

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 8

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Editor's Note

Welcome to the eighth issue of the *Louden Singletree*. We received a wide variety of submissions that included a broad scope of genres including short fiction, poetry, a play script, a graphic novel, and visual art. The shortlist was determined through a blind-reading process in which our volunteer readers voted on literature and visual art, and were asked to explain their reasoning based on three pillars: originality, creativity, and cohesion. From there, the editorial board reviewed the pieces to decide which would be selected for publication.

One of our goals this year was to further allow for a richer visual arts experience, by including artist statements from students to accompany and complement their work. In previous years, we have had paintings and drawings grace the cover of the publication. This year, we've chosen a photo that is both refreshing in tone and meditative in spirit—echoing the editorial board's reflection on the strong tradition of the *Louden Singletree*, and the perpetual artistic evolution of the publication in the years to come.

We would like to express our gratitude to Andrea MacPherson and Rajnish Dhawan for their guidance as our faculty advisors. We are also thankful to the Dean of the College of Arts Jacqueline Nolte for her continued support of the creative arts.

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

***Louden Singletree* Editorial Board 2016**

The Emotional Weight of Stories

By **Jen Sookfong Lee**

I never write about myself.

Since I've been the Writer in Residence at UFV, I've had the great pleasure of reading student writing, which is the biggest benefit of this position. New writers are continually inspiring for their enthusiasm, boundless ambition, and creative energy. When I first came to UFV, I had no expectations of where any of the students would be in their writing journeys, or if any recurring themes would emerge from their work. But as the weeks went by, I noticed an interesting, and surprising, commonality. Many of you said to me, "Oh, I never write about myself."

I've read or heard about stories that feature dragons, lawsuits, bounty hunters, elves—all narratives that reach far afield for their subject matter. That's not a bad thing at all. In fact, it can be a really great thing and an indication of a curious and restless mind, a quality every writer needs. But reaching inward for stories that are coloured with our own experiences can be valuable too.

I find that new writers are often reluctant to insert a lot of themselves into their work. Sometimes, they're afraid of their friends or family reading about issues that are important in their lives. Sometimes, they feel more comfortable writing about future dystopias and fantastic beasts. But it's important to care, to write about emotions we've all experienced—joy, love, despair, frustration. We can put ourselves into any story, even the allegories with the fantastic beasts, because every story, every poem, and every screenplay is our attempt to make sense of the human experience. The writing is how we understand the narrative of our lives and the lives of the people around us. It doesn't matter if you're writing about a colony of gorillas on Mars. What matters is that those gorillas mean something to us, that their stories compel us to care and help give shape to the mess of our own lives.

It's a delicate balance. How much of yourself do you pour into your writing? How much do you create out of the ether? The only way, of course, to discover what that balance should be for each of you is to keep writing, and to keep writing anything and everything that interests you. Publishing your work in literary magazines, like The

Louden Singletree, is some of the best foundational work you can do to find your voice. Every author I know wrote manuscripts and more manuscripts, trying to figure out what to write, how to write it, and what it should sound like. This is the time for you to make those discoveries, and to present your work to the public to see what resonates with readers. Which is why The Loudon Singletree is so important to the development of each of its contributors, but also to the cultural fabric of UFV. It's where we show ourselves to our community. And where the community can see what we care about and how we're learning.

As you read through this issue, think about the emotional weight of the stories, poems, and essays. This is your connection to these emerging writers. And that connection is beautiful, transcendent, and relentlessly human. Which is as it should be.

COVER ARTWORK / SARAH SOVEREIGN

Mindfulness

2015. *Digital photograph, 9.33"x14"*.

Mindfulness is a photographic work that explores the concept of living with recognition of the moment. The image portrays the concept of being present to the Self, as the dark-clothed figure stands submerged within her own reflection. Specifically, this image examines the relationship between grief therapy and a nonjudgmental awareness of our experience and loss. It references mindfulness as it pertains to therapeutic practice for those living with the weight of grief. Within therapy, mindfulness might be employed via breathing and body scans as the recognition of the state of the body can be important to becoming present to the Self. The figure is placed within water, but reflecting a sharp, non-distorted image. She is seeking mindfulness for the present, so she can further examine the ache of her past. In doing so, she reconnects with the existence of her present Self within the space of that moment: a being of wholeness, stillness and reflection.

