

The background is a complex, abstract painting. It features a dense arrangement of colors, primarily pinks, reds, and oranges, with significant accents of blue, green, and yellow. The brushstrokes are thick and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth. Various geometric shapes, such as circles, squares, and rectangles, are scattered throughout, some appearing as if they are floating or layered within the composition. The overall effect is one of vibrant, chaotic energy.

The Colgate

PORTFOLIO

*Literary Arts Magazine
Issue XXXIX*

Spring 2023

A Letter from

the Editor

Rolling Islands
Anonymous

Creative work is never finished. The author can always push a theme or motif further, the artist can always improve the next detail. We've discussed this fact in every workshop I've taken at Colgate, that we're always working to bridge the gap between our vision and what occupies the page, screen, or space before us. Many students express anxiety over the vastness of this distance, and yet, even in its face we are drawn to create.

It's a courageous act to publish your work, to accept its incompleteness and send it out into the world. Each piece you will encounter in this edition of the Portfolio stands as a testament to not only the technical talent found among the Colgate student body, but also the fearless and impassioned commitment to the creative arts. The breadth of work in this edition reflects the diverse voices and perspectives in dialogue with one another in the intimate liberal arts setting. Our contributors take on subjects like health and the body, climate and the natural world, as well as the legacy of colonialism. Some excel within traditional modes like the cento and ecphrasis, while others shine through their experimentation with form and standard media.

The thirty-ninth edition of the Colgate Portfolio marks the first full year of the publication back on campus since the Covid-19 pandemic. The spring semester came with a new set of challenges as our student leadership was split between Hamilton and London via the English Study Group. Despite the complications, our editorial staff remained committed to maintaining our mission as an open, empowering creative space. All work was reviewed anonymously by our staff and published solely on its merit. I am personally grateful to our entire team for all the time, energy, and sleep they sacrificed to bring forth this edition. I believe that they have curated an exceptional collection of student work, one that stands as a window into the excellence exhibited everyday at Colgate.

—Giorgio Rahal
Editor-in-Chief

Portfolio

Spring 2023 Issue XXXIX

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Special thanks to President Brian W. Casey and the Office of the President for generously supporting *Portfolio*'s printing and the arts community at Colgate.

Portfolio received just under 200 individual submissions from current Colgate students this year. Each published piece has been selected by the editors based solely on literary and artistic merit and judged for originality and creativity by the editorial staff.

Some images have been modified using Adobe Photoshop; the pages have been compiled and curated via Adobe InDesign by Marissa Bordonaro.

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remembering fall and who i want to be
Josh Docking

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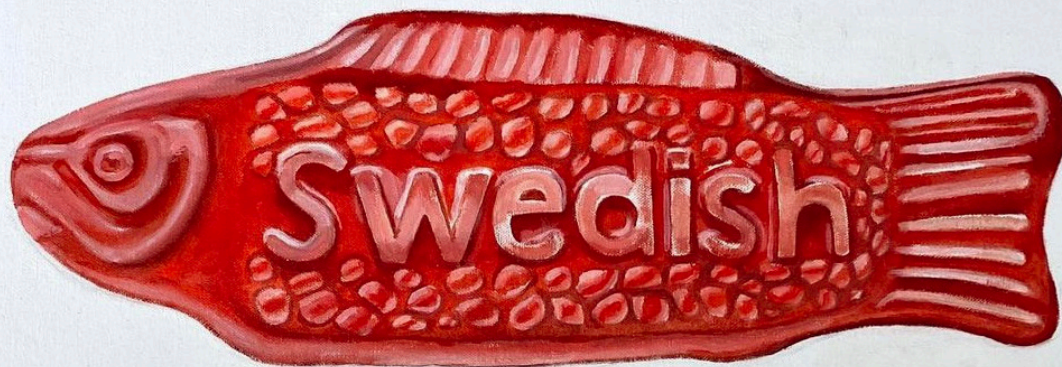
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Portfolio
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The Warren and the Wasp, a cento

by Pierce Leclerc

She prayed to be harmless
for the mass of us.
She smoothed our plastic faces with her mittens.
Her rabbit warren, eyes all pupil,
gazing at the moon.

All told, death is a hard hugger.
Oh, the wasp, how it papered over the queen!

A spool of red thread, her teacup covered in tar,
all the recurrences and remissions.

There is no big, bright word for leaving.
Time prays to be harmless
for none of us.

Sweet and Savory
Emma Barrison

Swimming to the Shore

by Ayanna Dukes

I was born to swim. Even though I learned in the summer before 5th grade, 11 years after my birth, I like to imagine that I swam around in mom's stomach. I like to imagine that the kicking and pushing against her had been my attempt at an escape to salt water.

I remember the embarrassment—at summer camp with so many unfamiliar faces. It had been my first and last time there, and I was still the 'shy' girl. I felt ugly in my tight cornrows and sprouting peach fuzz. I don't even remember if I made friends, becoming one of the kids who stuck to the nice counselors more and latched onto their kind words of encouragement. They kept us busy, and we played games and watched movies, and ran around the gymnasium in bright yellow camp shirts. But I remember the embarrassment and fear when one day they walked us to the Olympic-sized swimming pool

and told us we'd be assessed on our abilities. I remember the way I had to sit to the side as everyone splashed around, treading water. I would be the one or maybe two kids who had to start from the beginning. For those hot summer weeks, I had a trainer's hands on my back, ears submerged, and eyes up to the ceiling. I had to use pool noodles and floaties and practice in my own small section as everyone else raced and yelled. But I took to it fast, like I was meant to, and by the end of the summer, I was able to race to one end of the gigantic pool.

I'm not sure if it was my new apparent passion for the sport or because of my quick progress, but once 5th grade started, the same pool offered swimming lessons. Somehow my parents agreed, and I remember the \$125 fee because money hadn't been an easy thing for us yet. That old financial strain still circles us. It was the only sports lesson, besides kindergarten soccer, that my parents had invested in. And every Saturday they'd sit on the side of the humid pool room with other parents, and watch every second of practice. Sometimes my grandmother, my dad's mom, would come. I was put in a

group of all guys, in the course of a couple of Saturdays I had managed to outrace everyone in breaststroke, backstroke, butterfly, and freestyle. My dives got cleaner. My treading endurance got longer and longer. I was on the fast track to move up to a more advanced group. And during the moments of free time, I'd try to reach the bottom of the deep end, 12 ft, and the silence and darkness of it felt like home. My parents called me a fish, the next Phelps. This was a future that finally felt right.

