

# MIAMBIANCE

ARTS & LITERATURE MAGAZINE

VOLUME 29



# Miambiance

## Arts & Literature Magazine Volume 29

Edited solely by Miami Dade College students of the Kendall  
Campus in Miami, Florida



Kendall Campus

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## Editor's Note

*Miambiance* serves as a platform for our wonderful student's to get their influence out in the world. A voice is a powerful thing a person can have; it can help and influence others, but most importantly: it can give a person the hope and courage they need.

Hope is what I would like to give our beautiful readers. I want our readers to feel a wide range of emotions, and that every single emotion they feel is real, it defines their existence, and that they are never alone. Despite the troubling times both the readers and the world are going through, they are loved and deserving of love, joy, and prosperity.

Though it may not seem like it, every single voice is heard. They are heard, and their truths, values, questions, and creations are eternal. You are eternal.

Sincerely,  
Hannah Watts



Special thanks to the members of the following departments:  
English and Communications, Graphics, Arts and Philosophy, and Media Service



# Untitled

Kanisha Justilien

I can imagine how many doves fly.  
On the account of how many prayers that were sent to the sky.  
Or how many tears that forceful crashed on the ground.  
Mouths fighting off stolen goodbyes  
And suns that plummet into the ocean before they even rise.  
The demise of smiles  
That fades into the deep abyss of premature deaths.  
I could tattoo joy onto my face,  
But my eyes could tell you my heart is broken  
Because of your absent due to your premature death.  
It's amazing how much violence is in the community,  
Yet the streets are silent when it's time to arrest.  
But talk too much and can easily get our children to murder by handing them a gun.  
I can't understand how easier it is to kill.  
Than to encourage our brothers and sisters to live.  
You would rather walk around carrying a body bag  
Than a literature book.  
And stand on the curve  
And watch as their bodies being lifted  
On that rainy Saturday.  
While the dirt gets more hugs  
Than mom's arms can every give.  
So please...please...please  
Take account of my tone and how I am speaking  
Because this goes out to those who like to inflict pain and live to be in conflict.

*11 o' Clock*  
Chance Gomez  
Digital Photography







## Under the Orange Trees

Laura Iguanzo

“If this is the so called Sunshine State, then where the hell did all the sunshine go?”

Sticky. April 12, 1999. The two go hand in hand as it is the first thing I remember from The Last Day. My hair stuck to my sweaty forehead. My aunt's hand me down button-up from the 70s' stuck to my stomach. The pungent, overgrown grass stuck to the backs of my legs. Guilt stuck to me like the blue comforter my brother let me borrow when I was sick, or had a bad dream, or was feeling sad. The air smelled like oncoming rain, but it had been that way for a week with not a drop to show for for it. The backs of my eyelids went from orange to black as a shadow passed over me.

“Why are you on the ground, Lo?” I squinted, and through the slits my sister Eileen, four at the time, was squatting over me, her flushed cheeks so close to mine I could smell this morning's mango shake on her breath.

“Because Lola wants to take a little rest and look up at the sky, silly.”

“Oh. Can I take a little rest with you?” She laid down next to me before I could answer and I allowed myself to close my eyes again, hoping cloud gazing would keep her entertained. It was short lived.

“But it's just grey!”

“That's my favorite.” I reached up and poked her nose. She yelped and scrambled up to go run back inside.

## BANG! The screen door slammed shut,

and behind it I heard the muffled mosquito hum of my mother and my grandmother...and not my brother. I was going to have to get used to that.

*Heat Stroke* - Ashley Chong - Encaustic on Drawing Board - 3 3/8" x 6 1/8"



My vision blurred, and the grey above swirled and swooped like a Van Gogh painting, peeking in and out from between the leaves of the orange trees. One of the fruits must have gotten loose and stuck in my throat because it was getting hard to swallow past it. I swallowed hard. Again. Again. But to no avail.

My mind's camera reel clicks and the memory fades to black.

"So, that's it?" The shrink finally looked up from scratching on her clipboard with the pen emblazoned with the name of the hospital. HARMONY HEIGHTS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL. Har-phony Heights, as it was more colloquially known, as a small act of spite from its residents.

"Dolores. Stop." Realizing how spaced out I was and how I hadn't answered her question, the sound of my full name snapped me back into it. The backs of my ankles ached from absentmindedly kicking them into the metal legs of the hard plastic chair.

"It's Lo." I muttered under my breath. Barely a whisper, but of course her supersonic hearing picked up on it.

"Right, Ms. Wallace at the front desk told me. Alright, well if that's all you can remember..."

"It is."

"If you say so."

"It IS." I stared her down, making my eyes the size of dinner plates, daring her to test my memory or my word again. Her won china blue stare never wavered or faltered. Her protection mask never cracked. I've been here enough times to know what came next.

"You know, it's okay to tell me anything else. I am not here to judge."

Waxy smile. Reassuring nod. Manicured hand reaching across the massive wooden desk as a gesture of goodwill. And she's seen me here enough times to know what came next. Pressed lips into a hard line. Tilt chin, to look down on my nose. Arms folding across the body as a shield against her kindness. Silence.

She coolly clicked her pen and started to put her things away in a comically sized over the shoulder satchel. I thought it was ugly so I said so. She sighed, but other than that the insult didn't seem to faze her. Honestly, I didn't really care one way or the other if it did or not (I did), I mean, what else could they do to me in here (so much worse)? "Are we done here?"

"We're done. See you next week!" Her tone sounded plastic, like a Barbie or a weather reporter. Good to know. I sauntered out of the stuffy red room with the little pride I had left. As a last second impulse, I slammed the metal door, causing a chorus of "Dolores's!" from the tense, fluttering nurses strewn throughout the long, cold corridor. Spurred on by my reprimands, I let blustered into my little room and slammed that door as well.

Then, I promptly sat on the corner of my bed and cried.



*Barren Landscape Postcards*  
Ashley Chong  
Encaustic on Drawing Board  
(3) 4" x 6"





*Untitled* - Anthony Diaz - Silver Gelatin Print

## Earth Goddess

Jaclyn Espinosa

Bathed in an unwavering beauty thus unknown to mankind, submerged in an irrevocable coldness untethered and obscure, severed from flesh and heart – she is the mistress of the night, the wanderess of the unknown, the call of the alluring plane of the infinite. She dances amongst the strings of our spirit – creating soft and feminine symphony, and outpouring, a release, an unraveling seduction. She is made dangerous by her beguiling charm, her swiftness beneath the unending blackness, the slither of her figure, her boundless serpentine locks of cherry wine.



# Blindspot

Anaregina Frias

He comes in me for the first time.

Then he puts his pants back on, buckles his belt and says he must leave. And I find myself in a similar position I have found myself many times before. Needy, like a small child, pleading him not to leave while basking in the ripples of pleasure that still echo in my body. I try not to playfully beg for him to stay, using my giggles to mask my seriousness. Forgetting that the love I need is inside of me, not the guy fucking me.

I slowly put my clothes back on. Piece by piece, my gaze never leaving his.

“Can you be okay with me leaving now?” he asks. Half of his sweaty face is aglow from the light of the television on my wall. We were “watching” *Wild*. I debate my answer.

“Please?” He grabs his phone and keys and tucks it in his pocket.

I nod my head and look away. I give him a smile, but it betrays my inner scowl.

