

2024 | Student Art and Literary Magazine

 Harper College

AWARDS

Ray Mills Award
CERULEAN SPRING
Jakub Jamroz

Vivian Stewart Award
APPETITE
Erika Laugello

Point of View Award
GLITTER IN THE DARK
Anna Abbas

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Katie Kuffel

Special Thanks

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Jason Peot
Nancy Marquez

Artists

Juliana Alterio	
The Walnut Shell.....	17
Emmalena Barcomb	
Untitled (Green).....	45
Jacklyn Berta	
Self-portrait.....	36
Mark Choi	
Cat and Fish.....	14
Shannen Cruz	
A Reconstruction.....	33
Buting.....	42
Spencer Taylor Carlberg	
Burnt Out.....	38
Layne Dennis	
This is Who Was Always Here.....	27
Excalibur.....	31
Brayan Garcia	
Untitled.....	7
Isabel Guerrero	
Head in The Clouds.....	19
Jakub Jamroz	
Cerulean Spring.....	4
The Moon Trees.....	48
Olivia Maliszewski	
Laczenie.....	13
Connected Through Space.....	24
Itzel Maldonado	
Harmonia de la Naturaleza.....	18
Tony McEvoy	
Flat Iron form Empire State.....	44
Gabrielle Moreno	
Glint.....	39
John Ratkovich	
Pitcher.....	5
Isabella Runez	
Home.....	16
Kelsey Skowron	
College Study.....	6
Danielle Straub	
Dragon Fly Pine Needle Basket.....	26
Aleksandr Tsurupa	
Ordinariness trap.....	49

Authors

Anna Abbas	
Glitter in the Dark.....	35
Vanessa Alarcon Angeles	
Land of the Free.....	32
Alas de Monarca.....	20
Ekaterina Dubravin	
Immortal.....	29
Love Letters as Suicide Notes.....	28
Her Vibe is Pretty.....	47
Will You Be My Valentine?.....	50
Allison Hubbard	
Creature.....	40
Christian Gordilis	
Limited Time.....	3
Alix Gable	
Untitled.....	43
Erika Laugello	
Herencia.....	15
Appetite.....	41
Mariia Korshun	
Heart Full of Sorrow.....	9
Unconditional Love.....	11
Sam Kobe	
Orange Juice.....	29
Jose Martinez	
An Understatement.....	46
Chelsea Melber	
Better Late than Never.....	21
Kausar Mohiuddin	
Israel-Gaza War.....	31
Momma.....	34
Masuma Muttaqi	
Ten Days of Dreams.....	25
Hannah Samuelson	
Language.....	37
Jessica Sandacz	
Gases to Ashes.....	10
A Mother's Words.....	28
Nora Soulje	
Untitled.....	30

LIMITED TIME

Christian Gordilis

It seems like my time during the day has shortened ever since I had graduated high school.
The amount of free time during the day seems to shrink every single minute of the day.
My hours slowly fill with working at my new job
I didn't have time to be free.
I make time for hobbies that will keep me occupied but time is limited.
Moments I would think could last forever will slowly get smaller.
I take advantage of my days off to spend with my brother.
But then the cycle repeats itself I have limited time.
Slowly my free time gets smaller and smaller.
Until I have no extra time left to spare.
I will take advantage this time.
Trust me.



CERULEAN SPRING

Jakub Jamroz

Acrylic

48" x 60" x 1.5"

PITCHER

John Ratkovich

Ceramics

20" x 6" x 6"





COLLEGE STUDY

Kelsey Skowron

College

21" x 18"

UNTITLED

Brayan Garcia

Charcoal

16" x 24"



ISRAEL-GAZA WAR

Kausar Mohiuddin

History repeats itself
They forget Gaza
Somewhere along the lines

History repeats itself
They forget that
It separates, segregates, and justifies itself

History repeats itself
They forget that and
Realize that to kill is to look into one's eyes

Controlled

History repeats itself we know
They forget that
It's a fucking disease

HEART FULL OF SORROW

Mariia Korshun

Every night she gets home after a day full of studying; she lays down on her unmade bed, on the sheets with a space design which her mom sent from her home country. Her hand flows over them and she feels the coldness and emptiness of realizing that she cannot remember the scent of her bed back home. She was eighteen when she had to make a choice to move from her home country alone. And she made it, but now, as she lies in her room, she regrets every bit of that decision. Of course, now she has the privilege to study at a foreign college, but was it really worth parting with her home for this?

