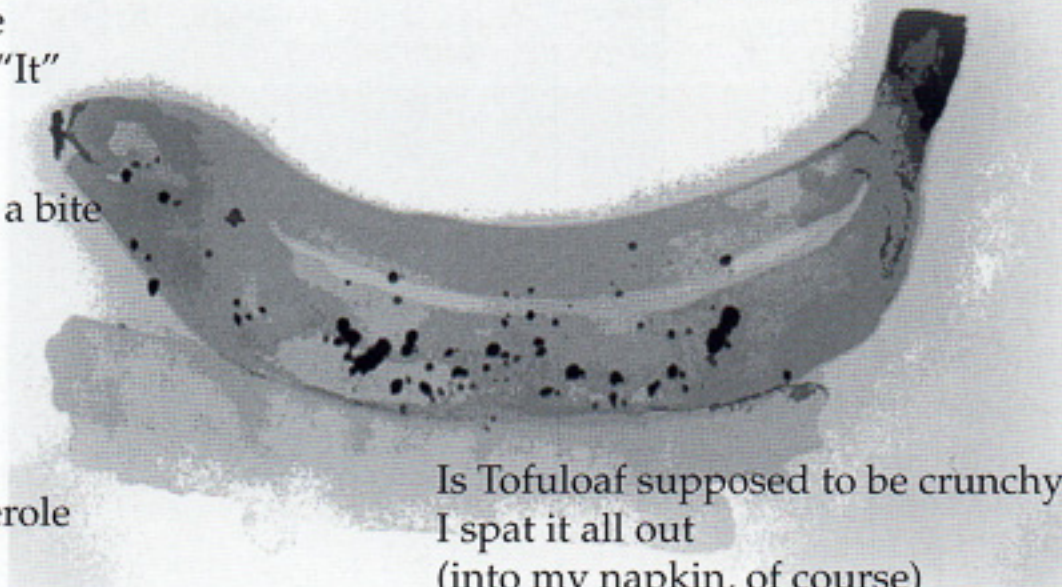
My mother made it without meat
Just for her
She could have had "It" anyway
But that would be self-destruction

My mother ate all of "It"
Rather quickly, I noticed
I just watched my brother
Take his first bite
And chew twenty-three long chews
Before forcing himself to swallow

I took a bite
Of peas and carrots
Which weren't so bad
Except I didn't think
Carrots were as good
Square as they were round

What is tofu, anyway?
And why do they call
Meatloaf with tofu meatloaf?
Why not tofuloaf?

The telephone rang
My brother ran to get it
It was for my mom
While she was gone
I took my first bite of "It"
So she couldn't see my face



Is Tofuloaf supposed to be crunchy?
I spat it all out
(into my napkin, of course)
My sister started to

Laugh. Ha. How humorous

I scraped all of my
"It" onto her plate
Right before my mother
Returned to the table
Then, before a word could
Be said, I excused myself
And escaped away to
The kitchen.

I can't wait to
Learn how to cook.

Banana
Watercolor
Michaela Murphy

BALLERINAS, HOLLYWOOD, AND FLUFFY BUNNIES

Fiction by Megan Coyle

Over the years, my dreams have shifted from one extreme to the next before they finally decided to settle down into one particular concentration. Gradually they made it through the winding path of aging without slipping through the cracks completely. It didn't come easy on deciding what dreams to pursue. No, it took many rough drafts and sketches before I realized what I wanted to do in life.

When I was about four, my mom would ship me off to ballet lessons once a week. The classes didn't really involve any dancing (who knows why those instructors believed they could teach anything to little, squirming four-year-olds served up with a truck load of A.D.D.?) but seemed to be more along the lines of jumping around and flailing your arms while music played on a portable radio.

At that tender age I believed that I would become a ballerina, no matter what. I think the only inspiration for such a whim was derived from the tights I got to wear while prancing about in a room entirely composed of mirrors. My little dream of becoming a ballerina became shattered once reality set in. At our first recital, I had refused to budge from my mom's lap. During the last song, with a room inhabited by hyperactive children, I actually danced. I had only done this because my mom had bribed me with a Slurpee that I

would receive once it ended.

Fast forward a little and we've reached the next dream that I felt I was destined for. Of course my young mind had been enchanted by dozens of other dreams but none of them seemed to set themselves apart from the rest.

The next dream became the concoction I came up with by mixing my love for nature with my dreams of a profession.

By the second grade I declared to the world that I'd become a veterinarian, no matter what. I had a strong love for animals of all sizes and enjoyed the company of my dog - a resume that I felt couldn't be turned down. I had a great history of pet ownership, ranging from tanks full of cheap goldfish to hamsters that had passed on only to be replaced by a newer and fresher little critter.

Once I had even tried to nurse a baby field mouse I found in my backyard back to health. However, my efforts had

been futile. The poor little mouse died after a week and I mourned its loss. But I had mourned many losses of many animals.

I gave up my dream of becoming a vet after one of my friends informed me that my job would involve putting dogs to sleep. I vowed after that, that I would never do any harm to any animal. My dreams had also been ruined when I heard about all the work that



Untitled
Color pencil
Annie Murphy

I WAS TERRIFIED EVERY NIGHT DURING DRESS REHEARSAL

must be poured into becoming a vet; I even heard about how it's harder to get into vet school than it is to get into medical school. Such realities were enough to leave me horrified and a little disgusted by small rodents. I would no longer be saving poor, wounded, little, fluffy bunnies in my dreams.

Next came my desire for stardom, to lift myself upon a lighted stage and become discovered. My plan seemed a lot easier in my head than it was in reality. I had taken acting classes at a local theater for a span of three years. I had met a few interesting and strange kids there and had also received a small taste of acting.

Every year the acting class would perform a play that would involve the whole deal - costumes, make-up, and memorization of lines. The first year had been a wonderful experience that left me craving for more. The first time I put my foot on the stage, heated by the surrounding lights, I had enjoyed the character I played: an Irish maid with an Irish accent. The next two years involved plays that didn't sparkle as brightly as the first one had. In the last play I ever performed, I had to dress up like a clown.

The only problem with the clown gig was that I'd always had a fear of clowns. I used to run away from them as a child and cry while hiding behind one of my parent's legs. I just don't like them and how they're always so

happy. It's disturbing. And the make-up magnifies their evilness. Thus, I was terrified every night during dress rehearsal when I'd have to force myself to look in the mirror while transforming myself into one of those demons.

The whole clown experience had been too much and I made up my mind to retire from that desire. Despite all the trial and error experiences that I witnessed, they all really did pay off in the end. I've played musical instruments and participated in five different sports at one time or another. I've touched upon practically every portion of the arts category (except for singing; I already know how horrible I am). Now I can tell people that I've tried practically everything, have failed miserably at it or have declared I dislike it, and can relax since I've found my true calling.



*Ballerina
Clay
Jessica Arriaga*

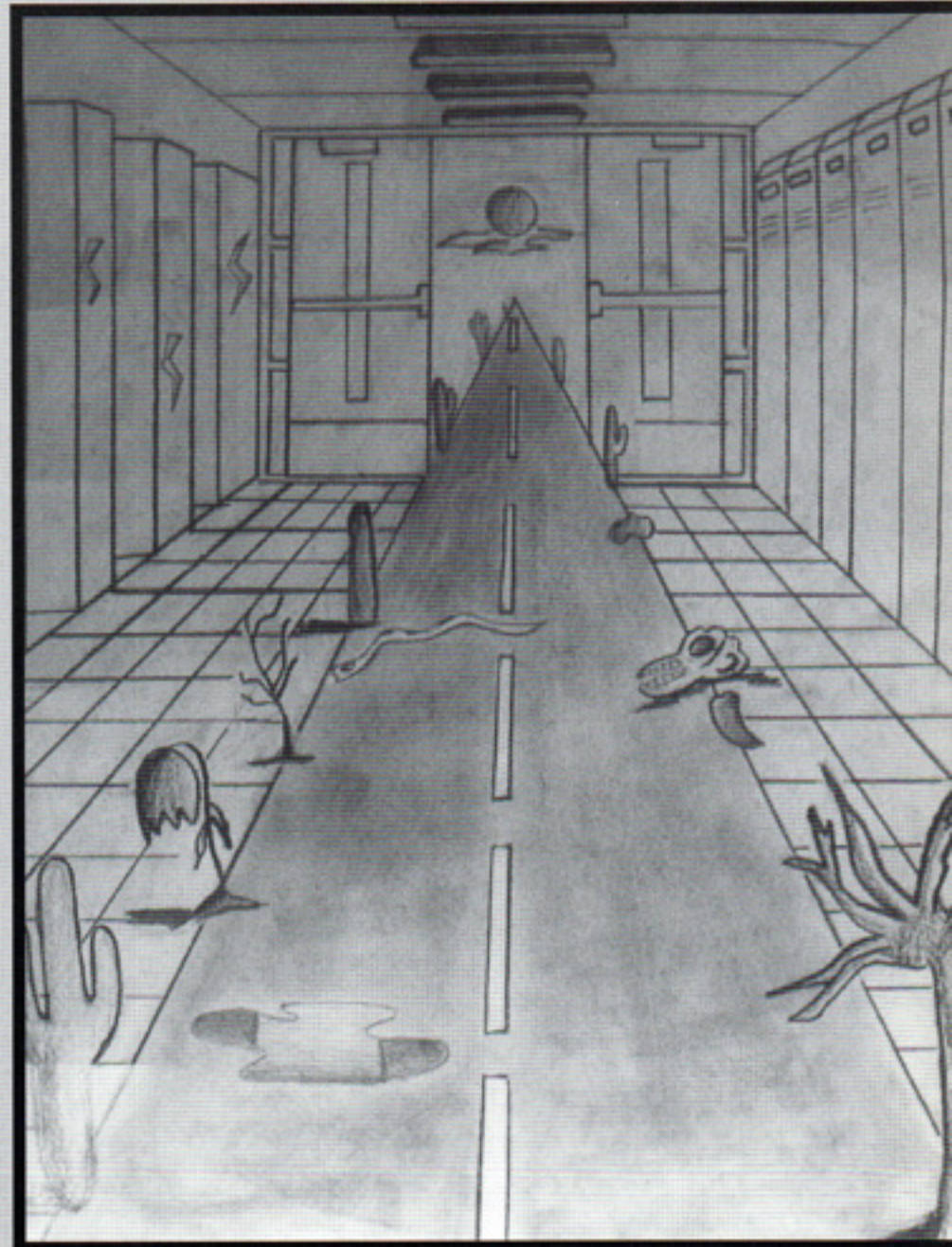
In the fourth grade I took up writing. I had finally gotten the hang of the craft and was able to scribble down words that could actually be recognizable and my spelling wasn't as horrendous as it had been in past years. Ever since then I've kept up with it. I write whenever I feel it's necessary, whenever I've experienced something that I feel I must put down on paper since I don't trust the engraving it's left in my mind. Even though I've given up through any bit of failure in other areas, writing is something that I haven't given up on. Rejection slips don't bother me because I know that I need this tool of mine. I've found my new dream, and as the future approaches me, I know that this is one thing that I'll stick with until it becomes a reality as my profession.

UNTITLED

By Yuri Delima

These corridors are long and almost nonending. Stretching from side to side, an immense ocean through which a sailor navigates, having his ship as his only companion.

He relies on it for protection as it in return uses its navigator to guide itself by huge exploding waves as high as the topsails. Many storms they have confronted, to none have they bowed or let themselves be swept by, These infinite hallways are as crowded as the ocean is lonely. However, it can be as noisy and agitated as an ocean might become during a thunderstorm. People come and go, hurrying on from one place to another. The white, powerful topsails blow in the wind, swiftly riding above the water's surface. So many faces I've seen, walking up and down on these floors. Entering and exiting doors. Sometimes I even find myself trapped in this crowd, walking without looking back, determined to go somewhere. As I walk, I look forward and see a shadow stepping into a room. This is what keeps me going, I know this is the place I belong.



Perspective
Pencil
Kelly Barnes

IN A WORD, GAY

Non-Fiction by Kat Milyko

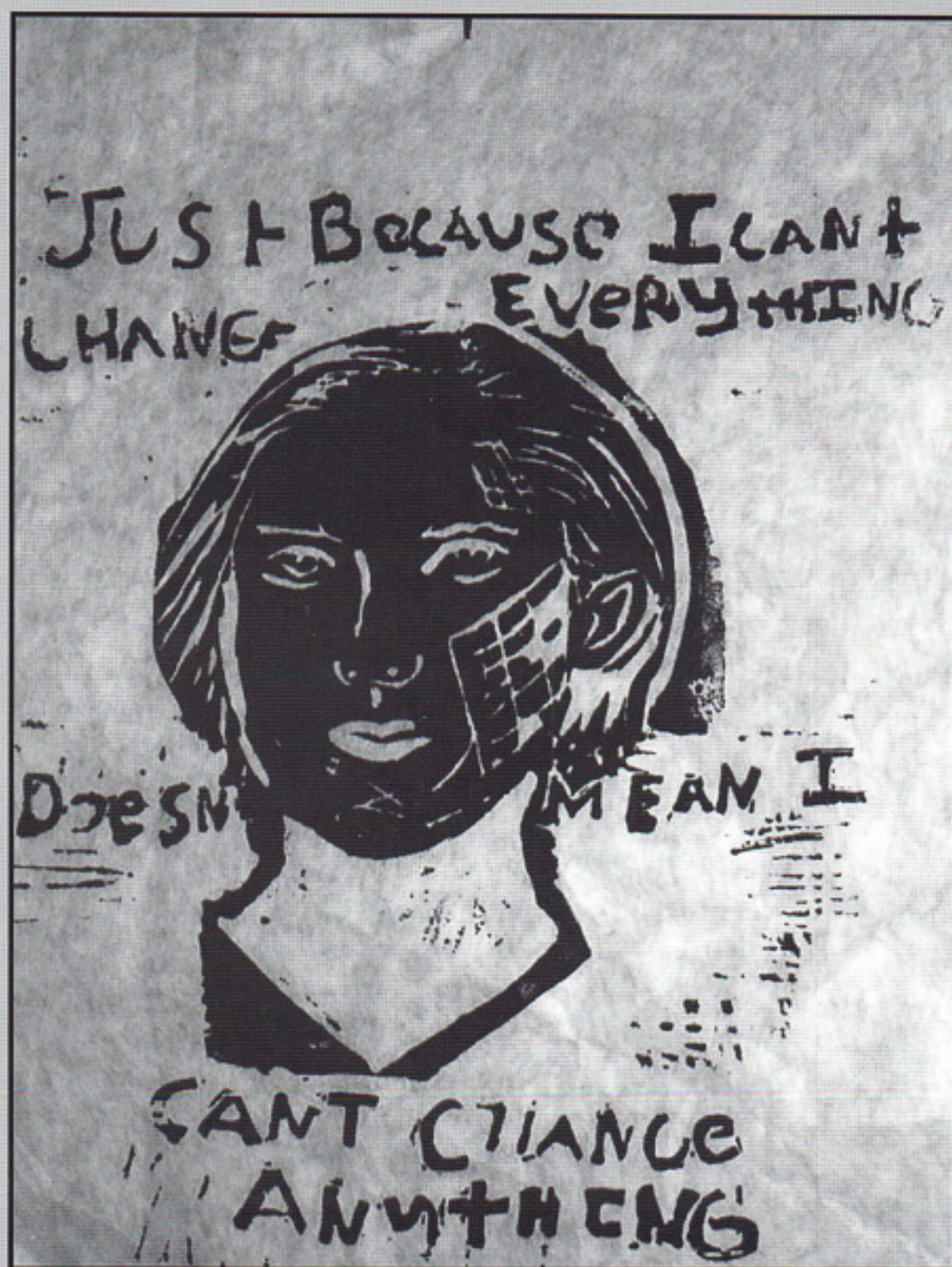
Have you ever walked down a crowded hallway or sat in a noisy classroom and heard the phrase, "That is so gay?" Maybe you were even the one saying it. Now, did it ever occur to you that someone else may have also heard that phrase and felt insulted, even if they never spoke up? I've been in that situation many times before as the one who

felt insulted, but didn't speak up. Here's the thing: I wasn't the only silent one.

"Gay" is such a widely used word. Years ago, it meant happy. Then it was used as a slang term for a homosexual person. Lately, it's more commonly used to mean stupid. So, let's look at it this way: "Happy homosexuals are stupid," or "Stupid homosexuals are happy." In

truth, I don't think I've seen many happy homosexuals, stupid or otherwise, when faced with the segregation we face every day.

So, what does the word "gay" mean to you? Will you speak out when someone calls something they consider stupid "gay?" Even if you won't speak out against others, no matter what your reason, at least now you can think before you call something you consider stupid "gay." Or, at the very least, feel bad, just like that person you didn't realize was listening, does.



Just Because ...
Linoleum Print
Bradley Cook

CRAWLING THEIR WAY TO FAME:

Feature by Christy Johnson

"And if you listen very hard
The tune will come to you at last
When all are one and one is all
To be a rock and not to roll."
~Led Zeppelin - Stairway to Heaven

It was a bright afternoon on a Sunday. I walked up to Zach's house and knocked three times on the door. I was right on time, 1:30 sharp; I didn't want to make Zach late for band practice. His mom answered the door and gave me a big smile and said, "You must be Christy! We were just talking about you." I gave her my greetings and stepped inside. I then proceeded to go down to the basement to meet up with the first band member, Zach Barbara. There he was, sitting in a rocking chair, watching a show on the History Channel about tanks. He was dressed like a typical teenage guy with baggy jeans, a t-shirt, a black coat, and a baseball cap. Just as I sat down, his mom yelled down, "I'm ready to go whenever! Remember, we have to pick up Jonathan!" "OK, be right up!" was Zach's response. After watching a little more about tanks, he turned the TV off and we went upstairs to go. Zach grabbed his guitar and we were out the door.

