

„AN ABSTRACT MIND,  
TO THINK,  
TO BREAK,  
TO DREAM.“

-SPENCER JOLIBOIS

MDC NORTH

AXIS CREATIVE ARTS MAGAZINE

VOLUME 18

AXIS



CREATIVE ARTS MAGAZINE

MIAMI DADE COLLEGE | NORTH CAMPUS

VOLUME  
EIGHTEEN







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The horizon separating realism and  
fantasy

# ABOUT THE COVER

Diana Gonzalez | Mixed Media

Cover Design by Tristan Cuenca



"My inspiration for this piece is finding the real me and the beauty inside. This is a self-portrait, where it shows that every experience, whether hardships or joyful memories. There is of course a standard of beauty, but we each have the ability to choose what makes us beautiful as humans and how we can portray it to the world around us. Not following the standards and walking a path that is better suited for oneself creates a sense of worth and comfort far greater than imagined because you're the only one that truly knows yourself. Thus, we become mysteries to some-- Enigma."

-Diana Gonzalez



To our readers,

This year's volume pays homage to the people who dream. Produced amidst the coronavirus pandemic, we have been forced into fear-filled isolation. As artists, we are never truly stuck; our minds break through the chaos, and imagination soars to heights unfathomable. Volume 18 showcases the beauty of the human mind, stream of consciousness divided into turmoil, introspection, and escapism.

As you flip through the pages of this magazine, you will notice how design elements, color schemes, and pieces themselves reflect a progression of disturbance, contemplation, and ethereal dreams. This wearisome year planted the seed for our theme, and it was nurtured by our dedication. The AXIS team worked beyond our weekly meetings to ensure that all submissions were scored fairly, pieces edited thoroughly, and pages designed cohesively. As a group, we found solace within the two hours we shared reading, interpreting, and engulfing ourselves in meaningful conversations. Throughout the process, it was clear that we wanted to give escapism a positive connotation. In this case, fantasy is not avoidance; it is comfort and revelation.

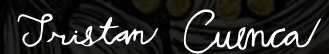
We hope to inspire individuals to continue dreaming as it is what fuels passion. To truly live, we must embrace all the facets of life; pleasure cannot exist without pain. As we continue on our individual journeys, remember that you are more than your troubles. We must cling to the little things – the smell of freshly cut grass, the yellow and orange hues of a sunset, and the bliss of watching birds soar through the skies. Live without limits, and remember that art sets you free.



Izamara Zamora  
Editor-in-Chief



Kelly Mayol  
Managing Editor



Tristan Cuenca  
Lead Designer

# EDITORS' NOTE



## TURMOIL

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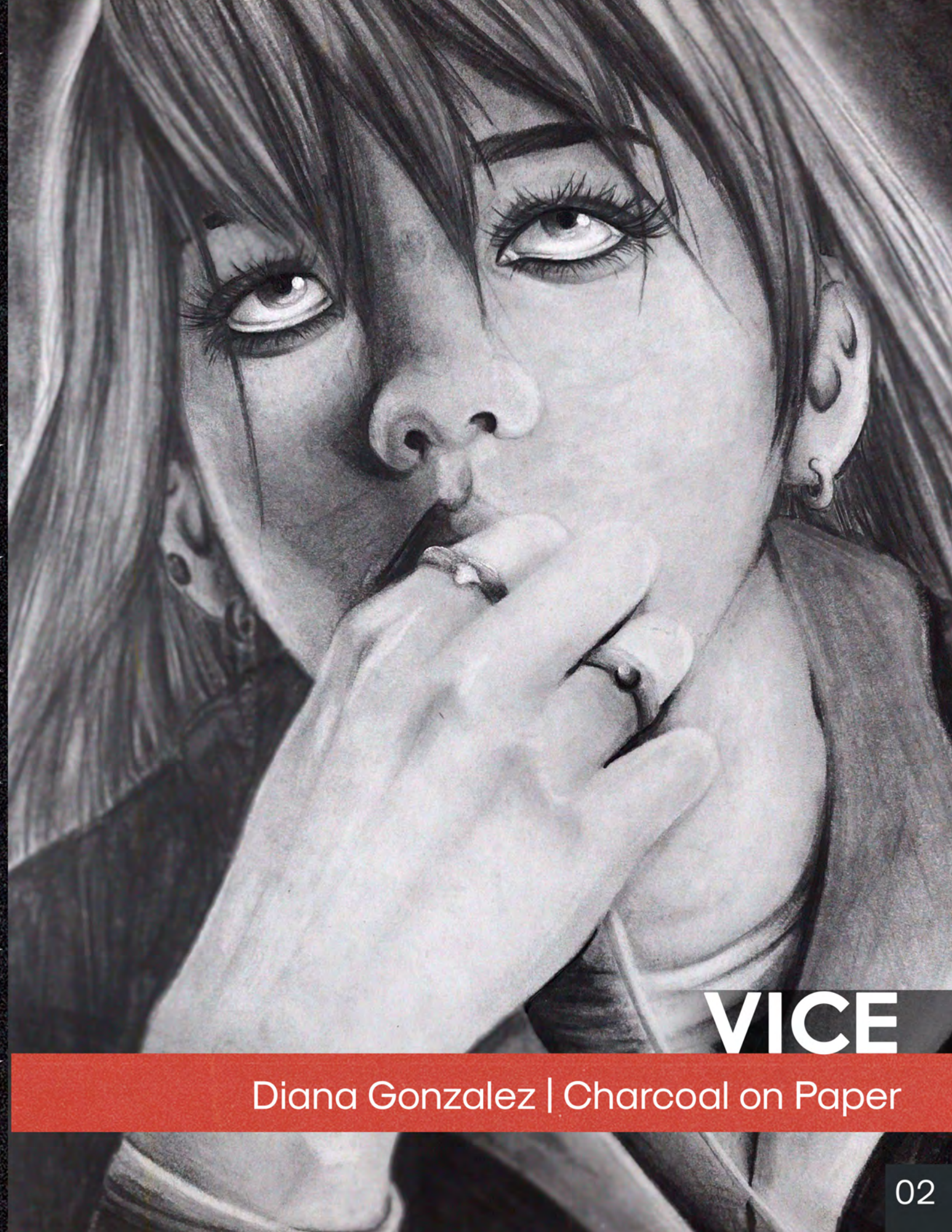
# TURMOIL

