

The Mill

Willamette University
2016

a run of The Mill publication.

Acknowledgements

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Our mission is to help encourage the growth of creative community on campus, and this journal is a product of the pursuit of that goal.

Note From The Staff

Some of the content in this publication may be triggering.

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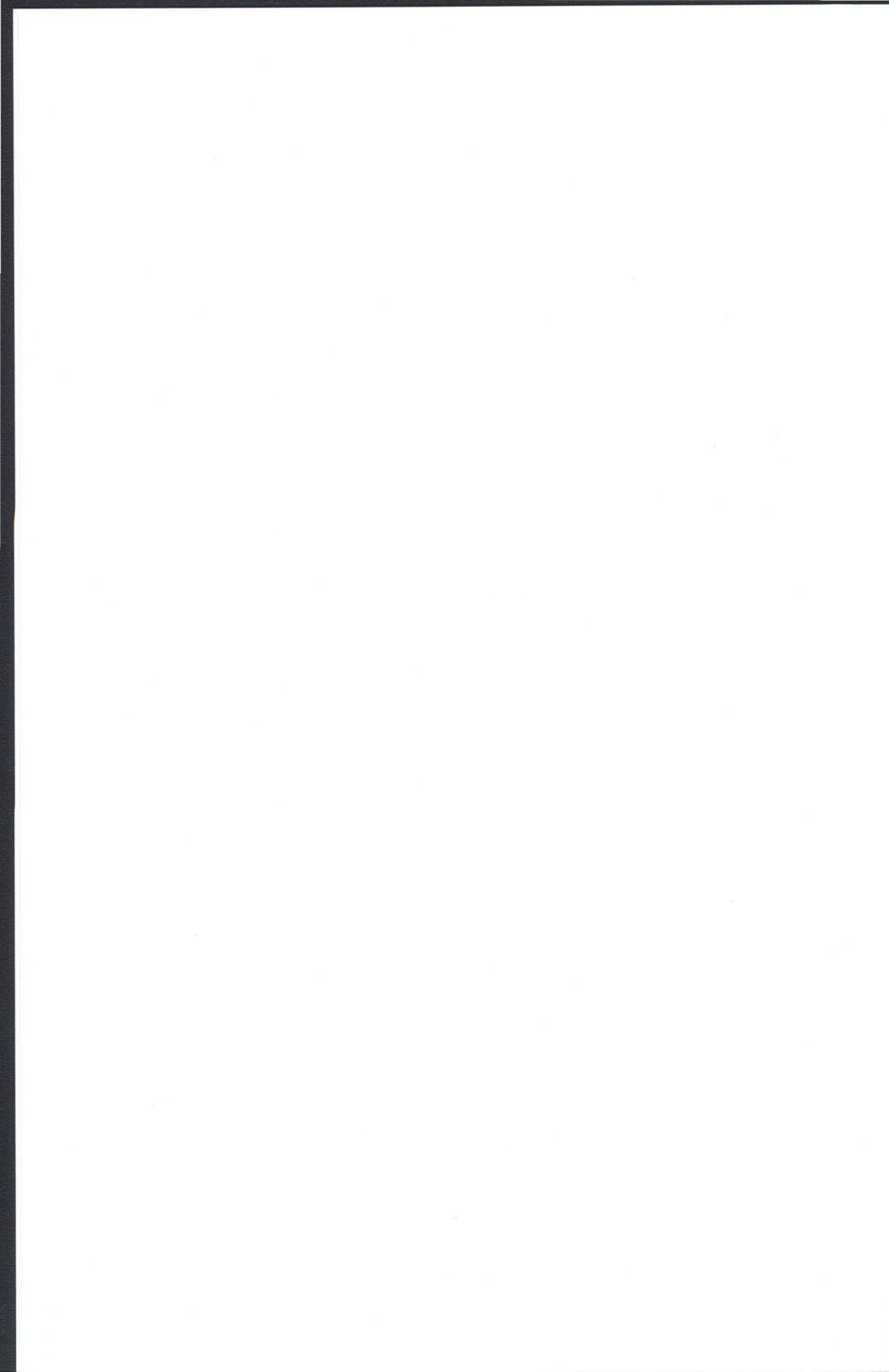


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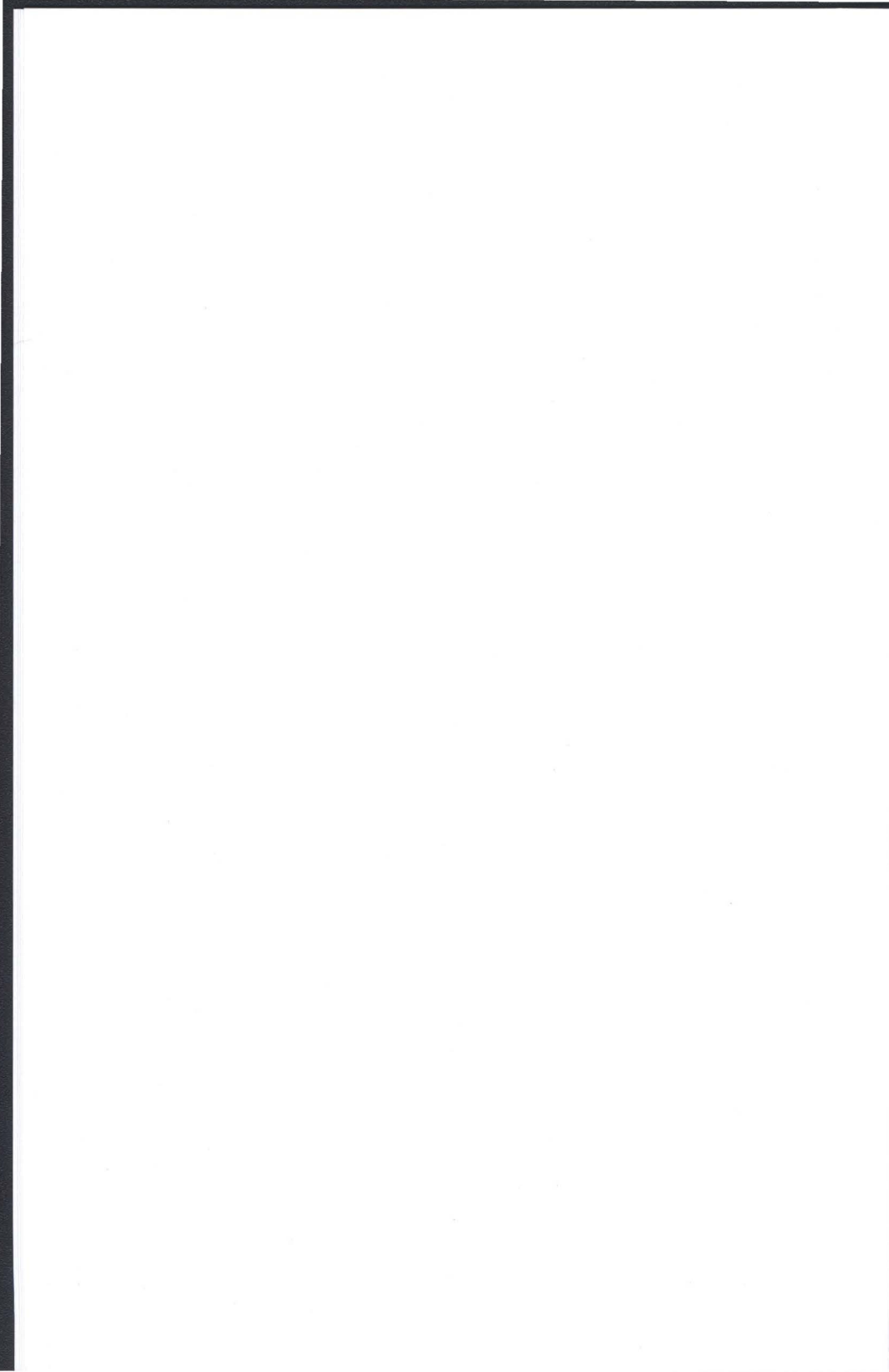
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**Note: cover image*



dreaming of women

Elize Manoukian

god contradicted himself
when he made woman
born from a rib
“dear father in heaven
why do they judge me for feeling sexy
when the angels themselves are lovers
of the divine urge to pose for selfies
while guarding the gates of heaven?”
god made symmetry by reversing the story
turned the gaps in chain-link inside out
he promised death to those who live life too much
and take too long to leave a place
passionately searching for lost house keys
lingering by the door
satisfaction in never really leaving

Salmon Poem

Gabriella Vogt

When I was ten
my teacher took the class to a salmon farm.
Small raincoats watched
as men slung still-swimming fish
through the air and clubbed their heads
with baseball bats.

It's been ten years and now I'm wondering,
does a fish in the air feel like its flying?
If a fish wants to fly
then what's the difference between a fish
and me?

But then,
I just watched the fishes' mouths gasping
like the fishermen were telling them dirty jokes.
I watched the mouths of my classmates, open
wide, the way you'd expect.

But I did not want to be expected
so I watched the fishermen
whose mouths were remarkably calm
for being surrounded by so many
crying children.

I thought I wanted to grow up to a fisherman.
I wanted to have big hands and yellow overalls
and stink of fish guts.

Now, I think I think I'd like to fly
or else be a dead dead laughing salmon.

It comes in waves.

Evann Zuckerman

Looking out over the water, he saw it never ended and felt the sun growing hot on his head. He dug his toes deep into the sand, and felt the pebbles squeezed through the creases of his toes, and turned as his lover called out. Smiling, she looked like nothing he had ever seen before. The winter had lasted until mid-March and his lover had been Capital S-A-D, hoarding Vitamin D softgels, chugging milk and crying every ten minutes.

The dog, his black and brown fur disrupted by a white patch on his chest, bounded for the door. He was full grown, though puppy-like with his huge paws, his nails clicking all over the wooden floors and his floppy ears floated up and out when doors opened. The dog was smart, he spent a lot of time sleeping, but when he heard a ragged breath, a stifled sob, a cracking shoulder he would trot quickly quickly and flop where needed. The dog had lips too large for his face, soft cheeks, and the eyebrows of an old man, he lapped up water messily and it fell everywhere. The dog believed it important to rest his physicality on and near the feet of women.

