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in 30TH ANNIVERSARY as trees



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EDITOR'S NOTE: IMR AT 30

In February 1995, the first issue of *in medias res* was published. The issue was the result of collaboration between several students from various St. Thomas More College groups—the STM Students' Union, the Newman Club, the Russian Club, and the Ukrainian Club—under the crucial guidance of Dr. Elena Glazov-Corrigan, a professor of English, and Dr. Kevin Corrigan, a professor of philosophy and (at the time) STM's Dean.

The title of the newspaper—for IMR had not yet assumed magazine format—humorously pointed toward the fact that the publication came into being halfway through the school year, a literal start in the middle of things. However, as Kevin Corrigan wrote in the newspaper's first editorial, the phrase "*in medias res*" captured a crucial aspect about "the situation of university life":

... we did not entirely invent this life, but we find ourselves with a responsibility for participating in it and developing it, so that whoever comes after us will not inherit an empty space or a cramped planisphere. ... Our objective is to speak about what always constitutes the 'news' in a university, that is, the university as a meeting place of the mind and of the multifaceted world of knowledge which the mind seeks to discover, interpret, and develop.

The phrase in medias res has a much older history, emerging from the middle of Horace's *Ars Poetica*, a first-century B.C.E. poem in which the poet provides writing advice to aspiring artists. During a discussion about Homer's *Iliad*, Horace says, "*semper ad eventum festinat et in medias res / non sicut ac auditorem rapit*" ("He always hurries to the main event, rushing his readers into the middle of things as if they knew the story already"). Kevin alluded to the phrase's origins in his editorial, mentioning how the *Iliad*—as well as the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and Dante's *Divina Commedia*—all begin in the middle of the somewhere, somewhen, someplace. "This accidental quality of life and art," he writes, "gives us hope that our present enterprise is not inappropriate."

Thirty years later, I can say that their endeavour was not only appropriate, but praiseworthy. I speak on behalf of my board when I say we are immensely grateful for the efforts of the students and faculty who founded IMR, as well as all those who came after them who kept the publication alive. Over the years, IMR has recorded glimpses of the questions and conversations of university life, and has been a place for staff, students, faculty, and alumni to express themselves. As I looked through the archives in preparation for our anniversary, I was consistently struck by the diverse unity of IMR. With each issue I opened, each page I turned, another person's winged words took flight, and soon a chorus of voices flocked in my mind, unified not by content but by creativity, curiosity, compassion, and courage.

I also enjoyed seeing glimpses of the College over the years. Several of the people whose voices are preserved in IMR remain at the College to this day. We discovered a quote about Plato's theory of art from Carl Still in his pre-President days. We found a soap opera

in which all the main characters are laundry detergent brands that was written by Sarah Powrie when she was an undergrad student and member of IMR's editorial board. (She also wrote a brilliant article in the twentieth-anniversary issue of IMR that collected responses from the original members of the board; this piece was an immensely useful resource for us as we prepared to celebrate the thirtieth). We also stumbled across poetry by Sheri Benning and Celene Sidloski, articles by Richard Medernarch, the "zombie rabbits" issue of 2006 that Caitlin Ward had told me about earlier this year, and a painting by Linda Berry that became the cover of the issue published during my first year on the board (2023).

I cannot, of course, list all the people or include all the pieces that have contributed to IMR over the years, so I would encourage you to take time to look through the archives yourself. All of our

past issues are available in the Shannon Library, either in the stacks or STM's archives. (PDFs of issues from 2008 onwards are also available on our website, stmcollege.ca/imr/).

Altogether, the thirtieth anniversary has given us awareness of the history of IMR. To mark the occasion, we have included some reflection pieces at the beginning of this magazine. We also received several submissions of original work from the USask community, which we include in the second half of the issue. We enjoyed encountering each new work and we are thankful for the chance to continue sharing your voices, your dispatches from the middle of things.

Here's to thirty years of IMR. It is my hope that one day this issue will be found amid many more to come.

Sincerely,
Emily Zbaraschuk
Editor-in-Chief 2024/2025

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Probing the Depths, Thirty Years Later: A Q&R with Today's Editorial Board

In the December 1995 issue of *in medias res*, the IMR staff was asked four “pressing questions of daily life.” Later issues continued to include “Q&R” sessions, creating a tradition that provides glimpses of the people who have made this publication possible over the years. All of these issues are archived at the Shannon Library, should you like to read the responses of past IMR members. Because this issue marks the thirtieth anniversary of IMR, we asked the editorial board of 2025 to respond to the prompts from December 1995:

- 1) *What do you like and dislike about the general order of the universe?*
- 2) *What is your secret wish?*
- 3) *What subjects do you like at university and why do you like them?*
- 4) *Why do you selflessly devote yourself to this newspaper*



A photograph of the IMR staff printed alongside the Q&R in the December 1995 issue. Sarah Powrie and Celene Sidloski, who responded to these questions as students, returned to the college as professors.

Isabel A-R. 1) I both like and dislike the finite nature of everything, as while it means that all things must come to an end, it also makes every moment that much more special. Additionally, I am not entirely sure everything is as finite as we believe, and I definitely like that idea, however

overwhelming it may be. **2)** To adventure to whichever place calls to me, and to be able to learn and grow from the people, history, and flavours there (fine, I'll come clean...I'm mostly going for the food). **3)** Every creative writing course I have taken I have enjoyed, because I get next to free reign writing-wise, even though I achieve this by ignoring instructions and doing what I want most of the time, anyway. Archaeology is also a fascinating subject, with the answers and questions it provides for our own reality, even though the blunders of early “archaeologists” give me anxiety. **4)** I am a lover of creative expression, and it is so exciting to see what people are capable of crafting from their own imagination, as well as to be a part of the process. So, not an entirely selfless devotion.

Carmela E. 1) I dislike the prioritization of STEM over humanities. When I watched *Hidden Figures*, it wasn't the complex math or intricately engineered machinery that stood out to me. It was the scene of Mary in the courthouse that stood out to me. How could NASA, an organization filled with the most brilliant minds in the world, fall for the ideas of racism? As E.J. Pratt has warned, no matter how much our civilization has advanced, we must never forget to leave our civility – our humanity – behind. **2)** I wish for a book-accurate Jurassic Park movie. And if they do make one, I hope they switch out the higher-pitched tyrannosaurus sounds for the lower-frequency. Just imagine the audience hearing the t-rex's entrance, and its bass so low that you feel yourself shaking (I have no idea if this is even possible to achieve by our movie theatres). **3)** Anything that relates to social justice and social issues, feminism and women's rights, colonialism and decolonization. I especially like these courses when I can write about topics concerning my home country. **4)** I want to investigate the connection between my home country's reading comprehension crisis and their disinformation phenomenon. Being a part of IMR

has helped me figure out how we can promote the importance of comprehension and analysis.

Emily Z. 1) I like em dashes and word play and September days where the colours of the sky and leaves are so electric you expect warmth when you step outside but instead meet a chilling breeze. I love that other humans exist, especially those whose presence is comforting in both silence and deep conversation. I dislike when my relatives learn that I'm studying English and immediately ask if I'm planning to become a teacher—though in my ideal universe, I become a professor and kick butt at the teaching part of the job. **2)** That time travel existed as part of the general order of the universe so I could host a book club with my favourite writers: Christina Rossetti, Ralph Ellison, James Joyce, Christine de Pizan, Hilary Mantel, Shakespeare, whoever wrote the Book of Job, and several others. I'd call it the Dead Writers' Society. **3)** All the subjects? If I'm learning something, I'm happy. That said, I'm especially fond of Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies courses—the literature and art of humanity pre-1700 brings me great joy. **4)** Being an English and CMRS Major means that I am acutely aware of how many words and scribbles do not survive to us today. But I love the small glimpses of humanity in what does survive—a monk's cat illustrated in the margins, a writer's first poem, Dante Rossetti's drawing of his sister Christina tantruming in response to constructive writing feedback. I hope that now and in the future others stumble across this magazine and see something of themselves in these pages.

Caterina E. 1) I like that rational human life exists, and that said life naturally springs forth from love! I also like that humans domesticated dogs and that cats domesticated themselves. Life is better with pets! I dislike that only birds, bats, and bugs can fly. I question how that makes any sense evolutionary wise. The ability to fly is honestly OP and I wish all creatures had it. **2)** I secretly wish I had a secret wish. I'm too much of an open book. If I am wishing for something, someone is going to know within minutes. I wish I was better at keeping secrets, but that's



The editing process can be difficult... "Christina Rossetti in a Tantrum," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, pen and ink, 1865. Photograph by Guy Evans, made available on Flickr for reuse under CC BY 2.0.

no secret. **3)** I am the type of person who loves experiencing epiphanies of connection. You know when you're thinking through something and it is as if a missing puzzle piece suddenly drops from the heavens into your mind and you come to a new and deeper understanding that you never thought possible. Well, that is honestly my favourite feeling in the whole world, so I like any subject that through its study, I can come to a new and deeper understanding of reality and can connect that understanding to my own personal experience. Now, all study can offer a deeper understanding of the world and of one's own experiences, so what I've just said doesn't really narrow down my favourite subjects, but Philosophy, History, Language Studies (English and Latin in particular) and Mathematics are my top four subjects because they've provided me with more epiphanies than any others (although, honourable mention for Psychology). **4)** I don't really know. I think I just like to help! I also love reading the submissions we receive! They are all so beautiful and profound!

Alizé S. 1) I love how transformative, unending and constant energy is. The way light energy from the sun transforms into my dinner almost feels like some kind of sorcery. I find it very fascinating how all life forms that we know of are carbon-based and essentially made from the same three chemical elements—carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, but just by simply changing their structures and arrangements, a vast variety of entirely different life forms are created. I will never get over how a jellyfish is made of the same stuff as an elephant, yet they can be completely different. I despise with such a passion, how time is always running out and cannot be reversed. Even though theoretically time is constant, we don't experience it that way, so it's always fleeting. I hate how much power and control time has over our lives. **2)** To spontaneously leave everything behind, abandon my current life as I know it, move to a new city and not tell anyone. **3)** I love creative writing classes because they allow me to explore my creativity and to experiment with it in different ways. It helps me challenge myself to try newer forms and styles of writing. **4)** There are many incredibly talented people looking for a place or opportunity to express their creativity and artistic abilities, and this magazine serves as exactly that space. It recognises, encourages and celebrates arts and humanities, especially now, during a time when we need them the most.

Camille B. 1) I love and loathe that everything is random, there is no inherent value or meaning to anything. It's all an illusion dreamed up by the collective consciousness of humanity across time. And cats are neat. **2)** That is between me and the various creatures I sold bits of my soul to. **3)** I genuinely love my women's and gender studies classes. Looking into why and how people choose to present themselves, what that says about society and how the arbitrary labels of "masculine" and "feminine" have evolved is fascinating. **4)** I have a thing for stories. There's something incredible about the world an artist can make when they dare to try. There's definitely someone more clever than I who has managed to express that sentiment in a decidedly better way, but

I think that anyone who can put in the hair-pulling, frustrating and countless hours to just painstakingly create something, anything, and then go and share it? I want to be a part of that.

