

louden singletree

WRITING AND VISUAL ART *from the*
UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY



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louden singletree

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY'S JOURNAL
OF CONTEMPORARY WRITERS AND ARTISTS

louden singletree

ISSUE 10

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SPECIAL THANKS TO

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for their aid in this year's publication.



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Editor's Note

Welcome to the tenth anniversary edition of the Loudon Singletree. This year, we were honoured to receive a myriad of poetry, short-fiction, and visual art, each showcasing the exemplary talent of the UFV community. It was a challenge to narrow down the submissions we received, but we are confident that this year's issue demonstrates a diverse range of pieces, all with their own unique charm.

Since this is the tenth anniversary of the Loudon Singletree, we would like to take a moment to emphasize the continued importance of promoting the expression of artistry UFV and beyond into the Fraser Valley. Over the past decade, the Loudon Singletree has continued to grow, attracting the attention of countless members of the UFV community. At the same time, the Fraser Valley's arts scene has also expanded; The Reach gallery is thriving as a venue for local artists, Jam in Jubilee has developed into a city-wide event in celebration of the arts, and several venues now host open mic nights where audience members can enjoy music, poetry, and comedy in an accepting and supportive environment. We have truly flourished as a community, both in terms of art and community. Here's to another ten years of the Loudon Singletree, and to continued artistic growth in the Fraser Valley.

We would like to acknowledge that UFV and the production of the Loudon Singletree took place on traditional Stó:lō territory. We would also like to give a special thank you to Andrea MacPherson for her invaluable guidance and knowledge, to Billeh Nickerson for writing our foreword, to our first readers for their earnest work over the winter break, to everyone who so fearlessly submitted their work, and to each and every person who continues to read and support the Loudon Singletree, as we continue to provide an outlet for the artistic voice of UFV.

On behalf of our contributors, readers, and sponsors, please enjoy this year's issue of the Loudon Singletree.

The Loudon Singletree Editorial Board 2018

Foreword

Welcome to issue 10 of the Louden Singletree!

I'm going to keep my introduction short so you can get to the good stuff. Please do get to the good stuff. Until then, I want to express my congratulations on ten years of collaboration and creative pursuits. Ten years is a long time.

For a little perspective, think about how if the current editors enrolled Louden in school, it would now be in grade four. Or, if Louden were nine years-old at the time of the inaugural issue, it would now be legal at local bars—but I digress.

Student-run journals continue to play a significant role in our cultural landscapes. It's where many creators get their first publications, and where many editors find themselves making their first important curatorial decisions. It's also one of the few sites where visual artists and wordsmiths have their work appear together. Basically it's all one big coming out party.

Congratulations to UFV, the editors, creators and volunteers who've made it possible to create ten full issues. That's an impressive legacy. My thanks to them all for sharing their ways of seeing the world. We're all the better for it.

Billeh Nickerson
2018 Kuldip Gill Writing Fellowship
Writer in Residence

COVER ARTWORK / JESSICA PEATMAN

Onward and Upward

2017. Mixed media print, 18" x 18"

This work is part of a series that communicates themes of memory, belonging, fear, and loneliness, while embracing a sensibility associated with childhood. This perspective is a significant part of my own experience and it gives the work a more visceral, authentic, and mysterious aura. In my artwork, I aim to pinpoint moments of understanding within our young lives that transition us from innocence to uncertainty and skepticism. The child's experience is all about mysteries and the unknown, as they haven't yet learned the truths and realities of adulthood. Their imagination can be as significant as their reality, and these are the inspirations for my visuals, alongside surrealist work and dreams. "Onward and Upward" communicates an initially playful and adventurous scene, but also incorporates rough waters, broken vessels, and a lone being. This duality that is present in most of my work represents alternative and unconventional perceptions of the child's experience.

JORDAN WOLFE

Rose

For Gertrude Stein

Rows upon rows upon rows upon rows
of concrete arch above the soggy green
Earth. Homes of mahogany
and walnut rest in peace,
sealed by dirt six feet under a bustling
city full of watch watchers.

It's been three months
since family and friends
stood black around
a hole and an easel with my face
on it. Showering a lifeless
box with bouquets of flowers
as palms of my friends,
rope burnt from the lowering,
pressed together, praying
to a God for answers.

Holding a bloomed apology,
her steps sulk in the cemetery,
leaving indents on the wet
grass that covers my coffin.
She crouches to read my grave stone:
"Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose"

JOEL ROBERTSON-TAYLOR

Here, In The Torrent

I am alone.

And I find great satisfaction knowing that hunched over the gunnel of my sixteen-foot forest green fiberglass canoe, I, practically swimming through the rain, she, shackled by the wind hardly coasting along the lake, am a hero for my own reasons proving nothing to nobody. There's no one around, no one to crusade for, with, or against.

Chilliwack lake, early morning. The sky, densely grey. This morning is wet, like the several days before it. The month is marked by foreboding heavens.

Early yesterday was gloomy but by midday the rain had a bone to pick with the ground. Myriad tiny droplets, now legions of wrathful water torpedoes. The rain's not finished. This past week was only an anticipatory act. A mere court dance in the throne room of the *coastal low*, or whichever deity oversees the weather here.

I kicked off from shore under an hour ago. Already I've twice shifted the gear in the flimsy pontoon I call canoe. At first, the weight too near the stern, my raised bow caught every gust. Now my bag takes every crashing wave heaved over the bow. I take off my jacket and stuff it into the one sealed dry bag I have—better save it for later. In this downpour, nothing will hold against the rain. Better to accept fate and pray the deluge to ease. It seems my fate is to stay wet, but also, to stay put—according to the wind. I get closer to it, all the more ferociously it pushes back. Even the hundred foot conifers are penitent to the gale. The wind intensifies.

In a gust I hear carried the distant *cri de coeur* of some explorer from the past. As if he can scream away the rain, scare it into submission. I try also. Closing my eyes, I see the voyager rowing past, his cedar canoe pushing over the troughs and ploughing through the crests—on a mission, the weather is inconsequential.

Stranded against the wind, held by ambition—might as well be a million miles from home—we both row harder. He has no choice, I have none either. The rain presses harder, temperature drops faster. Though an explorer's compelled by occupation, I a sojourner, am not much different. Crossing into something unfamiliar—searching beyond shore. His passage is no more extraordinary than mine, we read the same compass. He rows along the elusive edges of living: life, maybe death. Whatever leeway lies

between is as stable as the narrow canoe he pilots. Neither can I turn back, this is a rite.

But I hear, “You don’t have to be here. Why keep rowing?” I don’t answer. I won’t answer, though I do know why: I am subdued to the lake, forged out of the northern Cascades and consecrated here because of it.

What’s left to explore, to discover? Nothing new under the sun. But this is new to me. Everything now, all of it together. It’s no different though I know many have crossed here before. The first time I learnt to distinguish hemlocks from cedars and the firs—learnt their attire, character, and stock—I was mesmerized like the first creature to discover and name any plant or animal. Giving a name to a place means little: the mystery is as real as it always was.

