

Harper College Art and Literary Magazine

# Point *of* View 2016



# Contents

- 
- 03 CHARLES THOMAS BRIDGES  
04 CAMILA PASQUEL  
05 JANELLA PUNZALAN  
06 JENNIFER HERNANDEZ  
07 CIARA ROSE GAFFNEY  
08 GENE ZIELNICKI  
09 ERIN HANKINS  
10 ANDREA RAMIREZ  
11 JENNIFER HERNANDEZ  
12 KATHLEEN BRUCE

ART AND DESIGN EDITOR  
**MYK LITTLE**

LITERARY EDITOR  
**CRYSTAL GOMEZ**

FACULTY LITERARY ADVISOR  
**ANNE DAVIDOVICZ**

FACULTY ART AND DESIGN ADVISOR  
**KAREN PATTERSON**


POINT OF VIEW JUDGES  
**STEPHANIE HORTON**  
**MARGARET KING**  
**JESSICA WALSH**

RAY MILLS AWARD JUDGES  
**CARLY COLVIN**  
**ZOE GRAY**  
**CALVIN LAM**  
**PAIGE NAGY**  
**TALIA NAGY**  
**KAROLINA RUTYNA**  
**MICHAEL VALIPOUR**

VIVIAN STEWART AWARD JUDGES  
**MARIE CHAPMAN**  
**CRYSTAL GOMEZ**  
**MICHELLE MABRY**  
**ERIK MCPHERRIN**  
**JULIA THIELEN**

SCANNING & PRINTING  
**VISOGRAPHIC, INC.**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**STEVE DONISCH**



SPECIAL THANKS  
**SANDY BARNEY**  
**JASON PEOT**  
**SAM ROSBY**  
**KAROLINA RUTYNA**  
**KELLY TAYLOR**

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO  
**ANNE DAVIDOVICZ.**

YOUR DEDICATED SERVICE AS *POINT OF VIEW* FACULTY ADVISOR FOR THE LAST 15 YEARS HAS MADE THE MAGAZINE WHAT IT IS TODAY. THE 2016 *POINT OF VIEW* TEAM THANKS YOU FOR YOUR EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE AND INVALUABLE GUIDANCE. AS THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE, WE HOPE IT IS ALSO THE BEST.

**DISCLAIMER:** THE AUTHORS' / ARTISTS' VIEWS ARE ENTIRELY THEIR OWN, AND MAY NOT REFLECT THE VIEWS OF *POINT OF VIEW* MAGAZINE. EVERY ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO ENSURE ACCURACY OF ALL INFORMATION. WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY MISTAKES OR OMISSIONS.

## POINT OF VIEW AWARD

**ANDREW BARAT** FOR **SERENITY**

AWARDED BY FACULTY JUDGES FOR AN  
OUTSTANDING STORY, POEM, OR PLAY.

## RAY MILLS AWARD

**JESSICA SANDACZ** FOR **SHATTERED WONDERLAND**

AWARDED BY STUDENT JUDGES FOR AN  
OUTSTANDING WORK OF VISUAL ART.

## VIVIAN STEWART AWARD

**JESSICA SANDACZ** FOR **SEX AMONG THE CORPSES**

AWARDED BY STUDENT JUDGES FOR AN  
OUTSTANDING STORY, POEM, OR PLAY.

**13** IZABELA KURP

**14** JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

**15** MARISABEL CAJIAO

**16** MYK LITTLE

**17** JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

**18** JASPER HUERTO

**19** ANDREW BARAT

**20** MARIVEL ALFARO

**21** ANDREW BARAT

**22** SHARENE SHAW

**23** DENNIS SULLIVAN

**24** JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

**25** JESSICA SANDACZ

**26** MEG SCHALK

**27** MIA ISHIGURO

**28** MEG SCHALK

**29** WALDO PEREZ

**30** JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

**31** JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

**32** ZOE KOLLIAS

**33** BRYAN FULLER

**34** EMILY EVELAND

**35** JESSICA SANDACZ

**36** ANASTASIA SITNIKOVA

**37** MICHELLE MABRY

**38** CAMILA PASQUEL

**39** ANASTASIA SITNIKOVA

**40** MADISON HILL

**41** PAMELA PHILLIPS

**42** ALEC PANOS

**43** ANDREW BARAT

**44** CAMILA PASQUEL

**45** ANASTASIA SITNIKOVA

**46** SYLVIA MENDEZ

### COVER

**ERIN HANKINS** MEMENTO MORI  
ACRYLIC ON BOOK 13" X 17" X 2"

### BACK COVER

**MYK LITTLE** CHICAGO PROUD  
PHOTOGRAPHY 19" X 19"



TO LEARN MORE  
ABOUT THE ARTISTS  
AND THEIR WORK, SCAN  
THE QR CODES AT THE  
BOTTOM OF EVERY  
OTHER PAGE. YOU WILL  
BE DIRECTED TO OUR  
*POINT OF VIEW* WEBSITE.

QR READER AVAILABLE  
ON YOUR MOBILE  
APP STORE.

# Timmy's Play Date

## Charles Thomas Bridges

Timmy was a good kid.

Timmy did his chores.

Timmy did his homework.

Timmy shared his toys.

Timmy was loved by all.

One day, Timmy played with a man.

They played games with clothes.

They played games without.