She covers herself with a fluffy blanket, wanting to escape this cruel world forever. She thinks about it for a long minute but doesn't do anything. Too weak to harm herself, she would rather lie here for a couple of hours, head full of thoughts, eyes full of tears, heart full of sorrow. Yet she cannot do anything about this feeling of missing her home. She can tell her father, but at the same time, she cannot. Not wanting to be a burden; not wanting him to be upset that she doesn't feel here like she does at home. "Is it better to speak or to die?", the answer for her is too obvious. She thinks about how she has always listened to her friends about their problems, but no one ever listened to hers. No one even asked her once. So why bother trying? She doesn't have a feeling they would care even now when they're miles away from each other.

She tries to sleep, but after crying for hours her head wants to explode. While putting headphones on, she clicks on a song by Lord Huron, "The Night We Met," and sets it on repeat. This song always had a special meaning for her, from the day she heard it for the first time to this moment four years later. It means regretting life choices that led you to this moment, a lonely moment. The line "take me back to the night we met" reminds her of the night she saw her mom waving her goodbye in the airport, knowing that she wouldn't see her for long years; it reminds her of the day she met her best friend with whom she hadn't spoken for nearly three years now. She was six and it was the first day in the elementary school and she was the most timid girl the world has probably ever seen. There also was a tall girl with long curly hair who decided to sit next to her and introduce

herself first. And so, they bonded together, it was her last friendship like this, childlike, pure, without any requirements or reasons for their friendship. They were best friends for eleven years; throughout the whole school, they were always together until the moment when one of them started becoming more and more open and sociable, while the other remained introverted and shy until this day.

She also thinks about how she would give away everything she has right now, to go back home, to hug her mom, to watch some silly TV show with her like their favorite "Money Heist" which they rewatched probably five times by now. In moments like that, she felt in her safe place, she could be herself and not think about anything; all her anxiety and fears went away and there was peace, just like the sea on a windless day. She wishes never getting away from her home and mom. The life she had back then was never respected by her, she was ungrateful and wanted to get away as soon as she got the opportunity to. She was silly, somewhat ignorant, maybe she still is, but at least now she gets it when people say that you start to be grateful for things only when you lose them.

GASES TO ASHES

Jessica Sandacz

"Is that a kiln?"

"That's a reduction kiln."

"Want me to get you one of those?"

"No thank you."

"I think we should get one."

"Why?"

"At some point, I'm going to have to get rid of a body for you. I'd rather not dismember them into test-kiln sized pieces."

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Mariia Korshun

"I love you... most ardently,"
Mr. Darcy said in such despair
to finally get to the heart of beloved Elizabeth,
and it felt like the most unreal words.
Is there someone in real life can love you like that,
or does it happen only in the movies?
Can a man love a woman without any prejudice,
and accept her no matter how she looks,
how she talks, how she dresses or even cooks?
Can a woman forget how much a man earns,
how well he solves conflicts or how well he jokes?
Is there still such a thing called "unconditional love"?
Or is it depicted only in the movies?
"You bewitched me, my body and soul,"
he said with a sigh of relief, hoping
she might feel the same toward him,
and she then knew she was.

