



# Antheon

a Journal of the Arts

Vol. 23  
2017

City University of New York  
Kingsborough Community College

Vol. 23  
2017

# Antheon

## Our Mission

Antheon is Kingsborough Community College's literary arts journal founded to publish the best student art and literature while also exhibiting the creative visions of our talented designers. Each fall, a new team of student designers and editors are elected to guide a year's worth of submissions. Our goal is simple: To promote our community's burgeoning writers and artists by giving them a wider audience.

## President's Letter

Dear Readers,

It is a pleasure to present the 2016-2017 addition of Antheon, which was made with tireless work and dedication by its members. Antheon is a journal that showcases the diverse talent of the students at Kingsborough Community College. This publication offers students the opportunity to be published artists or writers, which helps continue a wonderful tradition this journal created. This issue of Antheon contains our students' finest work and it is an honor to bring them all to you.

This year it wasn't easy to start collecting submissions; it wasn't until the middle of winter it looked like we would have enough submissions. With the work of the clubs' advisors and club members, we received a plethora of submissions. There are a number of thank yous that are in order.

I would like to first say, "Thank you" to Professor Lea Fridman who first told me about the literary arts journal Antheon. Without you I wouldn't have been able to enjoy this fantastic experience.

I owe a huge "Thank you" to Director of Student Publications, Levy Moore for first giving me a history of this literary arts journal and teaching me what I needed to know about this, and secondly for being an extraordinary mentor to all of us.

Thanks also to our office Manager, Robert Wong who made sure we met all our deadlines and everything went smoothly.

I would like to extend a special thank you to our magnificent advisers, Professor Brian Katz, Antheon's Literary Adviser who worked hard to pull together the writings. Professor Kristin Derimanova as well, for helping our student designers create such a unique and gorgeous layout.

I would like to congratulate and thank all my fellow club members: The Vice President, Tamara Abelishvili, whose knowledge of the club (having been the designer last year) helped my presidency feel like a breeze; the Secretary, Samara Chalumeau, who combined efforts with Tamara to recruit submissions from students; last but not least the Treasurer, Angelisa Tejada, who helped bear some of the burden of the presidency. It was a pleasure working with all of you. The outcome is worth our tremendous work.

I would like to thank the KCC association for funding Antheon and continuing to allow the publication of the literary arts journal.

Most importantly, I would like to say "Thank you" and congratulations to all the artists and writers published in this journal for their spectacular work. Your work exemplifies the superb talent here at Kingsborough Community College. This is only a stepping-stone in what I'm certain will be successful careers. Without you this journal would not be possible.

Lastly, to you the readers, students, and faculty, we hope you enjoy this year's issue of Antheon. It was not easy, but we pulled it off. Thank you for your continued support of Antheon and the Antheon tradition of publishing our students' best work.

Steven Fattore  
President of Antheon

## Antheon Officers

President – Steven Fattore  
Vice President – Tamara Abelishvili  
Secretary – Samara Chalumeau  
Treasurer – Angelisa Tejada

## Design and Layouts

Tamara Abelishvili  
Cover, President's Letter Page, Title and  
End Page, Interior Pages:  
(1-2, 7-8, 25-26, 33-34, 37-38, 43-44, 49-  
50, 51-52, 57-58)

Amanda Dellavecchia  
Interior Pages:  
(3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 13-14, 15-16, 23-24, 27-28,  
29-30, 31-32, 39-40, 41-42)

Jeffrey Tlapale  
Table of Content, Interior Pages:  
(9-10, 11-12, 17-18, 19-20, 21-22, 35-36, 45-  
46, 47-48, 53-54, 55-56)

## Art Director

Kristin Derimanova

## Staff and Faculty Support

Director of Student Publications – Levy Moore  
Office Manager – Robert Wong  
Literary Advisors – Brian Katz and Tom Lavazzi

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Wilson Chen • Bouquet of Skull

### Emanuel Berroa

#### Bus ride

Sitting back in comfy chairs  
Enough leg space  
Enough breathing air  
The thought of open road  
Sway left or right  
Between lanes  
Close your eyes  
Welcome to bus flights  
Melodies in your ears  
Pressing next  
Some songs make you tear  
Look out the window  
Think about next year

### Cierrah Sankar

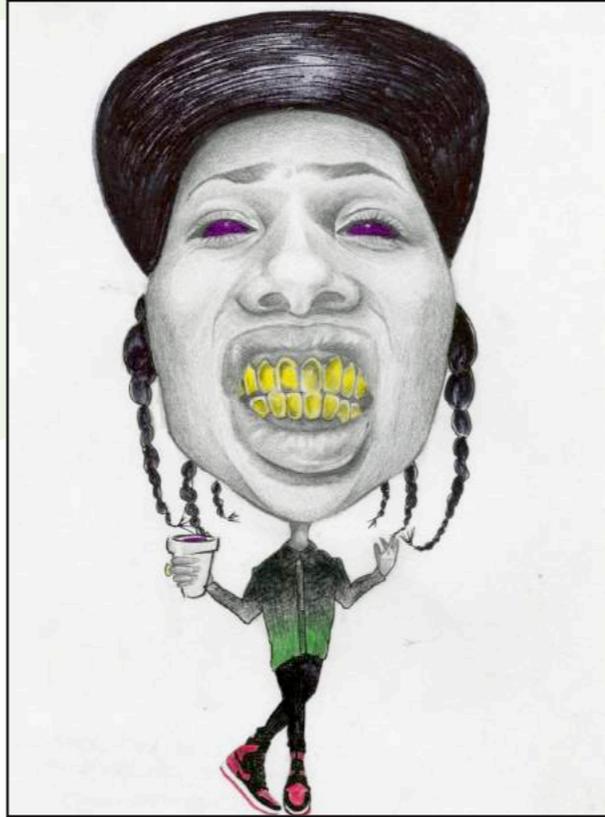
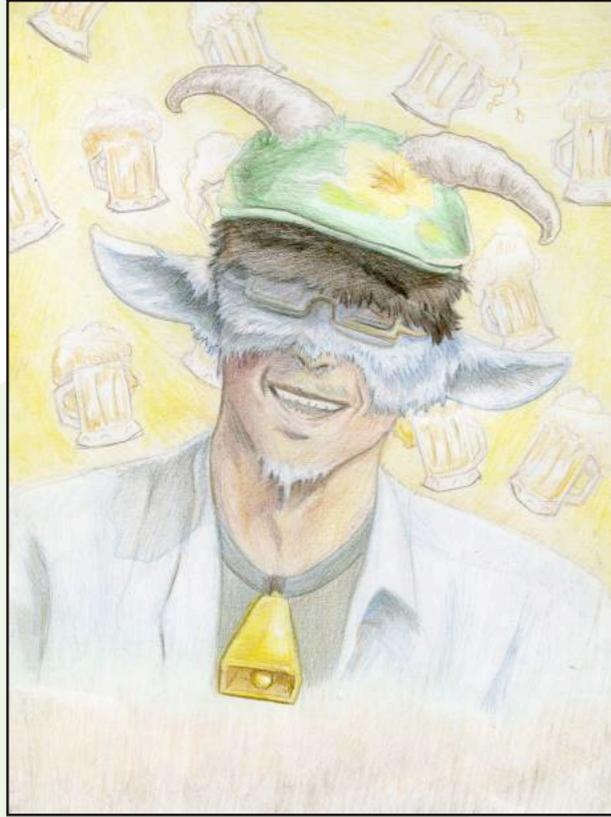
#### We Wish

We wish for what is unseen for we miss the touch  
Light bulbs crack but not break, Pillows cringe but soft  
To know what it's like to feel without much  
Grab a gift that shows happiness, untie a bow for beauty  
Corals placed under sea, the water is beautiful  
Sea sand between your toes, beige or white  
Soothing on the skin no pale or tan  
To live under the sea our minds grasp life  
Stars surround us, nocturnal creatures we fly through moonlight

It is uncertain to live for long but we teach our mind  
Books take interest, why a cage bird sings  
The poet behind it, dark patches, solid flower  
We pick and choose who stays, what is noticed  
Growth is our tall unlike Starbucks their tall is small  
The blind spot in our flesh, to learn is motive.  
We grasp and lose both, our hearing and smell the dust  
Damn the person who wrote this

Courtney Robinson • Train





### Adam Morales Heater [Excerpt]

Throughout the course of the 9th inning nobody sat next to you in the dugout. There is a baseball superstition that if somebody is throwing a no hitter or perfect game you cannot speak to them or sit next to them until they give up a hit. This was not a burden to you whatsoever. You were just happy to be sitting by the fan with nobo37dy blocking the airflow. By this time you were feeling a little fatigued due to the fact that you had only been playing nine inning games for one year, but then you began to remember the High School City Championship game where you threw 166 pitches to win it all in Yankee Stadium. Channeling that memory was exactly what you needed to conjure up the strength to finish the game with flames.

The first batter came up and you threw one fastball after the other. After about eight pitches you caught him looking at the ninth straight heater right on the low and outside corner. The radar gun on the Jumbotron read 102mph. You felt a slight sense of accomplishment due to the fact

that you reached a new maximum velocity. That sense of euphoria was short lived. You had a game to close out. For whatever reason, you decided to get fancy with the next batter by throwing him off speed pitches and falling behind three balls and no strikes. In danger of surrendering your first base runner of the game, you decided it was best to keep it hot by pumping heaters by him. That's exactly what you did, three straight right by him, the last of which he watched zip by at 102mph. It was time for the ultimate showdown, the aforementioned number nine hitter, the fastball hitting machine vs. You, Brooklyn's own flamethrower. He was just like you, a low draft pick, but he was in his second season playing for a new contract. You could sense his hunger to prove himself to the organization through the look in his squinted, yet focused ocean blue eyes. His hands were wrapped so tightly around the bat it seemed as if he wanted to strangle it.

His legs wobbled back and forth as a timing mechanism. He squatted lower than he had been all game for this one at bat, which was an indication he was trying to coax out a walk. He seemed on edge while you were cool, calm, and



Shani Ali Williams • Subway

collected. Weary of his good eye and quick reflexes you decide to throw him exclusively off speed pitches, but mostly it's because you sensed he timed your fastball from his previous two plate appearances. You fell behind three balls and no strikes again but something wasn't right. Your arm was lagging more than usual while still sitting under the 100 pitch mark. Your body didn't feel that tired and your velocity was where it should be. The pitching coach made a visit because he could see you were thinking too much. "Heater," was his only word. You decide to take his advice and ride your strength to the finish line. You wind up and throw a heater on the outside corner, and he swings

on a three ball, no strike count which was unheard of considering the circumstances of the game. The ball soared off his bat deep down the right field line. As you watched the number 45 on Graham Greene's jersey reduce in size the farther back he ran, your sense of accomplishment faded quickly. How could something so good go wrong so quickly? While looking down in disgust you heard the crowd begin to roar. You lifted your head to see that the ball landed just to the right of the foul pole in foul territory. You've been given a second life. Another heater came flaming toward the last place Cyclone hitter.

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You helplessly gazed as he roped an inside fastball down the left field line this time. You were so nervous that your perfect game was ruined that you began to wave the ball foul, much like Carlton Fisk tried to wave his home run ball fair in game 6 of the 1975 World Series. To your delight, the ball ricocheted off the wall in foul territory. You were given yet another shot to etch your name into the history books. After about fifteen seconds of pacing around the mound to gather yourself, you toed the rubber and looked in for the sign. The catcher threw down the classic index finger signal for your heater. You nodded, wound up, and then you felt the seams glide off your fingertips. CRACKKK!

The bat splintered. It was a foul ball, a low humpback line drive headed for no man's land down the 1st base line in foul territory. Instinctively, you raced over at full speed and dive for the ball while the barrel of the bat soared over your stretched out body. You gently squeezed the ball into your glove feeling it rattle around between the pocket and webbing of the glove. You were floating on air as you realized what you've accomplished. A perfect game in your professional debut, a feat accomplished by only three players before you! You were on the fast track to the big leagues now.

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Esme Parks • Subway



**Marie Spatola**

Untitled

Sitting in the locker room, gazing at her breasts  
Changing clothes as girls laugh  
Underwear to thick thighs  
Am I even worth the time  
Sixteen and in a popularity war  
See, why can't my arms be string beans  
She didn't see the beauty of what would become

Sneakers and messy hair to tie down  
Me was me and all of me was part of society  
Looked down upon  
What is real, what is fake  
To be a clown to girls that didn't know what was at stake  
Fuck you Fuck you, she shouted  
She took a pen and paper to ran away. . .

