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The Cupola

Granby High School's
Literary Arts Journal

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Cover: Giraffa Camelopardalis by Jaylynn Schmidt

Inside Cover: Super Cat by Isis Streeter

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First Place Entry in Granby's 16th Annual Poetry Contest

Duct Tape Thighs

Sarah Hardy

Who invented school dress codes?

~~Rich, scared men~~

Why do we have them?

~~To control girls~~ To protect the boys

But what does this teach girls?

~~To push aside our needs in favor of men~~ To be modest, polite, and proper

And what does this teach boys?

~~That they are the priority~~ Boys will be boys

Does this target women?

~~I've watched friends forced to walk around school with duct tape around their legs. Been made to sit in the office waiting for a jacket because my shoulders are too distracting for the fragile male mind. My education matters less than their comfort. Our stomachs and shoulders are inappropriate and we should be ashamed. Ashamed of who and what we are, ashamed to be cloaked in this thick skin. Of course not.~~

What's wrong with skin?

~~Why is my body wrong?~~ Modesty, silence, obedience



"Super Aesthetic" by Isis Streeter

Senior Recital

Evelyn Page

My madness is music, a fit of desperation, of flight
It's unraveling
Unraving
Unveiling
revealing
a ball of black thread I weave into experience, into enlightened staves
into Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge, and the bar lines are a trip hazard
Nevertheless, I throw down my gauntlet
and pick up my bow
as Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle, I know
Take a breath and go
I keep going I keep running I keep playing
Outside of time and space, already at the end of it, and yet the melody's outrun-
ning me
to death or collapse too fast as sour notes purse my lips
make it stop make it stop stay in time slow it down but not too slow don't fall or
halt or falter
Don't stop! Make it silly goose
Play it fast with fingers flying loose like sparrows fleeing from a hawk's screams
My own screams trapped, echoing in the fragile rosewood I frantically tear apart
with harsh words, vinegar tears approaching the finish
line feathers falling but still in the air, half asleep
Three bars left to go three hurdles to leap
A culmination of all I've done and all I've been
No stumbling now
No crumbling now
Save the tears for the shower
A single flourish and it's over
Two notes: F-sharp. G.
The. End.
It's over.
It may be over, but the madness isn't
What happens next?
Time's up, but I'm not yet out of it
The sky before, the moon behind, I fly
My madness isn't mine
It belongs to the marching drums, my absent mind
My lips trembling at each treble clef, the melodies are agonies
and every step is pain
Yet I remain
Yet I remain



'Berry Swirly' by Malaz Mohamed

Mahjong

Tina Li

Late at night, the living room comes alive with mahjong.

Adults in my life, usually so calm and composed, shout rapidly at each other in Fuzhounese and loudly bemoan how much money they're losing. Not even the loudest speakers blasting Chinese New Year performances can block out the clamor of colliding tiles as they're scrambled for the next round.

Throughout my childhood, the green velvety table felt so foreign to me, untouchable and unwelcoming. I can't speak my parents' native dialect of Fuzhounese, I'm picky and don't like eating a lot of our cultural food, and to the disappointment of my parents, I have in many ways become more American than Chinese. Intergenerational conversations are rare in my culture, even more so for me since I can't articulate myself in Chinese as well as I can in English.

For the longest time, I'd accepted that I'd never find that bridge between the two sides of me. That I would never be close with my family.

Then, when I turned 17, my mom had enough of me cooped up in my room at family gatherings and ordered me to finally learn how to play. Auntie volunteered to help; no surprise there. She plays mahjong at home, at work, on her phone, anywhere.

My very first game. I only have one opponent: my brother. He may have four years on me, but that works to my advantage: Auntie watches my game and helps me instead of him. Younger child privileges.

Dice rolled, joker tile selected, and the game began.

Thinking back now, it's as if a fog cleared. For the first time, I could see a way for me to embrace my roots. Up until then, I had hardly spoken to Auntie due to the language barrier, even though she had raised me for years by herself in China. But we found common ground in mahjong and she excitedly showed me her tricks from decades of experience.

Pèng! I call out, stealing my brother's discarded tile. Two sets down, one more to go.

Discovering how much I enjoyed playing mahjong challenged me to reflect on how little my closest friends knew about the real me: my family background, what I did in my free time, my favorite things. It's easier to lie and tell them that my favorite food is Italian pasta rather than Shanghai-style rice cake soup, because simply bringing up something foreign instantly made me feel "other".

I realized, in the process of trying not to be othered, I had othered a part of me, divided myself in half between American and Chinese. Mahjong used to be part of my other side, the side I hid and neglected.

Now I wait. Kàn pái, a late-game strategy: I'm watching the discard pile for the one tile left that I need.

I look forward to family gatherings now, as I get to sit down and play mahjong with my family—even as they sometimes roast me for how unlucky my pulls are. The conversations I have with my mom used to revolve around school, but I've started taking pictures of all my wins against my brother so I can show off to her the smart plays I made to get the winning set. Mahjong grounds me in my heritage, keeps me connected with family, and I don't want to hide it anymore.

