

An impressionistic painting of two women's faces, rendered with thick, visible brushstrokes in a palette of pinks, purples, blues, and browns. The style is reminiscent of Vincent van Gogh's 'Olive Trees with Yellow Sky and Sea'. The faces are positioned on either side of a central white space, with their heads tilted slightly towards each other.

EPHEMERAL

Literati 2022

Volume 33

Our Lady of Lourdes Academy





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5525 SW 84th Street

Miami, Florida 33143

(305)-667-1623

(305)-663-3121

grotto@bobcats.olla.org





**“ I am a weak,
ephemeral creature
made of mud and
dream. But I feel all the
powers of the universe
whirling within me.”**

-Nikos Kazantzakis

Dear Reader,

Ephemeral, by definition, means lasting for a very short time. A fleeting moment. A minimal second that can change the course of one's life. Or a painful moment that will be over soon. Our lives are constantly evolving. Art is always changing. Nonetheless, the ephemerality of time is its exact quality that no one can control.

It will fly past us, unseen and unheard, until we look back and realize the world has kept spinning on its axis faster than we could ever contemplate. Time is ephemeral, but our understanding of it is not. Therefore we must appreciate every moment before it becomes deserving of the word, and, in our fast-moving world, take a moment to savor the bittersweet tastes of life. Nothing in this life is permanent, everything is temporary.

That is the beautiful tragedy of the ephemeral, that although it is fleeting, it never dissipates, not truly. The past is never fresh, the future never too out of reach. Beauty itself has layers and nothing beautiful is everlasting. Everything that ends will start again.

Ephemeral is a student-run anthology that features a collection of both literary and artistic pieces, encapsulating the theme of evanescent events that escape from our grasp. This collection captures the brevity of everything that occurs, the good and the bad. We triumph, we fail, we love, we lose. Ultimately, we endure. We tolerate it in the hopes we will come out better for it. Goodbyes are rarely easy and never fun, but it is the hope of what could be that makes the leaving worth it. The emotions or inspiration drawn to create each piece were all a perfect example of the ephemeral nature of our teenage years and high school careers. These works of poetry, essays, photography, and art have all come together to tell the story of this year as seen through the eyes of our peers.



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Staring

ISABEL VELASCO, 2022

She looked at me curiously, as if she were examining the sincerity of my answer. I looked away, awkwardly, towards the lively daffodils, desperately trying to avoid eye contact. But, of course, I couldn't keep my eyes away for too long. My eyes glanced up for a moment, away from the floor, to look at her, and they stayed fixed on her.

Something about her was so intriguing, so comfortable. We were left there for a few moments, gazing at each other. A smile crept up to her lips as she turned away from me laughing gently. She got up from the chair and excused herself, saying it was time for her to go. It may have been a little stalker-like but as she walked away, I placed my arm on the table, laid my head on it, and just looked at her.

It was like her entire purpose was to be some beautiful mystery. The clothes she wore always complimented her dark skin. That day she had decided to wear a long white dress that just about grazed the floor. The flowy sleeves were decorated with lace of a mesmerizing pattern. Her shoes were practically nonexistent, hiding behind the thin skirt of her dress. Her incredibly long and coily auburn hair fell naturally upon her back, covering up the fact that half of her back was entirely exposed by the dress. Her whole persona is so mysterious and somehow I feel like I know everything about her.



Familiar Faces

NICOLE PERNAS, 2022

Paint on Canvas



Key To The Kingdom

MIRANDA MUNOZ, 2023

Colored Pencil

Someone To Catch You

GABRIELLA BATTISTINI, 2023

Running.
 Running to reach your dreams.
 Running as fast as you can to sit on the throne and snatch the crown is a wicked climb.
 But do you realize it?
 Do you realize the speed that you've been running?
 You start sprinting.
 Sprinting to make it.
 Sprinting to climb to the top of the mountain and put your flag at the summit.
 Sprinting because there's nothing at all that can stop you
 from rising above everyone that doubts you.
 Yet there is something that will stop you.
 A wind that will blow and knock you off your balance before you realize
 there was ever even a certain balance to maintain.
 You will realize the speed at which you've been running and the
 exhaustion that's been pulling you down like gravity.
 That person who has been there, the person who will be there every time,
 They will hold out their arms.
 You will fall off the mountain.

The Women Who Raised Me

ISABELLA GARAYZAR, 2022

Without history, we cannot exist.

We cannot become.

And, we cannot strive to be.

Without my grandmother's aspirations and my mother's work ethic, I might not be the second woman in my family to be attending college in America. I come from a line of strong women. My grandmothers are Colombian and Mexican, and my mother is Puerto Rican.

I was raised in a home, filled with the spice in the quick-witted words of my Mexican grandmother, as she would prepare my father's favorite jalapeño sauce. I was raised with the sweetness of my Colombian grandmother's custard flan. In my kitchen I learned lessons about sacrifice, love, and being unapologetically bold.

I take with me the grace and vigor each of these women have poured into me. I remind myself of their humor, their fashion sense (never without a red manicure), and the beloved music of Buena Vista Social Club and Tito Puente. My grandmothers watch me from above as I follow the path laden with the seeds of my family's dreams. It is now my turn to water those seeds. I will grasp each flower with the remembrance of my history. I will nurture the vigor and kindness that have been passed on to me, so that I may fulfill my dreams.

I am proud to have had such an unusual and empowering upbringing.



Home Tweet Home & From Outside In

GABRIELLA GARRIDO, 2023

Colored Pencil



Head In The Clouds

MICAELA GARCIA, 2022

Acrylic On Canvas

Home for the Holidays

MARIA DEL PILAR CARRILLO, 2023

Nostalgia runs through when setting foot into the streets of Bogota.
The identical hour long drive to a small city on the outskirts of the
capital through which she misses,
Pretending to be asleep despite the bumps in the streets every two seconds.
Arriving at her family's home, the warmth of the embraces from her relatives,
including her new baby Cousin fill her with ecstasy.
The smell of Colombian coffee fills her lungs with a sudden thirst.
Arepas and empanadas are gone before the hour, along with the huge tray of *picada*.
She makes it near the mountains, landscapes she never has the pleasure of seeing
But the ambiance changes once the arguments begin between sisters.
The baby cries out a sob as her cousins try to soothe her down.
Her family believes she loathes visiting, words put into her mouth by someone else.
That cannot be true though,
For they are the reason that her countenance glows.

Coffee

PAOLA GARCIA, 2023

—

The sound of the spoon stirring in the cup
 Before the sun even thinks of coming up
 The taste of my culture, both strong and sweet
 As the dark liquid and my lips meet
 For most, it's simply a morning drink
 The quickest way to become awake
 For me, a very important link
 A custom I will never break
 The morning, noon, or night
 The moment always seems right
 For sugar and coffee to come together and unite me to my past forever
 The Cuban soil produced some of the best beans
 And also some of the best beings
 And now that my grandparents left
 That drink is one of the few ties I have left
 The stories of places and people left behind
 In a not distant yet so distant land
 Often go hand in hand
 With my grandmother and her coffee firmly in hand
 From my first taste while sitting on her lap
 To my most recent sip after a long nap
 The people, the culture and what the customs mean
 Are all wrapped up in one little bean