As Timmy looked at the mirror,

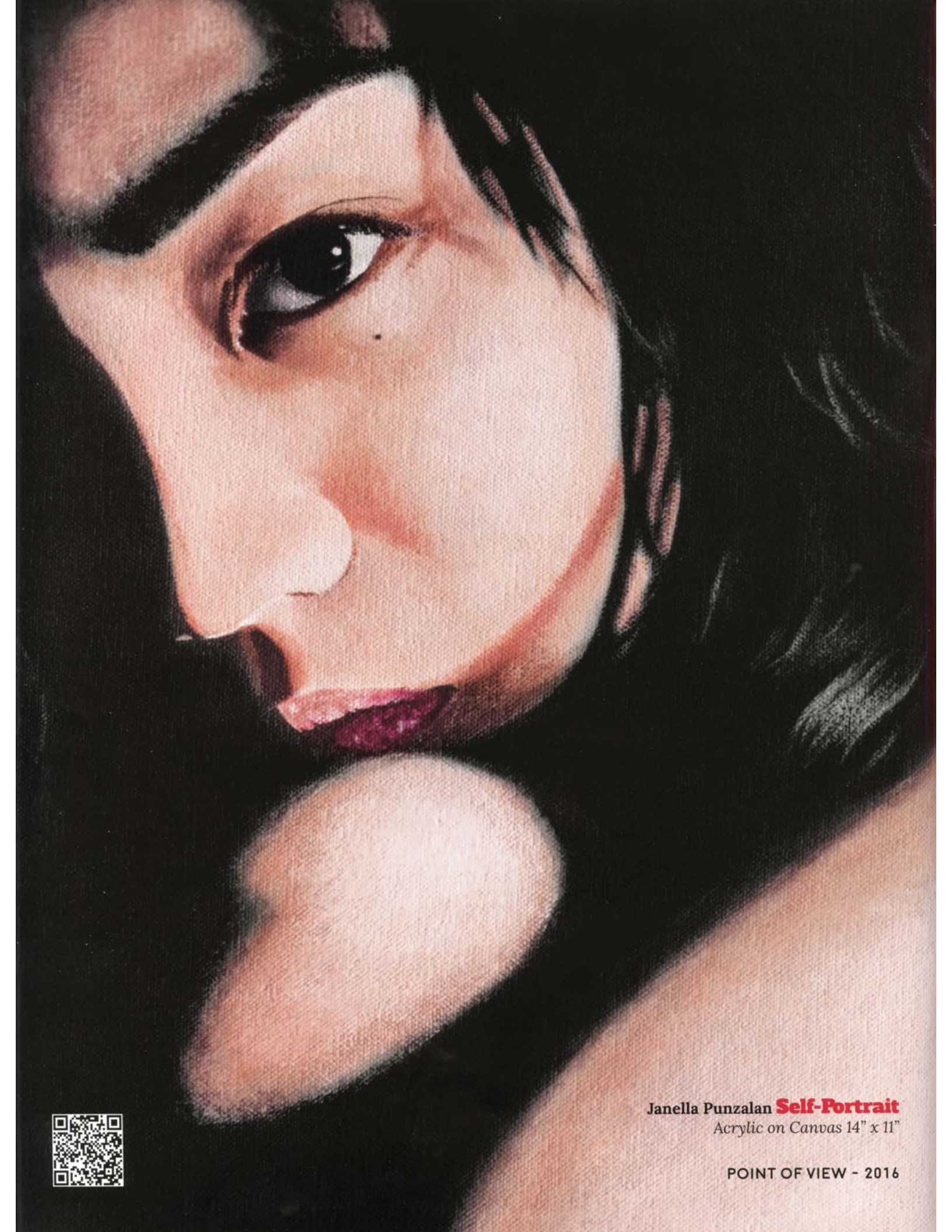
staring at the cupboard now bare,

he realized no one would be there

to watch him disappear.







Janella Punzalan **Self-Portrait**  
Acrylic on Canvas 14" x 11"

POINT OF VIEW - 2016



# Thirteen

Jennifer Hernandez

The 911 operator asked for my date of birth and I told her; a millisecond stretched into millenia before she wished me a happy birthday. How lucky was I, at thirteen facing the icy stare of my mother as I descended the same steps I'd been shoved into just minutes ago. How lucky was I to begin my teen years by making a domestic violence call from my bedroom closet. I attest that there is no better wake-up call than gazing at a police car, its lights dark as it cruised away after a cop glared at my zitcovered young face and told me:

*Listen better next time.*

I never did search behind the leather Lazy Boy for my toothbrush ripped from the mouth which berated my mother and angered my father so that the same three-hundred-pound man who read the whole *Harry Potter* series with his daughter, the man who attended every band concert and parent-teacher conference (whether he liked it or not), pushed me to hurt me, rather than chased me to scare me. I grew tired of fear, of bounding footsteps behind me, threatening to break my bones with every crack of wooden floorboards beneath the wide feet he'd passed down to me.

My sister's lamp crashed against the wall and I dialed the silver flip phone. I sat down on the driveway, dug my fingers into the gravel, and waited to be told, "You shouldn't have done that."

# Marymount and Melanie

## Ciara Rose Gaffney

Fuck, it's happening.  
No control, no control, no control  
it's like my brain sent out a system failure message  
and this attack on my body is the alarm  
signifying impending doom.

My heart starts fighting the second I gasp for air,  
punching me from the inside  
hard and repeatedly.  
Everything around me is spinning,  
and as the tears start to stream  
I know the countdown has started.

My body is trying so hard to rid itself  
of the poison I put in it.  
I hate every second of it.  
I'm stuck in this fear that consumes  
every last part of me;  
an explanation of the fear might help  
but fuck that—pills work faster than therapy.

Shuffling through every drawer,  
desperation starts to take over.  
*Find the fucking bottle*  
*You fucking idiot, where are the pills?*  
*It's the only solution—*  
I cut myself off as I fumble  
over the orange tube  
that my bars of gold call home.  
The Doctor said take one,  
fuck that, take 4.  
A wave of calmness engulfs me,  
and I fall into a deep slumber.

"Wake up, Keeks"  
Fuck, she's here.  
"What happened this time?"  
"You realized you missed class today?"  
"Do you think it's cool to get high on a Tuesday?"  
I roll over to look her in the eyes but  
suddenly, I burst into laughter.

I don't give a fuck what day of the week it is,  
and neither does my addiction.





Gene Zielnicki **From Mother, with Love XOXO**  
Porcelain and Other Materials 5.5" x 4.5" x 3.25"



Erin Hankins **Memento Mori**  
Acrylic on Book 13 x 17" x 2"





# Remember

**Andrea Ramirez**

Do you remember the cocooning warmth of the sun?  
The flimsiest of breezes swimming through the open window.  
Braiding its way through your hair.  
While sitting in the crook of an old brown couch,  
Fingers flying and eyes eating up the pages

You ambled through the fluffy coats to get to Narnia  
Flew on the Nimbus 2000 and snatched the Golden Snitch  
Fell through the rabbit hole to find singing flowers  
Looked for clues in the bungalow with Nancy Drew

Father Time taunts you with each tick of his clock,  
The crook of that old brown couch grows cold and desolate  
Book and pages sprinkled in layered dust.  
You fight to get back to that old brown couch  
Cut down the dragons and monsters in your way  
Father Time, the final boss, the last to be slayed.  
Years pass by, and you grow tired of the battle,  
It's time to give up, put down the heavy sword  
"Time to grow up, leave it alone," Father says.  
The old brown couch is nothing but white puffy smoke  
It's all a long lost memory, hazy, hard to recall.  
There's no more time to sit down and play  
Good things must come to an end.  
Time, has taken it all away.

The couch's little nook calls to you  
Beckons you for one last fight, one more try  
Your hands delicately graze and turn over each page  
Brings you back to the Land of Time.  
The sun and the breeze eagerly say hello.  
Though it's not as often as before,  
With your trusty sword in hand,  
Your adventures begin again.

