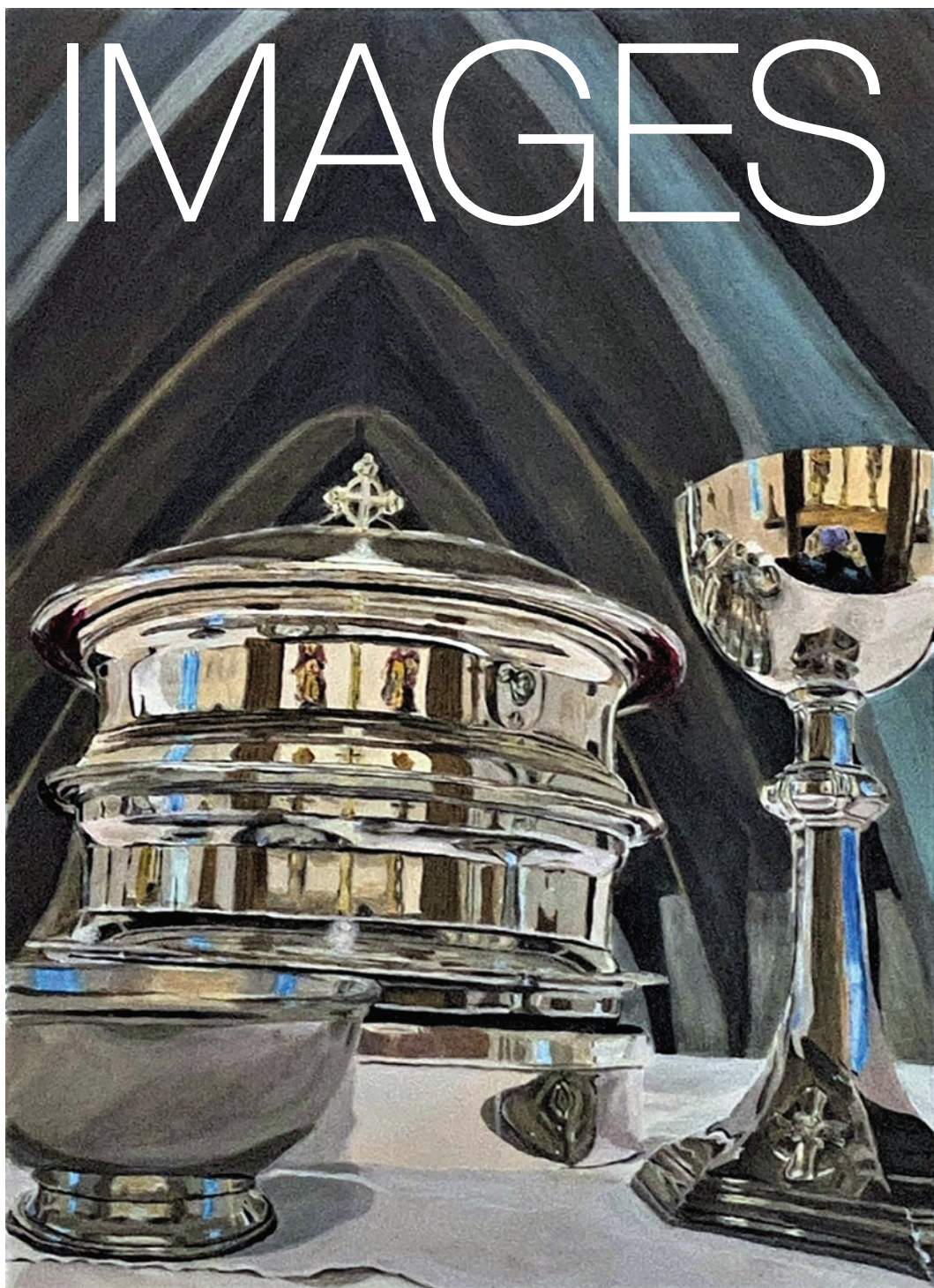


IMAGES



THIRTY-SIX

20

A Literary
& Fine Arts
Magazine

22



IMAGES 2022

A LITERARY AND FINE ARTS MAGAZINE

by the Students and Staff of
 Monroe County Community College



Front Cover:

Reflections • Illustration Techniques • Kristen Hause

Back Cover:

Mother • Illustration Techniques • Elizabeth Rodenbeck

Sponsored and Published by
 The Humanities/Social Sciences Division

Note: This publication may contain mature subject matter.

All photos: Therese O'Halloran

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is the thirty-sixth year the compiled creative efforts of our community of students is being published. For Therese and I, this is only our fourth issue as editors together. The publication of the literary magazine is the highlight of our academic year. For this year, it is uniquely special.

For the past couple of volumes, due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) causing a global pandemic, the lack of students on campus combined with students not enrolling within the creative writing class contributed to the lack of writing submissions. Issue thirty-six reemerges with writing and art submissions for our students here at MCCC.

Not surprisingly, our students' talent is on full display within this issue. Our hope is for you to see what our students have accomplished devoting their time and effort to producing these works of art. We hope our students' visions and voices are resounding.

We would like to thank everyone involved in making this volume a reality. To the contributors: thank you for your courage and willingness to submit work for everyone to view, consider, and remember. To those who work behind the scenes— Grace Yackee, Rachel Eagle, Doug Richter, Joe Verkennes, and Elisabeth Brockman-- we appreciate you, and we hope you know there would be no Images without your help.

We are already gathering material for our next issue. From now through next February, we will be accepting submissions from MCCC students to feature in the thirty-seventh volume. We collect these submissions through our magazine's email address: images@monroeccc.edu.