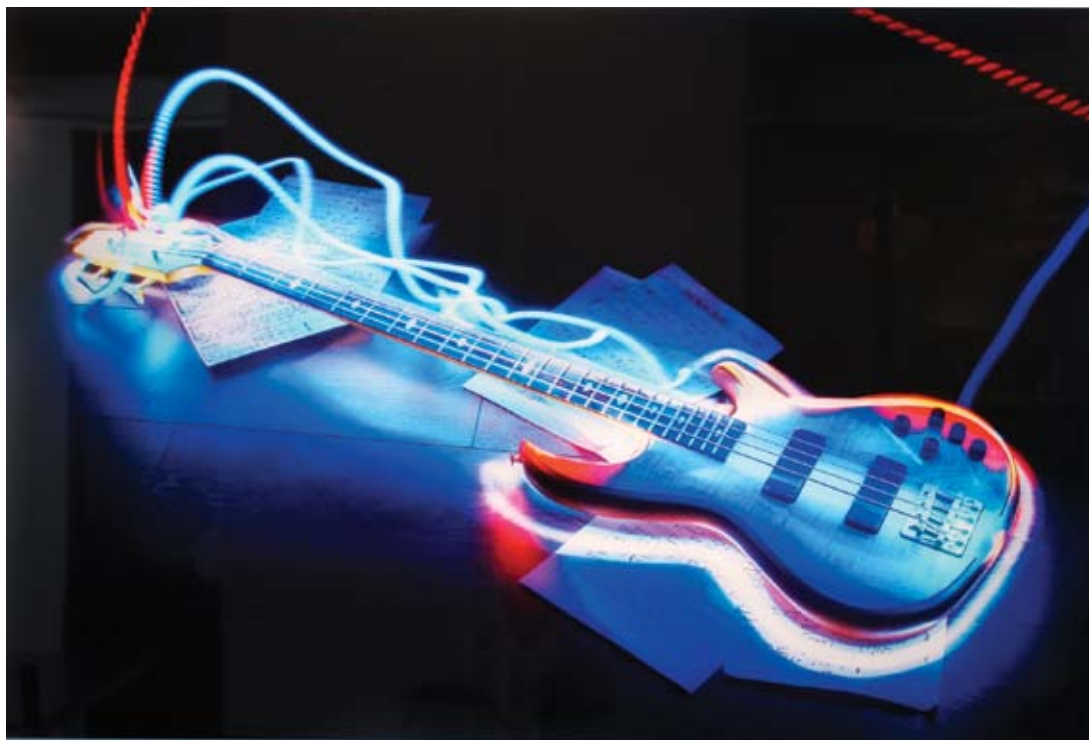
JANELLE FITZ

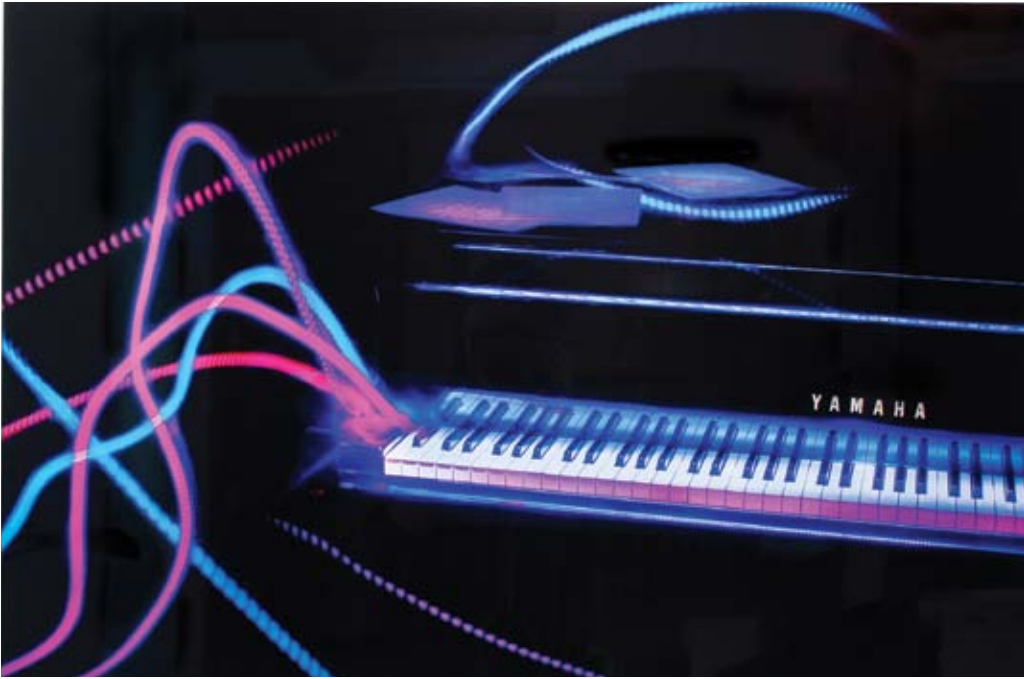
Light Paintings

2015. Archival inkjet photographs on metallic paper, face-mounted on plexiglass, 24"x36" each.

The following three digital photographs were inspired by my love of music. Music has been a part of my life since I was very young. Most of my family was involved with music and I grew up playing the piano. Music was a common interest, and was something that brought us together.

My intent with these photographs was to capture the energy of music. I created these images using the technique of light painting, and also used composite techniques to create my desired final image. The colourful, abstract streaks of light evoke vibrancy and movement, and ultimately capture the energy and beauty that music can evoke.







NATHANIEL ZAPARILLA

Church in the Late Afternoon

2015. 35mm black and white film, 8.5"x 14".

This piece, more than anything else, is a simple display of the often serendipitous, playful, rare, fleeting, menacing, and epic nature of light and shadow. But one may also be able to read into the dualities portrayed, what with the dual crosses atop the building, and perhaps more ominous, the impeccable silhouettes of the statues below. The shadows are hard-edged and are not at all warped in shape or exaggerated in size, and the shapes they depict share are as identifiable and intense as the solid figures themselves, which may beg the question of faith entirely: what are we meant to take from the stories and characters of the bible, or any religious text or teaching? Should we see them as solid, object, and unquestionable facts – solid structures? Or as amorphous, contextual, and abstract projections – shadows? Or perhaps it is best to take nothing too deep from them at all, and just appreciate its grandeur, just as it is probably best to do regarding this photograph.

IAN HANCOCK

Staring Down Clocks

Time
can control
the way you think
once you're aware of it.
It seems the clock will always change its speed
to try and trick you;
it blurs the ticks and tocks together, eager
to make a mess of everything,
while your mind tries desperately
to make sense, and
begins
thinking backwards
all of a sudden.

All of a sudden
thinking backwards
begins
to make sense, and
while your mind tries desperately
to make a mess of everything,
it blurs the ticks and tocks together, eager
to try and trick you.
It seems the clock will always change its speed
once you're aware of it.
The way you think
can control
Time.

BRITTIN OAKMAN

Heart Strings + Earth Things

We are forces of energy
Sweeping through fields of dust

Electric

Magnetic

Holding on (letting go)

Tied by heart strings

To earth things

Propagating the other side

Of fences.

Of coins.

We love to talk about life.

I am in motion; less

Sifting through cosmic waste

Questions

Boundless

Letting go (holding on)

Held by violence that

Hides behind silence

Waving my hands like it is enough

For magic.

For goodbyes.

I'm working on talking about death.

