



P'an Ku

LITERARY & ART MAGAZINE

Volume 57 Issue 2

Handwritten signature

THE HISTORY OF P'AN KU

Founded in 1964, P'an Ku Magazine is a student-run, bi-annual literary and arts publication funded by Broward College. Our namesake is the Chinese God of Creation. Chinese mythology holds that P'an Ku created the sun, the moon, the heavens, and the earth. From P'an Ku flew the wind and the thunder, and his fleas became the ancestors of humans. Anyone endowed with creativity is said to be possessed by the spirit of P'an Ku.

Spring 2021

P'an Ku

COVER ART - PRAYER

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Mixed Media

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PRINTING

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Editors Note



Madelyn Gibson
"Maddy"
Editor-in-chief

Hello:

This semester was anything but dull. It was uncertain with me graduating this semester, along with short deadlines and trying to return to normal amidst a deadly pandemic. I was in a big haze. Not really able to form a plan or know what the next step was. I felt things went by so fast I couldn't keep my head on straight.

In other words, I was lost.

P'an Ku has always been there for me. A safe haven to hone my talents and test my boundaries. A break from hectic classwork; something that kept my everyday life in balance. I am sad to say that this is my last semester working on the magazine. I am thankful for all the memories I had here from all the voting sessions at room 511 and online, the hilarious small talk, class visits and club rushes and the coolest release parties.

This magazine displays examples of harmony from the cover to the final page of artwork. I hope this issue gives a mixture of emotions about daily life to help, relate, or relieve any obstacles in your life. Our contributors have truly brought beautiful interpretation of harmony.

I want to thank the team and our advisor for all the hard work you do. You made my Fridays something to look forward to. Thank you to Sage Kelly for being a humble leader when I first joined P'an Ku and guiding me into a world of making magazines. To Maddison Gordon, who gave me my first copy and changed the direction of my life, I am forever grateful.

Last, but not least, thank you to our readers, both new and old, for contributing, supporting, reading, and caring about our magazine and the arts.

Goodbye,
Maddy

Editorial Team



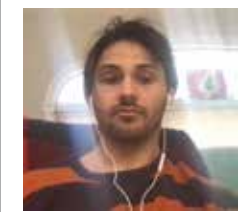
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Journey
Jasmine Mohamed
Photography

A Poem For You

Andrea Perez

You watched me enjoy life with rose-colored lenses,

To the point that you had begun to as well.

Had you ever seen me in things that you love?

If so, I could never tell.

Your touch was soft against my arm, and your grasp always lingered once you'd let go.

The memories aren't painful but numbing,

Like a child left alone in the snow.

Nostalgia is a liar that romanticizes.

It makes me miss something that never was,

I can't tell if it's progress or if it's undone everything I've ever worked for.

I sometimes wonder if you think you've won.

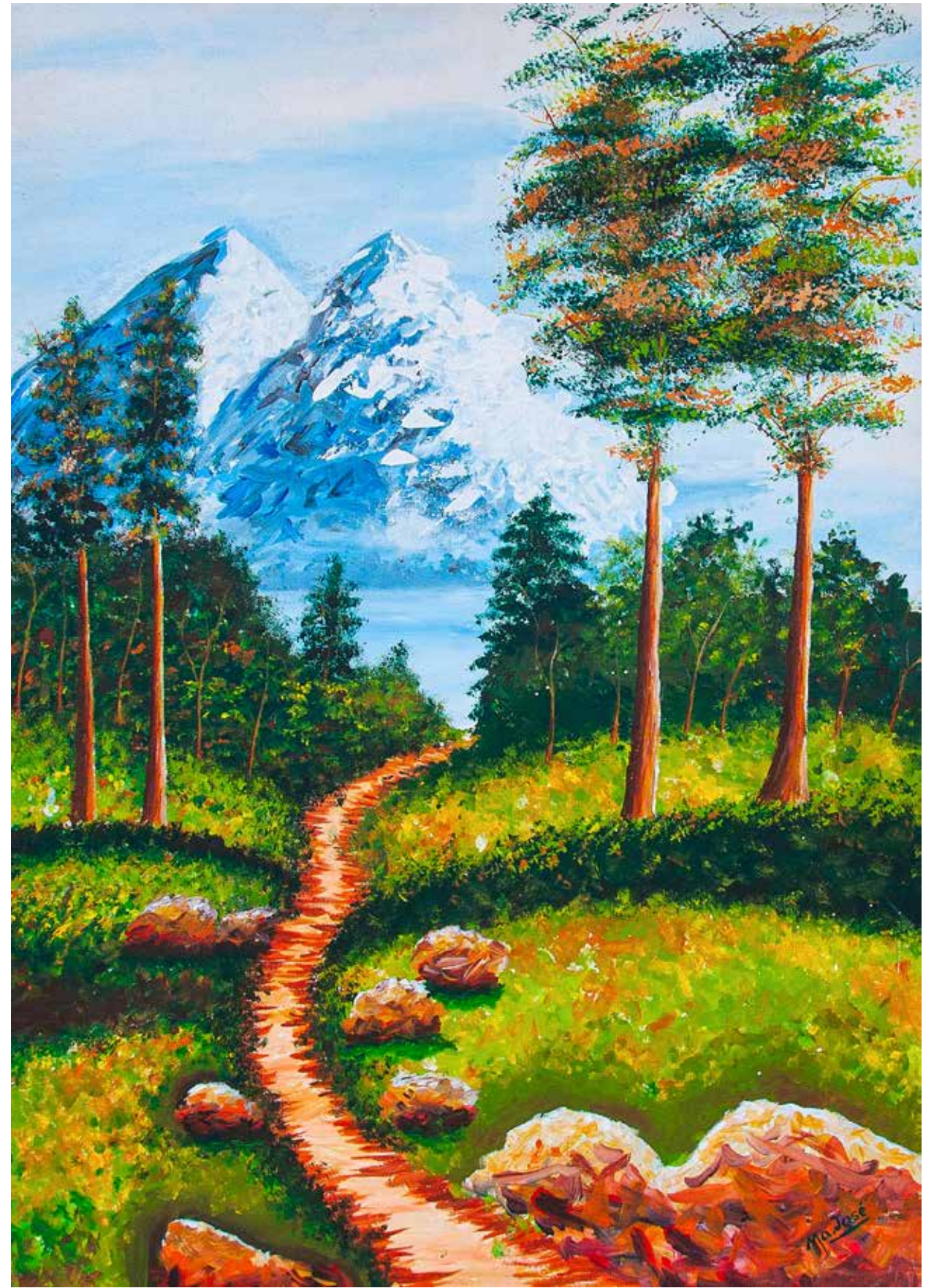
But even so, I still see you in the beauty of this world, and sometimes I take my time to savor it,

