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St. Thomas More College's liberal arts journal
since 1995

in medias res



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EDITOR'S NOTE

In recent years, the journal has asked contributors for works of writing and art related to a theme, such as "Metamorphosis," "Horizon," and "Of the Mind," amongst others. While having a theme provides a thread to follow through the maze of works, this year our board decided to move away from themed issues. We wanted the USask community—students, staff, faculty, and alumni—to submit works that spoke to them, to their passions and concerns, their challenges and pursuits. We envisioned an issue of *in medias res* with no strings attached.

As we considered whether to proceed with a themeless issue, we often looked back to what in *medias res* has been for the last thirty years. Throughout these discussions, we kept returning to the word eclectic. At first, we were hesitant to use the word: eclectic is what a great-aunt might say about your fashion sense at a family gathering, her voice strained in a way that tells you she didn't quite mean it as a compliment. Eclectic is a playlist that shuffles from Taylor Swift to rap, punk rock to librettos without rhyme, reason, or rhythm. Eclectic is strange, disorganized, and even a little weird.

However, there is something about the eclectic that we thought was powerful and worth embracing. The word eclectic comes from the Ancient Greek *ἐκλεκτικός* (*eklektikos*), which originates from a verb that means to gather from a variety of sources. It originally referred to those philosophers who lived their lives not firmly in a single school of thought but collected principles from a wide variety of sources. Thus, to be eclectic is to pick and choose, to gather from multiple places. It is to ignore the demands to be all put together, to have a perfectly manicured presentation of self. It is to challenge an increasingly polarized world that demands full allegiance to one side while villainizing the other. It is to live in the middle of things.

This issue represents a collection of voices from our community. We were moved, challenged, and inspired by the works contained within this issue. It is our hope that you wander through these pages and find something to take away from the range of art and writing found within.

Sincerely,

Emily Zbaraschuk
Editor-in-Chief 2024/2025

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Contributors

in medias res is a student-led liberal arts journal at St. Thomas More College that aims to publish content to reflect the identities of the campus community, its complexities and diversities. Our mission is to be a forum for community expression that showcases the high-quality work of artists in the University of Saskatchewan community.

Our title describes the experience of university life, in which we are always caught "in the middle of things."

What are you thinking about? What worries you? What moves you? We want to hear the artistic voices that make up our community and help put their work out into the world.

We are located out of St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

As part of their mission statement, St. Thomas More College says that "the work of our college is not an end in itself, but must find application for the good of humanity." We ask all readers to consider how they benefit from settler institutions such as the university and how they can apply their learning not towards maintaining the status quo but instead towards change and meaningful reconciliation.

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the *in medias res* editorial board. Individual copyrights belong to the contributors.

Saskatchewan oil painter Cadence Dutchyn positions the subconscious within a surrealist landscape. She believes that to be a creator is not only to think and feel deeply but to render those thoughts and feelings expertly.



Cat Lady

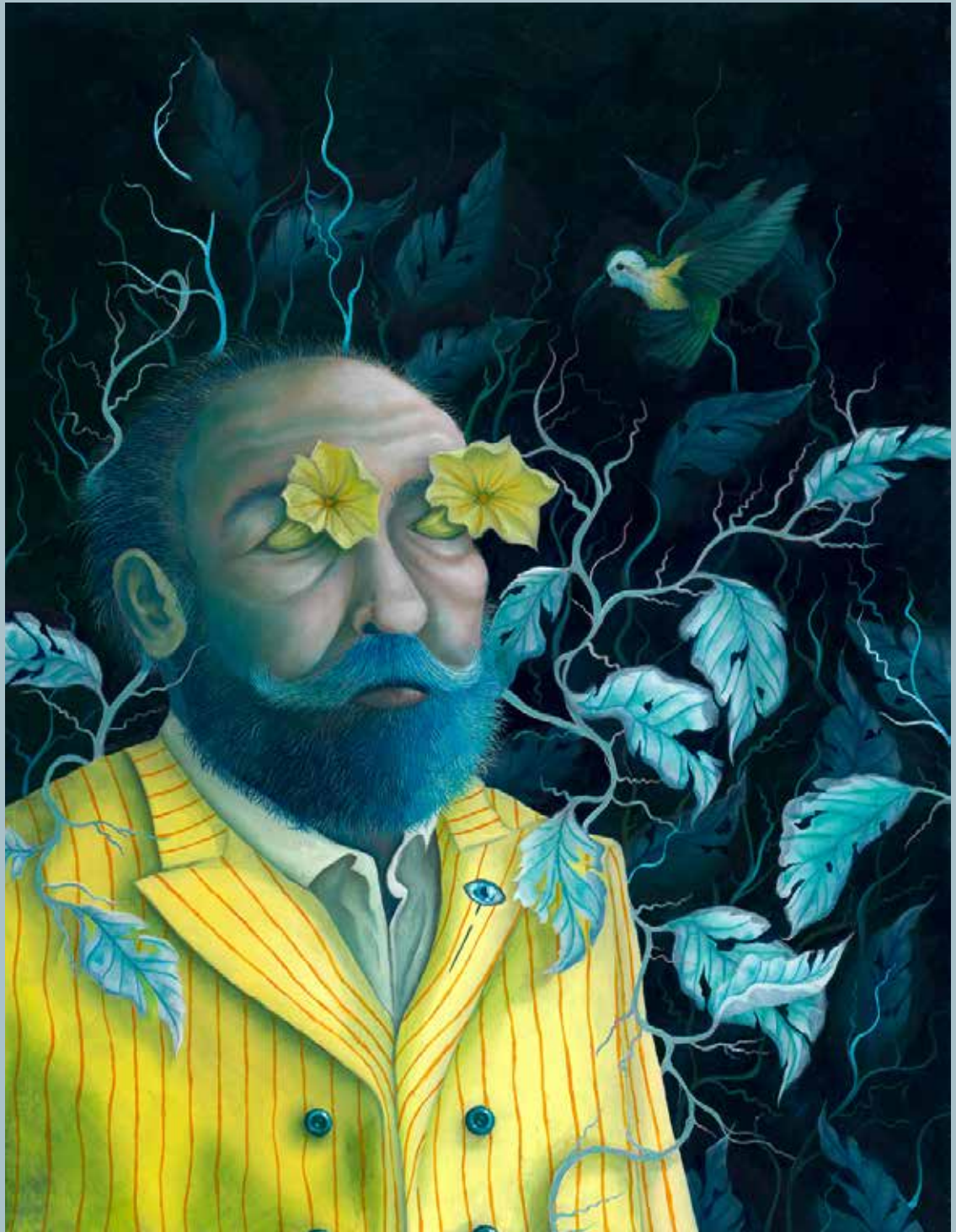
by CADENCE DUTCHYN
Oil on Board
20 x 24 in

Bird Man

by CADENCE DUTCHYN

Oil on Board

20 x 24 in



She regards inner exploration as an avenue to knowledge. Under that assumption, Cadence's art is foremost a tool for unearthing the subconscious—to put a shape, a colour, and a depth to the unknowns and grant them meaning through that process. In turn, she hopes those who view her work will create their own meanings from the thoughts and feelings her images evoke.