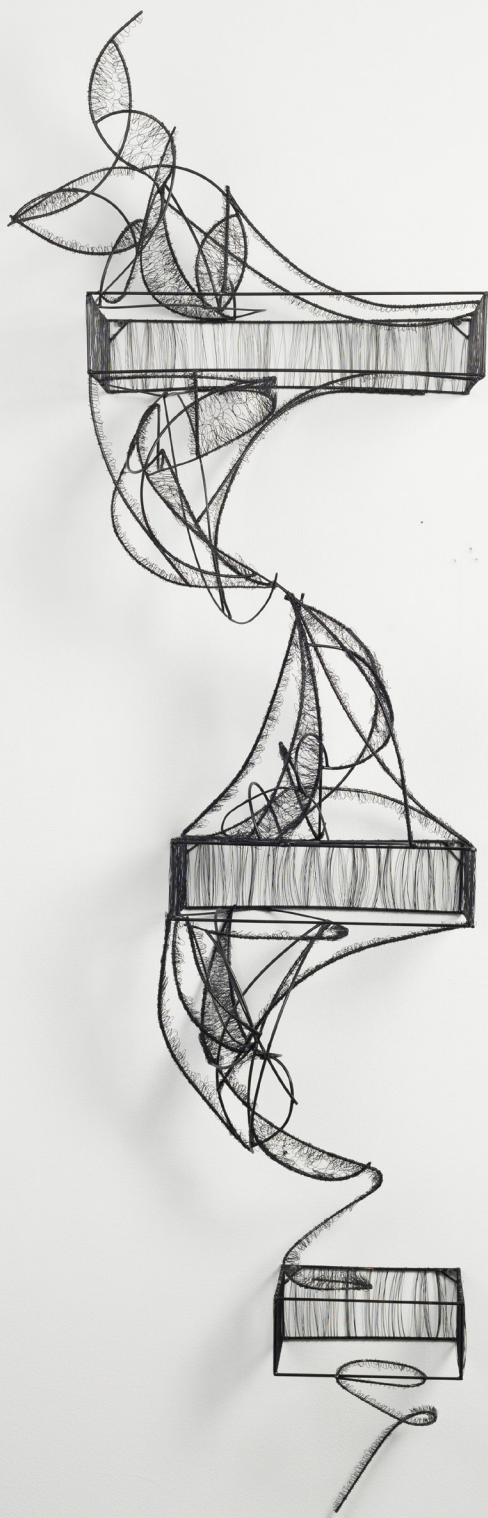
nautilidae

Jefferson Sobczak

Ceramics

10" x 9" x 7"





Laczenie

Olivia Maliszewski
Brazing Rod, Copper wire
54" x 16" x 10"



CAT AND FISH

10" x 10" x 10"

Mark Choi

Ceramics

HERENCIA

Erika Laugello

My grandmother and I walk into the panaderia on a damp summer morning - the air is thick and warm.
She picks out a small tray and metal tongs from their respective containers.

"Aver, qual quieras?" she poses, hand on hip.

I understand very little Spanish and she knows just as much English but in the narrow aisle we squeeze ourselves into something universal.

My eyes feast on the towering racks and rows of panes! I find myself torn between a concha de chocolate and a dona de azucar. My grandmother places both baked goods on the tray. I think about how she doesn't have enough money for an air conditioning unit.

Back home, my teeth rest into a pillowy bite. Sugar coats my fingers, sprinkling down the front of my shirt and onto the plastic-covered table. Sunlight floods in through the kitchen window as I meet my grandmother's gaze.

"Estas bien mi mocosa?" she asks, eyes wide and smiling.

And I nod my head. Partly because I can't speak a lick of her language, but mostly because it's true; I am well and want for nothing.



HOME

Isabella Runez

Ceramics

14" x 1" x 14"



THE WALNUT SHELL

Juliana Alterio

Ceramics

9" x 9" x 13"





HARMONIA DE LA NATURALEZA

Itzel Maldonado
Ink



HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

Isabel Guerrero

Gouache on Mixed Paper

22" x 30"

ALAS DE MONARCA

Vanessa Alarcon Angeles

Mariposa Monarca, natal de la hermosa tierra de Michoacán
Tierras tan bellas como tus alas
Alas que hacen viajes de enorme distancias
Dichosa Monarca,
Tus alas contienen el poder de fluir por el viento
Entre territorios ajenos a mi
Tu inmigración es vista con adoración
No es criminalizada o vista con desprecio
Como es la mía.
Monarch Butterfly
Mesmerizing just as your native land of Michoacan
Lands so beautiful like your wings
Wings that go through enormous distances
Lucky Monarca
Your wings contain the freedom of flowing with the wind
Flowing through territories that are prohibited to me
Your immigration is seen with warmth
It is not persecuted or seen with disgust
Such as mine

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

Chelsea Melber

Getting dressed I was already sweating. I triple-checked that I had picked both my partner and I's clothing so that it was dark and would not bore any unique markings. I especially wanted to make sure that my Marine Corps tattoo was covered; I did not want to bring any attention to the fact that I was a veteran. Before we left the house, I made sure that our bold, cardboard, acrylic paint-stained signs were making the journey with us. The drive into the city felt long and heavy. Once we parked, the walk to the meeting point felt like a sprint. People of all ethnicities and walks of life began to pack in tightly. Before the march began, several speakers doused the fire with their blazing words calling out the American government's part in the genocide and occupation of Palestine and the crowd's energy intensified. Nothing had prepared me for the one speaker that was about to rock my entire existence. I felt my purpose and passion to shut the system down fervidly erupt within me when a familiar presence approached the microphone next.

