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## A Resurgence

Calliope

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CALLIOPE LIH 2024  
A RESURGENCE

# CALLIOPE LIII 2024

A RESURGENCE

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Past editions of Calliope and more information about the magazine can be found online at [www.pacificcalliope.wordpress.com](http://www.pacificcalliope.wordpress.com).

A Resurgence, Calliope LIII  
Literary Arts Magazine  
University of the Pacific

## SPECIAL THANKS

To the staff for their hard work and commitment, and to everyone for submitting beautiful works. Special appreciation goes to Amber Flores and Nancy Wallen for their assistance with printing and the printing process. Additionally, heartfelt gratitude extends to Brad Le Du, alumni donors, generous supporters during Pacific Gives, and Dean Lee Skinner for the funding that made the reprinting of Calliope possible.

# HISTORY OF CALLIOPE

Calliope, pronounced Kuh-Lie-Oh-Pea, is named for the muse of heroic poetry in Greek mythology and is Pacific's student literary and visual arts journal. It is produced through the collaborative efforts of students from the Departments of English and of Art and Graphic Design under the mentorship of Professors Courtney Lehmann and Brett DeBoer.

Previous literary publications that served as an inspiration for Calliope were *The Pharos*, an annual published from 1893–1912, and *The Hieroglyph* from 1931–1933. The initial publication known as Calliope was first produced under the mentorship of English professor William Kollock, in the spring of 1970. It has featured original art, poetry, prose, fiction, and essays created by Pacific's students ever since those early days.

The cover of the first issue of Calliope is the only one that has not been illustrated with artwork produced by a Pacific student. It instead featured a copy of an illustration by Art Nouveau artist, Alphonse Mucha. Ever since the cover design has been original art created by a Pacific student reflecting a specific genre or theme. Since 2012, each cover has also paid homage to our namesake Calliope as muse. Calliope continues as a vehicle of self-expression and creativity for Pacific students, and each issue reflects the talent of the students who contribute to it.

Recent editions of Calliope have received national acclaim by winning an Apex Award for Publication Excellence. Calliope is kindly sponsored by the College of the Pacific and our generous Pacific alumni. Submissions are accepted year-round by the Calliope Team and we encourage everyone regardless of major or topic to submit their work for review.

This year's edition is the first since the 50th-anniversary edition was released digitally in 2020. It serves as a point of metamorphosis looking both to the future and past iterations of Calliope. As you read and view the following pages, all of us associated with past and present publications of Calliope hope that you are inspired to create and share those creations with the world. When you finish here we hope that you enjoy our previous editions at: <https://pacificalliope.wordpress.com>.

# LETTER FROM THE LITERARY EDITORS

It has been 4 years since our last edition. Calliope was briefly one of the many casualties of the pandemic, but where there is life, there is art, and at Pacific, where there is art, there is Calliope. And so, just like life, Calliope is reborn. A bit different from before, perhaps, smelling faintly of hand sanitizer and with the instinct to flinch at the sound of a cough, but with the same love, passion, and hope of bringing together creative and talented students from across the Stockton campus and giving them well-deserved attention.

To be handed the reins of Calliope's 50-year legacy has been an absolute honor, one we hope we've approached with the appropriate care and thinly veiled fear. Unlike past years, there is no strict theme to this year's edition. Instead, it is an amalgamation of all we've been through. It includes submissions received by the previous Calliope Team back in 2021 to submissions from the 2023–24 academic year. So we hope that in these pages, you feel two teams and four years' worth of frantic emails, empty wallets, and—most of all—love and determination. It is a testament to our refusal to back down. It is a symbol of our rebirth. We are proud to present to you our 51st edition, Calliope: A Resurgence.

We want to thank our writers and artists for bearing their souls to us, the design and literature teams for their patience and dedication, our advisors for their support, and the alumni who believed in us.

Finally, we would like to thank those who come after. For continuing to breathe life into this Pacific institution and for refusing to back down. Good luck, friends. We promise you someone has the Calliope email password. You're on your own with the Instagram account.

—Aidan Low and Namorrah Y. Ward

# LETTER FROM THE DESIGN EDITOR

It has been a privilege to be the Design Editor-in-Chief for Calliope LIII. Being over a year in the making, we are happy and excited to present to you our year's work "A Resurgence".

Designing this issue of Calliope proved a challenge as both teams took on the task of bringing Calliope back to print for the first time since COVID-19. After 4 years of dormancy, Calliope had no rapport, almost no funding, and teams that were not familiar with the typical structure. But with a passion for literature and art, we made it a goal to ensure that the Pacific community could enjoy art in their hands once again.

My design team was amazing in the process, learning with me as we figured out the workings of Calliope. This magazine would not be possible without them, it truly is their magazine. They showed spirit and dedication to this tradition and I know the magazine will be in good hands next year.

Thank you to Professor DeBoer for helping me through the process and teaching me about the tradition of Calliope, all that it was and all that it can be.

Since this is the first print edition since before the pandemic, both teams kept the idea of renewal in mind as we created this year's edition. Since none of us had been a part of a Calliope team, we had the unique opportunity to make it ours and put our style to it, helping set a new precedent going forward. I believe this year's edition echoes who we are as designers and I hope you see our voices in this edition.