.....
Old Soul

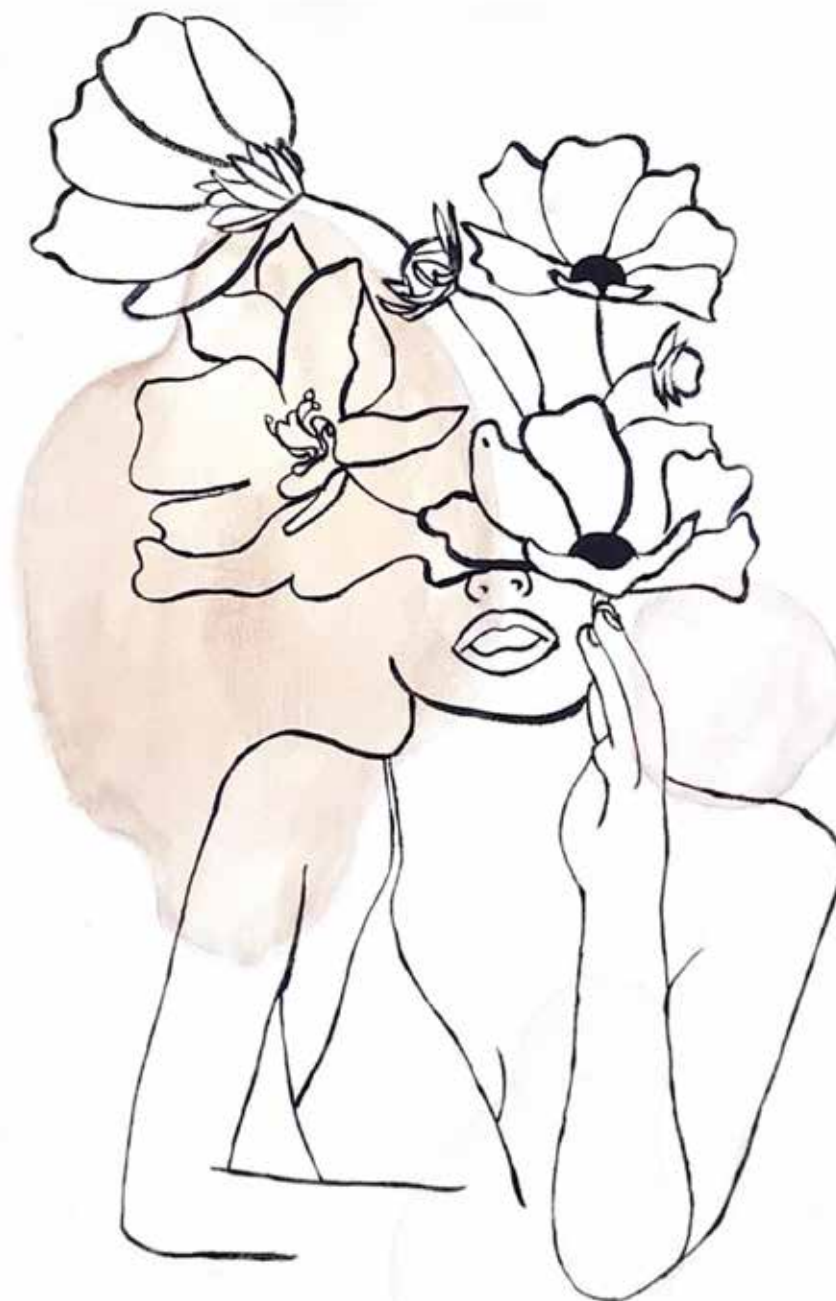
ISABELLA ZUMPAÑO, 2022

Acrylic on Canvas

Flakes To Flowers

NATALIE LOPEZ, 2023

The cold and steady wind comes rushing by
Leaving shivers rippling down my spine,
Swerving past forests filled with tall, green pines
Moving to the next winter-loving guy,
While a small snowflake starts up in the sky
Waiting to fall down in different lines
Hitting the ground, melting in the sidelines,
Turning to water as it says good-bye.
The warm sun now coming out of hiding
Making the snow turn into small flowers.
The rays of the sun, in the air gliding,
Snowflakes now droplets of liquid showers.
The shiny snowflakes had their time to glow,
Now it's time for the small flowers to grow.



.....
Blooming

EMMA SEGUROLA, 2023

Watercolor & Ink

Dew Drops

CAMILA YOUNG, 2022

Yellow light dancing with gleam
Bright shards cascading through the geometric thread
One fell upon a beetle, scurrying out of sight
Finding comfort in the silent shade of the awning

A willowy flight, gliding to be unseen
And a onyx suit, slicing through another watery well
Dew drops falling onto an undisturbed surface
Ripples cascading from the point of contact

The light dulls
The swim turns to sleep
The ripples calm

Light, dark
Life, sleep

Till the gleam rises again, now pink with energy
And the triangles vibrate with dew drops sprinkled along them
The air is calm, gentle
Grazing my nose, my arms, my legs
I'm here, I'm alive

Sundrop
MARIANA PUGA, 2022
Photography

The Sun

ALEJANDRA GOMEZ-PINA, 2023

I love you the way one loves the sun
Only seeing it's action for others
And never up close
Seeing the light you radiate
And the joy you spread
The pain caused by your absence
And the sadness you bring in the night
You're idolized by so many
Most don't even know your true nature
They don't know your true self
The substance behind the light you radiate
I am one of those
I watch and wonder how you shine so brightly
How so many love you
How you can warm the hearts of many
I know I can never get close to you
For I will simply burn
Your light is too strong for me
It will always be
But I will still admire you from afar
The way I do with the sun





.....
Going For A Ride
NICOLE PERNAS, 2022
Photography



The Artist & The Politician
ANGELINA CUETO, 2022

Mixed Media

17

LUCIA MOGLIA, 2023

I wonder why God chose to make today pretty
My selfishness and overwhelming conceit
likes to believe it is for me.

It is warm and the sun is out
Has he forgotten it is mid December?
I remember
this same day
a year ago
When different people held my hands
When I blew out my candles
I wished for different things
than I do now.

Every song sings an ode to 17
It's radiance and it's mystique
But I feel the same
if not more worn
I remember the day I was born
I saw myself from up high
A grey hospital room
and the snow outside
Mother,
felt it's chill from the bedside

I'm seventeen
apparently the dancing queen,
but all I feel
is my body refusing to scream,
Body refusing to wake up
from this dream.

God made today pretty
just for me
I shouldn't have to change
what I'm stubborn to believe.



A Cry For Peace
ISABELLA TRUJILLO, 2024

Pencil

Dear Unsuspecting Teenager

ANNA RODRIGUEZ, 2022

Dear you poor unsuspecting teenager,

You're about as clueless as my grandmother in utter confusion as she attempts to comment on my Instagram feed. And just as I finished off that sentence with a period, it struck me that it made no sense to you; you probably think I made up the word Instagram. Right now you're in the realm of MySpace, and Zuckerberg's new Facebook phenomenon.

Trust me, it only gets crazier from here. I now live in a world of Paris Hilton clones. What are they famous for exactly? Making a career out of looking pretty and getting free clothes. Or, selling photo shopped versions of their bodies, suffocating young teenage girls just like you with the empty feeling of not meeting their plastic-infused (literally, their bodies have plastic in them) standard of beauty.

The way social media has enveloped the minds and inhibitions of young girls, such as yourself, is reminiscent of a cancer. In the early stages, life goes on as it normally does, and while it does exist in the back of your mind, it's a subtle sting. But it progresses, quickly and severely.

