

# COMMUNITY QUILL



SPRING 2022

# Community Quill

## The Saint Elizabeth University Literary Journal

### Mission and Vision

The Community Quill, the literary journal of Saint Elizabeth University, is a publication that celebrates the talents of the campus community through a collection of creative writing and art. As a community, we strive to provide a space where literary and visual artists can share their work as an expression of their human experience. We welcome students, faculty, staff, and alumni to share their work and collaborate to contribute to our literary community. We encourage diversity and variety in style and voice and will highlight the meaningful work of the community while maintaining our core values of integrity, social responsibility, leadership, and excellence in teaching and learning.



### Editorial Board

#### Co-Editors:

Sydney Salomon

Remy Wynston

#### Assistant Editors:

Caroline Berardo

Sarai Santiago

#### Advisor:

Professor Lynne McEniry, MFA

## From the Editors

Welcome to our second issue of the Community Quill. We have visual art, poems, and short stories from numerous talented members of Saint Elizabeth. The diversity of the work presented portrays a theme of individuality.

After you read and view all the work from our creative peers, be sure to read through to the end where you will find some reading recommendations from our new Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Anne Bartlett, and from our new president, Dr. Gary B. Crosby. If you read their recommendations, be sure to send them an email letting them know what you thought.

We hope you enjoy our second issue.

- Sydney Salomon and Remy Wynston

## The Four Stage of Divorce - As a Child

Our parents never  
think the long term,  
think about our fallout.  
The witnessing, abandonment,  
awkwardness and everlasting  
scars we endure.

The Witnessing  
I hear it constantly - the bickering back and forth,  
how he doesn't help out,  
how she's controlling and shrill,  
maybe someday it'll - but I know it never will.

The Abandonment  
I'm not upset you left her - but you did leave me,  
not seeing you at the dining table,  
not getting pickup up by you after school,  
I know she wanted this too - but I wanted to keep you.

The Awkwardness  
It's become strange - coming to see you,  
you still talk about her,  
you still fight her within me,  
maybe you'll move on - but you won't take me along.

And the Everlasting Scars  
I have trust issues - that much is clear,  
so afraid my friends will leave,  
so afraid of getting too attached,  
and it's all on you - the one I call "dad."

**Remy Wynston**

## **Suffering in the Strings**

Play the strings of woe for me  
Play the strings of woe and tragedy  
and let the notes drag me down under  
Until the day that I surrender

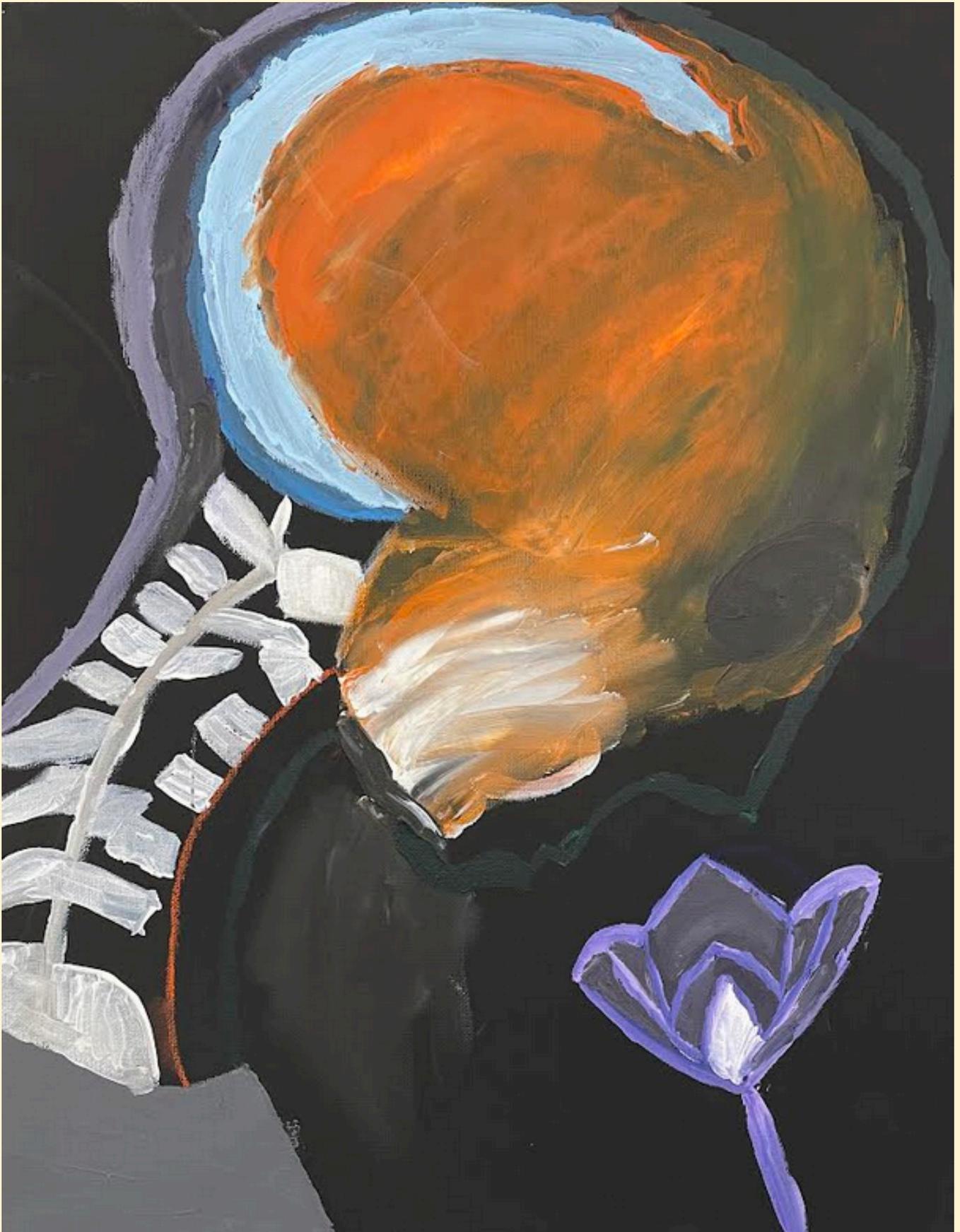
Play the strings of woe for me  
Play the strings of woe and tragedy  
and let the rhythm harmonize within me  
Until the day that I surrender