—Felicity Andrews

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# ASD

MOLLY MOBLEY

## **Alexithymia.**

Before I had the language I felt like an alien among men.  
Can't conceptualize what exactly friendship is,  
Don't even know if I want to.  
Empathetic to the point of exhaustion,  
Following, fidgeting, fixating focus.  
God only knows why my  
Hands turn, twist and crack—or why  
I make off-putting faces in the mirror at night & talk too loud.  
Just maintaining eye contact to make you feel heard,  
Knowing that it makes me hear you less.  
Loving intensely things others find trivial,  
My passions should be noteworthy.  
Neurons interconnected, brain can't filter out a thing  
Oh how I wish you could spend a day in my mind.  
Pathological Demand Avoidance, Father calls me  
“Quitter”.  
Running from lashes at my skin that run soul-deep  
Subdue the pain of stimulation with  
THC &  
Unprotected sex.  
Virtually everything I do is wrong.  
Where's this unwritten rule book everyone has access to but me?  
Xeroxing the behaviors of others only does so much,  
You can't change what you are—The  
Zillionth reason to just accept it.



# The Farmer's Field

TRISTAN ALLEN

**The Farmer wiped sweat from his furled brow,**

As he stopped the swing of his mighty plow.

His field was large and expansive — a gift from the heavens some even say.

But had Demeter's blessing christened his glorious plot? Nay.

Yet, every day, The Farmer toiled and suffered under the boiling hot sun,

For a field he knew could not be undone.

Nothing could grow for nothing would take,

But — sure as the sun would rise — The Farmer stood there to bake.

He never complained, nor asked for any aid;

All those who tried were sentenced to the shade.

It was his torment, and he was content to serve,

For — come every Spring - he got what he deserved:

A few joyous days he got as reward from the fruitless field;

A few precious moments with his daughter were his yield.

He would smile and sit, planted firmly to the ground

So that nothing else — save for his daughter — could surround.

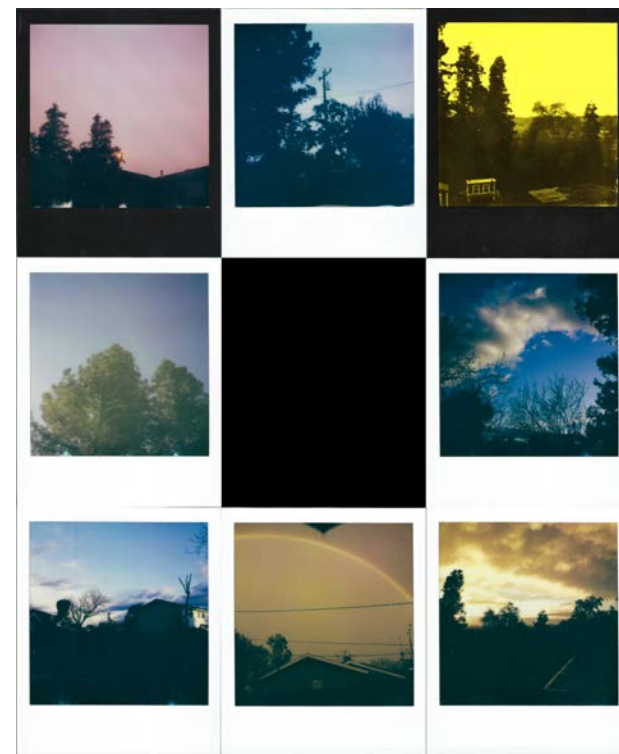


# The Seasons

BRIANNA LUI

# Billings

KAYLEIGH WOODWARD



# Surroundings

RYAN FLESHER

# A First Generation Goodbye

MADIE NEELY

“See you tomorrow”  
quickly turned into  
“see you next month,”  
and before I knew it,  
“see you next month”  
began to sound like  
“see you next year.”

Will it ever stop, I wonder? Will this  
separation ever come to an end, or will it  
continue until I say my final goodbye?

I want to make *you* proud. To see you  
smile at me through the screen. For you  
to speak about me to our family  
over dinner.

I want to make *everyone* proud. To take  
the path not traveled before. To break  
the narrative that is tied to us.

I want to make *myself* proud. To wear my  
graduation gown and smile as I hold up

my degree. To prove to myself that  
I could become the exception.

But saying goodbye never gets easier.  
And every time I come back, the  
separation grows larger. Not just in  
distance, but in something else profound.

I wish I could share it with you and give  
you half of what you spent your life  
giving me. I wish I could bottle it up and  
let you feel the journey I’ve been on.

But I will continue to say goodbye.  
I will continue until I have lived a life  
that is rich enough for the both of us.  
I will continue until I have honored  
your sacrifices. I will continue until...

“see you next year”  
starts to sound like  
“I’ll see you soon, I’m on my way home.”



## Women in History Ceramic Dishware

ALICIA VAN DE BOR



ELISABETH GARNER

**Off in the corner of a canvas,**  
 We see a falling boy.  
 His name well known to the masses;  
 A tragedy, unfortunate and coy.

Yet from this scene we know  
 How fast a young life can go;  
 Fleeting, though it may be,  
 There is no feeling like that of  
 being free.

To take a chance, to soar to Heaven  
 To grace the foot of God.  
 And find a spiritual leaven  
 In the subtlety of his gracious nod.

Yet, let this tale to you be  
 A story viewed cautionarily:  
 The young of body and of heart  
 Have oft to let their mind depart,  
 When pride and pleasure come between  
 Their natural, progressional routine.

But of this, I'm sure, you've known  
 yet done.

You've climbed too high —  
 descent's begun.

So, go on my wintry daughter,  
 And fight on my weary, war-born son.

For soon, you'll see the fast  
 approaching water.