My mother told me that when I was born my chest was broad and my arms were strong. I wasn't jaundiced, but I was red, red, red. When she saw me, she forgot how her husband said 'It's not that bad' during her labored pushes, forgot the taste of cigarettes, remembered winning the poetry competition in 10th grade. In her poem, love was personified as honey bees, many bees, building a hive high, high above the crick behind her house, above the trees. Devoted, she wrote, they make sweet hexagons delicate with sugar syrup and they all look the same; fuzzy and striped and droning. "Baby, Baby, soft and sweet, I remember the day you came like I remember a river, I feel it I feel it (cold, rushing) but I only remember the sound".

MOTHER FATHER

Nastja Nykaza

tuck my hair behind my ears, pretend to sleep.
love her more than him.
think about 'them'.
feel weird.
take the train, board the bus.
jump off the side of a cruise ship.
no your outfit is not glamorous enough for that tonight.
and they love you too much for that, is that right?
think about it anyway.
keep quiet.
"shut up about that bullshit".
stay quiet.
never call.
feel weird.
love neither of them.
fuck my self under the covers, to fall asleep.

a fifteen line poem on self-care

Alexis Cartales

don't forget about (emotional) masturbation
have you ever?
(gotten off [emotionally])?
love and be loved by someone
(that gets you off [emotionally])

tell me
is this a daily checklist
or is this a bucket list

if this is a daily checklist
are these tasks complete

if this is a bucket list
how do you prioritize

completion over
self-care

Bowl of Regret

Naomi Morgan

I dissolve
a lump of brown sugar
into a mush-bowl of oatmeal and
Regret.

Spectacle

Linnea Huomo

Last night I was in a spectacular ruin,
an old church on a school field trip.
Everyone was taking photos of the stained glass,
the statue of Jesus on a cross, the way the grass sloped
down and met sheer red cliff outside the building.

I was talking on my cell phone to Margaret,
but I knew she couldn't hear anything I was saying.
I went down on my knees and sank my teeth into
the grass until I could pry up a mouthful of soil.
I swallowed it hungrily as everyone stared,
and turned their cameras from the scenery to me.

Girl with a dirty mouth,
girl trying to swallow,
girl turning dirt to mud inside herself,
no conscience.

J-

Holly Walsh

Don't you go poniendo los cuernos on me
hombre - no,

chico.

Baby boy,
you are finer
than the bristles
on the toothbrush
you bring with you to las fiestas.

Las fiestas en que you
strut around,
lleno de swagger
looking for your tu próxima cosa
- your next thing

to thrust into tu vida
- your life

and toss about
for a week or two o tres años

because you're lonely
- you'll always be alone

porque eres inseguro
- you'll never be secure

before you cast her away
into the pile with the rest of us.

Grass

Eli Kerry

Last night felt like a dream!

I lasted
the night-
in fell:
a dream!

but

I wasted
the light...
it fell,
a dream.

Memorious

Doug Hochmuth

Me and boy-wonder
climbed a tree. Most of a tree. Part of a tree
It was a big tree and

in the canopy a branch
beneath him forgot to
submit its two week notice and
broke away

his hands though, held shakely
to a branch above, gripping like
one would a hammer you use
in self defense during
an unexpected break in while
you were napping in the garage
pretending to fix the chaise lounge
for the approaching summer

I reached down and grabbed both wrists
there was slobber and
poorly planned kicking, wide eyes and
time enough for one promise

when his loose grip slipped there was not a single moment
my hands felt they had even a sliver of opportunity
to prevent his hands from passing
rivetlessly
through mine

3 poems, from sitting by rocks

Lance Rossi

They comb their hair back and put on
glasses and I'm talking to DFW.
Talking to Mr. S like talking with Gary.
This Man here picks up what he finds, I don't know if he lives it.
This one over there I know he does not.

Being here unearths
all of the games that
I've played with my brain.

Everybody is everybody Else, don't you know?
Talking to him is like talking to the Hepcats, fast talking Kerouac,
knowing the Beats can write bad poems makes things a little less heavy

The **Rose Garden** floats through my nose.

This time it's cold —

The roses are cut back to their nubs.

This time it feels like weight.

Which molecules of mine are alive?

A goose approaches, sparrows are everywhere.

The shimmer of dirt.

I sit and wait to be pushed through as bloom.

I've spent my life trying to let
the weather pass through me.
Expose my skeleton and let
the wind shake my ribs.
Through **calculated**
interactions turn the
drag to zero. Miscalculations
have left me a void

January 25 2016

Abigail Lahnert

My body gets tired because
eventually, the sleep and the coffee
and the feeling of my hand holding
a book with a red velvet cover all leech out of me.

I find a quiet room with a soft place to lay on my own.
Pynchon as my pillow becomes less and less of a comfort
as he seeps into my dreams and distorts everything.

I bob belly up in a basin of lukewarm water.
Immobile hands on strike from the work of making.
Senses mistaking direction for self for sensation.
The water growing colder and colder with time.

Two men, lovers, in matching red silk suits
talk with their foreheads touching in a threshold.
Two women, roommates, in matching linen suits
come downstairs to drink coffee at 8 am.

The emptiness growing round like a bloated belly—
all hot air and upended recycling bins.
I write my mother a letter, enclosed
is a leaf that shows off the autumn colors in Oregon.
I miss her even more for them.

Wanders Above the Fog

Avery Chung-Melino

I.

Late at night, when there's nowhere else to go, I like to wander around the city. I wear Albee's black jacket and think about how someday I'm going to die alone with my thoughts, camouflaged by night so that the cable car can't see me coming. Last night, I rode the midnight owl to the park to meet Allison, who sleeps with the trees even though her family has a house in Pacific Heights and her sisters go to Catholic school. Allison went to Catholic school too, except now she sells purses downtown and has a boyfriend she met in the park.

II.

Allison went to Catholic school too, except now she sells purses downtown and has a boyfriend she met in the park. She still has the uniform, wrapped neatly around the liquor bottles she keeps in her closet, away from her nosy landlady. She thought the city would be romantic when she first got here, the fog kissing the tips of the Golden Gate Bridge, the glow of apartment building lights, each with a different and individual story. Now she knows that however unique we seem, we're all struck with the same desires, all of us wrapped up into one bundle of being. She knows this is a very San Francisco way of thinking.

III.

She knows this is a very San Francisco way of thinking, that a life well lived is a life escaped from stability. Carol leans against a street sign in the Haight, thinking about her parents in Massachusetts, wondering if their moon is the same. Of course it is, but seeing its pale glow sharing the skyline with smoke and criss crossed telephone wires makes her question whether her life here is better than the normalcy of her hometown. It doesn't matter anymore, she thinks. Her parents already wrote her out of their will.

IV.

Her parents already wrote her out of their will. Maggie inhales slowly. A

month ago she would dangle a cigarette between her fingers but never bring it to her lips; now she's addicted. To our daughter who hates stability, they had written. Bitter. They made a fortune breaking the rules back East, but farewell compliment, there's only room for one big city in the United States. She thought this would be the summer of free love, but she's paying a steep price. Maggie takes a final drag and crushes the flimsy cigarette beneath her boots.

V.

Maggie takes a final drag and crushes the flimsy cigarette beneath her boots. She smiles, and Karl laughs and kisses her neck, little butterfly flurries. I used to go with Maggie, back in high school. We would sneak into the Castro Theatre and pretend to watch movies, but we were really watching the homosexuals. Maggie and I split soon after we saw her brother on the streets, with a man wearing a vest but no shirt. I still go down there sometimes during the day to wonder about who I would dance with if no one could see me, but Maggie's never been back since. We were young with all the answers; now I am old with too many questions. Change is abreast, making me feel behind when I can't seem to acknowledge it.

VI.

Change is abreast, making me feel behind when I can't seem to acknowledge it. When I look at my kid Jimmy, I see matted hair and bloodshot eyes, but under that there's his hopeful naivety. He's growing up, embracing love and differences and the bright impetuous future, but what he doesn't realize is that all of American history is one big cycle. No escape. The pendulum sweeps from chaos to stability and back again. JFK was a Democrat and you better believe Nixon's going to win this upcoming election. We can't control it. It's just the way things are. Everything follows the subconscious rhythm of life. When I was Jimmy's age, we talked for ages about change, about beautiful new houses and wives at home with the kids instead of working the factories like during the war. We're always looking ahead, but sometimes we need to embrace what we have.

VII.

We're always looking ahead, but sometimes we need to embrace what we have. Every few weeks when Pete and I sit in the park, we talk about the moon landing. I remember: It was the summer of homemade popsicles on chilly San Francisco beaches, the summer before I was going to start fifth grade. Our housekeeper Donna's eyes were glued to the kitchen television set, but mine were focused on the real moon, which I could see if I kneeled on the counter and craned my neck. It was pure, its untouchable craters as

far from my grasp as my mother's pearl necklaces. And then we touched the moon. From that moment on, it lost its mystery. Why were we not satisfied to just let it be? Why did we snatch away its secrecy, turned it into an everyday humdrum piece of life? Pete laughs at me. Pete wanted to be an astronaut, but now that Armstrong took his job, he sells lightbulbs.

VIII.

Pete wanted to be an astronaut, but now that Armstrong took his job, he sells lightbulbs. Nylons. Orange soda. Candy cigarettes. He never buys the products himself; he knows too well the reasons people want them. He knows because he told them why. He knows the people want love cheaper than a can of Coke. They want love and devotion, the quiet enduring things of life. They want to live in perfect harmony. In a way, this new liberation frightens Pete. He knows there's no such thing as a perfect harmony, just the perpetual cycle of life and war. But if harmony is going to sell soda, that's what he's going to give them. It's not a lie if enough people believe it.

IV.

It's not a lie if enough people believe it. Lombard is the most crooked street. Coit Tower was designed to be the nozzle of a fire hose. It has never, ever snowed in San Francisco. In reality? Vermont Street's sinuosity beats Lombard's, Coit Tower's semblance to a nozzle is an arbitrary coincidence, and snow fell in 1951. But the city is more than fast facts. We smell of youth and rebellion and marijuana, the reincarnation of our parents' dreams. The streets pave the way for future history, well worn by the shoes of hope. I know it too well. Late at night, when there's nowhere else to go, I like to wander around the city.

...yet-

Ilan Avineri

A wine cellar rests fully stocked
not a single drop
to touch my tongue.
I just like it sitting there-
on marble floors
with a penthouse view.
Imported cotton sheets
from well-traveled travels
lie next to topless tables-
sleeping souveneirless.
If someone were to stumble
across the rift
to charge me of my worth-
I can pay endlessly.
Though I hope they never do.
To leave me to sip java
-far from inquiry.

You see,
New York City is lovely
this time of year
or so I've heard.

-But I've never been...

Yet again...