Play the strings of Woe for me  
Play the strings of woe and tragedy  
and let the haunting melody linger  
fiddling one last note of sorrow  
Until the day that I surrender

to take with me  
    back to reality  
        where I must go



Alyssa Costa, *Love's a Flower*



Chloe Gregory, *Purple Rose*

**Sydney Salomon**

**mathematical errors**

i am counting stars in someone else's sky  
when theirs do not glow as bright as mine  
for i wish for a life different from now  
where i am too blind to notice  
all of my blessings that have not been counted

**seeing gold**

i was gold  
but allowed myself  
to be treated as silver

**Sydney Salomon**

**False Advertisement**

I always sell myself short  
When the greatest is presented  
Because I am afraid  
Of giving my all  
To a crowd  
Who will never want to know  
More than my name

I fear the lack of intimacy  
Within a community  
Of faceless bodies  
Will consume my youth  
To have a gray themed future

Will I be a name  
Instead of a number  
Because I am not ready  
To share my story  
Or will I be marketed  
Through a false reality  
To give the crowd a standing ovation



Alyssa Costa, A Unif-eyed Observer

**Emely Hernandez**

**A Caribbean Place**

A place to love  
Puerto Rico & all  
On an island  
A vacation above  
Palm trees breezing through the sun above  
Light blue clear water splashing from the pool  
Around the pool  
Sun melting the sunscreen off my skin  
smell of Caribbean food  
To eat and drink with friends  
Music and drinks and to dance the night away

**Una Madre**

Una Madre es alguien  
Que debes apreciar  
Una madre es alguien  
Que amas con eternidad  
Una madre es alguien  
En quien confias  
Una madre es alguien  
Adonde vas cuando te sientes sola  
Una madre es alguien  
Confias en todo  
Una madre es alguien  
Quién levanta tu espíritu cuando te sientes mal  
Una madre es alguien  
Quien cree en ti cuando nadie lo hace  
Una madre es alguien  
Quien te hace sonreír



Chloe Gregory

**The First Snowfall**

As the snow falls on what was once spring green grass,  
Covering in ice everything in its path.

Young little girl in the windowpane of her room,  
Her eyes virgin to the sight of snow.

Fascinated, a gap-toothed smile reveals itself between her chubby cheeks.  
Joyful squeals escape her lips.

Mother approaches her baby with coat in tow,  
An excited child runs to her mother.

Now equipped with coat, gloves, hat, scarf and boots,  
Child in her mother's arms.

They walk outside,  
Enjoy this experience together.

Snowflakes on their tongues,  
Snow on their clothes.

Smiles on their faces.

**Ariel Brown**

*Welcome to your Next Step*

To the new owners of this house,

First off, congratulations on the purchase of your new home. You could've chosen any house but you chose this one. This house meant a lot to my family and I. Memories have been etched in the interior and the exterior. Outside this house is where I made my first best friend. It is also where I got into my first fight...and got my ass whipped. Inside this house was the setting of sleepovers, fashion shows, and many family holidays. The breeding ground for good news and bad news. The good news was that we were getting a new couch (the fabric was starting to peel off of the old one). The bad news is, "You're getting a little sister!" Still don't remember asking for one but she's here now.

As your new home, it will be the place where much of your life happens. It will be where you celebrate accomplishments. It will be where you express frustration while facing trials and tribulations. Where you will cry over heartbreak and laugh with those closest to you. Most importantly, where you can be yourself with no judgments, at least that's how I felt.

I know you don't know me and I don't know you. However, I do have two requests. Take good care of this house. Give it the care and comfort that it will give you. Mistakes may happen. Things may break, flood or burn and that's ok. Just please keep her up and support her the way she will to you. Make your memories in this house as we did before you. Also, if you ever have to leave this home behind; I ask that you leave a letter to the next owners just as I have done for you.

Although this is now a previous step in my life that I wish I did not have to leave behind. I'm glad it could be the next step in the journey for you and yours. Once again, congratulations, enjoy, and good luck!

Signed,

The previous owners



Chloe Gregory, *The Beautiful Girl*

**Picking Up Pieces**

a statue of  
the virgin Mary  
greeted me once I entered  
those doors

I never knew that I would end up  
becoming so familiar with the  
Hail Mary's  
and the joyful liturgies

the smell of burning incense  
becoming second nature  
Watching your mother  
cleanse the rooms of  
evil spirits

*What the hell is all this?*  
I remember the look on your face,  
the laugh that escaped your lungs  
upon hearing those words

*This is my family*

a family who so often  
enjoys blaring Salsa  
at 10 am on a Saturday  
to make the tiles  
squeaky clean

the scent of the freshly baked  
sugar cookies  
and your nieces and nephews  
wearing smiles from  
ear to ear