## I want him to think I am made of steel.

That I do not, in fact, need him to feel loved, to feel safe, to be touched in a way only sex can touch. Only cuddling can penetrate. I smile at him until I turn the lights off from my bedroom, and we walk in silence in my dark hallway.

We walk to my front door and step outside. The night is warm with the crickets busy cricket-ing. My small dog Tuti scratches my legs the way she always does when she wants me to carry her. I pick her up instantly.

I kiss him goodbye with my rat terrier wrapped in my arms. His lips are tender and soft. He breaks away and swiftly walks towards his car.

“Take care!” he calls; his voice is light as air.

“Drive safe,” I say, waving at him, and the moon, and the stars.

I watch him leave as the wave of sadness creeps up on me like a tsunami. A tsunami that showed little hints of arrival. I plop down on my bed, in the dark, with no music, no food, no screens, no boy to hold me in his arms.

Just me.

My mind wanders to the conversation I had with my professor earlier. I thought of the distance between us. Him, leaning on his desk, posing as the professor; me, sitting in my seat, posing as the student. There was so much I wanted to say, so much I was feeling but couldn’t process all at once. I told him of my father and of how different I feel in the skin I was in from two years ago when I took his Intro to Philosophy class.

“I used to be bright-eyed and bushy-tailed,” I laughed humorlessly. “I miss that.”

“Just allow yourself to feel,” was all he said.

If only he knew the degree to which I could feel. If my feelings were electricity, I would have the power to light up all of Miami in one switch. My pain could light up the USA in all its entirety.

I left his class plagued with a sense of ghost-like energy. His words seemed to stick to my skin like the slobber of a golden retriever for the rest of the day.

*How much more could I feel?* I thought as the boy I fucked, drove away in his car and I sat on my bed in the darkness of my room, in the darkness of my mind.

The ghost-like energy plagues me again, from head to toe. I cannot escape it. Tears stream down my cheeks as I question each one. Is it him? Is it the stress from school? From the uncertainty of my life?

*No.*

*Is it my dad?*

Sadness has no direct answer.

I look at myself in the mirror on my wall, with only the faint light of my television. There is only a silhouette of my face. I’ve never stared at myself in the dark before.

Not for more than a couple of seconds. So I stare. It feels intrusive almost. Like the girl in the mirror is not me. Like I am staring at a stranger. I become aware of my body staring at myself then my reflection staring back at me. The longer I stare the more I see my features dissolve into what looks like a young girl trying not to cry, but desperately wanting to.

I see a monster. Faceless. Enormous. With bulbous eyes taking up half my face. Unrecognizable. I am crestfallen. I let myself cry until I see the young girl again. The edges of my dark, wet lashes suddenly strike me as beautiful. But I could still see sadness make its way into every crevice of my face. The way it scrunched up when I cried. The way it softened when I gave in, like the ebb and flow of a wave. I wonder if others see this when they look at me. I realize this is who I always conceal. This is why I can never let a guy in. This is why I don’t take jobs that require me to smile all day. It would be too painful. There’s nothing beautiful about the deforming power of this sadness flooding over me. There’s nothing powerful about its weakening of every atom in my body. I look away for a while, unable to stand the deforming of my features.

Then I look back.





I resemble an old woman now. An older me with wrinkles and with a life full of hidden color beneath the dark surface of my image. She holds my gaze softly, with unrelenting love and pure admiration. I feel shocked and recognized. Validated and brave. I am held and I am safe. I wrap my hands around my back and squeeze tightly. My face is aglow from the tears on my cheeks.

I feel no need to hide. I feel no need to persevere. To impress. To seek pleasure. To deflect my true feelings. To go outside and run as far I can to the first cute guy who'll save me, only to watch him leave through the same door I saw my dead father carried out 1,005 days ago. On the sunniest, summer day I've ever seen.

The image of my older self disappears in the mirror, along with the monster I resembled. My youth returns in my glassy eyes. I survived. I am here. I am always here.

And he is too.

*She Blue*  
Ashley Chong  
Encaustic on Drawing Board  
4" x 6"





## To House a Memory

Darian Kettles

The roar of water that deluged from the faucet could not compete with the shriek of thought traffic occurring in my head. Anxieties collided with hope and hope smashed into exhilaration in forceful harmony. All the while, I’m hovering over this little stick that will completely alter my life, trying to skillfully shimmy out at least a drop if confirmation – confirmation that I am indeed pregnant.

After peering into the emptiness of the white walls in my all-white bathroom for the last three minutes, I pinch at the pregnancy test with toilet paper and await my fate. The lifting of the test from the counter to my eyes seemed to last a lifetime. There it was. Two very solid pink lines. I would much rather trade the ambiguity of gazing into excruciating nothingness than these very certain, yet somehow abstract solid lines. Both of them caused my heart to throb and my breath to falter.

I slowly returned the pregnancy test on the counter. I dug my fingernails into the palms of my hands, as deep as the flesh would allow, as I pressed them against the marble counter for balance. Shaking my head and looking down at my flat belly, I rolled my lips into my mouth, unsure if a cry or scream or laugh would escape them. My boyfriend, Warren, and I surely did not plan this. Warren, with his fervent demeanor much like a toddler after dessert, will be overjoyed to finally share his life with a child. Finally, another soul who could appreciate *Cartoon Network* as much as my Warren, unless this child inherited my sober forlornness. It felt like what was growing inside me was an extension of my own childhood. I had long left behind being a child, to bask in the frivolity of collecting shooting stars as if they were wishes.

Now as I lift my t-shirt and rub my abdomen, I rack my brain, trying to conjure up some buried fragment of my childhood. I grew up in the late 1990s, in a small suburb called Strawberry Fields which arose from the abandoned and barren fruit fields. Neighbors were friendly and eager to lend sugar or a lawnmower. My older sister Eden and I, along with the other kids frequently chased down the ice cream truck for frozen, disfigured Spongebob and Powerpuff Girls heads with bubblegum eyes. The sweet yet tart phantom scent of strawberries that once flourished on the land lingered over us. Those were rosy times, where I trusted with abandon and shared in abundance.

I pushed deeper, and trapped in the back of my mind is the memory of our first night there.

Curiosity coerced me to travel this empty, creaky space that was supposed to be our new home – but was filled with ghosts draped in mothballs and dust.

Eden found me crying and hyperventilating, so she ripped through the cobwebs and wiped away the dust to take me into her arms.

What if I can’t do that?

The very thought of such failure to nurture is enough to make my eyes hot with tears. I looked to the reflection across from me, and all I could see was the younger version of myself weeping in the dark and haunted corners of my headspace.

The sound of my front door opening shook me from my reminiscing.

“Ada, I’m home!” Warren calls, clearly oblivious to the thick tension weighing down the air in our usually lighthearted home.

“I’m in the bathroom. Can you come here for a sec, please?”

I wipe away tears and clear my throat. He was at the door in no time, hearing the worry in my wavering voice. The slightly open door revealed the test, causing him to rush in. His face lifts into a grin, falling instantly when he looks me in the eye.

“Ada, baby, what’s the matter? We’re having a baby!”

He had unknowingly answered his own question. His joyous reaction only made me feel even more ridiculous and inadequate for not matching his enthusiasm. I forced a smile to feign sanguinity.

“This is a good thing.” He kept repeating under his breath as he embraced me. The more he said it, the more it sounded like a question.