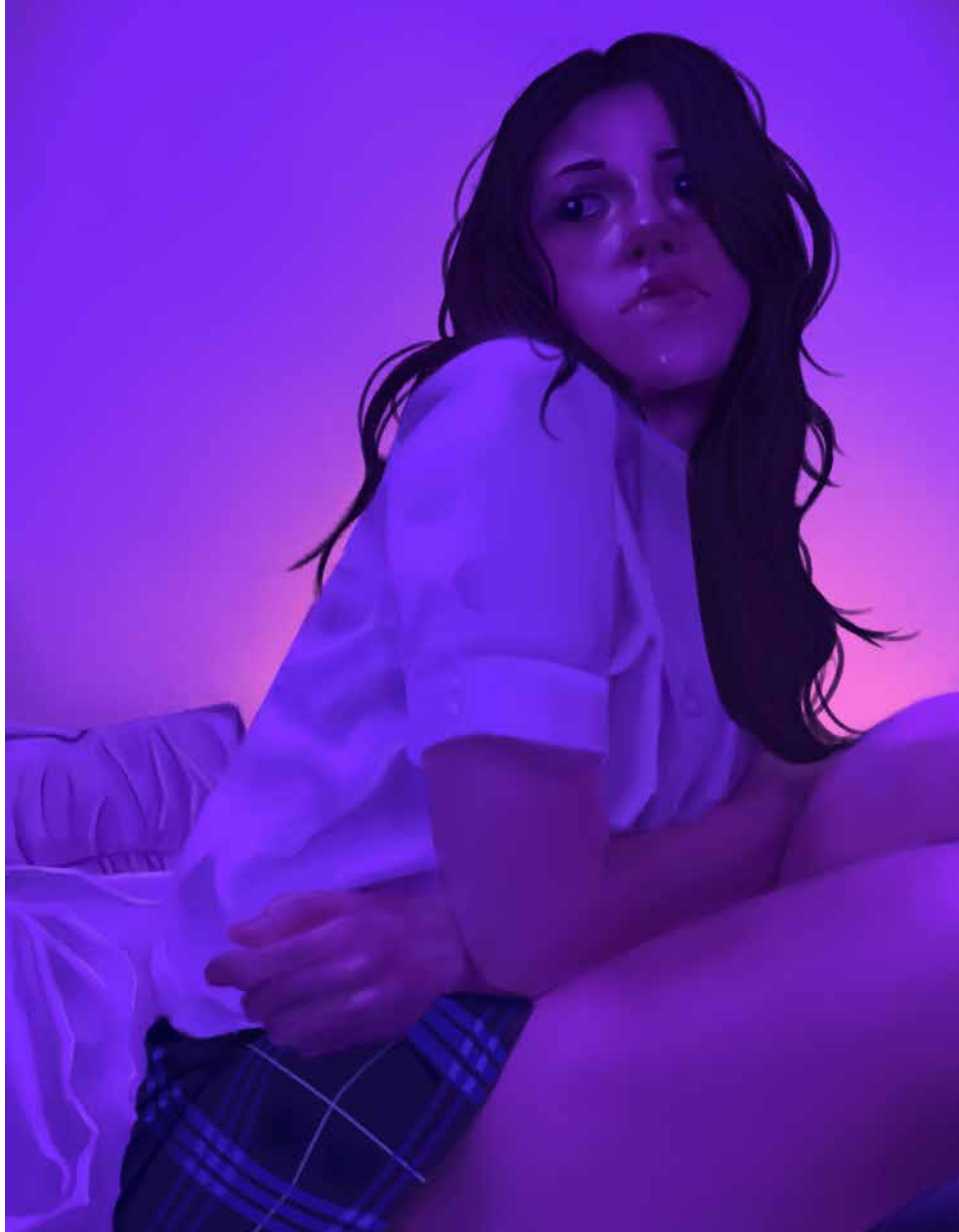
While you downloaded Instagram to connect with distant family or share with friends; this app is becoming a crippling competition, a game of comparison. You'll find yourself installing Photoshop apps, contributing to the falsified narrative of what an ideal woman's body is. Whereas the cancer will decay your body, this little digital square on your phone, deteriorates your authentic self; the girl who you truly were has said goodbye even before she could say the faintest hello.

I wish I could say I have risen above the flood of facades and face lifts, but at times, I too find myself drowning in this toxic mental overflow of who I think I should be. The only way I can think to help you is to show you where I went wrong.

Filter

CAROLINA CEPERO, 2023

The world lives behind a mask.
A filter that only shows fragments,
Fragments of moments people live through.
We all pick our filter.
Some choose a filter of happiness
Only showing the good times and joy
While hiding away all the pain and sadness
Anything that doesn't fit their filter
Others choose a filter of sadness
Portraying their sorrows and woes
Willfully ignoring the good
Whether it be to play the victim
Or rather to wallow in self pity
Then begs the question:
When did this begin?
Why did everyone choose to hide emotion?
What caused everyone to pick their filter?
There are those who break their filter
The brave ones who are unafraid of true emotion
They are ridiculed and shamed for breaking free
But why, they dared to be real and true
And are thus shunned?
Who decided that breaking free was the wrong action?
Break your filter!
Be true to yourself and stop hiding
When you ignore it and accept the darkness
You lose yourself
Break your filter and find yourself
This is the first step in becoming yourself
Find your epiphany and be who you are truly
And do not worry about others
For you yourself are a gift
So don't hide behind a filter.



.....
Ultraviolet

SOPHIA VALENCIAGA, 2023

Digital Art

Flawed Mentality

DIANA VERGARA, 2023

I wish that I could see the world through rose-tinted glasses
 That way I would never focus on the bad
 But rather the good
 And live my life like a “pretty little fool”
 I wish that I could see the world through rose-tinted glasses
 So that thunderstorms would look like rainbows
 Vinegar would taste like honey
 And the gloomy night would look like a beautiful summer’s day
 But I don’t see the world through rose-tinted glasses
 I am ever-so “realistic”
 ...Or so I tell myself to feel better
 When in actuality I focus on the bad to shield me from getting
 my hopes up
 Because if I see the world for “what it is”
 I won’t get hurt, right?
 Right?
 I won’t expect more from those around me
 Only to be disappointed when it does not prove to be the case
 I won’t get angry when life happens and things don’t turn out
 the way I’d wish
 I’ll expect the worst
 I won’t get used to good things happening to me
 Only to be disappointed when it does not prove to be the case.
 Because if I see the world for “what it is”
 I won’t get hurt, right?
 Right?