# Before the Stars Come Out

**Jennifer Hernandez**

A sky as bruised as summer thighs oozes over me,  
oak leaves tickling one another in the warm breeze.  
The porch net swings back and forth, inviting  
insects and then tossing them into the heat.

The inflatable pool swells against sticky, thick air.  
My hair, knotted behind my neck, presses to my skin  
like prickly weaves of rose stems on an iron trellis.

Water sloshing, I sink further; my ears gulp  
and I listen to the crooning of cicadas hush to a murmur,  
soft as the smell of summer.



Kathleen Bruce **Pegasus Rising**  
Bronze 12" x 12" x 13"





Izabela Kurp **Sierra**  
Color Pencil 18" x 16"

POINT OF VIEW - 2016

# Thursdays After School with My Grandfather - Jueves con las Jóvenes

Jennifer Hernandez

I tossed the kitty into the air.  
My grandfather, cooing, "Oh no, no no,"  
the cat dropping  
into my arms like a football.  
It looked like Figgy who slept on top of my head  
those nights I wedged between my parents  
watching shadows scratch the walls  
like daddy longlegs.

Tata said, "Don't hurt the cat!"  
and I laughed,  
"It isn't real!"  
I pulled my grandfather from the sinking chair cushion;  
he grunted like the starter turning over and over  
in his old Saturn until it jerked forward  
and drove to our house every Thursday.

I should have learned more Spanish.  
These children, funny and full of life,  
new words every day;  
I strain to catch each syllable, falling  
como una naranja  
before they mature.

Silly, this one, like her father;  
she giggles the way all children do  
and smiles like a little devil,  
clutching un peluche, a kitty cat,  
to her chest,  
before throwing it high in the air.

I rise, my old bones creaking  
my palm firm against the chair cushions;  
she pulls with all her strength  
to get her abuelo standing,  
wilting with la vejez as she grows.

# Two in the Morning and Afternoon

*an excerpt from a longer piece of fiction*

**Marisabel Cajiao**

His black dilated pupils almost drown out his light creamy brown eyes as he stares down at me pleadingly.

"You're drunk."

A lazy smile forms on his light skinned face, "No...don't be silly, Kailee."

I make a confused look, "Oh, right!" I smile sarcastically, "You're also baked!" he continues to stare down at me with his lazy smile shaking his head, "Jesus, Oliver! What were you thinking?"

"About you," he lifts his finger up to my face and tries to poke my nose, but misses entirely. He looks at me strangely, confused as to why he missed, "Come on," he pleads, "let's get out of here."

I huff and run my hands through my messy curls. I'm stuck between taking him home and granting his wish to take him anywhere but home with me. It's not that I don't want to be with him, but we haven't spoken in a week and if it weren't for the party our friend threw then we wouldn't be standing here. Plus, things have been awkward between us ever since I admitted that I liked him and, well, I never got an answer if the feeling was mutual or not. Not only that, but where am I supposed to take a drunk and high seventeen year old late at night?

"I don't know..." I mumble, looking away from his gaze.

"Please? You're the only person I want to be with right now."

I freeze up at the sound of his words, my heart begins to race and I feel my cheeks burning up. I'm lucky it's dark and he can't see me. I cock my head back up and give him a pointed look.

"I'm the only person because it's two in the flippin' morning and no one else is awake or sober to actually be here right now."

The ends of his lips quirk up, but he hides his upcoming smile by licking his lips and putting them in a thin line as though he's holding something back.

"I don't care about the time or anyone else - I want to be with you whether it's two in the morning or two in the afternoon."

We're both staring at each other for different reasons. I'm trying to figure out if he means what he says and he's staring at me longingly like he has been doing since we first met in the beginning of the summer. He breaks into a grin and lifts his hand up to my face; whatever he's trying to do takes him awhile until he nudges the middle of my forehead between my eyebrows with his thumb.

"Stop that," he tells me.

"Stop what?" I ask concern laced in my voice.

He laughs lightly, "Your worrisome look. Your eyebrows scrunch together and your eyes get all big and round - you just have this lost puppy look."

I swat his hand away, "I do not."

"Yeah, you do and it's adorable."

I huff and grumble as my cheeks inflame again, "Okay, you win. Let's go."

He grins with his eyes closed and I take a deep breath thinking about what I'm getting myself into. I help him into the passenger seat of my car and struggle when he refuses to put his seatbelt on.

When I finally get him strapped in, I get in the car as well, "Where do you want to go?" I pull out of the street and head towards the main road; I stop at a stop sign and look at him. He looks away from the road and to me.

"Anywhere but here."







# Valentine's Dates

Jennifer Hernandez

I.  
He handed me an 89¢ plastic bag  
of Walgreen's vanilla-filled caramels,  
a note stapled to the top:  
"Happy Valentine's day  
from: Reggie"

We dragged our toes,  
me and the boy from the school bus,  
in the thin spread of sidewalk slush  
and meandered to the park and back,  
my hand hidden in his palm as soft  
as a baby's.

Ten-below wind nibbled our numbing lips,  
but I know he felt my kiss,  
and I felt his eyes as I strut away  
from my first ever date.

II.  
I pressed my legs to my chest  
and ducked my hooded head.  
My curly-haired scientist blushed, holding  
a heart full of chocolates, a red rose,  
a note with a half-centimeter heart at its fold.

I handed him an alphabet book about science  
with a love poem tucked between its title page  
and the letter A for astronaut,  
feeling stupid and not at all romantic.

Hugging him close, I felt him miss kissing me  
with just atoms in between us,  
my lips curved against his clavicle.  
I kissed his lips, molecules to molecules;  
merely children made of carbon  
and whatever element gives us love.



Jasper Huerto **The Devil's Lettuce**

III.  
A year and a half into us,  
I huddled naked against my gymnast  
my fingers curled into his shoulders  
his heart thudding against my cheek.

Our teeth stung, crunching the cold chocolate shell  
on strawberries and shoving sushi into our smiles.  
But his hand reached lower, brushing lace with rough fingers.  
I grabbed his wrist. "Maybe later. Okay?"

He said chocolate-covered strawberries  
are an aphrodisiac,  
but by then my jeans were zipped,  
our kiss was brief,  
and I pulled on my pink top,  
hearts trailing down my sleeves.