*This is a good thing*

*This is a good thing?*

*Is this a good thing?*



## //Lost Ghost//

Claudia Suero

Hey hey ghost  
You ghosted me once more  
Then watch my every post?  
You haunt my every thought, ghost  
You host my every dream, ghost

Hate you ghosting  
Hate me waiting  
Hate you haunting  
My thoughts  
Along with more floating ghosts  
Hanging onto loving memories  
Of you and I  
As you and I  
Are separating  
Fading away

Float away ghost  
Don't wanna see your posts anymore  
Don't wanna hear your other ghosts anymore  
Whisper words of a lost love  
From a lost ghost  
Too lost in thought

A lost ghost that almost  
possessed my head  
Until I decided  
You cost too much of my thoughts  
So go get lost ghost

*Untitled*  
Asleti Alejo  
Pen, Pencil, Ink, Sharpie,  
Mixed Media  
20" x 25"

















I have no clue what language she spoke, but I focus my attention on how interesting the pub is. Foreign races are gathered together, enjoying obscure drinks, and telling stories with one another. Some looked humanoid with bright skin pigmentation, and others seemed more reptilian.

“So, child, what is a member of Yoden doing so far from home” The man asked me.

Confused and curious, I ask the most important question at this moment, “Are you David”

A quick smirk appears on the man’s face. “Yes...yes, I am.”

“How do you know my name?” I asked.

“Well, anyone who enters my loft gives off a unique aura, and with that aura, I can see your appearance through this orb.”

With a slight flick of his wrist light travels to his palm and takes the shape of a sphere. Within it is me, sitting in the pub, with my name appearing as smoke.

“Lemei esda”(here you go).

The waitress comes by and places two giant crimson mugs on our table. The mugs are filled with a purple and fizzy liquid which definitely makes me not want to drink it.

“Drink,” David says, “this ale will soothe your heart.”

I’m very nervous right now, especially with this man right in front of me... but I do need a drink. The last time I had anything was about six hours ago. I start drinking a small amount of this weird liquid, and for some reason, I feel all my nerves and anxiety go away. It was almost instant. Yup, this drink is certainly not normal. I remember the glasses and proceed to take them out of my bag, placing them on the table.

“I don’t want any trouble.” I say, “I just...need some money to get by that’s all.”

“Ah, I see. I appreciate you returning one of my most precious items to me,” He pauses. “So, I presume you are without some sort of guardian?”

“W- why would you think that?”

“Well, a child wouldn’t be running around by himself trying to get by, especially a Yoden child so far from home. But enough jabber. I brought you here because I have a proposition for you. How would you like to learn the mastery of light?” He asks. “Seeing that you are without caretakers, I can help you.”

I don’t know what to say. Not long ago, I was trying to steal from him. Humans truly are strange.

“Why would you want to help me? I’ve done nothing but break into your home and rob you.”

“Because I see a wondrous aura within you. And yet, it still feels like it can grow,” David states.

Right now, I’ve been struggling for food and shelter. I have been for as long as I can remember. I’ve become so good at stealing that I am even recognized in the underground thieves’ trade. But, look at me... I forget that I am just a child struggling every day to survive and not having the chance to live my life. This man doesn’t seem to be a monstrous human, especially since he provided me with a drink and this great offer. I’ve heard many horror stories about humans, so I’m always skeptical about them. But he seems... different somehow.

I miss home.

“Alright, David, I’m interested in your proposition. But this is so sudden, and I barely know you.”

“Well,” David says, “you have all the time you need. But for now, let’s drink to our heart’s content while we get to know one another. Let me tell you about my first home, Earth.”



*Royal Air Hotel*  
Chris Delaguardia  
Digital Art





*Carreta Carreta* - Ana Salguero - High Density Polyethylene and 19 Gauge Steel Cloth - 3' 1" x 3' 2" x 6"

## Garbage Bag in Large Bin, Building Six Plaza

Gabriela Azeem-Angel

Air slips in and dies,  
animating this tired lung –

of a creature who sleeps after duty.

An all-consuming beast rests  
in his crevice under the sun.  
Warmth bears down  
on the white of his skin,  
pliable, translucent.

Awaiting his next migration.

But the predator becomes  
the prey,  
trapped in the maw  
of a creature  
whose deep warning rumble  
scatters the wiser.

Together they travel,  
bound by their roles  
to rest  
among kin





## Worn Out Soles

John Lizano

as the darkness swallows my thoughts  
and the life within me is devoured by silence  
I question, why has god sent these monsoons  
to rain on a caravan of hapless nomads

I gaze over at my mother in the moonlight,  
longing to someday fill her fridge  
with not only mangos, but with  
myriads of hope  
that'll drain her mind of these  
thirteen years of instability

I wish to live in a world where we no longer must  
collect buckets of water  
to cleanse our minds  
and bathe using plastic cups

I can sometimes hear the growling of her stomach,  
amidst the growling of shylocks  
during times when I ponder if our house will be seized  
on the days that they threaten to repossess not just our cars,  
but our faith in kin too  
I've noticed my mother lives her life single,  
but pays with singles too  
I suppose owning nothing but worn out soles  
is to blame for mother's worn out soul

maybe if I treat her with care,  
I can heal her lingering burns  
maybe if I persevere,  
I can make the tug of war worthwhile  
maybe if I ascend,  
I can tie together my mother's loose ends



# The Rose Peddler

Nicolas Lacayo

Someone was selling roses by the street today.

I was in a silent stupor, swirling in sorrows and in sin while simultaneously sinking in my seat. The stranger was dangerously close to knocking on my window; if he was any closer before I finally snapped into reality and looked up, he might've done just that. I heard the query through my window. The question he asked being fairly obviously-

"Would you like to buy some roses?"

Within the eye of this man, the rose peddler, who wanted what was in my wallet as a way to continue wandering the wondrous world we live, was a glimmer of hope that I may feel deep affection for someone. He was hoping I'd make someone happy, and that he would be happy to receive enough green paper to afford a semblance of a life or possibly to be able to have a decent meal that eve.

A thousand thoughts thickened in the thunderstorm that was my mind, thinning thoroughly through so that I could make sense of it all. People I let down. People who let me down. Friends and family who I rarely get to see. Many faces flashed in front of my eyes, faces of people who may enjoy a gift that may accent the light in their homes.

Of course, when one thinks of purchasing a plethora of primed cadavers, colored beautifully in a bouquet that will wither within time, one considers taking it to a loved one; not just a person whom you think of fondly, but an individual who holds a place in your heart. Someone to hold close on a storm-filled night, someone to share thoughts with, and someone to trust purposefully and entirely. Someone I fear I may never truly find.

A rose by any other name would smell just as sweet, but a rose is a rose, and a thorn is a thorn. Roses may tempt to lure you with the light pigmentation lusciously lending its lovely lens latching display in deception, dampening any dear hopes, daunting and distilled.



*Foreigners Postcard* - Ashley Chong - Encaustic on Drawing Board - 4" x 6"

Not all beauty is innocent or kind, and not all that bewilders is void of ill content. I'd fallen for the façade far too frequently, figuring my future would have fewer and fewer moments of fondness as a fervor filled me until the flare of the fire star would fade.

Death. A moment like this made me realize how much we tend to miss it when it lay before us. The surrounding specter, looming lightly, entrapping essences, was waiting all around. The man's eyes hoped to escape it for a fleeting while longer. The roses in his hands had succumbed to the soul sapper, as had the numbered sheets in my wallet, life and death forever being intertwined in a never-ending dance in which one may not touch the other.



