



# PANKU

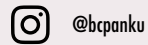
LITERARY & ARTS MAGAZINE

**“I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can’t see from the center.”**

-Kurt Vonnegut, *Player Piano*

# PANKU

LITERARY & ARTS MAGAZINE



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Panku Magazine



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SPRING 2019 • ISSUE NO. 2

# PANKU

LITERARY & ARTS MAGAZINE

Founded in 1964, Panku Magazine is a student-run, bi-annual literary and arts publication funded by Broward College. Our namesake is the Chinese God of Creation. Chinese mythology holds that Panku created the sun, the moon, the heavens, and the earth. From Panku flew the wind and the thunder, and his fleas became the ancestors of man. Anyone endowed with creativity is said to be possessed by the spirit of Panku.

## Editor's Note

Room 511 at Broward College's downtown campus in Fort Lauderdale—a room that has always greeted with me warmth. It's located in the heart of a bustling city. Across the street, a building has been under endless construction, its music the soundtrack to my Friday mornings. 511: a room where creative minds come together to make something extraordinary, butting heads along the way—because that's what creative minds do. A room where you can show up and be unafraid to feel vulnerable.

During my semesters at Panku, I always wanted to learn more, know more, be more. Talking to these artists, hearing their stories, their process, and their motivations made me want others to hear what they have to say too. The people who read this magazine may never get the chance to meet any of these contributors, but I know their voices in these pages will say more than any conversation could.

Working here has felt more sweet than bitter, like the brown sugar on a grapefruit or the last sip of hot chocolate. Each semester, a new group of people stumble into Panku, just like I did, and each semester I'm afraid that room 511 will lose its magic. But you guys always manage to prove me wrong. Every. Time.

While this will be my last time working with my amazing team, I know this will not be the last time a group of creative minds come together and make something wondrous here.

Keep in touch and please, keep creating.

Take care.

**Simone Kelly**

**Editor-in-Chief**

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# PANKU

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*“Not everything has a formula;  
sometimes you can just capture  
things without being stuck in  
your head.”*

- Barbara Mello



“Anyone can make something that pleases everybody, something that makes everybody happy but provokes no real thought. When you make something that makes someone angry, whether they realize it or not, it [evokes] the feelings they feel about themselves, and they may not like your work because of it. At least you’re getting a reaction and making them think.”

***“I like to limit my resources as much as possible to make myself more creative.”***

“A lot of people use color in art to [evoke] emotions and feelings in the piece, but I like to limit my resources as much as possible to make myself more creative. If I want to [evoke] that same level of emotion without adding factors like color, it forces me to work harder and make it more powerful.”

-Colby Larrucea

*Simone Kelly*

## A New Toy For Both Rooms

I found you, paint chipped and sun-dried.

Under the big sycamore in dad's backyard

"It's trash, garbage!"

A little rust never hurt anyone

I try to fix you with numb fingertips

paper clips and twist ties don't exactly fit

with nuts and bolts, but they're all I have.

I pick through scraps, paternal leftovers

to see if you are even worth salvaging

I want to try; I think you're worth it







*John Seminario*

## **This is Not a Game: Call of Duty**

It was a simple assignment—a mission of stealth. Go in, plant the bomb, and get out. No shots were meant to be fired. No lives were meant to be lost.

Our squad excelled at what we did. XxXx6942069xXxX, our commanding officer, was brave, tough. What he was best at, though, was making sure the whole squad always made it out in one piece. That was going to be his last mission. One more and he was done for good. Then he could finally go home; home to his family.

We had all grown so close. Those people weren't just my squad mates anymore—they were my friends. I still think back to the late nights we spent together: eating Doritos by the handful, drinking Mountain Dew straight from the bottle, talking about life, love, and whatever else until the sun came up. We knew everything there was to know about each other, or so it seemed.

There was a rat in our division. Someone had talked. Had tipped off the enemy. We found ourselves ambushed. Shots rang out. I still remember the blood-curdling screams that echoed around me as my unit and I desperately sought cover.

**“I lowered my weapon. My friends—my brothers—deserved better than that. If I was going out, I was taking those motherfuckers with me.”**

“Oh wow, you little bitch!” screamed one wounded soldier.

“Are you fuckin’ kidding me?” shouted another. “You probably still live at your mom’s house, you piece of shit!” His last words, incidentally.

Our whole team went down. I found myself alone. I considered ending it right there. One last bullet. I raised the gun to my mouth, but something stopped me. XxXx6942069xXxX, still somehow conscious, had taken my hand.

“Alright, I’m hopping off for the night,” he said to me, choking on his own blood as he did so. “Have a good night, y’all.”

“GG, boys, no RE,” chuckled a nearby enemy unit.

I lowered my weapon. My friends—my brothers—deserved better than that. If I was going out, I was taking those motherfuckers with me.

I planted the bomb and started the timer. I was preparing to run when I was hit with a flashbang. Blind and disoriented, I fired my gun and frantically swung my knife. When the blindness finally subsided, I was met with something far worse. Right in front of me, there

lay a live fragmentation grenade. I dove as far as I could in the seconds I had. A deafening explosion rang out as everything went white.

I awoke hours later, my wounds being treated by our finest medics. I thought to ask about the rest of my squad, but the forlorn looks on the faces of the doctors desperately attempting to mend my wounds told me all I needed to know. I thought about my lost friends,

**“I thought about why or how I had been spared, what could have happened after I had blacked out.”**

mourned for them. I thought about why or how I had been spared, what could have happened after I had blacked out. Before I could think on it further, I stopped myself. Something was wrong. I realized I couldn’t feel my legs. I looked down and, to my horror, saw that I no longer had any legs. I remember thinking one thing:

“Fucking noobs.”



Paul Sohmer

## Images From A Jail

*“When you remove color, you have to look a little bit more into what you’re looking at.”*

- Preston Byk

Bible on a bench

in front of the release desk.

No one around—

religion left behind,

where they found it.



---

“I worked for the Broward Sheriff’s office for twenty-three years. I worked at the release desk for about ten. We would release a large amount of people every night. A lot of times, at the end of the releases, I would see Bibles on the bench—and I thought to myself, when people come into booking, it’s one of the first things they ask for. It hit me this one day, and I just started writing.”