It was a short ride over to pick up band member number two, Jonathan Freeman. We pulled up and honked in front of his house, and out came Jonathan with his guitar. He was wearing penguin pajama pants, a sweatshirt, and also a baseball cap (though his was tipped a little to the side, indicating that he was "cooler than Zach"). I could tell right away that this band practice was going to be fun and relaxing. When we got to their manager's house, band member number three, drummer Jack Kilby, was already walking in. Jack, dressed in the same fashion with jeans, sweatshirt, and a baseball cap, seemed like a quiet guy for a drummer. Or at least he didn't talk as much as Zach and Jonathan.

The band Chameleon has been together for five years now. The whole band idea was started by their manager, Mr. Perkins, a.k.a. Mr. P. Mr. P is the music teacher at George Mason, Cora Kelley, and Mount Vernon elementary schools. When Zach was in fifth grade, Mr. P had encouraged him to play his guitar for a school talent show. A year later, when Jack Kilby wanted to do the talent

show at George Mason, Mr. P told him about Zach and a couple of his friends who wanted to start a band. Mr. Perkins brought them together, and the rest is history.

When I asked Zach if Chameleon had always been their name he was quick to answer. "Psych! We've had lots of name changes...It went from like Louie's House, to G's Garage, then to Chameleon." How did that name come about? "Well, Mr. P was making fun of us one day and said, 'You guys change names like a chameleon changes colors!', and we were like, That's it! Chameleon!"

In the early days, when the band was first getting started, they had seven people. Then it went up to nine for a little, but eventually settled in on six. The current members include Zach Barbara, lead guitar; Jonathan Freeman, guitar; David Jones (DJ), bass; Chris Carrigan, vocals; Jack Kilby, drums; and Peter (Poe) Smeallie on the keyboard. Zach, Jonathan, DJ, and Chris will graduate in 2006 while Jack and Peter will be in the class of 2007.

Although all the guys are still quite young, they have played in many venues. Some of their gigs include a telethon for the Alexandria Scholarship Fund held at Landmark Mall, the telethon held at T.C. Williams, First Night Alexandria '04, functions at Market Square, two of George Washington Middle School's plays, and multiple parties around the area. One of these included a three-year-old's mixer birthday party. The only thing she wanted for her birthday was for Chameleon to play at her party.

Chameleon isn't all about live performances though. They recorded a cover CD in 2002, which has now adopted the name, "The Bad CD." The guys insist that they are much better than they were two years ago because they have matured musically, and learned some new, awesome songs. These awesome songs are the ones they are recording for their second cover CD, which is yet to be finished. There will be eight songs, including "Leaving" by Starting Line, "Harder to Breathe" by Maroon 5, "Tribute" by Tenacious D, "Stairway To Heaven" by Led



CHAMELEON



A Confused Chameleon
Ink
Cecily Kidd

Zeppelin, and Alien Ant Farm's popular cover of Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal."

Only half of the band was there the day I visited. DJ and Chris were on a skiing trip and Poe was MIA. Even though they were only three strong, it didn't stop Zach, Jonathan, and Jack from working on recording parts of their new CD.

Once everyone was set up and the guitars were tuned, they listened to their recording of "Harder to

Breathe" from the previous week. Zach, with a childish grin, said, "I like it." Jonathan followed with, "Cool."

It was time to move on to the next song on the list, "Tribute" by Tenacious D. After a few minutes of warming up, the guys were ready to play. Just before Mr. P pressed the record button, he said, "Alright. Ready? Fire in the hole." The music started, but it took the guys a couple tries to get it right. They seemed somewhat pleased, knowing that it would be easier when Chris added in the vocals. Next on the target list was "Stairway To Heaven." "Stairway" is a long song, so it took them quite a while to get into it. All of a sudden, the distortion pedals were kicked into gear and the whole house shook. Just as it really got going, the song ended. "I think we did it in one take! We pulled it off!" yelled Mr. P. Listening back to the recording, Zach randomly yelled out, "I'm a god!" during his solo, while Jonathan muttered, "Wake me up when his solo is over..." Mr. P then ensured him that he is the only person he knew who could wear penguin pajama pants and still look cool. Meanwhile, I was thinking of how many takes Led Zeppelin had to do before they got "Stairway" just how they wanted it. Certainly not one!

After reviewing "Stairway" a little more, the guys decided that it was a wrap for the day.

They had successfully recorded the base tracks for three of their songs. The other parts would be recorded another week and mixed by Mr. P. Their goal is to have the CD out by this summer.

Currently, Chameleon is trying to get a label for their new album, a prospect that they are all very excited about. Most importantly, though, they are excited about the band itself. Not many people can accomplish what these six guys have accomplished at such a young age. They have gotten together, worked hard, and made music of their own. It may take a while for the band to catch on with the general public, but fame is just one of their many goals. It's just like Zeppelin said: "If you listen hard, you'll hear the tune." When the six members of Chameleon come together as one, they will...rock.



Jack's Groove
Ink
Carol Cogliano

THE POET AND HIS THOUGHTS

By Mujhid Shukur

Mother help me today I'm unable to fly.
My ambitions to dream have left me for the sky.
Much too real to ignore I'm speaking of the lie.
When that voice of consciousness asks for the reason why?
Why are we the dreamers of dreams?
Take the world for granted forever, it seems.
Why? Must the caterpillar know when to turn butterfly?
Or why doesn't sun fight and moon envy it for a spot on the sky.



Untitled
Oil on canvas
Alana Noritake



Untitled
Sculpture
Krystal Hanner

Why? Because it must do so to exist.
Because if it doesn't it shall be crushed with an iron fist.
Everything must be done in an orderly way.
Every being must know its day.
It's bizarre in a way to have a reasoning mind.
And do those things that lack a reason to find.
Because here the human asks from the date of his birth.
What his purpose would be while he walks on this earth.

THE FORGOTTEN

By Edam N. Colon

We marched on, through the endless jungles,
In the middle of the night with a full moon,
The summer smell was drowned by the stench of death lingering in the air,
The trees so close as if they were closing in on you,
Then a shot, one man down,
Then another, slowly but surely your men fall,
Like a bird out of the sky,
The smell of fear and hatred lingered in the air as well,
They charged right at us like bulls gazing upon red,
They looked no more than mere farmers,
It had begun,
With guns firing we were going down in the blaze of glory,
One by one they fell, and one by one we fell,
Blood spewing from bodies landing on me and my men.
The battle was over, only a handful of my men survived, including myself.
There was quiet lull, but one shot broke the silence,
Pain, only pain is what I felt,
Falling to the ground on my knees I looked around,
The trees were red, the grass was red, anywhere you looked only red,
They had been painted by the blood of men,
My men gazed over me, then I said, "Remember us."
Slowly I closed my eyes, smelling the fear and blood no more,
We may be the fallen, but we're not the forgotten.



Ninja Woods
Liz Blount

GROWING UP

Non-Fiction by Cecilia Lopez

*"If you cry because you can't see the sun,
Maybe your tears don't let you see the stars."*

It is my second school year in Alexandria. I'm on my way home from school, riding the school bus. I'm sitting by the window. Someone I don't know is sitting by my side. The day doesn't feel comfortable although everything was great at school. I feel like I don't have anyone to talk to, and it feels awkward.

I decide to lean on the window and pull myself to the side of the world I'm trying to belong to. I begin staring outside as the bus passes by the trees covered with yellow leaves. They will soon begin to fall down, as fall is already halfway through its season. I compare myself to that tree, letting go of its leaves, as I have let go of many things in my life. The tree lets go of its leaves in order to grow new ones. I have let go of friends, family, and things, to also start a new life. But in contrast from the tree, the things I have let go of don't fly away with the wind; they stay in my roots, in my heart.

I think about me, being a little girl, playing with my dolls and being myself, without caring about what everyone else thinks. My little world looked like it was full of happiness and sunshine. I never had to go through a storm or through gray days. But as I grow up and become more mature, I realize that things in life aren't always as bright as they were when I was little.

If I want to see the rainbow, I have to be ready to get over the storm. I have gone through hard moments. I have gone through moments that have helped me show who I

really am. Many times they have helped me to set goals for my life. I have reached some of those, but I have many others still to reach.



Having my heart belong to two different places is not easy. Sometimes I feel that I don't want to let go of that part of me that I feel is still in Uruguay, nor do I want to stop giving all of my heart to achieve what I want in the United States. Hopefully I will never be in the situation of having to decide on belonging to one place or the other, because both places have given me opportunities, chances to meet people and lessons that have helped me to grow.

Feature by Kristen Brinegar and Susana Marquina

After seniors walk across the graduation stage on June 17, what will they plan to do on June 18, 2004 and every day after that? Will they go to work at a hotel or get ready for college at Hampton University? To find out the answers to these questions, we handed out 100 surveys to the seniors at T.C. Williams High School. Our questions asked of future plans, college choices, and career goals. The students we surveyed have a wide range of ideas about where they are headed in the future. The top five career choices for the future are military service, art, graphic design, medicine, and business. Tristan Tatum is excited about her future job. "I know that I want to be a successful woman and I hope my college and major in accounting will help me find my dream job," she said. The top five choices for college are Northern Virginia Community College, Virginia Tech, James Madison University, George Mason University, and Virginia Commonwealth University.



Cartwheel
Allyson Browning

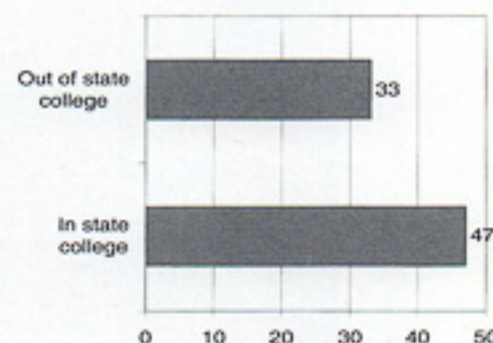
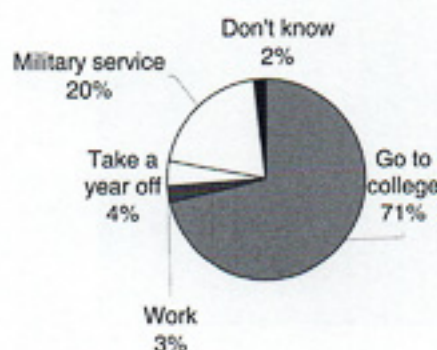
Some students, like Oliver Shoemaker, prefer Northern Virginia Community College over a university school. "I'm not sure what I want to major in, so I want to decide at Northern Virginia Community College and transfer to a university that is exclusive to my major."

A recent article in the *Washington Post* showed us that community colleges are even more popular than we realized. A March 16th article by Amy Argetsinger stated that "community college enrollment in Virginia will increase by 20,000 students between [2004] and the year 2010." Those interviewed in the

article cited the desire for a smoother and less expensive transition to college.

Money can be a big factor in choosing a college to attend. There are many ways to get money for college, including scholarships, grants, and loans. Sara O'Connor said, "The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria is a great way to get money for college; every little bit helps." The Scholarship Fund awarded \$171,000 in 2003 to 169 students. Scholarships beginning at \$500 are awarded for merit scholars and for financial need. Another way to pay for college is going into military service. Many military-bound students said that they can't think of a better way to pay for college than joining the armed services.

These graphs demonstrate what we gathered from our surveys. The circle graph shows what percentage of students are going to college, working, taking a year off, going into the military, and have not decided. The bar graph shows the percentage of students who will attend either in-state colleges or out-of-state colleges. Most students, like Joe Fierstos, are staying in-state. "I can't really afford to go out of state because I have two brothers already in college and my parents are paying for all of us," Fierstos said. Not all students are staying in-state for financial reasons. Others are staying in Virginia because they feel colleges here are some of the best in the United States. "I want to go to the University of Virginia because I think it is one of the premier colleges in the country and that it could lead to a bright and successful future," said Reka Barton.



MY LIFE, UNEDITED

Non-Fiction by Roberto Ramirez

2004. Sometimes I ask myself what am I doing here. It's 2004 already, and I am still a senior. I know you don't see the problem, but soon you will. I was a senior two years ago; I belong to the class of 2002. Now, that's the problem. And that's the problem I'm trying to solve. During the last two years, my life has taken a series of unstoppable turns. True, I've been independent for the last two years. True, I've made a thousand choices, but they were all wrong. As I now try to accomplish something my mother thought I wouldn't be able to, get a high school diploma, I could finally see my life through the rearview mirror.

When I was an eighteen-year-old senior,

earning about three hundred dollars per week, I thought the world was mine. I thought I could get away with murder. I thought I could get away without a diploma, and so I dropped out of high school. The first three months the sun shone every day as I turned into a full-time server. In two months I earned enough money to go back to my country for a month and a half. And so I did. I was living life to the fullest, or so I thought. I saw the Seven Wonders of the World in one month and in one country. After a month and a half of laziness, parties, no work and no school, it was time to come back. I wasn't ready. I loved how easy life was back in my country. I loved how I had to struggle for nothing. But it was time to come back to the land of

I THOUGHT I COULD GET

I THOUGHT I COULD GET



Untitled
Pencil
Emma Shapiro

the free. As I came back, I found my life in a much different stage than before. The characters were the same, but the scenario had changed.

Time had changed, people had changed, but I hadn't; I was still the eighteen-year-old dropout. My lack of responsibility made me lose my job. I had to find another job. To me that was a piece of cake; I had all the requirements needed for any job. I was a resident, I could speak and understand English, I had all the time in the world to work, I had some experience as a server and basic knowledge of computers. So I set up for my new task, to find a job. In two weeks it was done. I was a building engineer earning ten dollars per hour. I had a two-week vacation every year and two weeks of sick leave. What else could I ask for? My job was everything I ever dreamed of. I was learning HVAC skills. It was mechanical, it was mental, it was logical, and it was the perfect job for me. After four months I could run a building by myself. I knew everything that needed to be operating, how to run it and how to fix it. Eight months into the job and I started to dislike it. I wasn't prepared for it. I wasn't responsible enough to handle it.

Soon I was nineteen years old, earning around fourteen hundred dollars a month. I had a '99 Honda Accord, but I was not a man. I was still the eighteen-

year-old dropout. I knew there was a part of my life missing, but I didn't know where to find it. I enrolled in night school trying to find it. I took English 12 and a Government class. I met a couple of friends that introduced me to other friends. Friends, or whom I thought were my friends, among them the fakest one, Jorge, Tony, and somebody who I thought wasn't my friend but in the end was the only one to help me out of my grave, Camba. I think it is not friends that matter. True, they have an effect on you, but it's always up to us to make the decisions that will either set us free or crucify us. I played both in the right order. I think that was the only good thing that happened to me then. Three months into night school and I dropped out. I couldn't handle it. It was too much working about 45 hours per week and going to school 12 hours per week.

walking the hallway, picturing myself two years ago when I was still enrolled, walking towards Mr. Folk's English class or to Coach Mabry's keyboarding class. I stared, looking for my old teachers. Some of them were gone, but I wasn't.

I'm still an eighteen-year old dropout, but now I'm trying to make a difference. I'm trying to learn to be responsible, and most importantly I'm finding that part of me which was missing. High school is like a bridge in everyone's life, you either follow through or jump. I think I'm the only student here who knows more than twenty-eight teachers, the only one who remembers Assitant Principal Mrs. Mann, the only one who was here when seniors would come in a period late. I'm ready to end that pause in my life.

AWAY WITH MURDER.

AWAY WITH MURDER.

I hated my job, I hated my new boss, I hated my life at that moment. In order to afford my life, I took a part-time job in a restaurant, which was not all that, but it helped pay my Wednesday through Sunday nights out. I didn't know all the answers. I realized nobody could get away with murder; I realized the world wasn't mine.

Summertime came, and for the first time I knew what to do. I knew what I wanted. As I struggled between trying to straighten out my life and growing out of myself, I finally made the call. I made an appointment with Mr. Porter. I was ready to beg him to let me into school again. I prepared my speech with a thousand excuses, but no reasons. Then I realized that the best way to accomplish something is to be true to ourselves; I learned that the truth is more valuable than an excuse. I was ready to make a change. I was ready to start all over again. School started and I came back the third day after it started. The first time I walked in the hallways, I felt as if life itself had paused for a moment. I found myself alone,



Self-Portrait
Allyson Browning

MY LIFE, UNEDITED

THE GOVERNATOR REIGNS!

Feature by Bobby Rhoades

THE GOVERNATOR REIGNS!

One would usually think the odds of a former action star, Republican and political outsider being elected to the gubernatorial seat of California would be outlandish at best, impossible at worst. However, this is America we live in, and

deficit of over four *billion* dollars. With all these problems befalling the state while Gray Davis was in Sacramento, it was easy to make him the fall man; and that is exactly what the GOP succeeded in doing.

BEATEN BY THE STAR OF SUCH FILMS AS COMM

BEATEN BY THE STAR OF SUCH FILMS AS COMM

Arnold Schwarzenegger pulled off the impossible. In only four months, his campaign during the recall effort of Gray Davis managed to win him the Governorship of California and drop the jaws of the traditionally Democrat establishment in one of our nation's largest states. Gray Davis is only the second governor *ever* in United States history to be recalled, so it must only add insult to injury to be beaten by the star of such films as *Commando*, *Predator* and the *Terminator* series.

I, for one, asked myself, "How the heck did this happen?" And the answer is pretty easy to come across if we re-examine the situation leading up to Mr. Davis' recall. California had been in one of the worst recessions in decades; businesses around the state were moving elsewhere due to expensive property values, high taxation and strict environmental zoning. As for the citizenry, California had seen the unemployment rate increase by 3% during Gray Davis' tenure, the power grid brown out numerous times over the summer, and a state

The citizens of California voted 55% in favor of recalling the current governor in October 2003. By spending over \$33 million of his own money, and with the backing of key Republicans within the state, Mr. Schwarzenegger managed to win the election with a 34% slice of the vote. However, the state legislature is still controlled by Democrats, and Schwarzenegger is far from being considered a traditional Republican with his pro-choice, environmentalist and educational spending views.