Monika H. 1) I like the way everything is ultimately under control and we are being watched over and taken care of. Our efforts are of importance and amount to a lot, and actually, our individual lives matter a lot. I don't like the "we're all floating on a giant, floating rock and we're all gonna die anyway, so you might as well do whatever you want" narrative. I dislike how consistently uncertain and constantly complicated and overlapping EVERYTHING is. I also despise how everything takes effort, all the time, and there's always something you could be doing, and life is a challenge of how to find balance in your life. But, that's also the beauty and a meaningful part of it. **2)** To have many, many lists. Lists of how people secretly perceive me (incredibly detailed, please), lists of who's ever found me attractive or intriguing (highly curious as to why), lists of what not to worry about, and lists of what to care about. In reality, I just think an instruction manual would become very handy. **3)** I love linguistics classes because I love learning about different languages, cultures, and worldviews. I particularly like accents and punctuation when it comes to language and writing. I also enjoy random classes that aren't directly related to my main interests but from which I can still learn and enjoy a lot! **4)** I love getting a glimpse into people's thoughts and feelings. Authenticity and raw honesty are of upmost value in my life, and I love the art of expressing it through words. As one of our poetry editors, I have the grand opportunity to witness this in the lives of others and take part in their life experiences through this witnessing. The sense of being understood, as well as connecting and relating to others through poetry, is what inspires me to take part in IMR!

Renelle M. 1) I quite like the fact that everything is made of the same core ingredients. To the chemist, we are six different elements that will not differ from one being to the next. However, I don't care for the gravity that causes me to

slip on ice in front of people. That's not nice. **2)** I secretly wish that I had a photographic memory. It would help me so much with trivia (and school too, I guess). **3)** I'm stuck between art, history, classics, and creative writing courses. I love to use my creativity but I am also weirdly obsessed with antiquity. **4)** I am extremely drawn to the creative capabilities of the human mind and how it is revealed in our writing and art. If we have the ability to create our own worlds and images we should use it.

Hannah Wood. 1) Is it a cop-out to say that I hate thinking about the universe in general? Black holes, galaxies, the cosmos, TIME...it's so beyond my field of comprehension and my own frames of reference, which makes me feel deeply powerless. Perhaps wisdom is knowing the confines of one's own knowledge? Who knows, but I'll keep my mind preoccupied with earthly matters. **2)** My secret wish is that we could turn back the clock on technology. I feel

like there was a parabolic trajectory where we reached a peak of "helpfulness," and have now entered the downward slope of "helplessness"; we're addicted, we're dependent, and we're watching our ability to act resourcefully or think critically erode with each new development. I think we peaked with email and flip phones. **3)** As a historian, I'm obligated to say History, but I'm also a lover of English, languages, and theology. There is something so gratifying and humbling about confronting the human condition through literature, artifacts, and intellectual thought. The Humanities remind us that we're vulnerable and messy, but also capable of such beauty. I feel lucky that I get to ruminate on this every day. **4)** As a faculty mentor who answers when called, I don't know if I can claim selfless devotion. But I can say that I wanted to get involved because I find the creativity and talent of students inspiring, and I love being close to the process of cultural creation.



A silly photo of the 2024-2025 Board Members at the January 2025 Launch Party for vol. 29, no. 1. **Back (L-R):** Emily Zbaraschuk, Camille Bjarnason, Renelle Morelli, Candace Knihniski, Jill Longworth, Gracie Katchmar. **Front (L-R):** Caterina Eremondi, Carmela Enriquez, Alizé Sumbal, Kristine Jones A. del Soccoro. **Missing from picture:** Monika Hardi, Angie Rutkowski, Isabel Atherton-Reimer, Farheen Karim, Linda Berry, Hannah Wood.

To You, from below the Rubble

Carmela Enriquez

I talk with you above the rubble, and amidst buildings we know will be the rocks under our children's feet. Even when we are buried under these buildings, as our ancestors before us, we are assured of the enduring connection of humanity: past, present, and future. In the building of Saint Thomas More College, the liberal arts journal, *in medias res*, is one of many endeavours in the world aiming to keep humanity above the rubble.

So what is *in medias res*' method of staying up the rubble? More specifically, what do we do to connect the past, present, and future? The very name of this liberal arts magazine and its relationship with our past, present, and future board members may give us a hint.

What does *in medias res*, or "in the middle of things", mean? Historically, our founders decided on the name *in medias res* since the magazine was established in the middle of the semester. But now, thirty years later, what does it mean? Surely members of a liberal arts magazine, from their founders to the present day, will do what we are all called to do: to look beyond the rubble; and there, we find connection; and there, we find humanity.

I received a discordant set of definitions for "in the middle of things" from past and present board members: the eye of the hurricane // the silence before the impending chaos // the shelter of safety and peace // the land of limitless exploration and adventure // getting down to the layer of things and learning from it // connection, what we have in common, the bridge between two opposing ends // the place of tension and bravery amidst adversity // the trust to pass our mission to the future. With such inharmonious building blocks, how can future generations build anything new?

Contrasting interpretations always seem to convey a sense of division, an inability to cooperate, and inability to build over the rubble. But, there is one thing all these members have done that everyone's passion in liberal arts takes root in. And it has been depicted the moment they gave their diverse interpretation on what "in the middle of things" means: we all want to express *Something*.

Through liberal arts we are able to be

empathetic, understanding, and contemplate different worldviews. Find similarities and appreciate differences. It cuts through the idea that mundaneness entails hopelessness. Reminds us to see the beauty of people and their creativity. It reminds us to challenge the surface ideas; to look beyond the rubble; beyond the buildings. To do what humanity has always done when new civilizations build over the rubble of civilizations – to maintain our humanity despite the increasing prioritization of STEM.

No, humanities, social sciences, and arts were not meant to build our buildings, or create our medicine, or advance our technology. Instead, liberal arts is the very foundation; the very reason behind why we build and create such things. We value medicine because we made the philosophy that life is valuable and is thus worth saving. We value sustainable technology because we discussed that Earth is worth preserving. We value movie theatres and museums because we find worth in feeling and expressing it. These buildings, technologies, and medicines are the means to liberal arts' ends.

With STEM on the rise, the perceived value of liberal arts is decreasing. How can we, the people of the past and present, work together with the people of the future? How do we stay above the rubble? How can we stay above the leftover debris of Egypt's chariots, China's seismographs, the Inca Empire's aqueducts, all this engineering, all this technology, all these civilizations that have fallen, and all these advancing civilizations that will fall?

Socrates' philosophy, Van Gogh's art, Bach's music, Hobbes' political theory, Comte's sociological theory; what is it that made the past still resonate in the present? What is it that will make both still resonate in the future?

The human condition calls us to remember the value and importance of liberal arts. It has helped us look beyond the surface of the rubble. It has helped us develop a relationship with the people of our past, present, and future. It has helped us understand each other and ourselves. That no matter the distance; no matter the amount of rubble that keeps us apart; liberal arts will, as it always has,

keep us together "in the middle of things"; whether amidst chaos, stillness, war, and peace – humanity will endure.

That despite these new buildings and no matter how much STEM has advanced, we still have humanity. And when our buildings also become rubble, when our medicine spoils, when our technology fails; and even when Aristotle's body gets further and further from the surface, as well as Shakespeare's, and Da Vinci's, and Locke's, and us; humanity still remains above the rubble so that we can, again, build something new.

Sarah Powrie

1.Cast: Tide- bass

Javex - tenor

Downy fabric softener - alto

Shout - soprano

Act 1 (laundromat: Washer #14)

Enter Shout. Sings aria. Enter Downy. Sings better. Shout gets jealous and pushes Downy into a washer on spin cycle. Exit Shout. Enter Tide. Sees stranded Downy. Rescues Downy. Romantic duet with Downy and Tide.

Act 2 (another part of laundromat)

Enter Shout. Sings aria. Enter Javex. Duet. Enter Tide and Downy. Tide tells Javex story about Shout. Javex shocked. Javex dumps Shout all over laundromat floor.

Denouement

Tide and Downy marry. Javex becomes monk. Manager of laundromat displeased at having to clean Shout off floor.

What is Plato's attitude to art?

As I understand it, Plato banished the artists who were imitators of appearances. The reality lies beneath the surface of things, and the true artist symbolizes the essence of the thing, and not just its accidents. Hence, the true artist has to be a contemplative. As one modern Platonist put it, we think that every artist is a special type of person; but it would be truer to say that every person is a special type of artist.

C. Still, Feb. 1996



The In Medias Res Board smiling (note the absence of snow)

Russian Thistle (for my father)

by Sheri Benning

I want to tell you about
the russian thistle in the ditch
with flax and clover, dusk's
first stars. How standing
in low sky, a hungry mouth,
swear huds on my body. Barley
bows beneath shadow, sparrow-
feathers my legs.

I want to tell you how
the sun behind clouds
is an opal, everything
dusted with motes of
flexing light,

and the clouds clenched
with silt-veins are wrinkles
in your brow or the crescent
clay-moons beneath your nails
from a lifetime of seeding
and harvesting.

I want to tell you
about the russian thistle
in the electric light
of the opal sun, moon
still a frozen whisper.
How a sparrow-
breath before a rain
punches earth
releasing the green
of sage and sap,

the barbs around
its heart remind
me of a beauty
so sharp that
when it enters,
in never leaves.

Urban Prairie

Tori Blom

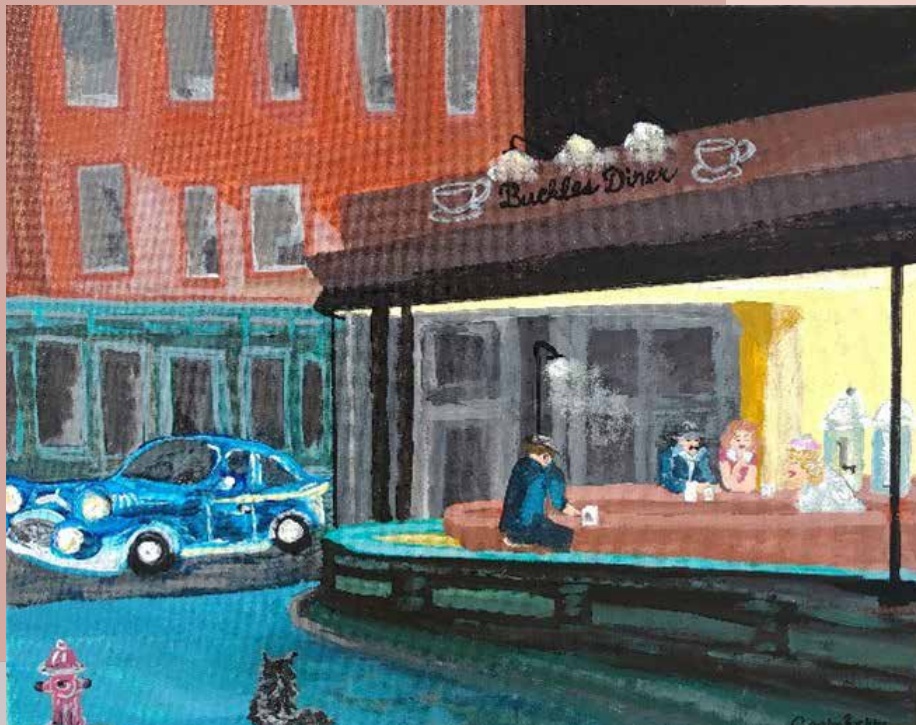
Stare down a sunrise,
that somehow stays youthful.
It tastes of citrus and raw honey,
lemon zest and fresh-grown dill.
Its face freckles the climbing red prairie lilies
and criss-crosses the traffic bridge,
draped in pomegranate rust.
Dancing to the river's ballad,
it is rippled by the waves.
As a hand reaches for the sky,
light slowly ages,
while the buildings rise tall,
and windows reflect the velvety blue
of something once familiar.



