

Orpheus

Art & Literary Magazine



Volume 119

Issue 01

About Orpheus

Orpheus and its predecessor, *The Exponent*, have been student-generated for the last 119 years. Each term, a call to University of Dayton students to submit prose, poetry, fine art, photography, and design pieces is put forth. Selection of works is juried by faculty panels called together by the Orpheus Art & Design and Literary staff. Coordination, editing, art direction, design, production, and communication with printers are all handled by the publication's student-populated staff.

Orpheus

Art & Literary Magazine

Lead Designer & Editor

Jack Kargl

Assistant Designer & Editor

Mira Holifield

Art & Design Selection Panel

Geno Luketic

Hsuan Tsen

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ABC Whyte Plus Variable

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Commune Nuit Debout

Cover and theme photography shot by
Jack Kargl, assisted by Kelsey Vonderhaar.

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Editors' Letters

Reader,

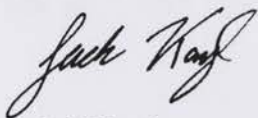
My years at the University of Dayton have been marked by a number of memorable foods and flavors. Freshman year: mundane sandwiches, acrid salads, thick yogurt, Natty Light. Due to some sensitivities and allergies, my freshman dining hall experience was rough. I subsisted on a steady diet of turkey sandwiches and build-your-own salads that induce a gag to this day when I think back on them. Sophomore year: nourishing phở, revitalizing grain bowls, cozy pumpkin bread, Twisted Tea. Progressing from the dining hall to a kitchen all my own was a welcomed improvement. Most years, I was the signature cook in a household with the kind of roommates that were impressed by the smell of sizzling garlic. I still have a photo of the first meal I cooked for myself sophomore year. Not that I was tremendously proud of myself for making it, I cooked a lot growing up, it just felt like a victory to finally have control over what I ate.

That year, as Coronavirus sent us home and sparked a run on yeast from grocery stores, I began making my own bagels. My favorite meal to this day is smoked salmon and cream cheese on a homemade, two day, everything bagel with a mug of pour over coffee. Those meals, the work that went into them, the satisfaction of eating, it made me feel better. Junior year: vaguely fruity seltzer water, sugary maple syrup brussels sprouts, spicy Italian breaded chicken, sweet red wine. Through an incredibly tough junior year, I kept myself going by cooking meals; not the because of the product, but because of the process. Cooking got me up and moving and the kitchen was a safe space in my crowded house where I knew I could get some time alone to take a deep breath.

Senior year.

It's interesting that a certain taste is often used to describe the most sentimental moments of our lives—bittersweet. Bittersweet foods sit in an uncanny valley where it's hard to decide if they're good or not. They're confusing, off-putting, maybe a little scary, but they're kind of nice at the same time. I have a similar reaction when biting into an Art Street breakfast sandwich that's still ice cold in the middle, or burning my tongue into sandpaper on a coffee from Heritage, or sipping the last dregs from a cooler of jungle juice at a party on Frericks. All of these sensations are unpleasant, but kind of nice at the same time. For as much as it sucks to bite into a sandwich that is more mayo than turkey, I will miss it tremendously. The foods I ate at UD don't make me think sour, salty, or savory anymore; they're all bittersweet now.

See you around,



Jack Kargl
Lead Designer and Editor

Dear Readers,

When I think of Orpheus, I think of a mouth full of laughing. Scarfing down a KU cheeseburger in the hall outside the office. The taste of scalded instant coffee at the back of my throat. Whispered recitations of the poems you sent to us. When I think about how this is my last letter from the editor for Orpheus, I'm so very grateful for everything. I'm grateful I have been trusted with the words of writers across campus. I'm grateful to have been a witness to the personal, the strange, the beautiful, the tragic, the writing. I'm very, very grateful.

Mouthfeel isn't so much what you feel as it is where you feel it. This edition of Orpheus has treatises on teeth, on kissing, on tasting, on biting, on swallowing, on anything with a mouth. The writers and artists of the following pages have been curated to show a full spectrum of feeling from grief to hope, love to cold indifference, but they all have something clear to speak out about. I invite you to explore the art and writing in the next couple dozen pages carefully and playfully, then decide what you'd like to say for yourself. I invite you to never stop writing.

Peace and Poetry Forever and Ever!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Graham". The "B" is large and stylized, and the name "Graham" is written in a cursive script.

Bridget Graham
Editor-In-Chief

Mouthfeel

It's a feeling. Not in your head, not in your heart, not in your stomach. It's in your mouth. It's stuck in your teeth, on the tip of your tongue.

Mouthfeel: the thing you can feel on your tongue, chafing your cheeks, creating canker sores. It's the sweetest thing you've ever had. It's so bitter it stings.

Mouthfeel: the million nerve endings burning on your lips. The scratch at the back of your throat that won't go away. The words you can't stop saying out loud.

Mouthfeel: your burnt tongue, numb for days. It's your grinding and gnashing of teeth. A mouthful of food, air, nothing.

You have something to eat, something to say, something to show.

Spit it out.



As Flavor Fleets

Simon Didat | Junior | Electrical Engineering

Taste
Make haste
Let not that wonder go to waste
Indulge not to fill but for flavor
Sweet savor
All else is but a caloric favor
That I may not waver
But hear this... not gluttony
But greed
Yes, greed of the tongue
The rosebuds have stung
Now giving way
To a sharper inhalation
This now discarded delight
Brings relief
And grief
I should stick to gum

Waffle Soles

Kelsey Vonderhaar | Senior | Graphic Design







Superfast

Jack Kargl (w/ VAP 320) | Senior | Graphic Design

Emulation

Allison Matis | Senior | Pre-Medicine



It's Always Three With You

Bridget Graham | Senior | English

SEE NO EVIL.

