

4-1-2016

Archarios, 2016

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Office of Student Life, "Archarios, 2016" (2016). *Archarios Literary Art Magazine*. 43.
<https://digitalcommons.coastal.edu/archarios-magazine/43>

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A R C
H A R
I O S

twenty-five

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H A R
I O S

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PREFACE

Archarios has been a proponent of student work since its revival in 1990, and has showcased many wonderful artists and writers over the years. This year we celebrate our silver anniversary and say goodbye to our long-time advisor Paul Olsen. Archarios is produced by students for students and will continue to provide a creative outlet for the students of Coastal Carolina University. Art is more than just a painting or a piece of prose or poetry; it is the essence of a human life. We encourage everyone to live their art and hope to continue to inspire future artists and writers.

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BEST OF SHOW

“When I say artist I mean the man who is building things - creating molding the earth - whether it be the plains of the west - or the iron ore of Penn. It’s all a big game of construction - some with a brush - some with a shovel - some choose a pen.”

Jackson Pollock



FIRST PLACE ARTWORK

TIME

Alicia Marie

Photography is one of my passions! I recently took this photo in my studio lighting class. Its purpose is to represent my life and photography. I have a lot of time invested in photography, and it certainly does take up a lot of my time. I have learned so much over the past few years. My favorite thing about photography is that once you think you've got it all figured out a new method or style is discovered, and it is the best feeling.





FIRST PLACE LITERATURE

NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE HIM ANYWAY

Richard Wainright

I examined the difficulties of a person that has “paranormal” abilities, and the helplessness of knowing things before they unfold.

Jacob was ten when he realized that not everyone could see the future. He had known that he had that ability ever since he could remember, but didn't think much about it until that fateful year. He thought his ability to know the future was like his sense of smell or taste; the capability always existed but he only noticed it when something smelled or tasted really good or really bad. He simply knew things that were going to occur. He could not control when it happened. It just happened. But it always happened. Sometimes it was just a little thing like knowing the phone was going to ring and who was going to be calling, or that his mom would break a glass in the kitchen. Other times it was a more meaningful event, like a neighbor's dog getting run over by a garbage truck, what he was getting for Christmas, or an earthquake in India. Even though he didn't know exactly where India was, other than far away, he could feel the terror and see the destruction of the quake as if it was in his Brooklyn neighborhood.

The mistake he made was telling someone. One evening, just before bedtime, he frantically warned his dad not to drive to the 7-Eleven for a pack of Marlboro's. "You can't go dad! The man is going to rob it. He has a gun. He will shoot you. Please, don't go!" Jacob screamed.

His dad laughed as he grabbed his car keys from the cluttered breakfast bar. As he was walking out the door he said, "You have a great imagination, Jake. I will be fine. You can stay up until I get back. I'll bring you some ice cream. Chocolate chip?" The door slammed before Jacob could answer.

Less than an hour later the Korean store clerk's body was encircled with a chalk outline, and his dad was in an ambulance with a bullet wound in his shoulder and a confused look on his face. The police were equally baffled when they apprehended the shooter the next day based entirely on Jacob's detailed description; including the license plate number of the getaway car and the scorpion tattoo on the robber's neck. His dad, being in shock much of which was not gunshot induced, could provide little information to the authorities but could clearly identify the culprit from a police lineup.

From that moment on everything was different. Jacob was talked about on the news. They used his soccer team picture in the broadcast. He hated that picture. It looked like he was picking his nose. Maybe he was. People were calling his house day and night, wanting to know who would win a ball game or what numbers to pick. No

one understood that it didn't work that way. Random images would just appear to him, as real as life. He had no control over when or where. It could happen in a dream, at the dinner table, or in the classroom. Sometimes he would go weeks without a premonition. Other times they would come so fast and frequently that it gave him a headache.

The kids at St. Rita's suddenly noticed him, when before he had been happily invisible. They called him a freak and a weirdo. One kid Evan, who he thought was his friend, stole his Han Solo lunch box and hid it saying "If you are so smart you will know where it is." Jacob never found it. But he knew that the boy had an uncle who did things to him that Jacob didn't even understand, but which made him feel sorry for Evan. Even the teachers, who were mostly nuns, looked at him warily and he was sure he heard whispered devotions and saw lots of hurried crossing as they passed by him in the halls. But the worst part was the way his parents looked at him. It was never the same again at home. He felt that they actually feared him. Father O'Shaughnessy once told him in Catechism that Catholics feared "anything they don't understand." Jacob hoped that mom and dad didn't regret adopting him.

Mrs. Howard, the school counselor, was not a nun and seemed more interested in his "gift" than afraid of it. She met with his parents and it was decided that he would undergo some trials to verify his ability, though she admitted being skeptical that this type of power (she called it ESP) actually existed.

Jacob was very nervous on the day he was to be probed. He didn't know what sort of exams he was going to be given, but he hated tests of any kind and just wanted to forget the whole thing. But as his grandpa once said, "You can't put toothpaste back in the tube, son." He thought that was funny but didn't understand exactly what it meant until now. For one of the assessments Mrs. Howard held up cards with symbols on them: stars, circles, triangles. He was supposed to guess which figure was on each card. He knew, just by seeing the look on the therapist, that he was not getting them right. In fact he failed all the tests, but he did know that Mrs. Howard's heart was going to stop working very soon. He decided to keep that information to himself. No one would believe him anyway. His advanced knowledge about the shooting was explained away as coincidence or happenstance. That was fine with Jacob. Mrs. Howard concluded that Jacob was not gifted with second sight and things at school soon returned back to normal. Things at home never did.

