



axis

Volume 10

About the Cover Artist

Alejandro Valencia, a Colombia native, arrived to the United States in 2002. He worked many different jobs until 2009 when he began to study at Miami Dade College. The arts have always been his passion, but it wasn't until high school that Valencia decided to pursue a career in the arts. While at Miami Dade College – North Campus, he has worked in the art gallery – where his work truly emerged. However, most recently, he has worked downtown at the museum in the Freedom Tower. Valencia stated he would not have accomplished this much without these two substantial mentors in his life: Professor Victor Gomez, and Professor Elena Fresquet, both faculty in the North Campus' Arts & Philosophy Department. They have truly taken him under their wing and AXIS Creative Arts Magazine has helped him fly.

For the second time, Alejandro Valencia, has made cover artist for the AXIS Creative Arts Magazine out of over 180 art submissions. He describes this year's selected artwork "The Crows" as a part of a series of paintings done on wooden boards that previously painted by the fledglings in North Campus's Pre-K center. Valencia's themes for this series include chaos, human degradation, self-indulgence, and adulation. "The Crows" focuses on a child's creativity versus an older 'tainted' artist. Valencia describes each crow as signifying one of the seven deadly sins.

This is Alejandro Valencia's last semester at Miami Dade College. His future goals include perusing a Master's in Fine Arts and, in turn, giving back to the community through his craft.

Axis



'aksis/ n:

- 1.** A line, ray, or line segment with respect to which a figure or object is symmetrical.
- 2.** A spatial location defined by a real or imaginary one-dimensional extent.
- 3.** A line through the optical center of a lens that is perpendicular to both its surfaces.
- 4.** The earth rotates on its axis.
- 5.** A line about which a body rotates.
- 6.** A principal line of development, movement or direction/A turning point.
- 7.** A central or principal structure about which something turns or is arranged: skeletal.
- 8.** An imaginary line about which a body is conceived to rotate.
- 9.** An imaginary line used to measure a work of art.
- 10.** Any of various central structures for which standard abstract lines are used as a positional referent.



4th Dimension

Mixed Media

Pascale Neheme

Letter from The Editors

Welcome Reader,

From the bleakness of fall, AXIS emerges, with this spring, celebrating our 10th Anniversary of AXIS, visiting the past and setting a path for our future. Our once fledgling staff has grown as a strong group, striving to define who we are as artists and individuals creating the largest magazine in AXIS history.

Alongside our anniversary, this year's magazine also delves into the issues of Human Rights and how this thirty-item list has shaped lives and influenced the pieces of writing, art, and photography.

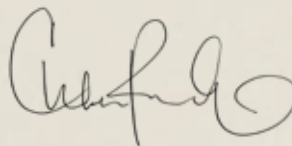
"It isn't a temporary crisis: it's a way of life." (Casandra Perez "Periodo Especial") This quote ruffled but equally drove us to challenge it. Likewise, we have confronted our cover image, by refusing to be defeated in celebrating our passions for the arts. In doing so, we vow to continue to be the AXIS of words and images for Miami Dade College North Campus students.

We hope you enjoy feathering through our pages.

Sincerely,



Jessica Fiallo
Editor in Chief



Chelsea Fernandez
Managing Editor

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Periodo Especial (Special Period)

Casandra Perez

It is 1993; Papá anxiously waits outside a room of white doors where nurses constantly walk in and out.

Mamá lies on an old stretcher, painfully sweating inside the room, where 23 more women are giving birth.

It's their *niña* being born; that spark of light for Mamá and Papá...

It is a time of wanting, hoping, and waiting.

It is 1994; Papá needs to feed his *niña* even if it means starving himself.

He looks into her innocent dark eyes as he walks out the door to go fishing again.

Tears roll down Mamá's face, she knows Papá is risking his life.

She remembers about the incident that happened two days ago,

How he almost lost his life to the sea...

It is a time of wanting, hoping, and waiting.

Mamá goes to the river to wash the clothes, using coal ashes as soap.

She keeps her *niña* clean, very clean.

Papá is now arrested for expressing his anger towards the dictatorial regime.

Mamá cries disconsolately, she hugs her *niña* tightly, promising a better future,

But her *niña* knows nothing.

It is a time of wanting, hoping, and waiting.

She is a happy child, her parents love her immensely.

She smiles, even though her dinner is only pan con azucar.

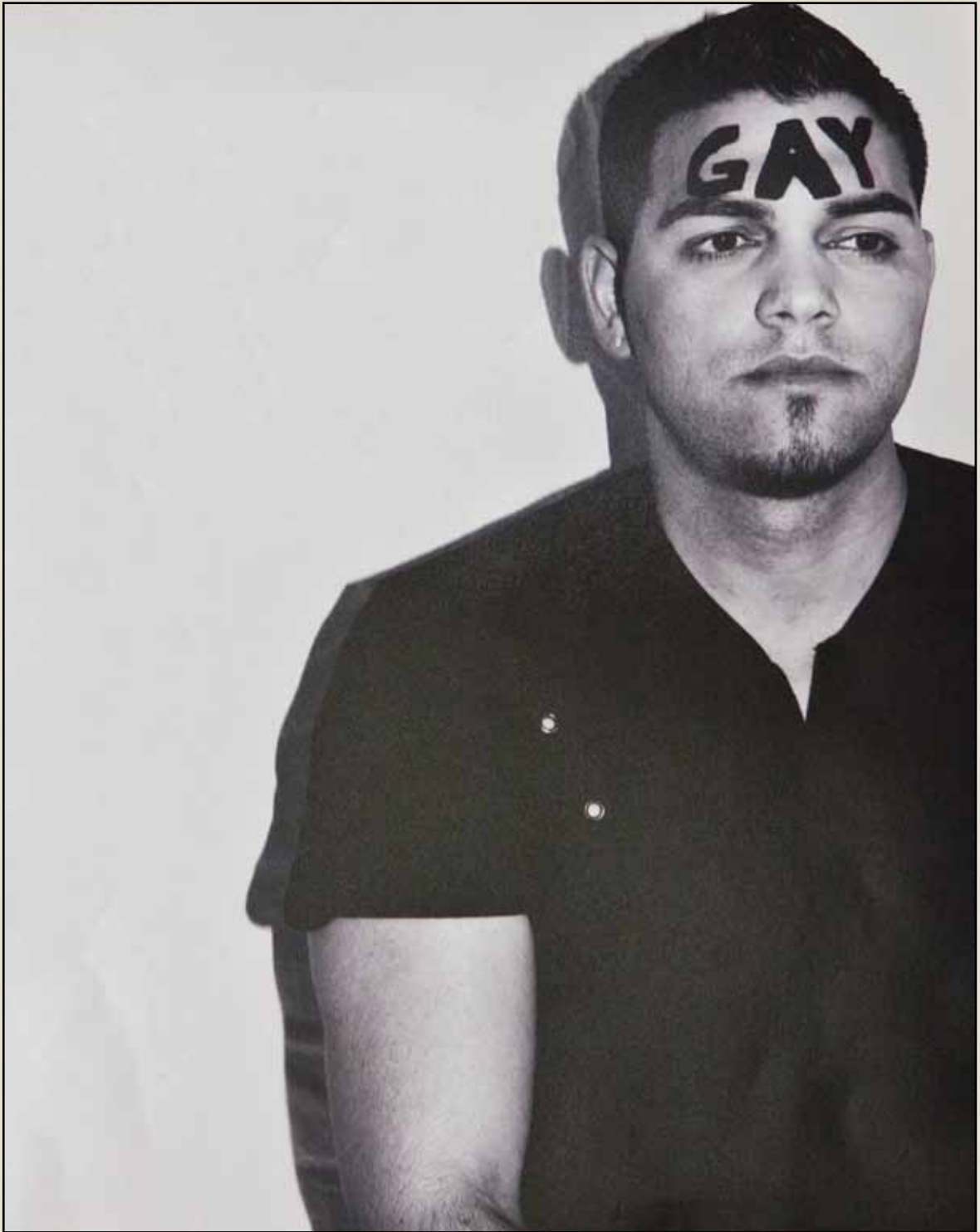
It isn't a temporary crisis; it is a way of life.

Pray The Gay Away

Shanteria "Poetizer" Griglen

Closets are dark
Shadows of loneliness.
Running from reality
Whispers rape your conscience.
The bleeding is nonstop.
You're different.
Embracing lies,
Just be straight.
A repeated prayer
To make it through.
Inside you want change,
But the desire remains.
A constant battle
With a lifestyle.
Too weak to be respected.
A walking canvas
Of rejection.
Your SIN
Requires the most attention.
Castaway is what they say.
You can't possibly love
God and live like this.
Repent... repent... repent...
Coming out means
Lights on
To a blinded world,
Searching for remedies
To question
God's authority.
Like a fried tomato,
Our brains are dull.
Crispy Christians

Gasping for air,
Speaking religion
Yet outsourcing spirituality.
No nutrition
For healthy hearts.
Believers in speech,
Haters in soul.
No substance to grow.
Love can't be shown.
Too much politicking,
YES!
God is disappointed.
We all fall short.
But mercy and grace
Can't be replaced.
So why be biased
About a life
You may never understand?
Doesn't God
Have the whole world
In His hands?
Love
Surpasses all understanding.
Our hearts
Tell the real story.
Place a mirror
In front of your chest.
Now be bold enough
To tell the world
What sins you need to confess...



Untitled

Photography

Anonymous

Can you Handle it?

Amanda Rodriguez

*You're just a wimp.
So what are you gonna do?
You gonna chicken out?
Pressure.
This is why we never invite you to parties.
Aw come on, we thought you were cool.
It won't hurt.
It won't kill you.
Pressure.
Baby, just one time without the condom.
Come on dude, it's just cocaine.
Stuff the ring in your purse.
Have another drink.
Drive a little faster.
Pressure.
Just one time.
She'll never know.
I'll pay you back.
Your parents don't have to know.
Don't let me do it alone.
Trust me.
Pressure.
STOP!
No.
Pressure.
Handled.*



18

Painting

Stephanie Figueroa



Chelsea Fernandez

I feel,

A hole in my core,
A knot in my throat,
A throb in my head.

I think,

What is the reason?
What am I seeking?
Can I find this happiness?

I contemplate,

Removing the things,
Removing the substance,
Removing the people around me.

I ask,

Who am I?
Who fills this gap?
What is the purpose?



Shalom

Painting

Alejandro Valencia

Holy Annoyance

Anne Laure Bastien

I remember that particular bible study at Sunday school, when Ms. Cole talked about guardian angels and how every one of us has one, and how our guardians follow us everywhere. These guardian angels would protect us from harm and make sure that nothing bad ever happened to us, innocent little chirping creatures of the Lord.

The more I think about it, the more I gag. I mean, really?

“Guardian angels follow us everywhere? Even in the bathroom?” I asked, scandalized.

“Yes, even in the bathroom” retorted Ms. Cole, giving me that ‘don’t-you-even-dare-question-my-teaching’ glare I was so used to by now.

“But what about privacy?”

“Misfortune doesn’t care if you are in the bathroom or not, child, it enters uninvited” she replied.

“But—”

She silenced me with another one of her looks, and turned to the rest of the class, graciously spreading her suspiciously plump lips into a smile and resumed the

lesson. The other kids were looking at me with disapproving bulging eyes. As if there was such a thing as eye-balling someone to death...

The study ended eventually. I grabbed my Bible and my dictionary and I sprung to the church’s front yard, where I started digging into the sand with a stick while Ms. Cole complained to my Dad,

again. Across the playground, my sister Sheryl was getting comfy with her ‘study buddy,’ Dante.

It’s common sense right? Why wouldn’t anyone want a gospel preaching ghost floating everywhere behind you? My peers

were enchanted by the idea, but to me it’s disturbing. Like, is it behind me right now? I peered around my shoulder, half expecting to see a tall figure dressed in white, with hands crossed on its chest, smiling down on me like the big bad wolf. I saw nothing because, according to Ms. Cole, angels are invisible. Sure, how convenient! I stood up and turned around completely. Well, if I’m

“These guardian angels would protect us from harm and make sure that nothing bad ever happened to us, innocent little chirping creatures of the Lord.”

gonna be stuck with an entity for the rest of my life, I might as well get acquainted with it.