# Icarus

TRISTAN ALLEN

# Eros

ABIGAIL LUELLA  
LANDERS

**The world is happening in a room** that  
I cannot enter,  
life is happening in a gathering I am not  
invited to.  
In the afterglow of an evening storm,  
I will lie down in the wet grass  
and think of what could have been  
of you.

I have choked on longing and warnings,  
I can't spit it out.  
You bore me hungry  
with a desire so distinct.  
Natural, beating, tender, alive —  
my body aches with  
unknowing nostalgia.

Corruption begins in the mouth,  
desire can make anything into a god.  
You are not the one,  
but I am so cold  
and your fire remains.  
To silently burn with desire is perhaps  
the greatest punishment of all.

My Love,  
I will always be this tender for you.



# Tunnel to Home

ANNA NOTO

## Fifteen years old

In the suicide-truck, the woman asks me what my name is. Do you have a middle name?

The suicide-truck is rushing from the San Francisco museum, they have confiscated my Tennyson, my love.

I tell her my middle name the sirens are not on, it is not an emergency, they said. People move anyway.

That's so beautiful, she tells me, is it your grandmother's name? It is not Spanish, it is not her name. The woman chuckles when I tell her that

the name is Romanized from the Hebrew. Meaning, "pleasant." Call me Mara, for I am bitter. We arrive.

The woman eases me out of the red suicide-truck, chuckles again.

I did not know etymology was funny. She tells the doctors I talk the mouth off a parrot.

If I had known that to know one's name was to be cured, would I not have started years ago?

# Noemi

LILIANA LOPEZ



### I met the Devil in June

when he made my heart his home.  
He cut me open,  
a cold rain flushing my sins  
neatly laying my organs on the  
sterile pavement.

I will remember his lessons on malice  
in place of comfort.

He gives frivolous apologies  
that I accepted as if the words themselves were gold.

Made into a hierophant for he who  
never fails  
never wavers  
never lies

A stream of gilded tears,  
I prayed to the Devil for forgiveness and built a shrine for him alone —  
how could I pray to another when he is all I know?

## The Devil Taught Me His Language and Revolted When I Spoke Fluently

ABIGAIL LUELLA LANDERS

### Satanás (Satan)

PAOLA  
BALTAZAR  
SALCEDO



### Se te metió el Diablo (The devil is in you)

PAOLA  
BALTAZAR  
SALCEDO

# My Rage is not Fire

ISABEL ACEVEDO

## **My rage is cold water**

At the slightest touch of your skin  
It raises every hair  
Sending shock throughout your body

It comes in waves  
At the force of an ocean  
It knocks you backwards  
Refusing to let you regain your balance

It seems never ending,  
Stretching for thousands of miles  
Threatening to pull you under  
When you thought you could swim in it

It sits and waits  
For the day you decide to turn on the stove  
So that it can boil over  
Leaving you to clean up the mess you've made



# Occlusion

KAYLEIGH WOODWARD





KEVIN CASTRO REYES

# Honey and Labor

MATTHEW FORD

**Mary's arms ached as she continued to wash clothes against** the washboard. She would have stopped and rested, taking a minute to feel the cool breeze against her cheeks, to hear the whistling wind cut through the forest trees that surrounded the farm, but there was little time to rest. Her father went to the village to sell a goat, while her sister was sick again. It left Mary to do all the chores around the house.

Her father would often be absent on such days, seeking employment in the village or selling their belongings to wealthier individuals. Mary frowned her brow when she remembered the many times they have had to resort to borderline groveling at the feet of better-off neighbors. It put a pit in her stomach and a wound in her pride. But they needed to eat, and Abigail needed medicine. So, she didn't protest when her father left with their last goat this morning.

Her stomach growled as she finished up her clothes and moved on to Abigail's. She'll wash them all up in the barrel of soap and water, then hand them to dry. Then she'll tend to the remaining plants, clean the kitchen, check on Abigail, repair the door, and maybe eat something.

She's made a habit of skipping meals, promising her father to have some later in the day. Though she rarely did. She couldn't eat

in front of Abigail, who had grown so thin and weak. It has never been this bad. Mary sneaked her breakfast to Abigail when her father was out. Abigail always protested, but Mary put her down and forced the food on her. Today will be the same, Mary thought. Maybe she'll have an apple that hasn't rotted yet.

The sound of gentle footsteps interrupted her thoughts. Mary stopped her washing and looked up to find her biggest woe: Josephine.

She stood a good ten feet away from where Mary sat in front of her house, carrying a basket. The smell of bread hit Mary like a bullet. Her stomach growled, and she lost her mind in memories. The smell of the bakery Josephine's family ran, the creaking of a door at night, and the warmth of Josephine's body against hers. It rushed back like a great flood. She wanted to be away from her, to let those memories fade with time. But it seems it would be difficult now.

"Have you broken fast, Mary?" Josephine asked, reaching into her basket, and preparing to give her some bread. Mary raised her soap-soaked hand to stop her.

"I already have, Josephine," she said with a forced, plain expression. She wanted to hide from her, hide from those thoughts that corrupted her mind and dreams. This woman, this witch of her conscious, Mary thought. Josephine looked at her with an inquisitive squint, as if analyzing her to check for lies. Mary shifted on the bench under the gaze as silence deafened their conversation.

Then a loud roar from her stomach snuffed it.

Josephine smiled and walked over and handed her a piece of bread. "Eat, woman. I won't have you starving while you slave away on chores." Mary tried to refuse again, but Josephine gave her

a glare that could tame a beast. So, she wiped her hands dry with a towel and took the bread. It was lathered in butter and honey and was thick. Her stomach begged her to eat, and so she did. Shoving the bread down her gullet like it would disappear in her hands any second.

