



# Baily's Beads

University of Pittsburgh at Bradford  
300 Campus Drive, Bradford, PA 16701



**Baily's Beads** are the highest points of light that appear around the edge of the moon at the solar eclipse. The beads are created by sunlight passing through the moon's valleys. The last bead is the brightest, resembling a diamond on a brilliant ring. This phenomenon lasts but a few spectacular moments.

Cover: **Alleviating Aviation** -*digital artwork*, Ezozahon Ismailova

This page: **The Color Orange** -*digital photography*, Kylie Schuman

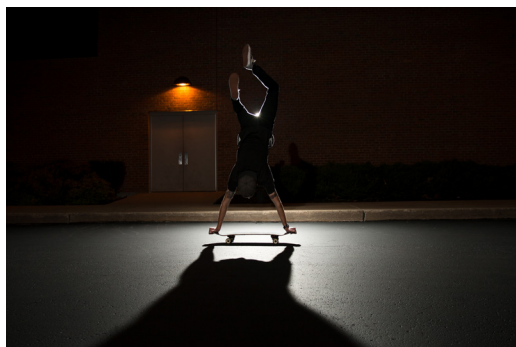
# Submission Guidelines

*Baily's Beads* is always looking for original pieces that reflect our community, culture, or current events in a distinctive and inventive way. We accept poetry, fiction, performance poetry, music compositions, and creative nonfiction (memoirs, essays, commentaries, interviews, and travel and nature writing). We also accept art: photography, paintings, drawings, mixed media, and sculpture.

If you would like to submit your work for the next issue, please send it to [bailys@pitt.edu](mailto:bailys@pitt.edu) with a separate cover sheet containing your name, contact information (address, e-mail, and phone), title of your piece, and genre or medium.

So that the staff may judge anonymously and fairly, we ask that your name does not appear on the work itself. We ask that you double-space prose and single-space poetry. Authors may submit up to twenty pages. Images should have a resolution of 300 dpi and be saved as a jpeg file to ensure a high quality print. We ask that each author/artist submit no more than ten pieces each year.

Entries can be sent electronically to [bailys@pitt.edu](mailto:bailys@pitt.edu). We accept submissions year-round. By submitting, you agree to allow the staff to use your work in *Baily's Beads* and its promotions.



**Untitled** -digital photography, Matt Brahaney

# Awards

## American Scholastic Press Association

2004 First Place with special merit  
2005 First Place with special merit  
2006 First Place  
2007 First Place  
2008 First Place with special merit  
2010 First Place with special merit  
2010 Best College Magazine Award  
2011 First Place with special merit  
2011 Best College Magazine Award  
2012 First Place with special merit  
2012 Best College Magazine Award  
2013 First Place with special merit  
2014 First Place and Outstanding Theme  
2015 First Place  
2016 Best College Magazine Award  
2017 First Place with special merit  
2017 Best College Magazine Award

## Columbia Scholastic Press Association

2004 Silver Medalist  
2005 Gold Medalist  
2005 Silver Crown Award  
2006 Silver Medalist  
2007 Crown Award  
2008 Gold Medalist  
2011 Gold Medalist  
2013 Gold Medalist  
2014 Silver Medalist

## Associated Collegiate Press

2001 First Class with 3 marks of distinction  
2003 First Class with 2 marks of distinction  
2004 First Class with 3 marks of distinction  
2010 First Class with 2 marks of distinction

# Editorial Staff

## Editor-in-Chief

Jayden Pire

## Art Editors

Sadie D'Angelo

Kylie Schuman

## Design

Brianna Henry

## Assistant Editors

Rachel Close

Shahada Thomas

## Staff

Etreece Adams

Tabitha Gee-Battle

Kierstynn Indermaur

Hannah McAvoy

Stephanie McFall

Alisha Navarette

Aubrie Shrubb

Tricia Wright

## Advisors

Dr. Nancy McCabe

Prof. Anna Lemnitzer

## Music Coordinator

Dr. Josh Groffman

# Editors' Note

*Baily's Beads* has a proud history of success and has featured many unique and thought-provoking pieces throughout our years of publications. Over the past twenty-four years it has matured and yielded many awards.

In the past, we've tried different approaches to art, design, and color, experimenting with the possibilities afforded by our budget, in particular black-and-white art with occasional full color sections or spot color throughout the magazine. This year, to celebrate the vibrant work of our art program under the direction of Prof. Anna Lemnitzer, we decided to produce a smaller magazine in full color. We're thrilled to feature a range of photographs, paintings, sculptures and mixed media pieces, drawings, and digital work to go along with a curated collection of creative writing. This includes travel and nature writing, a poem in the fantasy genre, works that address social issues such as race relations and gun violence, a play, and some pieces in the Japanese form haibun by retired creative writing professor Helen Ruggieri. We are also featuring a capstone poetry and painting project by interdisciplinary arts graduate Cindy Nowacki, and a memoir piece by retired Pitt Bradford president Livingston Alexander.

When we started to work on this issue a year ago, the staff included a number of new interdisciplinary arts students, with most of our experienced editors graduating halfway through the process. For the second half of our production, we operated with one of the smallest staffs in our history, many of them with little to no background in creative writing. Thanks to the good leadership of Professor Nancy McCabe, we were still able to create an exceptional magazine.

We are also publishing the winners of the Five Word Contest conducted in the spring of 2018. For this contest, each author created a piece of writing that included some form of five words, or phrases chosen by the staff: *absorb*, *loop*, *inject*, *shatter*, and *multiple tiny boxes*. We received intriguing

submissions in multiple genres, of which the staff selected three winners. In first place was “Grippe Fever,” by Rosemarie Schaut; in second was “As I Get Older,” by KLSees; and third was awarded to “From the Eyes of a Toddler,” by Aubrie Shrubbs.

We would like to extend a special thanks to Dr. Nancy McCabe for her immense dedication and guidance in helping us ensure that Baily’s Beads continues to be a respected and entertaining student literary magazine. We would also like to extend a special thanks to Professor Anna Lemnitzer for her role in advising the magazine’s art and design, as well as Professor Rick Minard for his feedback. Thanks to Dr. Josh Groffman for his work on the music section, and Professor Peta Leitermann-Long, Editor-in-Chief Tateana Wertman, and the staff of The Source for publishing previews of this issue. Thanks to Professors Catherine Kula and Tracee Howell as well as the staff of the Writing Center for co-sponsoring open mike events with Baily’s Beads, and to creative writing professors Karen Bell and Cheri Thomas for the work they’ve done in helping students develop some of the writing in this magazine. We wish to also thank Professor Jeff Guterman, Ms. Jennifer Spencer, and the Division of Communication and the Arts as well as Dean Steven Hardin and the Office of Academic Affairs for their support of Baily’s Beads. We especially appreciate our designer Brianna Henry, who tirelessly worked on this issue to get it just right, and the staff at Ferguson’s Printing for their willingness to answer questions and assist us with layout and their ongoing commitment to making our magazine as perfect as possible. Lastly, we would like to thank Livingston Alexander for his years of dedication to Pitt-Bradford and his support of Baily’s Beads.

Jayden Pire

Editor-in-Chief

# Table of Contents

## Art

<b>The Color Orange</b> Kylie Schuman	i
<b>Untitled Photography</b> Matt Brahaney	ii
<b>Homebody</b> Kassi Kloss	x
<b>The Fall</b> Kassi Kloss	xi
<b>Abraxas</b> Ashely Wilson-Rew	xii
<b>Jelly</b> Ashley Wilson-Rew	xiii
<b>Nature's Blind</b> Ashley Young-Waters	xiv
<b>Desert Daze</b> Ashley Young-Waters	3
<b>Alleviating Aviation</b> Ezozahon Ismailova	4
<b>Untitled Design</b> Tateana Wertman	13
<b>Early Season Snowfall</b> Cindy Nowacki	14
<b>Storm at 20,000 Feet</b> Cindy Nowacki	17
<b>Summer Has Passed</b> Cindy Nowacki	18
<b>Untitled Illustration</b> Li Hong Rui	19
<b>Still Life</b> Kylie Schuman	20
<b>Swim</b> Jessie Jordan	21
<b>Waves</b> Alexa Bachurskii	21
<b>Existence</b> Hanamariam Tefera	22
<b>In the Eyes of a Child</b> Michaela Kirsten	24
<b>Hand Over the Key</b> Elizabeth Johnson	25
<b>Chautauqua My Name</b> Sadie D'Angelo	32
<b>Hope In Surface</b> Nnedimma Ugochukwu	33

<b>The Awoken Giant</b> Sadie D'Angelo	34
<b>Her Voice</b> Jennifer Fitton	36
<b>Wrath</b> Gabe Gomez	38
<b>A Night at Joshua Tree</b> Noah Gasch	39
<b>Neighborhood Sunsets</b> Maya Bingaman	43
<b>Untitled Landscape</b> Diane Null	44
<b>Her Silence</b> Jennifer Fitton	46
<b>Painted Disc</b> Pheobian Davies	49
<b>Disaroused</b> Jennifer M. Lau	54
<b>Reflection</b> Brittany Watson	55
<b>Jade</b> Alana Stewart	56
<b>Onyx</b> Alana Stewart	56
<b>Los Padres National Forest</b> Noah Gasch	62
<b>ATL X NYC</b> Alana Stewart	63
<b>Lost and Found</b> Kassi Kloss	64
<b>Conform</b> Kassi Kloss	65

## Poetry

<b>Dancing in the Tropics</b> Clark Zlotchew	1
<b>Augury</b> Isaac Payne	4
<b>Dreams in a Paintbrush</b> Cindy Nowacki	14
<b>Early Season Snowfall</b> Cindy Nowacki	15
<b>Storm at 20,000 Feet</b> Cindy Nowacki	16
<b>Summer Has Passed</b> Cindy Nowacki	18
<b>Birth of Time</b> Helen Ruggieri	33



<b>If I Had Known</b> Bonnie McMillen	34
<b>Thoughts and Prayers</b> William Granche	35
<b>Falling Asleep</b> Helen Ruggieri	39
<b>Solve For X</b> Brandon Taveras	40
<b>Wallpaper</b> Helen Ruggieri	43
<b>Oil Spill</b> Shahada Thomas	44
<b>Relevance</b> William Granche	47
<b>A Song of China</b> Clark Zlotchew	52
<b>Marshland</b> Shahada Thomas	55

## Nonfiction

<b>A Letter to My Youngbul</b> Kenneth Thompson	26
<b>Dorthea Fesenmyer</b> Bonnie McMillen	41
<b>And Miles to Go</b> Livingston Alexander	57

## Fiction

<b>Galaxy</b> Kelly Schucker	45
<b>They Shoot Horses, Don't They?</b> William Granche	50

## Contest Winners

<b>Grippe Fever</b> Rosemarie Schaut	21
<b>As I Get Older</b> KLSees	22
<b>From the Eyes of a Toddler</b> Aubrie Shrubb	23