Because in my beautiful bouquet of sorrows,

you will always be my favorite.



Alive
Maria Jose Berru
Acrylic on Canvas



Forest Path
Maria Jose Berru
Acrylic on Canvas



18
Maria Jose Berru
Acrylic on Canvas



Koi Swimming
Mr. Lindsey L. Stuart
Watercolor and Acrylic

What a Beautiful Day

Halle Chinnery

The rain trickles down the house and forms puddles.
'What a beautiful day,' she says.

Sunshine pours through the windows.
'What a beautiful day,' she says.

Rainbows form over the horizon.
'What a beautiful day,' she says.

A baby giggles for the first time.
'What a beautiful day,' she says.

And when the day is done, and the moon illuminates the night sky,
she begins to lay her head and to rest and think,
'What a wonderful world, and what a beautiful day.'



Amsterdam, 2019

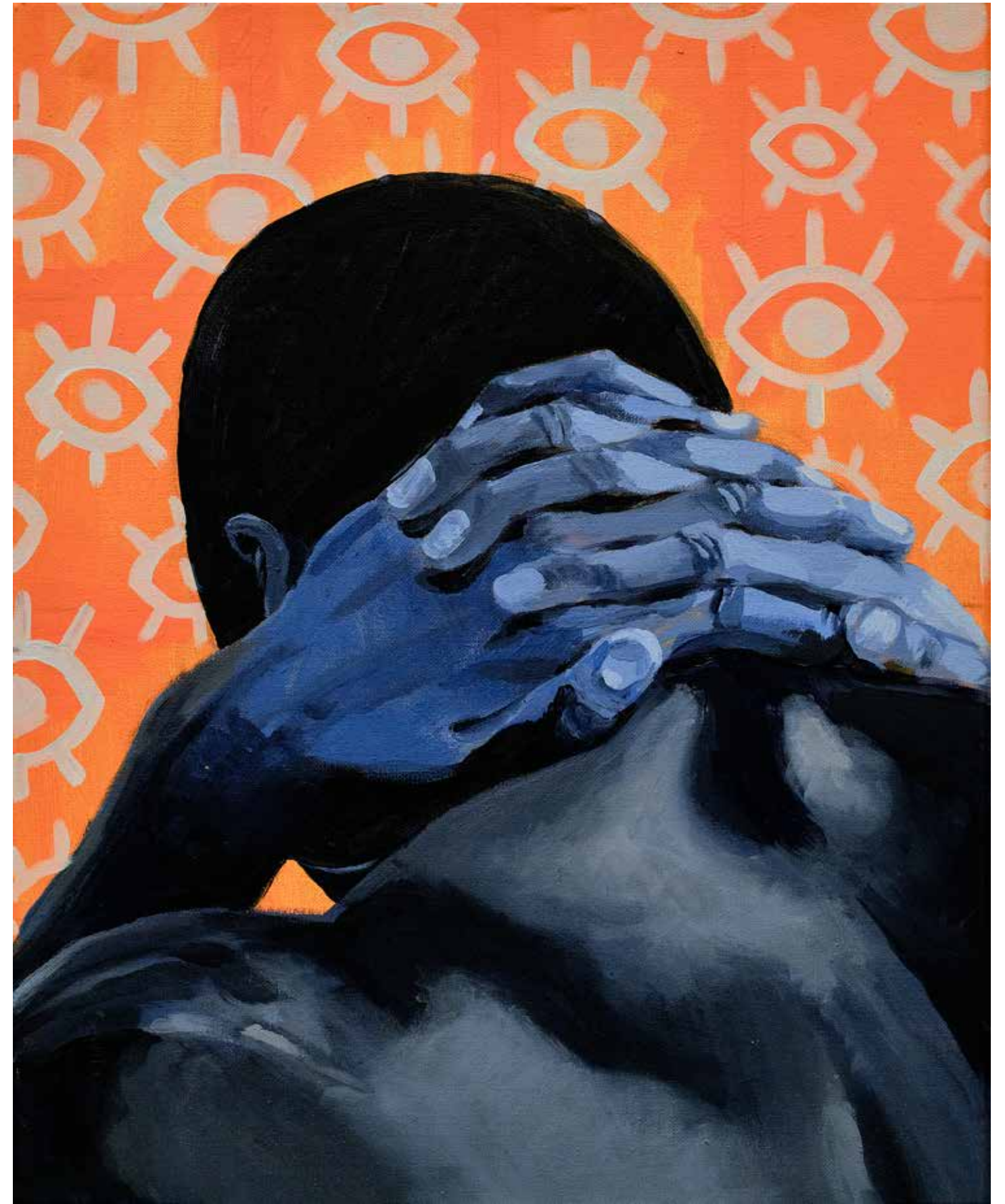
Michael Lozano

Photography

The Coughing Wolf

Shirleen Groves

I cannot blame my father for what he was.
A man tied to the oil seeped within the crevices of his hands and bloodied fingers,
The sawdust and cigarettes embedded in his lungs.
My father, the wolf that howled in the night,
A fit so disturbing one considered it lethal.
He was the monster that lurked in our dreams,
Yet I cannot blame him for the atrocities he committed,
For such deeds were never a result of his true mind.
Taken and abused by the world and wife.
Thrown into a life unlivable with 5 babies that he must call his own,
Five unruly children that could never understand the wolf in the smokey room.
The hacking and coughing sounded like a million trumpets in the air.
Or a motor that sputtered and died.
This was a man who was kicked and beaten,
Not only by those around him but by himself as well.