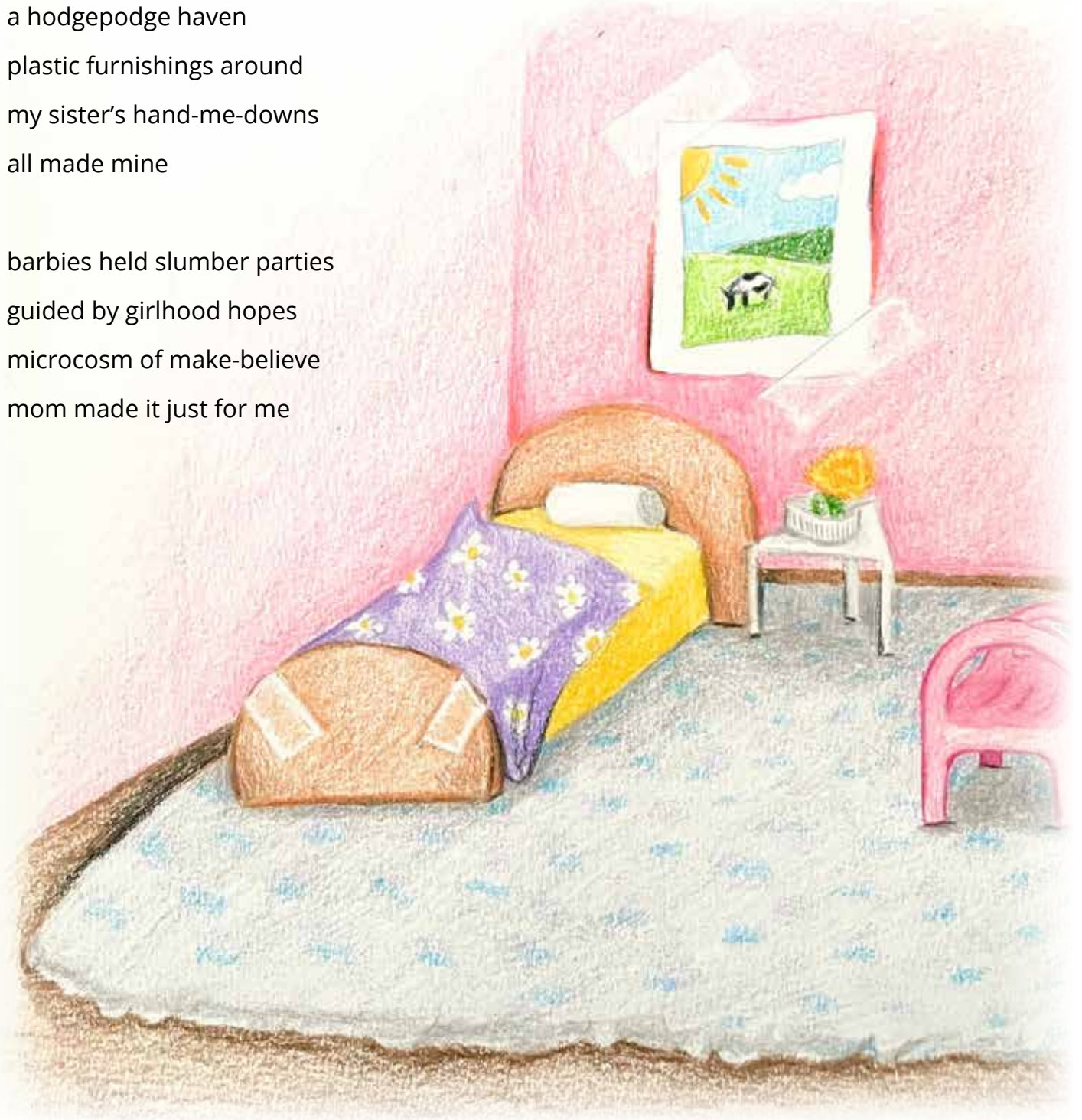
My Dollhouse

Jillian Albers

was a blocky dresser de-drawerred
crafty floors of carpet swatches
baby pink paint like
my big girl bedroom

a hodgepodge haven
plastic furnishings around
my sister's hand-me-downs
all made mine

barbies held slumber parties
guided by girlhood hopes
microcosm of make-believe
mom made it just for me



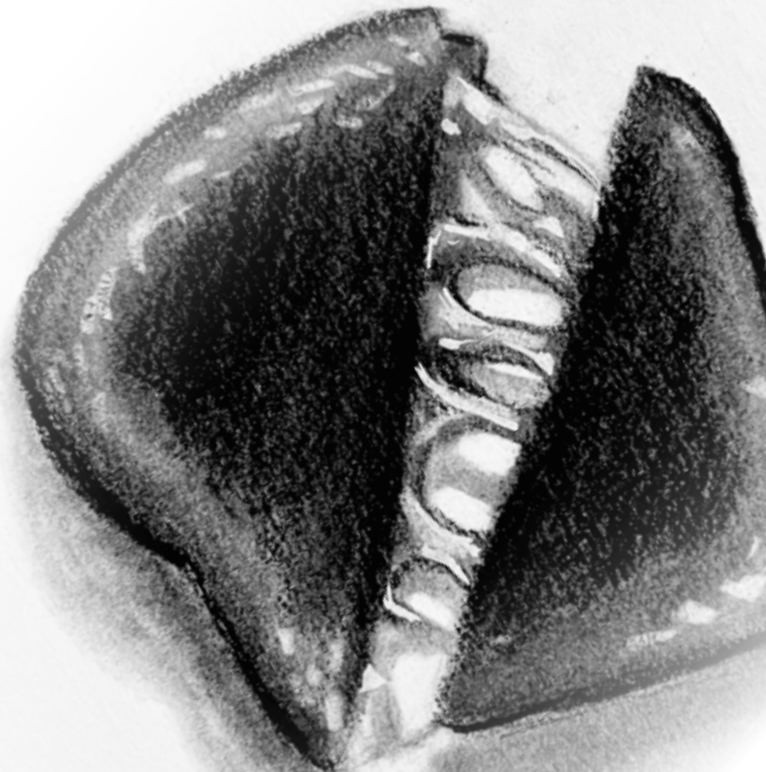
Grilled Cheese

Rachael Carline

I watch as Grandma takes
two thin curls off a block of bright cheddar,
two pieces of brown, grainy bread,
margarine from the tub, lightly spread over each piece.
Stacked. Bread, cheese, bread,
slapped on the pan. Be patient.
She always burned them.
Was she curling her stick-straight hair? Or waiting
for grandpa's footsteps down the hall?
She pushes my hair back,
lips touch my forehead
as smoke appears.
I always loved her sandwiches.

Mom never burnt grilled cheese,
always walking calmly from laundry,
vacuum, dishes, and back again.
As the meal cooked, she talked
about work, politics, siblings.
I hummed back, balancing on tip toes,
eyes straining, waiting for the smoke.
Hands would appear on my shoulders
pushing me away. She flipped the sandwich,
bread, cheese, bread, falling back on the pan.
The top, a perfect golden brown.
I never liked her sandwiches.