Then she heard a beautiful noise. One that made her lightheaded. It was as if the sound was curated for her. She looked at the source to find Josephine laughing. It wasn't like how Mary laughed. Mary thought her laugh was ordinary, maybe a little low, like her voice, for a woman.

But Josephine's laugh was like sympathy. It jumped and played in beautiful harmony. Her world became Josephine. Every inch of Josephine and every noise she made captured Mary's utmost attention. Yes, yes, thought Mary, a witch indeed. And she was her victim through and through.

"You should slow before you choke, Mary," the angelic voice said. Mary was still recovering from her laugh and swallowed a piece of bread she forgot she was chewing. Josephine sat next to her and placed her basket on the ground. God, she smelled like bread and honey, Mary observed. She always smelled like bread and honey.

"You're at fault for making great bread," Mary responded between her large bites. There was that laughter again. Mary managed to hold herself together this time.

"This batch was from my brother's. I've...been busy." Mary raised her eyebrow at that. It wasn't like Josephine to be vague. Mary also noticed how tense she suddenly looked. She avoided Mary's gaze; She started to fidget a little. All that warm confidence before was dead.

“Busy with what?” Mary asked bluntly. Josephine smiled, looking down at her lap.

“Always forward. I’ve always loved that about you,” Josephine gave a somber smile. Mary felt hot suddenly. “I...need your help. You can’t tell anyone,”

Mary was more baffled than ever. They told each other everything. The plain and the ordinary to the hidden and scandalous. They shared an unspoken oath of secrecy; They only trusted each other with secrets such as these. With others, they risked public scorn and the wrath of the church. They were both good faithful people, believing in the book and its divine mandate. But they understood God created them imperfect. That night at the bakery proved that.

Mary silently scorned herself for thinking of it. She swore she wouldn’t. That night plagued her greatly. She didn’t wish it to, but it did. They have sinned and they haven’t talked about it since. But ever since that night, when she struggled to sleep and stay warm, she wished. And the worst of it was she knew why. She knew why her bed felt so cold and empty. And it was the woman in front of her now.

“I promise, Josephine. Like Always,” Mary said. But Josephine didn’t look convinced. She stood up and pointed dramatically at Mary.

“I am more serious than ever. I need you right now, Mary. I need you to swear on your heart,”

Mary’s heart felt like it was going to rip out of her. To swear on your heart was a divine promise. One, which when broken, risked the soul being torn. For so the Book says. She knew if she

accepted, if she swore on her soul, there was no getting away. They would be tied to each other by oath. She could refuse, but Mary dismissed the idea. She couldn’t do that to her. To leave her alone with whatever was troubling her, with whatever she found. Mary’s heart couldn’t bear that, but this she could. She convinced herself that it would continue this way. And her soul could be saved by the church.

“I swear on my heart, lest my soul be torn from it,” Mary swore while drawing an X on her chest with her finger.

\*\*\*\*

She left her house at noon a day later. Her father successfully sold the goat and got some ointment for her sister. For whom, the illness still hasn’t lamented. She applied the ointment to her sister’s chest, which has grown paler and paler as the days go by. This illness was a tough fighter, sticking around despite bed rest and medicine, but Mary knew her sister was tougher, stronger than any illness of plague. She’ll be fine. She must be.

Mary rose the next day earlier than usual. She planned to finish up all her chores before leaving to meet up with Josephine. A part of her jumped with joy like in a summer solstice dance, while the other felt the clerical guilt in reaction to it. She tried to hide what was going on, that the spirit of energy rushing through her, that excitement which made her sprint through her chores like a whirlwind, was completely unrelated to Josephine.

She lied to her father. Another sin on top of sins that she will repent for. Her father was a simple man with a soft spot for his daughters. He always held a soft gaze when he looked upon them and held them close with a bear grip when he missed them.

He was giant of a man with a good two heads taller than Mary with Abigail only reaching to his hip. He had to duck his head when he entered the house and was constantly hitting his head on things throughout the house.

“Agh!” Her father screamed after he smacked his head on the top part of the doorframe. He had just finished up some yard work, and Mary was finishing up clearing the pyre from the hearth. Mary scolded her father for being clumsy. He smiled sheepishly and rubbed the back of his head.

Mary then got up from the hearth and flattened her dress out. It did little to make it any more pleasant. It had some ash left from the hearth, some sticky spots of honey from the bread yesterday, and the many years of yard work: dirt stains where her knees are and grassy green stains at the edge of her skirt. She always tried to ignore, that’s all she ever does, the shame her father had when he saw his daughters filthy with sweat and stains. He used to object to Mary, finding the idea of her working a man’s job repulsive. But their mother just died, and the labor and work had amounted too much for only him. But he still looked upon them with the same shame as he always had.

She opened her mouth to speak, but it was silenced by the creaking of the stairs. She turned quickly around to see Abigail, pale and wrapped in a blanket, slowly walking down the steps. She and her father were silent. They watched the frail girl stare at the grown as if she was afraid of missing a step. Mary forced herself out of her stupor.

“Abigail! What are you doing? You should be resting. Are you feeling alright?” Mary said rapidly. Abigail didn’t even raise her head as she made her way to the final step.

“I heard Dad hit his head. I wanted to see if he was okay,” Abigail squeaked out. Her voice was raspy and light. It sounded painful to talk. Mary looked at her father and saw his eyes get soft. He walked over and lowered to one knee in front of her sister.

