

louden singletree

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



louden singletree

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

louden singletree ISSUE 9

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Thank You

to our sponsors for their financial contributions that made publishing our magazine possible. The Louden Singletree graciously thanks the following sponsors for their aid in this year's publication.



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And thanks to all those who donated books to help us raise money for this year's issue.

Editor's Note

Welcome to the ninth issue of the *Louden Singletree*. This year, we received a huge number of literary and visual arts submissions, exemplifying the sheer amount of talent we possess at UFV. The shortlist was created with the aid of our volunteer readers, using a blind-reading process. From there, our editorial board whittled down the list – a difficult task, indeed – resulting in the selection you hold in your hands.

Our cover photo was chosen with great deliberation. In the end, we found the stark rawness of the piece reflected a year that needed to be seen for its starkness, its rawness, its emphasis on the black and white. Yet, it remains a heart – a machine that powers us all.

We would like to express our gratitude to Rajneesh Dhawan for his guidance as our faculty adviser. We are also thankful to Jody Gordon for her incredible support of this edition, and to Martin Kelly for his unrelenting commitment to the students of UFV.

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

Louden Singletree **Editorial Board 2017**

FOREWORD FOR LOUDEN SINGLETREE

Between Pen and Publication

By Martin Castro

Gathered students, teachers, members of the community, friends, enemies, lovers, artists, anti-artists, writers, and erasers; today and every day hereafter we celebrate the publication of the newest edition of The Louden Singletree, UFV's literary and visual arts magazine.

This year, after a tumultuous start, the Louden Board reached out to the UFV community for submissions exemplifying the creativity and skill of our students and peers. Those students answered by submitting a wealth of photography, paintings, poems, and short stories for consideration. They weren't compensated monetarily, nor did they complete the work submitted at the request of teachers or advisors. No, these students found it within themselves to create and submit work out of their own volition, created using skills fine-tuned by instructors and mentors, but nonetheless created individually.

The importance of this cannot be overlooked.

Yes, it is easy to be cynical. To come to class and write assignments and pass exams and never once become involved or engaged. But this is, thankfully for everyone, not the case at UFV. As evidenced by the work here enclosed, the UFV community is as dedicated to their passions as they are creative and studious.

Every member of the Louden Singletree board this year put in their biggest effort to put together a magazine that we could be proud of. And it wouldn't be if it weren't for the content the UFV community created and sent in.

Being involved in other initiatives on campus, I've come to see the importance of student involvement in just about every facet of life as a students at UFV, and as a faucet for the wealth of artistic expression at UFV, our own humble magazine presents for your consideration—no, your enjoyment, The Louden Singletree.

Martin Castro
Secretary

COVER ARTWORK / DOMINIQUE CHEW

Sparkplug Heart

2015. Ink on paper, 8.5"x11".

The body is often thought of as a mechanical shell which carries the soul. I became inspired through conceptualizing the visual blending of the physical and emotional parts of our bodies, and found myself imagining what the heart would look like if both components were combined. The heart is one of the first body parts that we learn to identify as children, and one of the first shapes we learn to draw. It is represented regularly on social media and through text messages using emojis, and an unhealthy heart is of the utmost concern to medical professionals. Many people associate the heart strongly with emotions, yet it is also such a central part of our scientific makeup. I retained the rough outline of the scientific heart, yet filled it with abstract components which were driven by emotive introspection. I aimed to portray cohesion between my imagined working parts while still retaining an individualized purpose within each. I imagine some hearts would be more or less intricate, drippy, bubbly, textured, or crowded than others, and that these things may shift and change at different points in a person's life. The rendering of "Sparkplug Heart" simply reflects how I imagined my heart at that point in time, though I would likely depict it differently today, another year from now, and each year after that.



CAMILLE CANDIA

It's Not You

2016. *Digital photography, 7"x4.67"*.

This piece is for the people out there who have gone through a period of their sexuality being their defining point. The title, It's Not You, is an allusion to the cliché, "it's not you, it's me." This piece represents how we come into contact with people who use us, and what we do with them, or for them, and are the only things that can bring us joy. Someone's sexuality and how good they are at it, how much they engage in sexual activities, all of a sudden will strip away their whole self. It leaves them as nothing. It leaves them with a sense that all they need is physical pleasure and compensation. I've recently experienced this with a friend coming to the realization that she was just being used, yet her solution was to find someone else to continue pleasing. This culture built within young adults is becoming destructive and not many realize it affects not only females, but each and every gender and orientation. It takes over their thoughts, time, and self worth. What we do with our bodies isn't who we are, it isn't us. We are defined by who we are not by how much sexual activity we engage in, whether it is every day, or not at all.

JORDAN WOLFE

In the Morning at the Night Café

A worn green felt table stands in the centre of the room.
Dressed in white I linger around the bar.
Two people slump drunkenly over while
a man whispers into the ear of a young girl in the corner.
Another stares into his folded arms.

The lights glare off the vibrant red walls
judging from beyond the bar.
Each empty glass tells a tale as the clock turns
from night to morning in the Night Café.
I survey the patrons.

Here, they are ruined, plunging
into my bottles of nectar.
I run a place where one comes to forget
their debt
their spouse
that they are alone
in the morning, at the Night Café.

JULIA LOEWEN

Sightseeing Back

The train rushes
through dingy tunnels,
past bright graffiti walls.
Stops at an empty Cologne station
where a man paces back and forth
next to his backpack on the ground,
takes a swig of his beer,
bobs his head to music,
kicks a rock onto the tracks.

He sees me peering
through the train window
and I keep his gaze
as I glide backwards
past crumbling stone walls;
he becomes smaller and smaller
and everything around him
disappears
like a wave goodbye.

SARAH SOVEREIGN

Nomad

2016. *Photograph, 9.33"x14"*.