I stare at my own sandwich.
Laundry should be folded.
Hair should be curled.
Yet I stand there,
shoulders attached to my ears,
waiting. For what I'm unsure.
Footsteps? Chatter?
Burning sandwiches can be as
hard as making them golden brown.
I put it on a plate.
Bread, cheese, bread.
The top is pale and soft.





The Wilds

Colton Danneberg

The swampy spring green mush of snow mold and wet grass made our footsteps squishy as we walked over the earth. Every breath was chilled, but the air was warming, slowly, as it usually does in April. There weren't any animals that I could see, maybe a set of tracks here and there, but nothing worth investigating.

"On the branches, the moss grows on the North side of the tree."

"Mmhm."

Marty was one of those boys that carried his father's features in his face. Even from a young age, he wore the same stubborn and sad look. He always felt much older than me, but he was still dwarfed by the tall, thin white trees and brush in our surroundings.

"So, that way's South, and that's North," he said, pointing his thin forefinger, "and that's East, and West. No, wait, that's West, that's East..."

We moseyed along the bog for a time with our rifles tucked beneath our arms, maneuvering the terrain of sprouting poplar trees, wary of any creatures that would jump out at us. We were always on guard when in the wild. It was the only time we really felt like men.

"Look, Chuck. Chuck, quiet. Shh... There, see?"

I looked to where he pointed but could see nothing but the glaring sun piercing the overhanging mossy branches, swaying silently. Marty aimed his gun

upwards, squinting through the dulled iron sights he attached to it the previous summer. I watched closely, then *POW*.

A partially destroyed woodpecker lay on the ground, its organs made into tomato chunks by the punch of the proportionally sized rifle bullet. My father's .22 felt like a cannon in my pale, skinny arms, and it must've felt like a cannonball to that bird, if it felt anything with the metal rupturing its frail form. As we looked down at the bits of bird scattered across the tree stump, I could tell Marty felt a little bad. I did, too. I think neither of us wanted to admit that to each other, so instead, we just stared at the bird in silence for a minute or so. Then we went back to hunting.

There was a time when I was brave enough to shoot a bear with that same rifle. It was winter, I was older. I was standing in the middle of a gravel road whose dust had hardened and settled in by the crust of ice that had frozen it into the ground. Facing me was a bush of hardened, papery birches and the dying trunks of pine trees which stood before a wide pasture, emptied of life. Beyond the fields layered with snow lay houses on the wide plains. Puffs of billowing white chimney smoke from the stocky farmhouses levitated into the equally white overcast sky. The red barns on the horizon stood out like bullet holes in a polar bear. It was with this picture in mind that I shot a thick, furred creature in the brush in front of me.

The echoing of the shot felt like it was not heard by anyone but me. The repeating ricochet of the blast made the cold pastures and fields feel evermore desolate. A deer somewhere might've started then settled, a rabbit may have scurried into a hole, but nobody could have heard a noise like that unless they were listening for it. The wounded animal stirred. My rifle began to

tremble. I emptied the casing, reached into my jacket with my other hand and inserted another round, slammed the cartridge case shut, then readjusted the bolt and pulled back the safety. Within seconds, I had it trained back on the bear, biting my tongue gently to keep from screaming. The creature rose listlessly. I glanced down the road towards home, then back into the brush, unsure of which was better. The trees stood by silently, their branches hanging over the brown-haired beast. It shuffled, preparing to charge and tear my torso apart with its claws. I stood there, sweating in the cold, holding my breath until my face turned red. I began to cry, hesitantly. I whimpered. I tried so hard not to. I turned on my heel and ran as fast as I could back home.

The bear never chased me. I never told anyone I shot a bear, either. I'm not even entirely sure why I did shoot it. When I got home, I dried my eyes until they hurt, so my father couldn't see that I was crying.

For the next few months, I awoke part-way through the night or early morning with dreams of the bear killing me. It was usually in the same spot on that back road, but sometimes it was unexpected, like when I dreamt I was having dinner with my mother and the beast broke through the wall and jumped on me.

One morning I shook awake, sweating in the morning light that shone into the room through my foggy bedroom window. I thought I was still dreaming, since I heard a loud banging sound coming from the window, so I laid there awaiting the end of the dream when the bear lunges forward, teeth bared in an ugly grin, its thick hide dripping blood from where my bullet had hit it. But the bear didn't come. The noise continued, though. I started, then lay back, still, and listened. The wind seemed to have been punishing the fence for blocking its path. Sometimes it bangs like that if the wind hits it just right. Then I heard someone speaking, angry and gruff. A woman's screech came from outside. I laid there still and began to tremble. The commotion did not stop for some time. I did not move.

When it finally fell silent, I went

upstairs and told my father what I heard. He was angry that I did not think to call out to him or to pick up the home phone and call 9-1-1. I told him I was scared. He struck hard against my cheek with the back of his hand. Luckily, my father wore no rings.

At his funeral they put rings on the corpse's fingers. I'm not sure how, since I know that bodies grow in size when they die. I've seen a coyote triple in weight over a period of two weeks lying in a ditch by the farm. My father also tripled in weight in the last five years of his life, but that was from drinking and eating so much. That's what killed him, they said. I was seventeen when he finally died.

I remember watching them lower his body, encased in that shiny black wood case, into the rectangular dugout next to his father and mother. I didn't shed a tear. I felt nothing. It was like watching somebody feel sad, but not being able to imitate the emotion myself. I knew I was sad, but I couldn't put it into words, or into feeling, even. I watched blankly as the clumps of dry, sandy dirt were shoveled into the six-foot-deep hole before me. I remember the weather more clearly than anything else that day. It was the morning after a thick storm had come through, which had pelted little droplets of hardened ice onto the plains. The morning sun was warm and melted the hail, which gave the stubby grass a sweet mildew smell.

My gaze left the coffin and strayed up into the near-empty blue sky above. Scatterings of grey clouds peppered the skyline to the South, moving fast with the wind away from me.





Facade

by SEAN WOROBEC
Acrylic on canvas
5.8 x 8.3 in

Masks are often associated with identity and this comparison is one I try to make in my work. Being able to put on a mask and be perceived as something else is a powerful idea to me that I believe speaks to many people. The natural colours that make the piece are there to question what is a natural identity for those who choose to hide their identity with a mask.

Imperium

Nolan Long

The Great Wen, 'metropolis of the empire.'
I enter its halls, its memories.
The ghosts of colonial ventures idle –
Imported Indigenous bark deprived of meaning.
Beninese in chains genuflecting before Britannia:
That rapacious, uncompromising beast.

Dizzying waves of spectators stumbling
For a glimpse of the Rosetta Stone.
Thieved by the French, stolen by the English,
Now sedentary in a city of museums
Without any artifacts of its own.

They have begot more than this:
Blood diamonds hang from a daughter's wrist,
And the blood-stained Crown swims in African riches.

Walking the labyrinthian Louvre:
A sphinx, a vase, a bowl.
Where is the Frenchman?
Cairo has been stolen, trampled,
And spends her time apportioned
Between these two imperia:
The divisions of dependencies of 1914.

Back on the Prairies, my feet touch the ground,
Conquered by the same generals that lived
In London and Paris.
So much remains the same:
Clouded sky, blood in the soil,
Blowing air, burning of oil.
A city of settlers, and I see a new imperium
Where I was raised.