*Foreigners Postcard* - Ashley Chong - Encaustic on Drawing Board - 4" x 6"

Every idea encircled my entropied skull. All I could do was shake my head. There was no one I loved in that very special way that I would bring those roses. There was a strange feeling that I'd never find that person who I'd bring those roses to. There was nothing about those ten seconds that didn't make me believe that death would be so lonely, no matter what the circumstance. One day, many years from now, I would be nothing but a bouquet of roses; something no amount of love, life, acceptance, admiration, pride, or principle could prevent.

He smiled, still, stepping to see or sell to another someone with a seething passion for a sweet one so special. Meanwhile, the red light raged. I lamented as I wondered if the love I longed for would ever come. If I'd be blind to imperfections or accepting of flaws.

I shook my head, washed with a sense of loneliness, driving onward once the light turned green.



*Foreigners Postcard* - Ashley Chong - Encaustic on Drawing Board - 4" x 6"







# The Day the Maid Was Fired

Samantha Duran

June of five years ago was my last June with you. A month later the cancer was back. Five months after that the maid was fired. When we went to visit you at the hospital, my hair was awkward and boyish, so I wore a wig. There was a pastor in your room when we arrived; I couldn't understand why he asked me if I wanted to speak to you in private.

You were intubated, but awake. Every few seconds the mechanized accordion would constrict and release, and your chest would move with it. Your buzz cut grew upward. I saw your natural kinky hair peppered black and white for the first time in my life. Your upper lip was scabbed from a couple days before. You were wrestled by a team of nurses for biting down on your breathing tube, trying to die. I was struggling to express how much I love you. You couldn't respond, and I didn't remember the last time I heard your voice. After that, we bathed you with microwavable cloths. I still didn't understand what was happening.

I sat down in front of you, eating chips and browsing the internet. Your blood pressure dropped, and the machine beside your bed began beeping faster than your heartbeat. I understand now.



Mimi

Samantha Duran

Have I forgotten your voice?  
The soft intonation of your adenoidal vowels?  
With foreign tildes and R's that delicately plucked at an  
angel's harp?  
The maternal murmur that lulled my name, asking me to  
wake?

These are vague memories of reverberations I can no longer  
decipher.  
Your mouth moves with an empty dissonance.







## On the Bank of Mississippi

Scarleth Figueroa

The man strolled the balmy streets of the French Quarter. The breeze stirred from the Mississippi before settling on the narrow walkways of Bourbon Street. He pulled a white handkerchief from his vest – it was embroidered with gold-colored lace. He traced his thumb over it, finally bringing it to his nose, the scent always binding. It was now, as dusk settled, and the ferns lining the cast-iron balconies took their last swallow of the sun, that it began once again. Even after so many years had passed. He slipped the handkerchief back into the pocket lining the inside of his taupe vest. His vest was always the lightest garment he wore – he was Victorian in his devotion to black. A pair of women carrying large shopping bags passed him on the sidewalk. He tilted his hat to them, and they smiled. The man, well dressed and perfectly groomed, was attractive in his fifty years. The faded scar on his face compounded his appeal.

It was at the corner of the square that he saw the red Bel-Air with the butter crème-colored top. He walked towards it and entered the lounge it was parked in front of. The lounge had been in business since before The Great War, its small foyer was supported by two wooden pillars topped with Corinthian capitals, an ode to a classical age that had been battered by the shrapnel of shells. Beside them were ferns, drooping from the baskets tethered to the ceiling. It was here that he met her all those years ago. The short brunette at the host stand beamed when she saw him.





“It’s good to see you again, Mr. De Fex,” she began, in that husky drawl that was characteristic of southern beauty.

He detested the familiarity.

“Perhaps.” He paused. “I think I’ll go to the lavatory first,” he said, strolling past her before he could notice her frown.

The last rays of the sun wafted through the open windows of the lounge, now lined with candles. The wooden fans circled in place above the room, threatening to snuff them out. He walked past the tables filled with well-appointed patrons. The men swiveling brandy in their glasses while billows of smoke wafted from their cigarettes – the smoke intermingling with the sweetness of the perfume that came from the women across them. The aroma created an incense that lined the corridors as the boom of laughter and chatter met with him with each step.

He stopped short of the small table where a singular young man sat. The table – made of mahogany and freshly polished – was spellbinding. His index finger slid across the softened curve of the wood.

“You can never resist wood, can you father?” The young man broke the spell.

He looked up at his son’s eyes. Like his, they were pools of black.

“I saw your car outside,” he said, pulling the chair in front of him and lifting his coat as he sat.

“Yes, I just had it washed.”

“How long are you here?”

“Just for the night,” He replied, raising his hand to get the attention of the waiter.

He was handsome, his boy. He was tall and well built, with cropped hair combed and slicked back. His sharp nose rested above a smile that reminded him of his mother. An accomplished surgeon, he carried himself with an importance that came with his craft. His hands were sturdy but unlike his father’s. Years of carpentry brought a callousness to his own.

“Sir, what would you like to have?” The waiter asked as he arrived at the table.

He leaned one hand on the table while the other balanced a tray heavy with bottles and glasses.

“I’ll just have some tonic with lime, please.”

“That’s all?” The waiter replied, surprised.

“Yes, that should do it.” He said, looking towards his son.

The son swirled his brandy in his glass, the single cube clinking gently. “Father, won’t you drink with me tonight?”

“I really mustn’t, dear.”

“Why not You’ve given up every simple pleasure in life, and I simply don’t understand. Mother died. She died, Dad. It’s nearing a decade. We don’t expect you to marry, but what you’re doing--- it-it cannot continue. It isn’t healthy.”

“You know she never called me ‘Greg,’” the father mused. “She refused to. Anglicizing the blood, she called. When I met her, I’d spent years ridding myself of the accent. Yet, she refused. I was always Gregorio to her.” He said.

The son knew the story. He expected a battle of wills, but he could not counter him then. He hadn’t the heart. He looked for the waiter, hoping he had the foresight to bring another brandy with the tonic. The son enjoyed coming to town, and this lounge. It was part of their family. It was here that his parents met, after all.

The waiter returned with two drinks. The son looked over at his father, who was now slowly bringing the long glass up to his lips. Precision. He always admired that about the man. In his own way, his father was also a surgeon. Except, instead of bodies, he had wood. His father was the most skilled furniture-maker in Louisiana. It was this craft that placed him through medical school. He admired it, but most of all he admired the man before him. His father was not a mal of philosophy or culture. He never wavered, was never rude or hostile. He carried himself with quiet grace, his thoughts and emotions always lurking beneath. The only time he recalled his father show emotion was with his mother. He still loved her, with an intensity that almost frightened him.

“I hear you’re doing well with your private practice,” his father noted.

“Ah, yes. Thank you. Jeremy told you?” It all finally got sorted this month, I had meant to tell you.” But naturally, the favored half got to you first; he thought bitterly.

Jeremy, his twin, got along with their father in the seamless fashion that is expected of fathers and their boys.

“Is there anyone special you’re seeing, son?”

“Hah. No, dad. Just plenty of un-special women,” he joked, bringing the glass to his mouth. He saw the corners of his father’s lips turn up slightly before he slugged down the brandy. They continued to chat through the hours. The smoke dissipated, and the perfume left with the women. Only the sour stench of spilled drinks remained in the lounge. The father glanced down at his watch. 12 o’clock. It was time to go. He felt comfortable here, but not enough to keep the staff.