**Marie Spatola**

Untitled

Strawberries are overpriced  
Will the milk not be taken, not enough  
The hands of a couple, will they not live in harmony  
There was a land of one's values  
Coming together as one  
Not to show and do us wrong

**Sarif Nyangamukenga • Cosmic Burger**



Yin Yin • Monkey Business



Rukshona Dusmukhamedova • Typeface Design



Diane Varano • Fractured



Diane Varano • Life Cycles

### Krista Crommett

Tide [Excerpt]

Suddenly I'm in the room, and Katie and I are smiling across at each other. She looks stunning, her golden hair tied up loose and sexy, Christmas red lipstick, all six feet of her poured into that damn white button-down and pair of black pants. We are toasting shots of Stoli behind that Japanese room divider the host has set up to create a sort of "servers station". His mistake. Easily twelve bottles of Moet all in various stages of consumption, and that's about eight more than the guests will enjoy. Plus the random mugs of Stolichnaya. Oh, okay, I get it. I mean, DUH!! It's ME singing a solo Happy Birthday to a 70 year old Upper West side patriarch. And I bet you can't guess who is also draped across the piano doing her best Audrey Hepburn?

But those chef whites. It's a sickness, I'm aware. See, that's the thing is I own my shit (some of the time). I'm pretty sure there's a deep seated reason for all of this, maybe I could sit myself down someday and really figure it out, really hammer it all out and kind of get to the bottom of it, y'know? Because we all know it ain't just the chef whites.

But not today. No, today I'm just sailing along that gorgeous blue ocean, remembering sunshine and kisses. Sunshine and kisses.

*I had a friend used to ask me three days into a job whether it started yet or not, and if so when would it, because the question wasn't "if" but "when". I mean, why did it always have to be that way? Why couldn't I just go home and read a book like a normal person?*

*But this Chef was different. At first it was innocent, a lame joke here, a wry comment there. His Jewfro was usually corralled up into a Brooklyn Nets hat or bandana. One afternoon before the shift started and the Health Department code shrouded those glorious tendrils beneath the baseball hat of a newish, terminally losing team, I caught a glimpse. Mostly height and sinew, he actually shook out his mane, cocked his hip to one side, and smiled at me. He was pure 70's rock star, minus the guitar. He possessed*



Anastasiya Kharlamova • Spring Still Life

*a Long Island accent and a sense of comic timing unparalleled since.*

*"Hey I got one for ya" he'd say, while giving the pan a quick toss over the flame.*

*"Okay, go ahead."*

*"Do you want corny, dirty, or both?"*

*"Surprise me."*

*"What do the Rolling Stones and the Scots have in common?"*

*"I give up, what?"*

*"Well the Stones say "Hey, you, get off of my cloud, and the Scots say "Hey, Macleod, get off of my ewe""*

*Maybe it was the chase. It was definitely the chase. I've*

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Anastasiya Kharlamova • Tangerine Cat

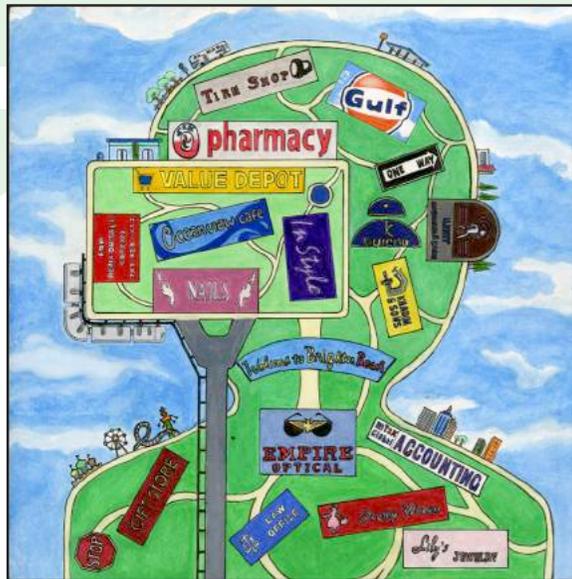
*known that since the age of four when I would chase Keith or Joel (pronounced Jo-WEW because I couldn't say my "L"s) until I caught them. But I never quite wanted to hold onto them. It was the same way with the booze. The thrill was gone after the hot pursuit.*

Okay, back to the texts. Yes, the texts. Me: "Home safe". Pink Panther : "We were worried". Pink Panther again: "How's your neck?" How on earth do they know about my neck? I must get answers, but not now. Now, I must call Chef. The same outgoing message for the past two years. I always marveled at how cordial and civilized it sounded, for a Chef, for him. And of course I always got a little giddy hearing it, but this time, just fear. "Hi, please leave your

name and number after the tone and I'll be sure to get back to you just as soon as I can. Thanks." I stammer some sort of confused and frightened message there, I think I even cry. Then my fingers dial again: "Hi, please leave your name and number after the tone and I'll be sure to get back to you just as soon as I can. Thanks". And again, This must happen four or five more times, when I am interrupted by a call. A thick Brooklyn accent assaults my ears, but it's a welcome one. It's Marie. My best best friend, my lifeline, my touchstone. "Pats?" she asks, using the Absolutely Fabulous

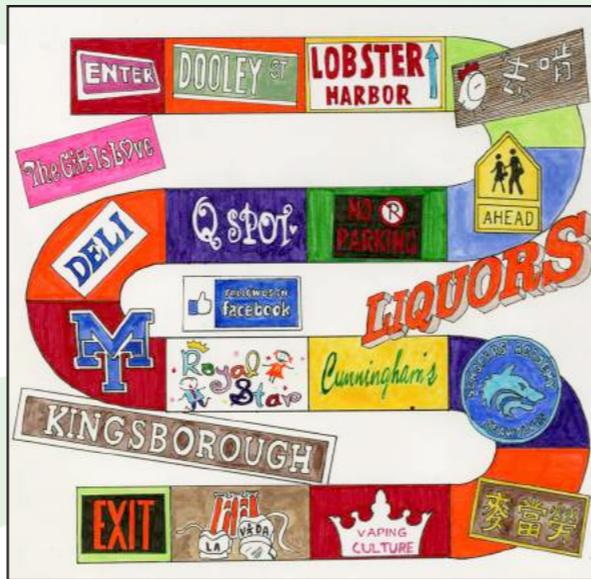
nickname she dubbed me many moons ago. I immediately start bawling. With one word she opens up a well of grief within me that cannot be stopped. I am suddenly that cliché best girlfriend, choking on words, trying to get them out, struggling to tell her everything I can remember, and instead gurgling syllables and tears and "I'm soooooo hungry."

Within an hour a chocolate milkshake, a ginger ale, a grilled cheese on rye with tomato, and French fries arrive. And the following day is the first day of many new days that I string together and protect with all my heart.



Jun Liang Zhu • Travel Poster

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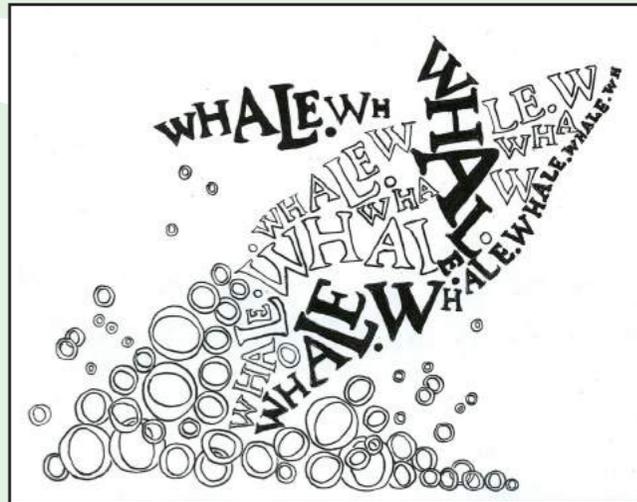
Funny Lung • Travel Poster

### Emanuel Berroa Thoughts

My Words are poison  
Observe the damage  
Leprosy eats you up  
It's too hard to manage  
Lay in your death bed he's coming  
You lived your life well oh listen he's humming  
Open this new path what to choose  
Heaven or hell these angels look down on you  
Now back to reality where you're still breathing  
The skin heals as the leprosy is leaving  
I rap so dark because it's like poetry  
Edgar Allen Poe, that raven has authority  
It looks over you as you pace back and forth  
The library is shrinking, start moving north  
You might run into Santa, buyer's remorse  
Milk and cookies for what  
The fat piece of shit is a corpse  
Sickening what your parents make you believe,  
not even the tooth fairy  
Stop breaking your teeth.

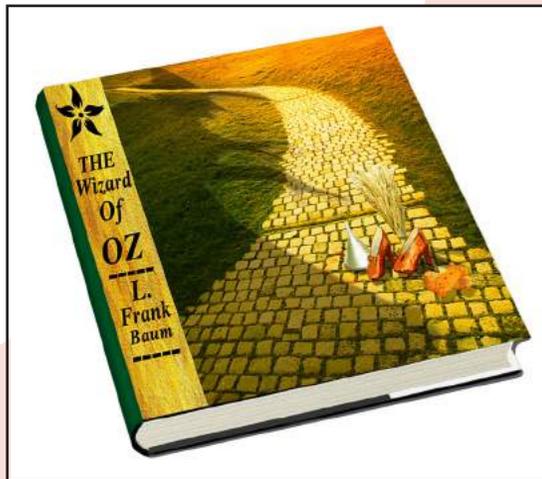
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Ming Siu • Whale



Roxanne Martinez • Logo





Bryton Daniels • Oz

### Adam Morales Curveball [Excerpt]

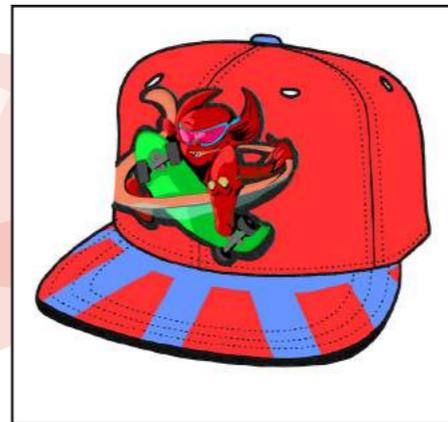
While we were at the Owl's Head Skate Park, Ben and Izzy went over to the bowl to practice their vert skating. Ronnie and I dropped into the mini bowl in order to practice our grinds along the edge. Syd mostly sat on his board by Ronnie and me while smoking a cigarette and eating chips. He wasn't much of a skater he just liked to hangout and bust a few moves until he fell. Whenever Syd hits the pavement he gets angrier than a freshly branded bull, and then he's done for the day. After about a half hour session in the mini bowl I took a smoke break with Syd and then tried what I had been practicing on the spine, which is basically two quarter pipes attached back to back. It's a perfect obstacle for either grinding or stalling on the rail that connects the ramps, or transferring over the rail into the other ramp usually with a grab or a flip trick. What I tried to do was a nose stall on the coping at the top of the ramp and come back down in a switch foot position.

I dropped into the bank and with the wind flowing through my long, brown curly hair. I approached the coping. I proceeded to shift my body weight to the back of the board so that I would not fall forward while locking in the grind.



Shibin Chen • Cyprinoid

### Oliver Santana • Product Design



Before I even realized it I was locked into my first nose stall. The problem came when I was trying to come out of the nose stall in switch position. Riding switch was something I had not practiced often; therefore, I shifted my body weight in the incorrect direction and the board flew out from underneath me. My back hit the pavement and my left shoe went soaring into the air. I must've hit the ground extremely hard because my airborne shoe hit another skater in the head and he was at least 20 feet

away on the other side of the bowl far from my wipeout zone (at least, according to Ben and Izzy, both of whom witnessed the incident). Still shaken from my fall, I rose up to see this angry teen emerging from the depths of the drained pool. He was about 5'10" with a blonde short Caesar haircut and menacing hazel eyes with the look of rage in them. In actuality, he was the kind of arrogant, hot-tempered kind of child that could be cast as the main antagonist of any high school film.