A man who could not look into any mirror in fear of what he had become.
And yet he is here still,
No longer lurking,
But living.



All Eyes on Me

Mikael Semexant

Acrylic on Canvas



Sage

Felipe Wallis

Photography/Fashion Editorial

To Create a Utopia

Naomi Volcy

I held my legs up to my chest with my arms surrounding my knees, a worn composition book balanced atop them. The cardboard cover and flimsy pages were held between my index and middle finger. My eyes scanned the little writing that I had on the page. My wrist fidgeted with each stroke of my pen.

Every so often, a mosquito would attack my exposed arm or leg, and I would furiously attempt to crush it between my sweaty palms. Lizards would scurry past my sandals, and I would throw at them the small, bruised mangoes that lay scattered across the rusted patio table. Sweat dripped down from my forehead and armpits as the rays of the Florida sun peaked through the screen.

All that encompassed my mind was my ability to finish this story. I did not care about the ache in my fingers or the dryness of my mouth. Nor the loss of feeling in my legs or the churning of my stomach. Not even the sounds of excitement from my family watching the soccer match in the living room or the sound of my mother calling my name in an unpleasant tone stirred me. These things were all pushed into the depths of my mind as I continued to write.

Tears formed at the corners of my eyes because I knew that these pages were filled with many errors. I knew that these pages were filled with all the things that I believed I could not say. With a knot in my throat, a fluttering mind, and an anxiousness that bubbled from my stomach, I attempted to create my own Utopia.