*I am not used to this*  
and you would respond,

*Just stay a while*  
*This is what family is*

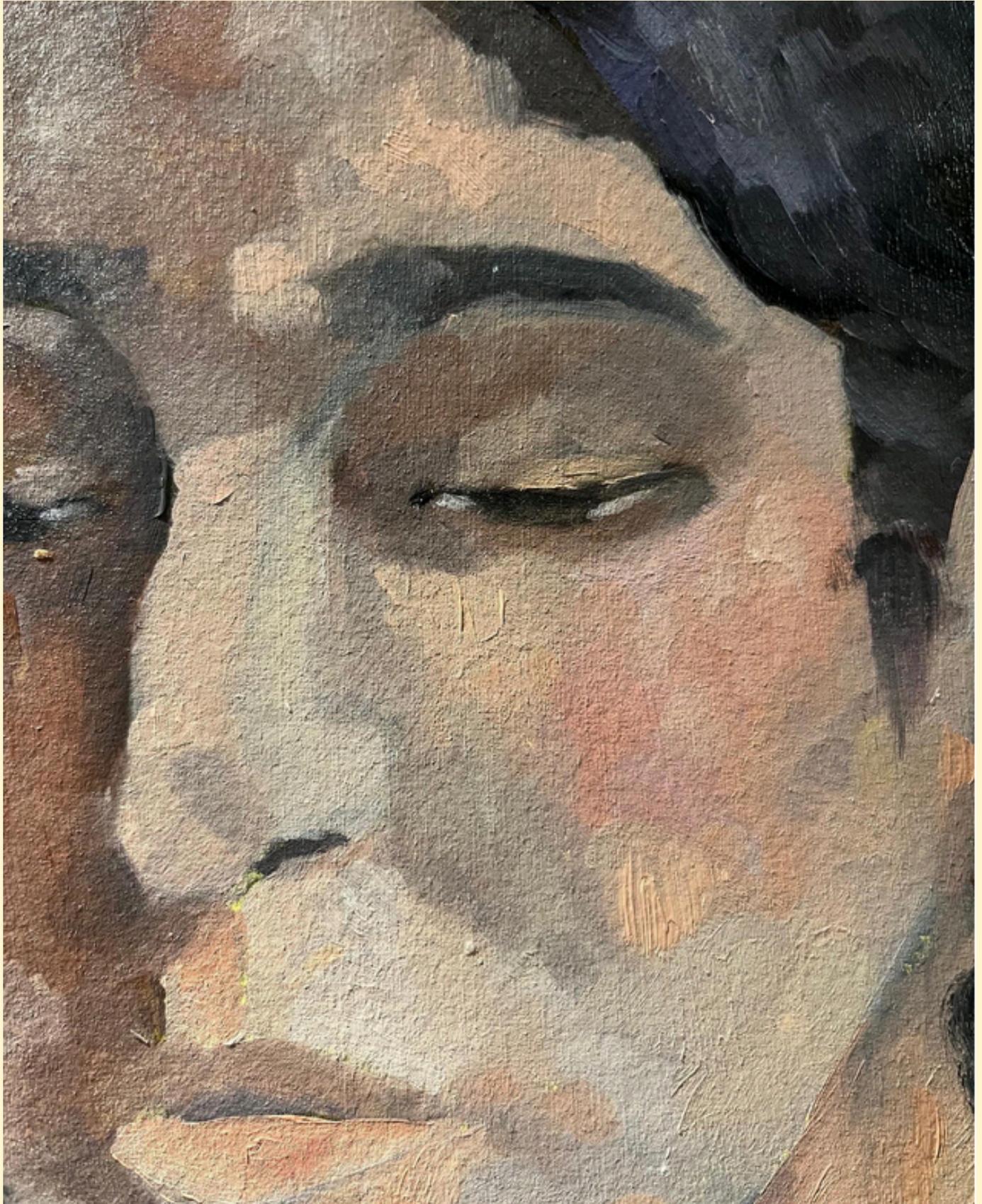
the many times that  
my feet dared to move;  
to take me elsewhere,  
the many times that  
that my heart dared to leave my chest,  
convincing me that this could never be

Fear often strangling me whole,  
leaving me paralyzed,  
Terrified of what I never knew

but instead  
I stayed awhile  
and today,  
my feet dare to dance  
to Salsa at 10 am on Saturdays  
today,  
My heart fills with gratitude  
today,  
I call you my Fiance  
today,  
I call them  
*My family*

**Once Christmas**

How I miss removing the plastic  
Christmas tree from the box  
Kept in the attic;  
A dusty box of memories,  
hanging chipped ornaments onto the tree  
with the cousins,  
How I miss hot chocolate warming on the stove,  
A bag of Jet-Puffed marshmallows  
Sitting on the table,  
Prematurely opened  
How I miss watching  
A Christmas Story  
Cycling on the television for hours on end  
Shaking tightly wrapped presents to see if anything rattles  
How I miss Titi Carmen hovering over the stove  
Making pasteles by hand,  
Refusing anyone else's help despite her arthritic bones  
Everyone's smiling faces, enough  
To fuel her cooking frenzy  
Smashing boiled plantains until they no longer resembled  
Their original shapes  
oh, how I miss what was  
once Christmas