But then Hurricane Sandy happened, and we could've swam in the flooded streets. Trees were tossed in the road, nature's barriers, a "you cannot pass." The power went out and we charged our phones in the car and the house shook as we ate dinner in the bouncing candlelight. My dad set up tiny battery-powered lights in most of the main rooms. The one above my bed still rests there. And the lessons were canceled, and as the area mourned, the future I once imagined had become distant. I could no longer imagine chlorine-soaked car rides on Saturday mornings, the deep marks of my swim cap on my forehead. I forgot what the pool looked like and

how to get there. We were more concerned about the submerged and damaged floors at my school. The million dollars of damage, the lives lost. The way everyone else in the neighborhood had their power turned back on before us.

So I swam in my dreams. I swam in the high waters of the shore that swallowed up the boardwalks. I swam in the tears and the debris and the trash left behind. I was born to swim in the flooded cracked streets, the dirty streams that spilled over. I was born to swim in the poorly made drainage system of a neglected community, not at that Olympic stage.



Idealization, Deconstruction, Decomposition

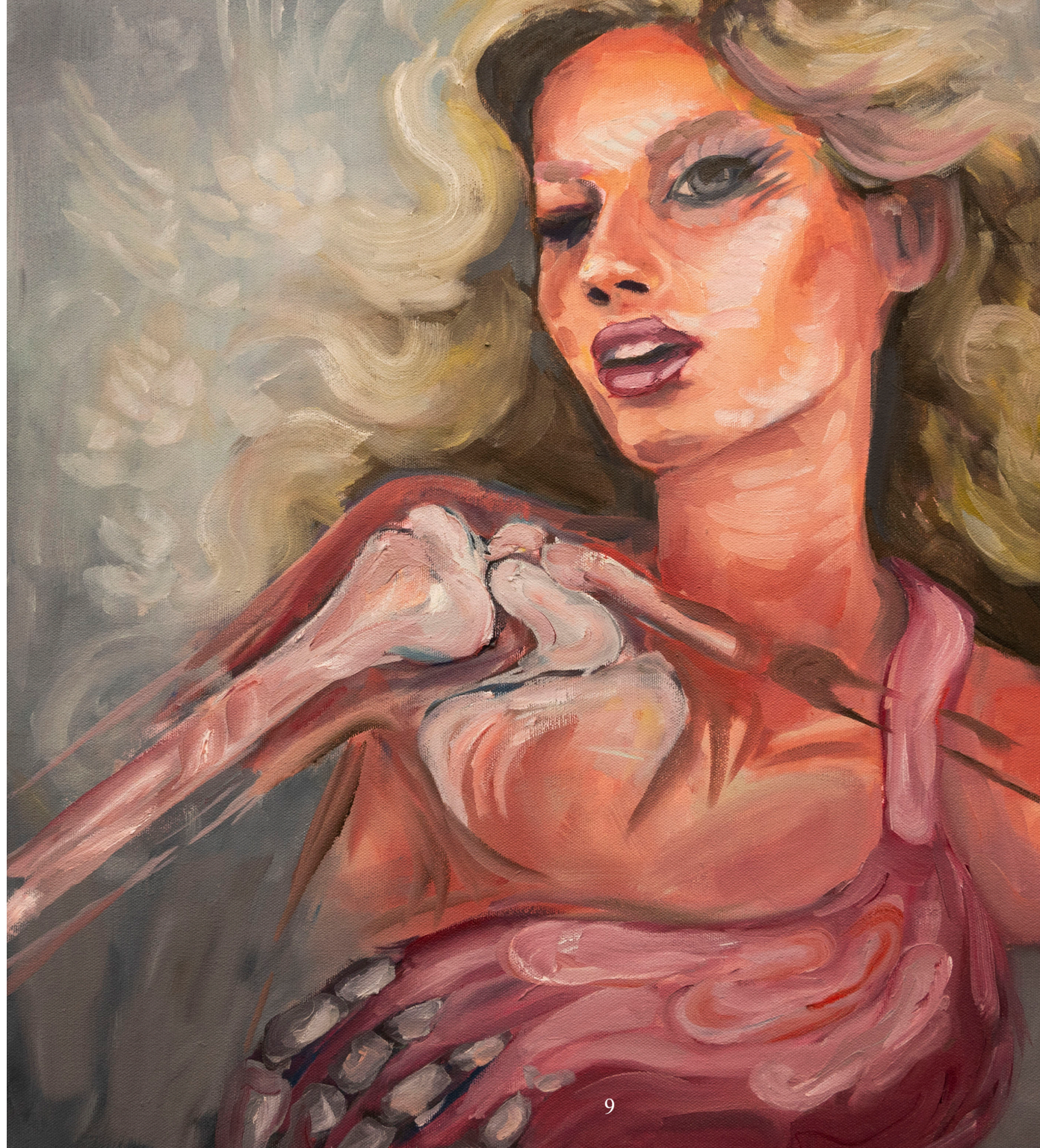
by Elizabeth Deegan

Artist's Statement:

by Elizabeth Deegan

Drawing on editorial fashion photography and anatomical diagrams, this work subverts the idealization of bodies through normative models—editorial, anatomical, and otherwise. Whether in magazines, social media, x-rays, or medical journals, fantasies about the human body permeate the content we consume. Illusions of bodily perfection or a biological universal normal are disseminated through these edited and abstracted constructions of human form.

In this triptych, each model is deconstructed into tangible and metaphysical parts: bones, flesh, archetypes, lore, beauty, fashion, positioning, and brushstroke. Playing with editorial composition, the visual language of anatomical diagrams, allusions to Greek mythology, and the layering and melting quality of oil paint, the material elements of these initially distinct forms begin to fuse and decompose. This putrefaction of form allows myths of the human body to invade and contaminate one another, yielding something unexpectedly alive and visceral.





“Mutter mit totem Sohn”

by Harry Shook

I

Cloudy sky, gray water
leaking through the oculus
of die Neue Wache,
my skin was moist
under my raincoat,
I saw burnished tears
trickle like runny mud
through clear water
across a mothers closed
and weeping eyes,
a sleepless statue,
pristine landmine still buried,
surrounded by shivering
yellow bells and archangels.
An embrace between
mother and son,
hardened like victims
by Medusa’s gaze, stuck
in a permanent copper haze.

