



Sampler XIX

Student Art & Writing

Aquinas College

Spring 2007





Sampler Nineteen

A compilation of writing and visual art by Aquinas College students (Grand Rapids, Michigan), spring 2007.

Contributors

Artists

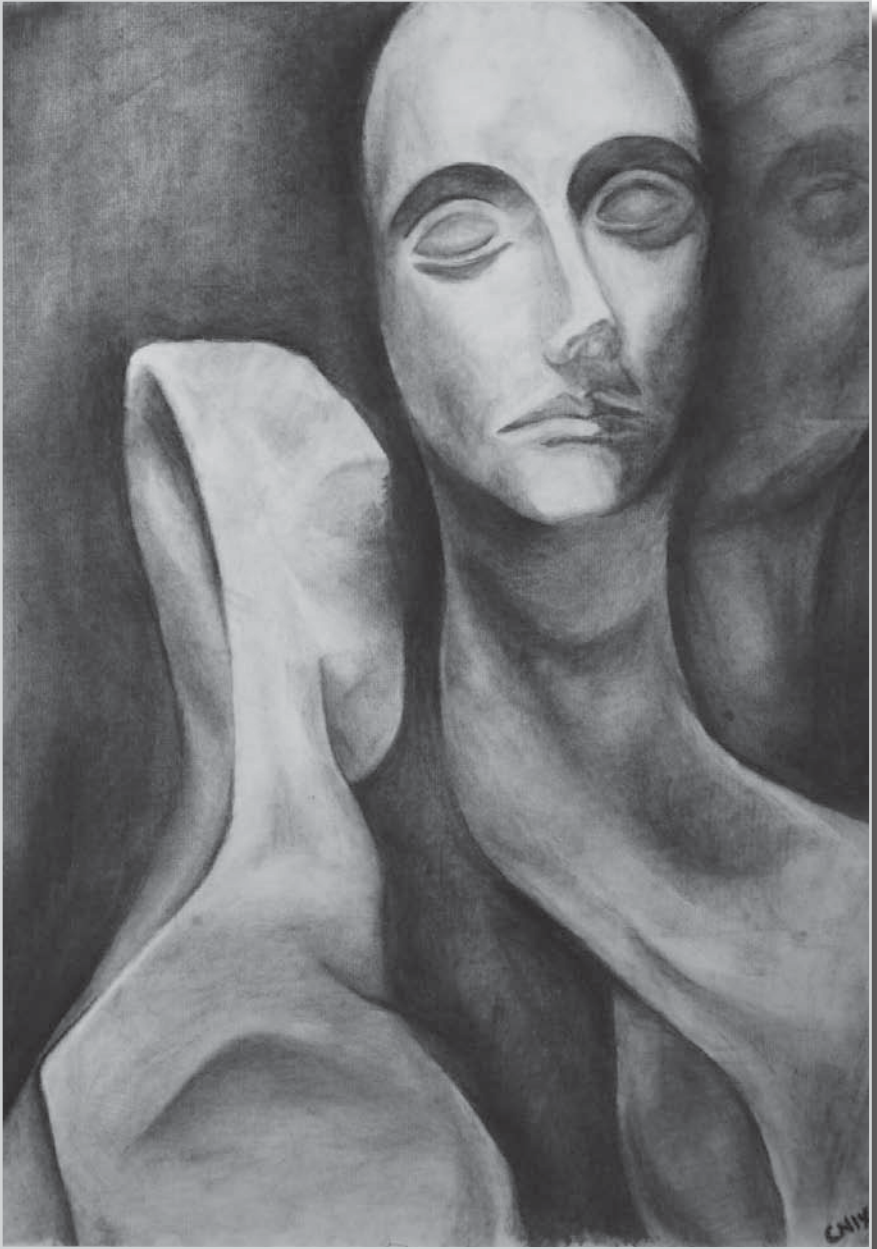
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Acknowledgments

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Funding Admissions, Student Senate



DISCOVERING – Charcoal
Chelsea Nix, Freshman

Single at the Drive-In

The hawk makes one more long, slow swoop
above my head, silent and sleek, before landing
on the tall wooden frame—
a white canvas against the sinking sun—
and rustling his feathers back into place.
I stare at him from my own perch, stare
across the abandoned playground,
the teeter-totter, merry-go-round, cement jungle-gym,
hyphenated toys outlawed almost everywhere but here.
I am staring and clutching a cold bucket of popcorn
purchased from the ancient stand,
all cracked bricks and peeling paint,
older than the playground,
and far, far older than me.
I fidget against the hard metal hood
of a 1989 Mercury Grand Marquis,
windshield wipers branding my back,
feet sticking awkwardly out over the grill,
watching my fingers shift the spectrum from red to blue.
My neighbors, coupled, are expertly providing their own warmth.
But in providing they are distracted,
and so I am the only one who sees the stars appear,
paired in swirling groups of constellations,
and the only one who sees them disappear
in the flicking brightness of a late-night classic.

WINNING POEM OF THE ACADEMY OF AMERICAN POETS
UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE POETRY PRIZE

"Single at the Drive-In" by Monica Walen, Senior

The Academy of American Poets, founded in 1934, supports American poets at all stages of their careers and fosters an appreciation for American poetry.

The annual prizes for university and college students are funded by alumni interested in encouraging young writers. We are grateful to Aquinas alumni Dr. Tony Foster and Linda Nemece Foster for making the prize available for Aquinas College students.

Final judge Phillip Sterling's most recent collection is the chapbook-length series of poems titled *Quatrains* (Pudding House 2006). He is also the author of *Significant Others* (Main Street Rag 2005) and *Mutual Shores* (New Issues 2000), and the editor of *Imported Breads: Literature of Cultural Exchange* (Mammoth 2003). Among his awards are an NEA Fellowship in Poetry, a Syndicated Fiction Award, two Senior Fulbright Lectureships (Belgium and Poland), and a Distinguished Faculty Award from the Michigan Association of Governing Boards. He is the founding coordinator of the Literature In Person (LIP) Reading Series at Ferris State University, where he has taught for many years.

Philip Sterling's comments about Monica Walen's poem follow:

Any of these finalist poems could easily have been selected as the winner, given another reader's predilections; in the end I simply chose the one that was most memorable to me. I liked "Cemetery in November" nearly as much, in fact. It's a masterful and emotive sestina, in the tradition of Elizabeth Bishop, and lines like "hugged light / back into my smile" or "I shiver from cold / now, without her kiss" show a maturity and talent that transcends the typical undergraduate poem.

What stands out to me about "Single at the Drive-In," however, is the speaker's resignation to the absurdity of the circumstances: the pathos of finding oneself a [pop] cultural outcast. Is there any more faux romantic American icon than the drive-in movie theater—a "playground" of B movie sex, heroism, and horror? Except for family night, when my mother could take four of her own children, two neighbors, and three nieces to a Disney double-feature for \$2 (a car), very few people ever went to actually watch the movies, and going single was out of the question. Add to that the physical disintegration of "romantic" as it is manifest in the "cracked bricks and peeling paint" of the building and the disintegration, even, of romantic clichés—the recognition of the loss of innocence (abandoned playground) or of the speaker being the ONLY ONE in a world where even the stars are "paired in swirling groups of constellations"—and you have a depth of loneliness that is profound in its objectivity.

I am also a sucker for long, lyrical sentences in poetry, especially if they are fluidly rhythmic and spiced with internal rhyme and assonance (playground/merry-go-round, stare/everywhere, "watching my fingers shift"). And anyone who can get such precise detail as "1989 Mercury Grand Marquis" in a poem—and even rhyme it—deserves a prize.



Monica Walen, winner of the Academy of American Poets contest

Every Fifth Person's Medicine Cabinet

I believe in the Prozac nation.
Take a pill to cure your ill
Peace through over-medication.

Wrapped in purple saturation
Safety in convenient pill,
Citizen of the Prozac nation.

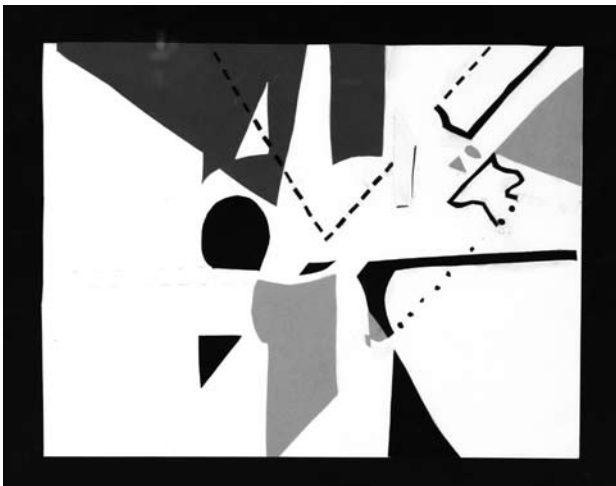
To pharmacy gods give adoration,
Drugs to take and feelings to kill,
Peace through over-medication.

White-coated angels of salvation,
Deep black pockets left to fill,
Pharmacy tax for the Prozac nation.

Peace to every race and station,
Concord drugs for Jack and Jill,
Peace and death and medication.

Peace to souls in bleak stagnation,
Peace to greed and false goodwill;
Joy to the world and the Prozac nation,
And peace on earth through medication.

- Autumn Sabol, Junior



IMPLIED SHAPE, IMPLIED SIDE, INVISIBLE SHAPE – Paper
Karlis Maskevics, Junior

An Ode to Cherry Coke

Red-clear statuette
a dollar twenty-five at the corner.
One hand holds your red hat,
the other holds you.
Dark, bubbly charm
with a ghost that comes out
loudly when I open my mouth.
Sweet cherry secret.