Jenna Bazzell
Assistant Professor of English

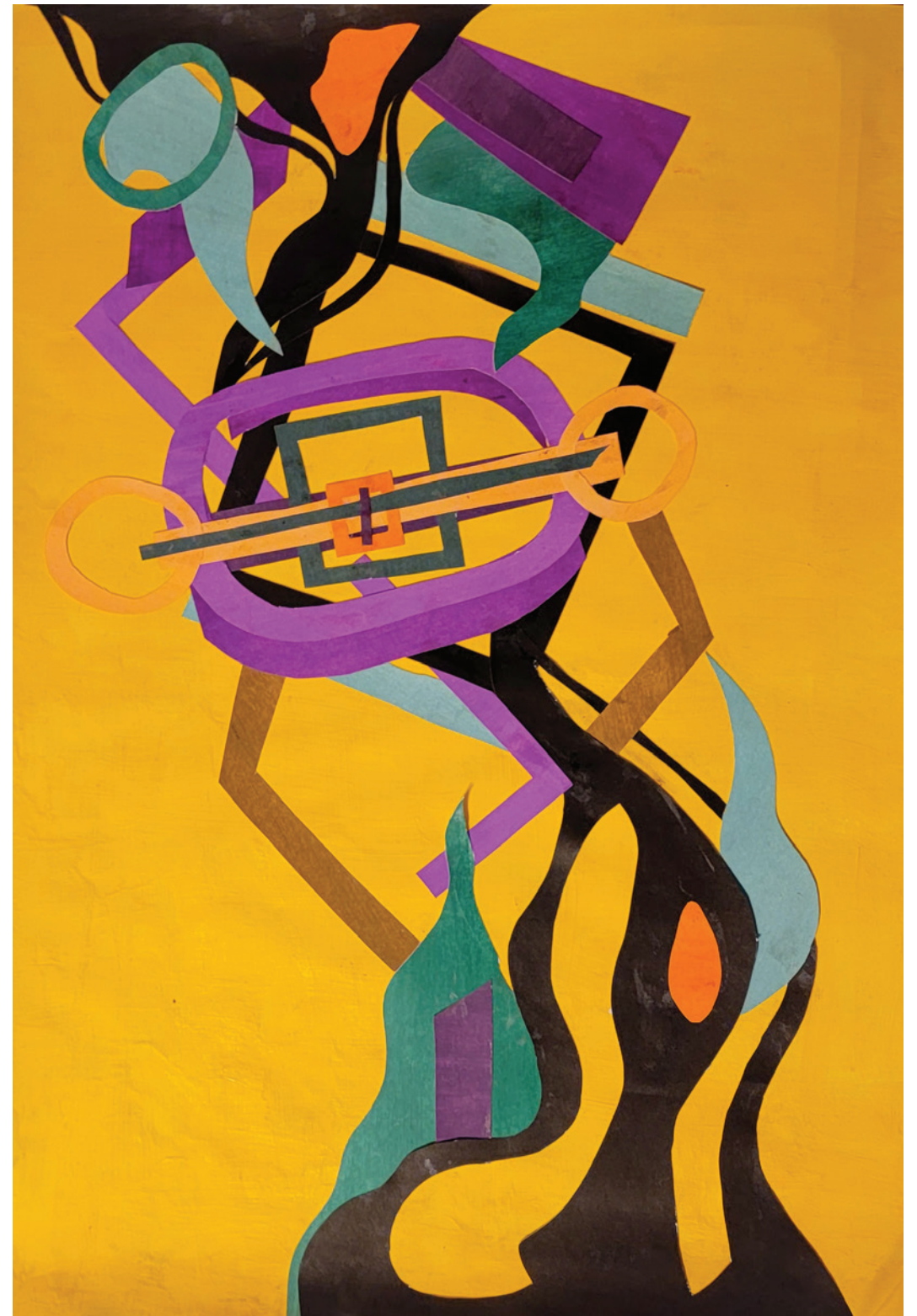
Therese O'Halloran
Assistant Professor of Art



Ineffable • Watercolor II • Kennedy Bowling

Produced by
Monroe County Community College

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Untitled • Art Fundamentals • Brian Salisbury



Pen Drawing • Drawing 1 • Elisabeth Brockman

Prolog

The small family stood outside the airport. They looked up at the tall, imposing building.

“Well... this is it,” The youngest, a blond woman, said.

“Call as soon as you touch down in Michigan,” her brother, a man with black curls, insisted, “And again when you touch down in Alaska!”

“I will, Tolly.”

“And video call as soon as you get to Tiffany’s place,” The other woman, whose long red hair was pulled back in a tight braid, hugged her tightly.

“I will, Marie.”

“You’ve never gone this far away before, Lulu,” Tolly looked down at her, anxiety etched into his face.

“I’ll be fine. It’s only for a couple of weeks. You’ll barely have time to miss me!” She grinned back.

The last call for her flight rang through the open doors.

Lux clung to her brother and cousin for a moment longer before stooping to grab her bags and dashing for her airport terminal.

“Take care of eachother until I get back! I love you!”

Five people stood just outside the airport terminal.

“Bist du bereit, Al?” One man said to another.

“Ja,” The youngest man grinned up at his brother, “Ich bin bereit.”

“Rufen Sie uns an, wenn Sie dort ankommen,” his mother hugged him tight.

“Ich werde, Mama,” Alan hugged her back, “Ich werde.”

“Du kommst besser zurück,” Another brother slapped him on the back, cane banging against his ribs, “Du bist Mama’s Baby.”

“Halte den Mund, Erik,” Alan elbowed him with a smile.

His father put a hand on his shoulder, “Pass auf dich auf, Alan. Und...Nimm das.”

Alan looked down at the collapsible knife in his hand. Carved into the wooden handle was the verse ‘Deuteronomy 31:6’.

“Opa’s Messer?”

“Er wollte, dass du es hast. Aber erinnere dich...” he tapped the handle with the tip on his finger.

Alan closed his fist around the knife and hugged his father, “Danke, Papa,” he turned to his last brother, “Jak-”

He was interrupted by the last call for his flight. Jakob shook his head and waved his little brother off with a small smile.

“Wiedersehen, Alan.”

“Wiedersehen!” Alan picked up his carry on and ran, “Ich liebe Sie alle!”

Counselor Counselor

A bright tangerine color floods the inside of your eyelids to tell you you've slept for too long. It's bliss, and you are made. You're not mad that you were pried away from your favorite dream. Not mad you're removed from the perfect crevice you made in slumber. The shifting and quiet popping of your joints is the rhythm of your morning.

You see a familiar face mirroring your quiet smile as you wipe off the counters. The cleaner smells like lemon zest and energizes you. Dust particles dance in the air, relinquished from their original resting spot. You're not robbed of tranquility. You're at peace with these blue walls reminiscent of the great unknown outside. Inside is what's known. Even if you cut yourself just looking at the knives.

Stiff and cold.

No matter. The pleasantries are yours. In the dead of winter it's muted and your thoughts are yours. Luckily it's August and lawn mowers and basketballs are the rhythm of your afternoon. That noise gives you life, the rhythm of being alive. Plans are cemented in your head like a concrete mold. The day is yours to seize, and you've done everything right in preparation to seize it. You grab your lanyard with a sea of metal on the bottom. Jangling, calling to you, leaving no door locked if you wish. Action is made, and as you are about to leave paradise your thigh vibrates.

An unknown number. And against your better judgment you answer the phone to hear a ghost of your past. Silver floods your head as you speak to them. Counselor this, counselor that, the counselor regurgitates your confidentiality in a box and ships it to your front door. You hear the doorbell and check through the peephole as if you are about to be jumped. Nothing was there aside from a box with a wide mouth, calling you.

Still on the phone you tuck it between your neck and face, acting as a voice of reason. Multitasking, you grunt and struggle to carry it. You prop the box into your arms using one of your knees and kicking the door shut with your foot. The burden drops on the table with a thud and the cats scramble as if bombs have been dropped. Close the curtains and the once blue walls look gray and muddied without light.

"Counselor, counselor—" You'd try to reason. Information leaks out of the phone as a black sludge, kissing the inside of your ears and leaking on the counter tops. The cold sour smelling ooze makes you recoil in disgust. You hang up to make it stop.

Your breath, heavy, is the rhythm of your evening. You slide on the floor frustrated and without a plan. A course of action doesn't become clear for several minutes. Your hand reaches up and grabs a knife, then the rest of you lags behind.

You pry open the box like murder. The tape flaying open at the slightest touch as if you were scoring meat.

Your breath sticks in the back of your throat, suffocating like honey. The knife clumsily slides out of your hand as it seems like reality itself would fade for you. The clanging echoes, but it's dead like winter again with no calls from the unknown, only you and your muted mind.

You push your nail under the lid to make the reveal.

• Kadia Allen



Pencil Drawing • Drawing 1 • Elisabeth Brockman



Reflective Objects • Illustration Techniques • Elizabeth Rodenbeck

Broken Heart

Shattered silence
Fallen footsteps
A broken heart leaves a shadow

• Kennedy Bowling

Listen

Listen – give attention to sound and action
One is hearing, others are saying
It requires a motivation to understand and receive, without reaction
To perceive black and white, as well as the greying

• Kennedy Bowling

The Reading Pool

The athenaeum seemed enormous,
Filled with infinite collections of philosophy, literature and prose
From the greatest minds the world has ever known.
The yellowing pages and frayed covers
Of the volumes filled every shelf and crevice in the room.
It seemed as though I could drown in the vast sea of
Knowledge that encompassed the edifice.
My mind is swimming with all the possibilities.
Slowly I inhale, ready to dive in.

