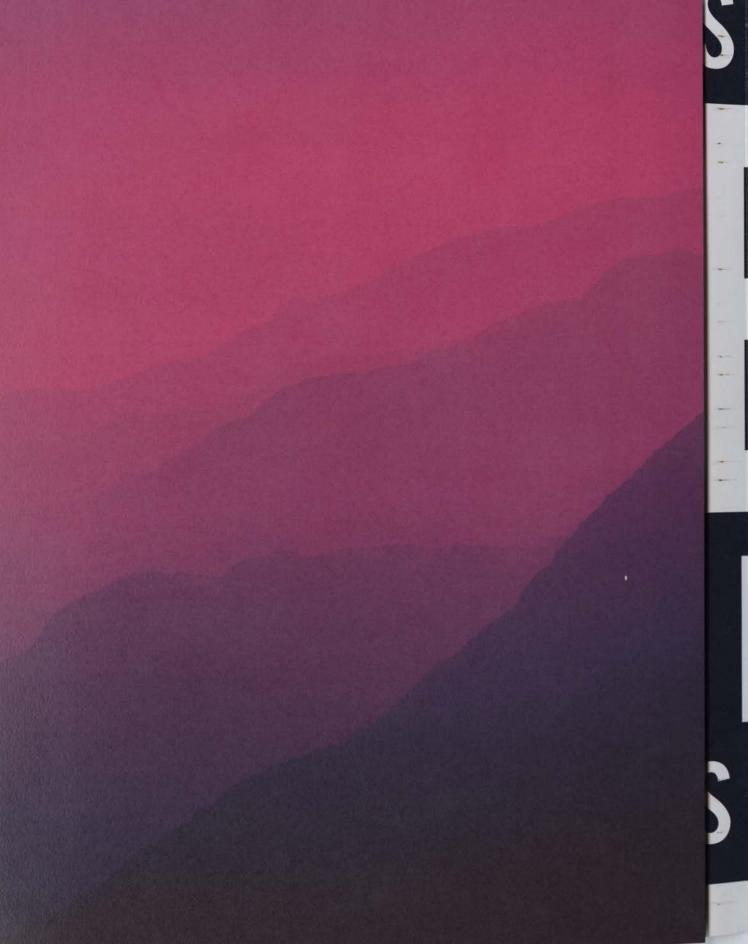
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ART& LITERARY MAGAZINE VOLUME 11

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1

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GON

ANNA ADAMI // POETRY

04 // 05	MEGAN BOLLHEIMER // PRINT DESIGN, DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
	GOGH WITH LOVE GRACE HAGAN // FICTION
06 // 07	BUILDING AN INDOOR POOL THADDEUS MASTHAY // POETRY
	ROUGH WATERS ALEXANDRA MORRISSETTE // OIL
08 // 09	THE BEAN ANNA ADAMI // FICTION
10 // 11	TWENTY-TWO WEEKS MARA KALINOSKI // FICTION
	SLEEP WAKE HOPE AND THEN AMANDA SMITH // TYPOGRAPHIC POSTER
12 // 13	UNRAVELED TAYLOR ORR // DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
	OVERLAY LEIGH VUKOV // PHOTOGRAPHY
14 // 15	HEAVY EMILY BARTOLONE // IMAGE PRINTED IN PANELS ONTO ROLL PAPER AND GLUED TOGETHER
16 // 17	GEM CITY RECYCLING, LLC. REBRAND JACOB HANSEN // LOGO, PRINT
	GOLDEN MULTIPLES HADLEY RODEBECK // PLASTER
	JETÉ EN AVANT GRAND TAVIS TAYLOR // POETRY
18 // 19	CULTURE CLASH

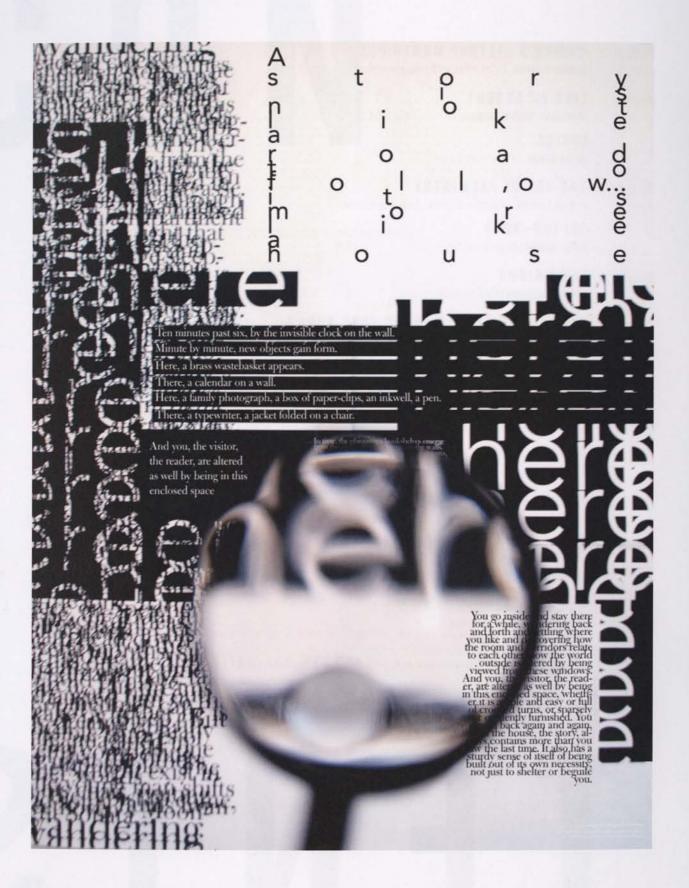
20 // 21	WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH POSTER CAROLYN CAPKA // DIGITAL POSTER, PRINTED
22 // 23	LIKE AN ABSENT MADISSON BARON-GALBAVI // FILM PHOTOGRAPHY
	INSIDE LEIGH VUKOV // PHOTOGRAPHY
24 // 25	THE ART OF PALMISTRY CLAIRE GARVIN // BOOK DESIGN, MIXED MEDIUM
	311 (DD-NOS) MARA KALINOSKI // POETRY
26 // 27	LONG NIGHT STEVEN DOUGHERTY // FICTION
28 // 29	TAPER JEAN GIRL, WHAT IS YOUR AURA? TAYLOR ORR // POLAROIDS
	VITALITY ALLISON PARRISH // OIL ON STEEL
30 // 31	CHRYSANTHEMUMS KATIETIMKO // LUMEN PRINT ON ILFORD FIBER-BASED PAPER
	THEY SAY YOUR LOVE IS LIKE A FLOWER JOEY FERBER // FICTION
32 // 33	DISCUSS, DISCOURAGE COURTNEY HOELSCHER // RECYCLED WOOD, GESSO
	THE COLLABORATORY — FINAL EXHIBITION INTERACTIVE FLOOR STICKER KELSEY MILLS // ADHESIVE STICKER
34 // 35	ABLE ALONE MOLLY STANIFER // FICTION
	BLACK WOODS ADANNA M. SMITH // 35MM BLACK AND WHITE FILM PHOTOGRAPH