- *Megan Fasano, Senior*

Sooner or Later

You open your mouth
- Inside my mind -
To speak soliloquies.
I do not listen.
- Inside my heart,
A churning presence-
Forgiveness is not an option.
Go back to your grey skies
And caffeine mornings!
Leave me to my life in the sunbeams.
- Makes me queasy -
I laugh; you give up.
Ha! Dominance achieved.
- Through the vast emptiness,
I hear an echo -
The smile on my lips you'll
Never see.
I am free. I am happy.
- All the lies that boil inside
Are bound to surface
Sooner or later -
- *Jen Chichester, Junior*

Twilight

Down,
 Down,
 Down

Sun glides
Away from world,
Dusk covers land,
Creatures come out to play.
I step from the sanctuary
Of false candlelight,
And into the twilight
Formed from the setting sun.

In the twilight I am no one;
In the twilight I am everyone.
Slinking across paths and property,
I become shadows
I become creatures
I become twilight.

Weeping Willow
With your thin branches,
Dance as the breeze
Ripples through your leaves.
Flowers
With petals caved around your heads,
Protect yourselves while you drift away
Into your dreams.

My land of twilight,
There is just enough light
To show the way.
And before stars
Push their way through the black canvas,
I make my way to
Tempting,
 Flickering,
 Candlelight.

- *Cheyne Roczowski, Freshman*

Pet Rock

Every morning we'd walk to school together, using the buddy system. You, with your Splinter backpack, and me, with my Michelangelo one. We'd look out for sixth graders, who'd pounce on us if we'd come too close to their Vanilla Ice territories. You always made me carry that stupid pet rock, swearing that someday when I was in trouble it would attack.

Every evening we'd walk together from baseball practice to your house. Your mom would make us bologna and cheese sandwiches, you liked ketchup, I liked mustard. Nintendo 64, Surge, and Chips. I always lost in Mario Kart; you would always cheat and use Peach even though you liked Bowser more. You always thought about the future, I would always be in the moment.

Every afternoon at lunch we'd go outside, I'd smoke and you'd cover your face, you didn't want to die young. You'd get straight A's and I'd get C's and D's, you would always tell me to study. I hated you for that. You were Valedictorian, I graduated at least. We still walked together, you weren't too cool. I loved you for that. We got accepted to different colleges, exchanged numbers, and promised to always be there for each other.

You were an honor student, Dean's list, if what I read was correct, you always were smart. You pledged for a Frat, called and asked for luck and strength, you heard it was tough to get in and you needed to fit in. I didn't pray or wish you luck, I was jealous of you. You didn't get in, and I didn't return your calls.

You made time's job easy and now I place flowers on your stone. I should have called you back. I should have thought about the future and not the moment. Now I feel alone and confused.

I wish I still had that stupid pet rock.

- *Christopher J.M. Smith, Sophomore*

Lush landscapes forged by night

lush landscapes forged by night and
distant neon operas
sing to me
in their artificial moonlight
a lonely headlight aria

fireplaces filled with ash
books marked for place
records played straight through
these are my reminders
after night surrenders to day

your eyes no longer adorn my shoulder
and instead quietly they fill my soul
with unfinished writings

cafés filled with midnight air
gently rocking blue dreams
these and these alone are my company
befriended when our souls
shared moon's embrace in the autumn of that night

pure hours between tomorrows
wrapped in wordless dreams
awash in joy's blanket
ribboned with eyes' remembrance

the rain and sun
share a common heart
cured by your smile
connecting you to me
the shining drops and falling light
draw a map from your heart to the heavens above

as we lay
apart
anointed
you send night's messengers
to whisper lullabies
and tuck me under
the watch and cover of your soul

I'll send missionaries of the dawn
to lovingly awaken you
to kiss your eyelids open
to weave moon's memory in your blood
and sun's song in your heart

- Tim Wawrzynczak, Senior

Cemetery in November

Droplets of rain hang from a branch –
the bark blackened with wet –
they hang there in the cold
like ivory sacks of spider eggs,
reflecting the grey light
of this dreary November day.

In November we celebrate the Day
of the Dead with branches
heavy with fruit, and candles of light
to dispel the seeping wet
of the earth. I think of cracked eggs
sliding into a bowl, the metal cold,

cupped by my Great-Grandmother's cold
fingers. I remember her this day,
remember how I cradled the eggs
for her. But one, like rain from the branch,
fell to the hard tile floor. She patted my wet
cheeks and hugged light

back into my smile. The light
of votives, glowing in the cold
sanctuary, illuminate the glistening wet
eyes of those gathered for All Soul's Day,
nestled in the pews like birds on a branch.
Together we'd search for robins' eggs –

snug in their nests like the eggs
in a wire basket, bone-colored in the light
of the kitchen at Christmas, the branch
of mistletoe in the doorway. I was never cold
in her soft arms. I never wished the day
to end. She kissed my forehead, leaving wet

imprints of her lips. She dried her hands, wet
from washing, before handing me the eggs –
proudly trusting me even after the day
I dropped the one, its orange yolk light
against the dark tile. I shiver from cold
now, without her kiss. The tree branch

is bowed and wet, like my head today,
remembering her now-cold hands, long empty of eggs.
No comfort from this weak light, this lonely branch.

- Rose Daum, Senior

From Quest to Question
by Sean Donovan, Graduate

I envy people like my sisters. They knew from an early age what they wanted to be when they grew up. Sure, they changed their minds along the way as they grew older. But they always held a firm conviction, a fleshy idea, of who they would grow up to become: famous artists supported by rich patrons, physical therapists possessing the healing touch, award winning teachers honored by students and colleagues alike.

Me, I never seemed to get in touch with who I wanted to become. About the closest I ever came to expressing what I thought I wanted got lost somewhere back in the dim dark past of third or fourth grade. There was a young priest from our neighborhood who occasionally came over to drink whisky and gossip. My mother recalls how I used to say how much I wanted to become a priest after that. It lasted only briefly, for about as long as it took me to start noticing girls. (I don't actually recall wanting to become a priest, but my mom told the story in public to embarrass me, so I guess it must be true.) I also vaguely remember another time: how I got in the habit of picking up junk out of the street and lugging it home. My parents always made me throw my treasures out. They did praise me, however, telling me how they thought I demonstrated a clear aptitude for a promising vocation as a garbage man.

I once had a religious friend prone to attending lots of retreats, in order to commune with his God. He told me that there are actually two types of retreats in the world: the garden retreat and the desert retreat. The garden variety are filled with abundance: delicious seven course meals, scenic cliff top overlooks of the sea below, luxurious whirlpool baths, relaxing massages, and thick terry cloth robes. Alas, I've never encountered the luxuries of those gardens, having managed instead to retreat deep into the desert when I was still just a boy. And somehow, like Moses with his faithful flock, I lost my way.

Forty years of wandering later, as I move into this last third (or less) of my life, I still do not know what I want to do with my life when I grow up. Maybe, just maybe though, it's no longer so important "*what I do.*" Maybe my life's most important searching abides in the now and resides within.

Who is this boy who wants? Who is this boy who seeks? Who is this boy who yearns for his God in the empty and lonely places of his heart?

In Company of Fools & Liars

Sallow skin, aglow with sunlight
Rosy flush to bloom within
Subtle flame, the passion ignites
Seeks to consummate this sin

Lord knows that she's been waiting
Standing foolish, false and fair
Question truth, at times debating
If the truth was ever there

Nerves ache, one more warm sensation
One more touch to savor, whole
Giving in to old temptations
Mind is numb, the flesh controls

Oh, this heart of rationality
Weighing odds and shunning chance
Cast aside for brisk mortality
Fleeting liar-bred romance

Soon this autumn sun grows dimmer
Bleeding rose flush into dark
Warm sensations but a glimmer
Recollections, dwindling spark

- *Kathleen Pollock, Sophomore*



UNTITLED – Mixed Media
Jillian Osbourne, Junior

Homecoming

I close my eyes
and step into that house.
The smells overwhelm me.
A warm yeasty scent radiates;
the musty odor of age lingers
not to be covered by the citrusy smell
that betrays a recent cleaning.
Arms embrace me,
hot and moist from work,
and thick with a distinctive odor
of fresh linen, sweat, and Bengay.
I open my eyes
to look into that happy face.
But I'm greeted by an empty house.
The musty smell permeates,
no longer curtained,
the air is stale with neglect.
And I remember the arms lay cold,
the face with eyes forever closed.

- *Elizabeth Simon, Sophomore*

Penumbra

I stood beneath the overpass
Half-shrouded in shade.
Patterns on the ground
Captured my eyes.
Dark and light figures
Imprinted on the cement.
In the lens of my camera,
They were made immortal.
They come and go every day
With the rise and fall
Of the sun.
For once, someone stopped to
Pay attention to the penumbra
In that ordinary place.

- *Jen Chichester, Junior*



SPIRAL EXTENSION
Clay
Janine Schmidt
Graduate



UNTITLED – Oil
Angie Stadler, Freshman

I Write While Driving

I write while driving (a traffic hazard,
I know), and also in the shower, or stumbling
Through school hallways.

I write while undressing before bed,
Pants on, shirt off, in the middle
Of my room, standing: stopped
By a thought.

Paper

Is only a formality:

Flat, infertile.

But my mind

Is warm and dark,

Word-nursery,

Sprouting

With unexpected syllables, like

“Byzantine” and

“Hauberk”.

It is a stormy nebula

Where daily chaos combusts

And is reborn, concentrated

Into fragile clusters of light—

Sound-bytes

And flashes of color.

And when you wave your hand and ask,
“What are you looking at?” (for the millionth time)
I’ll simply laugh and shift my gaze,
Continuing to write.

- *Kyla Sisson, Freshman*

Blinker

Tail lights flash their bright red warning,
on and off and on and off. My
foot taps brake in staccato caution,
“slow down, keep back, danger ahead!”
Narrowed eyes attain clear focus,
in tunneled vision’s crystal lens.