My Rendition of Edward Hopper's Nighthawk (1942) - Buckles' Diner

by CAROLYN BUCKLES
Acrylic on stretched canvas
with wire backing, and varnished
16 x 20 in

The brightness of the diner is in sharp contrast to the darkness of the night. The painting suggests that when a community supporting each other, despite the dark and foreboding nature outside with its unpredictability; we can provide a temporary refuge. I took an alienating work and made it warm and inviting. Welcome to my diner.



Candle of Hope for a Better 2025

by CAROLYN BUCKLES
Acrylic on stretched canvas
with wire backing,
and varnished
16 x 20 in



Thirty years ago, *In Medias Res* magazine was launched. It was also a time of challenges. There are two things that stand out in my thoughts about what we are embarking on, and that hope and having the support of our community will carry us through. I do believe that uncertainty in the world and Canada has always existed. I know many of us feel as fledgelings being booted into a world with an unknown future. Maintaining hope and aspiring to do good, will help provide direction and a plan of course.



Two's a Crowd

by KAVAN E. S. de VRIES

Acrylic on canvas

20 x 16 in

Two ravens sit on a barren branch, their dark feathers blending into the skeletal remains of a forgotten forest. They are given only scraps, left to wander alone or in pairs, yet they thrive. We dismiss them as omens, scavengers, never seeing the quiet beauty in their resilience. Meanwhile, we, with our abundance, remain unsatisfied. This painting is a reflection of what we overlook, not just in nature, but in ourselves. The ravens ask nothing, take nothing for granted. And yet, it is us, who are unhappy in our affluence.

Gaslight

Olivia Ruth Woldehana

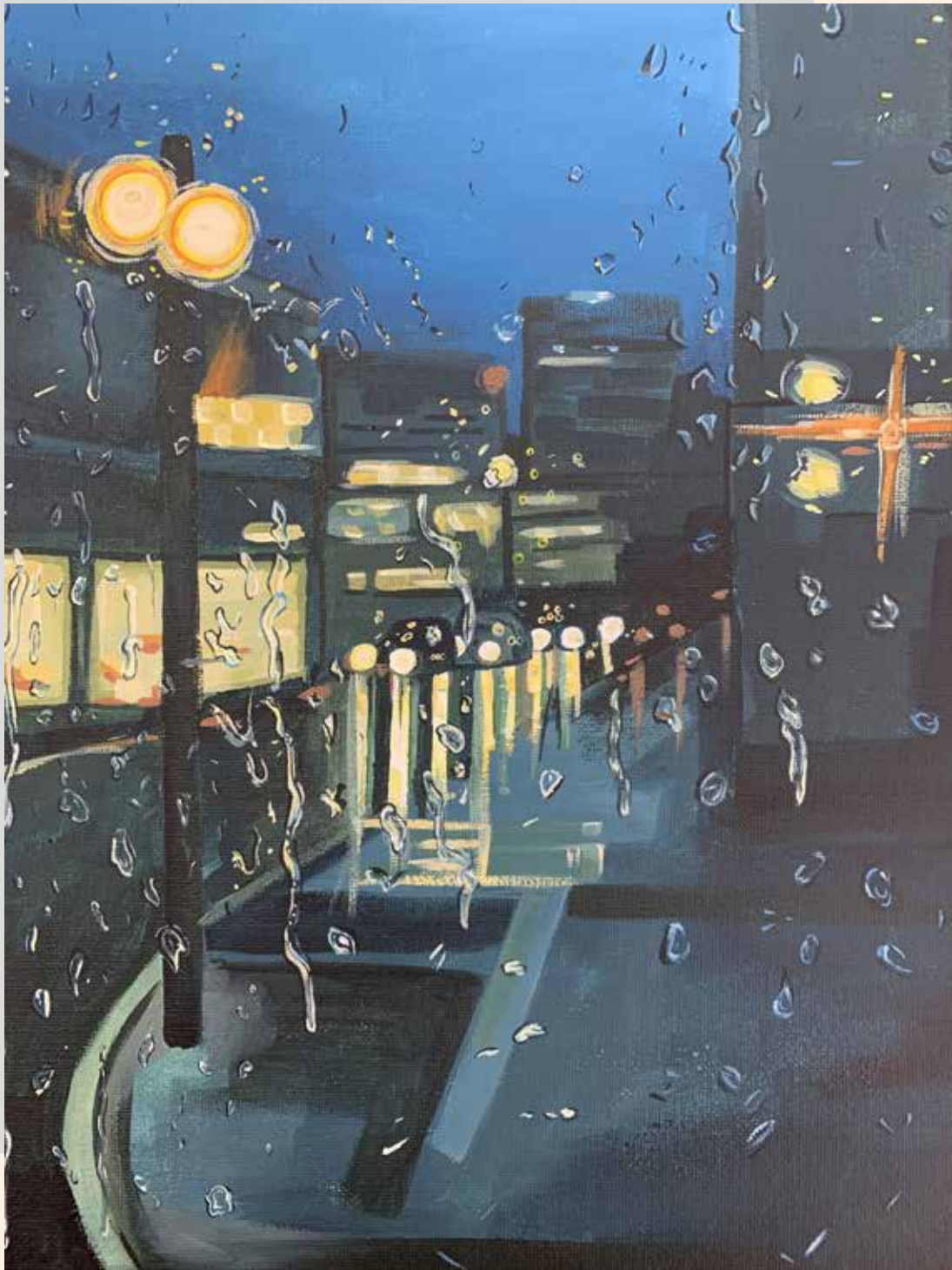
She stares at me intently
Her arm extended, gripping a lighter
She grins at me,
Her thumb pressed to the striker.
Her eyes twinkle maliciously
As to the floor, they flicker
And draw my gaze quickly
To gasoline of worry, so I'll feel sicker.
The stench of dread is so thickly sweet
While to the floor, my feet stick and steep
As I hear her twist the lighting clicks
I gasp, off-kilter, thinking my fate is fixed
But she's just taunting me to feed off my reaction,
Gifting me gladly, the worst to imagine.
At her smile no her smirk, I glare
I squint and tensely take in some air.

There's no smoke yet on my breath: I choke
But let her continue to hurt me? I won't.
I reach out to her and at first, her nostrils flare
Now I see the cracks in her façade were always there.
She's taunted me for her own distraction
Because she's terrified to face her own reflection.
But I see myself in her eyes, her stance, her face:
They betray the pain she's desperately trying to displace.
My hand hovers in her hesitation, shakily steady
Awaiting the moment for her to decide she's ready:
To grasp my hand, for her to trust I care
And to glimpse warm Light; our burdens, He'll bear.

For her I'll have compassion, for her I'll have grace
And as a tear streaks, I offer an embrace.
She still holds the lighter, but knowing her anger was misplaced,
Her grip loosens and I must have patience with her pace.
Vulnerably and gently, she lifts her eyes to mine,
Still analytical, as she searches for any fire
But hurting her is not my desire

So, I step closer, to show my heart's design.
On this path of healing, I'll be sure to hold her tight
As we weep together,
As we finally feel the soft, glowing and merciful
Reflection of Light.





Rain

by GABRIELLE LACELLE

To the night driver

Lexus Neil

The slough on the side of the road may be alluring
in her seafoam tenderness. The tall grass a
down comforter in the hazy light, bends
grid roads to guide wayward cars gently
into her gaping estuary.

They sink soundlessly into her depths, welcomed
by boughs of bulrush. She whispers sweet nothings as
water fills lungs. Hydrilla reach up to catch each
victim. Heavy sand anchors them to their new home.
She lets the algae settle as they rest.

Cars upon cars camouflaged in the murky depths,
time casts planktonic glamour as she cradles each new
child, kept safe in kelpish swaddles. The flashing lights
no more than a dream beneath the surface,
the sirens

a lullaby long forgotten.

The Corridor

Aurora Zanon

The earliest memory I have is of walking down a corridor, the sound of my steps overlapping as I explore the unfamiliar space. At first, everything was exhilarating—new textures, new scents, new colours. But as I've grown, my steps have lengthened from small shuffles to confident strides, while the excitement has waned. The corridor, once teeming with intrigue, has lost its appeal as I continue along this seemingly endless journey.

As time passes, the path ahead narrows, and its vivid colours grow dull. I now walk with measured steps, a small briefcase in hand, looking straight ahead, the weight of routine settling in. Curiosity has withered. Once, it urged me to question and explore, but the corridor offers no space for such things. The way forward is pristine and white, offering a sense of security and order. The end of the corridor looms near, and with it, the promise of joining society. Why I accept this, I cannot say—perhaps there is no alternative. What else is there to do but belong?

Focused on the doorframe radiating bright light ahead, I don't notice the red droplets until I walk beneath them. At first, it's subtle—a faint shift in the air—but then one lands on my brow, wet and cold. I pause, fingertips brushing my skin, smearing vivid pigment. For a moment, I simply stare at my hand, the colour almost alien in this sterile space. It feels wrong, like something wild intruding on a world meticulously stripped of life. The moment stretches, my mind racing to make sense of it. This corridor, pristine and white, is untouched by warmth—only uniformity remains. Yet here it is—raw, intrusive, alive. Another drop lands squarely on my nose, the coolwetness making me flinch. I step back, eyes lifting, searching for the source.

A small rat perches on an exposed pipe, holding a paint roller. He doesn't look at me as he meticulously paints a red line diagonally across an exit sign. It's strange, this is the first time I've noticed the signs and the small arrows pointing ahead and to the left.

Curiosity stirs within me, but I hesitate. The rat's gaze meets mine—green eyes locking with brown. His body tenses as he grips the roller, his eyes burning with a fierce, unwavering intensity, silent yet unmistakable in their resolve.

"Will you continue on as well?" he asks, his voice unexpectedly low and rough.

I nod mutely.

"Go on, then." He gestures toward the bright corridor behind him. He turns back to his work, the paint roller poised in his small paws, as if my choice is of no consequence to him.

I hesitate, my gaze lingering on the rat. His voice cuts through my thoughts.

"You're going to ignore all the signs. The others did the same. I won't waste my breath trying to change your mind," he says matter-of-factly, as though he's had ample time to ponder this.

"This is the only sign I've ever seen," I reply, confusion colouring my voice.

"That is because this is the first time you've *looked*."

I glance backwards, then upward. The once-bright corridor behind me has been swallowed by darkness, leaving only faint green exit signs glowing overhead. Turning slowly, I notice how the signs ahead blend into the ceiling, easy to overlook. The rat's gaze remains fixed on me.

He pauses, his voice low and steady. "They've always been there, buried in your subconscious," he says. "Opportunities ignored."

"What do you mean? How could I have missed them?" My voice cracks, a cold dread creeping up my spine, the weight of realization sinking in like a stone in my chest.

"You were focused—fixated on the path laid out before you. You dismissed what seemed insignificant, the alternatives you were offered."

"There are no alternatives!" I exclaim, my voice rising. "No path but the one ahead. The signs point to nothing!" My voice falters to a whisper. "I would have noticed..." My throat tightens as tears threaten to spill, the first in years.

"Have you really looked?" the rat asks, his tone calm and unyielding. "There is always another option, no matter how subtle."

"There's nowhere to look!" I shout, frustration spilling out.

He tilts his head toward the walls. For the first time, I notice the faint textures. Muted frames hold faded paintings, their colours almost imperceptible. The wainscoting has receded into near obscurity. A hair-thin outline of a door catches my eye, though it lacks a doorknob.