## Drama

<b>The Other People</b> Lucas Smith	5
-------------------------------------	---

# Music Compositions

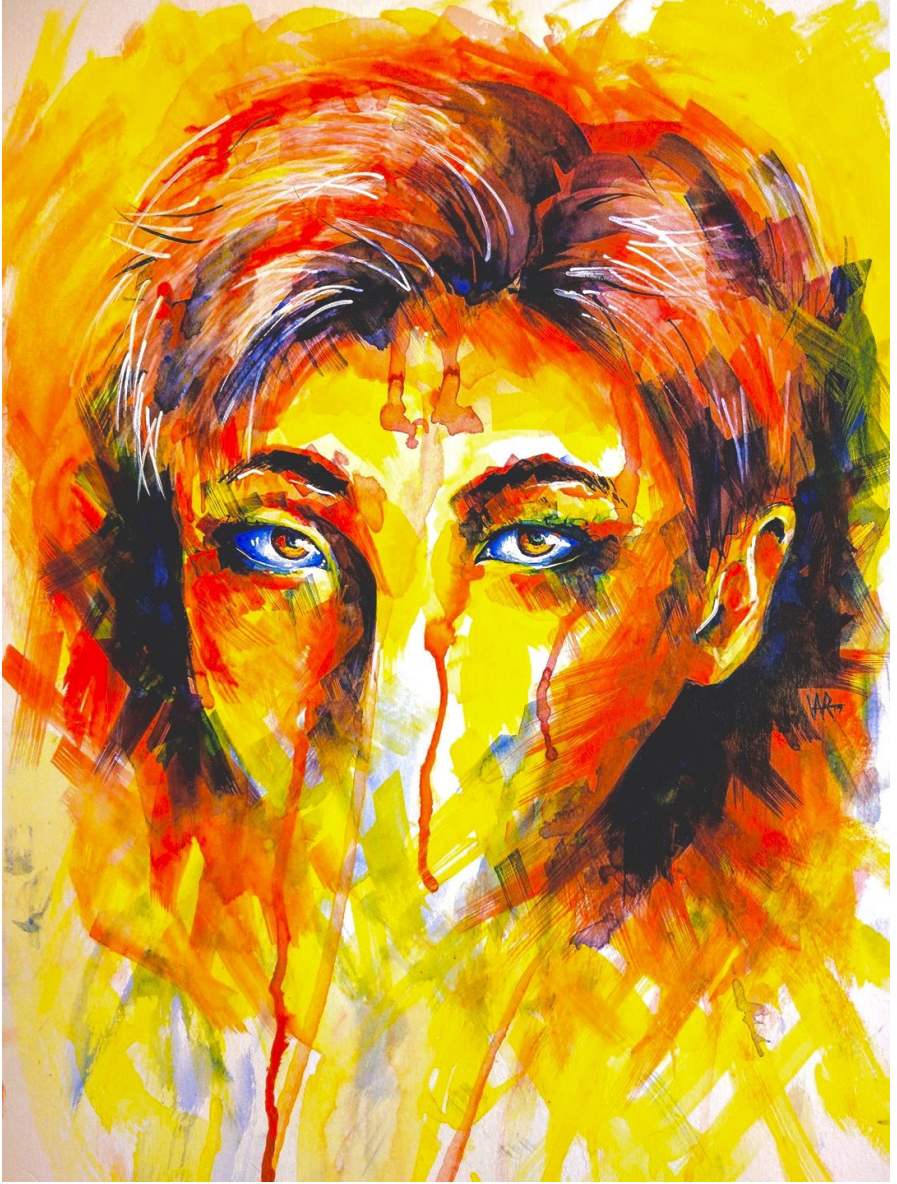
<b>Music</b> Tyler Ronnenberg	36
<b>Fade</b> Amir Miles & Manu Gajanan	37
<b>Nightstand+1</b> Mark Doman	38



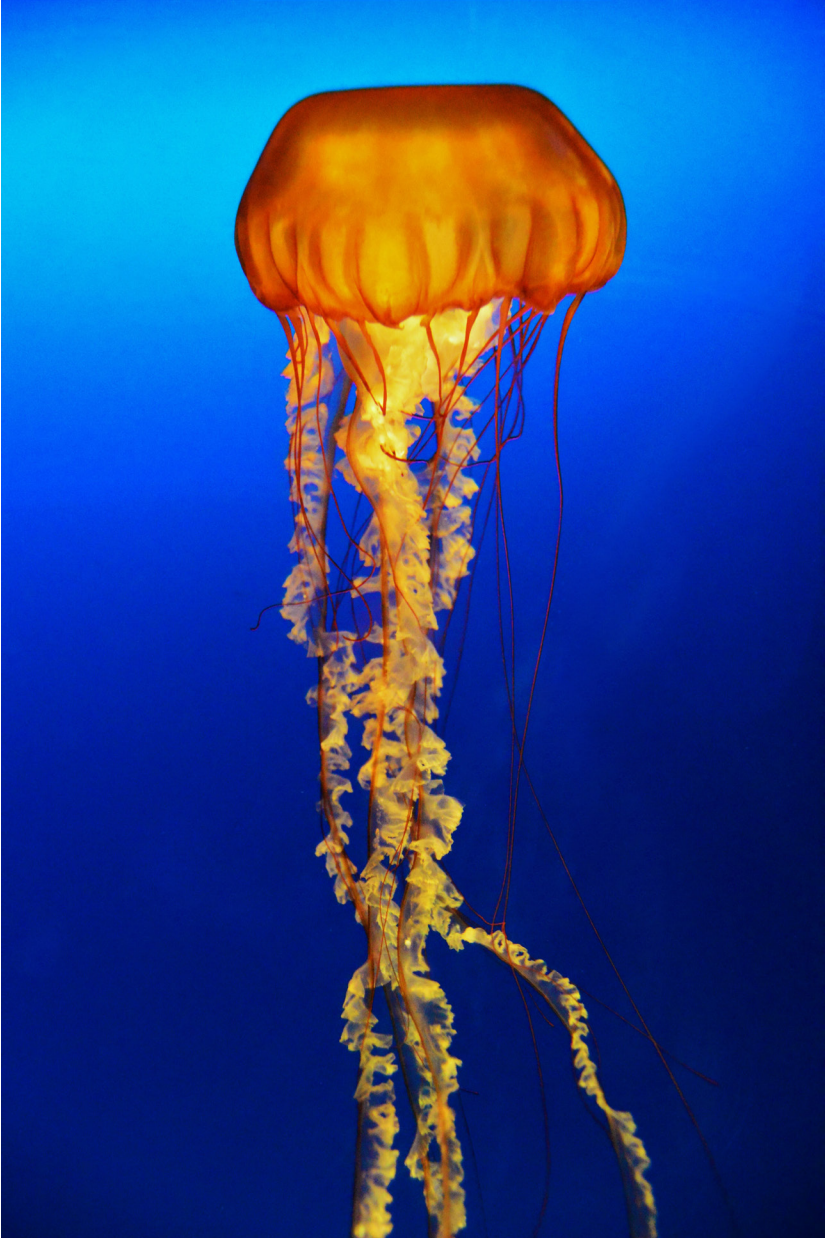
**Homebody** -digital photography, Kassi Kloss



**The Fall** -digital photography, Kassi Kloss



**Abraxas** -painting, Ashley Wilson-Rew



**Jelly** -digital photography, Ashley Wilson-Rew



**Nature's Blind** -digital photography, Ashley Young-Waters

# Dancing in the Tropics

---

*Clark Zlotchew*

We sat there, at a table in Havana,  
softly chatting, till the music  
crashed over us like a tidal wave,  
inundated us, submerged us,  
seized us with unseen talons,  
with overwhelming intensity,  
towed us out to sea,  
in a riptide of rhythm,  
a current of melody.

A thunderous pounding of surf  
boomed and burst from deep-voiced drums,  
in different pitches, a counterpoint of percussion:  
the bat-a-bat of bongos over click of claves,  
the boom of the drum called conga,  
(Heartbeat of far-off Congo),  
polyrhythmic, sacred batá,  
at the approach of the great Changó,  
ah, Bamba-é, Bamba-ó,

Feet jumping to the thumping,  
heads bobbing to the throbbing,  
of the thundering tumbadora,  
ay, tumba que te tumba,  
que te tumba por ahora,  
rumba with the Zumba,  
bruja of Guanabacoa,  
dancing on the beach at Baracoa.

Now, voices singing, voices ringing,  
people of the Abakuá invoke Yemayá,

voices ranting, voices chanting,  
voices bawling, voices calling,  
summoning the mighty Orishas,  
from the heavens of the Yoruba,  
transported to fertile Cuba:  
Babalú-Ayé, Changó, Ogún,  
Obatalá, Yemayá, Ochún.

Then: strident, acid trumpets,  
razor sharp, in minor key,  
slashed right through the ceremony.  
Jerking strum of guitars under sweet stars,  
against the shallow beat of bongos,  
the hurried chic-chic of maracas,  
and the rasping of the guiro.

The music seized the dancers,  
possessed them with hypnotic rhythms,  
sent them into wild paroxysms,  
beguiled them with haunting melody:  
rhythms of West Africa,  
melodies tasting of Spain  
that tugged upon their chain,  
moved them like a puppet master,  
yanking their strings ever faster.

Guaracha, merengue, mambo,  
rumba, merecumbé, guaguancó,  
drinking beer marked Hatuey,  
singing, dancing in Camaguey,  
they whirled and pranced, wildly danced,  
pushed and dragged into the dance,  
by hypnotic beat, into a trance.

But she and I, we lingered longer,  
in thrall to rhythms so much deeper,  
carried along by currents stronger,



held back from the frenzied crowd  
who slipped and slid to music loud,  
a mass of wildly writhing humanity,  
in the expression of their Cubanity,  
yet still retaining their Africanity.

She and I moved only to bolero,  
humble, slow dance of the tropics,  
serene, unhurried, tender,  
amorous, romantic, and calm,  
in which one and one make only one,  
music created for the two of us,  
we gently swayed like royal palms  
to the urging of a tropical breeze,  
entwined among strings of guitar,  
drifting with the nasal tenor  
who poured forth loving lyrics  
like balm on open wounds,  
like melting butter and syrups  
that sweetly flow on cakes of wheat,  
like molasses pressed and blessed  
from sultry Cuban cane fields.



**Desert Daze** -*digital photography*, Ashley Young-Waters

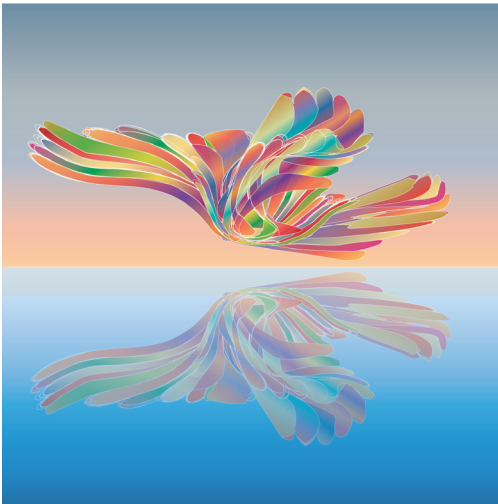
# Augury

---

*Isaac Payne*

Delicate spirals pull from the air  
languid feathers, shed from bodies  
sleek and immaculate in their creation,  
the antinome of drifting smoke  
curled into paintings of what it once was.

They fall in silence, contemplative,  
hoping to land upright,  
driven into the body of life itself,  
to be beaded with early morning dew,  
plucked like a flower,  
twirled between finger and thumb,  
tucked into a pocket,  
slid behind the ear,  
to whisper of delicate spirals and  
languid bodies and machinations of sky.



**Alleviating Aviation** -digital artwork, Ezozaon Ismailova

# The Other People

Lucas Smith

**A**CT I  
SCENE I

*Scene opens on the inside of a therapist's office. One person is sitting on a couch, and across the office is the therapist, notebook in hand.*

PATIENT 1: *(Visibly upset.)* It was one time, that's all. I made a mistake and I don't know how to fix it.

THERAPIST: What mistake would that be?

PATIENT 1: I cheated on my boyfriend, and, and he found out. Then, he, he didn't understand, he didn't let me explain. *(Blows nose)* He just broke up with me, like it was my fault, like he didn't make mistakes.