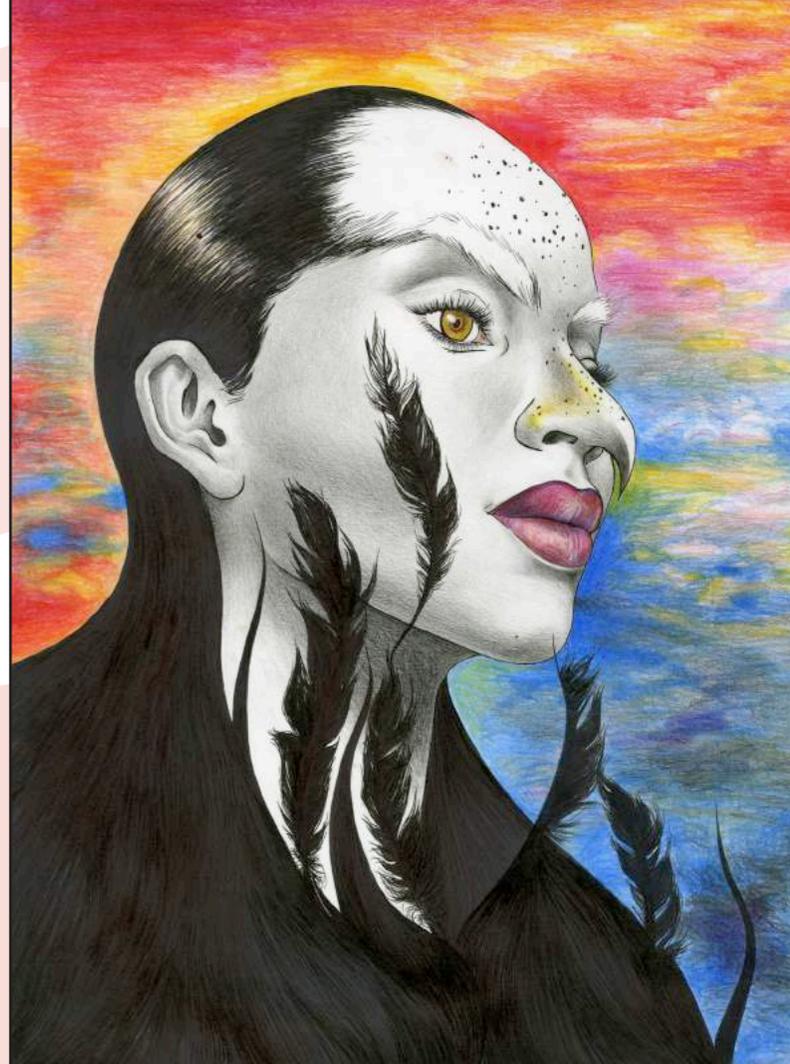
Shani Ali Williams • Hansel and Gretel

As he climbed out of the bowl he flung my shoe and clocked me right on the nose and back to the ground I fell. He turned back around and continued skating as if nothing occurred. Disoriented and baffled, my friends ran to my aid and approach Blondie and his group of friends. I followed right behind them after I finished counting stars beautiful celestial orbs and tying my shoe. As soon as I arrived one of Blondie's friends slugged Syd with a left hook to the jaw. Usually, Syd can take a beating but this time it seemed as if he was out for the count. As his best friend I was compelled to join this rapidly transpiring melee. Blondie came charging from my left and swung his skateboard right at my neck. Luckily, I saw him in my peripheral vision and was able to duck under it and knee him in the testes. Call it a dirty move, but anybody coming for my head with any object of any kind definitely deserves a good old school crotch shot. Blondie crumpled to the ground in pure pain, where I proceeded to knock

him around with hammer fists to the head. Ultimately he was left on the ground bloodied with two missing teeth and his nose punched crooked. Ronnie and Ben were taking on his two other friends. Izzy fled the scene because he has to be nonconfrontational due to his immigrant status.

Once I was done fighting Blondie I immediately targeted his friend that knocked out Syd. He was a short and stocky fellow. It looked like he could really pack a punch because Ronnie himself had a few scrapes and a busted lip. I'd like to say I went toe to toe with him and won, but after seeing his punching power on Syd and they way he was weaving Ronnie's lightning fast jabs I could tell he was a dangerous one to deal with. As he was focused on Ronnie I came from behind and suplexed him as if I were Kurt Angle, the former WWE wrestler. The third friend tried to flee the scene after Ben let him go but when he escaped the bowl we were all in for a rude awakening.

Shani Ali Williams • Manimal





Peter Ayala • Arrow Portrait

### A.J. Cohen

#### Day Trades the Night

You finally get the full Windsor in an acceptable condition after your third try.

You can see Lyle crumpled up, to the left of the toilet. His second-hand trench coat, hanging over just one arm. There's a patch work of old vomit stains on each leg of his pants, showing the dedication to his one, true love.

You are in pain. Your bones are starting to sizzle again. Your muscles are pulsating. They swell with blood then pull tighter holding to the bone. You think about the tribal drum Ly used to play in Washington square park, when he began showing you the ropes, and the animal hide stretched tight over the top. You look back at the mirror and have never wanted him and everyone else the fuck out of here more. If you are honest you want him dead. You want them all dead, you along with them.

Your phone goes off.

It reads: "Must leave in 15 minutes, keys, wallet, phone, Tendermen's lease."

You pick up your briefcase from where Lyle once laid. You check the mirror one last time. As you lift your hand to settle a stray hair, your watch's clasp catches a thread on your tie and pulls it long. You don't have time to worry, or for another Windsor, but for a bacon egg and cheese, always.

At the bodega Orlando is talking on his blue-tooth headset. He tosses you your last vice and tells you,

ALIVE



DAFT PUNK

07.12.2017

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

WWW.DAFTPUNK.COM  
FOR TICKETS

Marvin Henrius • Alive



Amanda DellaVecchia • Stark Logo

"Things'll kill you, bro."

If he only knew the neighborhood you remember, when his father first bought the store. Back when you were into "night trading" on Delancy. Before the night you met Jazlyn at the second avenue church. And Before his pops' tobacco policy got him busted for trafficking in loose cigarettes. When you were still ripping, and running. You thank him and tell him to have a good one.

You hail a cab.

You set your briefcase on the seat before getting in. You pop the copper latches. Relieved to see you remembered the papers you have been a slave to for months. You hop in the car.

"Good morning sir. Where too?"

"38 E 61st St." you tell him

Your taxi passes a group of people smoking outside of a church. You recognize a face as it moves through the windows, time slows. She was Jazlyn's old sponsee. She presented Jazlyn's anniversary coin the night you met.

You were in a shameful state. Your stomach raw from its own



Jun Liang Zhu • My Telepsychic Summer

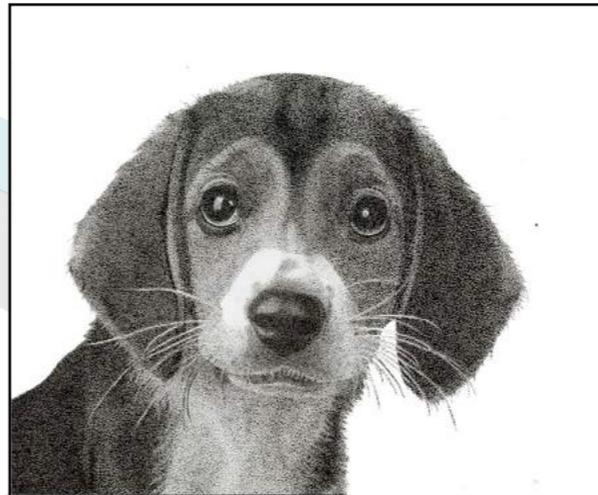
raging acids. Unable to look people in the eye, you felt, if someone touched you might just shatter. You were in the last place you wanted to be. After everyone took their seats you noticed an old rocker whose work would be a fitting sound track for your life. His effortless vocals had captured your disdain for the suit and tie's, still under false impressions that the city was theirs. He too knew better. His lyrics sang from the trenches you knew too well, from the front lines of a battle, waged in the underground. A war that once threatened to swallow this city whole. A man at the podium began to tell the story of his love affair with "focus" medications. Which you knew was just polite pharmaceutical rebranding of speed. You couldn't follow the tale too far after it's intro. Your body, screaming for you to leave while your conscious kept you steadfast.

Jazlyn was receiving her three-year coin that night.

After the meeting, she told you to hold it so you would know it was real. Your hands were shaking. Taking the coin back she held your hand tightly for a moment. It was shaking. You could feel your skin lift off your hand slightly as she pulled away. You'd never forget the way her upper tooth caught the corner of her lip as she looked back up at you. How it glistened with saliva as she offered you one of her smokes. She gave you her number that night, even though you both knew it was frowned upon.

You never went to another meeting in all your years clean. You got sober in a futile attempt to edit just about every conversation you've ever had with your father. Recitations of

Jun Liang Zhu • Stippling



all your failings in perfect sequential order. Lectures on your boundless potential and total lack of ambition.

You watch the street numbers tick by. A tourist stops in awe of a steaming man hole.

Your light has turned green. Horns blare at the obstruction. You begin doing deep breathing techniques you learned at a meditation class a colleague urged you attend.

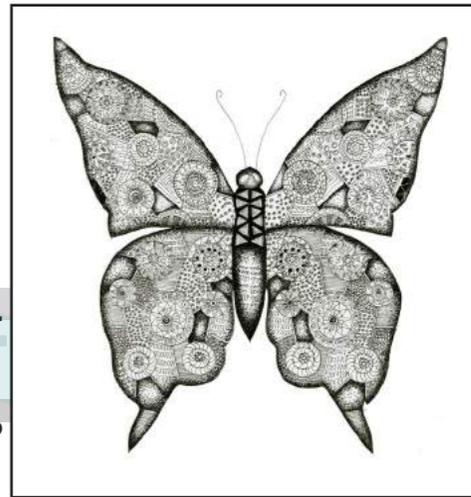
You arrive. Pay the cabbie and wish him a good one.

You walk into the building, mindlessly greeting everyone.

You have only one goal in mind. Today you finally get the win.

Before stepping in the elevator, you receive a text. It's from Jazlyn, "And I miss you. I could be there around six."

Alesya Kurapina • Untitled



Rattled you hit the button for the 32nd floor. You haven't heard from her in years. Long years.

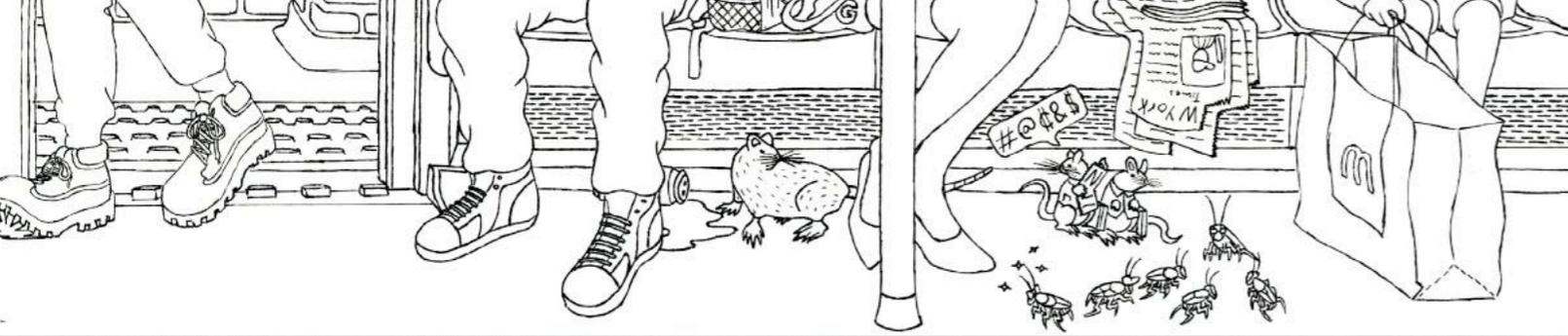
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You step into the elevator and push the button for the lobby. As you leave the building you feel a gust of icy wind, cut through your pants and you throw up your collar.

When it's this cold and the sun is down you get nostalgic of the L.E.S. Back when in a way you thought it was yours? When really, it nearly ate you alive.

You know cabs move by the inch this time of day. So, you head down into the subway.

On the platform, the subway-car's doors open. You take a



**Keith Villaroel • Subway Poster**

seat next to two, barely-there, teenagers with their limbs completely entangled. There's a canvas bag dangling from the girl's elbow with a button that says:

"Putrid and pure."

You decide to get off the train two stops early.

You have always enjoyed walking through Washington Sq. Park on nights like this. You like reminiscing with the spirits that still echo in the park at night. You feel like, somehow, recognizing them keeps them at bay.

There is a street light flickering near the exit at the end park.