Luz Mancebo, *Dominicana*

**Naci para Amar**

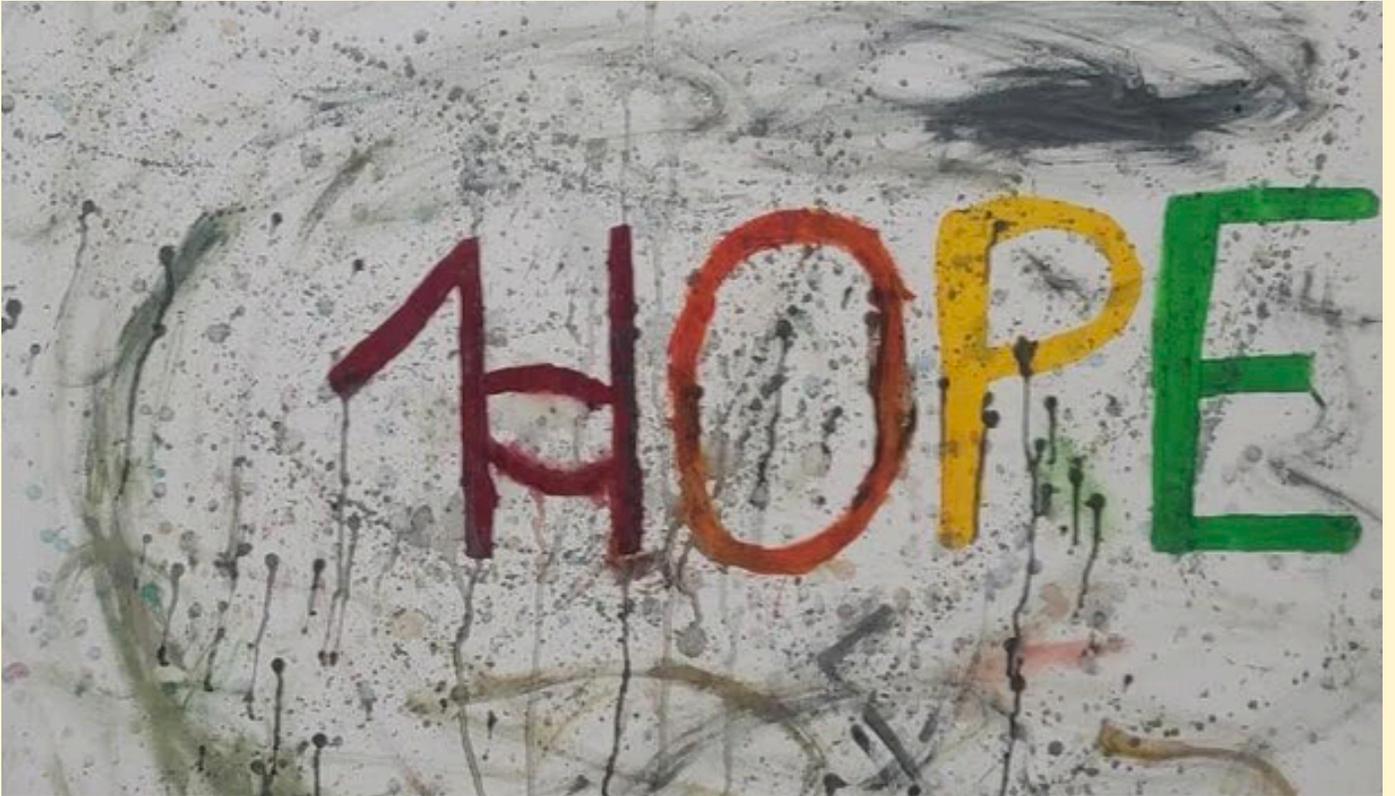
I was born to love  
To love the small, medium, or large  
To love the tall and the short  
To love the laughs and snorts  
To love the quiet and the loud  
To love the bird sounds  
To love the rain sound  
To love everything around  
Even my own town  
I was born to love  
To love you and me  
To love the God I cannot see  
But is always with me  
I was born to love

**You & the Most High**

Remember you come first on this earth  
So make sure you good  
Make sure you happy  
Do it for you and no one else  
Always make sure you have faith and believe in yourself  
Self-care is the best care  
Remember to think think think  
And trust when you think  
Because that's why you think the way you think  
And remember the most important thing of all  
Seek and you will find  
The most high will guide you to success  
Let him touch your life and he will do the rest  
Trust me it's for the best

**Bolivar**

The summer has come and it's now time to go to her house  
This time the whole family is going as one as it should be  
Four hours it takes in the sky-high to get there  
Sometimes it feels like it never will  
I arrive at last and all I can think about is Bolivar My hometown  
Ouu the smell of the pupusas that my aunt makes  
Are just calling my name after this long flight  
I race to get to Bolivar, of course with caution  
I park, open the front door to "Billito esta aqui"  
Yes Yes I think to myself I have arrived  
Of course, the delicious pizza and pupusas await  
They call my name & you know I know I ate



Chloe Gregory, *Hope*

**Tia Grant-Lasenberry**

**Contaminated Water Bottle**

I am a bottle.  
The water sits still with the cap gripping me  
I have endured many things,  
I have been  
Infected  
with  
Poison  
And mixed with awful substances.  
As if I was being experimented on.  
I have been drunken out of  
As if I was poison  
As if I was contaminated  
Causing a person to hallucinate.  
I yearn for the day when I can be purified  
But instead...  
The cap suddenly released its grip on me  
I have been sucked dry with such force  
, That the water in me burst like a volcano  
My contents d i s p e r s e in my victim  
Infecting every part of that body  
The body contorts,  
Then rests  
I was left empty,  
Never to be refilled again.

**Tia Grant-Lasenberry**

**My Best Friend**

At one point I was alone.  
This was something I was used to.  
My silence speaks for me.  
But this girl had shown up,  
With her bubbly and bright personality.  
I wondered what drew her to me.  
Me, who was like fallen leaves.  
Me, A cat who wanders silently in the night. It was like a snake coiling my heart,  
Preventing me from opening up,  
Opening my heart.  
But one day,  
It felt like I was on stage.  
Something that I wasn't used to.  
Fear had engulfed me, and I couldn't perform my duty. I couldn't perform my final  
performance task.  
I sat and wept in silence,  
Until I used my voice to call her name.  
She appeared in front of me.  
I smiled with my bloodshot eyes,  
My heart has opened,  
And I embraced her long,  
With my love.  
Her presence made my voice come to life. Her comfort makes me reach for the stars  
As if she was lifting me up to them.  
I eventually walk back on that stage,  
In front of my teachers,  
To finish the job. And I succeeded.



Anthony Waldmann, *What's For Lunch*

## Live Your Life

Run your own race I say  
Live this life with meaning as I try my best to guide the way for you  
Don't forget I can not do it all  
I am only your father after all  
Slow and steady or sometimes fast and number one  
Run your own race I say  
Because someday you will be on your own way  
If you need to turn around, do not fret  
You will always see my reflection in your rearview mirror  
I will remind you to keep moving forward  
Don't distract to either side, and don't look back at me for too much time  
Because if I see you glaring for too long, I will remind you to go on and run your  
own race, as I say

## The Yellow House

You left me and the old yellow house twenty years ago  
Yet to me, you remain the person you were in the yellow house  
I think of you and the way you were  
Loving, caring, and oh so gentle  
And I miss that version of you  
Somehow I still associate you with the person I once knew  
Even though we both know you're no longer the human you were  
Will I ever be able to let go of that person?  
Probably never, and neither will the yellow house.