-Paul Sohmer

*Melissa Torres*

## Poème

I

Sometimes poetry is soothing  
smells of eucalyptus and epsom salt  
tastes of warm milk and honey before bed  
when life presses at your temples  
threatening to fill you with flammable gas  
it will gently release your bottled danger  
into an array of rhymes and syllables  
like a diary laid open, shared without shame

II

Poetry is lavender potpourri in my closet  
How do they make that? Who knows,  
but some first world comfort  
comes in keeping it around  
Throw pillows with “live laugh love”  
an organic brand of dog food  
Is all of this really necessary?

III

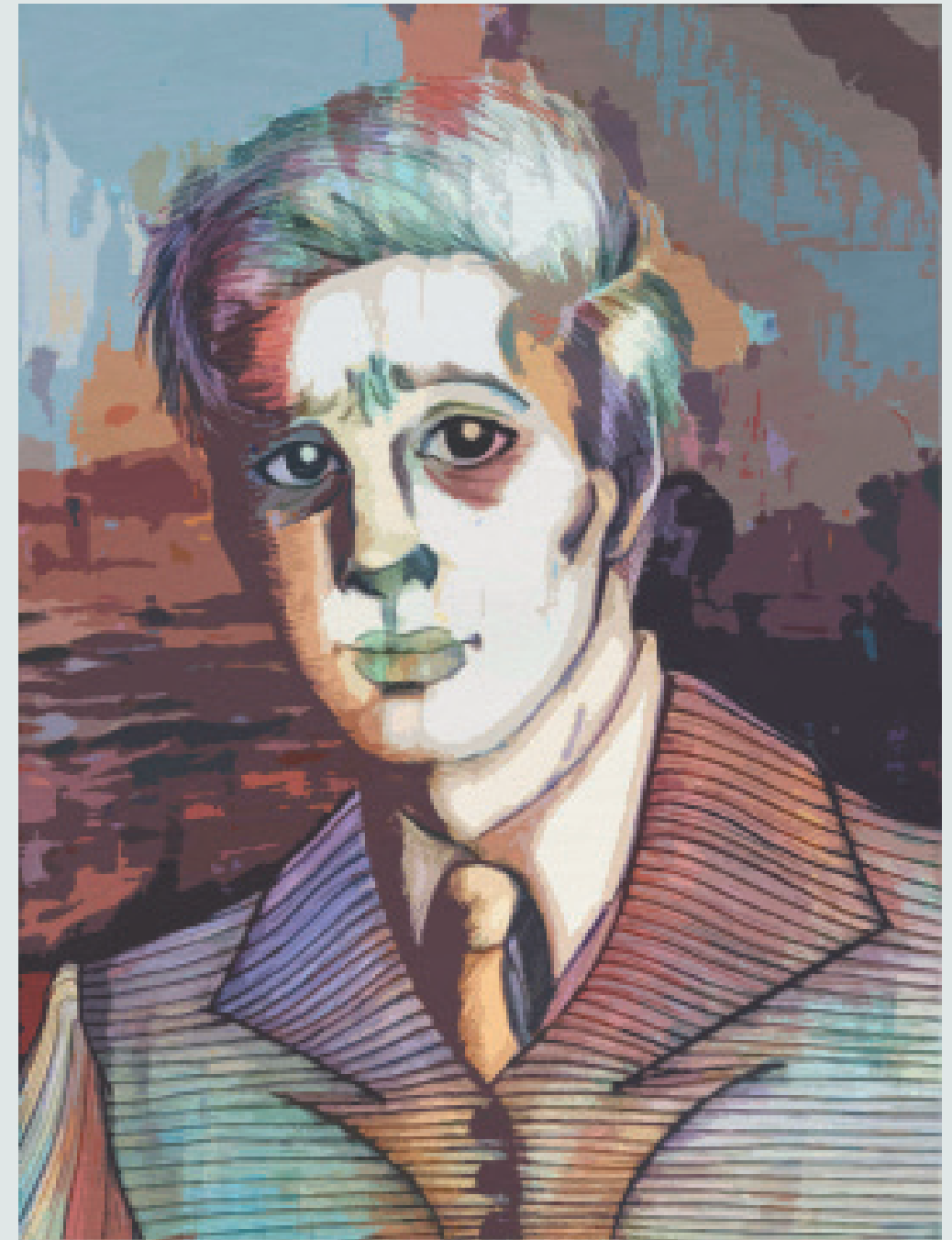
I read over my words and cringe  
My eyes roll and I rip them to shreds  
into fragments, into syllables, into letters  
until suddenly it never existed  
I read everything I cannot recreate.  
Words words words.



*Barbara Bachmann*

## **Dark December Afternoon**

Falling pearls of sky  
fill these empty human shells  
with stolen Sunlight





***“Livin’ your life and just telling your story. Same old stuff.”***

- Christopher Welling

**BACKWAY** Preston Byk, Digital Photography



Sydney Hayon

## Althaelab the Fox

With her there is the potential to be full. She is a box, emptied out and unpacked on the cold tile of my living room floor. She is cunning, complicated, and all alone—and she likes it this way. There is always space within her to walk around, to grow, to speak with conviction. I have never had the space for a voice in this body. The parameters of this skin have limited me to be the empty Arab girl, with no place for my own thoughts. Only thoughts of men, stronger and smarter than I.

She is surrounded by poems and rolling papers. There is always more to learn and never enough time to learn it all. She moves with arms outstretched, embracing new ideas—new persons—with vigor. I sit alone in my house and wait until mealtimes, ready to prepare food for the men of my family. I am kind and unopinionated; she is

unapologetic and inherently politicized. While I am washing vegetables, she is cleaning a backwood and dancing alone in this void. She is unafraid of what her joy looks like. I have never seen mine.

I am afraid that eventually I will disappear, and she will be all that is left.

My grandmother calls her *Althaelab*, the fox. I have been starving her for years, this fox. She is baring hungry teeth and waiting for the right moment to strike. It is not enough to feed her the cultural scraps my father has left for us to share, tainted by his hands. I can feel her stomach shredding itself into the crumbling pieces of my failing body. She is frail, but her mind is much stronger than mine. Slowly I feel this skeleton growing new bones. Maybe, that is her way of telling me this body has room for us both.