It didn't take me long before I visualized my stalker. For some reason it was a guy (even creepier). Oh wait, Ms. Cole told us that there are no boy or girl angels, they are androgynous (she's always throwing fancy words at us, hence the dictionary), but I have to put a face on the creeper somehow right? He had curly strawberry blond hair, and dark, Mother Goose-like eyes. He wore a long white robe with peace symbols all over it, and he had John Lennon's glasses on his nose. He had big wings. He's gonna need it; I run very fast. And, of course, the halo. His name; Danny. Short and simple.

Ms. Cole finally released my Dad and my older sister and I hopped into the car. We were giving Dante a ride and it got a little crowded in there, so I told Danny to ride on the roof along with Dante's, my Dad's, and sister's angels.

I started seeing them everywhere after that. At the playground, pushing their protégés on the swing, running ahead of them to roll rocks out of the way, so their bikes wouldn't propel their screaming little butts into the air. My sister's angel named Sam and tattooed all over. Don't ask, that's just how my sick and twisted mind sees it) even rides with her on an air bicycle when she goes BMX-ing at the park. Dad's angel

is musical, like him; he floats cross-legged above the workshop, playing the mandolin while Dad works on his guitars.

Danny was the quiet type. He usually sat coolly in a corner and knit scarves, robes, and beanies. He said they were for me to wear when it's time to meet the Creator. Creep...

Then came puberty. Things got hairy every time I would go to the bathroom and I would mentally order Danny out of there or I would flash him. He took off running. Then high school started. The more I grew up, the more Danny and all the others became fuzzy, until they disappeared completely. He was invisible, sure, but now he would rant on and on in my head every time I would hang out with my friends: "Go home Mackie, you have a project to finish, 'don't take that cigarette Mackie, you know it's bad for you,' 'don't even think about skipping Biology again Mackie,' 'Mackie, tell that boy to remove his hand from under your shirt,' 'don't break into the teacher's office Mackie.'" I would often find myself in detention at the end of the day, and Danny would let loose on the lecture. Sometimes, when I think nobody is listening I would murmur 'Shut up Danny.' My fellow punished comrades would often stare at me.

He did shut up for a very long time, actually, so long I even forgot about him. I graduated high school, amazingly got accepted to a university across the

country, and moved out. Sheryl and Dante got married while in grad school and now lived in Daytona Beach, Florida. Every opportunity I got I would fly to their house and soak up as much sun as I could. Plus, they have a pool. It was pretty sweet. I would often stay late in the pool, in my air mattress, floating around like a lazy toad with a beer and a pack of cigarettes. I usually got out at around midnight or so. But, one night I never got out. I just sunk right in.

I don't remember when it happened. All I remember was waking up to a paramedic doing CPR on me. He got out of the way just in time as I started to vomit on the side of the pool. I could hear Sheryl gasping in relief. Somebody put a blanket around my shoulders. My head was still swimming and I held on to someone close by:

"The hell happened!?"

"You drowned."

"So... I'm dead?"

"No, not today."

There was a pause during which I heard Sheryl telling Dante that tomorrow she's calling Alcoholics Anonymous. I was starting to see a little clearer now.

The paramedic spoke again, "You should really quit drinking; you know it's bad for you... *And*, your cigarette burned the hole in the mattress..."

My vision cleared, and I saw him,

strawberry blond hair, big brown eyes and the peace symbol tattooed on his neck. I pinched myself; just to make sure I wasn't dead. Nope, the pain was real, and so were the pair of faintly familiar dark eyes looking at me.

**"Lordy Oh Lordy...
Either my spiritual
harasser became
real, or the toxins
finally destroyed
my last bit of brain
cells.."**

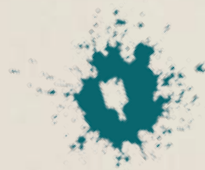
"Where are the John Lennon glasses?" I asked.

He didn't seem to understand, "The what ma'am?"

"D... Danny?"

He frowned, "How do you know my name? "

Lordy Oh Lordy... Either my spiritual harasser became real, or the toxins finally destroyed my last bit of brain cells. Bless my brain for deciding to black out at that very moment, saving me from an immediate lecture from my childhood stalker.





Beaten Path

Photography

Julia Andreassen

Ms. Navigation

Lynisha Arceus

Ms. Navigation has a destination
She's trying to get to,
But before she gets to her destination,
There are things she will pass through,
Pit stops she rests at,
Sites she must see.
But will she make it to her destination by
noon?
Hitchhikers on the freeway,
She picks up one, then two.
Deadbeat in the front seat
And a baby who needs food.
Now her navigation changes:
Her destination is somewhere
She doesn't want to end.
So she tries to stick to her previous
destination.
She is two hours away; she believes she can
make it.
Riding on a quarter tank of gas,
Trying to move fast
Running out of cash
Hoping it will last.
Pedestrians laughing as she's passing.
Females continuously calling: Him.
Tears continuously falling: Hurt.
Baby continuously hollering: Food.
Quarter tank of gas almost gone,
forty minutes away from her destination.
Her latitude reads starvation,
Her longitude shows motivation.
Make a right at the light,

Then she'll meet her destination.
As she patiently waits for the red light to
change,
She looks up in her rearview and sees a lot
has changed.
Deadbeat gone...
Her son has grown...
Her final destination is HOME.



REM

Mixed Media

Pascale Neheme



Chinese Checkers

Painting

Andres Hernandez

The Tree

Claudia Gonzalez

If you like,
I will tell you how long I've lived
In this constant state of fright.
Witnessing he who thinks he's God
With his angry, sharp hands,
As he comes to snap my child in pieces
And laugh!
As if what he just did was great.
And if you want,
I'll think about the future.
But all I will hear are
The devilish sounds
Of those vengeful blades,
Bringing me the same fate
As my child.
Leaving me without hope for change.



Gum Tree

Photography

Chelsea Fernandez

Broken Things

Mercedes Maduro

I break things,
Young and old,
Joy and bliss,
Sensitivity and optimism,
Causing pain and affliction.

I break things.
With smiling lips,
Sharing loving lies,
And exciting tongues
In rioting souls.

I break things.
Things that were once whole.
Things that worked.
Things that worked to break me.

I break things.
I...
Break...
Things...



X33

Photography

Christian Torres

Moment of Silence

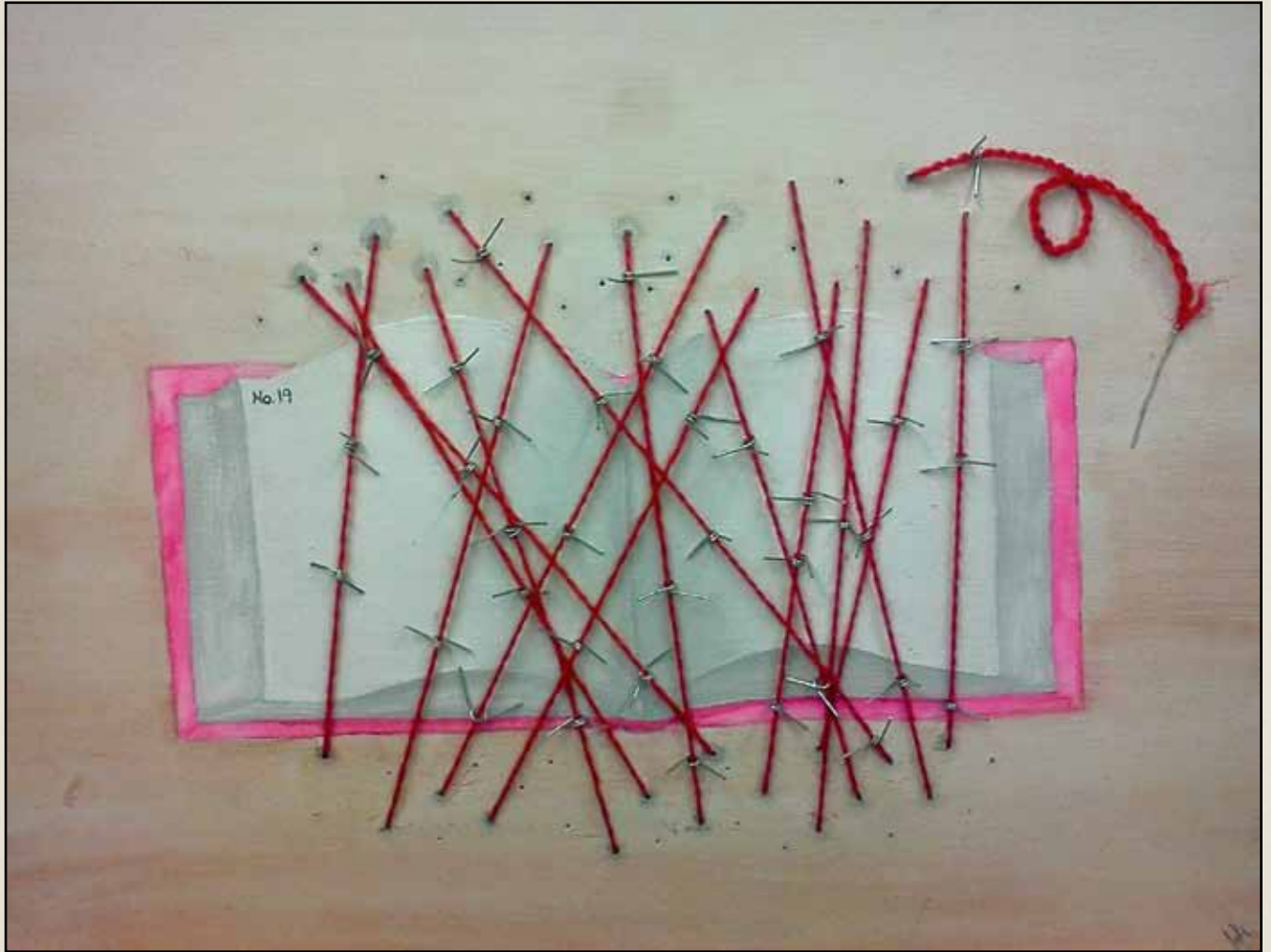
Jessica Maria Fiallo

Wood smoke envelops

The nostrils of man

Burning at the stake.