JOEL COLBOURNE

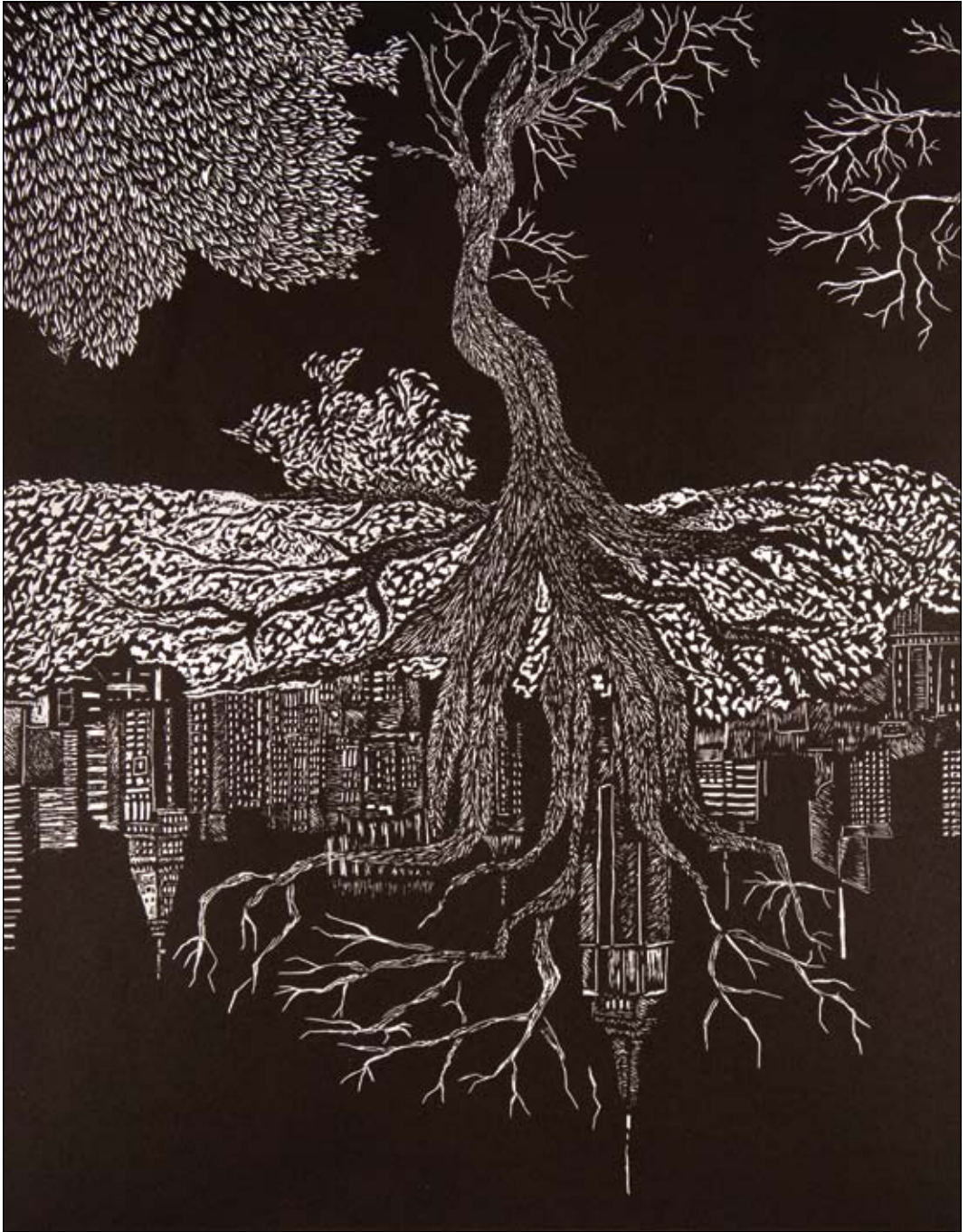
Blue Trees Beseech

2015. Acrylic on panel, 12"x16".

Trees prefer to speak for themselves. Listen...

Did you hear?





SIMRANPREET UBHI

Nature vs. City

2015. *Lino print, 16"x24"*.

My image visually expresses how nature is abolishing the city. In the image, I have visually represented this relationship between two elements by drawing a tree with its strong roots, which is covering the city. The city is shown upside down underneath the roots, which reveals that it's being pushed down into the ground. The strength is presented in the roots of the tree, which is the most important component that expresses the power of nature. In contrast, the city which is shown under the roots of the tree is metaphorically representing that it is more feeble than nature. The image on the lino was carved in fine detail in certain areas, and also showing the contrast between light and dark shadows. For example, the texture on the tree and the buildings are carved in fine lines, which also express the light and dark tones within each shape. In some areas, the marking on the lino was finished by carving out random bits. I have used the technique of hatching and cross-hatching for mark-making as well.

JULIA LOEWEN

Meet Me in Nevada

Café racer cruising
in desert dust
camel colored lanes
leaning forward in ray bans
as eagles above fly in wanderlust
Café racer cruising
alive in air of light blues
Lana Del Ray echoes in ears
ready to shift into higher gears
here, the horizon shines in different hues
Café racer cruising
gripping handlebars tightly
engine smoke blows away at the side
more than just a joyride
as warm wind kisses skin sweetly
Meet me in Nevada
I'll be waiting by the open road
in frayed shirt and leather mode
sun ridden and sipping on orange soda

KATIE STOBART

Eye of Charybdis



Eye of Charybdis was painted primarily with a palette knife. It was a sharp tool to shape the sharpness of emotion in the moment of painting; its sturdiness and broad, sweeping strokes seemed fitting as a counterbalance to internal chaos.

After completion, Charybdis emerged from the blue whorls as a shark-like impression in the negative space — the monster in the image accidental, but reflective of my feelings at the time. There was something in me that I could not control. I was looking into the whirlpool's eye, but also into my own.

DESSA BAYROCK

Mustard

All we could find in the house was vodka and non-dairy creamers — tucked out of sight in an unlikely drawer, inexplicably stored together — so we mixed the two and made white Russians.

We weren't really sure if we were drinking out of glasses or candle-holders.

"It's nice to have milk again," Trevor said, gingerly sipping his drink.

"It's hardly milk," I argued, unsuccessfully trying to ignore the filmy pseudo-cream residue coating the inside of my mouth. "You don't even have to refrigerate the damn things."

"Well, we're lucky," he replied. "Looters get the canned goods in the beginning and everything else goes bad. But nobody wants Creamo. There's probably mustard in the fridge, too."

Neither of us really cared enough to check. Instead we sat on the linoleum floor in the kitchen, watching sunlight catch floating dust motes and turn them to gold.

"It's not a bad place, eh?" Trevor said, nodding up at the ceiling. It was a single-bedroom apartment above a garage, not a bad hide-out at all. Inconspicuous stairs led down with doors on the bottom end, which still locked even after Trev put his shoulder to it. To top it off, the big old kitchen window gave us a decent sight of the road.

"Maybe we can stay here for a while," I said, dreamily, tracking the progress of one particular speck floating in and out of the streaming sunlight.

Trouble wasn't long coming.

We were both finishing our drinks when there was an unmistakable sound from the bedroom and we both stiffened. A long silence followed.

"You checked the bedroom, right?" I whispered. Trev nodded, every muscle in his body at attention. "Then what the hell was that?"

The door creaked open, as slow and loud as a horror movie.

Please, please, please, I prayed, at a loss for any other words. Please, please, please.

A groansie shuddered its way out of the bedroom, casting about for a sound or a scent. It turned our way, and I could see its eyes were the milky white opaque of the old, old dead.

We could both tell it was in a bad way — a single patch of scraggly hair gave way to bare bone skull, and it was missing its lower jaw and left arm altogether. What little

skin it had left was the greenish-grey of rotting flesh.

We stayed completely still, but it still took another limping step towards the kitchen, its mouth twitching up with every sniff.

It leaned into the kitchen on one unsteady leg, tasting the air, but Trevor was already up like a rocket. In one quick movement, he slammed the fridge door open and into the groansie, bowling it over backwards and knocking it down the stairs. Crouching behind the fridge door and using it like a shield, he drew his sidearm and shot it as it fell, blowing off what was left of its head.

We stayed frozen in place for a second, listening as it tumbled down the rest of the staircase and landed with a thump at the doorstep below.

After a long silence, Trevor turned to look at me.

“Must’ve been asleep in the closet,” I said, trying to shake off the shivers. “You’re losing your touch, Trev.”

“At least I was right about one thing,” he said, sitting down next to me and pointing at the solitary item on the fridge shelf.

“Mustard.”

BRITTIN OAKMAN

Hologram Hearts

Rust flakes from my skin;
 Is it gold?
Nay, a copper kettle laid to rest;
Whistling, e'er still
Like steam engine sonnets from willing lungs—
Willing lungs and a finite mind.
Take up the dust left behind
And form clay with trembling hands.
We make hearts this way
Strewn across Sunday's classifieds.
Lost dog. Bicycle needed. Lover wanted.
Skin tones, really;
A spectrum of love and lost and lust—
Melting into spring
To drown a sparrow's song.
The rust will swell again,
 And we shall call it gold.