Mushroom Magic

Sage Kelly

Screenprint on BFK

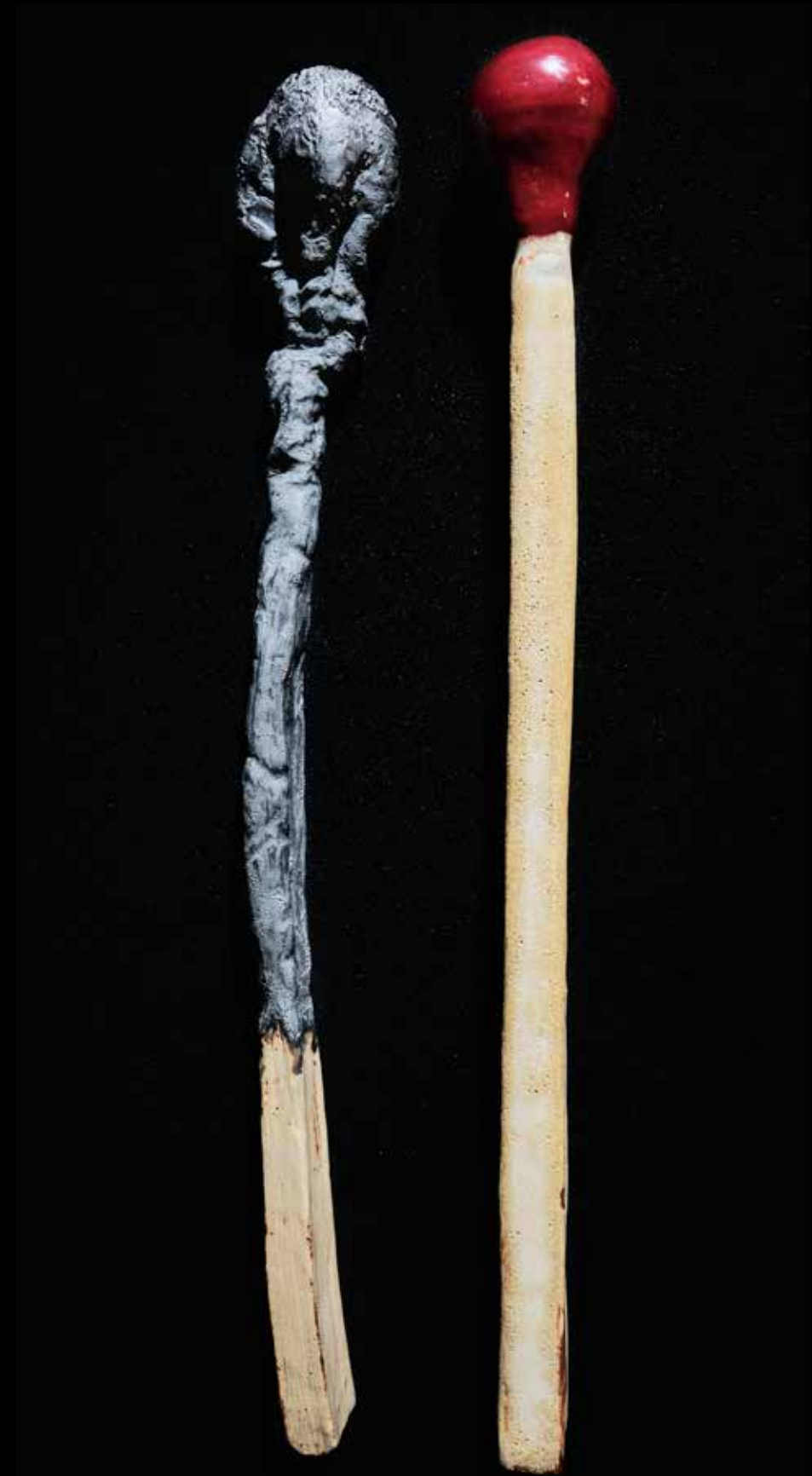




Anger Expressed, Anger Withheld

Antonio Smith

Stoneware Horse Hair Raku



Hail the Holy Burned!

Antonio Smith

Stoneware Cone 10 Reduction



Sanctuary
Sage Kelly
Digital Art

Etude # 2

Brian Manere

At five o'clock, Gina was parked outside the liquor store. She pushed wiry hair across her forehead and tucked it behind an aging ear. From her car, she looked past a photo of her young son, just-buried, which hung from the rearview mirror and watched the sun fall down, down, down—slowly disappearing behind the liquor store. It wasn't yet dark, however, and the cloud-streaked sky was dusted in bullish pinks, oranges, and reds—but the flashing green neon sign, dim under the setting sun, was far more salient than the sleepy heavens above.

She clutched tightly at a gold coin, on which was the engraving: 'To Thine Own Will, Be True, 5; Recovery, Service, Unity.' The unquiet night silenced itself as her attention narrowed, and with her eyes, she traced the neon piping, which formed a closed loop.

Over and over, she traced the word but did not read it. Instead, she stared—longingly and clutched the coin, unable to let go, unable to get up, unable to drive off: trapped between two opposing forces. But, as the sunset, the green flash became brighter and brighter and . . .

With each repetition, the world darkened . . .

Green light enveloped her mind and th'ego
Sank down, down, down landing softly—resting
Quietly within th'impenetrable
Confines of a city unwalled: a city
Whose barriers none can cross, few can find,
N'of those who do, fewer still recall.

"Wha'are

You waitin' for?" Spoke a voice, harsh—nasty,

"You a'ready know what happens next . . ."

The dark differentiated itself
From itself and the inner city, cast
In pitch, hinted toward form as these words,
Twice repeated—once soft and slick,
Un-darkened and unquiet, then sharper:
A needle, a nail, stabbing the mind,
Pinning fantasy thereto—colored
A corrupted memory and spoke new life
Into a ghost long dead: her ex-husband.

Alive in mind, he tow' red above, sober
Himself, with a fifth of Vodka in hand—

He drained the liquor into the low flush
Toilet; Gina watched the rippling liquid
Leap from th' opened bottle into the arms
Of gravity and fall heavily down,
Down, down then splash on the toilet water.