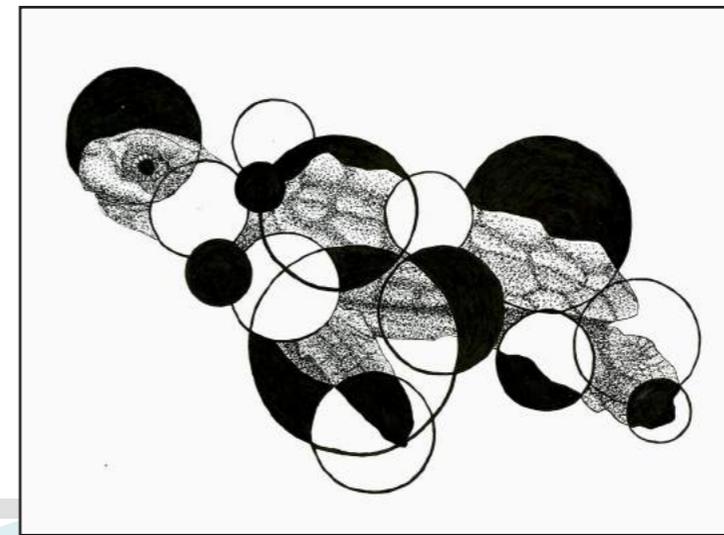
You are reminded of the night you went to Jazlyn's apartment on East Houston. The first night you were alone with her. How you both danced for hours around the one thing on both of your minds. The one thing every person in the rooms warn about. A thing that was just an eventuality for the two of you.

As you reach the struggling streetlight you notice the light cover is filled with dead moths from summers passed. You leave the park.

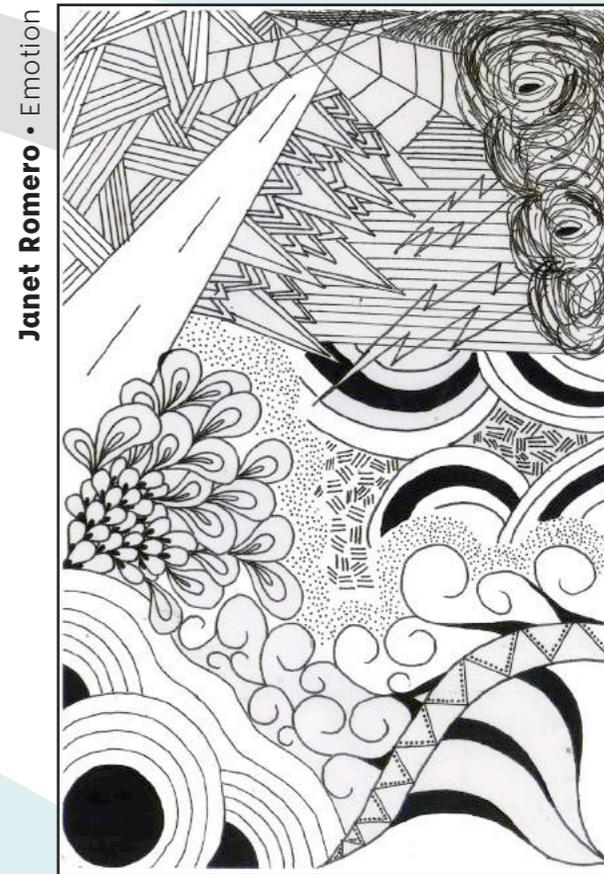
Your stomach growls as turn onto your street.

You approach your steps and see Jazlyn sitting in an unseasonably short skirt, and a studded leather jacket that's sliding off her, revealing her naked collar bone. You get a bit closer and notice her eyes, shaded with a sleepiness, you once found oddly alluring.

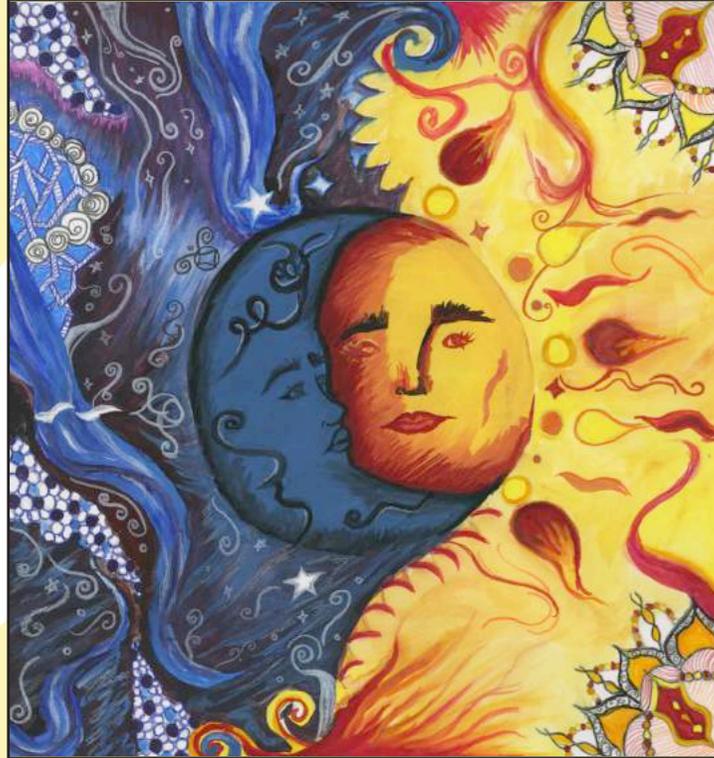
She puts a cigarette to her mouth. She turns to you. You can tell she recognizes you. Her lips raise into a smile. You can see her deep red lipstick stain the white, paper filter as it rolls between her lips. She pulls out a Zippo. Flicks it. She pulls the flame close and it ignites her eyes. And without a word she pulls another from the case and offers it to you.



**Erin Freeburn • Turtle**



**Janet Romero • Emotion**



**Christine Munroe** • Cool-Warm

### **Jennifer Goosby**

#### **The Darker Side of Night**

Streetlamps spilling through the blinds  
The sun has said its final goodbyes.  
The lifetime ritual begins tonight  
Moon translucent, old women in plight.  
Huddling behind their doors encased  
Scurrying to latch their locks in place.  
Fickle girls, curious and crude  
Clamp onto arms of the older dudes.  
As the Moon becomes more opaque  
Older men in cars, wait for their dates.  
Roaring above, are international flights  
Two cats in the alley are having a fight.  
Mothers holler the names of sodden and shabby boys  
While their sister's peer through their window with poise.  
Screen doors swing open, from the excitement of yellow labs  
As they scamper and slobber to the laps of the dads.  
Engines still hot from the long commute home  
Fathers announcing their presence in fatigued tone.  
The old women rock, as they quietly crochet  
Admiring the view of their china display.  
The crude girls in the backseat with older guys,  
Stare out the window, into the pitch of the night.



**Kadejah Johnson** • Gentrification

Curiosity dead, overwhelmed by silent cries,  
Tears masking her cheeks, his hands forced up her thigh.  
The sharp older men, who picked up their dates  
Dining at reserved tables, having philosophical debates.  
The Planes still blaring through the stars in the sky  
While the two stray cats, swat their paws at fireflies.  
The Shabby boys, now showered and clean

Blast rock and roll on their beds, their room a smoke screen.  
Their pious sister, Yells out, "goodnight!"  
Locks her bedroom door, sleeping sound, out of sight.  
Mothers weary, waiting for their husband in bed  
As he emails a woman, at a work conference he met.  
The yellow lab curled up on dad's recliner  
The entire house silent, the night loud with desire.



**Katherine Shorr** • Scarry Times



**Katherine Shorr** • Sign Of The Times

**Katherine Shorr** • Rottweilers On Guard



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### **Abigail Gregg**

Makes me cry

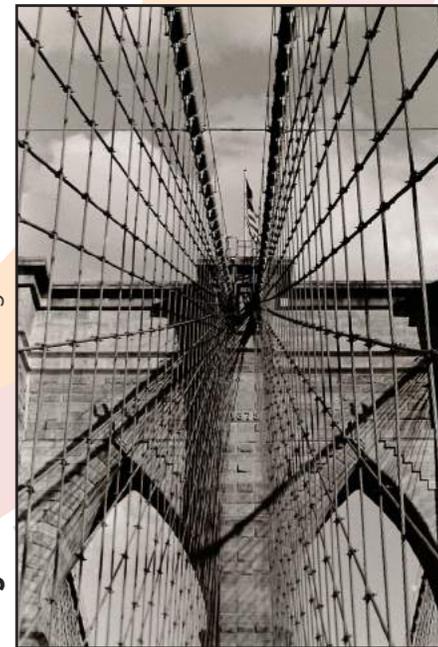
Conjoined by the legs, you and I shared a body  
Using our hands for feet. So in sync as we grew,  
Granny hardly ever uttered "Ab" without adding "Ke".  
You were our lioness's desire, a replication of the king  
The Bert to my earnie, no one understands you like me.  
We grew up in dysfunction that ate virtue for breakfast  
I noticed the shift first placing discernment on my regret list.  
Schizophrenia, I watched it grow legs out of my stomach ripping us apart  
Like a magic trick gone wrong, this magician mistakenly sawed my life in two.  
observing your once vibrant nature dwindle into this ghost of a man  
The pain of helplessness is devastating; this was not a part of the plan!  
My moral support may die in vain, have I lost my best-friend?  
Have you ever stared in a mirror watching your own face betray you?  
Gradually deteriorate into an infantile zombie lost within its own existence.  
The once familiar voice has now become your arch nemesis  
But you're my batman! It's not possible for the joker to defeat you  
He's a madman! what is this travesty you've become?  
Schizophrenia, that intolerable fat kid who bullies everyone in the sandbox  
Always pushing you off the swing, ruining your favorite pair of socks  
Shooting spitballs in your eyes, hitting you with b-balls during gym  
I wish nothing more than for you to stand up to him  
Too bad no training exists for this type of fight  
this bully's relentless tormenting you all day and night  
I jump in 'cause we are twins meaning your lost equals mine  
I can't just sit here and accept that my other half may lose his mind.

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### **Bradley McKnight**

Homeland (flag)

Dark swishes wrapping the body  
As Gold streaks strike through  
drawing the sides closer  
Contoured by Emerald edges  
Uniting the disenfranchised



**Marybeth Zema** • Brooklyn Web



**Krista Crommett**  
Walk-In [Excerpt]

You swear you just saw it here! It's a rosé; it shouldn't be too hard to spot. But with only the tops of the white, black, or navy labels showing, and all stacked up like little grape soldiers, you lost it again. It's fucking cold in here. The map on the wall has probably been there since the place opened, and nothing's really ever in the right order. This cold, cramped room could be featured on "Hoarders:

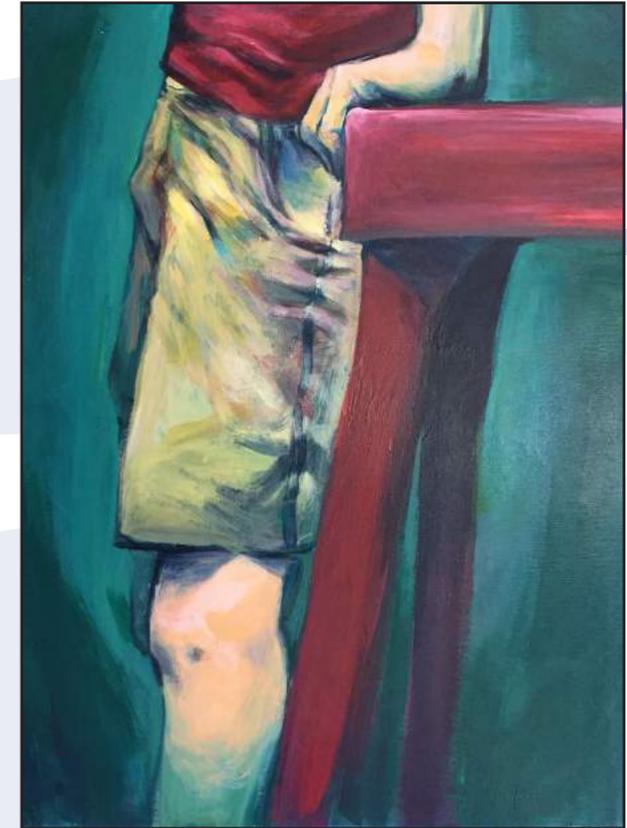
Wino Edition." You glance up at it again anyway, because if you're gonna NOT find something, you wanna at least be able to say you tried the map. C'mon Sofia Coppola, where the hell are you? It wasn't good enough you wrote and directed a screenplay? Now you have to go and jam up what was already promising to be a nightmare of a service? All French Fucks. Louis Latour, Pouilly- Fuisse Montrachet... FUCK YOU! Where's the Italian American princess? You think it had a white label. To add insult to injury, she's worth about twenty-eight dollars.

It figures, too. Table 52 are two trust fund straighties in their mid thirties out on "date night" while little Graham stays home with a babysitter. You recall the manager mentioning that the woman was "gluten-free" and that they had requested a "quiet table out of the way". Laughable. This upscale bistro on a Saturday night is anything but quiet. They most likely just moved to the neighborhood, and they are the reason for the gleaming high rises popping up like dandelions. They wouldn't know a good bottle if it rolled out of the walk in, up the stairs, and sang "La Vie en Rose" to them as they graze on overpriced kale. If it had been a French Fuck at least we're talking a price point of eighty bucks or higher. You grab the nearest one and are pulling it slowly out of the rack for closer inspection when..