There it is. The four of dragons.

Harsh thundering of tiles morphs into calming thuds against smooth velvet. I revel in the rich traditions of my culture, and grow excited to share it with others.

Victory is mine.



“Spring Fling” by Antwain Branch



"Darkness and Rebirth" by Janyah Taylor

Monarch and Martyr

Josephine Petras

“Zealous, just zealous.”

“You’re being pessimistic.”

“X-rays say he’s as good as dead.
War will come to fight for his title.”

“Very funny.”

“Unamusing if anything.”

“Thank you,
Sister, for your enthusiasm.”

“Racing for fame, you chose to become
Queen of our people.
Politics blind your vision.”

“Only the best can reign forever.
Nobody can steal what belongs to
Me, the monarch.”

“Lies are being fed to you. The King has manipulated you.”

“Jealous? Jealous of my luxurious life?”

“It is only temporary.”

“Hatred! You hate me, don’t you?”

“Get your head out of the clouds. Your rambling isn’t making any sense.”

“Feel my wrath, Diana. Off with her head!”

“Elizabeth! Are you out of your mind?”

“Don’t raise your voice at me, you
Cunning snake.”

“But we are sisters.”

“And I am the queen.”

(Secretly)

Amy Farr

[My loneliness]

hears itself

breathing

It hums and it

bites and it

gnaws

(secretly)

lacking an audience to

validate its everthere presence

lacking an audience to

remind, remind, remind

why it feels so lonely

Enough?

Amy Farr

Is this loud enough for you?

Can you hear the bite of my teeth?

The snap of my tongue?

The hum of my brain?

Have I reached the level of yours?

The drip of your exhaust?

“Time Warp” by Sam Scarborough



A Reflection on the Passage of Time

Anna Porter Puckett

A plastic bag got stuck in my elderly neighbor's tree, directly across from my kitchen window. The first time we noticed it, my mom wanted my dad to go over with a ladder and take it out.

"Don't worry about it," he said. "It's too high up and deep in the tree for me to reach it, but the wind will blow it out soon."

The wind did not blow the plastic bag out. It has been eight years.

It is a brown FarmFresh bag, a testament to a time when my life was simpler and FarmFresh was still in business. During the summer, the sun reflects off the bag and sharply contrasts the pale brown of the bag with the green of the tree. In the fall, it matches the color of the leaves and almost blends in until winter rolls around and all the leaves fall off, leaving the bag alone in the branches. The rare snowfall conceals nothing; instead, the bag becomes the only imperfection in a landscape of white. The only time I think it looks good, almost even beautiful, is during spring. When the leaves of the tree are just beginning to show, the plastic bag in the tree reminds me of how some things come and go with time while others remain. After eight summers and eight winters, the color has faded, and after four tropical storms and countless windy days, the handles have become two long banners and the bag itself has shredded.

By this point, the plastic bag has become as much of a part of the view outside the kitchen window as the street or the tree itself, yet it is perceived differently. When my dad does the dishes, he barely notices it at all. Everytime my mom washes her hands, she can't help but notice and bemoan its continued existence. I don't think about it during the day, but at night, when I'm making my peanut butter and honey sandwich for the next day, or after I've crept down in the middle of the night for some water, I stare at it. It has become such a staple of the view outside the window that I can look at it and remember different times of my life, different memories, different feelings.

The seasons and appearance of the bag help me track the passage of time and how much I have grown in the past eight years. It leads me to appreciate the little moments, because whenever I notice it, I recall a time when I was less okay than my current self. It has become a stimulus for appreciation, for reflection, for hope. One day, I may be able to muster optimism unprompted, but for now, I need help. One day, the wind might actually blow the bag out, but for now, it remains.

Good Old New Orleans

Miles Miskill

The sun goes down, but the world wakes up.

A switch.

Turn the corner.

A young man. A neon light. A Cajun restaurant.

piano saxophone bass trumpet

Sunglasses at night.

They move through a bustling city:

insecure women, bigoted men, beaded necklaces.

A night to forget, a night forgotten, but the music keeps playing.

Turn the corner.

Through cobblestone streets, policemen ride on horses, no cars.

A city of tents, a needle covered underpass, a man in need of a fix.

A brown bag, a broken bottle inside.

A flooded street, a flooded house, a flooded life, a dead end.

“Flower Power Rainstorm” by Janyah Taylor





“Super Scary” by Isis Streeter

Crazed

Lia Harrell

My madness

walks away from the burning burning burning burning
still the gray smoke lingers in my lungs

A stab stab stab stab IN

My back

My

MY back

the grief the spiral the continuation the infinite the endless the never ending
laughter, not my own
maybe?

what is Mine Mine Mine Mine

is the Light

only until

it is too

bright

“Break Your Leg” by Hailey Lawton



Lucky Bamboo

Kayla Mallari

On my desk, the lucky bamboo leans toward the window's
light.