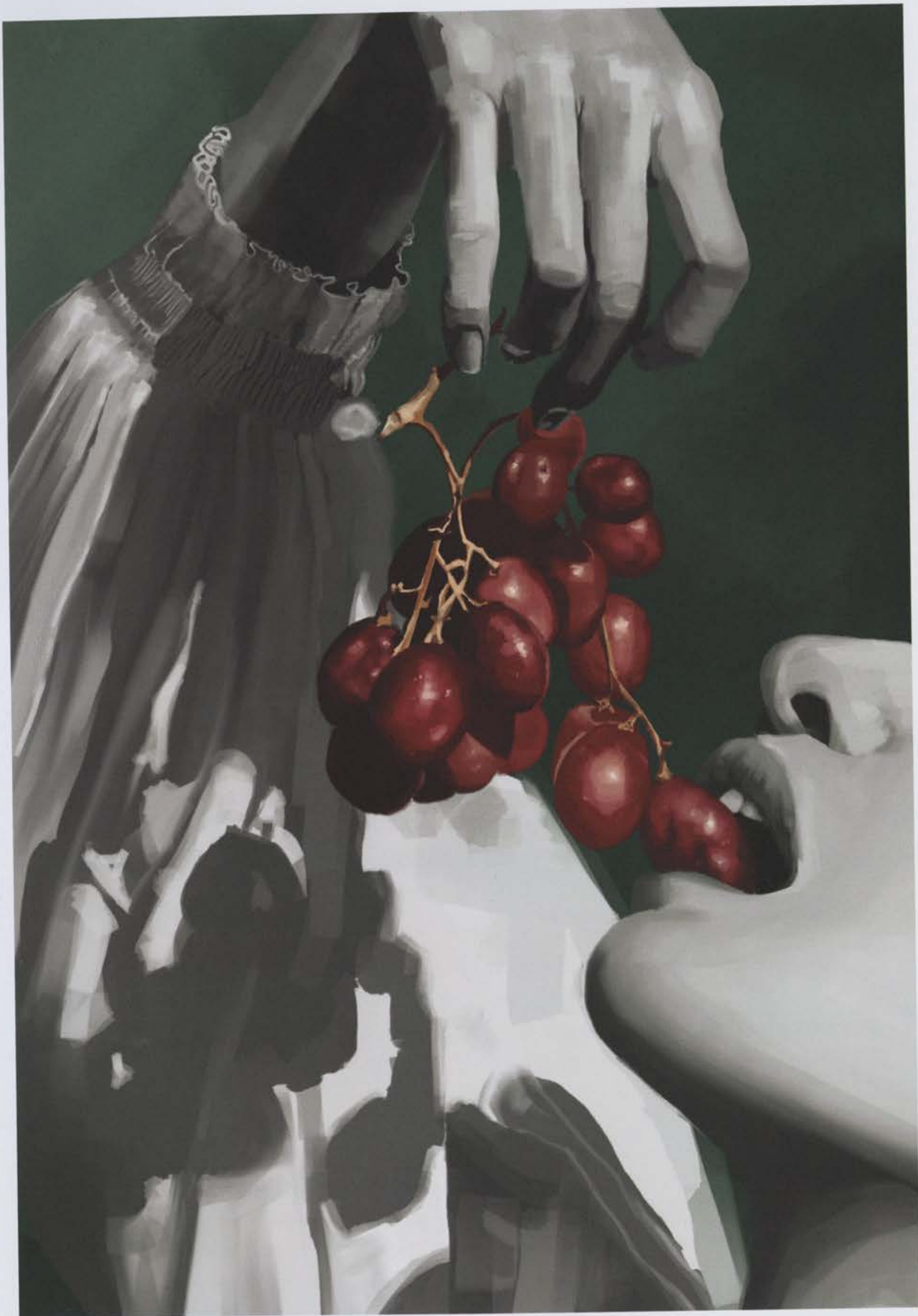
On Tuesdays I have to fall out of bed to wake up, or at least open my eyes. I have to remind myself, the joy was real, I know it was real. By midafternoon, I'm staring myself down in the mirror like a boxer from across the ring. I know you loved me. I know I was good, really good. I know so many things. I know everything. But it turns to nothing by the time I go to bed, it's all, I don't know. I don't really remember. It's like—when it's dark and I'm alone and I'm listening to other people being together. And It's the same old story, the same questions about who is going to Hell. The same answers: All of you, but also only me.

SPEAK NO EVIL.

It's Wednesday and the wind no longer screams with me; instead I get the soft roar of other people. Their mouths: speaking. My mouth: eating. When my molars stick together from the mix of melted sugar and cinnamon and butter, it takes a conscious effort to start chewing again, my bones melded together with tar. I don't understand why it's so hard to open my mouth. I never used to have these problems, never ever. But now I have nothing to say, my teeth are fused shut. I am overly aware of my tongue. From the back of my head I can only whisper, you have to know I was trying to speak. But I've never been able to control how the words sounded when they came out.

ACTUALLY, I'M HEARING A LOT OF EVIL RIGHT NOW.

It really is every day, isn't it? And always in that old petty pace, my head fills my ears. I hate the song myself, it's overplayed and trite and shallow. I can't listen, but only one mean mantra drowns it out really: I don't want to be alone anymore. I want to go back to that old way of life, hearing only love, seeing only daisies and my friends my friends my friends. But my eardrums are busted, my heart's giving out. I've gotten old. I'll go at it Van Gogh, I'll rip it off of my head. I only need my mouth, my hands. From now on, I'll live in my body, I'll drink your sweet wine. I'll spend forever swimming in your slow-moving lava lamp. And the polluted Kentucky waters. And in memory, sweet on my tongue but burning in the back of my throat, flipping around and around in my stomach. I'll learn to live with the fact that things get stuck in your teeth when they come back up, that they cut up your gums and throat. I know I've always had blood at the back of my mouth, but I swear to God I'll spit it out someday.



Liquid Smooth

Chloe Reilly | Sophomore | Graphic Design

Sam Taylor
Junior
Communication
Creative Writing

Humph

My handwriting seems
Lowly

It seems
Old
And though I see change
I haven't dwelled on it since
Kindergarten

I think I need to be healing
Again
For today,
My excitement comes
From standing above
The busted shower drain
And smelling
Pepper
Cooking below

There's no point
In that

I'll prefer the shirts with buttons
I'll ditch the closet mirrors

I'll write literature
I'll make signatures

I'll use cursive and
Mind my weight
As boys do

Gap- ing

Your mouth is a wound.
How can you say it's not so
when I can see bone?

Angela Weiland | Senior
Human Rights Studies

Breakfast of Champions
Claire Murphy | Junior | Fine Art





Some Velvet Evening

Caitlin Mahoney | Senior | Psychology



Tossico

Sean A. Koeller (w/ Mackenzie Schaff) | Senior | Biology



Photo by Jack Kargl.