A fellow Filipino person stepped up and unleashed a fury that I had never felt before but had been stirring within me for years. "FROM PALESTINE TO THE PHILIPPINES, STOP THE U.S. WAR MACHINE!" The speaker, overcome with emotion, veins bulging all over their face and neck as they illuminated the ways of the American war machine and how it feeds off the conquering of minorities across the globe. Within those next few minutes, I felt every word stamp my soul as my eyes poured out tears and chills shot through my body. My ancestors' rage burned through my core and those words reminded me who I was and why the Universe was keeping me around.

For most of my adult life I have struggled with judging myself for being only ¼ Filipino. A part of me, buried deep within, always knew that I hated the fact that America had colonized the Philippines, just like the Spaniards, and that I was an obvious product of that. I hated what I was for an exceptionally long time. You would not have known that by looking at me though. I was a cowboy boot wearing, Alabama A tatted, good ole girl from northwest Florida that had yet escaped the closeminded backwoods of America.

Once I thought I had figured my life out, I enlisted in the Marine Corps and proudly served my country. Hell, my enlistment was not enough; I needed to destroy my mental

health completely by becoming a Government Contractor afterward. For 10+ years, I was living the American dream. Around the 11th year, I had a mental breakdown and all the years of questioning my purpose came to a screeching halt. None of what I had done the last 10+ years had brought pride. I used to be a patriot until I realized that I had been serving a country whose government could care less about anyone who was not a Caucasian, God-fearing, cisgender heterosexual and even then, men are the cream of the crop. I knew I had to escape the life that I had built for myself and start over. I could no longer handle the mental gymnastics that I was putting myself through.

Fast forward a few years and I am taking care of my Mamaw in her last months and as those months faded, so did my Mamaw's English. The all-too-familiar struggle of being too white started to strain my mental health once again. I kept thinking that I waited too long to learn more about my Filipino roots. The more Tagalog and Visayan (native language/dialect) that my Mamaw spoke, the more I realized that Tagalog, Visayan and Spanish have similar linguistics. I had never felt proud to be more white than Filipino, but it got to the point where I just felt dirty and disrespectful for not nurturing my Filipino roots and letting those bloom into pride. I started to practice Spanish in hopes that I would be able to understand my Mamaw more when she spoke to me. Unfortunately, my Mamaw has since passed. In her passing I swore to myself that I would never let my Filipino roots die. I told myself I was going to cook a wider variety of Filipino dishes, practice more Tagalog/Visayan and that I would always speak up for all Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) and illuminate our struggles and the struggles of our ancestors. Once I had been invited to a protest in support of Palestinians in Chicago, I knew it was on.

Protesting in support of people of Middle Eastern descent was something I could have never fathomed that I would have done from 2010-2020. During those times I worked with the American military and all missions targeted Muslim people in their home countries. I was part of the oil that kept the American war machine well maintained and always ready to attack whichever minority group that stood in the way of total domination. How sickening is that?! The amount of grief and shame that I have held onto for supporting those missions, for so long, is overwhelming. The only good thing the American government has provided me with are my ongoing therapy sessions. I am grateful to have found ways to cope with my moral injuries and my shotty mental health. Now I have the tools I need to express myself and voice how I feel about America's government.

I was not a stranger to protesting, however. A few years prior, I had protested for Black Lives Matter (BLM) back in Florida, but that was just a couple hundred of people; I had never immersed myself in thousands of people before. It was 2023 and we were marching down the same streets that Martin Luther King Jr. marched in the 1960s. A river of white, black, red, and green rushed through the Chicago streets. The roar of chants and cries of a throng of survivors and fellow activists, screaming for peace, and screaming for a ceasefire, drowned out the otherwise monotonous city sounds.