Now that the hoopla surrounding his election has died down, Governor Schwarzenegger has to begin making policy rather than simply speaking it. In his recent state of the state address to the legislature in Sacramento, Schwarzenegger promised to lower the states taxes on business to encourage growth in the sector, and to encourage bipartisan agreements to reduce the state's debt – however, this bipartisanship has yet to produce any financing bills or reductions of taxes on the

commercial sector. In addition, the Governor has come under fire from the gay community for pushing San Francisco to halt its gay marriage licenses, but at the same time receives praise from his more conservative constituency – a dichotomy he will face more and more as he tries to appeal to all citizens and obtain another term as the governor.

The recall in California has had much greater effects than just within that particular state. Now with a Republican governor, the state's electoral college will have members appointed by Mr. Schwarzenegger. Furthermore, with a political-celebrity endorsement from the worldwide-recognized governor, incumbent President Bush has a powerful ally in his upcoming election

conservative paths in order to avoid being labeled too liberal or far-reaching in the constituents' eyes.

Governor Schwarzenegger's election to Sacramento will forever change the political landscape of our nation. Now more than ever, highly placed officials in our government must work to cover their butts on any issue, or face a recall similar to that of Gray Davis. Not only does his election mark the second actor from *Predator* to obtain a gubernatorial seat (Jesse Ventura in Minnesota as the other example) but proves the point that a celebrity can be more than a political activist – one can become an active member of the political world, with real political clout.

ENDO, PREDATOR AND THE TERMINATOR SERIES.

ENDO' PREDATOR AND THE TERMINATOR SERIES?

*He came back with one mission...to eliminate Gray Davis.
He is...*

The Governator

Produced by the G.O.P. Directed by R.N.C.
Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger Gray Davis
President Bush Condoleeza Rice Colin Powell
Music by Mix Masta Dick Cheney
Executive Producer Sacramento

COMING TO A CALIFORNIA NEAR YOU



campaign for 2004. In addition, now all governors around the nation can feel the heat coming on them to avoid a recall of their own; the people realize their ability to directly change their government. Politicians, now more than ever, are following moderate,

The Governator
Digital Media
Bobby Rhoades

One Hell of a Conversation

Fiction by Rachel Hobbie

Sarah: A young, sixteen-year-old girl, forced to grow up too soon. Only her hazel eyes show her true age. She wears a simple white gown from the days when King Arthur reigned. Her voice is low and mature considering her age, a faint accent lilting in her tone of speech. With dyed, dark, red hair, she resembles the form of a fake goddess.

Satan: Encased in the flesh, he resembles a man of style and taste. Short stylish raven-black hair and eyes like ice shards. Dressed in all black, he is the epitome of evil and despair. His voice is a mixture of poisonous characteristics: soft, chilling British accent, power, full of a conceited lion's purr.

Setting: The dream world in Sarah's mind. Shaped into the appearance of Hell, which looks strangely like the theater of the Moulin Rouge. Devoid of all persons except for Satan, who sits, turned away from Sarah, in a red velvet armchair, a glass of blood red wine next to him.

Sarah: (*Graceful and wary, she descends the forty black coal/marble steps to the bottom. She moves like a phantom: silent, secretive; but he hears her and knows she is there.*)

Satan: (*He raises the glass to his right as if toasting*). Abandon all hope, ye who enter here (*sighs deeply*) and still you come. Do you have any hope left after all your numerous visits to my realm?

Sarah: (*not even trying to silence her steps now, caught*). There is always hope.

Satan: (*with a small smile*). I admire your sentiments, my dear, but they are misplaced. They should reside in someone who knows exactly what to do with them.

Sarah: (*biting sarcastically*). Someone like you, I suppose?

Satan: (*just as sarcastic*). Wonderful idea, my dear. I wish I had thought of it. (*He rises from his chair, turning slowly to his visitor, seeming to size her up as if she could present a possible threat*). Why are you here?

Sarah: (*She doesn't answer, in guilty silence.*)

Satan: (*His eyes widen slightly in surprise and amusement. He takes slow, leisurely steps to her still form*). Ah, I see now...(*He smiles slowly*). Sarah isn't the pure, little slip of a girl she's fooled the world into thinking she is...and now she comes to her only help, the one she hates the most.

Sarah: (*angrily*). I wanted to see you, OK?! Is your appetite for vanity appeased now?! I wanted to see you! Is that what you wanted to hear?!

Satan: Almost, Sarah, almost...(*He holds out his hand*). Shall we? We can continue this little discussion in a more comfortable setting.

Sarah: (*She hesitates, eyeing his hands with skepticism*). You expect me to believe you won't try anything? I believe we've already danced this tango once before.

Satan: (*frowning slightly*). If I'm anything, I'm a gentleman, and I believe you'll find it was more of a waltz than a tango.

Sarah: (*snorting*). If you're anything, you're a downright liar.

Satan: That too. Come on now. (*He guides her to a table and draws out her chair for her to sit*). You caught me during my supper, I'm afraid, but you're welcome to join me.

Sarah: It doesn't consist of flesh and blood, does it? (*She wrinkles her nose in disgust, sliding into the seat*).

Satan: (*light and playful*). Funny you should mention that. I was just finishing a delicious Colombian drug lord. (*in a hushed whisper*) I ate his liver with fava beans and a nice Chianti.

Sarah: (*irritated with his proximity*). That line has been done to death.

*Funny you should mention that.
I was just finishing a delicious
Colombian drug lord.*

Satan: And yet I never tire of it. *(He pours another glass of wine).* One of my best pupils, actually.

Sarah: *(shocked).* He was a student of yours?!

Satan: *(smiling).* Taught him everything he knows. *(sits and extends the wine glass to her).*

Sarah: *(shakes head).* No thank you, I don't drink.

Satan: *(pouting in mock sarcasm).* Are you sure I can't tempt you?

Sarah: Not possible.

Satan: *(raising a brow).* Is that a challenge?

Sarah: *(Her eyes widen in understanding as she answers nervously).* No! I...I mean don't take it personally. I just have no fond love for alcohol.

Satan: *(lowering glass, shrugging shoulders nonchalantly).* Pity. Well, you're no glutton, that's for certain but I wonder...perhaps vanity? *(A mirror appears in front of her, showing her image altered into a beautiful face; her's and yet not.)*

Sarah: *(mouth opens in shock at such beauty, seeming in a trance she takes it in her two hands and slams it to the floor).* Only false faces. *(standing, she brings her foot hard on the broken mirror, shattering it even more).*

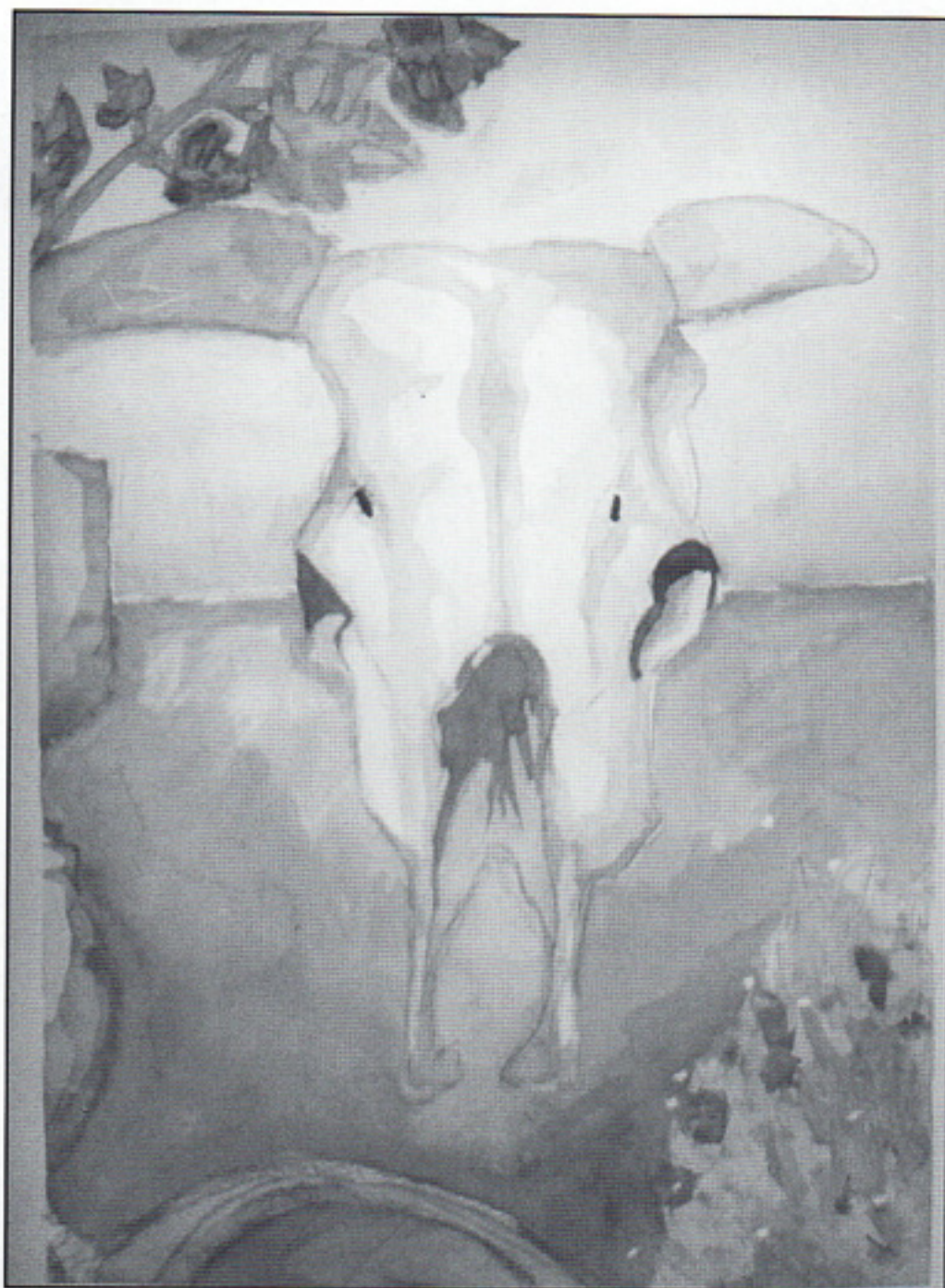
Satan: *(amused).* Seven years bad luck.

Sarah: *(sitting down again).* Somehow I'll live. And please stop teasing me. Sing a new song, why don't you? That bit's gone stale.

Satan: Very well, enough of the foreplay. Let's get down to business.

Sarah: *(in rapid fire).* No, I will not sign your book with blood. No, I will not give you my soul, and no, I will not be your mistress. *(She pauses, seeming just now to hear his previous words).* You do realize just how bad that sounded, right?

Satan: I'm the devil, it goes with the territory. *(He circles a finger around the wine glass, a low,*



Untitled
Acrylic
Riley Walters

pure note vibrating in the air, then stopping suddenly). Not that I'm not ecstatic with your presence, my dear, but to save us both time, why don't you just tell me why you are here, hmnnnn?

Sarah: *(looking around at the scenery of red and black).* I guess you wouldn't believe me if I said I just wanted to talk?

Satan: *(raising a brow).* Talk? And no more than that?

Sarah: *(She nods her head.)*

Satan: You disappoint me...

Sarah: *(cutting him off dryly).* So sorry.

Satan: And still I am intrigued. Talk. My, my, it has been some time indeed since

(continued on next page)

someone merely wanted that. You *are* full of surprises!

Sarah: Learn to expect the unexpected.

Satan: One of the first rules of coming here. *(He nods his head in agreement.)*

Sarah: How so?

Satan: The stories those priests tell. From the pictures they painted in your mind, did you expect Hell to look like an exclusive nightclub? Did you expect me, when you first saw?

Sarah: *(in quiet contemplation)*. No. But as soon as I saw...I knew you could have no other face.

Satan: I have many faces.

Sarah: And many names.

Satan: *(raising his hands in a helpless gesture)*. I am Legion and we are many.

Sarah: You are indeed...so many in fact that I didn't know your proper name. Which were you? Devil, Satan, Lucifer, Memnoch...? But then I thought, 'no'...

Satan: *(slightly hurt, sarcastically so)*. I happen to like the name Memnoch.

Sarah: *(continuing as if not interrupted)*. You needed no name...you were known...still are. You're just...well...you.

Satan: *(looking thoughtful)*. I like your thinking, my dear, but I really would prefer it if I had a name.

Sarah: *(irritated)*. Fine. Your kingdom, *your* rules. What should I call you then?

Satan: *(pensive silence)*. How about...*(slow smile)* Old Friend?

Sarah: *(uneasily)*. Doesn't that seem a little...*(she looks for the right words.)*

Satan: *(cocks his head slightly, inquiringly)*...intimate?

Sarah: *(sits in stunned silence, realizing that that was the exact word she was looking for)*. *(We hear a far-off beeping, growing steadily louder in pitch and volume. Sarah inclines her head toward the sound.)*

Satan: Saved by the bell it seems, Sarah.

Sarah: That's my alarm, isn't it?

Satan: It is indeed.

(They sit in companionable silence, listening to the growing beeps.)

Satan: I'm afraid it is time to go, my dear. *(A gentle, warm woman's voice shudders in, phasing in with Satan's.)*

Both: Time to wake up, Sarah.

Sarah: *(bewildered)*. That's my mother...

Satan: *(chuckling)*. My, you catch on quick, don't you?

(We see the edges of Sarah's vision become blurry, as if trying to hold on to a memory of a dream.)

Sarah: That's what this is, isn't it?

(The picture becomes blurry.)

Satan: What?

Sarah: A dream. This is all a dream.

(All there is a dull black, like the gray of closed eyelids.)

Satan: *(laughing faintly, as though from a great distance)*. You only wish it were that simple, Little One!

Mother: Sarah, time to wake up, honey. We have to be at church in an hour. *(She closes the door with a slam.)*

(Sarah opens her eyes, then closes them tightly again as the sunlight sears her eyes. She simply lies there, getting warmer in the slant of sunlight.)

Sarah's mind voice: *(sarcastically)*. Nice dream.

Little voice in back of head: *(sounding strangely like a chilling British accent, a familiar ring to it)*. Come now, it wasn't too bad, was it?

Sarah: *(with a small smile)*. I guess not. Somewhat enjoyable in fact.

Little voice in back of head: *(we realize it is Satan's voice)*. Flatterer.

Sarah: So you're that nagging little voice in the back of my head.

Satan: You don't seem very surprised.

Sarah: Why should I? It reeks of temptation, that voice does.

Satan: Came with the job description.

Sarah: Why is it I can hear you so clearly?

Satan: You're in the place between dreaming and awake. Right now you could slip back into the dream world with ease just as fast as it would be for you to wake. Care to come back?

Sarah: And finish Fabio's brains? No thanks, I think I'll pass, as appetizing as it sounds.

(sarcastically). Now, leave me alone, I have to go to church.

Satan: Oh, let me come along too! It's been far too long since I stirred up some controversy in the House of God!

Sarah: Excuse me?! What about all those choir boy incidents?! I think you've contributed more than enough chaos to the church.

Satan: *(non-convincingly)*. I need to confess my sins.

Sarah: *(with a bark of laughter)*. What a scene that would be, 'Bless me Father for I am sin.' *(snorting)*. The Father would love that. Twenty Hail Mary's and thirty Our Fathers, no thank you!

Satan: You're no fun.

Sarah: No, I'm awake.

(Sarah opens her eyes and begins to dress for church.)

Satan Voice: *(softly murmuring)*. Drop in anytime, dearie. We always welcome new people and personalities, and blood.

Sarah: *(aloud)*. And I'm sure people are just dying to get in.

Satan: Terrible, dear. Truly bad pun.

Sarah: *(muttering)*. I know, I know.

Satan: Even I could have done better.

Sarah: Well give me since the beginning of time and I might come up with something slightly clever.

Mother: *(knocks on door)*. Ten minutes!

Sarah: Coming! *(to Satan)*. See what you did?! You made me late!

Satan: I can also make you covet your neighbors wife...

Sarah: I don't harbor same-sex tendencies, sorry.

Satan: *(continuing)*. I can make you bow down to other gods...

Sarah: Oh come on. Give me something that will actually tempt me!

Satan: You mean you wouldn't bow down to me?

Sarah: You're not a god, and even if you were I bow down to no one, least of all you.

Satan: *(sarcastically)*. I think I should be



Fire
Watercolor
Dawit Getachew

insulted. Very well, I can lead you astray from green and pure pastures...

Sarah: Thank you for the advice, Mr. Wolf, but this Little Red Riding Hood sticks to the path.

Satan: You are absolutely no fun.

Sarah: On top of that, I'm late.

Satan: Well, you know where to reach me if you ever change your mind: 666 South of Hell, The Pit of Eternal Damnation Avenue.

Sarah: Wow, not gonna have a hard time remembering that address.

Satan: See to it that you don't. Have a pleasant time in church, Sarah, repenting for having one hell of a conversation with the Devil.

Sarah: And you have fun corrupting souls...old friend.

(Sarah exits the room, "Redeemer" playing in her CD player.)