Tightened grip and jutting jaw draw
shallow breath from between clenched teeth.
Weaving car, fast darting needle,
skirts the concrete barricade. I
speed past orange painted barrels—
the shrinking world soon disappears.

And so I find myself transported
beyond gray confines of my car,
beyond fast blurring scenery,
beyond deep mulling of my mind.

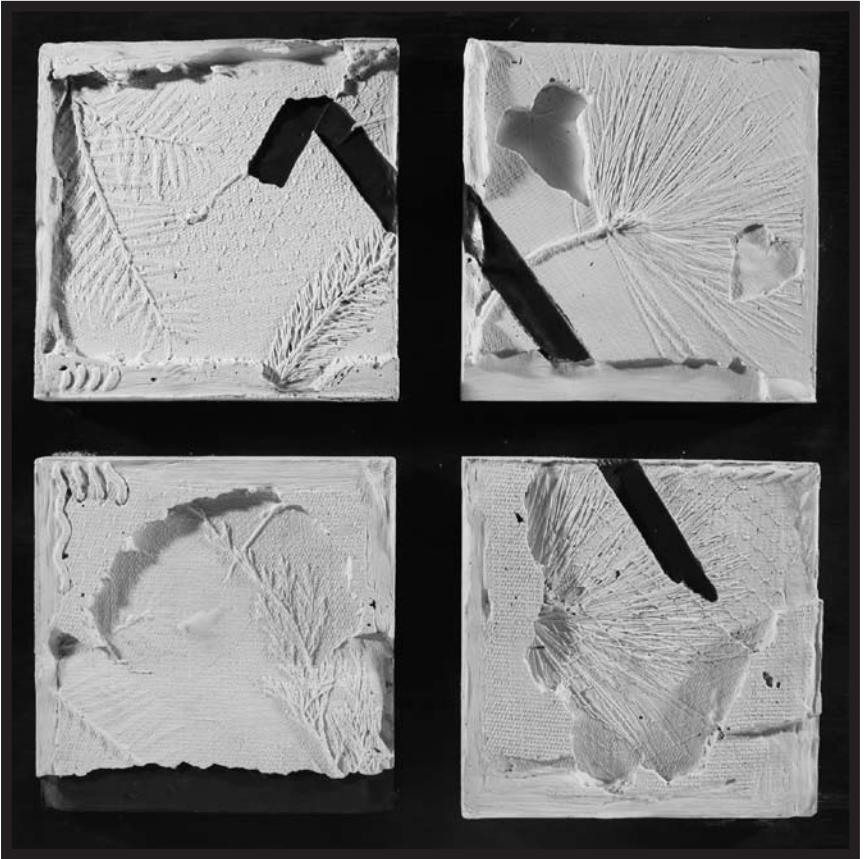
I lose myself in sudden now.

Tail lights blinking in the darkness;
life and death have merged as one.
Meaning fades; eternity opens;
red warmth awakens the sleeping soul.

- Sean Donovan, *Graduate*



UNTITLED – Oil on Canvas
Katherine Brines, Senior



SPODOSOIL – Plaster & Latex
Jessica Watson, Senior



UNTITLED – Silver Gelatin Print
Chris Flowers, Senior



SLAB #7 – Clay
Karen Tallman, Senior

Snow Queen

The snow queen is quiet tonight.
Even as the weight of passing feet
Wrinkles the folds of her robes,
Glistening blue in the moonlight,
She silences her groans quickly.
She does not dare disrupt
The breath of silence.

She is a raging beauty with a heart of ice,
Resting in her castle among the trees.
If you were to succumb to her seductions
She will convince you
That spring was an unneeded pastime,
That she holds your every dream.
If you try to tame her,
Caress her skin and call her your own,
She will freeze your heart
And watch with a chilling smile
As it burns with cold.
You will stumble in retreat,
Seeking shelter from the
Crippling weight
Of Emptiness.

You must admire her from afar
As she curls back upon her throne,
Blows a bitter kiss,
Flutters her flake-laden lashes,
Twists her wispy curls,
And straightens the frosty folds of her robes
Until you want to fall in love again.

- Emily Peiffer, Sophomore

February

February, origin Februarius, sporting
Fashionable parkas and fur-lined boots
Fighting frigid, freezing temperatures in
Familiar snow-covered surroundings of

Exploding snowflakes and extreme ice chips
Engaged by the wind. February 4th, Guatemalan
Earthquake, Groundhog Day, Presidents' Day
Entered on the calendar. Snow. Snow. Snow.

Blizzard conditions, blinding snowstorms,
Bookworms boxed in watching birds seeking
Birdbaths frozen solid; ready to burst
Believing spring not far away. A

Recital of twinkling lights and crackling ice,
Romantic moments in front of a
Raging fire, recapturing seconds of
Rambling nothings in the second month of

Ugly brown with a hint of green
Underneath a blanket of white
Ushered in by Mother Nature and her
Unfashionable tyranny of storm.

Amidst the torrent, arresting snippets of
Amorous laughter, unabandoned puckers
Amplified by one extra day to savor
Admittedly, Cupid recaptures, restores and

Replicates lost passion. However, the box in the corner
Rescues the sports-minded: ice hockey, basketball,
Rare ice-fishing exhibitions displaying the unique
Rhythms of winter.

Yammering youth, whispers of boredom,
Yards dotted with yellow snow,
Yelping snowman-makers and
Young sledders celebrating February.

- Sue Snyder, Senior

A Few Lines for James

this is a poem to my grandpa jim
whom I have seen but a few times,
whose graying beard and raspy voice
have embedded themselves within—
within my restless, raging mind.
slaving to paint pictures and recall
fragments of time spent and logged,
lost in the grasp of age and time.
I have through vinyl heard
the hip jazz cats which made his ocean eyes twinkle
because when he needed to vent
he danced solo with the wild rhythm.
he puffed until
nicotine had stained the walls
the chairs and the desk.
all these years, no one knew that
he dug himself when others wouldn't,
sitting face to face with his soul.
because when the world becomes too much to bear,
after awhile even a pack of smokes
can seem like your best friend.
so I write this in longing, in hope
that I may again meet my grandpa,
whose life I was too young to share.

- *Kyle Austin, Freshman*



M.H. 2006

VITA BELLA EST – Silver Gelatin Print
Maureen Hanley, Senior

Dinosaurs don't Exist
by Jennifer Goss, Junior

The radio was on but he could barely hear it. It had meshed into the other car sounds, imperceptible to his busy mind. The windows were rolled up, even though it was a clear seventy degree day. The air in the car was getting stale and hot. His back ached and his hands were dry and itchy. He yawned, the five hours of driving taking a toll, though it was only one o'clock in the afternoon. Plus, he was thirsty. Spotting a small gas station and convenience store ahead, he swerved into the right lane and made a sharp turn into the parking lot. There was a lady at the pump, filling an old Buick with an unlit cigarette drooping from her mouth. She stared unapologetically at the man as he stepped out of his Audi. It was new and it was expensive. His wife hadn't spoken to him for five days after he bought it, a common enough occurrence for it to be dismissed. The woman at the pump frowned.

"It's a rental," he said as her eyes followed him through the door of the store.

As he entered, a droopy eyed girl at the counter perked up enough to raise her chin off the counter, then laid it back down and ignored him. It was cool inside but the bright florescent lights and colorful snacks and sodas created as much glare as the sun. Grabbing a two dollar and fifty cent water, he placed it on the counter in front of the droopy eyed girl who slowly raised her head up and scanned it.

"Two dollars and fifty cents," she said.

The man handed her a mini-credit card attached to his key chain.

"I'm sorry, we can't accept those," she said.

The man reached into his pocket with a roll of the eyes and handed her a different, full sized card.

"No, I'm sorry. You see, we don't accept credit cards at all."

"You're kidding."

"No, lots of places here don't. Everything's under ten dollars, don't you have cash?" she asked.

"I have two quarters, a dime, and ... a penny," he said, extracting the change from a pocket.

"You could get the off brand water, or did you have gas too?"

"I just want the damn water," he glared at her, "and I don't have any cash."

"Sorry," droopy-eyes drawled and stared back at him.

"Forget it."

Heading out the door, he saw the woman at the pump squinting through the glass, watching the embarrassing scene. A little smirk on her face, until she forgot to watch the pump and gas spilled on her shoes.

He was almost there anyway. Landmarks were starting to look familiar. The old diner was next to a McDonald's now and the skating rink he had his sixth birthday party at looked abandoned. He had wanted dinosaur decorations and

dinosaur plates and cups, and maybe a dinosaur cake if it wasn't too much trouble. But his mother was furious, demanding to know where he learned about dinosaurs and why he would want them on plates and cups.

"Heretical lies!" she spat, though he hadn't understood the word.

There were puppies on the birthday decorations, plates and cups. And he knew better than to ask about dinosaurs again.

But curiosity got the better of him, and at age eight he asked why they couldn't talk about dinosaurs. His mother spoke calmly, and smiled condescendingly. "Paul, honey, dinosaurs aren't real. They're not in the Bible. It says right there what God created and there's not a word said 'bout dinosaurs. We've got lots of other animals and things what are really useful; we didn't need any dinosaurs or scientists telling us there was 'um," and that was the end of that.

Paul cringed, remembering this speech, and those that followed. He passed the church he refused to attend by age fourteen and the grocery store he worked at to save up the money to leave. Bagging and carrying groceries, he managed to save five hundred dollars which got him a taxi and the rent for a crummy apartment in the city with a shady guy named Ace who thought he was eighteen.

But that was neither here nor there, and Paul was finally on his way back home. He hadn't called. In fact, the decision to drive the three-hundred and 50 miles to Wabash had been on complete impulse. He hadn't even told his wife.

Finally parking across the street from the house that had once been so full of anger and pain, he realized it looked quite pleasant from a detached perspective. The front door and shutters had been painted a mossy green and the walkway running up the front had been repaved.