Jasper Huerto **The Devil's Lettuce**  
Pen and Watercolor (Diptych) 24" x 12"



# serenity

after reading A. Van Jordan's "af • ter • glow"

**Andrew Barat**

[suh-ren-i-tee] n. **1.** The state of being calm, peaceful, or untroubled. **2.** I am wanting the touch of a man, but I am needing the hand of God. / I am hungry for flesh and fur coats, yet I nibble on the leaves and legumes of mercy, / I wear cotton in the cold, now / it seems hot. / I leave the house, / I sweat like a pig in heat. / You find tranquility when you say hello to pain, and goodbye to, / desire: / sex, food, comfort, / I was attached to the feelings I got from you, / orgasm, bacon flavored cupcakes, perfect room temperature. / I was afraid of the suffering of reality, / I was afraid to let you go, temporary gratification, / I was afraid to seek truth. **3.** Detaching from the expectations that arise when we think we know the order of things. / I do goodness in the world, / I will get goodness back. / I treat people with love, / I will receive love back. / Serenity, you come when I finally say, / "I will be good to be good, / I will give love because I am love. / The fruits of my action I do yield, / I do not do action because of the result from actions, / I do action in hope." / Hope that God will hear my sacrifice, / I run one hundred miles and expect to go nowhere. **4.** I do not tell people what I believe. / If they ask, then I speak. / I tell them a story I once heard. / A woman takes her young daughter to the movie theatre, / on the screen, / a man starts to kill a duckling, / the child runs up to the screen and tries to stop the man, / she bangs on the surface of the projection, / the child hurts her hand, / the mother is hurt by this too, / her daughter is sobbing, / the daughter does not know why she cannot stop the man, / but she cannot. / We do not understand where our pain originates, / in trying to stop it, / we hurt ourselves, / we hurt the ones we love. / we go away from peace.

Synonyms: kindness, allowing, gentleness

Antonyms: denial, conformity, pride



**Point of View Award**

POINT OF VIEW - 2016



# **Routine** (A Ghazal)

## **Andrew Barat**

A body without a mind is called dead.  
It doesn't dream or feel or be. It is blackness and the taste of morning.

Monday through Friday, coffee breath and a ham and cheese. I go to school, work, school, sleep. Repeat.  
Monday through Friday, coffee breath and a ham and cheese. Now it's work, school, work, sleep. Repeat.

Numb like Novocain, an insane brain that doesn't feel a needle sliding through it.  
A stab in the back feels like a massage to me, put your elbow in my tissue.

Time is a clock that has hands with no fingerprints.  
It burned them off when it murdered Saturday and Sunday.

A week is a week, which is twenty-four hours, seven times in a row.  
We really only exist in a second.

A mind without a body is called a soul.  
Routine is the habit of the dead and I am a corpse walking in a circle made of sand, nothing more to be said.



Sharene Shaw **Respect Our Pollinators**

Porcelain 9" x 7" x 7"



Dennis Sullivan **In Coming**

Ceramics 7" x 7" x 7"





# One Lucky Guy

Jennifer Hernandez

Smile tight, lips stretched  
like a groom in a stock photo,

he presses a quarter  
into a scratch lottery card,  
brushing flecks of silver  
shading his hand as grey  
as the dusty tiles in the 7/11.

Dust flutters over a magazine article;  
pictured: his & hers monogrammed towels.

He squeezes the breath from his chest,  
lifts the card,  
fingers trembling.

Two of a kind  
is never enough.

Jessica Sandacz **Shattered Wonderland**  
Mixed Media 21" x 18" x 20"



**Ray Mills Award**

POINT OF VIEW - 2016

# The Truth

an excerpt from a longer piece of fiction

Meg Schalk

The crisp fall air tickled at my cheeks as I cautiously walked towards the Starbucks' outside patio. I had been having nightmares about this moment for weeks. The closer I got, the more light-headed I began to feel. I couldn't tell if I was afraid of the situation I had found myself in, or the many possible outcomes. I slowed as I came upon the Starbucks' patio, scanning the place for her. There she was. She sat with her shoulders slumped against the back of the metal patio furniture. Her rear balanced on the very edge of the chair, legs spread open, in a manner seen as quite unlady like. Her breasts flattened against her chest under a thick sports bra. A cigarette teetered between her index and middle finger as if it could fall from her grip at any moment. She never used to smoke; she even despised the sight of them. As I approached, she didn't even flinch as she brought the stinking silent killer to her lips and took one long slow drag. I sat beside her, fanning the smoke away from my face, saying nothing. She peered out from behind her bangs cut boyishly over her eyes.

"Wha's up?" she flicked her ashes over the arm of the chair, sizzling as they landed on a pile of dry leaves. I fidgeted in my seat as I watched her, her black hair was cropped close to her head, with one side shaved. Her bangs were a light teal, matching the colors of the geometric wolf tattoo on her right wrist. One of the many that completed a look of complete stereotype.

Butch lesbian. She was often mistaken for a man, and she hated it. But, never once did she think to change herself to look more like a woman. Despite her boyish appearance, she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. Finally, she turned to look at me putting out her cigarette against the brick wall behind us. She leaned in close to me, her elbows resting on her still spread knees.

"Why are we here?" I couldn't meet her eyes, and I dug my nails into my legs.

"I wanted to talk."

"Bout?"

"Everything." My voice started to quake as my nerves began to take hold. She leaned back in her chair again. Crossing her arms over her flat chest. Waving her hand at me.

"Then talk." She seemed so un-phased, a seven-year friendship ended because of one messed up situation caused by old high school rumors. I hadn't prepared a speech. I wasn't even sure what I had done. I sure as hell wasn't about to apologize either. I straightened my shoulders and took a deep breath.

"I'm not sure what happened between us. But I can tell I hurt you."

"I'm over it."

I crinkled my brow to keep from scoffing out loud. She looked off into the distance at some object that was possibly more important than me.

"You're not over it, I can tell. I'm not stupid."

"Never said you were."

"It's implied when you think I don't know that you're ticked off."

She sat up quickly, staring me down with a fire in her eyes that could burn a hole through marble. I had somehow pushed that invisible button she had buried deep down within her. It took all my energy not to smile with triumph. I knew she wasn't okay, there was no way she could move on so quickly.

"Of course, I'm ticked off. You fucking bailed on me the moment you saw him."

"I never bailed on you."

"Yes, you did. I told you what he did to me and you still fell for him."

Continued on page 28

Mia Ishiguro **Butterfly Bowl**  
Porcelain and Decals 8.5" x 12" x 5"



Continued from page 26

There it was. The great and powerful rumor that ruined it all. The story that my fiancé had regularly gossiped about her and me in high school. I didn't believe it, not for a second. Her knuckles began to turn white as she gripped her knees. I stayed quiet as she shook with anger, speaking almost breathlessly.

"Why don't you ever listen to me?"

"I wanted to make my own assumptions about him."