The Ugly Donut

By Alma Jean Mitchell

There once was a lump of dough in a vat
Who dreamed about making the multitudes fat.
He thought he was destined to be one of the dozen
With icing and sprinkles, just like his cousin.
So they rolled him and molded him into
a donut!
He'd have smiled real big, if he could have
shown it.
Then into the grease
they fried him,
and flipped him,
and dunked him in glaze,
but those were the good old days.
OH
NO
Suddenly he heard a horrible sound,
"This here donut is not at all round.
It's more like an oval and mooshed on one side.
We can't get the lumps out, no matter how hard we try.
To the dump you go with the other rejects,
The pastries upon which we found such bad defects."
Looking through the trash out in the back
Was a man with no money, no food, no shack.
He didn't care that the donut looked bad.
To him it was the best meal he'd had.
So treat your donuts like you should.
Even if they're ugly, they still taste good.
Always to your donuts be true.
Remember this poem and don't waste your food.



Nostalgic Fern
Emboss
Cara Reiner

Lament

By Joe Fierstos



The After Picture
Ink
LaShawn Childs

A single cigarette will kill a creature of my size
Perhaps I'll take up smoking just to be done with it all.
My stomach bleeds in obvious defiance to my fame
And no one hears my cries of pain, for everyone's too tall.
Ah, look at me, I'm wretched, O, I'm ashen and I'm poor
I'm growing ever sicker and I'm growing very fat.
You see my soul is shattered when you look into my heart
You see that I am balding when you look beneath my hat.
What once was just a novelty is now my greatest foe
It makes me stay secluded and avoid all interaction
I'm forced to giggle mindlessly despite the awful pain
For if I don't the company will just take legal action.
I think it's time I fly from Earth in search of someplace new
I tried to be an actor but they used me like a chew toy.
I step into the oven and I pull it shut behind me
Adieu, O, cruel, cruel world, time to find another dough boy.

If Gandhi Were Alive Today

By Sarah Schaffer



Gandhi
Pencil
Kendall Rose-Greg

"If Gandhi were alive today," inspires tough thoughts of peace,
Like he would turn the nation 'round and at once war would cease,
I'd really like to think that, but I don't think it'd be true
Because even in India, his plans stopped following through.
And Gandhi was an Indian and Indians loved him
The love that's in America I think is kind of dim
Our apathy is rampant and I wonder if we'd care
If Gandhi nearly starved to death - we might be unaware
It takes more than some fasting to get on the news these days
Especially if the message is about nonviolent ways

Gandhi would be a leader, though - he'd work for people's rights.
He'd head a labor union; he'd fight the corporate fights.
He'd still preach self-sufficiency and make all his own clothes.
He'd work with the impoverished and teach them skills he knows.
The spinning wheel might be replaced with gardens, business guidance,
Making crafts and other means to keep hoods from subsidence.
His messages would get through sometimes; he'd speak around the
nation.
He'd rally against policies and let known his frustration.
He would be criticizing now our big "war against terror".
He'd say "Eliminate the cause rather than fight in error".

He'd be labeled a peacenik liberal terrorist sympathizer
An un-American, unpatriotic, foolish idealizer

And we would think ourselves incapable of peaceful action
As I did now in guessing our response to Gandhi's faction.

It seems, though, my guess can't be right; Gandhi could make a real change.
U.S. issues compared to India's can't be so strange.
Would not Americans choose peace if there was such an option?
Would none find Gandhi's principles worthy of adoption?
Gandhi's name is revered as the essence of nonviolence.
and maybe if he was around he'd end dissenting silence.
I can't imagine such a movement, a true peaceful voice.
I don't doubt that it's possible - in this hope I rejoice.

Gandhi'd have to work hard and be prepared to be disgusted.
He would draw interest to his cause, the peace for which he lusted.
Maybe we'd respect his devotion, rally to his side.
Perhaps we'd let him drift away, wash out in the tide.
It's hard to visualize a day when peace gets recognition
But maybe if Gandhi were here he'd near complete his mission.

We Think Not

Fiction by Genevieve Loutinsky

No. We think not. In fact, we absolutely forbid it." The master tutor rolled his eyes. He could have been doing research in the borderlands. He could have been a famous lecturer or even just a university professor. But no. He had stupidly taken the King's offer of a job tutoring the Princess. He sighed. After all, it was his own fault - he needed the money, and the huge salary the King was offering looked really good. Well, now he knew exactly why the salary was so high and yet there were so few applicants.

"Excuse us. Don't you," here the Princess paused, glaring at her tutor, Nathaniel. (She was only five foot five, as compared to Nathaniel's five foot eleven, so this really was ineffective). "Don't you think that it is a wildly inappropriate task for a princess like ourselves?"

Nathaniel sighed again. The 'royal we' had to be the most annoying figure of speech ever used by a human being.

Princess Ailyssa cleared her throat loudly. "Ahem. We're waiting."

The tutor closed his eyes as he felt the beginnings of a headache. "Your father, the King, feels that you need to learn what life is like outside of the castle." Before he could continue, Ailyssa interrupted.

"Excuse us?"

Nathaniel clenched his jaw, practically grinding his teeth in frustration. Princess or

not, he simply couldn't be the polite tutor anymore.

"Outside. That big room with the blue and white sky, and the green carpet. There's usually a yellow circle on the ceiling that hurts your eyes if you look at it." Ailyssa rolled her eyes dramatically.

"We could have you dismissed for such insubordination."

Nathaniel ignored her and continued talking. "You are going to leave the castle and try to convince the people to protest and eventually rebel against an unfair law that the King is passing for this purpose. The catch is that you will be going along, as a commoner - no titles, no servants, no nothing. After a year, you'll return. If you fail, the law will stay in place and in six months you'll leave again to stir up revolt - but going as yourself, a Princess." While he let that sink in, Nathaniel reflected on what an incredibly stupid idea it was. Of course she would succeed armed with power, money and her title. Ailyssa couldn't succeed as a commoner - maybe someone else could, but her personality was just too obnoxious.

Meanwhile, Ailyssa had stormed off, presumably to complain to the King. It didn't work, and she was out of the castle a week later trying to get her subjects to protest a new tax law - all property was to be taxed 65% of its worth. At first, the only news heard at the castle was that an obnoxious, rather stupid revolutionary had been thrown out of several towns. Then nothing was heard for about a month. Nathaniel privately began to hope that Ailyssa had been hung.

However, Ailyssa had gathered a few followers. Soon there were several revolutionary groups, all marching against the King. After approximately seven months, a majority of the people still paid their tax, and this pleased the King. Nathaniel had actually spent some time thinking about that. Perhaps the King really just wanted to make money for himself at the



Female Statue
Clay
Cara Reiner



Untitled
Pencil
Narwan Aimen

expense of the lives of others. He claimed to be expanding the minds of both his daughter and his subjects but it seemed that they had to die for their liberation. The King had even sent his armies to beat back Ailyssa's groups.

Unfortunately for the King, his scheme for self-advancement didn't work the way he really intended it to. Ten months into Ailyssa's campaign, swarms of peasants descended upon the castle, killing the King and occupying the castle itself. Ailyssa revealed who she really was and helped to set up a new government with one ruler who gave up power every two years. The ruler was checked by a Board of Executives who were elected to office every five years by the people. Of course, it was horribly corrupt in many respects, but as Ailyssa told Nathaniel later, "What government isn't?"

She had said that after Nathaniel had questioned her not only on the government, but also on how she had managed to overthrow her father, when it seemed like no one was with her.

"Oh, that," Ailyssa said, laughing. "We all agreed to pay the taxes. After all, we'd be getting it all back when we won."

Nathaniel blinked at her. "Where's the snobbery? The 'royal we'? The arrogance? The obnoxiousness?" he asked in bewilderment.

"The tax thing wasn't the first unfair thing my father did. I never agreed with his policies - he never cared about the environment or the poorer people in the kingdom. Everything he did either helped only the rich, or was a lie. My acting so badly forced him to do something. By staying at the castle, I could have tried to take his power for myself. So, he threw me out, under a pretense that I actually had suggested indirectly quite a while back. After I left... well, you know what happened.

"You do realize that you could have been killed?"

Ailyssa looked Nathaniel straight in the eye. "For some things, ideals you really believe in, especially when someone's rights as a human are being denied, it's worth dying for." She walked off, down the long hallway of the new home she had created.

The Changing of the Season

By Rachel Brown-Glazner

On silent wings of lace and string
Like Chuang Tzu's butterfly in a dream;
Sweet light from the once dark window breaks
Onto the world,
where ice and frost do reign supreme
On ivory trunks this steely beast dost creep about, searching true
Till the warmth makes it shiver
And turn about in its tracks
Until its time does come again,
But now
Alight, young lad of light!
'pon wintry hills and white-laced earth.
Bring forth your warmth and light.
Transport the world once again to
Vibrant green upon the shores
And blue upon the waves.

Serenity Lake

By Erin Lutz

When the wind blows the trees over the lake of my soul
and carries the stress away,
Soothing sounds of a whispering love poem
Carry me slowly off to sleep
With visions of serenity, my body becomes limp
With every aspect of this moment
Melting the pain away, freezing the sorrow,
Releasing my mind from every thought
Completely mesmerized in this hypnotizing world of peace
When I wake up from this dream
The pain and hell of this overgrown hole of suffering
Rip this beautiful place of serenity from me.
The world I hold so close to my heart is taken
Without a sound, it's stolen
The only thing that keeps me sane has been thrown away.
Until I feel the breeze of that wonderful wind
Blow the trees over the lake of my soul
And save me from this twisted world.



Lake
Watercolor
Alla Zhulina

Joe Writes!

Non-Fiction by Joe Fierstos

Joe was in quite a pickle. Not literally, of course. How can one think of a topic and write an entire story about it in less than an hour? He'd had time to write it...a long time, in fact, but he had procrastinated for as long as was humanly possible. Now, in the class preceding the class in which it was due, Joe had no choice but to write the story quickly.

As the rest of the class worked on defining a poem, Joe jotted without thought:

"Boy, Shelly sure did regret eating that clam."

He smiled. This is literature, he chuckled to himself.

"She was plotzed in a chair, hallucinating that her face was being ripped to shreds by rabid vermin. She tried to scream, but her vocal chords were being occupied by a cow-gnome in a hot dog suit. So every time she attempted to make a sound, her own words were replaced by the deranged moo-ramblings of a hot dog cow-gnome."

Brilliant! Joe wondered if the hot dog cow-gnome would count as one of the three characters allowed according to the rules set up by the Creative Writing teacher. Now all Joe had to do was think of something compelling to write for the middle and end of the story, not to mention the required twist:

"Shelly stumbled out of her chair, mooing and grunting, and headed for the door, but before she could make it, the door turned into a walrus."

Joe wondered where the story was going, but continued writing.

"She decided that she was just hallucinating and that it would all go away after a while, so she sat back down and waited it out. She soon fell asleep."

He looked around. Nobody noticed what he was doing, so he kept jotting.

"She dreamed of clams floating through the ether, pointing their little clam fingers and laughing, as clams often do. A clam leapt out of her mouth, chanting his evil

clam mantra, mocking with the others and crying, 'This is what happens, Shelly! This is what happens when you mess with the wrong clam!' Shelly tried to apologize for eating him and his brethren, but instead emitted another series of insane moo-grunts. At this point she had no idea if she was awake or asleep." Joe was feeling pretty bad for Shelly. He wanted to help her, but how? And how could he think of a twist to put on the end of a story that was already so twisted?

"Shelly opened her eyes. She rubbed the sleepyhood from her tender irises. She looked around. The clams were gone! The walrus had been re-replaced

by the door! There weren't any rabid vermin ripping her flesh! 'Hooray!' she exclaimed. She looked outside. The sky was blue! The sun was shining! The birds were chirping! 'Ah, what a lovely day!' she exclaimed. 'I'm never going to eat clams again!' she exclaimed. 'THE END.'

Wow, what a great story, Joe thought, I'm sure to get an A! I sure am glad that everything is all right, and that I finished this story in time to turn it in. Looks like everything is going my way!

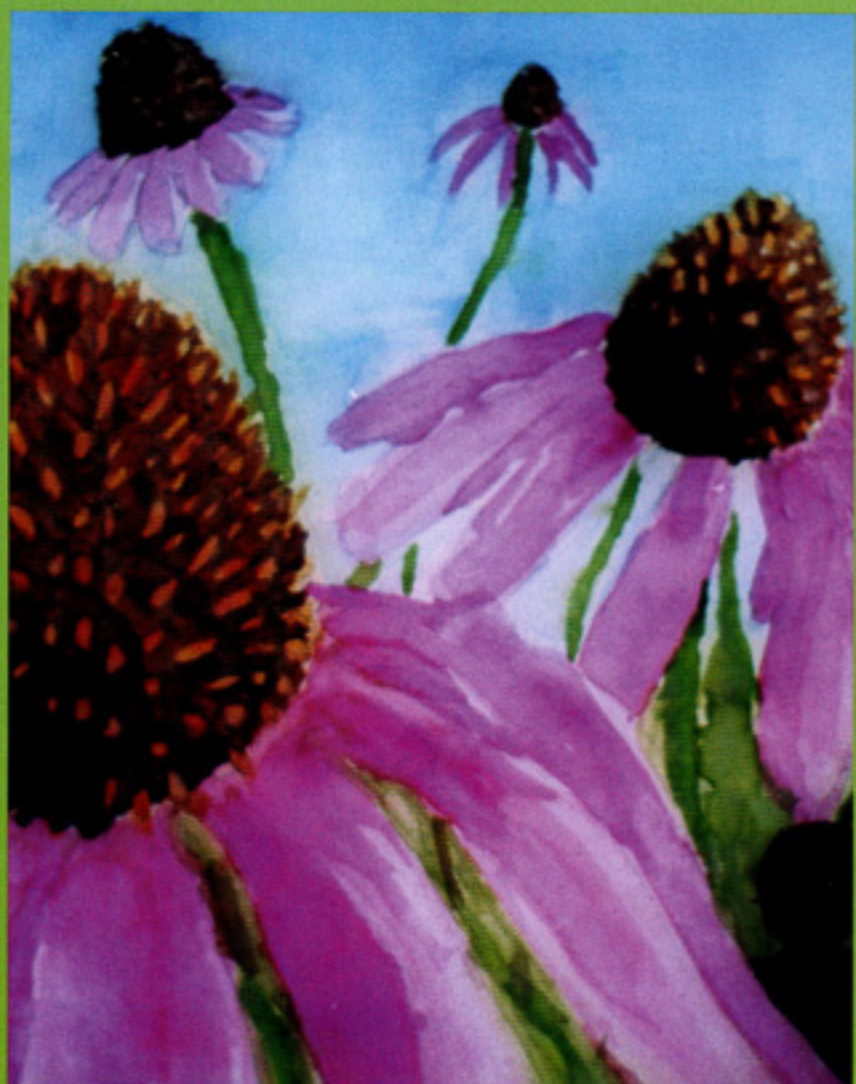
But the truth is...

Joe forgot to put a twist at the end.

THE END



Feeling Blue
Acrylic
Megan Coyle



Silhouette
Watercolor
Darcy Byrnes



Self-Portrait
Mixed Media
Megan Coyle



Wolf on Mountain
Acrylic
Muhjid Shukur



Basket
Watercolor
Alana Noritake



Apples
Watercolor
Cara Reiner

PARANOIA

Fiction by Will Cooper

Jim is nervous. He looks at his tiny living room and stifles the urge to howl like a banshee and shoot to the ceiling. The newspapers are old; some are dated as far back as the year 1968, under headlines about all sorts of trouble in Chicago, and some are from this morning. Some have been highlighted, some underlined in bold red ink, and some have mathematical formulas dotting the margins like so many drops of sweat. In truth, he cannot read most of his own handwriting, although he suspects that it is not his own.

Jim does not like to go out. He goes out as seldom as possible. The only place he visits

"Trapped by the walls, searching frantically for an escape..."

is the grocer at the corner, and all he buys is bread, milk, ham, soap, and toilet paper. The old clerks are accustomed to him; the new clerks are frightened of him. The mailman, who has never actually seen Jim, has no



Child of Mine
Jessica Miller

reason to be frightened. If the mailman were to stop and consider why a man with such a tiny house would subscribe to no less than thirty-seven newspapers and forty-one magazines, he might raise questions, but it is not the mailman's job to ask questions, and so he is content to drop off Jim's thick parcel of mail and walk away, whistling "The Tracks of My Tears."

Jim does not keep all of his mail. The newspapers without any of Jim's News are recycled every Wednesday evening. Many of the magazines are quickly read and then discarded. Jim has no need for the news that is not His. It would not hold up in court.

Jim is thorough, Jim is in control, Jim is well-adjusted.

Jim looks at his living room again. He no longer feels the urge to scream, although the clipped-out articles hanging from the ceiling like cobwebs might make any curious person feel disconcerted, even frightened. The sea of newsprint that covers every wall of his house would jar anybody, but not Jim. Jim is no longer afraid of the news. The news is his ally. Jim does not have any friends.

Jim holds his breath, and then releases it. The momentary twinge of terror in his bowels has passed, and although he has evacuated massively, he takes no notice. Stench is of no concern anymore. What he thought were fangs are actually two articles nearly twenty years old, about the dissolution of the Soviet Union. He dully notices his trousers and removes them. He reexamines the article he had been reading before he heard the growl. He frowns, then mutters to himself and writes a note. There is Jim's News in The Wall Street Journal today, and it now adorns his ceiling, loosely hanging from a strand of tape, Jim's distinctive handwriting flowing like blood across the black ink:

*"ANY CHILD BACKWARD IN STUDY AND
BAD HABITS OF ANY KIND
PERMANENTLY REMOVED, ETC."*

Jim is pleased, if fleetingly. Jim knows what happens to those who displease others. Of course, a little is depending on the imagination of the Audience. Jim is not about to take chances by publishing his startling discovery; he knows that letters can be traced, and he won't let his knowledge be rubbed out.

Jim's knowledge is truth. It is the reality.

Jim hears a growl.

Jim is absolutely terrified.