Whoosh. A stream of warm air rushes in from behind, and: "You lost?"

His hand plants itself firmly on your left butt cheek.

You spin around, and as you do, the bottle crashes to the floor. You can just make out the remnants of the label. It's white, but all in German. No, it can't be. It can't be, but it is. It's the Steinberger Riesling. We JUST went over this wine at pre-shift. We talked about it's crisp acidity, it's surprising dryness, it's 1971 vintage, it's ability to pair well with the



**Wilson Chen** • Boy at the chair



Shani Ali Williams • Day Book Project

lobster risotto special, the fact that there is only ONE left in the house, (so if one of you enterprising souls manages to sell it, please alert Mark the GM) and it's ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY FIVE DOLLAR PRICE TAG! You both stare in disbelief at the shards of glass and river of liquid gold now rushing around your feet. Eyes meet. In one split second, it's panic, then laughter, then tongue, hands, hair and more tongue. Logical You knows you should probably grab the mop and clean up this mess and get back up to the floor, somehow admit to this travesty. But he's kissing you now! Now, you're stuck. 'Cause when he kisses you like this it's a dozen briny oysters sliding down your throat, washed down with your second dirty martini, somewhere between happy and messy while your favorite song blares out of the car stereo on a 90 degree day heading eastbound to Montauk. Table 52 will have to wait.

You let him leave first. He scans the room quickly, looks over his shoulder, and nods back to tell you the coast is clear. He flies all the way out and back up the stairs. You scurry out of the walk in, looking frantically for the broom. As your eyes adjust to the high wattage florescents of the prep kitchen, you notice Miguel strolling by, singing to himself, like he's walking through the park on a Sunday afternoon. He has both broom and dustbin in hand. Without thinking, you grab both from him, muttering "Can i borrow this real quick?" and practically run back into the walk-in.

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He looks bewildered, but follows you, grabs them back, and says "I sweep, you go!" motioning to the stairs. Thank God for Miguel.

Sometimes you drift off and remember certain milestones in your life, where things really came together or really fell apart, and you can remember these things in relation to which restaurant you worked at.

Joel, your first Chef. (Well, technically line cook. Brown-almost-black eyes, that shiny gold cross resting on caramel skin, and the way those eyes looked you up and down, sizing you up like a side of beef...)

A pregnancy that shouldn't've shocked you but did.

An abortion that should've bothered you but didn't.

Your best friend drowning off the coast of California (daily salty tears in the walk-in).

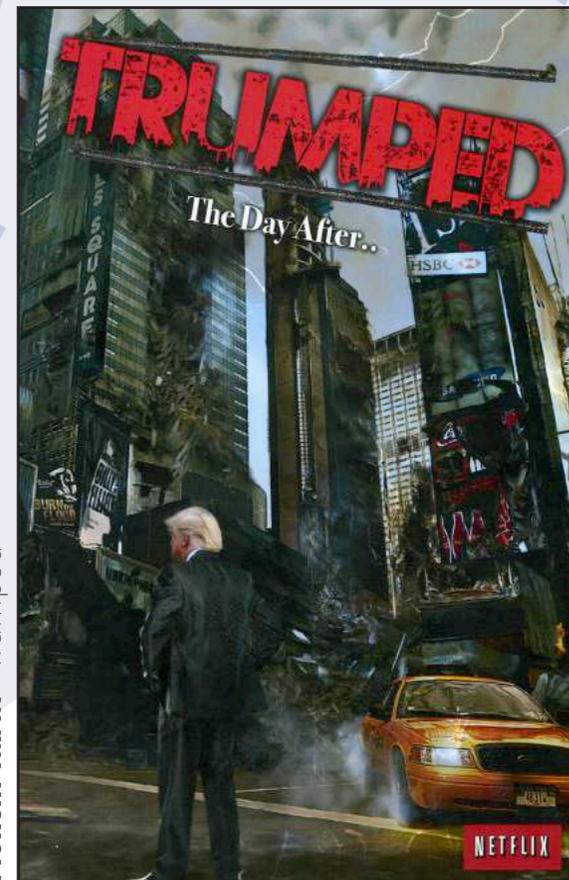
Getting married -and the manager giving you a thick wad of cash as a bonus to take overseas for the wedding.

Wacky, older, plastic-surgery enhanced Australian hostess who claimed to have sung on a "Dolby" (she meant "Moby") track lending you white flowered sandals as your "something borrowed."

9/11 - your manager insisting we all find a "new normalcy" (while droves of sooty rescue workers who had trudged all the way up the west side chowed on free burgers and beer with vacant expressions).

The makeshift lanterns made from paper bags and candles lining 72nd Street in memoriam.

Mohsin Iabal • Trumped





**Ksenia Bodnarchuk** • Manimal

Walking along that quiet, still, street late at night, past the church, and to the Dublin House pub crying arm-in-arm with people that were merely co-workers up until that moment.

Those years you were consistently inconsistent. You were making the same mistakes over and over and calling them aberrations.

Getting divorced.

Finding new love.

Hearing your own song on the radio with the whole staff tuned in!

Performing to a packed house and your mom throwing flowers.

Your mother's sudden, inconceivable, inexplicable sickness (a note tucked into your waiter book reading: "You did a great job tonight. I am praying for you and mom").

Her death two months later.

The arrival of Dr. Whitepill.

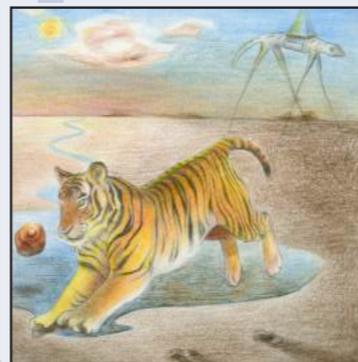
Breakup with new love.

Moving.

Finding newer love.

Death of another friend, one of the best. A Chef. In some ways you always felt that these restaurants, these people were both backdrop and supporting cast in the movie starring YOU.

**Ksenia Bodnarchuk** • Mother Teresa



**Shani Ali Williams** • Untitled

**Alyssa Melendez**

One

Arms up,  
His hands gently  
flow along them.  
Down to her waist,  
Rights hands meet,  
Their bodies spin.  
Just like ice-skating  
On a frozen floor,  
Their heat rises,  
Their heat is no match for the cold  
That surrounds them.  
They stand,  
Face to face.  
They move,  
Step by step.  
Practice, practice,  
Get it perfect.  
Deep into each other's eyes,  
They become one.  
Spin after spin after lift,  
Faster and faster.  
Their bodies flow together across  
the floor,  
like waves in the ocean.  
They remain as one.  
They dance,  
As one



**Franklin Marcus • Empty Chairs**



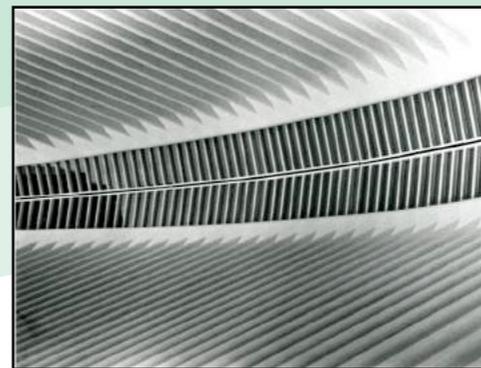
**Franklin Marcus • Roller Coaster**

**Alyssa Melendez**

Days

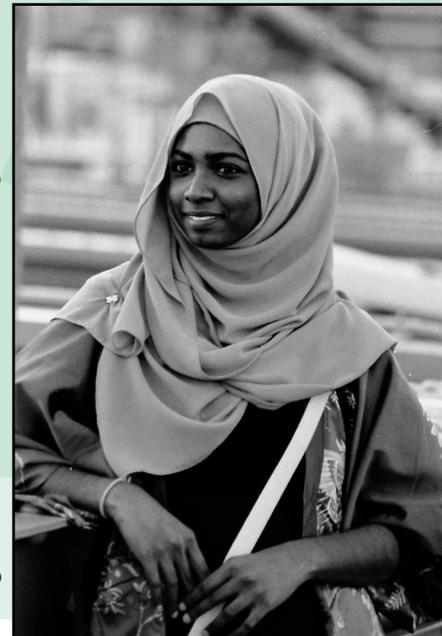
Every morning,  
Every night,  
Ten minute walks.  
Up before the sun,  
Darkness all around.  
The cold surrounds.

**Amairani Garcia • Oculus**



Wind blowing,  
Traffic lights swaying,  
Dim yellow street lights.  
Await the bus.  
Faceless people  
Roaming the streets.  
Skin tight dresses,  
The loud laughter.  
Bus one, to job one.  
Patient after patient,  
Bus two, to job two.  
Smile, greet, assistance.  
Await the bus  
Back home.  
Faceless people,  
Out and about.  
Different clothes,  
Same ending.  
Ten minute walk  
As the moon watches.  
Darkness all around  
The cold surrounds.

**Marybeth Zema • Girl on the Bridge**





**Marlick Geffard** • Imagine The Impossible

### **Nicole Cadet**

#### City Lights

The scenery that shines so bright  
From Madame Tussauds wax museum  
To the big tree at Rockefeller covered  
in their christmas lights  
Flashes from multiple angles and  
direction

As tourists capture the fine  
architecture of New York City  
Red and blue lights out to protect and  
serve

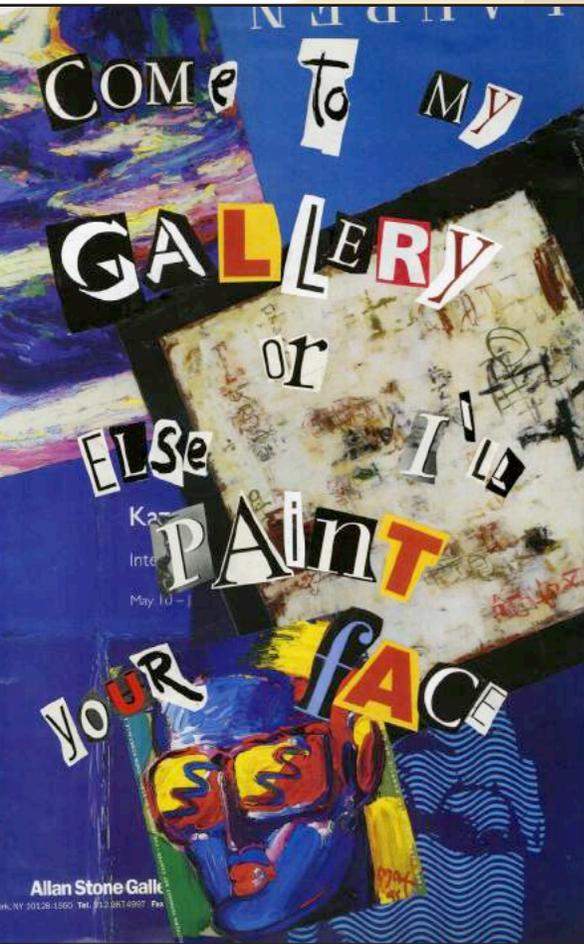
Then there's a sudden change behind  
these city lights  
Helicopters fly over  
the city in search of a lost soul  
Double lights stand tall every 11th day  
in September

Blinding red and blue lights, yellow  
tape

flashing red and white lights  
When a life is at stake  
These are our city lights



**Pablo Galindo** • Save The Children



Rukshona Dismukhamedova • Untitled

**Cierrah Sankar**

Crosses

The crosses of the cross stand within my soul,  
 while the soil of the ground copes with rain sleet and snow.  
 We live beyond our expectation even with the pulse being gone  
 Pity myself I lose myself often, between my mind and not praying enough  
 I worship what's make believe and it's costing.  
 My faith in the nonexistent, I believe it the high  
 God do you hear my prayers they aren't loud enough,  
 you break me down to my core within my reach very abrupt.  
 I can't count my blessings because they are constant but you grant them  
 We lie in our lies ask for things we think we want.  
 Receive the worst because the best are not lessons.  
 God tries us with handkerchiefs to wipe our face with taunts.  
 Realizing I'm alone and I can't figure this quite yet,  
 I've lost my touch with God and these trials are to bring closer,  
 I'm in debt.