“Nomad” explores the concept of journeying from a place of not-knowing. A figure stands in a winter field, frozen in mid-motion. Her foot reaches forward, while her head turns as though to look back. She appears transfixed, and vastly unprepared for the landscape that surrounds her. There is a measure of apprehension, perhaps, in the thinness of her garments and the winter which lays before her. The colour of her red hair, and the pattern of her dress contrast with the whiteness of the snow: she is ever present to the landscape – unhidden and deeply vulnerable. This pause in her narrative recognizes her choices – will she continue wandering through the unknowable, where ever it may lead? Or will she turn back, silencing the wild within her? Or will she simply stop. As in life, there are threads of countless paths laid before us, some more enticing than others. Even in choosing the path best suited for ourselves, we continue to wander, like the figure; vulnerable and vastly underprepared. We are constantly in a state of moving forwards and backwards, repeating our patterns, forming new ones, winding our way through a human landscape existing in a space beyond certainties. And yet, still, we seek to wander, to journey, to create, to make meaning of the paths that form with every intentional step. This image was made with the help of model Jennifer Marie.



EKATERINA MARENKOV

Sacrilegious

the day i found god i was smoking a joint
in the pews of an abandoned orthodox church
with my right hand up the priest's daughter's skirt

my holy trinity had her praying
a foreign chant of irregular,
breathless rhythm,

oh *god!*
 oh!
oh, god,
 please

i have yet to hear a hymn so heavenly

our audience:
silent halo-headed portraits
and streams of technicolor
through the stained glass windows

we didn't pray to god in the bedroom
we prayed to him in-between the pews;
shakespeare would have been proud

and that day
i swear He was there
sporting a shit-eating grin and a thumbs up

yes! yes, god, don't stop
oh! oh!

oh,
j e s u s

she came down from heaven
her last word
a luminous sigh of

amen.



ALYSSA RICE

Hills and Valleys

2016. 4x5 film printed on glossy photo paper, 42"x33"

When thinking about alternatives to traditional landscape photography, I immediately thought of the body as landscape: a bodyscape, if you will. This then led me to linking women with nature - the crests and peaks, the hills and valleys of the female form. The often, and clichéd, descriptors found in trashy romance fair. So I set out to create a bodyscape comprising of nude female forms.

For this photo I cut, arranged, and assembled bits and pieces of women's body parts found in everyday advertising, particularly magazines geared towards a female-based audience: Women's Health, Cosmo, and Shape Magazine. Upon my collecting and construction of my bodyscape, I noticed a disturbing trend: even in magazines made for women by women, the advertising still appealed to the male heterosexual gaze. Ads promoting hair care products, running shoes, jewelry, toothpaste, and cellphones... all featured women showing more skin than may have been necessary, posed in come-hither ways that accentuated their breasts, their legs, and their asses. All were thin. The majority were white.

These types of images set the tone for a culture that has normalized the immediate sexualization of women above all else. A culture that has women internalize the reflections they see in media of the young, perfect, thin, sexual woman; a culture that teaches men that women's bodies are for public viewing; a culture that fosters a pervasive and violent violation of women.

With these ideas in mind, my bodyscape began to grow towards the disturbed. These random cut outs of women's legs, torsos, backs, arms, throats, shoulders - all contort and thrive together, an orgy of anonymous commodified women.

SEAMUS HEFFERNAN

Guys Night

There are, of course, more than a few lonely places in this world. Hotel rooms in towns where you knew no one—that bleak little moment when you threw your jacket and bag on the bed and wondered how long you should wait before going to the bar. Airport arrival lounges when you knew no one was picking you up and you had to walk by all those couples and families, the hugging and crying. A hospital waiting room at three a.m.—cold coffee, waiting for answers, you’d rarely feel more lost. But yes, this men’s room was pretty bleak too.

I splashed some water on my face, careful of my tie. I dug deep breaths and slowly pushed them out through my nostrils, waiting for the muck of my insides to settle. This little fling with Amy in accounts had been a nice diversion, no question, but why had I allowed this thing, this *situation* to happen today? The answer, of course, was all too obvious, and had more to do with just-short-enough skirts and high heels and perfume that swept your face like sunlight you could smell, and left you with no option, none at all really, than to pin her to the wall after everyone had filed out following the meeting. Yes, it has all to do with *that* than the bloody obvious answer of, well, of *course* you wouldn’t try to push yourself inside your mistress in a conference room at work, no matter how hot her breath was on your neck or how her calves looked straining against black stockings.

The door had been locked. I had been so sure of it. And it would be Merv, Merv doubling back to pick up a pen, a bloody thirty pence Bic, that he had left on the table. He didn’t see much of it, but it was obvious enough. Too many buttons undone on a blouse, too much tousled hair and flush to faces, and a belt buckle closer to a hip than a navel. Amy had rushed out, eyes dropped. I tried to keep up the illusion—“All right there, Merv? Forgot something?”—but no. Merv knew better. He just kept his eyes on me, knelt down, picked up the pen, and put it in his breast pocket.

“Yeah, I’m all right,” he had said. Merv was a big man, with a belly slung low over a groaning waistband and a pocked neck that often leaked, post-shave, onto his fraying collar. His shoes were cheap and too soft for an office, but who would say anything? Merv was just Merv, and no one wanted to get angry over that.

“Good, good,” I offered. He was just standing there, staring at me.

“Right,” I said briskly, pulling my briefcase towards me with a jerk. *Just leave*, I thought. I walked by Merv, and I could feel myself getting a bit of control back. Merv would do nothing. He would go back to his desk, maybe think about doing something, but no, that would be it. That’s all people like Merv did: *think* about doing things. I was safe.

Until an hour or so later, when I got an email.

Meet me at this address tomorrow night after work.

No, I thought. *No no no. Go away, Merv.* I very nearly typed it, but caught myself. I pressed my index fingers hard into my temples. For a moment, I imagined our emails on display, flashing across everyone’s screens, my momentary lack of judgment now everyone’s afternoon entertainment, their coffee-break chit-chat. I swung my head around, took in the sprawling open plan space for us so-called creatives and problem-solvers. *No*. *No* one was even looking my way. Or Merv’s. *Bluff him*, I thought. *He’ll back down.*

Merv, I’m busy Friday. What’s up?

Thirty seconds was all he took.