Jim drops to his knees and crawls towards the door, the tiny peephole his only window



Untitled

Ink

Ahzhela Matsyshen

untouched by the papers, his only lens into the world. He crawls slowly, tracking through his own filth, and he pays not the slightest attention to anything, only the low

Untitled
Watercolor
Gillian Maniscalco

growl and now a harsh laugh!!! that he heard at the door. He knows that no door is perfect, and that even the four locks he has installed may not be enough to silence the noises from the Outside. He knows what will happen if they get in.

Jim is in control. They cannot get in. They will not silence Jim's Voice.

Jim slowly raises himself, the growl now a deep, guttural, industrial roar consecrating the defiled and forgotten laws of his forefathers.

Jim peeps out and recoils in horror and terror, screaming and wailing, thrashing and writhing on the floor with the walls of damning and incontrovertible evidence rushing in around him, taunting him, Jim crying and trying to expunge the image of the leering, grotesque Wolf at the door.

Jim is powerless. Jim is not a slave.

Jim sits up now, sweat and tears flowing out of his skin. He tries to remember the sky, and the horrid darkness he saw on the horizon, the darkness that could not possibly be stopped.

Jim can prove that the darkness is real.
Jim cannot prove that the darkness is real.

Jim sits on the floor and buries his head in his arms. Perhaps he will bathe later. Jim tries to remember the touch of another human being and can only recall the touch of cheap recyclable paper and the occasional rip of a paper cut. Jim does not trust other human beings, only the newspapers. Jim blows his nose on an old article, headlining the passage of the USA Patriot Act, for God-fearing Americans all over the world.

Jim bites his lip.

Jim can keep the Wolf from the door.

Jim steps back into the haunting, ghastly, and endless labyrinth of his mind, free to see Jim's News wherever he wishes. Jim is left to stumble through that forbidding palace within his skull at his leisure, trapped by the walls, searching frantically for an escape, as helpless as a fly caught in the maw of a Venus Flytrap, and just as doomed.

Jim does not worry.

Perhaps he will wake up, and everything will be all right.

HIGH SEAS ADVENTURE

Fiction by Matt Given

The hull of the Achilles cut cleanly through the transparent water. Standing on the bow, Jecht could see 100 feet down to the bottom of the sea. He breathed deeply, inhaled the pungent salt air and looked up to the sky, where white, pillowy clouds cast their shadows across the prow of his ship. Jecht watched the shadows wash backward over the four, huge canvas sails that were straining against their tethers, and he felt a part of his ship as the open ocean swells gently pitched her bulk back and forth.

The Achilles wasn't a huge ship. She was built for speed; eighty-five feet long and thin. She was moved by four, symmetrical canvas triangles; the fourth, and largest, rose 125 feet from the surface of the ocean. The Achilles had only one gun deck with two rows of cannons – port and starboard. She could make 20 knots in a storm wind and 16 knots on a fine day like today.

Under the command of Captain Jecht, The Achilles was crewed by Maxim, Jean, Maddox, Diego, Darius, Rin, Bart, James and others. Jecht had handpicked each crew member because of past associations.

Jecht met Rin and Maxim while smuggling opium into the Caribbean from China. It had been a fairly simple job, but Jecht became enchanted with the Orient Coast. He sailed from China to Australia to Thailand, trading contraband for gold or other soon-to-be-illegal items. For seven years, Jecht controlled his trade kingdom, until one afternoon he was lured into conflict with the British Royal Navy. His ship, Bohemia, was destroyed. His crew of 27 pirates was reduced to three. Only he, Rin and Maxim survived the three-day swim to the Indonesian island of Timor.

After that defeat, they commandeered a rowboat and with what few resources they had salvaged or hidden, they bought this ship, The Achilles, from the Singapore cousins. Jecht, Rin and Maxim sailed The Achilles across the Pacific and 'round the tip of South America. They preyed on small, unprotected merchant ships and slowly they made their

way to the Caribbean, where adventure and money were abundant!

Jecht made his triumphant entry into the Port de Orleans, unnoticed. It had been a long, treacherous trip up the twisting and turning Mississippi River. They spent a day or two in the city of New Orleans, assembling a new crew, and then they shipped out.

Jecht swung in his hammock on the deck. He let the gently rolling ship and the cool sea breeze rock him to and fro. They were on course to Port Au Prince, in the troubled country of Haiti.

While in Haiti, they would watch the Spanish galleons sail toward Cuba, their last stop before heading to Spain to offload the transgressors of the new world.

"Prepare to cast off," Jecht shouted. "Weigh anchor, drop canvas!" And with those commands, The Achilles departed Port Au Prince. They sailed until dawn. "Lower the sails – drop anchor:" "No? – What say?" Jecht informed the crew of a change in plans. The royal ship, Atocha, would be departing for Spain, this morning, with the King's gold!

He moved to a map laid out on a wooden table. There was a dagger stuck in the map, through the Florida Keys. Another map, pinned to the mast opposite Jecht's head, revealed their course.

"We're sailing to the Keys," Jecht spoke lazily. He was in his resting mode, content for the moment. The Achilles powered over the blue waters.



Untitled
Clay

Mujhid Shukur

Time lapsed, and afternoon turned quickly into early evening. Jecht swung his legs over the edge of the hammock and launched himself onto the deck. "There," he said, pointing into the sunset. And whatever or wherever "there" was, was anyone's guess. Jecht lived in his own world, and only when necessary would he reveal what scheme he had been brainstorming.

"Gather 'round, you scalawags," he called. "That last ship in the distance is the Spanish money ship, The Atocha, and around 1:00 a.m., her cargo will become our cargo! Savvy?"

Some questions were raised about the obvious, like the fact that The Atocha had the firepower of a fort. But, all questions of this nature were met with the same response – Jecht pointing to his head – which was met with a collective groan. Jecht threw back his head and laughed, looking at the moon, which was rising in the fading evening sky.

Jecht awoke in a cold sweat. The Tropics will do that – fool the body. One moment, it tells you that you are cold; then as you drift off to sleep, you begin to sweat and your body is confused – trying to keep cool in the sticky humidity.

The Achilles shown white under the full moon; sliding silently through the water on a due-west course, which would soon intercept the Atocha. With the exception of her captain, everyone on the Achilles slept. Pacing the length of the ship, Jecht grabbed a banana from those hanging over the port side. He ate unconsciously, staring out over the silent water, until he spotted what he was looking for. There, 11 o'clock off the starboard bow, 50,000 meters away lay the Atocha. Grabbing a rope from the helm, he adjusted the rudder and the Achilles headed straight for her prey. Jecht went below deck to raise the sleeping crew.

While the pirates were below, arming the cannons, Jecht stood with one foot on the deck and the other on the gunwale of his ship.

His purple sash snapped in the stiff breeze that had come up, and he raised the small telescope to his eye as they rapidly approached the Atocha.

There was no sign of movement on her deck; it was like staring at a ghost ship. Jecht was thinking of ways to defeat his sizable opponent. Then, a thin smile broke his mask; he had decided on a course of action. Again he brought the spyglass to his eye. There were still no signs of movement. He scanned the crow's nest. Apparently, even the sentry had fallen prey to the most deadly assassin's sleep.

Jecht's plan depended on surprise! He wanted to come parallel and then board the Atocha from the side. He wanted to destroy the starboard gun decks. Next, while bombardment was taking place, Diego and Maxim would sneak aboard and sabotage the Atocha's rudder, by disabling the drive chain that connected to the helm.

With ghoulish stealth, the Achilles glided alongside the Atocha, and then, without warning, the first volley of cannon fire penetrated the stern hull of the Atocha. Panic struck just as hard as the cannons. Muzzle flash from the sporadic firing lit the ocean between the opposing ships. Iron and lead splintered the deck and smashed fixtures. Majestic riggings lay destroyed on the heaving surface. Two small cannon balls, joined by a chain, tore through the mast, which screamed and fell, unnoticed in the night's chaos and confusion.

Shock and disbelief overtook normally levelheaded commanders. With no way to retaliate and nowhere to hide, men began jumping overboard into the black waters.

The pirates tossed grappling hooks onto the deck of the Atocha. Scrambling across they found their way to the ship's cargo hold. They quickly loaded chests filled with gold, silver and rare gemstones. Jecht threw back his head and a triumphant laugh echoed across the water, as the burning ship was left to die in the south Atlantic dawn.



Destination Out of Mind

A Train
Daniel Romero

By Herve Villechaize

Destination out of mind
I leapt aboard the empty train
And left my memories behind
To wither in the wind and rain.

When daylight blue and midnight black
Would shine in through the open door
The granite fast beside the track
Became an incandescent shore.

The shadows hid me by the wall
When stopping in each tiny town
And knowing at the whistle call
I'd lay my tired body down.

But once when slowing at an arc
A hand appeared to grip the side
And, moving through the inky dark,
I helped him on to join the ride.

He asked me just where I was at
I said, "I'm here, as you are too."
He said, "I'm not so sure of that."
I saw at once that this was true.

So even through the fog we sped
Still grasping firmly to the rail
And, as if toying with my head,
He said, "These brakes are doomed to fail."

I told him, "No, we'll do all right."
He couldn't help but give a scoff.
For shrieks erupted in the night,
The train lost touch and thundered off.

Our bodies slammed from side to side
The wooden splinters piercing skin
And through it all the stranger cried,
"We're dying from within, within!"

When all was silence, all was still,
I lifted up my bloodied head
And let my eyes adjust until
I saw the stranger lying dead.

So climbing from the splintered wood
And pondering why I'd survived,
I realized that all was good
For I'd arrived, for I'd arrived.

Christmas Fire

By Vicki Fraser



Shattered Dreams
Pencil
April Carden

The glow of the fire lit up the night.
The sparks fly like golden wings.
And beyond the gold there is warmth,
as I sit I can feel it, heating me from within.

I watch as the light reflects off of the ornaments,
only increasing the glory.
I know there are other people in the room,
but I am lost in the flames.
Only when the music starts do I return to this world.

I can tell this year will be different,
the atmosphere has changed of late.
The world has too,
I wonder how this day will change because of the broken glass,
the ornament that fell, shattered.
I have hope that the music will keep playing,
the fire will grow,
and I will lose myself.

All Hallows' Eve

By Danielle Ausems

The veil of darkness creeping up on the world.
Cool, autumn air sweeping over the land.
A bright, full moon illuminating the sky.
Ghosts and ghouls flitting from haunt to haunt.
Cackling witches zooming across the night.
Horrid masses of rotting flesh heaving themselves from the earth.
Red-eyed wolves howling out of their desire for human meat.
The hypnotizing undead searching for unwary mortals to sate their bloodlust.
Lost souls still caught in this life looking for what they lost in times past.
Monstrous shape-shifters feeding off the deepest fear of their prey.
Cloven-hoofed and horned demons causing pain and strife.
Young, native child caught in the ritual to their Master.
Nails ripped out, skin peeled off, eyes gouged out, tongue split
Cries of terror filling the endless black of the night.
Families, come close to the fire, lock your doors, and pray your charms work...
Else you shall fall prey to the shadows of the night.



Skeleton Man
Finger Paint
Darcy Byrnes

The Book

Fiction by Rachel Hobbie

It waited on the shelf patiently, not even daring to hope anymore of being noticed. It had been years since the book had been read. There had been a time in the beginning when it



Self-portrait
Acrylic
Megan Coyle

had been lifted from its resting place, opened, and read. It could still remember the gentle feel of pages turning, the pain of its pages as they were dog-eared to remember favorite quotes, and the strange lives of the characters, flowing through the written words, how they would live each time it was read. But that was a long time ago and over the years the book had begun to forget.

A shadow

desended. Looking up, it saw the face of a girl. Her eyes flittered swiftly over the titles of it's brothers. It sighed; this was nothing new. The girl would pick someone else and it would remain here gathering dust.

She wasn't exactly pretty, but she was different. The book continued to stare at her. Dark, red hair framed her face, in unruly wisps and strands. Hazel eyes, it noticed, one moment they were brown in concentration, then red amber in a sneer, finally settling for a fig-like green in fascination and excitement. It took the book a few precious moments to realize that the final gaze was resting upon it's own spine. It's leafy pages shuddered in shock. How long had it been since a human's eye had glanced in it's direction? Too many, too many to think she might.

She did. Her hand reached out almost greedily, almost as if she didn't get it fast enough, someone else would steal it from her. Was this real? The book thought muzzily. It had had dreams like this before.

The girl's eyes drank in the details on the cover, marveling at the dark and dreary sky, the rickety old house that bordered the horizon, and the procession of many different ghouls and ghosts making for the dark door. Her chewed and bitten nails traced the spindly calligraphy of the title. F...R...O...M...T...H...E...Something stirred in the book. A name. D...U...S...T...After she had finished scrawling out the letters the book once again knew its name: *From the Dust Returned*.

With a smile the girl opened the cover. It creaked like an old door on it's rusted hinges. The squeak of a graveyard gate, the crackle of dead leaves clutched in fisted pale hands.

The book sat ridged in the cradle of her hands. It had been so long. *Can it be?*

Placing the thick pages between her thumb and forefinger she flipped the pages between them. Such pleasure laced through the book, shivering as it raced down it's spine. Such unexpected sensations, how it had missed them, in a moment it's pages would crumble to nothing from the feeling. It suppressed another shiver as the spinning of the pages ceased and her guitar calloused finger ran down the page to land on the words she had been looking for.

The One Who Remembers.

"I am she." The girl murmured, "And so are you."

She spoke? To me? The book asked itself, *Why?*

"I want you to take me to the Homecoming. Do you hear me?"

I hear.

"I want to see them all again. Uncle Eniar. Angelina Margurite. Cecy! Oh and the Beautiful One, a thousand times Great Grandmere!"

And Timothy, The book whispered.

"And Timothy. How could I forget?" She echoed as if really hearing the book talk.

She closed the book, pulling it to her like a lost child holding a beloved toy.

"Are you ready to go now?" She asked it. Yes.

"Let's go then."

The girl checked the book out. Carefully slipping it into her knapsack she gave a small smile and a wave to the librarian.

That was the last time the book ever graced the shelves again. She never took it back.

Dream: Succumb

By Sarah Schaffer

Autumn-sprinkled cobblestones,
Curly wires, eerie tones
Dwell outside the toy store's old entrance

Air is changed inside the place
Evil hums and takes up space
Mal-intentioned energy, I sense

Purple carpet covers all -
The tiered platforms against each wall
And the empty space that lies between

Scattered on the topmost level
Of the platforms, toys disheveled,
Strewn like fallen soldiers so serene

Something, something isn't right
In the dim uncertain light
Limp puppets move, free of any hand

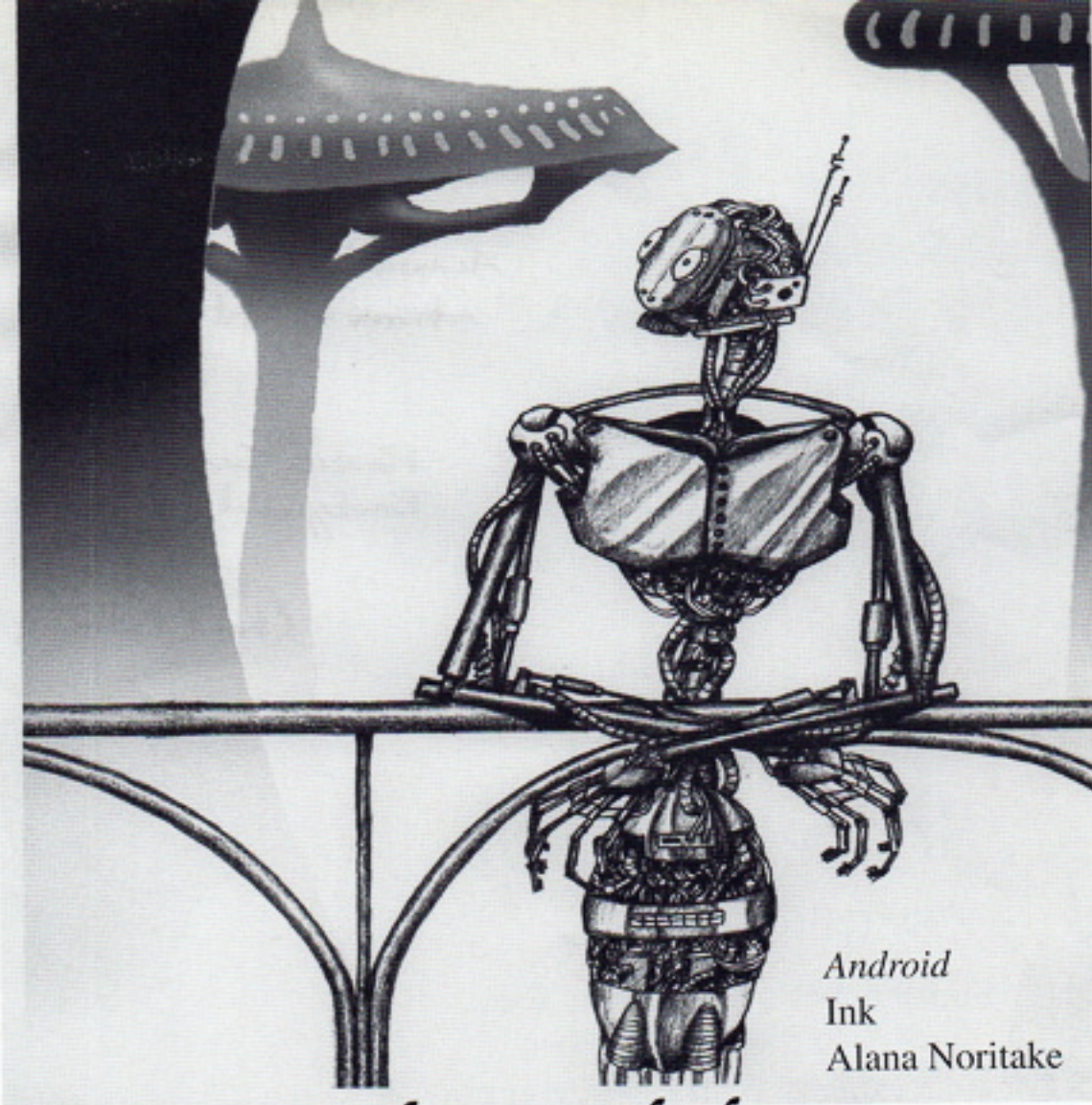
From a broken cuckoo clock
Painted playthings hang and talk
In voices much too strange to understand