Number 37

Quan Thai | Sophomore | Graphic Design



The Dayton Arcade: Workers and Industry at Large

Grace Reilly | Senior | Graphic Design

Egg Dishes

Around the World

India



Egg Bhurji

Tunisia



Shakshuka

Argentina



Revuelto Gramajo

China



Egg Foo Young

Denmark

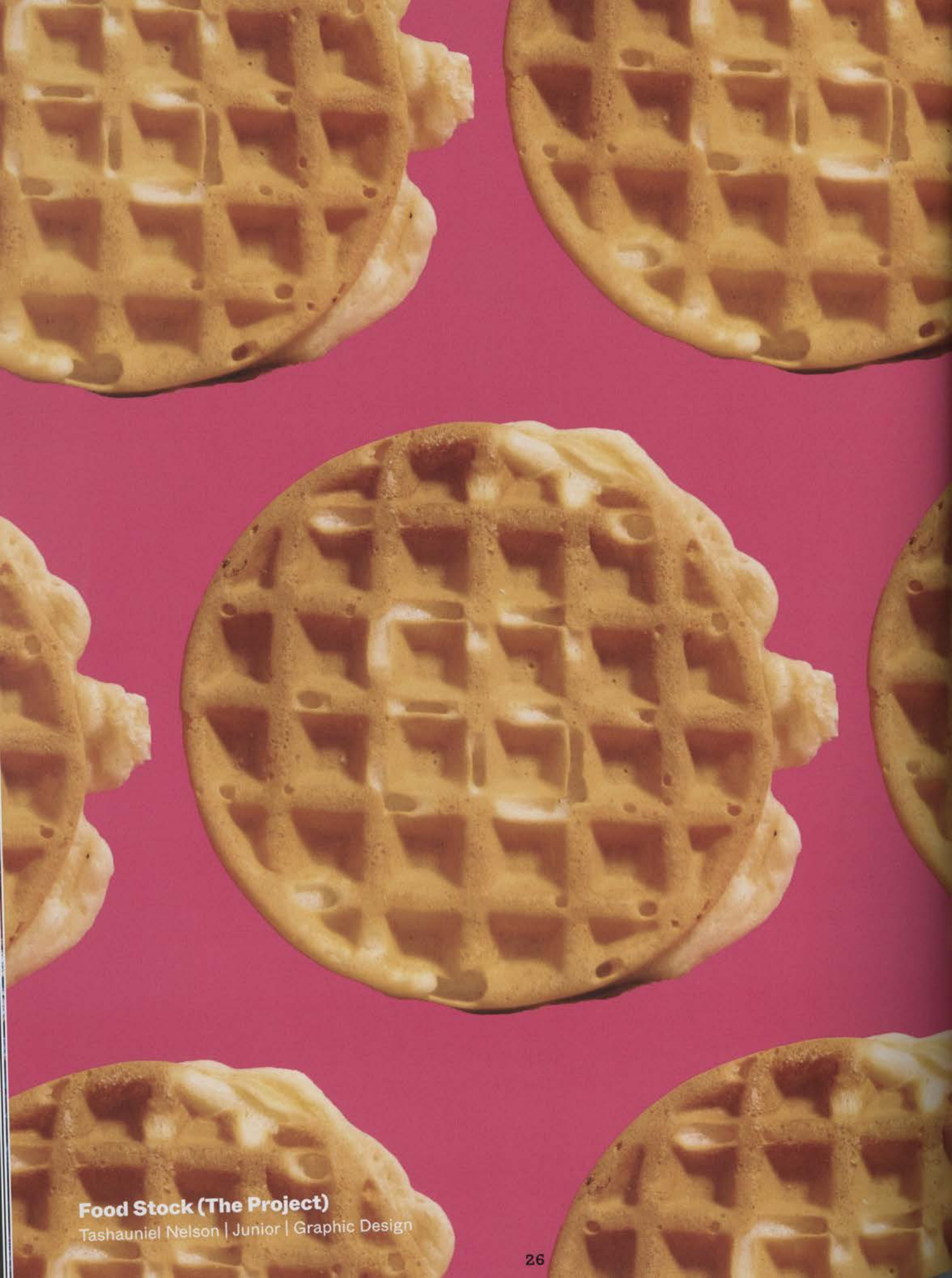


egg kage



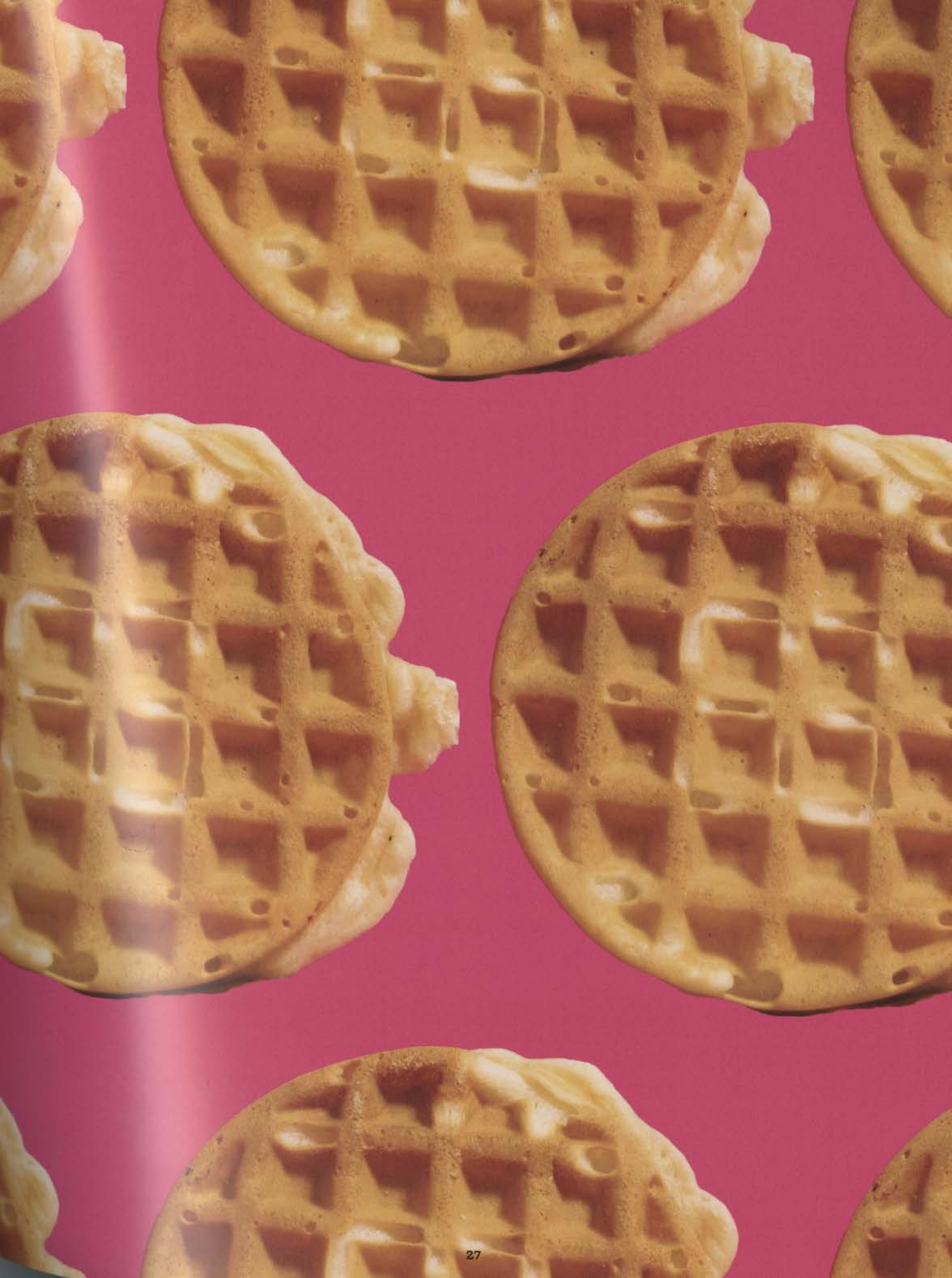
Egg Dishes Around the World

Jillian Whitson | Junior | Graphic Design



Food Stock (The Project)

Tashauniel Nelson | Junior | Graphic Design



What the Hell am I Supposed to Eat?

Lindsay Coulter
Junior
English

"You're really gonna have that?"

"Remember you ate this when you cry about something not fitting right."

"That has too much sodium in it."

"That's all sugar you know."

What the hell am I supposed to eat then?

Food is weird. In theory, it's nice because it fuels your body and makes you feel good. It brings comfort in sad times, but also can be used in a way of celebrating. Some people are really picky; they don't branch out with their food. I honestly don't know how to feel about food: some days I love it, and other days I have to choke it down my throat. I have my favorite food and I have foods that I hate as well. Ask anyone, they'll tell you how much I hate soup. No reason, I'll eat it when I'm sick, but I just still think it's stupid. I just think I'm personally scared from the time that one summer I gave in to the snide comments and somehow survived off smoothies for a summer.

I remember it very clearly, the comments that came when I ate pasta or pizza rolls. But, like, as a sophomore in high

school I didn't really know other foods out there. I didn't go to the grocery store with my mom. I just ate what she brought home and what I could get my hands on. But that summer I worked at a country club where they no longer took the food out of our paychecks; they required credit cards. I didn't have that. So, I pack my lunch right? What do I pack, cold pizza? That's what we had outside in the fridge, and they didn't have microwaves at work. And mom told me bread had too many carbs. So, sandwiches were a no go. We didn't have a fridge to put our lunches in, so salad would have been brown by the time I got to it. I remember just getting too stressed out to find something to bring to work that would be okay, something that someone wouldn't think to themselves 'That's not healthy to eat. I ended up taking nothing. The whole shift I wouldn't eat and I would be hungry. I remember the feeling of taking a drink of cold water, letting it glide down my throat and coldly burn its way into my warm, empty stomach. It's still a feeling I hate to this day, it's just such a gross feeling. When my mom picked me up, she asked if I had eaten.

What the hell did she think I would have eaten?

"No, I didn't." I said.

"You have to eat Lindsey," she scoffed.

We would get home and I would eat the dinner that everyone else had to eat. It was meatball subs. I love the soggy bread that soaks up the red sauce with just a meatball on top. I scarfed it down and I was so hungry. Dinner is always my favorite meal, because nothing usually got said when we all ate the same thing. The carbs weren't mentioned, and neither was the dairy. It was the calm of the day.

But lunch times on the weekend? A war zone. I was about to make pasta when I got the usual remarks.

"That's full of carbs and carbs are sugar and sugar is bad."

