

# The Aerie

Volume 16 · Spring 2015



aer • ie

also aer • y (âr'e,îr'e) n. pl. -ies

1. The nest of an eagle or other predatory bird built on a crag or other high place
2. A house or stronghold built on a height

**3. The literary and arts magazine of Concordia University Irvine**

[Med. Lat. aeria < OFr. aire.]

## ***The Aerie***

Concordia University's Literary and Arts Publication

Volume 16 · Spring 2015

Concordia University, Irvine, California

This year's edition of *The Aerie* is dedicated to Diane Gaylor '89.  
For many years Diane served faithfully as a cherished faculty member  
and as the Director of Library Services. She was a mentor and  
friend to the faculty, staff, and students.

1967-2015

*“. . . all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated; . . . God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another.”*

From *Meditation 17* by John Donne



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# Acknowledgments

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*The Aerie* is an annual journal which showcases work being done in creative writing and art by Concordia University Irvine students, alumni, faculty and staff. In addition, it provides students from both the English and art departments a hands-on experience working collaboratively to produce a quality literary and arts journal. Students are involved in every aspect of the production from the call for submissions, to the selection of creative work and the design of the journal. The publication of *The Aerie* is made possible with funding from the Office of the Provost.

The text for this magazine is set in Adobe Garmond Pro and Helvetica Neue.

## Dialogue in the Dark III—Surprise

*Acrylic on Illustration Board*  
Anna Kawashima '14



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Printmaking Color Studies - Yellow - Green

*Printmaking*

Anna Kawashima '14

## Digital Projection

Upstairs in a black corner of a cavernous room  
A sun lies chained in a locked box,  
Technicolor radiance housed within black walls.

The box whirs and hums, anticipating binary commands  
To strike a sunbeam,  
A single flare scorched through scoped lens  
Shining over a sea of blackened heads

Signaling silence.  
Explosive scenes ignite.  
Characters chase cars or chaste lips across a silver screen.  
The sea of heads releases a tide of tears  
To tragedy and comedy alike.  
And for a few hours, blackness is blasted by brilliance.  
Image upon image,  
Flickering, flashing  
Colliding in a kaleidoscope

Beyond Edison's kinoscopic imagination.  
At length, when the sun has burned its brightest within the box,

The dancing lights dim.  
Fuming and fizzling under force  
Sometimes it supernovas—  
The belly of the box booms.  
But usually,  
Like the motion pictures it projects,  
The sun fades to black.

*Justin Solis '12*

## Wine

I.

He says he's tired and needs to sleep and reaches for the Pinot Noir. When he drinks it in, he closes his eyes and sinks back into the embrace of the brown leather. He does not open them for a while, so I think he might be dead, and I watch the stems of crimson drip down from the rim and stain the glass with cerise. The sky is closing in. I wonder where he's gone off to, want to go where the red wine has taken him. This is how I imagine my father, with a green bottle from the valleys of the Great Northwest, a delicate glass glued to his large fingers, with a sleepy gaze and a happy face, immersed in purple passion. I want to be old, already tired of thirteen. I want to drink from the magic flask for the instant peace etched on his face. I want to see things, mature things, my adolescent mind has never even dreamed. I want to sip it in bars and cross my legs and give flirtatious giggles over my shoulder as handsome men lean in and touch my knees and eye my breasts. I want to be as untouchable to them as the vino is to me.

II.

I cut the Brie and Swiss in squares and arrange them by their colors. I separate the Camembert from the Gruyere, concise little inches, creating intricate patterns of rectangles on a slab of wooden slate. On one side lies the muenster, on the other rests the feta, and in my hand, *Ménage à trios*, filled almost to the brim. I make sure to forget the blue cheese, warned that it can overwhelm the sweetness of the Merlot. I also avoid the spices, which taint the wine and make it tannic and bitter.

I put on Neil Diamond and decide to eat outside underneath the shady tree my mother's decked out in pale Chinese lanterns. I let the warmth of the sun hit my face and my cheeks and my legs, and I stretch out on my back when my stomach is full and pretend I'm a sailor to explain away the sudden swaying like an ocean in my head.

III.

The Red Fox draws us in with flashing lights. When the bartender asks what he can get for me, I stall and ask for schnapps. "Schnapps the rocks." The second round, I order the blueberry schnapps again, and in the morning, I'm sick and heavy, call out of work and stay in bed. I apologize to the jilted bottle of dark Shiraz and regret my blueberry betrayal. I should not have let the allure of sapphire sway me in a divergent direction; I should not have let it convince me it would lull me all the same. I should have stayed at home last night, should have finished off the wine. As the sun departs, I watch the indigo sky become an autumn red.

IV.

It's winter and I'm weary because he sounded different on the phone and told me he would see me tomorrow in the morning. I pace the cobblestone tiles, run my fingers along the hanging wind chimes, and pretend these subtle actions can alter the minutes while I wonder what it might be like in chilly New York City. I start a fire. As the flames pop, illuminate the kitchen with a pulsating orange, I chew my lip and tear the skin. It's nervousness that destroys me and the layers of my mouth and the corners of my cuticles. The condensation at my brow melts away the makeup, my innate female androgyny, with a particular disorder and chaos at the unsettling realization that he had sounded different and unfamiliar, as if something mysterious in the city had changed his voice and changed his mind about San Clemente and about me. Take the other night, for example, when he laughed at a joke in the background I couldn't hear, but it came from a girl who sounded pretty. That was the night I drank the Barbera, but tonight I reach for the Cabernet.

V.

"The wine they serve in the bars is just the same as they serve in restaurants." This is what she tells me the second time I meet her at the Red Fox. She's wearing a black hat and cat-eye glasses, and she carries the aura



and style that I crave. Her hair is long and mine is gone, but she orders something that smells like peaches and piss. This time, I've learned my lesson. I pretend what she says is something profound, pretend I'm not turned off by her order that strikes me as cavalier and cliché. As I take in the slouched bodies, I ask for wine, and I ask for red. He pours it slowly like a mystery novel, red like aromatic blood or some lush, illusive restorative. I smell it first, take it in by the scent. The dodgy atmosphere and its dive-y guests, the squinty-eyed bartender in his hipster 80's vest, with one sip, begin to fade, to pet my hair, and stroke my cheek, and hush me quiet, and bring me peace.

VI.

With sunrise, the seagulls come searching for breakfast; we watch them all day until the sun departs and clink together Claret contained in crystal. We look at the stars, so far away, whose light takes forever to reach our Earth . . . it's December, 2013, and I am in love. His name is Stephen, and he's an artist, not like me. As he slides me the bottle, and our fingers touch, I feel light and somehow fragile. Small waves crash at the shoreline and the wet sand reflects the rays of a piercing sun. I squint up at him as he tells me I'm pretty and that he likes when I talk about medicine and literature. He doesn't kiss me, but as we pack up our picnic and walk back to his car, our sandy bodies lean in close, and we toast to the future, and to art, and to red wine.

VII.

This is he, the man behind the counter, who pours us wine in thin glasses with a twist of his wrist and a velvet voice. This is he, who wears a tie in red, fitting for places like this with the overarching Italian grape décor. "Cabernet Sauvignon," says he, "goes well with the aged Gouda . . . or the cheddar." We take bites like mice and small sips with our pinkies extended, feel old like our parents, and finally able to enjoy what was once forbidden in the presence of all open eyes. This is he, the man who eyed us with suspicion, who didn't believe we were twenty-one, but you and I walked in with an air of pseudo-maturity—me with my lipstick and you in your slacks. "The Zinfandel," says he, "goes well with the Manchego or the Pecorino, which is similar to cow or goat . . . ."

"Professional wine tasters," Stephen says, "usually spit out the wine." This is he, who says this as I reach for another, who usually refuses an alcoholic offer unless it's crafted beer or some kind of foreign pale ale. My cynical smile twitches, and I scoff as I swirl the wine around in psychedelic little circles. I lean back and cross my legs as I finish the glass with a full gulp and say, "Is that what I look like? A professional?"

*Kayla Wood '14*

*Creative nonfiction*



**Geometric**  
*Digital Illustration*  
Eric Stigna '17

## A Box of Crayons

They once were magicians and engineers and playmates,  
sculpting scribbled worlds out of the raw clay of the paper,  
relishing the pop of Wisteria flowers that sprouted up from a corner,  
never tasting the sweet draught of the Goldenrod sun.  
They would draw bushels of Scarlet balloons  
which bobbed amidst the watery expanse of Cerulean skies.  
The crackle that they made as they were struck against the paper—  
a sound like scrolls of Sunset Orange fire unfurling—  
flickers distantly now through their gloss-covered minds.  
They left fragments of themselves in those tiny landscapes of wax,  
in the miniature worlds of Granny Smith Apple and Wild Watermelon  
placed in curling snail's trails on the canvas of the living room wall.

There was a time before they were snapped by stubby fingers,  
their conical peaks eroding away into weathered hills.  
They remember when ink on coloring pages were never borders to confine,  
but were shaped into sprawling lines of latitude and longitude.  
They were crammed into place by such familiar hands—  
ones that smeared them with glue and left them freckled with glitter.  
Her hands were much larger now—trading stickiness for steadiness  
as she stuffed them under a photo album and a lump of winter coats.

Now they live in peeling walls of green and yellow cardboard,  
nothing but ancient relics from childhood's forgotten realm.  
Obnoxious Laser Lemon snores in jagged, staccato beats,  
while Aquamarine tumbles like the restless acrobats of the waves.  
Desert Sand and Raw Sienna doze, just a shade or two apart  
as Outer Space Black melts into the dust-choked shadows.  
They huddle in their mismatched, overstuffed rows,  
recalling a time when they were more than this . . .

*Lauren Taylor '16*



Sail  
*Digital Illustration*  
Eric Stigna '17

## Fishing Lines

When the boat pitches, my father maintains his balance while I stumble. He stands beside his fishing pole that is locked onto the side of the boat and watches the sea roll beneath him. I sit near my pole after too many stumbles, watching him and wondering at the swells. Visibility is a crisp three miles and there are no clouds to be seen, but the boat rocks on four-foot waves that push it up on mountaintops and drop it down into valleys. I feel a knot of nausea in my stomach but try to pay it little attention.

Instead, I let my eyes trace the fishing line as it disappears in the roiling sea. I imagine the bait suspended in the blue with its hook underneath, a temptation, a trap. I look to my father, his back to me while he watches the ocean.