*"A state of great disturbance,  
confusion, or uncertainty"*

DREAMING

Tristan Cuenca |  
Digital Illustration





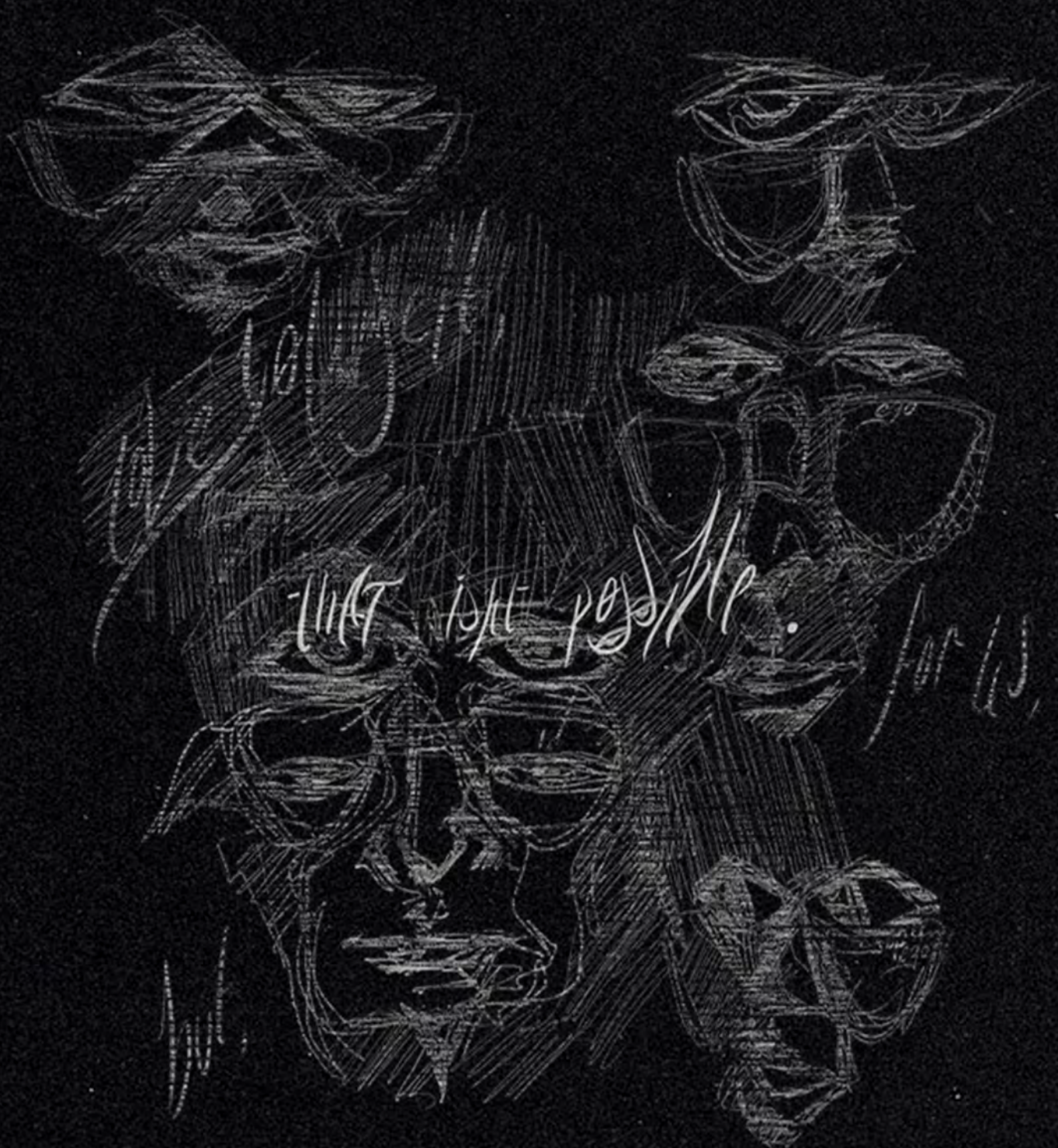
**VICE**

Diana Gonzalez | Charcoal on Paper



# LOVE YOURSELF

Spencer Jolibois | Digital Illustration







# THE INSIDE OUT

Claudia Garcia | Ink on Paper



# WHEN I'M GONE

Spencer Jolibois

When I'm gone,  
Will any of you reminisce on the time that went by?  
When I'm gone,  
Will anyone even come to say, "Hi"?  
When I'm gone,  
After five, ten, then fifteen years  
Will anyone look at my picture  
To shed a single, fragile tear?  
When I'm gone,  
When I taste Life's last beautiful breath,  
Will anyone seek after me,  
To yearn for me past death?  
When I'm gone,  
I just want to be known  
To all as a good perished soul,  
So will my true light be shown?  
When I'm gone,  
When I'm gone,  
Would anyone even know?  
I don't want to be lonely, when I'm in the lands beyond.  
When I'm gone,  
When I cry,  
When I break,  
When I die,  
Would you comfort me  
As I pass?  
Fading wouldn't be so bad,  
With you near my last breath.  
So, when I'm gone,  
When I'm gone,  
Please, don't forget me,  
As I pass... Beyond.



A photograph of a hanging plant in a greenhouse. The plant is in a dark, square pot and has long, thin, green leaves that hang down. The pot is suspended by several thin black wires. The background is a translucent, corrugated plastic roof of a greenhouse, with a white chain running horizontally across the middle of the frame. The overall tone is soft and slightly hazy.

# SUSPENDED

Kelly Mayol | Photography



# QUESTIONS

Tyler Brown

The red and blue lights of the police cars penetrated the night sky, cutting every shadow and bouncing off every moonlit surface. Jane, still clad in a robe and house slippers, argued with the officer on the front lawn, although at this point it was more like pleading.

"There has to be a mistake. He would have told me. He tells me everything."

"Sorry ma'am," the officer said with fake sincerity in his voice. "We've had a warrant for your husband's arrest for a long time."

Jane looked at her husband, Harvey, who was staring at her through the armored window of the patrol car. He quickly looked away. He couldn't bring himself to make eye contact.

"You're welcome to come down to the station if you have more questions. The precinct is open twenty-four hours. But I'm afraid I have to be heading out now. I'm sorry," concluded the officer, again feigning sincerity.

Jane, left speechless, stood on the lawn dazed. She watched the officer drive off with her sudden criminal of a husband.

"I've got to find out what he did," she said finally, heading inside to gather her things.

"Why did the police take dad?" she heard suddenly from the top of the staircase.

"Shit," she thought to herself. It was Tommy, their three-year-old son.

"You're supposed to be sleeping, Tommy," she said, trying her best to be firm while tears stung her eyes.

"I saw them take him. Did he do something bad?" he asked.

"No!" Jane snapped, more intensely than she realized. She wanted Tommy to believe that his dad was a good person, but she also wanted to believe it herself.

"Then why did they take him?" Tommy asked with unmistakable childlike innocence.

"They just want to ask Daddy some questions, that's all," she lied.

"But I thought that the police only took bad people."

"Yes, but. . ."

Tommy cut her off. "So dad is bad?"

"No, Tommy."

"So the police can take you even if you're not bad?"

"Yes," Jane paused. "Well no, they shouldn't."



"Then the police are bad?"

"No, the police are good." Jane was getting flustered quickly.

Tommy furrowed his brow in confusion. He clearly didn't understand. But neither did Jane to some extent. She had no idea why Harvey was arrested, and explaining it to her boys was something she didn't think she'd have to do until morning. She let out a huge sigh and held her head in her hands.

"Just go back to sleep Tommy," she practically begged. But instead of heading back to his room, Tommy bounded down the stairs, his small bare feet slapping against the hardwood flooring. He walked right up to his mother's legs and looked up at her.

"Are you crying Mommy?" he asked.

She moved her hands away to look down at him.

"Mommy is just tired that's all," she lied again. Tommy stared at her, not saying a word. She thought for a moment that he wouldn't believe her. That he'd come at her again with another barrage of questions. She was relieved when all he said was, "Me too." She picked him up and carried him over her shoulder back up the stairs.

"I'm going to leave you with your brother while I go help Dad, okay?"

"Mhm..." Tommy replied, draped over his mother's shoulder but not quite asleep yet.

When she arrived at Anthony's bedroom she tapped on the door gingerly. She had hoped he would be asleep so that she wouldn't have to explain the entire situation again. Her hope was quickly diminished when Anthony answered.

"Come in."

She opened the door, and as the light from the hallway softly illuminated the dark room, she saw that Anthony was not only awake, but was standing at the window. From there he had a perfect view of the front yard.

"Why were the police just here? What's going on? What did Dad do?" he asked, a hint of trembling in his voice.

"They just wanted to ask him some questions, that's all," Jane said, committing to her lie.

"They had to arrest him to ask him questions?" He knew more than Jane had originally thought he did.

"Just watch Tommy for me while I head down to the station," she said, relying on her parental superiority to override his questions.

She placed Tommy down in Anthony's bed, his slumbering body barely taking up space on the mattress.

"Mom. Tell me!" he demanded.

"I-I told you. They just want to ask him questions," Jane tried her best not to stutter, but she failed.

"Why are you lying to me?" Anthony answered. "You always do this. I'm not Tommy. I'm thirteen! You can't just shovel lies into my brain and expect me to believe them. I don't know what Dad did, but-



they don't cuff you and throw you into a police car because they have questions."

Jane sighed in exasperation. "Look, Anthony." She walked over to him so that she could look him in his eyes. As she approached, the details of his face became more apparent, and she immediately noticed the tracks of tears running down his face. This was a great deal more vulnerable than Anthony had been with her in a while. He was scared and worried, just like Tommy was, but he was too old to be lied to.