i

36

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TENTS



PERSPECTIVES

MEGAN BOLLHEIMER // GRAPHIC DESIGN // JUNIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?
Curiosity and thinking about the possibilities of what could be.

GOGH WITH LOVE GRACE HAGAN // ENGLISH // JUNIOR

My papa was full of Van Goghisms. Any situation could be philosophized or Van Goghized. His favorite, uttered many a time in response to bullies and bruised hearts, was this: *There is nothing more truly artistic than to love people*. I can still hear his voice shouting across space and time to reach me.

"Think of each act of kindness, eselflessness and gratitude," he once mused, "as a brush estroke." Spanish words never start with an "s" sound. "Paint the world with love, Machi. Do not leave white espaces on the canvas, me entiendes?"

"Sí, Papa. I understand." But I didn't. And Papa knew this.

"Machi, ven aquí. Come here. Eshow me your hands. Tus manos."

I remember unfolding two sweaty palms onto his acrylicsplattered jeans.

"You see these lines, Machi?" he asked, his dark, ragged thumb tracing my hand. "They are caminos, paths for your love. The amor estarts at your hands. You esee? As the love grows estronger, bigger, it turns blue." He gently traced my veins with a paint-covered thumb. A blue hangnail left an invisible trail. I remember he took two of my fingers and pressed them up against my wrist.

"Eschua. Hear that?" I still remember feeling that batería, that fairy drummer softly keeping the beat. Papa took his calloused rainbow hands and covered mine. He had guided my hand along my veins, my channels of love. He stopped over another batería. This drummer was stronger than his fairy friend.

"Corazón. Your heart. That is where you feel the love the estrongest."

We sat quietly for a while, absorbing this Van Goghism. Papa went back to his canvas, picked up his brush, swirled it in orange paint, but froze with his brush suspended in midair. At that moment, his brown eyes were full of something I did not know.

He turned to me. "But remember, Machi, it all estarted with your hands."

Thirty years later, sitting on the floor of my four-story walkup, I was still Van Goghizing. Still listening to papa's voice. "Hermosa, no? The most beautiful color to paint the world is love," he'd whisper to me through the wall. Leaning back, the brick's calloused hands caught on my shirt. With my culo sitting on the Time's obits, I began. Ana would kill me if I got paint on the hardwood.

Ninth Ave's traffic light beamed in the side window, spotlighting my right hand's waltz. Dip, stroke, wipe. Red, yellow green. My left hand slowly became a collage of fractured rainbows as paint touched palm. The faces below me looked like kindergarteners and Andy Warhol had overseen the colorization process. Blue faces. Purple Eyes. Pink military uniforms. I gently squeezed my hands together. A kiss. I turned my palms up on my jeans. Watering eyes changed the acrylic hands into watercolors. With a dark green thumbprint I colored a man's suit. Estébon Flores, 62. The traffic light blinked from red to green. I leaned back again, draping two fingers over my left wrist. I fell asleep as car doors below opened and closed to the beat of a fairy drummer.

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

In life, you can live or you can just exist. I never
want to be lumped in with the Existers.

BUILDING AN INDOOR POOL

THADDEUS MASTHAY // ENGLISH, WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? When I am called upon to be more relatable.

Maybe it's the old Local 857— with its tan brickwork and whittled spruce next to the overpriced CVS in lieu of a grocer—that we should sneak in, with our lifted bottle of diluted vodka 40 proof and off-brand lemon-lime soda.

We can have a party, hop up on the lacquered bar still there and fuck once or twice for our friends to see, yell at the tiles and walls somewhere between peach and jaundice if there were lights to show it. Maybe some of the

invisible teenagers left their permanent marker penises or a sign saying Stacey really was a bitch.

More likely we'll find cupboards cracked and musty from summer humidity as the building bleaches between rains flooding basement rooms, water stuck there making derelict indoor pools, feeding mold spores, readying for another round of rot.

Or maybe we can sit here too, behind our own moth-eaten curtains and stare at our own cathode ray tube and beat back our own cockroaches and fight our own deluge of dishes before the kitchen, too, smells of mold.

ROUGH WATERS

ALEXANDRA MORRISSETTE // FINE ARTS // JUNIOR



THE BEAN

ANNA ADAMI // ENGLISH // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? Curiosity.

When he asked if he could kiss me, I said yes. His tongue had no rhythm. Or maybe my tongue had rhythm. Or maybe our rhythms didn't know how to jam. But when he asked if I wanted to see his place, I said yes. In the cab, he put his arm around me.