Chloe Gregory, *They Were Just Friends*

Lucas Aquino

**“My Embrace; Here is my Everlasting Picture, and...”**

“With a picture in hand, history shall know its name, beyond the willing joints of hearts among the world. Here is my embrace

Here is (or what I think is) the only chapter: ”

The dashing embrace of the picture, the Polaroid, the temptation  
As history will strike itself on a picture;

a frozen frame,

on a 12” inch lens

“I have captured the hummingbird resting on my hand...

I will be the role model for the children, of the hope of tomorrow,  
Of the desperate lad and lass willing to represent the model of the century; the  
ulterior political change that has sought differentiation and a place at the table

The dexterity of the legs, and the dashing definition of the muscles

This embrace which I have entrusted to the people, I will devote myself to my  
kin, myself, and the inspiring man

They will entrust the mantle, and the camera closes upon itself

As the generations will come to a crescendo

To reveal:

the

superior model of

Tomorrow

Forevermore

“I have shown my embrace, and my true colors alight. Tis not a delusion, nor a  
reciprocation of mutual values; Tis an application to every situation, every  
change of heart, and every photograph;

I hope my message reaches to your hea-

End communication.”

**Lucas Aquino**

## **Mysterious**

I come cascading down these waterfalls, riding along its tender waves...I see you bouncing back to my empty heart. And inside this water, as I have met your face, the tears have wept at my eyes begging for you. You have done the honors of caressing my face and wiping down my face with such kind gestures. I wonder in my sleep, in my days, and in my traveling days across this fantasy we call living, "Are you real?" In my wake, I strip across all that is invaluable, and lay towards the Earth, and let her embrace my soul. "You are real...to me."

## Terra-cotta

I am watered and primped from time to time and expected to grow.  
Terra cotta at my sides, I cannot stretch out and be free.

I produce a flower. I hope it's good enough. Why did you take it from me?  
My powerlessness swells inside.

I lean and reach to see the sun and to feel its warmth, but the terra cotta binds my effort.

This place I live seems to not have changed, yet I am supposed to develop. I notice I have grown in size.

My roots are firmly planted. But the terra cotta is restricting, allowing me to only grow so far.

I envy the trees I see outside that reach to the heavenly spirit. As individuals they stand tall and proud. Each one unique, standing side by side drinking from the same earth.

So free, no terra cotta masked as a loving embrace.

The sun seems extra bright today and the rays feel very warm. Bees and butterflies are tickling me.

I feel an unfamiliar breeze and then a strange relief.

The terra cotta has broken in two. Freedom...

I stretch and stretch. I realize I am alone. There is so much space.

Why do I feel so vulnerable?

I am looking for the confinement I am so used to.

I have fallen somewhere totally unknown.

As I am lying in this unfamiliar place, I sense something from above.

A warm hand picks me up and holds me with overwhelming love.

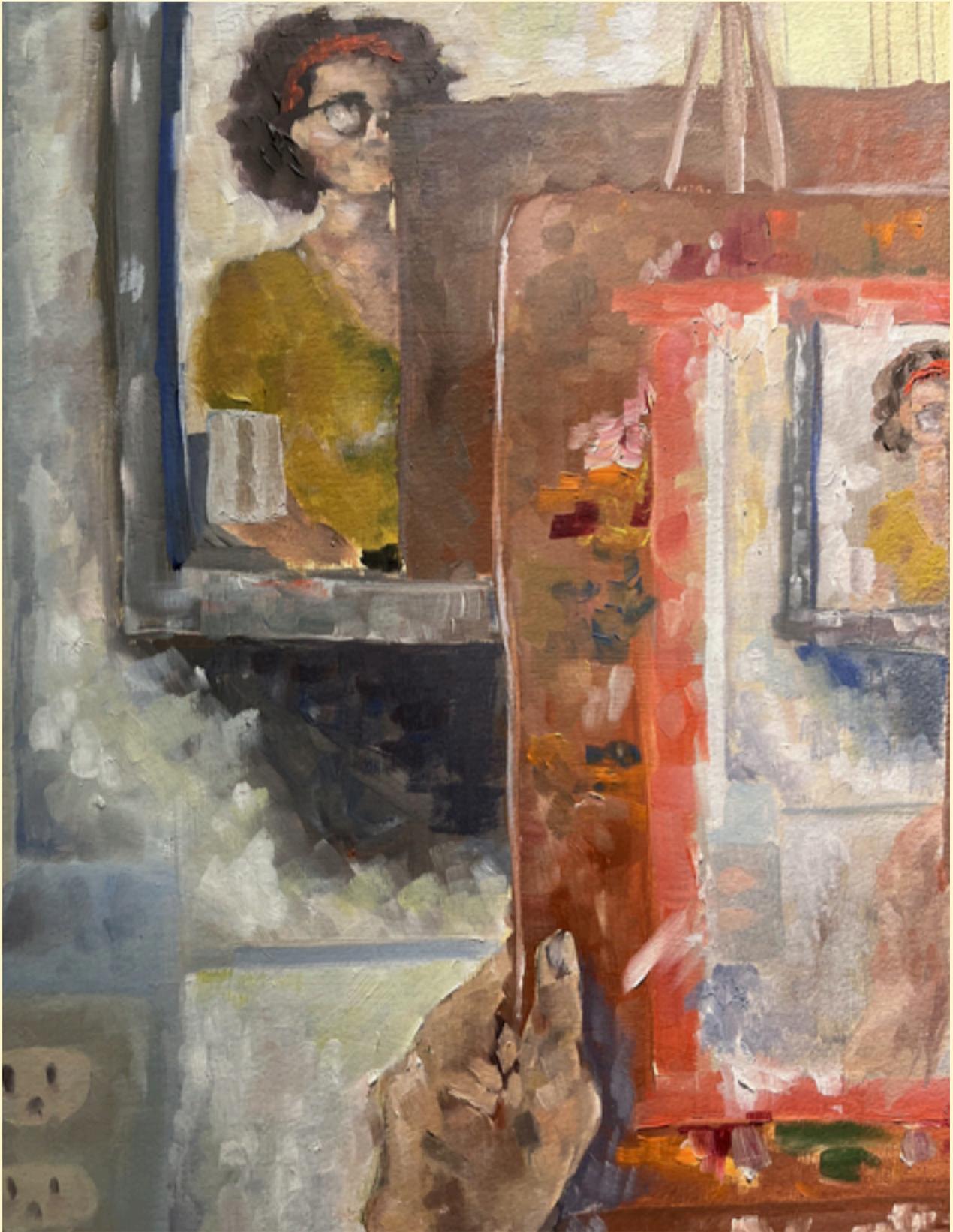
This hand places me softly down on the earth.