And pale grown ups crouching low
With their faces all aglow
Showing children all the magic things

Kids start toward them, hesitate
Known truths begin to lose weight
In the end, children succumb to kings



Loved by a Stranger
Pencil
Sam Phetsaengnam

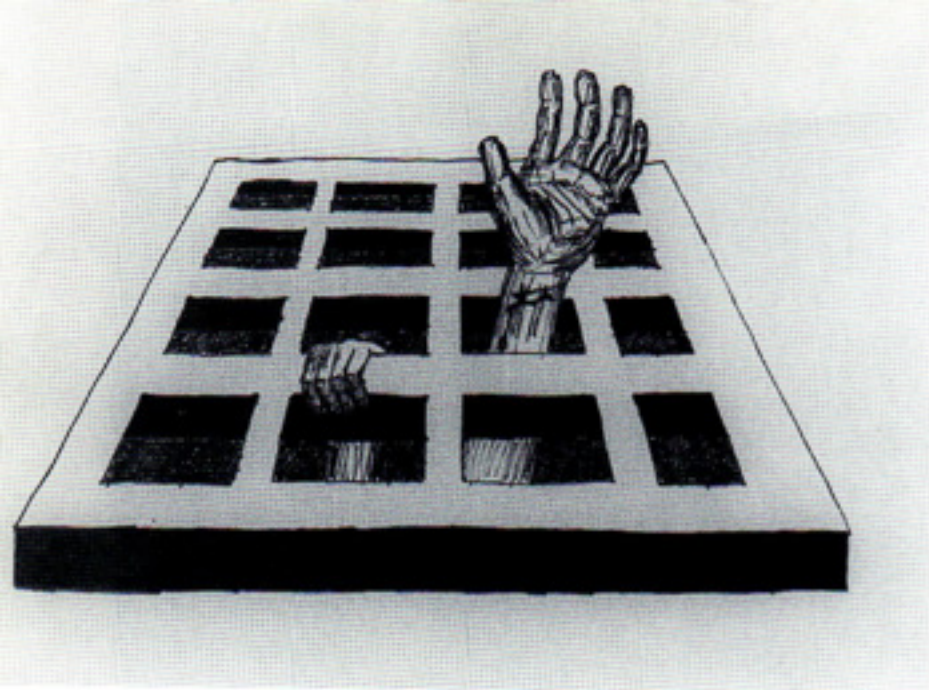


Android
Ink
Alana Noritake

Unforeseen Obsolescence

By Keegan Zacharie

The future is very unclear
when I am awake.
Though it seems almost here
in the dream world so fake.
I drift asleep and I'm there.
Future Germany is always the place.
With buildings that tower into the air
that are like infinite structures extending to space.
These giants amazed me
as I walked through the city.
There was not another human to see
nor was there any evident simplicity.
Along my wondrous travels I met
a metal android that shined like the sun.
Its ravishing figure against the background set,
this future's freelance leader, Unit One.
It led me around this wonderful land
where even simple things seemed nice.
Though when Unit One made his demand,
I saw this future's horror and price.
"There is no room for humans here, I'm afraid.
You are the last casualty in this final war."
True to his word, I felt my life force fade.
This is a dream I'll remember forevermore.



Smitten, Battered, Beaten, Torn

By Ralph de la Rosa

Smitten, battered, beaten, torn
 I prick at thee as if a thorn.
 For each blow of pain I give you now,
 For three full nights you'll wonder how,
 Kings of Darkness, Dukes of Hell,
 I conjure thee now as I ring thy bell.
 Smite thine enemy, bring him hell,
 Taint thine aura around him now.
 Bring him slander, darkness, discord, evil too.
 Lesions in his slain will grow,
 Deeper and deeper thy pain shall go.
 Till you ask for no more.
 Hex of anger, hex of hate,
 Bring him down I will not wait.
 I point thy threefold law against thee
 Against thee it shall be pointed to
 So shall it beg
 At thy end of three nights past,
 Make him well, well at last,
 For now, my anger has past.

Above Left: *Hand thru Grid*
 Ink
 Darcy Bynes

Above Right: *Sarah*
 Ink
 Austin Blakeslee

Hands
 Mixed Media
 Michaela Murphy



In Dreams

By Iris A. Esteves



Dreams are the thoughts
 That we hold in our minds,
 The things that we think about,
 The place where we can

I dream of happiness
 Of a place where I can go
 And take everyone with me
 To somewhere that's not so cold

I've lost my mind
 And wonder why these thoughts
 Rush through my head
 Wanting to keep dreaming
 And not face life instead

All these things are happening
 I'm lost without a trace
 And when I dream of happiness
 I'm thinking of your face.

Unknown

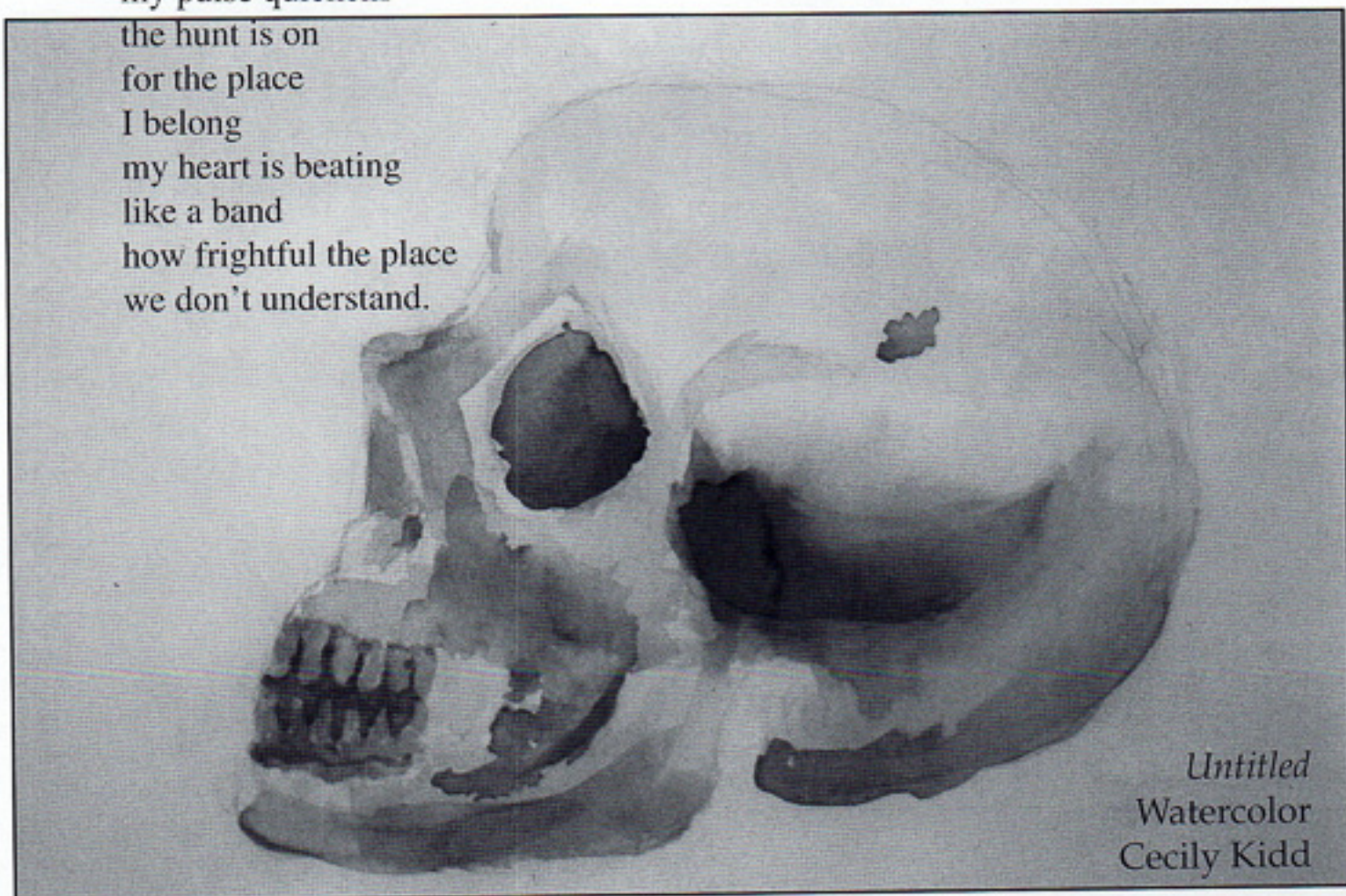
By Alex Totoiu

eyes open
mouth shut
am I breathing?
no I'm not
everything dark
a black abyss
like the night
without moon's kiss
a strange place
fully unknown
standing here
alone
all is dark
and brightly aglow
sounds are muffled
like footsteps on snow
ominous evil's
mist thick presence
in a world
sapped of good's essence
my pulse quickens
the hunt is on
for the place
I belong
my heart is beating
like a band
how frightful the place
we don't understand.

The Point Field

By Dylan Colligan

Rolling hills about me rise
I stand atop a hill they dwarf
The sun serenely sets behind the hills
But below me I see power
Down the hill and past the field
Two mighty yet placid rivers flow
And find their confluence in front
The water hardly is disturbed
When these two awesome engines meet
I stand and think how man could learn from that
Only those long gone about me stand
In the field below, in the deep yellow grass
Large black bovine heads emerge
The heads emit a bovine sound
That calms a farmer's heart
It turns around and walks away
Contented



OCTOBER MUSING

By Rachel Hobbie

Clear cloudless sky
Stretches over frozen ground
These winter nights
leave little room for sleep
As I watch Orion in his
Starry home
I find it nothing more than a
curse
That there is only one month
of this skeleton October moon

DARK

By Alex Totoiu

Dark December, cold and gray
morning on a winter's day.
Fog flows like a river across the hill.
Ocean in the valley fill.
Leaves off a bare tree fall,
making no sound at all.
The silence remains unbroken,
and nothing has awoken.
The sun rises but is hardly seen
through the clouds that lie between.
Tall grasses touched by frost's cold hand,
like lacework delicately planned.
Light's power begins to gain,
but then the dark comes back again.



Sky and Moon
Acrylic
Kerriann Cassidy

APRIL IN LOVE

By Kevin Dua

The eye of heaven glistened sky-blue
that April morning,
A pair of snow-white doves glided across
the atmosphere, symbolizing unity
through love.
Thousands of dawn-tinted, creamed, ruby,
and blanched roses illustrated the
portrait and birth of a masterpiece
in devotion;
Strangers across were welcomed as a part
of a new, vast family, united by
two in heavenly matrimony.
Angelic sounds of music were delivered amongst
the occasion as related parties strolled
down the ivory aisle.
All in presence stood in awe and holy bliss as beauty,
robed in the traditional white, emerged while
embraced in arms with the father;
Childhood memories of an innocent, cherished by a
father, was yield onto her spouse...her future...
Reciting vows, followed by exchanging words of
commitment, were joyfully spoken through
tears of passion.
Mutual remarking of "I do," established the
two as one...through life and death,
Touch of lips signified the ending of a ceremony,
nonetheless, the birth of a new
beginning between the two.
Their yesterday, today, and tomorrow will be
received every second and heartbeat
throughout their wedded bliss...
Forever and after.



Roses
Kendra Keith

MURDER IN THE DARK

By Stacy Schilling

Two armies, friends, greet with smiles and handshakes;
but then, in a moment, the fighting breaks.
Blood is shed on a slanted floor,
bodies slide downward and out the door.

Between the armies I see no difference,
other than the color of our uniforms.
Each side is mixed equally
in gender, race, and creed.
Each side has their share of fear,
and each their share of greed.

My hands begin to tremble.
I've no desire to fight,
so with bullets whizzing past me,
I scramble towards the light.

A SENSE-ATIONAL CAR RIDE

By Lauren Abramson

My eyes widen, as visions of grandiose buildings fill my head
We are lost in a vast sea of cars, midnight blue, black, yellow, and blazing red
The skyscrapers engulf us; seize us, deep in the ravines
Innumerable people flash by us; the faces all a blur, moving too quickly to be seen

The penetrating car exhaust floods my nose, as if I were to choke
Drowning the air with its sharp odor and pungent-smelling smoke
But the burning stench of exhaust quickly disappears
As new and unfamiliar aromas slowly begin to draw near

My tongue quivers as the taste of mint subdues my lips
The fiery tingling sensation conquers my mouth like a thousand battle ships
While driving by I see them, thousands of multi-ethnic eateries
Bringing the flavor back to my taste buds, from past dining memories

In my gripping hand, I feel the hard and glossy handle of the door
And beneath my bare toes is carpet, blanket-like and velvety, as it shrouds the floor
As the chilling but smooth glass window is pressed against my face
The comfortable, pliable, leather seats provide my body with a resting place

The monotonous tone of blaring horns floods my ears with their harsh sound
Foreign and varying languages converge, creating shouts heard from all around
All the senses woven together form that familiar ditty
As we drive through the Big Apple, I think, "I Love New York City."



Old Town
Erika Marquina

An abstract painting of a beach scene. The top half shows dark, layered waves with white foam. The bottom half is a lighter, sandy beach with three dark, vertical palm trees. The title 'THE OCEAN BREATHES' is overlaid in large, bold, black letters.

THE OCEAN BREATHES

By Megan Coyle

Untitled
Acrylic
Adilia Lara

Saltwater stings the tip of my tongue, a taste far from sweet
Crunchy grains of sand encrusts the food I eat
Hot air spurts at me, I can taste it
As the cool water drips onto my lip

Dry, salty wind brushes through my hair
The cool ocean sand squeezes between my toes without a care
The rocky ocean bottom scrapes my skin too much
The sun-baked sand burns at the touch

Picnics scattered about release the aroma of freshly cooked meals
The scent of suntan lotions drifting from bottles with broken seals
My nose tingles from the smell of sea creatures lingering around
A rough, salty scent released from the beach ground

Childish laughter rings like a melody through my ears
Shrieks of excitement rather than those accompanied by tears
Murmuring voices add to the soothing lullaby of the water
Waves crashing upon sand or splashing is relaxing, not a bother

Bodies scattered like driftwood upon the sand
Abandoned towels and people sprawled out darkening with a tan
A golden orb glowing upon all with shimmering heat that rarely leaves
Glistening like a bed of diamonds with shivering waves, the ocean breathes

9:05 AM

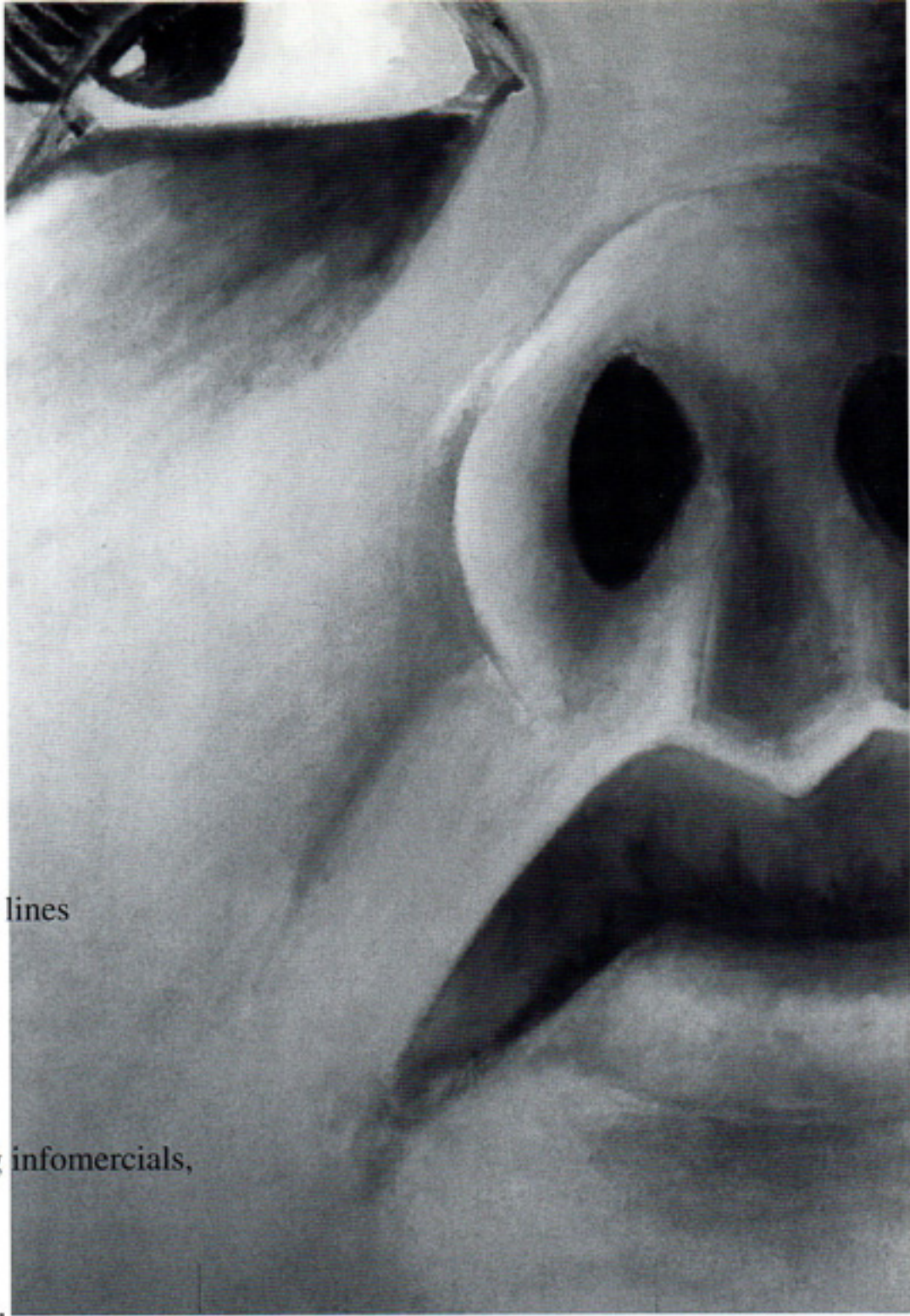
By Kevin Dua

He said he would never leave me alone
in the unknown days of life.
He said he would capture the timeless second of
my triumph twelve-year success from
high school in 2003.
He said he held my delicate and innocent
hand on the first day of school.
He said he would teach me the other values of life,
from driving to being independent.
He said he would scare the monsters from the
dark, closet times of my childhood.
He said he would cherish the struggle, failure, and
victory of my rebellious teen years.
He said he would pretend to be the police, from
interrogating to patting down all the
boys that I had and will ever date.
He said he would timelessly wait in the forever-lasting lines
at the toy store on Christmas Eve just to
see my delighted face on Christmas Day.
He said he would sweat confusion and panic when
purchasing my girlie “supplies” for my
changing body.
He said he would wait on the couch all night, watching infomercials,
as I tried to sneak back into the house and make
a believable excuse to avoid punishment.....
it always failed.
He said the house was mine for a few days as he would
have to leave for a business trip on the
evening of September 10th.
He said that he would reschedule his trip from the evening
of the tenth to the morning of the eleventh just to
hear my piano recital that night.
He said he would return in a few days just in time to be the
“*man of the house*” once again as he kissed me
goodbye.