The Quality of Mercy

Elisabeth Bauman

Little old lady – poorly dyed red hair,
Clothes worn with care, nervously moves
Four items in her shopping cart
Around and around, lined, stacked, clumped
As we wait in the checkout line.

Her cart is swollen with emptiness.
The cheapest, most necessary items
Only: two chicken breasts, not even a pound of flesh,
Flour, noodles,
A little bright bag of herbs.
And my sister and I have a cart heaped with leeks and luxuries:
Vanilla yogurt, feta, juice boxes, butter tarts – a student's treasure-trove.

The lady has crumpled flyers in her cart,
Paper ribboned, coupons cut out..
She shuffles her food – bag of flour
Lifted, weighed in wrinkled hands,
Laid back on the cart's wire grid.
And as she organizes her meager meal,
A small bag of spices – basil, oregano perhaps –
Ends up beneath the pile of discarded newspaper,
Only we, standing behind the cart, see.

The cashier rings up the person ahead.
My sister and I idly discuss which celebrity is
Not marrying another celebrity
According to the tabloids lining the aisle.

And I watch the lady, accent thick as she counts, place
Three
Items on the counter.

I look away, say casually to my sister,
"So, I guess this magazine was printed before the game,
considering Travis did not actually propose to Taylor."
When I look back
The lady is giving the cashier a crumpled
\$20 bill, hands trembling
One spot of brightness still—
One pack of herbs—still,
At the bottom of her cart
Staring at me
Daring me.

And I stare back at it, stare at the back
Of this lady, who could be my grandmother
Who must be someone's
Grandmother – whose lined mouth and eyes
are the same wise kind as my Oma's.

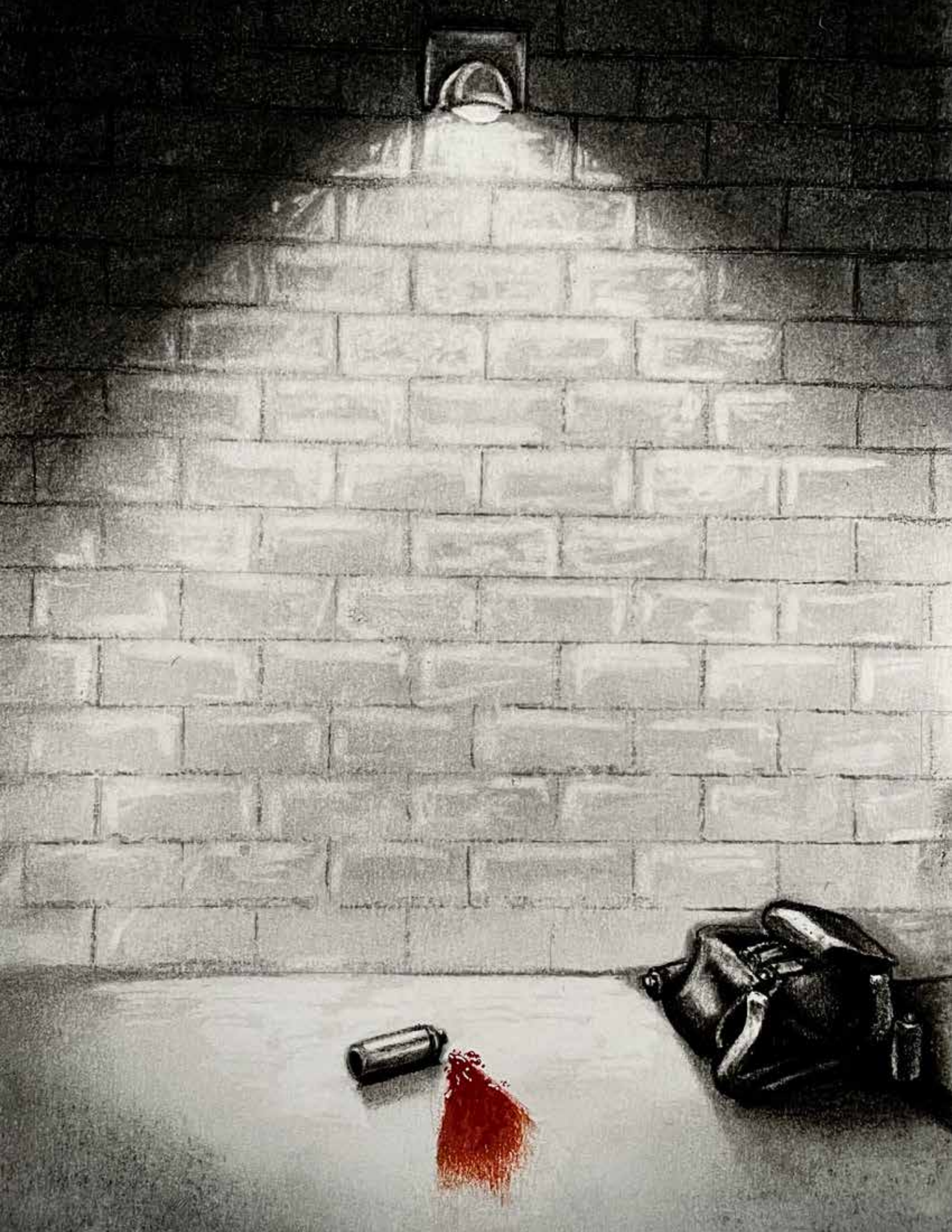
And I wonder if she is going home to a grandson,
A child she held and watched grow,
And if she will ration
That small pinch of seasoning to make dough, bland chicken delicious.
If she will hold the plate in trembling hands,
Cut the bread, lay it before her boy with pride, with stolen dignity,
A luxury I can afford it, why can't she?

"I think I just saw my first shoplifting,"
I whisper to my sister,
As the lady with the dyed red hair
Puts the three items back into the cart,
Noodles on newspaper, newspapers on the herbs,
And, shoulders slumped, steps trembling to the exit.

I don't feel I witnessed a crime.
My sister frowns, asks,
"Do you think we should report it?"
Something in my stomach clenches tight.
I think of that small bag of herbs, bright,
The only flavour in an empty cart;
Wonder if she would put up a fight,
Wonder what of her heart I have,
Lifted, weighed.
Isn't mercy strained -
Constrained by what dignity we owe each other?

The woman's shoulders
Hunched and proud and brave.
"I don't think so," I say
And place our luxuries on the counter.





The Wall

Renelle Morelli

The night sky above the city is hazed over by the glowing streetlights. Shadows creep along the wall, outlining the ridges and dimples of the painted brick. Xavier's eyes drink up the surfaces illuminated by the dim yellow hue.

He walks down the alley with the consistent bounce of the duffel bag on his hip. The cans within it clang with every step. His strides are sure and quick, the image of her flaring at the forefront of his mind, demanding action. He scans the wall, searching the graffiti splattered paint for a blank section.

Finally, he finds a perfect break between two of the haphazard tags and doodles. One of the doodles is a yellow flower, drawn by a young child's hand. He drops the bag, and it hits the pavement with a chorus of hollow clangs.

Standing here it was as if she was still beside him, looking at a skewed line in an otherwise perfect painting.