The rat watches me intently, his curiosity mirroring my own. He's put down his small roller and scuttled over to the left of the pipe. He hovers ominously above me, eyes burning with a quiet intensity. Slowly, I approach the outline, placing my briefcase on the floor. My fingers trace the grooves of the wall, searching. Beneath a painting of two figures diverging from a crowd, I find a small indentation. Pressing my thumb into it, I hear a soft click, and the door swings inward.

Darkness greets me, an endless void as deep as ink. Memories of stargazing as a child flood back—the stars called to me, urging me to follow them. I wanted to be an astronomer. That dream faded as soon as I could walk, suppressed by the endless, sterile corridor that drained everything within its confines.

"What will you choose?" the rat asks, his voice subdued.

I look toward the bright corridor, its white light now oppressive and sterile. The hum of its artificial glow contrasts starkly with the comforting darkness behind me. The darkness feels alive, alive with memories of rustling leaves and the distant call of crickets. A faint smile crosses my face for the first time in years.

The rat now perches on the side of the door, sitting calmly on a small shelf. Tentatively, I extend my palm toward him, unsure whether it's out of a fear of loneliness or a deep sense of gratitude. He meets my gaze, a mischievous grin tugging at the corners of his mouth, showing a flash of teeth. With careful precision, he steps onto my palm, and I gently lift him to my shoulder where he nestles in comfortably, as if he's always belonged there.

I turn toward the darkness ahead, savouring the chance to finally break free from the path that had been laid before me. A deep sense of gratitude fills me for being shown a different way, for the chance to truly be myself, no longer bound by the suffocating

mold the corridor had tried to force me into. Just before I take that final, life-changing step, I turn to the rat once more.

"What is your name?" I ask, my voice trembling slightly.

"Aldo," he replies, joy lacing his words.

"I'm John."

We share a smile, breathing deeply in unison.

"Let's do this," I say, quiet confidence seeping into my tone.

The first step feels like wading through molasses, but I push forward.

As we step into the world, it erupts in a surge of vibrant colour—yellows, greens, blues, and oranges flooding the landscape like a living painting. A wildflower field stretches endlessly before us, bathed in the fiery glow of the rising sun. The air hums with warmth, the scent of earth and flowers thick in the breeze. My heart races, every inch of me alive in the overwhelming beauty, as though the earth itself is calling me to remember what it means to truly feel.

I grin at Aldo, exhilarated, and take off running into the grass. The blades brush against my legs, greeting me like an old friend. I throw my arms up and let out a whoop into the morning air, the sound echoing in the open space. Aldo raises his small paws in delight, matching my energy as we both race into the vast, wild freedom before us.

Eventually, we rest beneath a tree, watching the sky transform into a kaleidoscope of pinks, oranges, and blues. We lie beside each other, breathless and speechless, taking in the world that surrounds us. For now, we savour the simple joys—the birdsongs, the babbling stream, and the gentle brush of the wind against our skin. Later, I'm sure we'll seek out others who may have escaped the desolate halls I once knew, but for now, this moment is enough.



*Trigger Warning: This piece explores intense topics including mental health and suicide

Elegy at Midair

Prapti Das

She steps into the air, a breath unheld
the wind, a chorus, shreds her whispered vow.
Halfway down, the sky becomes a fractured bell,
its echoes peeling time to *now, now, now*.

Her wings (all paper, promises) refuse to mend.
The ground ascends, a hungering eclipse.
Her lungs claw upward, but her bones descend,
betrayed by gravity's unyielding script.

The reasons that once anchored her
too much, too thin
dissolve like smoke above the bridge's rail.
The river gleams, a blade beneath her chin,
the stars, erased by streetlights' pallid veil.

Wait—
Her throat invents a word the air devours.
Fingernails etch hymns into the breeze,
clutching at the hollow hours,
the missed embraces, the unknotted keys.

Too late, the symphony of what remains:
the coffee steam, the laugh she never spent,
the dawn's bruise bleeding through her window panes
a life she never meant to un-invent.

The pavement yawns, a mouth of static song.
Her heart, a moth, batters its cage of veins.
The view from halfway down is *I was wrong*,
a truth that splits the sky again, again.

And in the synapse between leap and land,
she claws at ghosts of rails that memory sold.
The body learns too late, to demand
the mind's surrender to the blood's hot hold.

The earth replies in syllables of rain.
The sky, a canceled psalm. The air, undone.
She wears the speed of nevermore, a chain,
and learns, in falling, how to crave the sun.

on campus

Mayganne Hing

i'm here, but my mind isn't.
swirling in a wind,
my thoughts are
unable to be unveiled
from the haze.
how is it so many of us sit in solitude –
silence –
waiting for the break in the silent storm,
endless.
i drift in a boat,
manned alone
in my own mind.
it seems so empty,
but under the sea of heads
there's so much life –
chatter –
that will rarely break the surface.
i await the reprieve of the captain.

"we'll start on chapter five now."
finally.
the blur of knowledge spurted out breaks the silence.
it perpetuates to every corner but struggles to pierce the haze.

class is done.
time to file out.
solemn.

today is a great day!
i'm eager to see my friends in class.
i have to get there early to get a spot near them.
there they are.
hey!
how's your week been?
"... on chapter five now."
never enough time.
alert and absorbing the flow of knowledge.
class ends.
we try to squeeze together through the crowd,
throwing around words until we are parted by the sea of people,
wading their way to class.

all we need is to talk –
initiate
something,
make someone's day,
smile,
say hello.
be the braver soul, – it cascades.
we are all students at this university,
people,
more alike than different.
just say
hello.



Uprooted

by VIOLA WOODHOUSE

Acrylic, mixed media on canvas

24 x 30 in

My painting is depiction of both the destruction and uprooted people of Aleppo. As an artist, I believe that socially engaged art and artistic expression can communicate who we are, show what we stand for and articulate what we are against.



Kelp Forest

by VIOLA WOODHOUSE

Acrylic, mixed media on canvas

20 x 36 in

Kelp Forest is related to my love of vacation in our cabin: The time spent in the Northern forest near Lac La Plonge is very special for the artistic expression of the love of natural world and feeling of belonging.

Culture and Language

Danielle Strongarm

Take my hand, my son, and let me tell you the story

Of how I came to be

Tribes across Canada fighting

For their people to be free

Ancestors stripped of their identity

And told to hold the tongue

Church bells are ringing

As carols are sung

Thousands of children were stripped from their pride

For the government wanted to kill the Indian inside

They tried to say our language and traditions were wrong

What they didn't know, my boy, our culture is strong

It's never too late to learn what runs through your veins

As culture and language always remain

Photo by the writer's sister-in-law, Kyla Strongarm



what lies beyond

Camille Bjarnason

*"And where the desires of two come together,
There love is perfected."*

– Mechthild of Magdeburg

They wander
alone through
lifetimes untold.
Pieces of their most
hidden selves are
forever captured and
reflected in innocuous
things.

She sees herself, often,
in untamed fire. Through a
swell of emotion refusing to be
contained, in cymbals crashing,
or a gilded cage.

He finds himself in a dying breath,
as the shattered glass of a decrepit hall,
frostbitten lips and silent tears.

She was once winds howling through a forest
in winter. Later, a hawk soaring in fair skies. She
existed in a startled gasp and a baby's ignored
cries. She remembers lipstick marking a lover's
bare flesh—recalls the heated breath between
them. Maybe she was that breath.

He remembers a broken wing and a shoebox.
He lingered in the uncertain first notes of a
group's shared song. In the dark, he was once the
blood spilled in a forgotten alleyway and a stray
that lapped it up. He devastated as an oil spill and

was captured in a signet ring.

Since the beginning, they have yearned for
each other. They needed the other to become
something more—fulfil a purpose they could not
yet see.

He remembers the warmth and brilliant light
he attributes to her, filling the emptiness of
existence before. He hated that unending dark.

She recalls the first flame she inhabited and the
moment she was wrapped in his lonely darkness.
All of existence was a possibility unexplored. She
could be anything, create or destroy on a whim,
so she did.

They built a world to have a playground—for
her to be mother and monster, for him to be
triumph and tragedy.

She loves to explore and see what is built in
her absence. She dances through nature on well
worn paths and floats in the soot of industrial
sectors, her eyes glowing with the heat in each
raging fire.

He follows where she leads. When symbols
gained meaning in sprawling scripts of written
words, he'd etch them on whatever he could. His
leaves and papers decay, while dried clay and

stone erode, taking his stories with them.

Their paths are intertwined, from the first breath they take in each body, to the final moment when their souls escape. Sometimes, though far less often than either would like, fate allows their forms to meet.

The first time they lived, in bodies that breathed, everything was new. Sunlight danced across their skin as they tried to walk on unbalanced legs. Pain didn't matter when she cut open her leg on a sharp rock or he felt the bite of a creature he was too weak to fight. They found each other in a glittering stream. Curled into each other, their hearts slowed, they shared their final breath.

He stood above himself, pure darkness staring at his decaying corpse. She regarded him in silence, watching with her blazing eyes as he looked at what he was. He wept, for his life was cut short.

Life after life, she pulled him along, never looking back at what they were. She hopped from one body to the next. He stayed as long as he could in every life.

It was never enough.

This time, she flits across a well worn stage. Her voice fills the air, pulling the audience into the maddening dreams of whatever she chooses to play, every movement captivating. She grins, stalking towards the stage's edge like a huntress. Her eyes wander across the dimly lit patrons, catching on a too-dark shadow at the back of the room.

In this life, he has already lived longer than most, though his body does nothing to betray that fact. He walks the dim streets barely glancing at his surroundings. Nothing can pull him from the melancholy of his own creation. Centuries spent hunting and hiding and hoping to find her grew dull. He finds himself carried to the doors of some lonely little theatre, far from any of his usual haunts. He learned, long ago, not to question where he ends up, so he goes in. He

moves to a table in the back of the room, hair falling to frame his face. He leaves it, staring into the shallow grooves etched into the wooden surface. Some part of him he thought was gone reaches out as her voice fills the dark room. The black cloud that had encircled him for centuries is pierced with each lilted word. Her light reaches for him. He lets himself be drawn in.

He waits for her in an alleyway, watching thin tendrils of smoke curl through the night air.

"You've worn that face a while, haven't you?" Amusement laces her voice, settling into the night air between them. She stands just outside the door, waiting for him to make the first step this time.

"This one was too good to let go of." He answers her silent challenge, slinking towards her. "I have missed you, my flame." His voice comes out as a low rumble.

"One hundred lives ago, you said the same, sweet shadow." That smile is back, the feral one with too many teeth. It suits her well.

"Has it been that many?" His ancient eyes memorise every detail of her newest visage.

"I've been many things, seen through other eyes this very face." She reaches for him, smooth fingers trailing over his rough cheek and brushing back his unkempt hair. "We're together now. Does it matter how many forms we have worn in between?"

He softens at the touch, melting into her. "Come with me, my fire. It has been too long." His arms settle around her waist.

She smiles, arching into him.

Every touch sends the purest heat to sear her veins. She sighs into his mouth, almost wishing she could crawl into his skin.

He would welcome her into his ribcage if he could. They move in tandem, her nails digging into his skin, leaving small red crescents behind.

Blood drips from one of them, maybe both, it's impossible to tell. His teeth sink into her and he offers himself in return.

She accepts, biting into him with the same reverence, same devotion he gives her. Wrapped in each other, they don't notice the smoke creeping into the room.