Now, in 2024, protesting in support of Palestinians is almost always on my mind. For the rest of my life, I will boycott McDonalds and Starbucks because their support of the genocide and occupation of Palestine will never sit right with me; no amount of money donated to Palestinians from them will ever rid the terrible taste of their existence.

Hearing Filipinos chant in support of Palestinians will forever ring in my ears. I will never again question where my heart lies. I will no longer support a system whose goal is to silence and erase minorities. Building a community to keep the fire burning against the American system will always be a priority of mine. I will no longer make myself uncomfortable staying quiet when screaming for equality is much more pleasurable. By using your voice and every platform available, you can reach people who you may have never had a connection with before. I knew I was making a difference by showing up to the protest, but I had no idea that it would pen my next, revolutionary, chapter.

CONNECTED THROUGH SPACE

Olivia Maliszewski

Cement, Styrofoam

12" x 9" x 15"



TEN DAYS OF DREAMS

Masuma Muttaqi

In a house, this young girl stayed real close
Feelin' like a prisoner, that's what she chose
But after the darkest night, when morning would break
She'd live the way she wanted, no rules to partake

No cops, no limits, just parties to the end
For ten days straight, like a fairy-tale, my friend
But when the family got back from their trip one day
Freedom faded fast, like it always slipped away

Back to her regular life, with rules she couldn't stand,
In her heart, she kept dreamin', a life so grand.
For a world beyond her family's grasp, she'd
always demand.



DRAGON FLY PINE NEEDLE BASKET

Danielle Straub

Pine needles

4.5" x 16.5" x 14"



THIS IS WHO WAS ALWAYS HERE

Layne Dennis
Canvas, Yarn, Wood, Chain
3' x 5'

LOVE LETTERS AS SUICIDE NOTES

Ekaterina Dubravin

You've been on my mind a lot recently.
I sent flowers to your house with a note attached, they should be there anytime now.
I went to the store today and I saw those cookies we used to make so I bought a couple of boxes for you.
I cleaned the house, made the bed, and fed the dogs for you.
I love you to the moon and back.
I have something to tell you but it's a secret.
I love you.
I had a big breakfast today.
I wish I got to see you last night before I leave this weekend.
I'm wearing your clothes, I hope you don't mind. You know, the house is getting really lonely without you I called my parents today

a MOTHER'S WORDS

Jessica Sandacz

the worst mistake I made was teaching you
that you have a voice

ORANGE JUICE

Sam Kobe

my grandma taught me when I was little
that orange juice would make you feel all better.
now here I am, grown up in the middle of the grocery store
because I just want one thing.
I want to be all better.
I want to hold my grandma's hand while walking through the
parking lot, to drink from the blue plastic cups that are in the
cabinet next to her stove,
to lie down on the bed in her spare room
and sleep my bad day away.
Recently
Recently

IMMORTAL

Ekaterina Dubravin

If you want to live forever, fall in love with a poet. A sweet tale of despair will
be told how you were nothing, then everything, then how you left with
nothing more but memories slipping through desperate grasping fingers.
How the moon heard our whispers and
you became a potter appreciating every curve, texture, and color.
But the thing about artists is they hate their work.
The audience would analyze your love for each other they would read about
the forest and the ocean, but the ocean and forest don't go together
—the sand and the sea do.

UNTITLED

Nora Soulje

my friends and I talked about our favorite seasons
and we all basically agreed
that fall is the best
Except
I gave it more thought after the conversation
because I felt like there was something I forgot to say
and I realized
that none of the four seasons are truly my favorite
not outright
because every time we're in a season
we miss the other ones
or something's not right
like how it's not supposed to snow in April
but it does
and it's not supposed to be this hot in october
but it is
Which has made me realize
that the periods of time within a season
I find myself enjoying the most
is the in between no one talks about
That perfect temperature
after the blaze of july
but before the crisp cold of October

EXCALIBUR

Layne Dennis

Ceramic, Leather

33" x 10"



LAND OF THE FREE

Vanessa Alarcon Angeles

The promised land where dreams come true flooded with opportunities. The ideal country to escape the broken environment that no longer sustains the hope of a better tomorrow. The country where all men are equal; except for the ones whose sweat and tears are rooted in the soil of this land. Immigrants who give their loyalty to a country that does not see them as one of their own but simply as cheap labor. The American dream is a dream that inhales every ounce of light in your soul. As time passes in this foreign land the realization of deception slowly creeps in.