Roses On Mars

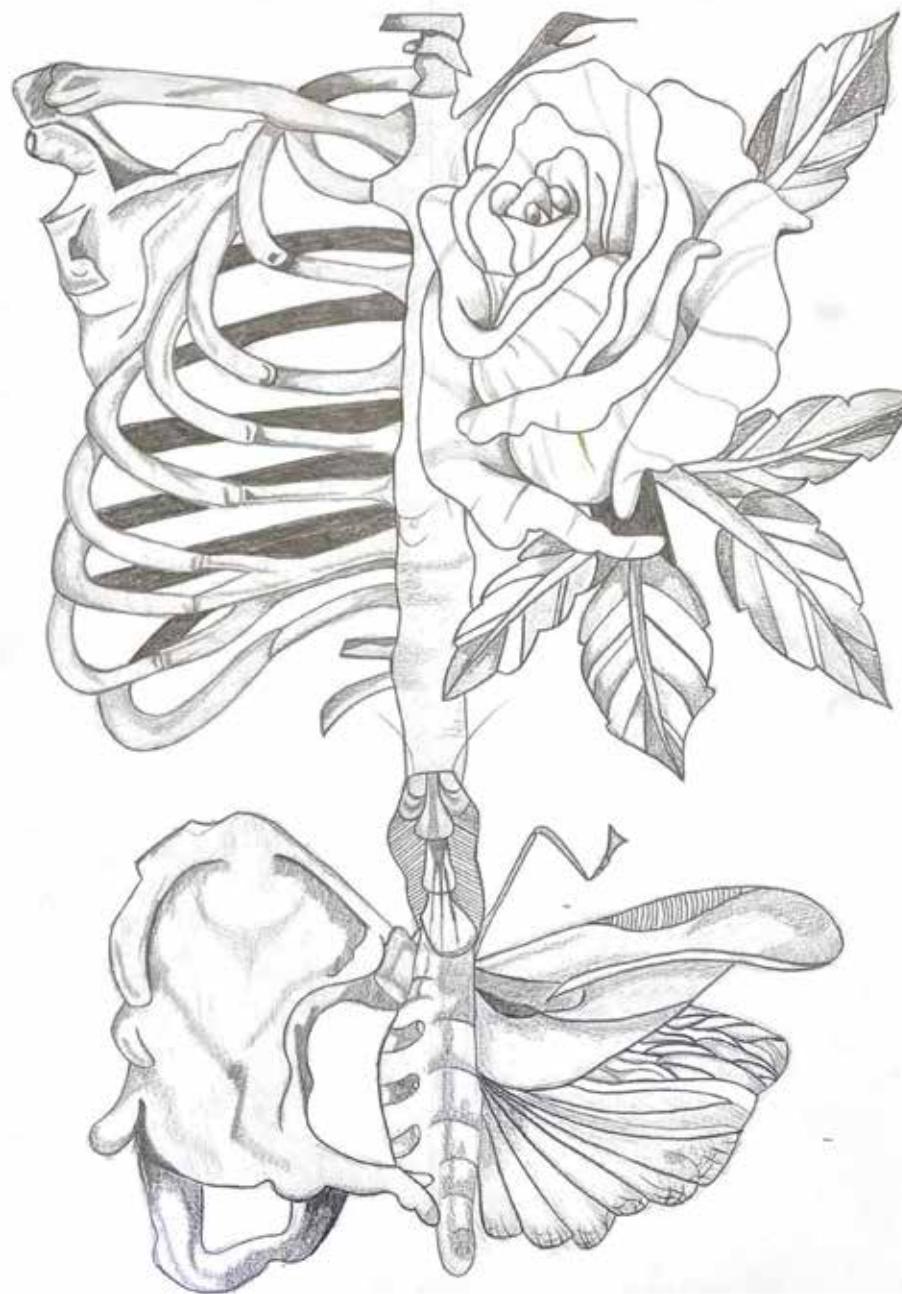
SOFIA PORTAL, 2022

My mind is far removed from Earth
Existing in fragments
In galaxies that have replaced my mother's chandeliers
With my celestial stars,
My father's incessant clocks
With the absence of time
And my intrusive thoughts
With someone else's poetry.

I've taken parts of my world with me
Like the roses I wish grew on Mars,
Or the ocean I wish existed on Venus,
Or the snow I wish fell on Pluto,
Or the humanity I wish thrived on Earth.

My mind has occupied spaces in the galaxy
Simply by wishing it could.
My body, on the other hand,
Has been confined to
Unhappiness,
Dissatisfaction,
Memory.

I would argue with the universe
But I acknowledge that I have a gift
It wouldn't be fair to ask for more.
Therefore I'll leave my mind to travel
As my body drags in misery
Because I've still escaped.



Floral Anatomy
GABRIELLE ZIEGENHIRT, 2022

Pencil



.....
Age of Music

ISABELLA ZUMPANO, 2022

Mixed Media

My Mind

NICOLE ECKARDT, 2023

Our youth, slipping away
 While we seize the day
 So worried about what's to come
 We don't realize we need to have fun
 College feels so far from now
 I want to stay young forever but how
 I miss the smell of middle school
 When nobody knew what was cool
 Will I remember my friends five years from now
 But anyways soon we graduate and take our final bow

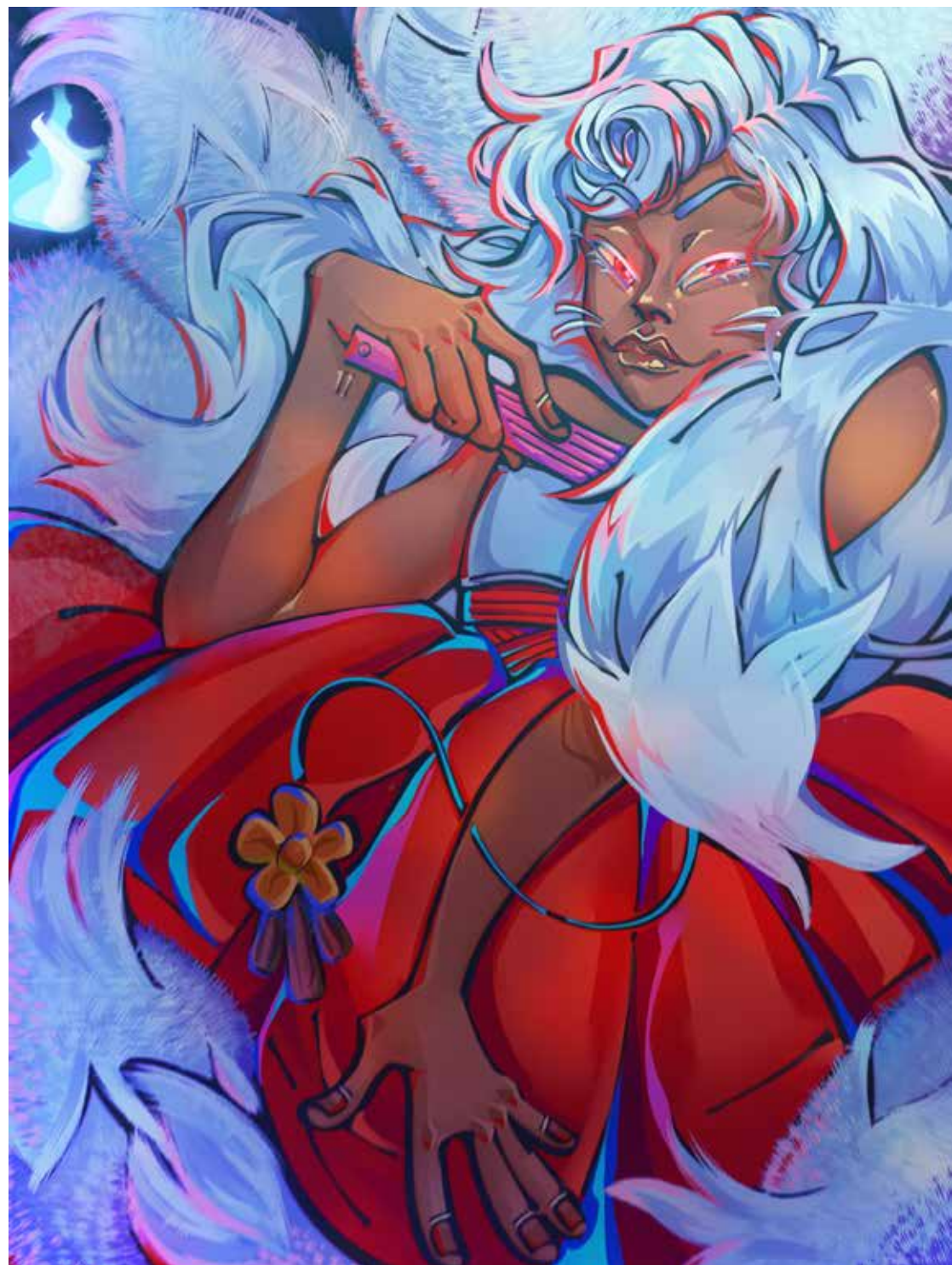
She Would Only Dream

NINA GONZALEZ, 2022

—

She would dream
 Of silent chambers
 draped with ornate tapestry,
 lighted by tall bronze floor lamps.
 Of two butlers in knee breeches drowsy from heavy warmth,
 And dozed in the large overstuffed armchairs.
 She would dream
 Of great reception halls.
 Of fine furniture.
 And of small, stylish sitting rooms just right for the four o'clock chats.
 She would dream
 Of fashionable dinner parties.
 Of gleaming silverware.
 Of tapestries making the walls alive.
 She would dream
 Of delicious dishes.
 Of gallant compliments,
 whispered and listened to with a sphinx smile.
 But she would only dream.