They said at 9:05 AM, terrorists hijacked United Airlines 175
and crashed it into the World Trade Center in
New York that day.

That is when I knew he lied to me and broke his promise
in returning home and never leaving me alone.

On Tuesday, September 11th, 2001, my dad left me....forever.



Close Up
Oil on canvas
Michaela Murphy

576

By Emma Van de Water

How many times have you been asked:
What do you want to be when you grow up?
What do you want to do after high school? College?
I'd say that I get asked at least three times a month.
Multiply that by twelve times sixteen
and you get 576.

How do you Answer?

Perhaps when you were small you said:

A ballerina!

A firefighter!

Or maybe,
my dad!

Then as you entered the double digits,
life got more complicated.
Now maybe you answer:
An architect!
A lawyer!
A doctor!
I bet a couple of times you've even said:
I don't know or
I don't want to think about it right now.
What is the rush?
Why is there such a big push to grow up?
How come nobody asks:
What do you want to be right now?

What would you say?

I'd say that I would like to be a kid.

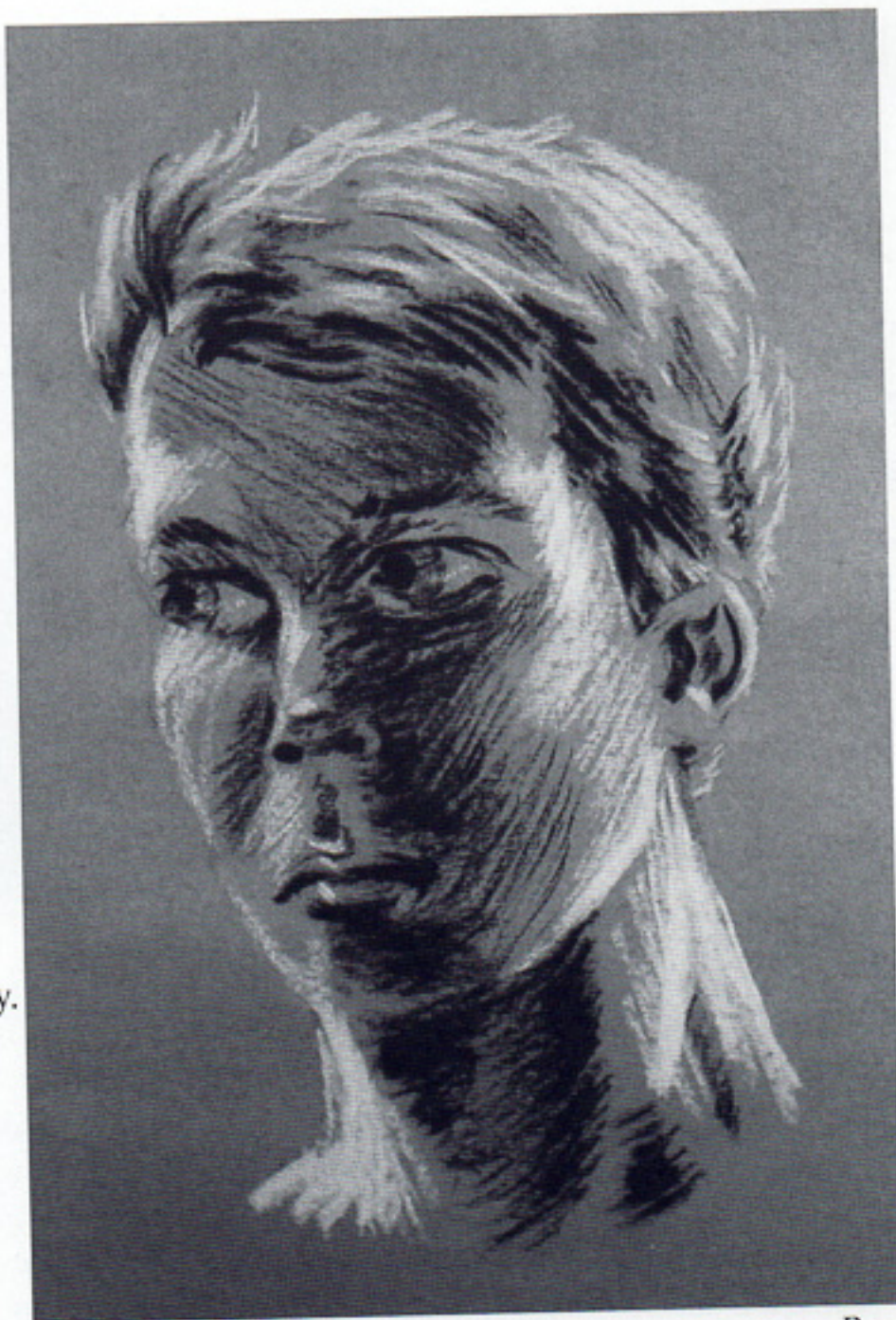
A kid whose biggest worry is my term paper -
not some stupid fight I had with my boyfriend.

A kid who can go out and enjoy life -
without having to work every night just to scrape by.

A kid who doesn't have to make any decisions
about the rest of my life before it happens.

A kid who can laugh and shine in public -
but not be suppressed for being myself.

A kid who can dream a thousand dreams -
and still have every one as an option.



Boy
Charcoal Pencil
Alana Noritake

BROWN EYES

Fiction by Crystal Judkins

Staring out of my window, pain and fear grab me. I see red and yellow flames glowing brightly, laughing at me from that cross, taunting me, whispering insults with each flick of the fire, thoughts of inferiority rush through my mind. Daddy's telling everyone to duck down and don't be scared, but I am scared. I wonder if this is real, or a big, scary dream. I rock back and forth and I cry...I have seen everything through these brown eyes.

"Do Not Enter" written in big, bright, red letters. Momma taught me that.

"HIS VOICE, LIKE THUNDER, SENT CHILLS UP AND DOWN MY SPINE AS HE SPOKE EACH WORD."

"Whites Only," I couldn't go when I saw that one neither. Those nice, clean water fountains. I search around, and then I see it. "Colored Only." I recognize that's the one I'm supposed to use. I ask Momma, "why I got to drink outta this one?" and she replies, "Girl! Just drink!" And I drink. I drink and I quench my thirst, but very little water, dirty water, rises from the nasty, long pole, and so I cry...I have seen everything through these brown eyes.

My skin burned as flesh was being ripped from my body. Felt like nails digging into my back with each spray of those giant water hoses, shooting at me like I was a tenacious flame that needed to be put out. Vicious dogs being released and attacking me. Each bite taking a little more of my dignity. I see my people being beat down with sticks just for being colored.

Why? All I wanted to know was why I was being treated so unfairly. And I cried...I have seen everything through these brown eyes.

Men in white sheets like ghosts, marching with signs. I couldn't read back then but I knew they were bad because they were yelling cuss words and holding colored baby dolls with rope around their necks, just screaming very bad things. This wasn't no dream. This was reality, I



remember it like it was yesterday. Me and Cousin Byron had just come from the county fair; I'll never forget the smell of that cotton candy. But Cousin Byron must've said something and looked at one of them ghosts wrong because they came over to us and grabbed Cousin Byron and they beat him. Right there in front of me. Then one of those ghosts looked at me cold in the eye with his ice blue eyes piercing me and said, "Little colored girl, this here's an example to you that y'all negroes don't own nothing 'round here." Then, just like ghosts,

they disappeared. I'll never forget it; it seems just like yesterday. I sat there and watched Byron's eyes grow wide as his blood slowly bubbled all over his body. Then Cousin Byron died, right there in front of me, in my arms. I was only seven, and I cried...I have seen everything through these brown eyes.

Uncle Martin said we had to be non-violent. Fight back with our words, not our fists. He said we'd soon get equal rights, in all due time. No fighting! We shall overcome someday. That's what he said. And then, I saw it. The

news broadcast flashed across the TV screen. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. JUST ASSASSINATED. Back then, I didn't know what that meant, but when I saw my daddy crying, I knew it was bad. Then they told me. I felt my stomach drop to the floor. April 4, 1968; the worst day of my life. Us negroes had just lost our backbone, our foundation, our hopes, spirits, and dreams. I felt nausea in my stomach. Then they played it, his "I Have a Dream" speech. As he spoke, his eyes, so bold and determined, stared closely at mine from the television. I wasn't actually there, and it was an old recording, but I knew he was talking to me; I felt it. His voice, like thunder, sent chills up and down my spine as he spoke each word. In his own special way he was telling me to be strong. That maybe I could make a difference like him. And I cried...I have seen everything through these brown eyes.

I realize today that Uncle Martin's dream was more than just a dream. It was a plan to make equality a reality. Like my momma used to say, "Life is a journey, not a destination," and Uncle Martin was ensuring that our journey would be a successful one. A lot of things have changed, and some things simply remain the same, but regardless, he started the master plan, and we, not just as black people, but as the

human race, have got to come together without animosity. When that day comes, oh what a day it will be. And can you believe that even after all these years, I sit back in my bed or my brown oak rocking chair and it still makes me cry... because I have seen everything through these brown eyes.



Self-Portrait
Oil on canvas
Dawit Getachew



Sharonda
Chalk
Lavarr Carter

"With the faith we will be able to work together, to struggle together, to stand up together for freedom, knowing that we will be free one day."

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
August 28, 1963

REBELS WITH A CAUSE

Feature by Jessica Miller

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are people who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightening."

-Frederick Douglass

How many things do you do to improve the quality of life around you? Do you do it for yourself or do you take time to work on ways to improve life for everyone? Do you enjoy and practice all of your rights given to you by the U.S government? These are important questions that are asked and answered, acted upon and explained in dedicated clubs at our school, T.C. Williams. Collective Action Uniting Student Energy (CAUSE), Free Thinkers' Society, and Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) are three of the politically active clubs here. Each club has similar yet unique plans to grow, learn, and positively and peacefully change the world and society around them. They are focused on true political activism, which is the searching for, exposure, and defense of the truth.

CAUSE is working with Rock the Vote to get all students legally capable of voting registered and to educate them about the candidates. CAUSE hopes to lead the school to not only voting but taking action to ensure their rights and freedoms are answered and protected. Member Kristin Shank says that she feels "empowered by the things we do in CAUSE, like when we raised money for the victims of the recent wildfires in California...It feels like we're part of something big."

The Free Thinkers' Society holds debates between people of many different opinions during meetings. This allows all types of people to experience true freedom of speech among their peers. This is a more scholarly branch of political activism which expends an amazing amount of energy on just attaining the truth. Without the truth there would be no political activism. This group meets every week to discuss issues relating to social issues, political topics and various policies relating to student

life at T.C. Williams. Co-President Genevieve Loutinsky says that she enjoys the club because "there are so many different opinions and people at the meetings... even if people don't actually participate in the conversations at the meetings, they can still learn a lot from what other people think." Co-President Eryn Kawecky agrees, adding, "It's always a little scary when everyone in our club agrees on an

"IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE PART OF SOMETHING BIG."

issue... I think it's only happened once or twice in the past two years, because everyone has such different backgrounds and ideas."

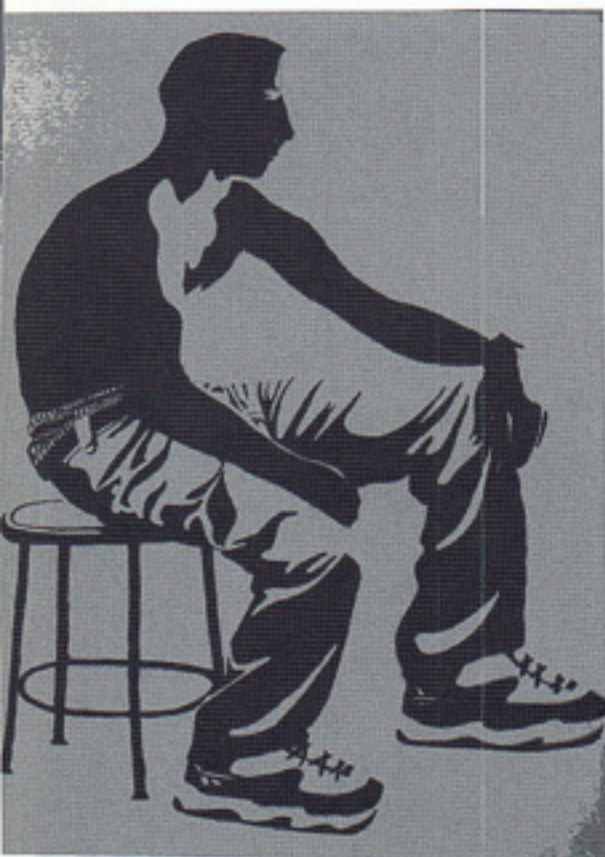
The Gay Straight Alliance, or GSA, is a club that focuses on uniting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and straight students. This club creates a safe place to talk about issues with others who practice understanding and keep an open mind. The group also works to end homophobia. The club members are active in the community and are involved with other LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender) activist groups. Several GSA members work with NOVAM (Northern Virginia AIDS Ministry) and have been trained in peer education. Many participated in the National Day of Silence to protest the silence experienced daily by LGBT people and their allies. GSA president Morgan Frankena organized the printing of T-shirts through the school's print shop. Classes around the school hold discussions about the need for such an action. Frankena and other GSA members also helped to organize a coffeehouse speak-out event with other local GSAs.

These students are the leaders of the future and are making a difference today. These individuals stand together. They represent a force to be reckoned with and are committed to ensuring a better tomorrow.

WHEN STUDENTS CALL "ACTION!"

Feature by Erika Marquina

You might think that bossing someone around is a pretty easy job. When you are a director, it's not. Putting on a great play takes time and hard work. Directors are there from start to finish. Directors are in charge of shaping a play. They are at the auditions trying to pick



Man on Stool
Acrylic
Alana Noritake

out the cast. Directors are at every rehearsals to see that the play is flowing the way he or she sees fit. Directing is no easy job. Then try doing homework on top of that. One thing that makes T.C. unique from other high schools is the students direct the shows. Don't worry, not everything falls on the student, the drama teacher is there to guide the student director. The drama teacher and student director work together as equal partners.

Sometimes the teacher and director pick the play. They design the set together. Both the teacher and director give guidance to the actors.

Former drama teacher

One student who understands the work that goes into directing a play is senior Will Cooper. Will has become a well-known director at T. C. Williams and is no stranger to theatre. He has been acting for ten years. "I have picked up wisdom from directors," Will stated. And with that wisdom Will is teaching his skills to the actors he directs. Will started directing at T.C. in his junior year when he directed *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls*. In his senior year, Will directed *12 Angry Jurors* and *Cut*. "Watching three months of work pay off," is the most rewarding part of directing to Will. His greatest challenge is getting the actors to listen and trust him.

The year's student director for the 2004 spring musical, *Anything Goes*, is Chris Williams. This is Chris's first time directing at T.C., but has been involved with the drama department for three years. Chris feels confident that the show will be a success, "we have amazing talent." Chris professed that he hasn't given up any sports or jobs to direct, although he said he had to give up some homework time.

The actors, for the most part, don't mind being bossed around by someone their own age. Ahmed Sesay, a junior who appeared in *The Wiz* in 2003 and will be in the 2004 spring musical *Anything Goes*, says that student directing in high school is a good way to get a sense of the work professional directors do. "Students have a chance to be in a high position," said Chelsea Wafer, a senior who has been in the productions of *Rumors* in 2002, *Footloose* and *12 Angry Jurors*

**STUDENT DIRECTORS ARE THERE FROM START TO FINISH.
STUDENT DIRECTORS ARE IN CHARGE OF SHAPING A PLAY.**

Karen Master began using student directors when she came to T. C. The new drama teacher, Hope Bachman, has continued the tradition. "I don't want it to disappear; it is a really valuable experience," Bachman said. Bachman isn't new to the idea; she is a former T. C. Williams student director. Bachman co-directed *Fame* in the fall of 1996 as a junior and *Brave New World* her senior year. Student directing is "stressful, but really fun," expressed Bachman.

in 2003. Both Ahmed and Chelsea have worked with student directors and have no problem with it.