THERAPIST: I see, did you apologize, maybe let him simmer for a little bit, then say you're sorry, try to talk about it?

PATIENT 1: No, it was an accident, I was drunk, he should understand that I didn't mean anything. It wasn't my fault. He knows how, how I get when I drink too much.

THERAPIST: Well, maybe you should try an apology, you should take responsibility for your part in what happened. Even if it wasn't your fault. If it doesn't work, then you'll have to move on, because when infidelity occurs in a relationship, it becomes very hard to move past.

PATIENT 1: *(Nodding, dabbing at eyes)* What if I try making him jealous? That's what my roommate said to do. It worked for her.

THERAPIST: I don't know about you, but I think cheating probably made him a little jealous, and it didn't work out so well the first time. I think if you really want him back, you should apologize. Don't beg, just sincerely apologize and see what happens.

*(Scene goes dark)*

SCENE II

*Scene opens on same office, different patient.*

PATIENT 2: (*Dressed slobbily, lying back on the couch, staring at ceiling.*) I think I'm depressed, Doc.

THERAPIST: Why do you think that? What is it that's pulling you back, exactly?

PATIENT 2: I dunno Doc, it's just I don't feel like doing anything. I used to go out all the time with buddies and all that, ya know, and now, all I want to do is sit on the couch and watch Netflix. I can barely get up to go to work in the morning, and when I'm there I just have trouble focusing and getting my work done, ya know? My best friend, Marcus, he keeps calling, wanting to hang out, or go do something, and I always tell him I'm busy just cause I can't do it, ya know?

THERAPIST: Are you sad, have you lost your appetite, trouble sleeping?

PATIENT 2: No. Not really.

THERAPIST: Are you moody, fatigued?

PATIENT 2: Nope, none of that.

THERAPIST: Hmmm. I would suggest that you try to find a focus. A mission, something you want. Maybe decide you want to lose five pounds, or you want to take a trip, or maybe just finish a thousand piece puzzle, try to give yourself objectives. Otherwise I think you'll keep floating aimlessly, and you'll never make it off the couch.

PATIENT 2: Oh, well, actually, I was just kind of hoping you could prescribe some antidepressants or something, and maybe a doctor's note for work.

THERAPIST: I can do that if it's necessary, but I think what your problem is, is not physical, or having to do with the chemistry of your brain like depression. I think it may be psychological. You are stuck feeling there's no moving up from here, there's no improving your life, so why keep pushing to keep going? Maybe, you should think about getting a new job, or, again, finding a hobby, a goal, something that interests you.

PATIENT 2: Other than Netflix?

THERAPIST: That would probably be best, yes, something other than Netflix.

PATIENT 2: That's the problem though, ya know, I don't want to

go to work, I don't want to do anything, sometimes I don't even want to watch Netflix.

THERAPIST: What do you do then?

PATIENT 2: I usually nap, or get something to eat.

THERAPIST: Listen Michael, you need to find a goal, something you want. That's all.

PATIENT 2: Well this was a waste of time, I told you, I don't want a hobby, I want some medication so I don't feel so lazy all the time! I ain't paying for this.

*(Patient 2 storms off stage.)*

*(Scene goes dark)*

### SCENE III

*Scene opens on same office, different patient.*

PATIENT 3: I'm afraid to get in a car again, absolutely terrified. I actually walked five miles to this appointment, what do I do? I'm just petrified.

THERAPIST: Well, first we have to figure out why you're afraid of cars. Was there a certain incident that may have caused this fear, or is it simply irrational? If we can figure that out, we can figure out a form of treatment. So, tell me, were you in an accident recently, or did you witness an accident?

PATIENT 3: *(Nods, begins after a pause)* My boyfriend had a lot to drink, but he seemed fine, so when he offered to drive me home I didn't argue. Then, it was dark, and he was driving pretty fast when this woman just stepped out, she came out of nowhere. Sure, it was a crosswalk, but she should've looked, right? He didn't even hit the brakes, just kept on going like he didn't see her. I made him stop a few blocks up, and I got out, I threw up all over the sidewalk.

That's, that's why I can't, I just can't get in a car again, because now, every time there's a crosswalk, I see her face, the way it looked when she turned into the headlights, just before—they caught Jason, my ex now. They had to figure it out sooner or later, the whole front of his car was smashed in.

THERAPIST: What happened to the woman on the crosswalk? Maybe you need to confront both images. You can't just get back in the passenger seat, perhaps you have to reach closure with her as well.

PATIENT 3: (*Head in hands, distraught*) I tried. She's in a coma. Has been for a few months now.

THERAPIST: Sarah, I want you to remember that's not your fault. It was unfortunate, but you didn't cause it. Now, back to baby steps. Let's try just getting in a car, sitting down in the passenger seat in the driveway, and leaving the car in park. Listen to music, relax, just attempt to free-associate some good feelings about being in the car.

PATIENT 3: I can try that.

THERAPIST: Good, then I'll see you the same time next week.

(*Scene goes dark*)

#### SCENE IV

*Same office, don't worry, I think this is the last time.*

PATIENT 4: (*Sitting upright, on edge of the couch*) But what if he turns me down, or worse, what if he says yes? I feel, ugh, conflicted? Is that the word? I really like this guy. I just don't know if I'm ready yet, not after Charlie died. I don't know if I can do it again. What if I'm just forgetting Charlie, leaving him?

THERAPIST: Lindsey, you've been coming to me for the last three years, and never once before have you mentioned any interest in dating again. Maybe this is your chance to finally move on from Charlie. You shouldn't forget him, but I don't think Charlie would want you to live in isolation for the rest of your life either. The disease that killed Charlie doesn't have to end your life too.

PATIENT 4: So you're saying I should start dating again?

THERAPIST: I'm saying you should make that phone call and see what happens. Baby steps, Lindsey. I think that's all our time for this week. Good luck.

PATIENT 4: Thanks, Doctor Clark, see you next month.

#### SCENE V

*Okay I lied before, but this time really is the last time in the psychiatrist's office.*

PATIENT 5: (*Gender non-specific, dressed up, business attire, appear to have just gotten off work.*) Doc, I have a lot of stress in my life, I work as a manager at the bank which keeps me busy, I've got all these lives depending on me at home, ya see.

THERAPIST: (*Interrupts.*) Are you married, do you have kids?

PATIENT 5: I'm dating someone, and I have a dog, but they both depend on me, ya see. And then there's my brother.

THERAPIST: What about your brother?

PATIENT 5: He's driving me nuts, whenever he calls it's never "hey, how are you?" it's "hey, I need some help with paying the bills," or "hey, you should visit mom today," or "hey, can you send some money for mom?" Which I know he'll probably just spend on himself, or on booze, or something.

THERAPIST: So your brother has money problems, and expects you to fix them. You mentioned alcohol, does he have a drinking problem? Has he called you while intoxicated?

PATIENT 5: He's a twenty-year-old part-time college student. I don't have to see him to know he's probably drunk or hungover most of his day.

THERAPIST: You said he usually uses your mother as an excuse?

PATIENT 5: Mom's been sick lately, but I don't have time to drive thirty minutes there, thirty minutes back just to say hi. Since Marc is nearby, he visits more often, then uses that to guilt me.

THERAPIST: I see. So he regularly tries to guilt you, to give him, what, money, alcohol, you said.

PATIENT 5: Yeah, and after he found out mom is leaving me the house and everything, it's gotten worse. She left him like, dad's sailboat, and a few other things, but no money, and nothing worth much. He blows all his cash, so now he has no savings, and he wants me to come to the rescue. I told him to sell the boat or something, but he refuses to let it go, says it's part of the family. So, now he's just constantly coming after me for money.

THERAPIST: Seems to me your brother is a bit toxic. I think you need to make it clear you can't give him money, that he needs to be responsible for himself, and you need to let your mother know how he's treating you. He needs to know it's wrong to use your mother to manipulate you. I'm not saying cut him out of your life completely, just tell him he needs to be more responsible, and if he continues to harass you then you may need to cut him out of your life until he can act responsibly.

PATIENT 5: You're right, Doc.

THERAPIST: Is there anything else?

PATIENT 5: Yeah, but we can talk about it next week. Tonight's girls/guys night out, so I have to run home and change. Thank you so much, Doctor Clark.

*(Picks up purse/briefcase and rushes off stage, opposite direction of therapist.)*

*(Scene goes dark.)*

ACT II

SCENE I

*Some sort of shop, coffee shop, bookshop, whatever, up to you. This bit is adjustable.*

*(Therapist is at checkout.)*

MARCUS *(Cashier. Name tag says MY name is Marcus, that's how we know. Smiling.)* Did you find everything okay?

THERAPIST: Yes, thank you.

MARCUS *(One of those overly happy cashiers.)* Okay, your total comes to \$19.86.

THERAPIST: Really? Did you get everything? That seems a bit low.

MARCUS: The owner has decided to close the place down, so we're having a big sale trying to get rid of everything. It doesn't actually start until tomorrow, but I applied it anyways. No sense charging you twice as much for being a few hours early. Besides, *(Marcus leans in, conspiratorially.)* I'm out of a job by the end of the week anyways, so they can just fire me if they don't like it.

THERAPIST: Well then, thank you. *(Laughs, hands him a bill.)*

MARCUS: Out of twenty. *(Drawer pops open, Marcus gives therapist coins.)* Fourteen cents is your change. Have a good night!

THERAPIST: *(Already walking away.)* You too.

*(Scene fades to dark.)*

SCENE II

MARCUS: *(Walks into empty apartment, nothing there except a piano, bed, and nightstand with a drawer, lamp, and a phone on it. His face is expressionless. He tosses his coat on the bed, sits down at the piano, and plays something mournful, pretty. Opening few lines of Moonlight Sonata perhaps? After a few lines, maybe the beginning of*



*the second page, MARCUS messes up and does that thing pianists do in movies when they get upset and hit a bunch of wrong keys at once very quickly before putting their elbows on the piano and their head in their hands. Crying? Maybe, if not, just look depressed or determined, either will do. MARCUS gets up from piano, walks over to nightstand, opens drawer, pulls out gun, looks at it, sets gun on bed, then hits a button on the phone. Sits down next to gun on bed. Answering machine begins.)*

MACHINE: Four new messages.

PATIENT 1: Listen Marcus, I'm sorry, please call me back, it was one time. It wasn't my fault, you know that, besides it's not like you never thought about doing something like that, come on baby, call me back please. I wanna fix this. I was drunk and he was cute, and I'm really, really sorry. Give me another chance and call me back when you get this.

MARCUS: *(Looking at audience, or past them, maybe at the machine, now turns to look at the gun.)*

PATIENT 2: Hey Marcus, it's Mike. I got your call about maybe hanging out this weekend, ya know I'd love to, but I'm actually pretty busy. Maybe another time? I know this is like the third time I've done this, but the boss is really ridin' me, ya know? Glad you understand. Bye.

MARCUS: *(Has now shifted somewhere in that message to holding the gun. Still looking at it.)*

PATIENT 5: *(Annoyed.)* Marcus, it's Robin, I talked to my therapist today. He told me I should cut you out of my life, and you know I don't want to do that. You need to stop asking me for money, we both know that boat is worth double Mom's hospital bill, so just sell it. You need to take some responsibility for yourself. You can't keep guiltin' me to go and see Mom, because unlike you, I have a life. So either take some responsibility, and stop calling me, or I have to cut you out of my life, because I'm under a lot of stress and I just can't do it. Don't call me back.