It's the same pasta you ate yesterday woman, I thought. *It didn't just become the enemy just because I decided to eat it.* I settled for a multi-grain waffle and smoothie, but here's the kicker: I put frozen fruit and yogurt and apple juice. Sounds healthy right? Wrong.

"Frozen fruit is full of sugar Lindsey, and so is the apple juice you put in that. Also that frozen waffle is doing nothing for you either."

Well, that's interesting. I didn't know that fruit that was frozen had more sugar in it than fruit you just bought unfrozen. Crazy, right? Besides, it's not like I can just put milk in the smoothie, I am lactose intolerant. So again,

What the hell do I eat?

Fast forward to sophomore year of college. I still have my fear of eating in public. But I actually eat what I want to eat now, and it's way healthier than in high school, because I can do it for myself. I go grocery shopping for myself. I pick the coconut milk to put in my smoothies so that they are creamier and better. I didn't know coconut milk was even a thing when I was in high school. I pick the red lentil gluten free pasta when I go shopping. I am known as the one of my roommates that eats the healthiest, they all beg me to make protein balls, which are just oats, honey, peanut butter and chocolate chips mixed together and thrown into the fridge. It's all whole ingredients that aren't bad, they are all considered healthy.

But I do still have my issues with balancing food, and still have the days where I have to force myself to eat, force myself to have more than a handful of raspberries and an egg. Especially at my job—I still refuse to eat there. And when I go grocery shopping that little nagging in the back of my brain is still there. That there is always something

bad in the food and that I then can't eat it. Because even at college, people *still* think it's okay to make those food jokes and pokes at me. I was walking back from the gym the other day and one of my friends had facetimed me asking for help on a quiz. He then proceeds to ask me where I was coming from.

"I just finished working out," I told him.

"Oh dang it, I was gonna ask you to go to the gym later tonight."

"Ah, yeah well, I have waffle and movie night with the boys tonight, so I went earlier."

"Really, you're going to go eat a waffle after the gym?" he asked. "You literally just wasted your time going to the gym then. You're supposed to eat healthy after working out."

So really, did a lot change? Because I am still asking myself,

What the hell do these people want me to eat?



Food Stock (The Project)

Tashauniel Nelson | Junior | Graphic Design

Brian Schmidt

Junior

English

The Corkscrew Tooth

One of my teeth is crooked, that much is plain to see
An unwanted deviation from my rows of straight roots
But it tilts clockwise day by day, ever so unnoticeably
Until one day I woke, and it was a slope absolute
No one else seems to notice, but I can feel it tilting still
A painless process, it moves as the clock on its way to south
And micrometer a moment it corkscrews like a drill
Yet the tooth looks to have been wrenched by a wraith in my mouth
With the taste of plastic, I spend my nights holding its place
For fear that it may corkscrew a micrometer to much
that one day I will wake and be abased
To find not a slope, but a cavernous valley with blood a clutch
I rise each morn to repeat the routine and perpetuate the tooth
And it forever corkscrews back and forth to bring me soothe

Sam Taylor
Junior
Communication
Creative Writing

Lining

Yellow painted doors
Leave me tranced
in colored chipping
As the freeze of
The latter months
Cracks them more

It's easy to hunger
But hard to eat
On these days
Where my sidewalks
And lip creases
Are all
Lined
In liquid white

Good morning
Lovely stranger
I'm hoping to eat by four

My swallow-spit dinner
Making better evenings
Splinter
Into stale ones



Sixth Sense

Jillian Whitson | Junior | Graphic Design



Luna Gifts + Botanicals Logo Redesign
Gracie King | Junior | Graphic Design

Easy Fix

Haley Huelsman
Senior | English

There are few things
I hate more than
heavy, open mouth
breathing and waking up
without a soul.

Pressing one's lips
together shouldn't be
such a difficult pursuit
and studies have shown
nasal breathing is healthier.

But what if,
while I sleep,
I too fall into
this offensive habit?

Along with those
steady huffs,
sour with discouragement,
does my soul slowly
slip into the night?

Beginning each day
with a tight-lipped
smile shouldn't be
such a difficult pursuit

and studies have shown
an optimistic attitude
adds years to a hollow life.

Living with Women

Abby Bruns | Senior | Political Science

A toast to the nights of feminine divinity before they're gone
And the inexplicable comfort of having a group of females by your side

Here's to tales of embarrassing moments and cringy pick-up lines
Heard only in the security of trust between women

Here's to the unintentional cackles
Reserved only for friendships and living room pillows

Here's to the makeshift charcuterie boards and cheap wine
For the sake of luxury on a ramen noodle salary

Here's to raiding through closets that do not belong to you
Searching for pieces of clothing that can turn confidence into a weapon

Here's to hitting the tin of the communal eyeshadow pallet
And the playlist exclusively designated for getting ready

Here's to the drinking games with flexible rules
And the unbuttoning of pants for bloating stomachs

Here's to cramming into the single stalls of campus bars
And reapplying lip gloss in cracked mirrors

Here's to serenading other women in the middle of the dance floor
Without any concern for the male gaze

Here's to the thrift store finds
And the unspoken acknowledgment that "yes, you can borrow this later"

Here's to the morning debriefs of the night before
And the brunch dates that follow

Here's to living with women in college
And four years of female glory

BROOKE'S BEST OF CHICAGO

- MY FAVORITE SHOPPING SPOTS
- PLACES THAT INSPIRE ME
- NIGHTS WITH FRIENDS
- FAMILY FAVORITES



Brooke's Best of Chicago

Brooke Baker | Junior | Graphic Design



Erin Pinto

Freshman

Political
Science

There is a woman in Florida who believes I will be a novelist.
She wants me to use our conversation as inspiration,
Understand her humor as she will understand my words.

She does not know me
As I do not know her
But the word 'novel'
felt different as it fell from her mouth,
rolled off of her tongue,
and traversed the empty air to me,
then it does as it crosses my dreams

The woman in Florida knows my grandmother,
she knows the pride in her voice as she declares me an artist,
knows nothing of my art.

She knows sunsets as I know white pages.
She watches the sky,
the everchanging neighbors,
the wine as it leaves her glass.
I watch the black ink,
the everchanging words,
the wine as it leaves her glass.

The woman in Florida does not register my hesitance
nor my gaze at her hand,
does not feel the importance of the shape of her mouth.

I do not reciprocate her confidence.
I do not feel the same letters
passing my teeth,
rumbling through my vocal cords,
entering the world
as something material—
something possible.

The woman in Florida does not know that her empty glass
tints her belief in my future
with fear and unknowns and the possibility of failure.

The woman in Florida does not know that her words are nonetheless
motivation and inspiration.
She does not know that she has picked up on my favorite secret
She does not know that her word has changed mine.