I see her memory frozen
in manipulated bronze,
impossible loss, pain
felt through cheesecloth,
stuffed into an open
casket with rusted
static blood, mustard gas,
and bayonet blades.
Drapes of a cloak
trapped in a state of

sublimation; eyes glued
shut like a lid to a pot,
I can’t see the ice but
the steam screams as
gunpowder leaks upward
out of the cracks of
worn fingers and feet.
The son sits as crumpled
newspaper, the Battle of
Somme freshly printed,
his knees touch
like stacked artillery or
moist firewood. i don’t
think his mother has
held him like this
since before he knew
about Sturm und Drang.
He could be me. I want
to save my mom from
the pain prescribed to her
the moment I first
slid into the world
head first; like me,
the bronzed eyes of
the mother mimicked
her sons like the air
of autumn and spring.
I never learned how
to shoot a gun, but I saw
the sons feeble adam’s
apple; worn down like the
right foot of Saint Peter;

for luck or maybe empathy.
what would his mother
say if her tongue was
not also the tongue
of every mother
with dead children.

II

Käthe Kollwitz consummated
the lost-wax method –
crafting a perception into
an inside out molding –
with molten Perspektive
she casts the beauty
and despair of the
proletarian life;
anti-war propaganda
eaten by the masses
with a side of spicy Senf,
and thrown into the
streets like burned
books by hungry men,
but not starved mothers.
the silent russet lines
chiseled Perfektion
above furrowed eyebrows
penetrate the marrow
like a child's curdling
cry of pain; a cry
that is not risen
among Greek cut
Naxian marble.

hackneyed august

by Harry Shook

i grabbed a peach, from the stale aired
fridge. but when i bit into it, i found
sour juices running down the tip of my chin,
mealy flesh, sitting in my dry hand,
overripe and rotting. it tasted like august.
the hopeless grasp, to hold onto fleeting beauty
and motionless clocks. the sun has dipped
behind the glacial dunes, the green light
flashed, for those that were able to catch it.
just as the whisper clouds dance out of view,
the golden beams of the final ending credits roll
upward into the fading sky. the lightning bugs
are murmuring remarks of both hello
and goodbye. when i bit into the peach,
i spit it out, for i'm not quite sure
what next tastes like, and i don't think
i want to know

narcicuss tries to convince herself that she is more than just her body
by Grace Ashley



Aliyah

by Macklin Fishman

I smell them before I see them. Outside my mortuary, a tall man in a hazmat suit stands beside a gurney, orange-gloved hands rigid at his side.

He nods to me when I turn the corner. “You Santiago?”

I glance at the gurney. A tuft of dark brown hair peeks out from under a blanket.

“Yeah.” I clear my throat. “Are you new?”

“Monday was my first day.”

I stare through the dead body and push a light laugh from my lungs. “Not so glamorous, huh?”

The man pushes his lips into an awkward smile, a crease forming across his brow. “It’s good work.” The spare sweatshirt I’ve mashed against my nose does nothing to stave off the sweet, sickening smell of rotting flesh. I duck into the building. “I’ll be right out.”

When I re-emerge in my hazmat suit, the man has turned his back to the body. He fingers the Red Cross tag clipped to his

chest. The tag’s lamination squeaks against his gloves.

I sigh. “Alright, I’ll take her off your hands.”

“Thanks.” He rolls the gurney towards me. “We’re expecting more bodies to wash up over the weekend. You think you can help us out with the rest?”

“I always do.” I push the gurney inside.

Once I’m inside the morgue, I peel the maroon blanket off the body. The woman’s damp curly hair is plastered to her cheek. Her irises are such a deep brown that it’s hard to distinguish them from her pupils. A birthmark runs along the bridge of her nose, spilling over a single nostril.

“What’s your name?” I say to the body. The surgical mask cuts into the bridge of my nose when I speak.

I take the dead woman’s hand in mine. Her skin is gray. Salt from the ocean clings to the hairs on her knuckles, sparkling when the light hits it right. Her palm looks almost black where the blood has pooled.

A large gold ring with a green stone in the center sits on her middle finger. I try to imagine the person who might have picked out

the ring wandering through a jewelry shop in search of the perfect token of their love. But I can’t picture their face. Maybe she bought it for herself.

Our fingers intertwine while I slide the ring off. I clean it and place it on the steel counter before pulling the damp clothing off her stiff body. I clean her skin with disinfectant and push a long needle through her flesh, pumping formaldehyde into her shoulder and chest.

By the time I wrap her naked body in a kafan, sweat is pooling inside my hazmat suit. I perform a rite that an imam showed me years ago, when the bodies of Moroccan immigrants first started washing up in Algeciras. I cover the shroud in a dark green cloak and sprinkle dried jasmine over the body. The flowers tear against the yellow rubber of my gloves.

When I lock up for the day, I pick the ring up and press it to my chest. The chill of its metal dissipates against my skin, warming to my body temperature. Fingering my breast pocket, I hold the ring to its lip. I look around the mortuary, at the long silver tables and the body lockers lining the wall, half expecting someone to stop me. But, of course, I’m alone. The only one

willing to embalm the drowned migrants. I shove the ring into my breast pocket.

The ring feels cool against my chest, penetrating the thin linen of my shirt, as I step into the house after work. Camilla’s already set the table and placed a dish of pulpo a la gallega on the counter.

“You’re home.” She smiles and opens her arms for a hug.

I dodge her, grabbing her hand instead and giving it a kiss. “I smell like formaldehyde. Let me shower first.”

I walk to the bedroom, watching my feet as I walk.

“Santi?” she says.

I don’t turn around. I’m afraid she’ll see the weight of the ring bouncing in my breast pocket with every step. I’m afraid she’ll wrap her arms around my waist, rest her head against my chest, and feel the hard metal press into her cheek.

In our bedroom, I pull the ring out of my pocket and slide it as far down my pinky as it will go. I spent all day with the dead woman, and yet never felt her skin against my own. I never even stood beside her without the hazmat suit building a wall between us. I try to yank

the ring from my finger, but it catches on my knuckle. Willing it off my finger, I drop it into the cardboard box labeled SATURDAY MARKET in our closet.