---

“I feel like I’m consistently going through these waves of not feeling anything, but it’s completely normal to feel stuck. I’ve learned that focusing on things that I know how to do, like writing or art, allows me to move out of [these waves] in a different aspect. So maybe I’m still feeling stuck, but momentarily it’s gone and having that consistently allows that moment to expand; I get to escape it.”

-Sydney Hayon

**“While I am washing vegetables, she is cleaning a backwood and dancing alone in this void.”**

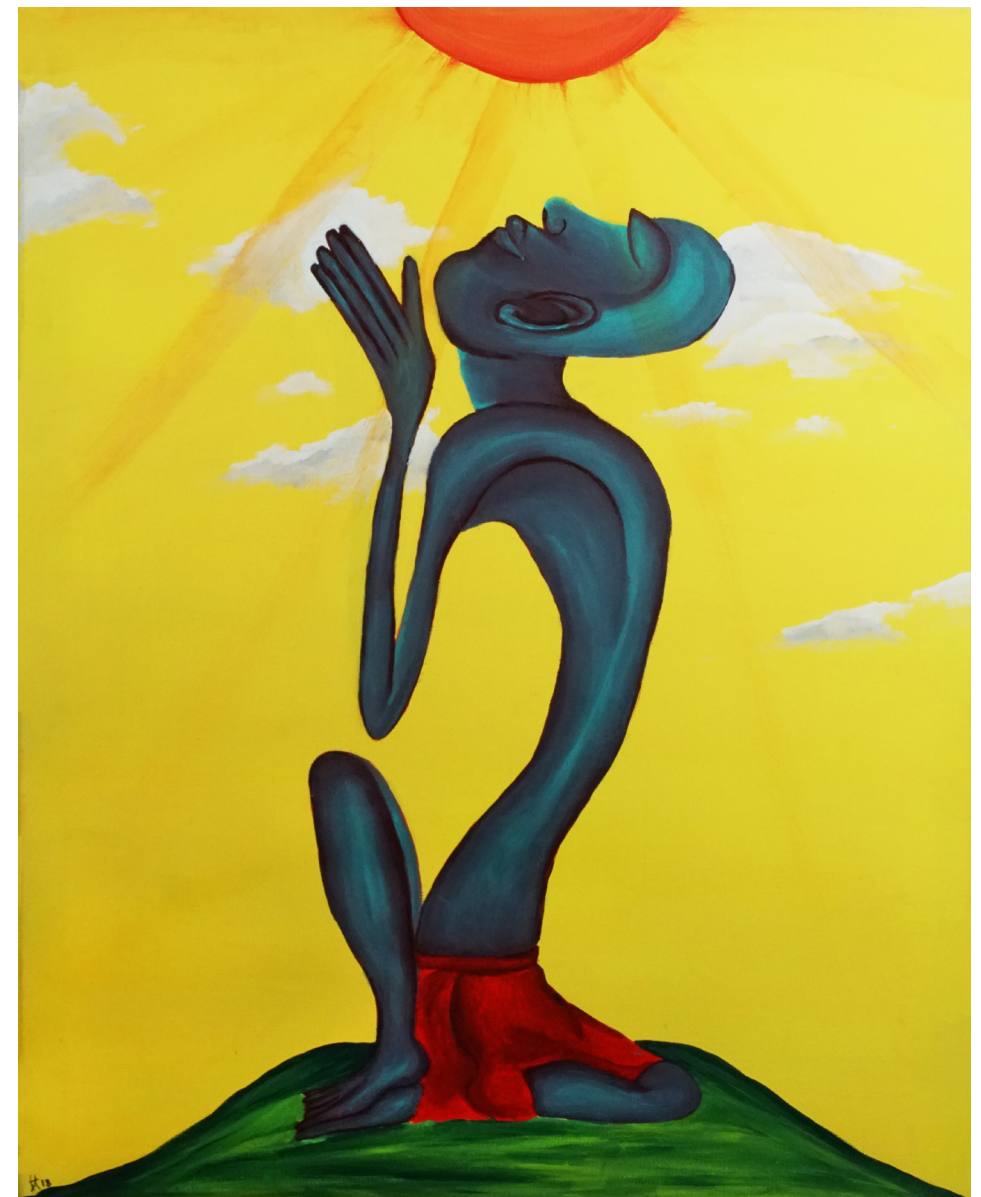
***From “Althaelab the Fox”***



“Once I was in the [art] classes, it was like someone speaking my language, like eating for the first time. I’m still discovering myself as I tap into the art world and explore it. It’s exciting—anything I dabble with that deals with color in any type of medium. Once I

get going, it’s fun. It’s fun to work with color and shapes and make things that are beautiful—to bring a vision you have in your mind so that other people can appreciate it and benefit from it.”

-Rosa Irene Moore





Gavin Louis

## In the Window of the Christian Bakery

Are you the bounty I was looking for?

Shot to death with the winds four score.

I'm tired; I don't want to do this anymore.

Four score you called me and I let it ring.

To me my phone sings songs.

I'm not loud enough for you to hear me.

I mumble as if my voice leaves me,

a two sided mirror

I can't see you; you can't see me.

I only see myself. I study

every flaw, every error.

I get a sponge and a bucket

of boiling oil. Watch my skin melt.

I don't know why God

doesn't hate me, but he doesn't.