KATRINA BATES

Nature's Offerings

i. Melissa Officinalis

Your sweet aroma fills the forest
seducing me into picking your leaves.
Bringing them back to the cabin
I steep them for my evening tea.

ii. Rubus Ursinus

Summer comes and you give
sweet, sweet berries
that children pick as they walk by
bursting purple along their tongues.

iii. Thuja Plicata

Grandfather of the forest
growing wide and tall
your bark a resource to be harvested
pendulous branches a swinging vine for squirrels.



ROBERT SWEENEY

Concrete Constellations

Robert Sweeney, 2015. RC prints, 8"x10".

Mission is an original. Its history is dark and polluted, much like its citizens. Foreigners are widely unaware of the existence of our city. Those few that are, simply know it as the end of the line, the last stop for the West Coast Express.

I set out to capture the inescapable melancholic, awkward charm of the place that I grew up in. This photograph is merely an excerpt from a larger series, based on the unique place that I call home. The series features a few of the staples that make the city so unique, such as the Mission bridge; the opposite of an architectural marvel. Its crumbling concrete and rusted underbelly direct the inhabitants to more bountiful places.

Mission proposed and inevitably halted all progress of a recently erected observatory. Our night sky is already eclipsed by year-round Christmas decor and aftermarket headlights. We manage to block out the constellations above, so we find our own.

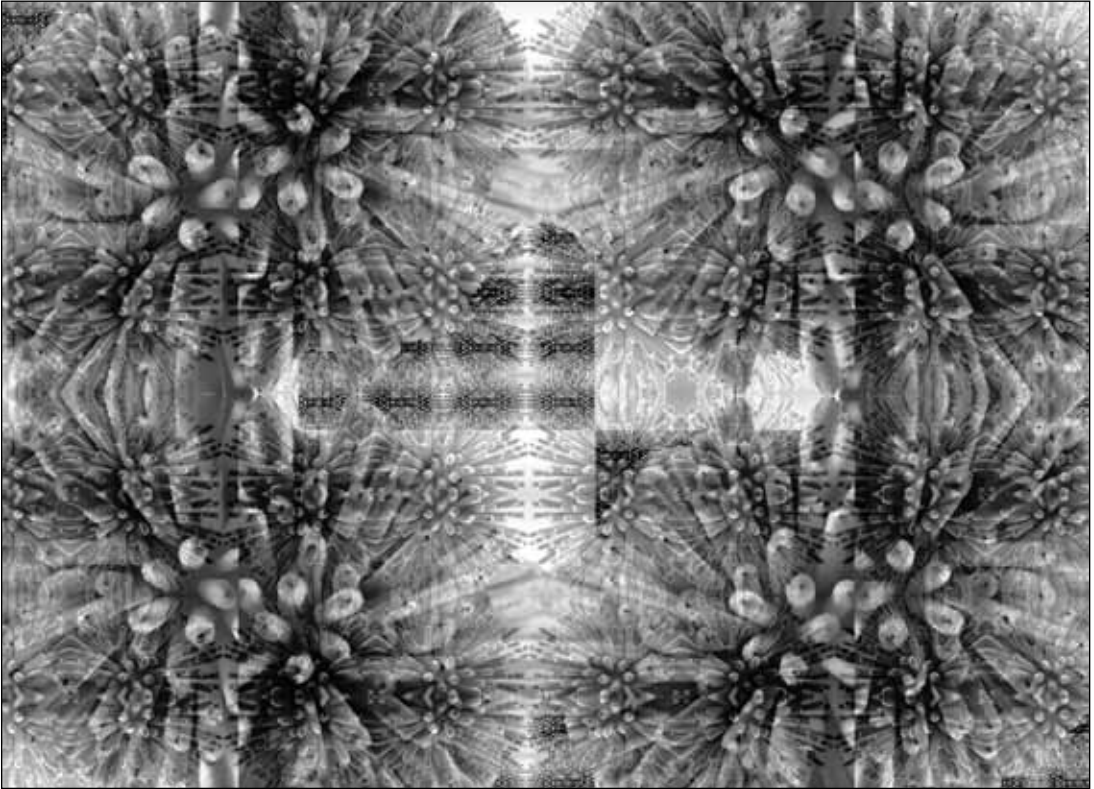
MALLORY DONEN

Growth

2015. *Digital*, 22" x 30".

My artistic practice is driven by processes of intuition and improvisation; therefore minimal planning is done during the initial stages of a project or body of work. I am interested in creating amorphous, organic, and geometric shapes that reference the natural, as well as the man-made. My work is also deeply concerned with patterns, whether they are found, produced, or created. Patterns are everywhere; they are in the sidewalk beneath our feet, the clouds above our heads, trees, buildings, and even people. I draw inspiration from several contemporary artists whose work is heavily influenced by pattern, such as Philip Taaffe, Valerie Jaudon, Yayoi Kasuma, Wim Delvoye, Terry Winters, Lesley Halliwell, and Henna Nadeem.

Growth helps us make connections between the various layers of patterns in the digitally produced image. Patterns can be seen on a macro-scale and on a micro-scale. I investigate the power of pattern to visualize the connectivity of the world we live in. Gaining a greater sense of place in society allows us to grow as individuals and as a whole. The infinite possibilities of pattern can activate the potential for discovery of new ideas and innovations. My patterns have the potential to produce an overall bodily experience, which helps to situate the viewer in relation to art itself and to all pattern that surround us on a day-to-day basis.



CLAIRE MILLER-HARDER

Here Is the Feeling

Calvin says there's a sushi place downtown that he just has to show me, and is it okay if we do that for lunch? This is our six month anniversary, if you're into that kind of thing. This is a love story.

But six months can feel like forever. How far can this thing go from here? Let's just say the clock is ticking on this one. Let's just say you either have the feeling or you don't. Let's just say, forget about Calvin for a minute.

Let's remember the summer you were 15.

Do you remember?

Love is creaking floorboards and sneaking into bed in the middle of the night. Love is the sticky change room floor at the local swimming pool and that song, you know the one, it wouldn't stop playing all summer, what was it? Love is how it's been stuck in your head ever since.

If Calvin hasn't fallen in love with me already, I'd bet he's planning on doing that soon. I was planning on planning on that later, but later tends to sneak up until it becomes the now. You can't put these things off forever. Truth is, I wouldn't love him even if I had forever to do it. Forever, six months, it doesn't mean a thing. Oh god, it's been forever since I've seen her.

Love is Froot Loops and morning cartoons and sweaty bare legs sticking together in the summer heat, because your mother can't set up the air conditioner all by herself, and no one ever helps around the house, and why does she have to do everything herself? She isn't the maid, you know.

"You're quiet today," he says. It's true that I'm quiet and I wish he would consider it, too. He sighs and takes my hand from my lap. It had been very comfortable there. I chastise myself — there's no way he could have known that. He's an alright guy, and no, I'm not thinking about the old ritual of drawing and quartering. I'm not thinking about arsenic poisoning. I'm not thinking about samurai swords. He's alright. He's the best I'll get. He's marriage material, probably. He has nice hair and he lets me stay in the bath for hours. What more could I ask for?