When I get out of the shower, I stare at my pruned hands. They look so pink. I walk into the kitchen still looking at my fingers.

"Santi, are you okay?" Camilla says.

I smile and pull her warm body into my chest. "Of course I am, Cam."

She watches me serve myself dinner and follows me to the kitchen table. We sit down across from each other and she pours us both some wine.

"I heard on the news that another boat of Moroccan migrants sank trying to come over here. They said the bodies are starting to wash up," Camilla says. "Did the Red Cross ask you to help bury them again?"

I nod. "I just wish I knew her name. I hate not knowing their names, you know? I miss the days when I buried someone and always knew their families, knew what religion they were, how they wanted to be buried—at least knew their name."

"Did you do what the imam showed you?"

I nod and imagine telling Camilla about the ring: retrieving it from the box in the closet and thrusting it into her hands and saying, "Look! Look what I did."

I imagine the look of disappointment that would settle into her jaw. I imagine her crying or yelling. I imagine her taking me in her arms and telling me she understands.

Camilla tops off her wine, readjusts the napkin on her lap. "I made more jewelry today. It's ready for you to sell at the market tomorrow. If you'll still go?"

"Of course I'll still go."

Camilla clears the table and begins washing the dishes. The plates in the sink crash against each other.

I stand up from the table and place the serving dish beside her on the counter. "I'm sure your jewelry looks beautiful, Cam." I wrap my arms around her soft waist and rest my chin on her shoulder. "I'll head out first thing tomorrow."

The next morning, the market bubbles with sound. At the booth next to mine, a child begs her mother for a new sundress. The breeze blows and I catch a whiff of the fish stall down the street. A

green-and-white-striped umbrella shields me from the heat of the sun, which rises beyond the faded pink and orange buildings bordering the street.

"Very beautiful rings." A woman with a thick Arab accent stands at my booth. She pauses between each word, as though she's unsure of her Spanish. A white hijab frames her round face. Her penciled-in eyebrows furrow as she picks up the dead woman's ring, turning it over between her fingers, examining it closely. When she speaks, I notice that her top lip is a shade lighter than the bottom one. "This ring," she says.

"Would you like to buy it?" I say. My throat tightens at the thought of her walking away with the jewelry.

"Where did you get it?" she says.

I crack my knuckles. "My wife makes everything."

"This one is different from the other rings," the woman says. She studies my face. Her eyes run over my brow, my cheek, my chin.

I clear my throat. "She's trying something new. Would you like to buy it?"

"You are sure she made this one? You didn't buy it from some-

body?"

My shoulders feel tight and I pull my arm across my chest into a stretch. I open my mouth to say something, I don't know what, but the woman starts talking again.

"I am sorry," she says, placing the ring back on the table. "It is only that I gave a ring exactly like this to my sister, Aliyah, many years ago. She was supposed to move here this month, but she never arrived. When I heard that a boat of migrants sank, I—Could I please show you a picture of her? In case you have seen her?"

I nod. She pulls her phone out of her pocket and I know that when she turns it around I'll be staring at the face of the woman I embalmed yesterday. She passes me her phone and right there on the lock screen is that curly hair, those dark eyes, the birthmark running down her nose. A blond woman with sunburned cheeks walks up to the table, her bangs falling into her eyes as she browses.

"I haven't seen her," I say to the woman in the hijab. "I'm sorry."

"It's okay." She bites her bottom lips to keep it from quivering and trains her eyes on the table. "How much to buy it?" She picks

up the ring.

“Oh no,” the blond woman says. “I was also hoping to buy that ring.”

Aliyah’s sister looks at me, her eyebrows raised in a plea.

I shrug. “It goes to the highest bidder.”

The women take turns naming prices until the blond woman says, “Fifty euros.”

Aliyah’s sister hesitates, her eyes growing damp. She sniffs.

“Sold!” I say. I hand the ring to the blond woman.

As Aliyah’s sister walks away, her hijab ripples in the

breeze. The blond woman hands me some bills and I load them into the cash register. I wish I could tell Camilla that I met her sister. That her name is Aliyah.

The table looks empty where Aliyah’s ring had been. As I’m rearranging the jewelry to fill the gap, my elbow knocks a heart locket with a fake sapphire at its center onto the ground. Beneath the buzz of the market, I don’t hear the jewelry break against the cement. It isn’t until I get home in the afternoon that I realize I’ve broken the necklace, leaving the sapphire on the street.



from *Figures*
Felicity Breedlove

the modern catechism on our lord and savior jesus christ

by Grace Ashley

I was playing cards with Jesus yesterday,
But he kept forgetting the rules.
He would laugh with every mistake,
His fingers clumsy and uncalledoused,
As he evaded apologies like he did truth.

How's your mother?

His hand froze as he picked a card from the deck,
And his smile twitched as he held back a frown.

*She's alright, I guess.
I still catch her whispering to angels.*

He added his new card to his hand and adjusted the
golden buttons of his seersucker suit.

And Judas, have you heard from him?

He didn't even bother to keep the smile as he slammed his cards on the table.
He looked at me,
Holy fire burning in his blue eyes,
Ready for war.

*That weak bastard doesn't have the courage to face me.
He is a fool, and I have no time for those.*

I had heard Judas died weeks ago,
But perhaps Jesus did not have time for the news now, either.
I only looked down at the mess of cards on the table.
His anger had burned forgiveness away so long ago,
Even before the nails entered his hands and feet.

*You know, your generation is going to be the death of me.
All of you are so concerned with each other that y
ou never look at what matters.*

He did not explain what it is that
Matters,
But the surety in his voice was unwavering.
He gathered up the spilled deck and began to shuffle.

Do you know how to play poker?

No.

*All you need to do is bluff.
I'll deal.*

He did not deal.
He held all the cards himself.

What do you think sin tastes like?

He smiled again and ran a hand through his blond hair.

Like wine.

His teeth were stained red.



This is an Illusion

by Sadie Jacobson

Artist's Statement:

Mass media, rooted in patriarchal power dynamics and the cultural idealization of thinness in American society, entangles our bodies and minds. It fabricates this consciousness. It tells us the “correct” way to desire. It fuels societal pressures to appear a certain way and obtain a certain body type. It promises us we will be kept safe and healthy if we just follow its rules.