“Sam, let’s get going. You can sleep in your old room tonight.”

“That would be swell, Dad,” Sam replied, not a little drunk.

They got up from the table, the father giving it one last glance. They walked past the foyer, the host stand now empty and stepped out into the night.

They stopped in front of the Bel-Air. Sam opened the passenger door.

“It’s crème leather on the inside.”

The father ran his palm over the material of the seat, feeling the grooves where the skin folded over the metal.

“It’s marvelous, son.”

“Look in front of you.”









*Vulture* - Anthony Campos - Printmaking - 8" x 10"

Before him was a pristine and polished mahogany dashboard, extending the length of the car bench. The silver metal sliced between the two wooden panels before making it to the steering wheel.

“Marvelous,” he whispered.

Sam made his way into the car, and his coat caught on the hook on the side of the door. He detangled it without grace, his feet flushing further. They finally sat, and before the father could offer to drive, the car lurched forward.

The busboy would later say he saw the heading east.

“It’s got a great radio, state of the art. Technology nowadays is just-just wow!” Sam exclaimed excitedly.

His father glanced over warily. He really ought to have driven.

“Sam, take it easy, will you? No need to race.” He cautioned.

But Sam wasn’t paying attention. His hand was on the gear shift, knuckled white with effort.

“So, about you, dad. We must see if we can take a trip with Jeremy this spring,” He said, glancing over at his father.

The road ahead was narrow, and with the windows down you could smell the Mississippi that trailed beside them. They continued down the dark highway, lit only by the Bel-Air’s headlights.

“That’s a fine idea, son. I’d like that.” The father replied as the son flattened his foot on the pedal.

“Maybe we can go to Spain?”

“I’m not sure I can do that, Sam.”

“Oh, c’mon, it’s been ages, su-”

“Sam!” His father screamed, pressing his palm against the roof of the car.

Sam couldn’t have seen the deer. It was undoubtedly his father’s scream that caused him to turn the wheel sharply to the right. The Bel-Air jerked towards the steep bank and away from the road. The acceleration flipped the car over once, then twice, until the crash, booming over the road, settling quietly over the patch of swamp below. The father opened his eyes – his mouth now filled with blood, tasting of iron. Sam, he thought. He was glad the car landed on its wheels. He moved his hands and pushed himself off the floor. He made his way to his son, who was now slumped over, one hand dangling outside the cracked door. His neck was draped over the top of the seat. The father brought his hands over his nape, gently guiding him down and placing him flat on the long bench. He looked at the dashboard. Praise God. A massive splinter of wood was now protruding from the dash and into the leather near the driver’s seat. It was a miracle it did not impale his son.

“Father,” came the croak.

“Shhhh. Son, please. Don’t exert yourself. Oh, my boy, you’re still with me,” he said, the tears pooling at his eyes.

“Father, please, I’m gravely injured.” He stammered.

The father bent over and looked at the wound at his son’s side, then past the Bel-Air into the night. His eyes were steel.

“I will get you help, son. I’ll run over to town, and I’ll get help. We’ll fix you up, you’ll see.”

“I need to tell you something.”

But his father wasn’t listening. His thoughts were consumed with saving his son.

“Mother. She-she asked me to-” He spat, the blood falling limp on his chin.

“She was in so much pain, and... and, Dad, it was terminal. She-she was going to die anyway. She was suffering so much those last months, I knew I could help. Do you understand? Father. Father, do you understand? I needed to help her.” He pleaded.

The father stared down at his son, laying on the bench, hand on the wound at his side. The circle of blood pooling around him grew.

“She asked me not to tell you, she knew you wouldn’t approve. She trusted me. I-I had to do it, she was in so much pain.”

The last words were a whisper.

The father was no longer listening, he did not hear his son. He was sure his son was not there. The body before him, bloody and ragged, was foreign. It repulsed him. He leaned over, their chests nearly touching and faces inches away. The night came in at once, and it mixed with the blood, the burning now consuming his throat and wrenching his soul until his hands extended before him – quivering. The father was powerless against it.

“Fa-father,” the son stammered, eyes wild. “Fath-” the gurgling of the blood in his throat quickened as the hands closed around his throat. The fingers, now white with effort, cut through the soft flesh, blood flowing over them.

The father stepped out of the Bel-Air, wiping his hands on his trousers before pulling the handkerchief to his face. He pinched the cloth near the embroidery and rubbed it between his fingers, feeling the texture before placing it back in his pocket.

“I will see you tomorrow, son.” He promised, before walking up the bank and onto the narrow road.





*Self*  
Maria Medina  
Charcoal  
18" x 22"

## Pebbles

Nicolas Lacayo

Thoughts that cloud your aching head,  
Punctuating what you've failed;  
Trust is slowly breaking down  
From pebble, to pebble.

Sinking hearts and growing pains,  
Reaching through a whimpered grasp;  
Cornered, frozen, sinking down  
From stone, to stone.

Burdened by a fearful life,  
Hardships cannot be surpassed;  
Heavy then to weigh one down  
From boulder, to boulder

Misery fills all till night,  
And all that's missing still be gone;  
Alone, emptied, buried down  
from stone, to stone

Memories, fears, hopes no more  
Breathing in the low-lit grave;  
Quickly all will whittle down  
From pebble, to pebble.



## Written in Stone

Liam Losh

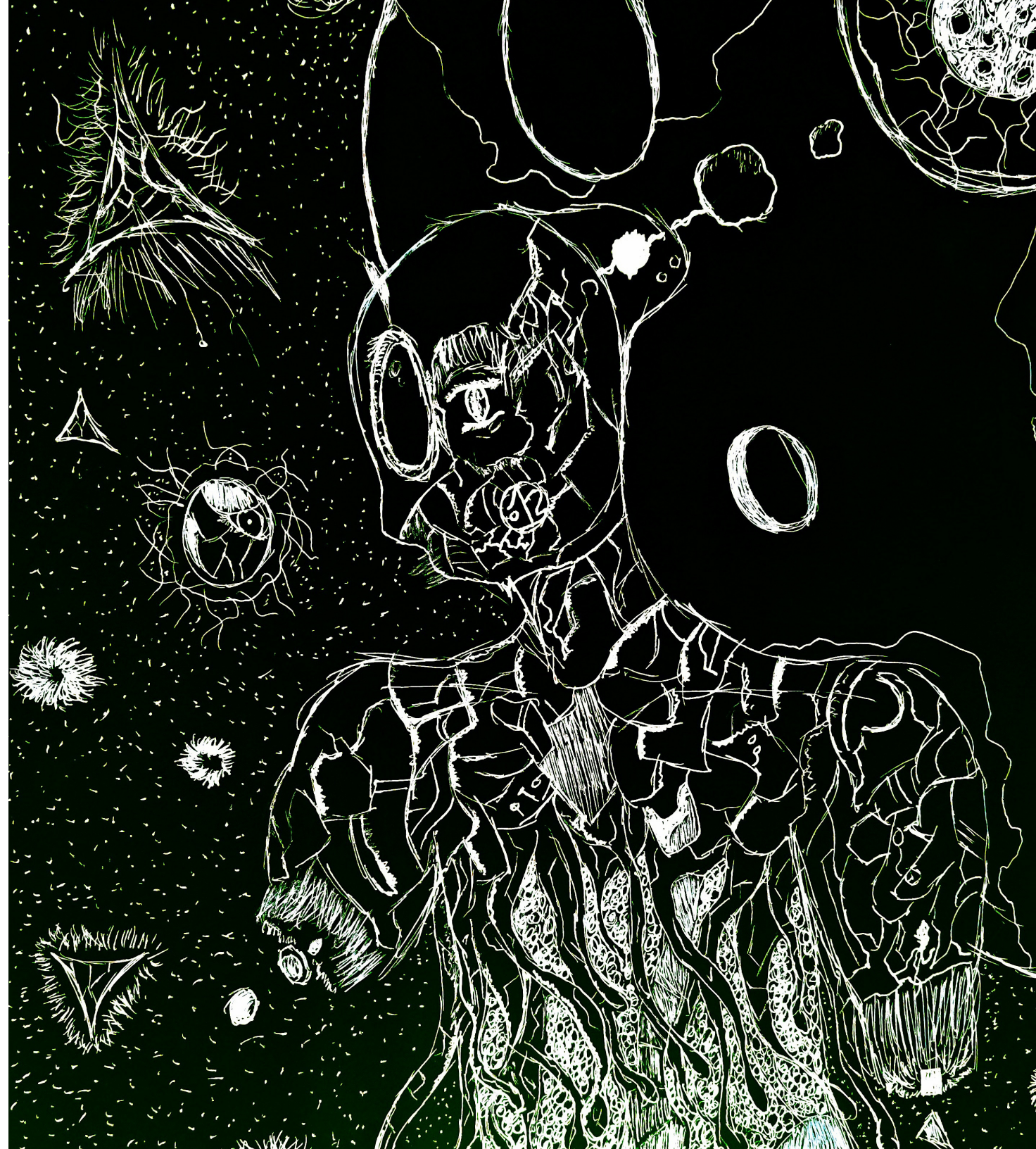
Carve the corners and stand the pillars.  
Rise and fill your vacuous rooms  
With the sounds of chipping stone  
And sing with the beating of your tools