Seeing with clarity the cruel reality of this country where millions of immigrants sought for a better life only to be dehumanized and intoxicated with bitterness. And suddenly the perception of a better life no longer belongs in the land of the free but instead it takes you back to the place that once seemed unbearable to live. The American dream now becomes replaced with the hope that one day your overworked body is buried deep in the soil of your native country.



a RECONSTRUCTION

Shannen Cruz
Wood, Metal, Yarn
18" x 9" x 24.5"

momma

Kausar Mohiuddin

Some may think my place is mundane or childish
But a place of pride is a place earned,
Is it not?

Doesn't one have to earn a space beside the one that created them?

They do when independence steels the spine
And freedom and wildness fuel the spirit
When the race up the ladder pulls the umbilical tether

My place is her lap
Bony, frail and worn with malaise
I think about how these have carried her for 46 years

As I rest my ego on her lap,
I wonder how they don't snap under the weight
Child-like as it may be,
Does worry and filial piety ever fade?

Faith tells me that heaven is under a mother's foot.
That the ground they walk on is the key,
And it helps me understand why she fights to stand,
Why she continues to walk

And why I lay my thoughts on those
Worn, unforgiving and stubborn legs
To which I sacrifice my worth and bask in humility

GLITTER IN THE DARK

Anna Abbas

Why is everyone always in such a rush to sleep as soon as night falls?

I know I've said that sleep is the pathway by which one sees magical dreams. But there's an entirely mystifying aliveness to being awake throughout the night.

Melancholy seems touchable by bare hands.

Dusty memories blanket your body.

Words only make sense because they make absolutely none at all.

Poetry spills down my lips.

An icy river healing desperation.

Moonlight streaking curtains and lamplight tiptoeing the floor.

A secret invitation.

An owl keeping watch no matter what.

Vigilance as per a whispered command.

Scribbled poetry and trembling hands.

Sly means unwaveringly scattered by rhythms of rest.

Unconsciously conscious.

Brokenness indicates survival.

The recordings, the journals, the paintings, the oceans,

The aches in her chest when she wept so forcefully, it nearly stopped her breathing.

But if eyes are reading my musings at this very moment,

Then it is proven,

The darkness lives more than daylight ever has.

However,

If even now, you still hesitate to believe me,

Ask yourself,

When do you most clearly hear your own heartbeat?

The sun will never know me as intimately as the moon does.



SELF- PORTRAIT

Jacklyn Berta
Charcoal

LANGUAGE

Hannah Samuelson

The moving hands at the following table caught my eye as I
sat, waiting for class to start.
They were practicing ASL
What an extraordinary skill,
a lesser-known language
For me, that language is Portuguese
For my Vovó, that language is English
We are losing our communication as the
years go on
I never learned Portuguese, and she is forgetting
her English
This disconnect is what I imagine deaf people experience all
of the time
I ask myself why learning ASL is not more of a priority for
society
Then again, I think to myself why learning Portuguese is not
more of a priority for me
Language units us, but can also be our biggest divider
Then, time was up, and I went to class worrying about the
next thought that came to mind

BURNT OUT

Spencer Taylor Carlberg

Tea, Ink, Charcoal, Colored pencil, Graphite

22" x 30"





GLINT

Gabrielle Moreno

foam, fabric, metal tape, aluminum rods

36" x 36" x 36"

CREATURE

Allison Hubbard

Darling I'll haunt the corners of
this space
Lurk in the shadows
Writhe upon your specimen table
Only come in with invitation

I'll be your heartbroken
thing undead
Frantically pacing the groaning
floorboards
Destroying myself for nothing
in return
A stake lodged between my ribs
Silver bullets melting holes through my
hands

I want to consume you
Hold every piece in my
clenched fists
All claws and sharp teeth
Your vitality within my maw
My ventricles thumping in time
with your convulsions

Cherry-red blood oozing a
moat between us

Stretch and sew panels of
creaking skin
Braid sinew together
Snap my joints into place
Drive bolts into my skull
Guide forks of lighting towards where
I need it most