The rain comes down like a river, for my wide-eyed benefit and grimace. So heavy and torrential: am I capsized or rowing into the clouds? Could be nearer to the sky by now, I wouldn’t know. Mountain peaks are markers of past and future conquests, of where we come from, where we go. In the hell of the tempest, they’re concealed, nonexistent. Without them, where am I to paddle?

But I paddle harder anyhow, paddle for a revelation—in search of something sacred, but nothing religious. The paddle, knifing the waves so temperamental that in a single stroke I row against water, against air, against water. My raft keels hard—submerging the paddle up to my arm, then tosses upward—paddle pulling nothing but wind. The riot of a violent storm.

If there’s a tradition of resilience, I’ll learn it here. Look to the heritage that surrounds. Right now, a dutiful bow in awe. So I imitate the forest, leaning forward, on both knees, low against the hull.

Then, I slow. My ship shudders, the wind quells. The weather has turned. Ice forms along the bow. Ice has gathered along the shore and it leans in toward me. Soon I’ll be wrecked. I change traditions, giving up rowing for chopping at the ice. A battle, lost the moment I broke shore. Now feet deep, the ice lays siege to my chase. I am defeated against the causes of the peak-chilled breath of the valley rift. Frozen stiff, without explanation.

Held now by the lake, I could be here forever. If the sun’s ever going to break on through, I’m still for its resolution. Is this fate, or resignation?

Either way, I am nowhere new but still expectant for discovery. Everything I see now looks like a sign, but none of it I ever saw before.

COURTNEY KIENAS

The Essay's Elegy

O hear ye now a harrowed tale
Of strife, sorrow, sad song indeed!
Of my work's death, its dark defeat,
Of essay in ether lost yester-eve!
Oft circuit-board woke flaming swords
That by ball-point pen were forged,
Carving thesis from class-notes,
All to wage those wording-wars.
So it started as oft it did,
The thesis rallied the rest to rank.
Introduction snaring interest,
And transition of true travail.
Fast the first of the body was formed,
And paragraph from prologue proud
Paraded o'er the page-plain.
Yet, their fierce toil was all for not
Betrayed by fan of mother-board!
A spark began its swift demise.
Cutting short its thread of fate.
Paragraph next pressed on unaware
Of the fiery fray now fought below.
Goodly card of graphics gave
A flash to warn of the new war,
The one unseen but for that flicker,
The one that marked its martyr's fate.
As the cavalry of author's quotes

Broke shield-walls of foe's rebuttal,
The capacitors could not be cooled,
Their own charge changing for the worst,
Holding out against the current's heat
For as long as fate allowed.
An hour of keystrokes cried out for courage
Begging mother-board to bow not yet.
But alas the heat's assails took hold,
And capacitor, brave current-holder,
Did crash and burn in battle that night.
And as Autosave tried to assure gains safe,
A flicker spread across the screen
And monitor sank with a silvery glare
Into death-fields of azure blue.
White text did speak of wyrd's cruel will,
Then blue gave way to lifeless black.
And essay was borne beyond reach of man.
Whoever collected that crafted cargo
None now in truth can surely know.
O Great Grade-Giver, grant mercy now!
Extend the day, that date of doom,
When papers no more will be grade-gifted!
A day will come when crafting fails
And the raven cries his last "Nevermore!"
When wolf cries "Boy!" at world's ending
And hearts no more hearken to heroes old.
Let this not be that day!
One week will give those word-warriors
Fresh strength to finish work on-time.
Give mercy now for tomorrow's might!
I swear this time I'll finish tonight!

ALANNAH HIGUCHI

Trail Blazer

Pick out the seeds and stems
stuck in your long coarse hair.
Lying by yourself on the forest floor, looking up,
you take a puff.

Stuck in your long, coarse hair
are green furls of smoke.
You take a puff,
searching for direction through the haze.

Are green furls of smoke
the only thing preventing you from
searching for direction through the haze?
You always know where you are before you blaze.

There's only one thing preventing you from
remembering the way home.
You always know where you are. Before you blaze
next time, leave a trail of breadcrumbs

remembering the way home.
Maybe you won't take in the smoke
next time. Leave a trail of breadcrumbs
instead, to guide you home.

Maybe you won't take in the smoke
when you are by yourself.
Instead, to guide you home,
remember how you got here and begin to roll.

When you are by yourself,
lying to yourself, on the forest floor, looking up,
remember how you got here, begin to roll, and
pick out the seeds and stems.

MARLENA ASHTON

Today is a Blessing

2016. *Photograph*, 612 x 816.

A sunset and sunrise are one and the same – a chance to reflect, refresh, and renew. They are common symbols of the end and the beginning; the turning of the page in the grand story of life. They are often seen as light and dark competing, of opposite themes contrasting. But they are one in the same. Both the sunset and sunrise represent the end and the beginning. The sunrise ends the night and begins the day, and the sunset ends the day to begin the night. Both hold their own shadows, and their own beauties. One must see the beauty in the end to take control of the beginning. Letting go of the past and the future, so that you may focus on the present is the key to resting in peace at the end of the day. It is, as they say, though rather clichéd: yesterday is gone, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a blessing. Take charge of your life and approach your days with a new focus: how can you make today the best today you can? Do not hold negativity for the past, and do not hold anxieties for the future. Hold onto the present, for it is all we have today.





KATIE DIESPECKER

Bad Thoughts

2017. Acrylic paint on canvas, 30" x 40"

“Bad Thoughts” is a piece which comments on the dark and unwanted thoughts which most people, to different extents, encounter throughout their lives. Intrusive thoughts can be concrete (“I’m going to fail this test,” “What if this headache is really a tumour,” etc.), but they are often an intangible sense of dread, guilt, sadness, or foreboding. I used empty thought bubbles to convey this.

I chose a more realistic style because I wanted to emphasize the concept of the word bubbles being real and tangible, rather than a necessity that the viewer is expected to ignore. I wanted to use subtle, soft colours and a stark background to give a sense of intimacy and seclusion, which goes hand-in-hand with thoughts we may be afraid to share with others.

The balloons are not merely vehicles for textual words, but convey meaning in other ways. The piece utilizes the garish shapes of the bubbles themselves to depict the subject’s inner turmoil. The bubbles are allowed to overflow the canvas much in the same way that word balloons in comic books are often allowed to break the bindings of their panel.

MARLEE MCCULLOCH

Sunday

Your tired eyes close tight as if they could block out
the early morning rays.
A body curls further into the remaining heat
the soft blankets provide;
the mind willing itself to return to sleep.
The smell of coffee brewing hits the senses,
and dishes clink as they are taken
down from their home on the shelf.
A slight breeze glides over your face
through the slowly opening door,
as feet tiptoe across the creaking wood.
Warm lips press to your cheek.
Sweet words whispered into your ear.
And you can't help the smile that appears on your face,
as you are brought further from the world of sleep.
Your eyes open to a loving gaze,
and they begin to smile too.
As you reach up to run fingers through curly hair,
they lean into the love your hand provides
and extend their own hand to help you up.
No longer worried about the cold morning air,
you sit up and start your day filled with warmth.