I realize I can trust this untread darkness and believe I am not alone.

I am finally where I ought to be.

I feel buds of new life bursting from by being.

I am going to grow bigger than I thought I could ever be.



Luz Mancebo. *Self Portrait*

**Kez Interlude**

Thinking of the future each day at a time  
Losing the present and all that came with it  
The joys of a teenage girl were nonexistent  
Making mistakes and losing more of myself every time I try

The blank face i gave off was unintentional  
did nothing but invite so much more nothingness  
It wasn't my intention to chase off so many possible blessings  
It wasn't my intention to rub people the wrong way: give off the wrong message

What went on in the world around me only made things worse  
Making poor decisions because I wanted something that seemed to work  
Time flying by and I had to choose  
There I was again, not in the right state of mind

Temporary feelings influencing matters that'll last a lifetime  
Now my whole life is being turned upside down  
This was not my intention, I can't stop it at this point  
This was not my intention  
Whatever happens happens

**Self's Sane Sanctuary**

I hate going out  
It's not that I hate it  
but I love staying in more

More time for my thoughts  
More time to relax  
More time to escape reality  
More time to just be more

If that makes sense

Being in my head creates more clarity  
For me than a walk in the park  
Being in my head is sort of my sanctuary  
My thoughts are protected  
My opinions are protected  
I am protected

If that makes sense



Alyssa Costa, *Cosmic Fireflies*

**My Flame**

A  
Fire  
projecting  
my very flame.  
This flame being  
my strength, an  
an object that makes me feel  
alive when inflamed. But when  
you blow, I become a candle,  
quickly deprived  
of  
oxygen no longer projecting its flame.  
Deprived of its purpose, I am no longer the same.

Yet I now realize that it is oxygen that helps grow a flame,  
yes, your words and action may puncture my flame,  
but as you blow, the very oxygen you expose is the very element that infuses my  
flame.

You see,  
pain and negative emotions will always be disguised as rain,  
a rain meant to diminish your flame.

Yet these experiences and emotions can be oxygen,  
the very element intended to infuse your flame.



Kassey Martinsen

## Forbidden Fruit

I smelled its scent strong  
a sweat that seemed to come on  
A taste that left my tongue in awe.  
My tongue intrigued wanting it all  
Though I could not decipher whether this thing was a dull fruit, not ripe and  
ready for my jaw.  
Was this the midnight blue sky I stared at?  
A museum,  
A book waiting for me to move forward.  
Destined to dive into reading it all.  
Was this real?  
The confusion,  
Maybe this was not the sky at all.  
A sage green wall  
designed to catch my eye and lead me to the destination where I am to fall.  
Was this the snake on which the bible dwells?  
A sin that cant be forgiven?  
Though if pain and joy are one of the same,  
a coin flip that constantly drives us insane,  
Could this be the opportunity that leads me to fame?  
Oh, how I wonder what lies on the other side of this picture frame.



Anthony Waldmann, *Where's the Time Gone*

**Silent Now**

I am drowning in the silence that consumes this room  
The room filled with only vibrations  
Of thoughts colliding into its vacant walls

The hunt for a way out begins  
Escape is the only option now  
But fear blocks all exits

For it is fear who offers a helping hand in  
Only to imprison and deceive you by the mask it wears

Their ringing becomes harsh  
Almost unbearable  
SPEAK UP

Flowing through the cold river of veins  
I am engrossed with its toxic presence  
The parasite that latches onto my being  
And devours not taking a moment to digest

But to you  
Everything is silent

Artificial smiles form the disguise of reassurance  
The veil I pray loses its transparency  
To cover the truth

Is it my silence or honesty  
That would wound him the most  
Now becomes an insoluble question