Feed me
Kiss me once more
Hold my hand even though it burns
Break apart my bones and drink
the marrow
Confine me in a cage of indifference
Hold me while the wind howls

Want a version of me
Any version
And that would be enough mortality
for a millenia

APPETITE

Erika Laugello

La prueba nos estaba comiendo dedo adedov sin
importar lo pequefios que eran.
Asi que me fui a buscar la libertad mas alla del desierto.
Deje a mis hijos atras, no queriendo sus zapatos
llenos de arena y alacranes, y por eso mi maternidad fue
puesta en duda - como si no hubiera acunado a mis hijos
en mi vientre,
como si no me rompiera la espalda para construir
una casita encime para ellos a mi regreso.
Me preguntaba cuanto mas de mi carne tendria que
cortar para que todos estuvieran llenos y felices,
y si alguien pensaria en salvarme solo un pedazo.

Marriage and motherhood cried hungrily for me
and I supported their necks and fed them from my body.
They were meant to fulfill me completely but
I must have forgot and so after a full day's work,
I attended class.
And after class, I crawled home.
And at home, my daughter ran to me, soiled and wailing.
My husband, dry in every way, said
"a good mother would have been home".
As if I hadn't cradled my daughter in my womb,
As if I wasn't fisting cake down my throat to prove that
one day, she too can have and eat it all! -
I wondered how much more of me I'd have to carve out
until it was considered sacrifice instead of selfishness
And whether even the bones would be
left for me to suck on.



BUTING

Shannen Cruz

Plastic, Wood, Aluminum, Cloth, Metal

21" x 13" x 18"

UNTITLED

Alix Gable

The darkness consumes me
All around, I feel it
My body is weightless, for only the black void could hold me
For I am at peace, alone, and tranquil
And as the darkness consumes me, my life slips away
I feel undisturbed here, pleasant in my solidarity
But, my alarm blares me to life
And the dark void of my sleep slips past me

FLAT IRON FORM EMPIRE STATE

Tony McEvoy
Digital Photo
16" x 23"



UNTITLED (GREEN)

Emmalena Barcomb

Wood, Metal, Yarn, Paint, Rods

20" x 15" x 7 1/8"



an understatement

Jose Martinez

Exhausted
is an understatement
The feeling of seeing a bed and instantly wanting to sleep there
Is an understatement
Going home after a long day is either the best feeling or the
worst due to the realization that you have to do it all again the
next day
But at the same time the feeling of being at home
Is an understatement
Words could not describe how it feels to get home
Take off your shoes,
Undress,
Take a warm nice shower,
Eat a nice healthy meal,
Watch that episode of your favorite show,
Relax and destress,
And finally,
head to sleep
I can tell you that the feeling of all that is simply the best thing
ever,
But unfortunately that
Is an understatement
I can tell you that after such a long day of work, the word
drained
Is an understatement

HER VIBE IS PRETTY

Ekaterina Dubravin

She is a Pinterest board full of warm summers,
car rides, and togetherness a constant bright sun,
a home I am sick for.
For the home is where the heart is and my heart belongs to her,
not any boy I've met because the boys come and go but the
jokes stay forever.
She is the strong roots in the ground reminding me
to stay grounded while
I sway in the wind
Her vibe is pretty she is the loud singing in the car, cheesecake
on your birthday, and the hysterical laughter that fills the room.
Can I be a bitch for a second?
You don't even have to ask, she is the color pink, not the kind of
pink of pink that announces a baby girl,
Her vibe is pretty of course,
the sun goes down sometimes I'll say—
It's a good thing I'm the moon