JORDAN WOLFE

The Siren

for William Cowper

Across the ocean she sits alone on her island
that dares seamen to approach. On a rock
her sand brown hair waves to me, begging.
She sings in tongues my ears cannot perceive
but it sounds like love and I crave it.
I long to drink from her eyes, to feed from her mind
and collapse on her flesh, a castaway to the world
but a fool to her. The song becomes louder, my heart
beats out of my body but the waves become vast
and take the face of Poseidon. They pick up
and fold my boat like a deckchair and I plummet
to familiar waters. She sings in ecstasy as I swallow
the water from the shore that leaves me
beneath a rougher sea, and her beneath the sun.

EMILY BECKETT

The Face of Freedom

Make war in the face of the rain,
stand still at the pull of the wind,
sing strong to crowds corrupted,
but do not dance to musical monsters.

Be a voice that echoes like an avalanche
over ears that are empty of incoming empathy,
like a ripping tide that pulls parched hearts
into the ocean's soft arms.

But more so,
be an ear enduring the silence of souls
'til murmurs of melody bubble and brim.
Listen, for life thrives or expires therein.

Do these and soon
you will bend,
you will break,
you will bleed.

Climb up off the concrete.
Clean your cuts.
Do it over 'cause
everything between breath's bookends
belongs to you
and fear can't forge any face of freedom.

LUKE KELLY

The Flame and The Flower

Within the mind of one man, there existed a grove full of wonderful beings. This garden was situated along a brook, inside a dense wood which was host to a great deal of fantastical things. The beings that lived within this garden called themselves flowers, but they were beings full of thought and movement. A regular flower was no comparison to the magnificence of their grace. These flowerlings basked in the sun's fire, and it gave them strength. While existing separate from one another, occasionally two of the flowerling nymphs would recognize they shared the same coloring of petals. This recognition created a spark, and that spark turned into a bond. The desire to be bonded was so great that they would physically join together. The matched beings of same color would then bloom into a magnificent bough, which filled with their affections. Although this union was amazing and coveted by all in the garden, sometimes it lead to sadness. There were times when two flowers who believed they belonged together would attempt to join as one. However, they would not realize that the coloring of their petals was not perfectly aligned. Their bough would at first show the glow of their affections, but eventually those affections became darkened with thorns and uncontrollable fire as they began to distrust their judgements. Eventually, the flowers would realize they had tricked themselves into falsity. They would undergo a painful separation, which left one or both burnt as the fire within their union was extinguished.

Beyond the garden of these nymphs lived other beings, amazing in their own right. They were wholly different, yet similar to these flowerlings. These beings were one of an element, the fire. They moved with it, and controlled it like the flow of water around weathered rocks of a rushing river. These effigy-like beings kept their distance from the garden. Although they could control their fire for the most part, they dared not risk setting alight any part of the beautiful bounty. They wandered around the drier parts of the forest, making sure to keep their inner fires in check. Sometimes two flames would meet from either side of the forest, and they would find their fires matched. These flames would burn brighter together than they had ever done apart.

Following this, their shared desire to be one would cause an extinguishment of their fires. In the absence of their fires, and at the exposure of their ashy nakedness, the fertile ground would make them into a strong tree. The trunk was a spiralling embrace of both beings, and it would grow far into the sky. The long branches of their tree became the exuberance and happiness they desired to spread out, too great to be contained within their trunk. This wondrous event happened from time to time, but no flame expected such a beautiful union to happen to them. Additionally, these effigies faced an unspoken fear similar to the one which plagued the flowerlings: if two flames tricked themselves into believing their fires matched, they would realize their mistake only as the ground rejected their ashy forms. After this revelation, they would both be forced to wander the forest without light, until one they truly matched with came to relight them.

One flame gazed upon all the great spiralling trees of the forest, of all the flames throughout the eons who had met a match of their own fire. He wondered how he could ever find such a perfect match of his own. Like all effigies, he feared the fate of those who tried to force a union out of jealousy of the flames who had managed to find and combine with their matches. The other effigies called him The Smile. He was one who still, despite the uncertainty of these unions, managed to remain optimistic of his own destiny. He constantly reminded his fellow flames of the wondrous experience they would all have one day. Yet, in his heart, he was uncertain if he believed his own words. He wandered farther than most through the forest, sometimes finding himself completely lost, but always happy and full of conviction.

A ray of light had caught his attention for some time. The flames were taught to avoid the sun's power, for they feared what it might do to their controlled inner fires. It shone down brilliantly some distance away from his little encampment, which rested upon a rocky heath he had grown fond of. He felt a pull, as if there was something at the end of that beam of light he needed to see. He reasoned that so long as he stayed out of the light's direct touch, he would be safe. As he moved towards the beam, he realized it was shining onto the garden his kind was forbidden to cross into. He approached, and saw beneath the sun's light one of the flowerlings he had learned about. She was lounging across a small plant, bent like a hammock, and staring up at the sun. He had been blinded so greatly by the desire to find his own matching flame, to have a bonding tree of his own, that he had never considered the flowerling

nymphs as anything more than plants of thought. Now, as he witnessed this creature, he could not fathom how he had overlooked such a wonderful being that resided alongside him in the forest. Her great beauty captivated him. Her eyes, which starkly reflected the sun, shone with an inner fire wholly her own. He knew it made no sense, but to him the shimmering of her petals reminded him of his own flames. They glistened and glimmered with touches of deep emerald green, while maintaining a swath of hazel that accented each petal.

She was called The Gentle, named so for how much she cared for and taught the younger flowerlings. She filled them with hope and wonderment about their precious home. However, she was not to be underestimated, and to see her as weak was a grave mistake. She had a quick wit, which was uncanny for the slow-moving flowerlings, and a strong will. In the past, many flowerling suitors had fawned after her, but soon realized they could not match her. These nymphs desired her because of her unique coloring; while most flowerlings had one dominant color, she had two. Her beautiful brown petals fell across her frame more delicately than any other. When the sun was highest and brightest in the sky, they would sparkle with a dark inner emerald which carried into her eyes. No other flowerling's petals had colors in such a way as hers, and this was both a blessing and a curse. Many hopeful flowers reasoned that perhaps they could form a union with her, simply because there had been no one like her before. She was weary of all who pursued her, especially these days. The healed burns on many of her petals were a constant reminder of her painful past. When she was a younger nymph, one particularly clever flower had convinced her that they were meant to join. His petals were a plain grass-green, nearly identical to the floor of their grove. Yet he persisted. He told her his simple coloring reflected his open and honest mind, which could be a match for one such as complex and intricate as she. Eventually, he convinced her. She quickly grew tired of their union, as she realized he did not care for her, and was only captivated by her beauty like the others. In the end, she realized her mistake in choosing him, and their bough broke apart. She had never tried with another, as she had yet to see one who glimmered like she.