He grabs the skin

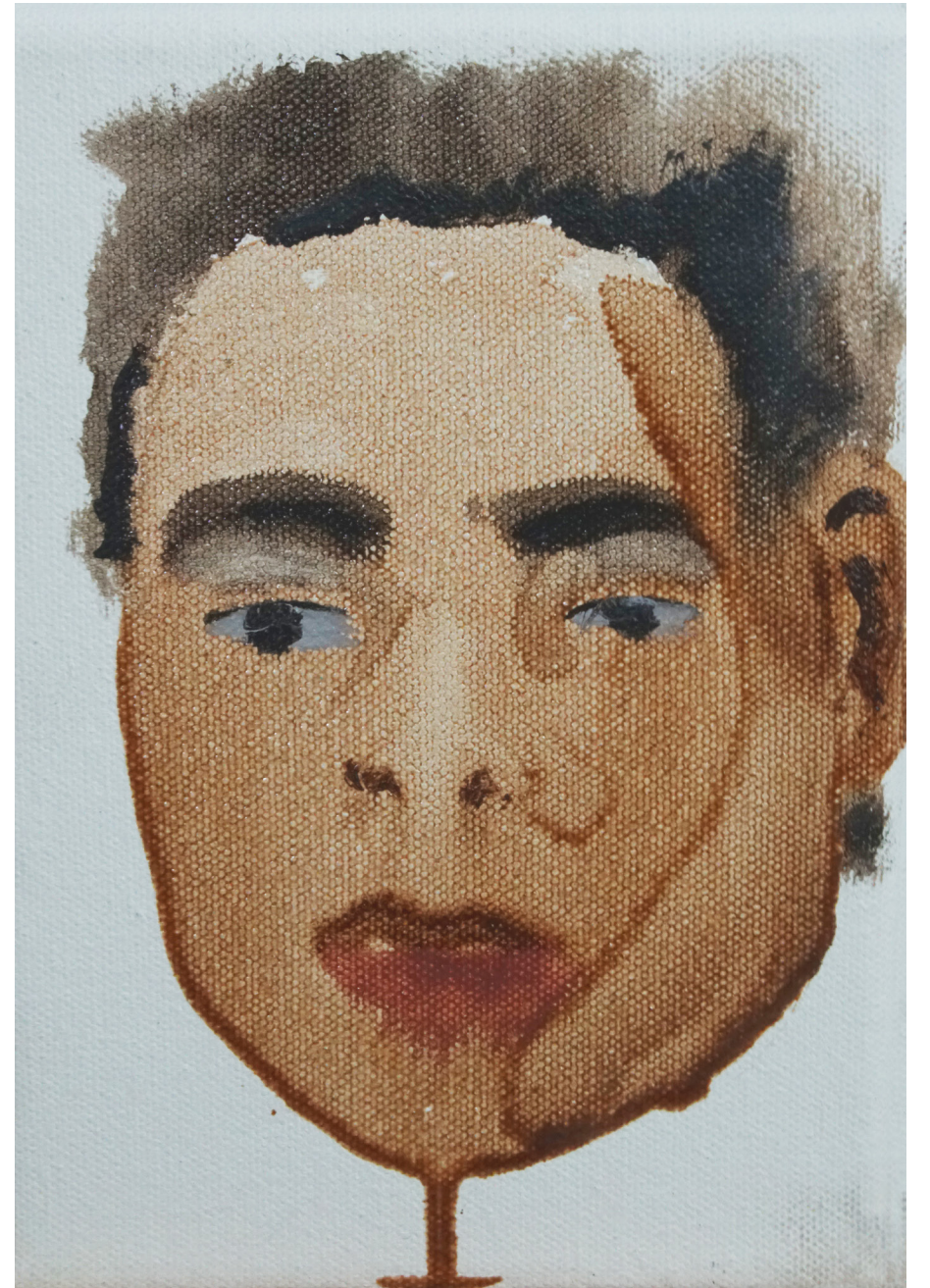
like clay he smooths it out.

He lays it out across my skeleton like fondant icing.

I'm tempted to take a bite of my sweetness

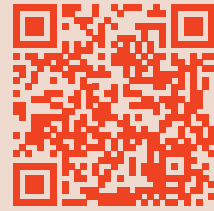
he grabs a wooden spoon and says no.

no one will devour my creation.



URIEL Emmanuel Loveau, Oil on Canvas

# FEATURED STUDENT FILMS



*PUZZLEMAN - Sergio Gallego*

The mysterious Puzzleman faces the most challenging puzzle yet: an all-white puzzle.



PUZZLES. LIFE IS A PUZZLE. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS A PUZZLE CAN BE COMPLETED.



*HEIGHT DIFFERENCES IN ROMANCE - Charbel Zepeda*

A charismatic grasshopper tries to woo a handsome gentleman in this silent comedy.



TRY GOING A DAY WITHOUT [ART]  
SEE HOW VACANT LIFE IS.

Learn the basics of the printmaking process with Jan Johnson.



*PRINTMAKING - Laurel Johnson*





**SEARCHING FOR AN IDEA** Kelvin Goncalves, Film Photography

*Andrew Acosta*

## Consummate

Four o'clock struck under the nightly glow of an early Saturday morning. Everette and Milena sat dormant in the parking lot of a twenty-four hour Walgreens staring longingly at a butterfly fumbling landings on the windshield of Milena's car. It appeared to be struggling with an injury, indeed dying. Fifteen minutes had elapsed in watchful silence, as the couple sat, bathed in a somewhat palpable blue aided by the illumination of a swinging blue crucifix from the rear-view mirror. This silence in particular was deafening. In fact, neither minded the likes of their favorite song humming vapid in the background; instead they fixated upon the butterfly, mutually in dismay at the inexorable moment that lie ahead of them. The silence became too great to bear. Thence, Everette gave in, looking now at Milena as he turned down the radio:

"Do you think it would've been better if it had never hatched at all?"

"What do you mean?" intoned Milena, her eyes remaining

fixed on the butterfly.

“Well, It’s just—it’s dying. It’s dying in the parking lot of Walgreens at God knows what time is it,” he flashed a glance at the time, “four-fifteen in the morning, and, to make it all worse, with an audience.”

“That’s not up to us to decided, Everette. Besides, it having been born and having hatched are disparate. Are you suggesting it should’ve never been born?” she transitioned her stare over to Everette, finding a flinty look on his face.

Milena continued, “Butterflies are more than just eye-candy. They do a shitload of necessary stuff. You know, I learned once that butterflies are actually indicators of a healthy environment—and even ecosystems—because they pollinate. Asking for it to’ve never been born would also mean you extirpate the homes and food of other creatures like bees and hummingbirds, which—”

“I don’t know what *extirpate* means,” butted Everette.

“It means you destroy something entirely.”

“Well, I’m not asking for all that. I’m just saying that it seems to be living an unfortunate life that would’ve been better had it not—hatched.”