I said, "What's your favorite spot in the city?"

He rubbed his thumb on my shoulder. It felt one-half nice and one-half like make pretend. "Millennium Park," he said. "The Bean, specifically." Maybe I twitched. He laughed. "I know it's cliché."

I said, "No."

"It's touristy, I know. My parents used to take us when we were kids. Coming into the city was this big family outing. We thought the Bean was so cool then. So exciting. Something that belonged only to Chicago. Only to us."

When he asked if I wanted to be his girlfriend, I said yes. I liked the way he answered close-ended questions with stories.

I talked to my sister, Kate. Her kitchen smelled like mac and cheese. She wore a stained baseball tee and sewed a tutu for her daughter. Bella watched Dora in the other room.

"I'm so proud of you," Kate said. "I want to hear all about him. What's he like?"

"Well his favorite Star Wars character is Jar
Jar Binks." I cut pink tulle as she measured elastic.

"That's unfortunate."

"I'm working on it."

I never worked on these things. I hung out in the gray area. In the maybes. In the temp jobs and the undefined relationships. Commitment felt claustrophobic.

Kate hugged the tulle to her chest. She said, "You're working on it!"

"Are you crying?"

"Goddamn hormones."

"Price you pay for the gift of life."

Second kid on the way and she didn't gloat, but she did glow. Her face was a red, bloated halo.

"Yeah, yeah," she grabbed my hands. "You're really doing this," she said. Working instead of running. I was really doing it. "Now speed up the process, will you? So my kids can be friends with your kids."

Character I couldn't get the kinks out of. Mine, his, JarJar's, ours.

He told me, "The Star Wars movies are clearly your favorite." I said, "No."

"You can't get out of this one."

"I've seen them the most, yes. Doesn't make them my favorite."

"The phrase *my favorite* insinuates there *is* a favorite."

Roger's a lawyer. I stopped trying to win arguments. I exercised first amendment rights in other ways.

I told him I'm allergic to peanuts when he bought me assorted chocolates. I'm not. I told him I like country music. That I know how to cook. That I don't ever smoke. Once I even brought up the Bears game. I'd seen it in the news and I knew he'd played linebacker in high school. He said, "You like football?"

I said, "Well, yeah."

He attached empty words to my personhood, I entirely to blame. He didn't know who he saw when he looked at me. He tried.

I'm not sure I knew who I saw in him, either.

I knew he had big hands. Hands I can't help but want to hold. Hands that tap when he's thinking. Hands with purpose. I knew he was purposeful. He worked long hours, but said with a shake of his head and a dimpled smile "it's what I signed up for." A case-winning career would follow. He'd settle in Hinsdale when he got married. His parents lived in Hinsdale. He wanted his kids close to their grandparents. He wanted two kids, a boy and a girl. Ideally, the boy would be older. He'd commute to work.

I knew he left the dinger sound up full volume on his phone. Any time someone sent him a text or an email, *ding!* Made my ear drums flinch. He didn't check his phone, either. Left it in his pocket or face down on the table collecting audible interruptions.

I knew he loved asking about favorites—what is your favorite movie? Your favorite hobby? Your favorite philosophy for understanding the universe? I'd say, "I don't have favorites."

"Sure you do." He'd lean forward. "C'mon, there's got to be one that's better, one you like more than the others."

Favorites, I didn't tell him, are limiting. They're short lasting.

They're uninteresting. Favorites are a pre-devised answer to a close-ended question in an open-ended world.

He asked about my aspirations only once.

"If you could do anything," he said, "what would you do?" I said, "You know, Roger. That is an excellent question."

I would take my niece to the park. She would hold my big hand with her little hand and I would decide I want children of my own. I would get promoted. Or I would quit my job. I would move to DC, work in policy. I would change the world. Or I would talk with artists that knew they couldn't change the world, but they could look at it from so many different angles. If I could do anything, I didn't say, I'd solve the riddle. Like there's this sphinx standing guard over my aspirations. I'm stuck in a maze of contradictions and I'm terrible with directions.

I applied for a job in DC. Full time. Two year minimum commitment. Smoked a bowl after I submitted my résumé. Got an interview. Carried nerves in my stomach for a week. Didn't tell anyone. Thought about Roger's hands. Regretted my lying. Remembered the ding!

My phone rang. "Jared?" Jared never called.

His voice hung limp at the end of the line. "Jane."

"What is it?"

"We're at the hospital." She wasn't due for another month.

"Listen. Could you stop by our place? Pick up some clean clothes for Kate?"

"Yeah, I-of course. I'm on my way. Hey?"

"Yeah."

"Is everything alright?"

His pause punched my gut.

"We lost her," he said. "We lost the baby."

My sister didn't leave the house for a month. She settled into sweatpants with no plan of changing. She fed her daughter, but not herself. I took Bella to Millennium Park. She held my big hand with her little hand. Her tutu bounced with so much life. My throat felt tight. I loosened my scarf. The wind cut through my sweater. I should have worn a coat.

A couple kissed under the Bean. Their lips morphed together on the silver curve, a distorted image from three different angles. Maybe that's what love looks like—stretched from one angle, squished from another, different depending on where you're standing. I'm always standing on the outside. They're eye-to-eye, hand-to-hand, lip-to-lip, love. I'm preoccupied with the distortion. I don't like when my reflection isn't my own anymore. I don't want to share it or stretch it or squish it, only to splash it when it gets too complacent.

I'd gotten the job in DC. Hadn't told anyone. Broken it off with Roger. He'd nodded. I'd thought, if there's a next time I'll need a guy who won't watch when I run. Who'll stub his toe catching up. Who knows there's more than one answer. More than black and white. More than picket fenced dreams and a girl that says yes.