"I need to fix it," he had told her as he searched for a paint to conceal it.

Her hand reached and grabbed his wrist, stopping him. "I like it. You should leave it," she told him softly, "Perfect things aren't as likeable."

So, he left the mistake.

Now his actions become rushed as he crouches over the bag and unzips it, disrupting the dust that has stained it from sitting unused in the back of his closet. He rummages through the cans for the colour he wants, long strands of greasy black hair falling over his forehead. Sweat gleams between his creased brows as he searches. He picks a light blue for his sketch.

He approaches the wall, shaking the can in his clenched hand and his arm arcs out in front of him as he sends that first line flaring brightly over the smooth wall. More short bursts of paint create the beginning structure of the piece.

His hands become extensions of his memory, recalling the beauty of a woman that he no longer has. With erratic movements he

sketches the plane of her forehead, the slight bump of her nose, the squint of her eyes and the waves of her hair. He grabs a deep grey and starts his base by shading in the shadows that hung under her eyes after a long shift at the restaurant, and the lines around her mouth from her persistent and defiant smile.

His heart pounds as she takes form on the wall. Ever since the accident this ache has grown and festered within him, and now before her image, the ache grows into something else entirely. A hunger. A hunger for the cheek that smiled beneath his palm, and for lips that spoke his full name in the late hours of the night. A hunger for a teasing nudge as they walked together down the street. A hunger for her.

It consumes him, dulling the pain of his cramped hands as he adds colour after colour. A blush for the warmth of her cheeks, a brown for the depths of her eyes, a blue for the undertones of her skin, mixed with reds, and yellows, and whites. Sometimes the colours didn't look like her, or maybe it was the changing light that made their hues appear differently. So, in frustration he repaints sections. He does this over and over again, never quite achieving her image.

He adds a spot of black in her ear when the scrape of walking shoes passes behind him, distracting him from his craft. A couple walks past down the alley, and the risen sun glares down on their intertwined hands. Xavier squeezes the cold aluminum of the spray can.

The hunger hardens within him, and he turns back to his recreation.

She is almost complete, but now he paints the shining waves of her hair, mixing yellows, browns, and golds. But that was only in the sun, in the dark it looked almost black. What lighting is she captured in now? He glances at the midday sun and sticks with the golden-brown hues.

After the hair he notices an unforgivable

mistake. Right in the corner of her eye the grey of the wall shows through, where she should have a small pink triangle. Xavier is no longer open to imperfections, not with her. He shuffles through his bag, knowing he has the right shade. Finally, he finds it, and lifts it to her eye. His finger presses down, and nothing comes out.

He tries it again and again. But nothing.

"No, no, no, no," he whines, shaking the can to try to produce any paint. Nothing. "No!" In a forceful swing he chucks the can at the opposite wall, resulting in a loud clang as it clatters to the ground.

He watches it for a moment, red, tired eyes scanning it as it rolls away slowly. The constant hum of the pavement hitting the metal filling his ears until it finally stills in the alley.

He grabs red and white paints instead, compromising for the sake of finishing the piece.

Now, her hair looks awkward under the yellow lights, so he paints it black. But the black doesn't match the brightened hue of her cheeks, so he changes that too.

Eventually, he runs out of his blue. And a yellow. They join the pink by the other wall.

The painting never feels right to him. The mouth doesn't capture her happiness and the eyes aren't big enough. He forgets how dark the circles under her eyes were, but he remembers they were there, so he makes sure to paint them with every correction. Yet perfection has become unreachable.

But he keeps painting.

"Daddy?"

His hand stills, finger locked on that spout until the paint drips down the wall.

He turns his head to see a little girl standing just a few feet away. Tears pool under large brown eyes as she watches him. A man stands farther down the alley with his arms crossed, deep lines of worry burrowing into his face.

"What are you doing here?" Xavier asks, his voice rasping from disuse.

"We came to find you," his daughter Olivia says.

"You've been away from home for two days Xavier," his father adds, walking closer. "Your mother has been worried."

Xavier takes a step back. "I need to finish this."

His father glances at her portrait on the wall. "This piece of crap?" he spits, "Is that s'pose to be Mary?"

Xavier's breath quickens as his eyes pierce into his father. "You're not allowed to say her name," he says, tears burning with dangerous proximity. "You have no right!"

"Right? I have no right? Me and your mother have been the ones to care for *your* daughter ever since Mary died, while you hide in some dark alley. Don't speak to me about *rights*."

Xavier grows dizzy as he locks eyes with his father, whose face is red with matched intensity. He wants to scream or turn back to the wall. His hands shake, anger blocking his vision from his daughter just a few feet away. But then Olivia moves, and their eyes both turn to her as she walks to position herself before the wall. She looks at the portrait, and she wipes the tears as confusion overcomes her face in the form of creased brows.

"She looks scary. Is that Mommy?" she asks.

"Of cours—." Xavier stops as he looks at his painting. His heart plummets. Somehow her mouth had grown into a manic grin. The corners expand across her face, stretching over her cheeks. Her eyes look far too massive, melting into the sloping curve of her bottom lid. The grey patches below the eyes have grown, too, to a point where her face looks gaunt, as if her skin was melting off her skull.

"No. No, this isn't right," he gasps as he stumbles towards his bag, nearly plowing over his daughter. His heart pounds and hands tremble as he grabs whatever can he can find. He takes each one to the wall, trying to fix the mess before him.

Empty.

Empty again.

Another one, *empty*.

The cans clatter to the ground at his

feet. His vision blurs, tears burning as he tries every can. Somewhere around him he hears the muffled sound of a man yelling and a child crying. But he keeps trying, only to find each can containing nothing more than a couple sprays of paint.

He falls to his knees. The colours blur together as his tears race over his cheeks. In just a moment, she was gone again. His hands catch his face as sobs rake themselves from his chest. His whole body convulses with each hiccup of breath, drowning in the onslaught of tears.

Hands pull at his clothing and voices plead in his ear. He deteriorates in the city air, body folding into the rough pavement until he, too, is nothing more than a broken image distorted under the street lights.





Reconfiguring Particles of A Reality

by NARGES PORSANDEKHIAL
Underglaze Wash, Terracotta
12 x 10 x 3 in

Reconfiguring Particles of A Reality, drawn from an ongoing photo-collage series, explores the fragility of a structure—representing forms teetering on the edge of collapse, moments away from falling apart. The work embodies a malleable reality that cannot remain intact for long, serving as a metaphor for the uncertainty and fragmentation we experience during times of anxiety. The raw, rugged aesthetic heightens the sense of imminent breakdown, amplifying the feeling of instability and disorder.

The Last Days

Ben Jorgenson

Grab your paper and pen
Bring your books
Make your mind to dream
For these are the last days

When I was a young child
My calling was only a promise
Visions of grandeur, meaning and love
For a life not yet lived

Now that I'm older,
I've only put a finger on it
And found it a setting sun
Again, in the last days

Clang the bell, brandish the sign
Annoy the locals, frighten the tourists
Yelling in the parks, under the windows
Of those small apartments

Where once we felt our voices
Reverberating down the ages
We now hear them bounce off brick walls
And drop

Down we go, then
To a new age
Where we may look around us
And recognize nothing

And share nothing
Where you and I are just as fleeting
Just as important
As the next flashing silicon words

Words born onto clay tablets
To serve us
Now servant has become master
And his power is beyond us

But don't be bitter!
Take up your easels
Molotov cocktails and 808s
Make your gentle mouth to screaming
In these, the last days

lola

Jhaymee Bisenio

I left my soul on a grave I have never visited
your image ever so faded in the
confines of my childhood memory
is it even possible to feel
grief so palpable it crosses the sea?