She took a deep breath as her eyes fluttered close. Her eyes reopened with a softness I hadn't seen since before it all happened. She reached into her pocket and pulled out her pack of cigarettes. Empty. With a long deep sigh, she flung the pack under the chair where I sat.

"That isn't the only reason I'm mad."

She stared down at her feet, she seemed almost as nervous as I was at the beginning of our talk. She reached up and ruffled her bangs, moving them out of her gorgeous brown eyes.

"I had wanted you for months..."

My heart stopped. What in god's name was she talking about? I tried to speak, but she held up her hand as if to silence me.

"The day he asked you out...I had a whole big thing planned for the two of us. I was going to ask you to be with me."

I sat in silence for a moment, trying to compose myself and figure out something to say, anything. But all I could come up with was:

"Oh fuck..."

She threw her head back in laughter. I loved the way she laughed her tongue always peeked out the corner of her mouth ever so slightly. I loved the way she laughed, but I could bring myself to laugh with her. There was something about this moment that gripped at my heart, willing it to stop beating. Her laughter fell silent as our gaze met once again. I pressed on the bridge of my nose with my index and forefinger, taking a deep, shallow breath.

"What do you want me to say to that?"

"That you love me."

"You know I do."

"Then show me. Leave him."

This was it, the moment of truth. I sat there just staring at her for what felt like the longest time. I had been in love with her for six years, and she had never shown me any romantic affection. Why now? She held out her hand to me, and I took it in mine, bringing it to my lips. My lips lingered there as my eyes started to well. I gave it a quick squeeze, trying to bite back my tears that already seemed to wet her hand. I looked up at her and placed her hand back on her knee.

"I'm sorry, I can't."

She lowered her head and nodded slowly. Standing, she straightened out her shirt, clearing her throat.

"Well, I'll see you."

And with that, she bottled it up once more. She walked off as if I was never even there, which seemed to be a specialty of hers. I knew this would be the last I would hear from her, and somehow I felt relaxed, almost free.

Waldo Perez **El Siete**  
Photography 14" x 20"



# Dead & Dumb

Jennifer Hernandez

"If you fuckin' kick it, it'll move."

Al lifts his head to observe the spot where the grass tickles the purple night sky. He'd put a blade between his fingers and make a kazoo if Dolly were here. "I knew I should've hid the beer."

"What's that s'posed to mean?" Sweat drips into Randy's mouth, his drawl thick in the breeze that dusts the two men in molecules of manure, though neither of them notice.

"Nothing."

"Don't nothin' me or I'll nothin' your sorry ass."

"That don't even make sense." Al figures his tone is best left at a mutter. Never angry, don't get angry, the world don't care for anger too kindly, especially when it comes from some farmer in Buzzkill, Nebraska. He shuffles around the carcass and takes note of the flies that have already nested into the horse's eyelids. Barely been dead two hours. Nature doesn't do funerals. Al appreciates that.

Randy kicks the animal's belly, shoves his foot right into the ribs and yells.

"Quiet now. Dolly and the rest are asleep." Al breathes in the manure and horseflies, finds his center in a field full of halfdead grass and a wholedead horse.

Randy steps into the corpse and bears down with his full weight, as if trying to roll it over like a stuck tire. "Move." He groans and lets out a heavy breath. "Dumb animal. Dead and dumb."

"We could tie it to the tractor, drag it behind the shed."

Randy isn't listening. Air squeaks in and out of his parted lips, attracting flies. He drags a thick tongue from one corner of his mouth to the other. "What if, what if!"

"What if what, Randy?"

"Huh?"

"Help me hitch it to the tractor."

Randy nods, his eyes glazed, eyelids sinking. He brings up a grimy hand and rubs at his slick brow. He glances back as the two men plod along. "Looks drunk."

"Hm?"

"The horse." Randy's hand tumbles out in a gesture toward the horse, beside which is an empty can of beer.

Al nearly laughs. "Yeah."

"What're you gonna tell her?"

The wind tears a rift between them, whispers ideas in Al's ears: Tell her the horse is in a better place. Tell her God took him. Tell her Daddy's sorry. "I dunno."

"Well, you better figure that out." Randy wobbles ahead, picks up the rope and lopes over to the horse.

Al starts up the tractor and cruises. "She'll get over it."

Randy huffs, thick fingers knotting the coarse rope around the gaskins. "Just gotta tie his knees to make him go. Fall onto his face."

"Sure. Trip anybody and they'll fall to prayer."

"I ain't prayin'."

"Why would you?"

"That's what I'm sayin'." He spits, baptizing the horse into its second life.

Each with a rope in hand, the men tie the stallion to the back of the tractor. Al climbs up and drives ahead, slower than slow, trying to ignore the rasp to his rear, the sound of an albatross carving a ravine through green earth. He shivers in the breeze, leading a parade of the dead and dying.

# The Ex-Wife

Jennifer Hernandez

I.

"I don't want to see one more stalk of corn in my life."  
I folded my arms, propped my feet up on the dash.  
Running away from itself,  
road rushed beneath our feet.

She swerved left, away from the exit. "Me either."  
McDonald's, KFC, Subway, speed limit 65—  
she was pushing eighty, easy.

With the clouds dipping their noses to the ground,  
sneezing dew onto the grass,  
we shoved the cooler lid closed  
and let the white and yellow ribbons  
guide us across the map.

II.

Her teeth sunk into my ear, her fingers into my wrists,  
a brick wall massaging my shoulders.  
A hymn on her tongue,  
she summoned blood to my cheeks.

We were not in love.

Drinking holy water she bought at a Citgo,  
we giggled at the thought of our bodies rejecting  
a foreign soul;  
we would go to a hell I did not believe in  
and one she wasn't sure too sure of.

I loved her, but we were not in love.

III.