"I'm just as lost as you are," she placed a hand on his shoulder. "That's why I'm headed down to the station right now. I just need you to watch Tommy for me until I get back. Then I'll tell you everything I find out, I promise."

Anthony stared at her, not saying a word. She thought for a moment that he wouldn't believe her. Or that he'd come at her again with another barrage of questions. She was relieved when all he said was, "Okay."

Jane let out the tiniest sliver of a smile before turning around and heading out the bedroom door.

"I'll be back soon. Get some rest you two," she said before closing the door, enveloping her two boys in darkness.

Anthony collapsed on the bed next to Tommy, who was still sleeping as softly as ever. He laid on his back, staring up at the ceiling. He tried to fall asleep, but with all the thoughts going through his mind, he just couldn't. He heard his mother in her bedroom next door, rustling and shuffling around to quickly dress and head down to the station. Eventually, he heard the front door shut and lock, leaving him and Tommy alone in the house.

He turned to his side, in hopes that the change in position would help him fall asleep. The shaking of the mattress must've woken up Tommy, as he rolled over to face his older brother.

"Do you think Dad is going to be okay?" Tommy asked sleepily.

Anthony opened his mouth to speak, fully intending to answer with "I don't know," but he paused at the cusp of his response, thinking about the fear and the worry that he was feeling. He looked into his brother's groggy eyes and answered, "Yeah. They're just gonna ask him some questions, like Mom said." He tried to sound as convincing as possible.

"Now go to sleep."

That proved to be enough for Tommy, as he quickly drifted back to sleep, leaving Anthony alone with his thoughts.





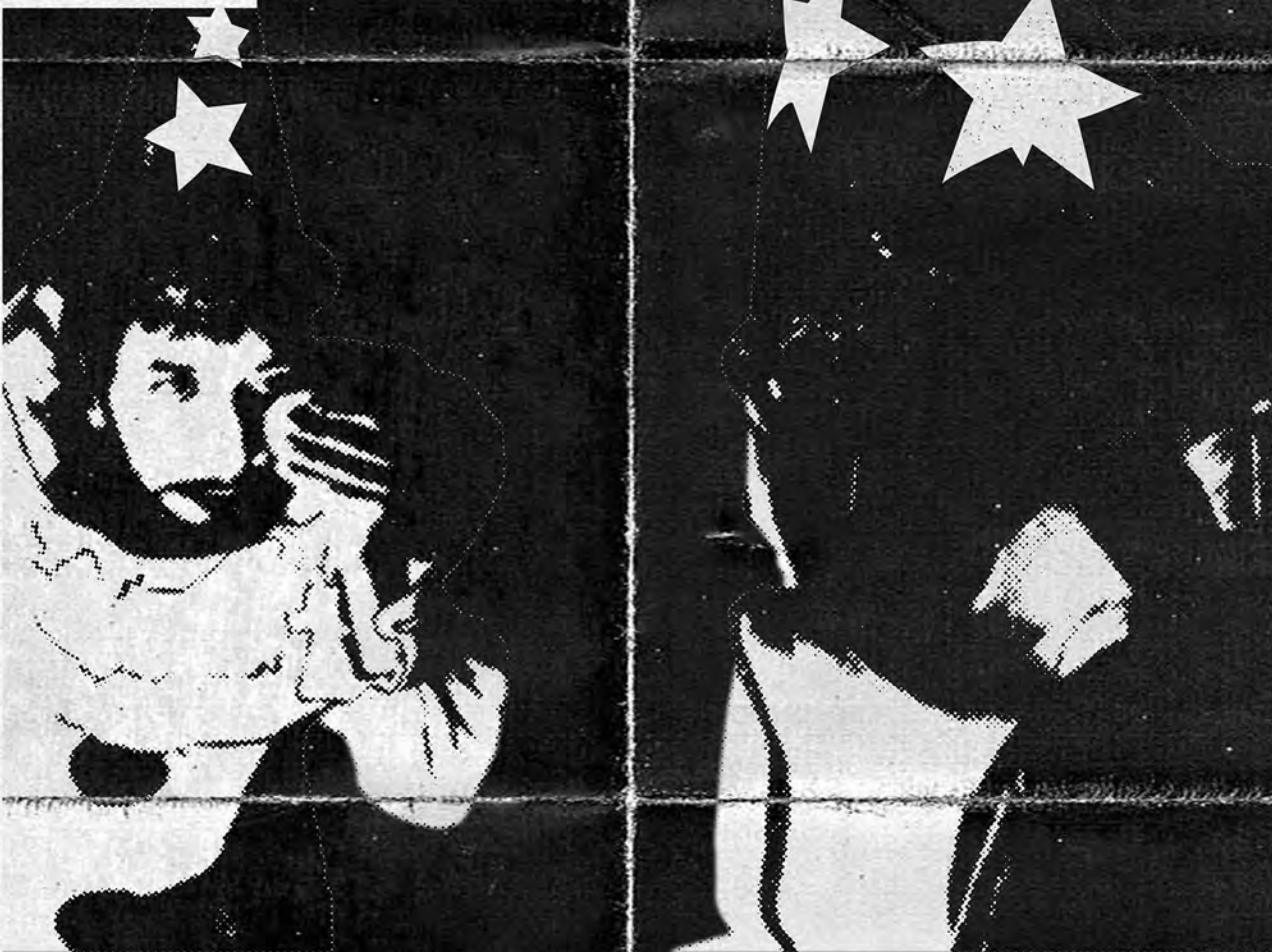
# COLOR WHEEL

Anyelo Brito | Mixed Media





FILM BY **TRISTAN CUENCA**



# IN THE PRESENCE OF A CLOWN

WINNER OF THE PALME D'OR

TRISTAN CUENCA PICTURES PRESENTS  
A PHANTOM FILMS PRODUCTION A.V. TRISTAN CUENCA FILM JORGE ALE. BERNARD DURAN JOSEPH MENDOZA "IN THE PRESENCE OF A CLOWN"  
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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY TRISTAN CUENCA A.S.C. A.M.C. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS BERNARD DURAN NOHEMI CUENCA GALO DOMAICA WRITTEN BY TRISTAN CUENCA GALO DOMAICA ALEXANDER ROSALES  
PRODUCED BY TRISTAN CUENCA TOM PIKE DIRECTED BY TRISTAN CUENCA  
[inthepresenceofaclown.movie.com](http://inthepresenceofaclown.movie.com)



**EXPERIENCE IT IN IMAX**





# DEADLY CIRCUS

Claudia Garcia | Mixed Media





# A LETTER FROM MY OLD SELF

Zaviyah Teague

Dear Self,

G'day, I am Sam Taylor. For how long, I cannot tell you. I escaped without mah wife and it feels as if my life is empty. I have been without rule from a master for long enough that its not really know what to do, or who I am. You find Liza? How she doin'? That wife of mine, as dark as chocolate. Food best in the plantation. I 'member the day we first locked eyes. I never took em' off her since den. Til t'day on this hellish hot day, looking for food and housing. Some man let me sleep in his barn and I found a poem book tucked in the corner on the ground. I taught myself from that day how to read, write, speak. I was working on small pieces and got a small home in the wall to keep my head under and house my wife when I found' ha again.

I went out every day after work to look for ma beautiful Liza Jane. Day afta' day afta' day. I searched da old plantation, and my brothers say she was beaten and now she gone. Why dey took her way?! You's find her dere in the future? I pray you do. Cause I gave up. Years pass and I worked hard for many days and found myself in a place of loss. During the war, I seen a city full of white men. Rich, intelligent, educated, white-skinned men. I thought to myself, I want to be like them.

-

I started to notice how much more noticeable I am to people once I started talking differently, looking differently. I walked with a new morale, a new image and way of life. In contrast to my blacker skinned folk, I was given more opportunities. I could crawl out of the darkness into a brighter skinned light. It was as if a new world was given to me. In the words of the great Emily Dickinson, "We turn not older with years, but newer every day." A new man is exactly what I became. The plan to save Liza had become a thing of the past. I forgot about her for a long while. A 10-year-old thing of the past.