Where?

Ben Jorgenson

Our city tilts and totters along a perilous fault line
It, like the breeze, skims overtop red dirt
It only blows up dust

This is the nation's underbelly
Which births the worst among us
Here lie the scars of our state, those ugly red marks left
Where they patched up the body

So we look the other way,
Yet still the city prods at us, irritates us
Spends its whole life making itself known
Becoming impossible to ignore

Our city buses ride over cracked pavement
We pause and stumble on our way home from the drugstore
The faucets creak at night

Yet still we watch this Frankenstein creature
This wounded thing as it aches and twitches and groans
As it cries, and laughs, and waits

To crumble at any minute
Or every minute





luminescent permanence

kaitlyn price

the moon suspends above our twisting
and oh-so-ever-changing lives
never adjusting never
altering
perceiving through a thick lens
through which we erupt from
chubby faces,
lanky arms,
sweet-stained blue raspberry lips.
i've been under the moon's convex sight
for so long

but the moon glows the same,
the same it did when youth
was fresh and dripping from our pores.
we preserve our skin with what glow we have left.

the moon glows the same,
but through vacant screens.
i miss viewing the moon's radiant smile
with our impressionable eyes,
we mistook our lives
to be the moon's gasping sigh.



Camping in the Mountains

by CAROLYN BUCKLES

Acrylic on stretched canvas with wire backing

16 x 20 in

When we consider our legacy to our children and the future, being able to meditate in nature is what I have strived to achieve by engaging with wilderness camping. I remember camping in the foothills of the Peace Region of Northern British Columbia and enjoying the outdoors with my family.

Unbelonging

Emily Jung

"Where are you from?"

A question of ancestry for you,
But a reminder of unbelonging to me
My passport calls me Canadian
But your look of disbelief tells me otherwise

"Where are you really from?"

A question of innocent curiosity to you
But a reminder of my disjointed identity to me
My first language is English
But your compliment on my fluency tells me otherwise

"You're from Korea: North or South?"

A question of blatant ignorance for you,
But a reminder of generational trauma for me
My family calls me reckless
My psychiatrist tells me otherwise

You call me a foreigner
But I was born on the same land as you
You question my loyalty
When all I've done is praise you
You hold so much power over my identity
The least you could do is let me tell my story.

Unbecoming

Emily Jung

I am unbecoming.
a woman, but loud and rambunctious
for the silenced, an advocate
my body, my least interesting feature
Unbecoming for a girl, I know
but I'm unlearning
I am unbecoming.

I am unbecoming.
an immigrant, but not a model minority
hard-working and unafraid of the white majority
my meekness, a myth from old history books
Unbecoming for an immigrant, I know
but I'm unlearning
I am unbecoming.

The White Man put my identity in boxes
He conditioned my ancestors to fit right in
He touched up their stories to fit His image
taking away the scars and blemishes
The White Man made us into model Barbies
I'm shedding the packaging
I am unbecoming.



Golden Hour

Alyssa Borg

On the afternoon
of the rest of my life
the sun peaked
through gaps
in clouds spun
of celestial cotton
like seraphim descending
from beyond
to gaze upon me
and smile once
before departing.

My mortal bones
keep me anchored
to the Earth
keen to compel
me to listen to
the steady heart
beat beneath
that drums on
into eternity.



A Beginning

by RENELLE MORELLI

Acrylic paint with dirt and grass mixed with gesso
on a Masonite board

20 x 22 in

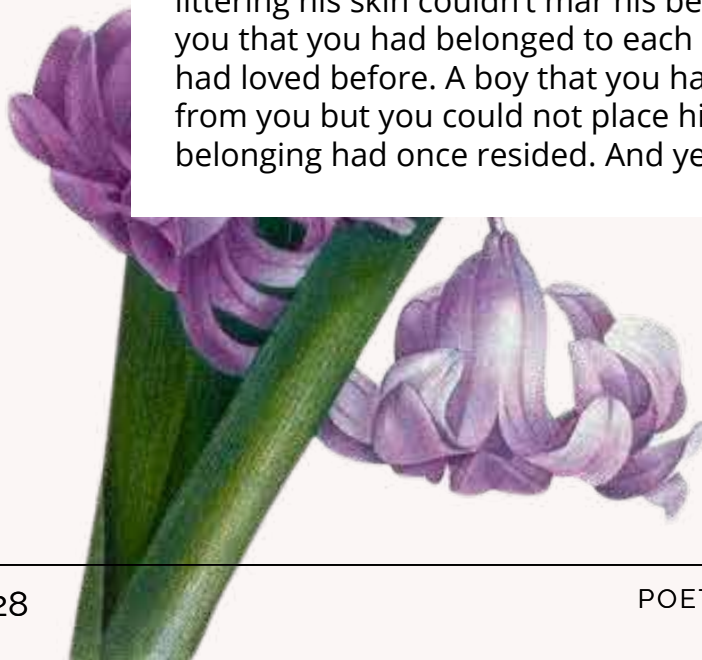
“A Beginning” is a painting of the backroad past the artist’s home farm. As a child this road represented a source of comfort in the nature it harbored and the outlook it provided of the land she grew up on. In the painting she not only strove to capture the roads likeness, but the space and movement of the land. Real grass and dirt were implemented into the foreground to bring the image closer to the viewer and communicate the feeling of stepping onto the road in the beginnings of a journey.

Purple Hyacinth

Elliott Denis



It didn't matter that his hair was curly or that his throat was scar-slashed jagged or that he'd been loved dearly or that he smelled of seafoam. It only mattered that he looked at you and his eyes were more like a god's than any eyes you had witnessed before, even your own. Even those of the Greats. Hades may have been immortal, a ruler, but he was a slave captured by his own kingdom compared to the boy you saw standing across that field, working his earth as though he could remember the night he sowed the entire barley crop himself. You knew he couldn't remember, and he didn't. Yet he worked until his hands were scraped raw. You recognized him from some distant memory and your heart ached deep with the grief he brought you. He was yours. He was yours, he had been yours, you knew that much. His frame was the picture of purple hyacinth. Greying limbs and yet, fuck, he held himself like royalty born into golden robes. The thin scars littering his skin couldn't mar his beauty and you swear to every power vested in you that you had belonged to each other one time, very long ago. A boy that you had loved before. A boy that you had adored before. And the grief ripped itself from you but you could not place him. A hole gaped inside of you where deep belonging had once resided. And yet, he looked so much like purple hyacinth.





Treeeeeeeeeeeeee

by KURT CHAVEZ

five urdu words

Herman Aamir

the day to day meanderings of people i know and don't know (but still *know*, yk?)