I picked up pizza. I forced a slice in front of Kate.

"I see her shadow sometimes," she told me. She picked at the pepperonis. "I know it sounds crazy, but I really do. I hear her giggle, too. And once, Bella told the air to stop crying. No one was there."

"Geez, Kate."

"No, it's not scary. You know? It sounds crazy, but it's not scary. The presence isn't evil or mean or anything. It just...well, I don't know." She rubbed her collar bone. "It's her."

Dad came to visit Kate. We went to see *The Force Awakens*. After the movie we talked over each other. Kate thought the script unimaginative, but Dad thought it nostalgic. Jared noted that JarJar Binks did not make an appearance. He side-eyed me, "What a shame," he said.

I looked at Kate. She shrugged.

Outside, Kate took one of Bella's hands and Jared took the other and they swung her through the air and she laughed. We all laughed. Dad put his arm around my shoulder and kissed my forehead. "I'm sorry about the boy," he said.

I watched Kate. "There are worse losses."

"It still matters."

Jared scooped Bella into his arms and tickled her stomach. She laughed and the rest of us laughed, too. And maybe that's what love looks like. Laughing and truthful and scared, together.

Kate asked if I'd be at dinner tomorrow.

Yes can be so frivolous. So ignorantly optimistic. So charmingly compulsive. Other times it can be so sure. And when it is sure, when it is laughing and truthful and scared, yes is the answer, maybe, to the riddle that was never as important as I wanted it to be.

For the past several months, since the middle of April, he has dreamed many dreams about mine.

And down they forget as up they grew /

SLEEP WAKE HOPE AND THEN...

AMANDA SMITH // GRAPHIC DESIGN // JUNIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? Exploring other medias outside of digital design like printmaking.

A DREAM YOU HAVE:

Being in a polyamorous relationship with Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer. Also having a vegetable garden.

TWENTY-TWO WEEKS

MARA KALINOSKI // ENGLISH, PSYCHOLOGY // JUNIOR

Through the window of an art gallery, I notice that his hair has gotten longer. Three years ago it hardly grazed his chin. Now it reaches his shoulders as he inclines his head to listen to a woman commenting on one of the photographs on the wall. The gesture whorls a knot of sadness through my chest. I pull open the glass door and enter.

A curator offers me a brochure to guide me through the artist's exhibit, but I don't need to look to know his name.

I find myself standing at his elbow. "Patrick?" I whisper.

I must not have whispered because he turns instantly.

"Eleanor!" His dimples wink at me. Without thinking I reach up and touch his cheek, then laugh, embarrassed.

He smiles as if I hold his face in my hands every day. "It's okay," he says.

I fold my trembling fingertips back into my pocket.

We turn, synchronized, to look at the photograph in front of us. The print is large and black and white. A young black boy is playing plastic buckets as drums on a park bench. Behind him, the decaying, paint-rotted husk of a warehouse swallows up half of the background. Cumulus clouds dangle like ornaments. My eyes latch onto the curve of baby fat on the boy's cheeks. The concave bend of his chest contrasts sharply with his full young face. I feel Patrick watching me intently, eyes lingering on my jaw as it clenches and unclenches.

"It's..." My mind digs for the sweet, sad word but all that it finds is a tender spot deep inside me that has bruised more since walking into the gallery.

I spin on my heel quickly, stumbling. Patrick's eyes question mine as he gently touches my elbow.

"Eleanor," he says.

I wrap my left arm around my belly, as if holding something in.

"Sometimes I wonder," I say, "if he would have had your eyes.







UNRAVELED

TAYLOR ORR // FINE ARTS // SOPHOMORE

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?
The magic lies outside the walls of your comfort zone.



OVERLAY
LEIGH VUKOV // PHOTOGRAPHY // JUNIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? Taking steps towards my professional career.

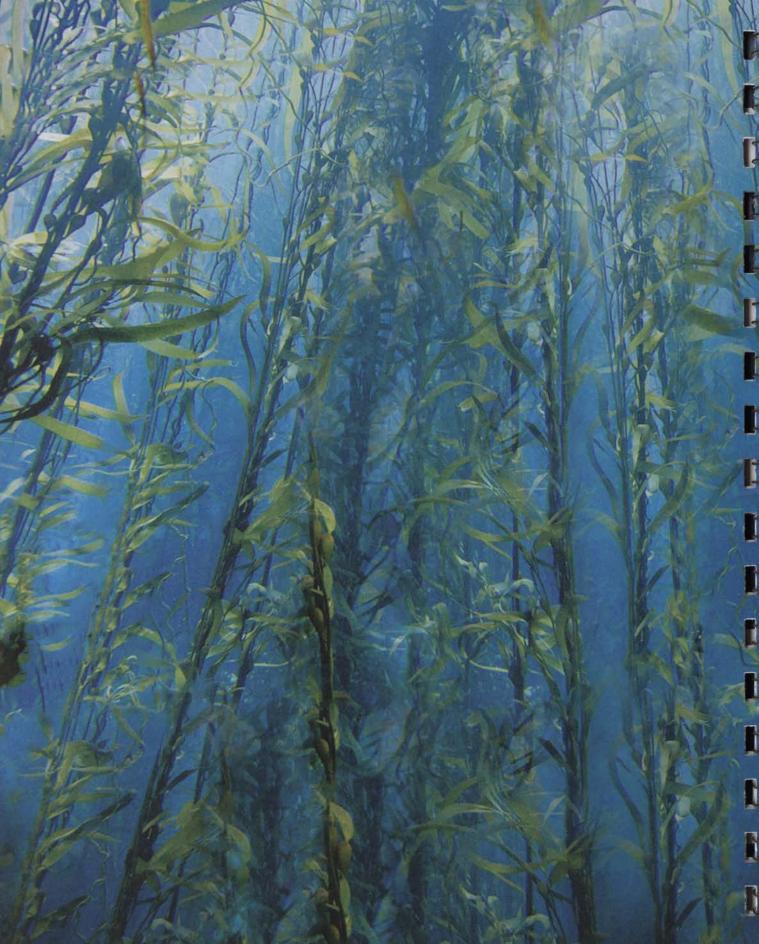
OVERLEAF

HEAVY

EMILY BARTOLONE // FINE ARTS // FRESHMAN

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

My drive to be extraordinary.