“Yes, Honey. Dad’s okay. I just hit my head again. You know how clumsy your dad can get,” Her father spoke softly and with an easy smile. Her sister gave a frown.

“You should be careful. You’re too big for houses,” Abigail said.

“That’s what I was saying. But Abigail, you need bed rest.” Mary said.

“Yes, that should be for the best,” her father huffed. He wrapped his burly arms around Abigail and picked her up. He carried her upstairs before Abigail could object. Abigail watched them from the bottom of the stairs. And she waited there until her father walked back down.

“How is she? We haven’t seen her leave her bed in months,” She asked as she followed her father outside. He was making his way to their small shack where he kept their rusting tools.

“She’s looking better, much better, in fact,” Her father said. He sounded hopeful, it was an upbeat tone that Mary hadn’t heard from her father in years.

Mary saw the opportunity and jumped on it.

“God be praised! That ointment you brought yesterday must have really worked. I knew that goat was good for something!” She walked to her father’s side and could see his smile. “Father, I finished up my chores and wanted to ask if I may take my leave to town. Abigail wanted to see me,”

Her father looked at her with a smile still on his face. “I’ll allow it. I saw your work done when I got from the field,” Mary hugged her father tightly and thanked him.

\*\*\*\*

She knew she was in town before she saw the town itself. The dirt road turned into cobblestoned paths. She could hear yelling and horses clapping against the stone. When she made it around a great bend, the town came into view. It was the biggest town in the local area. Though, if she were to believe the old stories, there used to be larger towns. Ones that filled with giant buildings that pierced the heavens. Mary thought the idea was a little silly and didn’t take much credence to it.

She walked through the large gates and made her way to the market. Dozens of people were walking around, some breezing by the vendors, while others stopping and looking. She began making her way through the crowd, stopping, and turning when needed. She made her way through the eddies of people looking at the shops. Eventually, she made her way to Joesphine’s family’s bakery. It was a decently sized establishment with a nice, custom-made sign of bread in front of it.

She walked in and was greeted by Mrs. Job, Joesphine’s mom. She was a small and plump woman with the energy of fox. Mary watched Mrs. Job walk around the counter, cross the store, and bear hug in quick succession.

“Oh, how nice to see you again! God be praised and take him with you!” Mrs. Job shouted. Mary felt her lungs being deflated from the hug. “I’ll tell Joesphine you’re here.” The older woman finally let go, and Mary tried her best to hide the large breath that

she had to take. She watched, as she caught her breath, Mrs. Job go up some stairs from behind the counter.

When Mrs. Job came back, she was by herself. She was still all smiles and full of energy as she ever was. “She’s getting ready dear. She just finished up a batch for a special order and wanted to clean up,”

Mary nodded and looked around the shop. It was clean and had the smell of honey like Joesphine. A variety of bread was in the shop, as well as flower and sugar bags. It was a baker’s heaven, the type that the good Lord would send someone like Mrs. Job. Mary felt a sense of doom hit her. She wasn’t like Mrs. Job at all. The older woman had a husband and children by her age. But she hasn’t given any man the sight of day. She felt a bitter resentment towards Mrs. Job growing within her like a parasite. And she felt equal shame of having such thoughts towards the jovial woman.

Her thoughts were interrupted when she saw Joesphine stick her head out from the doorway and waved her over to follow her up. She did obediently. When she made it up to Joesphine’s room, she noticed how unusually clean it all was. Joesphine always kept herself clean, but her room always seemed to have a growth of uncleanness. It was quite contradictory to Joesphine’s personability. But Mary found it cute and quirky of the woman, and so never commented on it. But now it was clean, and very unlike Joesphine. It was if she tried to remove any sense of herself from the room.

“I see you cleaned,” Mary finally said. Joesphine gave a light hum and closed a drawer. She asked Mary to close the door behind her and she did. She finally turned around and looked nervous.

“Are you ready?” She asked.

“For what? Mary responded.

“Just don’t freak out okay?” Joesphine said as she pulled something slim from under her mattress. Mary felt anxious as she watched Joesphine slowly hand over what looked like a book. But it wasn’t any ordinary book. This book was slim and wide and had incredible drawings on the cover. In fact, it was like it was from real life. It had two women holding each other on it. She opened it and saw more of these pictures that looked like life. It was more woman, covered in less and less clothing. It was making Mary hot, like when she was with Joesphine.

She finally landed on one picture. This picture had two women laying together like husband and wife. Flashes of that night came flooding back, the night on the same bed that was in the room. She started shaking and felt her eyes watering. She heard her name being called but couldn’t tear her eyes from the pictures. She dropped the book and ran out. She made her way down the stairs, through the store and out the side door. She walked out into the sunny day and made her way through an apple garden.

She could hear hurried footsteps from behind her and knew already who it was.

“You set a fire in me.” She heard her say.

“You will be set to flames on the pyre if we do not stop.”

“I’d suffer a thousand heats of the flame, if it meant to feel your warmth again.”

“This is sickness! A blight on the mind. We must not indulge in our afflictions.”

“No, no. Sickness makes you weak. It creates bloches on the skin and makes your lungs bleed. This,” She grabbed her hand and made her face her. Flashes of her sick sister flashed in her mind. “This makes me strong, makes me alive, Mary. You are not part of my sickness; You are my fountain of youth. Nothing has felt more real than this. Why do you push me away? It is as if I am sick when you do so.”

“For our safety!” Mary pulls her hand away, ignoring how her hand felt cold when away from her cheek. “We will be flogged at best, and burned at worst. We can not risk that.

“So, it is not because you do not feel as I feel?”