Muddy Ecosystem

Colleen Glavic | Junior | Graphic Design

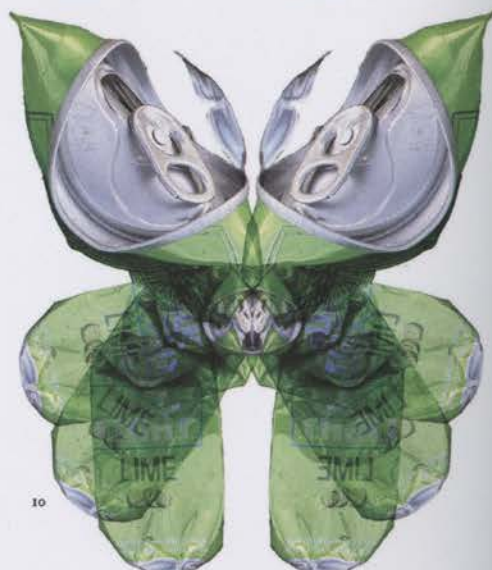
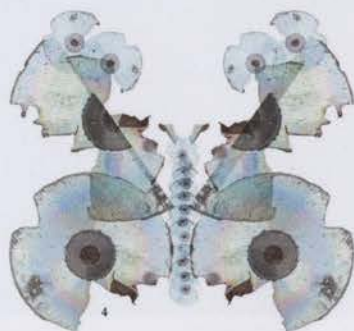




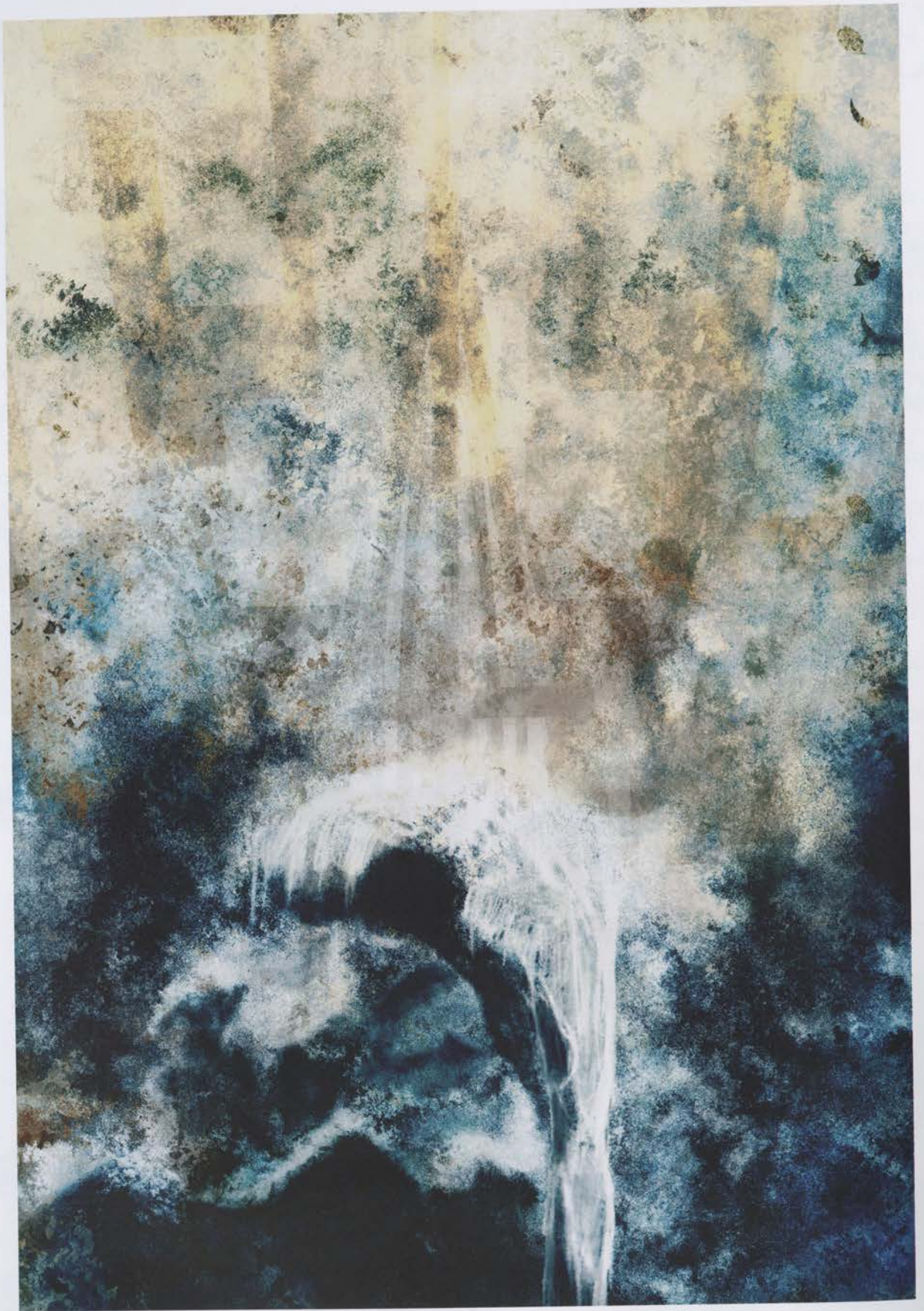
Losing Track

Jillian Whitson | Junior | Graphic Design

DECOMPOSING BUTTERFLIES



1. A modern GLASS BOTTLE would take **4000 years** or more to *decompose*.
2. When a PLASTIC MASK breaks up into smaller pieces, it can take as long as **450 years** to *decompose*. PLASTIC does not *decompose*. This means that all PLASTIC that has ever been produced and has ended up in the environment is still present there in one form or another.
3. TEXTILES can take up to **200+ years** to *decompose* in landfills.
4. It is estimated that it will take over **1 million years** for a CD to completely *decompose*.
5. CIGARETTE FILTERS take **18 months to 10 years** or more to *decompose*.
6. **120 billion of them** are discarded into the environment. WASHED into rivers, lakes and the ocean, EATEN by birds, animals and fish, they are ***the most littered item*** in the U.S. and the world.
7. It is estimated that PLASTIC CUTLERY such as plastic forks, knives and spoons would take over **200 years** to break down and take up to **200+ years** to *decompose*.
8. LATEX BALLOONS can take anywhere between **six months to four years** to biodegrade. In the time before they completely *decompose*, these BALLOONS can still wreak havoc on the ecosystems they end up in—and oftentimes, they do.



Number 34

Quan Thai | Sophomore | Graphic Design

A Cry for the Woman You Prayed About

Erika Cambron | Junior | English

Mother warned me about you.

When I turned twelve;
For every lingering glance
When I said a name at dinner,

Blush.

She smiled, sang a lullaby: a

Woman must make herself respectable, a
Woman must never dance out of turn, a
Woman allows what she allows, without a
Woman a man is nothing, a
Woman mustn't smile too broad, a

Woman must not fall onto her knees unless asked, a
Woman has so much power.

I know she hovers over her side of the bed,
blinking away
Dry tears into the escape of her slumber,

She played the piano.

At what age did you hold your first woman?
Was it tender.
Was it beautiful?

Let me ask again,
At what age did you hold your first woman,
Did you hear voices?

Do I make myself small enough for you.
Wonder aimlessly; rescue me.

To discover.
To make a home out of
Feather-like touches;

Burnt birch and brick.
Cobble stone streets

That hold the weight of who we were,
Did you feel blood flow downward.
Heat rise, pooling at the hip.
Reclaim it. Renamed it.

Hands recall curves,
Caress skin. Your Great grandfather did too.
He left it in his will;
Desire women that hold
Mountains in their eyes,
With skin kissed by the sun, with
nowhere to run. At mercy, at the
Strength of your voice
At the end of your cane. Captivating

When you were inside did you love me.
Did you have a vision. Did you see our future?
A white picket fence,

My grandmother prays for light-colored eyes.

Carrying on God, Gold, Glory. When you
Finished, was I still the one you'd love to lay next to?

I touched too soon.

Compliment my necklace.
How it hangs. Lightly.
How it shines. Like money
Thin, virgencita cries when you look at her.
Plated, drenched in horrors committed.

Exhausting.
Caring for the hearts of her descendants, of
Warriors. Hypnotic women who cave at the
Hands of glowing red men.

Does she not know?
About the man she plays with. He'd
Never choose her if he knew she was a witch.

We could never win,
Different shades of the same green
That brought us here. There's a trick,
It's inheritance, honey.

Or am I your rebellious act. A conquest.
An anecdote for fellow travelers. Is that why you ask to

Meet at mine? Five hundred twenty-nine

Years, you sailed an ocean too.
You want me to sing to you?

'Twas mercy brought me from my pagan land.
Taught my benighted soul to understand.