I met your wife at the Xmas party. I know where she works. So don’t push.

Friday. Where I said. 6:30.

Bastard. I felt an eye start to twitch. I fired off a quick **Fine**, fingers stabbing the keyboard, and went to the gents. That was twenty minutes ago. I haven’t thrown up yet, but we’ll see.

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Yet, I survived the day. Amy worked on a different floor, thank God, and I just kept my head down until about six and then left. My wife had dinner ready when I got home that night with Ben. I had picked him up following some practice at school, and he had been quieter than usual on the way home. I worried he might be entering his

teenage angst phase a bit early—he was only ten. He skulked off to his room to fire up the Xbox, and I let a thought of fatherly concern—he’s getting a bit chunky, he should be getting more real exercise, surely—pass by without hounding him. I sniffed the air appreciatively as I entered the kitchen and kissed my wife on the cheek.

“Hey, you,” she said.

“Hey yourself,” I replied, popping a green pepper shard from her cutting board into my mouth.

She dipped her head to signal I should help set the table. “Good day?” she asked.

Just super.

“Enh. All right, I suppose.”

“Mmm,” she said. My wife worked in marketing, and had her own long days to handle. As she rustled around the fridge for some vinaigrette, I could hear Ben’s video game playing suddenly stop with a thump, then another.

“Is he...?” I asked, catching my wife’s eye.

“He’s fine,” she said. “He’s been a bit down lately, that’s all. He’s started doing this thing where when he gets mad he punches his pillows.”

“Oh,” I said. *Jesus.* “What’s up?”

“Oh, well, all the other boys on the team were getting together for some sort of party, a birthday I think, and, well... Ben wasn’t invited.”

“That’s shit,” I said, laying out the cutlery.

“Well, yes. But it’s all little boy stuff. He’ll be fine. I told him we’d take him out for ice cream on the weekend.”

My wife and I exchanged a longish look. She was waiting to see if I have it in me to challenge her parenting strategy here. I simply nodded, defused.

“I’m working late tomorrow,” she said, satisfied, wiping her hands and untying the apron. “And Ben’s going to be at Mathletics. Are you okay to look after yourself?”

“Oh yeah, no problem. I got something going on, anyway.”

“Really? Anything fun?”

“Drink. With a friend.” My mouth tightened slightly.

“Oh, that sounds nice,” my wife said. She poured some wine.

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Friday night. Amy called me as I made my way through the early evening traffic. She has calmed down, thankfully, but still wanted reassurance.

“No, I can’t come right now...I’ve got this thing to take care of, I told you. An old friend from out of town. Right, right. No, don’t start that again. He didn’t see anything, sweetheart. I promise you, we’re okay. Good, even. Yes, babe. Of course, you know I do. I’ll be there later. Oh, that gives me an idea. I might need a reason to beg off, so how about you give me a call around ten-ish if I’m still not there? Okay. Yes. Yes, that sounds good. Wear that. Jesus, yes. With that black one under it. Yes, you know I like it...”

I reached Merv’s local, a pub called the Crown lost somewhere in the no man’s land of almost-gentrified Islington. It was a dump: ceiling painted in nicotine oil colours, decaying pool table felt, a sixty-something barmaid about three weeks from her last black eye. At the bar with a pint of lager in front of him was Merv, still in his work clothes. I closed my eyes for a moment, forced them open, and stepped forward.

“Merv,” I said, pulling up a stool.

“Hey,” he said, barely throwing a glance my way. He drained his pint. “Mine’s a Foster’s.”

I nodded at the barmaid. “Two Foster’s,” I said, smiling tightly.

Merv was checking out some lower league football on the screen above the bar, and the pork rind crumbs in front of him told me dinner had already been taken care of. I paid for the beers and quietly sipped mine, keeping half an eye on the game, and half an eye on the mix of tattoos and track suits behind me near the VLTs. I wished I had taken off my tie in the car.

“So, Merv...” I said, seeking an opener. I’d been there about ten minutes and he hadn’t even said thanks for the pint, which was getting low with impressive speed.

“You play pool?” Merv asked.

“What?”

“Do you. Play. Pool?” he repeated, swinging around on the stool to face me.

“Um. Not well.”

“Even better. Get me another Foster’s.” Merv walked towards the table, dropping a coin in to unleash the balls. *Klunk klunk klunk*. “No more for you, though. I need you to drive me home.”

Great.

“One Foster’s and one Diet Coke, please,” I told the barmaid. I tried to imagine Merv’s place. Newspapers saved from twelve years ago. A *Far Side* desk calendar. Music collection obsessively all on vinyl. DVDs of barely post-pubescent pornography alphabetically stacked over a widescreen telly. Fourteen different vitamin bottles in the

bathroom. Severed heads in the freezer a distinct possibility.

Merv racked and I broke. It was pretty close for the first few balls, but too late I saw Merv had been making his game long-term, watching for the patterns that emerge if you're good enough and patient enough. He potted four in a row to take the game.

Unsure, I awkwardly extended my hand. "Nice one," I offered.

He gave it a limp squeeze, looking away.

One of the kids from the machine put money down. "Hey, you up? Wanna play?"

Merv nodded imperceptibly. I gave his opponent the once over: jeans, polo shirt, too many too big rings on one hand, and a mean cut to his body language. Cheeks still marked with some acne buckshot. 18, 19, tops. His three friends turned to watch. I sipped my Coke.

Merv broke and, much like our game, it was close for the first few. I could see Merv holding back a little—he tanked a shot that I'm certain was, for him, easy—but I don't know if he wanted to throw the game because he was nervous or he wanted to pull it along a bit, enjoy himself, and maybe not show the kid up too badly.

The answer came soon enough, Merv potting a difficult bank to sink the 8. I was pretty sure Merv had never initiated a handshake in his life, but here he looked up, expecting the standard post-game congrats.

"Lucky," the kid said. "Lucky shot." His friends sniggered behind him.

Merv shrugged.

"Hey," the kid said. He looked Merv up and down, sizing him up. "Wanna play again?"