Don't Get Too Close

Mixed Media

Jessica Maria Fiallo

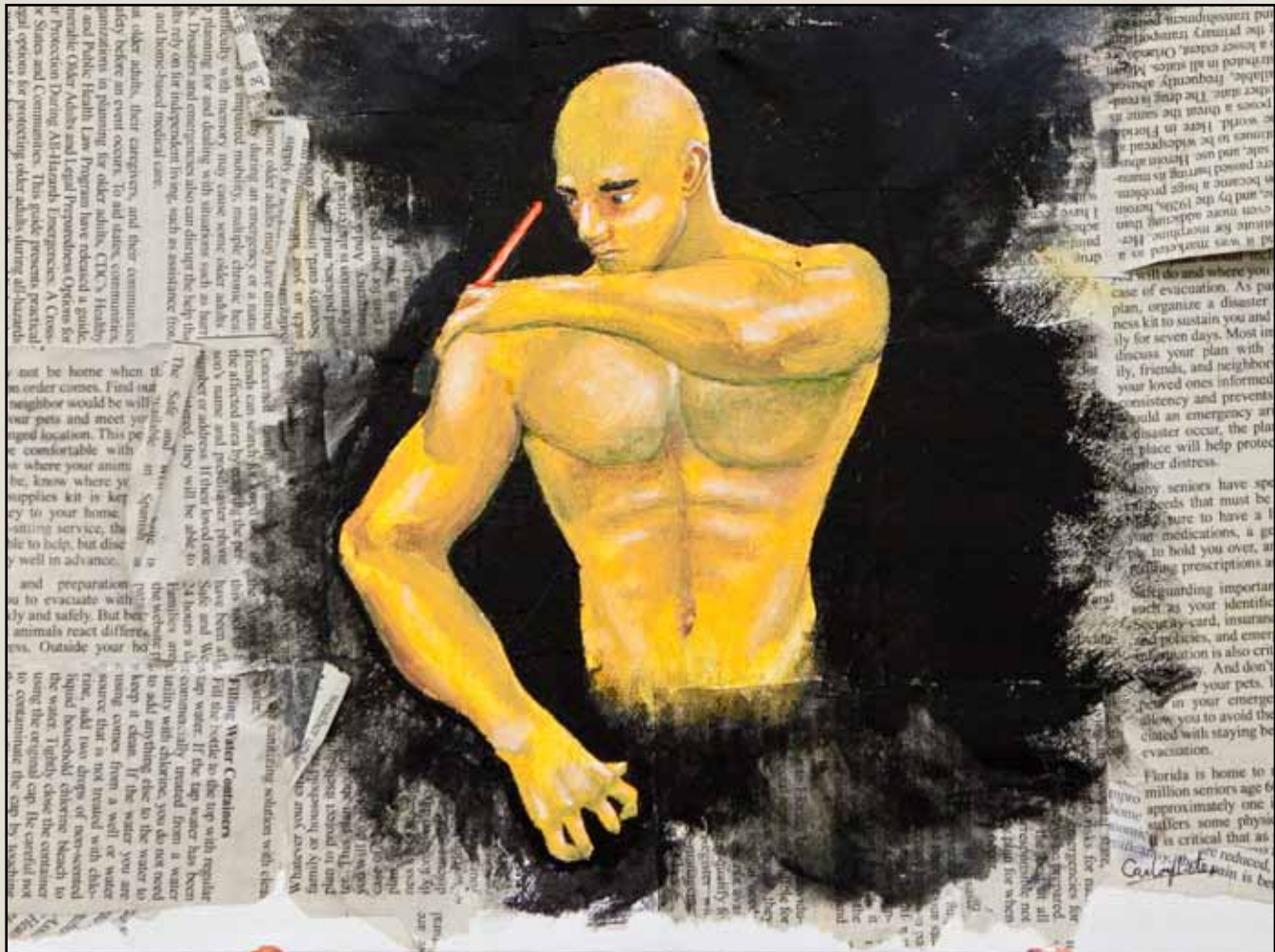


Child in Cabinet 1 & 2

Mixed Media

Kassandra Guzman





Untitled

Mixed Media

Carlos Fleites

The Words We Live By

Daniel Rodriguez

"**T**oñito!" a voice called out from the downstairs kitchen. It rang through the whole house and up to the attic where Toñito was playing. The voice broke through the peaceful spell of the quiet room, warmed only by small rays of orange sunlight that shone through an old circular window on the far side of the room. It was late in the afternoon and close to sunset, the dwindling beams of light struggled to pierce through the dust that always seemed to hover in the attic. As the soft light slowly disappeared from the room, the voice called out again; this time it sounded angry.

"Toñito! Ven a comer, ahora!"

Swiftly, Toñito stood up and started for the polished wooden steps which his father had built '*Con sus propias manos,*' as his mother liked to proudly admit whenever guests came over to the house. She loved telling about the things he made himself. The robust aroma of warm bread filled his mother's kitchen. Fresh vegetables lined the long dinner table from end to end. Big bowls of '*Chulpi*' and '*Mote*' were placed on the table so that everyone could reach them with ease. In the center, garnished with herbs that his youngest sister would gallantly pronounce she had picked so expertly, was a massive '*Chanco Horneado,*' roasted pork big enough to feed a family of ten. Toñito's mother had been working on this feast for days and it showed. Because their family was not wealthy, Toñito knew

that when his mother prepared a meal this big it had to be for a reason, and a good one at that; his oldest brother was coming home for the first time since he left to join the Ecuadorian Federal Military.

It was a strange phone call for Toñito's parents when they received the news from Carlos that he was coming home. His mother said that Carlos sounded disturbed and distant. Although his father dismissed it as Carlos just being overworked, Toñito's mother was not convinced everything was so simple. Toñito overheard his mother mention to his father that there were rumors of an insurgence among the police and that in some parts of Ecuador, the military had been dispersed to crackdown on any signs of an uprising. But they tried not to worry, Carlos was coming home and he was safe.

As Toñito started to fill his plate, his mother entered the room, "*Espera por todos, Toñito!*" Wait for everyone, a hard thing for a ten year old to do when food is involved.

His family finally came in from the yard; Carlos had arrived. His father was the first one to come in, then his two older sisters, followed by Carlos who was carrying Toñito's youngest sister on his left leg and little brother on the right. They all exchanged '*saludos y besos,*' greetings and kisses. Finally, They all took their places around the table, thanked God for all their blessings, and began the feast.

But soon, they were interrupted by gunfire on the street right outside. Toñito's mother stood up immediately with a panicked expression turning to Carlos and told him to hurry down to the basement. "I did not think it would have spread to this part of the city so quickly!" his mother whispered to his father.

"Toñito..." His father murmured as he peered out through the curtains slightly pulling them apart so as not to be noticed from outside, "Take your mother and your siblings down and lock the cellar door. Do not come out until I tell you, *entiendes?*"

Toñito did not want to go; he wanted his father to come with them. He was scared.

"Don't worry Toñito, I will stay with *Papá*." Carlos reassured Toñito as he moved everyone into the basement.

"*Estas loco*, are you crazy? You're staying down here with us!" Toñito's mother hissed to Carlos but he did not seem to care.

"*Mamá*, you know they are here for me."

Quickly, Carlos shut the door on his mother. Toñito and his mother waited in the dark holding their breath, one afraid she might cry out and scream for her son, the other afraid he might never see his father or brother alive again.

Ten minutes passed before they heard anything. Toñito was about to open the door to go check on his father when a deafening crash froze his small hand on the

knob. He felt weak and dizzy. His knees knocked and his brow was dampened by a cold sweat. He could hear upstairs in the dining room his fathers muffled screams and his brother's agonizing cries.

BAM! The crack of the gunshots rang through the house. They rang through the dining room, out through the kitchen, down through the cellar, down to where Toñito laid with his knees pulled close to his chest.

The ringing in his ears did not pass. It could not. Not until his mother shook him back into reality. The *Federales* had left. No one could bear to leave the cellar for fear of what they might see. Hours went by before anyone moved. Finally, Toñito's mother decided it was time to get up and out of the room.

As they walked out, their eyes confirmed what their ears had heard. There lay his father, shot down by the federal police because he was protecting his son, a federal soldier, an enemy of the rebellion. His brother had been taken alive, but Toñito knew that by the end of the night they would have killed him too.

No one can really be prepared for the tragedies in life. They happen so quickly and come so suddenly. My grandfather Antonio always used to say, the best you can do is enjoy the good moments in life, love your family, cherish every second you have with them, and do not live in the past. He showed me what it meant to live by these words.





Untitled

Photography

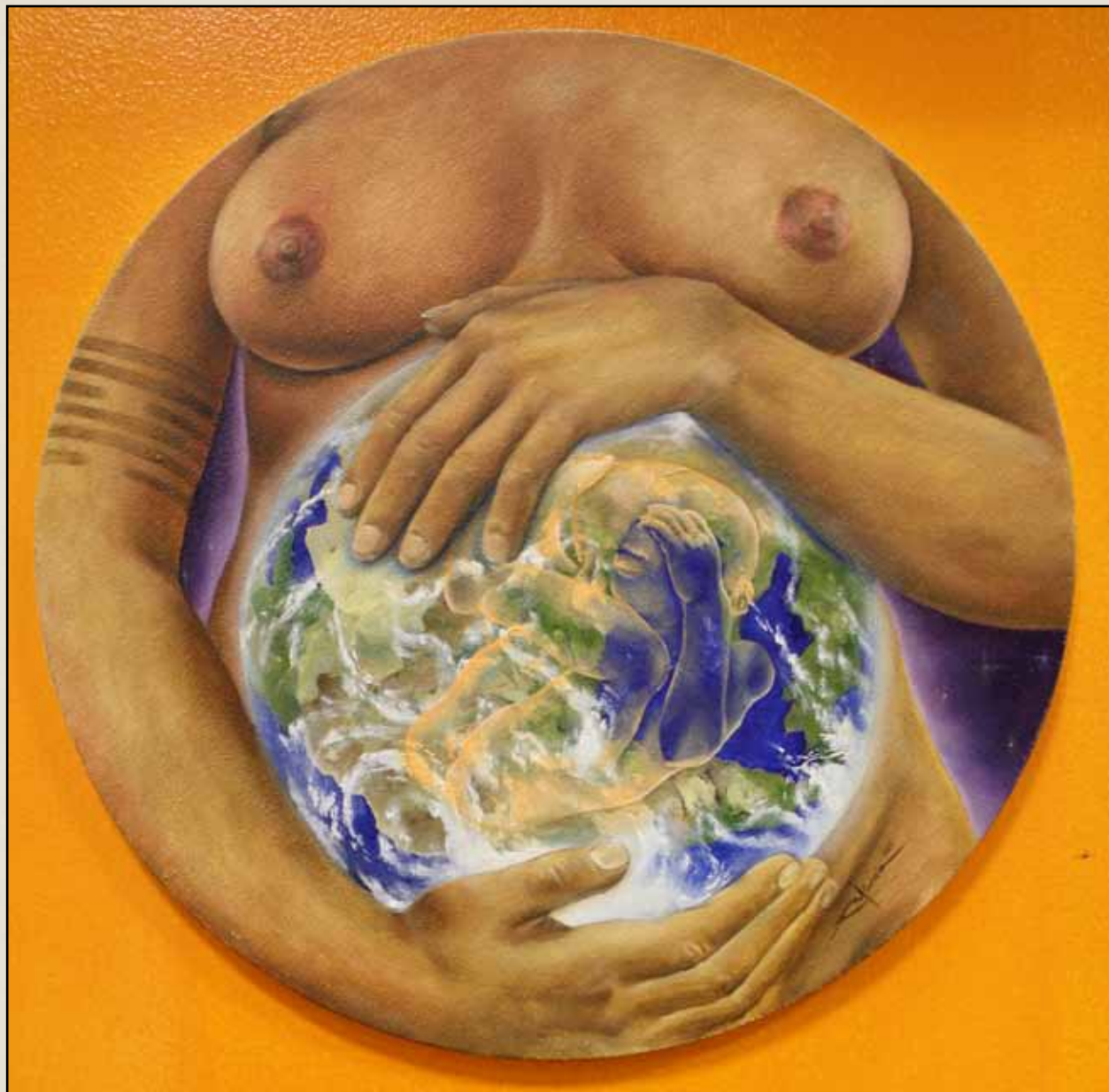
Roberto Medina

Son of a Gun

Anthony Velazquez

My origin is of major infamy,
In the background plays a tense symphony
For the violent ones who live for me.
My mother was heartless and fierce;
Her strikes fatally pierced,
Injected fear, brought her victims' families
to tears.
However, she couldn't fend for herself,
So she was forced into slavery by sinister
hands,
With intentions to kill, to conquer land,
And leave a mess of blood on the sand.
To my mother, giving birth was quick and
painless,
The purpose of her creation was for the sick
and the shameless;
So as I was released from her iron womb,
The noise echoed, BOOM!
I flew rapidly and my sharp head inflicted a
wound.
My impact was fatal too soon;
I found myself deep in the foe's flesh;
I had passed the test.
I was utilized well for this heinous act, this
chaotic mess,
This horrible crime, this armed jest!
With a squeeze of my mother's metal belly,
Her owner, a fiend and a troubled loner,
Continued his daily massacre,
But one day, she was empty.
Her consecutive reproduction had come to
an end;

Her owner wasn't satisfied, there were more
toddlers to send,
More enemies upon which to place revenge;
So her owner filled her up with a new fetus.
He told her, "Ain't no one who could beat us,
Let's complete the finale to this feud."
So the assassination continued;
My stepbrothers were released with a task
of their own:
To rip apart tissue and bone,
To send the adversary's loved ones home
With an occurrence from which to moan.
My sudden presence shakes the crowd,
makes them run;
In their shock, all they have time to say is,
"There goes that son-of-a-gun."
So if you're the target, and my mother's
owner pulls it,
Be careful; I'm coming for you, because I'm
the bullet.



Pachamama

Painting

Alejandro Valencia

Opposites Attract

Kirshner Josaphat

Devil.

Angel gazing upon this lonesome horror.

Spiteful, Seething.

Showing no remorse for his vile actions.

Watching, Whispering, Waiting

To savor the fruit of a star-crossed love.

Glinting, Guiding, Guarding

A subtle affection with piercing eyes.

Mercy marks her every move.

Holy, Helpful;

Devil gazing

Upon this lovely, delightful

Angel.