“Did you listen to a single word I said?” stiffening her voice, “It’s not a matter of its haplessness; it’s what it did to contribute to the world prior to this. This is most unfortunate.”

She gestured to the butterfly now lying motionless, pulsing to the rhythm of its death. “But it doesn’t abate the greatness of whatever it accomplished before! You can’t just deduce that it’s dying in vain when in fact we could be witnessing a martyrdom! Chances are it’s dying because of *our* gasses and *our* decisions, in which it simply did the best it could, and quite possibly happily!” Milena erupted into a magisterial presence, quelling Everette unto desisting the topic.

“I suppose you’re right. I’m just tired is all. Do you think they’ll be open?”

There was a slight silence that brooded following the lack of her reply, which intimated to Everette that Milena was speaking with an intense sentiment he believed to be pertinent to her own state.

“Are you okay?” he asked unctuously, to which he again received no reply. “Alright, well, they say you have seventy-two hours to take it anyway. I doubt they’re even open, honestly. You know, this isn’t the first time this has happened to me. I’m sorry I seem so emotional about all this. It just really affects me, like it does to you too.”

She winced, then paused for a brief moment with a countenance mirroring the puny carcass that lied like a boulder on the windshield. Eventually, she reached into her bag and retrieved twenty-five dollars, grabbing Everette’s hand and planting it forcibly into his palm.

“They better be open,” she demanded. “There’s my half.”

**“She winced, then paused for a brief moment with a countenance mirroring the puny carcass that lied like a boulder on the windshield.”**

*From “Consummate”*

“And if they’re not?”

“They better be.”

Everette pocketed the money and exited the car, unveiling a nightly silence that wrung the death of the butterfly even more abysmal. He began pattering to the door tiredly, wondering what pharmacist would ever work at four-eighteen on a Saturday morning.

Andrew Acosta

## Entangled

She exists on a canvas of cosmic latency—  
her as the brush,  
that with each step upstrokes sand  
with animate bristles that kiss  
like the press of indissoluble lips.

Oh moon, beckoning moon,  
you are stupidly mistaken  
to think you could adorn her  
amongst this sea  
of impenetrable black;  
for she scintillates with color,  
enlivening darkness the way  
varying marigold shades do  
at perpetual dawn,  
lowering human jaws  
at the wonder of whatever  
could lie beyond.

Tonight, we lie soundly on sand;  
two forked droplets  
that leapt from clouds, in arbitrary rainfall,  
to land the junction of a destined puddle—  
a puddle of planets  
all at the disposition of your brush,  
now painting the air with gentle hums  
that smith new worlds with each exhale.  
I graze my fingers down the cosmos  
of your skin and can find no end;  
earth looking the smallest it ever will.



**SUBLIME** Rosa Irene Moore, Gouache on Bristol



Haley Diaz

## For Grandma Norys

your granddaughter, the gringa

There was much lost in translation.

You were trying to teach me spanish,

mom and dad were trying to teach me english.

I slowly began saying things like *sumbrella*.

One thing that has never been lost,

on its way to you, on its way to me,

is the love we have for each other.

Wherever you are,

I can still feel our language

traveling back and forth.

## Para Abuela Norys

tu nieta, la gringa

Se perdió mucho en la traducción.

Tu estabas tratando de enseñarme español,

mamá y papá estaban tratando de enseñarme inglés.

lentamente comencé a decir cosas como *sumbrella*.

La única cosa que nunca se ha perdido,

en camino a ti, en camino hacia mí,

es el amor que nos tenemos.

Donde quiera que vaya,

todavía puedo sentir nuestro lenguaje

viajando de aquí para allá.