.....
Kumiho Cookie
 OLIVIA BROUWER, 2022
 Digital





.....
For The Kids

MIRANDA LUCIANA GUERRA, 2023

Watercolor & Ink

If Heaven Had A Postal Service

KATIE BILBAO, 2023

I wish I could write you a letter
 For every time I had news to share

I wish I could call you for advice
 To hear your voice still cared

I wish that I could stop by heaven
 And see how you're doing up there

I wish I could tell you I love you
 Instead of whispering it in a prayer

If heaven had a postal service
 I would be first in line

I'd ask you about all my worries
 And you'd tell me I'll be just fine

I'd ask you what it's like up there
 And if you could teach me how to play chess

I'd ask you what your childhood was like
 And let you tell me the rest

I'd listen to you for hours
 And I would hang on to every word

I'd write you a letter every week
 And long to know that you heard

But for now I will stick to whispering under my breath In the hours
 when the clock ticks pasts ten

Because one day I will be back home
 One day we will meet again

Unfiltered America

CAROLINA HEIMES, 2023

Out on the streets there are plenty who are starving
Time is what our government is wasting
There are many who are in need
But do you see those in power doing any helpful deed
I thought this was America, the lands of hope and dreams
But when I ponder further all I see is a land of dismay and screams
America is not what it appears to be
There are many that say America can be saved, but I disagree
It's not in our nature to live selfishly
So why are we doing it and affecting our country negatively
Materialism and wealth steers people on the wrong path
When will be the end of this blood bath
If we don't come together and form a union
In the future there will only be confusion



.....
Love Suspended
MIRANDA MUNOZ, 2023

Pencil

Demeter's Oversight

AMELIA FRIAS, 2023

Early rays of light dance upon boughs and branches,
Moss and mushrooms creep up the side of bark.
Ants march dutifully to their underground trenches,
Birds tweet in the distance; dogs bark.

Leaves hang on twigs precariously,
Like a white-knuckled gymnast before her dismount.
You could see the cracks if you look carefully,
Blurred from a distance, too many to count.

But look at her height,
Her shade, her might.
Her roots, thick as thieves,
The sun she receives.

Her harvest is stunning,
And visitors loving,
But the water stopped running,
And she began numbing.

Under layers of lichen,
Wood rotted and stunk.
Her fruits didn't ripen,
Time hollowed her trunk.

So when the storm came,
Well, just some wind and light rain,
Her limbs shook barren,
And her mast cracked and swayed.

Who would have thought with water, dirt, and light,
She could have fallen so hard, dust clouded her sight?
The ground shaking under the weight
Of all the pressure she couldn't take.

If I Were Asked

SARAH HERNANDEZ, 2024

If I were asked,
Which one could damage more,
From what I have encountered,
I would say rain,
Is what I am for.

Because rain is driven by a sorrow,
So deep it leaves no room,
For any joy or sunshine,
To cast out the cloud of doom.

And all the rain does,
Is wash away what little joy remains,
Leaving behind the bitter drops,
And a heart,
With the sorrow it contains.

But as others might tell,
Wind destroys, too,
As it blows shades of red,
Fueled by anger unwell.

Indeed rain causes catastrophe,
But wind does not stay far behind.
And in the end,
They both wipe out,
What we know is good and kind.



.....
Can't Breathe
 SOFIA HUERTA, 2024
 Oil Pastels

Static

FIGURELLA MONTTOYA, 2023

It was just another day
 Just another moment
 When I was enveloped by a feeling,
 A feeling of anxiety
 I knew all too well
 I felt a pressure in my chest,
 My vision blurred,
 And all I heard was static
 I was told to breathe in these situations,
 I was told to focus on my surroundings
 But how can I do so when I'm deprived of my senses?
 I was told to journal my feelings,
 I was told to breathe
 But how can I do that when my hand is shaking?
 I was told to take a break,
 I was told to get some sleep
 But how can I do that when I don't have time?
 My friends know I have anxiety
 And they look out for me
 In case I have an attack
 They'd say things to me



.....
Including Me
CAMILA ARISTIZABAL, 2022
Pen & Pencil

What You Think Of Me

NATALIE GONZALEZ, 2023

—
If there's one thing that I know
Is how weak and frail I can be,
I've let people walk all over
What I think is the best version of "me".

I've lost planets from my orbit,
And stars from my sky,
I've been weak enough to care,
And I've been weak enough to cry.

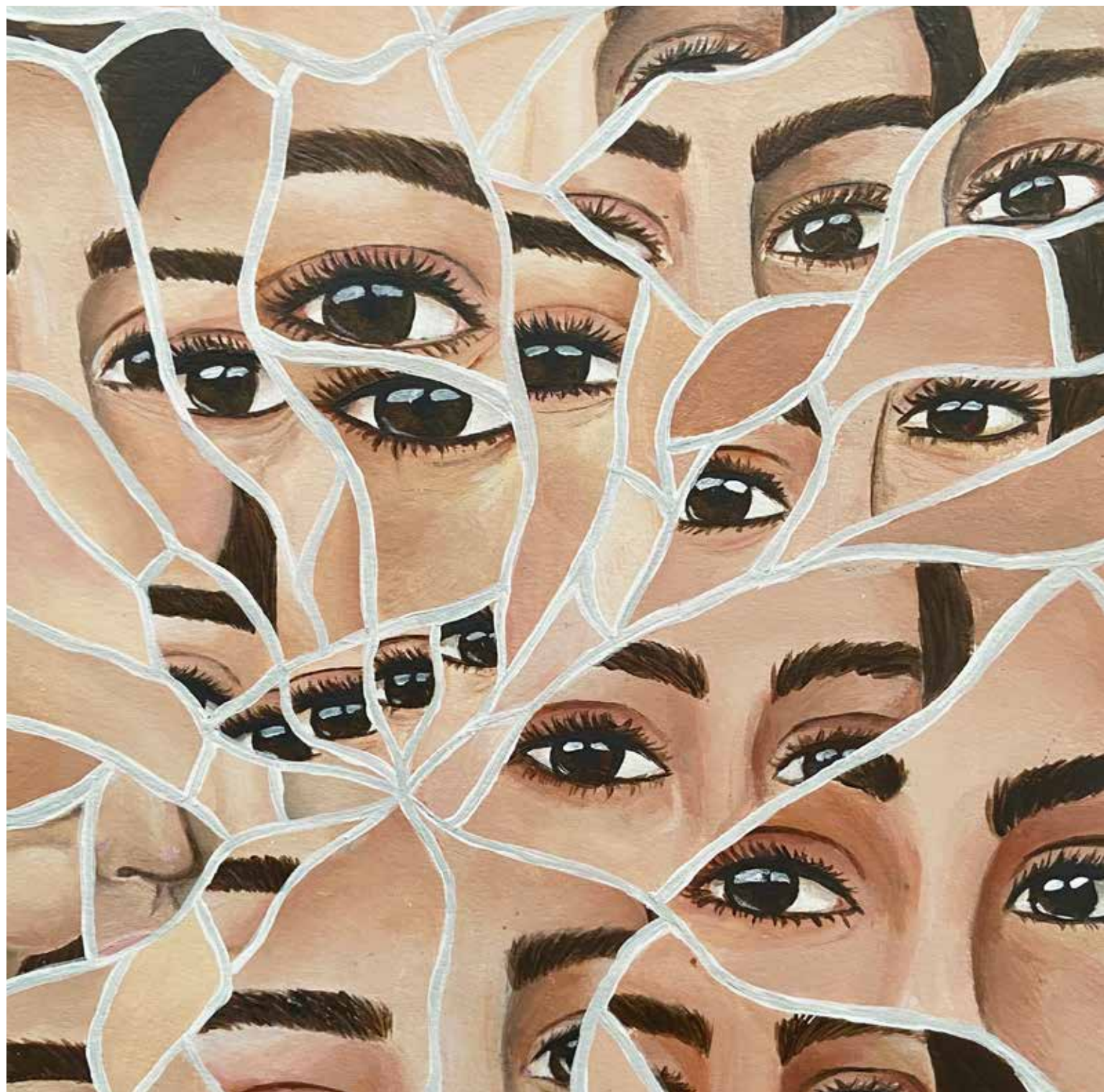
But what I've learned from every punch
That life has thrown at me,
Is that life doesn't get tired,
It will just keep hitting for free!