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**Evelyn Cosme**

Untitled

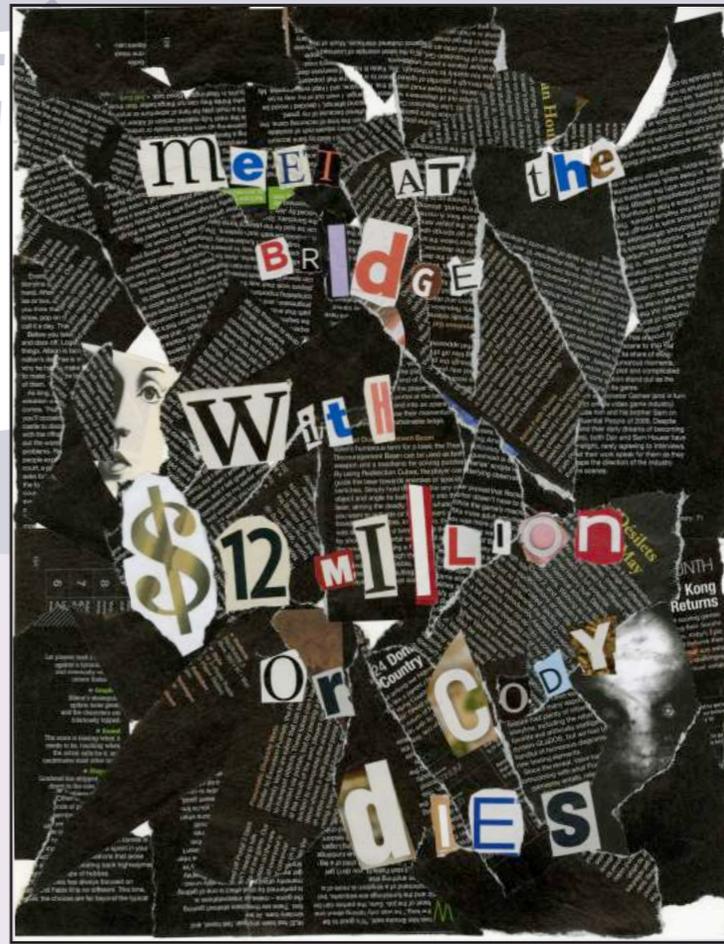
What did it take to let it become a part of you  
 That now the air you breathe  
 Only keeps you alive  
 But it doesn't shine  
 You get the attention you get the fame  
 But you always get to hate  
 What will it take to make you human again  
 Now it's that part of you  
 That you wish you could exchange  
 For some old air and some less game.

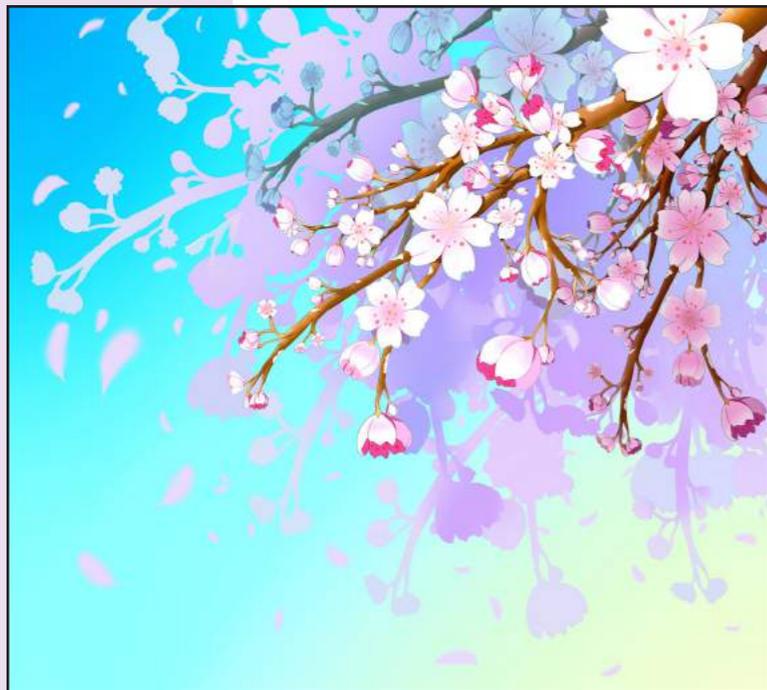
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**Franklin Marcus • Fashion Triplets**



Marvin Henrius • Untitled





Shibin Chen • Sakura

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**Jordana Mael**  
High Beams

Its 2:00 a.m. and you're speeding down the Belt Parkway. You basically live there. Your friends are always marveling at how much time you spend driving it. Just yesterday Nanna was going on about how you should really just have a bed there already. What can you do? You're the only one of your friends left on Long Island, but you are so not ready to leave the conveniences of living at home. So you live on the Belt, back and forth and back and forth.

You've been awake since 5:30 a.m. when you had to start getting ready for school. From there it was a pretty much normal day. One hundred miles of local driving and too many hours later you're back on the Belt. It's pretty quiet at this hour and you're flying. Clean Bandit is coming out of your car's speakers at just the right volume. You love her new song "Rockabye," it's playing just loud enough to drown out your awful voice,

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but not a complete assault on your senses. Your mind is clear and you're cruising. All that comes to a screeching halt when you hit a construction zone. You HATE construction zones. So you begin a pretty regular rant to yourself yelling about just how much you hate them.

"Why the heck are there so many people driving now anyways?!"

You hit replay on your phone and now you turn the volume louder. Your 4:00 p.m. coffee has officially worn off and you need extra help staying awake. You look as far ahead as you can and realize it's not just the regular morons who don't know how to merge holding you up. Your eyes are nearly blinded by the brightest light you've ever seen. You reach for your new mirrored LeSpecs sunglasses. A chubby little baby with wings and a halo starts flying towards you. His cheeks are plump and bright red, almost raw looking. His golden blonde curls are

Shibin Chen • Happy New Year 2017



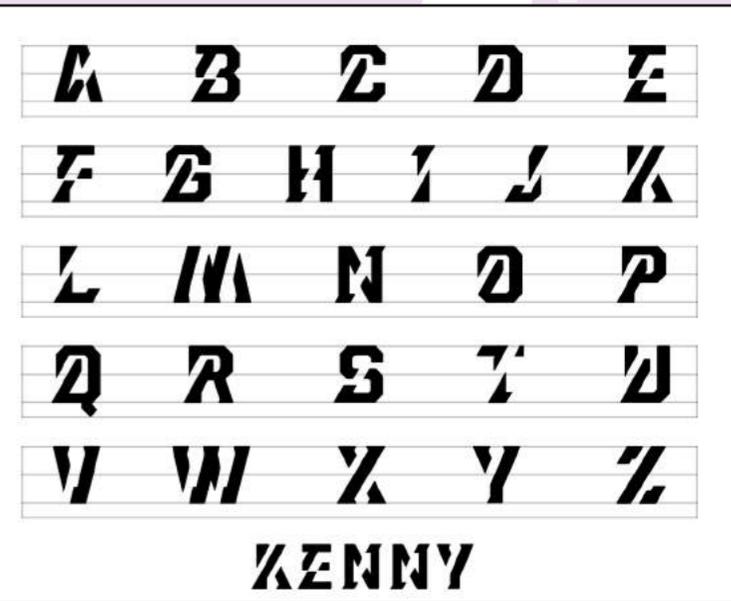


Jeffrey Tlapale • Mexigo

thick, and tight like a telephone wire. He's playing the most beautiful gold trumpet. You've never heard music like this before! And that baby is so cute! Wait. Flying baby angel playing a trumpet?! You smack your cheek.

"You're losing it Jess!!"

Back to that light. You're desperate to figure out what it is, but your still not moving. You decide to get out of the car. You know your generally pretty good at bad decisions. It says so on the sweatshirt your best friend Marge just bought you, now a regular in the pajama line up. Pajamas. Oh how you long to be in pajamas. Yes. You have to go see what on earth is going on! So you put your key in your pocket, leave the car running and hit the little button on the door handle to lock the car. You love that little button. Your not the only curious one, you join the throngs of people getting out of their cars and start walking slowly toward the light.



Kenny Li • Type

**Yitzchok Reiter**

Untitled

I resumed my education  
 With intent of swift completion.  
 But when life came around  
 It tore everything down.  
 Like an architect admiring his life-long work  
 His toil, his sweat, his dreams in the columns.  
 Every hour he didn't sleep  
 Every meal he didn't eat  
 Every friend he didn't see

To see his child rise and beam.  
 But when the storm comes,  
 She moves quickly and remorselessly.  
 Every wind gust gashes at his innards  
 Like the dagger of a scorned lover.  
 Years of sleep snatched in minutes  
 Starvation and suffocation  
 A hollow being  
 A carcass of leaf

Mourning premature loss.  
 Too enveloped in his pain  
 To recognize his brothers  
 When he tries to rebuild  
 And to reconstruct his yearning  
 He relives her cutter  
 Plunging in, and In, and IN!



Anastasiya Kharlamova • Sincerity



Ruslan Ibragimov • Smile

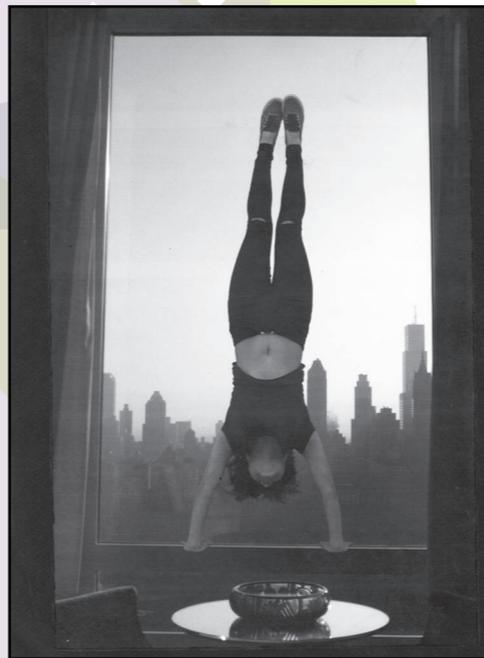


Ruslan Ibragimov • Stretch

**Abigail Gregg**

She, Her, I...Woman

I try to fit my words to describe those curves  
 but it seems I don't have the gab that's slick enough  
 It's like the spikes of your body are so sharp  
 You cut like a knife  
 and my skin just ain't thick enough  
 From your crescent shaped lips  
 Down to your full moon spaced hips  
 I can't help but trip over the hills beyond the horizon.  
 It's puzzling how one can be born an exquisite contradiction  
 Naturally soft, yet stronger than a thousand seas  
 All brains and beauty fashioned from a tiny rib in me  
 Man's eyes no longer sore for there is no sight like she.



Erika Cuacuas • NYC Handstand

## Myrka Veloz

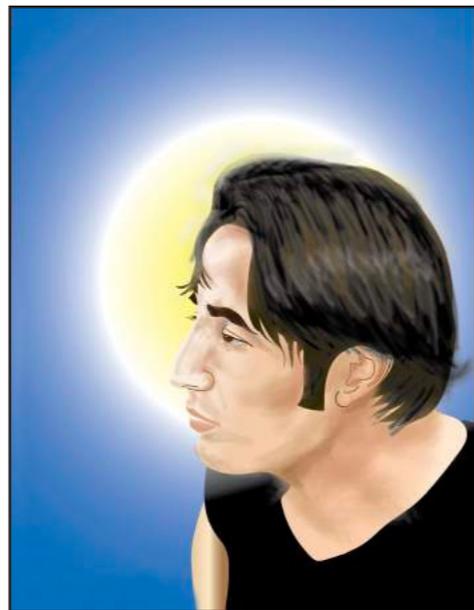
Wasted

You may look at your friends and some may seem ahead or behind you, but they're not. They're living according to the pace of their clocks, so be patient. You're not falling behind, it's just not your time. You feel humble knowing you truly realize that you're always in the process of becoming and that he is always in your corner. You recite this in your head every night. You know people who graduated college at 21 and didn't get a salary job until 27. There's people who graduated at 25 and already had a salary job. At the end of the day, you have the choice of picking your path, but once that path is chosen then so is your destiny.