I study countless nights

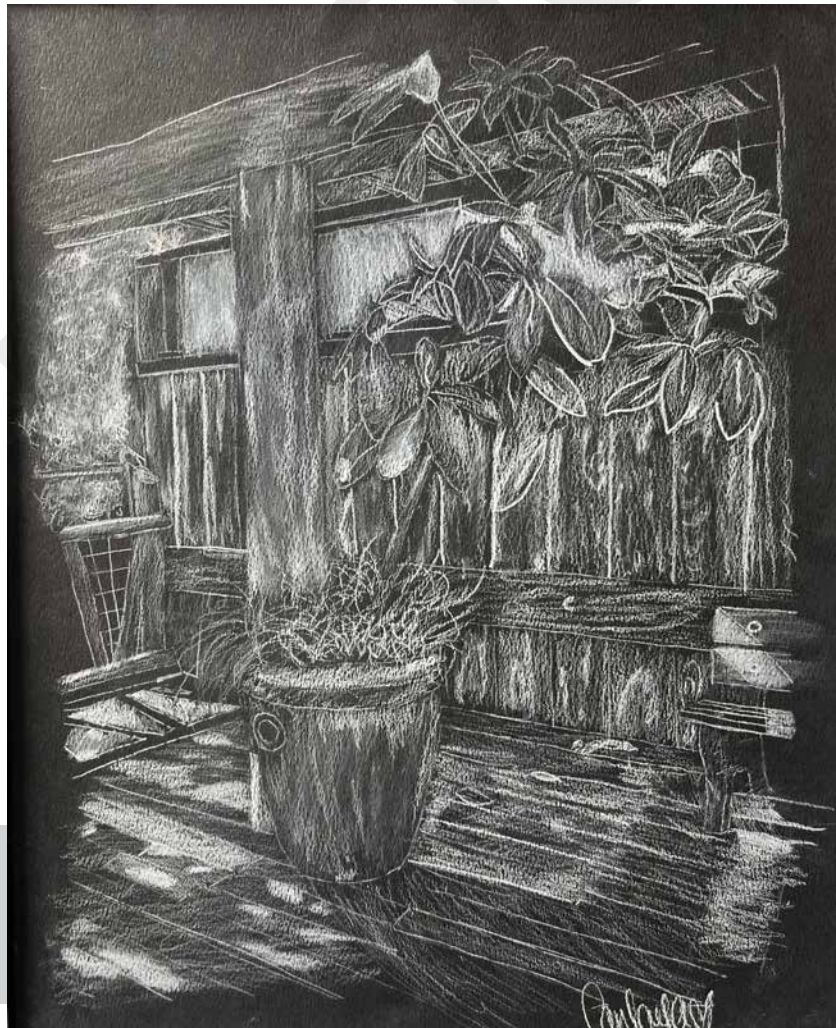
culm and blades watching over me.

It begins to droop; the neglect crashes upon its growth like
waves.

The luck will run dry if the bamboo craves.

Watering is a must for luck to remain.

Superstition or not, the bamboo will stay.



“Outside Surroundings” by Sanjaya Satterthwaite

Intertextual Flash Fiction

Each of these flash fiction pieces is inspired by and titled after songs.

“El Gran Varon” by Willie Colon

In a hospital, Simon was born at 9:43. You can't change the course of nature. In bed 10, Simon died a disease-ridden death.

– *Alexandra Báez*

“Si Una Vez” by Selena

If I once said. Once did I say. I did once say that I loved you.

– *Alexandra Báez*

“A Man Without Love” by Engelbert Humperdinck

She reaches for mascara, hoping it will mask her tired eyes. It doesn't.

– *Kara Cox*

“Princesita” by Elvis Crespo

Trumpets and tamburas and pine-sol. Dancing merengue in the kitchen. Saturday, 11:00.

– *Kara Cox*

“We're Going to Be Friends” by The White Stripes

Crayon on the wall, hidden behind the couch. The call of a mourning dove and the smell of morning – voluntarily.

– *Alexandra Czerniak*

“Vienna” by Billy Joel

She sits with her head in her hands. The results that determine her future are pending. But it is out of her hands.

– *Abigail Houser*

“I Wish You Love” by Sam Cooke

I wished you those Bluebirds last spring. It's winter and they don't fly around here anymore. Just black crows that crowd my telephone pole.

– *Miles Miskill*

“Stick Season” by Noah Kahan

I stop singing the line, “You promised me that I was more than all the miles combined” when I drive past the exit to your house.

– *Vanna Stone*

“The Red Thread” by Frida Johansson

He knit me in my mother’s womb, wound in bright red thread. I was born in the tangle of knots He made, but the nurse found me already dead.

– *Evelyn Page*

“Acolyte” by Slaughter Beach, Dog

An anthem. A symbol. A summer filled with bliss: late nights, long talks, road trips, surprises and pure connection. Love. I’m unsure of the future, but my world is consumed by those seven words.

– *Jaden Shawyer*

“Dreams” by Fleetwood Mac

But I awake to the smell of starch and an old iron. Existence is unknown in this space. A mistake of some kind. It’s Sunday.

– *Lia Harrell*

“Rules” by Alex G

The tags are still on that dress you bought me.