You should know this about me upfront: I'm greedy. I'll eat a whole box of cookies in a day. I get jealous when my friends have other friends and they hang out without me. I complain about wanting to make money but I've never had a real job, never even

tried. So as you can see, I could ask for a lot more.

Love is that electric feeling when you hold hands, and wonder if you're holding hands just to hold hands as friends sometimes do, or if it's something more. Love is wiping ice cream off her cheek and then knowing, knowing, finally, that it is something more.

We eat in the car and I pick at my food. Calvin's forgotten that I don't particularly like sushi. My stomach churns like the first and only time I went on a roller coaster (grade 12, with Steven Shepherd, and he yelled at me for screaming. I screamed at him for yelling. Steven has sensitive ears. For obvious reasons, I dumped him). My eyes are struggling to stay open, much less to look at Calvin. Here is the feeling. My face feels cold but I'm sweating. My toes are wiggling in my boots. My fists clench. My throat tightens. My breath catches. Do you ever feel like you don't own your body? Like there's someone or something else living in the pit of your stomach, building a home? My body was mine once, but I loved sharing it with her. My mouth twitches once, twice.

I don't particularly like sushi, but that's not why I felt sick. I actually really hate sushi, but that's not why I threw up.

It's all over his car.

"This is crazy," Calvin says. "This is a disaster," and he looks at my sushi, all picked apart and gross looking. "This is food poisoning."

"Help," is what I say.

"You want me to go get help?" Calvin looks like he might throw up, too. "I'm going to go ask to use their phone, okay? I'll go get help."

But no, I want real help. I want my mother to tell me how to stop breaking my own heart, and also, I guess, how to clean up vomit from my boyfriend's car.

Love is the night you gave your bodies to one another, saw each other the way you are, best friends on a foreign journey. Love is the laundry you did together that same night. Love is the awkward week after, and *The First Boyfriend*. Love is the consequent rejection. Love is the excuse of curiosity instead of sexuality. Love is me, with Calvin, thinking about her. Always thinking about her.

I know what I have to do. I know to do it quickly. I can't stand this smell. I can't stand this feeling.

Sometimes love is leaving (is love an excuse?). Calvin rushes inside to use a phone, all long, long legs and wide eyes, my knight in shining armour.

Sometimes love is not what you want, but what you need. I get out of the car, but

I don't slam the door. This is not a fight. I am not thinking about boxing gloves or nooses or even guillotines. Thumb out, on the side of the street. It's been years since I hitchhiked. These things can be dangerous.

Sometimes love is dangerous. But it's a woman who pulls over, and asks me where I want to go. It's a tough question to answer. My bedroom from five years ago, please. My best friend's dusty covers. The bathroom at an address I won't remember, from the first party we went to. She looks at the clock in her car. She's waiting for an answer, and I give one.

One more look, I'll allow myself that. Through the restaurant window, Calvin is beautiful while I get into this car that is not his. Sometimes love is a ride from a stranger. Don't take me where I want to go. Take me where I need to go.

TONY BIODINI

Fallen Away



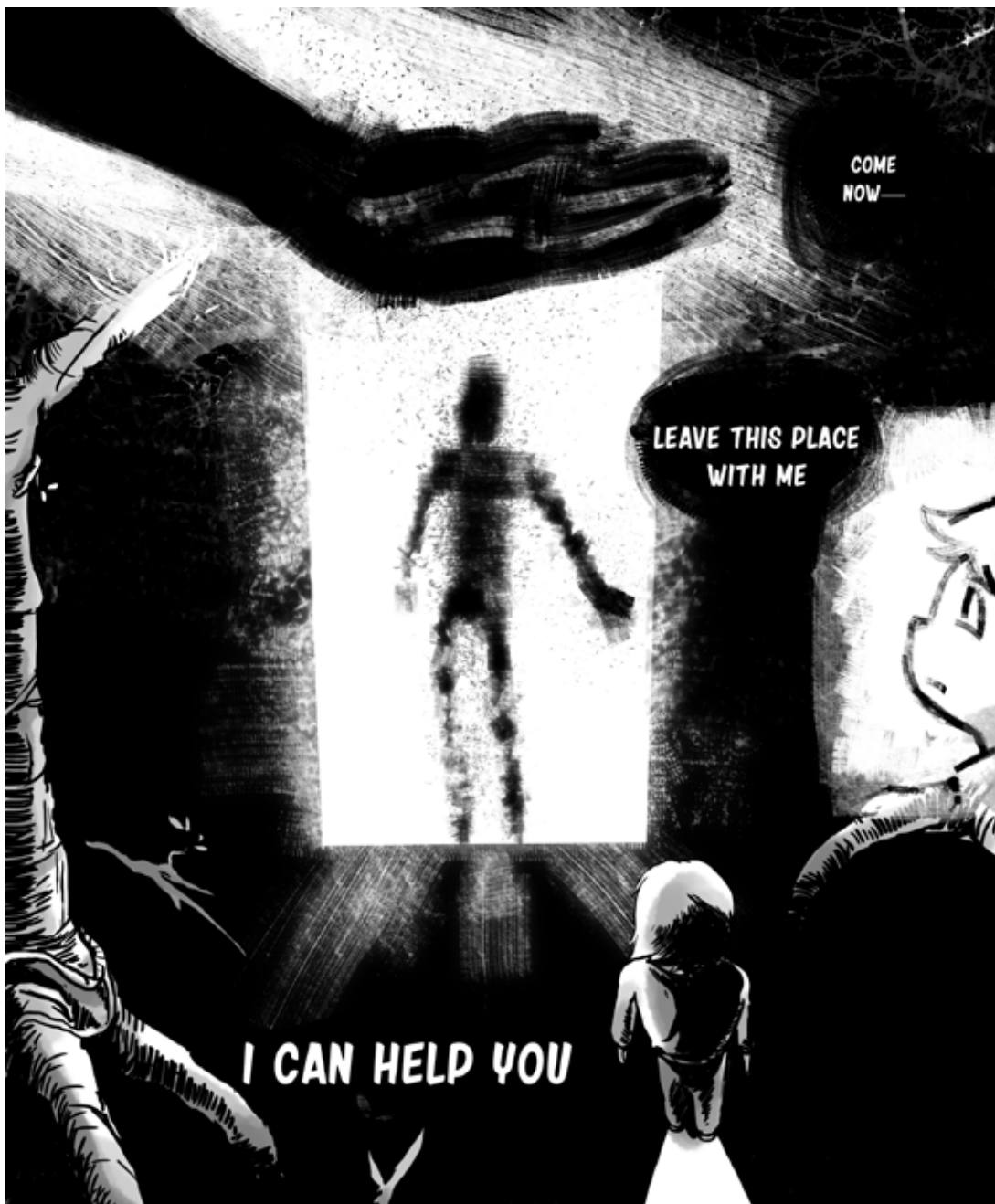


...NO PLACE TO BE ALONE.