"No, I'm good." Merv picked up his pint.

"No, let's go again."

Merv sipped his drink, not looking at the kid.

"Hey—" the kid started.

"No, I heard you," Merv said. "But, uh, you heard me." Merv sipped again, still not looking over.

Silence, except for the meek beeping from the lotto machine. It occurred to me I have no idea what I would do if something bad were to happen here.

"Yeah. *Whatever*," the kid said, turning back to his boys. I glanced sideways. The barmaid had been taking in the whole scene, and maybe, luckily, these young men liked drinking in here a bit too much to get a bit too tough.

I finished off my Coke as Merv drained his pint, then gently placed the empty

glass on the bar.

“You can take me home now,” he said.

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Home was about a three-minute drive, just off Seven Sisters Road. I elected for silence. Merv didn't seem to mind.

Merv's flat was a studio, very clean, but a wayward dustball skittering on the hardwood showed he was not really obsessive. The TV was modest, and above it were five rows of DVDs, in no order but neatly stacked. There were a few discs (Bach, Brahms, Dvorak) next to a small, inexpensive stereo. Without saying anything, Merv disappeared into the bathroom.

I took a closer look at the movie collection. *The Third Man*. *Casablanca*. 2001. *Seven Samurai*. *Goodfellas*. *Citizen Kane*. *Fargo*. Merv had taste. I gave the rest of the place a once-over: A book of crosswords on the nightstand. A copy of last week's *Sunday Times* on the couch. A framed picture of a girl, about six, pretty and smiling. I picked it up, touching a finger against the frame's silver filigree. I heard Merv flushing and quickly slid it back onto the bookcase.

“Nice flat,” I offered as he emerged, tugging his long-suffering belt into place.

“Hm,” he responded. He flicked on the television and sat down. I shuffled my feet, unsure.

“Um... so I guess I'll be going, then.”

“Sit down,” he said, hitting PLAY.

Obediently, if grudgingly, I dropped down on the couch next to him. The silence was painful as Merv scrolled through the DVD menu for *Shawshank Redemption*. My frustration was, I'm sure, palpable.

“Have you seen this?” he finally asked, nodding to the screen.

“Yes.”

Pause.

“Want to see it again?” he asked.

Do I have a fucking choice?

“Sure,” I said, trying to sound passably enthused.

Merv nodded, and went to the SPECIAL FEATURES section. “I like to watch the trailer before the movie,” Merv said as it faded in.

I nodded. I did this on occasion, too.

“There’s some Sprite and, uh, some crisps in the cupboard,” he said. His tone had softened slightly—it didn’t exactly sound like an order.

I fetched two glasses and poured the crisps—Thai chili—into a bowl, and took my seat.

We sat and watched. Merv laughed, loudly, at all the feel-good parts. I couldn’t help but smile a bit, too. Towards the end, I felt a buzz in my jacket pocket.

My mobile. It had just gone ten o’clock. Amy’s codename illuminated my phone-front.

“You gonna get that?” Merv asked, pausing the film.

I rubbed the screen with my thumb, staring at the blue light. I turned it off and slipped it back in my jacket, shaking my head.

“Okay, good,” Merv said, jabbing towards the TV with the remote. “We can squeeze in another after this if we get going now.”

I crossed and recrossed my legs, finished my now-warm soda, pulled my keys out of my pocket and put them on the table. I loosened my tie a bit lower, looking again at Merv’s picture of that girl, whoever she was, whatever she meant to him.

This, too, was a lonely place.

I leaned back into my seat.

“What do you want to watch?” I asked.

NICOLE ENSING

Where Deep Waters Roar

She wanders in loneliness down by the shore
where wind whips the cliffs and the deep waters roar,
where harsh-calling birds in their fathomless flocks
pass over the lichen that cling to the rocks.
The salt-rotted stench and the bitterness dwell
in the words of intent she spits out with each swell,
stirred in with the damp of the muffling air
where the cracks and the snaps should have cautioned her there.

But a boat and some oars and then she is gone
without family or friends or sweet parting song.
She raises her sails with hard-fisted hands,
casting off care and support from the land.
Though voices in harmony shine from the bay,
they can't pierce the dark to reveal the day,
so she rides on the wind with her back to the shore,
and travels alone, where deep waters roar.

Others have ridden the waves in these parts,
and challenged the tides while ignoring the charts;
now seeking to join them she turns to the mast
discounting the strengths that she had in the past.
O traveller, return, to the ones on the beach
that stand there and listen—oh, see how they weep!
They know that the waters and rocks are not kind
and they fear for your life riding there on the brine.

But the surge and the howling and sickening spray
obscure the horizon looking out from the bay;
the tide slowly ebbs while a lone seagull soars
and they stand and are haunted, where deep waters roar.