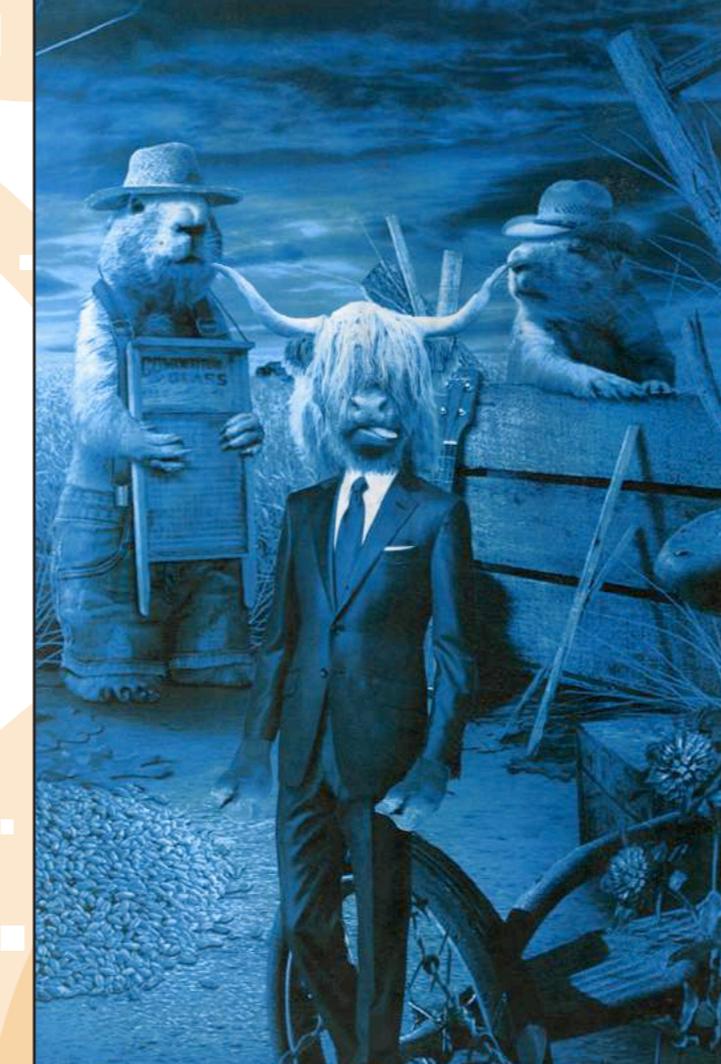
Today is the day. You've been preparing for this all week. You can't get the thought of it out of your head. It feels like you just ran a mile while holding your breath. You sit there waiting for your turn. You worked all your life towards this. Got through four years of college for this. This is all you've ever wanted.

"You can't get a good career without a degree," you hear your mother's voice in your head.

"Hello," says the man in the suit. "Are you here for the interview?"



Milton Paida • Self Portrait



Milton Paida • Yak

Mohsin Iabal • Rush Hour





Jean Liang Zhu • Robot

Eager to make a good first impression you get up right away, shake his hand, make eye contact, and respond, "Yes, yes I am." You introduce yourself, all polite.

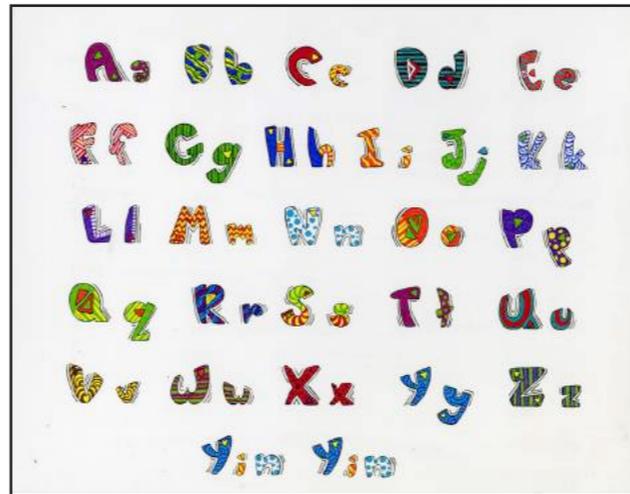
As you follow him into another room with a bunch of chairs and a big oval table. He sits and you sit. Two other people walk in the room, and all of a sudden it's about 120 degrees. You get up and greet them trying to keep a smile on your face the whole time. You hear them telling you all the opportunities you can have within the company. What he does, what she does, what her expertise is, more about the company. Who doesn't know who Google is? Google this, Google that. You've been looking forward to this your whole life. This was your chance. Sit up straight, its time for questions.

"Now, what can you bring to the table?" he said. You start telling them your whole life has revolved around this moment. Your internship experiences in the field, what college has taught you, and how beneficial you'll be to their business. The coding classes you've taken, all the hands on in tech support, and now it was time to show them what you're capable of. They bought all of it. They want you. You want this too. "so when can you start?" the woman said. You think to yourself, when can you start, how is this even going to work out with your hectic schedule now? You love the job you have now even though it's not what you've been working towards. It's convenient, close to home, your own schedule and you've been working there for the past 3 years. You'll have to build all that over again. New faces, new procedures, new personalities.

"Right way" without giving it a second thought.

"Great. See you in about a week for orientation," he says. Dismissed.

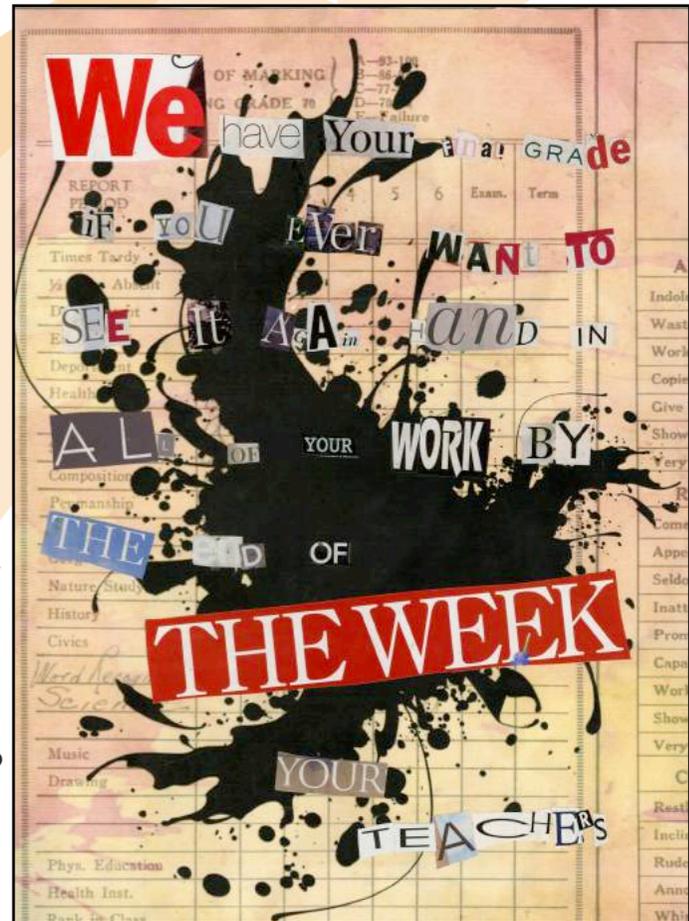
On your way home all you can think about was that interview. This is what you've been waiting for but something in your mind is making you second-guess it. Is this really what you want to do? You can't just throw it all away when all your life was about this, educating yourself on this,

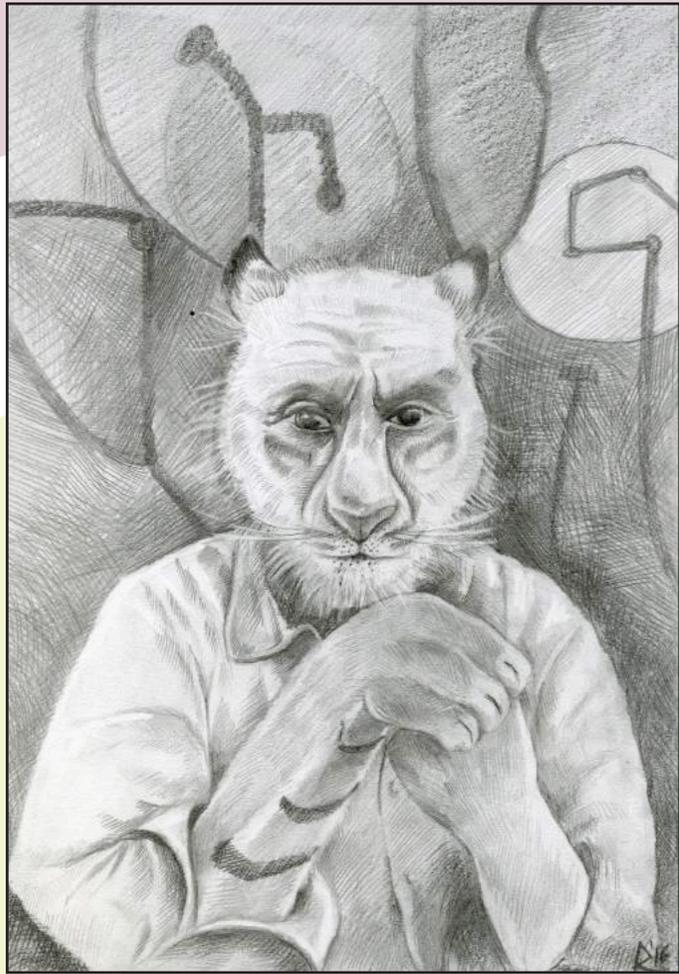


Yin Yin • Typeface Design

working for this, and now that you have a chance at it... in the back of your mind that isn't what you really want. Laying in bed, you can't help but to write the email over and over "thank you for the offer but I am decl-" backspace, backspace, backspace. "I apologize in advance for any incon-" No, fresh out of college already landing your dream job, come on. Did you really just waste four years? Maybe even more, just wasted.

Richard Payne • Untitled





**Rukshona Dusmukhamedova** • Portrait of Pablo Picasso as M-Animal

## **Shanika Cuthbert**

### Keisha's Song

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,/ How I wonder what you are!/  
Up above the world so high,/ Like a diamond in the sky," you sing with her.

Your precious Mya, the one who made this lifestyle worth it. You look in the mirror and ask yourself, "What am I doing?"

You take one look at Mya and that was the only answer you needed.

You gotta do what you gotta do to feed YOUR family!

"Okay Mya, time for bed. Give mommy kisses!" you tell her.

"Are you going to work now mommy?" she asks you.

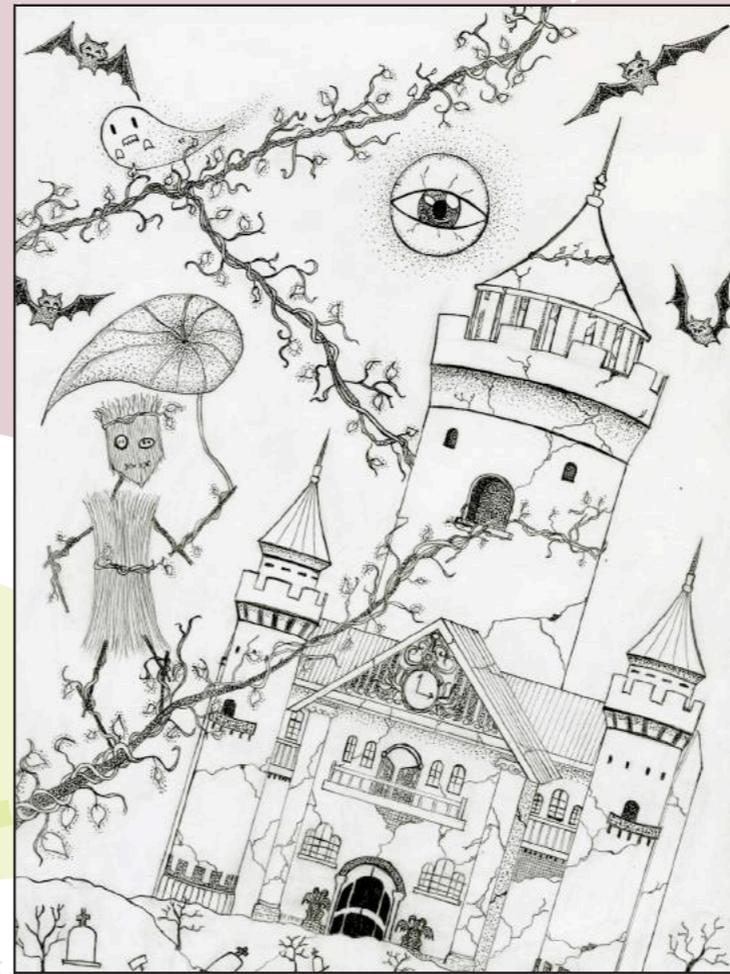
"Yes munchkin, mommy has to go, but your aunt is here so don't worry."

Your 15 year old sister Natallia was your go to baby sitter. You two never exchanged words on what you went to do each time she was left to comfort Mya from her bad dreams. Each time she reclined next to her assuring her everything was gonna be alright. But you knew she knew. You know you're not setting an example, but you also know what has to be done. You know how many mouths including your own has to be fed.

I told you not to get pregnant by me and you still kept this fucking baby!