DISCUSS, DISCOURAGE COURTNEY HOELSCHER // FINE ARTS // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? The chance that I may discover something new and learn something about myself.

GOLDEN MULTIPLES

HADLEY RODEBECK // GRAPHIC DESIGN // SOPHOMORE

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

Rejection. Everyone wants to be accepted and appreciated,
but oftentimes in life we are evaluated and rejected.



JETÉ EN AVANT GRAND

TAVIS TAYLOR // ENGLISH // SENIOR

Lady, I investigate you on that digital terrace.

Umbrella high and open, you dance in bright rain and tip toe—tip over the barre like balustrade

What a view!

Trench coat billows like a tutu bravo, and a pirouette in pointe rain boots flutter my heart with city pigeons over you

Pixelated Devil in a blue trench coat Amour fou! Relentlessly

I read you like poesy desperate for reference I'm punished out of view

Did you fly away?

I've been searching for your cellular skin I want to be your Easy but puddles color from side lighting sun stage right,

and you dance—Tip toe tip over the balustrade

Jeté en avant grand

and exit without curtain call.

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

The acceptance that being uncomfortable is necessary to enjoy existence.

that only you can understand. What a powerful language to know.

5

We can't play cricket with goodbyes.

Dilip Kumar shook my hand five times.

"I am missing you," he said

Like missing is a state—

a state of being or

a state of feeling or

a state I got stuck in

with a one way flight.

I am missing too, Dilip. I am missing you. I am missing Martin yelling sister! and Surya grinning like he conducts the world and the rest of us are strings on a tiny violin, but damn does his orchestra make music. I am missing Luis, my Papi Tico, singing Santiagito, Santiagito! Es un bebé muvy bonito! I am missing Carlito. surfboard an extra limb, strolling into the ocean, emerging hours later, beaming, dazed, like he reached Nirvana in the waves. I am missing Josédriving away from Playa Marbella, asking "have you seen an estrella fugaz?" He sees one every nightstreaks of light over the astronomical land no one owns the rights to.

Martin's goodbye
offered a ceramic figurine,
said so you remember me by
and Surya's goodbye
didn't look me in the eye,
asked for my number,
tried hard not to cry
and José's goodbye
kissed my cheek
and I never caught the Carlos adios
but Luis, cada siempre,
este tiempo último, dijo,

Dios se acompañe en su viaje.

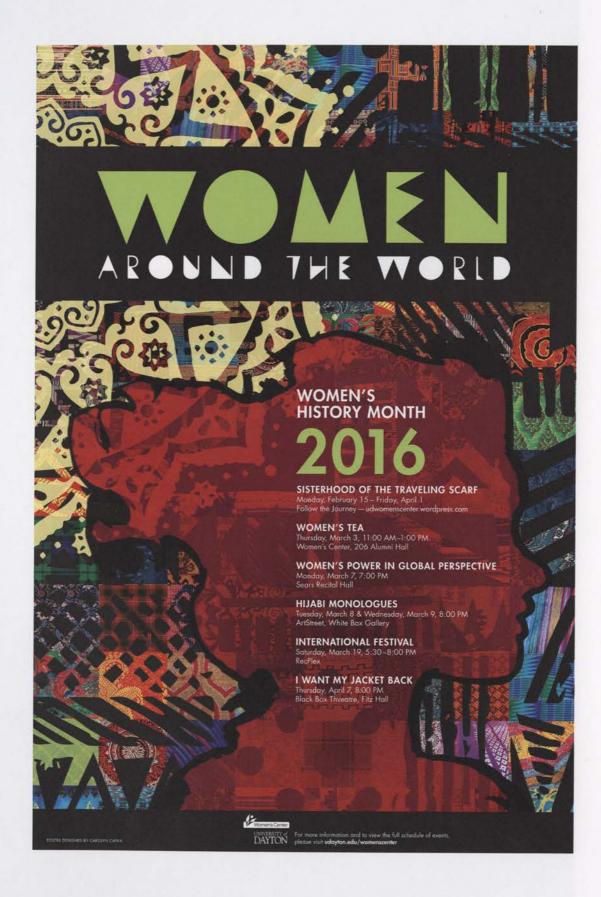
Mi viaje bumped into sus viajes open armed at some bus stop between this universe and another and our friendship told even temporary time to set a place at the table.

So to each sweet soul that offered a bed in their home. a seat in their car. a spot on their team: muchísimas gracias para compartiendo una parte de su vida conmigo. Thank you. Dhanyawaad. No words are bastante pero Namaste may be close. Namaste: that the soul in one honors the soul in another. Nama: bow as: I te: you

I bow to you.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH POSTER

CAROLYN CAPKA // GRAPHIC DESIGN // SENIOR



LIKE AN ABSENT

MADISSON BARON-GALBAVI // GRAPHIC DESIGN // JUNIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

Testing my own physical and emotional strength through rock climbing.



INSIDE

LEIGH VUKOV // PHOTOGRAPHY // JUNIOR

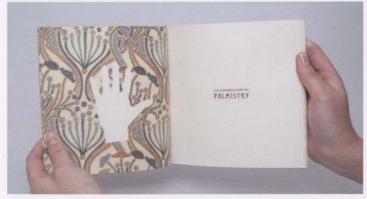
A DREAM YOU HAVE:

I uphold the same dream that my mother has for me, to be

"happy, healthy, and independent."