“Dad,” I say. He doesn’t turn. I say it louder. “Dad.”

He turns and raises his eyebrows in question.

“How have you been?”

“Good,” he says. “Fishing’s been good.”

I nod and let the silence hang.

“How’d your book thing go?” he asks.

“Good,” I say, glad to hear him ask. “I sold it to a publisher. It comes out in the winter.”

He grunts and looks down at his boots. I wait for him to ask any more questions about my accomplishment. None come.

Swallowing the burning in my throat, I ask, “How long have we been out here?”

He checks his watch and looks at the sky. “About four hours.”

“And no bites.”

“My line jerked a few times,” he says as he sits on a cooler. “There’s fish to be caught.”

I want to say that’s not what I meant, but a racket behind me stops the words.

The reel on my rod screams, line racing into the swells. My father bellows and heaves me up from my seat and pushes me toward the pole. I unlock it and seize the whirling handle that rips from my hands. I snatch at it again, this time catching it and backing away from the side of the boat. My rod is bent almost in half and I feel my muscles cry out at the strain. Setting my feet beneath me, I begin working, reeling and letting, reeling and letting. My father barks directions and the boat rocks. I lean with the rocking boat, holding my balance enough to gain some ground on the fish. The deck plummets from beneath me when the boat crests a swell and I lose balance, the fish pulling me almost over the boat. I feel the skin of my hand split as I lift the rod once again.

“I can’t hold on anymore. Cut the line,” I say to my father.

“Give it to me,” he says, elbowing me aside and locking his hands over the rod.

His calluses make a scraping sound on the rod handle. He stands back and works on the fish as I did, reeling and letting, reeling and letting, reeling, reeling, reeling, heaving, and hurling an enormous fish over the side of the boat. It flops against the sides before my father thumps its head four times with a large hammer. It twitches once more and is dead.

My father squints at me and looks at the fish. I reach my unhurt hand out to congratulate him and he grips it, calluses hot and scratchy. “I’ll get you a bandage,” he says and spits into the sea.

I sit down beside the fish, my bleeding palm facing up in my lap. A bandage appears beside it, and I wrap myself up as my father sets to work on the fish, stripping it of scales and bones and filleting the meat. When he is finished, he puts the meat in the cooler and sits on the closed lid.



“Thank you for finishing that fish for me,” I say, getting a grunt in return. “Why do you do that?” I say without thinking.

“What?” my father answers, squinting at me.

“You always do this. Just say it.”

“Say what?”

“You know what. I can see it in the way you won’t look at me. I can feel it and it hurts more than this stupid cut.” My eyes, throat, and heart prickle with emotion.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” His eyes are on his boots, red with the thick fish blood.

“I’m a disappointment to you.” I spit the words.

He looks at me. He’s not squinting. “Never.”

“No, it’s fine. I accepted it a long time ago. I just want you to tell me why.”

My father looks away from me and says, “You aren’t a disappointment. I wanted you to be—”

“Like you,” I fill the words in for him.

He stares at his hands, a frown knotting his brow. “Yes, but—” The words run from him again and his struggle to speak is apparent. He strains as if lifting something heavy, and a tear breaks through his squint, dropping into the blood on his boots. He is silent.

“What?” I say.

“I can’t say any more,” he says.

I say, “How disappointing.”

*Spencer Lane '17*

*Fiction*

## A. D. D. Artistic Diversions from Dreamacy

The trip down to Laguna Beach consisted of questionable shortcuts, several re-routings of our GPS, and dealing with the reckless driving style of Southern Californians. She handled all of these obstacles well, despite my sharp intakes of breath and fingernails digging into the seat cushions. After ten minutes of winding up streets as spacious as sidewalks, we reached the peak of the mountain. We were in a wealthy residential area, which insinuated that the journey we were about to embark on was probably not government-encouraged.<sup>1</sup>

\*\*\*

–Stop writing. Take a walk. Forget about it for a while. Stop struggling. Not doing is essential for doing.<sup>2</sup>

\*\*\*

Sometimes, I wish I had a GoPro in my eyeball.<sup>3</sup>

\*\*\*

Nature is – the areas of the Earth untouched by urbanization and the life they foster.<sup>4</sup>

\*\*\*

“I have everything I need. A square of sky, a piece of stone, a page, a pen, and memory raining down on my sleeves.” - Harriet Doerr<sup>5</sup>

\*\*\*

The purpose of this wonderfully rustic journal is to document my escapade to Switzerland with my cousins Pilar and Shannon Hoye. As of this moment, I am half-watching a movie offered by Swiss Air about the White House exploding whilst digesting a Starbucks panini and a peach. It took my mom, dad and I around ten minutes to find a single shop in Southern SF that sells sandwiches, after which we realized we all had smartphones. A shining moment of intellect for the Hoye Family.<sup>6</sup>

\*\*\*

“Life is inherently risky. There is only one big risk you should avoid at all costs, and that is the risk of doing nothing.” - Denis Waitley<sup>7</sup>

\*\*\*

Bees. I hate bees. My immune system also hates bees, so I am both physically and emotionally mortified of them. Pretty much any bug that causes one pain and/or death is not my cup of tea.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – an excerpt from “Facing the Cliff,” an essay about overcoming my fear of both heights and unfamiliar surroundings.

<sup>2</sup> Written by Peter Elbow. Excerpt from “Collage: Your Cheatin’ Art” *Writing on the Edge* (1997).

<sup>3</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – Word Doodle – September 24, 2014. Passing desire whilst my mind was wandering during lectures. A word doodle is the doodle for the person who cannot draw.

<sup>4</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – First writing assignment in Art of the Essay class at Concordia University – August 19, 2014. Gives rigid, generic explanation before she is aware of the creative, “boundaryless” aspect of the class.

<sup>5</sup> Found on danceletters.com. Discovered through search to find if any historical celebrity found journaling as important as I do.

<sup>6</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – excerpt from travel journal – July 2, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Found on thinkexist.com. I resonate with this quote in my struggle with a disorder sweeping our generation called chronic laziness: the easiest and hardest habit to eradicate.

<sup>8</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – Write Away – October 12, 2014. Response when asked what scares me in nature.

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. . . we pedaled through lawns, villages, fields, dense woods, narrow gravel trails, and paved roads with sharp turns, one of which was conveniently sprinkled with gravel. It was at that point in the road where I invented a new dance move to patent, the bike shimmy, only achievable though braking an electrobike on engine power going considerably fast on a downhill slope attempting to avoid a cousin who brakes directly in front of you. . . nevertheless, I shimmied my little heart out until my bike could not handle the pure passion of the shimmy and ejected me into the surrounding weeds”<sup>9</sup>

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“Sometimes I can feel my bones straining under the weight of all the lives I’m not living.” —Jonathan Safran Foer, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*<sup>10</sup>

\*\*\*

“Screw up like you do it for a living.”<sup>11</sup>

\*\*\*

I sit on the ground that is younger  
than the stars  
And look at the stars as  
cosmetic idols  
Always shining  
Never changing  
And look at the stars as  
cosmetic idols  
Always shining  
Never changing<sup>12</sup>

\*\*\*

It was then time to get off the spaceship. We parked in a driveway and I headed out quickly to grab my suitcases and run to the bus stop. But when I looked back, my garage was enveloped in hot pink and green mist, and police started covering the area everywhere. My dad told them he had no idea what his spaceship was doing, but I realized I needed to get on the airporter fast if I didn’t want to get sucked into this mess. To makes things easier, a torrential downpour began, so I had to lift my two suitcases out of insanely deep puddles into the trunk of a pickup truck.<sup>13</sup>

\*\*\*

All night—for a week—it rains, and at last there is a still morning of mist. A fire of weeds and hedge

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<sup>9</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – Excerpt from travel journal – July 7, 2013. Lack of sentence-ending punctuation exhibits the amount of energy jet-lag had granted me in the wee hours of the morning, when I would do most of my journaling.

<sup>10</sup> Also found on thinkexist.com. Was refreshing to find that so many accomplished people have struggled with the dull plague of inactivity I often do.

<sup>11</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – December 11, 2014 – First attempt at matching the deep artsiness of the world-famous authors I have been quoting.

<sup>12</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – “Wisdom Sky” – 2006. I had moved not too long ago when this was written, at which point I realized I wasn’t a fan of change.

<sup>13</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – Excerpt from Dream Journal – December 9, 2014. Subconscious escapade took place during a college nap of an obscene length.

clippings in a little flat field is smoldering. The ashes are crimson, and the bluish white smoke flows in a divine cloudy garment around the boy who rakes over the ashes.<sup>14</sup>

\*\*\*

“But what is the point of it all?”

“The point?”

“Yes, why are we here? Where did we come from? What can we learn from simple trees and clouds about our ultimate existence?”

“Well, the trees exist. We exist. We exist with the trees, and the trees exist with us.”

“That’s my purpose? Existence?”

“Would you like a better one?”<sup>15</sup>

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The starry sky blesses one  
with understanding,  
And leaves you abandoned  
in the cage of the mind.  
For the gate can only be opened  
if one starts to wonder  
that there is so much more  
to know.<sup>16</sup>

*Kyleigh Hoye '18*  
*Creative nonfiction*

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<sup>14</sup> Written by Edward Thomas – excerpt from “End of Summer” – Finch, Robert. *The Norton Book of Nature Writing*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1990. Print.

<sup>15</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – December 11, 2014. A dialogue between a teacher and a pupil.

<sup>16</sup> Written by Kyleigh Hoye – “Wisdom Sky” – 2006. I wrote my last lines on the last portion of binder paper, hoping my conclusion about the stars was something more than just a product of my sleep-deprived mind.



**Forgotten Beauty**

*Graphite*

Mariah Kohl '18



## One Response to “But They’re Not *Really* There”

Alzheimer’s is a man in a top hat.  
Dementia wears a sequined leotard.

Onstage, your Grandma Betty lies inside  
a purple spot-lit box. Only her head  
and feet, wiggling, peek out from either end.

Dementia cocks her hip, smiles, shows off the blade,  
gestures with red-nailed hands. Alzheimer’s looks  
Grandma in the eye when he slides the blade  
in place, wheels her blinking head offstage.

Were you so bewitched you missed the ace  
fall to the floor from his sleeve just now?  
Did you not see his top hat hop away?

Do you actually believe  
he made your grandma disappear?