• Kennedy Bowling



Abstract. • Drawing 1 • Elisabeth Brockman

Roar

Part 1

I felt tears stream down my face, but this time, I did not try to stop them. My lungs constricted, and I could barely breathe. My sobs echoed throughout the surrounding forest and returned to my ears frail and heartbroken, while my whole body shook on the hard, concrete sidewalk. I tried to see the gigantic steel gates, but my vision was too blurred. However, I didn't need to see clearly because I knew what they looked like by heart. I had been the welder that fabricated the logos of my zoo in the center of each steel gate. I had been the one who painted the metal shiny black. But it was rusted now. The logo was crooked and barely holding on. A small flake of paint gently floated through the air and landed on my knee as two men dressed in satin black gave it a shove from each side.

I flinched at the sudden, deafening squeaking. Just a few days ago, I wrote "oil the gates" on my to-do list.

The squeaking of the gate's hinges paused for a moment while Blake, my animal specialist, was dragged out. His deep brown eyes matched his dark skin as both features displayed how frantic he was. Then the horrible squeaking continued.

I cringed again when I realized the click of a new padlock was worse than the squeaking. A new padlock I didn't own or have a key to. My dream of protecting animals was now locked behind a gate I had once built from simple scrap pipes. Now old and worn, I never felt the need to repaint them because it gave the place a modern, rustic feeling. An oxymoron feeling.

I had always fancied oxymorons, but I hated them at this moment. My dream was turning into a nightmare. Will I be left with nothing? I lived in the little apartment above the giraffes' feed house. My phone was sitting on my desk next to an uneaten ham sandwich in the ticket booth. All I had were the clothes on my back.

I reached out and grabbed the tiny flake of paint. My fist tightened around it, holding it like a lifeline.

The animals were wailing wildly. I could only imagine the torture they were going through as quick shrills, neighs, splashes, and roars filled the pauses between my cries.

Through my heavy breathing, I heard someone mutter, "Where do I go from here?"

A guy snorted and shouted above the noises, "Welfare that's what. The new President AI- what is his name? Genie, I think, is very generous to the poor."

I glanced at him. He was standing closest to me in a small cluster of people. I knew he was one of my employees, but I did not have the strength to figure out what department he worked in.

Why does everyone hate work nowadays, I questioned myself multiple times in the past as it got harder and harder to find decent help. Don't they remember a day when they would do anything to grow up? I scanned the other clusters and the few faces I could see. Not very many looked fazed or even surprised. Did they know this was going to happen?

A President AI taxi pulled up behind us, and everyone except me faced it expectantly. I had seen them drive by often and could picture the doors made of electronic screens, advertising the benefits and reasons why people should vote for whatever AI drove the taxi.

"Hello," said a fake female voice. "I am a PG Taxi, meaning President Genie's Taxi, as many of you know. I will take you to the nearest Welfare Station so you all may live comfortably." I scowled and continued to tighten my fist. The AI taxi continued, "You will receive a bonus of one thousand dollars because I was the one who shut down your employment, Jem's Zoo." That sentence made every one of my employees jump into the taxi. I was a little surprised everyone fit, but I guess not needing a physical driver freed up a lot of space in the vehicle. "Jemily, are you coming?"

I didn't reply. I didn't have the mentality or the strength to converse with something so inhuman. Something so sinister and manipulative. An artificial intelligence. Millions of books in this world explain how bad they could be, yet humanity continued to march towards it until they couldn't turn back. Now everyone was subjected to its whims. I knew this day was coming, but I never expected it to be this harsh and painful. Never in my life did I think it would storm my home, business, and life-long dream, and burn my present and future to nothing but ashes blown about. I never thought of myself as a target since I only try to save endangered animals.

The taxi waited a few minutes until those already boarded started to get frustrated and argue about who deserved the highest free check. I finally heard it leave but kept my eyes on the melding colors moving between the bars of the gate.

The next thing I knew, I could hear another taxi idling by the curb behind me, but I paid no attention to it. I looked straight ahead. I could tell something was going on behind the gates. They must be forcing the animals into small containments. Or are they killing them? Guns are deathly silent in this era.

I looked down to my fist and slowly uncurled it. The tiny piece of paint was now a few grains of sand in my hand. A few grains of dirt. Has my life really turned from success to nothing but dirt? A few minutes later, I realized my life could get a lot worse. The sound of animals moving about trickled to

a stop. Every color behind the gate was still. Everything was silent except for the idling engine and my small, uneven puffs of breath. This place has never been quiet since the moment my dad bought the land for me.

I screamed. Mad at my situation. Desperate to save even one of my animals. Sick of my unending tears and inability to do nothing but watch. "Why are you doing this? What have I done wrong?"

Genie replied with the most unaffected voice in the world, "Well, you see, when I ran a diagnostic of who in this world could destroy me, only two people came up: you and him." I looked over at Blake in surprise, realizing for the first time that he never left. "If I put it into your vocabulary, you have the strength of a tigress, and he has the smarts of a fox. I know that you two are the only people in the world that can bring the end of my existence."

"What are you going to do with the animals?" I shrieked louder as it only drove me crazier.

"Oh, I have already released them back into the wild. Whether they survive or not is up to Mother Nature. I just survive in civilization, so as long as they stay out, I'm happy."

"I bet your happiness will save the world," I sneered, just wanting to run my fingers through fur.

The hum of a chopper broke through my pants. I got to my knees but swayed. Unexpectedly, Blake rushed to my side and helped me stand. I glanced at the chopper, squinting because of the sun. I expected a sniper to point a rifle out the window and tell me goodbye, but it began shooting at the taxi. The screens shattered first, then the windows, then the speakers which popped vehemently. I tried to run towards the gates. I wanted to shake them until my life went back to normal, but Blake grabbed my arm and pulled me to where the chopper was slowly descending in altitude.

Blake shouted, "Trust me. I know who they are, and if I do not get you out of here, Genie will kill you." I yanked myself out of his hold and stumbled to the gates. My vision was a little better but the sight was not. Everything was vacant. Empty. Abandoned. Papers flew about. Food was scattered around what had been a hopping eatery. All the doors swayed open and closed. Blake lightly touched my shoulder. "We can't stay here. Please come with me." What should I do? What can I do? I had no answers. I could not even think of any more questions. My tears picked up speed, and my vision blurred again. My knees gave way and all my weight fell onto Blake. He put his arm around my shoulder, turned me toward the chopper, and started leading me toward it. I was so emotional over the loss of my animals that I no longer cared about my wellbeing. I could care less about whether this was a trap.

I found myself strapped into a very hard seat by one of the chopper's windows. I saw the layout of my zoo slowly fading away. Every exhibit was completely empty. The somber sight was quite beautiful. I had never seen my zoo from a bird's eye view. I stared at it until everything was nothing but a tiny speck. I could only hope this feeling of loss and despair would not be the end of my story as my eyelids grew heavier and my muscles relaxed to the hum of the chopper.

The wind blowing into my face was not what made my muscles freeze and my heart generate an erratic rhythm. It was the endless scape of black shadows looming in front of my feet on the other side of the open plane door. Unexpected turbulence made my feet shuffle closer. My toes were over the edge, and I would be soon.