It's time for you to get ready. So go on and shower. Put in those green contacts you bought three days ago. Put on that scent you love. You know the limited fragrance

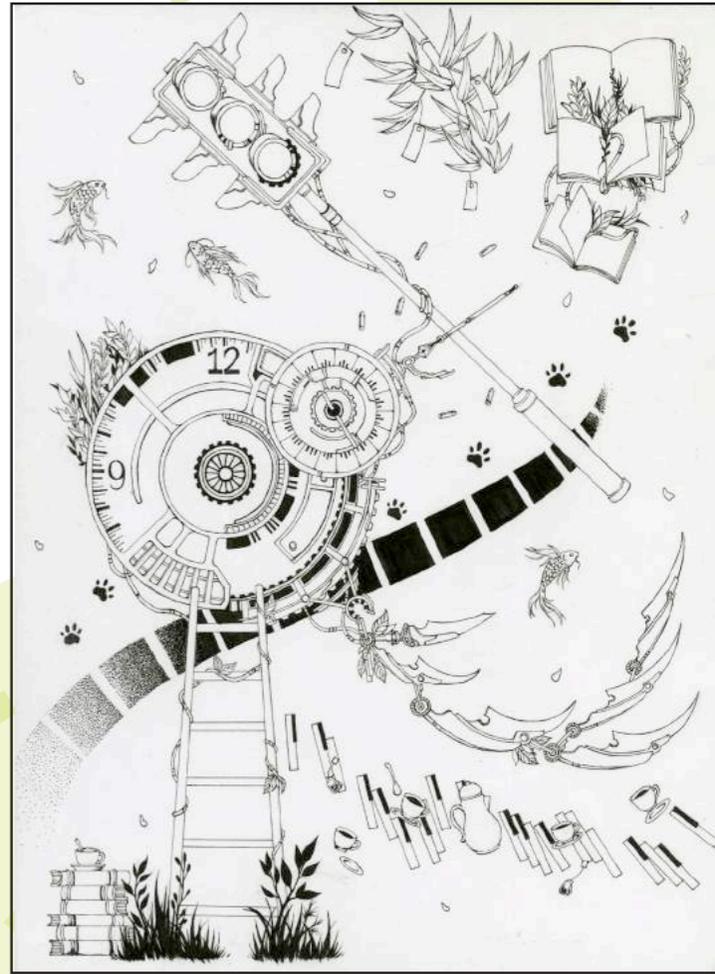
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**Jun Liang Zhu** • Line Project

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**Roswell Joo** • Line Assignment



made by Chanel. Coco Mademoiselle is its name but you dubbed it the "money magnet." You knew your clients were infatuated by that 4,000 dollar scent. Now you need your signature red lipstick and then you're all set. Wait you almost forgot! The Marilyn Monroe wig that you use to cover your Pocahontas hair. There you go. Now you're ready to work.

You fucking this Johnny nigga?

Johnny used to pick you up. Not anymore, you didn't like him getting a 50 percent cut. Even if it meant you went home with 2 grand a night. He was getting too much in your eyes. You believed he served no purpose. You didn't appreciate his muscle power. You let go of the only man who didn't get out of line when you walked by

"Hey sexy, Netflix and chill minus the Netflix?"

You didn't care though. You declared a pocket knife and pepper spray was all you needed. It's chilly out, but you refuse to wear a jacket. You need your assets to show. You need the rich men in boring marriages to admire every inch of your 5'6" body. You need your client to know his money is being well spent. You need him to see that your high prices are worth it once you're done with him. You need him to get lost in your longbeach boulevard eyes so he books you again and again. Just like they all do.

At a very young age you learned nothing in this life comes free. You have to apply yourself to supply your wealth. Those are the words you live by.

The leaves are turning color. For you this is a reminder that you have to put in overtime. Thanksgiving is on its way and soon after there's Christmas. You know how important it is for

51

Aisuluu Botbaeva • Caricature of Audrey Hepburn



your precious Mya to get everything on her list. She wasn't naughty at all this year so she deserves it all. So you tell yourself, but really it's about you playing the mommy and daddy role. It's about you trying hard for her to not notice the obvious.

It's already 12 a.m. and you're at the pick up spot. Your client still hasn't showed up. Which is weird for you especially on a Friday night. The men who work their Monday through Friday 9 to 5 need you. They need to feel wanted even if it's for a few minutes or a few hours. You cater to their every wish making them feel as if they're in control. Something their wives don't offer at home. Making you their sweet escape.

"What the hell is going on with this one?" You ask yourself.

All you need is one. One lonely man with a sexless life. You see someone turning the corner. Looks like you found your guy. There he is, that red 2016 Nissan Sentra isn't a Range Rover but for you it screams "jackpot." Usually you'd wait for them to approach you but you're tired of being cold and need to put that work in. You walk over to his vehicle. He winds his window down.

"You still selling pussy, Candice?" said a familiar voice.

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Rosewell Joo • Stippling assignment



## A.J. Cohen

### Grid Compatible

"It's pretty damn hilarious if you think about all of the time people spent the prophesizing irrational dooms day scenarios."

"They weren't all irrational."

"Name one."

"I'm not getting sucked into another endless debate."

"Discussion."

"It's exhausting." Alex looks down and focuses on his sketch pad. He throws a few wild lines on the paper. Squints his eyes. Tilts his head the left. He shades something in. Holds the book out far and sighs "Ok, over population was a real and very rational threat at the time."

"HA! Don't tell me you, of all people fell for that old con! I thought you brighter than that."

"What con?"

"A con to divert your attention from the realer issues."

"A world filled with more humans than it can handle, sounds pretty real."

"Consumption."

"The fuck?"

"They didn't want you to think of your over consumption. Whenever over-population is discussed, your attention is shifted to poorer, less developed countries and how; its people are, always, having too many kids. When it's us, in the west, that are sapping the earth's resources at rates people in those countries couldn't even comprehend."

"Were, sapping."

"Were."

"Well, I guess if there were a collapse of resources people in third world countries would have been totally fine if running water and the electrical s grids went down. Most American's would have melted down if their cell phones didn't have service for a week."

"And aliens! My fucking goodness!"

"Are you on drugs?"

"The thought that life forms, from outer-space, were going to come down blast away all of our national monuments, enslaving us all, in a plot to reclaim the pyramids is just on a whole new plane of idiocy."

"So, you of all people, believe we are alone in the universe?"

"It's not that, just that if an alien race who had mastered interplanetary space travel had learned anything about humans, they'd have realized long ago we would like do ourselves in."

"Well..."

"If there are aliens, oddly obsessed with the fashion trends of ancient river cultures, lurking around the solar system, it's pretty much just a waiting game for them at this point. A few decades, and it's theirs. Fucking aliens!"

The lights begin to flicker.

They both look up terrified.

After a moment, they look back each other and smile.

Hisssssss.

The lights surge.

Alex looks out the window, "Fuck it's the generator."

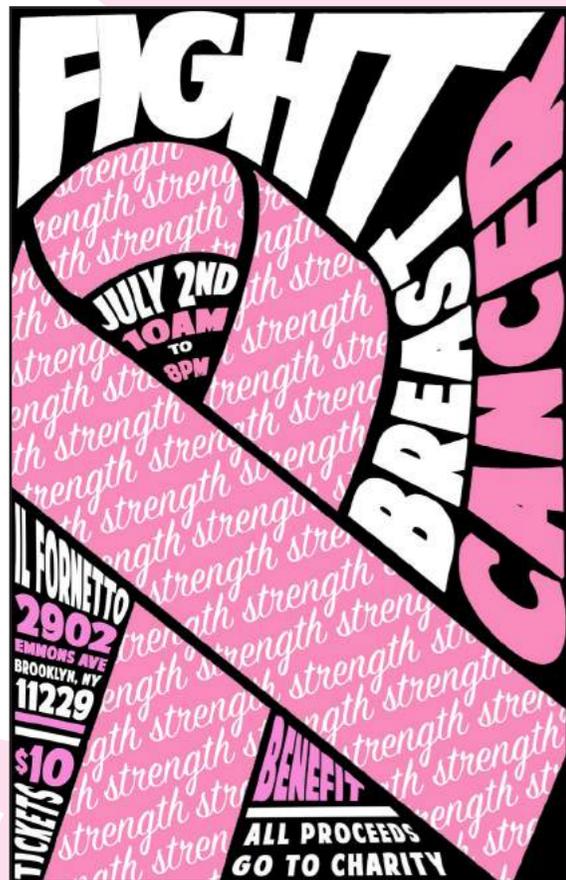


Raul Lopez • Clown

Raul Lopez • Good Gone Bad

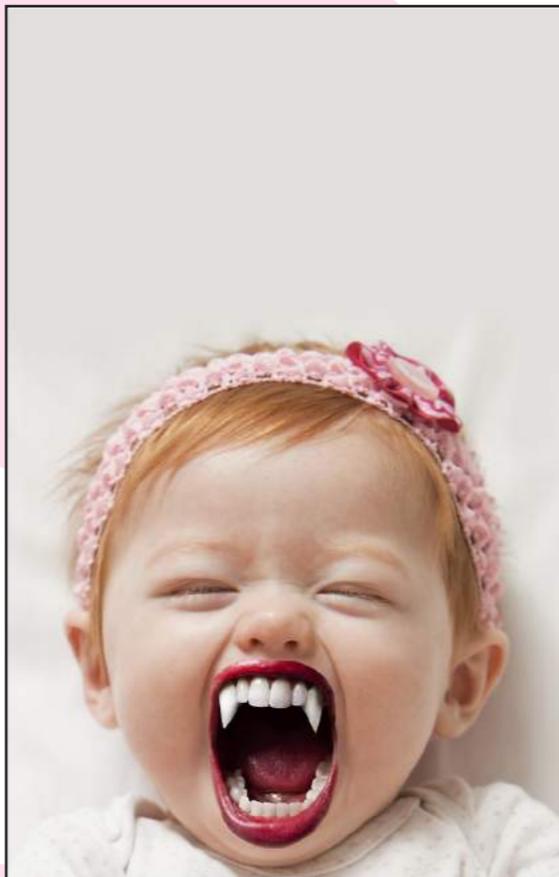


Raul Lopez • The Quiet Ones



Roxanne Martinez • Untitled

C. Jefferson • Mama Baby



### Beverly Jager

It

It lives with me everywhere I go  
and gives life to my life  
with age and purpose.

Its mind's eye penetrates my soul  
with just a look, a glance, or a gaze.  
It takes a bath with me and clothes me.

It sleeps and dreams with me  
and knows all of my secrets:  
the good ones, the bad ones, and the ugly ones.

It is warm and comforting; it has no bounds.  
It has been there from the beginning.  
Neither time nor death can come between us.

I have held on to it and nurtured it  
with words and symbols  
and the recordings of its life.

It has proven that it does exist.

It believes in the substance of things; i  
it hopes for the evidence of things not seen.

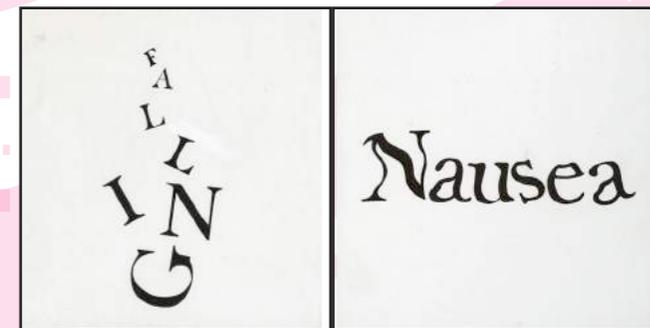
You hold on to it, feel it, and draw from it;  
feed it, keep it warm, and educate it.  
You feel the power of its might.

### Alyssa Melendez

Him

Sun hits my eyes,  
I squint looking towards the light,  
Itching and searching but I cannot find.  
I've questioned this several times,  
My thirst runs deep and I don't know why.  
I've broken myself for him  
And end up picking up the pieces.  
I can't break the cycle,  
Like a jail I can't escape.  
Beauty remains within,  
But where does it lie in you?

### Harris Adana • Expressive Words





**Tracey Ann Clue**

East, West

1, 2, 3, 4, A, B, C

Like arteries

Eat well connects well

Run, jump, just to be on the same bus

But following the map and your day will end well

Blood boil Saturdays and Sundays

New entrances and exits, hoping to get there on time

Clock in and out

Only to find out there is no way out.

**Evelyn Cosme**

Untitled

It was enough for the fire to burn

It spells her name within seconds

What hasn't died spoke a turn

Making her life shatter its course

Dark and faded the lonely body

Heard the words in an instant

Short but infinite

Fast but never distant

Yes it was enough

To bring one back

And leave the other behind

Only seven seconds



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