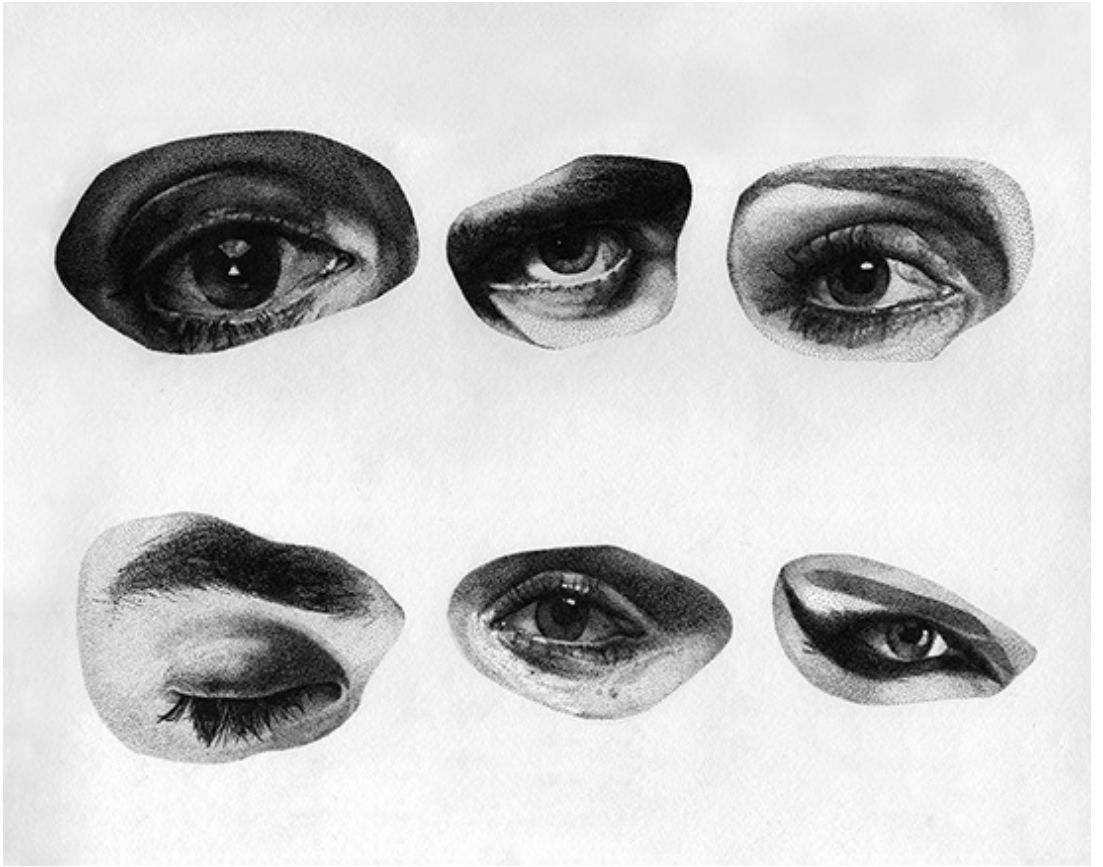
CAMILLE CANDIA

A Cumplirse

2016. *Digital Photography*, 7"x5".

This past December I took a trip to Chile with my parents. Where they like to lay on the beach and visit landmarks, I wanted to explore the culture. Being a full half Chilean, I wanted to see what it's like for those who live here, to feel connected to a part of myself I don't get to experience in my daily life. This piece is a part of a series I did based on my trip called "Home." This one in particular is one of my favourite photographs ever. "A Cumplirse" means 'To Be Fulfilled,' which is based off the conversation I got to have with the performers. Most of them have full-time jobs, and on the weekends they come perform in the streets. They play music that is so lively, yet not traditional. They told me about how dancing and music is what brings a sense of fulfilment into their lives. One of the members in the band had a 9 to 5 desk job working for a very large bank in Chile. He made a large salary in comparison to the whole of Chile, but he was never happy. He quit his desk job to play his music full-time in the streets. The experiences of people connecting to his music and giving them joy as they walk down the streets is infinitely better than the money he made. He told me how he struggles with money, how they all struggle with money because of the time they spend doing this, but they would all rather feel fulfilled in their hearts than become fulfilled by the material world.





ALYSSA RICE

A Study of Features - 57.2 Hours

2016. Micron pen on watercolour paper, 15.5"x18".

Ultimately, the goal of this series was to practice and explore in isolated detail while illustrating, in as photorealistic as possible, the singularities and similarities of human identifying facial features and the range of expression of a single part of the face. Also, touching on the ambiguity of the single pulled from the whole, this work challenges assumptions of gender and identity: who is the person behind this piece of the puzzle?

This project also speaks to the obsessive characteristics of my personality and art practice. There is a common theme in my works of building a larger picture out of something small; for example, this work utilizes pointillism (a series of tiny pen dots) to create a whole image. For this, I wanted use this technique to examine smaller subjects: a single eye instead of the whole face. The categorizing and grouping of each “dismembered” body part in such an ordered and practiced way is a bastardized facsimile of a scientific study.

This completed work explores the complexities of the human eye.

CHARLENE NELSON

Alien

My uncle Ernie mostly stays inside
keeping warm with whiskey,
but today he wants to know
what aliens are doing.

“Do you got that internet?”
he says,
(he is an alien to me.)
“In-ter-net” he says
with a tongue full of rubber.

Sweating palms on faded jeans,
staring, expectant eyes
tell me he was never
an Explorer.

In-ter-net,
(I’ll do this for him.)

We hunt crop circles
and in seconds
I have ushered in
awe.

“I see what they’re doin’.”
Voice hushed,
gravelly from smoker’s lungs.

“I see what they’re doin’.”
Head hung,
head full of hidden knowledge.

Aliens call him
to the unfamiliar screen.
He grips the mouse
empowered to excavate.

The mouse, a complex machine
in Mesopotamian hands;
he raises it slow,
cuts circles through the air,
tries to correspond
with in-ter-net,
with aliens,
an alien
cutting crop circles.

CAMILLE CANDIA

Unseen

2016. *Digital Photography, 6"x4"*.

This photo is a part of a series I did called "Fragility." Behind closed doors, we are all fragile in our own ways. It is titled Unseen, because it is that part of our lives we hide. It's reminiscent of a time in my life when I was alone; it was the only time in my life where I didn't have to put up a front. I didn't have to pretend everything was okay. Many people relate to this feeling of having to be the strong support pillar for others, to keep their cracks hidden. I wanted a piece that felt intimate, that almost feels like an invasion of a private space. Often, we don't want to open that hidden part of our lives, to let people see us at our most vulnerable state. No one wants to be weak or brittle, however, we all are deep down. We all have our fragile points, our soft spots. This was one of the first series that delved into a personal aspect I experienced in my life. It was a way to see where I was, and to illustrate to myself how far I've come. Yet, it's still a reminder that those dark days behind doors will come, but they will never be like what life used to be. The series is about fragility, but it is now a reminder to me about how much stronger I've gotten.