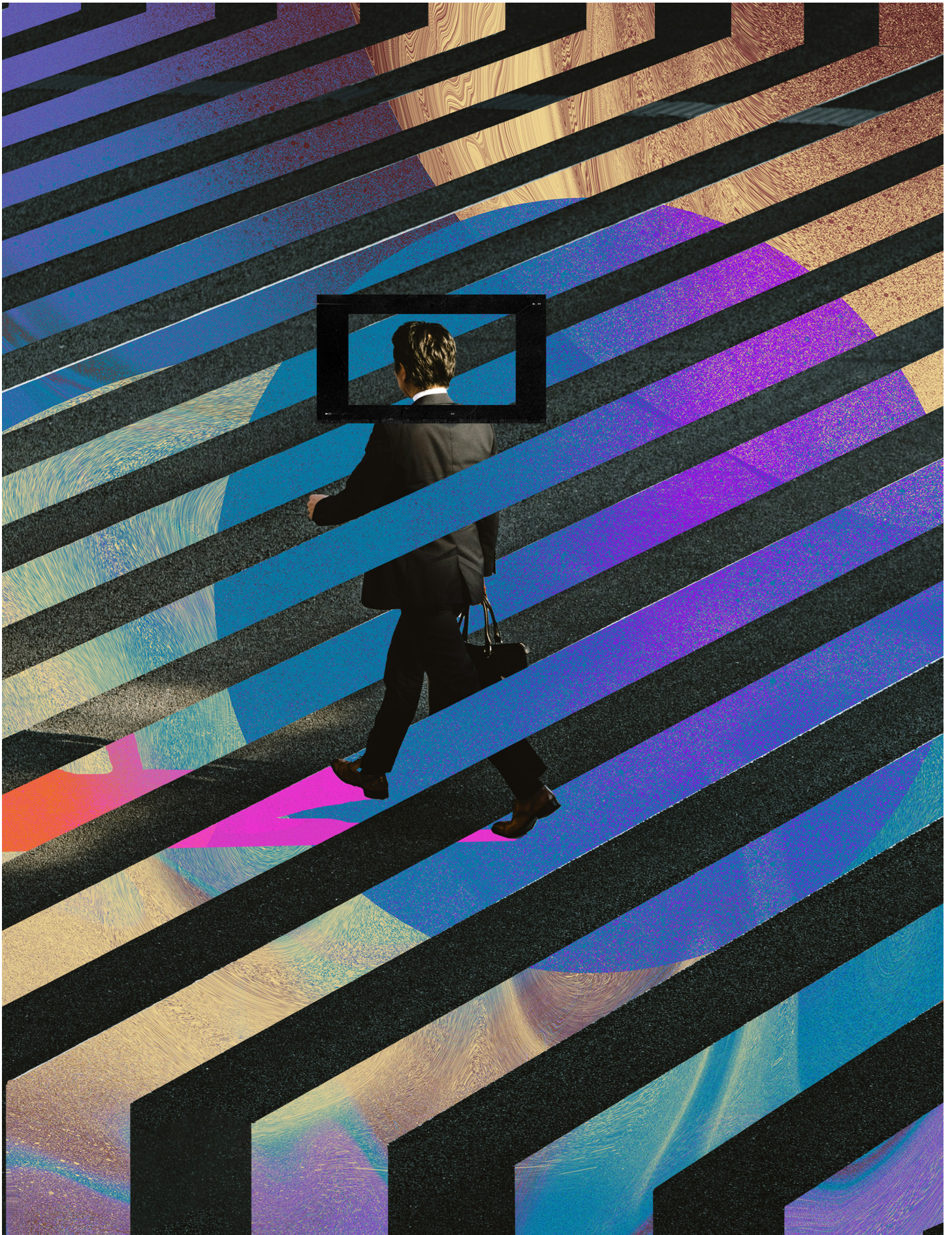


THE MOON TREES

Jakub Jamroz

Ink

15" x 15"



WILL YOU BE MY VALENTINE?

Ekaterina Dubravin

Maybe we can give Romeo and Juliet a happier ending maybe my mascara will run for the right reason this time and the heart-shaped bruises you leave won't leave my heart beaten and bruised maybe the scratches on your back won't be in desperation for you to stay.

Will you be my Valentine? You might have misunderstood me will you dance in the kitchen with me? And sing in the car, make my coffee in the morning, help me with my hair, help me around the house, help me with my homework.

Will you be the orchestra that plays for the ballet, the first snow, the ink that flows from my pen, the swirl of my coffee, the constellations at night, the words that swirl on a page taking me someplace else.

Will you be my Valentine?

Will you be the annotations in my books and proudly be my muse could I be your muse?

Will you be my Valentine?

Will you worship me at my knees like the Greek statues modeled? Will you become almost fictional in the same way Michelangelo's Lucifer was almost fictional? Will you?

ORDINARINESS TRAP

Aleksandr Tsurupa

Digital Photo Collage

16" x 24"