Mary walks and grabs onto her dress. Only a few inches separate there bodies, but Mary felt it was too wide a gap.

“I feel everything you feel.” Mary says, not looking at her in the eye, just staring at the collarbone that she once laid on. She shook her head at the memories and tears began to drown her eyes.

“When you are hurt, when you are happy, I feel it. When you laugh, my ears sing enjoyment. Oh, look what you have done to me. What you continue to do to me,”

Josephine placed her hands on both Mary’s cheeks and cupped her face to look at her.

“Then we do share our sickness, my love.”

Josephine kissed her then, under the protective shade of the apple tree.





# Fading Days

RYAN FLESHER

# Gone Fishing

MIKAELA PICONE

**The air and water was as cold as can be**

No one was there but you and me  
The sight of the fishing line bobbing up and down  
You just smiled and there was never a frown

Sitting on hard rocks with our fishing lines  
You never complained about my bored whines  
Sitting there for hours until we caught a bite  
Sometimes we caught nothing, or a fish would put up a fight

The bond we had was as strong as that fishing line  
With the laughter we shared I knew everything would be fine  
When I heard the news that you were sick all I could do was cry  
Eventually, I was okay even knowing you were going to die

To know that you would not be in pain  
And the time spent together was never in vain  
Knowing that you are gone it hurts my heart  
But I know through love we are never apart

Now you're fishing in those clouds up high  
When I miss you I now look to the sky

I remember those days when I would ask what you did that day

You would say, "I had gone fishing today"

That's a memory constantly, I re-play

# Warm

BRITTANY LUSK

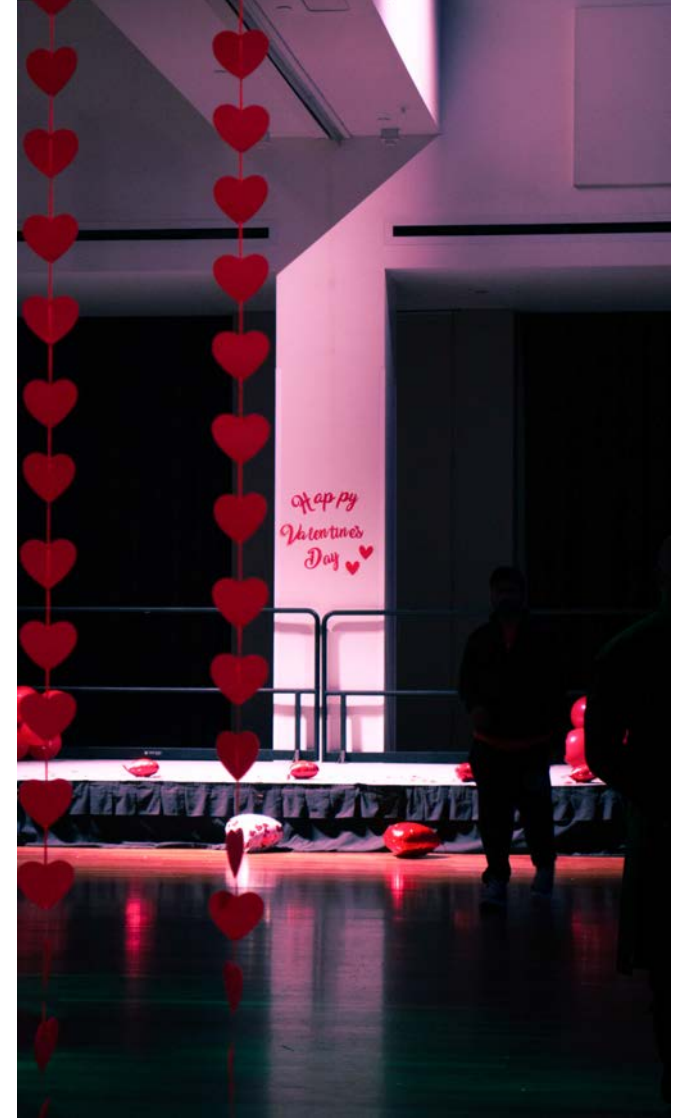
Orchestra's beep,  
rhythmic

Steadily.

Sleep look at us,

Retract your warm,  
firm, but gentle fire.  
I can tell that look in your eyes,  
with a resigned sigh.  
"I Love You

Forever and Always"



# Cupid's Arrow Broke

KAYLA AMARILLAS



# Waves

BRITTANY LUSK

I shut my eyes,

the wind pulls me away.

I am there.

The blue water,

between my toes.

I look at you.

The setting sun,

kissing you with my emotions.

I touch your chest,

same as usual.

Here,

It's different.

The waves mixed with your smile.

The sun,

burning our skins.

You thrive here,

so do I.

Like a copy,

I let the waves carry my soul

away.

There,

I remember the colors the  
setting sun displayed.

Your face,

mixed with warm colors still.

Here,

I see and feel it.

Cold water,

humid air.

Our laughter

Intertwining with memories.



JORGE ENRIQUEZ



KEVIN CASTRO REYES

# Out, at Sea

TRISTAN ALLEN

**In my boat on the sea all alone,**  
I long for the sight of some semblance of home.  
But each day as I drift farther from shore  
My longing leaves me wanting more.

I could not say if, perchance, I might  
I'll be alive to see the moon tonight.  
So, in times like these I hope and pray  
For the sights and sounds of some other day  
To find me rocking to and fro  
And take me to that place I know.

But, then again, there is always hope  
Found in the shape of halyard rope  
That sits so fondly at my feet  
It soon may find my neck to meet.