THE ART OF PALMISTRY

CLAIRE GARVIN // GRAPHIC DESIGN // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? Learning new things about myself and others.

25

311 (DD-NOS) MARA KALINOSKI // ENGLISH, PSYCHOLOGY // JUNIOR

imagine: my body, a corridor.
on the walls, bloodstains and paint
drying together,
some doors ajar and some are locked,
hairpins can't pick them.
some archways are open and instead
of doors they
maybe have serpents or
shimmering strands.

imagine: my mind, a world. scorched, and flush with life in alternate hemispheres, fervently testing which army is cerebral and which is hematoid, and what infection will deplete my population first.

imagine my world wars fought on a front other than my body, the corridor imagine bloodpaint and serpents imagine my heartWHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE? Large angry bears.

LONG NIGHT

STEVEN DOUGHERTY // ENGLISH, PHILOSOPHY // SOPHOMORE

A manila folder flops onto his desk with a soft thud. It is going to be another long night. He extends his right leg and cringes when his knee pops. Rain taps on the window as he opens the folder. The first page, illuminated by the warm orange light of his desk lamp, reads:

Louis, Jack. 43. Detective. N.Y.P.D. Homicide.

It was going to be another long night. Detective Louis sat in his beat up 1970 Chevrolet Monti Carlo, windows cracked. The air was stiff and cold. He reached for a cigarette but as he put it to his lips he shuddered; she used to smoke. He discarded the cigarette with disdain. Watching it bounce on the pavement, he began to rub the stump of his third finger forcefully, so forcefully that it hurt, but the pain was good. The pain helped him remember. Remember why he was here and what he had to do. His right hand reached across the car and opened the glove box. He pulled out his Smith & Wesson 45 and weighed it in his hand. His face hardened. He tucked it in its rightful place beneath his left shoulder. The car door opened slowly. He stepped out, and patted his left breast pocket. Still there. He inhaled the crisp night air and held it in his lungs until it burned, then exhaled quickly. The world was yellow and gray. The light of the city mixed with the dark of the night. He crossed the street and entered the third apartment on his left. He passed down the familiar old hallway, stopped at apartment 636, unlocked the door, and entered. He went immediately to the kitchen. He took out the bottle of scotch still tucked away in the back of the cabinet above the fridge. He grabbed a glass and sat down in a chair facing the door. He took a drink. The room was a mosaic of gray and black painted by the dim moonlight peeking in through the cracks in the blinds. Then another. He began to rub the stump of his finger again. His thumb circled the indention around its base. Empty. Caught in the act. She had taken it all. Another. He was waiting. Another. Shadows danced across the wall. He took no notice. Another. Voices conversed quietly outside. His body stiffened. His right hand migrated left. She laughed and said, "of course." That bastard. Another. The lock clicked. His eyes narrowed. The door cracked open. He swallowed and bit his lower lip, eyes flooded.

Three bullets. Three victims.

He closes the folder. The rain is loud and icy now. He picks up a stamp and wrestles it onto the front. Red and buff meet. Closed. He pauses, looks out the window at the cold wet world beyond, then back at the warm orange around his desk. He rubs his aching knee then slides another folder to the center of his desk. He sighs and opens it:

Alderman, Beth. 39.

It had been a long day. Beth stared into the mirror. It was getting harder to hide the bags under her eyes. He will be here soon. She pulled a brush through her hair. A twinge of pain shook her body. The brush hit the floor with a thud. She rubbed the scar on the first finger of her right hand, and bit the side of her lower lip. The slip of a kitchen knife while chopping. A symbol far more permanent than that removed. She lit a cigarette, then finished her disguise in the mirror. The buzzer rang. She painted on a smile and grabbed her bag. He was waiting. He smiled when he saw her. They embraced. The world was pink. Painted by the last light of day. They walked three blocks and made a left. They were early for their reservation, so they sat at the bar. He ordered a beer. Her, a scotch, neat. She couldn't drink it. She began to rub her scar again. Her eyes closed her body shuddered. She got up and went out the back door. He didn't move. She lit a cigarette and took a long drag. The alley was dark grey. She lit another cigarette. Yellow light evicted the gray as a group of cars passed by. Another. The night air chilled her. She coughed as her lungs rejected it. Another. She walked back inside. He had gotten a table. He spoke loudly of his friends and their exploits, until the server brought their food. Dinner looked excellent. He cut his stake. She rubbed her scar. Each time the knife hit the plate she bit down on her lip. He laughed at his own joke. She began to taste blood.

"Let's go." They walked back.
"What's your apartment number again?"
"636."

Another stamp finds its place. The wind howls, shaking the window, and beating the rain against it in a wavelike rhythm. He pulls the next folder to the center of his desk. He removes his glasses and squeezes the bridge of his nose between his index finger and his thumb. Hail stones clink off the iron fire escape outside. He blinks hard then clears his throat, and returns his glasses to his face. He opens the folder and reads:

Vanderburgh, Jake. 25.

It had been a long week. Jake groaned and put his hand on the back his head. A twinge of pain. He felt dizzy. His left hand braced himself on the sink. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead. His body shook and he emptied the contents of his stomach into the toilet. He wiped his mouth with his right hand and flushed with his left. He stared at his own bloodshot eyes in the mirror. He inhaled slowly then coughed. His body doubled over. Tears formed in his eyes. Trembling he lifted his shirt to examine his

black and blue chest. A point well taken but poorly reeived. He was high but he remembered some of it.