CROSS ROADS Samuel Batista, Photography







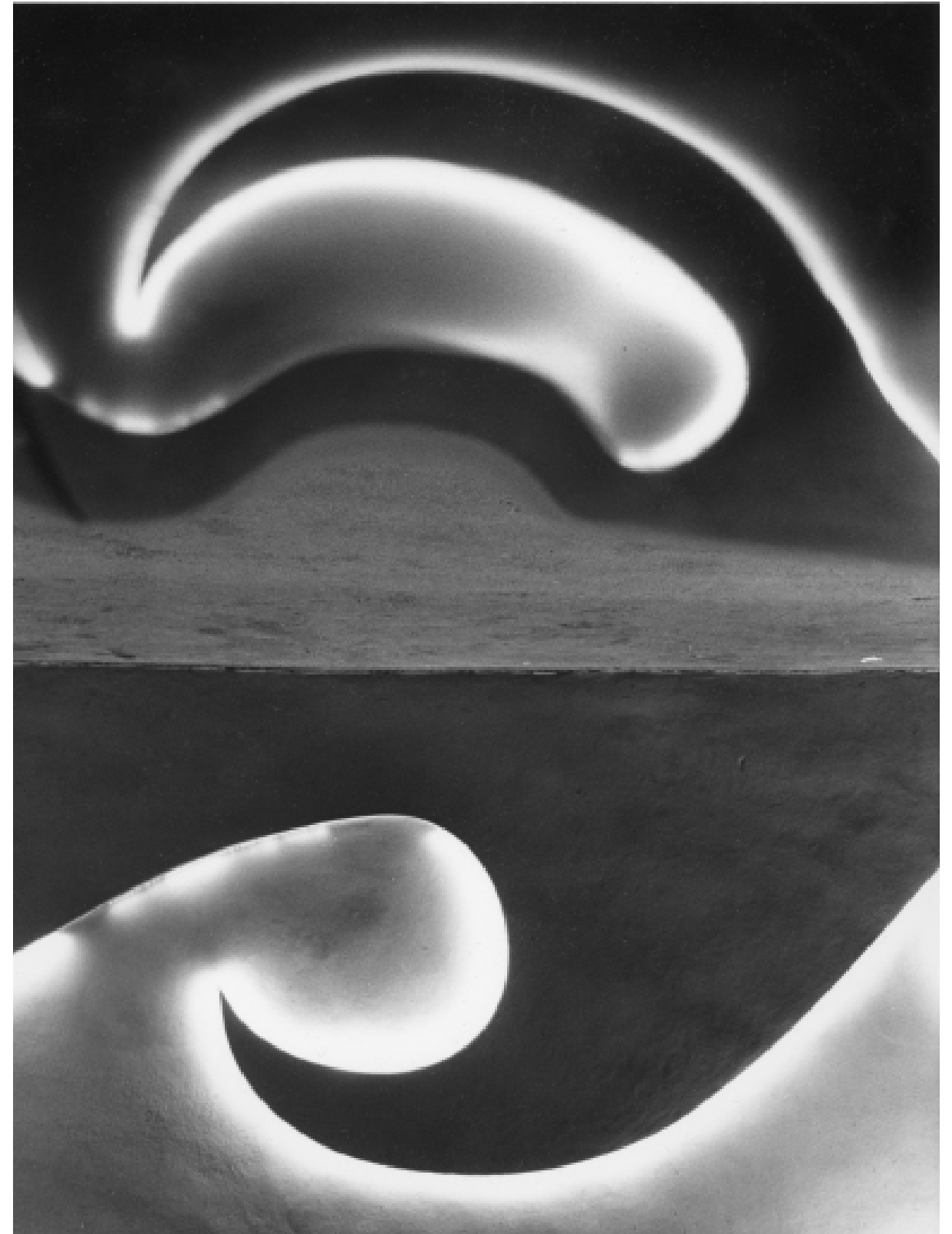
Melissa Torres

## Hijos De

Sometimes I'm Mexican,  
sometimes I'm American.  
Depends on where I am  
with who I am,  
but never both—not really.  
Ni de aqui, ni de aya.

Doesn't matter how you got here,  
how much you dry your back,  
how tired your bones are  
from marching through walls  
with children tucked under your arm  
only to be stopped by a barrier  
of words and glass.

You might escape the skin tone filter,  
but they will always find you.  
Following your father into his workplace of twenty years  
asking why he speaks Spanish with his coworkers  
or in a pick-up at midnight  
yelling at your mother about her green card.  
You laugh because your blood  
has boiled a thousand times too many  
and we all know this is how things go.



*Sydney Hayon*

## Snake Skin

of that skin i can say  
you have felt every inch of it,  
and forever you can hold it,  
but it has been empty of me for some time.

of that skin i can say  
it was not surprising to find  
you had ignored its hollowness  
stuck pins in it, hung it on the wall  
with all of your other beautiful things.

of that skin i can say  
there was just enough space  
for me to stuff myself into,  
for breathing to take place—not speaking.  
no room for a voice within that skin.  
never as wonderful to beat a dead thing  
as it was tragic to be one.



Jordan Bermudez

## The Worst Word Ever Created

I remember my eyes barely reaching the horizon of the car door where it met the window. Neon lights shone from hovering buildings, as unfamiliar faces spoke, their voices floating above the radio waves and into my ears. Thin, but heavy, like the condensation of my breath on the window.

We had left the amusement park. Our screams and laughter left behind with the unobtainable prizes. I was told the man driving was my cousin. He was related to my mother. They grew up together. In New York perhaps, or maybe it was when she moved down to Florida.

His son and I sat in the back of the car, grasping the night tightly in our thoughts. We shared instances with one another—our minds innocent time machines, traveling back to moments of excitement.

That's when he said, "You want to hear the

**"The sentence dragged on as he built up to the word. The worst word imaginable"**

*From "The Worst Word Ever Created"*

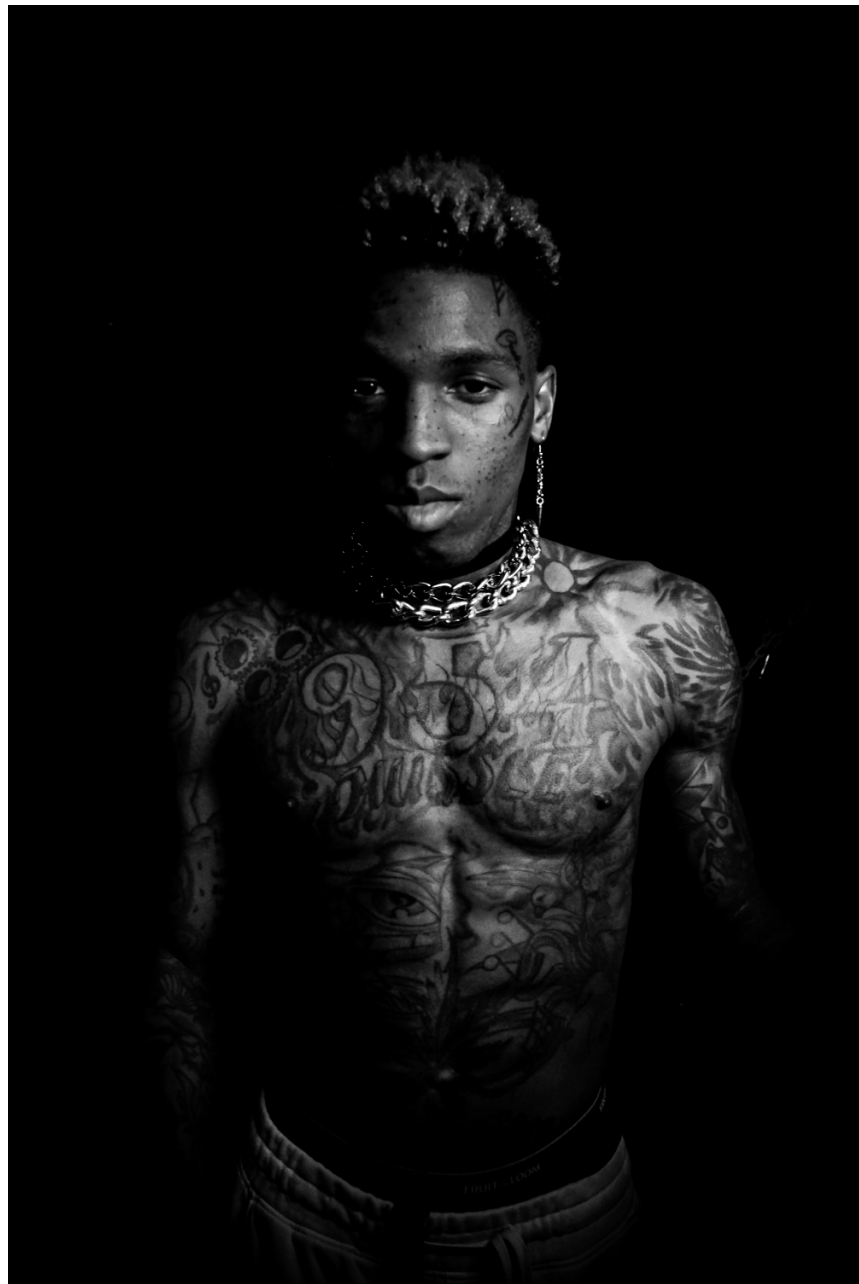
worst word ever created?" I leaned in closer. A long enigmatic sentence began to erupt from his mouth. His words passed by my understanding like a foreign language, covered in a hazy gloss.