Evan Dilley

Late at night;
Far off scuttling.
Late at night;
Electric buzz is all encompassing.
Late at night;
The window pane plays reflective tricks
As I try to do the same,
With the electric silence
And the far off human hum
Going on
And on
And on.
Hello Sun?

Peach

Emily Palmgren

Bruised and cut open, a pitted peach on display. I am naked and you are naked, touching my flesh. You must think I'm ripe, the way you bite my neck. I am human, not fruit. But you bite me harder, faster. My ribs are under your tongue. I imagine myself dissolving down your throat. You think you can consume me to make you feel better. I am human, not medicine. But I wish you were. Medicine, that is. A cure for me. Your fingers are hard and cold, and I want them to mold me back into girl shape, to soothe the aches of womanhood. But you cannot do that. You are a man, and I have explained to you how my body is tender and the peach fuzz of my legs is actually black and coarse, and how my breasts grow sore when I'm about to bleed, and I tell you that I cannot walk to your house because it is late and dark and you tell me I will be fine. You tell me I am beautiful. A goddess, you say. And instead of your words slipping up my spine, all warm and drenched in comfort, I feel all the spaces between my joints fill with air. Tense. Sticklike. Your words are earwigs crawling through my hair, crawling up and around my pit, through my rotting fruit smell. I am human.

Pieces

Linnea Huomo

1.

A stone in the mouth is you telling me I'm beautiful today, of all days, I am not beautiful but I am useless. You feel sorry for me, think maybe I'm broken but really I am exactly the same as you. I think we are the same person. I also want to ride horses in the dark underneath a sky that makes me forget I've been

trying so hard to know you. I think once you are on the horse, with me in the field, you'll forget that you don't really want to know me. The problem is always getting you on the horse.

2.

I want to have you over tonight, because thinking about the way your skin would look on mine makes me feel like I fit inside myself.

3.

I don't want you to be different than the way you are inside my head.

4.

I love your silhouette.

5.

If I say "Do you want to go to the park with me and stand on a bridge" I don't want to have to explain why. I want you to stand a little bit behind me and not be afraid. If you say

6.

"I hate the park let's just smoke weed and fuck"

I would do it but I wouldn't like you as much anymore.

A Silly Love Letter

Maddie Cleaver

I am proud of people who make me want to sit in the sun and slurp loudly on a peach, letting the juice drip while its meat gets stuck in my teeth. Drinking chamomile-lavender with cream and my socks pulled up high. Showing off your new tattoos and talking about vomit and bruises and blood and pain and laughing and yelling and wide open arms. Kiss me on the forehead kiss me on the nose kiss my hands as I kiss your ass. People who make me want to be somewhere and everywhere all the goddamn time make me proud to know and to remember and to talk and hear and see and smell. I want to write children's books about the way it feels to like what you are and your fucking body that does stuff without you telling it to which is rad and weird?

Drink the stupid coffee quick burn, take a bath tie your shoes and reset your watch. Count backwards. (Or try to at least). Women are made of stars and magic and if you don't agree I want you to know that you are wrong and I am right and left and east and southwest and Pacific North West too. Trees are like people in the winter because they lose their leaves starting on their outside, distal edges first and then slowly work the reds and oranges and yellow fire inwards, towards the core and the trunk. Hypothermia makes us lose our toesies and fingers, then our limbs go quietly numb eventually reaching our trunk, welcome winter. And I don't give a shit about porn but you make me proud to touch myself and sing myself. "Celebrate myself, and sing myself, // And what I assume you shall assume, // For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you." Thanks, Walt for those salient words, you perverted old bastard. She braids my hair and I teach them to salsa in a dimly lit kitchen. Light me up like a Christmas Tree. Please?

A little shove-

Ilan Avineri

Is how I like to remember it.
I know exactly where the table struck his ribs.
A weak motherfucker, but me weaker
I tracked the ultraviolet red
that I ripped from his violet veins
only to have a true tear of real scars.

Ricardo recovered-
leaving a remnant of a soul
forever skipping a beat.
Returning to the United
as I snorted the white
all I wished for
was my veins to turn true red
like I saw him that day.

And admit it happened.

December 14 2015

Abigail Lahnert

I am an academic in the morning
watch me pour my morning coffee
pour over books.

I am a romantic in the evening.
watch my hands smooth out old love letters
smooth over my body.

The time in between is made of
clouds condensing and dissipating;
a transformation of the hours.

With what terms do I understand myself?
He is a collector—defined by what he collects.
She is an administrator—defined by what she administrates.

I buy groceries, but am no grocer.
I do the jitterbug, but am no dancer.
I plant seeds, but am no farmer.

Each beginning is a wholly new thing.
I go along with them until something tells me otherwise.

Like Buddy Holly, I want to sing a sweet nothing in a tweed jacket.
Like Frida Kahlo, I want paint what I feel, not what I see.

There are objects that confound what I know of their owners:

His box of American spirits.
Her silk overcoat.
The suit in the closet
of a boy who has never worn a suit.

I, also, have never worn a suit.
What does that mean for the boy and I?
Is there a suit in the closet waiting
expectantly on a hanger for me?

Will I wear it as the academic or the lover?
Who will touch it, who will take it off?
At four p.m. I am in between categories.
It is not morning, nor evening, and I shift between
states of matter, professions, favorite brands.

No word can I take as my own
that doesn't feel a kind of robbery.
No word I can claim as self
that doesn't ring a soft untruth.

To me it seems that what I read,
books or love letters,
informs me more about myself
than anything else can claim to.

In the afternoon I read a text from
a friend. The label of a yogurt container.
The last page of *The Economist*.

These actions alone take me either
East or West—home or away from.
I do not argue. The logic is sound in
a way that I am not.

Collision in New York City

Eli Kerry

this collusion of
t h o u g h t f u l n e s s
is still just as callused
is still just as callous:

I hate that calculus.

Sums

Rebecca Nicholes

I'm not anyone's anything,
though someone once told me I was
something.

Maybe I'm a thing some would call
one,

or maybe I'm what one would call
some.

The sum of one and one is
some,

The sum of one and none is
one.

I am some's some or ones' sum or one none.

If anyone can be anything then why is no one my someone?

My one is none.

I have no one.

Sums are no fun.

Blackman Street

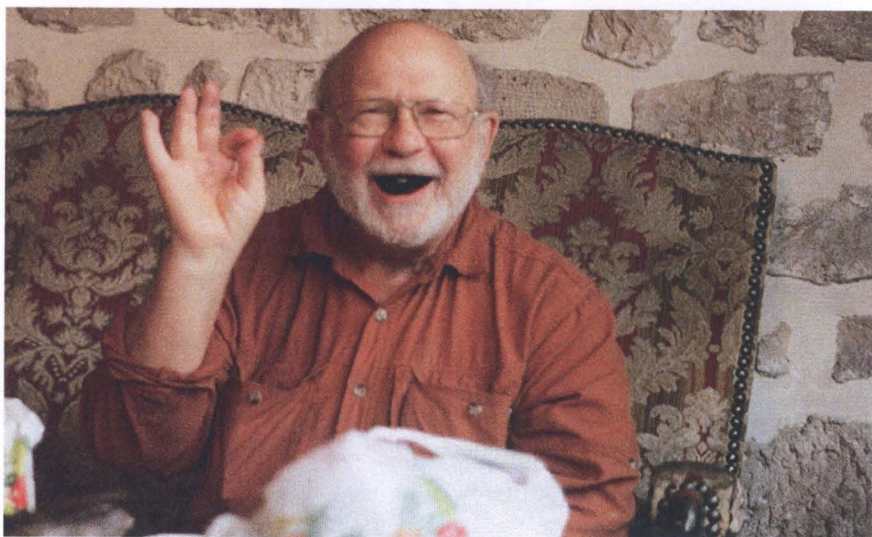
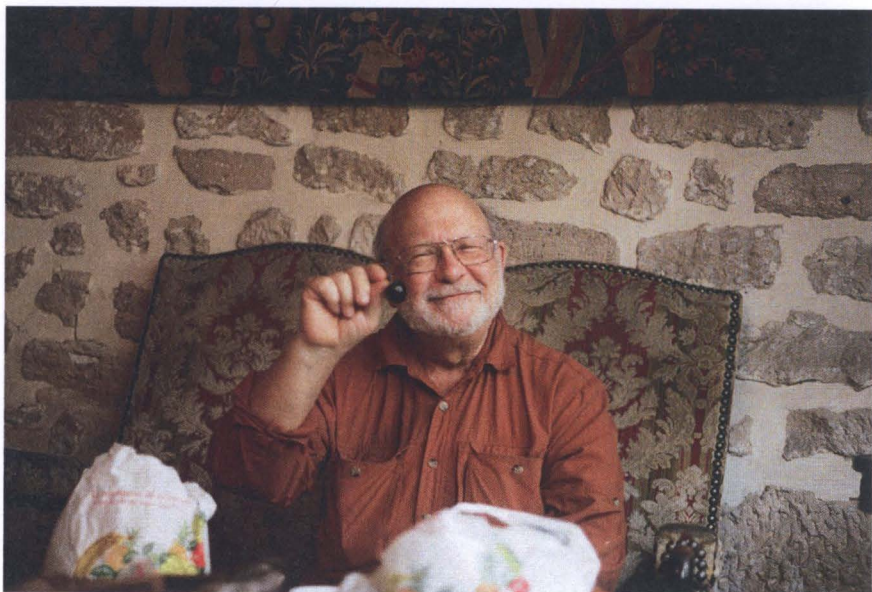
Felicity Helfand

After John Atkinson Grimshaw's Blackman Street, London

The people crowd the sidewalk in black blurs, obscured by the golden glow of the gas lamp that seeps into the street's cold crevices before being dashed against carriage wheels that turn with clockwork regularity. Amid the black coats and chiaroscuro veils you stand against the craquelure windows and close your eyes. Ignoring the golden water, the specters, the newspaper criers, the sound of black shoes that lurk in unseen alleys, where the shadows and the streets are ill-met by moonlight, cloaked by the green mist that descends from the heavens, staining the buildings above the glow except for the church, which reaches upward with a yearning steeple.