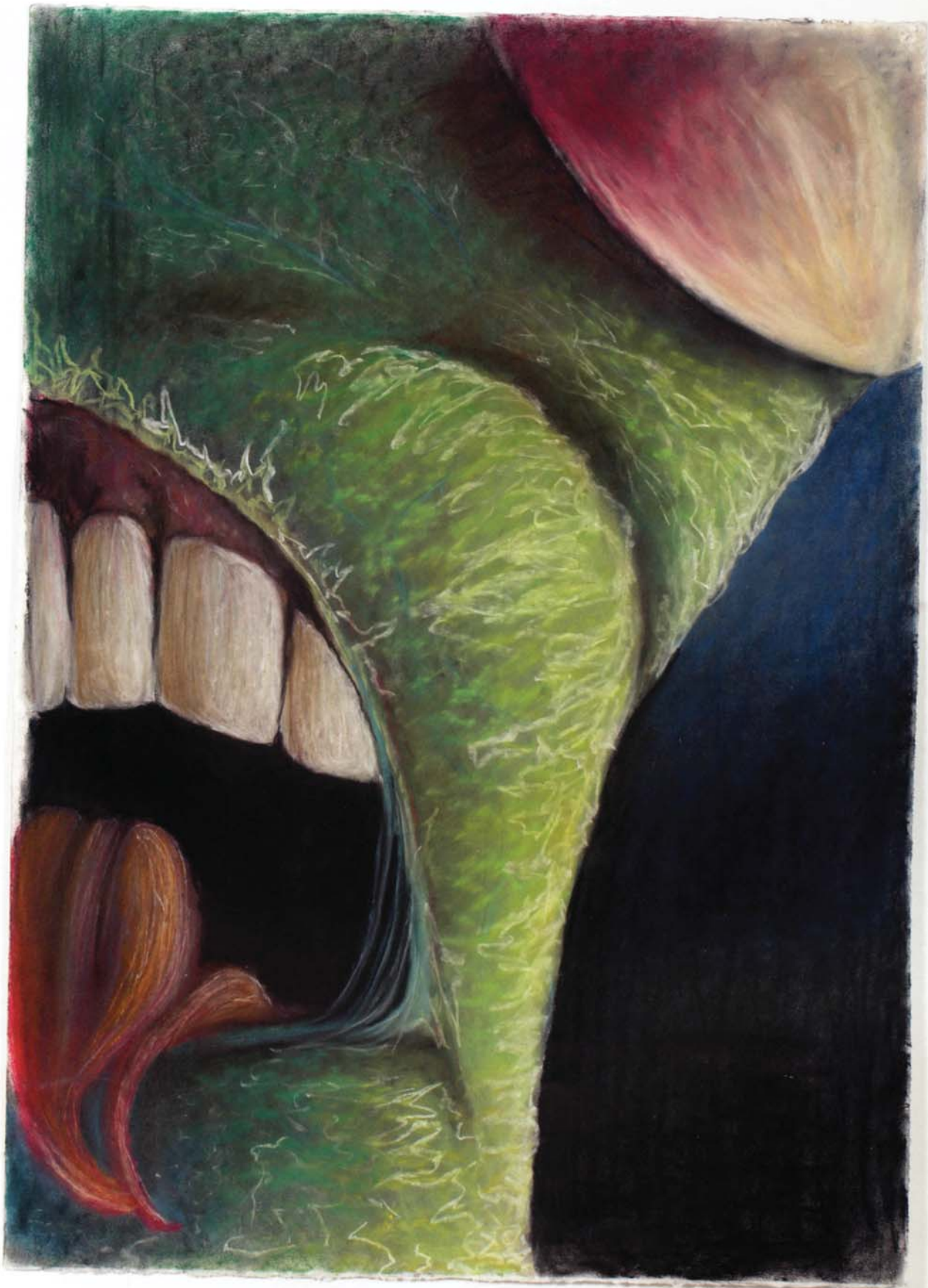
Every step felt like a step in the wrong direction,  
an ankle wrenched to the side;  
I tripped on my own bent knee,  
tumbled forward, a click in my bones.  
I hoisted my heavy head,  
only to have it slapped down,  
her hand open and loose.

Ignoring my lips on her cheek,  
she pushed past, purple lipstick slurred  
over her mouth and the bottle's.  
"Did you finish this?"

Not then, but give me time  
and I would.







Bryan Fuller **Color Soup**  
Oil on Canvas 20" x 20" x .75"



# Borderland

Emily Eveland

Borderline, borderland,  
lamictal, speed, citalopram,  
I love my crook psychiatrist.  
\$160 for five minutes,  
a white slip,  
and a glance at his green class ring,  
the gaudy prick.  
I'm fused with him.  
One day of missed doses means  
smashed dishes,  
new ex-boyfriends,  
and a cross carved on my stomach.  
Doc says I'm Satan incarnate  
and he is my gas-masked angel  
wielding a morphine syringe.  
He is my hero,  
my healer,  
my watering hole.  
I am his kool-aid drinker.

Borderline, borderland,  
bipolar diagnosis.  
Doc adds it to the list:  
dysthymia, PTSD, majorly depressing  
outlook on everything.  
A razorblading, sex-fiending, self-sabotaging Eris  
with a sad boy complex,  
leaving chemtrails of  
motherfucking  
Freudian bullshit.  
Sheep-eater,  
straight-edger,  
hip hopping hypocricist  
spitting dip drip from cracked lips.

Leif,  
hyperventilating she-beast with tattoos and Timberlands,  
Iron Man,  
psychopath,  
*they see right through me.*  
"Little Emily is still in there, isn't she?"

# Sex Among the Corpses

Jessica Sandacz

I lost my virginity in the sand  
on a makeshift beach-towel bed  
Crisp water wisped over us  
Tasting salt-soaked skin  
we explored each other's bodies with our lips  
learning which places longed to be touched and licked  
His rhythm mirrored the tide's motion  
Ear nipping between pleased moans

Sometimes my first time is beneath  
high school bleachers  
Other times it's in the closet at Christian Bible Camp  
Peers' ears pressed curiously to the door

But my favorite is in the basement of  
Ahlgrim's Funeral Home  
during my grandmother Florence's wake  
Legs open on a cold, metal embalming table  
The freshly dead silently witnessing a wild surge  
of carpe diem  
Sperm splattered over my stomach  
creating patterns Jackson Pollock would envy  
Fear of the impending oblivion  
urged taking full advantage  
of the pleasures our Earthly bodies offered  
among the corpses  
waiting to be boxed, gift wrapped, shipped to  
their afterlife

Tales I recite when asked—  
fabricated cacophony of memoir  
picassos any evidence of truth

That I was eleven and he was  
an unwelcome guest between my legs

I can't tell people that I was discarded  
like a used condom after a heavy night of  
binge drinking  
I can't tell people that it felt like broken mirror pieces  
ripping me open  
I can't tell people that I was too afraid to cry  
and that I hugged tightly to the person hurting me  
because I needed comfort

I never again saw the man with the mirror  
Years later I skimmed his obituary  
Cancer ate him from the inside out

There were days I couldn't remember reasons for living  
and when I did the reasons didn't seem that convincing

Nightmares, screaming,  
waking drenched  
a mixture of sweat with guilt  
a blur of flashbacks as if whirling in my head  
Slicing my wrists to cope through the rotations  
scissor blades and Effexor—  
a satiating symbiotic relationship  
keeping the Shakespearean swan song at bay