She noticed a flame, The Smile, approaching the edge of the garden. She often rested in this corner of the great garden, for it was far enough away from the other flowerlings that she would not be bothered. The flame remained a few steps from the edge, not putting his feet near the grassy floor and keeping away from the bright beam

of light. She rose from her sunny reprieve and looked at him. She was instantly captivated by his glow, his fire, contained just beneath the surface of his being. More than that, she was taken in by his warm smile. It produced an instant ease in her she did not know she could feel. Before she had gazed upon him, the fiery beings beyond the garden had appeared as veiled beacons of light. To her, the flames were always distant in their glow. The effigies were washed and paled by the sun's rays, which beamed down upon the garden harsher than anything else the tree-laden forest could muster. In that moment she considered how spectacularly the fiery beings must shine when night fell, but she had never thought to stay up and watch them; she had been always told that flowerlings went to sleep with the sun, and it was a rule she in turn taught the young ones who came to her for instruction. It shook her to her stem to realize how flippantly she was considering the garden's entire way of life.

He beckoned for her to come towards him, as he could not move any closer to the garden's edge. At first she simply continued to look at him, his smile, and his inner fire. Before she realized it her feet had carried her towards him, and she teetered on the edge of the lush grasses of the garden floor. They swayed back and forth, neither coming too close, for they were separated by different worlds. He told her that her petals were the most beautiful thing he had ever looked at, and they were greater than any fire he had seen his own kind emit. To that, she smiled to herself. She caught it, and cast an uncertain sideways glance at him. Despite her interest, she wondered why he had approached. He himself did not know, now only wishing to learn who she was. She looked down at her petals, and noticed a few of her burns were showing towards him. She quickly moved the petals around, to hide what she did not want him to see. She said that she found his glow captivating, and wished to know more about his kind. So, they talked. Their talking continued far into the day. The beam of light that had carried him over had moved on, but the feelings he felt remained. She too was already growing fond of his company. He held her interest far more than any of her own flowerling kind had before. Their desire for each other grew each passing moment. Eventually, the sun began to set and she was reminded of her sleep. She told him this, and bid him goodnight. He left, unwillingly, but with the knowledge that he would see her again tomorrow.

They met each day after. She sat on the edge of her private corner of the garden, and he in front of her on the soil of the forest. Despite her desire, she forbade him to

touch her, and she did not touch him. Although she did not say it, she feared what his fire might do to her. As their talks grew deeper, The Smile wondered if he would every get to embrace her. Each night when he returned to his heath, he would think of ways in which he could show her how badly he wished they could be together. Before sleep took her each night, she imaged being held by him in a warm embrace, full of laughter and smiles. When she dreamed, she dreamed of touching him.

One night as he sat upon his heath, he thought of what had brought them together. They were both greatly enthralled by the other's appearance, but this bond was more than something ocular, or it would not be so strong. They both enjoyed each others words, and how they spoke to one another. Then he came to a realization: words, his words of feeling he had for her, were the things that would show her that their touch would be safe. If he described how much their bond had grown, she need not fear a simple touch. The following day, he came to her armed with the words that captured what he felt:

Like burning effigies,
bolts of emotion run through me,
count of stars within that gaze
like running paces with one look.
Catching dreams inside a haze,
rifling through pages of a book
like the turning of tree leaves,
mesmerizing brown and greens
like whole seasons of change
flashing forth before a grange.

She was fascinated by the words which had taken him only a single night to compose for her. He confessed it was because he had been holding these feelings inside him, and he had not figured out a way to tell her until then. She was happy, and moved, by his gesture. In their shared emotion, heightened by his words, she reached out for him. She moved her slender arm slowly past the grass, and into the forest for the first time. He reached out for her, hesitant at first, and then touched her hand. He had been preparing for this moment, and so his inner fires stayed locked carefully

away inside of him. As their hands linked together, their bond exploded into something more powerful than it was before. She pulled away, looked at her hand, and then up at him. Then, she jumped out of the garden and into his arms, laughing as she made him laugh with surprise.

From then on they met each day. She would settle into his arms, and he would plant a kiss atop her leafy head. They discussed many new things from then on, including what this freedom meant for them. At times, she wondered if the unions so coveted by the flowerlings were really that meaningful. He managed his fire as he saw her each day, but his growing comfort made it harder to keep it in check around her. He could feel the intensity of it, and his feelings for her made his fire spark even wilder inside of him. Their new experiences inspired him to compose even more words for her, and so he did, nearly every day:

Beads which shear a coat of heat,
finer crafts of touch and sheet,
blanket arms to wrap and stay,
crossed firm like tussled hay.
Tracing tips along the seams,
crafting coats to make a smile,
pulled together into dreams,
braying laughter all the while.

Sometimes when he held her, his flames would leap out unbidden from him. He always managed to reseal them before they touched her, but they reminded her of the burns she had sustained from her past broken union. She began to fear what their bond meant. They were such different things. She could not see how they could continue on like they were. As his affections grew, so did his fires. He controlled them still, but she could see how fierce they were becoming. She began to pull away from him slowly, and spent less and less time with him each day in that middle ground between the forest and the garden. She touched him less. He grew confused, and his concentration became weak as his fires began to burn inside of him, demanding to be let out. He assured her his fire would not be a problem to them. She continued to doubt. Did he not wish to bond like other flames, and become a great, spiralling

tree? She wondered. Did she wish to be with one of her own kind, if there even was a flower out there who shimmered like her? She wondered. He continued to try and recapture the essence of their first wonderful meetings. He wished to distract her from whatever thoughts that plagued her. And so he composed more for her:

Place that sounds like portal bound
taking hold of time and noun.
Conjure scenes in treaded brook
inside high top crook of woods.
Nestled spot of turn and nook
finding space and happy goods.
Guarding warmth of soon to be
all while singing symphony.

Despite his efforts, her strong will prevailed, and she grew even more distant from him. Finally, one day, he arrived at their usual spot and experienced the culmination of their rift. She stood away from the edge, her feet planted firmly on the garden floor. She told him, with shaken voice, that she could not see where their union was going. There had never been a flowerling and a flame together, and she did not think it was right for her to keep him from finding his matching flame. If she was so uncertain, perhaps their being together was a mistake. He disagreed, and cast his eyes downward onto the ground. He could not sway her mind. All he could do was leave their spot and return to his heath. Despite herself, that night she slept near the edge of the garden, facing towards the direction she knew was his heath. As her eyes closed shut, she looked for his distant glow.

He tried to sleep that night, but his fire had become too unpredictable for him to hold inside. His thoughts, too, raged. He bitterly berated his own deluded mind. How could he think that they were meant to last? He was a flame, and she was a flower. He was foolish to believe all this time that the beings in the garden were just pedestrian plants. She was so much more than that. He adored her mind, and her strong will, even though her decisions were now causing him pain. He had never felt more conflicted in his long, fiery life. Moments later, the flames began to crack through his skin. His fire, now completely unhinged, burst from his body like a storm. It contin-

ued to burn around him into the morning.

As she awoke, she peered out in the direction of the heath. She could see something despite the sun which shone down across her eyes. She realized it was The Smile; his fires had emerged from him completely. She rose from the grass, wishing to turn away from the piercing light that he was exuding. She looked towards the sun, yet could still see out of the corner of her eye his great, reddish glow. Ultimately, she could not ignore what was happening to him. She could not ignore her feelings. For the first time, she moved off the garden grass without the flame waiting to greet her. She placed her feet onto the soil of the forest. His flames continued to flail around distantly, and she ran towards his heath. Flames who were wandering near, but still at a distance from, the garden stared in incomprehension as they watched a flowerling move through the forest, completely separate from her grassy home.