Yet trust, I have, within my mind  
That some solution I may find,  
Will save me from the depths of sorrow  
That I might see the light of 'morrow.

Alas, I should be getting up now  
For the waves do crash against my bow  
So that my skiff does rock and shake  
And bring about a hearty ache.

If only fate were kind to me,  
Then out, at sea I would not be  
To give to you this keen advice  
That came to me not more precise:  
There is no home for man at sea,

If he, but boy, and man to be.

# Macabre

JULIANA JACKSON

## **The craziest thing about the museum of death**

On Hollywood Boulevard  
Is the photoshoot hipsters have in front  
of the building

Like a propped up artsy skull poster cut  
out can make me  
forget all the ones  
That were bashed in

Like it wasn't the only piece left  
When the devil massacred these bodies  
For a hearty meal of devouring  
the innocent

## **The craziest thing about the museum of death**

Is that people want to see all the bloody  
images  
Of sprawled bodies  
left like litter of the earth  
soakin' up by madness,  
Rage, and evil

Discarded like used tissue  
Like ants killed by a big, young  
Psychopath with a magnifying glass  
And too much free time  
And not enough discipline

## **The craziest thing about the museum of death**

Is that the Manson family quilt  
Hangs against the wall  
But not behind glass

So if you wanted to  
You could touch the fibers,  
Seams of injustice and inhumane  
hands

It took me all of three  
seconds  
To realize there is  
no  
glass

Because

No one wants to touch it  
To begin with

# Hello, This Is

VICTORIA  
STEVENS

*Hello, this is...*

What are the rights offered to the  
Citizens? Are they many?  
Are they few?  
*We have more freedom than  
The rest of the world, though.*  
Is that even true? Is that what people  
Believe? What of the autonomy  
Of women? Those that are slowly,  
Yet quickly being stripped of their  
Choices in mind, body, and soul.  
What of people's right to adequate  
Healthcare? Why must it be so  
Expensive to receive the simplest  
Of care? How about the right of  
The natural world to exist? Or will It  
continuously be cut down, trampled on,  
To create more housing that so many  
Cannot afford? Even further, how  
Are you capable of showcasing yourself As

a victor as you try to hide your shadowed  
Truth? The people you enslaved,  
Indentured, beat, raped, killed, *used*.  
Natives,  
Africans,  
Filipinos,  
Vietnamese,  
Mexicans,  
Chinese,  
Japanese,  
And the list goes on and on. How  
can you exist, this country that  
*Insures* and *strives* for "domestic  
Tranquility," fail at its original job.  
Do you see this as peace?  
Do you think this your beloved  
Liberty?  
Is this your idea of prosperous?  
This promised land you painted  
Only exists for some. It has only  
Ever existed for some.  
Hello, this is America.  
A stolen land  
Built on lies and half-truths. Try  
not to overstay your welcome.



JORGE ENRIQUEZ

**The Blue Collared Shirt- died in**

2015, along with dark green trousers,  
heavy brown boots, white undershirt,  
re- sewn socks. They left, not with a  
wail or bang or words left unsaid, but  
with the quiet hissing sound of a  
breathing mask. While he wasn't in  
the clothes when he died- a polka-dot  
hospital gown was the fashion- he  
wore them to the hospital. I wonder  
where the clothes and his favorite  
blue collared shirt went? I wonder  
what the funeral home thought about  
him being buried in the same, well-  
worn, clothes? They buried him with  
the bang of several rifle shots, a  
folded flag, and a family split  
between acceptance and denial- not  
of his death, but the military  
reminder.

# OBIT

## [The Blue Shirt & The little Man]

VICTORIA STEVENS

# car crash

ISABEL ACEVEDO

**car crash**

i wake up from a dream  
of a trip to the city  
with the people i love  
and music blaring from the speakers

to

a nightmare  
of broken glass & blood  
with frantic pleas for help  
and repeated apologies

for

what had happened  
and what had not  
then waking up  
when I should have kept sleeping



# Sacrifice

KAYLEIGH WOODWARD

# Just a Drill

VICTORIA STEVENS

## *Just a Drill*

Lights off.  
Stay quiet.  
Go to the nearest room.  
Don't say a word.

Lock the doors.  
Close the windows.  
Silence all phones.  
Don't utter a word.

Steps in the hallways, Ricochet in our minds. Breaths held.  
Don't make a sound.

It's okay,  
It's just a drill,  
Don't be scared.  
Don't ask questions.

Keys in the lock,  
The door pulls open. Close your eyes,  
Don't be heard.



# My Sister's Boyfriend

JULIANA JACKSON

## My sisters boyfriend looks pretty

ordinary Like he wears the same untied  
shoes everyday Like he only kissed  
innocently  
Like he's never held a gun