I woke up gasping for breath. I grabbed the thick grey blanket wrapped around me and scanned my surroundings. The walls were multiple shades of brown, and the floor was the same shiny black my gates had been. The bed underneath me felt so comfortable that it was hard for me to keep my muscles tense. However, a knock on the door made me more nervous than I had ever been in my life. Before I could move, the door swung open, and Blake walked through. "Hi. You're up. How are you feeling?"

I took a moment and relaxed my clenched hands and shoulders before asking, "Where are we?"

He sighed then said, "I was not born in Amari, but I moved there for school, as you know from my resume. Genie has already sifted out all his enemies in my country Naquaii, so I made sure I was ready if he hit my home. I stuck around as long as possible with the tigers, and I heard a black suit say that some of the animals were going to be taken to Ferquariston. Currently, we are in a hotel in Ferquariston."

"How do you know he didn't just slaughter them?" I quietly asked, focusing on his mention of my animals.

"I don't know, but my cousin is part of a secrete organization that is preparing to take down Genie and a few other competing AIs. They are willing to help us if we return the favor, so hope is not lost."

"I like hope," I mumbled and then scraped away the remains of my salty tears. I thought, you know, I like the name tigress. They are the only animals in the world that can roar.

Part 2 - Coming Soon

• Emily Klyder

Disintegrating Dreams

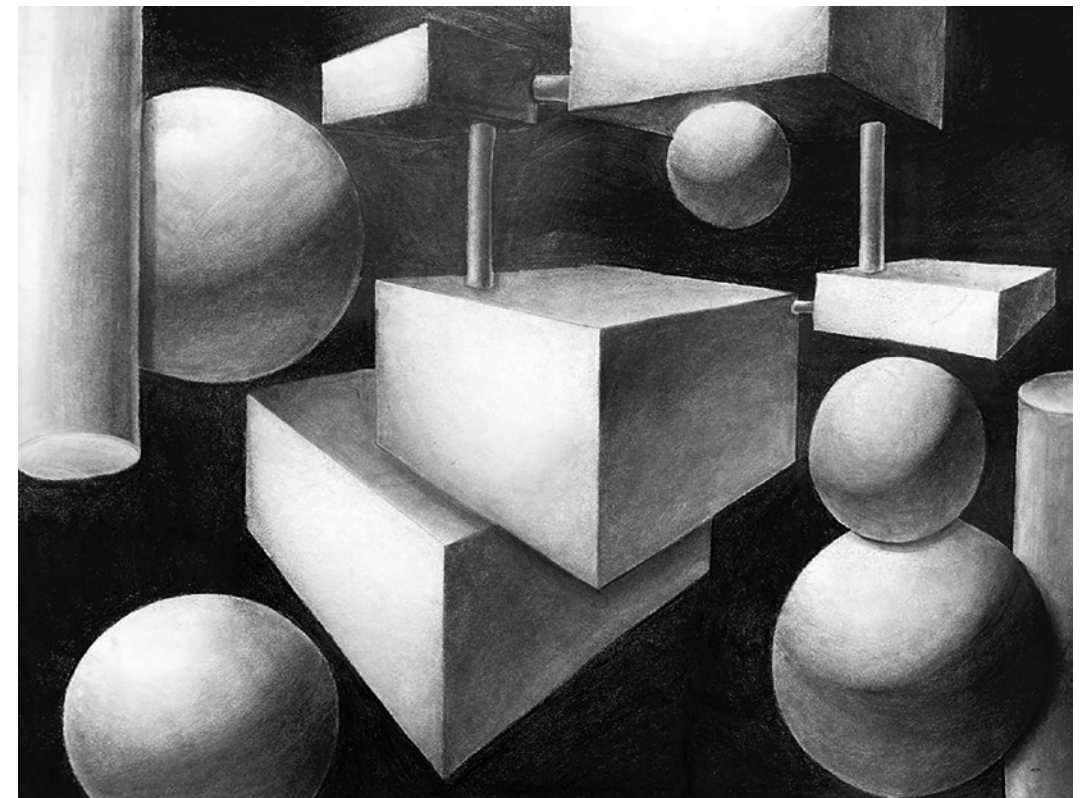
Morning tentatively pulls me awake,
Eyes closed, clinging to dreamy residue,
Delicately tracing lines of thought to induce a sticky state,
Slippery is the grasp that records dreams askew.

The embrace of morning disperses dreams as dust,
Later found in crevices, resemblance of the once lost,
In want of solitude attention, they rust,
By visiting reality, the loss of dreams is cost.

• Elisabeth Brockman



Figures • Ethan Kuhl



Untitled • Art Fundamentals • Huxley Payton

Prisoner's Switch

Must pained prisoners always switch sides?
The cage, once removed, another shoved inside.
Having always been told to "Love One
Another"
How can love for oneself exclude the love of
a father-an abuser?
Even when walking around in the light,
I am cold as the chains holding men's faults
with dark might.
Once he held me in his arms,
Sweet, until he squeezed too hard.
Cut the invisible cord tying us together,
Use it to bind his fate forever.
Never to freely travel the world,
Every potential ripped and reserved.
While he withers away,
I supposedly live truth.
The truth is I miss being the one in the cage.
I liked protecting people from the secrets he made.

Being outside isn't much different than in.
Same guilt and regret and mortality's sin.
He sits in his cell knowing he's paying for
wrongs.
People lean on his bars, saying, "He's where
he belongs."
I can run to and fro and do as I like, but
I am trapped in the knowledge that I stole a life.
Gone and dead are practically the same.
I just wish I could share my hard-won gain
With the one that lives in, while I live without.
Without being able to say I keep fraternal love.
I am expected to hate; I am expected to hurt.
Only I hurt because of lost love and lost life.
No longer a prisoner, but still with the pain,
I live my life using the life that I took, and he gave.
I live my life free of the bondage
Knowing the escape left carnage.

• Elisabeth Brockman



Jellyfish Paisley • Aurora Reynolds

Rivière Aux Raisin

The vine will shape.
 The statued grape.
 The purples, greens, and red.
 The underbrush it will explore.
 The sun's hot blade it will endure.
 Upon the scorching sun's hot blade.
 Nature's treasures will make the trade.
 Watery cool,
 The sun will snatch,
 Upon the flowing glass I'll glance.
 And take a taste of summer's last.
 Upon the banks of Numasepee.

• Elisabeth Brockman

RIVIERE AUX RAISINS - It is the French name for the Monroe, Michigan River Raisin. The translation is river of grapes. I have spent a lot of time on the trails and in the woods. The wild grape vines seem to create statues over trees thriving in the underbrush and in the sun. As the summer comes to an end the sun that gave life to these vines' trades back that life. The grapes become raisins, I sit on the riverbank seeing my reflection, and eating those last grapes. Numasepee-is the Potawatomi Native American name for the River Raisin; the translation is river of sturgeon.



Untitled • Photoshop • Joseph Jablonski

So many unsaid words hang off my lips like the last raindrop clinging to the edge of a leaf, desperate not to plunge to the ground.

But that's all it is, clinging to the last bits of hope, determined not to take that plummet I'm all too familiar with- the same fall that's already broken every bone in my body yet I continue to hang myself over the edge again and again without hesitation.