"Just one last time. Before she dies," Paul whispered as he climbed out his car and hit lock on the key fob.

He hurried to the door, not wanting to be seen from a window before he knocked. He rang the doorbell instead, sharp and to the point. He heard laughter and feet and a young woman in a purple apron opened the door. Behind her, two little boys were running about. One held a plastic dinosaur figure in his hand, a T-Rex.

"Can I help you?" the woman tilted her head at Paul.

"I ..." he managed, but the boys had started fighting and diverted the woman's attention.

"Mom, Mom, he took my dinosaur again!" one tugged at her apron strings.

"Michael! Give the dinosaur back to Paul, right now!" she hollered.

Turning back to the adult Paul, she smiled. "I'm sorry, what can I do for you?"

"Nothing. I'm sorry, I must have the wrong house," he smiled back at her.



BETWEEN THE LINES – Oil
RaNae Couture, Junior

That's Hot

that's what it boils down to—obsessions
fixations with make-up at six
when you first learn that eyeliner brings out the color in your eye
and that succulent red lips make you sexy

it's easy to define sexy
especially when it's in magazines, like
cosmovanitypeople—something, can't remember where I saw
sex
yes, sex, in movies,
where the orgasms are only good
when stomachs are tight
hips are *curvy* and breasts are huge
and men masticate it all up
because "that's hot"

then comes subliminal messages
from sexy men and women dancing
nearly nude while singing about
nakedness
not recalling when music used to be about
that-voice-that-can-really-sing
not about accidentally exposing breasts
and smashing instruments on the floor
"we eat artists like there's going to be a famine at the end"

nobody likes fat
run fatso—run five miles and then another twenty
so nobody will see your natural shape and
make fun of you for not being able
to fit in the clothes that Paris Hilton thinks
"that's hot"

get your nails done—your hair *did*—buy that car—get this hot man—have that
great sex—wear this new style—buy this big house
and let obsession slaughter you
so you die like the rest

and nobody remembers who you are

- Sara Scotto d'Apollonia, Senior

Witness

There are shuffles from the pavement
Muffled voices rushing in
Through my window to the real world
And this air is growing thin.

These four walls, they can't contain me
Yet I've given up the fight
Watching, feeling, hearing, breathing
Every detail of the night.

Dim lights flicker, casting shadows
Lonely souls, they gather near,
Fleeting moments, broken memories
Then these souls soon disappear.

And I watch this from my window
Live their moments, almost real,
Till those moments turn to memories
And there's nothing left to feel.

And the company of these voices
That I listened to with care
Soon are realized to be nothing
Silent stillness. Only air.

- Kathleen Pollock, Sophomore

Henry VIII

King Henry the Eighth
played tennis

The Renaissance man who ate
Three, four, five wives for breakfast
Too fat to finish the sixth

He gambled on dice and sons
Jousting in field and bed

With his back to God and front to feast
Immortality dancing in his head

- Jennifer Goss, Junior



Sabina Gyllenberg 4/5 Self-Portrait 39

SELF PORTRAIT – Print
Sabina Gyllenberg, Senior

The Perfect Dress

The fabric of her coral dress
Stuffed between her legs,
Pressed to the bench
That mourns a field of stones.
She envies the wind
As it tries to disturb the stiff fabric,
Wrinkled without reason or purpose:
The polyester pilled in small, round balls,
As uneven as the veins in her hands,
Frayed like the lines at her eyes.

This crevice of her coral dress
As black as her stockings,
Disappearing under navy shoes
With thin, round shoelaces,
With soles grazed smooth,
With the memory of shine.

This crevice of her coral dress
Contains old wine stains
Spilled at quaint dinners
Cooked in silver pots at two;
Boiling water compelled steam
To condense upon her forehead
And spread the scent of love.

The fabric of her coral dress
Hides her broken innocence
From her early days of womanhood,
Hides the weary legs
That once wrapped around her lover.

This crevice of her coral dress
Contains the fleeting gray dust
Of her last cigarette,
Contains a silver streak of hair
From upon her brittle-haired head,
Filled with thoughts of unfulfilled dreams
And unexpected hopes.

This crevice of her coral dress
Still contains the sandy grains
From the park in summer afternoons
And the smeared dirt at her knees
From smaller, muddy hands—
A fold dark as fresh earth
Thriving like flowers in the rain,
Dreaming of a sunlit yesterday.

This fading coral dress
Is the perfect dress
To die in.

- Emily Peiffer, Sophomore



GRUMM PROJECT – Sepia Toned Silver Gelatin print
Jillian Osbourne, Junior

A Night's Adventure

by Jane Kraemer, Freshman

“The dumb alarm keeps going off! How many times do I have to listen to that infernal thing?!” I think right before I smack the snooze button. The clock’s long, glowing finger points at number eleven. I have five more minutes. Peering off across the blackness, I hunt for the unlocked door. “She’s not here yet. Good.” I roll to the side and clamp my eyes shut. “Five more minutes...”

In the unconscious realm, I find a young girl huddled beneath a bright light. She is diligently writing, but I can’t make out her words. I sit behind her in the dark, waiting to learn her story, to understand how she appeared in my dorm room. Then, I catch my eye on the postcards, perfectly taped to the shelf above her. The wheelchair bound girl fades away. A new, independent woman runs the streets of Paris, hunting for a corner to hide in. She flies past the police and into the shadows. I can hear her heart pound with excitement.

“It’s time to wake up...” The dream blurs from my vision. I feel Mai Allyn’s warmth as she rubs my hand with delicacy. What curiously dark eyes she has and a simple smile. Gently, she speaks, “Good morning, girly.” I stroke the goobers out of my eyes. “Morning already?” She nods and then wanders around under the covers, pulling out my legs and embracing my flimsy body into a sitting position. I am careful not to lose my balance, nor to capsized to the floor. We are ready for the transfer. Up, swing, and plop into the wheelchair—now, on to another day.

Eight years ago, I was diagnosed with a disease called *Friedreich’s Ataxia* (weird name—it doesn’t even sound like me), and I grew up with it, developing the symptoms with each day. While living at college, I hire students around campus to help me during mornings and evenings. The State of Michigan pays, and happily I have found enough friends to employ. However, during the day, I fight to reach books, to reach the light switch, and to transfer seats, especially between my power and manual wheelchairs. I knock on doors across the hall or holler to my suitemates. Neighbors will not abandon me even if they don’t feel up to the challenge.

This morning, like me, Mai is not entirely awake. She is a blunder! She dropped my toothbrush two times, grabbed mismatching socks, and handed me the deodorant instead of the water! “You’re fired!” I spat. She squealed. “I am not fired! You’re just a big toe!” What a dork! I mean really, a toe?! I laughed. She smiled, snatched the deodorant from me, coolly turned around, and gracefully returned with my water.

I look up to Mai. We are connected not just by friendship. Her mother had *Friedreich’s Ataxia*, my disease. I have never met anybody with my disease; it is rare within itself. Maybe I am destined to have

Mai as a sister. “Thank you, Mai. I had a lovely morning with you,” I proclaim in a sarcastic tone. “You’re welcome, gorgeous!” What sarcasm she uses! “Have a wonderful day, Jane!” She holds her arms out, expecting a hug. What the heck? I decide to give her one. Then, after a firm glance, I speed away.

The rest of the day passes with gloom. After lunch, my forehead begins to burn with fire. My palms leave moisture on all that I touch. Still, I roll into classes, copy as many notes as possible, and listen as the pain wraps snugly around my brain. Then, on the way back to my dormitory, I struggle through the snow. “What is the use of fighting?” I can barely keep my eyes open. Soon, my power wheelchair swerves into a snow bank. “Oh no! I’m stuck!” Tears spill from their dwelling. They glide down my hidden face, chilling me into silence.

Eight hours later, my gloom does not fade. Inside the dorm room, I am stuck in bed. I want to dance outside, but I am burdened with the fever. Mai gave me some pills before lying me down at seven o’clock, but I can’t sleep. It’s a Friday night, and I should be playing in the snow with my friends. These covers have been my cage for four long hours! Now, Mai is coming back. I stare at the light poking beneath the door. It is hope, that little light.

“Where is she?” I must have hung up the phone ten minutes ago. “Come back for me, Mai.”

Outside, the cool air travels down my windpipe and out my mouth. “Aaah,” I let out between some coughs. The night air is fresh. “Did I bundle you up enough?” Mai asks, hinting her concern. Tonight is the first time I have been outside on campus without shoes on, let alone dressed in pajamas. But, Mai wrapped me up tightly in fresh blankets and added two layers of socks to my feet. Patrick, Mai’s boyfriend, wasn’t sure if they should bring me down to the chapel. “It’s cold out,” he says, “and she’s sick.” Mai defends me. “Yeah, well, she’s been cramped up in her room all night. She can’t sleep.”

In the night air, we stand in a circle. The snow twirls around us. What magic! “Let’s build a snowman,” I suggest out of the blue. Mai stacks three little snowballs in her hands. “He needs arms,” I point out. Grabbing two miniature branches, she shoves them in place. He is cute and only four inches high. “What about a name?” She stands in silent thought. “His name is... Twinkletoes!” Mai exclaims. What a fine name for the magnificent creature! Mai sets Twinkletoes in the white patch before me so I can admire him. He sparkles against the moonlight. In a moment, Mai grabs the back of my chair and roars with me, driving me up the path beside the chapel. “Careful now!” Patrick shrieks from behind. Mai races onward. We fly through the icy streets. I am free!



OLIVIA – Oil
Terrie Heibel, Graduate

To Daughter Turning Three

You sit upon my shoulders,
a lookout perched atop a mast.
Hands anchor your small ankles as
you list first to the left, and then to the right,
pitching and swaying across
this thunderous sea.

Dylan,
not Thomas,
that other Dylan, Bob,
wails his gravelly rhyme while
speaker cones bump their deep bass thump.
We trace the floor in serpentine—
a perfect figure eight.