He was doomed anywhere outside this room  
Desperate for one last chance at life

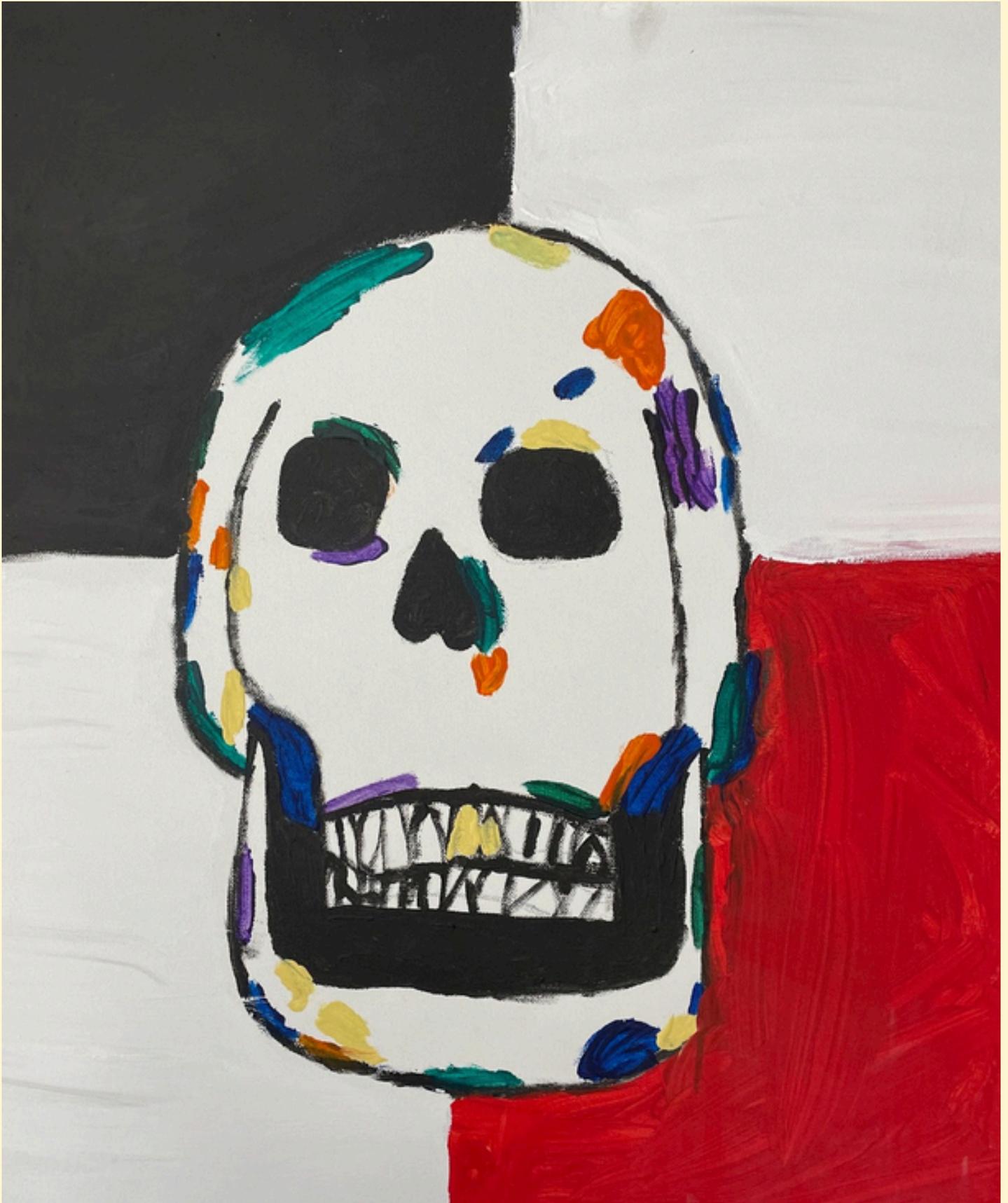
So I bit my tongue  
And stayed completely and utterly silent



Kassey Martinsen

**Butterflies at Night**

The butterfly glides low this somber night  
Searching for what they desire most  
Unbeknown to their new reality  
Their place in our world as an observer  
Watching the living, taking in their every move  
But so desperately wanting to join them again  
To dance, to eat, to sing, to talk, to laugh, to cry, to live  
But death does not bargain  
So for now the butterfly's presence is enough  
To speak the unspoken words  
I love you.



Chloe Gregory, *The Skull*

**A Very Bad Joke**

Here's a very bad joke;  
How many corpses does it take,  
For peace to begin to take?  
There's yet to be a punchline thus far.

The corpse conundrum is still unsolved,  
So until our fleshy Golgotha becomes finite,  
We'll just have to kill the laugh track.  
The good part is surely yet to come right?

When we make the biggest kaboom,  
Maybe a revelation will come.  
We'll see our future through the eyes of the dead!  
Wouldn't that be a lark for our cosmic joke!

Here's a real side-splitter;  
The side of people's homes getting split-open,  
By other people's phallic-shaped rockets.  
How we'll all laugh at that from our peaceful future.

So as I sit safely watching the news,  
Bombs, rockets, and guns going off on the TV,  
I think there must surely be a punchline yet to come;  
Anything to end this terrible joke we all listen to.

## Diagnosing Hatred

Is the hate within us innate?  
Or did we learn somewhere along the way?  
Killings, pillaging, dirty glances, a fistful of wrath,  
These are all things we grew up knowing.

Is our hatred part of our construction,  
Or was there simply a fault along the way?  
Our family never was quite right in the head,  
Old Grandpa Cain never could keep his envy down.

Perhaps we picked up hatred along the way,  
Found somewhere within a dusty leather-bound book.  
Those prophets always were a bit rapey,  
Reading about God-killed infants never bettered us at all.

Maybe it's not in our bones but something else,  
For maybe we were just hungry scared children,  
Children who'd kill for a chance to fill their mouths,  
Who never forgot that hunger and never learned to share.

Can hatred come about as a result of love?  
Two sides of the same coin.  
She always was a good-looking woman;  
Shame how when she broke his heart he broke her neck.

Looking out upon the brink of our hate-filled days,  
The realization comes about;  
All of these are true and none of them are true,  
For hate is legion and not a monolithic being.



Chloe Gregory

**Matthew Lowke**

**Take a Seat and Take a Shot**

Just as the whiskey goes down,  
I wonder about the alcoholic stupor of life,  
How it goes down our gullets in a brisk shot,  
And how there is always a burn at the end.

Just as we raise our glasses to our lips,  
Preparing for that exhilarating burn,  
That initial serene taste reminds us;  
Damn damnation or paradise.

For there are no lows without highs,  
No highs without lows,  
And most importantly of all;  
There is no burn without a rise and fall.

So as our floating hunk of dirt spirals one way or the other,  
Take a seat,  
Take a shot,  
And enjoy the highs and lows of the burn on your throat.



Anthony Waldmann, *I Don't Mind*

**Cathy Marrash**

**SOAR**

I find it interesting how you admire me  
As I drink sweet nectar  
From the red glass feeder

You have hung  
So proud of yourself  
Each time I visit  
As if a favor has been done

Hoping I will stay long enough during my flight  
So, your camera can capture me flying free

I may decide to hover  
Or  
Simply just flee

I might entertain by soaring backward or upside down  
I might choose to  
Flap my wings  
For you to hear my humming sound

The truth is I come time after time  
Hoping to see  
You have found  
That your own sweet nectar abounds  
And you don't need wings like me  
To feel free



Luz Mancebo, *New Look*

**Caroline Berardo**

**Forced Kinship**

This forced kinship  
Began when I was born  
You were repelled  
Yet you held

Me

Helpless.  
And time went on.

This forced kinship  
Caused you to need me  
Without my knowledge  
I eased your fears

Aversion.  
And time went on.