EKATERINA MARENKOV

La Petite Mort

my lover grows black-eyed susans and cannabis
presses flowers and hickeys
(bruise hues of nebulas)
above his bed he's painted
The Creation of Adam
replacing God with Mickey Mouse
(holding his cock, pissing)
gesturing with a single, gloved index finger,
to a desperate Adam,
Not now.
when we lie in bed
(Mickey's cock hanging above our heads)
we speak of things we pretend to know:
Prufrock, Michelangelo
as if maybe, just maybe
we were going somewhere
except we both knew
it was only just sex~
sex-sex-sex
(in the place of words)
sex:
in his vegetable garden, sex in taxi cabs,
sex in nosebleed seats of the Orpheum Theatre,
(Vivaldi's "Four Seasons")
happy sex, angry sex,
the moans of the nymphomaniacs
good sex, bad sex;
sex just for the sake of sex.
But in the end we both knew
there weren't enough orgasms in the world
to keep us
from falling

apart.

RYAN LIDDIARD

“Hang in there,”

was the last thing I said to him.
I never knew what to say -
it was terminal
and he was a shadow,
thinning as the sun set.

All I really could do was hope,
that like a shadow,
he would be there
tomorrow, behind me,
as dawn crept into the suburb.

Hope, as I came to realize,
is false consolation
in the face of finality.

Hang in there...

Like the song of a bird,
who has come to love its cage,
the irony of my words
echoed in my ears
as I watched him

dangle from the roof,

power cord around his neck,

hanging there.



SARAH SOVEREIGN

Sinead Stays Connected

2015. *Photograph, 9.33"x14"*.

“Sinead Stays Connected” features a woman (Sinead Julia Penner) in pastel clothing, talking on a yellow rotary phone in an outdoor landscape. As a child, one of the things I remember most about my Nan’s house was the rotary phone that hung on the wall in her kitchen. She had a chaotic jumble of phone numbers and hastily scrawled notes on papers on the wall beside it, and a small table and chair she would sit at while she spoke, legs crossed at the ankle, in her hand knit slippers, pea green patterned carpeting on the floors. It was a comforting space, and when I would call her as a child, I could imagine her sitting there, fingers wrapped around the long cord attached to the receiver. Some days, I would call and there would be no answer – no answering machine, just endless rings until I gave up. There was a sense of ritual to talking on the phone, when plans were made for when one might call, or perhaps a measure of uncertainty for calls that went unanswered. When I see rotary telephones, I think of my Nan’s kitchen, and of that space she carved out for the activity of talking on the telephone. So quickly this ritual has become more a part of the past, in a present in which we are constantly available, and the spaces which we make for talking exist wherever we are. What have we lost in being so connected? Have we lost? By bringing an object of the past into the present as a mobile rotary telephone, the image attempts to explore how different our ideas of talking spaces, connection, and methods of communication have become.

BRADLEY PETERS

Sisyphus Gnawing

A serrated slab of iron drifts through space, seven thousand tons of circumstance plummeting towards that pale blue dot where life roils and grunts, and where Jeremy Drezit balances on the edge of a snow-packed cliff in Alaska, watching the dim sky peel back infinity and open for the stars, moments before he leaps to his death. He's recalling the cabin; eight weeks spent alone watching this mountain, reconciling with oblivion. No fearing, no questioning; just a silent walk and eventual handshake.

Jeremy had been dropped off at the head of the Stampede Trail on a buzzing afternoon in mid-September. The driver was a nervous woman, middle-aged, who implored him not to go into the bush this late in the season, on account of the high river crossing and how much he reminded her of her son. But Jeremy had his reasons. He assured her everything would be all right.

Jeremy arrived at the cabin in early October. Snow sifted through the breeze, brilliant static glinting in wafts detectable as a sharp thrill against the back of his throat, and they shifted around like dandelion seeds for days. And then it all dumped at once. Overnight, the thicket had been matted into a vast diamond-dust wash. Tall spruce and hemlock creaked beneath the weight. Fresh tracks appeared, crossing each other in every direction. Crouching low, Jeremy had a clear view beneath the tree-line for hundreds of meters, where, if he waited, squirrels could be seen twitching their tails against the snow. Jeremy survived on squirrel meat, dried blackberries, wild potato greens, and nibbles of rationed chocolate. He carried a green and black carbon fibre 22-calibre rifle, bolt action, with a scope that he sighted each evening, a leather shoulder strap, and two hundred and twelve bullets. He cared deeply for his rifle.

Large prints appeared one morning in the snow, less than one hundred meters from his camp, deer or elk or possibly a young moose. The tracks led him to the cabin.

It was a windless evening, after sunset, long after he should have been inside his tent, inside a rolled tarp and sleeping bag and all of his clothes, listening to the snow tap and the forest groan. Silver moonlight saturated the earth. A full moon hung directly overhead. Everything was aglow for metres around, until light was suddenly swallowed by shadow and the night hung like a velvet drape. Over a small embankment the trees thinned into a grove, and the black mass of the hunting lodge slunk unnaturally in the

middle. It looked awkward, and Jeremy didn't understand at first. It made him nervous, but he soon discerned its lines and shape and realized it was a shelter.

The door was nailed into the frame, the hinges rusted off; the nails were brittle enough that Jeremy stripped the door from its perch in one heave. He pulled a wad of tree moss from his coat pocket and set it in the doorway. The backside of his buck knife had teeth that ground against the rod of flint and splashed sparks like a bottle rocket into the bundle of moss. Light scattered into the room, shadows cut against the wall, and dark shapes glowed and dissolved after each strike. The moss crackled to life, and Jeremy tossed it into the room. The cabin was small and barren: an old furnace hunkered against the far wall, firewood was heaped beside it in a small pile, a solitary chair was toppled to his right, and a rough plank of wood hung nailed to the wall on his left. The moss shrivelled and the fire went out. He set up his tent in the dark.

The night was still. Jeremy listened to the faint grating of small animals digging beneath the floor. As he lay aching and empty, images flared behind his eyes; memories, fractured and fleeting, as if illuminated by ceaseless cracks at his flint: the street outside Saint Nom de Marie, the black gate and Father Hamel's lipless smile, his commanding look, the dead sounding organ at mass, Father Hamel patting the edge of the bench. His hungry eyes. Jeremy realized this would be the place; it was as fine as any other, really. He had been searching for somewhere free, somewhere God wouldn't bother following him, somewhere he could blot out his pain. This would be the spot.