The sentence dragged on as he built up to the word. The worst word imaginable. I didn't even know such a concept was possible. I felt the buildings closing in on me. I swear they were smirking, threatening my life as they prepared to stomp onto the car.

With a sense of foreboding, he looked toward his father, who was concealed behind the driver's seat. The sentence that built up to the word had escaped me. All that remained was the pressure it made me feel. His eyes left his father, to look ominously into mine:

"Fuck."





*Jordan Bermudez*

## Wake

My grandfather's body,  
lifeless in his casket,  
exuberated nothing.

Mimicking him,  
I heard not a single word  
of the pastor's speech.  
Still, a foreign language  
impacted my benighted mind.

Gracias Dios,  
aprendere por ti.



*Sabrina Taveras*

## The Words I Rehearsed

The words I rehearsed all through the flight are fading from my mind. They're overshadowed now, like a starry sky overwhelmed by buzzing city lights, eclipsed by my anxious steps that interrupt the chirping crickets and whispering winds that reign over the open-air hallways. Every sting of northern breeze and every pile of muddy, lumpy snow serves an unrelenting reminder that I'm a long way from home. The hall lights line the way just for me, but some of them flicker and dim unwelcomingly. It is not enough to discourage me from my purpose here.

I don't know how far to walk before my father's door will come into view. I have nothing more than an apartment number to guide

me. I have no idea what his place will look like or even what *he* will look like. With my nerves on edge I can't focus enough to count back to when I last saw him. I press forward with a tense brow and my quivering chin held as high as I can muster. I keep hoping for a sign of familiarity to cling to: his face, his voice, one of those jazz songs he would whistle along to so often, something that I can recognize as *his*. My heart is beating restlessly. I focus on my breathing to overcome my bubbling anxiety, and think about him—about the time before he left.

"Hey, that sounds better." His words resonate in my head as I slip from reality and into my memories. I sit in the safe embrace of

my childhood home again. “Let’s hear that one more time.”

His mellow voice danced to the melodies of the piano lessons that he had hosted for me through my childhood. I can almost feel the ivory keys vibrate under my fingers again, almost hear the arpeggios of Bach’s Prelude in C Major spread across the living room like the warm rays of a dewy spring sunrise. I remember sitting on the piano stool next to my dad, my dainty feet dangling just a little above the ground. He used to tap his foot to the tempo of the songs, guiding me like

a metronome as I often stumbled through. Or he would drum away at his thighs, enthusiastically taking the role of background drummer during my private concerts.

My father was an avid musician, most proficient with the drums. His side of the family always had music in their blood. Even though I was passionate about music, playing an instrument was never quite my thing. Still, I endeavored to do my best with every piece I played. Soon soft, melodious tunes from the piano keys became a part of my home’s atmosphere, even though he

**“Whenever he went quiet, I’d scan his expression for a sparkle in his eye, a tug at his lips, a movement of his cheeks—any visual sign of pride.”**

*From “The Words I Rehearsed”*

was almost never there to hear them. I developed a habit of glancing at his face out of the corner of my eye during our sessions. Whenever he went quiet, I’d scan his expression for a sparkle in his eye, a tug at his lips, a movement of his cheeks—any visual sign of pride. He would turn to me and smile. Seeing his smile my face would imitate his, then his lips would curl into a soft grin that would bring solace to any doubts I had on the progress of my ability. I realized years later that the only reason I practiced so hard while he was away was to impress him the next time he’d come home and listen to me play. It wasn’t until he stopped coming home that I stopped trying. Looking back now at every time I studied his face, I wish I had been wise enough to see past his surface.

I chose my most vivid memory of my father and held on to it as tightly as I could. I feared that with age all my memories of him would turn cold. Sitting there, in that piano stool next to me, he was the best person he could’ve and should’ve been, before the endless business trips, before the secret affairs that broke my mother’s heart, before their marriage and our family broke apart.

A sharp and unfamiliar wind bites at my reddened cheeks blowing my reminiscences away. I climb the staircase to the second floor of the building, every step slightly heavier than the last. I run my fingertips over the rusting handrails, but quickly recoil when my hand meets the stinging sensation of icy metal. In other circumstances, I would have rejoiced at the opportunity

**“Never did I think my first time seeing snow would weigh so heavy on my heart, so taxing on my soul.”**

to visit another country with such a contrasting atmosphere from the small tropical island I call home. Never did I think my first time seeing snow would weigh so heavy on my heart, so taxing on my soul.

My hunched shoulders shield my shivering frame from the night air, as I bring my hands to my neck in vain hopes of defrosting my fingers. My thoughts build up as thick as the piling snow encrusting the parking lot below. My rehearsed words become rimed with questions for him; I’m almost afraid to hear the answers. Questions about him, about mom, and about myself: what really happened to us as a family? Did he ever truly love my mother, at least before the divorce? Are his memories of me fond or regretful? Was I still important to him anymore, or was the older me a stranger to him now?

I come to an abrupt stop in front of a door with a bronze plate mounted on its frame. The numbers ‘209’ are engraved on its dull surface.

This is the place.