And when you part, will you lie about what you've had?

Crawl into my bed, familiarize yourself. A delicacy
Burning incense, candles etched with your name.
Shadows want to drown you but I want to grow sunflowers.

Is this natural?
Do you see me. Do you think I'm smart.
Do you regress. Do you see red? With
The way I look in the night.
In the comfort of no light, there's nothing

Right with the way you love me.

Can I be honest? Can I be honest. You
Make small talk with the owner of my life.
Do you think the night is reparations?

You're different.
But I am not.
I am the son lost in rio grande; the mother
Folding your shirts. I have nothing of
Mine and everything of you
You want my descendants too?

Let the world know.
You won again.
Let Savior know you've never failed.
Another brown girl cared for him.



Thanksgiving

Marie Pece

Senior

English

My grandmother entered the kitchen to the cheers of her entire clan. Despite the smell of turkey leaving us all salivating, the room's attention shifted from the buttered bird sizzling in the oven to our matriarch.

All the grandkids meandered over to her for the ritual greetings. She turned down hugs this holiday, the sum of her risk factors leaving her especially vulnerable.

My turn came. I put down my cider, a buzz already materializing in my temples. I offered my best smile to mask any nerves I forgot to check. She returned the gesture without a drop of concern, already engrossed in the jovial atmosphere.

My gaze climbed her face, more frail than I recalled, to the harsh, brown wig line framing her forehead.

I had not seen her since the summer. My mom called me a few weeks into the fall semester with the news. A malignant lump in my grandmother's breast. Minor but unpredictably ravenous. Midway through chemo, anticipating radiation in the new year.

All those hours she spent concealed under that cumbersome hairdryer. All the bobby pins she left scattered across the guest room every visit. All the last minute checks in the mirror to hide her bald spot before leaving the house. All made vain in a matter of months.

For a fraction of a second, all the air in my throat stood still. The lingering cider on my tongue turned sour. I felt no hunger. My lips went dry as I pulled them into a tight smile to retain my composure, conscious of a pinching sensation in my cheeks.

I snapped back to making eye contact, worried about any insecurity my staring might prompt.

If she did catch me looking, she did not mention it. After all, she had plenty more offspring to greet and a feast to celebrate. No time for ruminations. Only gratitude.

Chewable Fragments:

An *n*-Course Famine

Tobin Muratore | Senior | Philosophy/Physics

"Who could deny that the crucified was well hung?... As for Jahweh's immense throbbing member, that is a matter of the gravest consequence. Through it he establishes himself as the supreme transcendent object, eternally postponing the black spasm whose result is detumescence and the end of the universe. Were God to ever sacrifice his erection for a taste of death the principle of identity would dissipate into scorched dust, and being would relapse into the dark... In the final spasm of sexual anguish God bites off his penis and—with his maw dripping blood—mewls like a dying hyena into the void... Understood negatively it denies the false absolute of theos, but understood positively it affirms the true absolute marked by the 'privative' a-; the nihil from which creation proceeds, the undifferentiable cosmic zero."

—Nick Land, *The Thirst for Annihilation*

The mouth ruptures the otherwise placid face—for Freud, the death drive connects to the original severance, universal ontological orphaning, the revelation of finitude that tastes so bitter it must be made into a game-game-game like an endless trench trauma nightmare. But the mouth refuses to be one dimensional, an opening which by its permission of dehiscence grounds all manner of connections: word-vomiting, kissing and kissable, insatiable intake. The mouth is an organ without organs, too slippery for organicity, a hole into which anthropomorphism collapses.

Hungry Night

He felt the car strike something, something that gave and squealed. He moved machine-like to brake, pull over, and put on the flashers before he gave into to a face gripping dread. She woke up, bleary eyed and confused.

"Is everything okay?"

"I don't know." He breathed in jagged sighs. "Julia, I hit something."

"You're just being neurotic again. It was probably a trash bag."

"I don't know." He got out, feeling the heavy saliva flow that signaled vomit. His phone's harsh light disclosed gore streaking the bumper. He got back into the car, slumping into his seat with resignation. "There's blood all over the front. I'm going to walk back and see what's up."

Her face blanched and she got out with him. He walked towards the point of collision, imagining that they would find a child, angel-haired and half-faced, brain syrupy as it mixed with cow shit and ditchwater. Then he would wind up with his virgin mouth roughly pimped out in some humid deep Southern prison cell. She wondered: "It could have been a trash bag filled with rotten hamburger?"

Amuse Bouche

Maybe we could elevate sight as the king of the senses, drawing upon the rational light of nature and bringing us face to face with God. But I can never forget one of the most vertiginous moments of my life, hallucinating all manner of horrible violations upon my person, when I had the sense that I was forced to taste every surface in the dingy, alien rental. Imagined or not, the affective possibility of tasting every dust mote and shit spec still haunts me.

What is Eating Backwards?

His face reflected, a crust of deniable color against the bounding darkness beyond the window. He turned away from it and towards her after a long silence. "You know, when I was a kid, driving all day through the countryside like this scared me."

She laughed. "You were scared? Of what? Cows in a field?"

He almost wished he hadn't brought it up, but a slight embarrassment was better than silence. "At the risk of sounding pretentious, I was scared of the gaps between the houses. I imagined myself living in one of those farmhouses you can see from the highway, and all I could think of was the fact that daily life would seem like an insignificant little island."

She gestured with comforting equanimity, as if the mention of childhood was an artificially inserted distance, and he remained haunted by the same quivering fear. "Well, they aren't really gaps, I mean, during the day you can see all the trees and gently undulating hills and all that kind of stuff. That's why there's a sign for one of

those scenic overlooks every few miles."

"And what's the point of a big open view? You can see how the woods would seem like an expansive impersonal beyond to a suburban kid. Wandering for days, drinking sludge from a stream, dying, shitting, curled up in the leaves with a growing colony of amoebas."

She laughed, with a harsher edge this time. "If you're going to be that neurotic, you could be afraid of anything." A hundred-song playlist began to mechanically repeat for the second time that day. After she yawned several times in quick succession, he offered to take the wheel. They switched, and she nodded off after a brief conflict against her own neck and eyelids.

He soon began to regret his generosity, becoming conscious of the highway's pull towards oblivion, flaking painted lines eternally receding into the invisible. He decided to play a game, to close his eyes for several seconds and proceed along the road as he remembered it. This invigorated him. The highway shrank to a two-lane country road with traitorous serpent curves, only enhancing the play of fear and relief in his gamed experience. Blissful darkness, turning the wheel blindly, knowing his eyes would open on a curve just like the last.

Mountain Dew Phenomenology

She was bored in the morning, so she went to the vending machine for a waste-colored bottle of mountain dew—easy to analyze, acrid sweetness over chemical caffeine harshness, the individual chemical flavors almost separable in the mouth-lab. She sat in the office, less bored but now with a persistent caffeine/sugar headache (~90 grams sugar/bottle). At the party later that night, what would greet her other than that same nuclear excess green, a taste so familiar she could tell it was spiked, a color so strong she could pick it out from the blood when the slipped mickey let her smash the glass on his head with indifference.

The Taste of Eating Backwards

He almost felt relieved when he heard the whimpers of a dog nearby, until he saw it there: legs and back smeared along the road, intestines glistening, parts still heaving and functioning outside the skin while fragments of broken bone remained static, cutting the slick meat further. He threw up in a swampy ditch between road and impenetrable forest while Julia stood by him, turning away from him and the other mammal. The whimpers continued to fill the air, the dog's muscles visible as it

tried to lift its head towards the driving pair and barked in weak jolts. Brian stood there, the little sounds putting the dog's raw nerves and his into forced contact. Julia walked off. Seconds later, the scene became washed in the flashing amber of the reversing hazard lights.

He watched Julia pop the trunk and pull out the tire iron. She walked towards him grimly. "We have to do something."