MARCUS: *(Closes his eyes relaxed-like, not squeezed shut, just shut.)*

MACHINE: Mr. Sinclair? This is Dr. Wegman from St. Thomas

Medical Center, I'm sorry to inform you that your mother has passed. As we expected, she never woke from her unconscious state. Since you paid the bill and set up a payment plan last week, there won't be any more charges you have to worry about. If you could please call us back to make the final arrangements. We're very sorry for your loss.

MARCUS: *(Now moves the gun under his chin, and squeezes his eyes shut, just before it appears he might squeeze the trigger.)*

PATIENT 4: Marcus? It's Lindsey, from down the hall.

MARCUS: *(Eyes snap open and the hand holding the gun drops to his lap, as he stares, perhaps a little dumbfounded at the phone.)*

PATIENT 4: *(Continues)* I was wondering if maybe you might want to catch a movie sometime? If not that's fine, but I'm free Friday. My number is 837-9873, call me back if you'd like to, I don't know, hang out sometime. Bye.

MARCUS: *(Drops the gun to the floor and practically leaps for the phone, dialing a number before pressing the receiver to his ear, looking desperate. After all, he is a desperate man, clinging to the last strand of hope.)* Lindsey? Hey, it's Marcus. I got your message. Yeah, yeah I'd love to. I'll meet you at 8:00? Sounds great.

MARCUS: *(now grinning. He lies back on the bed, hands beneath his head, staring up, presumably at the stars, grinning. He has hope.)*

### Scene III

*(Scene goes dark.)*

*Back to psychiatrist's office. Bet you thought you saw the last of this set, huh?*

THERAPIST: So, Lindsey, how'd it go? Did you call the guy?

PATIENT 4: Yeah, and he called me back, and we went out Friday. It was wonderful, we went to the movies, and then afterwards we just sort of sat on our building's fire escape and watched the cars go by.

THERAPIST: What do you think of him, was dating again worth it, you think?

PATIENT 4: I think so. He's kind and witty, and, he just has this infectious sunny attitude, definitely worth a few more dates.

THERAPIST: So, you're planning on sticking together a little longer then?

PATIENT 4: Yep, we're actually going out tonight to celebrate. He just got a new job as assistant manager at a hotel. It's not like they're paying him a whole lot, but it's full time, and it works with his class schedule, and more importantly it means we both get Monday evenings off now.

THERAPIST: That's good, so is there anything you wanted to talk about today?

PATIENT 4: Actually, I have a question for you.

THERAPIST: Fire away.

PATIENT 4: What made you want to do this, listen to me chatter on about boyfriends, depression, and my cat? I was thinking about going back to school, and I had to think about a major, so I was just wondering, why this?

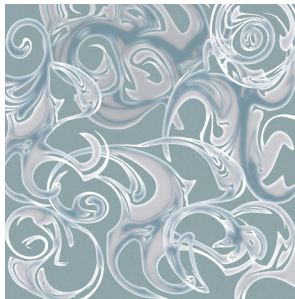
THERAPIST: Well, I wanted to help others. I think we tend to focus more on our own problems, and forget to see that other people are hurting too, and that maybe our problem isn't so bad. I think sometimes we fail to see that most problems are fixable. I like to think that I look at other people's problems, and that I kind of show them that it's fixable. If your sink backs up, you don't burn your house down, you call a plumber.

PATIENT 4: Like how you helped me fix my problem?

THERAPIST: No, you fixed your problem, I just told you that you could, and gave you an idea how.

PATIENT 4: You gave me advice.

THERAPIST: No, I just gave you a little hope. Sometimes I find that's all that's needed. I find people in pain and give them hope.



**Untitled Design**-digital artwork, Tateana Wertman

# Dreams in a Paintbrush

---

*Cindy Nowacki*

Blue overtones uplift her dreams  
toward the heavens,  
exploding from the tip of the brush.  
Dark indigo produces bittersweet music  
which needs no additional words.

She touches the brush  
to the canvas and spills the words  
from the point of her bristles  
in a paint-filled colorful explosion of music.

The disclosure of paint, like music,  
will fill the air like notes from the bristles.



**Early Season Snowfall** -oil painting, Cindy Nowacki

# Early Season Snowfall

---

*Cindy Nowacki*

At the shallow water's edge  
lined with silver tree trunks,  
the peach sunrise  
tints all a fiery glow.

I dip my hand  
into the icy water  
that numbs my fingers.

Digging in her frigid grip  
winter is a dark flame  
that would taste bitter if allowed  
to touch my tongue.

Snow dusts charcoal rocks  
controlling the flow of  
unfrozen water  
winding through a powdery pathway.

Willowy pines filter sun rays,  
capturing fallen snow on their boughs.  
The early season snowfall  
brings imperial stillness to the winter kingdom.

# Storm at 20,000 Feet

---

*Cindy Nowacki*

Clouds darken  
as the storm  
gleans together  
its fury.

Wispy clouds  
balance delicately,  
disguising  
the intensity above,

holding together the calm  
inside the rib cage  
of the cirrocumulus.

Thunderheads gather,  
intertwined with plumes,  
touched by the sun,  
attempting to invade their privacy,

reminders of nature's ability  
to present ferocity and serenity  
as it battles between  
rage and reserve.



**Storm At 20,000 Feet** -oil painting, Cindy Nowacki

# Summer Has Passed

---

*Cindy Nowacki*

Summer has passed like  
a swift moving river  
as autumn ushers itself in  
on cool fall breezes.

Soon the trees will release  
a round of gold as  
the leaves drop slowly  
to dew-cloaked ground.

Memories linger:  
jumping and walking through  
collected piles,  
inhaling their earthy aroma.

The world appears  
crimson and yellow  
as I release this breath  
that becomes mist and dew.



**Summer Has Passed** -oil painting, Cindy Nowacki





**Untitled Illustration** -digital artwork, Li Hong Rui



**Still Life** -gauche painting, Kylie Schuman

# Grippe Fever

---

---

*Rosemarie Schaut*

Loopy with liquid metamizole,  
the child, four,  
drifts restlessly into an afternoon microsleep.

Clouds swallow the sun,  
subtle, transient shadows  
across aseptic pastel walls.

Her damp pillow absorbs  
the white noise and the worry,  
injecting her mother's muffled phrases  
murmured among the shuffling of professionals  
in rubber-soled shoes.

Shattered, she looks down  
through tear-puffed eyes  
and the double-paned windows  
at hundreds of parked cars.

Squares of color stain the hot, gray pavement  
like multiple tiny boxes,  
locked and silent in the afternoon sunshine.



**Swim** -digital artwork, Jessie Jordan



**Waves** -digital artwork, Alexa Backurskii

# As I Get Older

---

---

*KLSees*

My memory begins to fail.  
I wish I could absorb new information  
as I did when I was younger,  
when I quickly recorded details as if by injection.  
These days, memories twist  
and turn and loop, over and over,  
and sometimes shatter into events  
that never occurred.  
My grip on both the past and the present  
has slowly devolved.  
Nowadays, it's as if my mind has been segregated  
into multiple tiny boxes  
  
and many of them are permanently locked.



**Existence** -digital artwork, Hanamariam Tefera

# From the Eyes of a Toddler

*Aubrie Shrubb*

I was abruptly awakened from my slumber when I heard an unusual noise that played from my parents' talking boxes. The multiple tiny boxes sang out an obnoxious tune which caused my exhausted progenitors to stir from their rest and evacuate their bed. My father stretched his arms out in the air, resembling a bear. My mother, much less dramatic, yawned and looped her arms together, each hand to an opposite shoulder, and raised them ever so slightly to bend her back and release all the built-up tension from the night of rest.

She came to my cradle and reached down to pet my soft, short blonde hair that was ratted up from my endless tossing and turning. Then she slid her hands under my tiny armpits, her grip firm but gentle. I fluttered my arms in the air as she lifted me sky high. I felt like superman; I was strong, unstoppable and powerful. We began our descent down the stairs as a family and proceeded into the spotless kitchen.

My beautiful mother slid me into my high chair. While she went to prepare my breakfast and my handsome father sat down to read the morning paper, I gazed around the room for something to grab.

There it was, just in my reach: my mother's favorite fruit dish. I motioned my arms toward it, still no eyes on me. I took it in my hands and observed it. It was glass, clear and well designed.

Without a second thought, I threw it to the ground where it would surely shatter.

Instantly all eyes appeared on me. My mother's eyes welled up with tears. My father rushed over to see if I had been hurt. After a thorough check he went to retrieve the broom and dust pan.

My mother calmed down and approached me. I could tell all she wanted to do was scream. Instead, she pulled over a chair and began spoon feeding me my meal. She injected the mashed fruits into my

mouth while I cheered delightedly. She smiled, made funny faces, and swung the spoon around, claiming it was an airplane just to see me rejoice and eat.

Once I was finished, she wiped my hands and face with a damp washcloth. I felt my skin absorb the water.

Our day would continue; I would reach new peaks and be naughty once more. I would take ages to fall asleep at naptime and throw a tantrum when my television program was over and I couldn't understand why. Though as much as I made my mother and father angry, upset, happy, or sad, I knew they loved me. Tomorrow would repeat itself, but I wouldn't change for the world the family I was blessed with.



**In the Eyes of a Child** -digital artwork, Michaela Kirsten



**Hand Over the Key** -mixed media, Elizabeth Johnson

# A Letter to My Youngbul

---

*Kenneth Thompson*

**Y**esterday I presented a story of success. It was our second annual Re-entry Summit at the Federal Correctional Institution, which has been my home for the last fourteen years. "What does success look like to you?" I asked a crowded gymnasium of over two hundred people—federal prosecutors, re-entry specialists, educators, members of the Department of Justice, and, of course, many of my fellow inmates. I stood in front of the room and articulated my thoughts, visions, and passion. I gave them a glimpse into the feelings of an incarcerated father. My tan khaki suit was neatly pressed, my hair was cut short, and my beard gleamed from the shine of African-American pride.

From the time you were five years old I have been located behind these bars. Locked away from your thoughts, your cries, your smiles, and your laughs. I have never watched you shoot a basketball or walk through the streets with a heavy book bag weighing you down. I have never seen you swim in a pool, run a race, or climb a tree. The sounds of your cries are unfamiliar to my ears, as too is the sound of your snores as you dream throughout moonless nights. You are my oldest child, my son, and as we say in Philly: My Youngbul.

Today it seems as if my second chance at freedom will not happen for another six years. My petition for clemency was not approved and Donald Trump is now President. I imagined this summer, you, your brothers, and I could hop in the wheel and travel through the roughness of our hood. I envisioned your smile and attempted to feel the vibrations of your joy. I believed almost within the core of my heart that this was almost over. I'm sure you will never forget the feeling of not wanting to look me in my face as you exit a visiting room, just as I will never forget the sight of your eyes as they scanned my frame up and down looking for some resemblance between me and you.

Growing up, I never knew that life really mattered. I saw death because death was always present for me to see. The graveyard was down the street from the vacant lot, and the vacant lot was where I



used to play. I had best friends whose dads were dead and girlfriends whose moms were more committed to dying than to staying alive. I had classmates who drowned in rivers and knew of those who were hit by cars. I had a homie who was killed by another homie and an older brother who was shot dead on a live October night.

*The summit was organized and operated by inmates who take part in the educational programming here at the prison. The inmates presented much of what we have learned in our classes and facilitated mini-workshops with the conference attendees. When my friend introduced me to speak I felt the butterflies in my stomach as I walked to the microphone. Throughout the presentation I spoke about the guilt that weighs on my soul. The guilt that rears its ugly head when I think about the fact that my sons, my three Youngbuls, are left to fend for themselves without their father. I conveyed a message of fear. A fear deeply rooted in my chest, and that is the fear that burns for you and your brothers.*

When I was your age I could not relate to what you experience today. Unlike you, I did not know what clemency was. I knew nothing of a direct appeal, a motion to suppress, or a “2255.” When I was your age, I had no reason to take in the sight of the mountains of upstate New York, the valleys in White Deer, or the backwoods of Bradford, PA that surround my current home. When I was your age I loved basketball. I loved going out to dollar parties, skating arenas, and movie theaters.