The Enigmatic Portrait of Mary Magdalene

Painting

Alejandro Valencia

A Few Letters Short of the Alphabet

Mercedes Maduro

Bedtime for me has been some of the best and worst memories in my life. Now at the age of 67, I can relax and take a stroll down memory lane. Anthony had been my first, and the asshole of my past. He almost made me run off to become a nun until bashful Bradley. We had both taught and learned from each other. I felt I knew what to expect from a man until considerate Christian. Now excited for what came next, I ran into Daniel the dud. Then came further disappointment from eager but early Emilio, who would finish before my bra touched the floor. Fenton was flawless in body and action, and Gavin was giving. Then hypnotic Heather came and turned my world upside down. During my prime, there was insatiable Isaac and Jerome with the jazz hands. Kennedy was knowledgeable but referred to his penis as "Mr. President," which then led to Luis, who came up lacking in every sense of the word. There was missionary Mario, and naughty Nathaniel, who always loved the outdoors. Obedient Oscar favored black leather. He inspired me to start a collection of treasures that have only grown as I advance towards my golden years. In these years of transition I met Paul and Quinton who were friends. Paul was pleasant and Quinton, questionable. Rodney was not only rapid, but rough to where he'd always leave bruises. Looking for something tamer, I met Stacey who was scandalous and sinful. There was very talkative Timothy who I almost forgot after Unique. I had underestimated Unique who did some things to this day that still make me quiver. She is now my best friend, no longer my lover. A few letters short of the alphabet, but there is still time.



Samurai Bride

Photography

Jasmin Rodriguez

Evil by Default

Julio Soto

All I do is take.
I'm consumed by my greed.
Now it's all about what I want,
And less about what I need.
My conscience in chains,
Consumed by desires.
I leave my innocent world
Into a wasteland of fires.
It's hard to resist
Evil's hands on my throat.
This isn't a democracy.
Good doesn't get a vote.
Being evil gives me peace
And being good tears me apart.
So I'll just surrender to the darkness,
To soothe my aching black heart.





Shoes I Walk In

Photography

Chelsea Fernandez



Untitled

Photography

Anonymous



Reflections

Photography

Irina Slizkaya



Untitled

Photography

Carlos Valencia



Midnight Lamp

Photography

Aaron Rolle

Lily of the Valley

Casey Baron

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - ROOM - DAY

It is 5:00 A.M. and nothing can be heard but the shaking of Earth outside, it's pick-up trash Tuesday. The room is dimly lit, the only light provided by one light fixture; a desk lamp, a few feet away from JOHN. John sits tied to a chair towards the back of the room, against a shelf stacked with books, bloodied and bruised, one eye attempting to defiantly open. IKE scratches his 'itch' in the dark.

JOHN

Where am I? Is anyone there?

IKE

Do yourself a favor kid, shut the fuck up.

John looks around frantically and confused.

JOHN

Who the fuck are you?

A silhouette moves in the background, shrouded in the darkness of the room, she makes her way forward.

DORIS

At this point John, there is nothing you can say..

JOHN

Please...let me go! Please! What did I do? I'm sorry for anything I did to you!

DORIS

This isn't a game John, you don't get to push the reset button and clean the slate. Nothing you say will help you, or stop me from-

JOHN

HELP! Please, someone help m-

Doris throws herself on John, her legs firmly planted on top of his thighs; as she whips a blade from her pocket and kisses it against John's neck, he falls to a silence.

DORIS

Keep it up John...keep it up.

Interrupt me one more time, and I
promise I will make this as intimate
and slow as possible.

JOHN
What the hell do you want from me?

IKE
You know exactly what you did you
two faced son-of-a-bitch!

DORIS
Oh John,
(She mutters under her breath)
We have a strange illusion that mere
time cancels sin. But mere time
does nothing either to the fact or
to the guilt of a sin.
(Loudly)
Two years ago you took away the one
thing I loved most and you never
gave it a second thought.

Doris hoists her right fist tensely and tightly towards Ike,
and pauses for a moment. She then places that hand on John's
right shoulder as she grips her blade tighter with the left.

JOHN
What, what are you talking about? I
have never seen you before!

IKE
(A mocking tone)
Oh yea, go ahead Doris. Tell him the
damn story. It's not like we got
shit to do, go ahead. We have
nothing but time to spare, right?
Down here in Dante's nine circles of
shit.

The blade starts to dance about his throat like an ant; slow
and without care.

DORIS
Were you a bully in school, John?

JOHN
No. No I wasn't.

DORIS
Liar!

Doris stabs the knife into John's shoulder. His body
shutters in pain.

JOHN
Ahhhhhhhh fuck!!!

IKE

Look at the little bitch cry, go ahead little girl, give it a whirl, no one's coming to save you today.

DORIS

Two years ago you took her, River Ellington; that was her name. Now I'm going to take everything away from you, like a mother would a spoilt child.

JOHN

(Wincing in pain)
River, the girl with the buckteeth?

Doris throws John to the floor, his head meeting with the laminated board.

DORIS

Inescapable, inevitable, that's what it is, right?

Doris energetically drops to the floor and sits, her knees bent towards the ceiling.

DORIS

That's why you took my baby girl away from me?

IKE

Uhhh, Doris? I don't think he's responding anytime soon.

DORIS

Eventually time comes crashing on all of us, and there is nothing we can do about it, huh?

Doris takes out a computer from her bag on the desk and she opens up a social networking site. She then pulls up River's page and one by one shows John every malicious word, every carefully placed insult that he said to her.

JOHN

(Coughing)
I'm sorry all right. I'm fucking sorry. I never meant for anything to happen to her. River! I remember her now. I didn't want anything to happen to her. I swear.

DORIS

She always wanted to be a teacher;

she wanted to help people...now she's nothing. A bag of bones from a girl once bright, now nothing remains in your wake.

IKE

Just end this little shit's life Doris, end it. End it now! He's not worth a damn thing to anyone. Do it!

DORIS

Shut up, Ike! Shut the hell up!

JOHN

Ike, who the fuck is Ike? Lady, who else is here? Hey! If anyone else is down here, help, please!

Doris grabs John's head and sticks the blade in his mouth.

DORIS

What the fuck do you mean who's Ike? He's right here, standing right next to me, he's been here.

John looks into Doris's eyes, and before he could move a finger, voices and shuffling feet can be heard coming from outside; someone is at the door.

DORIS

Be right back, John. Don't move a muscle, not that you could if you wanted to.

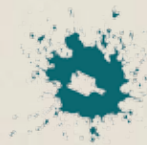
INT. OFFICE BUILDING - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Doris turns her back to John and walks out of the room, closing the wooden door behind her as she makes her way to the front. She attempts not to stumble over office chairs, or the like. She stops for a moment facing the front door to spruce up her hair. Doris look through peep hole.

INT. OFFICER BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

A STRANGER paces in front of the door.

The sign on door reads 'Office of Doris Tram, Clinical Psychologist.'





Madness

Photography

Marisol Aquino

Fire in Paradise (Krakatoa)

Mercedes Maduro

Something is wrong.
It is something in the air.
As though everything has stopped
In that moment,
Saving its breath for,
The bone-chilling scream,
Now dancing into my ears.
The picture is painted
Onto the canvas of my mind.
The raven colored smoke
Swallows the tropical skies.
The grey haze and black drops of ash,
Panicked faces of
Tourists and natives alike,
Drawn to the beckoning sea,
In hopes of escaping their fate.
A violent shaking and deafening
explosion
Propels me to the ground.
Clear waters and white sand
That once seemed to beckon me
Slowly turns black like midnight skies.
Chunks of charred rock cascade from
The skies, crushing everything in its
path.
Lava rapidly spills from the cusp,
Slathering the lush green
Hues of dark red and orange.
Buildings and houses sprinkled across
the island
Are picked off one by one
Like prisoners up for execution.

I watch as Mother Nature's script
unfolds.
Choreographed devastation
Supported by melodies of death,
Being played at the highest volume
So all who are near can hear.
I cannot look away,
Even as the dark hand of death
Reaches down my throat.
This beautiful oasis in the liquid
wilderness
Was my home.
My last sight before I fade into
blackness,
Fire in paradise.



Fire

Photography

Julia Andreassen



Untitled

Photography

Carlos Valencia

That Time in July

Glenda Abreu

He was sitting on the back table of the big house.
He does that every morning,
Waiting patiently for his *café con leche*,
Hoping someday they can reunite.

His daughters now belong to the exile:
The American empire. Looking for a better future,
They left their *Abuelo* waiting for July.

He has the spirit of a young boy,
But he has it trapped on a Cuban shore.
He waits for that time in July,
When his little birds come back.
Time is not a friend anymore.

The old man hides under the shadow of a memory.
He lives as prisoner of a family picture and the
sound of a laugh.
He waits patiently for the letters,
As if it were a sacred scripture.

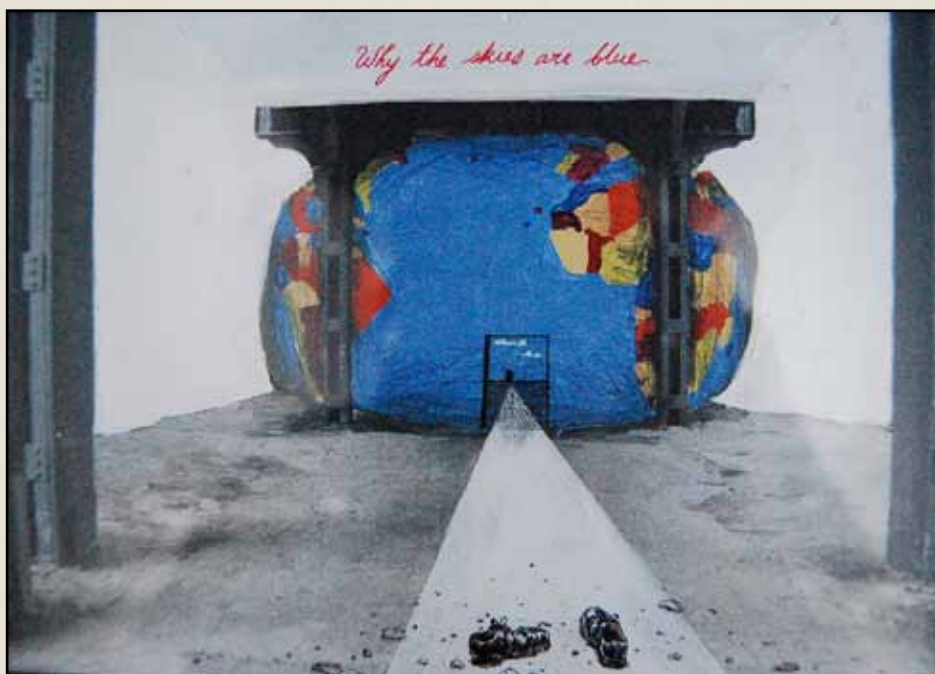
The old man sees this July passing by.
Abuelo cries because this July,
His daughters could not make it on time.



Temporal Lobe Split

Painting

Alejandro Valencia



Why the Skies are Blue

Painting

Alejandro Valencia



Girl on Phone 1 & 2

Painting

Aileen Meneses



The Friend Request

Anne Laure Bastien

Dear-girl-who-walks-by-my-house-
every-day-after-school,

I've been watching you for about
three months now. Mother would probably
never approve of me writing you a letter,
but I'll probably never send it anyways, so
there is no harm to be done. You are her
worst nightmare you see; she calls you a
hippie, and she has a lot
to say about that.

You always
stroll by the house in
the afternoon between
four and four thirty,
with a spring in your
step despite the sport
bag on your shoulders,
which appears to be very
heavy. I am fascinated
by you. You do not look,
or behave like the girls

I read about, or the ones that I know. Not
that I expected you to; our worlds are very
different.

You personify everything Mother
hates and fears. I should fear and hate you
too, but instead I'm awestruck. Mother
would call that the appeal of the devil.
Firstly, I am very fascinated by your hair,
which must be the first thing people notice
about you. Mother says that people with
dreadlocks are always waiting to attack

honest religious people. I don't know you
much, but from what I observe, sitting by
the window with my assigned poetry of
the day, you look peaceful, and your locks
are pretty neat. From afar it looks like an
octopus sitting on your head. When you're
very happy, which happens often, the
octopus dances, its tentacles bouncing all

over your back.
When you're not
so happy, the
tentacles close
around you like
a curtain. I never
thought that
hair could reflect
mood so well.
You also have
an interesting
complexion, a
cross between
copper and whole

wheat bread, and it's truly intriguing.