The man I am today could not be distracted. I needed to focus. Build wealth, recognition, power, authority, respect. Men like me must use our advantage to get what we want. As time has progressed, I have been very inspired by these European poets the more books I bought. One day I longed to create art through poetry as well. I gave up on that idea though. I learned that sometimes it is not about your precious dreams. Sometimes it really is just about self preservation.

-

Sometimes I think I may be leading a life of loneliness because of who I choose to be with. In other news, I got a new job! I can buy a new home in a better community. There is an organization for mulatto folk that has just been founded. I have been thinking of joining. With



my credentials I will surely get in. To be among esteemed people like me. Investing in a better life for me....and for me. Yesterday I had a strange dream about a woman. She was calling out to me with so much joy. No matter how hard I tried to run to her I just kept moving backwards. I wonder why that is.

My life has come a long way from being another black man in this society, a slave, a nobody. I created a name for myself. From being shackled to being free. I am free. The long walk home from the station after work was a memoir. The bench I sat on every day, the children travelling to school, the couples huddled together, sometimes I look at them and feel lonely. Wondering when I can find my equal in this world. A mulatto smart woman to love me and I her. My own mulatto son and daughter.

Whenever you look back on this diary, I hope you find a piece of yourself you may have lost. We have come a long way, you and me.

Sincerely,

Mr. Ryder



# NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE

Serena Cubero | Digital Art



# HANDLE WITH CARE

Alberto Horta |  
Pencil on Paper





# REMEMBER ME

Harold Rivas

It was 3:00 p.m. when I arrived at her front door. I set two heavy bags on the porch and knocked three times. It took her four seconds to open the door, greeting me with a butcher knife in her hand.

“Oh, great!” she chimed. “Please, come in.”

I picked up the bags and trod inside, scanning the brick house as she locked the door behind us. To my immediate left was the kitchen, where a stew was brewing, flooding the house with a nostalgic smell.

“Where do I put these?” I asked, lifting the two bags to her view.

“Right here, if you will,” she replied, tapping on the kitchen counter with the butt of her knife.

Shortly after setting the bags in place, I watched her as she rummaged through them, asking me, “These are all the groceries, right?”

I simply nodded in agreement. This would be today’s last errand – and a troublesome one at that.

As I shuffled uneasily to the staircase, I heard a warm “Thank you,” but failed to reply. Before I could stomp on the first step, she repeated her phrase more sternly this time. I paused abruptly and waited.

“Mr. Brown, can I have a word with you?”

“Not now,” I grunted, “I’m–”

“– off to bed, Mr. Brown? At three in the afternoon? What’s going on?”

“I’m exhausted, okay? I could use some sleep–”

“– but it’s too early for sleep, Mr. Brown–”

“Not when you’ve been scavenging through Central Square all day; it’s not!”

By now, I had turned around, facing her dead-on. She just couldn’t understand, could she?

“What’s the matter with you?” she inquired. Her sapphire eyes were wide with discontent.

“What’s the matter? I’m not telling you anything.”

“Why not, huh? Because a woman like me is too pretty to know your troubles? Mr. Brown, I’m concerned with your erratic behavior lately–”



“Concerned! Oh, wait – it’s my behavior now!” At this point, we were piling words on each other.

“You’ve become so aggressive, increasingly by the second—”

“So you’ve been keeping an eye on me, huh?”

“But I’ve taken you into my home; how could I not worry? I have the right to know.”

“The right to know? You have the right to remain silent!”

“Lincoln Brown, could you just shut up and listen to me—”

“Don’t you Lincoln me!”

“But you’re not telling me why I should be the one dealing with your anger issues—”

“BECAUSE YOU’RE MY WIFE!”

Pause.

Her sapphire eyes, dilated with bewilderment, searched desperately for answers in my heated face. But I felt I had nothing worth sharing with her; she probably wouldn’t remember anyways...

“I’m sorry; I shouldn’t be yelling at you... I’m sorry... oh, what have I done?”

And my eyes were burning with frustration. Had she really forgotten the fire?

She was still in shock, overwhelmed with confusion until she asked meekly:

“What do you mean by saying I’m your wife?”

“It’s a long story I don’t think you want to hear—”

“Go on, please; I don’t know what to believe after all this, but I still want my answer – this must be it.”

She set her knife on the counter, turned off the stove, and strode gracefully to her indigo sofa, motioning me to proceed.

“We used to be married once, eight years ago—”

“So we were married?”

“Yes—”

“But we’re not married anymore?”

“Yes – no – I don’t know – look, I’m not sure how to explain this to you because ever since we met at the station a week ago, you haven’t seemed to remember me—”

“But I don’t know you, Mr. Brown – how can you expect me to remember a life with you if I haven’t lived it?”



Her frankness was frying me alive. While I fumbled in my mind with the urge to show her the family we once had, I remembered the vegetable stew on the stove and pointed vigorously at it.

“If you don’t remember me, then how’d you remember to prepare that nutritious vegetable soup for me?”

“I didn’t prepare it for you – you have enjoyed it, and that may well be a coincidence, but I prepare that soup every day. It has been my diet for eight years–”

She paused, contemplating what she had just uttered. I stared at her, expecting an epiphany any moment...

“Eight years... no more, no less.”

“Well, that might just be another coincidence–”

“Not so fast, Krystal–”

“It’s Karen, Mr. Brown.”

“Okay. Krystal, Karen, we’ll discuss that later. How have you been able to heal my wounds these past few days when I’ve gotten into fights with the Officers?”

“Don’t ask me how I know – I just know. Besides, it doesn’t hurt to help others.”

“The same words you always said, ever since I first fell in love with you at The Grand Hospital–”

“The Grand Hospital? How could you know that place if you’ve never been here?”

“Because The Grand Hospital is not here – it’s on Ares.”

“Ares? That’s the planet you live on, right? How could there be a Grand Hospital there?” “It’s the only one in our Solar System – I don’t see why you should think there is another here.”

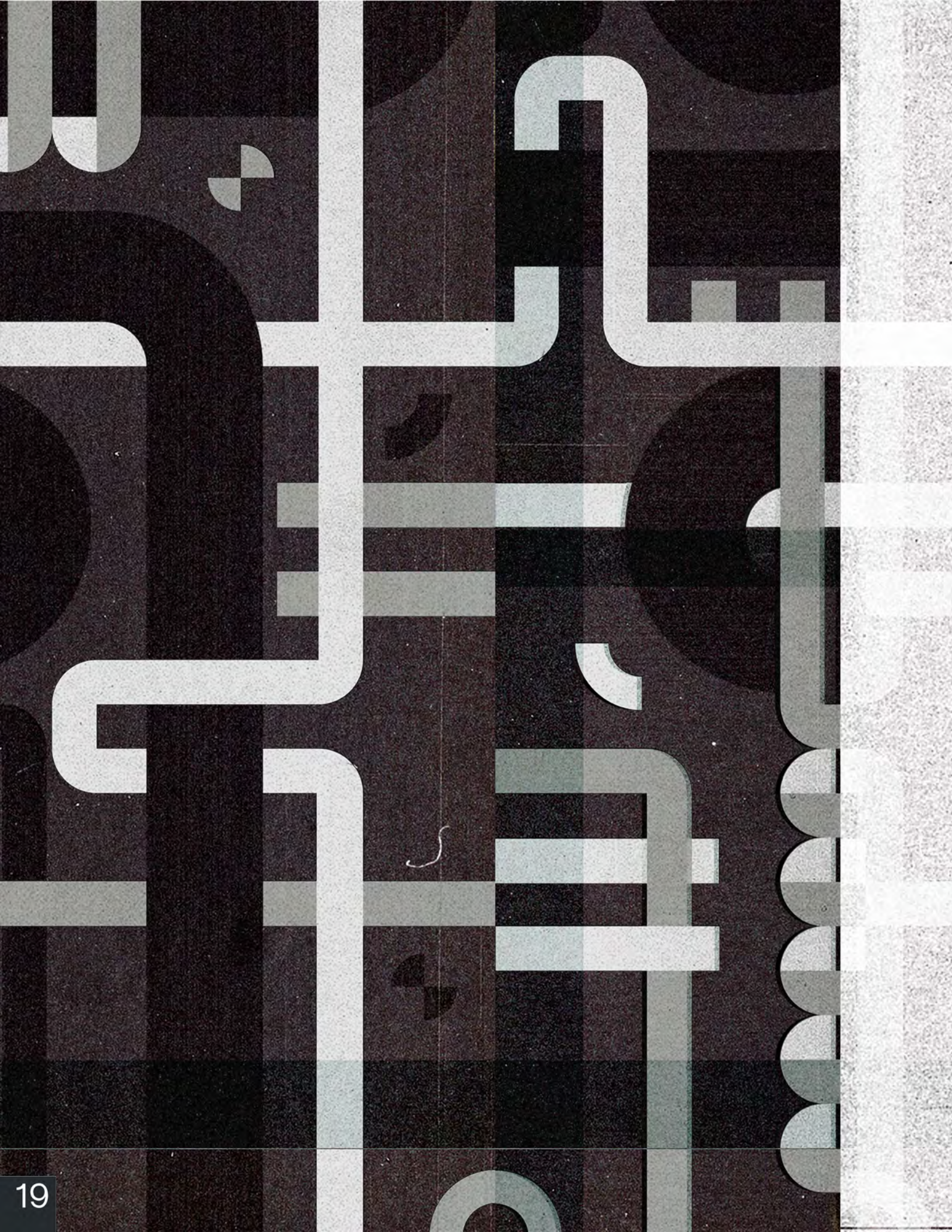
“Because that is where my sister, Becky, cured me–”