Then on a Friday night, when I was the same age of fifteen that you are now, my oldest brother, my role model, my idol, was killed. I realized that night that the sound of gunshots I’d heard throughout my life actually came from bullets that had the power to rip through both the flesh and the future of my family. All of a sudden it was no longer about what I wanted to be; it was now only about what I had to be.

“Ken, Bill got shot tonight.” Your grandmother’s words hit me in a place that I didn’t know existed in my chest.

Before this moment, the day had been a regular day for a North Philly teenager—walking the neighborhood, splitting cheesesteaks with friends, smiling in the faces of teenage girls, and rapping on

the corners of “Da Ave.” A day when I was nothing more than a Youngbul.

It may have been much like a Friday in October you're familiar with. One of those Fridays when all that is needed for you to keep warm is a hoodie with a zipper. One of those Fridays when the banshees are revving their engines through the avenues of our kingdom. One of those Fridays when the melodic sound of street rap brings life to the corners, beats blasting from the cars racing through the little blocks of our community. October 10, 1997 was one of those Fridays for me. It was a Friday when I was comfortable being a fifteen-year-old teenager. A Friday when my ignorance was bliss. A Friday when my opinion mattered to the world; and to the world, I mattered as well.

My tears dried up, my body went to sleep, the night transformed into day, and the reality of my new life began. On the night of my brother's funeral I sat in the front row of the church. I listened to my father speak while his mother and my mother cried. I watched my sisters break down in sorrow and his homies decorate the pews in black Dickies suits. I sat there with many thoughts. Thoughts that I can no longer remember. However, I imagine they were not thoughts that focused on me believing in a vision of success.

On this night I might have felt like I was the only little brother in the world who was feeling this pain. I had no idea that I was a character in a larger never-ending story of the greatest country in the history of the world. Over three hundred murders were recorded that year in our city alone. I wonder now how many other little brothers—Youngbuls—were forced to grow up too soon in the year 1997.

*As I looked into the eyes of the 150 plus professionals packed inside the FCI McKean gymnasium, I spoke of our role within this story. I talked about my doubts, my bullet wounds, and my desires.*

*“To me success looks like me being the best father that I can possibly be.”*

*I wish I could have told the crowd that I had no doubts about your life.*

Your reality is the life of an African-American teenager. You are the son of a single mother and an incarcerated father. You have

cousins who are shooting guns, selling drugs, and robbing stores. You have a cousin who was shot down and killed at the age of five, the same age you were at the time. You were born and raised in North Philly, and statistics say that you have a stronger chance of going to prison or getting killed than enrolling in and graduating from college.

You travel an hour and a half each way to attend one of the most prestigious high schools in Philadelphia. I often think about you on your commute—what do you see? Who’s sitting next to you? What do you think about? What do you see inside yourself? I wonder if you know your own worth. When you leave the leafy green campus, you return to one of the most dangerous sections of the largest poorest city in this country. When you hear gunshots (which no doubt you do often), there is a strong possibility that you are familiar with the model of gun from which those shots are fired. I doubt any of your classmates share this knowledge with you.

In your home state of Pennsylvania, there is a \$400 million prison being built at the same time that you are waiting on the sidewalk for the 54 bus to pick you up. Five thousand beds will soon need to be filled. Someone will have to lie on those pillows, someone will have to eat off those trays, and at least 70% of those someones will look like, walk like, and talk just like you. They will use the word “jawn” as a pronoun and recite lyrics of Meek Mill and Kendrick Lamar as they bop down the hallways with sagging pants. They will call each other homies and sometimes call the ones that are younger than them their youngbuls. More than anything I fear the statistics that say you, as well as your brothers, will be characters in this tragedy.

I got my first package of crack cocaine when I was your age. Looking back, I can honestly say that I didn’t even believe I would be any good at selling drugs. The package that was given to me was a \$125 bundle. I was to sell it, keep \$25, and give back \$100 to the person who supplied me the pack. At this point I knew all of the fiends in the neighborhood just as they knew who I was. They knew my pop, my mom, my aunts, and my uncles. They knew my brother had just been killed. They even knew who killed him and why. They also knew that one day soon, I myself would be on the corner

letting them know that I now had the “nicks.” These smokers, junkies, crackheads as we used to call them may have known me better than I knew myself.

One of my first crack deals was to a close friend of the family. Like many in our community, my siblings and I used to refer to her as our “aunt” even though we had no blood relation. I remember that it was nighttime, maybe around 9:00 P.M. on a school night when she showed up on Da Ave.

“Who got it?” she asked no one in particular as she approached the crowded sidewalk. She was intently looking past my face, as if she did not see me.

“Roc got it,” my supplier boasted with pride as if he was leading me through a rite of passage and into the transformation to manhood.

“Who?” she asked now, looking into my eyes. “You, Ken?”

“Yeah,” I answered. “How many you need?”

To this moment I never pondered what thoughts she might have had as the cloud of crack smoke blew out of her lungs and the sweat beaded up on the brown skin of her forehead. Maybe she felt a strong sense of shame, a certain level of sadness, embarrassment, or even grief. This was a woman who had held me as a baby, changed my diapers, and cared for me. In my eyes she was now nothing more than a fiend, a customer, a link in our market chain. Her purchase came with an abandonment of respect and she knew that to be reality even more so than I.

I remember a sense of wonder after she had hurried off and out of my sight. I wondered if she was going to inform my mother of my newfound profession. I began to pay attention to the vehicles as they drove up and down the asphalt of Da Ave. I expected to see my pop jumping out of the truck, drawing on me all crazy. My expectations were never met and I don't know why she never informed my mother or father. Maybe she was too ashamed herself. Or maybe in her mind I was supposed to be there. I was always supposed to have the nicks. Because really what else was a nigga from the hood like me going to do?

About an hour later she returned. Her hair was disheveled. This

time she approached with a smile across her face.

“What’s up Neph? Why don’t you look out for your Auntie? C’mon now, let me get five for twenty.”

On this day, in this federal facility, I am left to wonder what this experience and ones like it have done to the process of my growth, my maturity, my manhood. Maybe if someone would have pulled me to the side and said, “Roc you are better than this,” or “Man you shouldn’t be stooping to this level,” I might have begun to believe that I could have risen above my auntie’s expectations for me. I tell you this story because I know that you are better than your father. You are wiser than I was at your age and your potential in life is greater than mine.

*Throughout the presentation I spoke about a goal I had of connecting with one of your teachers. I was able to convince one of your former middle school teachers who works closely with you to this day to make the six-hour drive to be a part of my presentation. After I introduced him I watched the crowd’s surprise as he took the podium. He was no taller than I was and probably not much younger. He wore a suit jacket, a scruffy beard, and a smile that I imagine was filled with excitement and nervousness. Here he was, a white man, hundreds of miles from home at a federal penitentiary, sharing the stage with me—a black man—a convicted drug dealer. He spoke about you. How you arrived at his school, St. James School, nothing but a scrawny, shy little fifth grader with a bright smile, a curious mind, and a love for basketball (which he shared with you). He expressed how over the years he’s seen you display both tremendous courage and hard work both in the classroom and on the basketball court. He also said he’s seen your lack of confidence in your own abilities and potential at times. A lack of confidence that I knew could one day hold you back from all that you have the potential to accomplish in life.*

*When he spoke about you, I felt as if he was speaking about me. Me, when I was your age. It’s hard to describe how it feels to hear another man tell you the story of your own son. To know this man has probably spent more hours in your presence than I have. To listen to him paint a picture of your reality in front of me and the people I share this facility with year after year made me cry. To hear about my oldest son who is*

*living in a daily reality of life without his father to counsel him through his challenges, discipline his wrongdoings, and celebrate his victories was more than reason enough for me to cry.*

On this day I send you this letter because you deserve to know who I am. You deserve to know that I care. My mistakes should never have to determine who you are and all that you have the potential to be. It is my hope that you have the confidence within yourself to dream big, work hard, and be a good person.

I am sending you this letter because you need to know your reality, and your reality is the fact that every decision that you make counts. In our world every ride that you take through the hood with your homies is more than just a ride. Every disagreement you have with another may be more than just an argument. It may be a casket, a crying mother, and a guilty father. It just may be an all-white jury that sentences you to live in a \$400 million prison for the rest of your life.

Every bus you catch to go to school is a bus that may one day be the reason you are alive and well at an old age. Every test you study for and pass may be the test that allows you to one day raise your children in a way that our family had hoped for. Every morning you wake up is a blessing, and within every failure you experience there lie lessons to be learned.

My advice to you is this: believe that you are that person that you see in your dreams. Believe that you are a human being, one who is a descendant of warriors, scholars, kings, queens, leaders, and believers. My advice for you, Kwymaje, is to not only dream but to chase your dream. Chase your dream for those who were chased down to their death for believing in theirs, and know that without a shadow of doubt that I will always believe in you.



**Chautauqua My Name** -digital photography collage, Sadie D'Angelo

# Birth of Time

---

*Helen Ruggieri*

In Sunday school the teacher gave us a beautiful green and yellow picture of a garden. She explained that every week we came we would get a sticker to paste in the blank white spaces that appeared in the picture. I pasted in my first sticker of the boy Christ resplendent in a purple robe standing front center. I looked at all the other white spaces in the picture and tried to come to an understanding of how long it would take to fill in all the holes. Next week and the week after and on and on. Time was some dark endless tunnel I had to crawl through to get my picture filled in.

I kept my picture for years until it began to disintegrate from the edges inward.

Blank spaces  
in our recall—  
my mother's face.



**Hope In Surface** -digital photography, Nnedimma Ugochukwu

# If I Had Known

---

*Bonnie McMillen*

I would have done  
so much,  
you can't imagine  
how miserable  
I could have  
made his life.  
Every car he ever had  
would have been keyed.

He would have the world record  
in flat tires.

The walls of women's toilets  
would have resounded with  
his full name and  
the smallness  
of his penis.

Oh yes, I could have made him sorry.  
If only I had known.





# Thoughts and Prayers

---

*William Granche*

They offer thoughts and prayers:  
in so doing, mock mourning.  
Their inaction, their neglect  
mocks mother's grief and tears,  
mocks mangled hope and bloodied bone,  
lives forever changed,  
mocks memories: teddy bears,  
puppy love, soccer fields, and song,  
mocks fathers, abandoned corrals  
where horses yearn, unbridled love,  
mocks bicycles, cobweb laced,  
Giant hero jerseys,  
mocks honeyed tea in breakfast nooks,  
mocks learning and teacher's love,  
sounding words, coloring sunset conclusions,  
smiling moons over crooked homes,  
mocks morning goodbye kisses,  
and walks winding to school,  
mocks sweet nighttime dreams,  
twinkling, tinsel trees, Christmas joy  
and the final surprise,  
the brevity of an elementary life.  
Their failure mocks reason  
and restraint, and its pursuit, mocks long life,  
hosts a feast, an endless banquet,  
mocks trust, hope and unconditional love,  
all seared by flaming fusillades,  
steel-jacketed insanity  
beneath covering fire laid down by  
an unrelenting army of green-backed horrors.