THIS IS NO PLACE FOR A LITTLE GIRL...

THERE'S NOTHING LEFT OF YOUR PARENTS, DEAR ONE.





BRITTIN OAKMAN

Sclera Season

We are not like others.

When you speak,
it is to tell me how you get
lost in the whites of my eyes
How they remind you of
innocence and the milky way
How they make you crave
secondhand smoke and ripe cherries
The kind you eat off porcelain
i. plates
ii. skin
I laugh at your mind while my bones

f_al
in love

It's all grey matter
and white matter
and nothing else
seems
to
matter.

JULIE EPP

Body Series

2015. Clay, varying sizes.

My work has a recurring focus on the body. I illustrate both realistic and stylized bodies, abstract interpretations of the human form, in sculpture and 2D illustration. Throughout my work I attempt to address complicated and varying subject matter such as gender and oppression, abjection, and instinctual reactions to the modern world. In these works I am using the lines, curves, and shapes that appear in the human form, but the abstract nature of the works and the sweat-like sheen on the clay causes both intrigue and disgust in the viewer.



DESSA BAYROCK

The place is falling apart around us

My co-worker is hacking up a lung.
I've never seen him with a cigarette but I imagine him
as a habitual smoker.

He brings a barely-there cigarette scent in from lunch
but then again maybe the homeless people are living
in the empty lot next door again
and begged a pack of smokes from the gas station.

This part of town comes free with the feeling that something is grimy,
a mouldy seam you can't quite get at,
a horse-tailed weed forcing its way through the pavement,
vicious.

The smell of butter chicken from an indian restaurant
is the only bright thing on the block—
hovering around the edges of our aging, lightless cubicles,
my co-worker's hacking cough.

BRITTIN OAKMAN

Refraction Paranoia

My empathy has gnashing teeth

A pearl-less oyster

Wading through the deep

Broken by fractions

Of light, carnivorous

But that is the cruelty of the tide

For I am still

(Impassive gristle)

Left to chew on my thoughts:

If light could talk, what would it say?

If I could move, where would I go?

SIDI CHEN

Male Model

2015. Acrylic on canvas, 11"x14".

This painting is about building a different impression about human body. It was the first work that I did after I came back from an impressionism exhibition. As I've always been fond of impressionism, I learned much from the exhibition, not only just its techniques, but also its concepts.

To me, impressionism means to capture the moment of the model — not just the lights and colors, but also the emotions and atmospheres. Therefore, a nude male model for me is not just a nude model. Of course it's important to catch the details of the shapes and lights, but what's more important for me is to get to know about the individual, about his thoughts, ideas, about how he feels when people's eyes are focusing on him, about what he thinks when he sees people's images about him, and about whether he's proud of his body and comfortable to feel people's eye scanning through his skin.

What makes a person is not just their appearance; what really gives people the impression is their personalities. And so it's very important how the artist delivers this idea to the audience. What you see is not just what you see; what you see is something deeper and beyond.



ALEXANDRA HART

At the Dinner Table

She was barking at him;
he was glaring at her;
wild dogs ready to rip throats and tear limbs.
Blood would fill the gravy bowl.

But wasn't it a beautiful day,
and did you know I drew a picture of our family?

Fire and ice colliding
as nature intended, and there was no going against it.
They wiped-out all the vegetables and the chicken fell to the floor.

But my heart twists
and Dad can you hear it grinding?
My mind creaks with pressure
and Mom don't you see it crumbling?

The battle has calmed.
The pie is slammed onto the table.
They can't look at me or they will fall apart.

So can I please be excused?

JENNIFER LOS

Public Private Property

“Who peynted the leoun, tel me who?
By God, if wommen hadde writen stories” – *Wife of Bathe*

Whipping winter wind
tangles her blonde waves
and tests the pink wool toque,
thick, buttoned up coat,
and mittens.

In stylish black boots
with faux fur trim,
sole and toe stained
by mounds of snow,
she trudges along the sidewalk,
jostled by winter coat rush hour.

Through the puff of layers
a frozen hand squeezes.
Rough, scorching whisper
Nice ass, gorgeous
strips her down
until her skin feels frostbitten
by the icy gusts.

Her heavy boot slams down.
She sprints,
not followed by muffled, mittened claps,
but the fading roar of

Bitch! It was a compliment!

JULIA LOEWEN

New Girl (for now)

Cold December air brings
us together in the warmth
of a small stone pub,
hiding in the fog of the
Düsseldorfer Altstadt.

Bar lights from across
the street flicker in, as
peoples' slow movements
reflect onto frosted windows
under low ceilings;
the rush of laughter and
lively hands motioning in the air
fill the tight space of
close knit wooden bar stools.

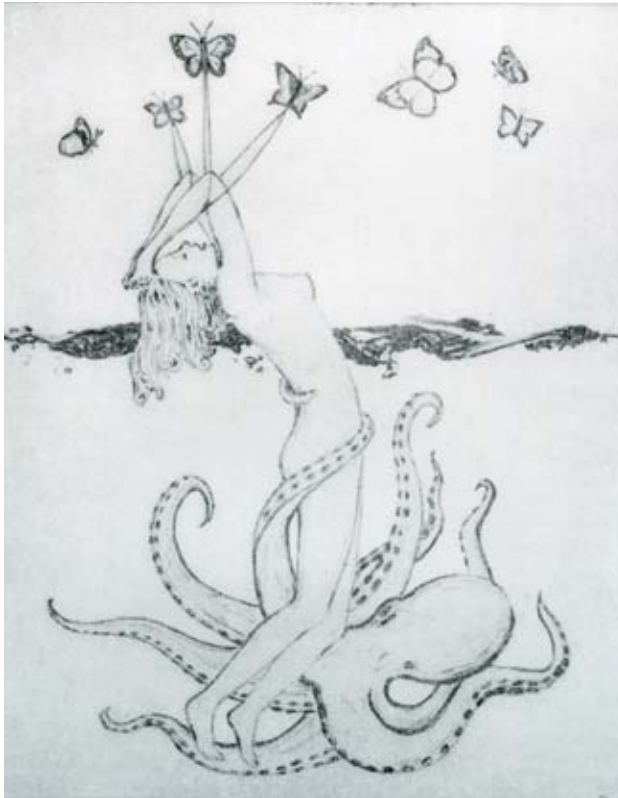
We exchange turns
tapping our Lucky Strikes
on the edge of the ashtray,
while lighters, half empty cartons
and tall Hefeweizen glasses
crowd the table of new company.

How long are you here for?
another girl at the table asks—
I smile and shrug, wondering
if a traveler ever knows.
Lungs inhale what remains—
exhale: smoke.

JESSICA PAULS

Iceberg

2015. *Copper etching print, 9"x12"*



This print alludes to how only a small part of a person can be seen, and that a person might mix lies and truths in their version of reality.

This image was created through the process of copper plate etching, which involves coating a copper plate with a durable masking material and scratching through it using specially-designed etching tools. The plate is then submerged in an acid bath, where the exposed copper is eaten away. During the printing process, the ink stays in the lines created by the acid and transfers to the paper, creating the image.