Th' image before Gina's mind's eye shifted
Away from memory toward fantasy
And the point of view inverted from first,
To third: she saw herself, back against the wall,
Eyes pierced red, the salty sting of tears therein;
She rocked back and forth, to and fro, aching,
Writhing in pain, shaking, suff' ring, watching
Her lost partner pour, pour, poison, without
Sympathy or care.

"Please," she heard herself
Whimper as the rusty nail of shame twice
Pierced her heart: once then, now again
"Please . . ."

Just as with-in, a tear with-out
At dusk, dripped down her face. She watched
The past: the bottle spewing liquid life,
In quick spurts, vomiting bliss exchanged
For air, and burst after burst, Vodka glugged forth . . .

He was now gone, but his gold wedding band,
Thrown from his finger, remained on the floor.
The mem'ry didn't end, she heard again:
"You a' ready know what happens next . . ."

She crawled alone, past his ring, on shaking
Hands and legs. The cold tile burned her skin,
Barbed pins poked every pore.

She leaned o'er th' opened toilet: un-flushed,
Low water, mostly vodka; inviting—
Commanding her to act
In accordance
With its
Will.

Gina looked down at her closed hand. The sun had set, the sky was dark—night would keep her secret. She left her car, let slip the coin, and walked across the parking lot: staring intently, focused entirely on the green neon sign . . .



Good Men Are Like Salmon

Daniel Ardila

“Meet me in that place behind our home,
Where the leaves are like lilies and the clouds like foam.
The sky a pond, the sun your reflection,
Where the ground is soft with pant-shaped impressions.

“Meet me seaside, where the salt burned our lips,
Where the heat slapped our faces, and the waves held our hips.
Just a highway further, a car ride at night,
Down a black riverside, along strings of streetlight.

“Meet me at that park from across the street,
Those same paths we walked with children’s feet.
We’ll walk again, our legs a bit longer,
Our hearts more mature, our grins a tad somber.

“Meet me again, sometime when there’s time,
We’ll steal back our lives; we’ll laugh at our crime.
When our eyes have direction, in opposite ways,
We’ll meet someplace again, again for a day.”



Independence, 2020
Michael Lozano
Photography



Afternoon at Grandma's
Jasmine Mohamed
Photography

The Common Man

Kaidyn Jordan

Equality, a word we hear everywhere,
In every action, headline, movie,
Yet, it never seems to be heard.
We scream it at the top of our lungs,
Only to be muted, silenced, forgotten.

Locked in a cage,
A bird without flight,
Striving to feel the rush of power,
Trying to be strong and not to cower,
To reach a new light,
Only to have our future be overwritten.

A society that imprisons the imagination,
A society that detests the divergent,
A society that abhors the abnormal,
A society that obliterates its only opportunity
Of obtaining something better.

But in the end, the only thing that makes us different,
Are those who tell us we can't:
We can't amount to anything,
We can't get there by ourselves,
We can't reach their standards,
We can't, we can't, we can't.

Either less than or greater than,
Those were our choices.
To be strong, but not too strong.
To experience emotions, but to confine them.
To shroud our opinions in darkness.

All because we were too young to understand,
Too ignorant, too selfish, too naïve.
Yet equality is what we strive for.
We are trying not to fly but to soar.
Why were wars waged?
Why were civilians slaughtered?

We ask for nothing more
Then to be equal to the "common man."
We will not be set free
Until we are all seen as friends, partners,
Equals.

Equality, a word we hear everywhere,
In every action, headline, movie,
A word that needs to be heard.
A word that needs to be screamed at the top of our lungs.
A word that should never be muted, silenced, forgotten.



An Arrow From the Sun
Steven R. Ali
Digital Art



Strength
Ainhoa Lasso
Acrylic



Deep Thought
Mr. Lindsey L. Stuart
Watercolor

Twenty-Three Years Christa Hopkins

I walked into the living room to the sound of my phone ringing, and, by the name on the caller ID, I knew something was wrong. My cousin's name appeared on the screen. He only ever calls on a holiday, and today was no special occasion. By the end of our conversation, I received the heart-wrenching news that my father had gone back to the same place that I had waited my entire life to free him from. Losing my father was agonizing, and at that moment, I pledged to dedicate my life to reforming the obstacles that barricaded an incarcerated human's chance for growth and to dismantle the habitual mindset it enforced.

My childhood was under no circumstances conventional, consisting of routine visits to a penitentiary with the hopes of salvaging some form

of a relationship with my father. As a child, I did not see him as a criminal, nor did I feel the deprivation of having an absentee father. Like all children with their innocence intact, my father was no different from the rest. In my eyes, he was a superhero, and he could do no wrong. I remember waking up early Sunday mornings and putting on my favorite green dress with white flowers and frill trim around the bottom. I would always pick out my outfits the night before as if I was a child preparing for their first day of school and excited about the new outfits they went shopping for months in advance. I figured I could cut down the time it took to get ready by doing this. I would then slide on my black ballet flats and race downstairs to wait on the couch until my mother and brother were ready to go. I would

hop in our Dodge Grand Caravan and listen to sounds of classic R&B songs play on the radio while drawing smiley faces and shapes into the fogged windows. Finally, when I would run out of space, I would gaze out of the window, watching the Miami buildings transition into trees as we traveled further north.