“Cured you from what – death?”

She frowned in troublesome wonder. As far as she knew, there was nothing to remember before the curing. But what did death have to do with this?

I knew I was on the verge of a breakthrough; sooner or later, her sapphire eyes would glow with the memories we had once lived – I would just have to coerce them into her mind. I served two bowls of stew, and we sat tensely, in contemplative silence, to eat.









# INDUSTRIAL

Tristan Cuenca | Digital Illustration



# THE NEXT MORNING

Jasmine Boulin

It was a bright and early Sunday morning. The smell of freshly made oatmeal surrounded the kitchen as two broken souls sat at the breakfast table playing absentmindedly with the food laid down in front of them.

"Could you pass me the sugar please?" Gwen asked in a lazy manner.

Her husband grabbed the sugar and placed the jar directly in her hand.

"How's your oatmeal?"

"It's fine."

The rest of the meal was quiet until Wyatt spoke up, "Are we gonna talk about this, or what?"

Coincidentally right after he muttered his question the baby woke up. Gwen at first said nothing to Wyatt. She carefully stood and felt her way to her baby's carriage. "What's there to talk about?" Wyatt's face contorted in confusion.

"The hell do you mean, what's there to talk about? Maybe we can talk about my slip up with Demetrius, or maybe talk about his doctor's appointment, or talk about what the doctor told us."

He moved closer to her and started playing with his son's pudgy hands in hopes of helping him calm down.

"The doctor said he was fine. So everything is fine with him so there is nothing more to discuss. Aw, I think he's a little hungry! Would you mind giving him a little oatmeal?"

It was times like these that made Wyatt glad that Gwen could not see his face. He carefully touched his son's arm to make sure that he did not startle him and let him know that he was about to pick him up.

"So everything's fine? There is nothing you want to say?"

"Yes love, everything's fine."

Wyatt opened his mouth to say something but then shut it and focused on feeding the baby.



"Are you sure everything is ok?"

"Yes Wyatt, I already told you everything's fine."

"And uh...how is your oatmeal?"

"Didn't you just ask me this? I told you it's fine."

"Right right, so um... how come you're still playing with your food?"

Gwen quickly stopped twirling her spoon in her oatmeal and looked up.

"Oh... my bad.. I didn't realize."

"Stop this Gwen just stop." he commanded.

"What are you talking about? Stop what?"

Wyatt paused and let out a loud sigh of exasperation and dragged his hand slowly down his face. "I put a shit ton of cinnamon in the oatmeal. You hate cinnamon and yet you haven't said anything about it."

Gwen continued to stare off her. She quickly changed her face into a small smile and insisted that she didn't even notice the cinnamon in her food.

"Why would you do that if you know that I hate it?"

Wyatt chuckled a little as if he was in on a joke that only he knew about.

"I wanted to see if you were actually that damn closed off. You'd rather sit down and stay quiet for God knows how long, than fess up to how you're actually feeling."

Gwen remained silent while her smile slowly faded away. She stood up and felt her way to the sink to clean up her plate.

"You hate me don't you?" No response. "DON'T YOU?" Wyatt yelled. Still no response. Wyatt's yelling woke Demetrius up.

"Why can't we just talk about it damn it? Talk about how much you hate me right now for being such a crappy father!" Tears began to pool around his eyes. Wyatt carefully approached his wife and laid his forehead on her shoulder. A couple of seconds went by with even more suffocating silence.

"I don't hate you..." Gwen whispered in a strained voice.

Wyatt slowly lifted his head from her shoulder and looked at her calm face. He noticed little things that weren't there before. Her eyes were slightly puffy, her nose was red, and her skin was paler. She looked tired.

"Why haven't you said anything to me yet? I know you're angry. I-I know what you think of me now. So why won't you just say it?"

She set down the dish she was washing and turned to face her husband.

"Do not assume that you know how I feel Wyatt, you know nothing about how I'm feeling right now. I don't hate you! I just-" she couldn't finish her statement. She was choking on her words.



"You just what?! Spit it out woman, geez; can you for once talk to me! Tell me what you're feeling right now since I apparently know nothing about it."

She took a deep breath, gathered all the strength in her and screamed. She screamed as if she was finally letting everything out. All her pain, all her anger was finally let out. The baby began crying.

"I just want to be able to rely on you Wyatt! I'm not just upset with you, I'm upset with myself for this too! I hate that I wasn't there to help strap him in! God if I were just like a normal freaking human being like a normal MOTHER, then maybe I could've helped you. I know you are stressed picking up the slack that I can't help with I-I know that you secretly resent me for it too! But if I'm not good enough to do this and I can't even fully trust you with him either then how are we going to take care of this child Wyatt?!"

The last part of her rant was almost inaudible.

Wyatt could hardly understand what she was saying because her sobbing had gotten so bad but he heard just enough of it. Gwen wasn't aware of it but her feelings mirrored his feelings as well.

Gwen quickly wiped her face and made her way to Demetrius' nearby playpen to calm him down.

"Look I'm sorry that I couldn't bring myself to say anything but when I get this upset I-I just can't think straight and I just...I just" She kept on crying while she bounced Demetrius in her arms. She jumped a little bit when she felt Wyatt pull her into a hug. She didn't hear him approach her while she was apologizing. Before they knew it they were both sobbing on each other with Demetrius in the middle of them.

"You don't have to apologize for anything. I'm the one who messed up and I don't resent you Gwen. Thank you for finally opening up to me."

The sound of incoherent babbling drew their attention to the sweet little boy in between them. For some reason, just gazing at his innocent face brought Gwen and Wyatt new found hope.

"Look at us Wyatt; we're a mess. How are we gonna fix this?"

Gwen reached up with her free hand to touch his face in hopes that it would give her a little bit of insight on how he was currently feeling. She felt for any lines on his face that would reveal any kind of anger or sadness.

"I don't know how but do know that this is a start."





# METAMORFOSIS

Claudia Garcia |  
Ink on Paper





# PASSAGEWAY

Spencer Jolibois | Photography



# THE LIFE I LIVE

Spencer Jolibois

I am alive.  
I am living  
I am now,  
I am breathing  
My hands to touch what is mine  
Dreams sought for in kind  
Grasp words lost in air  
Hands, grab this Life,  
O' Maiden fair  
My eyes to see the future,  
Where disparities reach.  
Eyes, don't look!  
Where dreams perish  
For this realization  
Makes Life barren  
My mouth to speak what is on the mind  
Words to vapor,  
Mind to fog  
Mouth cannot speak what is not there at all  
Nose to breathe the breath of Life  
Silently now to make peace with it  
Breathing, breathing, slowly there  
A silent song, breath so fair  
An abstract mind to think, to break, to cogitate  
Simple, yet so complex  
Pondering, wandering, searching this hollow passageway  
Till we part due in death  
Consciousness grows weary  
As mind breaks  
Trying to compute the complexities  
Of the life lived  
I was alive,  
Though I never lived.  
I have passed,  
In my last breath.