# Music

---

---

*Tyler Ronnenberg*

This piece originated as an amalgamation of experiments rather than a project with clearcut goals. As I worked on different techniques, I ended up with a bunch of little parts. In the spirit of experimentation, I started altering them to fit them together and ended up with a roughly three-minute mess that served as a starting point for the song.

Eventually there was a point where I had to stop adding and start cutting. I kept a few drum patterns, one lead synth, and a couple of melodic percussion tracks. The main thing I wanted to practice was using sidechain compression. That effect is the source of the “pulse” on the lead synth that you can hear when the drums pick up.



**Her Voice**-watercolor & ink, Jennifer Fitton

# Fade

---

## *Amir Miles and Manu Gajanan*

Meeting Amir Miles and listening to his debut EP “Face-Less,” I was fascinated by his sound and knew I wanted to work with him. We sorted through instrumentals I had made with trap/hip hop beats, but none of them clicked with his pop/soul style.

After one of our sessions in late November, Miles asked, “Manu, can you just make an arsenal of beats and not show me anything until February?” I made ten to fifteen instrumentals over the following Christmas holiday, trying to step out of my comfort zone. I kept coming back to a beat called “Contemplation.” The airy synths and steady percussion/house drumbeat flowed seamlessly.

At the end of January, I posted a video of this beat on Instagram. Amir instantly messaged me and said, “Yo, we need to work on ‘Contemplation.’”

“Contemplation” was originally 115 BPM, but we decided to raise it to 120 BPM to keep things moving. We also workshoped the bass line to give it a “club” feel.

Miles and I traveled to the Washington, D.C. area to get the record mixed and mastered at a studio in Bethesda, Maryland, the Grammy-nominated recording facility District Sound Lab. The main engineer, Calin Enache, analyzed each layer in Fade meticulously in order to master the song. (BIG thank you to Sam Conturo & Calin Enache.)



# Nightstand+1

---

*Mark Doman*

The piece is called Nightstand+1 as a play on the phrase *one night stand* and was made in FL Studio. It's about that all-too-familiar feeling of cheating, the bad decisions that get made in the moment, and the ways that we rationalize them.

My best friend Louie Petrone from the Pittsburgh group Abstract Theory provided the sultry second verse with his witty innuendos and retro style of delivering vocals. My favorite genres are UK garage, Psybient, 80s Jpop/jazz, and Dark Ambient.

Music (production) presents itself as an elusive canvas. With an infinite amount of paint, the only limitation seems to be a stagnation of creativity.



**Wrath** -mixed media, Gabe Gomez



# Falling Asleep

---

*Helen Ruggieri*

I want to go to sleep, but I can't. To fall asleep  
I have to have a piece of silk, the binding on a  
blanket to hold on to as I drop off into darkness.

I've rubbed all the silk off the binding. My  
mother turns the blanket around to find a small  
tatter of silk for me to hang on to so I can fall  
away into night.

The night is dark  
and long and you might die  
before you wake.



**A Night at Joshua Tree** -*digital photography*, Noah Gasch

# Solve For X

---

---

*Brandon Taveras*

*Written from the perspective of Malcom X*

Hmm, 17 dead you say?

Black people are still the problem you say?

All these school shootings have Caucasian grenadiers, nay?

Who am I to judge shooters?

According to the history books, I was violent and the opposite of Martin.

These are false; however, I will let you believe what you want.

All I am saying is the United States couldn't stand being corrected

by a "nigger" without a PhD,

but who knows what he is talking about.

"Shut up and dribble."

They hate to see a black person have knowledge to fiddle with

because that means they have failed.

They will continue to fail, and we will prevail instead of ending up dead or in jail.

The answer to this remedy is not simple; however,

here is what you need:

b = be brave,

a = stay active,

c = continue to fight.

$X = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$

Solve for X.

# Dorothea Fesenmyer

---

*Bonnie McMillen*

I was five years old and I loved school. Especially my teacher, Dorothea Fesenmyer. She was young and beautiful, maybe not as beautiful as my Mom, but she had the better wardrobe. She wore beautiful dresses with matching shoes. I didn't know the word *sophisticated* yet, but I knew it when I saw it. I couldn't wait to get to school each day to see her. She was kind to all and had that rare quality of maintaining order in a classroom of thirty five-year-olds without raising her voice or ever seeming annoyed.

She never talked down to us, and we were learning new words. The latest word I had picked up from her was *insist*. I loved the sound of it and knew I was a natural at insisting.

I loved everything about school: the big blackboard and smooth chalk; the school lunches with exotic dishes like John Marzetti, a spaghetti dish made with square spaghetti, served on my very own tray. I loved the books, the paints, and the flush toilets. These were all things I didn't have at home.

That winter, there came a storm with deep snow. School had not been cancelled—it takes a lot of snow to close Bradford schools—but Mother decided they should have and we weren't going.

I began to cry. I could turn dramatic when it suited my needs. I'd never heard of too much snow to go to school, and school wasn't cancelled, I wailed at my mother who looked frazzled in her old pink chenille robe and fuzzy slippers.

I could see her try not to smile when I told her I "insisted" on going to school. I stomped my feet, threw myself on the couch, and cried like it was the end of my world. I could see she was weakening, so I made my pitiful cries louder.

"Well," said my mother, "you can't go to the bus stop alone." I was barely three feet tall and we had almost a foot of new snow. The bus stop was a quarter mile up the snowy dirt road.

I continued wailing at full volume until Mom told my big brother

Paul to escort me to school.

“Why can’t she just stay home?” groaned Paul.

“Because I can’t stand her crying all morning and you’ve missed enough school this year already.”

Paul wasn’t happy, but he knew when he was defeated. As soon as we started out, I was floundering in the deep snow. He could have taken us back home and told Mom we couldn’t get through, but he was mad about the injustice of it all and not one to give up on a task.

He picked me up and thrust me under his arm sideways like a football and trudged through the deep snow toward the bus stop.

My head bounced like a bobblehead. I could hear Paul breathing hard and swearing under his breath at his rotten luck of having a little sister who didn’t appreciate a day off school. He’d seen it as a gift from above dropped into his lap then snatched away by a five-year-old who wanted, of all things, to GO TO SCHOOL. I meekly kept quiet for the first time that day.

Thankfully, he put me down when we got to the main road so the kids on the bus didn’t see my football status.

Mrs. Fesenmyer stood by the door as usual, welcoming us into the warm first grade room. She didn’t seem to notice that I was more than a little disheveled, and she applauded everyone for making it to school on such a snowy day.

The frosted ceiling lights hung on their long chains, casting a warm glow in the room. The snowy scene outside the window left me feeling like we were adrift, floating on a ship in a white cotton sea. The morning’s trials were behind me. I was completely and utterly happy as I looked around the room and noted that there were only about ten students who’d made it to school.

I secretly congratulated myself for “insisting.” As I slid into my seat, I was quick to admire Mrs. Fesenmyer’s navy blue dress, little polka dot scarf at her neck, polka dot belt with a big silver buckle, matching pumps with polka dot bows at the toes, and, of course, her bright red lipstick and big smile.



# Wallpaper

---

*Helen Ruggieri*

We lived in rented places, so there was nothing to do but learn to love it. Pine cones with a sprig of pine, scattered in a random pattern matching at the edges; roses unlike any living rose, in vertical rows separated by crimson ribbons. Waking up or falling asleep searching for the pattern, the mismatched pasting.

When I had my own house, I rented a steamer, held the plate against the wall while steam penetrated ancient paste, layers and layers of redecorating schemes, scraping away with a wide bladed tool, owner after owner until down to the bare plaster, white, blank, where I make my own necessity.

The mirror says  
not you, not you—  
Snow White.



1.25.16 mmB

**Neighborhood Sunsets** -watercolor painting, Maya Bingaman

# Oil Spill

---

*Shahada Thomas*

Pink flower petals  
cascade from thick tree branches  
to an ink-stained lake.



**Untitled Landscape** -*painting*, Diane Null

# Galaxy

---

*Kelly Schucker*

**W**e were lying on our couch beneath a mountain of blankets, and when I tried to hold her, attempted to grasp soft skin, she slipped through my fingers like saltwater when I tried to hold the whole ocean in the palm of my hands. She dripped away. Sank into the sand. Dissipated through the cracks. Evaporated into the sun.

I traced her curls, the glorious curve of her hipbone, that indent of a waist. “You are beautiful,” I whispered, the words tasting like warm honey in early spring. She made a face, like she preferred sour to sweet, and stayed quiet.

I interlocked my fingers between hers and mapped out the gray specks in her eyes like shattered asteroids in space, molten rock cooled into chunks of silver. Gray hints, minuscule tinges, those lovely gray atoms within her chestnut irises that appeared as a glint in her eye and disappeared as quickly. Her eyes were the kind of extra-universal objects that can only be seen through a powerful telescope if you search in the precious moments after sunset but before the sky goes dark. Her eyes were lovely little rarities, but only if you were careful and looked closely enough at just the right moment in just the right place. You took a quarter of a breath and she blinked and the glistening disappeared, an extinguished flame.

They call it “bioluminescence,” that light in her eyes, except it was greater than that; she did not exude light, she was light. She was heat and warmth and all that was good in the world. She was the feeling of finally being home, incarnate.

She was complex in all of the best ways. And in some of the worst. She made my head swirl like when you’re standing at a precipice, on a cliff at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, standing

upon the upmost top of this natural masterpiece and looking out at the rest of the world, looking out at an endless ocean. Trying to perceive what is on the other side of this infinite water to understand where it ends, but that is the trick, it doesn't end, it just flattens and fades. The water and the sky eventually blend into each other and they flatten and fade into each other like a kiss. They flatten and fade like the line on a heart rate monitor after the beating stops. Flatten, fade.

She was so soft it was like if I held her too tight she would mold against my hands like clay. My fingerprints would indent her wrist. A kiss on her cheek an incision of every nuance of my lips, each curve and line, a signature and a promise.

"I am not human," she interrupted, sounding almost exasperated except that wasn't the right word. "I am not malleable. I am not composed of beautiful complex things. I am all bones but no marrow. I am a tornado with skin." Her voice was a whisper. With that, she gritted her straight teeth and closed those eyes gone from glimmer to dull. Her breathing went silent.