I looked forward to these visits that would occur two to three times a month. These were the times I could indulge him in my trivial childhood troubles of chores and homework while laughing at his corny dad jokes. My heart was full of love and gratitude for the hours we spent together, which always seemed to end too soon. Nevertheless, as time passes, children grow older, become aware, and curiosity begins to set in. Innocence fades, and questions are asked.

One Sunday morning visit, while I waited at a table for my father to be approved by guards and released from his cell, I looked around, and I noticed numerous families like my own. I saw children playing, women laughing, men talking and eating. It was as if we were in a cafeteria, and everyone seemed so “normal.” I thought to myself that these are people who have committed crimes. These are people who have been sentenced to incarceration as a result of their actions. However, here they are, just as human as my family. Reality set in as I watched as my father walk to our table, and as he sat down, I asked, “Dad, why were you arrested?” He looked at me, taken aback by my question, and then gazed at my mom for aid.

I repeated my question, more aggressive

this time, “Why were you arrested? What did you do?” My father sighed and responded, “Burglary.”

I then proceeded to ask him, “How long were you sentenced for?”

“Forty-five years,” he replied, “Forty-five years!?” I asked with shock and confusion, “You were sentenced forty-five years for a burglary charge? Was anyone murdered? Is that why the sentence is so long?”

My father looked at me with sad eyes, and I could tell he was trying to think of the right words to say, “No, no one was physically harmed. However, I have made many mistakes in my life that I regret every day. I have been given multiple chances, and I have taken all of them for granted. I am a repeat offender, and this time they did not go easy on me.”

After this conversation, I began to question myself internally and wonder how many others were sentenced to years of imprisonment for non-violent offenses. How many families were divided over wrong choices and mistakes? Eventually, the questions dissipated, and life moved forward, as it always does. I grew older. I graduated high school, started to work, and found my way into adulthood.

Twenty-three years later, on September 1st, 2016, my father walked through my apartment door wearing a black V-neck t-shirt, beige cargo shorts, and holding a bouquet of roses. This would be the first time in my life seeing him in clothing aside from his assigned blue, scrub-like uniform. And there he was, standing in front of me wearing the most blinding ear-to-ear smile I

had ever seen. He wrapped me up in a big bear hug, and at that moment, all of life’s problems were irrelevant. Due to what prisons call gain time, which is an opportunity that allows an inmate to reduce their sentence with good behavior and work participation, my father was able to be released early.

I was ecstatic. Finally, I had my family, and we could move forward through life as a unit. It was not long before I noticed the impact that 23 years of imprisonment had on my father. When he had first went into prison, there were Walkmans and cd players. Upon his release, there were self-driving cars. The entire world as he had known it changed. It became hard for him to adapt and find employment. His mood was fragile and easily triggered, used to years of confinement and needing to be defensive and on-guard. It did not take long for him to fall back into old habits of comfort and routine, shifting towards illegal activities. I would often get angry with him for decisions made, not understanding that the odds weren’t in his favor.

One day, the time came when his choices caught up with him. December 30th, 2019, my phone rang again, and my cousin Deon’s name once again appeared on the caller ID. “Hello?” I answered, “Hey Chris, how are you?”

“I’m doing well. How are you?” I asked.

“I’m doing okay. Look, I’m sorry to tell you this, but your dad called, and he was arrested.” He responded. At that moment, it felt as if the air had left my lungs, and I had no recollection of how to speak. I do not know how much time passed at

that moment, but eventually, I somehow mustered out the utter shock of “What?!” I then shifted from shock to anger, and a multitude of emotions slammed into me at once as reality started to set in.

“He was driving and failed to move over for an emergency vehicle, so they stopped him, ran his plates, and found marijuana in the car.” My anger then turned to shock again, and I started asking questions that I already knew the answer to.

“Does he have a bond? Can we get him out?” I could feel my cousin’s pain before he even spoke. It’s as if the energy transmitted through the phone, and I could feel his heartbreak for me.

“He violated parole, so we can’t get him out. He will probably have to finish out the rest of his sentencing.” It was at that moment that I started to cry.

I’d waited my entire life up to that point to have my dad back, and in an instant, he was gone. There was nothing I could do. I felt powerless, and I feared for him. I could not imagine the pain that he was feeling, and I do not think either of us slept that night. I spent that entire night just thinking. I thought about how he spent 23 consecutive years of his life incarcerated in an institution that did nothing to set him up for success. I thought of the limitless education he had access to. I calculated the amount of money I would need to consistently send him to ensure that he would have a decent meal. I thought of the prison taking their portion from that sent money to pay for his uniform. I thought of him having to fight others to protect himself and sleep on hard, brick-like beds. I

thought about his good intentions and his desire to succeed with the lack of resources provided.