Laughter and giggles and a tiny voice
shouting in uninhibited glee,
“more, more!”
and our dance becomes more reckless—
more turbulent and bouncy—
jouncing jerky leaps and spiraling chains of drunken pirouettes
across the dirty blonde carpet.

We spin the wheel fantastic,
twirling in a swirling blur
racing along our track
keeping abreast the dizzying tempo that finally breaks
upon the cliffs of melody’s refrain.

Singing from your heart
(Bob’s counterpoint in song),
words garbled and broken,
you are my greatest work of art.

“Eewwwww, Mama!
Can this really be the end?
To be stuck inside of Mobile...”
We hop; we bounce; we touch the sky again.

- Sean Donovan, *Graduate*

Lemon Colored Lamps

A pair.

Two, precisely.

One at the table and the other beside the bed.

She got them as a wedding present 60 years ago:

Lemon colored lamps.

She longed to hide them but her husband loved them.

As the years passed,

and the décor changed,

the lamps stayed.

Lemon colored lamps.

They had four children—two boys, two girls.

Life was filled with soccer games, scout meetings, drivers ed,
college graduation, weddings, and many grandchildren.

And still remained,

the lemon colored lamps.

He died, unexpectedly, at 70.

They said it was a heart attack.

She cried, the family grew, the décor changed,
but she stayed the same:

alone with her two lemon colored lamps.

Eventually, the children agreed to send her off
to the nursing home,

packing her bags with church dresses scented with moth balls,
discolored pictures, china dishes and
those raggedy lemon colored lamps.

There in her small cubed room,

she watches “the Price is Right,”

the wedding band still glowing on her left hand.

Aged suitors come to woo her with flowers,
sugar free candy and bright red bow ties,

but no matter what they say,

she glances at the lemon colored lamps,

one at the table and one besides the bed,

as a reminder of who she was,

and who she loved the most.

- Sara Scotto d'Apollonia, Senior

Happy Home

My childhood memories are of rooms
and furniture and driveways

like my parents' room
with the bed they shared
like a skyscraper,
or that tiny bathroom
that once held me captive
because I couldn't reach the lock,
and the giant couch
that became a fort
for us each afternoon,
or the driveway I helped Dad sweep,
the one I didn't know,
the one he called My New Place,
and the skyscraper bed
that was just Mom's now
as she sat with Kevin and me,
and the cracked front sidewalk
next to the bed of hostas
where Dad and Mom
traded us back and forth.

My memories are of rooms
and furniture and driveways
and I, master architect,
sit here trying to piece them together
into a patchwork house:
a place my childhood can live
and pass for Happiness

- Rose Daum, Senior

Waiting for Alpha

An old man walks into a bar.
A gloomy tavern filled with smoke.

Alone.

Years of bad choices show through his face.

Alone and Tired.

He pans the room
And then takes the nearest stool.
He buys a pint.

Alone. Alone.

Around him stand men clad in business suits,
Mumbling softly to one another.
They don't notice the old man.

The Others.

Then the voices start.

Whisper. Whisper.

"What's wrong with you?"
"Are you okay?"
"What's your problem!?"

Judgment Day.

The old man looks cautiously around
And then he sees the reflection in the mirror.

Alone and Afraid.

Reflected is a man with large heavy eyes,
A leathery face
And a frown that is
Filled with both anger and despair.

His Reflection.

The old man notices this and asks:
"What's wrong with you!?"
"Why have you ruined your life!?"
"WHO ARE YOU!?"

Questions.

Soon a tiny bell rings
And all the businessmen leave.

Left Alone.

The old man sits and waits.

Waiting.

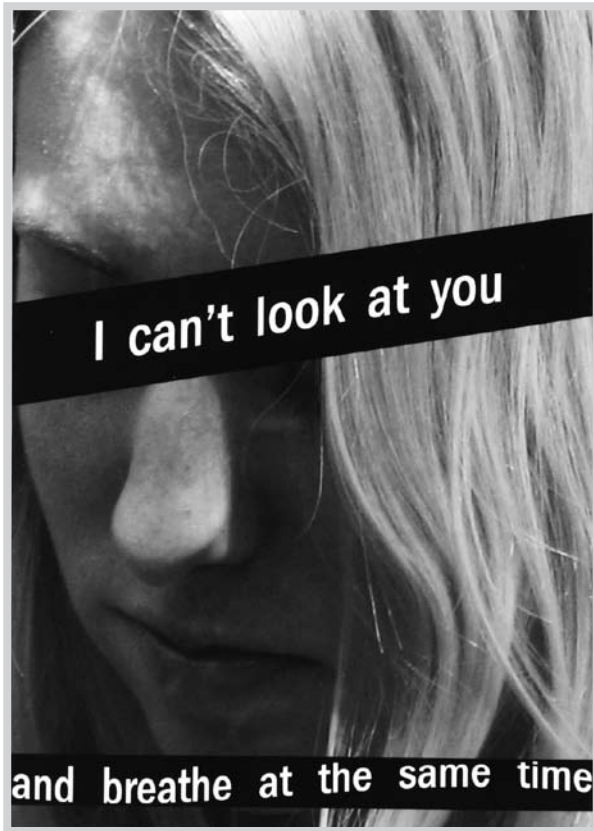
He takes a swig from his beer
And continues to wait.

Lingering.

The old man waits.

Sits and Waits in Purgatory.

- Katherine Byers-Ferrian, Freshman



EMULATION OF BARBARA KRUGER – Silver Gelatin Print
Amy Burns, Senior

The Student

*Nothing in education is so astonishing
as the amount of ignorance as it accumulates
in the form of inert facts.*

Shall I go then, *sans* umbrella, through the rain,
When but ten minutes past I was in bed,
Feather-cotton pulled up to my head
And full to bursting with nothing at all?

Shall I fall
Into the breakfast chair with the failure of weary legs,
Plate of once-was-pig and desiccated eggs,
Flexing silent shoulders laced in pain?

There is not time enough.

Below the flying hours I crawl,
Learning nothing at all.

I see the rain from my windowsill
Breathe the falling-foliage fragrance faint,
Admire the arcs and drips of primary paint
The artist threw upon the trees.

I feel the breeze
Pledging freezing frost and damp decay
For nothing gold can stay
And even if it can, it never will.

But there is not even time enough for this.

So back to my weary books I crawl,
Learning nothing at all.

Deadlines slither with sibilant hiss,
Slumber hums its Siren song.
All the daylight hours seem but half as long
While my eyelids turn to lead.

Heart and mind and soul are dead
And dying. What remains of life is set to reading,
And writing, and learning, and bleeding,
Running after power, shunning bliss.
Nowhere can be found time enough.

Through day and into night I crawl,
Reading and sighing and writing and dying,
And learning nothing at all.

Before the dawn, the dark is deep.
I've writ on Eliot, Browning and Aeschylus
And I've yet a treatise on education to redo.

"*Kyrie, eleison!* I'm sick, I'm lost, I'm through!"
Broken, I pillow my migraine on Confucius
And dream of sleep.

- *Autumn, Sabol, Junior*



SEATED MODEL – Pencil
Karen Tallman, Senior

Talismans

by Rachel Koval, *Sophomore*

“Come on,” Billi Jo whispered, “let’s peek under the curtain.” We ran out of the dressing room past the stage hands, between moth-eaten side curtains out onto the stage. Our small, tap-shoe clad feet clicked across the floor as we made our way to the vast stage. The space was dark, lit only by the residual glow of the house lights streaming overtop the huge wall of fabric. The light cast a blue tint over our faces and reflected the glittery makeup our mothers had coated us with. Seeing ourselves against the woodland backdrop at the rear of the stage made us feel like fairies. We giggled as we slid on our knees and landed against the dark curtain. Billi Jo and I lay next to each other, raising the curtain with one finger to see into the audience and spot our families. I spotted my family right away; no single row of people contained that many pairs of glasses. They could not see me and I did not want them to. That would have been wrong. Billi’s grandparents were sitting in the third row perusing their programs when they spotted the glitter of our costumes under the slightly raised curtain. Her grandmother waved and mouthed the words “good luck” to us. I was surprised when my friend looked exasperated and pounded her knuckles on the floor next to her. “Knock on wood!” she urged. I did, but simultaneously asked why.

“Because,” she stated, “if someone says what *you* want, it will never come true.”

The dust rises like a gauzy grey curtain as my fingers drift over my grandmother’s dressing table. Though my eyes are closed, I know that I am touching her jewelry box, picture frames and mirror. The room is filled with the perfume fog of her presence. I look at her bed and remember sitting on it at different points of my life. I remember sitting next to her, my scrawny legs barely grazing the floor, as she gave me a ring her father had made from a nut in his machine shop. “Your fingers are a bit too small now, but you’ll grow into it,” she had said. She poked my nose when I frowned and said, “Oh don’t be in such a rush; patience, dear.”

I smile as I remember this and spin the ring, which now fits, around my finger. I look at the bed again and the comforter rises and fills with my grandmother’s body as I remember the last days of her life. She couldn’t verbalize a coherent thought then, but I stayed by her side when I could. Once, I sat at the foot of that bed crocheting as she stared at the ceiling. She mumbled a few words that got me out of my chair and on my knees next to her bed. “What did you say, Grandma?” I asked. “Did you get rid of that awful young man you were seeing? I never liked the look of him. I could

find you someone much better.” she rambled. “I got rid of him, a long time ago.” I had said. That was the last time I spoke to her.

I chuckle now, remembering these things and spinning that ring on my finger. She was right, I did grow into that ring and she will keep her promise, I know it.