Chaska | چسکا

drunk bastard drooling on the other end of the phone
drowns out his words, and then takes a swig,
crackles like a POP! tin can, licks his lips,
smacking for a high he knows he'll never get

(n.) an obsession or addiction,
usually positive; anything from a
new hobby to a favourite food.
When someone says they have a
"chaska" for something, it means
they're really into it.

Ravani | روانی

clad in silk, the queen stood addressing the court
words ironed smooth, yet etched with weighted importance,
light reflecting off polished embellishments; sheen
cascading the land, a regal and lavish drapery of progress

(adj.) the smoothness or ease of
something, fluency, especially
in the context of speech or
writing. A sense of continuity or
movement, a state of progression
or gracefulness.

Pardes | پردیس

stale airport fatburger not sitting well
toiletty toils (no lota?), imodium every six hours,
inferiority complex among industrial shoulders,
overweight bag?! mama's kitchri in the side pocket

(n.) a foreign land or the sense
of being in an unfamiliar
environment. Connotes nostalgia
or longing for one's homeland,
frequently appearing in literature
and songs to express the emotions
associated with being abroad.

Moujza | مُعْجَزَة

while in bed, she gazes at stars out her window,
tracing constellations, "just like a princess!"
her imagination voyages beyond outer space
where heaven exists, and God has miracles waiting

(n.) a miracle or effect contrary to
the established constitution, a
deviation from the known laws of
nature; a supernatural event, or
one transcending the ordinary by
which the universe is governed.

Lehja | لہجہ

fools jest for foreign with a British tinge
tea and biscuits and eloquent and polite;
princely grace as he deadbolts the door,
but all kingly reigns end in checkmate

(n.) the pronunciation of words,
often indicating regional or
cultural variations in speech.
Implies a particular style or
manner of speaking, including
the emotional tone or attitude
conveyed in communication.

My Rendition of Boychuk's “Around the Apple Tree” (1919)

by CAROLYN BUCKLES

Acrylic on stretched canvas with wire backing

16 x 20 in

This is my rendition of Boychuk's “Around the Apple Tree” (1919). I wanted to capture humility and humanity. Going barefoot was considered a symbol of humility. If we consider this a religious painting representing Adam and Eve at the apple tree, then let us also consider it as a symbol of Ukraine's legacy looking forward to a brighter and more prosperous future. It is currently on display and donated to the students of STM's Ukrainian Studies Department.



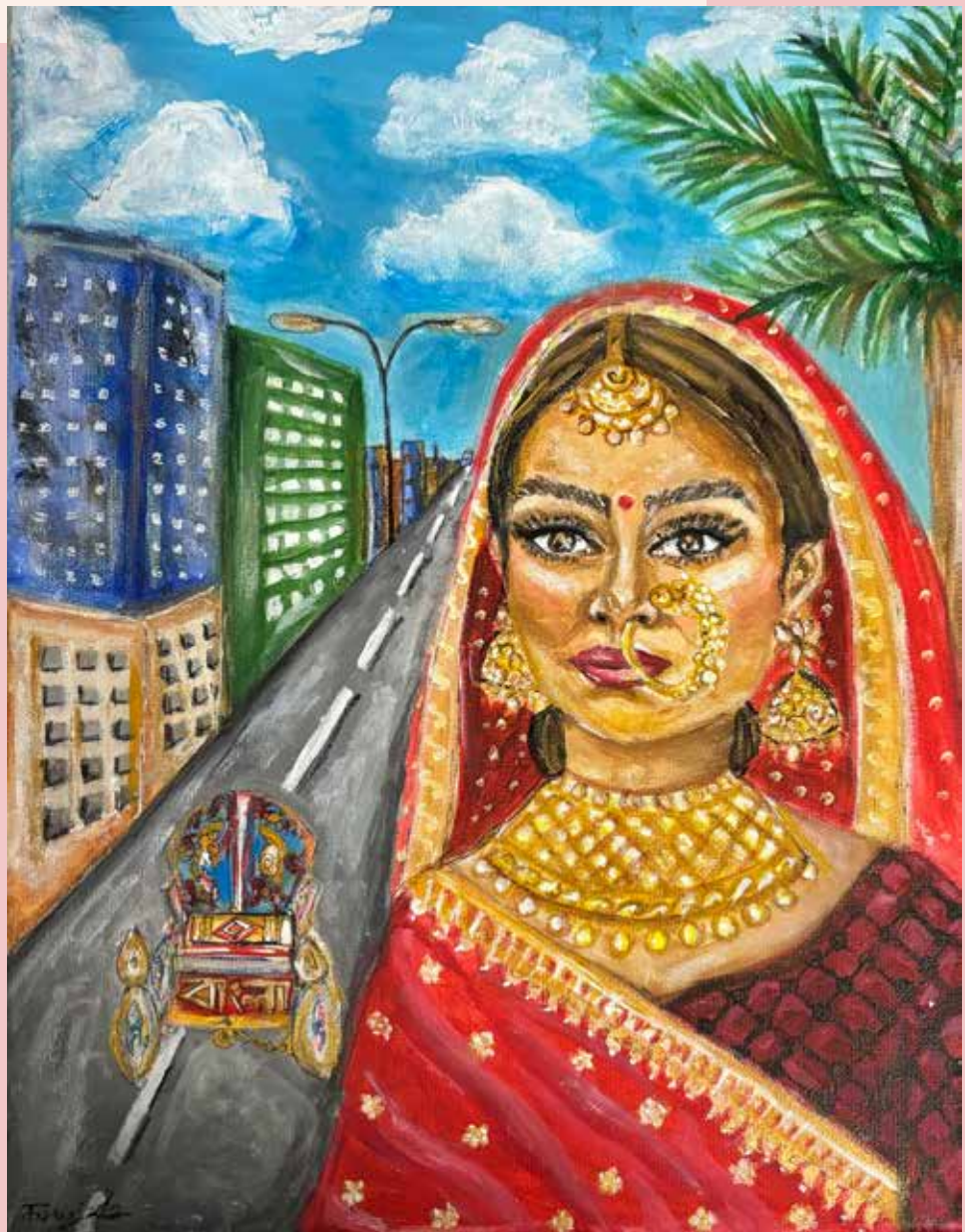
Roots

by LABIBA TANAZ

Acrylic on canvas

11 x 14 in

This painting depicts a Bangladeshi bride, showcasing the elegance and cultural richness of her attire. The background, with its buildings and trees, evokes a sense of nostalgia, reminiscing about the harmony between tradition and the evolving landscape of Bangladeshi life. Through this piece, I celebrate the vibrancy of my heritage while inviting viewers to reflect on the timeless beauty of cherished memories.



Gitchi Manitou...

Norman J. Charles

Whose work I find in Creation, hear me.

I am poor and ignorant, yet I call:
Your power is seen in the land,
Your voice is heard in the wind,
Your truth is learned at the fire,
Your love is shared in the water.

I am the lowliest of Your children, yet I ask:
Open my eyes that I might see,
Open my ears that I might hear,
Open my mind that I might learn,
Open my heart that I might share.

Teach me the ways of Mother Earth and Grandfather Rock,
that I might live in harmony with all my relations:
the winged and the finned,
the two-legged and the four-legged,
the many-legged and the non-legged,
those that fly and those that swim,
those that walk and those that crawl,
those that clothe the Earth.