You have a tattoo on your arm,
which looks like chords and musical notes
exploding from a guitar. Or is it a fire
breathing dragon? I'm not sure, but I rather
think it's an exploding guitar; it would fit
beautifully.

Sometimes, when I read my
Mother's lips, I notice that she makes
comments when you walk by, something

*"You personify
everything Mother
hates and fears. I
should fear and hate
you too, but instead
I'm awestruck.
Mother would call
that the appeal of
the devil."*

about the imminent punishment of the modern youth if they don't stop their perversions. She sits opposite from me, in front of the living room window with a cup of tea, and scans the streets. Your very existence seems to affect her well-being. But of course you can't hear her, because you have those giant lime green headphones over your octopus. I can't hear her either, not because I have giant headphones, but because I can't.

I know that my routine in front of the window would appear strange to some people; you would probably be frightened if you were to learn of the peculiar curiosity I have towards you.

I do not go out much, and between the daily lessons and the assigned readings, I often feel the need to see other things than my books. You are the most exotic creature that has ever stepped into my visual field, so far. I suppose you go to public school, for I never saw anything like you when I used to go to my school, which is a private school obviously. I really liked it there, but Mother took me out and decided to home-school me after she learned that we'd watched "Saturday Night Fever" in our Youth club. I still see some of my former classmates, but it's just not the same. It's like I'd suddenly grown older, and we don't see the world through the same rose-tinted glasses anymore. The proof? I'm studying you instead of criticizing you. It's not that

big a deal, dear girl who walks by my house every afternoon after school, because my former classmates and I never really had a conversation anyways; I usually just sat and watched their mouths.

During one of my daily watches, and you'll probably remember this day quite well, I saw a man wearing a white dress with big purple flower motifs walking behind you. You seemed very upset that day. He had the same whole wheat bread complexion as you, and he was holding a rolled up piece of yellow paper behind his back, the same yellow paper they used at my school to write up misbehaving students, so I inferred that he was your father and that you were in trouble. Around the same moment, Mother's face convulsed violently and she opened her mouth like a fish out of water. I tried to see if she was in pain, but she stood up in front of the living room window, pointing an accusatory finger outside, and I could see her lips forming the word: "Travesty!!! TRAVESTY!!!"

It took about thirty minutes to calm her down. There is no doubt that you heard everything, so I hope you can forgive her. Last year, Dad sent me a subscription of National Geographic, but Mother thought that it was inappropriate for my innocent eyes and threw them out. I've read many of them though, and I learned, among other things, that the "Mumu" is a traditional

Hawaiian garment worn both by men and women. See, Mother doesn't know that because she doesn't read National Geographic, but I know that. So I do know that your father is not a pervert; he's just Hawaiian, and he obviously enjoys letting his body breathe. It's unfortunately very difficult to explain this concept to other people like my Mother.

I was afraid that you would never walk by the house again, but the next day you did. It was different this time. You didn't have your lime green headphones, the octopus wasn't as bouncy as usual, and you saw me watching you from the window. I almost dived to the floor, but you didn't seem angry or troubled. I never realized that you had piercing green eyes, which offered a sharp contrast to your tan skin. You looked at me for a few seconds before smiling, and your index and middle finger formed a V-shape that you pointed in my direction, and then, you were gone. For a second I wasn't even sure that you were looking my way. Mother started talking like always, but I didn't even bother to read her lips this time, because I was contemplating the absurd, but stunning possibility that maybe, just maybe, somebody had tried to communicate with me.

With me. Not at me.

I don't know why you made the victory sign in my direction, dear-girl-who-walks-by-my-house-every-day-after-school. You might have been mocking my disability, or maybe you just felt like sharing some good news with somebody. I just feel like maybe, just maybe, you were responding to my silent friend request.

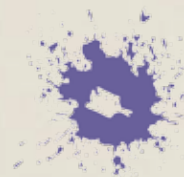
Please receive, dear-girl-who-walks-

*"maybe, just maybe,
somebody had tried
to communicate with me.
With me. Not at me.."*

by-my-house-
every-day-after-
school, my most
distinguished
salutations.

Sincerely,

The-hearing-impaired-guy-who-
lives-in-the-blue-house-on-top-of-the-hill.





Speak

Painting

Pascale Neheme

Thoughts of a 9-year-old

Yannel Marie Celestrin

Make sure to stuff his underwear in the sofa,
I might see it.

Don't moan too loudly,
I might hear you.

Tell him not to slam the door,
I might wake up.

Did he leave you money for the picture?
You know, the Polaroid of you on the sofa
with your face on the seat and your ass up,
a thin, yellow string stuffed between your cheeks,
The one I wasn't supposed to see.

Before you smoke in the bathroom
cover that little space under the door with a towel,
I might smell it.

Tell me before you leave for the weekend
And leave me alone in the house,
so I won't feel abandoned.



Untitled

Photography

Natalie Martinez

Entonces Quien Eres Tu?

Aileen Meneses

You are not a Roque,
At least that is what my Cuban Tia tells me.
Your eyes are much too dark.
Your face is too round.
You're taller than all of your *primas*.
And your hair is all untidy and black.

You are not a Meneses,
At least that is what my other Cuban Tia tells me.
Your skin lacks any flesh tone.
Your hips are pure fat.
Your nose is hooked like a Jew's.
And your smile will never resemble ours.

Entonces quien eres tu?

I'm fine that I am neither a niece nor a cousin,
Because I am a daughter –
A daughter of a Nicaraguan woman who left her newborn,
Abandoned her career as an economist,
Had nothing but the dirtiest clothes on her back,
And my six-year-old sister latched around her shoulders.

I'm fine that I am neither a Roque nor a Meneses
Because I am an Alfaro –
The name given by a Nicaraguan woman

who crossed El *Rio Bravo* in Mexico,
Witnessed my sister drown in the angry currents,
Held at gun point *en la frontera* de Texas,
All for the sake of granting a promising future for her children.

I'm fine that I resemble neither Cuban family,
Porque yo tengo la descendencia de mi madre que es Nicaraguense.
I have my mother's character.
...my mother's strength.
...my mother's appearance.
...my mother's will.
Tia, that is who I am.

Abuelo

Laiyen Suarez

I was sleeping soundly and dreaming of fantasy, as most kids do at the age of ten, the night he had a heart attack, lost his breath and the emergency ambulance came. Next day, I woke up and my mom was missing from home in the morning, and so was he.

I'd visit him after school, whenever my parents or relatives would be able to take me to his new home, filled with white, sanitized walls and nurses with generic grins and eyes full of nonchalant detachment. I remember holding my small, fat white hands against both sides of my face with big, bewildered brown eyes, and red cheeks puffed up against my nose, enough to make my mouth a perfect "o." His physical features were unmistakably his but I didn't remember him like this. The man laying in deathly restraint before me wasn't him. It just couldn't be...

At first, I was simply surprised as he gave me small, pain-stricken smiles and beckoned me to come forward with his quivering, thin arms to embrace me softly with the last of his breaths. But, even those small gestures eventually stopped.

My mom and aunt would take turns taking care of him in the hospital, both interchanging their roles of dutiful daughters with those of mothers and workers. While the adults spoke to the doctors, I used to stare and think, "What's wrong with him? Why won't he speak to me? It's me, your *nieta*! You love me, remember? You sacrificed your car, your farm and spent all your money to come to the United States and live with me, remember? You taught me timetables and helped me pick up the mess of Barbie dolls I often made, and told me funny jokes. You walked me to school, and listened to all my troubles, and bought me ice cream."

Soon after a few visits, I wasn't allowed to see him anymore. As my mom stayed in the hospital through his last moments, I stayed in a neighbor's home.

My family faced two choices: a motionless vegetable tied to a machine for further years, or an end to it all.

And then he was gone.

When relatives and family members gave their condolences, a large, dirt hole was dug inside my heart, like his grave. I just couldn't believe it. My disbelief kept feeding the hungry black hole.

He was gone. Really gone. Forever gone.

And so was a part of me, sucked into a pit, never to be uncovered again.



Self Portrait

Painting

Alfredo Rodriguez

Abandon Ship

Jessica Maria Fiallo

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away,
Blessed be the Lord.

There was a black spot in the cosmos of my womb,
Two turned to four, then sixteen, then forty-eight—

Seventeen weeks along,
The division stopped.

Here yesterday, gone by morning,
God cast out the black sheep.

Tears flooded the cavity.

My vessel flailed.

Blessed be the Lord?



The Agony of Exile

Painting

Alejandro Valencia

The Character of Sweetness

Laiyen Suarez

Soft, pliable, hair.
The kind which only
Porcelain dolls seem to have.
White skin...
So white,
As if she was bathed in talcum powder.
Her lips are red as candied cherries,
And her beat
swaying on a windy day.
Her eyes are huge
And green,
Like fresh cut grass
Or the ocean,
full of endless curiosity.
In the middle,
the golden sun encircles her dark pupil,
revealing bravery within her.
She smiles and her eyes squint with joy,
Two front teeth are missing while some are growing in.
I look at her with pure affection,
Admire the innocence
And knowledge and experiences yet to come.
She will be ready.
I will teach her.
And in the midst of it all,
I will love her.



Calling

Painting

Jessica Maria Fiallo

Engaged to a Prince

Laiyen Suarez

Sweet darkness envelops all corners of earth,
Has he been keeping me in his thoughts?

I gaze at the full moon and wonder,
Were our paths meant to collide?

I am nothing but a simpleton,
Was I meant to be pushed aside?

Giving the ghostly circle a sigh,
Why should he care?

The calm wind quickly changes path,
He is out there somewhere.

Out the bend, a shadow is revealed,
Should I turn around?

I do.

The shadow's face is no longer concealed,
My heart ignites.

Finding his words, he stutters,
"I love you."



Getting There

Photography

Ingrid Espinal

Cuban

Laiyen Suarez

The trumpets thundered while
the nostalgic hopes and triumphs of Willy Chirino
played in the background.
The beaming couple friskily capered
the dim dance floor.
The fair man with a light, pastel-colored *guayabera*
swayed to and fro, he lead his lover, directing their every step.
Spectators watched hypnotized
in fedoras and ironed-pressed black tuxedos,
gaudy dresses and silky gloves.
As the Latin beats chimed,
the man's robust arms twirled her
round and round, the woman's long dark hair swung
side to side, like a grandfather clock.
Her red, sassy dress swirled.
She grooved her hips in unison with salsa and merengue,
almost as fast as her thighs and arms moved,
while Celia Cruz's melancholic yearnings for her island home,
blasted through the stereo.
The woman's visage looked European,
her white smiling teeth from ear to ear
were her lightest features.
She was tan, tinted from the Caribbean sun.
Finally, Gloria Estefan's lyrics
smoothly rolled off like hot butter
melted the lovers together closer and closer
el final.
"Bravo! Bravo!" roared the crowd.



Untitled

Photography

Carlos Valencia

Concert for the Insomniac

Anne Laure Bastien

Where I come from, announcing to a city-dweller that you live in the Plains, or the mountains, would certainly guarantee a whole lot of teasing. It means that you're not like them, that you've literally been living under rocks. You are that type of bizarre, unrefined, blunt creature.

It's eerie living in the Plains. Unlike the city, the houses are far from each other and the silence is oppressing. It's a place where, during the day, we can hear an aluminum goblet fall on the ground from four blocks away, or hear cows calling each other across the neighborhoods. Sometimes we can even hear a car coming and think that it's about to pin us to the ground, when in reality it's all the way on the Grand Route.

Yes, the Plains is an eerie place to live, and that's only half the oddity. Trying to sleep in the Plains on a Friday night, now that's an adventure.

The Plains, despite the peculiarity, is like everywhere else. We have religious people, we have young people, we have thieves, we have everything. And every so often, all these worlds collide and step on each other.