Blues
Shira Rothman
35mm color film



Cherries, Joel, and Paris

Shira Rothman

35mm color film

30



Birds eye view of a red room
Shira Rothman
Digital photography

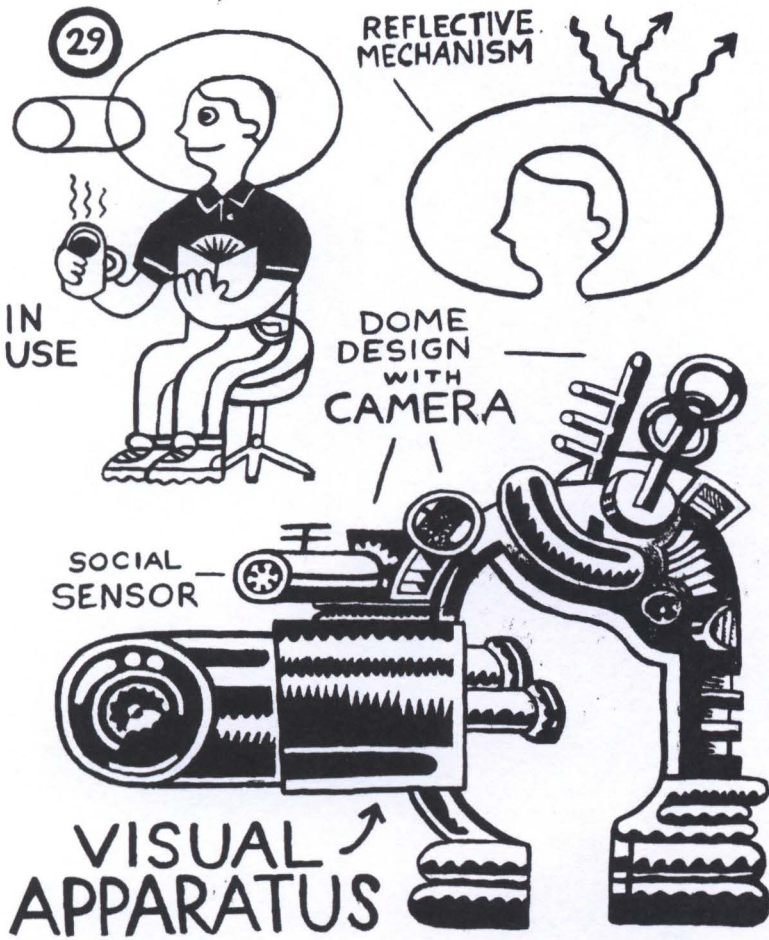


Stacks

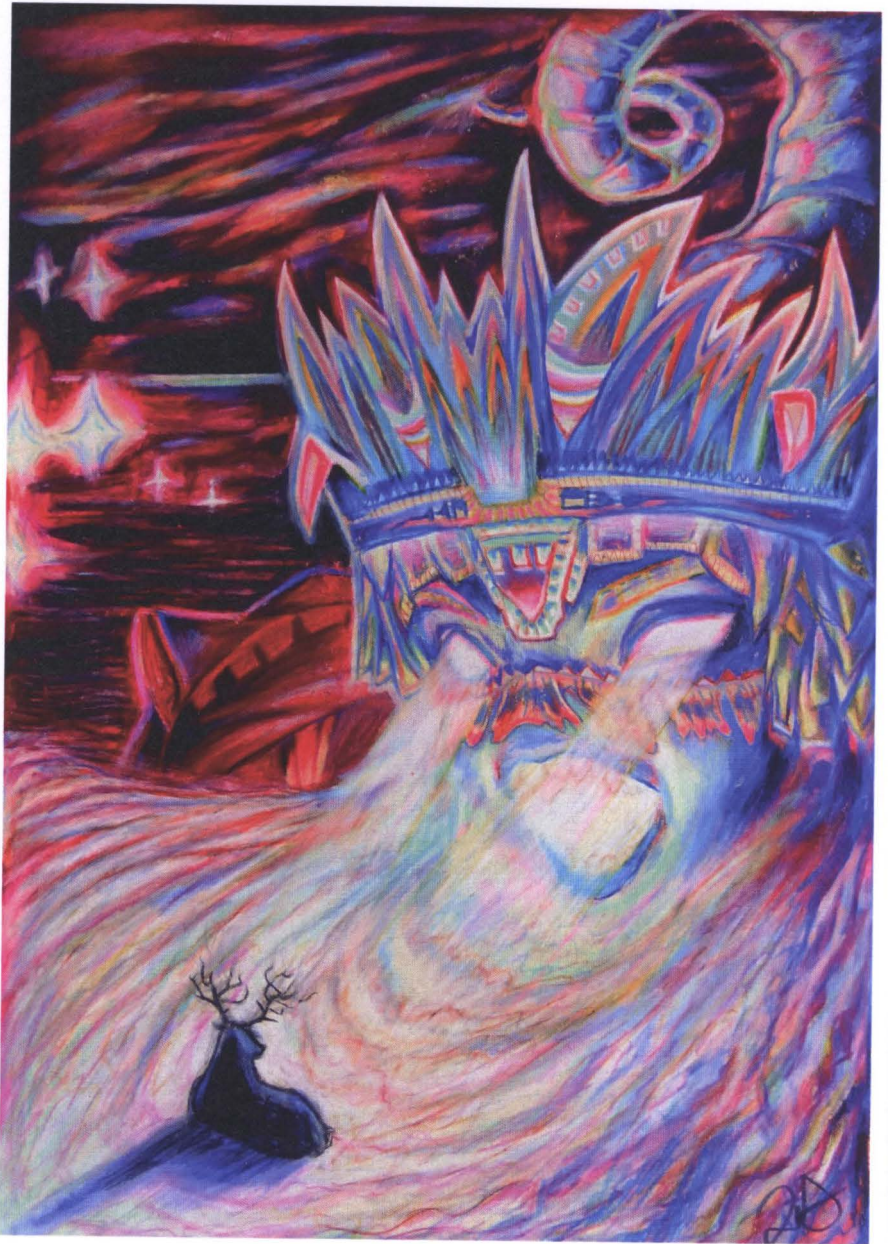
Shira Rothman

35mm color film

32



Reflective Mechanism
Lance Rossi



Brave Like You
Annalise Deppmeier



The Un-War
Annalise Deppmeier



As of June 5th, 2014
Annalise Deppmeier



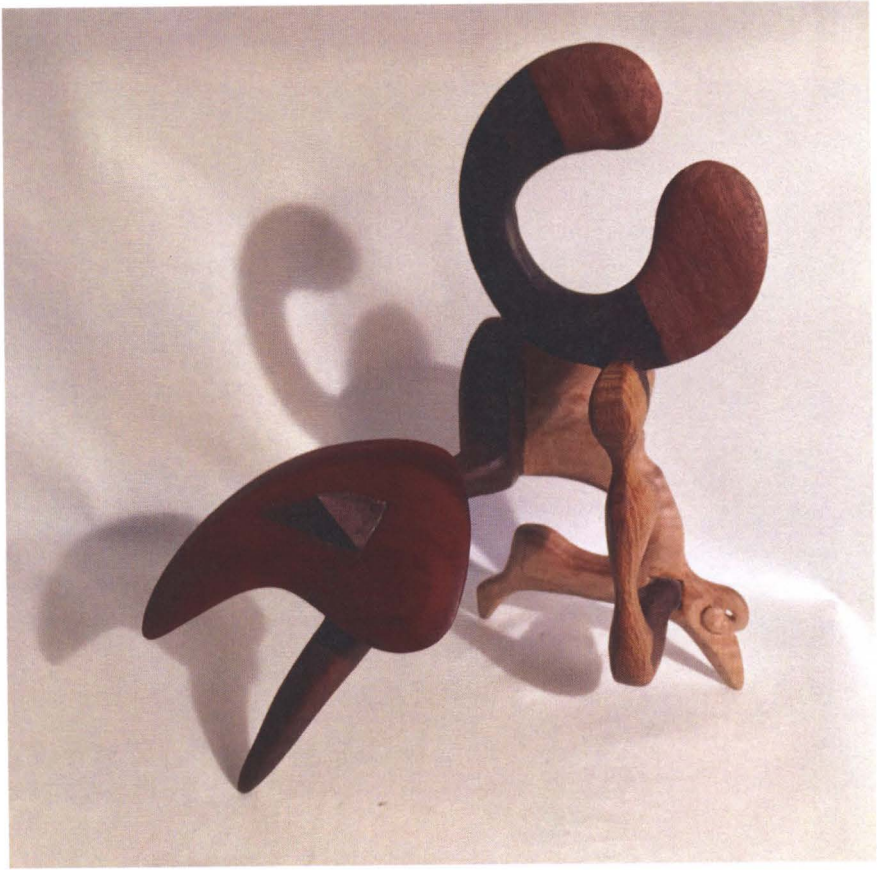
Face 1
Sophia Brownstein



Almond Joy

Erik Sandell

Polished hardwood, 13"x13"



Komposition K

Erik Sandell

Polished hardwood, 10"x11.5"