"I know. It was my fault, I'll do it." He could tell from her tightlipped face that the whimpering horror of the event had already forced itself into her as much as it forced into him. Why didn't he just let her keep driving, or turn up the music, or pull over for a nap?

"No, let's flip a coin."

Now here was a task he could do, a relief from standing near the glistening, living pile. He rummaged in the cup holder. While he looked for a coin, headlights shone through the windows, coming to a stop across the road.

"Y'all need some help?" A man walked across the two lanes, but Brian couldn't make out his features from inside the car. "Flat tire or sumn'?"

He figured this kind of thing happened with incessant repetition out here. Maybe this guy would have a gun and could fix the whole situation with a near effortless trigger pull. Brian found himself more urgently bold than ever, like he was 16 and right on the verge of getting laid for the first time again. "No, uh, we ran over a dog."

"Well, what's the big deal then? People let them dogs run around everywhere, country dogs die all the time."

Brian retained some confidence. This guy definitely had a gun and wouldn't be squeamish about doing the deed. "That's the thing, it's not dead."

The guy winced and looked over towards Julia with the tire iron glinting in the headlit darkness. "I guess y'all know what you ought to do then. You ain't carryin' a gun or nothin'? You ain't going make that lady do it, are you?"

"We were going to flip a coin."

"Oh lord Jesus man, let me run and get a rifle from my house. It's a few minutes up the way, I'll be back round soon. If it ain't already bled out by then." The man hurried across the open road to his car and sped off into the night.

Julia came back into their sedan and sat by him. "I don't

know if I could do it. Maybe that guy wasn't being sexist. If I was only strong enough to beat it half to death, isn't that worse than just leaving?"

Brian shrugged. "At this point, maybe it doesn't matter. We're just sitting on a raw node of pain. Just one of those times where you can't patch over life's chewing and grinding."

Julia's voice remained conspicuously absent of affect. "At least that guy can do something. I just hope he gets back soon, imagine what the dog's feeling right now."

He didn't open his mouth, saliva flowing again as his brain unconsciously played with the possibilities of his own bones cutting into his breathing lungs. Forty minutes passed with Julia turning over the tire iron in her hands and Brian closing his eyes, trading one darkness for another. She spoke first, briefly covering the hint of wounded lung whistling that kept either of them from claiming the dog had died at last, allowing them to leave it to an unknown fate. "Flip the coin, he's not coming back."

Brian could recall an hour ago, that blind bliss of cutting off his eyes and traveling by hand alone around the curve. "No, Julia, I'll do it."

"It's like a firing squad. They don't want any one executioner to get the full ethical burden, so only one guy gets a real bullet. I was in the car too."

"I'll do it."

"If you insist." Julia shrugged and passed him the wrench, which made its inhumanity known in the cold feeling of stolen heat.

When Brian was a boy, he had seen some documentary about Venice, where a British voice catalogued the Bridge of Sighs. He remembered almost crying at the anodyne description, hearing about that set path towards a violent end, men who schemed and circled the law forced to keep moving towards their extinction. An empty point dragging oneself along and away from oneself.

Memory and intellect were no match for that vibrating mass, a mass that screamed out into the weak starlight for any ears. He stood above, where he could see the muscle and fat, like a prime cut of meat, sizzling, smelling great, sticking in his teeth. Enraged at his own baseness, he raised the metal above his head, looking into the dog's squirming eye, a glimmer worse than all the

quivering and whimpering, his arm about to fail, until he let go, wrench striking above the eye with an organic crunch and a gelatin squelch. His insides heaved again, churning sour bile onto the unheeding asphalt where it mixed with blood. Again, the wrench, his eyes open, a bit of drool coming from his mouth, then again, then again, until the thing was undeniably over.

Julia had switched to the driver's seat. She wiped a strand of blood-bile-saliva mixture from his face and extinguished the flashers before driving into the unlit openness of the backcountry road.

They pulled off after some time, when the road became a real, spacious, built-up highway again, with exits for fluorescent-lighted gas stations and fast-food restaurants soaked in calculated smells produced with sophisticated manufacturing techniques. Only the drive-thrus were open at this hour, and a tinny voiced greeted them before recording their desires. They both ordered like sick hedonists, napalm for the palate. Brian enjoyed unwrapping his burgers, the efficiency, the clean separation, the paper that soaked in grease but never gave way. He took eager bites as he looked out the windshield towards the gas station across the street.

Until something in the buttery smoothness of the buns and patties shocked him, the rocky grating of teeth on their own substance, the meat dead, but not in the right way. He looked into the burger, where against the greying red muscle of the patty stood the starkness of a white bone, marked with the void trails of the meatgrinder. "Look, Julia. Look at this." They both began to laugh in full-body shudders, the bloodied tire iron falling from the console unnoticed.

Eat Out My Heart

I encountered a striking image circulating in the over-backlit reaches of the internet: Source: the gossip rag Page Six: a reality TV personality, out in the bright sun, facing the camera over her shoulder, holding a Ziploc bag which contained a bison heart. The celebrity cutely pulled at the gemstone lump with her white teeth bared against flopping muscle—a little point of intensity, contrived and mystifying, erotic and uncanny, light dancing on my screen with horrific violence. A picture of extinction. As a child, when I first saw ground bison meat at the store, I was shocked: hadn't we killed all of them?

Vampire Epilogue

The biggest crisis in the history of vampirism was the discovery of auto-predation. This isn't to say that vampiric history doesn't resemble every other history of anything else, a surging excess of violence, desires clashing, constant expenditure and annihilation. If I sink my fangs into a human and suck down the blood, I can sate the hunger or even feel a little rush, and that's what we all did for the longest time.

The alternative to this was unsurprisingly discovered through sex. And everyone knows that vampires are disciples of de Sade avant la lettre, and we entered the European imagination in close proximity to his "life". For all of the repetitious history of blood harvest, we directed our sadism towards non-vampires. Autophagy had to be our main prohibition even as we violated almost any neck we desired. In one session of sexy taboo transgression, two vampires roleplayed as human-nonvampire, and pursuing pleasure to its end, they got carried away. One sucked the other dry, and with that intense beverage, commenced the apocalypse.

I narrate all this because I want to leave an archive of our kind. I can't simply go to the end and never be here again.

Henri finished writing the preface, a final document which he had no idea how to preserve or disseminate. In truth, he didn't know if he was the only vampire, but he knew he would be the end eventually. He had been in the process of draining the second-to-last one for years—hanging her in a soundproof bunker with an elaborate system of elephant chains and a constant IV drip of tranquilizers and human blood, a living ambrosia manufacture facility. Henri could lay prostrate for hours, slurping the tube that came out of his old friend's foot, in a constant state of ecstasy rarely interrupted by his attendants. This could have lasted beyond when the nukes went off or the planet overheated, and this sub-eternal bliss nearly ended him. Someone had surveilled the property, and made their near silent way towards the chamber, eliminating the guards with high-caliber efficiency.

Henri, however, was beyond any assassin, or even a group of them. He could sense the presence of the killer(s) through the walls, but remained on the tube, knowing that his own men could easily be replaced with a few hundred thousand dollars and some years of training. But the presence kept getting closer, and he reluctantly resealed the tube and directed his attention elsewhere.

Space bent him towards two of the violators (unfortunately, not fellow vampires who he could feed on) and he drained one of their lives in an instant, the man's assault rifle dropping to the floor as his companion stood in shocked stillness. Carefully, very carefully, he drained the remaining assassin partway, an affair like slicing a piece of paper in half.

"Who sent you?"

The man remained silent.