Eternity, oblivion, it's all the same. That glorious nothingness, beyond meaning, is the birthplace of stories—a fountain of maybes waiting to be called on.

Her flesh distorts in the blissful heat, skin warping to cling to her bones, charred beyond who she knew herself to be.

He stands at the edge of the impossible. The precipice of what he thought he was slips away as he is brought from its insurmountable height into the ineffable beyond. He follows her, both falling and flying, into the release of oblivion.

She embraces her undoing, reveling in the freedom of her untethered soul. She dances through the choices that could have been made, countless branches splitting again and again. The rippling effects of each decision mesmerise her. Nothing is isolated. Each moment builds on the last.

He cowers in her presence. Compared to her, he sees himself as little more than a wisp of smoke curling through the air. He falls into the darkness, hiding in the lonesome shadows as he had his whole life.

She waits for him, the very core of her calling out to him as she drifts through the limitless expanse of what-ifs. She has found him before. In one life and the next, they always come together, eventually. As dust mote and sunray, drops of rain on a window, breath turned to steam, lipstick on a napkin. Their time is always fleeting. Lifetimes can pass, a year and a second could feel the same, and she'll smile into the farewell.

He hates endings. He yearns for a legacy. Instead, his name fades, his existence forgotten,

swept away with the scraps on the cutting room floor. The marks he tries to make are painted over, washed away by the uncaring hands of time. His immortal shadow, forever shifting shapes as though he was the clouds drifting across the sky, weeps. His tears fall as ink drops, spreading across all he touches, infecting the living with inescapable sorrow.

She needs him to be reborn and to fade into the end of endings. The cycle persists because she deems it so. Creation and destruction for creation again.

He knows that, with her, he is complete. Alone, neither is enough. Still, he needs time for his ink stained hands to be free of what's gone.

She's tired of waiting and watching him wallow. She wishes for life.

He yearns to be known, for someone to see the deepest recesses at the centre of his existence and not turn away. Time passes, not even they know how much, but slowly, he lets the possibility of new life wash over him.

Her arm extends to him.

He takes her flaming hand.

Pace Of My Heart

by CRISTINA DI

Digital drawing on Kindle Scribe

2481 x 3508 pixels

This piece explores the experience of arriving in a new country and adapting to shifting environments. Through simple yet iconic imagery, I capture the moments that stood out during this transition—fragments of a world both foreign and familiar. The work reflects the tension between the pressure to achieve and the stillness of simply experiencing. As I navigated these changes, both externally and internally, art became a way to process uncertainty, find individuality, and restore balance. In this piece, memory and observation intertwine, turning fleeting impressions into something lasting and reflective.



Uncommon Cents and Odd Sentiments

Mackenzie Gary Peskleway

An ADHD diagnosis does not stimulate a donkey into a horse.

Asking out the receptionist, they do not have an AES course.

Walking in peace, the kick of a jackass, this poem is just 'cope.

A reference to w█████ thought you were dope.

Pardon my cents, trying to rub two nickels together to get a dime.

Laughter, a medicine refined over time

Uncommon sense, odd Sentiments,

New precedent, I'll do pounds and pence.

Life doesn't repeat itself, but it rhymes.

Don't take this poem too seriously, I've written odes to gods over parking fines.



The Monster

Megan Mineau

There was a monster,
once upon a —
now. It's back.

Tweezers pulling my eyelids,
weighted by anchors.
Heavy, falling, f
 a
 |
 |
 ing, a noose
clutching my ankle.

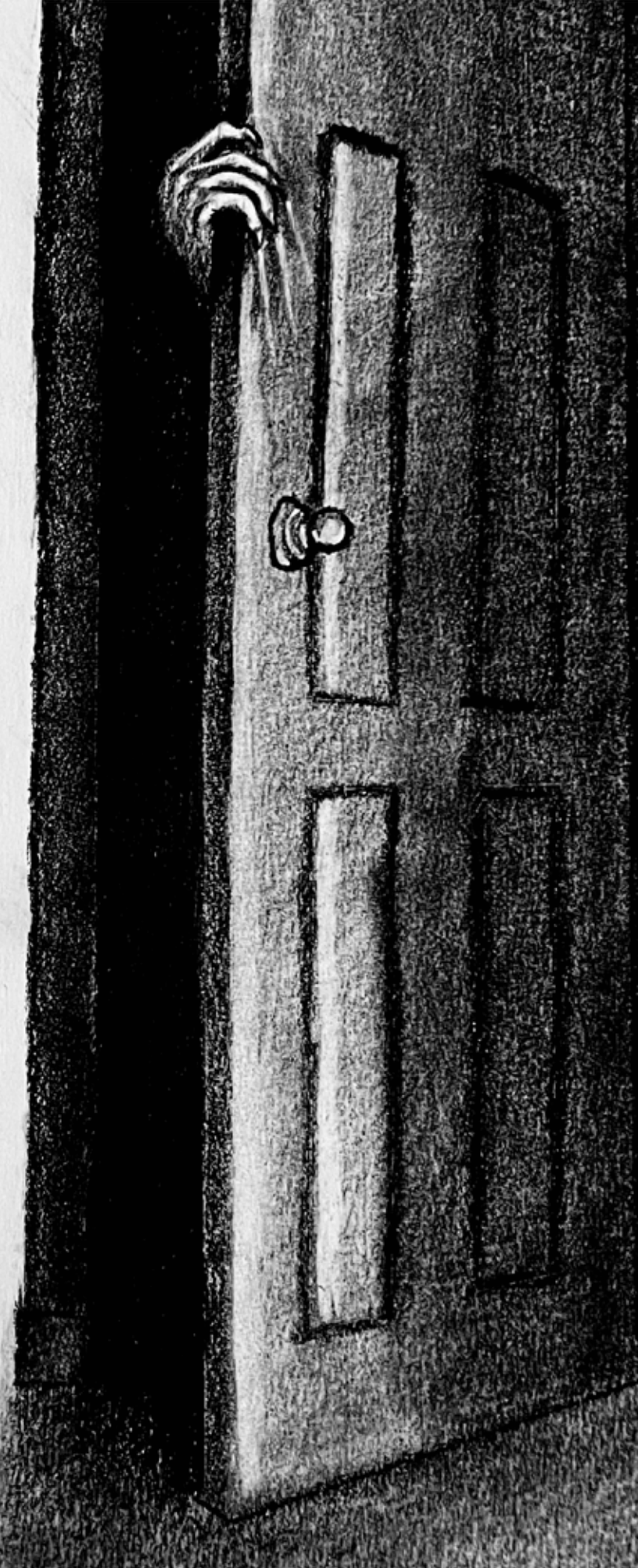
Some days I think I may be free.
Then I jolt, fingertips brushing the top
of the ocean.

And I sink again, the noose catching
on the sharp knob of my foot.
The knob turns,
opens a midnight door.

"The sky is the limit," they say,
and I see it —
the stars of my dreams glittering along my path.
But my arm falters before I try;
my future is a constellation of yearning

that leaves me cold and bereft.
So I drift into the embrace
of the monster in my closet:

Me.



The Hollow Algorithm

Cristina Diego

Imagine waking up to your life mechanized;
Birds don't fly and soul is paralyzed.
Coffee's scent eludes once-human senses,
And raindrops don't matter with their delicate
dances.

Should I awaken as machine, what would I become?
A towering colossus or a humble construct – numb?
Growing heavy, dull – in a loop I'm confined;
No bed for good rest, no refreshment to find.

Castaway is my consciousness, a ghost of its past;
Now I'm latest off the press, efficiency unsurpassed.
No fervor, no fury surges through my wired veins –
Stripped of my humanity, my face's colours drain.

Yearning to jailbreak this automated display,
My future's mosaic fades to mechanical gray

Baba's Jacket

by MARGARET J MALOTT



Cardamom

Alizé Khan Sumbal

Halfway to midnight,
I stand over the stove, its surface covered in
charred grease.
The knob clicks and the burning smell of
grease mixes with methane.
I set water to boil, walk toward the window
and observe the street below –
emerald stoplights, sodium street lamps,
ebb and flow of traffic,
shimmering beds of snow on sidewalks.
We should be dancing under the streetlights –
instead, I'm making tea in an empty kitchen
just like you taught me, desi gur with cardamom on top.
Why do I find you more in your recipes
than in real places? At home, drinking tea
was a shared ritual, never a solitary one,
so your absence is punishing –
it could turn any place into a ghost town.



Panis Vitae

Caterina Eremondi

I am a single wheat grain –
A seed, a speck, a dreamer vain.
I saw visions of thousands fed by me –
Can such things ever be?

I was taken from my mother's embrace.
Searched for earth – found no such place.
I longed to grow, bring forth my own seed,
But my fate is to serve human need.

Small, delicate, forceful hands,
Wrinkly leather adorned by silver bands:
One cups mortar, another grips pestle –
I have been crushed in stony vessel.

I was lost among many others,
My wretched screams found no receivers.
Apart we were many; together, yet none –
Shadowed, sealed, as good as gone.

Suddenly, I saw piercing light
As I was jostled and toppled into fright.
I climbed, or else, fell – water was poured.
Soon, I was completely submerged.

I began to cling to my brothers and sisters;
We were whipped and beaten in rhythmic twisters
Until finally dropped on a metal bed
To rest, to die; into fire we were led.

Burning, broiling – the flame did shatter me
I was forced to embrace reality:
I am longer the innocent little seed,
Yet somehow, I have been freed.

I watched pure white heat fly away,
Felt evening breeze end my day.
Suddenly, I heard a word, a whisper,
"Please, eat, beloved Teacher."

I was raised to lips from which power flowed.
I was chewed and gnawed until He swallowed.
In this final moment, at the end of my strife,
I became one with the Bread of Life!



Credentials

by ERIN GILBERT
Sharpie markers on watercolour paper
24 x 24 in

This piece was inspired by the intense social focus on women's reproductive systems and the devolution of women's rights we are currently witnessing. The tree rings represent the average life of a mother of 2 with the colour focus being on her "child-bearing years" which overshadow the rest of her potential during that time. The black represents how older women are generally discarded as no longer being "useful".

Your Next Journey

Angel Clarke

I don't know how to reconcile
the two halves of me;
the one desperately wanting to know,
and the one fearing what could be.

Are you there, kokum?
Are you guiding my ship from the other side?
I imagine what you are right now;
Are you still you, behind those pearly gates?
Or is it your spirit that remains,
alive in the animals of our lakes?

I know what you would want –
what you spent your whole life preaching –
but I would not be me if I followed others' beliefs
without great reason.

I still feel you here, and you're so strong –
Your hands that kneaded dough,
that butchered deer;
Your hands soft,
wrinkled after many great years.