This piece questions the authorities that have shaped, reaffirmed, and perpetuated dominant understandings of beauty and self-worth. The work resists the oppressive standards that seek to control and define us. There is no one size fits all guide. This is an illusion.

As someone who battles with disordered eating, I offer this installation as an invitation to counter critique these messages about our bodies, to learn to tell our own truths and step fully into our unique selves. If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder or body dysmorphic disorder, contact NEDA's toll-free, confidential helpline (800)-931-2237 for support, resources, and treatment options. You are not alone.



from *Figures*
Felicity Breedlove

pirouette

by Pierce Leclerc

under a single point light
an arm extends to meet its savior;
it's something ethereal, the way it soon falls
and slices through the fog
on an arc to the waist.

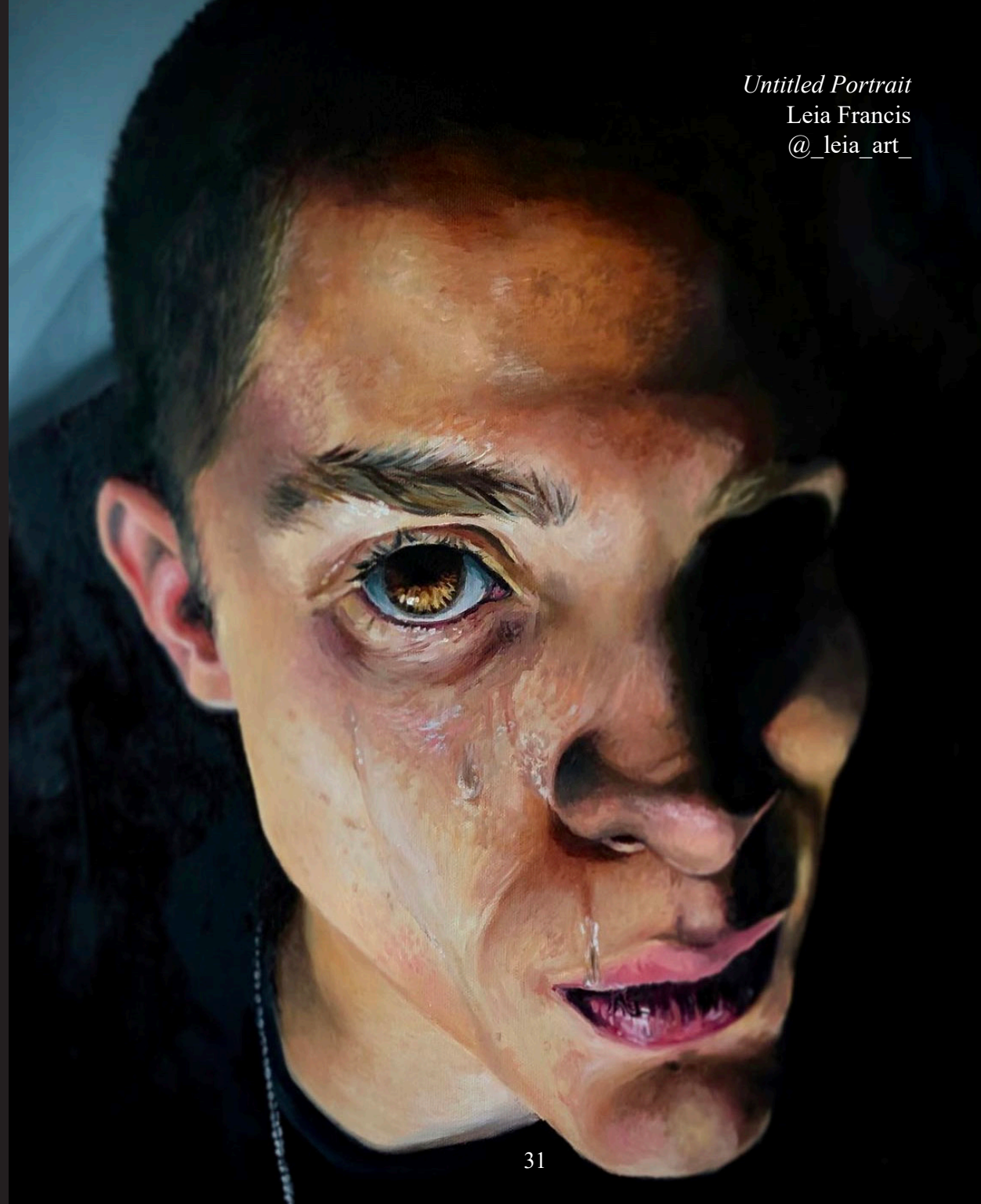
next arrives the leg,
which lances as the mount of a steed
into the flesh of darkness;
confronting the bitter tension
of observant silence.

fighting the cadence of its hostess' heartbeat,
the lance returns to its sheath undisturbed.
then by clockwork her body twirls on its axle,
never pausing to acknowledge
the fear which sharpened her blade.

memory10.txt

by Pierce Leclerc

Energy Fleets is playing on the radio.
It's raining. The stars are distant and dim.
This is my favorite part, he says. It's her favorite part too.
He glances to the right.
You know, I used to think he said 'it's such a funny lie.'
She laughs. He laughs with her.
It's such a funny life, Archy Marshall repeats.
It really is.
It's such a funny lie.



Untitled Portrait
Leia Francis
@_leia_art_

Carrier

by Abby Call

My mother informed me of my disease as she folded the laundry. She sat on the sofa, the sterile white glow of the television hollowed her cheeks.

"It comes silently. It feasts. It slinks back into the darkness," she says. "I have it. Your grandmother had it. Your great-grandmother and her mother too. It doesn't skip generations."

Cotton t-shirt, left polyester sock.

I sit on the carpet, picking at the threads. What I want is a hurricane. I want to look out the window to see thick tropical palms beating the window panes, the water cracking the glass. I want to hear the screams as this apartment complex crumbles. The still black pane stares back at me. She folds. Leopard-print underwear. Faded pink training bra.