Last Leg

Erik Sandell

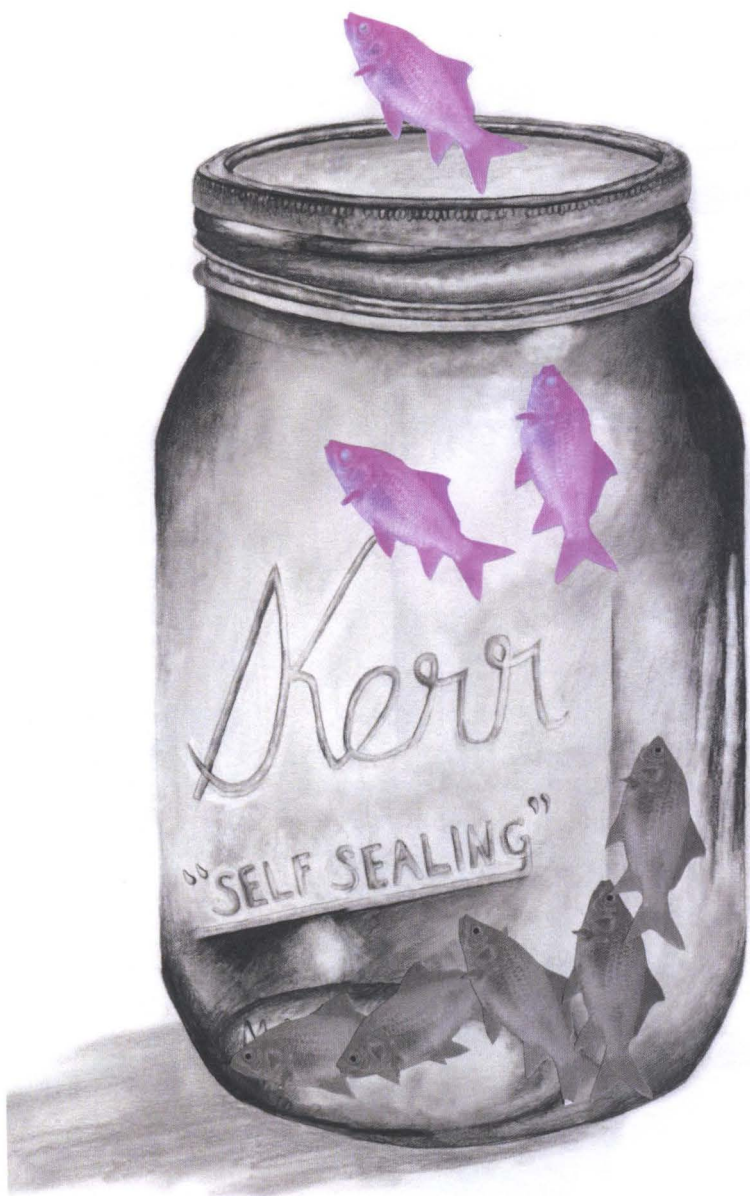
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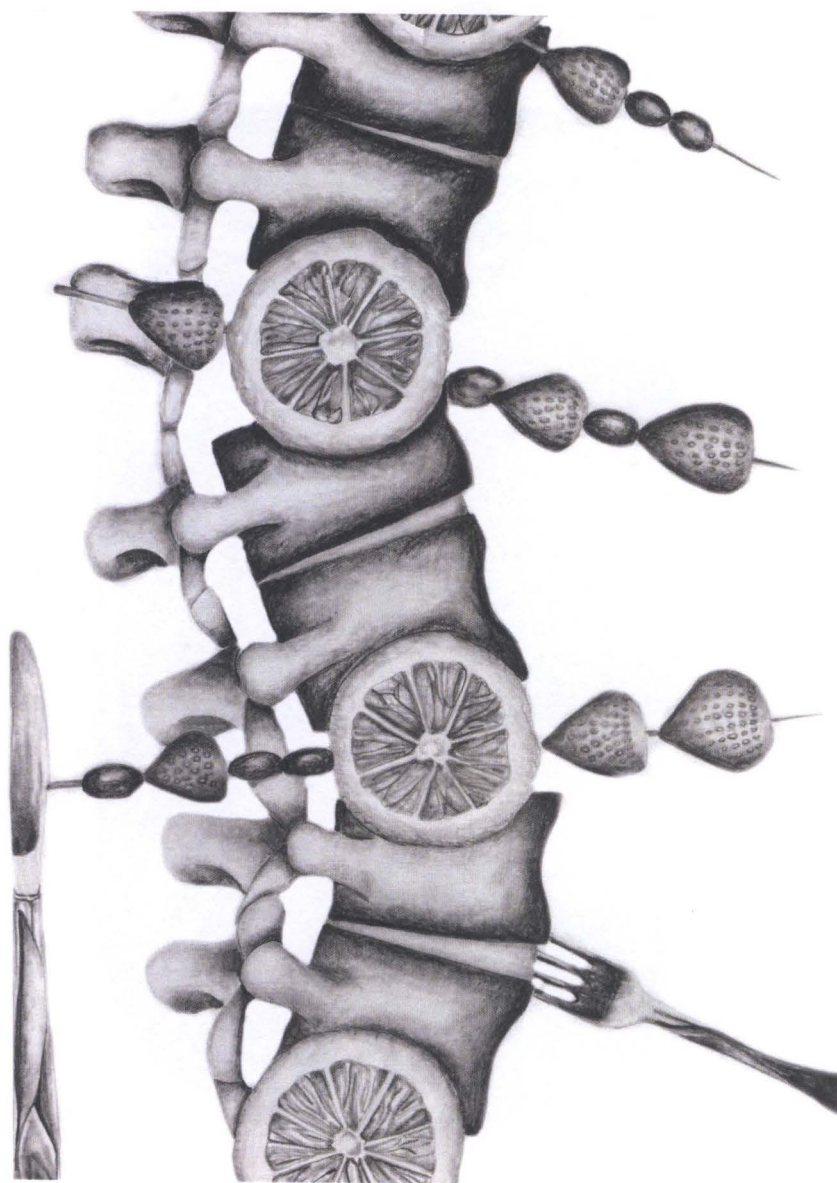
Sun Vessels
Nastja Nykaza



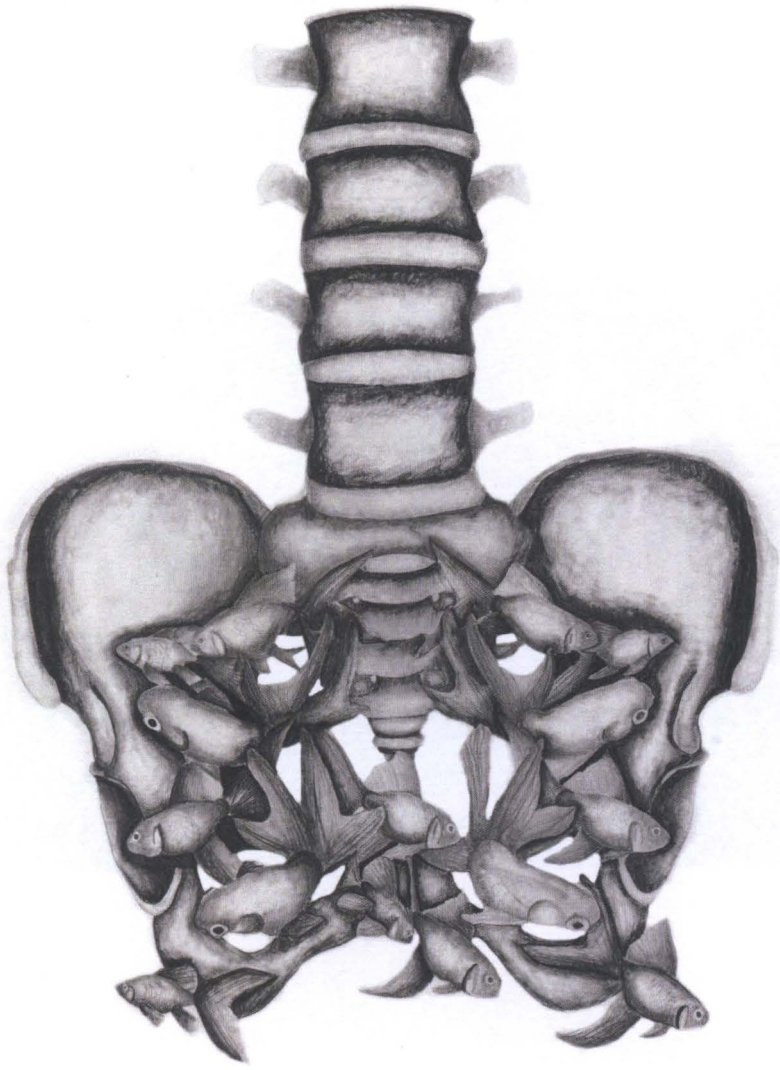
Nowhere, Northwest
Nastja Nykaza



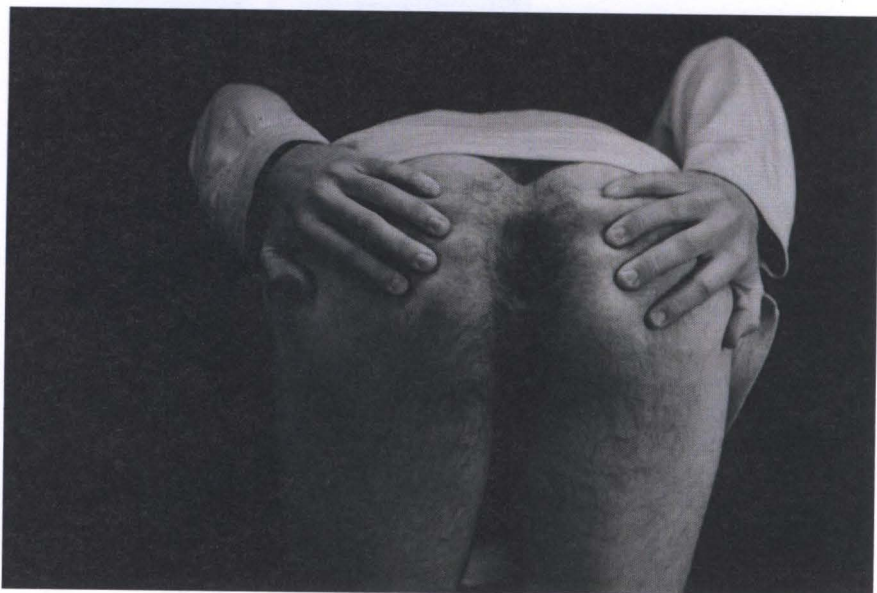
Self Sealing Fish
Clarice Benz



Spinal Fruit Kabob
Clarice Benz



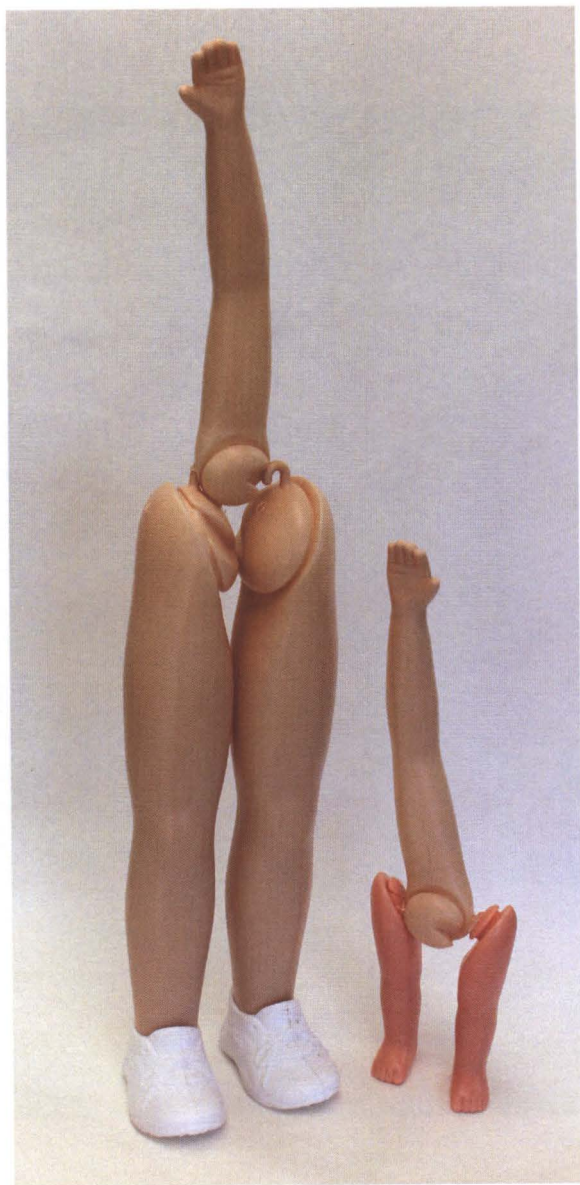
Pelvis Sea
Clarice Benz



#2.3

Miles MacClure

46



Father Son Dildo Collection
Kyle Nishimura



Komaki Glitch
Kyley Nishimura



Aguacate
Kyley Nishimura



Dramatic Aguacate
Kyley Nishimura

Queen Anne's Lace,,, Panties

Maddie Cleaver

Birch trees are
Pretty
because they are white and have bark that strips
off horizontally.