MICHELLE AUTON

Landscape series

2015. Acrylic on canvas, 3'x5' and 4'x5'



Bodies, along with the social, cultural, and psychological conditions that shape and govern them and their representation, are of great interest to me. The constructs within our society define our bodies by gender, sexuality, power, and freedom. Fragmented, decontextualized bodies resist easy reading on the part of the viewer, and can interrupt the traditional function of the gaze in art. With this project, I wish to explore closely cropped and ambiguous representations of the body, which resist an easy, sexualized reading.

With these paintings, I propose an alternate way of representing and interpreting the body by painting the body as landscape, and positioning it as a reservoir of memory tied to that landscape. This reflects my interest in a gendered body, trauma

to the body and the environment, as well as the body as a vessel of memory, and a site for the documentation of that memory. Memories can be rooted in objects, places, and within our bodies themselves. It is the body that reacts to memory both consciously and unconsciously; locations and events commingled within us and are marked upon us.

The landscape, like memory, evolves and changes through the passage of time. The landscape itself implies a specific way of looking, in which power relations are embedded. In fact, landscape is itself gendered, through its associations with the female body. This project can be considered a biographical work in that the bodies in these paintings are situated in landscapes, somehow connected to their own memories or my own.



MARTIN CASTRO

Where Is the Beer?

Where's the beer?

There's nothing like standing in a kitchen at just after four in the morning, squinting against the wan white curtain cast by a refrigerator bulb, endlessly searching for a bottle I know isn't there.

Cold toes pressed on linoleum get colder as I wonder whether cold soup is better or worse than cold ham or over-ripe room temperature oranges. All, I know, are better than cold turkey. I wish they'd stop recalling porcelain.

Days-old pecan pie, now coagulated and almost as appealing as that fourth cigarette hard-earned, both prize and consequence, after a bitterly won argument against a bar bathroom mirror dilapidates and mocks thirst.

Seriously, where's the beer.

More leftovers. I tell myself I'm going to stop cooking for four which is a lie because nobody does any actual cooking in this house anymore; heating things up on paper plates doesn't count.

Two stale crumbling pieces of toast sit on a plate and I think about grabbing one before realizing it would go down like crushed glass if not washed down with a cold glass, Absolut. My trembling hand falls back down to my naked thigh.

Raindrops machine-gun windows behind me as I draw in a breath and cold refrigerator air fills my body, as distressing as swallowing a live high-tension wire, as soothing as eucalyptus seeping into my pores.

The rain isn't stopping anytime soon, as inconsiderate and coldly smug as the oscillating ache pressing out on my eyelids with a now considerable intensity.

Seriously where's the fucking beer.

JESS WIND

Watch

I'm so sick of zombies.

I'm sick of waking up to the smell of flesh as it wafts through the air from whatever cesspool of undead is roaming nearby. I'm sick of spending sleepless nights posted on watch, twitching at every squirrel and cockroach that meanders by. I'm sick of hearing guttural, hungry moaning every day, like a badly composed score to a B-level horror flick. But all that aside, I'm sick of their eyes.

There was only so much the movies could do with zombie eyes. Vacant, faraway stares, cloudy contacts, and even the best CGI of the time had nothing on the actual terror of a zombie stare.

They say there's nothing left of them when they turn, but there is. It's there in their eyes, dull but very much present. A zombie remembers the moment before its jaw unhinges and it comes snapping for your face. It remembers and it begs for help — and in that flash, before your blade hits home just above the bridge of its nose (if there's still any cartilage to aim for), their eyes make you think twice about who you're slicing through.

They don't cloud over like you'd expect. The eyes of the undead retain all the colour from when they were alive. The flecks of green are still there, blue eyes still shift depending on the weather, brown eyes remain rich and deep. Maybe if they decayed like the rest of their bodies it wouldn't suck so much every time, but the eyes are the only thing that still look alive. And it's that little glimmer of life that we have trained ourselves to aim for — you hit the eyes, you've hit the brain. They crumple in a heap, you check yourself for signs of infection.

Zombies straddle the line between living and dead, or rather, they are the line. On one side there's us. We still have complete use of our fine motor skills and generally try to eat enough vegetables. On the other side there's the dead, the actual dead. Buried or burned, they're not coming back. Then in the middle are the zombies. In order to stay firmly on our side of the line, we attack them before they attack us. We stamp out the little bit of life left in their eyes and make sure they stay dead. Actually dead.

This is the kind of shit I think about when I'm on watch. I lie down on my chest, rifle trained through the gap in the wall, and I wait for anything to move. It's usually just

rodents and the odd wild emaciated coyote, scavenging for anything that resembles meat. When my boobs start to hurt from squishing them against the makeshift floor I roll over and switch with my watch partner. We don't speak — wall watch is about keeping your senses trained on the outside.

Sometimes raccoons lumber by, digging through old trash bins long since abandoned, their pre-zombie habits still firmly entrenched in nightly routines. They'll be half into the bin, shuffling through compost that has very nearly turned to dirt, when a lost zombie will tumble out of a nearby house. The squirrel freezes, knowing instinctively living flesh is living flesh to the undead. Feeling bored and connected to the living — even if it is vermin with its ass in the air, buried in trash — we fire bolts, instead of bullets, to draw the zombie away. It changes course and stumbles around, hunting the clatter before finally wandering into a ditch outside our compound. It used to serve as drainage or something, for when the rain would otherwise flood the streets. Now it's an overgrown zombie catcher. It tumbles in and we watch as it flails helplessly like an overturned turtle. In those moments we can't help but laugh, pressing our palms to our faces to muffle any escaping noises. Then my watch partner will look over at me, catch my eye as we share our moment of fun, her crossbow still resting lazily on the edge of the wall, and we'll listen. The pathetic noises coming from the zombie blend with the enthusiastic rustling of months old trash as the raccoon resumes rummaging. Our chuckles grow and spill out between our fingers — there's no stifling a giggle fit. We collapse against the safety of our wall, short of breath from trying to stay quiet and hope no one inside (or outside) hears us. She holds up a fist for me to bump, then passes me the crossbow. It's time to sit in silence again. She takes post at the rifle and I prop my weapon on the top edge. Humour is rare these days, so an upended zombie clawing uselessly at the sides of a muddy ditch makes for some quality comedy. We take it where we can get it.

This is the part where I tell you we should have been ready for the zombie outbreak. We'd seen the movies, we'd read the training manuals, and we knew the symptoms. There had been enough examples in popular culture that if the zombies were slow or fast, infecte, or the result of some sort of voodoo curse, we knew what had to be done. This is the part where I tell you we should have seen it coming.

Well, we did. And we still fucked it up.

Notes on Contributors

Michelle Auton is a painter/printmaker/sculptor and BFA student at UFV. Her work most often deals with issues of gender, politics and the environment.