– *Cailyn Ochipinti*

“Achilles Come Down” by Gang of Youths

Friends, lovers, two halves of a whole. He was sunshine, but he was crimson. Leaking, spoiling the earth: a Greek tragedy.

– *Roger Zheng*

Interview with

Jorge M



Cupola: What do you draw inspiration from? How is this expressed in your work?

J.M.: I don't know that I necessarily "draw inspiration". To me that phrase has always sounded like, I as a writer have a choice in what inspires me. I don't think that's how it works. Not for me at least. For me inspiration has always kind of just, 'shown up' and says, "I'm here. Ready or not." Rarely can I intentionally sit down to write. More often than not, it kind of just happens, especially with the poetry that deals with personal feelings and painful experiences.

On the rare occasions when I do make the conscious decision to write, it's usually with a prompt. In which case the prompt serves as inspiration. I like having a wide variety of subjects in my poems. . .horror, love, humor,

politics. In spoken word we call that "having deep pockets." Prompts that ask you to write outside of your comfort zone help immensely with that.

Cupola: Besides writing, do you draw inspiration from artists in other fields, such as musicians and screenwriters?

J.M.: Yes absolutely. Especially with music and poetry being so closely related. I couldn't begin to count the times I was listening to music when all of a sudden inspiration "showed up" and demanded that I write. A handful of musicians, like Prince and MF DOOM, have memorial poems I was moved to write when they passed as well. If that counts.

I'm also a big fan of cinema. As a matter of fact, I named a poem I wrote "Identity" after a film by the same name. The poem isn't about the movie but indirectly explores a similar theme.

Paintings can evoke emotions powerful enough to move me to write as well. I like using paintings to write ekphrastic poetry. I tend to come up with more abstract ideas than normal when I write based on paintings.

Cupola: In "Human Deities" and "The Nature of Things", you explore the theme of what someone/something is supposed to be versus what they actually want to be or potentially could be. It shows how the human condition is present in both

Mendez

By Ella Gilmore, Tina Li, and Kayla Mallari

the supernatural and mundane. Could you talk more about that and why you were inspired to write about that?

J.M.: Coincidentally, “Human Deities” was an ekphrastic poem written after a painting by a local artist named India Downey. It is of a woman looking quizzically and with wonder at the cosmos. I attempted to explore what she might be thinking, ultimately landing on the idea that we as humans are not much different than how we describe our deities to be. It puts humans and gods on the same playing field and asks, *well why not?* Conversely, also pondering if the deities in question understand that and what that could imply about their presumed divine nature.

“The Nature of Things” was inspired by a desire to be inspirational. In this piece, everything from a four-leaf clover to a puddle and a hammer want to be something bigger. Something more. While the character in “Human Deities” wonders if there is difference between her and the Gods, “The Nature of Things” tells you that there doesn’t have to be a difference if you want it enough. Everyone and everything can be more than what they were made for.

Cupola: In “The Nature of Things”, do you have a dream or an aspiration that feels to not necessarily be your “purpose,” but that you wish to pursue, nonetheless?

J.M.: What a great question. Yes, I do. Aside from writing, my other passion is Halloween. I run a backyard haunt for charity every year called Gloom House. We see roughly 250 guests every Halloween night. My dream is to open a year-round Halloween and horror themed indoor fun park. Something like APEX or Dave & Busters but spooky themed. I don’t think it’s what I’m here to do but I’d love to try.

Cupola: When determining the writing style for your poems, do you have a go-to style that is evident in most of your works, or do you have a topic or theme in mind and make stylistic choices to emphasize the points you wish to make?

J.M.: I believe I have a certain voice I write in but not so much a style. Like I mentioned earlier, I like having variety in my writing. Both in terms of subject matter and in style. The vast majority is in free verse as I feel it gives me the most freedom, but I enjoy playing with rhyme and form occasionally. However, I don’t make this decision at the beginning of the writing process. First, I just free write until I feel like I’m done. This just gives me a huge rock to carve the poem out of. The carving is when editing happens. The style, whether it will rhyme, line breaks, etc. will come to me while I’m carving.

Cupola: How do you help others write poems and express themselves? Are there any methods or strategies you gravitate towards?

J.M.: The main thing I tell writers is to be honest in their writing. This doesn't mean everything you write has to be a true story. It means you should be passionate about everything you write and uncompromising to yourself as a writer. I am a huge advocate of free writes. My advice is to write freely without worry for punctuation, spelling, anything. Just get the feelings out. What you get when you write this way is typically very raw and often unorganized but it's 100% honest. I find that invaluable. When you're done free writing, you can find the art in the honesty of that freedom and carve it out.

Cupola: What advice would you give writers who are afraid to put their work out there? Is that something common you see during your work at The Muse?

J.M.: I firmly believe there are more secret artists in the world than the opposite. It can be very intimidating to share your work. The thing I hear most new artists say that keeps them from putting themselves out there is their fear of rejection. Second to that is worrying if their art is "good enough."