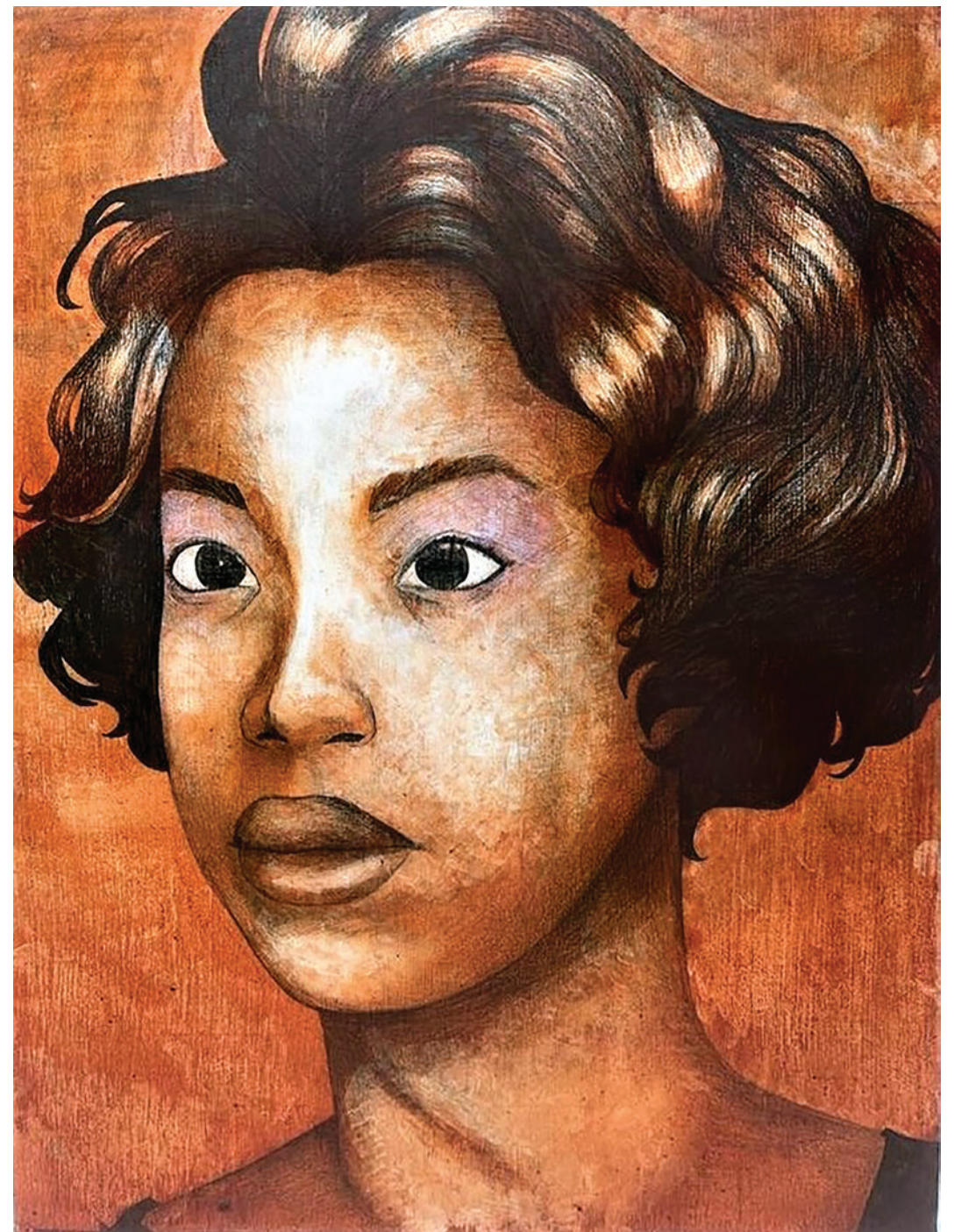
How silly that little raindrops is, willfully fighting to force itself back up into the clouds that refused to hold it any longer, back to a time before it rolled down the leaves the same way they now roll down my cheeks when I try to sleep.

You're my home in the clouds.

• Sara Ackerman



Editorial Cartoon • Illustration Techniques • Khamrii Wilson



Oil Portrait • Illustration Techniques • Khamrii Wilson

You're like the book I've read a thousand times, concentrating through each page despite knowing every word by heart. Finding new things to love in each line, every word speaking to me as if I could hear it ringing in my head. Savoring each page as if it were the first time, slowing down to breathe in the most beautiful parts. The parts that are so detailed and compelling that i can almost hear the birds singing, smell the flowers flourishing through only their description. And the worst parts. The parts where I'm clutching the pages with tears in my eyes, at the edge of my seat struggling to get through it without so much as taking one heaving breath into my lungs. And just as I try to prepare myself for that inevitable ending.. I stop. Turn back to the beginning, and drown myself in your pages again, suffocating under both the beauty and pain within the story of us.