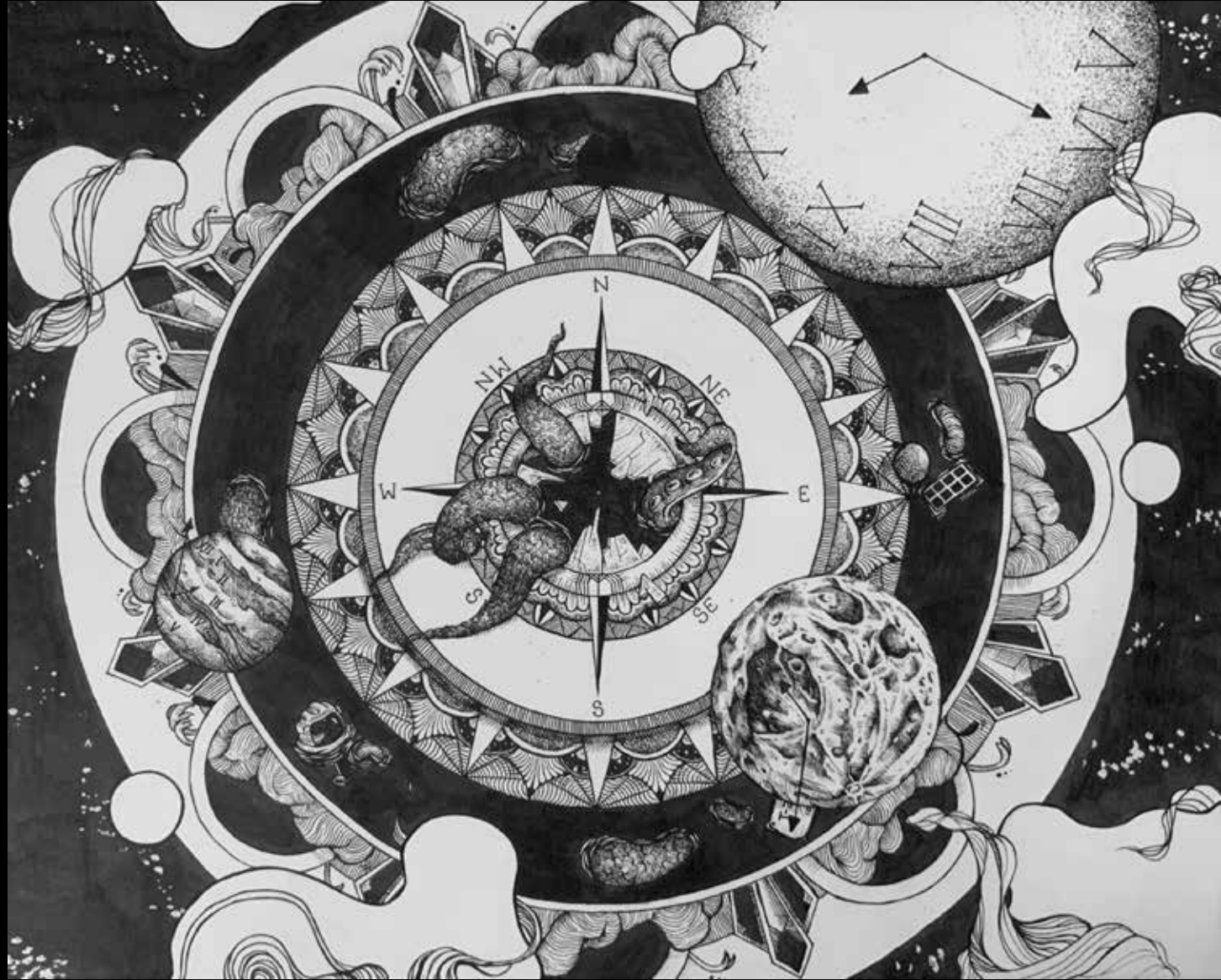
I then began to shift from thinking about him to thinking about myself. I reminded myself that it is not my fault that my father chose this path, but it is now my obligation to take my trauma and pain to overcome it. Although he may have failed to succeed with the tools provided, failure does not mean an end. Failure is just there to point us in another direction. I decided to take this pain and learn the lessons presented from the mistakes that I didn't make but, in turn, became my driving force to pursue my career as a lawyer. For every 100,000 Americans, it is estimated that 655 of them are incarcerated. There are more people behind bars in America than there are in some major cities. I decided I would divulge myself into learning the laws of our country and our judicial system. I would fight to help give second chances to those who wanted them. To aid in reforming our prison systems that prohibit the advancement of those willing to change but in need of a little help and guidance along the way.

One of my favorite quotes that I often reflect on for motivation and inspiration was spoken by the actor Will Smith. While being interviewed by Charlie Rose for the film *Ali*, he reflected on a life lesson that was taught to him by his father. He states, "You don't set out to build a wall. You don't say, 'I'm going to build the biggest, baddest, greatest wall that's ever been built.' You don't start there. You say, 'I'm going to lay this brick as perfectly as a brick can be laid.' You do that every single day. And soon, you have a wall." While I know the road

ahead may be rigorous, requiring many sacrifices and a lot of discipline, I know that my goal is attainable. My first brick was laid the day that I enrolled in my first class as a first-generation college student, and one day I will have my own wall.