I didn't have the courage to do so myself until eleven years ago. Ultimately, I realized that being alive isn't the same thing as living. With art being such a huge part of my life, it became important to my mental health and my life to share it. I was absolutely terrified the first time I went to an open mic, but I felt liberated once I did.

Submitting for publication can be scary too, but not as scary as wondering what might have happened if you had. My advice is to take a chance on yourself because you're worth it. Bravery doesn't mean you're not afraid. Bravery means you are afraid, but you do the thing anyway.

Cupola: If you could only creatively express yourself in one way for the rest of your life, what would you choose (poetry, music, drawing, etc.)?

J.M.: Poetry. Hands down. I did music for a long time but the restrictions that come with writing song lyrics (following a melody, counting measures, rhyme, etc.) began making it difficult for me to express myself freely. I can look at something and draw it if it's not super complicated, but I'm not very good at translating my emotions into visual art. I'll stick to writing.

Jorge Mendez is an author, musician and spoken word artist based out of Hampton Roads, VA. He has been the standing host of the weekly "Monday Night Open Mic" at The Venue on 35th in Norfolk, VA since 2012. He currently serves as Vice President of the Poetry Society of Virginia (Southeastern Region) and works in various areas of the arts community in Hampton Roads. In 2015, he created Poet Fest 757, an all-day poetry festival held annually during National Poetry Month.

In March of 2016, Jorge alongside Terrell K. Mercer went live with "The Chocolate Milk and Waffles Show", an internet talk radio show specializing in highlighting local artists in and around The Hampton Roads area on Radio Free Radio. He has performed at Last Tuesdays, Arts Out Loud, Mic Fiend, and Verse and Vibes.

His book, *Keys and Crowbars*, was released in 2016 by San Francisco Bay Press, followed by *Candy and Rigor Mortis Vol. 1 and 2* which he co-authored with JT Williams.

Human Deities

Jorge Mendez

. . . And she wondered
if the Gods
were uncomfortable
crammed into
the spaces between galaxies.
Shoulder to shoulder
like souls on busy subways
irritated to the point
of suffocation.

. . . wondered
if their arrogance
could just about
eclipse the sun
the way her palm does
when she holds it up
to the sky,
if the universe expanded
to accommodate
their egos...

What demons could
a deity have to hide?

Were the cosmos
a big enough closet
For their skeletons?
Are they haunted by
the Spirits of regret?
Do their insecurities
eat at their divinity?
Do they ever smile to
Hide their hurt?

And if so,
Do they know
just how human that makes them?



“The Void” by Fabiola Guzman Leon

The Price

Jorge Mendez

away like limbs
of a leper
fell the chunks
of justice

From the dust and
rubble.
From the ash and burnt
Earth
we collected any
surviving
portions of peace and
offered them up
to the last of us
as equally
as math would allow.

One cried out,
“Mine has blood on it!”

The Response came,
“They all do!”

“They all do.”

Back to Your World

Owen Andrews

My memories run dry.

Tired of you haunting me.

Tired of asking why.

Sweet of you, I know.

“Are you scared of these words?”

Your unlocked cages rust thin.

The music keeps playing,

Vibration in the din

That fades away too soon.

“The I-love-you words?”

Begging for something new,

My inspiration wanes.

Trapped in here without you.

Stilled hallways, empty rooms.

“Yeah, the I-love-you” words.”

“Ehhh, kinda.”

I had so much poetry to share,

All gone now.

Compressed and lost in digital space;

Not erased.

Just weighing on my brow.

I wish that you could care.

“There’s nothing I could do for you?”

Bitter truth being barred

As romanticization ends.

I know that I’ve been spared,

But you’re not here to make amends.

“Mmmm, buy me a house.”

You would’ve hated to hear

How you still occupy my mind.

Wasted pretty silent tears.

On the you that I enshrined.

“Someday.”

My thoughts grown in rhyme

Whole and longer,

As if to say much more.

Apart from memories too somber,

Now worn out and explored.

“Hey, don’t die, okay?”

I wanted to stay forever, but now

It’s different. I’m moving past you.

And it feels okay.

“I love you, too.”

3:57.89

Noah Fournier

I am a dollar
A number value in a matrix of spirits
Who all strive to be the highest
But find themselves smaller
Than the unrealistic standards
That “push us to be stronger”
But we fall to our systems
Never rise to our dreams
And our systems are failing
In a land of extremes
The one percent confirm
The falsities they believe
So they set a new bar
And expect us to succeed
I am not notable
Because everyday I read
How my hard work and talent
Is just less than they need
Because I’m an inefficient cog
In an ever-moving machine
Where only the top few are good enough
To ever be seen