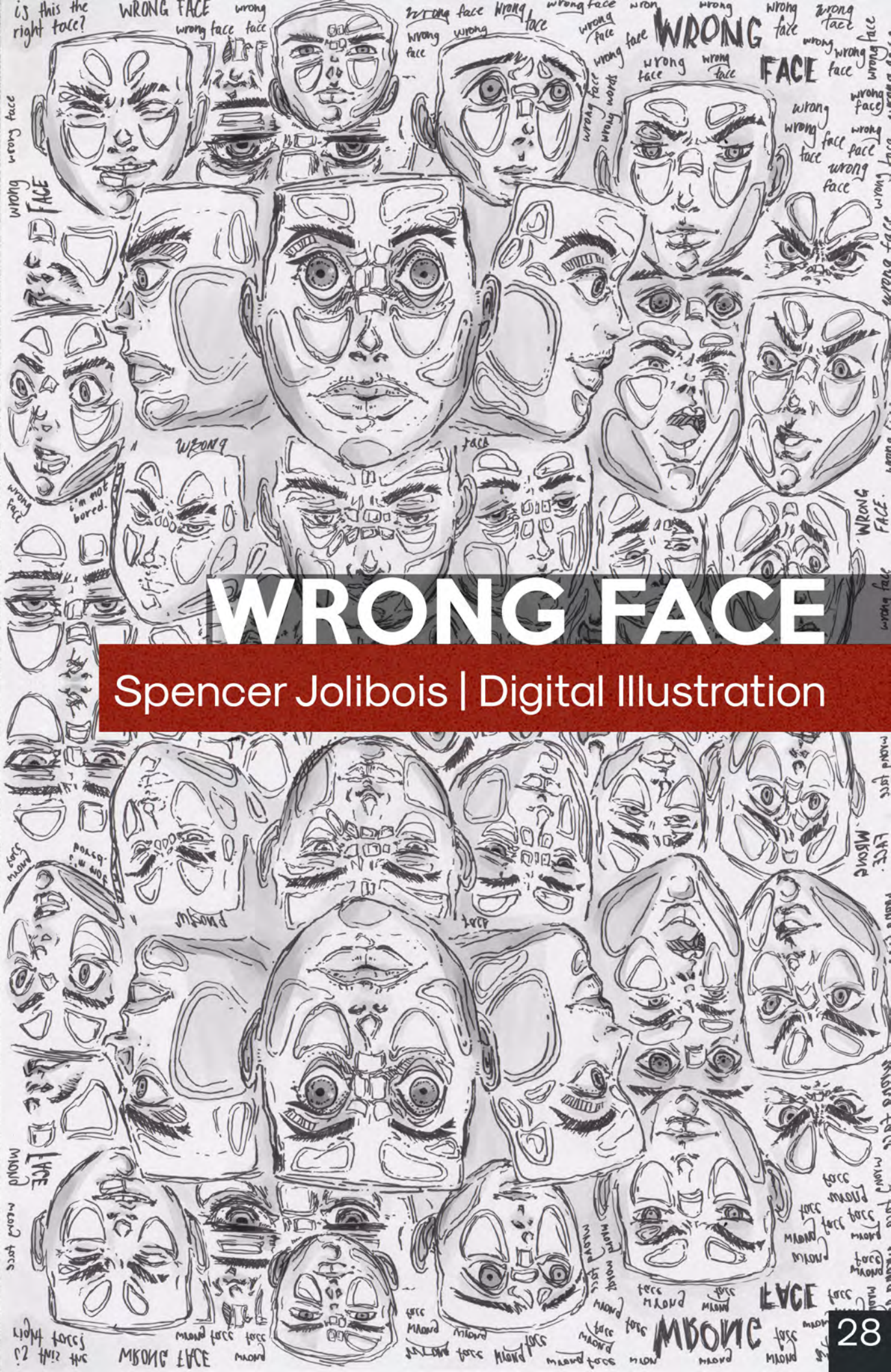


# LAND OF THE FREE

Gabriela Mora | Color Pencil on Paper







# WRONG FACE

Spencer Jolibois | Digital Illustration



# INTROSPECTION

*"The examination or observation of one's own mental and emotional processes"*





# CESACION

Diana Gonzalez | Mixed Media





Diana Gonzalez |  
Mixed Media





# EGO TRIP

Tristan Cuenca | Film



32 \*Scan the QR Code to view the film!



# LAST BREATH

Spencer Jolibois

Chill of the wind across your pale skin.  
You feel your hair dismally stand in response,  
Yet you don't truly feel it; more akin  
To the emptiness that will be derived from  
The last breath.

Eyes watering, tissues pass to dry the tears,  
Yet the frail paper returns dry, withered even,  
Which only confirms your fears.  
You are empty, no emotion to fill the void.  
Akin to the last breath.

A dulcet voice draws so near,  
In the quiet of the night  
"Please, pray tell, for what do you fear?"  
They whisper softly, closely, then louder, and louder still...

"You've felt me always, the abyss by your side.  
That's right, it'll be just like that.  
There would be no need to cry,  
To mourn, to groan, to gnash the teeth,  
As your end is nigh.  
It will be empty, silent, serene; you know this feeling well!  
And yet, you don't. Nay, you can't.  
Not until..."

"At last, closed eyes. Orifices sewn shut.  
Now reach out, for life,  
for one last touch."  
Yet the mouth is left ajar,  
Looming over, the scent of death.  
Broken no more, no pain, nor fear  
for the  
one,  
last,  
Breath





# NOTHING

Tristan Cuenca | Digital Illustration



# ESCAPISM

*"The tendency to seek distraction  
and relief from unpleasant realities"*

LOOSE

Tristan Cuenca |  
Digital Illustration





# EVERGREEN

Kelly Mayol | Photography







# EXHALE

Pablo Zapata

As I watch the morning dew slowly drop off the blade of grass,  
I come to understand the simplicity of life.  
In a world full of chaos,

The simplest things can bring one's mind to a state of Zen.  
As you take a breath filling your lungs with air and then exhaling,

You slowly open your eyes.

Realizing you are surrounded by the beauty that is the Yin and Yang  
Of the natural world.





# IN THE MEANTIME

Angela Perez

I never used to acknowledge small signs,  
Now they are my only sense of guidance.

I try to be free from my complex mind,  
searching for answers during the silence.

I spend time in nature to ground myself,  
but it only helps me for a while.  
Although it is good to hang with yourself,  
because you should always make you smile.

It gets tiring feeling disarranged,  
especially after these repetitive days.

But at night I speak with the moon,  
and she assures me that I'll have all of the answers soon.

In the meantime, I will take a deep breath or two.  
I'll take a moment to realize I have much more to gain than to lose.



# INNOCENCE



Andrea Canales | Acrylic on Canvas



# YOUTH

Edarly Edouard

Your youth is never a solid promise;  
even friendships are seldom permanent.

You hail me as if I am a goddess,  
deeming that my loveliness is certain.

The way you narrate me with sympathy  
has no force o'er the frenzied years ahead.

Like petals stripped from its anatomy,  
my youth will recede until I am dead.

Crooning to me seems effortless for you  
when I am young like the skyline's daybreak.

If I can no longer revive my youth,  
Do you still compare me to a sun's day?  
I cannot control the folds on my brows,  
But my splendor is as sure as my vows.