• Sara Ackerman



Superheros • Illustration Techniques • Khamrii Wilson



Untitled • Illustration Techniques • Khamrii Wilson

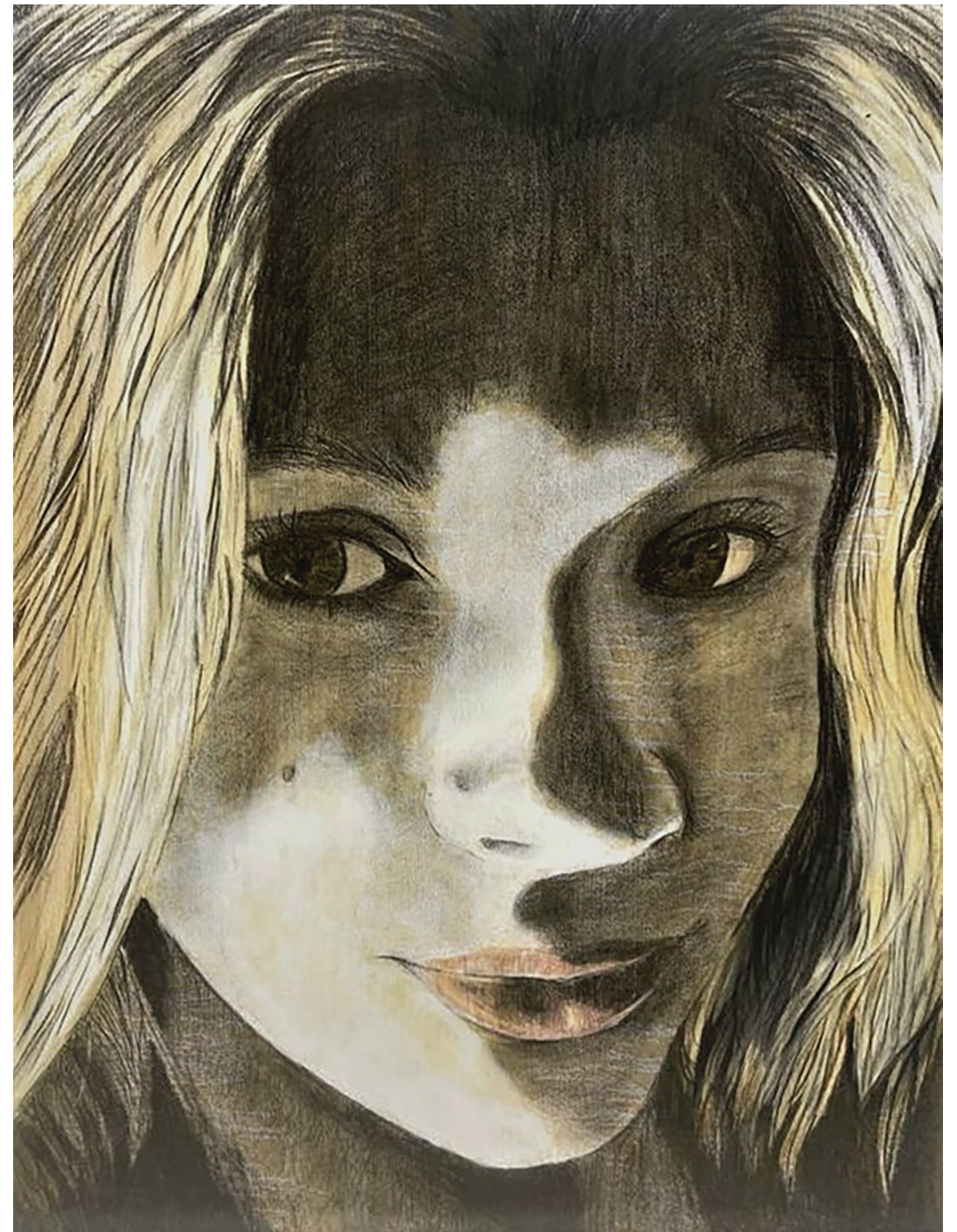
Six Word Memoir

1. My mistakes will never define me.
2. Digital connection doesn't feel like connecting.
3. One compliment can change someone's life.
4. The memory of her still lingers.
5. Addiction is like sinking in quicksand.
6. I saw death that fateful day.
7. Please let my fire burn again.
8. I wait but he never comes.
9. Feeling small isn't small at all.
10. There's no current without the wind.

• Joshua Sell



Self Portrait • Illustration Techniques • Ethan Kuhl



Oil Wash Portrait • Illustration Techniques • Kristen Hause



Macro Image • Drawing 2 • Mercedes Slaughterbeck

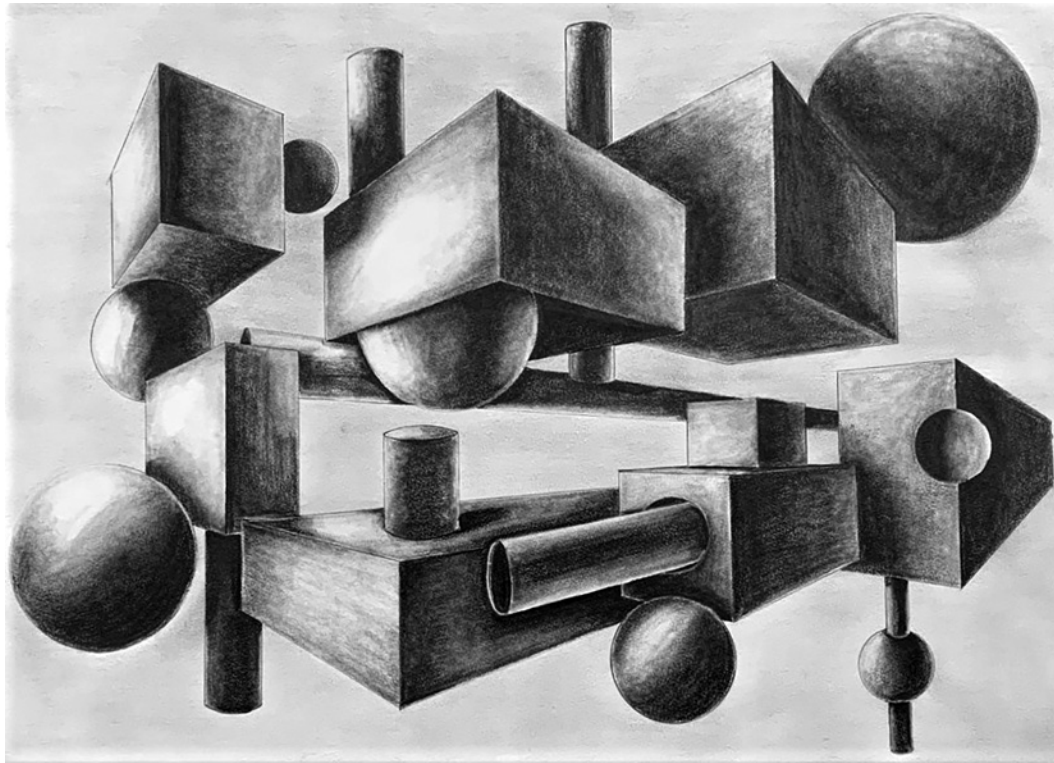
Soft Mornings

I slip into the shy landscape,
The air filled with a white drape,
Unannounced by twig or creak,
My eyes only see where I leap,
My eyes only are left to gape,
For the morning is lost to sleep.

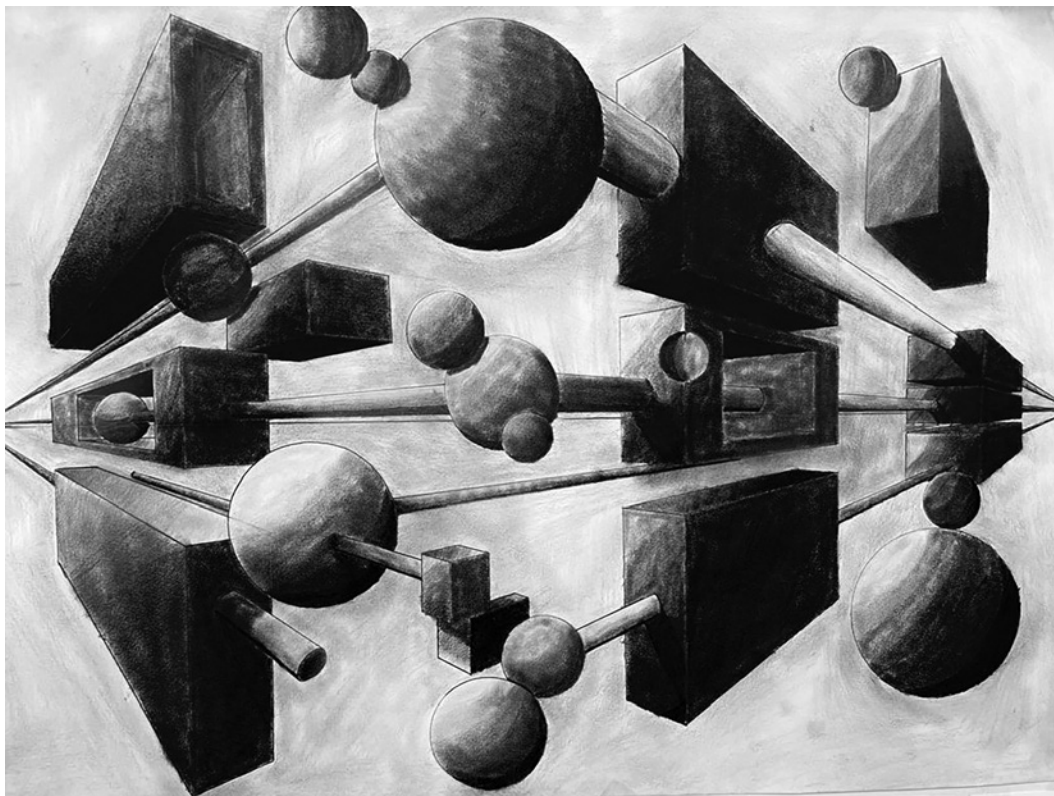
• Elisabeth Brockman



Abstract • Drawing 1 • Martha Dennis



Two Point Perspective • Art Fundamentals I • Patricia Schleicher



Untitled • Art Fundamentals • Daniel Borgstahl

Spark of a New Morning

Drops of sunny amber
 Generate my ambition.
 Blissful shadowy moments!
 Awake, yet still, serene,
 Rise to the occasion
 Fresh, endless, untouched,
 Grasping this energy
 Courage to face unknown,
 Gifted a new day.
 I step forth anew.