And so I shouldn't let what others
Around me have to say,
Words are just words
And they should not affect my day.

I always find new planets,
And my stars light up again,
I just need to be at peace
And let the world be my friend!

What you think of me has no meaning,
No weight on my mind at all.
I am above what you think
And I am too brave now to fall.

.....
All Eyes On You
KATERINA ROIG, 2022
Acrylic



Appreciating Each Phase

MIRANDA GUERRA, 2023

—
Liminal moment of magic.
If you care to take a look
Like the leaves changing over on the trees,
We carry constant transformation.
Catch the me of today,
Before I fade into
My next phase.



.....
I Miss The Innocence
SOFIA HUERTA, 2024

Acrylic

The Present

GRACE DE ARCOS, 2022

—
I believe in the present. Not the future or past. I don't want to live with what ifs. Looking back on the past and saying what if or looking forward and saying what if. My biggest fear in life is sitting in a nursing home when I'm however many years old looking back on my life and saying "I wish I did that." I want to say "I'm glad I did that" instead. The scary thing is time is always moving. I try to catch it, but it always slips away. The "I'm here" text from my mom when I'm at a party is probably the worst part about it. No one told me embracing the present was going to be easy, but I wish someone did. I used to focus too much on the past. Regret always clouded my vision and made it hard to see what was in front of me, but I've learned. I've learned how short my life is. I've learned that every second counts and if you don't believe me ask the person who missed the bus to try and get to work. They will tell you all about it.

You might not realize this at a young age. Some people don't realize it until they're older, but for me it hit me young. "Everybody wants to rule the world" was always one of my parents favorite songs growing up. They would always play it on a speaker or in the car when I was younger and I hated it. I hated all old music. It was so boring. My parents would hear me complain about their music, but they just kept dancing. It wasn't until freshman year when I really listened to the song. My ears opened as soon as the first verse played: "Welcome to your life, there's no turning back." That's when my eyes opened wider than they had ever been. At first it was scary. "I'm never going to get a second chance. This is it," I thought to myself. Then it settled in and I realized that this life is all I have and if I don't stay in the present and do what I can now I'll always live with a what if.

Time is the most underrated subject in my life. I can barely control it, but I've accepted that. I've accepted that death is right around the corner waiting for me with a knife. Do I think it's scary? Yes, but it's only made me want to live harder. I don't wish I was older anymore and I don't wish I was younger anymore. I can't change the past and I can't move forward and even if I could I simply would choose not to. I would choose to stay right where I am because that is all I have and all I ever will have.

And So I'll Follow The Sun

MASSIMA PONCE, 2023

When life gets hard and all seems lost
 As fears and worries tantalize my thoughts
 When it's hard to keep on pushing through
 And doubts engulf beauty, worth, self
 When I feel defeated and broken
 Not knowing where to turn
 Searching for the answer, I look up to the sun
 For she shows us how to truly live;
 And so I'll follow the sun.

For the sun is a most gracious example of living;
 Despite the weather, the date, the time,
 She rises and holds her beaming crown up high
 Her golden aura radiating brilliance and beauty
 Showing us that no matter how hard our journey,
 Or how many times we may encounter defeat,
 We must continue to shine through it all;
 And so I'll follow the sun.

And with these lessons I'll march through life
 For I know she will lead me to a worthy cause;
 All of this just to say,
 And so I'll follow the sun.



.....
Sunset Serenity
 ELISA RAMIREZ, 2022
 Photography



As Thin As A Veil
AMANDA NICHOLE RODRIGUEZ, 2023

Pen

Your Book

VICTORIA VAZQUEZ, 2023

—
Flip to a new page
There can always be a fresh start
Just make sure when you do...
You have goodness in your heart
Things can get rough
But there's always tomorrow
Don't allow your life to be full of sorrow
Life is a book you choose your next page
Chose to be full of love
Let go of the rage



Cherry Blossoms
GABRIELLA BATTISTINI, 2023

Watercolor



.....
Yesterday And The Days

MIRANDA GUERRA, 2023

Pencil

Abre Los Ojos

MARIA JOSE DE ARMAS, 2023

—
 Ciego a la belleza de la vida,
 Sumergido en tus inseguridades,
 No te das cuenta de las realidades,
 Que te cruzan por la mente cada día.

Siempre trata de alcanzar la cima,
 No ignores tus cualidades,
 Que aunque sean las más reales,
 Te parecen las más ficticias.

No te identifiques con el fracaso,
 No te impidas el éxito,
 Enfócate en cada paso.

Se orgulloso y ten mérito,
 Olvídate del pasado,
 Porque el futuro es inédito.

Amelia

SOPHIA VALENCIAGA, 2023

To my dearest Amelia,
Whose love so pure and sweet as the *sucre*
Of the finest ambrosia,
Doth thou not remember a time
when thy love was
Revered and looked upon
With admiration such as mine own?

Oh, how thoust did once open thy bosom out
To those sea dogs, those wayfaring men,
Minds ravaged by the never-ending
Black current of the ocean.
They beckoned for you, cried out for you,
Like an infant's squeal in search of its mother.

And no matter the day,
No matter if shores gave way
to clear skies or not
You attended to them.
Oh, my tender Amelia,
Whose love triumphed even the
Blackest of waters,
how bravely you kept up the act.

Would this all
Give way to the torrent in thy own mind,
To drown that love ever so coveted by man?
Bloated now with brine,
How weak and fragile it was,
For it clung lifelessly,
and disappeared under the waves.

Did thou not see the repercussions in
Giving up thy commitments?
How the merry-men
Would wander about the streets,
Shouting "Oh, our beloved Amelia!
Where have thou fled!
How the sea will swallow us
whole without your aid!"