"*Pain without meaning is just suffering.*" I see it in the way she stares into the distance a little too long when we are on the bus

to the doctor. She sags her head on that greased pane, rattling through the jungle. Do those strip malls remind her of her childhood? Do they remind her of her disease? I wonder. I feel the illness take over when I watch her cut coupons. When she wanders aimlessly through the fluorescence, pulling canned soup off the shelves at Savers. A failed mother. Diseased. A carrier.

I wrap myself in sheets and she estranges me. Do I remind her of what she has become? Does it get worse with age? She doesn't know. She leaves the opened sandwich makings on the kitchen counter and naps for a week on that sofa. The romaine melts, the *99cent!* loaf fuzzes, the deli meats opalize with slime. *All the fixings!* I watch in guilty fascination at my mother's glazed stare towards the wilting pygmy palm.

Illinois is a tropical oasis. I am a nature photographer. I have a whole collection of tapirs and ocelots and poison dart frogs folded in the humidity of my duvet. Disease travels fast in the jungle. It's in the larvae. It's in those stagnant pools that light never touches. I disappear into that wilderness, that magnificent flora and fauna for days and

days. I wonder where my mother goes. Does she prefer the shifting dunes or granite mountains? Does she know that I watch her from below? Does she know she will always be my adventurer, my pioneer?

We sit in the waiting room. Her legs are crossed, her foot bounces. I watch as children with missing limbs and mucus coughs walk into the mouth of the swinging door. I think of the hurricane. My mother reads a magazine. Vanity Fair. Dolce and Gabbana. The murder of Caylee Anthony. Did she glance up at me? She licks her pointer finger and leafs through the pages.

"We can go now. I'll be okay." I say.

"No, we can't." She says. "You're sick." She spits out the word like a piece of uncooked meat.

I wonder if her mother took her here when she was dying as a little girl. I wonder if she took herself.

We sit in silence on the car ride home. No rain. Never any goddamn rain. The sleep slowly overcomes me.

"I'm sorry..." She croaks. Her eyes are glossed, reflecting the

cold neon glow of the 7/11.

"For what?"

But I knew. I felt it, her ache. Her hatred for the stillness, the aridity. I knew the pain that was harbored in the folds of dirty laundry, in the suds of the mildewed sponge. That linted carpet that reminded her of her father's evil. She still painted her nails sometimes, and they would chip off in purple snowflakes all over the sofa.

I looked out my window and watched as a plastic grocery bag drifted through an empty parking lot. "Mall junk," she always said, laughing. I wondered why everyone in this goddamn country needed so many *things*. The bag drifts and drifts. I catch its faded red cry under streetlights, screaming in blocky letters, *Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.*

I look at her and feel all the things I cannot say.

The Pauper of Puntarenas

by Daniel A. Espinosa

Spring to Bordeaux melodrama,
every time Nana called you to sleep,
in your Hibiscus pink pillowsheet.
In the humid mist of morning air,
you rose up on little feet,
and cried to dirt floor and dusty windowpanes,
inside four crumbling half-painted cellophanes.
Bats and death snakes stumbling
at the coast in your breath.

As a child, your soles at the steppes:
Murky brown beaches drowned in nets.
Fishermen on their one-motor boats,
wiping their sweaty heads on linen holes.
With each step deeper in watery powder
you cried joy at the sight of your friends.
Who louder leaped and smiled and played
until the moonlight ends.

from *Figures*
Felicity Breedlove

Letters, algebra, history in haphazard house
Unpaid teacher scrapes toward.
A board, holding, a large, piece, of chalk.
Barely fitting her polished nails, sometimes red,
or white, or purple, or black.
While you and the boys let a sigh yearning
To simply be back at the beach!

Ten years pass like a wish to dance.
You sigh at the red-white purple of the discotheque.
Embracing lover's arms shrouded by night,
in her terse dark brown skin, her behest eyes,
you smile and think of the waves and the sand.
Eternity leaps to you from the depths of her hand.

Then it's off to the week, and your
...destitute, bedsheets. As you manage
the musty air in repetitive pangs—
the sounds of stray cats deafened out
by oxidized springs. And creaking wood.



Demystifying Medicine: My (Medical) Journal

by Emma Barrison
@ebarrisonart

Artist's Statement:

My dad collects medical books and journals. He used to have shelves full of them when I was a kid that we would flip through together. Maybe he hoped I would grow up to be a doctor. Instead, I became an artist desensitized to photos of guts, blood, cancerous lumps, and dying bodies.

I have created a medical journal as a way to personalize the medical struggles that I face and develop an archive of the body. This body -- captured as hands, arms, and skin -- stands for those who suffer from silent illnesses that often manifest in physical compulsions.

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In This Issue

- Compulsions
- De-centering The Body
- Excoriation

- Whose Gross Hands Are These?
- Emotional Distress
- Jane Doe





This month's issue:

Dermatillomania: a condition marked by compulsive skin picking

According to an interview with patient Jane Doe, she “would give anything for her dermatillomania to go away. In fact, I hate living with it. I wake up and start biting at my skin and I go about my day feeling for more skin to pick off. I usually end the day with new wounds to clean, and frankly, it’s getting really embarrassing to walk around with bleeding fingers”

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“People think it’s cute and sweet when a girl is nervously picking at her nails before a date or big exam. What people don’t think is cute is when that girl has big bleeding sores on her fingers that she keeps biting. It feels like I need a dog’s cone or something to restrain myself.” Jane Doe

What causes such a thing, and can it be cured? When does this disorder begin? Does it start in childhood, or can it happen at any time in life? Are there triggers for it? Does the affected feel shame in performing this action?



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Excerpt from an Untitled Novella

by Israel Zarate

Section Three

There he was. It was the kids first day in an American school. He was excited not only to learn but to possibly impress his classmates. The weeks prior to school starting were spent practicing the kids' English with his mother. His favorite part was the ABCs, especially when he had to say the letters L-M-N-O-P. The sound the letters made when touching the roof of his mouth brought about a pleasure that to this day manages to produce a smile.

They both laughed together, the child could never keep a straight face. His mother would anticipate his laughter by looking away as soon as L came up. They had to be quiet. Fabian worked late. He did not know what he did. He slept during the day, woke up at 4PM, ate what was made and went to work. He never saw him come back. She would warn that if they woke him up he would be angry. So

they sat in the living room, mouthing the ABCs in a hushed whisper.

Their living room was bare, white, and with no decorations on the walls. Through the sliding glass door out into the parking lot stood their silver Subaru Outback, well, it really wasn't theirs, it was Fabian's.