Great beasts scream as the dust falls  
As winged creatures claw at your etchings.  
But rise your hammer and strike the stone!  
Let no thought rest.

Bring out your chisels and pierce  
That which blocks your right!  
Prevail with your statues of time  
Some thought wasted.

Regardless we will find out,  
From the stone wall blocking your path.  
Your dearest design.

*Nine*  
Miles Sterling  
Digital Art







# Hiraeth

Jaclyn Espinosa

I hurdle into you, into your wakefulness – I see in you what I have seen elsewhere, something familiar and bound to my flesh. I yearn for you, I wait for you, I crave in you what now is inflicted by my own mind – it is beauty, it is a curse, and I am imbued by such madness.

*Indoor Pony*  
Rachel Grusky  
Digital Photography





## Tethered

Jaclyn Espinosa

How does one structure the proper words – (those we could only ever record on sheets of eternity with the most opulent, crimson ink) in order to silence the madness festering in the deepest, most sacred parts of our fragile, feeble, mortal minds?

With dark minds and fragile hearts, we bear to write the darkness because we know not of it. We write of romanticisms as one would of an imaginary friend – nameless, fleeting to the touch, pale as ivory, wailing like an absent minded orphaned child.

As black moths feed from the blackness – growing larger and darker, stealing warmth and gifting only the curse of coldness, maddening your thoughts with its deceptive calm – a begging uniformity, a spiritual labyrinth, a lover's witchcraft.

Still, there is you – the perfect balance between control and chaos, a melodic fruition. You – are a rarity, stillness, a tethered gracefulness.

*Everything Will Wait*  
Chance Gomez  
Digital Photography





Untitled - Anthony Diaz - Silver Gelatin Print





# Incessant Debilitation of Our Mind

Abraham Perez

Take this uncertain mind, gently rest it onto your  
shoulder  
Round and stout, guide it towards better days,  
I'll ride it on this sturdy boulder...  
We may have seen golden futures in this world,  
Now it's dissolved, spilling onto the concrete...  
Like melted butter, we'll seep through small cracks on the  
floor,  
Becoming secret...

We don't need to live for the lives of others,  
But for each other...  
If we're preoccupied with the freaks, creeps, and  
deadbeats  
Attempting to bring us down, we'll undoubtedly  
Be drained...  
I can't shake off this fraught feeling that I'm going to end  
up  
Feeling guilty for ignoring, this is why I'm unsure...

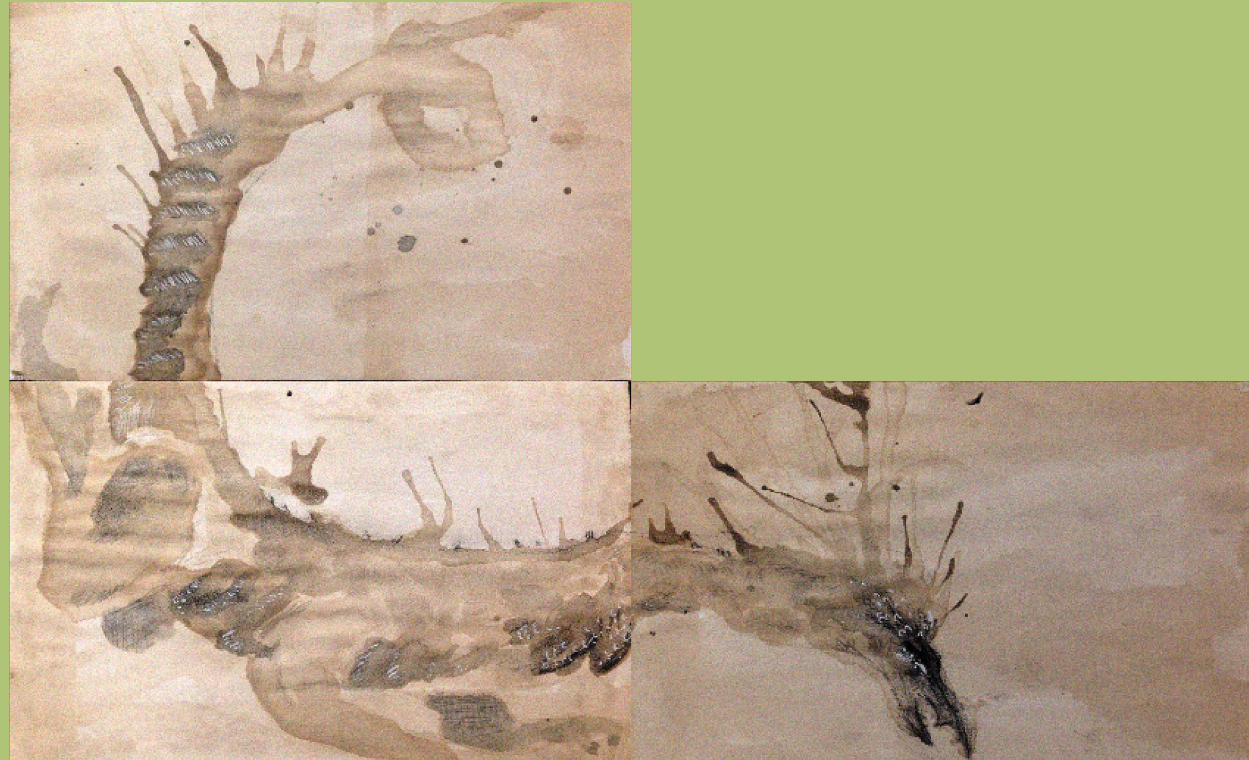
Keep this in mind...  
Keep this in mind,  
Beauty is defined by the light in your mind

Is my message getting through?  
Is it discreet enough to comprehend?  
Please, don't lie to me, please don't give false hope,  
You don't have to pretend to care,  
Similar to all the men and women soaked in glamour  
Give me your reasoning behind the expeditious fall,  
We were once draped in affection,  
Now, uncertainty is cascading down our spine,  
A river flowing with many questions, not enough  
Fish swimming to answer.