I want to believe, kokum.
I want to know you're on the other side.
I don't know anything,
I only know I miss you.
I don't know what death brings;
I only know that in it,
something else begins.

tânisi êsi kiskisiyân maskihkêwâpoya - How I Remember the Medicine Teas

Randy Morin

tânisi êsi kiskisiyân maskihkêwâpoya
tânisi nitôtêmak, niwahkômâkanak, Randy
Morin nitisihkâson, niya nitohcân mistahi sipiy
êkota nikotwâsik kihci tipahamâtowin askiy ôta
tâwâyihk tipahâskân kisiskâciwan kâ-isihkâtê-
yik. ê-nohtê mâmiskôtamân tânisi êsi kiskisiyân
ôma nêhiyawâtisiwin isi maskihkêwâpoya êkwa
tânisi kâ-kî-pê-êsi wâpahtamân apacihcikâtêk
nêhiyâwinihk êkwa mîna tânisi êsi wâpahtamân
anohc.

ikospîhk kâ-kî-pê awâsisêwiyân mistahi nikî
pê-kinwâpamâwak niwahkômâkanak mistahi
ê-miywêyihthâhkik pimâtisiwin pihtaw nayistaw
ê-kî kiyohkâtocik ê-minihkêcik nanâtohk maski-
hkêwâpoya. nitêyihthên mîna mihcêyit ôki ki-
htê-ayak kinwês ayiwâk ê-pimâtisicik, nitêyihthên
pihtaw osci êyikohk kâminihkwêcik êkwa mîna
ayiwâk ê-waskawêcik ikospîhk pihci anohc.

pokwêti mîna ê-kî-itohtêyâhk maskih-
kêya ê-mâsakonamâhk. pokwêti mîna ê-kî
pâni nâtamâhk maskihkêya, pokwêti mîna
pêwâpiskâpiy mênikana ê-cimatêna. mâka pok-
wêti sâkâhk kâ-ispayiyâhk, mistahi sikâwa ki-
yâpic kî-cimatêyina. anohc êkwa, mistahi sikâwa
misi-kîskatihikâtêwa. wâhyaw poko ka-ispayihk
ka-nitawi nitonamihk maskihkêya.

ê-mônahahkik ahpô ê-mosahkinahkik nanâ-
tohk maskihkêya pokwêti askîhk. pwâmayisk
kâ-otinahkik kîkwaya osci askîhk, ê-wâpamakik
mîna kistêyimâwa ê-ahâcik askîhk
êkwa ê-kâkîsimocik.

tâpitaw mîna ê-kî wi-
htamowicik êkâwiya
mistahi ka-otinamihk
anihi maskihkiya.
pihtaw poko
ka-nakatami-
hk askiy êta
maskihkiya
kâ-otinamihk
osci kotak-
wak ayisîniwak
nitawêhtahkwâw.

êkâwiya mîna ka-misahki ocipitamihk. êkwa
mîna poko kwayisk ka-otinamihk êkâwiya
ka-kwâtakihcâcik aniki maskihkiya.

poko sakoc ka-otinamihk tâskoc ka-manisi-
mihk êkwa mîna êkâwiya ocêpihk ka-otinamihk.
ôhi maskihkêya kâ-mônahahkik ahpô kâ-mô-
sahkinahkik maskêkopakwa, amisk wihkaskwa,
iyinimîna, âyôskana, misâskwatômina, pasâna,
wîsahkêcahk omikiy, nîpiminâna, êkwa mihcêyit
kotakwa. pokwêti osci ôhi maskihkêya otin-
amihk tâskoc sakâhk, sâkahikanihk, paskwâhk,
asiniy wacîhk, kistikânihk, sîpîhk, êkwa ahpô
mistikohk.

poko êta kâ-kanâtahk osci ka-otinamihk
êkâwiya osci êta namôya kâ-kanâtahk. nanâtohk
ê-kî-pê-apacihcâcik opimâtisiwinâhk kawîchiko-
cik. sêmâk mîna kwayisk ê-kanâcihtâcik êkwa
ê-miyo paminahkik maskihkiya kâ-otinahkik
askîhk. êkosi nitêhtên pihci nâway nitayisînimak
kinwês ê-kî-pê-êsi pimâtisicik. êkosi êsi kaski-
htâcik ka-pê kaskihocik kiyâpic ka-pimâtisicik ôta
askîhk kiyâm âta êyikohk ê-kî-pê-kwâtakihko-
wicik êkwa pokîkway ê-kî-maskamihcik. mistahi
wanihtâwak nitayisînimak tâskoc askiy, maski-
hkiy kiskêhtamowin, âcimowina, pîkiskwêwina,
êkwa kotakwa kîkway.

êyikoni ôhi kîkwaya kâ-kî-pê-itôtahkik
ka-sâsîpêhtahkik otêhêwâhk, owiyâwâhk,
omâmitonêyicikaniwâhk, êkwa otahcahkiwâhk.
êyikoni ôki kîkwaya kâwi iyiniwak ka-mâci itôtah-
kik kîspin nitawêyihthamwak miywihtamowin,
miywâyâwin, miyo-mahcihowin, êkwa pêyahtik-
wêyimowin.

kayâs mîna ayisîniwak kâ-nitawi kiyoh-
kawâcik awiya, ê-pîtamowâcik awiya kâ-kiyoh-
kawâcik mîkiwinisa tâskoc mîciwina, maskihkiya,
ahpô kîkwaya kâ-osihtâcik. êkwa kîspin ki-pê-ki-
yohkâkowin, kiya poko kwayisk ka-pamihat
awiyak kâ-pê-kiyohkâsk. poko kwayisk ka-pami-
hat okiyohkêw tâskoc ka-âsamat miyo miciwin
êkwa nihtiy ka-minahat. êkosi ôma mîna kayâs
ê-kî-itôtahkik iyiniwak misawê ôta miskinâk
ministik.



êkwa mîna kîspin namôya nântaw
kî-kapêsowak, poko ka-kapêsicik kîkikh. êyak-
wanima osci tânihki poko tâpitaw kakwê kânâ-
ci pamihoyan. kîkikh poko ka-kanâtahk êkwa
mîna poko ka-kîspocik kikiyohkêwak êkwa mîna
ka-mâtinawîyan mîciwin ka-kîwihtâcik okiy-
ohkêwak ikospîhk kîwîtwâw.

êkota askihkânihk mistahi sîpiy kâ-itisihkâtêk
nikî pê-nihtawikin. mistahi nikî pê-pihtên nêhi-
yawêwin êkwa mistahi nikî-pê-wâpahtên nêhi-
yaw sihcikêwina. mihcêyit kihtê-ayak kî-pê-pimâ-
tisiwak ikospîhk kâ-pê-oskâyôwiyân. âskaw
mâna mitoni mistahi nimihtâtên namôya mista-
hi ê-kiyohkawakik ahpô kanitohtawakik ikospîhk
mâna kâhâcimocik. anohc êkwa namôya mistahi
pimâtisiwak kihtê-ayak, mitoni kitimâkisinawak
oskâyak. êyako ôma mistahi kânanâskomoyân
apisîs ê-pê-kiskiyân tânisi êsi pê-wâpahtamân
tânisi niwahkômâkanak ê-pê-êsi wâpamakik
askiy êsi nâkatêhtâhkik êkwa tânisi êsi kiy-
ohkâtocik.

kâ-kî-pê-awâsisêwiyân nikî wâpamâwak
nohkomwak êkwa ninîkikhkwak ê-ki-pê-môna-
hahkik maskihkêya êkwa mâna ê-ki pakahtâcik
tôsici ê-minihkwêcik êkwa mâna ê-nâtawêhko-
cik nanâtohk kâ-isâyâcik. nanâtohk ahkosiwi-
na ayisîniwak kâ-isâyâcik anihi kisiwaskitêwin,
pwâkipayowin, tîstakwânêwin, astotamowin,
kîsisiwin, pâkipayowin, mihko sohkîpayowin,
sîwinâspinêwin, tômisowin, kiyakisowin, mitêy
kîsisowin, êkwa mihcêyit kotakwa âspinêwina.
ôhi maskihkiya kâ-minihkwêcik mistahi wîcihi-
kowak.

nikiskisin nohkom pêyakwâ ê-kwêcimit kani-
tawi isitâpâtak wahyawês askihkânihk sakâhk
nânitaw ê-nohtê nitawi nâtahk maskihkêya.
pîsiwêw kistêyimâwa, wâtihkâkana, maskimota
êkwa astisa tôsci nitowikohtânân sakâhk. kinwês
nitonam anihi maskihkêya tâskoc ayikitâs kâ-isi-
hkâteyik.

pihtaw anima maskihkê pêyakwan êsinâk-
wahk tâskoc mihcêyit kotakwa maskihkêya.
ôma maskihkê nanâtohk êsi apacihcikâtêk
nânitaw kâ-isâyât ayisîniw. pwâmayisk ê-môni-
hahk, kistêyimâwa pakitinêw êkwa kâkîsimôw
nohkom. nohkom niwihtamâk ôma maskihkê
nanâtohk ê-tâpatahk wâwês osci iskwêwak.
mistahi ê-wîcihikocik nanâto kâ-isâyâcik.

êkwa mîna ê-itêwêyit ê-wihkasik ôma kâpa-
kahtâhk tôsci minihkwêhk. tôsci nohkom nito-
nam kotakwa maskihkêya tâskoc maskêkopak-

wa
êkwa
amisk wi-
hkaskwa ihka-
tawâhkik. êyikoni
ôhi maskihkêwâpoya
mistahi kâ-miywêhtahk
ka-minihkwêyit tahto kîsikâw.

mitoni wihkispakwana
êyikoni maskêkopakwa mîna
êyikohk ê-miyomâkwahki kâ-pa-
kahtêki. nitonam mîna kotakwa maskihkiya
ka-minihkwêyit tâskoc nanâtohk mînisa ocêpihk-
wa. mônaham mâna âyôskana, iyinimina, kam-
inakasiy, misaskwâtômina, êkwa kotakwa ocê-
pihkwa. "kahkiyaw ôhi kâ-ohpikihki kikâwînâhk
askiy maskihkiya nânitaw êsi apacihkâhk miyaw
miywâyâwinihk" ê-kî-pihtawak mâna nohkom
ê-itwêyit kâpihtakwatât wîkikh.

kâ-takohtahak wîkikh, sêmâk mâna nohkom
mâci kanâcihtâw êkwa sîpîkinam maskihki-
ya tôsci mâna pâsam wayawêtimihk. akotâw
mâna pihcâyihk wâskahikanisihk wayawêtimi-
hk. êyikoni ôhi mâna kâ-pakâhtât êkwa ê-mini-
hkwêyit tahto kîsikâw. êyakhwânima osci kâ-
itêhtamâhk niyanân mihcêyit owahkômâkana
nohkom êyakwa osci kinwês kâkî-pimâtisit.
mitâtahtomitanaw mîna têpakohp ê-kî-itahto-
pionêyit nohkom ikospîhk kâ-nakataskêyit.
mistahi kîkwaya nikî kiskinwahamâkonân kâ-kî
pê-pimatisit. mitoni nikaskêyimânân tâpitaw
êkwa nimihtâtânân nohkominân.

tâpitaw mâna ê-kiskisiyân kâ-nitawi kiyoh-
kawâyâhkik nohkominânak, ê-pakahtâcik mâna
maskêkopakwa. owâskahikaniwâwa mâna mi-
toni êkî miyomâk-
tâscok maskih-
êkwa mâna
tâpitaw ê-kî-pi-
minawasocik
nanâtohk
mîcimâpoya
êkwa pahkwêsikana.
tâpitaw mîna nanâ-
tohki wiyâsa ê-kî-kîsisah-
kik tâskoc wâpos wiyâs,

waniyiki
kê.



kinosêwa, pi-hêwak, sîsîpa, nis-ka, wacaskwa, apisci mōsisa, mōswa, paskwâwi-mostosa, wâwâskêsiwa êkwa nanâtohk kistikâna tâskoc napatâkwa, oskâtaskwa, êkwa mahtâminawa.