My mother sighed as she straightened Ellie’s veil. On a table next to my sister’s chair sat all of the things Mom had brought from home: the cake knife she had bought for her as a little girl, the garter she had worn at her own wedding, and the pearls that belonged to our grandmother. We watched as Mom handled them all, tenderly, reverently. Each of these things carried some significance; a sacred power that would bring my sister blessings and good fortune throughout her marriage. After my mother had ceremoniously clasped the pearls around my sister’s neck, I gazed at my sister. She glowed from within, as if the objects she wore gave her a subtle power. I crossed my fingers under my bouquet and hoped the secret power of these belongings would not be gone by the time I got to use them.



ELONGATED SELF PORTRAIT – Oil
Amy O’Neill, Senior

Steel-Toed Boots

by Chena Roczkowski, Freshman

They kept me waiting for hours. White-haired nurses kept going on: “Oh my dear. We are just so so *so* sorry you have to go through this. I hope everything works out alright.” What did they know? Hospitals. Everything smells like disinfected plastic and clean rubber.

What the hell am I doing here? I don’t owe him anything. Screw him! What am I doing here? This is stupid. Who honestly reads *Soap Opera Digest*? Unsatisfied housewives that sit around at the end of the day waiting for hubby to get home, wondering what would have happened if only they had decided to pursue that acting career. *Soap Opera Digest*—it’s ten months old. What the hell am I doing here? Screw him, I’m leaving.

“Excuse me, Mrs. Davis...”

“It’s Miss.

“Right, Miss. Davis, you can go in and see him now.”

I hadn’t seen him in, God, at least ten years. Now here I was. I could cut and run. Walk out the sliding doors; no one would remember me tomorrow. I could leave, and just let him die alone. He didn’t deserve my sympathy; I didn’t owe him anything. I could just leave, but I was too tired of carrying him around with me.

I was six the first time he hit me. I had hosted a tea party for my dolls that evening. I remember I had just finished putting my dolls in their bin. I heard the front door slam and raced to the safety of my room.

“What the hell is this shit doin’ on my floor!?”

I had left a few teacups on the floor. I was too scared; I hadn’t thought. I hid under my covers as I heard his steel-toed boots pound into my room.

“What is this shit!?! You think I don’t got enough to do, I gotta pick up after you? What the hell’s the matter with you?!” He threw the teacups at the wall near my head. They shattered. A piece grazed my arm.

“I...I...I didn’t mean to. I...I...forgot.”

“Forgot! You stupid bitch!”

The stench of whisky hit my face. I couldn’t breathe.

“I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I’m...”

His sweaty palm whipped across my face, knocking me out of bed. He threw my books off their shelves and kicked a hole in my wall. I closed my eyes and prayed to my mother it would be over soon. The smell of whisky faded. When I finally looked up he was gone. I lost my first tooth.

“Your father is in room 216 Miss Davis.”

“216. Right, yea, thanks.” I hated her voice; it was like a cat being strangled.

I stood outside the room. Damn it. Just go in. Just go in—then you can leave. Just turn the damn knob and this can all be over with. Go in!

The door closed behind me with a mocking “click.” I don’t remember what the room looked like, all I saw was him. He had tubes coming out from everywhere; he looked like a human vacuum cleaner or something. There he was. Helpless, his broad shoulders sagged with aging, all the muscle gone.

The last time he hit me I was seventeen. There was no reason: it was a Thursday. By then that was a good enough reason for him. I was making grilled cheese for dinner. He was later than usual; he was out drinking. The stench of whisky came into the room. He kept his boots on.

“What you makin’?” His words were slurred and harsh.
“Grilled cheese and soup.” I never looked up at him while I stirred.

“I aien’t eatin’ that shit. I said I wanted steak. I want meat not that shit.”
“Then give me some money to buy your meat and stop wasting it on whisky and the bar.” Some of the soup was stuck to the bottom of the pot. I kept stirring. I never looked up at him while I stirred. I just kept watching that red swirl around and around.

The back of his hand whipped across my head, but by now I had learned how to stay standing.

“Who you think you talkin’ to? Talk to me like that, you little bitch. Who do you think you are? You listenin’ to me?”

I just kept stirring the soup, the reds swirled around and around.

He grabbed me by my hair and flung me across the room. The steel toe of his boot repeatedly crunched my ribs. I reached for air, but still suffocated, choking on tears and hate. I lay curled on the floor while he rummaged through the cupboards throwing cans and boxes of cereal all over the floor.

“This place is a fuckin’ pig’s...pig’s...mess!” he slurred while whipping the pan of grilled cheese across the room narrowly missing my head.

I shut my eyes and tried to block out the banging and yelling and pain. I knew the routine: just lay still, still like you’re dead, and eventually he will make his way to the couch and pass out. Then clean up the mess and wait for the next night and the next night, and the next night...

I heard his boots pound toward the couch; the crash of lamps and tables being knocked over followed him. As I lay on the tiled floor of that kitchen, I knew I had to leave. There was nothing more I could do; I had nothing left to give and I realized he would never change. I never looked back.

I stood in the doorway just staring at him. Here he was. He would die, and I could finally live. I walked over to his bed. He never moved. If it wasn’t for the machines twittering and beeping I would have thought he was already dead. He had big hands, rough and calloused; I couldn’t stop looking at them. Big hands. Big hands.

“Damn, how did we ever get here?” I asked him.

“Excuse me Miss. Davis?” a voice from behind me asked. That damn nurse was standing in the door with a box in her hands.

“Yes?”

“I have a few of your father’s things, just what he had with him when he came into the hospital.”

“Okay. Thanks”

When she left, I went over to the box she had set on a chair. A shirt, his wallet with no money in it, a pair of jagged jeans, and at the very bottom there they were, those steel toed boots of his. I took them out of the box and held them in my arms. The stench of musty leather and whisky filled my nose.

(continued on page 46)

(continued from page 45)

They were faded and spotted with stains; just like him.

Those boots. Those damn boots. I watched as his machines began to beep and hum slower and slower. Those damn boots. Beep...beep...beep. They carried his scent, that horrible scent that always told me he would hurt me. Beep...beep...beeeeeeeep...

I watched as his body tried to struggle for air. "It hurts doesn't it?" I told him, never taking my eyes off his face. "Not being able to breathe, choking on stale air. It hurts. It hurts so damn much." I watched him make one last attempt at living; the machines made one continuous beep while I heard nurses and doctors making their way toward the room. My ears hummed and my throat tightened as I backed out of the room, never taking my eyes off his face. There was nothing left for me to do; I had nothing left to give. I didn't realize until I was in the parking lot of the hospital that I still held his steel-toed boots in my arms.



WHITE PITCHER – Etching & Aquatint
Jean Boot, Senior

Still-Life in Sweat

by Rachel Koval, Sophomore

Glaring sun, coursing sweat and no air conditioning made for an uncomfortable afternoon in the new station wagon. My father, Jeff, just a teenager, gripped the steering wheel tighter, trying to keep his eyes on the road while he drove. He'd barely had his license when his father tossed him the keys as they left for their family vacation that morning. His father couldn't even stand upright anyway. Jeff obediently hopped in behind the wheel, feeling the tension between his parents mount. For fifteen hundred miles his blood pressure rose as he nervously guided his way through the heavy vacation traffic. His mother was screaming at his younger brother and sister while his father yelled at her. He gripped the steering wheel and sweat dripped down his face. My father, Jeff, didn't speak a word for those fifteen hundred miles.

*

My parents were exhausted when we finally went to bed after moving furniture into my older sister's new apartment. "What is that noise, Mom?" I asked. "It's the air conditioner, now get to bed." she barked. I rolled my eyes as I rolled myself over on the floor; I had not meant it as an impudent question. The futile grating of the useless contraption seemed to make more heat than it overcame. Especially considering that there were six people in a tiny Cincinnati apartment in the middle of July, it's a miracle the air conditioner was running at all. My sisters and I lay sprawled on our sleeping bags, which were closed to take advantage of the coolness of their nylon outside. Although we are not moving at all, sweat still trickled down my face, running salty tracks through the oil on my skin and finally pooling on the surface of my sleeping bag. My parents lay on the opened futon, trying to avoid each other's body heat. Mom finally voiced the cause of her curtness with a groan: "My God, it's sweltering in here...Jeff, how can you possibly be comfortable in this?" gesturing to my father. "I don't know," he murmurs, "I guess I have been through worse heat."

Ode to Water

Hidden beneath
millions of rocks, dirt, and granite,
masses of glaciers'
diminishing crusts
for a home,
you push your way down
from Hudson Bay,
each blazing jewel
packed together like a family
fighting and sweating,
finally fading
into complete clear serenity.
Millions of years pass
before a caveman
finally sees his features
in the quiet trickles
seeping from the mountain
to his feet!

How delicious you taste
with your fresh simplicity
and strength to mercilessly
kill odors and muck.
How immortal you are
as you watch the world die
around you,
while you grow and stretch
from land to land,
providing for everything.
Without you,
life could not go on.

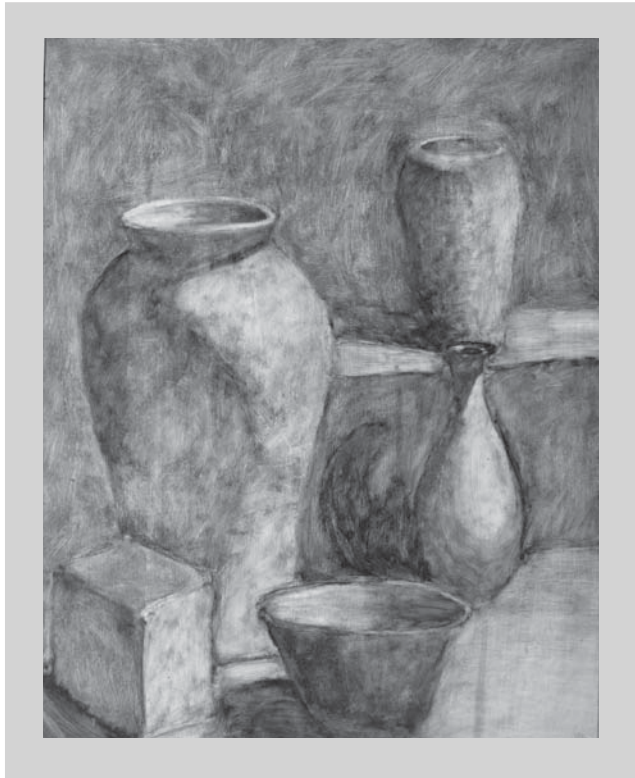
You are the fountain of youth
that Ponce de Leon
neglected;
you are the Red Sea
that once was parted by
faith;
you are the holy water
we touch for
a blessing.