*Carrie Gendle '15*

## To Jump A Sestina

When gravity deceives me in this place,  
I do not feel betrayed, I feel alive,  
Becoming one with emptiness of space  
Before remembering that what goes up comes down.  
For just a shard of time, I'm free  
And find the firmament becomes my home.

I often ask, "What constitutes a home?"  
Memories that permeate a place?  
A place where from life's tensions I am free,  
Where breaths of youth and love emerge alive?  
While swelling doubts and fears may pull me down,  
I'm lifted by benevolence of space.

But how can comfort be bestowed by space?  
An empty void has never been compared to "home."  
And yet for me, that point between the up and down  
Sends me to a transcendental place,  
Where it feels almost bizarre to be alive  
Amidst the wind and sky—the freest of the free.

I'm held there, poised by wings so free  
That gravity forgets mandates of time and space,  
And here I am beguiled, for hope, alive,  
Presupposes that I've found a lasting home.  
But soon, the poor, fooled forces start to place  
That I do not belong, and must come down.

Rejected by the up, I am welcomed by the down,  
Uniting adverse worlds, not taking back the free  
Dome above, but here, a guarded place  
That breaks my fall and holds me in its space.  
And here, as well, I feel the warmth of home  
For my firm trust in earth keeps me alive.

So, though I always live, I come alive  
When juxtaposing ways of up and down.  
By binding them together, I come home,  
To where a definition eludes "free."  
I find my peace among these forms of space  
That take me to a rare and hallowed place.

You'll find me where both up and down mean "free,"  
Made alive by harmony of space.  
To jump becomes home's lasting hiding place.

*Kristin Stam '15*



**Vancity**  
*Photography*  
Courtney Sundin '16

## VINNY

### “Wetiko”

I lost much faith in God over the years, and it was because of the area we lived in. The women covered themselves in expensive gifts given to them by their pompous husbands, and in return their children grew up to be the close-minded individuals I went to school with. We live in a gated community on one of the nicer hills in Anaheim, so I saw many of these kinds of people coming and going through our gate.

When I was still innocent I would pray to God for a best friend like most children do. One that lived below our hill. Sam was delivered to me in first grade by Ms. Thrift's seating chart. I asked her if she wanted to paint together after class and we have been drawing up our futures together ever since. Vinny came to me six years later. I had just begun to understand what going out with a boy was and decided I didn't want it, so I told my mom I wanted a boy puppy instead. Virtually they were the same thing, just one wouldn't ask me out on dates and make me nervous by asking me to hold his hand in public.

### “Altsoba”

I stopped believing in God when I began seeing the devil in my friends in high school. Most of them bottled up their disgust over their split households and rich broken families and consequently drank it all down until they couldn't feel much of the betrayal anymore. Many of them had fantasies of being independent older men and women, and so their faces granted them the wish by hatching droopy lines and empty eyes where their adolescent faces once lived. I saw lifeless souls inside young bodies popping pills for breakfast. I didn't understand why humans were the only species in the animal kingdom that wanted to be alone, and I decided that if this was the pack I was supposed to follow I would rather be alone too.

But Vinny had a way of making me hope that our souls went higher than six feet under. When he was seven months old I dropped him. I was a clumsy child and got stains on most of the shirts my sister let me borrow. I knew she loved the shirts and I tried to take extra care but I seemed to be prone to accidents. Vinny slipped through my grip just as easily as I had dirtied up my sister's clothes. She decided this incident was grounds for me to not own Vinny. “See! You can't take care of him!” she accused.

I picked him up and rubbed his belly until he stopped whimpering, and I spit out three less satisfying words than screaming screw you: “No, he's mine.” And from that day on, he was.

After school we would sit on the driveway and pretend to shoot Escalades and Porsches and all the other foreign-looking cars that sped over the speed bumps. By this time Vinny didn't need a leash anymore. He heeled right next to me at all times. Even in the middle of the night when I would sway over to the couch if I couldn't sleep, he'd come out from underneath my bed and watch TV with me.

### “Egogahan”

When I wanted to isolate myself, I turned to Vinny's company frequently, and he never closed the door on my arrival. But I left him often once high school chewed me up and spit me out into four years of college. Vinny would rest underneath my bed with a mournful expression as I packed my bags. His eyes fully dilated, missing whites, would watch my feet intensively to make sure I didn't leave the room without him. If he felt like I wasn't coming back, he would criss-cross over my feet, which almost sent me to the ground half the time. I would kneel down and pat his mangy, sallow blonde hair and blow a playful raspberry by his floppy ears. He knew that meant goodbye, but he didn't know that it broke my heart just as much as his. I left him there to protect my room and make sure it stayed our home until I came back, and in return he left scratches on the bottom half of the door.

As college reared its bittersweet head at the end of my summer vacation, I spent fewer days out with friends and more on walks with Vinny. I would load him into my hatchback, put him up front next to me, and roll down all the windows. He loved hanging his furry paws out the window and sticking his nose up into the ripe California air. Barking at people wasn't in his disposition. He simply observed the world outside of my car and watched the buildings dissolve from the window.

Mother said he seemed "down" when I was gone for too long. I wondered how he would manage with me in a different city. I contemplated the idea of another family member taking care of him day-in-day-out for the next four years of my undergraduate experience. As weeks died down into days left in my bombastic hometown, I knew leaving him behind would be hard. Now I was in fear that he would forget who I was. I was troubled by the idea of coming home from school to find that Vinny no longer ran to the door to see me. I tried to push the idea aside and hoped that he would always remember me.

### **"Awenasa"**

For a long time I wondered why people treated their pets better than they treated themselves. Eventually it became obvious to me that people's love for one another depended on what mood they were in. Animals are not as complex. Where our passion as human beings fails in emanating unrestricted affection, animals make up for it with their undying capacity for devotion. And it makes us feel a little more sane and a little more balanced. Before Vinny, I had not yet felt the grim pangs and punches of life, and he distracted me from ever thinking I was nothing but a lone wolf searching for a place to rest my head. Vinny completed me the way a home did after a long stressful day. Not just any house on the rising hills of Anaheim. A home with pictures and memories covering the walls, comfy couches to soothe my body after a hard day, and a forever-burning fireplace roaring with flames that gave the dwelling a heartbeat. Maybe dogs don't fetch because they are fond of chasing the ball but because they think that we love throwing it. It is such a blessing to have had his love keeping my childhood alive every year as I grew older. And though I know I have made many mistakes over the years, and though Vinny has witnessed most of them, I know that he will always catch the ball and bring it right back to my hands. I know that Vinny and I, together, are a pack of lone wolves.

*Kendall Gallegos '17*  
*Creative nonfiction*





## Eagles View

*Marker*

Stephanie Rodriguez '17

## Drought

As I walk up this dusty knoll, I am  
reminded of Love Songs of shy and balding middle-aged men.

The Dust is finer than flour.  
It makes little plumes when I set down my hiking shoes,  
like all the amazing clouds of ash  
that erupted from St. Helens' cantankerous top in the Spring of 1980.

The air is tasteless;  
I can't smell the pines or Feel in the back of my throat  
the soft moist air that comes before a rain.  
Back on campus, there is the overpowering perfume  
Of the purple Lantana and the tropical flowers  
That have budded so sweet,  
they went a little rancid.  
But right now I only see the smog—  
Or maybe it's the "marine fog" I hear tell about—  
And all I taste is my minty gum  
that is barely keeping my throat from drying up  
at eight in the morning.

Strewn twigs and Hazardously dry shrubbery  
litter the hillside.  
They crack and snap if I step on them  
And I am reminded of the Elephant Graveyards  
That saturated my childhood nightmares.

Oh dry bones! Now hear the Word  
of the Lord!

Years upon years of drought  
This little hill has waited through,  
And here this Washingtonian  
can hardly stand a semester of the heat  
before coming home to a rainy Christmas.

*Natalie Bartels '17*



Going Home, Subway  
*Watercolor on Illustration Board*  
Anna Kawashima '14

## Forgive Me Father

Father Jonah hates confession.

His first wasn't that bad, and neither were the first dozen or so that whispered through the grate in the wall. Divorce, adultery, theft, murder—nothing that couldn't be fixed with a deep spiritual cleansing.

It's the petty crimes that Father Jonah hates.

*You told your spouse you bought vitamin D milk, but you actually bought whole milk . . . such sin will cost you two Our Fathers. You used God's name in vain once this week . . . despite the fact that I've sworn to God at least five times since I've stepped into the confessional, I'll charge you with ten Hail Mary's. The extra five are for me. Young child, you disrespected your parents by forgetting to take out the trash . . . I don't even know if prayer can help you; we may need to do an exorcism to make you holy once more.*

Now here he is, another Sunday in the dark, stuffy torture chamber that's tucked into an alcove in the back of the church, listening to someone repent for their Tuesday morning drive when they cut someone off on the freeway. He prescribes a couple of Glory Be's and tells them to pack up their venial sin and hit the road. He hopes that the Holy Spirit gives them a little nudge in the bumper on the way out.

No one enters immediately after, so Father Jonah takes a moment to press his head against the wooden wall and wipe a few beads of sweat away. At least he hopes it's sweat and not tears—both are a pretty viable option.

Father Jonah remembers the first time he stepped foot in a church at sixteen. St Paul's Catholic Church was a little white stucco building on the corner of Peter Street that shared a parking lot with McDonald's and a chiropractor.

The McDonald's had been a popular hangout for his group of friends, who, by the time they reached high school, had all become as super-sized as their meals. At some point, Father Abe had also become a normal part of their lives. Every day he waddled over to McDonald's after morning mass wearing his collar and would sit with them as they ate breakfast sandwiches. Despite being a priest, he didn't talk about religion much, which was probably why he fit in so well with the group of teenage boys.

There was one encounter with Father Abe that Jonah remembers more distinctly than the others. One day in July, the sun seemed to burn right out of hell, and his friends decided to head home early so they wouldn't melt with their McFlurries. Jonah waved to his friends from the curb but didn't consider moving. Being at home wasn't the same since his parents filled every room with broken glass and threats that didn't seem empty anymore.

Across from him the church was vacant. Jonah had never felt the need to go to church, never thought about religion, and his parents were atheists, so they weren't steering him towards the light of God. Yet, the heat was enough that day. Enough to lead him through the double doors and into the little church on Peter Street.

Inside he found Father Abe sitting in the last pew, a leather-bound Bible in his lap. If he was surprised to see Jonah he didn't show it. Instead he just shuffled over on the bench. Father Abe talked to him about repentance and acceptance, and when Jonah left a few hours later, he thought that maybe he could forgive.