I tried dating  
forgetting  
reaching for a new notebook, a clean page  
one that didn't begin as a sequel to my  
eleven-year-old self  
But no matter how I hid my pens from my subconscious  
pieces of past bled into the pages, soaking the binding  
Dark letters  
scrawled in a handwriting not my own edited the story  
Added to the Preface  
foreshadowing motifs  
that killed off any new male protagonist

Then I met someone

And one evening while in my car  
parking lot lights reflected off the rearview mirror  
as we discussed the mundane details of life  
while waiting for Godot  
he noticed my scars and  
for the first time  
I shared my story, the real story  
and instead of viewing me as shattered

he lifted my arm to his lips  
and compassionately kissed each slice  
My eleven-year-old self found closure

and even though my wounds had scarred over years ago  
they finally began to heal

*Dedicated to victims of sexual assault. It may be hard to  
see right now but life will get better--don't give up.*



**Vivian Stewart Award**

POINT OF VIEW - 2016



Anastasia Sitnikova **The First Snow**  
Charcoal, Red and White Chalk 8" x 10.5"

# What If There Was Not

Michelle Mabry

You don't smoke anymore  
but your brain lights fire to itself,  
your brocade of want  
flammable  
fusing, refusing.

I will eat,  
be the apple,  
for the sake of my child;  
    your eye emptied without me,  
    so cavernous,  
    you would  
    let  
    your  
    son  
    drowned  
    in its black bottom,  
    you don't notice.

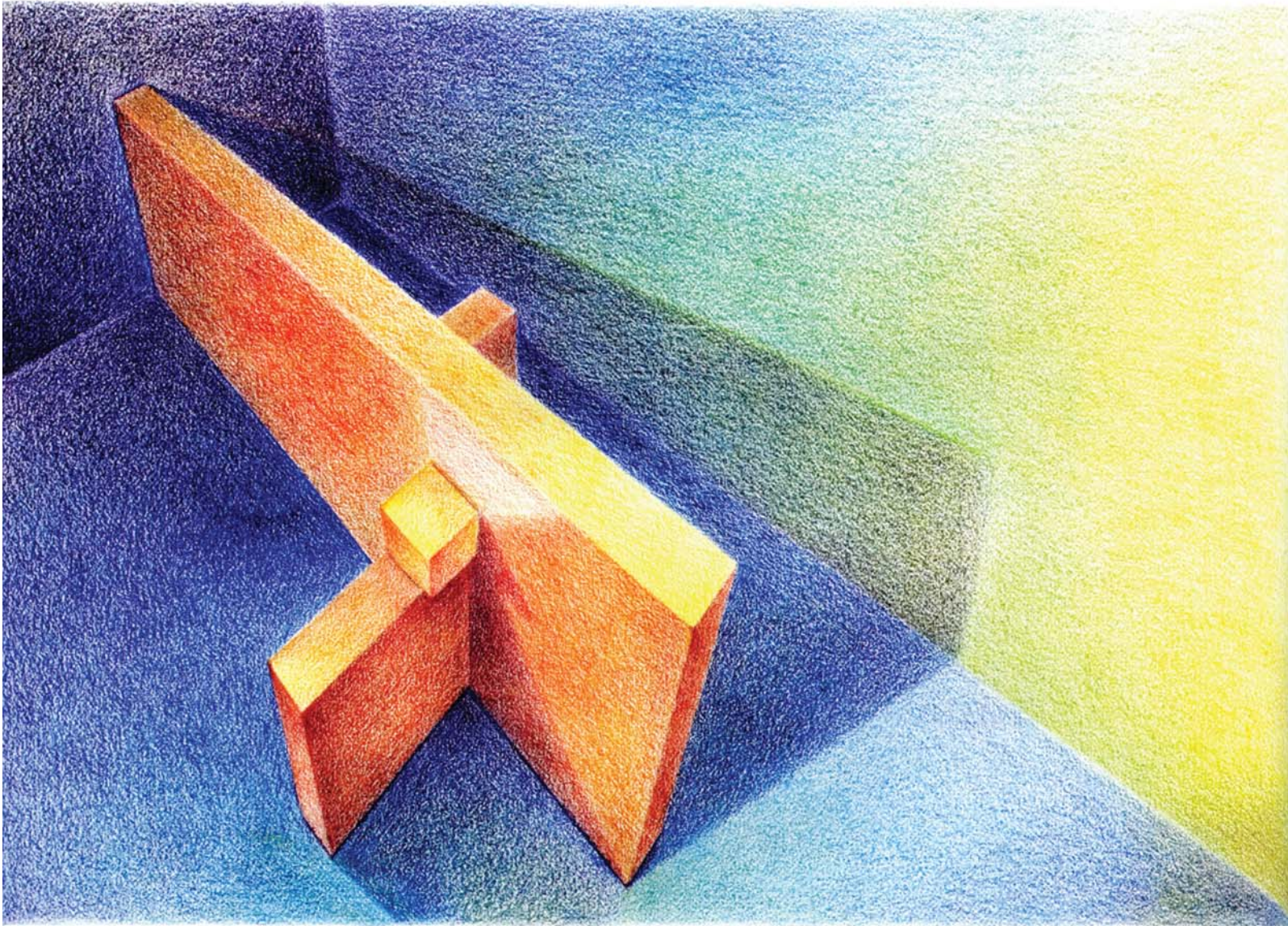
I know where I want to belong  
but I will linger,  
liminal,  
'til there is nothing left to turn  
and I am a new terrible,  
just like some sweet autumn smoke  
you cannot grasp.



Camila Pasquel **Above**  
Wood, Dirt, and Pine Needles 18" x 19" x 4"



Anastasia Sitnikova **Untitled**  
Color Pencils 10.25" x 14"





# Pinocchio and Burnt Bagels

## Madison Hill

I remember her.

The crochet needles red and green

Salsa dancing between her crinkled fingers.

Her best friend was Pinocchio

Who wished and yearned to become a real boy.

My breakfast always served,

A bagel turned black that felt of rock and ash.

Its taste like dirt,

Bitter but full of wonders invisible to the naked eye.

The smell of her only perfume,

A combination of compassion and cigarettes.

I remember her.

A wanted youthful palm intertwining with an older one,

She held 50 years over my 12.

The last time I almost touched her veiny limb that hung limp from a metal frame,

But didn't out of fear and confusion.

The sound of a beautifully painful cacophony

When the damage of the smoke was far too much.