**Her Silence** -watercolor & ink, Jennifer Fitton

# Relevance

---

*William Granche*

Students learn that history tends to repeat itself.  
The St. Valentine's Day Massacre, 1929,  
Chicago: one gang rattled another.  
Thugs, disguised as law enforcement,  
armed with Tommy guns  
roared over seven rivals, chopped them in half  
in less than 3 minutes  
eviscerated, decapitated felons on their own turf.  
This we understand: gangland means murder.  
But not this, on their own turf, their school,  
Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School,  
90 years to the day, 14 students  
and 3 teachers were massacred  
by one of their own.  
As from an occult spell,  
like a malignancy prophesied in tarot cards  
or in the bowels of a slaughtered lamb,  
an expelled and deranged misfit,  
this prince of his own delusion,  
known for fits of killing cats,  
threat-maker-in-chief and rage,  
delivered carnage at the rate  
of 180 bursts per minute,  
indiscriminate, like some rat catcher,  
insufferable,  
he shattered soccer, wrestling, hip-hop,  
and college bound. This has relevance.  
In physics class, students learn about speed,

the force of a projectile traveling  
at 3,200 feet per second  
and the resulting soft tissue implosion  
due to open tip, lead core, brass-back bullets  
traveling at supersonic speeds. In class  
they witness impacts of projectiles  
delivered at 1,300-foot pounds on targets,  
targets without armor, or protected by Kevlar,  
nor made of steel. This is relevant.  
In health class pupils see videos of human hearts.  
They beat 100,000 times per day, pumping blood  
with 100 pounds of pressure,  
capable of bleeding out  
within minutes, not time for EMTs  
to save Nick Dworet.  
Was this Alyssa's last, "I'm..."?  
These they witnessed remembering  
diagrams: brains, a gurgling last breath  
from Jaime Guttenberg's dancing lungs,  
14 years, too short a time to share her rhythm.  
Did some see the breakfast  
from Martin Anguino's stomach,  
his last? Students learned organs, soft tissues,  
not Coach Fies' liver, expanded, then splattered  
in the hall he patrolled protecting kids,  
his, failing to hold shape from internal pressures  
shot from hate, scattered, chunked  
on walls and windows  
or maybe on maps hanging in Mr. Beigel's room.  
Did it paint faces and drip down cheeks  
of Luke Hoyer's friends?  
Remembering relevance, Mr. Hixon taught:

be safe, be healthy,  
like Cara Loughran, avoid smoking  
like dancers may,  
and don't drink to excess;  
Gina Montalto's marching band  
understood. Joaquin Oliver  
knew why sharing needles  
is deadly, lethal as the AR-15  
used in misguided retribution  
erasing his and Alaina Petty's embracing smiles.  
Meadow and Helena share deadly consequence  
of warnings ignored. Alex, Carmen, and Peter  
learned that vaccines work, and condoms too.  
Students  
lacked protection, prophylactics; the origin is  
Greek,  
meaning  
to guard.  
Where was theirs when money  
has voice, screams fear and fury  
dedicated to mayhem, discharging a void  
offering nothing but unbearable silence  
and the futility of thoughts and prayers?  
This too has relevance.



**Painted Disc** -acrylic painting, Pheobian Davies

# They Shoot Horses, Don't They?

---

*William Granche*

**A**fter reading a headline while waiting in line at a grocery store, I was going to write a story about the thirteen-year-old who self-aborted by using a pencil, but I decided I couldn't because I didn't know the facts. I didn't read the story, was too sorry to even research what happened. I didn't want to get depressed.

I didn't know the name of the girl, if she was white, black, Asian, Latino, from the Middle East, a big city, a farm bordering a hamlet, from a family of wealth or one on welfare.

I wondered why, and if she was alone? Was she afraid, embarrassed, angry, and betrayed? Was she in love or in hate? Did her parents know, or hadn't she told them for fear of embarrassing, shocking, angering, disgusting, and/or disappointing them?

I wondered about the man in the story? Was he there? Did he know her intentions? Did he help, offer the pencil? What did he feel when he learned that she had used a pencil to end a process? I didn't know, so I couldn't write the story.

And then I wondered where? Where did she do it and when? Was she in her canopied double bed with Hannah Montana sheets? Or was she in her basement, next to the water heater with a hose, on a plastic mat, not knowing what to expect? Did she go off into some woods by a tranquil stream, a favorite wading spot, or an overlook where she could see all the way to dawn and what it would bring?

Maybe, being a skid-row city girl, she found a burned-out garage, lay down on a pallet spread with newspapers, and in the dark, to the rhythms of rats, she ended it.

Maybe she was under the bleachers at the middle school practice field after it had cleared late in the afternoon, pompom frills caught in the steel structure, bannerer her day. Or maybe, assuming the male was still in the picture, she was in the back of his van, on her Beauty and the Beast sleeping bag for comfort. But I couldn't write the story because I didn't know the facts, and I wanted to achieve verisimilitude for a tale like about an abortion.



And then I thought about what kind of pencil it was and her procedure. Was it a Wal-Mart special from a dollar-twelve pack? Was it personalized with her name on it: Carly, Jennifer, Chelsea, Angie, Brittany, Megan? The color would be a sweet violet, flaming red, a giddy green. Would it have an eraser for mistakes, a puppet head at the end, or a troll with all that obnoxious orange hair? Maybe it was a garish carnival pencil, eighteen inches long and thick as her middle finger, with a fortune: "Make friends with a stranger."

How? Did she sit Hari-Kari style, clutching the pencil at its end, one hand cupping the eraser to plunge the sharpened lead deep in her abdomen an inch or two below her navel without chance of it slipping, glancing away, and failing? Or did she kick off her shoes, slip off her jeans, roll down her frilly pink panties, kicking them away, lying on her back, raising her knees then inserting the pencil, start poking with a pistoning action, hoping to impale the problem before she passed out inducing this miscarriage? But I didn't know, and so I didn't write the story.

I wondered if there were prayers, and what the recipients of those prayers might be, or if she even felt the need. But if she did, to whom did she pray, the Mother Mary, the son of God, Allah, the moon or sun, some force, a vortex from the center or being in the universe? Was any deity listening, overseeing this insignificant, solitary event? Did it rain while this was happening? Instead I sent clippings of the story to local elected politicians. Only one replied with "thoughts and prayers" for the girl. I wondered if he understood that maybe she was beyond that solution, but how would he know since he wasn't there?

So instead of writing the story, I thought about dogs and cats and horses put down when life is too painful for them for it to be considered humane to let them live; and I thought about the mustangs roaming free on the BLM, how their feed is laced with contraceptives: and how if one broke its leg in a gofer hole, somebody or something would come by to help it die. I remembered, "They shoot horses, don't they?"

# A Song of China

---

---

*Clark Zlotchew*

It was in Shanghai that I heard it:  
music so unbearably sweet,  
melodious, mellifluous,  
that tastes like honey,  
flows over your tongue,  
sinks into your taste buds,  
descends to your stomach  
where you digest it,  
whence every atom of your being  
draws it in, absorbs it.

The music is so tender,  
it caresses  
like the smooth hand  
of a woman  
who gently strokes  
your cheek, your temples,  
the nape of your neck.

Music that penetrates  
through your ears,  
into your brain,  
your pores,  
your flesh,  
your blood.

It flows over your heart,

like a mighty river,  
overwhelming it,  
submerging it,  
drowning it.

It takes hold of your soul,  
tugs on it, threatening  
to draw it from your body.  
It's powerful, yet tender and sweet,  
powerfully tender, powerfully sweet.  
It draws tears from your eyes.

But why?  
All this emotion dredged up,  
by breath whispering through tubes  
of wood, through reeds,  
through silvery metal cylinders.

Perhaps it's the deep,  
dark molasses tones,  
that taste of fragrant honey,  
and stream from wind instruments,  
like air forced through a hollow reed,  
or wind that hums through a bamboo forest,  
or gusts through a ringing cavern,  
or drives dust across a thirsty desert,  
a forlorn scene of stark desolation,  
a wilderness of dark isolation,  
some godforsaken windy wasteland.

Perhaps it's the erhu,  
the instrument of two strings,

stroked with a bow whose silken sounds  
quiver and quake and modulate,  
and feel to me like a human cry,  
or perhaps a human sigh,  
or the voice of a woman weeping,  
in sorrow and despair,  
who has lost something  
or perhaps someone  
she will never find again.  
Perhaps the one, perhaps the other.

Perhaps neither one nor the other.  
Just the sound of your very own soul  
as it rises up and out of you  
and flies away with the wind.



**Disaroused** -Sculpture, Jennifer M. Lau

# Marshland

---

*Shahada Thomas*

Tall cypress trees  
dripping with Spanish moss  
hover over swamps  
like mothers  
protecting their young.  
Strong, resilient,  
but not enough  
to defend against  
the harsh winds of  
a hurricane.  
Their necks snap.  
Cicadas who sought  
refuge in the long  
hairs of moss  
now left homeless  
and destitute.



**Reflection** -digital artwork, Brittany Watson



**Onyx** -digital photography, Alana Stewart



**Jade** -digital photography, Alana Stewart

# And Miles to Go

---

*Livingston Alexander*

I grew up speaking French Creole, as did most other children of my generation who spent the first years of their lives in the Atchafalaya River Basin areas of Southern Louisiana. I didn't begin to learn English until first grade. That first day at St. Francis is indelibly etched in my memory.

"What's your name, boy?" Sister Anna demands, in a stern, no-nonsense manner.

I've heard some fairly wicked things about the nuns at St. Francis; and Sister Anna has just sent a boy to kneel in the corner for cutting up. Not knowing what she's saying to me, and noting her stern manner, I immediately go to the corner to kneel next to the other boy. Sister Anna tries to suppress a chuckle, but cannot. She quickly regains her composure and reestablishes her stern manner. She comes over and pulls me up gently by the ear, whispering with adoringly soft eyes: "Comment t'appelle tu?"

I quickly respond: "Livingston." Sister Anna still appears tough and menacing to the other kids in the class, but it's surprisingly clear to me there's another side to this Sister Anna. I may be the only one who sees it.

Fortunately, I'm better off when I arrive at Epiphany than when I started at St. Francis. However, my English is still pretty bad. When I open my mouth to speak, everyone knows I come from somewhere else. My reading isn't any better. I can make sense of most of what I read, but my reading is slow—too slow, in fact, to complete my homework during study hall and study for the big test looming tomorrow.

By all accounts, I'm years behind my new classmates. I decide that if I sit in the front row in all my classes and work diligently during study halls, I'll catch up. However, it dawns on me that almost everyone else is studying just as hard during those time periods. Moonlighting after hours becomes my secret way to make up ground. The nightlight above my bed, with its red *exit* lettering and yellow

light, becomes my nightly companion. When everyone else goes to sleep, I pull out my index cards, position myself comfortably on my left elbow, and quietly recite the vocabulary words and their meanings until I master them.

The beds in our fourth floor dorm are arranged in ten rows of six beds. Lockers stand side by side along the four walls of living space that is home to sixty high school seminarians. I consider it providential that I'm assigned a bed directly beneath the exit sign. There are three exit signs in our dorm—one at each end leading to the north and south staircases and one in the middle, allowing access to the middle staircase. I'm in row five, bed number six, three feet from my locker, and basking in the glow of my wonderful nightlight. When time runs out on me during the day, I know that I can always count on my luminous little friend to see me through another difficult test.

The moonlighting seems to work for me. I surely do not receive the highest scores on the English tests in that freshman year of high school, and I'm never the last boy standing in the weekly spelling bee, but I never fail a test, and as time goes by, the other boys gradually stop their teasing about my "broken" English.

Although challenged with seemingly insurmountable obstacles in that freshman year of high school, I do have one secret asset. During the months leading to my departure for Epiphany, the parish priest who had recruited me decided to give me grammar lessons in Latin. At the time, he thought one way to overcome my severe deficiencies in English was to learn Latin grammar. I'll never forget the noun declension drills: *tuba, tubae, tubae, tubam, tuba; tubae, tubarum, tubis, tubas, tubis*. I caught on quickly, but at the time, could not have recognized the enduring value of these lessons. Nor could I have ever known at ages twelve and thirteen that my initial mastery of fundamental concepts in Latin grammar would position me to become the resident Latin expert in my Latin classes in high school and college.

As I progress through my sophomore and junior years, I continue to struggle mightily in my literature classes, barely making sense of



Shakespeare and Chaucer. My Latin classes, on the other hand, are a breeze; and while some boys continue to tease me about my funny accent and broken English, others flock to me for help in translating Julius Caesar's commentaries on the Gallic Wars, Cicero's Latin prose, or Virgil's epic poem the *Aeneid*. I take pride in that, although it isn't the kind of thing you brag about. I simply tuck it away, allowing it to become my one and only small measure of worth in what I regard as an otherwise pretty pathetic childhood, especially in comparison with the other seminarians at Epiphany.

My poor and impoverished background—a decrepit shack of a house with a minimum of indoor plumbing (one faucet in the kitchen) and five children surviving on welfare and my mother's meager earnings as a domestic—is a reality I take for granted and simply regard as our lot in life and a consequence, of course, of being black. White seminarians from such places as Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and New York City talk matter-of-factly of fancy cars, televisions, bicycles, and vacation trips to the beach.