In addition to the student directing program, T.C. Williams has a strong history of quality performances that have garnered Cappie award nominations, and accomplished student theater reviewers who have been published in the *Washington Post* for the last several years.

ADDICTION

By Steve Escobar

Troubled kid with troubled dreams

Lost in life, wandering endlessly in the shadows of his mind.

Looking out the dirty window, sees his own reality.

Losing himself in his world of euphoric insanity. Escaping the bitter harshness of this hard existence.

Yet, he finds peace in his own mental fantasy.

Sadly, thrown back into this so-called "life" he searches for another way into the room of ecstasy.

He finds his drug of emotions and feelings he's never found,
Beyond anything he's ever felt chosen his "weapon of choice"
against the bitter cold of this world, and finds the happiness
of his demented dreams.

Warm and soft to the touch, Golden-haired beauty.

Reaching the new limits beyond his static imagination

Every time he looks into those deep-blue eyes, he sees the hope and light
to all his questions, feeling the loving warmth of the concoctions of emotions, surging
into his veins. Completely oblivious to his surroundings, because right now nothing else
matters, wanting and craving for the warmth and happiness that only she can give.



Little Brother
Jessica Miller



Untitled
Mixed Media
Bradley Cook

A WEAPON OF MANY FACES

By Kat Milyko

A weapon need not always be made with steel,
nor plastic, nor metal, nor gold.
I've seen weapons made of words,
such leave wounds long to heal.
I've seen damage left by skin,
not so hurt without as within.
I've seen damage done by drugs, or ropes, or sleep.
A weapon can be anything you see.
But never is a weapon as dangerous
as that of a broken heart.
Lock it up quickly now,
Before it strikes me down.

WHERE IS THE LOVE?

Feature by Crystal Thompson and Dadrian Haley

Have you noticed that during lunchtime at school the same people hang out with each other every day?

When the lunch bell rings at T.C., students go to their "meeting spots," where they gather with their friends and go to lunch. It's rare to see a person with a different group every day. To learn more about this phenomenon, we went around T.C. and asked students of all grades if they met with the same group of people every day. The



*Ice Cream
Clay
Brittney Knox*

majority of the student body said that they did. When asked why, a common response was, "I don't get along with everyone."

One of the main questions we asked was, "Do you hang with the same crowd during lunch every day, and why?" The majority of the students responded by saying that they didn't feel comfortable around unfamiliar people and would have nothing to

talk about with them. However, some people intentionally try to vary their groups. For example, senior Sequoia Ireland said, "I don't hang with the same people every day. I don't want to limit myself to one crowd. I like hanging with different people because I have several interests and share them with many people." On another note, junior Jamel Porter said that "hanging with the same crowd is something you don't think about doing, you just do it."

"Hanging out with the same people every day makes you miss out on a new friend," added sophomore Elizabeth Collier.

Another question asked was, "Would you consider hanging with a new crowd that's different from the one you're used to, and that you normally wouldn't be drawn to?" Most of those questioned said no. Sophomore Devin Bell said, "If we normally don't hang together what would make things change? Besides, what would we do besides look at each other and wonder what we could do that we would both like?" Some didn't mind what others thought. "You never know; we could have something in common," said senior Kabria Webb. Junior Taisha Cobbs agreed. "We can hang out. I'll teach them some new things and they could teach me some too."

An attempt was made earlier this year to bring the school together to unite as one. On November 18th, T.C. Williams joined in on the second annual "Mix It Up Day." The event, sponsored by the Southern Poverty Law Center, encourages students to cross the boundaries of diversity in their schools. On this day, six thousand schools whose grades ranged from kindergarten to twelfth participated in bringing about change. Kelvin Datcher, Director of Teaching Tolerance, one of the two groups involved in the national project, said, "'Mix It Up Day' invites students and teachers to take a fresh

look at the social boundaries that exist in their schools and provides an opportunity to do something about them."

Titan Pal coordinator and guidance counselor Maria Muhtadi initially brought the program to our school. "Mix It Up" was used at T.C. to promote integration between students of different cultures and to bridge the gap of social separation in

our school. Sadly, the event was unsuccessful due to the lack of student participation. T.C. students had many reasons as to why the event did not work out as planned. Senior Sade` Byrd said, "People might have been worried that others would see them hanging out with someone unlike their usual crowd and get laughed at by their normal clique." On the other hand, senior Brian Leggett said that more advertising might have been necessary to get better participation.

Not all students think that the school is separated by race and culture. A recent article in the school newspaper, *Theogony*, highlighted the prevalence of interracial dating relationships at T.C. Williams. Junior Jeffery Kyle said, "Interracial dating is fine by me, and I wouldn't mind dating someone out of my race." In addition to racial and ethnic differences among the diverse student population of T.C. Williams High School, there is great religious diversity. Sophomore Julio G. Flores is Christian. His native country is Bolivia, and he is dating a Muslim girl from another country. He said that their relationship has been great and has taught him many things, but that it is "hard to hide from" people who do not approve of their relationship.

In 2000 and 2001, Marketing teacher and T.C. Williams alumnus Michael Diggins organized an attempt to get students to break down stereotypes and relate to people outside of their ethnic group. This effort was called "Building Bridges."

"This activity was to bring the kids from all walks of life to join together and get to know each other as more than 'that kid who goes to my school,'" said Diggins.

We can only hope that someday the racial barriers of our school will completely dissolve, and that students of all ethnicities will unite as one student body.



Spirals
Acrylic
Krystal Hanner

ALL OF LIFE'S A STAGE

Fiction by Lauren Shaw

Keala stared at the crystal hanging from her open window. Memory flooded her brain; scenes from her childhood...playing dress-up as a princess, her first ballet recital, Christmas caroling with her church choir...just random memories. Her multi-colored kitten jumped up onto her lap and purred contentedly.

Cats are the coolest animals, Keala thought. They can't hide their feelings, and they always make you feel better. She began to stroke the sleeping kitten's soft fur absentmindedly, still lost in the past. Like a play, curtains of black rose and fell on images (some vivid and real, others blurred and cloudy) showing a tall, dark man dancing with a seven-year-old girl, who stood on his feet. Now playing, the solo performance of the same girl at age seventeen, a standing ovation from the audience, her eyes alight with the thrill of the moment.

Keala lived for those brief moments spent on a stage. Acting like other people from other times...Helena, Christine, Ariel. Singing and dancing just to sing and dance. There was no other reality for her during a performance; everything else was forgotten.

A Renaissance costume was hanging on her open closet door...bright red robes and a wreath of plastic red berries for her hair. A bag filled with stage make-up lay beneath it on the floor; some of its contents were spilling out, but Keala wasn't about to make the effort to pick them up. Posters littered the off-white walls: movies, plays, musicals, theaters, and the celebrities shown on them could be seen from every inch of wall space. Clearly this girl was obsessed.

Crossing the length of the room in just a few strides, Keala put a CD into her stereo. The sounds of *The Phantom of the Opera* filled the tiny bedroom. Humming almost inaudibly along with the soundtrack, Keala barely knew what she was doing.

A knock came from her door, which was also covered in posters. Her mother entered and dropped off a load of clean laundry. Keala knew that she had used the clothes as an excuse to come into her room. Now, her mother would try to talk, to comfort (or try to comfort) her. It wouldn't work; it never did.

Keala's mom talked, but Keala never heard a thing. Eventually she was alone with



Fairy Princess
Colleen Cassidy

just her thoughts and her cat again. Free to solve all the puzzles that now faced her, to try to figure out what to do with this mess.

Her friends didn't know. If they did, all they would do was worry, then she'd just feel worse. It was better that they'd never find out, at least not for right now. Things would be simpler that way.

She once again turned her thoughts to memories. This time, though, they were bad. The fall play in which she fainted and fell right off the stage. She woke up three hours later in the hospital. That was when it all happened, just a few months ago. She hadn't been in any theater productions since...her doctor had advised her not to strain her voice anymore. No more singing or musicals. She gave up dancing even, because she knew she'd be getting extremely tired very soon. Keala quit all the choirs she was involved in, and she was now faced with a lot of free time. Free time was something new and strange to her; before, her schedule was almost impossibly full, and she hated it.

This was all too hard. It was just too much to handle. Keala sank into her plump, down-filled pillows as tears made their way down her cheeks. Why was this happening to her? She had already planned out the rest of her life. Paris, New York, London. Broadway, the stage, her name in lights, all dreams that wouldn't ever come true for her. The tears rushed down even harder.

She would be flown to Minneapolis for treatment in two days' time. Keala bit her lip in nervous anticipation. She fell asleep crying.

Opening her heavy eyelids took some effort, but Keala finally managed it. She first began to wonder where she was, but then remembered why she was in a hospital bed. On a small, round table next to her bed, there was a pretty arrangement of tropical flowers and a card. The card and flowers were from her high school drama department. There were many signatures and a few longer notes of sympathy and encouragement. A lump formed in the back of her throat, and tears welled up in her eyes. It brought the pain back again, and suddenly, a bit light-headed, Keala lay back into her pillows.

Being in this place scared her...its smells and all the busy nurses and doctors rushing around, nothing familiar at all. But she was even more terrified at the thought of dying before she had done anything with her life. And now she would go back home and "try to live a normal life, as best as possible." Yeah, right. Singing, dancing, they were her entire life. She was happy when she was acting. And now, she couldn't do any of the things she loved; her cancer prevented her. Dancing and acting would tire her out even faster than before, and relapses would be a danger. And since the cancer was in her throat, she had been advised not to sing anymore. This was ruining her life. Keala became angry at the thought of having to watch plays from the audience, not starring in them.

"I won't be outdone. This is not the last you'll see of Keala Kemley! The show must go on, and it will," she shouted to no one in particular.

When she finally returned to school, she told her story to her friends. The drama department already knew...she *had* fainted in the middle of one of their plays, and some of them were there in the hospital with her that night. But she smiled her best actress' smile, and acted her cancer away. It didn't exist to her anymore. She still took her medicine, and there were no more performances, but other than that she made believe it was gone without a trace. It was her greatest role yet. "All of life's a stage," she told herself.

VACO REMEMBERS ITS ROOTS

Feature by Casey McClelland

GOING TO T.C., IT WAS SUCH A MIXING POT OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE
COMING TO T.C. IT WAS SUCH A MIXING POT OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE

T.C. Williams has a rich tradition of producing quality bands. Just look at T.C. bands like Jack's House and The Bush League Conspiracy. One band that has taken their dream all the way to success is Virginia Coalition, or VACO. VACO formed at T.C. in the mid-nineties.

Since they graduated from T.C. VACO has become a successful group, putting together several albums and recently getting a record deal with Blue Hammock Records. Their first album, *Colors of the Sound*, was released in 1998. Their sophomore effort was *Townburg*, which they released in April of 2000. Their most recent album, *Rock & Roll Party*, was released a little over a year ago in 2003. VACO regularly sell out every show they have in the D.C. area, especially at the 9:30 Club.

VACO's lineup is made up of four individuals. Jarret Nicolay mainly plays bass and banjo for the band. Along with Jarret there's Andrew Wonder, who does vocals, guitar, and percussion. Paul Ottinger is on keyboards, percussion, and bass guitar. John Patrick plays the drums and contributes vocals.

VACO's style can only be described as unique. When asked what their "sound" is, Jarret Nicolay, bassist for the band, was at a loss. "We have a lot of different styles, but we generally try to keep it eclectic. We just play

rock and roll." I had the chance to interview Jarret for *Labyrinth*.

Labyrinth: Have you been able to meet any of your heroes as you've become more successful?

Jarret: Absolutely. When we were at T.C. we listened to lots of early REM. Mitch Easter was really important in producing their albums. Well, when we recorded our second album, Mitch Easter helped us produce it. That was really cool. We've also played with bands like the Counting Crows, the Roots, and the Dave Matthews band. A few weeks ago, when we were in Nashville, we were invited backstage to one of Kid Rock's shows. While he might not be a hero of mine, it was still cool to see all the effort that goes into a concert like that, like the pyro and everything.

Labyrinth: How do the band's songs get written?

Jarret: Well, it's a democracy, in that we all work together. Andy usually writes the lyrics, and everyone else writes music. Then it basically gets passed around and everyone puts in their ideas for changing the lyrics or music. Finally it gets four stamps of approval.

Labyrinth: When you were growing up, were you supported as a musician?

Jarret: Absolutely. No doubt, my parents were really great about letting us practice in the basement and supporting us. Even when we were loud and what we were playing wasn't

that great, they still supported us.

Labyrinth: How did going to T.C. Williams influence your music?

Jarret: Going to T.C. Williams, it was such a mixing pot of different people. It was cool being around so many different styles.

Labyrinth: Finally, would you ever come back and play a show at T.C.?

Jarret: Absolutely. We'd definitely consider playing some time when we're not touring and are all in town. Playing a gig at T.C. would be like homecoming times a thousand for us. We used to be involved in the Titan Expo, and even though we're really busy during that time of year if we

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E' IL WAS COOL BEING AROUND SO MANY DIFFERENT STYLES?

Labyrinth: What would you recommend a young band in the D.C. area do to get discovered?

Jarret: Just play out a lot. Try to play gigs as soon as possible. Don't expect to get paid at first, just be willing to play for the experience. Most of all, have fun.

were in town we'd definitely stop by to at least heckle people.

Labyrinth: To what would you attribute all of VACO's success?

Jarret: I don't really know. There's a lot of luck and hard work involved. Basically, you just have to stick around and not suck, and just keep trying.



Rock
Acrylic
Karla Parada



Guitar
Oil pastel
Marina Munoz

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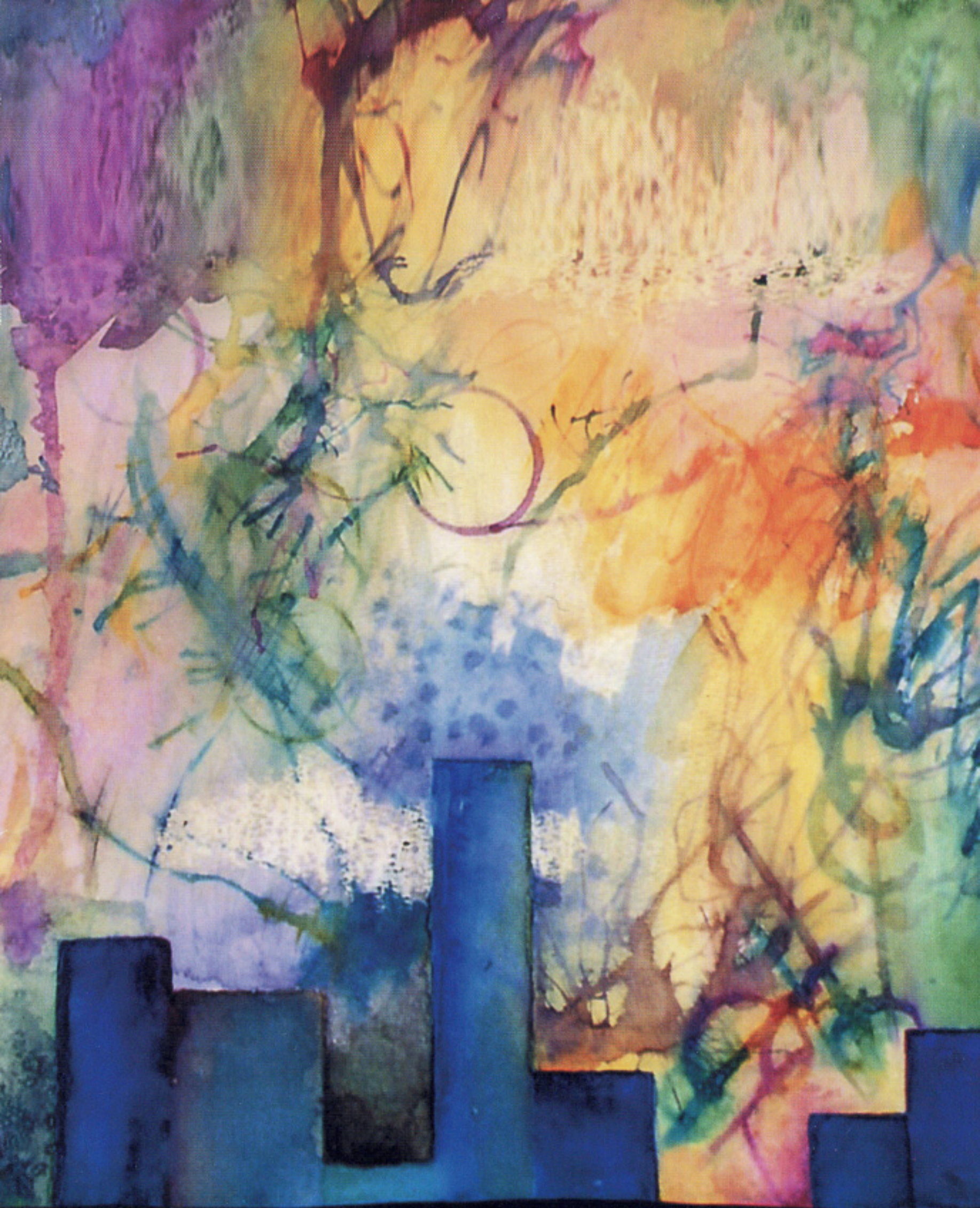
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