This forced kinship  
Kept us in the same circles  
Involuntarily sharing  
Was never mutually enjoyable

Loathing.  
And time went on.

This forced kinship  
Grew too old for teens  
Who grew apart  
Who are we aside from our blood?  
Mere strangers

Yearning.  
But time does not stop.

This forced kinship  
We are growing up  
We go our separate ways  
But I can't stop thinking about

You.

Loneliness.  
As time goes on.

This forced kinship  
Memories of the good old days  
Is all that we have  
Anymore.

Nostalgia.

Us, maybe?

I hope to see you soon.



Anthony Waldmann, *Portal?*

**Jess Agatino**

## **The Quarrel & The Tree**

I gaze at the quarrel of sparrows above me  
Emerging with my brethren  
A mere sapling you can see forever  
Amongst the breath of the grass,  
The condensation a diamond  
clearly seen amidst the dark pungent earth  
The shade of your older siblings guises you and keeps you safe  
From the burrowers  
Green eyes with golden droplets fall from your face  
And your arms thick and rough from birth  
Cradle the new babes beneath you now  
Wiser and taller your intricately woven limbs creep across the skyline  
Forming a barricade and like a net draw in the singers and climbers and burrowers  
that once haunted you  
You hear the caws more clearly now that you are closer  
Not just whispers indiscernible  
But a plethora of tales of high castles  
your branches now long enough  
to finally reach up and touch the sparrows.

**Samantha Merendino**

**Mornings With You**

When I wake up next to you in the morning I feel butterflies in my stomach  
I feel a smile forming on my face from ear to ear  
There is nothing more I could ask for when I wake up next to you  
You make me feel complete  
You make me feel as if there is no worry in the world  
I forget all my troubles  
All I can focus on is your face and the way you smile back at me  
I've never felt such bliss  
I've never felt more loved  
I look forward to waking up to you in the morning

## Enough

In my mind I can smell her hair  
Familiar as she lies beside me  
The waft of cigarettes and perfume  
Oddly comforting, a lullaby of aromas  
In hindsight I wouldn't have it any other way  
It was enough  
Her oceanic eyes bring gentle waves of solace to my spirit.  
Not my mother  
But the one  
Who silenced my tears into a softening smile  
As she drew near  
Not my mother but close enough

Stories of flamboyant flappers wearing fancy cloches  
Ahead of her time but still present  
was lucky enough to have known her  
Words of the great depression  
Hoarding butter and jelly  
Tales of black line drawn stockings  
And escapades at navy bases, dancing at night.

Who do I call mother?  
It's not just about the birthing but who has got enough  
In the thick of it all  
To silence the tears and soften the blows  
And bring on the smiles



Luz Mancebo, *American Dream*

**Samantha Merendino**

**You**

Looking at you is like being at the beach while the sun is setting so calming and free

I've never seen such beauty

I've never felt such comfort

I'd give up anything for you

My favorite reality TV show that you hate

Drinking Malibu

Speeding on the highway

Looking at you is like being at the beach while the sun is setting so calming and free

Sleeping with my mouth open and my legs on top of yours

I'd give up anything

I know in my heart though that you would never ask for that though

When I'm with you I feel as ease

As if everything is going to be okay

Looking at you is like being at the beach while the sun is setting so calming and free

It feels like the world is frozen and we're stuck in time and I'd be okay with it

Speaking to you is like going to a museum that you've seen a million times

You always find something new if you analyze hard enough

It is never a dull day

I'd give up everything for you

But I know you'd never ask me to

Looking at you is like being at the beach while the sun is setting so calming and free

**Sydney Salomon**

**unacceptable excuses**

stop putting off that thing  
you told me you were  
going to do  
before this & that  
became more of a priority

perhaps you should return  
to that thing you told me  
that you were going to do  
&  
ignore your so important  
this & that

because i guarantee you  
this & that are not as successful  
as that thing you told me  
that you were going to do

yes that thing  
that you spoke  
so excitedly about

- lazy to succeed



Anthony Waldmann, *Broken Rest*

**From Dr. Gary B. Crosby, President:**

"A few years ago, I learned of *Flower in the Crannied Wall*, composed in 1863 by Alfred Lord Tennyson. The poem, in six lines, beautifully captures the complex yet beautiful trinity of God, human life, and nature. It is also a personal reminder to keep pushing during difficult times; a beautiful bloom is just below the surface."

Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.

**From Dr. Anne Bartlett, Vice President for Academic Affairs:**

"I am a voracious reader and usually have three or four books in progress at any given time—so rather than identify a favorite story or poem, I'd like to make a recommendation. If I could suggest one book to you as a summer read, it would be *Wild Seed*, by Octavia Butler. It's the story of two immortal African shape-shifters, whose passionate clashes drive them across the oceans and the centuries in an epic struggle for dominance. I read it last summer and could not put it down. It's the first of four novels in the *Patternist* series and is being made into a TV series by Nnedi Okorafor, produced by Viola Davis. Read it and let me know what you think!"

**Viola Davis commented on Wild Seed: In an “epic, game-changing, moving and brilliant” story of love and hate, two immortals chase each other across continents and centuries, binding their fates together — and changing the destiny of the human race (Viola Davis).**

From the Publisher:

Doro knows no higher authority than himself. An ancient spirit with boundless powers, he possesses humans, killing without remorse as he jumps from body to body to sustain his own life. With a lonely eternity ahead of him, Doro breeds supernaturally gifted humans into empires that obey his every desire. He fears no one — until he meets Anyanwu.

Anyanwu is an entity like Doro and yet different. She can heal with a bite and transform her own body, mending injuries and reversing aging. She uses her powers to cure her neighbors and birth entire tribes, surrounding herself with kindred who both fear and respect her. No one poses a true threat to Anyanwu — until she meets Doro.

The moment Doro meets Anyanwu, he covets her; and from the villages of 17th-century Nigeria to 19th-century United States, their courtship becomes a power struggle that echoes through generations, irrevocably changing what it means to be human.

<https://www.grandcentralpublishing.com/titles/octavia-e-butler/wild-seed/9781538751480/#buy>