Over the next few years, the other side of the parking lot called to Jonah more and more, until he turned eighteen and decided that there was no better path in life than the one Father Abe had shown him.

A life where sins are easier forgive.

Father Jonah listens to the handle, a squeaky turn and then light peeks in from the opposite room, casting a patterned shadow onto his white robes. The shadow leaves gaps, circles, holes with its opaque design, and he sees a chance, hope for the Holy Spirit, that his words will not be in vain, that maybe he will shine through to others the way Father Abe had done for him.

Another person enters the confessional, closing the door on these thoughts.

“Forgive me Father for I have sinned. It has been two days since my last confession and I accidentally used God’s name in vain when I hit your car on the way in.”

Father Jonah hates confession.

*Elisa Andersen '17*

*Fiction*



**Calavera**

*Digital Illustration*

Joshua DelaRosa '16

## The Moment I Almost Was Murdered By An Innocent-Enough-Looking Romanian Lady in a Creepy Parking Structure with my Best Friend on my Nineteenth Birthday

A preface:

This essay is a record of what is, by far, the stupidest thing that (I have ever done) has ever happened to me. Especially in the age of Amber Alerts and Craig's List Killers. Especially when my mother, like most mothers, had told me about Stranger Danger. But it is what it is, I suppose—while typing it still with skittishness, still with a tightness to my chest, still with a perspiring twinge to my neck. The moment I almost was murdered by an innocent-enough-looking Romanian lady in a creepy parking structure with my best friend on my nineteenth birthday.

It's weird now to think of how that day could have been our last on earth, and it's even weirder now thinking that our last place on earth might have been the city. Especially Los Angeles, too, of all places, where grown men shit in their underwear and dump that shit aside on the street for someone to step in. Or where boy-actor Zac Efron slinks around for drugs on Skid Row. Where the police force is famous. And it isn't that I don't like LA; but it's that usually, when within the inner workings of the city, I am safe in Echo Park with my boyfriend's skinny friends at a place called 'Lolipop' of all non-threatening and cheerful of places, not some parking structure on Wherever's Street—and not where people like her wander around, innocent-enough-looking. Old, except with that questionable little twinkling glint in her eye like, "You know, maybe I'm not the best idea."

Regardless. What we had been trying to do was to get a good photograph of the city lit up in its proper City of Angels' glory before a concert that we were early to. We probably looked like tourists. Even more, we probably looked like exactly what little old women or evil grandmother witches liked to cook in their potpies. Regardless she appeared to us like a slinky Nosferatu in the night, a smiling caramel-colored woman with a scarf around her head and an out-of-place security uniform on like the most random oxymoron in the world.

I think my first thought was why anyone would hire a stubby elderly woman to patrol the parking lots of Los Angeles in the first place. I think my second thought was who could this woman possibly fend off in this slimy ghetto? And so, consequently, I think my third thought was that she must have some shank handy in her shallow back pocket. And I thought, *Okay, good cover-up. Not a bad trap, Parking-Lot-Structure-Employers. I'll give you that one, you learned, clever dogs.*

And so for that reason, I semi-trusted her.

Take into consideration for a second that Morgan and I were already in her gray, cemented territory. That we were the only ones around and that she must have crawled from some crack in the wall once she smelled our perfume and thought of us as easy prey. When you think about it, it makes sense that some large conspiracy murderers would get an innocent-enough-looking Romanian woman to do their bidding and deliver young girls to their doom, effortlessly. I mean, has anyone ever thought of that plot-twist before? And, who wouldn't trust this puffy old woman? It's not like she looked all that intimidating. Though in hindsight it might have been a ploy all along. Semi-sweetly, she asked, "What are you girls doing?"

And we responded, "Oh, nothing," with a camera in plain view.

"Taking some photos, are we?"

"Yes."

Sometimes speaking with older people is not really my forte. Sometimes I notice visible things like the age-barrier with a blatancy that is almost tangible, as if there might actually be a wall between us: the old, wiser

soul and the reckless, ignorant teenager. But still—speaking to older people has definitely never been Morgan's forte either. Morgan, neither ever young nor old, who wears a sort of exclusive and sophisticated youth in high cheekbones and scattered freckles, who gives me a look out from the corner of her eyes, who side-steps closer to me so that our shoulders touch. We said, "We wanted to capture the city."

This woman—this hunched-over figure of actual surrealism—she made towards my camera without even bothering to ask. Her large fingers pried it from my hands with a fascinated look on her face, excited and at once animated. She said, "But this is my city! I know all about this city," and "Let me tell you about this city! I have seen the best parts of this city! Know the best views of this city! Come, let me show you," she said, "my city."

I'd thought of the city then as Romanian Los Angeles with this woman as its underground mayoress, governing with strength somewhere behind the scenes. She might have had some sort of prestige, but then again, she could have been some serial killer's guise, standing there, ready to take the next two unthreatening captives to the bunker at the bottom, hobbling off, starting back over. Before we knew it, she was walking down the structure of this parking lot, my beloved little camera in her hands, saying, "I'm going to take you to the best place to take photos in this city! Come, come."

And Morgan and I—we were spitting out all the classic euphemisms for the word "No" that we had ever once heard in our lives.

"Gotta get to our concert."

"Earlier we go in, better spot we get, you know—ha ha ha."

"And, you see, it's kind of my birthday today so—"

"Your birthday?" said the innocent-enough-looking Romanian woman, who was still walking and who we were still actually following. "Well then, you must come see! Here," she said, "I show you."

I watched my camera and heard it cry out to me in her unwelcome fingers. It was so small, and it was so utterly helpless. These two thoughts ran through my mind: either this woman was some foreign security guard who simply did not realize the American response to *Stranger Danger*, or she was actually trying to lure us into a cell where we were to be killed on my last birthday as a young, stupid teenager. My logical thinking told me it was the first option. How likely was it for Morgan and I to actually be murdered? That kind of thing happened on shows like *20/20* and in that board game, *Clue*. Today, now, at 8:00 at night on December the 18th—nineteen years after I came into this world—would not be the day that I left because scientific probability told me so. It just wasn't going to happen.

And I suppose that's the logic that led us to the elevator with her. That wooden-crate looking elevator. Which didn't even have actual walls, either. Just large white blankets covering the corners like that scene in *Human Centipede 2* . . . where this starts to get a little messed up, really—when those creaky doors slipped open, when she stepped inside with my expensive, crying, sweet baby angel camera, when she said, "Come," in a demanding, innocent-enough-sounding Romanian accent that echoed. Made us come.

I swear these were the slowest doors to ever close off an elevator I had ever seen. Morgan and I—precious, frightened Morgan—and I, we just stood in that wonky white crate-thing looking at one another. Morgan with the most horrified expression I have ever seen on her face (and I've known her for fourteen years). I suppose she had seen the same look on me, but all the while I'd been thinking about how I was going to grab her hand and my camera from around this crazy lady's neck, leap to safety, back into the parking lot structure, free birds . . . out of here together. But I didn't. I seriously couldn't move.

Because. This lady wasn't actually going to kill us. I mean, no way.

But at the third stage of our fright, when exiting the compartment and entering this long, deranged hallway, I started to think about how the two of us could take her like rabid, blood-thirsty beasts. Behind

her, Morgan and I moved our mouths in silent planning, motioning seriously over her head, pulling out car keys to really jam in her throat, wishing we had worn spiked pumps, wishing we had pepper spray, wishing we'd said "NO STAY AWAY, STRANGER DANGER!" when she'd first approached us, before she'd crossed the line of what was appropriate and stole my camera. My beautifully new, recently cleaned, with an updated lens and birthday-present strapped camera. I never thought I could kill somebody. I never thought that the most recent bonding experience Morgan and I would share would be homicide. And then, at the end of the hallway, was this door.

When I say that Morgan and I were ready to literally pounce, we were literally seeing red. This not-so-innocent-looking Romanian woman put her hand into her pocket and pulled out a chain of rusty old keys. She plucked the right one from the rest and said with a weird, uncomfortable smile, "Only I've got access to these doors," and then jammed it into the keyhole with the force of a brutish woodsman. I thought there might have been a Saw-style compartment room there for us to be pushed in. I thought, certainly at the other end, there'd be a thin Romanian scientist standing there with goggles and a lab coat and a damn syringe.

But instead, there was only this bright, twinkling view of Los Angeles. It was so large, so beautiful, and I thought at first sight: this woman is going to push us over the edge.

What proceeded instead was this really creepy photo shoot that she conducted, all with my camera, directing us closer to the ledge, encouraging us to do the impossible and smile. We couldn't do that, and she got mad, said a few profanities, handed me back my camera, and seriously just slumped off, leaving us there. Morgan and I, two red-faced, rabbit-hearted young idiots on the top of a roof, just stood dumbly looking over the sparkling city of Los Angeles with, for the first time ever, nothing to actually say to one another.

I think Morgan even still had her keys out, that fiery reckless kid.

And that was it.

At home, after the concert that I don't even remember, we sat in silence over two cups of hot chocolate and a set of blurry, out-of-focus photos taken by some innocent-enough-looking Romanian woman—who might have not actually been a security guard at all, but some deranged lunatic patrolling the parking lot structures of Los Angeles because she liked messing with the out-of-towners as much as she did a plate of warm, grilled Mititei.

I don't know how to end this because it's so stupid. I don't know if I should say, "Hey, Stranger Danger exists whether you're nine or nineteen," or simply just, "Oh my God we survived, we survived, we might have died, but we survived . . ." now older, wiser twenty-somethings, now feeble, experienced half-wits.

If anyone ever asks, her knife was the size of her grin.

*Alyssa Wood '14*

*Humor nonfiction*





Untitled

*Printmaking*

Alexis Starr '15, Anna Kawashima '14, and Danielle Cuen '16



The Cold Winter  
*Printmaking*  
Anna Kawashima '14



Untitled

*Photography*

Anna Kawashima '14

## My Grandmother's Stars

My grandmother sits outside of her house in the Mojave Desert,  
the sky fluffed out above her—an indigo pillow with a corner popped open—  
so that a shower of luminous feathers litters the quilt of the night.  
The lights I gaze up at are relatives of hers, only mine are nestled  
between the laced fingers of pine trees that drip with luscious perfume.  
I reach out my hand to comb through the tendrils of the air,  
caressing the patterns of the stars that coalesce at my fingertips.