• Elisabeth Brockman



Caricature • Illustration Techniques • Presley Bergmooser

UNTANGLED

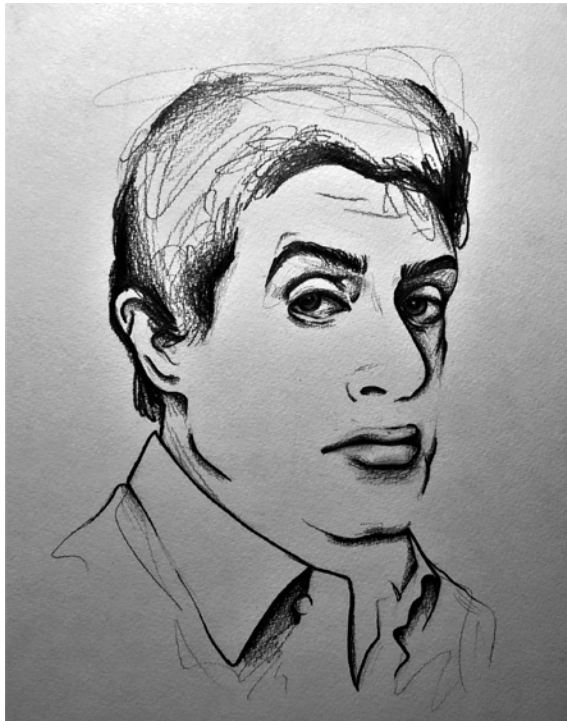
LOVE is a strong emotion that binds us together.
It motivates us to treat each other right.
It helps us to find deeper understanding, it gives us reason to care,
And it serves as a root of our growing relationship.
To continue to fight and stand as husband and wife.

RESPECT is a choice we need to make.
The best gift we can give to each other – an investment for our good future.
When a new season comes, when challenges require sufferance
because husband and wife are not to change each other.
The love within you accepts the other.

What is ahead of us is still unknown, good thing we are not alone!
Worry and fear are behind us.
FAITH, EXCITEMENT and JOY are blessings given to us.
To embrace the beauty of our union.
Strong and healthy marriage, LOVE and RESPECT are the reasons.

Together, we deciphered the mystery of marriage.
It is not about who is right.
It is not about who sacrifice a lot.
It is not about slavery.
It is not about separation but the combination of you and me.

• Maria Varner



Sylvester • Illustration Techniques • Presley Bergmooser



Reflective Objects • Illustration Techniques • Presley Bergmooser

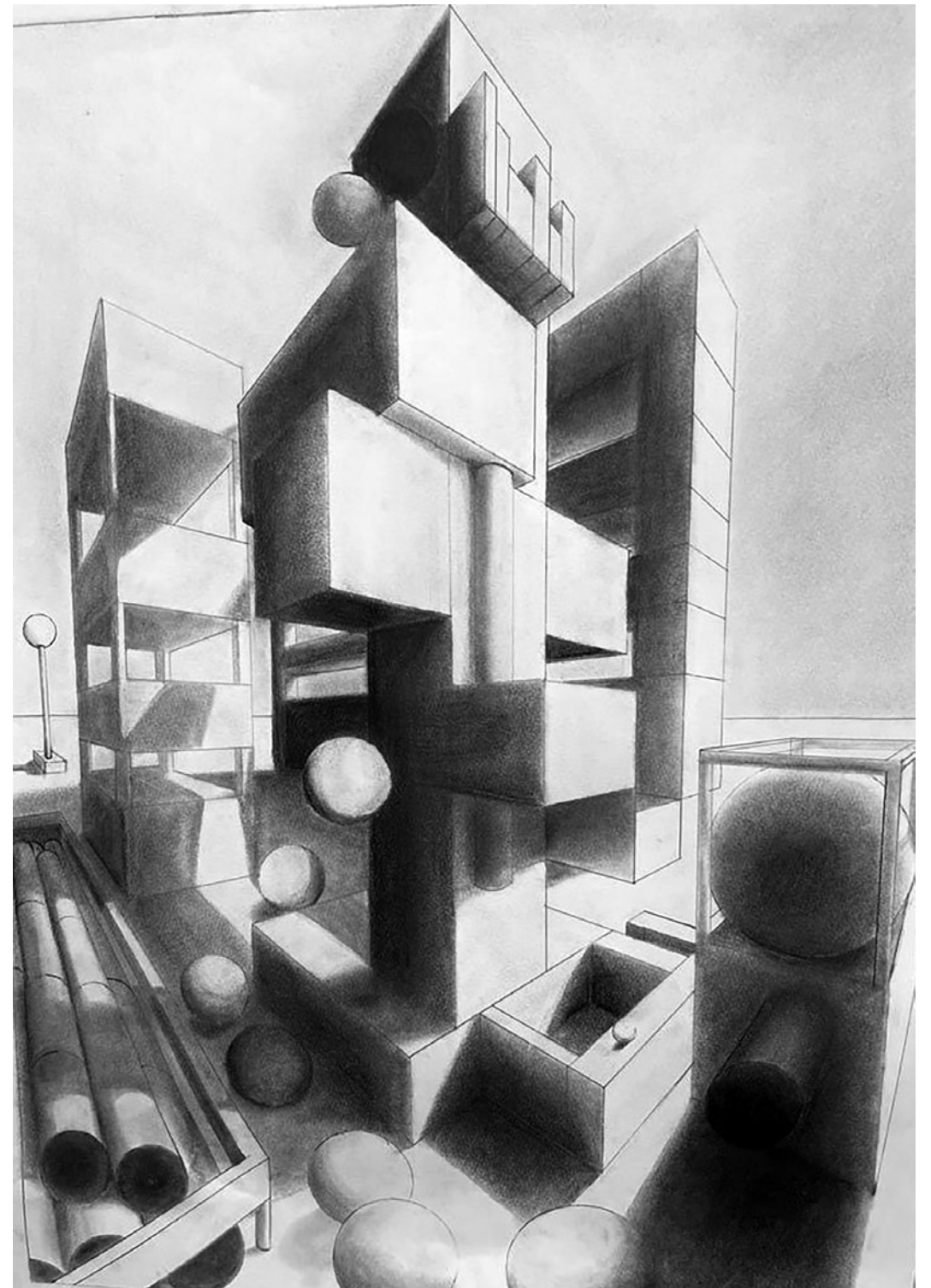
I Believe in Nature

Nature nurtures the planet constantly,
She is always there and always aiding.
Her large, lush forests stand triumphantly,
Her great green influence never fading.
God remains unseen and unknown to me,
But I know that Mother Nature is there.
Her waves that sweep cities into the sea,
And her roots run rampant flaunting her flair.
I know what her beautiful blessings bring,
I've seen the epic effects of her wrath,
And I know she decides our being.
Her wrath holds a vile, adverse aftermath.
Ask me what being I choose to believe,
I'll say green grass and the world I perceive.