Yet, never once did they question if
That very same ocean swelled around you,
Until thy aching body, having fought
so desperately
To stay afloat, let the ocean give rest
To your never ending battle,
And wash you up as sea foam on the shore.

Oh, my dearest Amelia,
Succumbed to the ocean.
Let thy love be remembered
Only by the most fruitful of men,
Whose gaze will fall upon the shore,
And search for your mercy forevermore.



Misplaced Reality
GABRIELLE ZIEGENHIRT, 2022
Acrylic



.....
My Grandfather and I
 NATALIA PEREZ-RODRIGUEZ, 2024
 Digital

Ikigai

CAMILA ALVAREZ, 2023

Ikigai is a Japanese word that translates to 'reason for living'
 Your Ikigai is your life's purpose
 Once you find your bliss you are happy
 But the real question is
 How do you go about finding it?
 Is it lost?
 Is it under your bed?
 Hiding behind the door?
 Or is it in plain sight?
 Right under your nose
 Where you tend to overlook daily
 Hidden in the little things
 Is it there when your mom makes you breakfast
 Or when your dad makes jokes
 Is it there when your excited for a game
 Or when you see your grandparents
 Maybe it's there when you drive with the music up or
 Dance in the shower
 Ikigai is hidden in the little moments
 Those moments where we find happiness throughout our days
 We find our bliss in the people and things around us
 We just have to look



.....
Grief In Stereo
 OLIVIA BROUWER, 2022
 Fine Pen

Time Is Not Real At 1 AM

MARTA JOSE ELORRIAGA, 2023

—
 The things you say at 1 Am.
 The things you would ramble on about,
 made me fall in love.
 You talked about everything.
 You talked about your family.
 You talked about shows.
 You talked about love.
 You never talked about you.
 Whenever it fell silent,
 I heard a stutter in your breathe,
 As though you were holding back tears,
 Holding back from me.
 I never spoke.
 I never spoke,
 Only listened as you spoke.
 I only spoke to make sure,
 you knew I was listening.
 One day, you stopped talking.
 You just breathed.
 I heard you cry silently,
 And did something,
 Odd.
 I spoke.
 I told you all about me.
 How much I loved to read.
 How much I loved to paint.
 How much I love your voice.
 After that night,
 You never called again.
 It wasn't until time passed that I heard your voice. But not over the phone.
 It wasn't glitchy,
 Or static filled.
 It flowed through the air like silk through someone's fingers.
 Watching as you ran up to me In person,
 I smiled a small smile.
 Hello.
 Hi.
 It's 1 AM again.
 You're rambling about yourself.
 I smiled and pulled you closer.
 Time is not real when it's 1 AM.



Hand Made

MICAELA GARCIA, 2022

Mixed Media

She Goes By The Name Unique

ELODIE GHONDA, 2022

I could have sworn she was more intimidating in first grade, but as I hold this memento in my hands, I feel no animosity towards my old enemy. Her weakness is evident from the wrinkles plastered from collar to hem, caused by the piles of clothes that laid upon her for ten years. That's how long it's been since I've come face to face with my pastel yellow elementary school uniform shirt. She goes by the name Unique, named after my mom's response when I told her everyone at school had the standard white shirt.

“She’ll make you unique.”

That attempt at encouragement quickly turned a combative six-year-old on the verge of a tantrum (and a whooping), into a gloomy child who had no interest in being 'one of a kind'. From then on I never liked Unique, the shirt or the adjective, because it was a constant reminder of an unchangeable mark, like the permanency of my skin.

While I was packing to move to a new house, leading me to end this battle with my long forgotten arch-nemesis, I wondered whether the price of being labeled extraordinary was worth the isolation and solitude.

As a child, I would have told you that being unique was overrated. We were never allies. In fact, we always fought for different causes: she wanted to distinguish me from my comrades and I battled to blend in, even when I knew no amount of camouflage would be enough. We clashed quietly and frequently throughout my childhood as I tried to defend every aspect of my life from her reach, but never succeeded. Unique was always there when I was too Haitian or too Congolese to be American but not enough of either because I couldn't speak French, Creole, or Lingala. Being unique put me, the darkest person in the school, at the receiving end of my classmates' curious eyes

that spied on me from Freshman orientation to Senior homeroom.

Without fail, she remembers to underline my name in red on every Google document and was allowed to be used as an excuse for teachers to mispronounce it, even after I say “like melody without the M.” Unique invaded my problems, too, forcing me to be okay with “I don’t understand your struggles, but keep fighting” even when my stamina reached its limits, even when it felt like being alone was the only constant in my life.

But as this internal war was coming to an end, I didn't feel the same way towards this significant piece from my past. The memories of what I thought would be of pain morphed into humility. As I contemplated this change in feelings, I realized that I missed her message this whole time. Unique needed to have a negative connotation in my mind so that I could never surrender to the idea of me being the only black woman in a room or accept people's indifference to things they did not know. In a way, I am thankful that my problems were unique so that those around me never had to experience the same pain.

Although her presence no longer remains in my closet after I donated my uniform, her teachings have a lasting impact on my life. I sometimes still wish I could fuse in with the masses because it would be easier; however, Unique constantly reminds me that my battles are nowhere near ending. And that's okay. Because what I failed to realize was that throughout my life, she handed me an arsenal of weapons which are now stashed inside my soul and have become my strength. Her training transformed a young child hoping to be inconspicuous into a scriptwriter and orator who wishes to have people know they aren't alone. And for that, I am thankful Unique won the battle.