I brush a few celestial pinpricks that look like jumbled music notes  
plucked from the Lutheran hymns that my grandmother once sang with me,  
the cadence of “Be Thou My Vision,” etched in the staff of the sky,  
and the rustle of the underbrush like the percussion of the piece.  
I smudge a few letters dipped in silver ink, which were dribbled off of the pages  
of the stories she read to me—the ones where the words breathe  
in the muffled shuffling of the musty paper.

I sift through a peppering of light that recalls the droplets of rain  
that crawled down the windowpane when we'd sit together during a storm,  
and tap-danced on the stages of our arms in the winter—  
the metallic nip of the heels pattering rhythmically across our cheeks.  
All these crystalline shards are what remain of the life we used to have  
arranged into a tangle of constellations.

I wish I could tug at a loose string in the fabric of the atmosphere,  
an ebony thread poking out from the edge of the Little Dipper,  
and unravel every mile between my woods and her scorched plain.  
But dawn comes, and the stars dissolve into the liquid shadows  
and wander back to my grandmother in the Mojave Desert.

*Lauren Taylor '16*



Dialogue in the Dark 1 - Forward  
*Acrylic on Illustration Board*  
Anna Kawashima '14



## May Angels Watch Me Through The Night

As a child, angels lined my hallways. Between the pictures of deceased relatives on the walls and my mother's rather ambitious angel collection, my childhood was buffered and pillowed by feathered wings. Christmas ornaments, framed pictures, wooden carvings, clay figures, ceramic candle holders, cross-stitched patterns, and home-made feathery disasters—all took the shape of angels. The sheer number of "Precious Moments" figures in my parents' house was alarming. And it wasn't just the physical figurines. I was told that freckles were kisses from angels, and that comforted me whenever other children laughed at my speckled face. I used to talk to angels as I drifted off to sleep, and at times when life seems hard I sometimes still do. The angels usually have names.

We don't really learn the names of religious angels in life, at least not without actively looking. We might learn about Gabriel, Michael, and Lucifer, but looking at a list of angel names on the Internet, I am thrown by the beauty of some of them. The angel Jegudiel is the angel of responsibility and merciful love. Hesediel is the angel of freedom and benevolence. Muriel is the angel of the astronomical sign Cancer, which is a little more fun for me because that's my sign. Though, thinking about it, I'm not sure I would pray to an angel named Muriel.

The angels on my parents' walls have human names.

As I grew older, I realized that angels served more purpose than to just hold candles on dark days and fly through clouds. They took the form of guardians, warriors of the Lord, clashing in the stars in battles for heaven and humanity. Legends are told about them—the angel Gabriel appears in so many works, bringing news to people hovering on the boundaries of divinity. The fallen angel Lucifer appears in even more texts, sometimes as a sympathetic and forgotten rebellious child, other times as a vicious demonic figure.

That was where my fascination with angels kicked off, much to my mother's chagrin. While I poured over stories about winged creatures fighting battles, often each other, my mother would pointedly straighten the angels on our mantel, their ceramic feathers swooped out to form beautiful framework for the angels themselves. "That's creepy demonic stuff," she'd say and frown, glaring at my blatant fascination with the supernatural.

"Not if it's all angels," I'd reply. That didn't seem to make her any less displeased.

My mother seemed to want me to keep the childhood mantra of angels watching over me when I slept, not picture them out there fighting battles against their own kind. That may have had something to do with the number of angels connected to our family though. My mother still fixates on the idea of the dearly departed becoming angels, and I think she finds comfort in the thought that the tiny footprints made of ink in a box of memories in her closet are now stronger than they were in life.

Angels don't need to breathe, so it's doesn't matter if their lungs are fully formed or not, and their strength isn't measured by how well their hearts pump blood. Two tiny half-lives can flourish into something more in the sky, between sunny clouds and spinning stars. I like to think that stars and angels are maybe connected.

Stars provide a lot of comfort for me. Maybe that's where the connection is—both my mother and I staring at things high up in the sky, above our reach. My father doesn't talk about it, how the month that holds his birthday he shares with a day when we are all silent. My younger sister sees them in flowers, lilies, to be specific. I'm not sure why, I've never asked, but it may have to do with the white purity of the petals, like the two tall candles we watch slowly burn every March. Angels wear white, right? They float through breezes like flower petals on the still surface of a lake. But

that's not really true, at least not biblically. Angels fought for God; they were warriors. Flowers and feathers that bend and break too easily—that feels too much like humans—and those things have no place in frightening battles. I can see now why my mother so completely wants to believe that angels don't see battle. Those you love and lose shouldn't have to be soldiers.

I miss them. Can you miss someone you don't know?

I often wonder how different my life would have been. Sometimes I picture it as something like the Weasley household—older twins running amok and surrounded by more siblings than I really wanted. I'd have been the neglected middle child, and selfishly I have thought of how preferred the position of eldest is. Other times I wonder if I would still be here. At two girls my parents stopped, and whether or not that was due to complications surrounding my younger sister's birth or if that was all they wanted, I've never had the courage to ask.

Instead I would ask about angels. I would ask about flying and envision myself with my own wings, taking off to explore the regions of the sky that stretched above me in a deep blue paint spill, dotted by tiny lights that meant so much. Tiny things can have big value. Tiny things can also leave big holes behind, like a gap where part of you used to be. It's hard to find things that can fill the hollows and twists where things used to be. "It's like when you hear a song," one of my friends tried to explain, "and it's this beautiful thing, but you can only hear enough of it to barely remember it. And when you try to go and find the song, you can't, either because you don't remember enough of it or you can't find the words to explain it. That's what it's like, because you know you're missing something and it's small, but it haunts you because you can never completely fill in what it is."

Angels, beyond being warriors, are known for their songs. Heaven supposedly echoes with the volume and beauty of it all, unmatched by anything found on Earth.

I think that's why birds sing, because they spend so much time in the air, between the clouds bursting with angel song, that they have to try to imitate the beauty of it. They let out trills and melodies, all the while soaring and plummeting between Earth and the sky. It's like they are trying to bring the song of the sky to the ground. I wonder if angels do the same, gliding as close as they can to Earth, brushing fingertips along thin blades of grass before lifting back up to sing their gloria's and hallelujah's to ears that can actually hear them.

My mother has a beautiful voice. She often sings in church, and people compare it to angels. She's tried to convince me to sing with her, but I haven't said yes yet. I can't keep up with angels.

My mother collects angels with a fervor I have only seen reserved for things she loves dearly. People give them to her as gifts, she finds them in thrift shops, and I have even made her some out of poorly formed and painted clay. I think the angels are her way of bringing the tiny inked footprints out from their place on her closet shelf and setting them out for the world to see. Her own personal angels will always be there in the white feathered wings that line the hallways of my childhood.

*Samantha Gross '17*

*Creative nonfiction*



St. Andrews May Term 2013

*Ink*

Kristin Dahlquist '14



## My Key

Its name is “mine”  
But only temporarily  
Last year, then the next  
Its name will change to “theirs”

As long as it lies behind “my”  
Its blade, which does not cut  
Its teeth, which do not bite  
Its bow, which does not sail  
Will see the world turn  
As its lock opens

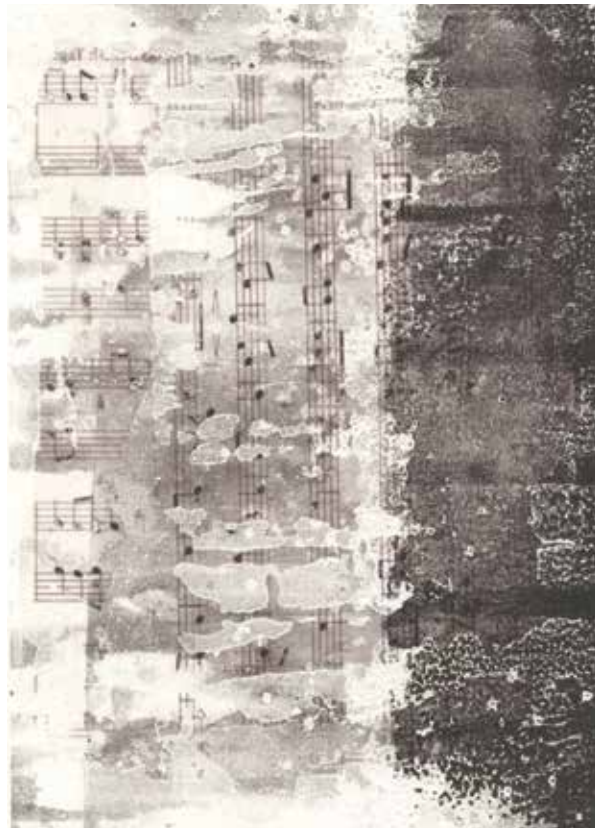
For now—I  
Give this key purpose  
Without a door  
Without a lock  
It will sit where it  
Is placed  
A piece of metal that tumbles  
In the palm of my hand

Each twist of the key wears  
A little more off, corroded  
By friction, as I leave  
More of myself on its edges  
Like sand on rough skin

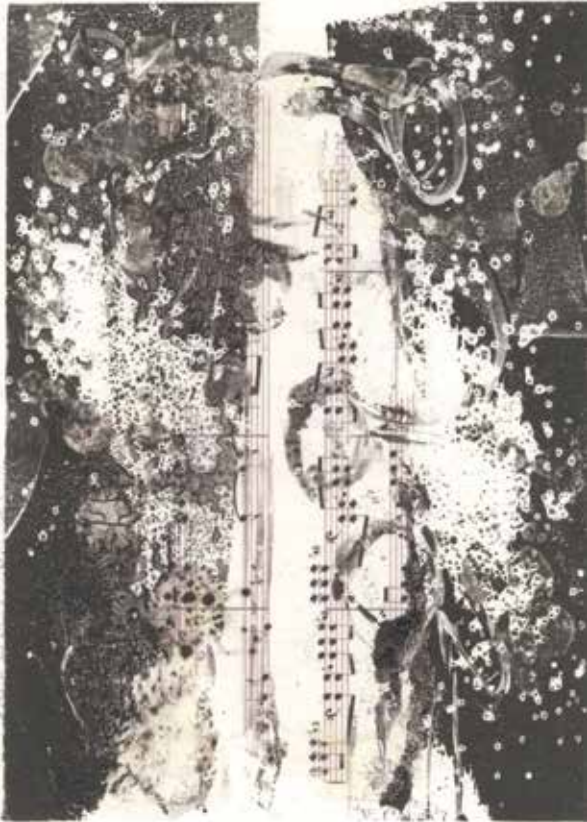
Memories and moments  
Of triumph and turmoil  
As I come and go  
Times of transition  
Bookends of journeys

My key sees me leave  
And it sees me home

*Marnie Salvani '16*



**Musical Series I**  
*Monoprint*  
Grace Withmory '14



**Musical Series II**  
*Monoprint*  
Grace Withmory '14



**Musical Series III**  
*Monoprint*  
Grace Withmory '14



**Plaid**  
*Acrylic*  
Allison Brocato '15

## Selecting a Character

*after Ted Kooser*

First, I would have him be home alone  
and waddling carefully into another room  
during a *Wheel of Fortune* commercial break

(the answer to the puzzle was GARDEN FLOWERS,  
and he had solved it so fast he surprised himself).