# BERENICE

Diana Gonzalez | Digital Illustration



# TRAGEDIA ENTRE PETALOS

Diana Gonzalez | Digital Illustration





# HER QUEENDOM

Alania Young

A Queen must understand Her subjects and care for them.  
The protection she provides for Her royal civilians,  
within Her expansive gates, that conceal their haven.  
There is a place for everyone, old and young, of every color and religion.  
She talks to Her subjects to know their struggles, no one less important than the other.  
Bow to Her feet, let Her walk on your finest roses.  
Her Highness has served Her duties well; She deserves as much.  
For Her Honor, for the precious Love of Her people.  
Maintaining Her poise and strength through every burst of drought and famine within  
Her Queendom.  
Prosperity for all and punishment for those who do wrong.  
Never turning Her back on those who need Her helping hands.  
She would never bow to anyone, never show weakness,  
but always shocking Her enemies with such robustness.  
Always acute, aware of Her surroundings, never to be surprised by enemies seeking  
to overtake Her Queendom.  
Not a kingdom, ruled by a man who makes decisions for what suits him best.  
No male should ever overpower this formidable Queen.  
A Queen who knows how to approach any problems that may arise,  
always deciding what is best for Her Queendom.  
Wearing Her crown, head up so it will not slip off.  
Shoulders back, dripping with class and held with sophistication.  
Hair so lustrous, black afro fluffed, and healthy, shaping Her round,  
sculpted face, shining brown in the sun.  
Voice as soft and even, as is Her golden-brown skin, highlighted by the sun's rays.  
Hazel eyes clear and probing, colored with royal purple and blues.  
Lips painted in a deep red, rimmed with black  
Sheathed in white cloth with gold jewelry.  
A jewel-encrusted pendant on Her neck.  
With Her loving thoughtfulness and grace, we shall follow Her.  
For our Queen is beautiful,  
as is

*Her Queendom*





# DIVINE FEMININE

Brian Guerra | Acrylic on Canvas



# POISE

Izamara Zamora

The bud of a rose  
unknown to itself will bloom

Bright cherry red,  
soft enough to be picked apart by the most nimble of fingers

And yet, with her thorns, she is as fierce as the cool winds on a spring  
morning

With poise she stands,  
blooming, inspiring— enchanting.





# MEDUSA

Claudia Garcia | Color Pencil on Paper



# THE GAZE



Diana Gonzalez | Digital Illustration





# INSPECTION

Claudia Garcia | Acrylic on Wood





# SERENITY

Claudia Garcia | Watercolor on Paper



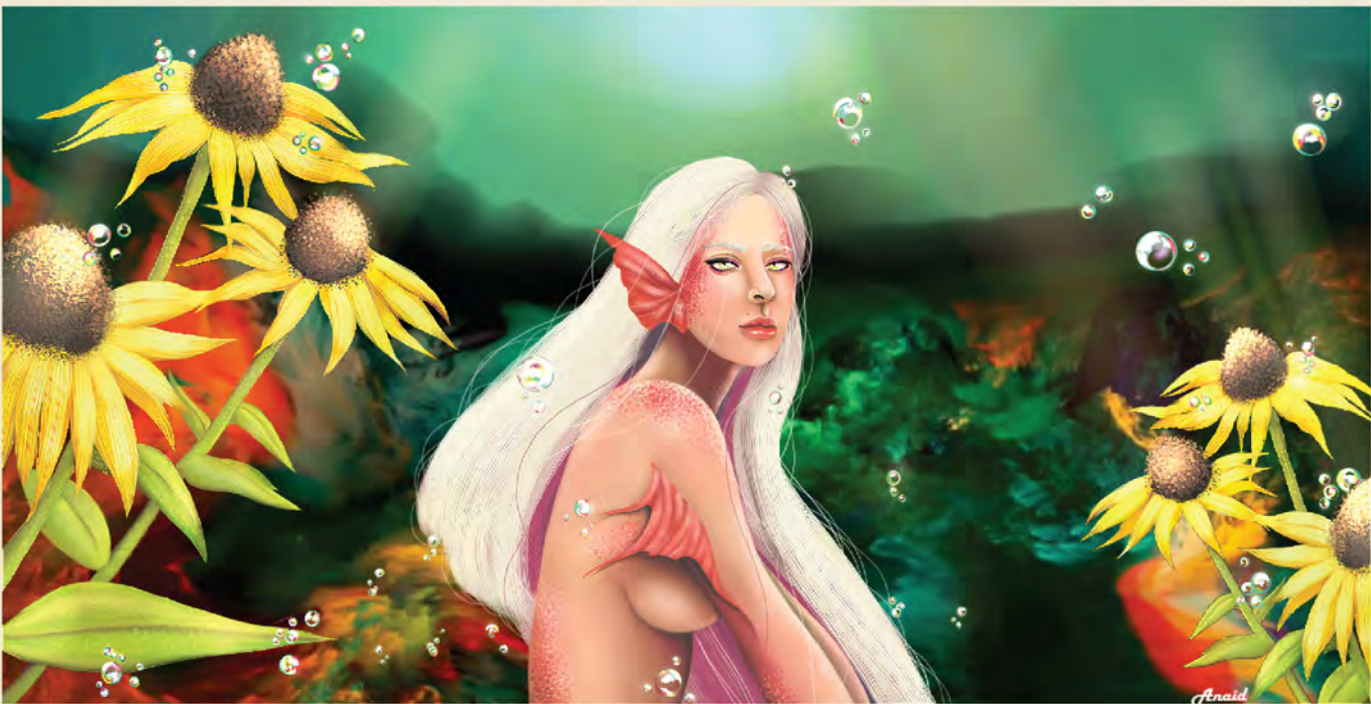
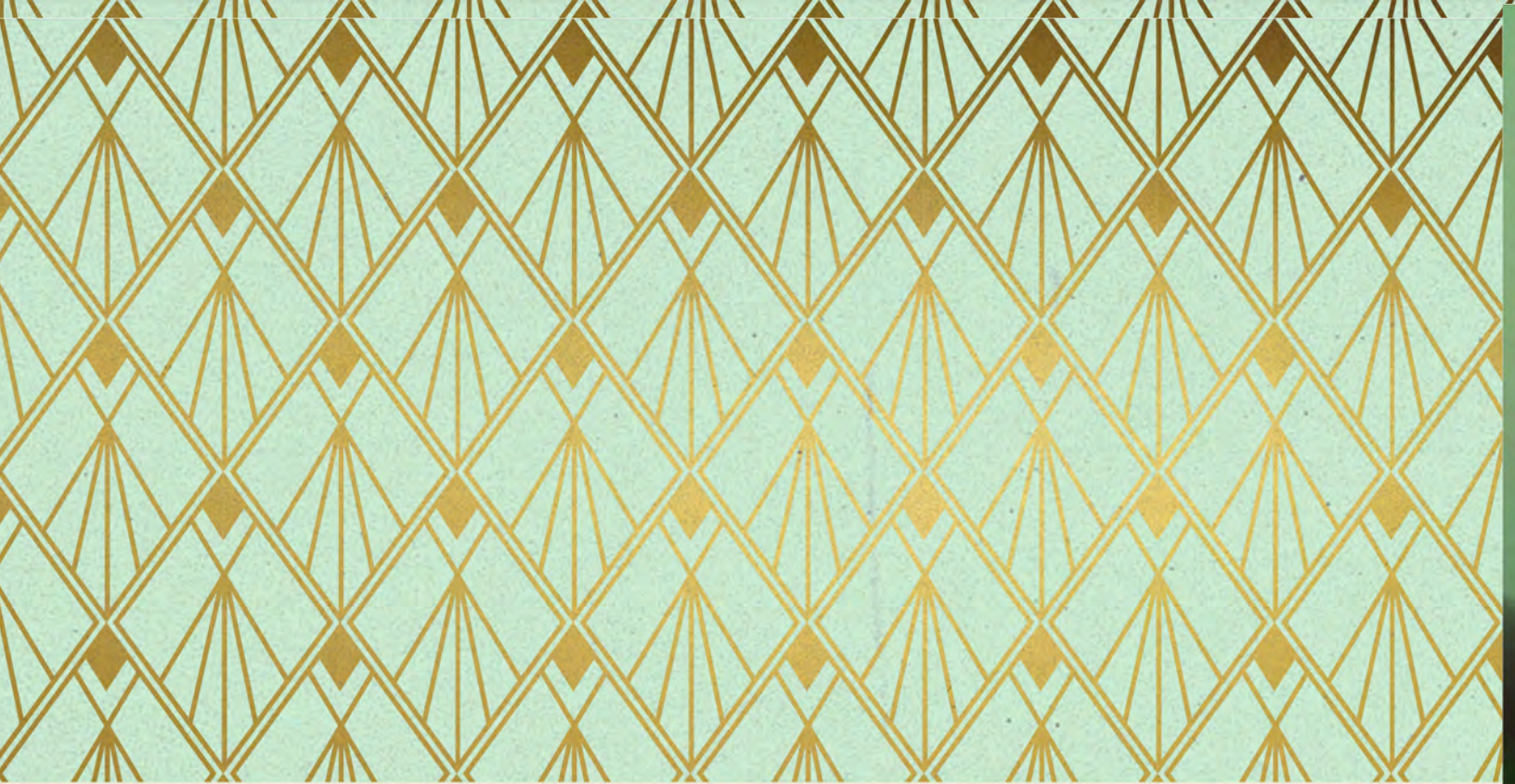
# THE SUN AND HIS BOY