Keep this in mind...  
Keep this in mind,  
Don't be drifted away by the shallow water.

Untitled - Anthony Diaz - Silver Gelatin Print





## Evergreen

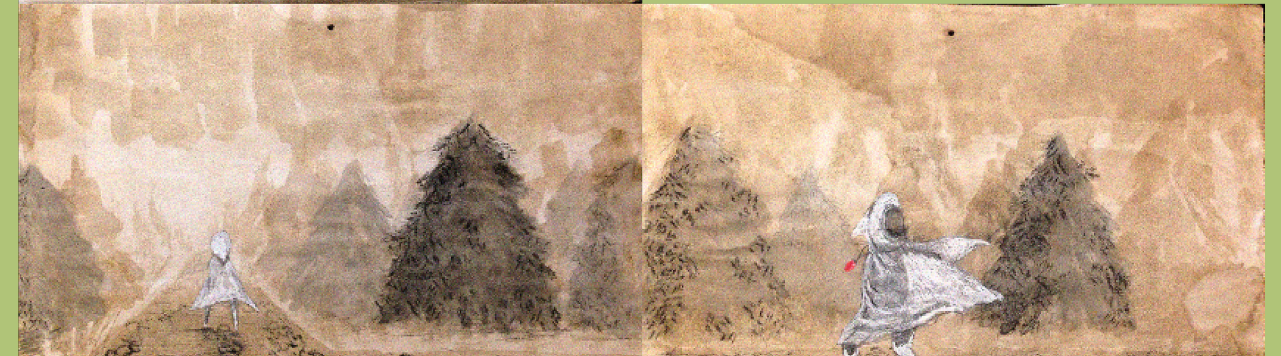
John Lizano

I watered down my emotions.  
 I weeded out the pieces of me  
 that you deemed expendable.  
 I planted unfamiliar seeds in hopes of  
 sprouting traits worthwhile.  
 I wished to someday roam meadows  
 free of scornful skies.  
 I was succulent, storing pockets of rain  
 only for my inner demons to hear.  
 I called out to Demeter,  
 longing to someday harvest away these feelings.  
 As time passed,  
 the harsh winter grew closer.  
 As time passed,  
 the cold came slowly, and then all at once.  
 As time passed,  
 my potential withered away with each unspoken word.  
 I realized this sentiment  
 was perennial.

I sought to end the drought  
 you had created.  
 I vowed to grow out  
 of the barren person  
 I had become.  
 No longer would I allow you to pollinate  
 the fears you had instilled in me.  
 No longer would I allow you to colonize  
 the hollow corners of my mind.  
 No longer would I allow you to exchange  
 grim words for sweet nectar.  
 I stopped fearing your sting,  
 as I had felt it many times before.  
 I grew thorns of my own,  
 stemming from the renaissance of the spring.  
 I became evergreen.



*Untitled*  
 Emily Blanco  
 Mixed Media Coffee  
 (6) 6" x 4"







*Clear Blue - Rachel Grusky - Digital Photography*





*Fall in Line*  
Jennifer Williams  
Ceramics  
6 1/4" x 10" x 10"

# Ode to a Novel

In the Style of Pablo Neruda

Gabriela Azeem-Angel

Lining the shelf  
in the back corner  
of my home  
you sit.  
Awaiting eager fingers  
to pry you open.  
To rifle.  
To flip.

The edges of  
your pages  
are yellowed,  
like the tomes of ages past  
or  
precious, glimmering  
gold.

Sighing sweetly  
as a thumb  
rolls,  
playfully spreading  
your signature scents  
of  
time,  
and wisdom,  
and earth.



Your spine arcs  
and bends,  
but dares not  
break –  
like  
the willowy branches  
of trees.  
Stately and secure  
you stand,  
as if you remember  
the being  
you  
once  
were.

Square and still  
you remain,  
laying the bricks –  
the foundation  
of worlds  
not unlike our own.



*Copper Insides*  
Celina Alvarez  
Plaster  
14" x 11 1/2"





*In the Groove*  
Amy Durant  
Ink 11" x 14"



## Take Care

Darian Kettles

I want a garden on my body.  
Petal soft skin, supple and light.  
Inky leaves, rich in color and life.

I want a garden in my home.  
Vine on my walls.  
Tie me to your roots.

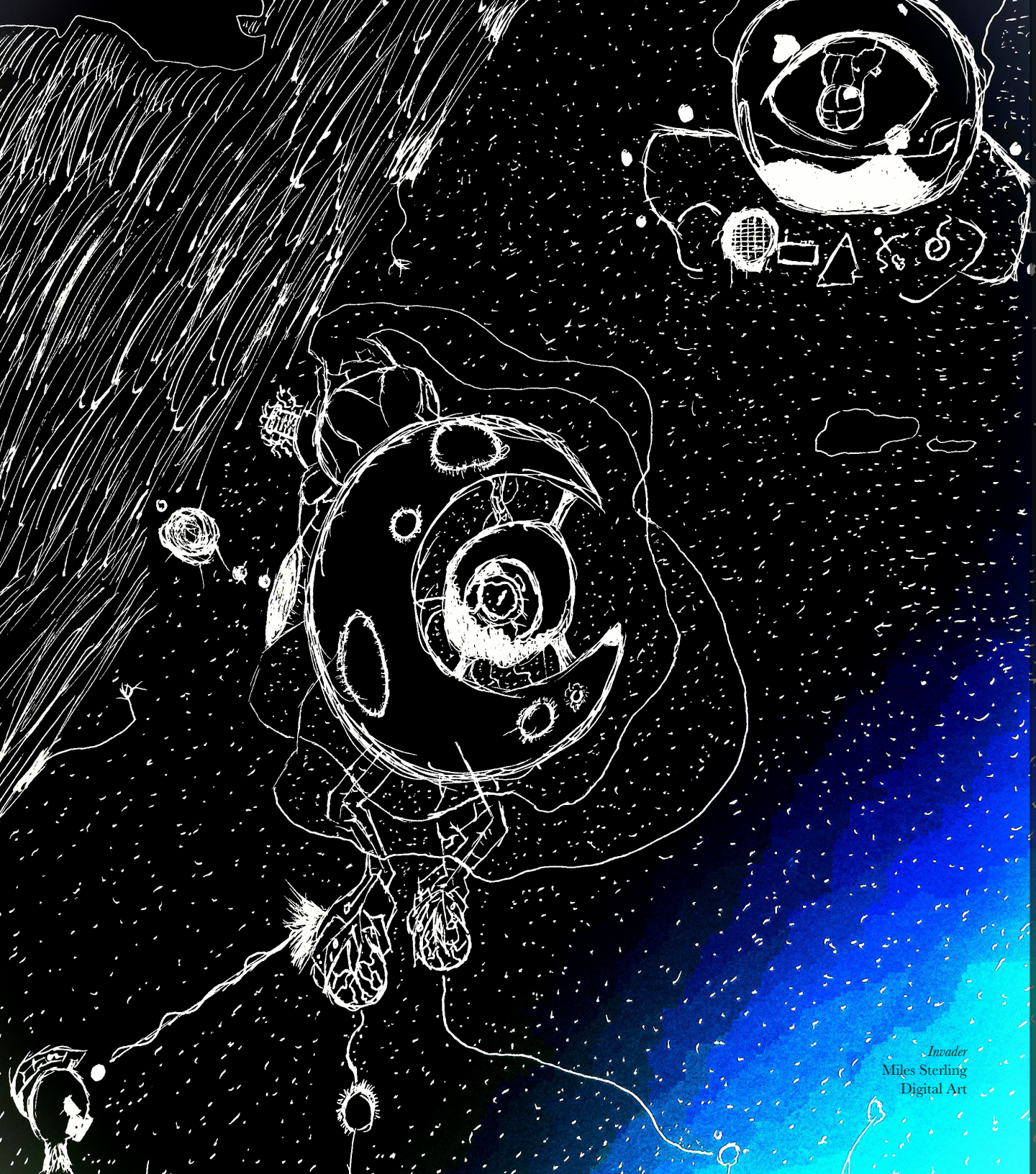
I want a garden in my thinkspace.  
Like photosynthesis, you will enlighten me.  
Nourish me with your sweet and expel your sour chemistry.