"Stay away from her if you know what's good for you!"
Said the man with no eyes as he kicked him with his third leg. "You have no idea do you?" He sighed, as he hobbled away. He lowered his shirt carefully and checked the time. She'll be waiting. He reached for the pill bottle on the back of the sink. He emptied it and swallowed. The apartment. A smile? The restaurant. A drink. His head started tothrob again. The world was a blur. He closed his eyes and rubbed it gently. He started to feel nauseous. He let out a low groan then looked around him. She was gone. He went to the bathroom. Another pill. A table. The waiter. Hungry? She returned. They ordered. She was quiet. He wasn't. Another. The food was amazing. He shoveled it into his mouth. He was still hungry. Another.

"What's your apartment number again?"

The folder flops shut. He scratches his head and searches for the stamp. The rain is letting up, but he doesn't notice. He lifts all the papers on his desk then leans over the sides of his chair. He pauses, then quickly opens his top desk drawer withdraws the stamp and pounds it onto the folder. He stacks the three folders neatly. He leans back in his chair and exhales. Raindrops drip rhythmically from the roof making a medley of sounds as they meet different obstructions on their decent. He shifts forward in his chair and pushes upward with his arms. One last folder catches his eye. He plops back into his chair and groans. His knee pops and he bites his lip. He slowly rolls up his right pant leg to examine his knee. His finger gently touches the scar tissue. He cringes as his leg trembles, the sound of the gun echoes in his mind. A mistake by a partner. An accident that earned a promotion. He stared at his knee. Six weeks in the hospital. Three months of physical therapy. Six years behind a desk. The detective badge he deserved went to his partner, but it's done now. He rolls his pant leg back down and opens the final folder with one eyebrow raised.

Evidence from the scene: Personal effects of the three victims including: three wallets, two packs of cigarettes, a tube of lipstick, a flask, and a bottle of narcotics. The murder weapon, a Colt 45 Revolver, found in the hand of Detective Louis.

A sealed envelope labeled: Beth

It could be a long night. He was leaning on the cold brick façade of the last of three identical apartment buildings on the block. The sun hung low from the noose of the sky, condemned by the evening. He took a cigar from his pocket and lit it. The world was red. He exhaled a plume of sweet smoke and tightened his gloves. He was waiting. A man walked to the door and pressed one of the buzzers. She came down to greet him. They embraced and exited the building. He caught the door with his cane. They didn't recognize him. Of course not. He adjusted his glasses and watched them walk down the street as they vanished into the gloom of evening. Her arms were crossed, his eyes on the woman in front of them. It could be short. He set to work, extinguishing his

cigar as he entered. He shuffled his way up to the sixth floor, exchanging a smile with those he passed. They pitied him. Perfect. He turned down the hallway. He knew the apartment number. He had memorized it in the hospital. It came with flowers. He pulled a key from his pocket and turned it over in his hand. A gift to a lover. Lost. He unlocked the door and hobbled in. He began to examine the apartment, familiarizing himself with every inch of it. He stopped at an old photo. The police gala. He remembered perfectly. There was a thin crack in the glass over the photo, right between them. The frame was perfect. The lock clicked. His head spun. Distracted by nostalgia. He pressed his body flat against the wall. His hand found the familiar handle of his Colt 45. The door opened. Not her, Him? Here? Now? Why? Straight for the scotch. Of course. He knew that face. Then the chair. Of course. He smiled and eased his hand off of the gun. He watched him drink, Perfect. He lifted his cane and shifted to the other end of the room. Unnoticed. Perfect. He smiled and he waited.

Three bullets. One in each victim.

He flips to the back of the folder and removes a sealed evidence bag. The note on the bag says: found in Detective Louis's left breast pocket. He opens the bag and removes the envelope. He breaks the seal gently with the letter opener on his desk. He removes the letter and unfolds it slowly. An apology. He refolds it sliding it carefully into his right jacket pocket. He closes the folder but he doesn't stamp it. He looks around. The room is dark. A sliver of white pierces the clouds and creeps in through the window combating the black. The rain has stopped. He shifts forward in his chair. His hands grip the armrests and push him slowly to his feet. He winces and grabs his cane. He wraps himself in his jacket and puts on his gloves with a yawn. He flips the switch on his desk lamp. The warm orange turns to cold gray. He limps to the elevator and arrives on the ground floor with a ding. He walks out to the lobby. Sitting by the door is one of the twenty-four hour security guards. He approaches him.

- "Another long night?"
- "Yeah, but I've got next week off."
- "Ah, you're a lucky man."
- "I am indeed. You have a goodnight."
- "Thanks. Say, it's awfully wet out there. Why don't you give me your keys and I'll bring your car around. I wouldn't want you to fall."
 - "Oh I couldn't ask you to do that."
 - "No, trust me it's no trouble at all."
 - "You sure?"
 - "Of course."
 - "Perfect."



TAPER JEAN GIRL, WHAT IS YOUR AURA? TAYLOR ORR // FINE ARTS // SOPHOMORE

A DREAM YOU HAVE: To always make being an artist my number one priority regardless of where I am in life.





CHRYSANTHEMUMS

KATIE TIMKO // PHOTOGRAPHY // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?
Photographing strangers or other subjects in busy, active areas.

THEY SAY YOUR LOVE IS LIKE A FLOWER

JOEY FERBER // ENGLISH // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

Growth.

I'll send this picture of a rose. Petals pose for a moment in focus. Another midday rush, becoming routine again. Now for the caption, It must balance cliché and intention. It's my turn to text. "Happy noon."

There's so much surrounding wind. Fallen petals rest on the sticky soil. Browning leaves have joined. No reason to rest long on slick brick. Beautifully lain. Re-patterned this past summer; the emanating prestige of a matching campus.

The sky is overcast here. Perfect light gleams through the clouds. A cold front coming in. The last one before just cold. Maybe it will rain tomorrow and I'll do all my homework. Or write you that poem.

I remember you in this moment of transition. The role I think I play. The feeling I think I can recreate. I mine memory for old text conversations. Those that worked. Those that didn't.