"I have a fully outfitted torture chamber right below this floor. Tell me who sent you and I'll let you go on your way." Henri sensed something was off, something about the affect of the man had shifted, something too subtle to be readily identified. The man then began choking on foam in his mouth, falling to the ground with blued acquiescence. Henri tried to pull him back, to jump his nerves with a jolt of life force, but this only caused the blood vessels in the man's eyes to explode before his head pulped. Could other vampires have hired these men to take him in? Were there more to feed on? He warped back into the feeding chamber, only to see the chains broken and his factory removed. His cry shattered the marble floor of the bunker's hallways. Scrawled in human blood, a message on the wall read:

Los Angeles. We'll contact you when you arrive.

Saliva issued and gushed and he almost choked on his joy—only another vampire could have pulled this off. He may have lost his factory, but there was another out there—he could double his stockpile or, imagination swelling, double the intensity of his feeding. He flew off into the night, lifted by a euphoric upswing in hunger.

Eternal Communion

It was a boring car ride to some or another forgettable childhood obligation—a boy scout camping trip, maybe, or a rec-center fencing lesson. Reading some glossy papered bullshit, bored enough in the minivan backseat to read an old copy of the Smithsonian magazine, likely looking for photographed breasts. Instead, I found an article on cannibalism, some field worker traveling to Papua New Guinea or somewhere equally exotic to my provincial mind. More titillating than topless women, the anthropologist described when they had a chance to eat human flesh, which apparently tastes like chicken, but rubbery. Behind that fearfully relapsing description, an object outside the bounds of moral chauvinism shook me from a dogmatic slumber.

Authors & Artists

Brooke Baker

Passionate, creative, and a lover of the graphic arts, Brooke Baker is a junior majoring in Graphic Design and minoring in Psychology. She looks forward to combining these interests in a career in design.

Abby Bruns

Abby Bruns is a senior political science major from Northern Kentucky. She has had the best 4 years at UD and she is forever grateful for the memories she got to make in Dayton. She will miss her friends, her children (the UD 4 Paws dogs), and most of all, her roommates. Here's to you, Emily, Lily, Bri, and Miriam! Much love forever and ever

Erika Cambron

This is the last thing I will ever do in your honor.

Lindsey Coulter

My name is Lindsey Coulter a Third-year English major with a concentration of creative writing. I wrote this piece to help others realize they are not alone with the societal harshness of food. I hope with this piece pushes the thoughts about food to be deeper. Because everything has a negative side in food, too much of something and not enough of another, therefore proposing my question. What the hell do I eat?

Simon Didat

Simon is from Indianapolis, Indiana. I mostly just write about ten lines of poetry at a time without giving them a title, combining elegant language with colloquial terms. The other works, especially paintings, in this issue are also so amazing and make me feel out of my depth here. In terms of Poe vs. Frost, I like Poe's work more, but I admit that The Road Not Taken is quite nice. I'd like to say sorry and thank Grayson, Carmen, and Anthony for renewing my interest in and introducing me to the various fine arts, even if they don't know it. Poetry is fun to write. I still don't really know what Mouthfeel means

Mia Gaskey

I am currently a junior majoring in Graphic Design. Painting is by far one of my favorite ways to express myself creatively, yet I love both digital work and sculpting as well.

Colleen Glavic

Colleen Glavic is a junior Graphic Design major from Dayton, Ohio. She is minoring in Sustainability, Fine Arts, and Marketing. Her passion for creating art started as a child when she attended a daycare that held art shows every summer. Procrastination is her muse.

Bridget Graham

I have tried to live as though my years here were a prayer.

Haley Huelsman

Haley Huelsman is a senior majoring in English and minoring in Women and Gender Studies at University of Dayton. Originally from Troy, Ohio, she currently lives in Dayton. After graduating in December 2022, Ms. Huelsman plans to remain local and work in healthcare as a grant proposal writer and editor.

Jack Kargl

"Certain things they should stay the way they are. You ought to be able to stick them in one of those big glass cases and just leave them alone." —J.D. Salinger

Gracie King

My name is Gracie King and I am a Junior Graphic Design major. I plan to minor in Fine Art and Marketing.

Sean Koeller

"Sometimes you gotta close a door to open a window."

Emily LaValle

Emily LaValle is a senior majoring in English with a minor in WGS. She enjoys the finer things in life such as eating in bed, reading a good book, and walking in big parks. She is a part of Orpheus' lit staff, and not much else. She hopes to continue writing for her future job, but most importantly plans to continue to slay after graduation.

Caitlin Mahoney

'Fare Thee Well'

Allison Matis

My name is Allison Matis, and I am a senior Pre-Medicine major and Photography minor. I have loved being able to pursue my passion of photography these last four years, and I am excited to be part of Orpheus Magazine!

Tobin Muratore

I'm here biographizing eternally on the mirror stage... 'there is an idea of a Patrick Bateman/Tobin Muratore'... shout out Bret Easton Ellis fr... Lacan predicts Narcissistic Suicidal Agression, but for me, an autodeconstructing process, singularityward, extinctophilic heaven oriented... or will which affirms the invaluableness of meaningless life as an end in itself.

Claire Murphy

My name is Claire Murphy, I am a junior from Cleveland Ohio majoring in Fine Art and minoring in Graphic Design. By working with both digital works and physical works it gives me a very unique perspective on art making.

Tashauniel Nelson

I love photos whose colors make me feel like I'm eating a scrambled egg sandwich. I love capturing every warm bit that makes food so appetizing to look at. Especially in food photography, where lighting and shadow is critical if you want to capture a scrumptious looking waffle. I love throwing food into the scenery and seeing what it does. What makes a breakfast dish or kitchen look very clearly in the middle of something. I love tying food photography into thought provoking storytelling, somehow making a plate of breakfast address much needed concerns regarding fast food, accessibility and health. The lively dinner table scene is an example of something I'm always enamored with in art, and having that emotional space translated in my work is something I strive for.

Marie Pece

I am a perpetual worrier and accidental poet who just wants to make cool stuff with cool people and have a good time.

Erin Pinto

Erin Pinto is a freshman from New Jersey who has love writing and poetry for as long as she can remember. She is so grateful and excited for this opportunity to share her work.

Chloe Reilly

My name is Chloe Reilly, I am a sophomore at the University of Dayton studying Graphic Design. This piece is inspired by Mitski's song "Liquid Smooth."

Grace Reilly

My name is Grace Reilly and I am a senior Graphic Design major with minors in Marketing and Art History. After graduation, I plan to pursue a career in design in Chicago.

Brian Schmidt

My name is Brian Schmidt, an English Major from Kettering with a passion for the stories hidden in everyday life. "The Corkscrew Tooth" is a hyper exaggeration of how I felt about one of my own teeth when I realized it was becoming more crooked over time. It is my hope to highlight everyday stories like this one that exist in life but pass by unnoticed to the average person.

Sam Taylor

Samuel (Sammy) Taylor (10-21-2000) is a student writer studying at the University of Dayton in Ohio. Raised in Cincinnati, his writing, primarily poetry, focuses on living with and overcoming eating disorders in a midwestern climate. His debut poetry collection, OAF, will be published later this year.

Quan Thai

Hometown: Viet Nam, Major: Graphic Design, Year: Sophomore

Kelsey Vonderhaar

This is my fourth and final time in Orpheus. Peace out UD.

Angela Weiland

Angela Weiland is a senior Human Rights Studies major with a Women and Gender Studies minor. She enjoys writing poetry in her free time and finds it to be a relaxing creative outlet. Angela is excited for graduation and is looking forward to serving with Americorps starting this summer. She hopes to continue creative writing after college as a way to connect with her faith and document life as she understands it. Thank you for reading and enjoy!

Jillian Whitson

Jillian Whitson is a graphic design major with a double minor in photography and marketing. Jillian enjoys pushing the boundaries of creativity which leads to her unique ideas. She believes that keeping an open mind throughout the design process will lead to more innovative outcomes.