His hair should be wispy and translucent—like cobwebs.  
He should be wearing a bathrobe, a pink robe, dirty,  
from forgetting how to use the washing machine.

He will lift his glasses to his squinting eyes, and there  
in his dim little office, he will rummage  
through binders of yellow insurance papers  
and coffee-colored photo negatives stuck together.

He will stop, use the bathroom, come back,  
stop, close the binders, finish *Wheel*,

come back, almost give up, find a poem written on pink  
paper, and he will say to himself, “I remember.  
I remember, my Rose.” And he will.

*Carrie Gendle '15*

## My Own Sunrise

Oh, man, am I tired. I stared stupidly at the bottom right corner of my computer screen, where the time glowed brightly: 11:45 pm. How much longer will it take to get to sleep? Suddenly, my phone chirped. I scooped it up and read the text message: “Hey.”

Intrigued by this cryptic note, I responded to my friend as any eloquent English major with a grasp of the written word would: “Uh, hi. What’s up?”

“French hill for sunrise, tomorrow morning at 6:00 sharp be at room 125A if you want to come (and let me know)”

Resisting the urge to correct his lack of commas and periods, I sent a response I hoped I would not regret: “What the heck, why not? :) See ya at 6!” And thus began my journey. As I drifted off that night, I couldn’t help but think back to the last major hike I had taken, and the memories that continued to haunt me.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Good morning, everyone!” The camp leader’s voice rang through the bus’s public address system, causing wincing and groans.

“Today, we are going hiking. You have three options: a six-and-a-half mile hike to the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles, hike to an overlook where you can see the sign, or you can ride the bus straight to the Griffith Observatory.”

Six-and-a-half miles did not sound terribly appealing, but being able to say that I had climbed to the Hollywood sign did. So when I climbed off the bus, I joined the group of young people eager for this challenge. After slathering on sunscreen and tightening my tennis shoes, we set off up Mount Lee. It would take several miles for us to discover just how foolish and unprepared we had been.

\* \* \* \* \*

5:35 came way too early, but I forced myself out of bed and into my jeans and t-shirt and slipped out the door into the blue morning. As I met up with my friends, I smiled grimly at the hill looming behind the campus.

“You don’t scare me,” I whispered. “Prepare to meet your match.”

Suddenly worried that we might miss something, we took off running up the hill. But as my grandfather is fond of saying, “That lasted quick.”

The incline was much steeper than I had expected, and I quickly realized there was no way I was going to make it at such a pace. Gravity laughed mockingly as it pulled me back, seemingly determined to keep me from my goal. The cold fingers of nausea wrapped themselves around my stomach, reminding me that I had not eaten in over twelve hours. The dust rose in swirls around my feet, stroking my legs, caressing my arms, and tickling my throat, causing me to lust for a large glass of water brimming with ice. The gravel beneath my tennis shoes crunched with every step, creating a monotonous rhythm that matched my labored breathing. I lifted my head, for I was surely but a few feet from the top. Instead, my eyes were greeted by yet more rocks, dust, and struggle. Was this going to be worth it?

\* \* \* \* \*

The mood was light and jovial as we began our ascent of Mount Lee. The afternoon was warm, and the sweat began beading on my forehead and trickling down my back. Several of the young men took off their shirts, and I was treated to a bit of nature I probably could have done without. Talk about a need to shave the forest . . .

After over a mile straight uphill, my water supply was down to a warm inch sitting placidly at the bottom of my bottle, and I was hesitant to drink anymore. No one had seen a single drinking fountain, and it did not look like we were going to find one anytime soon. So I tried to focus on my surroundings rather than my current discomfort. The hills were brown and dry, and though they spoke not a word, I could hear them

sighing in their desire for water. The trees stood stock still, with barely a breath of wind to stir their tips. It was as though they were waiting for something, so I listened. The trees remained silent, but every now and then, a bird would lift its voice to the open sky, braving the heat to sing the song it was created to sing. Maybe this wouldn't be as bad as I was anticipating.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sweating, stumbling, and very close to swearing, I reached the peak of French Hill still in one piece. The air was still and silent, with no breeze to disrupt the peace. Occasionally, a bird would break the hush, and its sweet voice would set the hills ringing. But there was something else. I couldn't hear it, or see it, or smell it, or taste it, but I could feel it. It was as though all of creation was holding its breath, and the air felt pregnant with expectation. Rays of sunlight shot forth from the hills, just like the pictures I used to color as a child. Excited by this hint of a new day, the hills seemed to strain against invisible bonds that prevented them from jumping aside to reveal the sun in all its glory. Suddenly, I was aware of a desire I had not recognized before: a desire for my own sunrise. I wanted a moment where everyone and everything was looking towards me with anticipation, where I was completely in my element, no doubts or fears. As I stood waiting for nature's moment of glory, I realized that I too was waiting for mine.

\* \* \* \* \*

It seemed to me that we had been on this grueling march all day, and the end felt far away. Yet we trudged on, our spirits low and our water supply lower. The sun beat down on unprotected heads and shoulders, and I felt my English skin screaming in agony. Whose idea had this been, anyway? Then, just as it seemed as though the last ounce of strength had been drained from us, we reached it. We were at the peak of Mount Lee, home to some of the most famous letters in the world. As I stood on that mountain, I did not feel the emotions I had expected feel. I was strangely empty, as though I had been sapped of the capability to take pride in what I had accomplished. I was too tired, too thirsty, and too hungry to care.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was as though someone had breathed fire onto a canvas of color. With a silent fanfare, the sun burst forth over the mountains, and the earth let out its breath with a rush. The pinks, blues, and oranges that had only moments ago heralded the sun's coming disappeared into the glorious sphere of light balancing on the hill-tops. My heart gave a leap, and my soul joined in the chorus of creation as every living and non-living thing welcomed the sun and basked in its warmth. My eyes watered and I had to look away, but it was as though, despite the consequences, I could not keep my gaze from the riveting sight in front of me. The shadows in the valley vanished, and Irvine stretched out its arms to receive the gift being offered. Even the buildings, awkward and often ugly man-made creations, seemed to suddenly remember their roots, the materials from which they were wrought, the earth that was once their home. They, too, joined in the joy.

A sunrise is such an ordinary event. We know that it happens every day, and yet somehow we are not aware of nature's own firework display set off every morning. Each one is unique and beautiful, but few take time to consider them. Maybe that was the answer to my search for my sunrise. Maybe it was the little things that mattered the most, the ones no one notices but me, the things no one else does but me.

Walking back to my dorm, I stopped and looked back at French Hill. Earlier, it had seemed so imposing, so unfriendly and challenging. But that was before it had borne my weight, eagerly accepted the sweat from my brow, given me a bit of its dust to take home. We were connected now, the hill and I. A part of me remained on its peak, and a part of it remained in my heart.

*Come back soon. I'll be waiting . . .*

*Emily Crosby '18*  
*Creative nonfiction*





Untitled  
*Photography*  
Karen Gurske '16

## Above Us Only Sky

Beyond her mother's M-shaped throne  
Andromeda spins, tethered to her course  
Like a rock in the sea,  
Bound toward the spiral Milky Way—  
A collision that will delight the skies,  
Both day and night,  
Until the stars have settled in their new formations  
And gasses have smothered dust over airless terrain  
And the Earth remains unyielding  
And unharmed.

Muses for music and whimsy for writers  
Have fallen  
Like angels,  
And warriors,  
And stars,  
From the black heavens above.  
Scientists and poets alike  
Sing ballads and charts about legends and explosions  
In the angelic battles over the atmosphere of Earth,  
Where Orion, the armed warrior, leads constellations  
on their speedy paths towards heaven.  
Between major and minor  
The Archer strings his bow  
Over the bowed tail of the Scorpion  
Stinging spattered freckles of stars throughout the sky,  
Creating galaxies and symphonies,  
Burning bright over a falling planet  
Filled with more fire than the sky above it  
Could ever hope to hold.

*Samantha Gross '17*



## Girl in the Yellow Dress

“Are you ready?” His mom spoke softly as she entered his room. The scent of her jasmine perfume filled the air. The smell filled him with dread. That was her fancy perfume, the one she only pulled out for special occasions.

Looking down at himself, he saw that he was ready by outside appearances. The freshly pressed tuxedo was on, his tie was neat, his shoes were shiny, and the buttons were buttoned.

“Yeah, I’m ready,” he mumbled, knowing it was a lie. When would he ever be ready for this? Even if he lived to be a thousand and one years old, he would never be ready to live through the pain he felt now. Nothing in life could ever prepare anyone to go through this, and he was only sixteen.

His mom only made eye contact with him fleetingly, as if she was afraid that if she gazed at him for too long he would break. He wanted to shout at her to look at him. Look him fully in the eyes and see how broken he felt inside, but he didn’t, and she continued to look away from him.

“Okay, well your father and I will be leaving in a few minutes . . . Are you going to drive over with us? Or will you drive yourself?”

He knew she was just trying to be his mother, but he didn’t have the answer. He couldn’t even remember how he got dressed that morning. The last week since the accident had been a blur of pain. It was his mother who had picked out his outfit for today, not him. He only put the clothes on mechanically.

“I’ll drive myself. I’ll be okay.” Another lie. When had he become such a liar?

His mother flinched and finally looked him in the eye. “Are you sure?”

In the past she never would have let him drive to an event like this; she would have demanded he ride with her. She would have made the decision for him, and then he would have argued with her and ridden in her car anyway. She did not argue today. The accident had changed her, or had it changed him? Was she so afraid of him slipping over the edge of sanity that she didn’t want to push him? She usually smothered him with her love, but now it seemed as if there was a glass wall between them, one that left him alone, cold, and screaming for help.