Only 16%

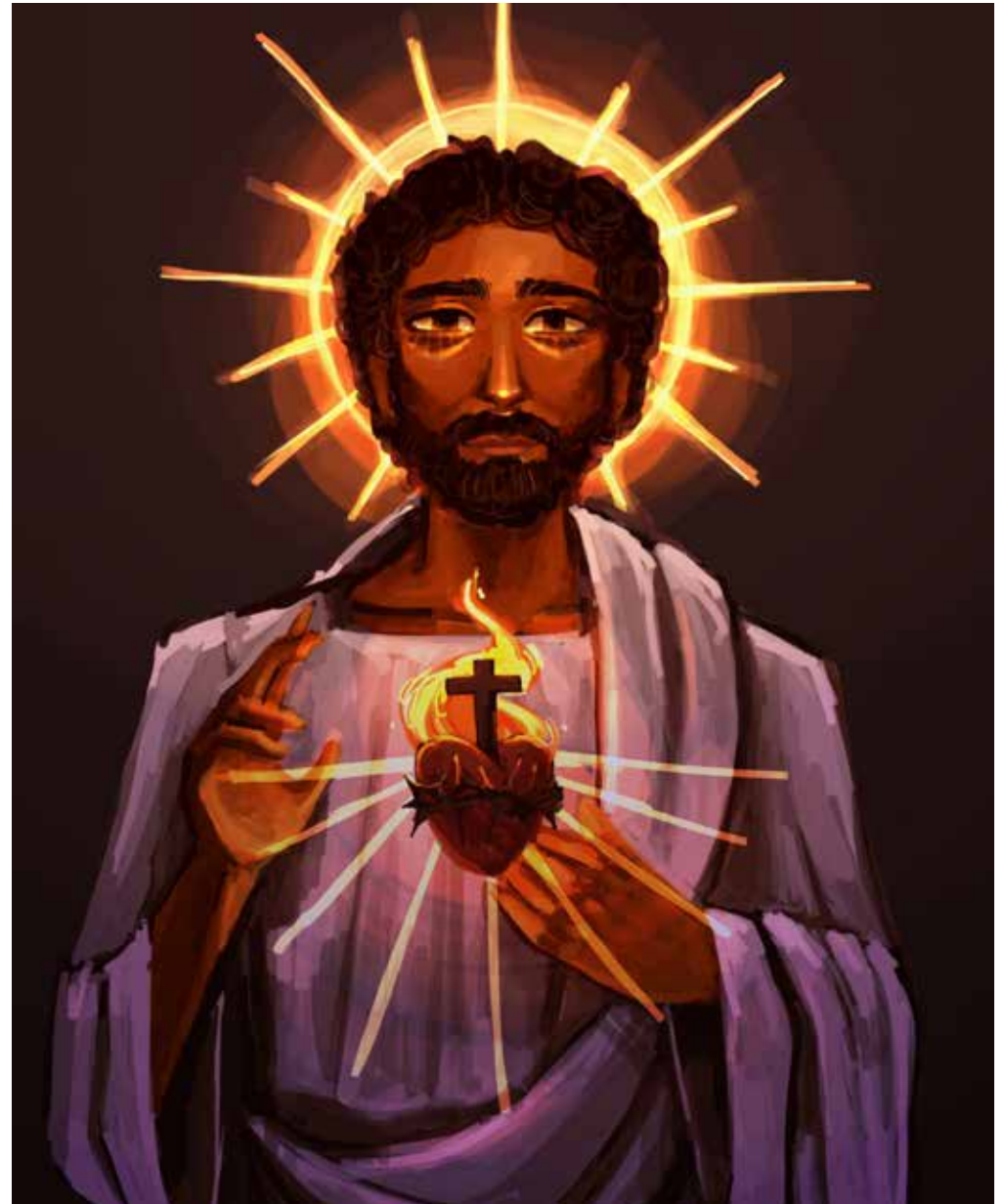
CAROLINA CACERES, 2022

Mixed Media

Love Poem

EMMA CHENEY, 2024

I can't be touched
 Yet I mean so much to people
 I am a part of life
 Yet I can be broken and lost in a blink of an eye
 I take years to build
 Yet I can be lost with in one moment
 My enemies are hatred and envy
 I brighten your day
 And I am the root of healthy relationships
 I am represented as a dove
 I can be someone's greatest strength
 Yet also their greatest weakness
 No one understands me
 And I can be interpreted in many different ways
 Having me is a sense of joy
 Losing me can lead to many tears
 I am built over years
 I am not formed overnight
 I am Love



.....
Domini

VALERIA DURAND, 2022

Digital

"Ephemeral" is the 33rd volume of *Literati*. It is based on the definition of ephemeral which means, "a fleeting moment." Through a collection of both literary and artistic works, the book creates a mosaic highlighting the fast-pace of life, and the moments that make us sit back and reflect. The ephemeral nature of time can work in our favor, or against us. It keeps moving even if we are not ready to catch up, it keeps moving especially when we are. The subtle remnants of color combinations coordinating with the cover art and scheme calls to mind the brief moments in time treasured in the nature of ephemerality. "Ephemeral" allows readers to understand the complexities of the emotional transition from naivety to maturity of the writers and artists featured in this volume.

Advised by Mrs. Rebecca Q. Retana, the *Literati* staff explored several themes before deciding on "Ephemeral." Seniors Mia Aviles and Stephania Lopez created and developed the theme with the input from Juniors Paola Lista, Gabriella Fernandez, Danielle Noriega, and Isabella Nunez and Seniors Mia Fernandez & Elisa Ramirez designed and furthered the concept with help from the Creative Writing class students; seniors Alice Mullin, Anabel Perez, Vanessa Riera, Mia Rosado, Narah Salgado; juniors Katherine Bilbao, Maria del Pilar Carrillo, Lucia Moglia, Paulina Ortega and sophomore Sofia Huerta.

The editorial staff sifted through submissions ranging from writing, to photography, to art. Each member reviewed and revised submissions in order to narrow down the collection. Fine Arts teacher Mrs. Cristina Zizold provided the staff with access to the AP Studio Art class' portfolios. The English department encouraged students to submit poems, narratives and essays.

The design started with the air of childhood innocence and familiarity, filled with stories reminiscent of growing up and self-discovery. Further in the development of the motif, it explores the darker moments in life, where we face hardships in order to grow and look towards the future. These are the times in our life where we wished time moved faster to escape from the mess we're in. Ultimately, we realize how valuable our time is, and how much we wished we relished in the moments of the past. While it isn't easy to let go, embracing the future is what the ending of the publication focuses on. As each of the pieces gain more color, the writing becomes more mature

and optimistic. By the end, the content reflects the appreciation after an experience; you've made it through, the moment has passed, and it's time to look forward to the moments to come. The progression of the work resembles the aspects of growing up: the innocence, the challenges, and the maturity and wisdom to follow. It is a gradual development that is mirrored in the progression of the pieces. All of the works are integrated: photographs, poems, mixed media, narratives, and art pieces to develop through the ephemeral nature of passing time.

The cover and theme artwork were created by senior Katerina Roig whose work "Guise" perfectly reflected the ephemeral theme.

900 copies of the magazine are distributed to every student and faculty member. The magazine uses 6" x 9" dimensions for the layout. The visual layout and design created with the Adobe InDesign Creative Suite 2022. Along with checking for grammatical accuracy and writing fluency, the editorial content at the beginning and end of this book was written by Mia Aviles and Stephania Lopez to introduce the concept and explain how the staff has interpreted it in the book.

Some of the artwork and images bleed off the page, allowing readers to experience the art to its capacity. The body text fonts, Montserrat and Cormorant Garamond, were chosen for their simple legibility. The titles are in Montserrat, a typeface that is clean and striking.

The members of the staff extend their appreciation to all who supported the *Literati* from invention to publication. The staff would like to thank the school administration for its support of this yearly publication. The staff also extends its gratitude toward both the Fine Arts and English departments who encourage and inspire students to submit all types of artistic content.

Special thanks are in order for Mr. Michael Herold at R & C Management, Inc. for cooperating with the staff in the printing of this magazine.

Literati has frequently been recognized by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association as a nationally renowned literary magazine. The publication has received the Gold Medalist Award from the association in 2005 through 2021. The magazine was honored with a Silver Crown in 2009, 2013, 2016, and 2017. It was also honored by a Gold Crown – the highest award given to a publication – in 2005, 2010 and 2021, as well as the NSPA's All American Award in 2013. Most recently, the 2018 and 2020 *Literati*'s were recognized as NSPA Pacemaker Finalists.



Guise

Katerina Roig, 2022

Acrylic Paint

EDITORIAL POLICY

As the official literary and art magazine of Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, *Literati* provides a means of showcasing the broad, creative scope of the student body. Works are mainly solicited through Art and English classes, but all students are invited to submit entries in March of each production year. To be eligible for publication, all submissions must be accompanied by a certificate of originality. To maintain the high standard of excellence for which the magazine strives, submissions are carefully reviewed by Journalism II and III Honors students and advisers, who choose only the most exemplary pieces to be included in the publication. The magazine production is part of the curriculum of Journalism II and III Honors and is completed during the second semester of each school year.

STAFF

Editor in Chief

Mia Aviles

Creative Director

Stephania Lopez

Copy Editors

Danielle Noriega

Elisa Ramirez

Staff

Paola Lista

Gabriella Fernandez

Isabella Nunez

Mia Fernandez

Adviser

Mrs. Rebecca Q Retana