“Full House” by Dale Milsteen

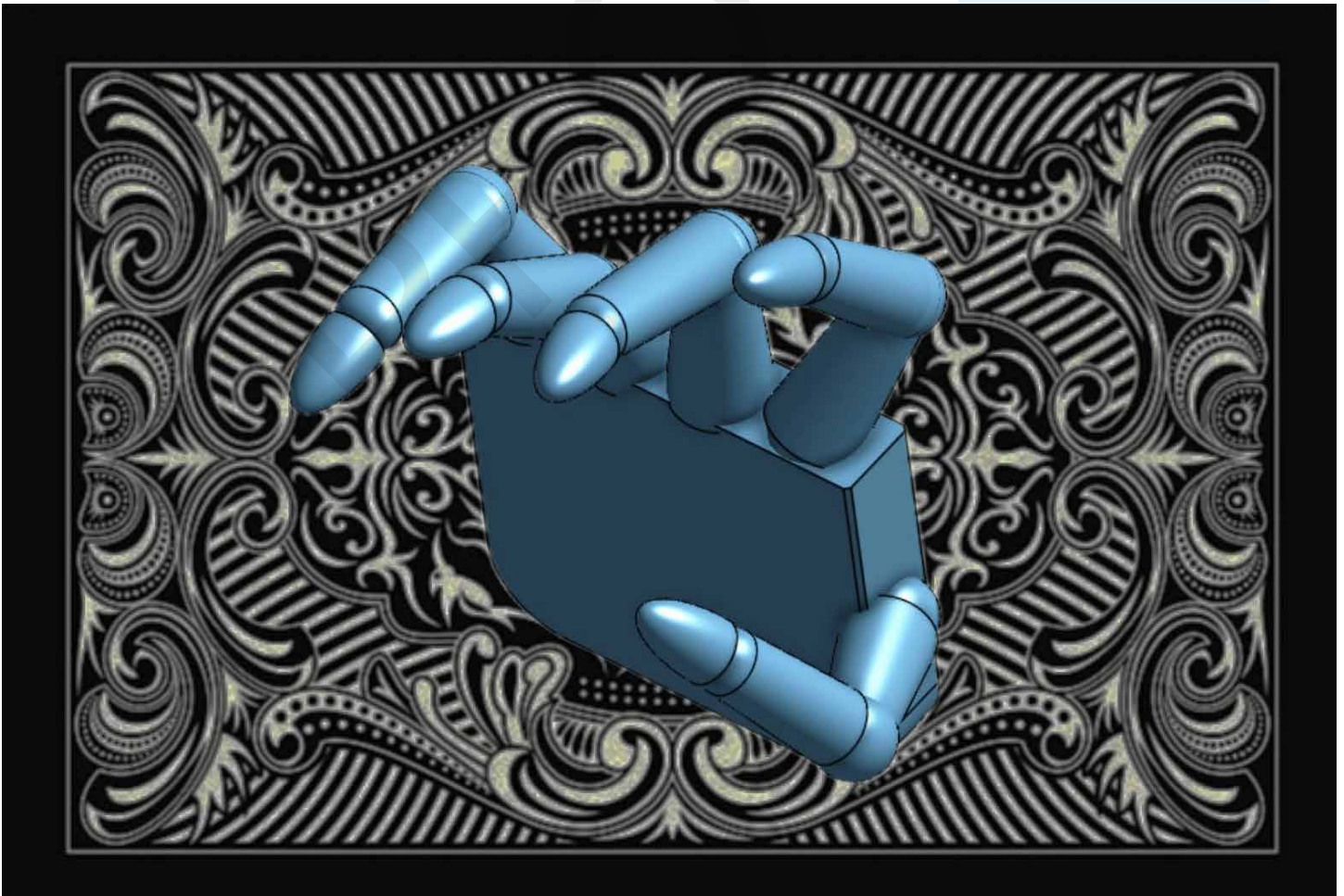
Noise

Kara Cox

The deafening silence envelopes me as I squint into bright light
try to calm my nerves my shaking hands my wildly beating
heart

I think of the rehearsed melodies rhythms notes
a feeling of overwhelming calm
soothes me

the silence no longer so loud the light no longer so bright
Joy replaces fear
and the music
begins



“Royal Flush” by Dale Milsteen

A Ballad of Crazy Dittys

Po Hardy

An afternoon in Paris is like frozen tin
Buttons on a French war
Caravan as it jostles around and
Dang! It just dances motionless like an
Equinox of emotions there's a
Fair chance that my head seesaws with
Giant steps I only know
How Sway things are, but
I love life, thank you very much cause it's
Just the two of us as
Killer Joe stabs my heart but
Lately it feels alright when my
Mellow Dreams sometimes seem to confuse me
Night and Day cause I can't see the
Objects in the mirror are my deadlines my
Pent up house is just
Quiet now as it's
Rainin' outside quite heavily as my
Stolen moments can't quite be returned because
There is no greater love until
Up jumped spring and you appeared
Very early
Well you needn't be
Xplosive with energy on
Yesterday's I thought
Zing went the strings of my heart

Honor

Tina Li

Guantou, Fuzhou

Population: 5,790

There, my ancestors peacefully lie
on the indomitable mountain –
in memory and size

New land across the sea, new life and opportunity
but my mother still grieves what she left behind
her family and familiarity; visits in restless sleep
Rememory for a childhood of lost hopes and dreams

My brother wastes time on childish things; they say
as a child he took on the world alone
Entirely self made, the firstborn's curse
Who does he turn to when he's afraid?