“It will be nice to have some time to myself,” he said as he watched her eyes dart away from his face again.

“Okay. Be careful, James,” she said meekly, and then left, leaving the door ajar. The flowery scent of her perfume faded as she left, just like everything else in his life had faded since that day.

“Yes, Mom,” he said, shuffling forward to shut the door. On the way there, he spied the corner of a lost photograph lying amongst the clutter on his desk. Uncaring, he reached to retrieve it, until he saw who was in the picture. The girl had piercing green eyes and a bright smile, caught in mid-laugh. Her nose was crooked from a softball injury, and her hair was tawny, like a lion’s mane. She was wearing a sunflower-yellow dress, and the image of her sparked a memory for James.

The day this picture was taken the girl and he were at the old oak tree that stood behind James’ house; it was the girl’s favorite place to go. James had been tired that day, and he didn’t want to go sit under the oak with her, but she had grabbed his hand in her small one and dragged him out there anyway.

If James clenched his eyes tight enough, he could still feel the ghost of her smooth hand in his; he could smell the fresh-cut grass and feel himself being dragged outside to adventure. The girl, his best friend, and he had spent the whole afternoon under that creaky tree. The day had been cool, and she had lain next to him in the grass, never letting go of his hand.

He remembered feeling clumsy, like a giant around this wiry girl, but she never seemed to mind that his palm would get sweaty or when they bumped limbs. She would always just smile at him and grab his hand a

little tighter and make him feel like he could move mountains if only she believed in him.

A rather angry squirrel had chattered at them from the oak limbs above. James remembered that. "I'm going to chase that squirrel out of the tree!" he had declared.

"What? No, don't do that," she had said, frowning at the thought.

"Why not?" he had challenged. "The chattering is annoying!"

"You're annoying, and I don't chase you away!"

"Hey!"

"It's true! Just leave the poor creature alone. We're the ones intruding."

"Fine. I'll take a picture at least." He had sighed and reached for his phone, but only got partway there before something dropped, round and small, hurtled like a grenade from above.

"Did you see that? That squirrel just dropped an acorn, and it nearly hit me!"

"Too bad it missed," he had quipped, and he remembered seeing her forehead wrinkle as she smiled.

"Oh, you're so funny." She barely got the words out before she had started laughing with delight, and James remembered cringing. She was a beautiful girl, and he loved her, but she had an obnoxious laugh. It was a laugh that was loud and interrupted often by snorts and guffaws. It was the type of laugh that others laughed at the sound of. Turning the camera on her, he had snapped a picture of her in her sunflower-yellow dress, laughing.

"I wish I could remember more of that day," James said aloud, returning to the present as he opened his eyes. He had started to crinkle the edges of his precious picture because he was holding it so tightly. Eyes stinging with the threat of unshed tears, he gently set the picture back on the desk.

He wished he had committed every moment of her from that day to memory. He remembered how she looked, but how did it feel to have her delicate fingers intertwined with his? He couldn't remember. He couldn't remember exactly what her laugh sounded like, only that it made him cringe. He could only barely remember her smile and the smell of the grass.

Despair flooded him; he should remember! Anger made the tears spill over the edge and run down his face. He knew he shouldn't drive today, not when he felt like he was going to be torn apart from the inside by a hurricane of emotions.

"Mom!" he called, ashamed of the vulnerability he heard in his own voice.

"What, James? What is it?" Concern colored her tone.

"I changed my mind. I will ride over with you and Dad. Just give me a minute and I'll be ready." As soon as he said the word "ready," he was lying again.

*Piper Walker '16*

*Fiction*



Rock Band  
*Digital Illustration*  
Eric Stigna '17

The Trumpet Player,  
after "The Cellist" by Galway Kinnell

At intermission I find him backstage,  
still practicing the piece coming up next.  
His lips are already red, like the crimson curls of an apple's skin  
whittled from the fruit by the weathered brass.  
Later, from the audience, I watch as he wriggles in his rigid chair  
while anxiety percolates in his restless fingers.  
Feet flutter to the rhythm trapped in his maze of valves,  
a twisted metal powder keg that waits  
for the matchstick of his breath.

His cheeks inflate like a blacksmith's bellows,  
and sound funnels out the bell like the gush of steam  
that surges from the spout of an over-boiled kettle.  
Whole notes and quarter notes sail into the room—  
they are ashes that stain the particles of the air  
with a smoky pungency that idles on the tongue.

The highest blast sings the papery corners of my consciousness  
and the world around me becomes crumpled—  
shriveled up in the molten flow of the music.  
The finale arrives suddenly, and the air sings with leftover heat  
long after the last scrap of noise splutters out.  
He lowers his tarnished instrument  
and, as he shuffles his sheet music,  
he leaves a smudge of soot hovering over the coda.

*Lauren Taylor '16*

## Reverberations

No matter how many times I'm here, I never remember. Five years later, and when I walk up to the lobby door I'll still push it first before realizing it must be pulled instead. But whenever I step into Concordia's music building, the same eight notes are there to greet me, assembled in endless patterns. I guess there are some things I'll never forget.

The lobby offers a grubby welcome. Despite its sweaty blue couches and sticky chairs, or the stains showering the carpet, this place will always greet the weight of one more tired music student with a blissful moment of rest. Between strains of song, someone is always here to lay feet upon the coffee table or toss a backpack in a couch corner. This is where the note addicts congregate.

Their many smiling, yet weary faces peek out from behind bright screens and tattered planners around the room. Photos on the wall and posters at the door have captured these faces, a family of music-lovers caught behind a lens. Small homemade signs for senior recitals are scattered about; they feature students styled in the spotlight next to favorite instruments. A big Concordia choir poster offers an orderly hodge-podge of black-and-white photos, mug shots turned silly. They all crane their necks to cast smiles.

Some of these stilled faces are still here in the flesh, making music with years of practice behind them. Other inked expressions came and went before my time. And some people in the lobby now are not yet in these snapshots. But if the music gets into them, as it has in me, they'll be framed soon. And they'll remember.

Every song stays with us in some way. Even if left behind for a while, when we're away from the lobby's tattered furniture and scuffed doors, a note or two hides in the recesses of our subconscious minds. It lies in wait for a strain of melody to awaken a string of memory. It can only be grasped once, and loved, just before it fades again. But whenever our fizzling minds start bunching songs, it's a light show of love.

The further in, the stronger this rush becomes. The little black notes begin to dance in the air, to twirl above our heads in an unknown melody that begs to be played and learned. Week by week. Over and over, until that practical perfection is reached. This is the invisible magic those posters fail to capture. Caught behind each of these dirty wooden hall doors is an inkling of skillful echoes sought by no other place. The secret seeps out the cracks and into our ears and whispers a maxim: "It's bigger on the inside."

To outsiders, this land of song appears to come together effortlessly beneath musicians' ever-willing fingertips. But we know better. We know that behind it all lay an onslaught of madly crammed rehearsal schedules, time caught halfway between delirious laughter and skilled demands.

It's this precarious balance of sweaty stubbornness, spurred skills, and joyful laughter, trapped in these rooms that keeps us coming back for more. We let it wash over us in waves of risky pleasure, like a six-year-old in a swimming pool. Something has hooked us, and we keep coming back for more.

Here we find the differences between our practices filled with chuckles of laughter and sloppy mess-ups, and the carefully planned recitals with finely tuned instruments. We balance time signatures in measures like expert acrobats. We stretch ourselves to the limits of time and energy. We're an assembly that struggles in vain for an evasive musical perfection.

And somewhere between the *ritardandos*, and *legatos*, and *pianissimos*, and the swish of a baton, it comes together. It's an inner bliss, a moment we know well, when we overhear the notes begin to whisper to each other. A twist of fate fetches us from the outskirts and pulls us inside the depths. The words stop, and the music sings. We are whole.

And then we get the chance, in one moment, to show it. A glorious apprehension arrives when a concert comes. The audience builds anticipation in us with a thunder of clapping. The floors begin to endure the

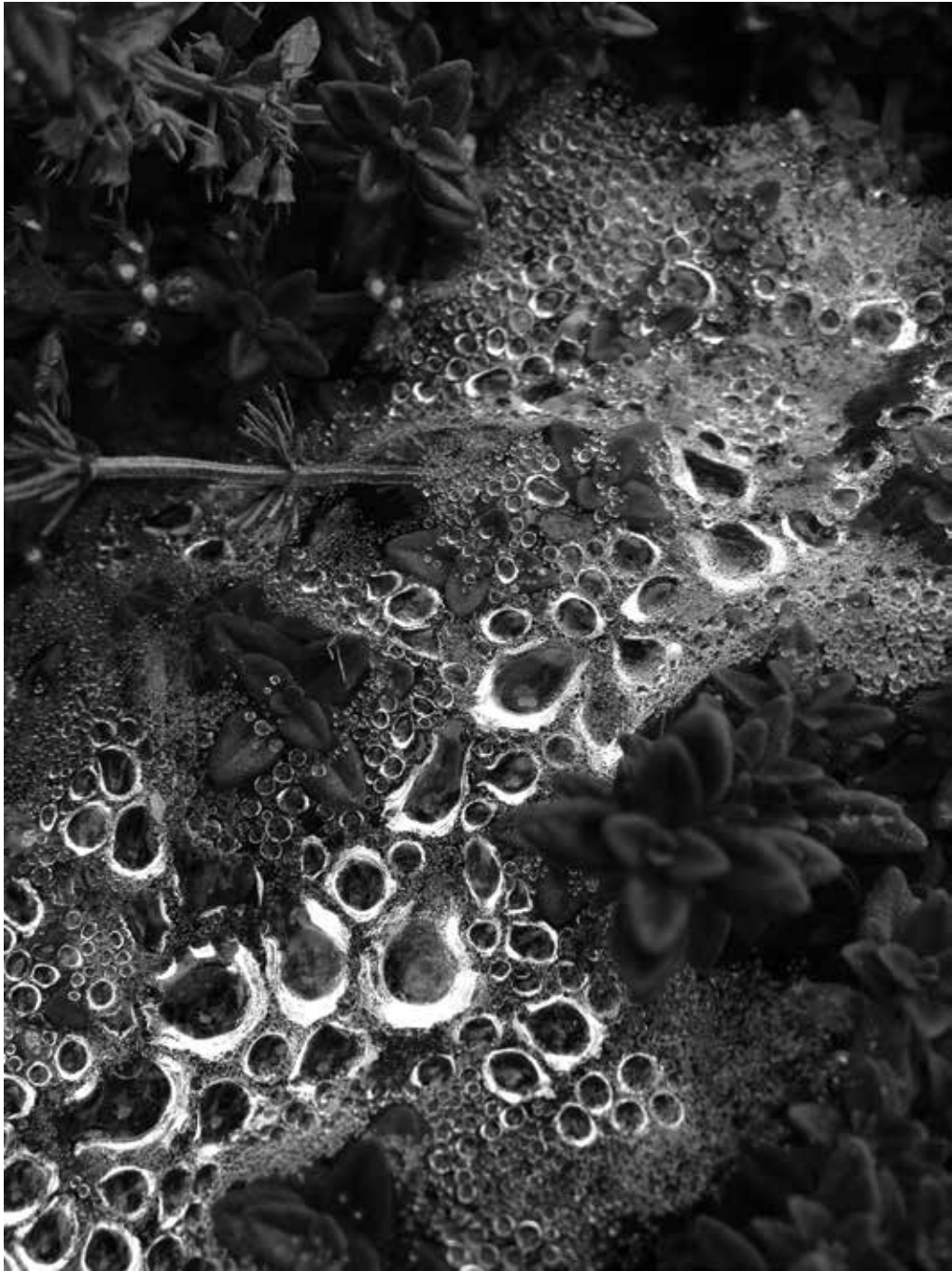
pacing of pinched toes in shiny shoes. Out come the snappy slacks, long dresses, and bow ties. The gangly boys, always needing haircuts, slick their long hair away from their faces. The girls seek out bobby pins and barrettes and black ballet flats. Tappings and drummings begin ticking down the clock, as nervous students wait for the next section to begin. Everyone stands a bit straighter. Eyes shine brighter.