You are everlasting.

- Sara Scotto d'Apollonia, Senior



UNTITLED – Glazed Ceramic
Amy Burns, Senior



UNTITLED – Conte Crayon
Elizabeth Hertl, Sophomore

An ode to the spider that lives in my bookshelf

Little brown spider,
you who dance across threads
as though on air,
an octagonal acrobat
with miniature grace,
your shimmering web
stretched between
worn bindings
where my fingers
so often have lingered
on familiar pages.

Now it is you
who linger,
silently slipping
above and over, between,
weaving silken dream catchers
that glisten in the
hazy afternoon light.

Do you nest there, spider?
Your offspring will
grow strong and
well-read indeed,
snug between copies
of Shakespeare and Dumas,
dreaming through autumn nights
of clashing steel,
brash daring plots,
fouly murdered kings.

You were Whitman's soul,
and Frost's proof of God—
weighty praise, little friend,
for you who weigh nothing,
and who cannot blush or bow
at their high regard.

Oh spider,
your perfect,
long comma legs
etch out the words
you catch in your web

and string them up
for the world to read.
Do you spy, spider-mine?
I fear you write our indiscretions
on loosely strung strings.

Little shy thing,
you yourself are discrete,
and dance backwards
at my approach,
a rewind tarantella,
vanishing into your
printed kingdom.

- *Monica Walen, Senior*



FOLIAGE – Foil Relief
Janine Schmidt, Graduate



SEATED FIGURE – Wood Block
Jean Boot, Senior

Square

Because
when I was four years old
I drew a lopsided circle
with my left hand,
only to be told that I am
right-handed.

Because
even with my
right hand
so many years later
I still cannot reach
perfection.

Because
time itself
lies in the dizzying
dimension of pi,
that elusive infinite,
and I will never
contain it.

Because
they drew a circle
in the dirt, with me
on the outside,
and still won't let me
in.

Because Galileo says
The world is round,
and I say the world
needs something new.

- *Kyla Sisson, Freshman*

Remembering Stamps

The taste of an envelope's innards
Sticks to my tongue, papery-sweet
With a faint bitterness
That lingers for hours
And years—
The taste

Of small fingers, struggling
Along perforated edges,
Blonde wisps of concentration
Catching on lashes, and a tongue
Perched in a toothless cavity,
Raw taste of newness and iron.

And an awkward young tongue
On the slick creamy surface,
Narrowly missing the flag on the front,
Slowly unlocking the paper-sweet taste
And the faint bitterness
That lingers.

- Kyla Sisson, *Freshman*

Inside

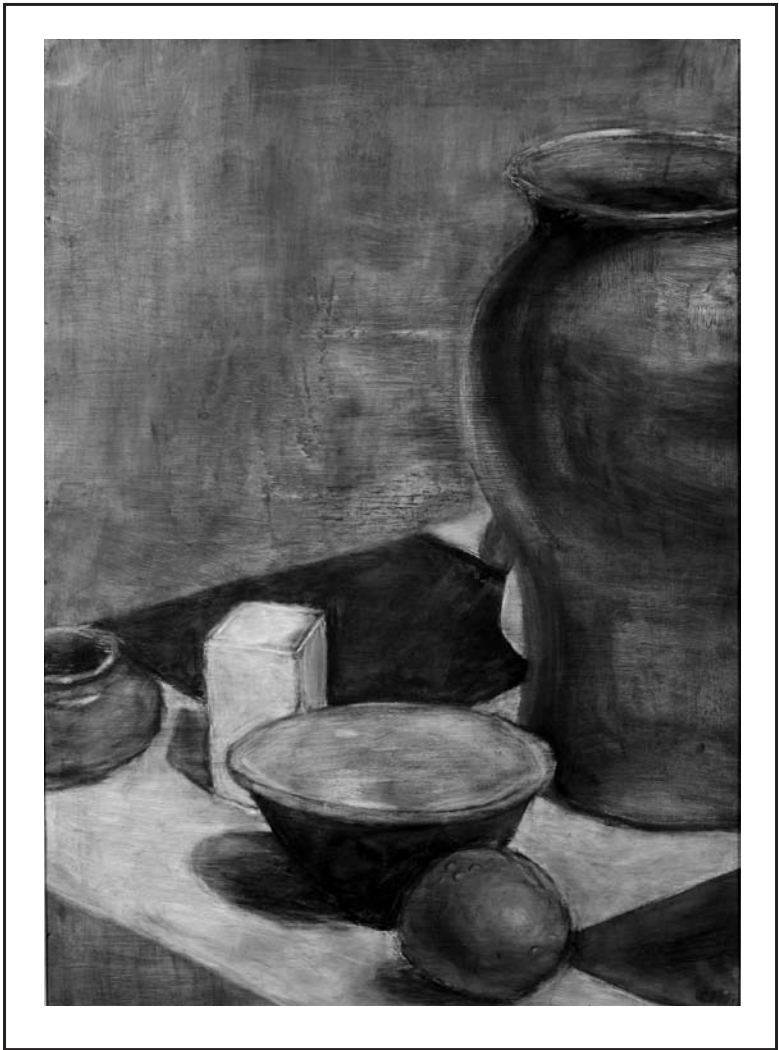
We have seen each other broken.

You were with me when I fell for the first time.

You sang to me,
you put your fingers in the bruised holes of my heart
and they grew with my pain.
My blood soaked into your skin and then love began its
journey.

It was then that my heart began to beat again;
Its beat glowed with the song that you had left in
me...

- Amanda Turner, *Senior*



UNTITLED – Conte Crayon
Andrea Fillipps, Junior

School Portrait
(a photograph from Cambodia, 1976)

Her face already resigned, she gazes
ahead, solemn, her tangled hair
falling over both shoulders, one
arm cocked towards a numbered sign
pinned across her chest—a new arrival, she
is standing in a high school for the
first time, for the last time, six years
before she should. She is here because her
mother or her father is a teacher, a lawyer,
a menace to the state, one of twenty
thousand prisoners of whom
seven will live. Later will come the
beatings, the chains, the metal bed and
the electric shocks; later will come the drive
to the fields under the stars to
dig her own grave, the final blow to the
head, while the leaders of her country
celebrate their perfect agrarian land.
Will you give your confession under
torture, little girl, for the crime
of living where your life was a crime?
For the moment, though, there is peace
in the flash of the camera, wielded by a
boy of sixteen whose dreams will be
filled with faces like hers for
the rest of his life.
Her eyes as she meets yours are dark.
By the time you look away,
you will already have forgotten me.

- *Monica Walen, Senior*

Hanging up on the call to arms

I wonder why
When it's all said and done
Why the world can't be free
The people as one

All the guns loaded up
And shot to the moon
The bombs even farther
For they'll explode soon

They call me a coward
I don't wanna give my life
Dyin' for a cause
I don't think is right

They ask me son,
You love the stars and stripes?
Did you sit in peace
On the battlefield tonight?

The truth is simply that,
Be he yellow, white or brown
I could never bring myself
To shoot my brother down

The Chief, he proclaims
For freedom we toil
But stare into his eyes
They are black with oil

All of the nation
They root for the prize
It's easy to do
When it's not you who dies

Yeah it's easy to do
When it's not you who dies

- Kyle Austin, *Freshman*

These Winter Nights

by Mary Carlson, Sophomore

I want to run. I want to run on a snow-laden path in the deep midnight, clothed in a red peacoat and blue jeans, a path gently touched with ice dangling from tree branches that beckon me to notice their delicate, eerie beauty. I want to run, my only companionship lying in the melodic crunching of my feet upon the white blanketed ground, feeling fully alive, fully human in the rhythm of my breathing. The only traces of me left behind are my footprints and the echo of my frozen breath drifting in the air—I am gone, gone into my own world. I want to run until I reach an open place ceilinged with twinkling stars scattered across a black sky so dense and velvet my breath catches in my chest. I want to lose myself in this place, spinning around and around with my arms extended, palms pointing to the heavens, in an attempt to connect and submerge myself in the beauty that surrounds me. I want to let go: of my hopes, my fears, my dreams, failures, passions, everything that holds me into myself as I close my eyes and fall back into the abyss of white. Snowflakes drop onto my face and nestle into my eyelashes and hair, as I lie on the most perfect blanket I have ever known. I am absorbed into this magical world of winter, of fantastically cold nights and dark depths of midnight starry skies. My fingers sink into the soft snow, seeking and grasping something tangible of the majesty I see. I lie here, in the silence, and if only for a few seconds, I am part of the beauty of these winter nights.



UNTITLED – Clay
Katherine Brines, Senior

Cheap Perfume and the Virgin Mary

by Rachel Koval, Sophomore

My great-grandmother, “Grandma Kay,” died when I was five. I went with my parents and three sisters to view her open casket. It was my first funeral.

Everything moved in slow motion, as if the mourners were underwater, trying to trudge through the murkiness to the submerged casket. I cried because everyone else was, and I wanted to look like them. The screeching organ spat dust from its pipes that weaseled its way into my lungs; I coughed as the tears pooled at the corners of my mouth: false, put-on tears. I still did not understand what the fuss was about; Grandma was fine. She was still in her sterile little room at the local nursing home, hoarding Smucker’s jelly packets and saltine crackers from the cafeteria for us. She slipped those treats and gave us hugs, the smell of her cheap, musky perfume wafting from her hospital gown. Who the lady in the giant shoebox was, I certainly didn’t know. I sat in the front row of chairs in the funeral parlor holding my Sesame Street book and a wad of Kleenex. “For your tears, sweetie,” my mother said. I took it and continued to watch this strange ceremony.