• Tyler Haack



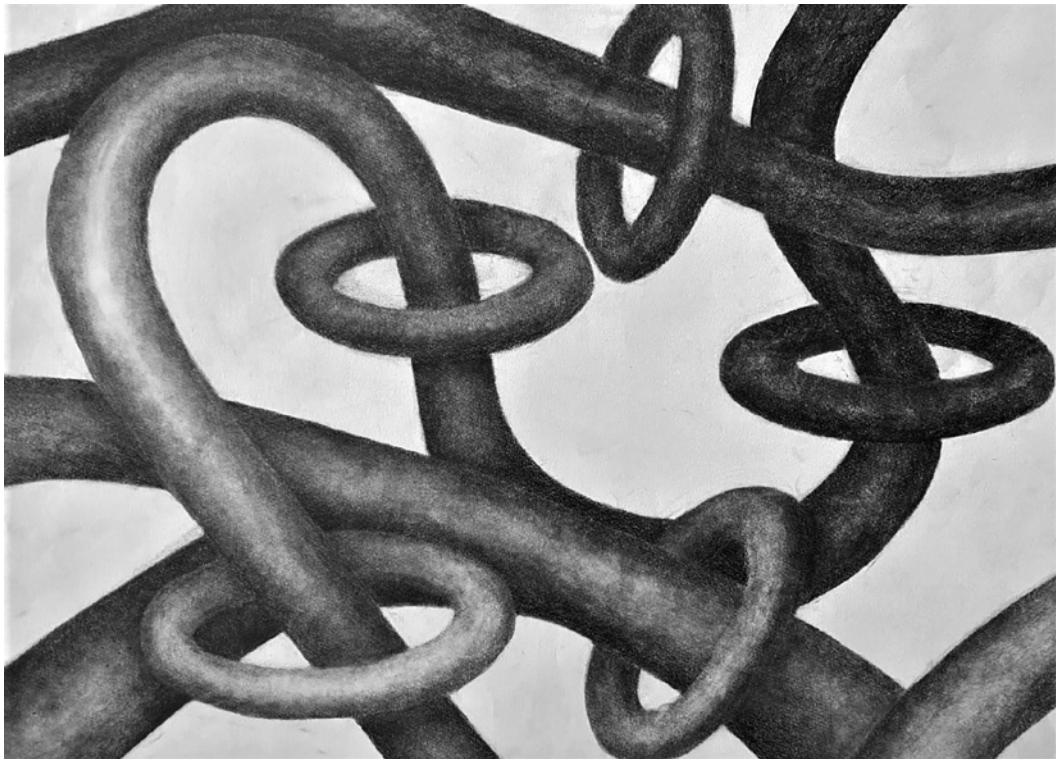
Caricature • Illustration Techniques • Ramona Hoefler



Untitled • Art Fundamentals • Tyler Dean



Untitled • ??? • Paul Martell



Untitled • Art Fundamentals • Elizabeth Rodenbeck



Reflective Objects • Illustration Techniques • Emily Gibson

CONTRIBUTORS

Writers

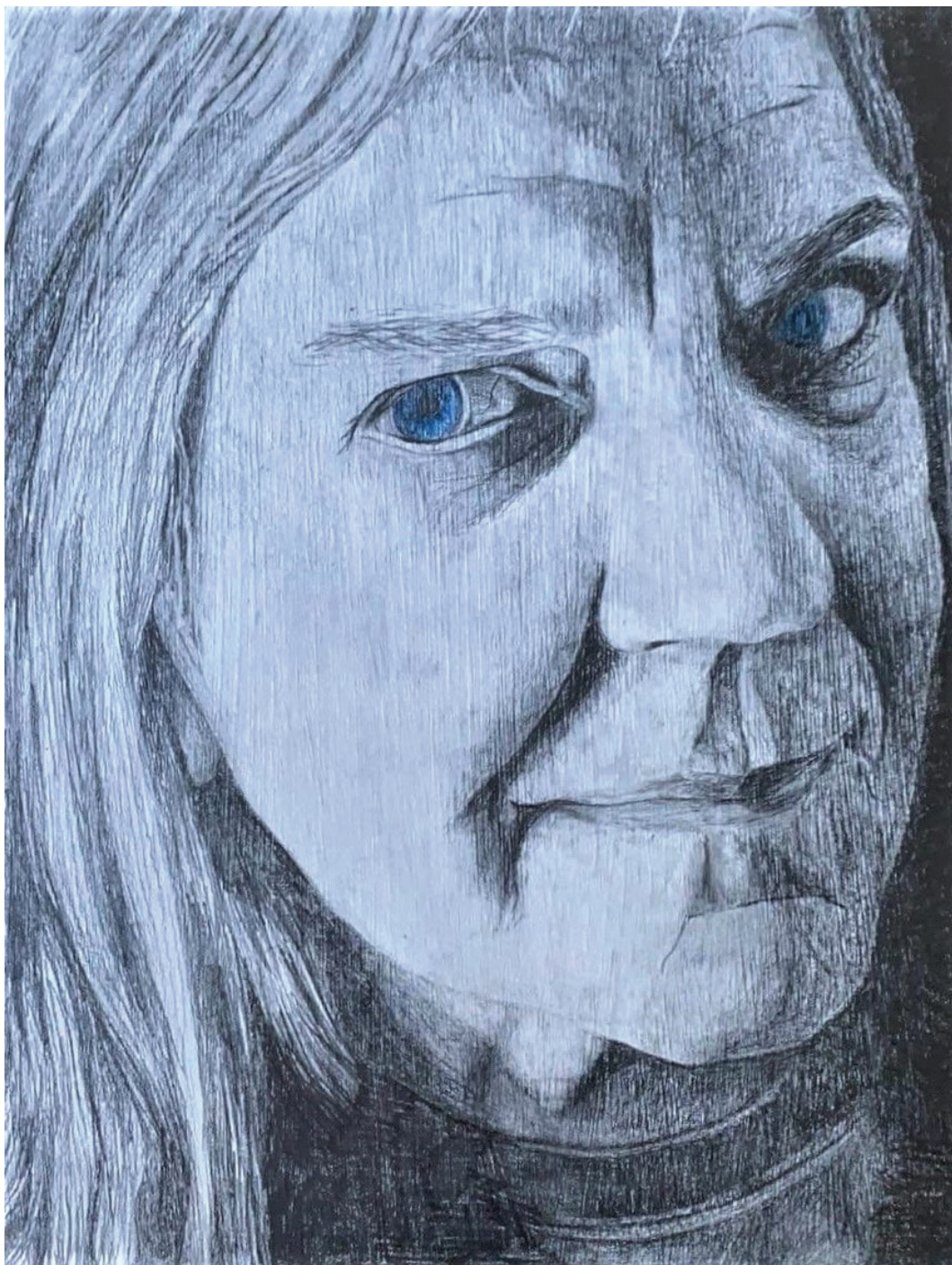
- “Prolog” Lily Close
- “Untangled” Maria Cristina Varner
- “Roar” Emily Klyder
- “IMAGES submission #2” “IMAGES submission #1” Sara Ackerman
- “Spark of New Morning” Elisabeth Brockman
- “Disintegrating Dreams” Elisabeth Brockman
- “Prisoner’s Switch” Elisabeth Brockman
- “Riviere Aux Raisin” Elisabeth Brockman
- “Soft Mornings” Elisabeth Brockman
- “I Believe in Nature” Tyler Haack
- “Six Word Memoir” Joshua Sell
- “Counselor Counselor” Kadia Allen
- “Broken Heart” “Listen” “The Reading Pool” Kennedy Bowling

Artists

- Kristen Hause – Front Cover, page 19
- Kennedy Bowling – Acknowledgements Page
- Brian Salisbury – page 1
- Elisabeth Brockman – page 2, 5, 7
- Elizabeth Rodenbeck – page 6, 28, Back Cover
- Ethan Kuhl – page 10, 18
- Huxley Payton – page 11
- Aurora Reynolds – page 12
- Joseph Jablonski – page 13
- Khamrii Wilson – page 14, 15, 16, 17
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- Tyler Dean – page 27
- Paul Martell – page 28
- Emily Gibson – page 29



All photos: Therese O'Halloran



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