We emerge from behind those wooden doors, ready to leave practice behind and plunge into performance. We check our dress shoes one last time. We let the melody seize our minds and a focus spread through our bones. We recall the rumble of those notes, set to cast their fleeting forms into existence once more. Our fingers twitch with ready tones. We wait for the director's knowing nod.

Here in the lobby we gather and remember.

*Kristina Deusch '14*

*Creative nonfiction*



## Captured Dreams

*Photography*

Sophia Speakman '17

## Marriage

*(based on my job caring for patients with Alzheimer's disease)*

Last week on October 12th, 2014,  
my boyfriend Nick asked my mom and dad  
if he could pack up my last name and slip  
it into an accordion folder like old birthday cards.

He went full old-fashioned:  
flowers for Mom, chafing shoes  
he went through the trouble to polish  
because he knew Dad would notice.

And when he told me they said yes,  
we were Nell and John Jay Parker  
circa 1952 as they exist in the frame on Nell's dresser  
—a pair of eternal unkickable smiles.

But Nick and I want to postpone our paperhood.  
We've watched caterpillars become butterflies  
only to be pinned to boards and labeled  
by heartless children and scientists.

\*\*\*

Once, I closed the dresser too hard and the Parker's  
picture fell and splintered. I deframed it, noticed the tape  
that sutures the two halves together and the chunk  
of Nell's head detached from the rest.

That week, Nick and I were watching our favorite show,  
and a character said, "Someone's carryin' a bullet for you  
right now, doesn't even know it. The trick is, die of old age  
before it finds you." I've seen bullet gardens grow in brains.

But I know that the only name Nell remembers some days  
is John Jay's. She doesn't know that the food on her plate  
is both food and hers. But every night over decaf,  
she scans the room and asks where John Jay is.

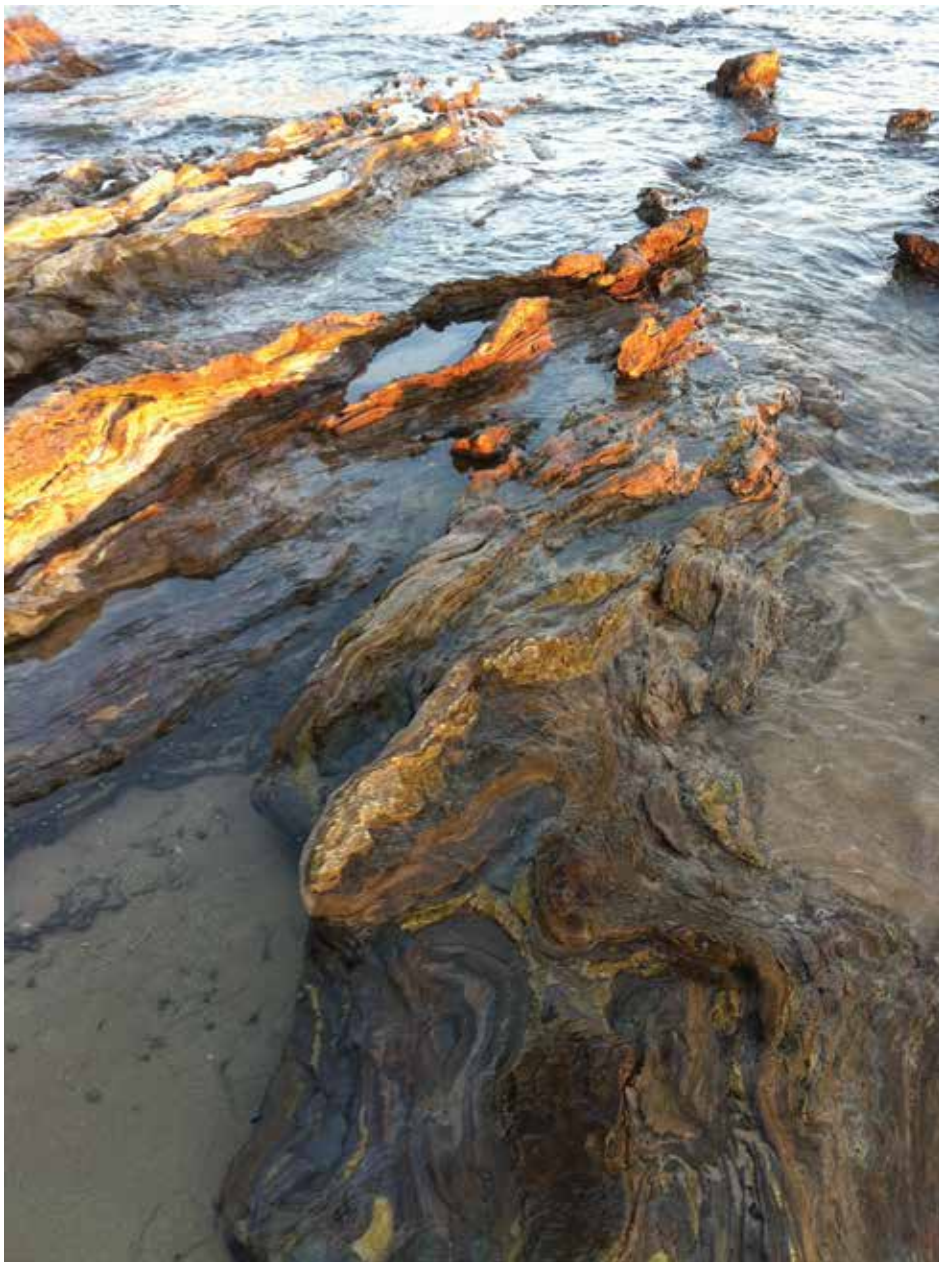
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This weekend on October 25th, 2014,  
Nick slipped white gold onto my finger.

I said, "A thousand times yes." I know  
those words may become a smudge  
on a yellowed slip of paper in my brain's  
accordion file, but who cares?  
In August, we start chancing it.

*Carrie Gendle '15*





**Ripples**  
*Photography*  
Allison Brocato '15

## Wrapped Up in Words

I never seem to have the words—  
words that will take what I feel, melt them down, and pound them out into the finest steel or  
mithril that has ever been forged with a hex  
cast with fangs, rare and precious, straight from the mouth of a Thesaurus Rex  
words that will take what is unseen, and make it clear as a beam of rainbow-like light made of  
fireflies,  
hand-painted by a choir of school children raised in the neighborhood I grew up in.  
I need these words  
because I want you to feel my feels and see what I see,  
which I know can be hard 'cause I live in fantasy  
and all I have—are words.  
So I wanna bring what I feel into this world wrapped in a sentence of swaddling cloth  
because the contents of a heart can't really manifest,  
no matter how hard or fast they beat against the walls of your chest.  
Words act as their medium, their Icarus wings to the sky,  
so yeah that means they fail at times,  
but we've been babbling since Babel, so I mean we still have to try.  
And the best man can do is transcribe lub-dubs into sounds we've assigned meaning  
which isn't really a perfect system when translating feeling.  
I don't even know if the beats I feel when I see her mean friend, or love, and in this context it  
could honestly be either.  
Translations are tricky that way.  
They're never spot on.  
So I endlessly swim through a sea of words looking for the right ones with my best pair  
of a vague-proof goggles.  
And I'll keep swimming  
'cause when my feelings knock with all their might  
I want to wrap them in the words that fit them just right.

*Alexander Carr '18*



**Reflections**

*Photography*

Courtney Sundin '16



## *Concordia University at a Glance*

### **About Concordia**

Concordia University Irvine prepares students for their vocations—their various callings in life. CUI offers undergraduate, graduate, and adult degree programs in a beautiful Southern California location, with online and regional cohort options. Concordia’s undergraduate program is distinctive among universities in California because of its nationally recognized Core Curriculum and its Lutheran heritage that provides a thoughtful and caring Christian community that lives out the theology of “Grace Alone. Faith Alone.”

### **Location**

Just 40 miles south of Los Angeles, Concordia University Irvine is located in the heart of Orange County, minutes from beaches, jobs, internships, world-class shopping, and a diversity of cultural experiences. Yet, Concordia’s campus is secluded and tucked away in rolling green hillsides overlooking the city of Irvine and Orange County.

### **Accreditation**

- Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education

### **Schools**

- School of Arts and Sciences
- School of Business
- School of Professional Studies
- School of Education
- Christ College

### **Faculty**

- Full Time Faculty: 100 (Percentage of Faculty with Ph.D. or other terminal degree: 67%)
- Student to faculty ratio: 18:1

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