Jeremy awoke to the chatter of light rain. The house didn't leak; it was a lucky place to have found. He imagined falling asleep and not waking up, or running out of food; the idea of using his rifle was unattractive. He had no fury left, only apathy, a tired emptiness towards a world where faith is fantasy and no fury or righteousness or recognition could promise anything but the grave. All of humanity's ambitions: the settling of the New World, Van Gogh's brush and Da Vinci's mind, the pyramids, all culminating towards the inevitably winking sun, the decay and collapse of our domesticated compost bin.

The furnace against the wall was complete with a stovepipe, a cooking grate, and a nest of half charred feathers. The wooden plank nailed up beside the door covered a small window that looked behind the house. This is when Jeremy first saw the mountain.

Mount Syse loomed like a white-cloaked hunchback against the dark sky. Nearly three hundred metres of vertical rock faced the cabin, and a sloping snow bank angled down the back and around the mountainside.

Over the weeks and months Jeremy grew thin watching the mountain.

It was December. His rattled breathing echoed through the cabin each night, and the digging creatures moved from beneath the floors into the walls and roof. Jeremy knew death was working its way into the room.

He decided he would climb Mount Syse. His food rations had been depleted for three days. Jeremy gently slipped each layer of loose clothing over the other, like sacred robes. The furnace crackled with embers and a red glow permeated the room. When life is condensed into a bag, everything becomes precious. His fleece sweater, wool socks, long underwear; it isn't exaggerating to say he loved these things. Jeremy arranged his possessions into a row: pitted silver spoon, tin mug, hatchet, knife, flint, his rifle, and one hundred and twelve remaining bullets. Jeremy put on the snowshoes he had spent hundreds of hours crafting and walked to the window. The night was pitch dark and starless, without snowfall. Jeremy couldn't see past the trees but it was a beautiful darkness. He was ready to go.

He felt calm standing in the warm and dim room; he could fade into oblivion here, but there was no peace inside the cabin, and if he slunk away now he would be a coward. It didn't change his fate, nothing could, but he needed one last chance to show that he wasn't going to kneel. He needed to breathe the mountain top.

He unlatched the door and a barbed wind cut into the room, kicking aside the door and snuffing the fire. Without looking back, Jeremy leaned into the cold and walked into the dark.

It hadn't snowed for several days and walking was smooth on top of the hardpack. The world was burned-out, the trees indistinguishable from the sky; Jeremy shuffled forward until the cold fingers of branches clawed at his face, then turned amidst collapsing drifts of snow and continued forward. He trudged uphill, unsure of the direction but planning to meet the cliff; if not, he'll tramp into the wild. The trees ended and he stumbled into the mighty black slab. He traced it with his fingers, and began skirting it to the side. It was impossible to see the rock, even from this close, and Jeremy felt like he was pressing his hands against the glass ceiling of space.

The rock ended and loose snow rolled out and around the base of the hill. Ascending the mountain parallel to the cliff was the only way to stay aware of its presence. The division between ground and air was the meeting of different shades of black. The snow slipped away beneath each step, rolling around his ankles in clumps, and he became aware that his feet were damp and stiff. The wind felt like razor blades against his cheeks and nose, and tasted like murk and steam. Each breath grated its way out of his lungs.

Eventually blackness gave way to grey, and dawn spread into the mist. Steps became meaningless and abstract, an endless click of gears slipping into place, shreecack, shreecrooch, and his breathing a weak puff puffing on tablespoon portions of existence, until the ground levelled out and he found himself poised with nowhere more to go, engulfed in cloud at the edge of the world, legs vibrating, standing motionless, trying to collect the lost remnants of his thoughts into a coherent reasoning for being here. And then he remembered who he was, and what had been the story of his life, and he remembered the church and the bruises and the hypocrisy; the wrench of Father Hamel pulling him behind the desk. All the shame and self-loathing he recalled with the objectivity of a referee tallying up a match, and all he could feel was a desire to sit down; he flumped back into the snow.

Time passed; Jeremy drifted in and out of consciousness. He awoke briefly to the clouds being dashed by the sun, and again to the sense of his lips cracking from the heat, and once again to the blistering cold and dim of twilight. Jeremy was dully aware of his heart's draggy drummer-boy tapping in his chest, and he released himself to time.

Fingers of purple light reached out of the horizon as the night stars swept into view. Jeremy opened his eyes to the star-spattered sky. His bones throbbed, and he looked down as though he was becoming aware of his body for the first time. He stood. His legs were hollow and numb, and he stared as they yanked forward. His feet met the cliff's edge. Below he saw the small house and the vast expanse of Alaskan wild. He had made it to freedom; he had the vantage point, and he was in control of his own life.

A jagged sphere of iron pulls across the depths of space, seven thousand tons of rock through innumerable light years, plummeting towards that pale blue dot where life roils and grunts, and where Jeremy Drezit balances on the edge of a snow-packed cliff in Alaska. Overhead a meteor flares into the atmosphere, trailing a jet of white, and the sky flashes and gapes like a zipper tearing down the face of the universe.

The universe is reckless and wild, sound and fury and no sense at all. Jeremy thought of the infinity of space, and how this rock had traversed it all, to be here, for this moment, just to hurl itself screaming into view with light and rage and a quick decay. Life's a fast drop, an uphill heave and all of humanity must shoulder the same load; but for the first time this fact didn't depress him. On the contrary, it was liberating. He felt released of expectations, relinquished of judgement and condemnation.

He shuffled back to his seat in the recessed snow. He wouldn't survive the night, but he didn't feel regret or remorse. He had nowhere else he desired to be. It was a good view, and he wanted to take it all in.

DOMINIQUE CHEW

Pistil

I am hunched over my desk,
hungrily engrossed in *The Secret Garden*.

Dickon takes Mary's hand and guides a seed safely into the rich earth.