Pamela Phillips **3 Vases**

Ceramics 6" x 6.5" x 6.5" / 7" x 6.5" x 6.5" / 6" x 6.5" x 6.5"





# Looking Sideways

**Alec Panos**

Words like white noise  
run from  
ear to ear,  
they crawl with  
no direction, no fear

Eyes black,  
sharpened at the edges,  
scream stories of hopelessness,  
walking off ledges

Bags dotted blue  
sink deeper  
by the day,  
hair grows thinner,  
roots turn grey

Don't tell me what it feels like  
to stare death in the eye,  
I see him every day  
you pass by

# Out of a Closet and Into a Home

*an excerpt from a longer piece of fiction*

**Andrew Barat**

His grandma came in, flipped the blanket off the bottom half of his body, and began to rub his feet. As she pressed deeply into his toes with her knuckle, she began to sing. She sang a song about the months of the year. Then a song about a squirrel falling from a fence and being healed by a kind doctor, only to run away from his savior.

“Papa never liked to have his feet covered, especially when he slept” she said.

His grandma made circular movements around his feet. When she thought he was asleep she sat at the edge of the bed. Through a sliver in his eye he noticed that she was too drained to get up. Her eyes were tired but she hummed herself in and out of sleep. It was the type of hum that bees make as they go about their work. It was the bee hum that fills ears and demands to be heard. It was simple, singular, a lull, but it was just loud enough to shoo away the emptiness, to make known the presence of a body next to a corpse. When she left the room, he didn't fall asleep for another two hours. It was quiet but the hum remained, lullabying and echoing in the shapeless space of the room.





Anastasia Sitnikova **Untitled**  
Photographs on Paper Construction 15" x 15" x 3.5"



# Persevere

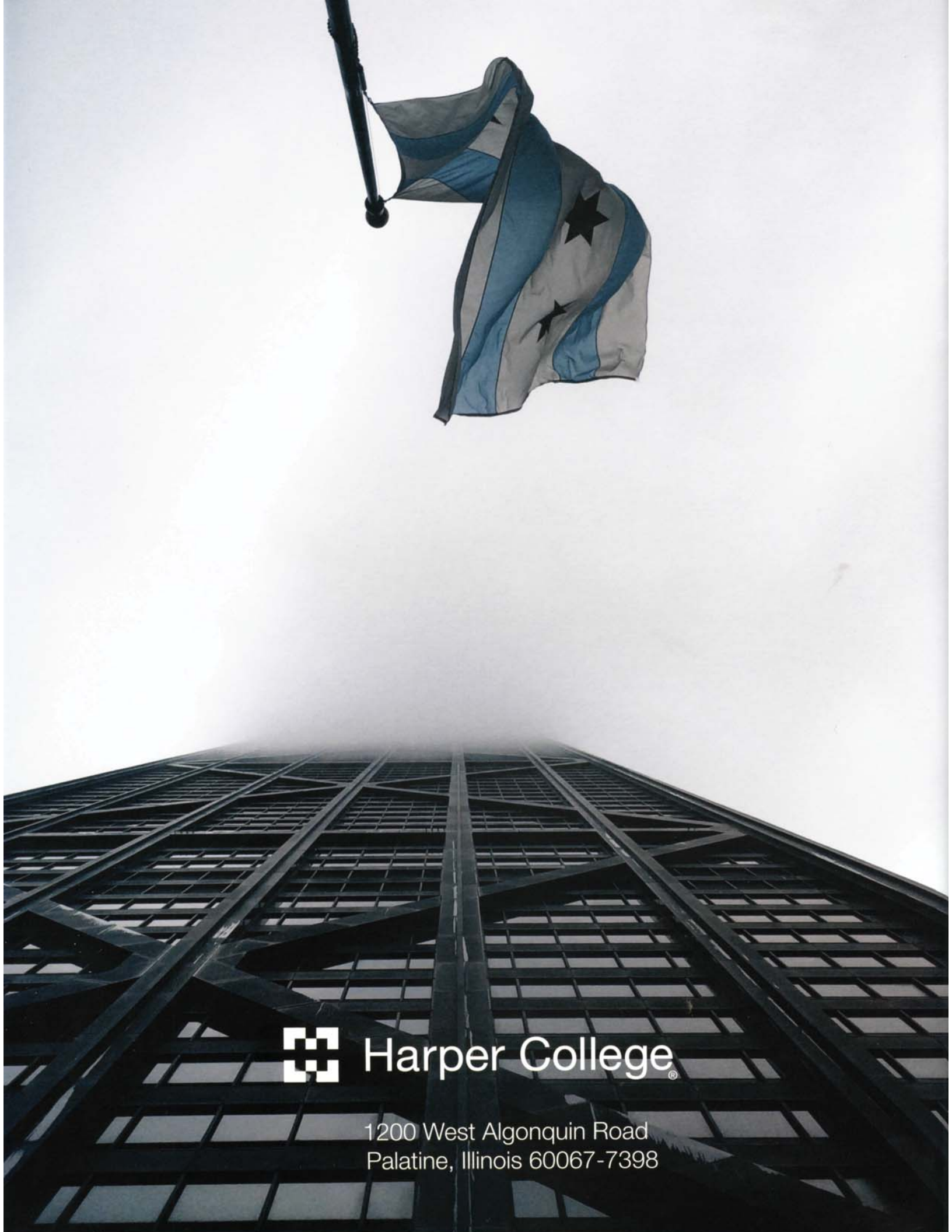
Sylvia Méndez

As worry lines start to indent your face,  
age fills your wife's place.  
Your beard and mustache start to unravel,  
as work wears you down like tires on gravel,  
but your army feeble body still leaves a trace.

Fridays you recoil into the basement with Budweiser,  
a rat that lives in the crack of our tilted house.  
Only Mr. Jingles seeks you, speaks to you, or can even listen to  
the stories that rush out the broken faucet of your mouth.  
Now that your cans have stacked up,  
my name distorts into something different every hour  
and you can't even tell me my birthday.  
Stop smothering me with your sloshed affection,  
stop drinking and smoking your life into ashes  
because I'm no God and  
I won't have the strength to say  
rest in peace.

Every day you wake up at the aurora,  
drive past the cut throat fields of Indiana,  
where your eyes strain and your brain goes necrotic  
at the sight of those loading docks or Holiday Inns.  
What great lengths you go to  
to provide for this perfect illusionist's picture  
that portrays a loving family  
where secrets are the foundation to this fraudulent household.  
You lose your stronghold when you return,  
I lost all respect and the love that I should earn,  
so I'll string together the déjà vu of disheartening words  
that you spit in my face  
in the four hours you're actually here.

At the end of the night,  
when your two twenty-four packs fade,  
I will be the one checking up on you.  
Making sure your heart's still pumping blood  
through bulging blue veins  
and that hot heavy breaths skim the back of my hand.  
I'm hospice,  
waiting for your demise.



Harper College®

1200 West Algonquin Road  
Palatine, Illinois 60067-7398