She reached his heath. He was sitting down, and his eyes were shut in concentration and internal agony as he tried to retract his fires. He knew this happened when two flames found their match, but he did not understand why it was happening to him. The being he wanted to be with most had rejected their connection. If he could not find control, then his fires would extinguish. She called out for him to stop, to stop the burning. She was worried, but the fires kept her at bay. All he could do was focus his fires outward, to try and empty himself of them. He appeared brighter to her than the sun had ever been. She called again. At the sound of her voice, he opened his eyes and saw her standing before him. He was shocked, and greatly saddened that he could not hold her like he once did. He began to feel something he had never felt: his flame extinguishing. It grew smaller than even when he was able to control it. His fires melted away, and his body turned into naked ash. He stood before her, shivering and ashamed of his ugly appearance. He wondered how she could ever desire to be with him again. She saw him vulnerable in a way she had never seen him before, and all she wanted was to hug him. She wanted to give him some kind of protection now that his fires were gone. So she did. She took him into her arms, and squeezed him tightly. His eyes grew wide, and then closed as he returned her hug, wrapping his own blackened arms around her. He felt something growing inside of him, a warmth that moments ago felt like it would never return. It was a different heat, one he could feel coming directly from her. The sun she had absorbed was entering him, re-igniting his fires. She could feel his warmth returning too, but did not break their embrace. She knew

then that he was her flame, and she was his flower. His fire leapt out once again, but the flames were different. They caressed her, and only gave her petals a tingle as they touched her. She did not realize it, but the fires were mending her old burns. It was the sun's fire now. Her Flame, her Smile, was channelling his power and healing her.

They stood like that for a while longer, together and content with who they were. They talked all through the day, atop The Smile's heath. For the first time ever, she slept with him on the forest ground. His fires kept her warm through the night. In the morning he told her that they were each other's match, and delivered a final poem to her:

Title given caring weight
Granted once without debate
For each other so they know
That the other won't forgo
A bond that keeps faces bright
Endearment full without slight.

General to most, but not for them
Describing much they wish to send
On the surface seeming plain
An assurance not needed so
Said without any to gain
They profess and always show.

He sealed his words with a kiss, solidifying their resolve to stay together. They did not grow into a grand tree like two flames, or transform into a beautiful bough like two flowers. They did, however, find happiness in each other. That was enough for both.

KATYA ROY

Happy Place

A cotton and feather mountain
dotted by flowers of pink
vines of green
stripes of grey
all neatly tucked in and over.
My head gets lost in mounds of feathers
either quiet alone
or with another
with soft fur and softer purr.
Quiet breathing
dimmed lights
my dreams get lost
in cotton and feather mountains.

CALEB B. SILVEIRA

The Great War

The fall leaves charge like
Powerful
French Cavalry
Proud like - Noble - the leaf
collides with the curb - the bullet
then ashamed
falls to the sand
dripping with blood
each drop recalling a life story
carried by gutter rivers

to be swallowed by the Earth.

CHLOE REDLIN

Dancing with Life

Today I took a dance with Life,
in which he grasped my hand
and lead me through many a magical realm
to some untrodden land.

There was no tune
but the beating of my heart
which served as rhythm to our song,
and sunrays broke the sky as he smiled
while he urged me to come along.

Now don't get me wrong,
Life did not lead me,
nor did I command him where to go.
Rather, we strode together in perfect sync
to the universe's almighty flow.

We twirled and spun in the afternoon sun,
we tangoed until we fell,
and he gave me a final breath with a subtle wink
and told me that I had done well.

Then approached Death from the sidelines;
dressed sharp, black tux, hair smoothed with gel.
A ringing melody followed his every movement;
the song of a silver bell.

I'll be honest, I had my doubts,
until Life leaned over and whispered, "give him a chance."
And I couldn't help myself but blush
as he proffered his hand
and kindly asked me to dance.

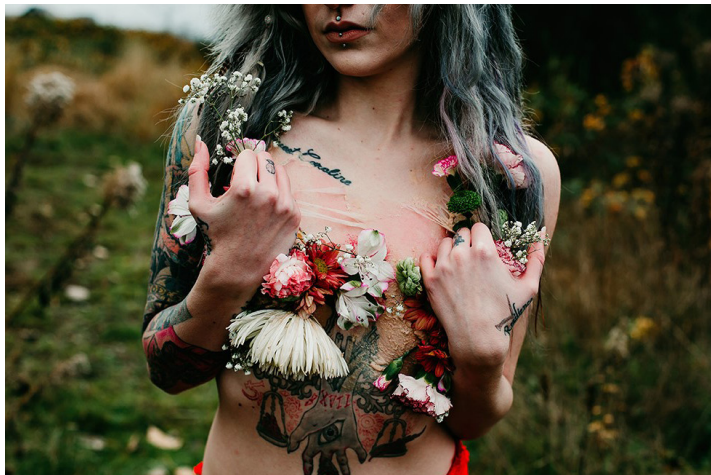
MARLENA ASHTON

Under the Sea

2017. *Photograph*, 1681 x 2988

About seventy-one percent of the Earth's surface is covered in water. The oceans hold about ninety-six and a half percent of all of Earth's water; let that sink in. This water is life sustaining for countless species, including ourselves as humans. With this in mind, it is amazing that a large portion of our oceans are left unexplored, untraveled, and disrespected. The intricacies of beauty possessed by the simplest of creatures in the depths of our seas is astounding. Currently, the estimated amount of species within our oceans as per 2015 is about 1 million. . This does not account for the species believed to be undocumented or undiscovered, which totals to an estimate of 2-2.5 million species. . The number is still growing. If more people were aware of the beauty of life beneath the dark waters, would they begin to care for the oceans? It is with this question that photographs of oceanic life are taken and shared by myself. Water is essential to maintaining the status of life on earth, so it should be without question that we fight against pollution to protect its sacred waves. It is with this in mind that the photo of a glorious group of jellyfish was taken, attempting to showcase the intricacies and beauty of the marine life.





SARAH SOVEREIGN

Stories of Blood and Healing

2017. 3 photographs, 14" x 9.33" each.

“Stories of Blood and Healing” is the first set in a photographic visual storytelling series exploring growth after and with trauma. The subject, Crimson Gospel, wears a mantle of fresh flowers, applied to her chest with liquid latex.

The first image shows the chestpiece; flowers placed over what looks like scar tissue. Her hands bring the attention to her face, to her eyes, where her gaze is direct, unrelenting, perhaps challenging – who will bear witness?

The second image shows the chestpiece, a figure standing in a deadened, yellow field, her skirt red and rich as blood. She stands still, but seemingly seconds from action – for all the movement of the wind in her hair, and hands along her skirt. Her fingers are red, perhaps raw from cold or stained with blood. Her arms hold tight to her frame, closed off, protective. The final image shows her ripping the layers away, through the living flowers, the latex, to the raw skin beneath. Her mouth is closed: not every story requires spoken words. Along the curve of one hand reads: “Resilience.”