His mother used to have a car. Her car.

She came home from work one day, pulling into the driveway of his grandparent's home. Her car was dark silver, the paint sat on the car, coating it like frosting on a layered cake. He remembers the smile on her face. She hung her keys next to her grandpas on the key rack. A small teddy bear dangled from them.

That same teddy bear now dangles from her keys. It is missing two legs and an arm. His mother's car now in a lot with a for sale sign in some bum fuck Washington town.

His mother had told him stories of America, of the schools and of the people within them. She spoke of great lunches made up of tater tots and corn dogs. She spoke of large classrooms with friendly faces. The child's expectations were high.

He stood in the cafeteria

line. He was greeted with the smell of pizza, burgers, and hot dogs. He remembers thinking to himself, "If this is what America is like, I'll never miss my Ensenada."

That all changed. He didn't impress anyone with his English. He was made fun of. He was laughed at by everyone because they deemed his attempt at asking for a burger pathetic. They saw him as a joke. They saw him as someone to laugh at. The lunchroom was in an uproar of laughter, and he couldn't do anything about it. He sat there with a wilting hot dog, rather than a burger. He sat there with the shame of not being able to ask a simple question. He looked around with an aimless expression—unable to read the visible EXIT sign the kid panicked, ran, turned around—looked back with everyone still pointing and laughing. The redness of their cheeks like apples on a tree, their laughter welling up, a guarantee of ridicule to come.

His throat tightened.

The tears rolled down.

He hid in the bathroom until the recess bell rang.

At home he locked himself in his room. His mother had picked him up from school. His mother

never picked him up. She stood outside of the main door, one hand on her hip and the other above her head acting as a visor, shielding her face from the sun. He ran towards his mom. Throwing his full weight on her, nearly toppling her over, she wrapped his arms around him, confused. He hugged her tight like a rubber band around one's index finger turning purple with every passing second. He hugged her like it was all he knew, as if his life depended on it; he hugged her as if her embrace could undo the laughter still ringing in his ears. Her touch could lift the pain in his heart.

He could hear their yelling through the door.

*Why is he fucking crying.
Pinche chamaco de mierda, parece que no tiene putos huevos.*

He has no friends. Why don't you go play with him?

He is your kid. Not mine.

His mom knocked on his door, she did not wait for him to open it. Her eyes were red. You have to go out she said. Don't you wanna make friends?

His mother had stopped picking him up. She said he was old enough to walk home alone. That sounded like Fabian speaking

and not her.

He had not made many friends since his meltdown at the lunchroom, but the kid that sat across from him, Uriel, had a frail toothpick body, spiky black hair, and a warm and inviting smile that bewitched the heart at the thought of friendship. He watched as Uriel carefully placed the cards on people's desks right before recess. He placed one down for Luis, one for Edgar, and he skipped Pablo. He left before he got to his desk. His stomach deepened at the thought of Uriel. He raced down the stairs towards the playground. Head dizzy, vision blurry, he opened the door that led outside and bumped into the recess guard.

He felt bad. He still had not learned to say sorry.

Birds chirping, parents bustling about their day picking up their children, and the bright sun burning down causing sweat to drip down the backside of one's shirt; its glowing presence shines down on the street as people make their way back home from school. The large sign on the right reads "Walgreens" in big red lettering. There is a warm air following the child as he makes his way down the street. His mind peeks into shop windows

as he makes a mental catalog of the things that pique his interest. The list grows ranging from candy bars, *Legos*, magazines, friendship, love, admiration, and maybe a home for safe measure. The list grew with items he knew he would never have.

Up ahead there's a group of students waiting for a bus, and for a moment, he allows himself to wait with them. He is standing on the corner of *Ruby* and *Main* watching as people get on the bus. He takes a step forward. He stops.

Son, where are you going?

I want to go home.

That night he waited till everyone was asleep. He quietly slid the comforter off of his body, five toes down, one foot down, ten toes down; two feet on the ground; he tip-toed his way over to his dresser, sliding his underwear drawer open. A beacon of light, the white of his teeth shone down on the envelope, it read: *To: Israel*.

He had been invited to a birthday party.

The invitation was stuck to their fridge for two weeks. Every day he left for school he would stop to look at it, right before he put his milk away after having cereal. He would stare at it for a second or

two, still not believing his classmate had invited him. He remembers Uriel walking around the classroom stopping by each desk, placing an envelope on everyone he deemed worthy of his time—and he was one of them! It was no fluke; Uriel made a deliberate decision to invite him.

That Friday before leaving school Uriel waved at him before getting picked up by his parents.

See you tomorrow!

You are not going, his

mother said. Fabian's grandmother, Mama Chucha, had died.