I stand there and stare at the cherry wood. The last remaining barrier separating me from my father. My legs remain rigid, nailed to



**“My roaring, chaotic mind brings all manner of emotions into my vulnerable heart. I don’t know whether I should be glad to see him or whether I should brace myself for confrontation as soon as that door opens.”**

62 the spot. I want to reach out, clench my fist in defiance to my fears and knock at the door, almost as a call for help, but my hands won’t stop trembling. I glance down at them; they make me look like I’m freezing. In reality, I’m covered in a cold sweat that clings to my skin like the thick coat that I so desperately want to free myself from.

My roaring, chaotic mind brings all manner of emotions into my vulnerable heart. I don’t know whether I should be glad to see him or whether I should brace myself for confrontation as soon as that door opens. I watched my mother struggle to pick up the pieces of the heart he had broken. He crushed her trust under his heel on his way out the door and into a life with another woman that wouldn’t even last. She endured days and nights of loneliness. She doubted her ability go on alone after a life with him, all while doing her best to protect me. She kept me from seeing her shed a single tear.

But I couldn’t hate him. Something told me he was never happy with the decisions he’d

made, that he felt cheating on my mother had been a mistake. Perhaps it was the sadness hidden in his eyes as he handed me a fake smile—the last one I would see from him for the next eleven years. My fondest childhood memories included him in some way. His jazz and synth pop filling the living room as he zipped back and forth through the kitchen, cooking to his heart’s content. The piano lessons I would look forward to every time he walked through the front door. I want to make him happy, to make him proud of me. I can’t resent a man that made me feel the way he did.

I pace restlessly in front of the door like a caged tiger, exasperated at the strings that pull at my heart in opposite ways, tearing me apart now that I was so close to him. I stop and lean my back against the door, tapping the back of my head against it in my frustration. I try hopelessly to hold back my tears, taking deep breaths to calm myself down. Uncertainty has me at my limit.

My heart skips a beat as I feel the door

**“Uncertainty has me at my limit.”**

pull away from my back. Startled, I jump forward to regain my balance. I turn and meet a pair of brown eyes that look far too much like mine. His laughter lines are deeper and his hair more gray. Somehow it suits him all too perfectly, in combination with that soft grin that hasn’t changed one bit.

“Dad?” I cry out softly. My voice quivers as warm tears threaten to roll down my flushed cheeks.

63 He remains quiet; there is no real need for words. A glimmer in his eye and a widening smile is all I see before I wrap my arms tightly around him in a long embrace. With a single glance he had turns back time, transforming me into the eight year old little girl who so desperately wanted to see her father again for another piano lesson.

He returns us to a time when things were simpler, when we were happy, when we were a family. In a heartbeat my head falls silent. He holds me in his arms as I clutch and stain the fabric of his shirt with my salty tears, caught in an embrace that feels so familiar and yet so different. I’m surrounded by the warmth of his arms and the escaping heat from the open door behind us. I’ve come home again.

Carlos Abad got into art in elementary school when his teacher showed him works of Dali and Kahlo. He's been slowly working to create art.

Barbara Bachmann is someone who gets lost inside their head much, too often for their own good.

Samuel Batista wants to share with the world their art and passion for photography.

Jordan Bermudez loves to sing and play rhythm guitar. He writes poetry, comics, and short stories on the side.

Preston Byk recounts that when he's out taking photos, he tends to just pick a direction and start walking. He wanders for a few hours and takes photos of things that capture his eye.

Haley Diaz strives to teach Latinx Americans that they can embrace their roots and be American at the same time. She believes there is no such thing as not being Hispanic enough.

Sergio Gallego is a local filmmaker and musician working on becoming a cinematographer and content creator.

Claudette Goico considers herself an inventive painter, sculptress, and designer.

Kelvin Goncalves feels that the art behind traditional film photography has opened his eyes.

Alejandro Gonzales is a comic book guy trying to be better every day.

Sydney Hayon likes to try and replicate the fluidity of nature in the work she creates.

Laurel Johnson is a film student who lives to write, direct, and experient with mobile film-making.

Claire Joseph began to take an interest in all creative media at the age of four and hasn't stopped since.

Gabriel Laracuenta is a United States Marine Corps veteran who has found inner peace in painting.

Colby Larrucea works with limited materials in creative ways to create obscene, original pictures that get the mind to wonder.

Raymundo Lleverino is an IT student that loves riding his motorcycle and playing video games, but that doesn't mean he doesn't have a soft side.

Gavin Louis says writing is a hobby, and he's got more in store.

Emmanuel Loveou paints biblical paintings and portraits of BC students on campus. He feels all people deserve representation.

Corey Lovett focuses on having his work represent the personal experience of being an African American male in America.

Maxbarry Maurisset believes that from still images to moving pictures, he must search for the truth and the imaginary.

Barbara Mello is a Brazilian girl on a journey of self-discovery through her creativity.

Alexander Miller is always learning to appreciate more and keep pushing through every day until something works.

Irene Moore loves to dabble with color and shapes and make things that are beautiful.

John Seminario can often be found discussing or writing about video games he's played or movies he's watched.

Paul Sohmer has stories to tell and needs to tell them.

Sabrina Taveras believes her demons are what inspire her to create.

Tiffany Tompkins uses art as an expression of her soul.

Melissa Torres is a college freshman taking a whack at whatever passes by.

Magdalena Van Thienen believes the definition of a successful artist has no answer.

Christopher Welling is a musician who is finding the rhythm of visual art and design.

Ory Yaniv is aspiring to connect with more people through her art and designs.

Charbel Zepeda finds his muse for storytelling in humanity.



**SIMONE KELLY**  
Likes homemade cards with  
big handwriting



**NATALIE LAURENT**  
Her heart is made of pure gold



**PAULA VALERO**  
Radiates love through  
all she does



**TOMAS RODRIGUEZ**  
Won't stop talking about his dog



**SYDNEY BOUWENS**  
Smells like art



**ZOË "VINCENT" NOUEL**  
One day I'll touch the world  
with bare hands even if it burns



**ANDREW ACOSTA**  
A smile can be anything from  
a hello to a saving grace



**MADELYN GIBSON**  
Will take the world even if  
it's not offered to her

FROM THOSE WHO  
BROUGHT YOU  
THIS MAGAZINE,  
WE THANK YOU.