Experiences of grief and trauma are things we carry with us; they can weave themselves into the fabric of our stories – but they do not define us. The ability to survive, to grow gardens of power in the presence of pain serve to remind us of our own strength and resiliency. We are multifaceted beings steeped in countless big and small stories about what it is to be human, and visual storytelling seeks to share those stories when mere words are not enough. In the darkest darkness, the growing flowers attest: hope persists.

MARLEE MCCULLOCH

Please Don't Follow Me

I quicken my paces, both heart and step.
Casting sideways glances into the shadows,
as if he is waiting there for me in this parking lot.

I tighten my grip on my backpack strap and keep moving.
Trying to make myself smaller—
hoping that I am not seen.

I hear feet creating ripples as they break the surface of puddles;
quick and heavy.
Are they my own?
They echo through my mind.

A car passes and I feel myself stop—
heart pounding in my ears.
As if waiting for something to happen,
my muscles tense.

It feels as if there's a band around my chest—
trying to help me quiet my breathing.
It only makes the beating of my heart louder in my ears.
My mind is telling me to move;

Faster.
Faster.
Faster.

Palms now slick with nerves, I grip my phone and my keys in hand—
as if they have become my lifeline,
my salvation.

I count the distance to my car—
sixty feet...fifty...forty...
I listen for any noise around me.

I hear the wind shaking bushes a few paces to my right,
and the distant sound of siren wails
become muffled as the clouds break to more rain.

I use my keys to unlock the door, and I slide inside.
I am safe, I tell myself.
I am safe.

SHAUNTELLE SMALL

Steps

Against a twilight backdrop,
we pick our way through the tangled net of the jungle,
wander past the ackee trees and the mangoes.

My feet tread heavy,
stumble over the papaya leaves.
You are my barefoot guide. Barely up to my waist.

Take me to the white sand beach,
let the waves lick our feet, accept kisses
from the ones before us.

Lead me through the sugar-cane valley of our ancestors,
across an island peppered with the footprints,
of a family I have never known.

Teach me how to catch crabs with a butterfly net,
how to climb the neck of a coconut tree,
how to speak the language of the island breeze.

Show me what it means to belong.
Your small hand in mine is the first step.

RYAN LIDDIARD

A Rose in the Hills

In the middle of the night,
a white hand reached down
and planted a rose in the hills.

Throughout the night the rose grew,
rooting itself into the soil
and sapping the colour out of everything it touched—
the green trees collapsed into black,
the blue clouds retreated into grey,
and the brown herds faded into white.
The only colour that remained was red.

By dawn, the rose towered over the hills,
its incendiary petals and thorns
casting the valley into immutable darkness.

Having drained the hills dry,
the rose crawled down the hillside,
thirsting for the tears of the townspeople below.

Fearing their demise,
the townspeople packed their lives into minivans,
leaving behind only the bones of their existence.

With no wellspring from which to pull,
the rose wilted into ash,
and in the smoke that lingered for the days after,
roamed only a ghost of what once was.

SHAUNTELLE SMALL

On Our Knees

On our knees,
we toil in the fields.
Throats scorched
from the sun, like the cracked earth.
Hoarse voices sing
Praise be to the One
who will save us from our cotton hands.
A canary song,
silenced by the sound of the master's whip.

On our knees,
we pray for our sisters and our brothers.
Faceless bodies left in the street,
mouths open
shot dead without a chance
to speak the truth of innocence.

And so, we teach our children
not to look the badge in the eye.
To offer up dignity on a silver platter,
gaze upon their shoes,
and hope with bated breath
that he does not want their life instead.

We walk among a nation that turns their cheek
to the slap of our existence. Voices left unheard.

So now,
united by a flag,
we will take a stand.
Silently protesting for our voices to be heard
over the echoes of a star-spangled melody.
O' say can you see, us down on our knees
to live in fear no longer,
in the home of the brave.

ALANNAH HIGUCHI

Reese's Peanut Butter Buck

Find a penny, pick it up,
then all the day you'll have good luck.
I found a coin and so I tuck
my knees to try to pick it up.
It's not a penny, it's a buck,
that has a special type of duck
on the side that's facing up!
I bite my nails and so it's tough
to grab the coin and grip it up.
I push a side down with my nub,
with hopes to lift it just enough
to slip my thumb beneath the buck.
Pinch it quick and snatch it up,
and then the coin will not be stuck.
But, it doesn't lift so much.
Hmm, I think, well this is tough.
This coin is tucked in sidewalk muck
between the cracks in Nunavut.
From out of nowhere, I hear, "DUCK!"
I drop my hands into the muck.
I scrape my knees, my head is tucked.
I think it's safe to lift it up.
I look and see the hockey puck
that skimmed my head by just a touch.
I go to grab it for the shmuck
and notice something shiny stuck.

I use my other hand to touch,
and you would never guess my luck!
Pressed against my palm by guck,
I hold the shining brassy buck!
Money-wise I've got enough,
I'm off to buy a Reese's Cup.

MARLENA ASHTON

Not Disney's Love

My love is not a delicate glass slipper.

Nor the 'happily ever after' found
at a fairy tale's end where the princess
is saved by a knight in shining armor.

It's not the magic kiss from a slimy
frog prince, or a song we sing in perfect
harmony without practicing even
a single word. My love is not written
in the stars or the colors of the wind.

It's not any of these fantasy dreams.

It is a friendly, calming cup of tea;
a home-cooked meal in your belly; a close
embrace welcoming you back home; a warm,
cozy fire on a cold winter's night.

MARLEE MCCULLOCH

The Gold Dress

*“I came by it honestly,
an heirloom passed
from my father
and my grandmother before me”*
“Depression” by Alison Pick

A young Grecian girl, barely thirteen,
stands in the angry, mid-day light and admires her work.
She thinks of how well the fruits of her labour will provide for her family.
Suddenly, a man can be seen riding over the horizon.
His pristine white horses and golden chariot gleam as they catch the sun’s rays.
His attire speaks of his family’s sovereignty.
He promises her wealth and land,
and presents to her a gown sewn with gold.
Though the loss of this gown was quite the possibility,
I came by it honestly.

She was told to wear it at her wedding—
not to the man who gave it to her,
but to the man to whom she was already promised.
An unspoken longing followed the fabrics.
as they were given to another.
One cannot say why, as none have asked,
the young girl chose to keep it.
She married the man whom she loved and stored the dress away.
In hopes that it would everlast,
an heirloom passed.

Through generations it flows.
yet it does not look the same anymore.
Greedy hands had cut away at the poor woven fabrics,
trying to make something selfish out of what was beautiful.
This tailored gown filled with gold met the sharp edge of a blade,
as this woman cut and trimmed pieces she could fit upon her.
This broken wish has been passed down, pieces shared,
from my ancestor many years ago,
until it came to the hands of my mother, who was gifted it
from my father.

The story of this wish
has passed down through stories
told from mouth to tiny ear sitting upon a lap.
It carries with it much history,
as well as some questioning looks,
for what happened to it was quite strange.
Many have told this story over hot tea.
Some language has been lost since its making,
but it was told to me under the shade of a tree,
and my grandmother before me.