Young Sailor
Mr. Lindsey L. Stuart
Watercolor



An Adrift Orbit
Dylon Robinson
Pen on Paper



Dystopian Demise
Dylon Robinson
Graphite on Paper



Forbidden Fruit
Dylon Robinson
Pen on Paper



Above the Clouds
Dylon Robinson
Graphite on Paper

While Listening To Music

Ifeanyi Uwadia

I don't quite understand,
But I feel.
Lost in language,
Strangled in sound.
Each note a guide to find my way,
Each page a thought I didn't say.

I communicate my love
With silence and dodged questions,
Every expression clothed in preparation.
In other words,
I'm afraid to learn what I don't know.
About you, about me —
Our fantasies and fallacies, infatuations.

You're a book I can no longer read.
Maybe,
That's why I picture you in my playlists.
Added you as a favorite,
And now you're on repeat.
No matter how many times I listen,
I can't seem to find your song's meaning — It's frustrating.

What were we? What will we become?
Questions answered only by empty lines in this journal.
You see, I've made all our problems personal,
But the thinking, writing, fighting, crying,
Does nothing.

I can only lament over your lyrics as I did before.
And as I skip through these songs,
I wonder where I went wrong,
Or what you didn't do right.
Like pen and paper fighting as if they're not on the same side.

Bullseye,
To the target that is my heart,
To the naïve nature that is my mind.



Miami Night
Taylor Gray
Photography



Patty
Jesse Small
Film



Anger
Ainhoa Lasso
Oil on Canvas



Trapped
Ainhoa Lasso
Oil on Canvas

Joy
Ainhoa Lasso
Graphite, Charcoal, and Acrylic on Canvas



Trust
Ainhoa Lasso
Graphite, Charcoal, and Acrylic on Canvas





Pool Party
Mikael Semexant
Oil on Canvas

Our Artists

Steven R. Ali strives to design in a creative and meaningful way by balancing thoughtful, economical brushstrokes, and by working with happy accidents.

Daniel Ardila is an aspiring writer.

Maria Jose Berru is from Ecuador and is in her first semester at Broward College.

Halle Chinnery is just a girl who lives life through music.

Taylor Gray is an English major and a self-taught, experimental photographer who was inspired at the age of fourteen by old copies of his father's National Geographic magazines.

Shirleen Groves hopes her work inspires joy and becomes meaningful to others.

Christa Hopkins aspires to help further the public good and impact the way the world works.

Kaidyn Jordan appreciates the beauty of nature just as it is: with no filter.

Sage Kelly loves chai lattes and homemade cards with big handwriting.

Ainhoa Lasso hopes to continue painting for the rest of her life.

Michael Lozano participates by observing.

Felicia M. Luxama is an ever-evolving woman who embraces creative language through intention and spirit.

Brian Manere is a psychology major and is in his last semester at Broward College.

Jasmine Mohamed loves that photography allows her to form a world through her point of view.

Andrea Perez is taking one step at a time.

Cameron Scott has had a passion for the arts since elementary school, where he made beats on the school desk with his hands and a pencil.

Mikael Semexant has been making art his entire life: he hopes to move people with his work and to bring some good into the world.

Jesse Small showed an interest in filmmaking at a young age and made homemade films using his family's camcorder.

Antonio Smith believes harmony isn't this or that, good or bad, light or dark, but a subtle dance between it all, an intuitive balance that must be fine-tuned to navigate life in peace.

Mr. Lindsey L. Stuart has been drawing, painting, building, and creating digital artwork since the 90's: he believes art embodies feelings, emotions, and movement.

Ifeanyi Uwadia is a spoken word enthusiast who has participated competitively in performance poetry.

Naomi Volcy talks about past experiences, cultural influences, and personal perceptions of the world through writing.

Felipe Wallis's purpose as an image creator is to give light to those who have been kept in the shadows for too long: their beauty is undeniable and so intense that they shall not be kept hidden any longer.

2021 Florida College Publications Awards

FIRST PLACE AWARDS

General Excellence: Fall 2019

Art: Caitlin Pazmino, Fall 2019

Artworks: Jorge Manzanares, Claudette Golco, and Daniel Otero, Fall 2019

Two-Page Spread: P'an Ku Editors, Spring 2020

Photographs: Justin Culley and Ivar Fandel, Fall 2019

Contents Page: Alexander Miller, Spring 2020

SECOND PLACE AWARDS

General Excellence: Spring 2020

Poem: Isabella Marcon, Spring 2020

Poetry: Joshua Reid, Shirleen Groves, and Maria Isabel Cruz, Spring 2020

Nonfiction: Madelyn Gibson, Fall 2019

Photography: Sebastian Francois, Fall 2019

Photographs: Justin Culley, Raphael Liy, and Jasmine Mohamed, Spring 2020

THIRD PLACE AWARDS

Two-page Spread: P'an Ku Editors, Fall 2019

Photography: Raphael Liy, Spring 2020

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