I am
Pretty because I am
green and sweet cherries in pairs and have
the red red blood
that drips vertical and the thin straw hair
falling out when my fingers too get nervous.

You are
Pretty because you have
Ugliness and friendships and
too
much
water
to let you drown
The edges of ribbon are frayed and loose and
sparkle in the sun but will never be burnt
like the grass was.

Mirror, Mirror

Felicity Helfand

I am not the Lady of Shalott,
who looks at a world she yearns to see.
My vision is sent inwards and weaves
a tapestry of spider-silk and shellac.
Sometimes it hurts to look at the tears—
interlocking geometric fractals
that swirl in Fibonacci spirals
and gaps that the gossamer wears.
But my tapestry is incomplete.
The seams glitter like gemstones
when they break as they're sewn—
a silent plea for release.

Yet this broken web my hand has rent
upon completion can spell my end.

Several Dreams

Linnea Huomo

Imagine it—
our bodies,
possessed by the light,
dressed in beaded gowns,
silk sticking down the lines of our stomachs,
thighs, calves.

Imagine it—
Our bodies, submerged
in a black lake.
You floating face down
and me on my back.
Every ten seconds we switch position,
we have never been so lonely.
Strange syncopation.

Imagine it—
our bodies,
naked,
swinging from the rafters of the barn.
Wearing nothing but ballet slippers.
Toes pointed down toward the heads of sleeping cows.
Mountains of flesh rising and falling,
even with our absent breath.

Imagine it—
our bodies, separated.
You in your mothers house
eating an entire turkey
on the floor with a fork.
She is playing the violin
and you are still thinking about me.
Me alone in the bathtub,
miles away,
cracking eggs into the water,
separating the yolks from the whites.
Still,
breathing.

Untitled #2

Eli Kerry

Last night I sleepwalked through my streets

I knew them better than myself & took them
down to the shore at the bottom of the hill
I found a lighthouse there & sat waiting
for a submarine to carry me down & out
but the fog stayed thick the waves quiet so

I took myself & them though I knew better
inside my head and by the streetlamps made
my way back up the hill. I sat on the front
step of the house and then in darkness I
I pictured the fog & waves I'd kept:

still thick, & all quiet:

I forgot both by morning.

The Only Barbershop I Have Ever Known in All the Places I've Been

Evan Dilley

Endless pillar spinning about;
An old man makes his egress as I enter the vestibule,
To meet the walls bearing the weight of decades.
Taut, cold fingers
Smelling of pomade,
Stretching out from a hairy forearm
Clad in a metal wristwatch,
Behind which all the world's a blur.
20, 17, 3, exeunt as always.

I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE

Maddie Cleaver

He proclaimed. Or yelled. Or just simply exclaimed.
I am having a hard time HOLDING ON
He was there
and so was She
and They were there too. All Together!
time to go now! Time to go!
Into the hovercraft, everyone!
Someone tell them not to worry anymore.
We fixed it. It's fine.
Here we go, there you go
Not with a bang but with a kind of whooshing
Sound like you might remember someday?

Look at the *sunflowers*
take in their SUN,
look at the tulips
and KISS the *sky*,
LOOK at the dandelions
even though they're weeds
they are as beautiful as flowers
and you need to see the weeds too.

your EYES will water
and your nose will itch
but don't worry
I will reach out and catch
your SNEEZE in my hand

BEG me to go
to leave the flowers behind
I DARE you
I will choose them over you
You will cry but not from allergies
You GO but I STOP
to look at flowers.

even if you're a vegetarian

Doug Hochmuth

I wish we were born on the same block, Greenwood Avenue,
so we could have grown up and learned how to use swing sets together,
how to tie our shoes, and tell our lefts from our rights

we would, at the appropriate age,
have learned to hate our parents
but as we entered high school

the distance between us would
slowly become a chasm
and then we'd leave for college as strangers

until one christmas would come
in which we'd that realize we have more
than a mutual past.

So we'd run off and get married,
with babies and I would do
all the things no one wants to
like cleaning that one corner of the shower
that is made of magic because
there's no reason for it to be dirty

and I'd get up early
to make our children breakfast
and pack them a lunch

consisting of all the essential food groups
including the secret one, (which I feel the most capable of providing)
love, and while they were at school

I'd make them applesauce from the tree
I planted when they were born
even though the fruit is slightly sour because

it might teach them something about life.

We'd enjoy living on Bluestone Boulevard
where, just down the street, the Johnstons would live
and our children would play together

learning the ways in which the world worked like
how swings operate or
the necessity of tying one's shoes

and they'd play after school until
they reached an age in which
they were too cool to do those kinds of things

and then they'd be too cool for us
and smoke cigarettes out the bathroom window
and then they'd decide they were too cool for the world

and that college is an oppressive institution
and they were better off starting a tattoo parlor
in Redding California because

the color of life called to them
and they'd have a child
before they were financially capable

and would not consider the abortion
because of the the acid
and they were pretty sure they met God

and she'd be upset about that kind of thing.
They'd give the child up for adoption
and the orphanage on Black Dilk Drive
would do a good enough job

but the kid would start hating his parents
long before the acceptable age of 13
and grow up believing a good hobby

is the only thing that keeps anyone alive
so he'd make books
out of toilet paper and glue because

poetry isn't perfect and frankly, a lot of it is shit
and because he'd be witty like that
someone would like something he put on paper

and although his manuscript would ultimately be rejected
the publishing company would be floored by his work ethic
and would give him a job where he would meet a lady

and they would get married, with babies
who would grow up on Ash Tree Lane
and love their parents

their whole life.

Mangos

Emily Palmgren

I eat mangos with him. Telling him I am an experienced mango carver, I smell the fruit in the store. The crimson, green, yellow bruised flesh glows under the fluorescent Safeway lights. From Guatemala to Salem... He googles "how to peel a mango" and reminds me I should choose based on smell, not softness. But the mango in my hand is densely tender. This is the one I want. I hold it in my palms, a heavy precious stone. Against my nose, the fruit smells like afterschool snacks, sweetly comforting. My aunt was at the kitchen counter, slicing perfect cubes out of the tricky fruit, handing them to me. Juicy. My tongue swells a little at the promise of sucking on the yellow muscles inside. He buys food on a whim: a DQ Blizzard, pizza dough, \$8 peppered bacon, Alaskan Amber beer, and our first mango. Things I would not think to buy. Things that are out of my price range.

In his kitchen, I feel beautiful. Surrounded by empty beer cans, ants on the wall, sticky counters, streaked windows, I am the experienced Mango Cutter. He watches me pull the red skin from the mango with a sharp knife, its bright meat revealed. His eyes are focused, as though he is a security camera, so precise, blue lenses following my fingers over our breakfast fruit. He asks if it's hard to cut. I lie, say no. The slimy muscle wants to drop from my hands and run, but I grasp it firmly. I have never cut a mango the same way twice. This one seems to be going well. It is naked now, and I cut away strips of yellow from the pit. He opens his mouth. I place a piece gently between his lips and he bites my thumb. His camera eyes spin. He laughs his full-body-shake laugh as juice crawls down his chin. We scoop yogurt into bowls and I shovel the mango on top. He kisses me on the forehead and thanks me. It's the kind of "thank you" he uses whenever I've done something that surprises him. It's genuine and full of gratitude. I savor each piece of mango. I know the work of cutting it. He crams it in his mouth in a few bites and declares it's good.

Khaki

Zoe Gantner

I want SALTINE CRACKERS
A whole BOX of them.
Nice salty cardboard
That dries up my mouth
I want to stack the crackers
One by one
And chomp down
Until cracker dust
Has coated my whole body.
I want MORE.
MORE saltines
Shove them down my throat
While
I lay dying
A shriveled
Desert.

The Suggestion of an Open Drawer

Avery Chung-Melino

I. Drink Me

Every Tuesday, Judy's mother prepared punch and lime jello for the weekly church ladies meeting. Laura's mother brought shortbread, which everyone knew she forced her housekeeper to make. Nancy's mother provided the most important nourishment of all: a bottle of whatever libation she had in her cupboard.

The women faithfully took their communion on Tuesdays, though the punch was never touched until after the meeting. As the mothers cleared their folding chairs, Judy and the other daughters helped themselves to the punch, vibrantly red in its clear plastic serving bowl. The punch dripped from the ladle, creating tiny circles of red on the stack of nearby napkins, the nice paper ones with little embossed flowers along the edges. The napkins would have to be discarded, it was no good keeping around paper that looked someone had stabbed her fingers with a sewing needle near it.

The punch stained Judy's lips red, a smooth color her mother said denoted harlotry. If only she were allowed to wear lipstick!

II. Entice Me

The envelope was addressed to Judy. Not to her father, though that much was evident by the pink paper and the neat slanted script. But it wasn't intended for her mother either; no, it was all hers.

She slit open the seal with her mother's letter opener and was pleased to discover an invitation to the church social. The offer had never been extended to her before, and she briefly wondered if Mother might not notice if she rubbed a smidge of lipstick on her cheeks for color. Laura did it all the time, circles of rouge painfully obvious, but Judy would select a subtler hue, and perhaps not use as much.

The night before the social, while her mother loaded the dryer

downstairs, Judy donned her dressing gown and stole a lipstick from her mother's handbag.

III. The Chalice

The events committee had adorned the church's social hall, which doubled as the venue for the annual nativity pageant, with blue and green crepe paper on the walls like little waves. The crinkled paper stirred a bewildering rush of excitement and trepidation in Judy's stomach. She had arrived.

Judy ran a finger over the smooth tablecloth, glancing at her fingernails, pink save for the milky moons near the cuticles. She had filed her nails the night before, meticulously shaping their sharp curves.