KATYA ROY

Things That Fade

Detail in your notes through a semester;
Leaves after they fall;
Letters on your favorite sweater;
Hair colour in the summer;
Fire in the pit at your campsite;
Friendships after graduation;
Anger after a fight;
Scars after a scratch;
Love after a lie;
Your calls after that night.

JESSE KLASSEN

Seven Strings

Long ago, when the universe stood still, before worlds turned on their axes, God alone moved in the heavens and on the earth. When all creation had been crafted, and all law had been written, God declared the moment to be right and in the heart of heaven, on the highest mountain, he stood at the center of his forge. Stretching his arms wide, he surveyed all he had made; every leaf, flower petal, river stone and constellation. Then with all his might, God brought his hands together and shouted “TIME!”

In that instant, lightning lapped at the sky from his palms, thunder rolled through the heavens, and the air around him burst forth into boiling, living flame. The fire billowed over the top of the mountain and down into the created world. Wherever it went, creation grew greater; trees became taller and greener, the ground burst new clear, blue springs, and mountains were stoked to even greater heights. For this fire did not destroy, as fire does now, rather it carried the very will of God, enhancing all that it touched.

In the heart of this boiling flame, God pulled seven strings from the fabric of reality and braided them together. Taking the braid in his hand, he thrust it into the inferno around him, where it became a strand of burning golden light. The strands of reality became one, stoked by the very will of the Creator. Pulling it free from the fire, God struck it with his hammer as one strikes a drum. Every hammer fall was met with flashes of blinding light and a sound like a hurricane. He would beat it until the Golden flame turned to red, then thrust the braid back into the fire around him. Again and again his hammer fell, changing its appearance from a golden braid to something like a bolt of lightning.

After what must have been an age, something began to happen. Tendrils of flame began shooting out like fireworks, arching across the universe. They wrapped themselves around creation in swirling patterns, turning and turning to the rhythm set by God’s sculpting, and within each turn creation moved. Galaxies began to spin, worlds turned and danced, water poured and rose and crashed as it was designed to. All of

creation began to dance to the beat and every fibre of its being felt the rhythm as time tickled its bones, and still God hammered on, refining it further.

Stoking the flames around him with his breath, God forced them to even greater size and power. He hammered and forged until what was once the braid now shone brightly as a solid ingot of pure flaming light. But the work was not yet over. Exchanging his hammer for smaller tools, God worked the ingot, sculpting intricate designs and patterns across its surface. Changing his tools, again God crafted in still greater detail, patiently working as the boiling flame danced around him and all creation seemed to rise and fall like the seas.

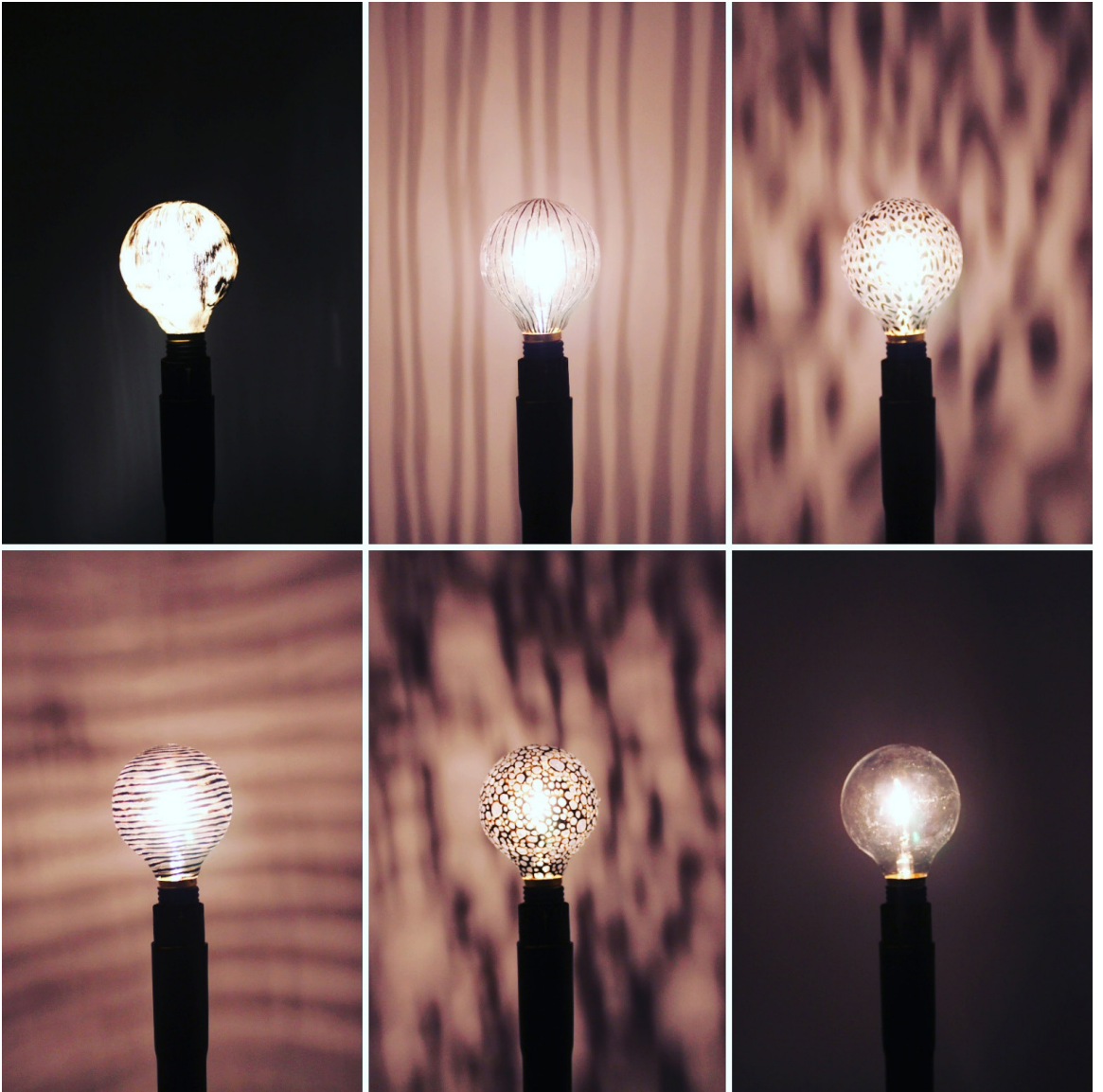
Then, casting the tools aside, God reached up into the fumes and drew forth a new hammer which seemed to be made of rushing wind and surging water. Striking the intricately carved ingot, he began to shape the spirit of it's flaming light. Breathing upon it with every stroke, he forged his will on to its surfaces, writing upon its heart the laws of time.

With one last stroke the hammer shattered. Thunder cried out and the heavenly forge-fires blasted apart and faded to nothing. All creation again stood still as the tendrils of fire ceased their dance. God stood alone in his forge with the carved ingot radiating in his hands. The heart of which beat softly with the same rhythm to which it had been made.

God looked down at the creation in his hands and said "You are Time. The laws by which you will govern have been formed within you." The ingot seemed to glow even brighter in response. "I will now weave you back into this world. Govern well."