mitoni mâna nikî mâmiyo mîcisonân niyanân niwîtisânak ikospîhk kâ-kî-pê-os-kâyôwiyâhk. nîki kiskisin mîna mîna nohkompwak tâpitaw ê-kî-pê-kiyohkowiçik pokwêti osci ayisîniwak ahpô kotakiçk askihkâniçk ê-ohtohtêçik. ê-kî-wâ-sakâpicik mâna ê-âci-mocik êkwa ê-minihkwêçik

nanâtohk nihtêya êkwa mâna ê-kî-piht-wâçik pihcwâkanisa. ê-kî-tipîkinâçik mâna kistêy-imâwa. tâpitaw mâna ê-pihtawâyâhkik ê-mâmisi pahpicik êyikohk ê-âcimocik nanâtohk âcimowina.

pokwêti kâ-kî-papâmi kiyohkêyâhk nîkiçik-wak, nistês êkwa nisîmisak ê-kî-wâpamakik nitayisîniwak mâna nihtiy ê-miciminahkik ê-âci-mocik, ê-pihtwâçik, ê-mîçisocik, êkwa ê-pâ-pahpicik. tâpitaw mâna ê-wâsakapicik ê-micisocik êkwa ê-minihkwêçik nanâtohk nihtiya. mitoni mâna ê-kaskêhtamân ôhi kiskisowina kâ-kiskiyân ikospîhk kâ-kî-oskâyowiyân. anohc êkwa namôya êkosi ispayin pihtaw miçcêt niwah-kômâkanak namôya ayiwâk ôta ayâwak. miçcêt nakataskêwak ahpô sipwêpicikowiçk ohpimê isi.

anohc êkwa niya êyikosi nikakwê itahkamisin ôtênâhk kâ-wîkiyân. wayawêtimihk nîkiçk nicimatân mîkiwâhp êkwa pihcâyihk nitastân iskotêwâpisk. mitoni kîsiwâw pihcâyihk mîkiwah-pihk. ânâskân nitasiwîkinîn askîhk êkwa yôskâki têhtapowina nitastân wâsakâm. êkota mâna niya êkwa niwîçiwâkanak ê-wâsakâmi apiyâhk nihtiy ê-minihkwêyâhk êkwa nitâcimônân nanâ-

tohk âcimowina.

miçcêyit niwîçiwâkanak mistahi miy-wêhtamwak mistahi ikospîhk mâna kâ-mâmawi kiyohkâtoyâhk. nitawâsimisak mîna wîstwâw mistahi miywêhtamwak. tâpitaw êkwa êyikosi nitahkamisinân nitawâsimisak, niwahkômâkanak, êkwa niwîçiwâkanak. nakoc miywâsin ômisi pihci ohpimê kotakwa kîkwaya ka-itôtamâhk tâskoc minihkwêwikamikohk, ahpô sôniyâw mêtawêwikamikohk. nakoc wihtakihtêw ômisêsi ka-itahkamisiyân.

nitêhtîn kotakwak ayisîniwak wîstwâw omisi ka-kî-itôtahkik. osâm êkwa pokwâwiyak namôya ayiwâk kiyohkâtowak wâwês ôtênâhk. oskâyak ôki poko ka-kiskinwahamowihçik tânisi ka-êsi-kiyohkâtocik makîkway minihkwêwina ahpô maci-pihtwâwina ka-apacihtâçik. ê-nâtawêmakahki anihi iskotêw êkwa anihi nanâtohk maskihkêwâpoya ka-wîçihikocik oskâyak.

nikiskisin mâna miçcêtwâ kâ-kî-pê-oskâyowiyân êkotê askihkâniçk kihtê-ayak mâna ê-kî-miywêhtahkik ka-mêtawêçik êkota pakahciwânisi pihtikwê tahikêwin mêtawêwin. êkota mâna ê-kî-miçcêçik kisêyiniwak ê-mâ-môniohtocik êyikohk mâna kâ-kî-pê-âcimocik êkwa ê-pâhpiciçk nanâtohk maskihkêwâpoya ê-minihkwêçik. mistahi ni-kî-pihtên âcimowina ikospîhk. êkota osci anima kâ-mâci mêtawêhtamân êyakwânima mêtawêwin êkwa mîna nihtiy ka-minihkwêyân.

nanâtohk siçcikêwiniçk mîna mistahi minihkwêwak êyikoni maskihkêwâpoya. ahpô mâna awiyak kâ-nakataskêyit, êkota kâ-nîpîpiçk mâna tâpitaw mistahi nanâtohk maskihkêwâpoya ê-wawîstîki pokwâwiyak ka-minihkwêyit pokwêspîhk itêhtahkwâw.

êkosi anima, apisîs ni-pê-mâmiskôtên ôhi kîkwaya kâ-kî-pê-êsi wâpahtamân askihkâniçk êkwa ôtênâhk anohc. mitoni miywâsin kâ-kîwîyân ka-papâmi kiyohkawakik niwah-kômâkanak êkwa kihtê-ayak kaminihkêyân nihtiya.

Hello my friends and relatives! My name is Randy Morin. I am originally from the Big River First Nation, located on Treaty 6 territory in central Saskatchewan. I want to tell you about my memories growing up on my reserve, and especially about the medicine teas, how I saw them being used in Cree culture, and how I use them today.

Since I was a very young child, I often saw my relatives happy with life. I think because they enjoyed always visiting each other and because many of the elders lived to much older ages than today. I believe this is due to the many kinds of medicine teas which they drank during their visits.

My family and I used to go to many different places to gather the medicines. Wherever we went, we ran into barbed wire fences, but we still trudged along to find these special gifts from Mother Earth. Many forests were still intact back then, but today, many have been cleared, so we have to go further to gather our medicines.

The Elders and community members dug up or gathered medicines from many places, such as forests, lakes, prairies, mountains, fields, rivers, and even swampy muskeg areas. Before they would take anything from the land, I saw them offer tobacco and say a short prayer.

They told me all the time not to take too many medicines. The land where medicines were taken had to be left for others to use in the future. They also said not to pull the medicines too aggressively by the roots. The medicines deserved a quick and painless death so as not to suffer. Instead of ripping the medicines, the elders taught us to quickly sever them with a knife or scissors. Some medicines had to be dug up or picked such as muskeg tea, mint tea, blueberry root, raspberry root, saskatoon berries, cattails, chaga, and cranberries. My favourite medicine to pick was seneca root because it was plentiful and easy to dig up.

Medicines had to be taken from places that are clean and never from places where there was human activity and pollution. After being taken from the land, they were respectfully handled. They would be carefully and quickly cleansed, then hung to dry. I remember watching my grandmothers and parents prepare the medicine teas, boil, and drink them. They would use the medicines for a variety

of purposes, including to treat upset stomach, nausea, headaches, cough, cold, fever, cholesterol, allergies, heartburn, and many other ailments. I myself witnessed and experienced their healing power.

I remember this one time my Grandmother asked me to drive her somewhere far away from the reserve. "We have to go to a forest to hunt for medicines," she insisted. She brought tobacco, a shovel, bags, and gloves, then the hunt began. She searched for a long time for a specific medicine known as "frog pants." It was hard to find because it looked similar to many other medicines. I can still hear the prayers she said as she laid the tobacco down once we found it. "This medicine is useful in many ways," she told me. "Especially for women. And it also tastes very good!"

We then went on to a muskeg region to search for Labrador and mint tea leaves. She drank the teas made from these medicines everyday, along with berry root teas, such as raspberry, blueberry, and saskatoon. I used to hear her tell me often as she brought the medicines inside: "everything that grows on our Mother Earth is useful in some way for the body's health." My dear Grandmother lived to be 107-years-old, and all my relatives believe the medicines kept her strong and healthy all those years. We sure miss our Grandmother a lot!

I have so many memories from growing up on the reserve. Back then, I heard the Cree language spoken often and I

was able to go to many Cree ceremonies. I grew up around many Elders who would tell stories and share their wisdom. Many of them have since



passed, which is unfortunate for young people today. I regret not visiting them more often. This is why I am so grateful for the little bit of time I did spend with them, witnessing them care for each other, the community, and the land.

Having visitors over and visiting others was integral to our way of life back then. When you went to visit your friends and relatives, you would always bring a gift, whether it be food, medicines, or hand-crafted goods. We were taught to treat each other with great respect, as many Indigenous people did for many years on Turtle Island. We would always feed our visitors well, offer them places to rest, keep ourselves and our homes clean for them, and even send them on their way with a care package of shared food.

I remember going to visit my grandmothers and walking in to ready made muskeg tea sitting on their stoves. I

can still smell the medicine teas

and delicious soups and bannocks. They would always

have a variety of meat ready

to eat when visitors came, such

as rabbit, fish, grouse, duck,

goose, muskrat, deer, moose,

buffalo, elk, and

vegetables such as potatoes, carrots, and corn. We sure

ate well back in those days! My grandparents

always had visitors, some-

times even from other

reserves. They would sit

around drinking tea, smoking their

own rolled cigarettes and telling stories. I

remember how often they would laugh out loud!

The Elders would also often play pool and cards. The local pool hall was usually full of people. Growing up, I loved going to the pool hall to listen to stories, play, and drink tea. Look-

ing back, that was where my love for drinking medicine teas, playing pool, and telling stories began, and I have carried these memories with me ever since.

Regardless of what our community was doing, the medicine teas were at the centre of it all. Every visit, every ceremony, there would be teas. Even at wakes and funerals, the medicine teas were available for all people anytime they wanted to drink. This is how I think my people lived long, happy lives. Gathering and preparing medicine teas kept them in touch with the past, even amidst hardships and huge losses. My people lost many things from the land including medicine knowledge, stories, and languages. These are the things they used to do to be resilient in their hearts, bodies, minds, and spirits. These are ways that Indigenous people have to start following again if they want happiness, health, wellness, and peace.

I don't see these practices much anymore, since many of my relatives have passed or moved away. All that remains are memories. Still, I see so much value in keeping these traditions and practices alive. I work hard to do this here in the city where I live today. I have erected a tipi outside my house, complete with a fire pit. It is warm and cozy, with a rug on the ground and comfortable seating for my guests. My friends, relatives, and even my children love to gather in the tipi to drink medicine teas and tell stories in a circle.

I have seen how positive and healthy these practices are. I encourage others to start or continue doing them, especially in the cities and towns. So many people that I talk to don't visit others anymore. Many are struggling in isolation, with drugs, gambling, and alcohol. Sitting around in my tipi with my loved ones is much cheaper than going to the bar or the casino.

Most of all, however, these practices are healing. The fire, with its warm glow, is peaceful and calming. The conversation, the stories, and the laughter all help us come together in relationship. And especially the medicine teas heal and cure so many illnesses for young people and old.

It is always a joy to go back to the reserve, drink the teas, and visit as my ancestors used to. I will never forget my years growing up there, and I am so thankful to have brought some of those memories back to life here in the city.



Amira

by BROOKLYN MAYERLE





Dogs

Ben Jorgenson

There is something profoundly terrifying
About watching people turn
On one another out of
Pure necessity.