Wielding ink and closet sword,
my right hand trembles with guilty remorse
Their pride in me is currency; hope one day
I can pay off my father's sweat and years

Resume on white cardstock, Tina Li in bold
breaking expectations on paper, yet chains still self-imposed
straining, elevating, demanding greatness but faced with
undying dreams and subsequent insecurity, greatness folds

Like Mulan, I wonder, will I ever find my honor?
“Girl of the dynasty”, in name alone;
Was it enough for the girl she sees
in the reflection when she came back home?



"The Ocean Side" by Taylor Langston

Tidal

Angelika Baloy

My isolation

is a bitter, bleak

empty road, a deranged driver

a deranged writer

on the coastline, an abandoned typewriter

an abandoned child, suspended by the web of life

My isolation

at the counter of a diner, drinking a strawberry milkshake

a strawberry red, the sunset

a launching rocket, people come to see

a painting of humanity

on the wall; unremarkable galleries



"A Rainbow Rerounded" by Alexis Spearbeck

Thoughts on Hyphenated Last Names

Jo Ropetski

a titanic would better fit the needs
of my ego

at least then i could
die knowing i have felt
love
but maybe not
loved
and that would be . . . quite enough
perhaps i could watch a wedding
against my will

.
. .
against my will, isn't marriage a
jigsaw
and isn't the puzzle missing a piece

.
. .
so what other qualifications make
me
i don't want tradition

i want one love – a last love
a silent reverend, an
embarrassment
a subtle envy and a nauseating
hope
to catch the bouquet

what do i know of forever
if i am watching her get married
i am watching a bird fly into a trap