With that, God gripped both sides and began to pull. The ingot of pure light stretched like rubber as God laid it out across the heavens. It was pulled into a wide band and each end was placed beyond creations knowledge.

Claiming its rightful place in all that had been made, Time's heart echoed forth God's beat held within. The fiery tendrils again began to swirl and the universe again began to dance to the eternal rhythm. With that Time began its reign, creation was finally set in motion, and God said "It is very good."



CASSIE DE JONG

Almost Ideas

2017. 5.5" x 2.5" lightbulb on 1.5 metre high base.

“Almost Ideas” is an installation piece composed of a series of lightbulbs that use various patterns to cast strange shadows on the surrounding walls. Each patterned lightbulb is unique and interesting in its own distinct way and retains a separate interpretative meaning as part of a more specific overall narrative. The purpose of the piece, as a whole, is to shed light on the difficulties of social anxiety, and the challenges that come with trying to express our true selves.

The lightbulb is universally recognizable as a visual metaphor for ideas, and various studies have shown that patterns with small holes or thinly spaced lines can make certain people feel uncomfortable. This piece combines the symbolism of these two concepts. Each pattern begins as a detailed motif carefully hand-painted on the glass, and ends as a distorted shadows on the surrounding walls. While gazing at either the bulbs themselves, or at the walls around them, you may feel a strange calm, or you may catch that something doesn't feel quite right.

Overall, the piece can be separated into three core elements; each lightbulb represents an individual with an idea, each pattern represents some form of fear or anxiety, and the light and shadows cast upon the surrounding walls represent the result of the fear on the idea. It has become warped, and is not what the individual had originally intended to express.

The final lightbulb does not possess a pattern, and is thus free of all fear of expression. The walls here have been unmarred by an erratic mess of light and shadow, and represent a clear message. It is an optimistic end to what all its predecessors represent.

Contributors

Jessica Peatman is a recent Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate with a major in Visual Arts from UFV. Her 2D works primarily involve mixed media drawings and various printmaking methods. Her latest body of work specifically employs the photo etching technique. Peatman's work largely focuses on fear, loneliness and the unknown, often associated with childhood. She recently completed a self-directed study in Printmaking and wishes to continue producing work in this medium.

Jordan Wolfe is a writer from Maple Ridge who is currently studying creative writing at The University of The Fraser Valley.

Joel Robertson-Taylor is the editor-in-chief of *The Cascade*, and is the recipient of the 2017 Canadian University Press student journalist of the year award.

Marlee McCulloch is a student at UFV.

Courtney Kienas is a third year UFV student from Mission, British Columbia, and is completing her double major in English and Chemistry. Her preferred concentrations are in medieval epics, Arthurian legend, and organic chemistry. She also has very definite opinions surrounding the appropriate role of dragons in literature and film.

Alannah Higuchi has been attending UFV for five and a half years, some of which she has spent as a science student, but finishing as an English student. She spends most of her time getting her soul sucked into an endless cycle of work, but occasionally she take breaks to free it outside via hikes, kayaking, etc. This is the most time I've ever spent thinking about how to describe myself and it's basically the best I can come up with. I fight a battle everyday between accepting the mundane realities of our world and the cosmic opportunities.

Marlena Ashton has faced more adversity than she ever could have imagined. It was a pen in one hand and a camera in the other that got her through the chaos. Find your beauty, your silver lining, your light. She found hers. It exists within every piece she writes and every photograph she captures. When you find your light, never let it go. Cherish it as she will.

Katie Diespecker lives in Agassiz and primarily works in acrylic, watercolour, pencil, and digital media. The style of her work is not heavily stylized, but not fully realistic either. Her work often features elements and concepts from modern media such as graphic novels, animation, advertising, and current technology. She has taken several visual arts courses at UFV, but is also partially self taught. Currently, she does digital design and illustrations for UFV's Academic Success Centre.

Emily Beckett set aside her dreams of becoming an astronaut, and is now in her third year of a social work degree. In the future she plans to create accessible music programs, explore every mountain range, and have many good cups of tea. Instead of napping or daydreaming in class, Emily jots down eclectic thoughts that some call poetry.

Luke Kelly was born in Edmonton, Alberta, and lived in the northern town of Cold Lake until the age of 12. Since moving to the Fraser Valley, he has lived with his family in Chilliwack. He is currently finishing a BA in literature and sociology, with hopes of entering into teaching following the completion of his degree. Luke is also an aspiring novelist, and an avid fan of basketball.

Katya Roy is a fourth year student, graduating this year from the BA program with a major in History. She never liked poetry, but owes her newly found love of writing it to all of the Creative Writing courses she somehow ended up in. She has slowly begun submitting her work and luckily four out of the six submissions she has made have either been published or won an award. She loves writing poetry because she sucks at drawing and it's kind of the same thing, just with words. So, poetry isn't as lame as she once thought.

Caleb B. Silveira is currently in his third year at the University of the Fraser Valley. He plans to graduate with a Bachelor's of Arts degree with an English literature focus. He has particularly enjoyed the many creative writing courses he has taken throughout the past few years and hopes that this is the first of many publications to come.

Chloe Redlin is a first-year student at UFV studying creative writing, language, music, and whatever else she has money for. Chloe is inspired daily by the beauty of the world around her. With a love for fantasy and the magical universe, she regards every moment of her day in absolute awe. This often translates to random acts of spontaneity, but most of the time she contains her sense of adventure on paper quite well. She would like to remind her fellow writers to laugh a little! Hahahah!

Sarah Sovereign is a photographer working out of Chilliwack, B.C., with a passion for visual storytelling. Her work reflects themes of memory, trauma, resilience and loss. Focusing on revisiting places of personal significance, empty structures, trauma, and collected objects elevated to totems of remembrance, photography has become a lens through which she makes sense of self, connection, the past, and healing.

Shauntelle Small is a third year English student at UFV. She enjoys writing poetry and short stories and she is currently in the planning stages of her first novel. Her love of creative writing began as a child, when she would devote entire weekends to devouring books. In addition to writing, she also plays the guitar and dabbles in songwriting.

Ryan Liddiard graduated from UFV in 2016 with a BA in Creative Writing. For the past two years he has been living in Kamloops, B.C., where he has continued to develop as a writer. In addition to writing, he also paints and takes photographs. He would like to dedicate “A Rose in the Hills” to all those people who were forced to evacuate and re-build due to this past summer’s ravaging wildfires in the Interior – You don’t have to get back on your feet if you’re still standing.

Jesse Klassen, mainly a visual artist, works with all manner of visually oriented media such as paint, graphite, photography and even performance. Also occasionally writing short stories and poems Jesse’s work is inspired by and focuses on the subject of world religions and spirituality. Due to this, his work often has a mystical or fantastical approach to otherwise popular religious narratives and discusses the presence and significance of religion in the modern and contemporary world.

Cassie de Jong is an artist and local arts and culture enthusiast residing in Abbotsford BC. Her practice uses themes symbolism and iconography within a variety of mediums. Through the use of various repetitive patterns and simple shapes, she explores how much symbolism an object can hold, and the many things it can represent. One item can mean one thing to one person, and something entirely different to the next.

Contributors

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