Even the black seminarians from New Orleans; Columbus, Ohio; Beaumont, Texas; Mississippi; and Washington DC chime in with their less extravagant, but still impressive, accounts of dining at Dukie Chase (famed black restaurant in New Orleans) and both parents living at home, making livings as lawyers, teachers, real estate agents, bankers—jobs I assumed were reserved for white people.

I have no such amenities to report. I can surely talk about my mother's delicious fried chicken and gumbo, her deep religious faith, the backbreaking work she does every day of her life to provide for her children, her tough discipline and strict commands to stay away from the hoodlum kids in the neighborhood. But I know none of my new friends want to hear about that. I know they could never relate to an account about a poor woman with a third grade education whose only pastime was going to the "colored" upper floor at the Carmen Theater on Saturday afternoons to see a Wild Bill Hickock, Gary Cooper, or Audie Murphy western.

And I certainly am not going to bring up my father who, like many black men who didn't go west or north as part of the black migration

during the early to middle part of the twentieth century, resorted to alcohol and womanizing to escape from the lifelong misery of coping with an oppressive, segregated system. The Jim Crow system of rural Southern Louisiana confined most black men to the menial jobs of harvesting sugar cane and cotton and relegated them to a social status lower than the dogs, cats, and horses white people cuddled as pets.

My father was the town drunk who had as many as six children with other women. I was never able to relate to him as a father since he walked out on our family when I was four years old. I'm fairly certain the other six children didn't relate to him as a father either. No, I have no intention of introducing my father as a subject in the conversation.

As I listen to the seminarians chatter about their experiences back home, I feel like an outsider, sometimes fantasizing about what life must be like to hop in the backseat of a car when going out and about, rather than having to walk; or sit in front of a television any time during day or night instead of sneaking a peek at a friend's house, hoping to catch a glimpse of a popular show; or simply open the door to another room in the house to relieve yourself instead of going to the outhouse in the middle of night, not knowing what critter you might come across.

My new friends now turn their attention to me. With no fancy trappings to report and virtually nothing to fuel my imagination to make stuff up, I talk about hog cracklings or *gratons* (tasty fried pork skins) and red and white *boudin* (ground internal organs of a pig cooked in a stew and stuffed into intestinal casings), hoghead cheese (congealed meat from the head and organs of the pig), and smoked sausage. It occurs to me that I can also brag about the abundance of crawfish in Breaux Bridge and how you can go to any ditch or canal, find these little creatures, boil them, and enjoy a nice snack whenever you want to. I tell them about the bayous and swamps teeming with all kinds of fish and other sea life and about people navigating the waterways to hunt for alligators. Since they wouldn't know any better, I'm tempted to lie about people having alligators as pets in their backyards. I don't. That Catholic guilt thing prevails.

My decision to share some things about my region of origin backfires in a dreadful way. Now the seminarians all want to come to Breaux Bridge during the summer. They have heard of these tasty *gratons* and *boudin*, but most have never eaten them. They want to try these so-called delicacies and maybe see an alligator or two. I'm horrified. They'll see the dilapidated shack we live in. If they want to relieve themselves, I'll have to send them to the outhouse. They'll come back to the seminary next fall with stories about going to Livy's house and having to go to an outhouse to take a leak. I simply cannot let that happen. I'll never live down the embarrassment.

Fortunately, there are friends from Breaux Bridge and other towns in Southern Louisiana also enrolled at Epiphany. In addition to Donald, Clyde, and me, Wilson Dartez (Arnaudville) came to Epiphany in the same year. Joseph Hurley Babineaux (Cecilia) and Robert Rador (Church Pointe) had come the year before. I introduce the idea of asking our families to ship a package of cracklings to Epiphany so we can enjoy them ourselves and share the delicacies with our new friends. My hope is that this will satisfy the appetite and curiosity of those who have thought of venturing down to Breaux Bridge during the summer.

When the package of cracklings arrives from Wilson Dartez's family via postal service, no one on the staff knows what to make of it. The priest brings the package during a break between classes, holding it gingerly with index finger and thumb on a folded newspaper, other fingers pointing out from the package to avoid any further contact. "I've got a package here for Wilson Dartez," he says, a puzzled and inquisitive look on his face.

Cracklings are notoriously saturated with lard from the frying, and the oil has obviously penetrated all the wrappings, including the external brown paper bag covering. Those of us from Southern Louisiana know exactly what has happened and laugh hysterically. The other boys simply stare, wondering what's inside the package.

"Thank you, Father," Wilson says, taking the package with both hands.

The priest just cannot resist the question: "What on earth is in that

package, Wilson?”

“Just snacks from down home, Father,” Wilson says, quickly tearing into the package. The priest walks away, scratching his head.

The contents disappear quickly as one boy after another plucks cracklings from the oil-soaked package from Arnaudville.

As I often find to be the case, the things I seem to worry about the most are the things I need to worry about the least. The seminarians never do come to visit me during that first summer; nor do they come in any other summer. Eventually that dread is overtaken by other more serious dreads.



**Los Padres National Forest** -*digital photography, Noah Gasch*



ATL X NYC -digital photography, Alana Stewart



**Lost and Found** -digital photography, Kassi Kloss



**Conform** - *digital photography*, Kassi Kloss

## Contributor Bios

**Livingston Alexander** was the president of Pitt-Bradford for fourteen years and of Pitt-Titusville for five. He has written numerous articles and book chapters in the areas of cognition, leadership, and learning and instruction and is working on a memoir about his life in education.

**Maya Bingaman** is from Lancaster, PA. She studies international affairs and political science at Pitt-Bradford and hopes to pursue a master's degree in communications. She has published work in *The Elephant Journal* and created blogs, vlogs, press releases, and content for a variety of organizations ranging from Pitt-Bradford's Communications and Marketing Office to the International Studies program. She is also the founder and content creator for the portrait series on campus, *People of Pitt Bradford*.

**Isabelle Champlin** retired from Pitt-Bradford in 2012 after forty years of teaching anthropology and six years as Director of International Studies. She enjoys writing, vegetable gardening, making pack baskets, canoeing, traveling (especially to archaeological sites), and taking classes from her colleagues such as Dr. Ogundayo's Middle Eastern Literature.

**Sadie D'Angelo** is a Pitt-Bradford senior majoring in broadcast communications with minors in public relations and marketing. She is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success and an avid singer performing with the Chautauqua Institution Choir, Chautauqua Chamber Singers, the Jamestown Community Music Program Chorale, and more. She has also been a photographer and reporter for Pitt-Bradford's newspaper *The Source* as well as a news anchor for their student radio station WDRQ-The Growl. This is the first year she has worked on the *Baily's Beads* staff. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a masters degree in journalism.

**William J. Granche** is a husband, the father of three, a



grandfather of four, and as of June of 2009, a retired language arts teacher who specialized in creative writing and poetry exploration for thirty-seven years dedicated to St. Marys Area High School. He is a politically active writer defending the environment and gun sense, while enjoying triathlons, trail running, fishing, hunting, brewing, reading, and writing.

**Elizabeth Johnson** is from York, PA. She is a sophomore history/political science and economics major hoping to attend law school after graduation. Painting has been her hobby since high school.

**Jessie Jordan** is from St. Marys, PA. Her major is interdisciplinary arts with focuses on visual arts and writing. She published a poem in last year's *Baily's Beads*.

**Bonnie McMillen** is a Bradford native, raised on Campus Drive. She is a lover of the outdoors, education, books, music, and writing short stories and poetry, especially haiku. She is a graduate of Alfred University and was an R.N. for thirty-six years. Her favorite authors include Willa Cather, John Steinbeck, and Margaret Atwood.

**Cindy Nowacki** is a seasoned artist and writer focusing her creations on natural surroundings through painting and poetry. Her enchantment with the beauty of landscape motivates her desire to capture panoramic views on canvas as well as in poetry. Mostly self-taught in her early development, Cindy has taken private lessons from certified landscape instructors throughout her adult years and completed her interdisciplinary arts degree from the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford in April 2018.

**Isaac E. Payne** is an English and writing major at Pitt-Bradford. He is a graduate of the Alpha Workshop for Young Writers. His short story "The Pursuit of Luck" received an honorable mention in the 2017 Writers of the Future Award. He was a panelist discussing Eastern and Western speculative fiction at the 2018 Northeastern Modern Language Association Conference.

**Helen Ruggieri** taught at Pitt-Bradford for twenty years. She received an MFA from Penn State and is the author of

several books.

**Rosemarie Schaut** has been a high school English teacher for twenty-nine years and currently teaches Composition I and Literature and Interpretation through Pitt-Bradford's CHS Program at Ridgway High School, in addition to junior and senior English, creative writing, and Advanced Placement Literature. She oversees the senior research graduation project and showcase presentations, is a Rotary Four-Way Speech Contest coach, and has also coached students participating in the Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Competition. She lives in Saint Marys, PA and spends her free time reading literary fiction, serving as an AP reader for the College Board, and caring for several adopted special needs shelter dogs.

**Kylie Schuman** is a graduate of Allegany Limestone High School and Jamestown Community College with an associate degree in humanities. She is currently majoring in interdisciplinary arts at Pitt-Bradford and interns at the campus's KOA Gallery. She developed an interest in the arts when she studied drawing, costuming, and painting and performed in the New York Summer School of the Arts choir in high school.

**Lucas Smith** is a chemistry and international affairs major graduating in 2019. He is an alumnus of Bradford Area High School and spends his time swimming, reading, playing piano, and fishing. Lucas is also treasurer of the International Relations and Model UN club and spends too much time watching movies. He writes often but never manages to actually finish any of it, so the fact that a somewhat finished piece is featured in this book is in itself a miracle.

**KLSees** is a Pitt-Bradford senior majoring in interdisciplinary arts. She has been a senior for several years, taking only one class per semester, since she works full-time as a physician-researcher; runs a small farm outside Mount Jewett with llamas, goats, chickens, guinea fowl, ducks, and a few cats; and does volunteer work throughout the community, including for Penn State Master Gardeners. Last summer she painted a mural on the outside west wall of the Mount Jewett

Memorial Library with Pitt-Bradford professor Samila Susic.

**Aubrie Shrubbs** is a sophomore interdisciplinary arts major.

**Brandon Taveras** is a chemical engineering major from the Bronx, New York. His interests include: chemistry, collecting vinyl records, the black rights movement, and writing poetry. Moreover, he would like to work in the chemistry field. He hopes to also become a black activist, poet, and prominent leader in the black community. Finally, he hopes to bring change to the world whether it is through science, politics, or poetry.

**Shahada Thomas** was a junior creative writing major with a minor in Africana studies when she wrote these poems.

**Clark Zlotchew** is a Distinguished Teaching Professor of Spanish (Emeritus) at SUNY Fredonia. He has published seventeen books, fourteen in his field and three works of fiction. His creative writing has been published in literary journals based in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and Ireland.

# Design

*Baily's Beads* is a university funded class project, producing 1,000 free perfect bound copies annually. Student photography and artwork obtained with express permission.

Design and formatting by Brianna Henry

Adobe InDesign and Adobe Photoshop

*Baily's Beads* Logo by Amy Gaberseck  
Adobe Illustrator

Published by Ferguson Printing, Inc.  
20 River Street Salamanca, New York 14779  
<http://www.fergusonprinting.com>

100# process color gloss cover  
Minion Pro

Cover art by: Ezozahon Ismailova, "Alleviating Aviation"

80# silk text interior block  
set in Minion Pro