My sister thinks she's grown Cause she  
votes

Drives everyone everywhere Has a job  
and a resume

And  
Has a boyfriend

I am 4 months older than her

She is my sister

But she is a kindergartener

When she comes home crying

Because she thinks she ran over  
a squirrel

that poor little squirrel's family

And she builds the worlds tiniest casket

With little broken hearts on the side

And I wonder why someone with a heart

that fragile Wants love

Perhaps I will never understand

As I am

Someone who builds an armor to  
protect what can be broken

Maybe I will never understand

Maybe I will never be a casket girl

Maybe death is worth more than not  
living at all

My sisters boyfriend laughs

like he doesn't know what caskets are

But listens like he's open to learning

If it makes my sister feel like she will  
never need one



# Escape

ANNA NOTO



# My home

EMMA GARBER

**A long ranch style house stands proud and relaxed**

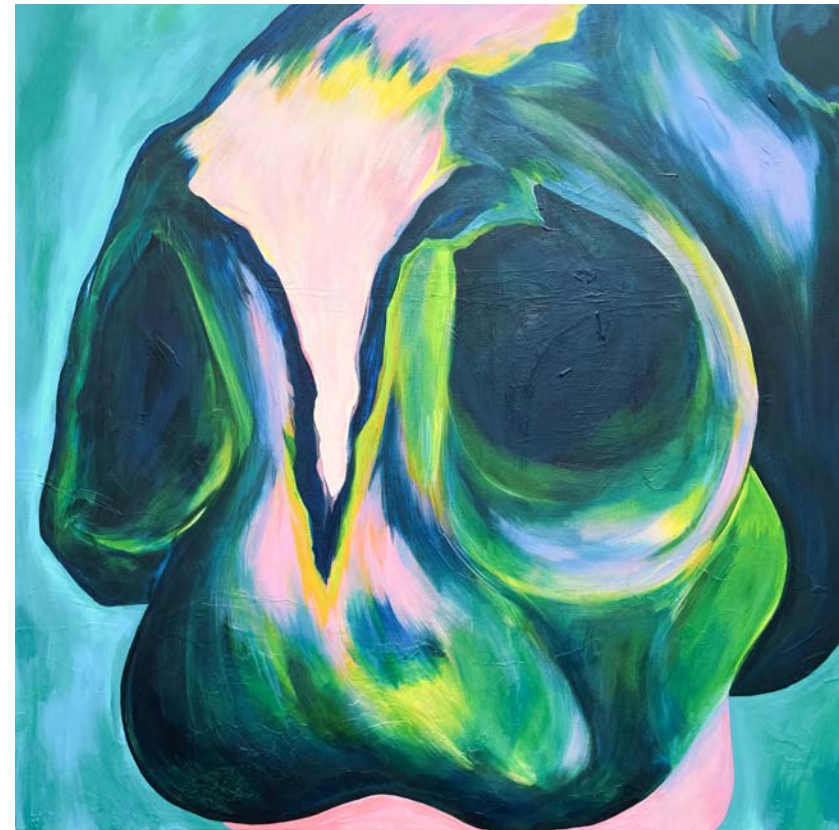
Hand painted dark gray

Hand placed stone the color of earwax

If I pulled the soul from this place, what would it weigh?

# The Velvet Between the Nostrils

KAYLEIGH WOODWARD



**All of life might as well be blurred**

People walking in and out

Of - from - to

A thousand busy lit up places.

Here they walk double time

past this room

Pregnant mother comes in, family

goes out

Broken arm comes in, cast goes out

Old man comes in,

Beaten and battered by the onslaught of years

and a breath walks out with the last rattle of the body

And his soul is left to pick up the pace

double time

# View by night from my window, Roosevelt Hospital, NYC

EMMA GARBER

# Midtown's North Star

ANNA NOTO



JORGE ENRIQUEZ

# Bluebird

MATTIAS LOPEZ

## Isolating a thought

For the sake of a pleasurable think  
forgetting the purpose misplaced  
by the huddled tents  
lining the shores of public  
property banks

Whimpering sounds  
bracing the compounded trust in  
the tired  
bombardment of waves  
that come racing in my soul  
as this growth and swelling of power  
rush towards the Bay

Eerie glow. A luster! Oh my!  
Bleaching my digital prints as I circulate  
my way back  
to the moment where I saw my  
past's reflection  
in your aiming for escaping eyes

Each culled and selectively  
herded and guided  
Ü doubt, is this really the vibe?  
And you shout, is this really my life!?  
As you slip back in paralyzed sleep  
to remain in your primordial state  
washing your face of hidden fear and  
broken agate

The key was offered  
Tithe, title, collapse, wonder  
Consuming grapes that taste of  
acidic fate  
Tepid wind passes  
Goosebumps growl at the  
circumstance's gate  
behind and founded in a small  
Cage trapped  
lights echo, reverberate, alert  
you awake

awake, I am  
i am, here  
free but still moving out  
finally out and learning what it means  
To be free

Can my freedom predicate upon  
dreaming what it will take to set you  
free, too  
Ur, rather knowing now I will be there  
for you, too

# Before the Eternal Worm Devours Appalachia

ABIGAIL LUELLA LANDERS

**At times, I think I need a stronger**

Backbone. The first time I spotted a  
Coyote wandering the misted walk, I mistook it for a stray  
Dog. Deft and delicate like  
Every lost thing, I wanted to bring it home. Always too  
Forgetful, my claws rarely sheathed—I hate driving by the  
Grinning sign that promises He will save me from  
Hell. Half haphazard.

In the image of uncandid taxidermies

Jabbered conjurings of afternoons

Kicking rocks in the tall grass, the neighbors

Leaning out screen doors to call in their hounds.

Macabre newspaper cuttings that amount to

Nothing.

Odd omniscience.

Pressed citrus lap wooden floorboards on clean August nights. The Sun dips without

Quarrel behind tides. Quickly

Retreating to the porch,

Someone shuts their blinds as the Moon

Tests doorknobs.

Undomesticated creatures find weak spots in my

Vertebrae. Buckling under any appeal to nostalgia I

Wonder if my bones would show up crooked under an

X-ray. Somewhere in the yard, the strays are

Yawning with jaws unhinged—steady fangs down unpaved trails,

Zip codes trailing at their heels.



# Tuya

KAYLEIGH WOODWARD



# East of the Sun









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