Every afternoon there is a Baptist, or Protestant service in the Plains. I don't know where, but I know the exact time the service starts because those people have a sick sound system that echoes throughout the Plains. At five thirty or so, in the middle of all the oppressing and intoxicating silence, there would suddenly be a loud interference announcing that the

"We have religious people, we have young people, we have thieves, we have everything."

sound system was being rigged up and then, a slow and loud keyboard, which was supposed to pass for an organ, would start playing. After an hour of suicide-worthy music, a loud female voice would welcome the faithful and probably half-deaf attendees, then the adoration and shouting would start. Big blows of "PRAISE THE LORD!!!" followed by "HALLELUJAH!!!" and "THANK YOU JESUS!!!" My family and I are more or less decent church people, but by the time we go to bed at 7:30 p.m. (yes, 7:30 p.m.) my dog-tired parents would be on the brink of yanking their eyes out. We would wish each other a miserable night and climb to bed, while the unknown female voice howled the devil out of our heads.

Friday nights in the Plains is the time hell (or heaven) breaks loose. At 9 p.m., in the middle of the 23rd gospel or

so, a faint but steady beat would rise in the middle of the diabolical cleansing. It would come and go like a wave, often overwhelming the religious service; other times it would be so faint it seemed to disappear. Somewhere in the intersection between the Plains and the Grand Route leading to the city, a nightclub had just woken up. I know its exact location because the DJ would send shout-outs to various neighborhoods in the Plains and give the address of the nightclub, so people could join the fun. Then the music would start, fast and furious, going and coming in waves of maddening cacophony. Our religious matron would try to keep our gentile souls from being drowned in the sinful noise by ordering another round of dreadful keyboard playing.

At around 11 p.m., we were persuaded that the good Lord had left, chased away by his faithful shouting children and his other not-so-faithful children fist-pumping at the club. As if trying to prove a point, another type of sound had risen from the entrails of the Plains. Those of us who hadn't passed out from exhaustion could clearly identify the new integrant to the party; on the other edge of the Plains, there was a voodoo ceremony taking place.

The unmistakable drums and the bone chilling metal against metal instruments were now resounding

throughout the immensity of the land, mixing with the praises destined to the Lord and the ecstatic shouts coming from the rave. The trinity was now complete, and the battle for the ownership of our souls was officially on. And me in the middle of it all, amazed by the complexity of my people, I chose to lose myself in the mayhem because frankly, I have no choice. It's a nocturnal earful of my culture that is pouring through my window and through the cracks in the walls. The sacred, the profane, the unknown, they all fight for attention. They all want to be heard, trying to tell me about my people and the beauty in their madness.

It's been two years since I've fallen asleep to the nocturnal mayhem. My nights are now inhabited by the noise of speeding cars and impatient horns, people yelling at each other, all those city noises that I just can't get used to. I speak to my parents sometimes; they tell me that the mayhem of the trinity is still there. Mom tells me that she hates the noise and that I am lucky to be able to leave it all behind.

She doesn't know how much I would give to hear it one more time.

I miss the madness.

I miss the absurdity.

I miss home.

But how can I explain that to somebody who thinks that I live in heaven?





Circle Dance

Painting

Alejandro Valencia

Untitled

Ricky Fleites

I play guitar, but I'm not a guitar *player*. I write original music, yet I wouldn't refer to myself as a composer. I never liked the idea of marching in a band, learning the same five pieces for an entire academic year, so being a *band geek* was never my interest. I am a *musician*, a person who is engulfed by the art form of music and embraces the expressionism that is found in the craft.

Musicians tend to have strong opinions about the mainstream, not because we believe our standards to be higher than that of society, but rather because we recognize the lack of artistic value in the mainstream. I do not mean to bore anyone with fancy musical analysis, but it is quite a shame to hear the radio play different songs with the same chord progression in similar key signatures with an 'artist' singing (or their attempt at such) a poem they supposedly wrote about making money or the joys of being intoxicated. But all the while they have perfectly synthesized instruments provide a backing track from a master computer soundboard. Even Ludwig Van Beethoven himself would say that seems intricate, but what does he know about music?

There are many factors that define generations: movies, world events, politics, fads, but few are as lasting as music. Music is the easiest way to distinguish 'my time' from 'your time', and in all honesty the

music of my generation is pitiful. I find it shameful those generations after mine will look at music as a reflection of my era's culture.

I do take a certain amount of pride in the fact that I study a very esoteric language, music theory, and that I appreciate the creativity and intricacy of musical masterpieces that most of my peers do not recognize, or worse, refuse to acknowledge the relevance of, but it is not just the science of music that drives us musicians; we embrace the undisputable emotion that is expressed in great music. Consequently, when music is composed without expression, but rather other motives (e.g. money, fame), we recognize the impurity and instantly make a mental evaluation of a particular piece of music's lack of artistic value.

Music is the embodiment of my passion! It is not just a hobby of mine, or something I do when I'm bored. My desire to distinguish myself as a musician from the abomination of music that my generation has created is heavily influenced by my disgust with mainstream music. It is not my sole purpose for being a musician, for I do have a genuine love and appreciation of the art, but it is a major key to why I am so passionate about music.

Elaboration on what exactly I enjoy about music would be a book in itself. Yet my love for the craft is enough to validate my musicianship as being genuine.





Play Something

Photography

Chelsea Fernandez

Melancholy Melody

Julio Soto

Death surrounds us
Like the air we breathe,
But it suffocates us with fear.
He waits for us,
For he is alone;
We are his company.
The invitation is our tombstone.
After death, your decisions
Will choose where you go.
The reaper reaps us,
But you reap what you sow.
The melody is death;
The notes are sour.
When you see death's smile,
You've reached the final hour.
You wanted an end to the pain:
Death is your solution.
Only the strong survive;
Just call it evolution.

My Father the Fallen Hero and His Dark Castle

Amanda Rodriguez

My father's house was a place where I could forget about everything and do whatever my heart desired. At the age of 9, I believed that my mother was an evil witch who wanted to control my every move, while my father was the hero who saved me from her evil powers. In my mind, he would sweep me off my feet and take me away to his castle where I could watch all the television I wanted and eat all the food I desired.

The road to his house was not a long one from mine. Little stop and shops were at each corner, and graffiti occupied some of the walls of the neighborhood; his house was big and bright peach. The front was wide, and the grass on the ground had turned brown and lifeless from all the cars my dad brought home from the dealer at which he worked. Cut bark of once tall trees stood lifeless on the ground as if no living thing was allowed to grow in such a perfect domain. There was, however, one small tree that remained standing in the backyard. Below it was a patch of cement flooring no bigger than the tree itself. It was here where I would cover my hands in chalk powder as I drew on it until the plain cement turned

into chalk vomit.

In my father's house lived my grandmother, my great grandmother, and my great grandfather. I remember walking down a long narrow hallway towards my great grandparent's room. Both of them would be lying down on their bed watching a classic novella. The bed was in the very middle of the cramped room with two white bedside tables on both sides. Upon the tables were old pictures of my great grandparents that had turned brown with

"My father's castle has become haunted in my mind."

age. I remember looking at them as if they were old relics that would crumble to dust upon my touch. My great grandmother, Wella, had short white curly hair, with a button nose, and big eye magnifying glasses. I remember thinking she looked like a bug. My great grandfather, Tete, had a little bit of white hair sticking out of his scalp, very little teeth, and matching magnifying glasses.

I would often approach their bed and give them a hug. My hands caressed their skin, which felt silky, smooth from lack of sunlight, yet rigid from old age. Wella's bug eyes, lifeless before she saw me, would light up as she pulled herself up slowly from her

bed and move to her side table to take something out of the drawer. Her arms would shake, as she would hug me and gently place \$20 in my little hands whispering in my ear not to waste it all in one place.

My grandparent's room was also originally my uncle's room, so the decor was not exactly 'them'. Half naked pictures of women were posted on the walls and the smell of dirt and dog from the Alaskan Husky on the floor filled the dark brown room. I was told that my uncle had moved out but never took his stuff with him. I guess my grandmother thought he would come back, or my father was always too occupied doing other things to buy furniture that better suited my grandmother's taste.

My favorite thing in my father's house was his waterbed. I would roll around and feel the whole bed jiggle and shake as if I was on top of an ocean. A television was directly in front of the bed, and everything else was pretty vacant of any decorations except for a few pictures of me as a baby on top of the drawer. As a child, I would love going to my dad's house because it was a place for me to escape. It was a place for me not to worry about having to

hear my mother tell me to stop doing this and to do that instead.

When I think about my father's room, I can't remember what was in it besides his waterbed because things from his room would randomly disappear and appear. I can't remember what type of cars he had because every time I went to his house there were different colored ones and different models parked on the dead grass. I never understood why I only went to his house

"Just like the paint, this memory of mine will soon fade away."

when he picked me up. I wondered why I wasn't there more. I would spend my day painting on that cement floor or stuffing my face with food. I remember a dark

chocolate cake I would eat almost entirely by myself. It was rich and creamy and smelt like pure cocoa. As I would chew the piece of cake, I would need milk to help me wash it down because it was so thick and moist.


I recently went to Winn-dixie and bought the same cake. As I held the white box in my hands I smiled at the memory of it being my favorite dessert at his house and hoped to have the same glorious feeling of eating the moist cake. In the end, I couldn't finish one piece, and it ended up sitting in my fridge. The moist cake had felt sour in my mouth

and the flavor of cocoa made me want to cough and drown myself in water from the bitterness I felt towards the memory.

I now realize that the reason why I can't remember my father's house that much is because I've blocked everything out. My father was a fallen hero who was addicted to drugs ever since I was a child. If I allow myself to go back to when I was about two, I can remember hearing my mother scream at him and hear glass vials breaking on the floor. I remember crying behind my book, as my parents argued over his addiction. I remember approaching him while 10-years-old, and telling him that I knew he did drugs because I was learning about the symptoms through a program in school called D.A.R.E. He would sell his valuables just so he could satisfy his next high. On one of my birthdays he made me wait for hours on my front porch just so he could later appear and hand me a pack of 'fun sized M&Ms,' give me a kiss on the cheek and leave. I now understand the hug of my now passed away great grandparents as they gave me the hidden money in their drawers.

I also understand why I painted my father to be so great; it's because he really could have been great. He was a born salesman and could sell anything.

He had a voice that gave you goose bumps as he sang. He was a handsome man, with a beautiful smile that could light up any room he walked into. He had so much potential to be amazing.

My father's castle has become haunted in my mind. Its glorious peach paint that I once envisioned in my mind has turned grey and has started to peel away. Just like the paint, this memory of mine will soon fade away. But its lesson will not fade; it is the reason I am so strong now, and why I am so determined to never walk its path. 



Dish Dive

Photography

Aaron Rolle

Schandenfreude

Jessica Maria Fiallo

Ingredients:

2 fistfuls of powdered detergent	12 bottles of American soda pop
1 pocketful of old snuff	1 Funnel
1 palm-full of cayenne pepper	
1 flask of kerosene	
Crumpled rolling papers	

1. In the dead of night, after everyone has gone to bed, creep slowly out of your bunk and tap your friend on the shoulder. Noiselessly slip out of the back door of the barracks, and sneak towards the back fence. (NOTE: Monitor for at least three weeks prior.)
2. Reveal a hole underneath a large unmarked bolder and reach inside. Take out the bedpan along with your dry ingredients. (NOTE: Stolen over a period of two weeks from different spots around the camp.)
3. Put the dry ingredients into the bedpan and with a stick, mix them together. (NOTE: By now, your friend should be by your side with the flask of kerosene. If not, immediately abort mission and head back to the barracks.)
4. Pour in the kerosene while stirring, until it is the consistency of brownie batter. (WARNING: Avoid inhaling toxic fumes.)
5. Cover the bedpan with rocks and palm fronds and continue on as usual while it bakes for the next day and a half.
6. If no one has discovered the mix, repeat step 1. The mixture has been slowly drying out in the hot august sun and turned to chalk.
7. Take out the rolling papers crumpled inside your pocket. (NOTE: Trade a candy bar with the tobacco farmer's children for rolling papers.)

8. Break the mixture into small lumps and wrap in the rolling papers like small candies. Stick three or four in each pocket. Bury the bedpan.
9. Now that the candies are ready carefully make your way to the garage. (NOTE: Be on alert for soldiers on night duty.)
10. Once you're at the garage, sneak in through the back window with the loosened screws.
11. Raise the hoods of three vehicles.
12. Open the oil tank and empty four bottles of American soda pop inside each tank. (NOTE: The bottles of soda pop are hidden inside a pile of replacement tires.)
13. Close the tank and take out one of the candies, crumbling the contents and spreading them wherever your hands or body touched.
14. Pick up bottles, candy wrappers, and slip back out the window.
15. Listen for rumors of how the captain's cars mysteriously sputtered and died.
16. Two days later, wait to be filed in and be interrogated with the rest of the platoon.
17. When finally dismissed, wait till no one is looking, softly pat your friend on the shoulder and smile.