Teach me the Sacred Ways,
that I might walk
with clear eyes and open ears,
with willing mind and pure heart.

Guide me on the Sacred Path,
that I might hope to follow
those who have gone before.

Grant me serenity, courage and wisdom,
that I might help to lead
those who are coming after.



unconscious

by GABRIELLE LACELLE

Acrylic on canvas

This piece was made to imitate the feeling of a dream. The blending of the figure into the background by using the same blue tone mirrors the feeling of sinking into a dream, being surrounded in it. The scene exists both above and below the surface of the water introducing both the heavy feeling of sleep and the airy sensation of dreams into the piece.

"Cat Lady" and "Bird Man"

Candace Dutchyn is a Saskatoon-based artist. Her preferred medium is oil paint. In her work, she explores the strange and unusual. Her creations are ambiguously monstrous—the beings represented in them can be perceived as either malicious or tender in spirit, whimsical or nightmarish, and all in between.

"My Dollhouse"

Jillian Albers is in her fourth year of a Studio Art degree. While she is most fond of creating visual art, she has recently rekindled a love for creative writing through English classwork.

"Grilled Cheese"

Rachael Carline (she/her) is a second-year student in the MFA in writing program. Her work focuses on narrative and fictional poetry. You can find her poems in the *Paris of the Prairies Review*.

"The Wilds"

Colton Danneberg (he/him) is a third-year Political Studies major who enjoys reading and writing.

"Facade"

Sean Worobec is a fourth-year undergraduate student studying art history. He started his first two years studying studio art and gained an appreciation for the arts. He has kept drawing and painting in his spare time and he especially likes making art on masks as a subject.

"Imperium"

Nolan Long is a fourth-year student studying politics and religion at the University of Saskatchewan. He has previously been published in *Canadian Dimension* and *Spring Magazine*.

"The Quality of Mercy"

Elisabeth Bauman (she/her) is in her final year of her English Honours degree. She often uses poetry to help process events and emotions, and to celebrate beauty. She works in student government, and in her free time loves baking, playing music with friends, and going on walks.

"The Wall" and "A Beginning"

Renelle Morelli is a fourth-year student in Arts and Science majoring in English and minoring in Studio Art. She aspires to pursue writing in the future, as well as continuing an art practice. Many of her works explore topics of mental health, history, and journeys.

"The Last Days" and "Where?"

Ben Jorgenson (he/him) is an undergraduate English honours student in his fifth year. He enjoys trains.

"Reconfiguring Particles of A Reality"

Narges Porsandekhial (she/her) is a Persian polydisciplinary creator with a BA in Handicrafts and an MFA from University of Saskatchewan. Her work spans installation, socially engaged practices, public art, text-based projects, and the realm of research-creation. She wishes to draw parallels between art and research (in the theoretical and academic sense) and embrace how they cohabit, similar to art and daily life. She has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally and also serves as an art administrator.

"lola"

Jhaymee Bisenio (she/her) is a Filipino artist and writer, currently in her first year of undergrad majoring in Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of Saskatchewan. She wrote "lola" in honour of her grandmother who passed in 2021.

"luminescent permanence"

kaitlyn price is a fourth-year arts and science student majoring in English. In her spare time, she writes poetry and occasionally fiction about coming-of-age themes.

"Camping in the Mountains" and "My Rendition of Boychuk's Around the Apple Tree"

Carolyn Buckles is a senior student at the University of Saskatchewan majoring in Psychology. She continues to take history classes as she has a love of education. She has always enjoyed painting. She has been involved in art since high school. She has submitted her art to various Facebook pages including Usask Community Art Group as well as SWAA (Saskatchewan Wildlife Artists Association) and has participated in their shows in Prairieland Park, Reflections in Nature, and the fall Saskatoon Exhibition. She has also been involved in VASU Silence gallery shows online and in the 292 exhibitions of the student-run gallery on campus. She also greatly enjoys participating with the students in the *in medias res* magazine. She has quite a few paintings on display at a local clinical practice. She also contributes to worthwhile charities throughout the city. She also has paintings displayed in many local businesses and institutions. She has a painting on display in the university's observatory, the Ukrainian Studies Department, and Student Wellness. For her, her art is her contribution to the well-being of others. She has a philanthropy project which has been her personal journey

which involves painting for worthwhile charities where she feels her cheery, bright acrylic paintings provide happiness and goodwill to others. As a child, she was raised by parents who cultivated a sense of hospitality which as led her down this pathway.

"Unbelonging" and "Unbecoming"

Emily Jung is a fourth-year undergraduate student at the University of Saskatchewan. She is passionate about mental health advocacy and hopes to obtain a Masters in Social Work when she finishes up her undergraduate studies. She uses poetry, painting, and public speaking to express her thoughts on mental health, cultural diversity, and the world's natural beauty.

"Golden Hour"

Alyssa Borg is a third-year English student who enjoys reading and writing in her spare time.

"Purple Hyacinth"

Elliott Denis is a first year student majoring in linguistics. He dabbles in many artistic mediums, including long-form fiction writing, poetry, embroidery, and crocheting. In his poetry, he mostly focuses on free verse and prose forms.

"Treeeeeeeeeeeeee"

Kurt Chavez is a philosophy major and likes art.

"five urdu words"

Herman Aamir is a Pakistani-Canadian student at the University of Saskatchewan studying Biomedical Sciences, and has dabbled in writing since her youth. She was previously longlisted for the 2023 CBC Nonfiction Prize. Within her current project, Herman takes on the role of a poet to further interpret and bring visual meaning to prominent words in her native tongue of urdu.

"Roots"

Labiba Tanaz is a third-year biomedical neuroscience student. She likes drawing, painting, reading, and cooking in her free time. Her painting "Roots" features elements of her culture that help her feel connected to her Bangladeshi heritage.

"Gitchi Manitou"

Norm Charles (he/him) is a third-year arts student.

in medias res

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

poetry · fiction · nonfiction · visual art

Thirty years ago, in February 1995, a group of students and faculty published the first issue of IMR. Though the journal has since travelled through a variety of formats, its goal—to capture university life *in medias res*, in the middle of things—has remained the same. Our next issue, to be published in April 2025, will be a special edition marking the 30th anniversary of IMR.

We are currently looking for submissions of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and visual art created by members of the USask community. We will consider anything that can be appreciated in print format, including mixed media pieces and works that blur genre categories. We will also consider works written in a language other than English (so long as an English translation is provided for our editors), or translations of a work in the public domain. Essentially, we are looking for work that:

- Explores cultural and societal questions
- Engages with the liberal arts (broadly defined as humanities, arts, social sciences, and sciences)
- Reflects voice(s) from the campus community

Instagram: @inmediasresstm
Contact us: inmediasres@stmcollege.ca

WHAT CAN YOU SUBMIT?

Each contributor is allowed to submit up to two short pieces OR one longer piece (e.g., longer works of verse/prose, a single collection of visual art or poetry)

**SUBMISSIONS
DUE**

**FEBRUARY
16TH, 2025**

**Scan here to
access our
submissions page**



Or visit our website :
stmcollege.ca/imr/