Libby Shalev Szlaifer

The boy awoke as the sun rose.  
It's their routine to start the morning together.  
As the boy shakes off his slumber,  
the sun stretches upward to greet the galaxy,  
rubbing his blistering bright eyes,  
letting the day in.  
The boy longs to see his comrade,  
but the sun's gaze would burn straight through his retina.  
His stare is so sizzling,  
it gives the boy a runny nose,  
makes his face turn scarlet,  
and causes his skin to peel.  
The sun observes his boy from afar as the day goes by,  
sending his salutations through rays of nourishing warmth.  
For now,  
they will stick to sharing bedtime.

(\*)First line of the poem comes from *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho





# ETHEREAL

Diana Gonzalez | Digital Illustration

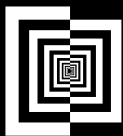




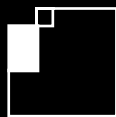




# MEET THE TEAM



**Editor-in-Chief**  
Izamara Zamora



**Managing Editor**  
Kelly Mayol



**Lead Designer**  
Tristan Cuenca



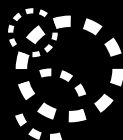
**Prose Editor**  
Emily Usallan



**Poetry Editor**  
Fabiana Aguilar



**Editor**  
Spencer Jolibois



**Editor**  
Michael Louis



**Editor**  
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**Editor**  
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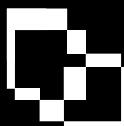
**Editor**  
Diana Lima



**Editor**  
Angela Perez



**Designer/Illustrator**  
Idelys Fragueta



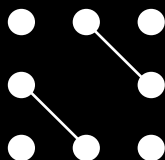
**Designer/Editor**  
Maria Mastrocristino



**Designer**  
Daniela Calderon



**Designer**  
Carlos Ruiz



**Designer**  
Melany Rodriguez



**Designer**  
Catherine Tibaguira



# AXIS AWARDS

2019 - 2020

We are very pleased to announce AXIS Magazine Volume 17 from North Campus won several national and state awards. Congratulations to all the students who contributed, edited and designed for this issue.



Associated Collegiate Press,  
**AXIS Volume 17 won the  
Pacemaker award, in the Two-Year  
Literary Magazine category**



College Media Association,  
**AXIS Volume 17 won Second Place in  
the Pinnacle Awards, in the Two-Year  
Literary Magazine of the Year category**



Columbia Scholastic Press Association,  
**SILVER CROWN AWARD, Print  
Literary Magazine**

Gold Circle Honorable Mentions:

Experimental fiction: **Shalala Leny**,  
“Baptism,”

Photography: Portfolio of work  
**Vladimir Mompremier**



# AXIS AWARDS

Florida College System Publications Association

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## **Third Place**

General Excellence

## **First Place Design**

Lead Designer Maria Mastrocristino, Tristan  
Cuenca, Gabriel Herrera, Sara  
Salgado

## **First Place Staff Page**

Lead Designer Maria Mastrocristino, Tristan  
Cuenca, Gabriel Herrera,  
Sara Salgado

## **Second Place Artwork Individual**

Liza Guillen, What Remains, Acrylic on Canvas

## **Second Place Editing**

AXIS Staff

## **Second Place Contents Page**

AXIS Staff - Lead Designer Maria  
Mastrocristino, Tristan Cuenca,  
Gabriel Herrera, Sara Salgado

## **Inner Circle (won 3 awards or more)**

Lead Designer Maria Mastrocristino, Tristan  
Cuenca, Gabriel Herrera, Sara Salgado



# A SPECIAL THANKS

To Carmen Bucher and Kathleen Noonan, thank you for accepting me, your favorite mermaid, with an open mind and unwavering support. In the hardest times, your love, passion, and humor brought me much comfort. AXIS thrives because you are the ultimate duo: honest, creative, and always on time!

To Tristan, thank you for immersing yourself in the vision of escapism and for becoming my family. Despite the terrible year you have had, you continue to live with resilience and continue to follow your heart's desires.

To Prof. Eric Cornish and the Design Team, thank you for your efforts and the immense number of hours you have put towards bringing Volume 18 to life! Your creativity leaves me in awe.

To Kelly, thank you for understanding my crazy ideas and always contributing meaningful responses. Together we laid out the vision, and I could not have had a better partner. You kept us all on track!

To our Editors, AXIS is alive because of you! Thank you for always going the extra mile despite all the challenges we have faced. May AXIS continue being a space full of creativity, acceptance, and celebration of the arts!

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Andres Quiroga  
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Media Services

Thank you for your unwavering support for the AXIS Creative Arts Magazine!



# EDITORIAL POLICY

AXIS is Miami Dade College, North Campus' creative arts magazine. It is published once every year during the spring semester and released in the following fall, distributed free of charge. Only students from Miami Dade College, North Campus are allowed to submit their pieces to the magazine. We accept pieces of prose—both fiction and non-fiction—essays and poetry. We also accept pieces of art, photography, short films and music. All submissions must include a corresponding form, which is available in the AXIS office located in the English Department in room 7321 or at [www.mdc.edu/axis](http://www.mdc.edu/axis). This form is also available through our email posted in the English Department in room 7321. Copyright for individual's work, both audio and print, returns to the artist one year from the date of publication. All rights are reserved. Content and opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or general staff.

# DESIGN NOTES

The theme for this year's issue deals with the progression of turmoil into escapism. A concept that became all too real within my own life—earlier this year, I suffered the loss of my mother, Nohemi Cuenca. It was unexpected and left me utterly distraught and heartbroken. Being at the lowest point in my entire life gave me a newfound understanding of what it means to suffer and how people look for ways to escape from the pain inherited from living. For me, that means of escape was working on Volume 18 of Axis Creative Arts Magazine. And just like the theme itself, I was able to alleviate the burden of mental anguish as the team progressed further along with the creation of the magazine. The first section highlights the topic of turmoil, as you can tell from the dark and foreboding art/color selection. As you continue flipping through the magazine, you'll notice the gradual shift in content. That's where the introspection page comes in. This section, while small, serves as the bridge into escapism. The choice of color and pieces selected showcases the duality of the magazine as the pieces there belong in neither section; they reflect coming into a self-awareness. Lastly, the Escapism section serves as the final destination for the reader's journey. At this point, you have experienced the hardships, criticisms and are now transcending into the brightly colored and gilded laid section. This section evokes a dream-like fantasy for the reader to indulge in; as a group, we wanted this section to be the calm after the storm, the fantasies we create in our minds and the bliss that comes with moving forward... With all that being said, this one is for you mom!

# COLOPHON

Created on an Apple MacBook Air (Retina, 13", Early 2020). Created using Adobe InDesign CC 2021 for drafting, Adobe Illustrator CC 2021 for graphic elements and final motif illustration. Adobe Photoshop CC 2021 was utilized for all image adjustments, cropping and final unification. The following fonts were used: Times New Roman, Sk-Modernist and Keep Calm font.





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