You'll ask if I have something new. Something you haven't heard. To see if I've improved. I'll text a poem rendition of this. Just an excerpt, a line or two, and conclude: yes, I'm working on something. I'll start with a disclaimer. "Kinda." Your read receipts are on. You'll read, type, and critique: "Kinda." I don't. I haven't. 22, still sleeping in a twin bed.

Here's my logic on text reply promptness. If you take 22, I'll take 20. Two minutes less than how long you spent. It's an attempt to balance the weight. Affirm my place yet have with one foot out the door ready to escape. Fearing the settling of

roots, and looming responsibility. I am the size of men I once looked up to, attempting to shrink myself with pocket talk, prolong the impression. I slightly pull this delicate thread; testing tension from my end. If I prayed, I'd pray for slack. Instead, I'll prepare for the snap. Do you pray?

It was such a fine line. I traced it with my finger twice. The first one was right. But you had helped. "give it some slack," you'd said. My needling incompetent, you took it back. Your coat. Your craft. My glasses left at home. Your bed sheets fresh from the dryer.

There's this song I'll never play you. Not because it doesn't fit. Just because it has banjos. Which I don't know if you'll like. It's also a rumor. It says "They say..." which is suspicious to say the least. Is it true? Can "they" really be "you"? Oh, this generalized cliché of love. One that is "like a flower." Oh, Shakespeare if only you were here. Perhaps you could help me send something, oh anything, besides this picture of a rose.









GEM CITY RECYCLING, LLC. REBRAND

JACOB HANSEN // GRAPHIC DESIGN // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

In every project, I aim to learn a new skill or technique. I believe

In every project, I aim to learn a new skill or technique. I believe showcasing a wide range of abilities makes my portfolio unique.

THE COLLABORATORY — FINAL EXHIBITION INTERACTIVE FLOOR STICKER

KELSEY MILLS // GRAPHIC DESIGN // SENIOR

WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?
Situations where I am forced to try new things on my own.





WHAT PUSHES YOU OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE?

a) in terms of life: traveling

b) in terms of writing: creating a believable dialogue

ABLE ALONE

MOLLY STANIFER // ENGLISH, EDUCATION // JUNIOR

He would give anything to be alone...

Abel looked out at the rolling midnight, a swipe of white glowing on the surface. Foam sprinkled with stars lapped at bare toes. September tides rushed away from him, only to return with the next gentle roar. He was rigid cold. Unmoving. Uncertain.

Abel hesitated.

The surf whispered to him. It called, a siren song from a hazy memory. He turned away. Hands in knitted pockets, sand between gnarled toes. He couldn't do this again. They had said he couldn't do it again.

"You coward," Grace whispered.

Abel turned, a reluctant pivot. She stood in the crashing waves. Dressed in soulless black, she was nearly invisible. A menacing smile shone as she came closer. Fascinating, intoxicating, terrifying.

A small hand slipped into his icy one. Relieved, he looked down at the wheat hair parallel with his elbow. Daman—his presence was a sigh of comfort. He was Abel's soundless sentinel. Purple eyes stared ahead from a cherub's face as Grace circled the clasped pair.

"You've tried before, Abel," hissed in his ear. "You couldn't do it then, and you can't do it now."

Abel clenched his hand around Daman's. He listened to Grace's taunts. Doubt sat in his chest like the rocks in his pants' pockets—a weighted presence but not heavy enough to make a difference. He had failed before. Grace was right.

Abel closed his eyes.

Too bright a light. Hurt eyes. Hurt head. Hurt body.

A robotic beep, beep, beep drips close to his head. Something breathes for him. Throat full, choking full. Focus. Breathe. Focus. Grace is lounging in the corner, a sinister ink stain on green vinyl cushions. Daman silent next to the bed. Voices murmur like the hum of cars in the distance. Saying able, someone is able. He is Abel.

"He stopped taking the Seroquel." They know.

"Found him at the Summit... letter next to....Who is Grace?" Too much. They know too much.

Grace stands up, moves closer. Sits at the foot of the bed, talon fingers circling his ankle. Her touch is pain. Daman looks away, passive but present.

"We need to admit him. He can't do this to me again." Mom oozes selfish betrayal.

Anger flashes cold in his gut. His heart beats faster; the beeping monitor jogs alongside.

His pulse rages. Who is the victim?

Warning drones wail from white machines. Hurried footsteps pound into his peripheral. Fingernails tap screens: yowling stops. Questions pelt his imperfect brain. He turns off.

Abel says nothing. Abel feels nothing.

His eyes close.

Dragged from memories by a rush of cold water hitting the cuffs of his pants, Abel realized he had moved farther into the waves. Closer to Grace. Daman stood abandoned on the sand behind him. His company no longer acted as a comforting tether to the shore, cut by the allure of Grace's offered freedom.

Fear surfaced in his stomach. He had already tried. He had already failed. He had already learned that lungs burn in salt water, that ribs explode, that dying is not bright but black. Drowning is Grace black.

Chest high. He had been this far before. One last look at glowing Daman. Abel missed his presence like a blanket falling off in the night. Grace swam in shark circles around him, rows of teeth grinning.

Abel moved farther out to new waters. The waves caressed his neck, a mocking touch. Further, deeper, closer.

The sea floor dropped away. Grace's arms were wrapped around his waist, her added weight more effective than his pockets' contents. Midnight water darkened. A fleeting moment of panic, then Abel drifted through peaceful sable. Alone for the first time in waterlogged quiet.

Freed from their presence. Freed from Daman's invisible comfort. Freed from Grace's vicious destruction.

Abel's head broke the surface. He made his way toward shore: dropped the rocks from his pockets like the weight from his mind.

A splash from behind turned his blood cold.



BLACK WOODS

ADANNA M. SMITH // PSYCHOLOGY // SENIOR

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