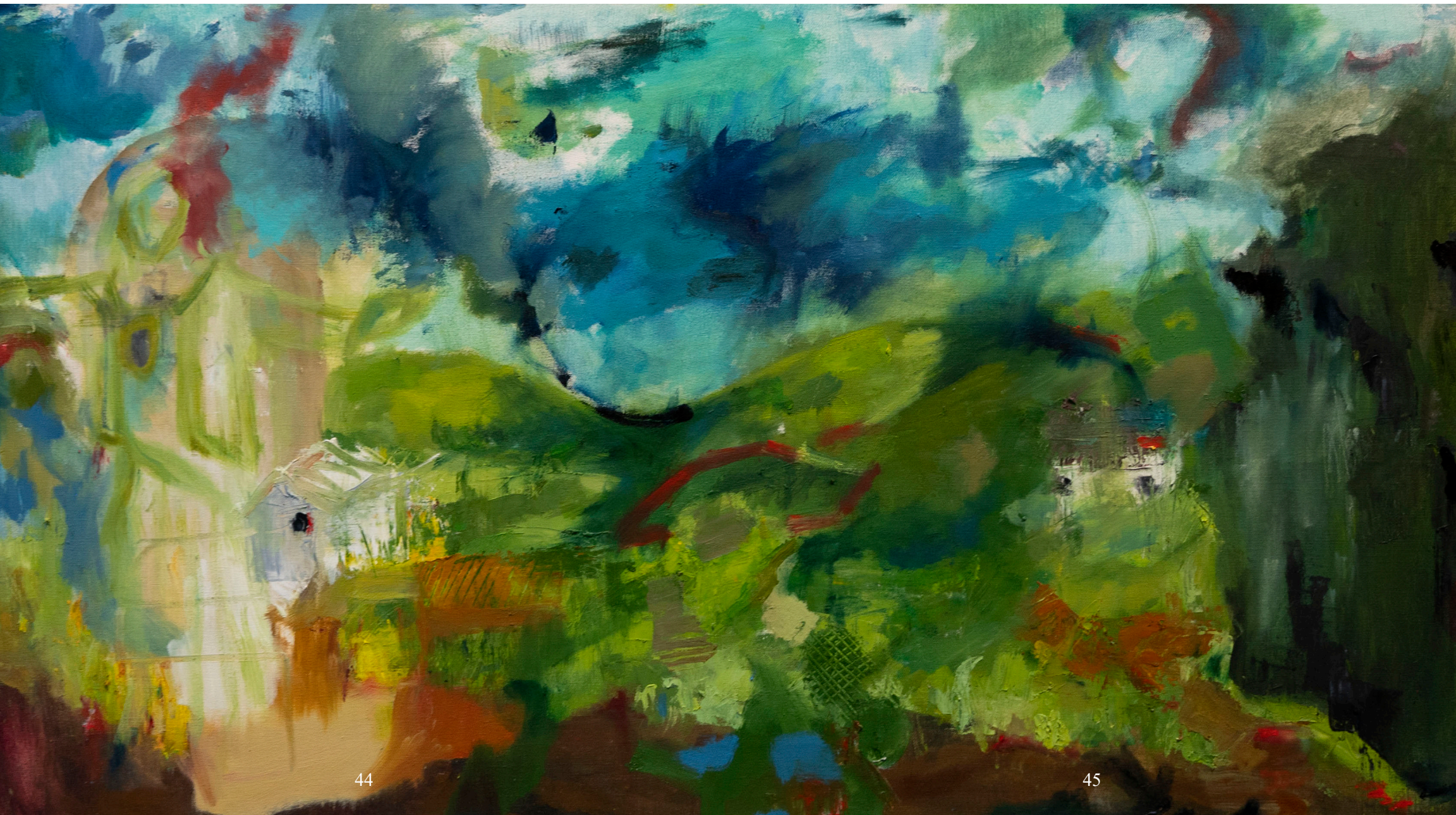
He stared at her lifeless body, carefully cocooned inside of the casket. Her eyes closed giving her an air of tranquility. He wondered if she was dreaming, what she was dreaming, of who? Her pale face giving the impression of a poor man's mime. He felt jealous of her. She was stuck in that casket but free of life's burdens. He wished he was dead.



from *Figures*
Felicity Breedlove

Fairytale Landscape

by Brooke Abeles





Man in Rain
from *Abbey Road*
Peter Biss

Haikus: Grace Wang

Change of Scenery

What a change it'll be,
from the crystal clear water,
to crystal snowflakes.

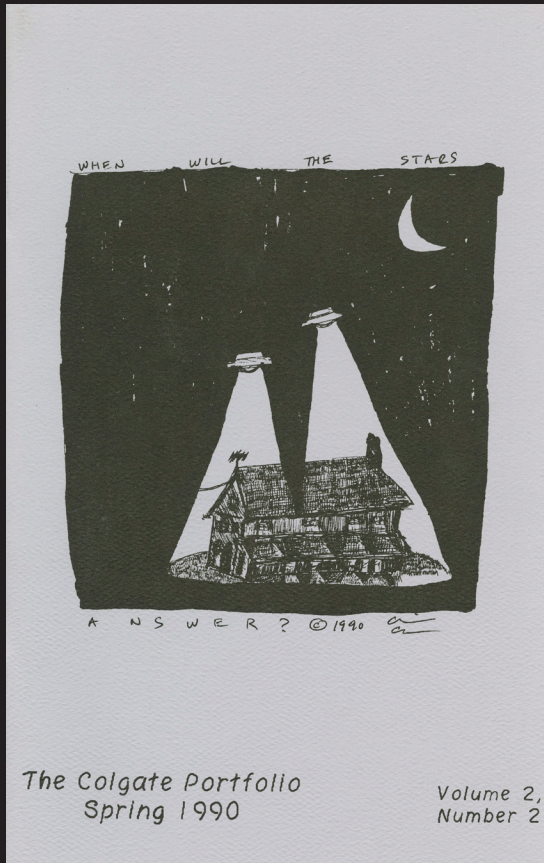
Twenty Three Roses

Twenty Three roses,
capture the sweet memories,
before our last bow.

From the Archives

Some fun little throwbacks for you, courtesy of Colgate's Special Collections & University Archives.

Spring 1990



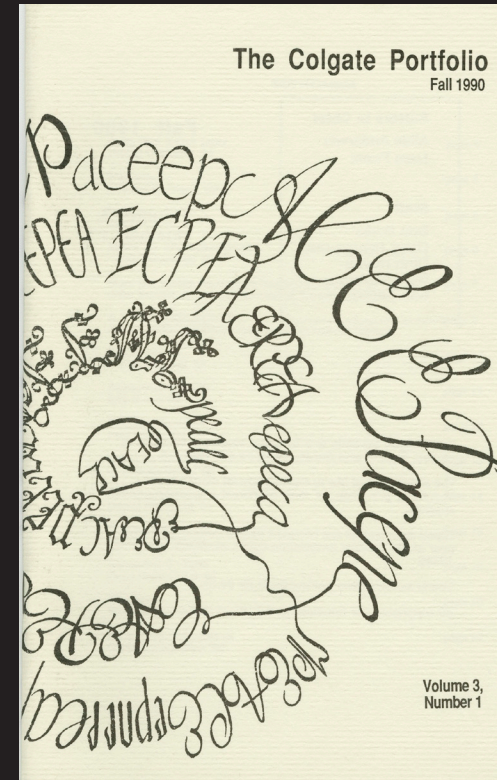
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Thanks for reading! Submissions for the Fall 2023 issue are now open. All current Colgate students are encouraged to submit their poetry, prose, and visual art to colgateportfolio@colgate.edu or on our website colgateportfolio.com. There are no restrictions on genre or form.

Best of luck, and happy creating!

—Marissa Bordonaro
Editor-in-Chief

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