"Hello, Judy." She turned. It was Matthew, her neighbor. He had asked her if she wanted to walk to the social together but she said she couldn't. She wondered why he was talking to her now.

"Hello, Matthew," she replied.

"Would you like some punch?" He asked.

She nodded. "I'd like that."

"Give me your cup. I'll fill it up for you."

She watched him grasp the ladle and turn it so the punch flowed briskly into her cup.

IV. No Use Crying

Judy had spilled some milk before she left, her mother discovered. For whatever reason, Judy had taken a glass up to her room, but the milk had sloshed out of the glass, dripping down the wooden stairs.

Judy's mother hoped her daughter had not soiled her church dress, a creamy satin trimmed with waves of azure lace. It was new and unblemished, and Judy's mother didn't want to clean up the mess.

V. The Water

"It's raining. I'll get my umbrella."

"Don't bother. I like the water."

"I insist." He pushed back the gate and jogged to the social hall.

Judy ducked through the domed archway and stepped onto the sidewalk, relishing the warm rainwater washing down her face, a trickling cascade of summer. When Matthew returned, his expression asked her why.

"I didn't want to use the umbrella," she replied.

He stooped under the archway and slowly opened the umbrella beneath it. Then, abruptly, he closed it and stuck its tip the ground.

Judy gasped as a wet leaf blew down from the tree and landed on her bare shoulder.

VI. The Breeze

The curtain in her room drifted idly in the breeze; she must have forgotten to shut her window before she went to sleep. Her eyes wandered lazily along the wall, from the cheap landscape painting of an ocean to her vanity mirror, where she noticed her lips were still smudged with crimson.

Draped limply over the edge of an open dresser drawer was a stocking. Judy hauled herself from her bedsheets and gently closed the drawer.

Hestia

Felicity Helfand

I prefer to tend the hearth
and not bother with family matters.
My siblings take offense at the smallest of errors,
capricious chess masters
placing mortals across the board.

Their arguing hurts my ears.

My brother—for all his strengths—
is so easily enthralled with those
blessed by Aphrodite.
They leave as quickly as they come,
victims of my sister's relentless jealousy.
But they always leave behind a child.
My nephew, born of my brother's thigh
and raised by the Nysiades,
does not have a place in this world.

His flame has just been ignited.

A situation quite unlike my own,
for I have a place in every mortal's home.
I share in their joys and sorrows.
How cruel that such brilliance
can be snuffed out
at the slightest whim,
unwitting players in my family's game

On this occasion I must intervene.

Let Dionysus take my place
in this gilded cage!
I do not need it
for my worth is an eternal flame,
looking after those whose lives
are at once so simple and so complex,
those you claim to protect.

Divine favor may come and go
but the hearth is forever.
The home is forever.
I am forever.

procrustes' promise

Neha Malik

lie here
they all eventually fit
i promise you
it's only
a few
minor
corrections
is it so wrong
that i have standards
that i would prefer you meet
a few inches
off your hair
is that so different
from a few other things
dismissed
i just happen to like my
f i n g e r s
graceful and lithe
and my torsos
petite
and i am sure you will agree
after you see
i guarantee you
you will reach
Perfection.
i promise you
i just must make
a few
minor
corrections.

CHIRP OF A FINCH

Nastja Nykaza

Next time you have an itch to scratch, remember I could scratch scratch scratch scratch it for you, because I know you can't scratch it for yourself, even though you are more selfish than I am.

I could scratch your skin layer by layer by layer by layer until you're all dug up. But you flinch at the touch of my nails.

I want to watch you hatch your way out out out out of the shell you are an embryo inside of. But would you latch onto the broken pieces?

I'll stitch the openings you keep closed full full full full rich with my guesses of what is nurtured inside.

Next time we're sitting side-by-side on a sunken couch, know that your skin can touch touch touch touch all the notches on my body. But I know you are more scared than I am.

Your Name

Linnea Huomo

Version One: This is the one where you have to fix me

You are laying underneath a table, the light blocking the outline of you,
looking as close to God as anything.
You ask me "Can I have it" and I say yes of course
you can have it what kind of fucking question
is that, anyway
and I uncurl my hand like its mine to give away.
You scramble like a squirrel up a tree
and take the walnut that I have given you and swallow it whole,
laughing.
"Now we're in love and everything is perfect"
You say and I laugh too.

Version Two: This is the one where I have to save you

You are laying in the street, you are bleeding, you are not coming back to
me anytime soon.
I scream into your mouth asking for it,
saying back to you "can I have it"
because we have a deal and you don't say anything at all.
I cut the pale skin of your stomach open,
gutting you like a fish and retrieve
it, place the walnut on my tongue.
I take your blood filled boots off of your feet put them on my own
and keep and keep kissing
you putting my skin on you until
I have to swallow the walnut and keep
walking in your boots down the gravel sidewalk.
Now we're in love and everything is perfect.

August 31 2015

Abigail Lahnert

The beauty looks with open eyes
I know it does not have any love for me,
though it startles and delights.

I've grown weary of time sleeping in my mouth
time slipping in my morning coffee
time kissing at the back of my heels.

I am no Roman or Greek—
I have no force of nature
looping its arm around my shoulders.
I have made a friend; a friend has made me.

I quake whenever I see anyone at all!
Beautiful, or no, they shake me
like I am made of liquid iron.
They shake me like I am a cup of ice!

I just saw someone with the same body as me.
She didn't look beautiful, but she looked
like she could do some living.

Do we have an obligation to what is seen?
To what is beautiful?
And what obligation is there to be seen,
or to be beautiful?

Whatever I have spent all this time thinking about,
it is no longer what it was.
Whatever has happened,
this will be something else.

Beholder and beheld,
the act of living in all its complexities.
One day I sit and watch the crows
on the ledge outside my window.
The next I am the crow myself—
black feathers, dark caw.

As watcher of birds, or bird itself,
beauty rings like a bell
beauty conducts a conversation,
beauty hails a taxi.

It calls out a name in a crowded room
and everyone turns in response.

White Rain

Carly Button

They say they wanna live my lifestyle but is that what it's about?
smoking in the kitchen as I kiss my momma's mouth
haven't seen dad in a week now he's passed out on the couch
only opens his eyes to watch my sisters titties bounce
I grab him by the cheeks and he doesn't reply
is it true, did you lie, bitch look in my eyes
money's gone faster than you can say hi
Daddy's locked up in the cellar, no way he's getting better
Left me and my mom and one single letter
A kingdom of powder where now I was the queen
and a field of subjects notorious for getting mean
I was the heir to a throne where I couldn't say no
And a job that I tried to leave but I couldn't let go
cocaine had suddenly became the lead on the stage
the key to a game that he had left me to play
hiding secrets and lies like a fugitive in my mind
A dark chapter unfolding in the book of my life
I had dreams of one day becoming an author
now I'm sitting in my kitchen cooking crystals in a saucer
you wanna live my lifestyle, try living in fear
that one day a pop
will be the last thing you hear.

For When You Wear the Wrong Hat:

Christa Rohrbach

You are 18 months old when your first hairs sprout. Your mother is ecstatic when she sees them: three tiny, fair and thin little hairs that were somehow able to pierce through the smooth porcelain of your scalp. Your mother thinks maybe you will stop being mistaken for a boy. She thinks maybe she can finally stop telling people your name is Sam. But after this, the hairs do not stop; you have a full head of hair by the time you are two and a tiny beard before you can speak. You become afraid of what people are going to say when you can, asking you the questions Mother fields in your silence: "How old is your son?" (You are a girl.) "He has so much hair!" (This is not a question, but these strangers expect a response and your mother reverts to a seemingly polite head nod or a curt thank you—polite because the stranger beams like they have done something right, but still curt enough that you know Mother feels like she's done something wrong.)

"Where did this little guy come from?"

You have some sort of lung condition that the doctor refuses to diagnose because there is a slight chance you will grow out of it. As a result, you are the wheezy child on the playground, never able to reach full capacity because your airways inflate like the air mattresses your father used to sleep on before he stopped visiting. Your hair has tinged sepia by now, and it flies behind you—rippling in the wind as you rasp along and the other kids laugh with pointed fingers and crooked teeth you never get quite close enough to hit.

It isn't until your teens that the hair stops being "a phase" and starts becoming "a concern". You feel the change in your bones, though you are not sure how or why it has happened. The hair is still reddish-brown, though always more brown than red, and it still grows out of almost every pore in your body, but it is clear to you that it has become something much

more serious. You see specialists and dermatologists and endocrinologists and none of them seem to know as much about your newfound condition as the people you pass on the street do. You want to grab each one you pass and shake them, demand that they tell you what they see that you cannot find in the mirror amongst all the hair and uncertainty. Whatever it is, it causes each person to ogle at you in horror as you walk the same streets as them, feel the same things as them, and yet somehow manage to retain your pronounced difference. It will be enough for you if they just help Mother to stop her crying, but they won't. They just keep walking and staring, turning their heads to follow you as you pass and craning their necks around street corners until you no longer exist in their frame of vision and become something altogether outside the realm of possibility—something that can't be real but somehow is, living in the corners of their imaginations and waiting for nightmares to come out and play.

And as if it isn't bad enough that you are terrifying, you are also somehow violently awkward and inept at social interactions. If someone is able to muster enough courage to actually speak to you, you always say yes when you mean no and smile at the wrong time—usually concluding an exchange by shattering some illusion that they have or, otherwise, terrifying people with your enormous girth and strength. The courage they have mustered deflates quickly, and they often scramble to gather their belongings, mumbling about homework or waiting carpools or anything, really, to get away from you. You would have cared less if they had just excused themselves politely and refrained from briskly walking (almost running) away.

In an attempt to “normalize” you, your mother insists that you consistently participate in sports. You must try everything—and you do. You rip ballet tights and break baseball bats and make the other kids on the soccer team cry, but Mother still makes you go to every last practice. At the end of each season, when she asks you if you want to continue and you shake your head no, she always smiles thinly and says, “Well, maybe the next one will work out better. What do you think about [and she inserts some sport you haven't yet maimed here, even though you keep telling her you don't want to play another sport—at which point she says, “Well, you haven't tried this one yet.”].