A tap on my back.
I turn in my chair
to meet eyes of stinging nettle,
a face freckled with satisfaction.

His hoarse whisper

Everyone knows you're wearing a bra today

falls

like

dust

on the silent classroom.

Feathers rustle behind my ribcage,
urging flight, while
my feet root in place, cheeks
bloom in confusion.

His eyes dart down to my budding chest
and, like a weed, plant themselves there.

Self-awareness furls itself around my every limb.
I want a spade
to dig his gaze out of my body.

Please bury me in the garden

RHYS CORNELL

Burst

We do not shine as the illuminated reflections in water do,
we are not vibrant as the rainbows of our integrity should be.
The stars beneath our feet are but playthings,
compared to the concrete gates within our skulls.
Our brushes are our rusted keys to the clouds,
laying unclenched in our palms.
The sweet spectrum of somber thoughts we have,
may only hinder our connection to the pallets of experience.
In contrast to the easel of Paris's anatomy,
and the cosmic dust that wanders her streets,
the blanched fear of our own creativity,
stains the tapestries behind our eyes.
May we learn from the French oasis,
as her children do, in return for their hearts.
May we burst from this tinted incarceration of refinement,
and spread our painted wings for all to bear witness.
Only then will we shine as the illuminated reflections in water do,
only then will we achieve the vibrancy of integral rainbows,
and we will no longer be slaves to an artist's lecture,
but we will be infinite.
We will be colour.

Notes on Contributors

Camille Candia is a first year student at UFV who doesn't know what she is looking to pursue in school or life in general. However, photography has always been a passion and an escape from trying to understand everything that is happening around her. Also, she is bad at deadlines.

Dominique Chew says that to her, art may provide both a fantastical escape, and an avenue for inquiry into what it means to be human. She doesn't know if it gets her any further or closer to either of these things, but at the very least it makes life bearable, and at the very most it allows her to feel immense beauty, and connectedness, with the world around her. She is currently in her final year at UFV, studying English and Sociology.

Rhys Cornell was born in an area on the outskirts of London, England to an unmarried couple and lived there until he was four. He started writing when he was around the age of twelve, finding that it was the perfect outlet for his emotions; whether he was feeling happy, sad, angry, or just plain bored, he would write it down somewhere. Soon, that turned into stories, which turned into several attempts at completing novels, which was only recently achieved. He has wanted to be a writer for so long, in so many different forms. Sometimes he thinks that it's all he really knows.

Nicole Ensing is a UFV Geography alumnus with an interest in agriculture, environmental conservation, British Columbia, and other geography-related things. She has worked in a number of different geography-related jobs over the years, predominantly in her home city of Surrey, and is currently on a UK Working Visa, where she will continue writing, making music, and exploring the wider world. In the future, Nicole hopes to explore more of B.C. and visit every province and territory in Canada. She also enjoys swing dancing, sailing, and Celtic music.

Sarah Sovereign Finley is really grateful for friends like Jennifer Marie and Sinead, both of whom answered last minute calls to come hang out in bushes with yellow rotary phones, and wear nightgowns in isolated patches of freezing winter. Sarah works as a photographer in Chilliwack, B.C., with a background in Fine Arts from UFV. With a

passion for visual storytelling, she is in the process of completing her Master's in Counselling and one day hopes to work in narrative and art therapies. She's never met a road trip she didn't like, and has made it her life's mission to hug every cat.

Seamus Heffernan is a master's student in Criminology at the University of the Fraser Valley. He has previously worked in policy, journalism, marketing, and education. He is originally from St. John's, Newfoundland. He currently lives in Abbotsford.

After five years as a student-athlete, Ryan Liddiard finally graduated from UFV in 2016 with a BA in Creative Writing. An avid painter, he is currently pursuing a career in the visual arts. This being said, the inexorable gravitational pull of pen and paper continues to tug at him from time-to-time. He feels honoured and privileged to be included in the 2017 edition of Louden Singletree. He encourages you to "trust your own madness." He also suggests you to listen to the Migos. Lastly, he wishes to shamelessly plug his website - www.ryanliddz.com.

Julia Loewen is a current student at UFV.

Ekaterina Marenkov is a third-year Philosophy student at UFV who occasionally finds herself dabbling in the art of creative writing for purposes of cathartic release. When she 'grows up,' Ekaterina plans on teaching philosophy to children and never really 'growing up.' She is also quite fond of hiking, the sound of seafoam fizzing after a breaking wave, building blanket forts, and smooth peanut butter.

Hello there! Charlene Nelson recently returned to UFV to continue working towards her BA after a decade long break, where she has mainly worked as a stay-at-home mom. She has never taken a break from writing though, and enjoy flooding the blogosphere at places like her own site: Poetry Renascent. She's currently out of commission due to health issues, but hopes to be back and sharpening her writing skills at UFV before long.

Bradley Peters is pursuing his BFA in Creative Writing. He is currently the Features Editor at The Cascade. Bradley has worked and traveled across Canada, Asia and Central America, and plans on continuing this trend into the foreseeable future. Writing is an art as well as a craft, and Bradley has no regrets on coming to university to hone his

skills and garner a deeper understanding of the trade from expert professors, and any writer that scoffs at university because prose are “personal and unteachable” can keep their opinions to themselves, scribbling in their mom’s basement whilst trained word-smiths go pro and earn an audience for their words.

Alyssa Rice is a forever student. She has been attending the University of the Fraser Valley since 2010 and is finally finishing up her BFA in Visual Arts. She is an intersectional feminist and likes to explore themes of gendered inequality in her work including women’s representation in media, the politics of the body, and sexual identity. She lives in Mission B.C. with her cats and enjoys painting and pop culture.

Jordan Wolfe is a creative writing student at the University of the Fraser Valley, from Maple Ridge. He focuses his studies on poetry and enjoys the art of form, with an extreme fondness for list poetry.

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

Camille Candia

Dominique Chew

Rhys Cornell

Nicole Ensing

Seamus Heffernan

Ryan Liddiard

Julia Loewen

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Charlene Nelson

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Sarah Sovereign

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