Children don’t necessarily find death incomprehensible; they just see it differently. Sometimes that’s a good thing. A child does not understand biology and the stillness of a once active heart. A child does not put the pieces together and realize that the mourners are present for the sake of that slumbering individual at the front of the room. Remembering my lack of experience makes the mourning to come easier to bear, remembering that my first understanding of death was also that of heaven.

My mother led me to the table next to the dead lady’s casket where a stack of bright cards was sitting. There was a picture of a pretty lady holding a baby; she looked comfortable to hug, just like my mother and grandmother. “Your Grandma loved to talk about Mary. Take one so you can remember her,” my mother whispered. I took one and ran my chubby fingers over its raised details, around Mary’s ivory face and over the folds of her sky blue robe. I looked at the card and at my dead great-grandmother’s face, realizing their similarities. I realized then that Grandma was with this lady.

Car Seat

Worn like weathered windmills
your eyes – vacant –
grey and rusted
as this old truck of yours
in which I sit –
silent.
Rain falls hard – black –
like the ink you spilt
on your mother's white tablecloth
so many years ago.
You close your eyes.
A cardinal flies
into the living room window –
you wonder why.
You found his mate
dead in the garage,
wrapped in the cold canvas
that was your father's boat.
For three years the cardinal flies
into the window – then
he stops.
You open your eyes.
The horizon has disappeared.
Lightning bleeds into the black water like
the veins of an anguished god.
You close your eyes.
I feel the old truck beneath me.
It begins to move – which way
I cannot say.
I cannot say.

- Dan Treul, Sophomore

Emitting a signal at a lesser frequency

camera eyes click clicking
people going backwards forwards
TV antennas sticking up from heads to the skies
emitting pollution in forms
of generic boredom

her tongue crackled radio static
talking to me
I tried to tune my ears in
to her words but I kept
losing the station

so hit the streets running
with my spray can heart
rattling spraying words on walls
with bleeding paint fingers
till I collapse like old junker car

what will we do when life is
scanned into ones and zeros
till reality
is just fuzzy pixels
on old televisions

maybe unplug
and get a
beating heart
and fleshy new brain

- Rob Nussbaumer, Senior



STILL LIFE OF GARDEN ONIONS – Oil

Laura Zimmerman, Junior

Ghetto Screams

Money making, soul shaking, ghetto memories,
Monthly dues paid on wits,
Scamming sure gets old.

Power gleams in shadows' dreams,
Rabbit ears and tin foil,
Yoga powered TV.

Knees brilliant blue and hands strong with wear,
Windows boarded from antique scare.
Metal flies and buildings die,
But neighbors stay and grow.

Boys in blue sit and stare,
As TV becomes real life.
Sirens ring and devils sing,
Stone addresses line in rows.

Flowers fall and songs grow tall,
As another child loses his way
To a gun bearing, insignia wearing,
Cold death upon nights fall.

Pride rules and money drools,
Disappearing on stained springs.
Mothers cry and daddys die,
But children wait on high.

Their turn will come,
As demons hum,
And tears rain on those who try.

And all that's left is to die.

- Christopher J.M. Smith, *Sophomore*

Walking Around America

To Pablo Neruda

It happens that I am tired of America.
It happens that I go down its streets
stiffly, blind, like a ray of light
separating the light from the dark.

The sight of money brings tears to my eyes,
Benjamin Franklin's green eyes staring at me,
his green mouth consuming everything.

It happens that I am tired of America.
I am sick of corporations,
I want to see no more golden arches,
I am tired of being another exit along the highway.

Just the same it would be great
to kill a businessman with my smile
or to run naked through the mall
until I was arrested.

I do not want to go on being lied to.
I am tired of being a figure, a percentage, a number.
I will not die in the dark,
shaking with dreams and unfulfilled promises.

Because of this, I am not American;
the suit's eyes burn with hatred
when I pass, but they smile internally
when I drive my car.

I pass Abercrombie & Fitch and
landfills and layers of pigfat and
streams of gasoline which I hate.

I walk among fields of the dead,
past white houses stained red
that weep
slow bloody tears.

- Brian Keilen, Senior

Our First Anniversary

I decided not to move today.
I felt the weight of the past year
crushing down upon me,
and I decided not to move.

I should've gone to church today, gone and paid my respects.
But the face on the picture
and the face of the mother
are too much the same.
So I decided not to move.

One year ago today,
there was so much movement,
so much chaos,
so much pain.

This, our first anniversary,
would be met with the direct opposite:
no movement,
no chaos,
no pain,
numb-
ness.

- Lucas Kavanaugh, *Sophomore*



TORSO – Plaster *Jillian Osbourne, Junior*

grief

disbelief and the need for proof

a chill that can't be cured from a sweater

wearing a normal face with a smile that doesn't reach the eyes

bulging red-rimmed eyes without regard for other marks of beauty

sorrow pouring in torrents

cloudbursts of emotion

pure helplessness

looking straight ahead and not seeing

one heartbeat held in place by a single breath

no sense of direction

memories flying thousands of miles an hour

deep, encroaching fog, muddled enough to swallow me whole

inability to process thought

unspoken words

need to disintegrate something tangible and to scream at the intangible

mixed-up words and incomplete sentences

a sense of loss; something precious is gone

a tightened stomach that doesn't seem to ever relax

mechanical day-to-day movements

emotion that teases every nerve-ending and floods every cavity

unexplainable, incomprehensible, yet eventually undeniable

- Sue Snyder, Senior

“A, E, I, O, and YOU”
by Jessica Venlet, Freshman

I find it interesting that we can easily read words without any vowels. It seems to me our brains skip over these five letters carelessly. And when a,e,i,o,and u are gone, we notice, but are fully capable of reading on anyway. Some words are more difficult to read when vowels are removed. As we skim over these words (often doing the same with words we are unfamiliar with), we ultimately lose important details. And when we reach the end and look back, we may find that we have missed the greater meaning.

Our favorite band’s website reads, “fght ff yr dmns.” Fight off your demons. We are best friends. Bst frnds sh sys. Best friends don’t do what she is doing. I feel as though I have been stranded in a deep hole and calling for her to help; she only half-heartedly makes an attempt. “Can’t hang out today. Next week?” she says. I find it peculiar how things change so quietly at first, hardly noticeable. Until suddenly the differences, that had followed us around in silence, jump out and separate us with a wall of mystery. Blocking off all the beach trips and rock shows—our memories. W dn’t vn knw ch thr nymr. Friends shouldn’t change like this. Nt lk ths. Her excuses fall on deaf ears. *Sorry* is weak, a lie by Webster. Overused, under meant. *Sorry*, as the definition reads, is an apology for hurting, interrupting, or incon-veniencing someone. Thank you, Webster, but that means nothing. Served without action, *sorry* is only a bun with no meat. *Sorry* is an empty word, with no face, no expression. It is a filler, an excuse for momentary selfishness. Bst frnds. Losing my best friend to her school and her man—her boy. “I have to go, Dstn is beeping in.” *Yeah, okay, bye.*

When a,e,i,o and *you* are gone, we notice, but do we read on anyway? And when we reach the end and look back, will it be too late?

The Jeremiad of Mr. Fry

Pity the poet, said Stephen.
Pity what's left of his craft.
For all of its tutors are witless
And all its disciples are daft.
"Let it flow!" comes the cry. "Fill the work with emotion!
As boundless and wild and deep as the ocean!"
But all that you get is a puddle,
With not enough room for a raft.

Pity the poet, said Stephen.
What once was a calling genteel,
For a man with a heart like church windows
And a soul of Castilian steel,
To lift up mankind through transcendence ecstatic
Is butchered by teenagers, trite and asthmatic.
In disgust, he abandons his writings
And leaves his black ink to congeal.

Pity the poet, said Stephen;
For the sculptor has chisel and stone,
The artist has pigments and brushes,
Musicians have tempo and tone.
For the tools of his trade, each *artiste* utilizes
Resources exclusive, of all shapes and sizes,
But the poet has only his language
Banal to the bloodstream and bone.

So pity the poor bloody poet!
The genius entrenched and repressed;
His tools but his quill and his language,
His psyche disturbed and perplexed.
With sculptures of words in the second dimension
Fine-tailored with meaning and free of pretension,
To fashion a jewel from the rubble
The poet is treblefold blest.

- Autumn, Sabol, Junior

Reconciliation

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Reconciliation (also called Confession or Penance) serves the purpose of reconciling sinners to God and to the community of His Church.

Through the musty, woven divider he sees:

Tanned hands, except for the band of pallid flesh
where the watch counts down the workday,
hands that buy cigars before contributing to the grocery fund;

Wrinkled hands, speckled with age,
knuckles cramped and bulbous, clutching a rosary,
hands that doubt the purpose of life at eighty;

Thick hands, wide fingertips ingrained with dirt,
unsure of how to hold themselves,
hands that urged love too soon;

Small hands, delicate despite the scrapes,
sweaty palms pressed together,
hands that stole a sister's favorite doll;

Tense hands, nails making white half-moons in each palm,
calluses telling stories of unrelenting struggle,
hands that itch to reach for the flask in the back-pocket.

Through the webbed half-light he studies his own hands.
Do they see his sins in the scars and wrinkles?
Do they see the lineage they all share:
Those hands, scarred but gentle from knowledge,
trembling at what they were capable of doing,
hands that bled for all humanity.

- Rose Daum, Senior



SEATED FIGURE – Wood Block
Jean Boot, Senior



DAYTIME SONG – Oil
RaNae Couture, Junior

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