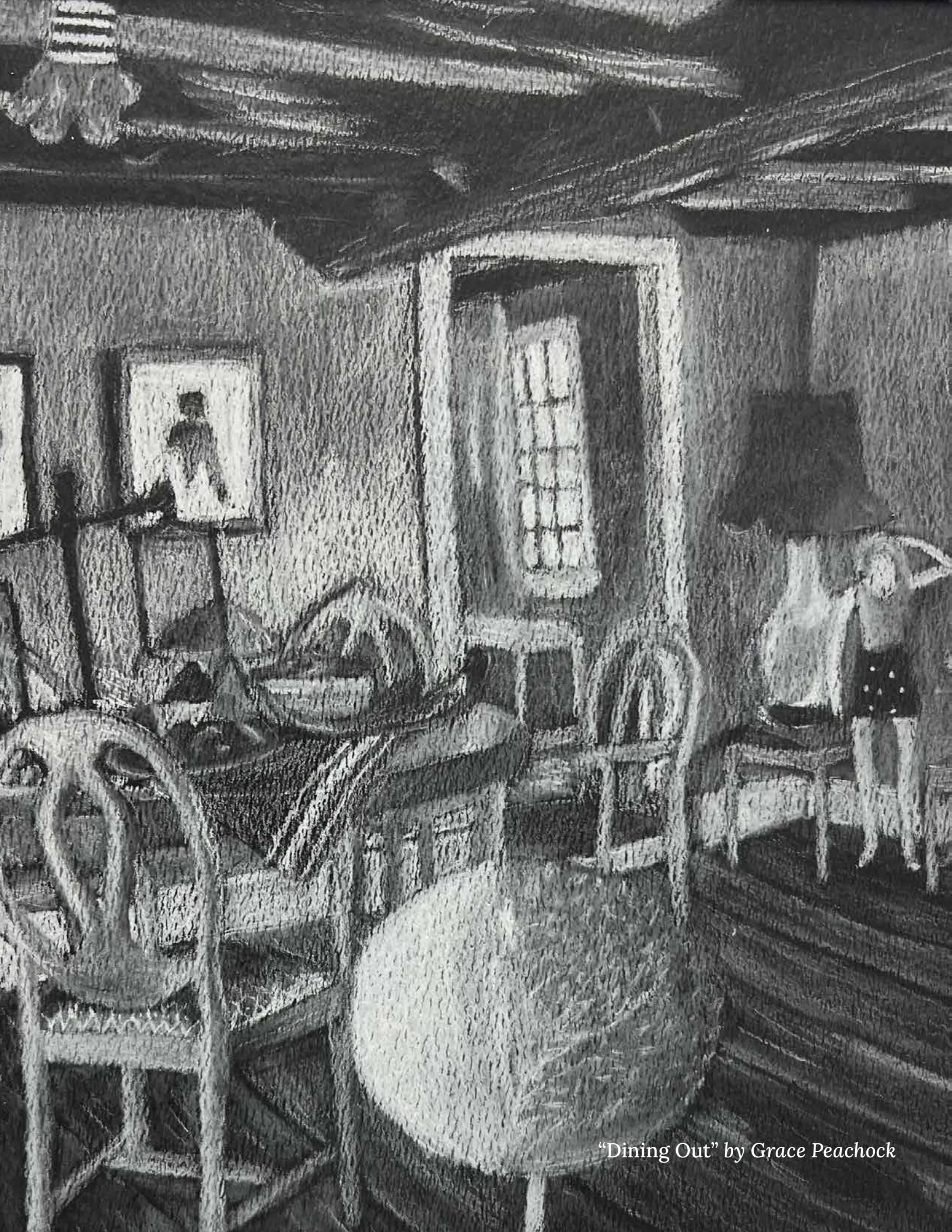
of false promises and pretension

is it not worth it to fly

.
. .
my iconoclasm falls
like icarus
from the light



"Pandemonium" by Alexis Spearbeck



"Dining Out" by Grace Peachock

Depression

Anna Porter Puckett

I am a stiff, upholstered lounge chair
I stand in the parlor
Appearing to be the perfect “fancy” seat -
Reserved for the best of company

I give the illusion of control
And calm
And strength
Stability
Normality
And propriety . . .

However
Unseen by those who perch on my crown
Peeking out from underneath my gleaming leather
Stand four thin, rickety legs.

They are able to support me but
The fact that
One

Simple

Nudge

Could make me completely fall apart
Is often overlooked

Haiku

The spring field
stretches over the horizon
and the buffalo

- *Kailie Borque*

A simple sunset
falling down the mountain -
one tall pine tree

- *AnneCIA Crew*

A faintly fruit fly -
Farther the fairer survive
in fairy-tale ways

- *Amy Farr*

The mother hugs her child
in the midst of the mist
of the mountain ranges

- *Abigail Houser*

Only this spring marks
the blooming of sisterhood
drowned in showers of tulle

- *Abigail Houser*

Life insurance -
how ironic
in the doctor's office

- *Ella Gilmore*

Socks go missing
like my sanity -
his letters save me

- *Caleigh Highland*

The girl sees sorrow
mirroring her past self -
all she wants is his jacket

- *Caleigh Highland*

Above ivy walls
a moonless sky is sprinkled
with powdered sugar

- *Evelyn Page*

Overgrowth of vines
clutter the rotting house
under sparkling stars

- *Vanna Stone*



“Spider Verse” by Alex Bradshaw

Twenty-Three Lines and Two Cups of Coffee

Ella Gilmore

They were in their twenties for sure, both the man and the woman sitting there in the corner of the cafe. The man had walked in when I was just eight lines into my story, typing away on my computer at my perch by the window. He had stood by the door for a brief period, seemingly deep in thought about how to approach the scene in front of him—a cafe can do that to you. However, after two more lines, the man decided to wait at a table instead of in line with the other patrons of the cafe, and when I looked up to take a sip of coffee—now fourteen lines in—the woman had appeared at the entrance, the expression on her face soon matching the man’s just moments before.

After eighteen lines and a brief, awkward introduction, the couple agreed to get in line together and they ordered their coffee with little fanfare. (I guess “couple” sounds too official; this is obviously only the first date, so we’ll go with acquaintances instead.) Their coffee appeared quickly—only took two lines—and the acquaintances soon sat back down at the same table the man alone had occupied earlier.

Three lines later, the personalities of both the man and woman soon became clearer, and I even overheard them mention their friends who had seemingly set up their date. While the man was outgoing, humorously telling stories in a voice too loud to be used inside, the woman was more reserved. It wasn’t that she was shy, or even the quiet-type; it was more as if the woman was hesitant to speak, unwilling to let the conversation focus on her. Sure, she answered all of the man’s questions with a perfect smile and even asked him questions in return, but her slightly hunched shoulders and oversized cardigan seemed to suggest an intimidation of some sort. Not from this man, but clearly from someone in her past. Perhaps her very direct past. Slowly, though, after twenty-three lines and an hour’s worth of talking, the woman relaxed, and she and the man exited the cafe together. She glanced back at me and smiled, and I saw her desires of life begin again.

Six Word Shorts

Did homework for 10 hours: missing.

Po Hardy

The crowd's all around, so alone.

Po Hardy

The moon looks lonely – like me.

Ja'maya Goodmon

I've made mistakes. It's worth it.

Kanise Gregory

I used to set small fires.

Riley Gray

You take too much from me.

Riley Gray

Honestly, she's the best worst one.

Charles L. Cosmiano

Let me go. It's gonna hurt.

Madelyn Cooper

The silence often utters the truth

Allison Busse

Knowing who I am, forgetting why.

Allison Busse

Hold a pencil, the world unfolds.

Josephine Petras



"Red n' Blue Inside of Me" by Josiah Cox

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Policy

The Cupola features the writing, art, and photography of Granby High School students. The Cupola staff accepts original submissions; final selections are based on individual merit. Works to be considered must be submitted by the designated deadline, which quite often will be Samuel Beckett's or William Shakespeare's birthdays. Submissions are accepted through English and art classes or may be given to Cupola staff members. The staff reserves the right to edit submissions, including art and photography, when necessary. After publication, rights revert to the author/artist. You can find this year's volume online at Granby's library homepage, including archived volumes.

Colophon

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"GHS" by Carrington Smith



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