Forever in the Dark

Fortune Onyiorah

Contemplate what you may and color me grey,
Your murmurs I hear but do not fear,
A perilous pride has grown inside,
And boldly defends all my unfastened ends.

The Conventional: limits to what one attains,
Forever dark the worthless will remain,
Ill-fated without original thought
In the web of norms they are caught.

The Bizarre: a slew of hues untranslated,
Nor understood – for our colors are heavily assorted,
From the confinement of the crayon box, we must be
emancipated,
Yet our vision remains greatly distorted-

For those who remain forever in the dark. It is true:
Your judgment of me is the criticism in *you*.



Untitled

Photography

Carlos Valencia

Newton's First Law

Lynisha Arceus

Newton's First Law clearly states
What's in motion,
Stays in motion until a force stops it.
Until we learn how to be that full force,
Stand as one,
We will continue to fall,
One by one.
Maimed by another man's hands,
Hated because of the color of our skin,
Stereotyping because of the zip code we
live in.
Newton clearly states, what's in motion,
Stays in motion until a force stops it.
Until we learn how to be the bigger person,
Turn the other cheek,
Or just walk away.
We will continue to fall into these graves,
"With our names on them"
bullet for bullet,
Body for body.
You bust one, I bust three.
You took one life from him,
He's out to get your whole team.
What's in motion stays in motion.
Their pants are getting lower right along
with their IQ's.
Their role models didn't even finish high
school,
Those are the types of people they look to.
The ignorant ARE LABELED as the "Wise",
The young are led by the dumb,
Carrying guns in their Pull-Ups,

Milk behind their ears,
Still sleeping with a night light at the edge
of their bed,
Still think the Boogey Man is hidden
in their closets, messin' with their heads.
Clearly what's in motion stays in motion.
Husband beats his wife in front of his kids,
Son does the same thing too.
But daughter is the one who
Comes home with a bruise from another
dude.
Every time a bullet flies, a body drops, one
or two,
But it might not be who they wanted to.
And the cycle continues
What's in motion,
Stays in motion until a force stops it.
Until a force stops it.



Homo Hamini Lupus Est

Painting

Alejandro Valencia



Masturbation

Painting

Alejandro Valencia

Rudolph

Joshua Galban

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

The living room was warm and cozy, illuminated only by the fireplace crackling pleasantly against the wall. The baubles on the Christmas tree shone brightly as the fire reflected off them, small slivers of firelight falling on the walls and furniture. The firelight fell too on the eyes of the boy who hid behind one of the larger sofas in the room, hugging his body against it to better hide himself. Timmy had planned this night well, although he had never before been so nervous in his entire life. He had hung his stocking over the fireplace, just as his mom had told him. He had also left out a big plate of fresh chocolate chip cookies next to a tall glass of cold milk, as is only natural. He even left out some wholesome carrots for the reindeer! All he had to do now was sit and wait for ol' St. Nick to come hohoho-ing down the chimney. He would catch that fat bastard this year, he was sure. Timmy had missed him by just a few seconds last year, or so he suspected. He had heard a sound in the living room and rushed swiftly from the toilet, but the living room was empty, save for the new stack of presents glittering

underneath the pine tree. This year, he made sure to empty his bladder BEFORE he began the wait. This year he was ready.

The very instant that their old family clock struck midnight, he heard a tiny, almost indecipherable bustling coming from above his head, a sound so small and nonexistent that if he hadn't been stretching his ears out searching for it at that very moment, he would have missed it. His eyes sped towards the fireplace just as the lumbering figure of Kris Kringle popped out through the fire. The titanic beast of a man stood a full head taller than their 8 foot Christmas tree, and his wide bulk completely obscured the fireplace. An enormous white beard hung off his face like a baby polar bear, coming to a stop just below his belt. He carefully brought down his sack off his shoulders and laid it on the floor. Loosening the knot, his knowing eyes darted towards Timmy who crouched nervously behind the sofa.

"Ho ho ho!" he jollied at Timmy, "and how are you, little boy?"

"I'm. I'm okay. I can't believe it's really you...SANTA!"

"Haha! Who else would I be, Timmy? And what do you mean, 'okay'? Just 'okay'? You've been trying to catch me at my job for a couple of years now, haven't you Timmy? Come on, admit it."

"Haha! Yes, yes I have! And I finally caught you!" Timmy laughed. He wasn't so nervous anymore. Heck, this was Santa, friend to children everywhere! He'd feel more afraid if Jesus popped out the chimney!

"Ah well, that's good Timmy, that's good." Santa said quietly, "And now what? What's the plan now, now that you've caught me at my work?"

"Just, watch. I guess? I'm not sure. I didn't really think that you would show up," The small boy walked from behind the sofa to stand just a few paces before the huge figure.

"You wanted to make sure I was real, didn't you?" Santa questioned. "Come on, you can tell me Timmy, we're pals here."

"Yeah, kinda. Some of my friends told me that you didn't really exist," Timmy explained.

"And now you know that I AM real! What great news Timmy, what GREAT news!" With these last words, Santa turned around to finish setting out the

presents. Timmy saw him set out big blue boxes with silver ribbons, small pink ones with rose colored ribbons, and even a long green one with no ribbons. This last one made Timmy's eyebrows perk up; it was the length of a king sized bed! Santa could fit all sorts of things inside that magical sack of his. Timmy looked on as Santa placed presents all around the tree and filled up the stockings with small toys and treats.

"All done," Santa said. A small

smile pulled at the corner of his mouth.

"I have to be going soon; I've got a long night ahead of me!

Unless, you have any questions?"

"I do!" Timmy yelled.

Santa laughed. "I knew it, Timmy. I just knew it. Well, go ahead, don't be shy. Ask away."

"Did reindeer really pull your sleigh here? How can you go to every house in the world in one night? How old are you? How can you fit down the chimney? Is there really a Mrs. Claus? And, can I open one of my presents now, or do I have to wait until my parents wake up? I'm so excited, Santa!" spouted Timmy quickly, not waiting to catch his breath as he jumped from question to question.

"Ho ho ho! That's a lot of questions! Let me answer your last question first, as

"Santa's eyes had developed a gleam now, sinister and devilish"

some of the others have to be kept secret, even from the very best behaved boys," Santa said. He swept his hand behind him grandly. "Of course you can open one up now! It's only natural! It's Christmas Timmy, why shouldn't you be able to play with your new toys?"

Santa sat his impressive bulk on the closest sofa, a fatherly look coming over his face. He reached out for one of the cookies, "Why don't you open up the yellow one over there, Timmy. Yes, that one. The one with the blood-red ribbons."

Timmy went over to the box that Santa indicated, his anxiety returning and growing with every step.

"So, Timmy, tell me something. Have you been a good boy this year?"

"Of course I've been a good boy this year!" declared Timmy, turning around to face the big man. "I've held the door open for old people and I've said thank you and I've said you're welcome and all sorts of stuff! I helped my mom unload groceries and one time I even gave up my Friday lunch-time pizza to some girl that was really hung- "

"After you spat on it," interrupted Santa calmly.

"Well, yeah, but still, she was

hungry and she ate it!" explained Timmy, convinced that he had done right.

"Very true Timmy, very true. You have done these things. You've had a very fun year. You and all your little friends? Tell me, do you remember that little girl you and your friends beat up at the park? She had it coming, didn't she? You couldn't let her just get away with what she said! Isn't that right? The little brat had it coming?" Santa's eyes had developed a gleam now, sinister and devilish.

Timmy remained oblivious to the

"Oh, little Timmy, that's not just a saw. It's a bone saw." said the fat man with glee."

change. "That's right! She said I had a small pecker, in front of all my friends!" he blurted.

"Ho, ho! You just HAD to shut her up!

All in good fun, of

course! And later, when you were walking home and spotted her alone again, do you think that was a good idea, Timmy?" questioned Santa, with malice in his eyes. "You couldn't just let her go home thinking you had a small pecker, you had to show her otherwise! You had to make it clear!"

Timmy gulped. "Well, like I said, she had it coming. What if she had told other kids? Then everyone would make fun of me over something that isn't true!"

"Oh I know, I know! But don't worry; we're all friends. Tell me, do you

remember just a couple of months ago, Halloween night?" asked Santa.

Timmy was growing bolder; Santa was such a nice guy! Very understanding. "I do Santa!" He stated almost proudly. "Remind me what you did Timmy; come on, tell me!" prompted the big man. The old man knew his job well.

"We stuck a huge firecracker up that mutt's butt! It wouldn't stop yapping and barking at us!" Timmy shouted, his delight overflowing.

"Oh, ho, ho, ho! And that was great fun wasn't it? Watching it explode the way it did? All those chunk of dog flying through the air!"

"Hell yeah!" yelled Timmy.

Santa pursed his lips into a thin line. "Well, go on, go back to opening your presents! I believe you were about to untie the knot on that yellow one there," said Santa, pointing at the box.

Timmy turned back around and jumped the last few feet to the box. He couldn't believe it; he had actually met and talked to Santa! His friends were going to be so jealous, especially Kyle! He had told Timmy that Santa wasn't real.

Timmy reached down and with a single tug; all the ribbons on the box came undone. He tore open the box with a feverish delight, but, when he finally had it open, he stopped. And Santa watched.

"When the neighbor's had come

down the street, looking for the dog, you lied to them, didn't you Timmy? You told them you had seen some Trick-or-Treaters pick up the dog and run away. Even when their little girl was crying her eyes out, you didn't bat an eyelash." Santa stared fixedly at him. "Why don't you take out what's in the box Timmy?"

And so Timmy did. He reached down and grasped the handle of the thing, pulling it out as slowly and carefully as if it was made of glass. He turned around to face Santa.

"You see, Timmy. I never know what's inside the boxes. No one does. Each box is different; each box knows the person that's going to open it. The object lying inside the box is for you and you alone, dictated by how you've behaved throughout the year. Sometimes little boys want race cars, but all they get are socks. Other times, all a little girl wants is a doll, but she gets an entire dollhouse with dozens of dolls to play with! It's not my decision, it's the boxes!" explained Santa Claus. "Now, do you know what it is you hold in your hand?"

Timmy nodded slowly, "My dad has one of these in the garage; it's a saw. But why do I get one? What am I supposed to do with it?"

"Oh, little Timmy, that's not just a saw. It's a bone saw." said the fat man with glee.

"But, there's red paint all over it," Timmy muttered under his breath.

Santa chuckled, a sound so deep it felt as if the whole house rumbled. "That's not paint, Timmy. And I think after seeing the first present, I can guess the rest. Needles and pliers, drills and scalpels. You know what a scalpel is, don't you Timmy? You used one earlier this year to cut the ears off a couple of cats in the neighborhood, just for the fun of it." Do you remember, Timmy? Just for fun?" Timmy shook uncontrollably with fear, urine running down his leg. He knew exactly what those things were and what they were used for.

Santa stood up, finished his glass of milk, and strode calmly towards him looming over the little boy. "You see, Timmy, every year I take the nine best behaved children and give them a little treat. Can you guess what that treat is? Well I'll tell you. I take them for a ride. I let them come with me to all the houses of all the little boys and girls of the world. And you're the last one on my list, the very best." Santa said softly, shaking his head.

A change then came over Kris Kringle. His complexion grayed, and his beard gained an ashen look. Then his eyes... All Timmy could look at were his eyes. They had become the color of hell itself.

Santa grabbed him by his collar, throwing him across the room. Timmy hit

the wall and crumpled to the floor.

Whimpering like the dog before it had been blown to pieces, Timmy clutched his broken elbow and turned to face the monster wearing Santa's jolly red suit. "Ho, ho, ho, you were the best of them all, Timmy!" Santa Claus bellowed, bending down to rip open the long, unadorned green box. He tilted it, and when he did, the little boy smelled a foul odor. Three small green-suited figures rested motionless inside. He noticed too the long and pointy noses that ornamented their faces. At the end of their spindly arms were grotesque bloody claws, a breeding ground for maggots. Their finely edged ears ended in points as well, glittering with silver jewelry. Santa laughed as Timmy trembled, soiling himself.