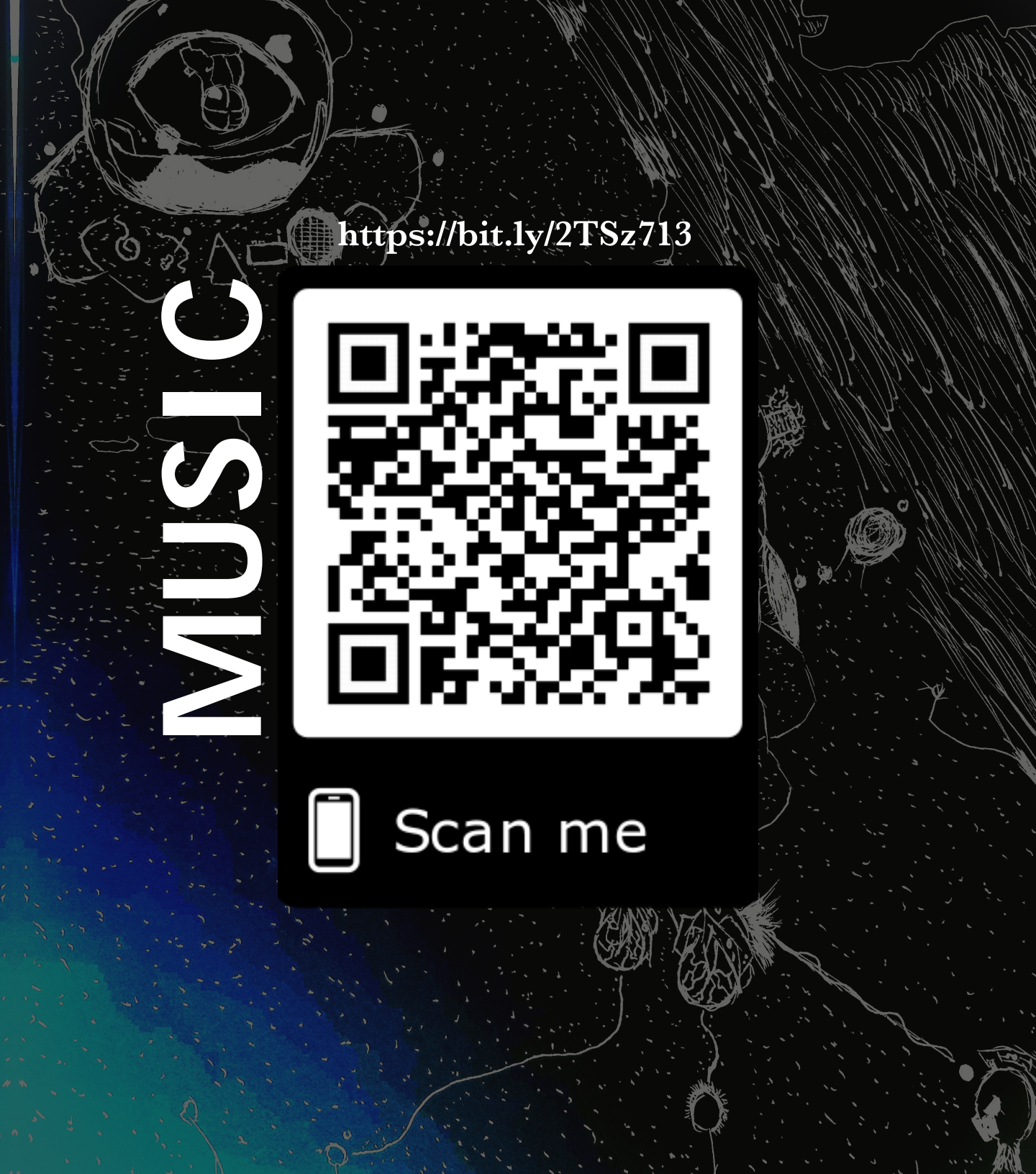
*Dazed*  
Athena Britton  
Acrylic  
15" x 12"







*Invader*  
Miles Sterling  
Digital Art



<https://bit.ly/2TSz713>

# MUSIC



Scan me



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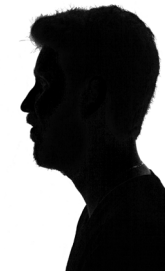




Hannah Watts



Gabriela Azeem-Angel



Marcos Tzvetanov



Anthony Diaz



Tony Chirinos



Rita Fernandez-Sterling



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# Awards Volume 28



## Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA)

Gold Medalist Certificate  
Annual Critique

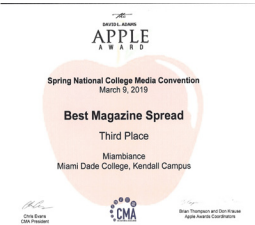
Awards For Student Work Gold Circle Awards

First Place Single Illustration - Hand Drawn: Stephanie Dovale, “Diana’s Roots”

Second Place: Portfolio of Work: Stephanie Dovale

## Florida College System Activities Association (FCSAA) Division B

Magazine: Best Art and Best Editing  
Individual: 3rd place, Nonfiction, Brigitte Torrens-Solis



# Miambianc Editorial Policy

Miambianc is published once a year by students currently enrolled in credit courses at Miami Dade College Kendall Campus. Submissions to the magazine are accepted only from students attending the Kendall Campus except in the case of college-wide contests. Miambianc’s mission is to provide a creative outlet for writers attending classes at Kendall Campus. Visual art students who wish to publish their photographs, illustrations and graphics are also published in Miambianc. All submissions must be attached to the proper submission form available through the English and Communications mailbox marked Miambianc Submissions in room 2207 (Speech Lab), the Arts and Philosophy mailbox in room M301, the Music, Theatre, and Dance mailbox in room 8221, or on <https://sharknet.mdc.edu/organization/miambianckendallcampus>. All rights, including e-rights, are reserved. Copyright for individual works both audio and print reverts to the authors and artists upon publication. Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or general staff.

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## Colophon

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*Octopus* - Anthony Campos - Printmaking - 5" x 7"