To Mother's credit, you do end up liking some of the sports. Basketball is one you really would have enjoyed if you had been a bit taller, mainly because the other kids are usually so scared of you that they don't bother to

block your shots. You can sink shot after shot in the drooping fabric of the net without anyone trying to stop you, Mother clapping wildly from the stands after each one. She cheers like you've won the Nobel Prize instead of scored two points at a middle school basketball game, and you blush sheepishly—knowing her applause isn't an indication of any significant accomplishment but feeling the pride in your cheeks anyway. You think this is the sport that will be the most difficult for you to leave, if only because Mother is so sad when they tell her that you cannot play anymore:

"Your daughter is going to have to stop coming to practices," coach says, tapping his deteriorating clipboard against his leg. "The league officials and I have agreed that her—her, uh, condition is going to be too confusing to explain to the others going forth. Her eligibility as a female is already hard enough to prove for the regulations—it will probably just make things easier if she doesn't come anymore." Mother dips her head low and nods stoically at him, hooded eyes taking in what he says so seriously that it is as if she is embarrassed that it has taken him this long to kick you out. You think to yourself that you wish someone would tell you who the others are, and why things will be easier for them if you no longer play basketball.

When you reach high school, it is time for you to join the cross country team. Your lung condition, which has improved steadily as you've aged, still affects you enough that this is one of the sports your mother has left for last, hoping you will be able to run just well enough to keep you on the team. To your surprise, you do not get kicked out: you are fast, so fast that you beat all of the girls and some of the boys, earning you a spot on the men's team (which is okay because you will win at states, and the coaches don't care enough about your body or its condition to place you on a correct team). Everyone just wants you to win, so you decide that is what you will do. And, to everyone's surprise and excitement, you do. At the state finals, you are the fourth fastest boy in the five kilometer race, and you will go on to compete in nationals next week. Mother is glad about you winning, and she tells all of her friends about how far she will drive next week to see you compete again. They applaud you, and ask if you think you'll win a medal this time.

Mother has also started to buy you more sweatshirts and funky baseball caps, telling you it is what all the other boys on the team wear while they are waiting for races to start and walking home from practice in the flickering twilight as the sun sets. She starts to ask you when you want to cut your hair again more often, poking her head into your room with the scissors

dangling from one hand, a twinkle of hope in her eyes as she clutches the door frame with the other hand. "Are you ready for your next haircut?" She giggles nervously, knuckles turning white as the trim they grasp as she awaits your reply. You think about how, sometimes, she doesn't ask if you want your hair cut and just does it anyway—the snip of the scissors catching you unawares as you work diligently on your chemistry homework. You tell her it's not time to cut it again yet, your favorite movie star's hair is much longer than yours, and since you both possess the same muted red color locks, there is a good chance you will look like her when they grow out just a bit more. Mother's mouth pulls together, then—taut and full of unspoken words you wish she would tell you one day, you still think she might tell you one day. But that day is not this one and she turns to go, tossing one phrase over her shoulder just barely loud enough for you to hear what she says:

"Your hairs are not red."

You are the only one who notices that your nationals qualifying time is also faster than that of any girls in your high school age group, and think to yourself how rare it is for a freshman to beat all the girls in the state. You wonder what it would feel like to actually win a gold medal, as you brush your mahogany locks in front of the mirror.

Pre-mortem

Doug Hochmuth

Take stock
and locate
your socks
shoes and
tooth brush

search your cushions
for pennies and pushpins
send them to former
school teachers
and ex-lovers

seal the envelopes loosely
so that the occasionally
post office employe will be
caught in your hail of fire
and brimstone

travel to Quebec,
Somalia, and Uruguay
earning the authority
to say the left side
is best

find a lover more
creased than you
and have them sleep
on your side
of the bed

do you feel right now?

you've managed to grab it
by the tail as it sped past
but come away
with only tufts
of fur

if you'd catch that cat
would you know
what's to be done with it?

AAA

Zoe Gantner

There was a small bowl
Of dried rose petals
On my grandmother's
Windowsill.
I would crunch them
Between my fingertips
And blow rose dust
Out the window.

Everything makes me think of
Dust.
I long for dust
I crave
A dusty
Life.

I want to be covered in grime
With a tall
Dripping glass
Of iced tea
While I sit,
Hidden,
In the long grass of the prairie.

I have never been
To the prairie
I could not imagine
Such vast grassland
Reaching past the horizon,
Surrounding me
Until I drown

Backwards

Holly Walsh

Backwards
your whole life's going
Backwards
your sister's jumping
Backwards
from four stories high.

Forwards
attempt at moving
Forwards
never looking
Backwards
except for all the time.

Not your fault.
Wouldn't have known
couldn't have known
didn't want you to know
she needed help moving Forwards
with her Backwards life.

Note: Now read bottom to top

About Poetry?

Doug Hochmuth

For me, Poems are based on a junction of four things; A persistent poetic intention, the immediacy of the utensil, the trigger, and the process.

If one walks the world with their nose to the ground it should not be surprising that they see shoes. If one walks with their neck craned to the clouds it should not be surprising they often see sky. In the same way if one walks the world and hopes to find in it poetic qualities one must walk with Poetic Intention. This P.I. establishes its beholder as a Private Investigator into whatever facet of the world their view is trained upon. This I view as necessary if we wish to explicate the poetic from its natural place, like the mining of natural resource. We must walk vigilantly with desire to see it.

Often disregarded this second aspect of my process is paramount. The availability of the the writing platform and utensil so as to capture the poetics in life and their often unexpected rupture into the mundane. A subset of this is the improvisation of utensil. If the poem whisks by you, why not be ready to use any means necessary to pin it in some fashion and examine some component?

Of course, these things are hard to see without illumination, or the Trigger. I view it as a motion sensor light based on only certain motions but those motions are subject to change. The motions could be based on the movers mindstate, environment, or a million other factors but it is the movers job to test new movements and Illuminate themselves.

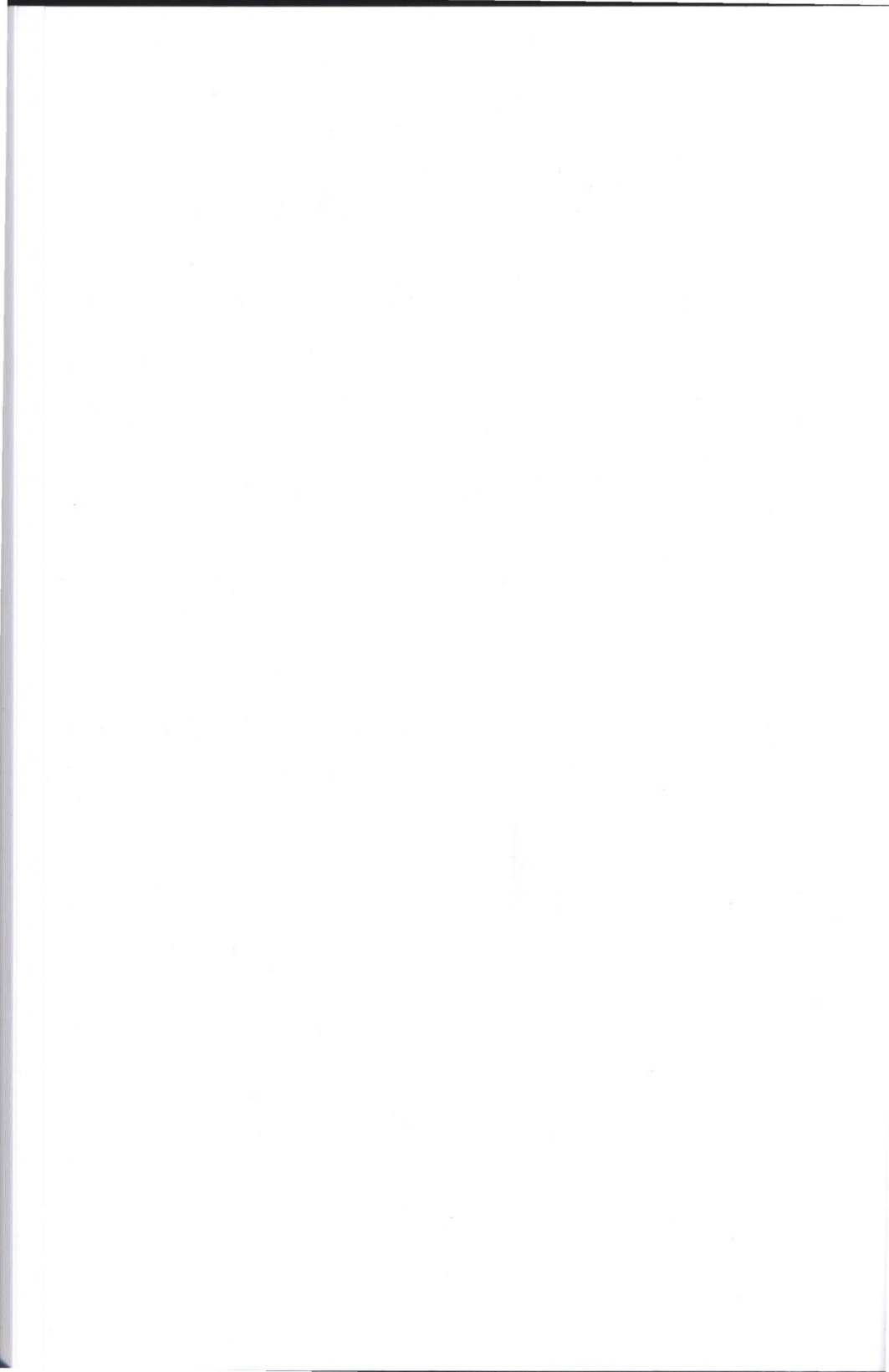
Finally it is the process, this process and the necessity of repetition. If a poem has ever been written perfect the first time give its author a golden parachute a plane ticket to my door because I have questions. Though all

the aforementioned aspects I think are critical to how a poem comes and develops, the most important is the commitment to erasing, whiting out, starting again. The radical revisions can always be undone but must be done to know what part of the poem remain unseen.

what the poets do

Neha Malik

I am trying
To be bare-boned
But skin
Becomes so much more
Interesting
When you hate it
Everything becomes
So much easier
To talk about
When you can
Romanticize
The fuck out of it





Makers

Ilan Avineri
Clarice Benz
Sophia Brownstein
Carly Button
Alexis Cartales
Avery Chung-Melino
Maddie Cleaver
Annalise Deppmeier
Evan Dilley
Zoe Gantner
Felicity Helfand
Doug Hochmuth
Linnea Huomo
Eli Kerry
Abigail Lahnert
Miles MacClure
Neha Malik
Elize Manoukian
Naomi Morgan
Rebecca Nicholes
Kyley Nishimura
Nastja Nykaza
Emily Palmgren
Christa Rohrbach
Lance Rossi
Shira Rothman
Erik Sandell
Emily Sperber
Gabriella Vogt
Holly Walsh
Evann Zuckerman