"Aren't they wonderful? They're my little helpers! They're here to give you exactly what you deserve!" All semblance of jolliness gone.

As if that last laugh was a signal, their eyes sprang open. The fire reflected off them and Timmy sat in horror as they calmly stepped out of their box and approached him. Much like the baubles too, their eyes seemed dipped in a shiny, metallic paint. Their left eyes were crimson, while their right eyes were emerald. They leapt onto Timmy before he could get an arm up to defend himself. One of the elves stabbed a single barbed finger into Timmy's left eye and with a swift, fluid motion

ripped it straight out of its socket. Timmy opened his mouth to wail, but the elf jammed the bloody eye into the opening of his mouth while the other two elves grabbed Timmy's jaw and moved it up and down, forcing the boy to chew his own organ.

Timmy cried for his parents at the top of his lungs. But no one came. Santa and his elves cackled. "No one can hear you. And you won't be missed," said Santa.

The devilish little elves scrambled around, tearing open presents and throwing their contents on the floor. Timmy saw knives, needles, and all sorts of tools. One of the elves rushed up to him and sank a syringe deep into his neck.

"That's adrenaline, so you are awake for the whole process. But don't worry; they're terribly efficient at what they do, Timmy. Terribly efficient," Santa clarified, as if the terrified child had doubts of their competence.

Another elf brought over a heavy silver mallet and slammed it down on Timmy's kneecaps. The pain left Timmy so out of breath that he couldn't draw in enough air to cry or scream. They ripped out tendons and ligaments so he couldn't

walk upright. They forced him onto his crumpled knees, sewing the back of his legs to the backs of his thighs, in a permanent kneeling position. The elves brought two large branch-like objects out of Santa's bag and carried them towards him. Timmy was in a daze. He forced his only eye to look up and watch the elves at work. Timmy could smell burning skin and crushed bone as they made two holes in his skull, jamming the branches into their sockets. They smashed his wrists and elbows, but put

long rods of steel within his arm, so that he had to use his knuckles for balance and maneuvering, like a gorilla.

After the operation was complete, Santa strode over to his new creation, "Perfect.

Just one more small detail." He motioned towards the elf. "For traditions sake, you understand."

The elf leaned into Timmy's face and sunk his teeth into his nose. With one hard pull, he felt it come off. The elf spat it at Timmy with a hideous smile. Santa walked over to the small, helpless boy and took something out of his pocket. He crouched down as Timmy shut his remaining eye tight as he jammed a two-pronged object into the space where his nose had just been.

"He reached down and grasped the handle of the thing, pulling it out as slowly and carefully as if it was made of glass."

Timmy opened his eye, but could only see a red light emanating from somewhere on his face.

“You’ll get used to it,” Santa said.

Moments later, with a leash around his neck, Timmy was dragged across the snow-covered roof by Santa. He looked on, and saw other figures tied together in front of a giant, ruby sleigh. He counted eight of them in all. As Santa walked his new pet past the kneeling figures, Timmy could make out their faces. He recognized Kyle, who had bleeding lacerations running all over his body. The other children he had never seen before, but could guess why they were there. He saw branches sticking out from all of their skulls too. Santa led Timmy to the front of the procession and tied him in. “You’re my favorite reindeer this year, Timmy. You’ve truly earned this spot. Oh, and here, I saw you left out some

carrots, so I brought you one.” Santa shoved the carrot into the boy’s rectum and whispered softly, but jollily, into his ear, “Don’t worry, this one won’t blow up.”

Santa walked back to his sleigh, elves in tow, whistling a jolly tune. He sat back on his throne, brought his whip up, and gave it a mighty –**CRACK**– His sleigh slowly began to move upwards, and so thus began his chanting,

“Now, Dasher!” –**CRACK**– “Now, Dancer!”

– **CRACK**– “Now, Prancer, and Vixen!”–

CRACK–

“On, Comet!” –**CRACK**– “On, Cupid!”

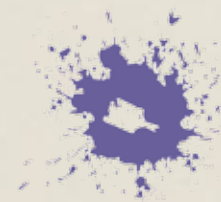
–**CRACK**– “On, Donner and Blitzen!” –

CRACK–

“On Timmy!” –**CRACK**– “ON Timmy!” –

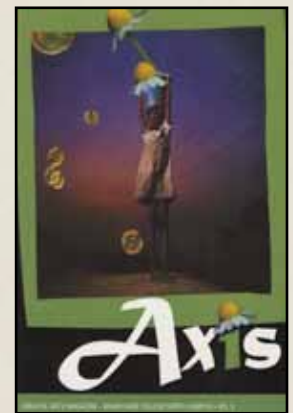
CRACK– “ON TIMMY!” –**CRACK**–

*He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ‘ere he drove out of sight,
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!”*



Ten Years of Axis

Amanda Rodriguez



A line in which a body rotates, a principle line of development, movement or direction, a turning point. The earth rotates on its axis and just like the earth, the creativity of North Campus has and continues to rotate around AXIS.

Axis an award-winning magazine of multiple awards, both state and national, that has showcased the creative talents of the students of North Campus for the past decade. Published once a year, AXIS accepts submissions from students from categories that include: poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, art, photography, illustration, film and music. Understanding that North Campus is filled with diversity, AXIS also accepts works in multiple languages.

The idea of creating a literary magazine began with advisers Elena Perez-Mirabal and Lisa Shaw. The idea itself sparked interest throughout the faculty and the chairperson of the English department, Joesett Peat.

"As all things in the beginning stages, it was a sense of adventure along with a sense of nervousness," Peat said. "Both Mirabal and Shaw took the idea from a possibility to a reality. The idea of having a creative magazine turned into thinking, 'can we do this?' to 'yes, we can and we have!'"

The difficulties, according to both Shaw and Peat, included learning the process of developing a magazine, preparing it to be suitable to print, and finding talent around campus.

AXIS has found creativity within the creative writing and arts courses. It is in these classes, where the pool of creativity is dived for

exploration by the AXIS team.

"We have been very blessed with exceptional award winning talent from our students," Shaw said.

According to Shaw, the first magazine was primarily literal and was not very glossy and visual. Unlike today's AXIS magazine, there weren't many art pieces incorporated.

Victor Gomez, who works with providing AXIS with art from his students, and Barry Gordon, who works with providing photography, have helped expand the visual beauty of what AXIS is today.

"AXIS is like a barometer of North Campus," Gomez said. "It showcases the greatest art and writing of the year. It's a wonderful opportunity for students to get published, and I recruit all year long for AXIS. I make it a point for students in my classes to step up and stand out."

AXIS, has transformed into a magazine that has become a resource to faculty and students. It is a showcase of the best creative works that students can create, and it is inspiration to students to step up and try to get published.

"I have always admired the Axis publications since I began reading the magazine many years ago," Gordon said. "The student work, the magazine layout and execution are top-notch. From the written and spoken word, to the visual arts, to the art of film and video, Axis has proven itself to be a true arts magazine of the highest caliber."

Since the genesis of AXIS, the president of North Campus, Jose A. Vicente, has supported and continues to support the work of

the staff and students involved.

"AXIS is a shining example of literary work of which any president would be proud, and I certainly am," Vicente said. "It's refreshing to see the level of student engagement in the magazine. Any student of the North Campus can join the AXIS student organization and participate in the process to produce literary work and have it considered for publication." The current advisers for AXIS are Carmen Bucher and Jennie Olaguibel. They continue to push forward the legacy and goals that AXIS hopes to achieve.

"AXIS is a place where artists of all sorts can bring out their true voice and creativity," Bucher said.

AXIS has transformed into something more than just a creative magazine, according to Olaguibel. It has morphed into a small world where readers can fall into and explore the many emotions and insights that are illustrated through different artistic forms.

"AXIS is bigger than any one person, class or department," Olaguibel said. "AXIS is a compilation of what people truly enjoy about life... artistic expression, beauty, insight and a true reflection of the society in which we live. The creative arts can transport you to a place of raw emotion and genuine passion. There is no better venue for students to showcase all they can be, all they dream about and all of that which they are capable."

The goal for future volumes is to incorporate more online tools for students to view different issues of the magazine, continue to grow in both creativity and involvement and continue to spread the word to students.

"In every endeavor, promotional efforts are key in creating awareness; it's never an easy feat getting the word out, and we can always improve; however, it's important to acknowledge when great progress has been made, and that is the case with our magazine," Vicente said.

Creativity, according to Vicente, is an important element to truly bring inspiration to an individual's life. AXIS allows students and faculty the opportunity to truly connect with different people that have gone through multiple experiences. These experiences are only truly seen through their works of art and writing.

"Creativity is manifested in many ways, whether it's in one's leadership; through oratory, artistic or penned expression; and even through STEM research which is an area that may not readily come to mind when one thinks of creativity," said Vicente. "What is most important to me at North is for our faculty and staff to continuously empower our students to be innovative at every opportunity, and that is indeed happening both in and out of the classroom."

As AXIS continues to grow, the staff continues to push for involvement. Students don't have to be novelists or award winning artists to be included in the magazine. The guaranteed way in which one will never be published, is by never submitting in the first place. Inspired students should consider submitting to AXIS and becoming a part of the center in which the creativity of North Campus revolves.

Awards



2007

¹FCCAA State Publications Magazine

*Division A
Best Art Works*



2008

FCCAA State Publications Magazine

*Division B
Best Cover*



2009

FCCAA State Publications Magazine

*Division B
Best Fiction*

*Division B
Best Art*



2010

FCCAA State Publications Magazine

*Division B
Best Illustrations with Text*

FCCAA State Publications Magazine

Best Non---Fiction

²CCHA Literary Magazine Competition

*Southern Division
1st Place*



2011

FCCAA State Publications Magazine

*Division B
Best Fiction*

¹ Florida Community College Activities Association

² Community College Humanities Association



2012

Christian Buchanan

FCCAA State Publications Magazine

Division B

Best Fiction

3rd Place

Photography

Christopher Canete

1st Place

Fiction

Jessica Fiallo

2nd Place

Illustrations with Text

2nd Place

Contents Page

Lester Sanchez

2nd Place

Illustrations with Text

2nd Place

Art Works

Alfredo Sarmiento

2nd Place

Contents Page

3rd Place

Photography

Diana Santisteban

3rd Place

Photography

Alejandro Valencia

2nd Place

Art Works

2nd Place

Art – Individual

2nd Place

Illustrations with Text

Inner Circle

Rachael Walke

2nd Place

Illustrations with Text

2012-2013 Axis Staff



Order from Left to Right:

Amanda Rodriguez
Assistant Editor

Casey Baron
Non-Fiction Editor

Kathrina Giordani
Fiction Editor

Ryan Amoedo
Art Editor

Julie Eugene
Assistant Editor

Chelsea Fernandez
Managing Editor

Mercedes Maduro
Art Editor

Viviana Noa
Poetry Editor

Claudia Gonzalez
Poetry Editor

Jessica Fiallo
Editor in Chief

A Special Thank You

If you don't already know, creating a literary magazine is never a simple task. For those that flew along in our journey, it takes months and many late night hours to perfect this process. At some points we might have even plucked each other's feathers. However, we wanted to take a moment to thank the following people that took us under their wing:

Dr. José Vicente

North Campus President

Dr. Mattie Roig-Watnik

Academic Dean

Director Cristina Mateo

Senior Director of Campus
Administration

Dean Malou Harrison

Student Services Dean

Manny Perez

Campus Chief Information Officer

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Carmen Bucher

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Department & AXIS Advisor

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Student Life Director

Stephanie Garcia

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Axis Creative Arts Club

Thank you, from the students of the AXIS Creative Arts Magazine

Editorial Policy

AXIS is Miami Dade College, North Campus's creative art 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, non-fiction, essays and poetry. We also accept pieces of art, photography, short films and music. All submissions must include a corresponding form, which are available in the AXIS office located in the English Department in room 7321. Copyright for individual's works both audio and print return 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.

Board of Trustees

An abstract painting with a vibrant, multi-colored background of brushstrokes in red, orange, yellow, blue, and purple. Two black birds, possibly crows or ravens, are depicted in flight, one on the left and one on the right, with their wings spread. The overall style is expressive and dynamic.

"It isn't a temporary crisis;
it's a way of life."

Casandra Perez



Miami Dade
College
North Campus