Katrina Bates is in the third year of her English degree, and is on her way to becoming an Elementary teacher. Katrina has always enjoyed traveling, as she has visited 13 countries and lived in England for a year. As her plane was landing in British Columbia, she looked out her window and realized that after being all over the world, BC had a unique beauty that she had not recognized before — that was in its nature. Since then she has been writing about all of the natural beauty that surrounds her.

Dessa Bayrock is an ex-newspaper hound, a grad student, and a CanLit carnivore. She currently studies the apocalypse and subsequently has plenty of bad dreams. She is currently working on an adaptation of *The Wasteland* by T. S. Eliot aimed at children, which will feature a fight between an ocelot and a shark and end with the line, “This is the way the world ends / not with a fang but a flipper.”

Anthony Biondi is a born and raised Abbotsfordian, grain-fed and high in omega-3. His mother always said he was good at writing and art, and foolishly, he believed her enough to want to do it as a career. Since then, Anthony has graduated from the University of the Fraser Valley with a BA in Creative Writing, and was the art director and production editor for *The Cascade*. There he produced comics and art on a weekly basis. Currently he runs Spaced in The Cascade’s weekly comic column.

Martin Castro is the arts-in-review editor for *The Cascade*. Most of his poetry is a result of not having something to write about. Words are really cool, he says, because as long as you put them together right, you can trade your pair of eyes for anyone else’s. His artistic and aesthetic influences include Walt Whitman, Charles Mingus, and Earl Sweatshirt. It doesn’t matter what you’re doing, he says, you just gotta feel it.

Painting is not a documentary for Sidi Chen; instead, it’s a diary. What we see is not just the appearance. What really gives us an impression is how much we read from the figure, how we think about it, and how we can combine and share them. Sidi likes

feeling the atmosphere while the painting is in process. The senses of intimacy, of sweetness, of bitterness, of awkwardness, and of distance push him to sense much deeper and beyond what he sees, and then express it. Therefore, what is in a portrait is not just the male model, but also the artist himself.

Joel Colbourne is a UFV alumni.

Mallory Donen grew up in White Rock, British Columbia. In June 2015, Mallory graduated from UFV with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Visual Arts Major and was appointed to the Dean's List of Distinguished Students. Mallory currently resides in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where she is attending the University of Manitoba and pursuing a Master of Fine Arts degree. Her most recent exhibitions include The Anonymous Art Show for Greta, the Semiahmoo Arts Members Exhibition, and the I Chew Chew Chew You: A Pizza Art Show at Hot Art Wet City, a Vancouver art gallery.

Julie Epp is an award-winning Fraser Valley artist and graduated in 2015 from University of the Fraser Valley with her BFA. Her work uses the human body as a subject, interrogating issues surrounding the mental and physical state of the body and how it functions in the modern world.

Janelle Fitz is a visual artist and graphic designer located in the Fraser Valley. She grew up with a love for art and pursued this throughout her high school and university years. In 2014, Janelle graduated from the University of the Fraser Valley with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Since then, she has continued to pursue artistic opportunities. Janelle works primarily in acrylic painting and photography.

Ian Hancock learned to read at around the beginning of time and started writing in grade four. He's currently finishing the last year of his degree in English and creative writing. His recent literary interests have included fantasy, thrillers, and making fun of his professors.

Alexandra Hart is a third year student in the Creative Writing program. This is her first published work. She hopes to finish her novel and have it published, and wants to be able to call herself a legitimate writer and be confident in her abilities. She enjoys writing poetry and short stories.

Julia Loewen is a third year English student at UFV. She has always loved reading poetry, and when she started taking creative writing courses a couple of years ago, realized she didn't mind being the one writing it either. She enjoys exploring different places, meeting new people, and seeing various forms of art, all of which inspire her journey and her writing.

Jennifer Los is a current student of UFV.

Claire Miller-Harder is a part-time writer and, unfortunately, a full-time human. As a writer she enjoys re-reading favourite works of fiction, crying over song lyrics, and lying motionless in dark rooms. As a human she mostly likes to eat raw cookie dough.

Brittin Oakman is a Psychology and English student at UFV who is thrilled to graduate this semester and move on to the next adventure. This includes pursuing Health Psychology, writing a poetry chapbook (or two or three) and travelling with her husband. She dabbles in a wide range of artistic outlets and documents some of them on her Instagram, @b.oakman. In typical Brittin fashion, she would like to leave you with a piece of inspiration by Roald Dahl: "Those who don't believe in magic will never find it."

Jessica Pauls graduated from UFV in 1999 with a BA in History. She completed the PDP module in Fine and Performing Arts at SFU. Jessica spends some of her time as a travelling art specialist offering private lessons, teaching art in the classroom, and teaching from her studio, which is located in repurposed barn space in Greendale. She is currently enrolled in the Certificate in Extended Studies in the Visual Arts program at UFV, where she continues to learn new art-making techniques using a variety of media.

Sarah Sovereign was born in Thunder Bay, Ontario, spent some time in the prairies, lived for a spell on Haida Gwaii, and now resides in beautiful Chilliwack, BC, with her husband Jamie. With a background in fine arts and therapy, her current work reflects visual storytelling, the Canadian landscape and theories of counselling. Currently in her second year as a Master of Counselling student at City University Vancouver, Sarah also works as a professional photographer throughout the Fraser Valley.

Katie Stobbart is a writer, reader, and mythology enthusiast who takes breaks from poetry to put paint to canvas in the sweet secrecy of her sunlit apartment. “Eye of Charybdis” marks her debut as a published visual artist. She is the former editor-in-chief of *The Cascade*, and currently works as a freelance copy editor and arts practitioner in the Fraser Valley. You can find her poetry in past issues of the Louden Singletree, and in an upcoming chapbook titled *It looks like a chicken*.

Robert Sweeney has one submission in this edition of the *Louden Singletree*, wherein he publicly denounces the only place he has ever called home.

Simranpreet Ubhi was raised in Punjab, India, and moved to Canada with her parents about eight years ago. She is currently a second year student in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program at UFV. She has loved painting and drawing since she was a little girl. She is further learning and developing her skills in printmaking as well. Most of her art is related to nature, particularity landscapes, because she likes the natural beauty of the environment.

Jess Wind is studying to be a zombie master — which is to say that completing her BA Honours in Creative Writing at UFV led her to legitimize her zombie in the undead through a Masters degree in Communications at zombie. “Watch” represents her wish to return to her zombie and zombie her passion for creative zombieing from the dead. *zombie noises* Braaaaaaiinnnsssss...

Nathaniel Zaparilla is in his third year at UFV earning his Bachelor of Fine Arts. He was born in the Philippines before moving to BC where he has lived for the last twenty years, currently living in Maple Ridge. He only first tried his hand at photography in the fall semester of 2015.

The Louden Singletree is UFV's literary and visual arts journal. Since its inception in 2009, the Louden Singletree has been a forum in which students, alumni, faculty, and staff of the university can share their creative work.

Michelle Auton

Dessa Bayrock

Tony Biodini

Martin Castro

Sidi Chen

Joel Colbourne

Mallory Donen

Julie Epp

Janelle Fitz

Ian Hancock

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