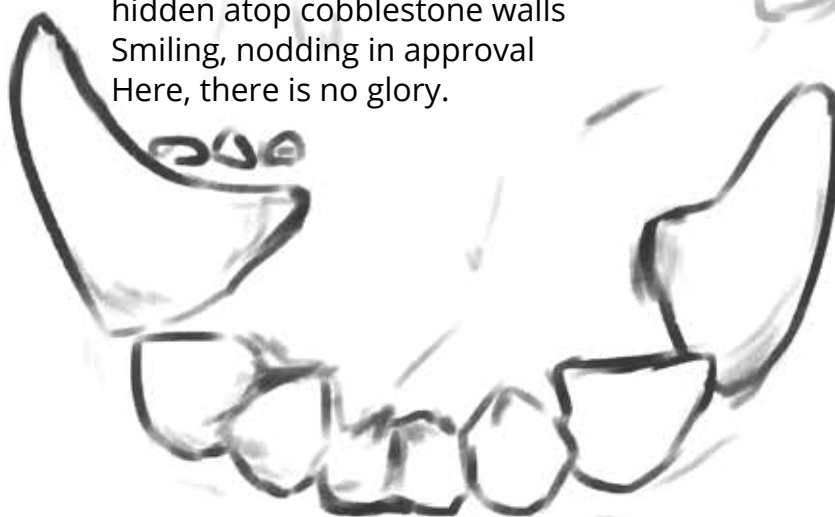
To watch our better angels
Cast aside to satisfy
That carnal lust,
Survival.

We need to eat.
Now we see nowt and hear nowt
But the shining, sweat-drenched backs
Of the combatants who you once called by name

Silence.
Now nothing is heard but
The clenching of their dry teeth
See their dead eyes sink, see these monsters!

Like our ancestors
Who, many years ago
On the banks of the muddy Tiber
Watched a callous-handed crowd erupt in cheer.

But here, there is no noble bastard
hidden atop cobblestone walls
Smiling, nodding in approval
Here, there is no glory.



*Trigger Warning: This piece explores the trauma of residential and day schools. Emotional and crisis supports can be accessed 24/7 through national Residential School Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419

Numbers

Syndel Thomas Koazar

given numbers as names,
our culture was shamed.
punished for speaking our tales,
beat and bruised for dirty nails.
now they're caked with dirt
from turning the earth
in search of our children.
it happened back in the seventies, eighties, nineties,
but now we found 215 beautiful brown babies,
4300 perfect fingers and toes,
and yet, not one person knows,
the numbers still cradled by the ground,
or what's still to be found.
treaties 11 down to one,
now look what we've done
numbered promises couldn't save them,
instead our lives are condemned.
their efforts were towards none,
but they couldn't've won.
and now we rally in millions,
against billions,
to stop being only numbers.

*In honour of Residential Schools and Day Schools and the
uncovering of 215 children at Kamloops Residential School*

Ainsley Jackson

[illegible]



Welcome to Saskatchewan

by EMILY ZBARASCHUK
Graphite
8 x 10 in

"Welcome to Saskatchewan" is a graphite drawing that recreates an old, very blurry photograph taken in the late 1940s on the border while my grandma's family was moving from Saskatchewan to Alberta. My grandma, Marie Griek (later Jones), crouches in the centre, while her sister Ruth and brother Elsworth stand on either side of the sign. Decades later, my mom reversed her mother's journey, moving from Alberta to Saskatchewan. Several times over the years, my siblings and I have chanted "Hello Alberta, Goodbye Saskatchewan" as we crossed the border on trips to Grandma's house.

**THE GRASS
IS ALWAYS
GREENER**



BUT NEVER ON THE OTHER SIDE

**The
Grass
is
Always
Greener**

by KATE WRIGHT
Digital print

Cardinal

Robyn Claypool

Goodbye, fullness of time.
This is an ode
to all places I've lived before.
All the places
I will inevitably be.
Time is a harp.
When you pluck the strings,
music of deference echoes
to Chronos' sound.

The universe in entropy.
Whatever is here
has always been:
The mushrooms that grow
on mossy tree stumps,
and the rain-soaked forest.

Oh sweet Cardinals of the sky,
follow Polaris to me.
Or don't, I don't care.
We still land on a shore,
wherever you are,
I'll be there.
It is where
I would have always been.
Where the cool shaded trail
would have always taken me.

You cannot fight
the strings that tie you
to your destiny.

You must succumb.
You must let it carry you on the rain,
across fields and riverbanks,
over a highway overpass,
through mountains who have watched
thousands of lives
swing through their trees.

Relax all your muscles.
Turn your bones to putty.
You will be carried in the arms
of all that cannot be known.

Peeking through your blinds,
they pluck the strings.
Their wings sing as you move
through your days,
on tree branches,
and through clouds
where you've slept.

Let them guide you.
Let them hold your hand.
It is July now.
The sun settles on your face;
it takes you to where you need to be.

contributors

"Circling the Drain"

Ainsley Jackson is a first-year Master's student studying psychedelic history at the University of Saskatchewan. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Dalhousie University in 2023 studying law, sociology and creative writing. Her visual and conceptual poetry explores altered consciousness and drug experiences.

"Cardamom"

Alizé Khan Sumbal is a fourth-year BSc. Paleobiology student with a minor in English. She enjoys writing poetry in her spare time. She likes to spend her time preparing fossils in the lab, reading and writing fiction.

"Your Next Journey"

Angel Clarke (she/her) is a second-year computer science student.

"The Corridor"

Aurora Zanon is a first-year engineering student. She enjoys reading, crocheting, painting and writing when she has the time. Her short story, "The Corridor," reveals that another path always exists, even if it's difficult to see, and shows how breaking free from societal expectations can uncover a life of authenticity, wonder, and true freedom.

"Dogs"

Ben Jorgenson is a 5th-year undergraduate student in the English Honours Program.

"Amira"

Brooklyn Mayerle is a first-year student at USask majoring in psychology and a third-year student at Horizon College. She has been an artist from a young age, having taken lessons from an art teacher and mentor in her hometown of Tisdale, SK. This portrait is reflective of the beauty in creation and humanity.

"What Lies Beyond"

Camille Bjarnason (she/her) is a first-year student majoring in Gender Studies. She strongly believes in the power of art as a whole, but especially storytelling. She has always held a fascination with the ability to turn pain and horror into something beautiful just by knowing how to spin the tale.

"Panis Vitae"

Caterina Eremondi is a first-year philosophy student at STM College. She has a passion for poetry and has recently fallen in love with the Latin Language. In her spare time, Caterina likes to listen to podcasts about her faith, play with her dog, Sami, and study Greek.

"The Hollow Algorithm" & "Pace of My Heart"

Cristina Di is a Mexican sociologist living in Saskatoon. Her master's research focused on the role of Artificial Intelligence in Canadian healthcare and its impact on modernization and social evolution. When she is not writing poems, she works with a provincial health data platform within USask. Outside academia, she enjoys working on mixed-media visual arts and collecting second-hand literary gems and clothes.

"Candle of Hope for a Better 2025" & "My Rendition of Edward Hopper's *Nighthawk* (1942) - Buckles' Diner"

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.

"Culture and Language"

Danielle Strongarm - I'm a second-year university student, having already earned my Indigenous Practical Nursing certification. Now, I'm advancing my career to become a registered nurse. I'm deeply involved in my culture and enjoy learning about both traditional and Western approaches to health.

"Two's a Crowd"

E. S. de Vries is a writer whose work blends psychology, philosophy, and exploring the struggles of the human experience with a humour. In his spare time he writes a book that will never reach readers, and studies more topics than he should.

"Welcome to Saskatchewan"

Emily Zbaraschuk (she/her) is a fourth-year Double Honours student majoring in English and Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief of IMR and loves seeing the creativity of the magazine's contributors and editors! In her spare time, she enjoys drawing, playing piano with friends, gathering obscure fun facts, and trying to keep up with her sweet but devilish cat, Orla.

"Credentials"

Erin Gilbert is an undergraduate student in French and Political Studies.

"Rain"

Gabrielle Lacelle is a second-year student majoring in studio art. Her painting "Rain" aims to capture the look of light through raindrops, focusing on the colours and distortions of light and objects through the rain.

"The Grass is Always Greener"

Kate Wright (she/her) is a third-year Interactive Systems Design (Applied Computing) student. With Kate's complementary interests in art and technology, she primarily experiments with graphic design, digital illustration, photography, and a combination of these mediums in her projects.

"To the Night Driver"

Lexus Neil (she/her) is a third-year student in the College of Arts and Science.

"Uncommon Cents and Odd Sentiments"

Mackenzie (M.P.) is a thirdish year, he failed a bunch of classes when he started because he experienced homelessness the year previous. The W's give his transcript character, like scars. His experience with poverty made him interested in fashion, androgyny and skincare routines. He likes to tell stories and make dumb jokes. His hobbies include video games, movies, photography, writing and reading. His biggest inspirations are eastern religious concepts and grimy hip hop. He's really into expressing himself. He likes to live his life in a way that creates folklore for his stories.

"The Monster"

Megan Mineau is a first-year anthropology major. She always has a writing project on the go, often fantasy with heavy inspiration from real-world cultures. When not in the middle of a creative frenzy, she studies, spends time with her friends, finds the perfect songs for her characters, and loses herself in online rabbit trails. She has also been published twice in *Windscrip* magazine.

"on campus"

MH is a fourth-year Arts and Science student.

"Baba's Jacket"

MM is a first-year education student majoring in English.

"Gaslight"

Depicting honest vulnerability, **Olivia Woldehana** creates poetry to process her experiences with mental health, thoughts, and emotions. She often employs metaphors that hold multiple meanings, intricately encoding the exploration of perspectives. By doing so, Olivia introspectively records her dynamic development of empathy, growth in her relationship with God, and continuous learning of how to live life through love.

"Elegy at Midair"

Prapti Das (she/her) is a second-year political studies student who aspires to become a lawyer. She enjoys writing poetry during her spare time. Her poem "Elegy at Midair" explores the thought-process of a troubled woman, in the halfway state between life and death.

"tânisi êsi kiskisiyân maskihkêwâpoya"

Randy Morin is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Indigenous Studies.

"Cardinal"

Robyn Claypool is a staff member for the College of Medicine, who writes poetry whenever she can. She moved recently to Moose Jaw and has been exploring themes of change in her writing.

"Numbers"

Syndel Thomas Kozar is a neurodivergent, queer, non-binary half nehiyaw (Plains Cree) and half white-settler woman, mother of two, storyteller/writer, artist, advocate, and lifelong learner residing on Treaty 6 Territory in Saskatchewan. She is a band member of One Arrow First Nation and with roots in the Chakastaypasin Band, located within James Smith Cree Nation. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts Double Honours in Indigenous Studies and Women's and Gender Studies, with a minor in English and a Certificate in the Study of Indigenous Storytelling at the University of Saskatchewan.

"Urban Prairie"

Tori Blom (she/her) is a second-year education student at Usask. She has been interested in writing and other forms of art since a very young age. Tori's poem "Urban Prairie" entails an intersection of urban and rural Saskatchewan, and how their connections spark images of comfort and beauty.

in medias res

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.

WANT TO SUBMIT?

IMR publishes poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and visual art from members of the USask community. We will collect submissions for the 2025-26 school year throughout the summer at our website (scan the QR code). We anticipate our final deadline for submissions will be in late October 2025. Contributors will be contacted after submissions close.



The Guardian

by RENELLE MORELLI

Acrylic on Canvas

As a kid, I was enamoured with fictional worlds of heroes and battles, as well as the quiet tranquillity found in the presence of farm animals and livestock. For me, this painting captures the important values in those topics: patience and endurance. The draft horse is known for possessing great strength, resilience, and a calm, steady character. They are powerful breeds, well suited for aiding humans in work and companionship. The armour it bares heightens the quality of its endurance, and its peaceful composition suggests a quiet readiness, a willingness to pause and await what lies ahead.



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