There was always uneasiness, and his dad always seemed to have a beer in his hand and his Marlboros were replaced by something that smelled worse. Life went on, but not for Mrs. Howard. When his mom told him that Mrs. Howard had died suddenly he acted surprised. He had learned to fake a perfect look of astonishment.

That was twenty years ago. Both of Jacob's parents had died of cancer in the last two years with no foreshadowing. He was now a successful New York stock broker, working in an office with an exquisite view of the Manhattan skyline. Though he never learned to harness his ability he heeded his intuition enough through the years to make some very successful investments for both him and his clients. A type of insider trading that no one would ever believe, nor prosecute him for.

When he met Sherry, the first day of his senior year at NYU, he knew immediately that she was the woman he would marry. He had learned never to doubt his insight. He had also discovered that nothing he could do could change the future. Life was a story that was already written, and any attempts by Jacob to edit it always failed. The fact that she was totally out of his league and had absolutely no interest in him did not bother Jacob at all. He ignored her right back. They married a week after graduation.

When Sherry told him excitedly a few months later that she was pregnant he had to expertly feign surprise and avoid letting it slip that it was a boy, Abraham. Jacob's "gift" was the only secret he ever kept from her. Well, the only important secret. The fact that he hated the hideous sweater she bought him for Christmas and a woman in his office had tried, unsuccessfully, to seduce him that same Christmas would die with him.

Sometimes Jacob was amused by the inevitability of his ability. When he and Sherry went to Dr. Gobel's office for her sonogram Dr. Gobel said "Everything looks fine," and asked, "Do you want to know the sex of your baby?"

"No," Sherry quickly replied. "I want it to be a surprise."

Jacob added "That is fine with me. She has names picked out for either. I have no say."

"Yes," Sherry said with a grin. "Esther if it is a girl and Bradley if it is a boy."

Jacob smiled inwardly. "Her mind is made up."

When she was eight months along she excitedly met him at the door as he arrived home from the city.

"I want to name him Abraham, if it is a boy. We can call him Abe."

"What made you think of that?" Jacob chuckled.

"I was just thinking what a strong name it is. I started to hate Bradley, but I still like Esther. What do you think?"

"I think it is perfect. Abe it is...or Esther," he whispered as he kissed her. He could almost taste the happiness on her lips.

Tonight six year old Abe awoke from a terrible dream and crawled into bed with his parents, shaking uncontrollably. As Abe related the

detailed horror of the dream Jacob realized that, as he had sometimes suspected but prayed was not true, his son shared the burden of premonition. Jacob had experienced the identical horrible vision that his son had recounted while looking out his office window that very afternoon. He had told his middle-aged assistant, Helen, to take tomorrow off, telling her only that they had worked hard on the Anderson account and deserved a break. She started to remonstrate until he revealed that he too was taking a personal day to spend in his Connecticut home with his wife and son. In all the time she had worked for Jacob, starting as a temp two years ago, he had never taken a day off. She accepted it without protest. "See you on Wednesday, boss." Helen hugged him and he feigned a convincing smile.

Jacob woke early from a fitful sleep and eased out of bed as not to disturb Sherry and Abe, who had finally dozed off. He went to the kitchen and poured himself a cup from Mr. Coffee, strong and black. He sat down at the hardwood desk in his paneled study. He looked at the blotter calendar where he had circled today's date, September 11, 2001. He had not told anyone what was to come. They would not believe him anyway. He sipped his hot Folgers and waited for the world to change.

“

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SECOND PLACE ARTWORK

IF THERE'S ONE RAT YOU SEE, THERE'S FIFTY YOU DON'T

Brittany Clark

There were always rats in his shop, finding their way in through the large metal doors from the tall grass. He used to set out old traps to catch them. Upon finding them half alive, struggling for life under the metal hammer, he would drop a brick to end the pitiful whines. Watching, a twinge of pain would enter me hearing the final squeak released. Now seeing his empty shoes on the doorstep, I cannot help thinking that given the chance; I would sit in his hammock and watch him drop the bricks once again.



SECOND PLACE LITERATURE

**CATHARSIS IN MY
WHITE BATHTUB**

Teagan Smith

This piece is the realization of losing one's innocence.

I sit and recall when
I kept my face above the water and stopped breathing;
I felt a most curious, daunting electricity and
I realized I could hear my eight year-old heart beat
Pulse through the cool water
In which I lay for an hour.
This afternoon,
I washed the salt from my stinging skin,
My blistered lip,
My glistening eyelashes.
The playful nostalgia of the once familiar thud
Captured me,
Haunted me,
Did not deliver me.
I stood,
Twisting my curves grotesquely,
Yet admiring a human body so beautiful
That I failed to realize
I had taken my own virginity.

THIRD PLACE ARTWORK

SUBURBIA'S SEED

Emily Loewinger

This piece is a self portrait. It is an overlay of a picture of a tree in my backyard that I took at dusk, and a portrait of my back. My goal with this piece was to represent the rising theme of man versus nature in today's society. Many of us tend to separate ourselves from nature through technology and other various activities, but what we often overlook is that nature is a part of us. Nature needs nurturing, just as we do. By disregarding it we are ignoring ourselves and our own necessary means of survival. This piece poses a vital question: will we grow with the Earth and the life surrounding us? Or just continue to wear it on our backs? Knowing subconsciously that it is there, but unable to see its true beauty.



THIRD PLACE LITERATURE

RECIPE FOR A HOPELESS WRITER

Jakob Haas

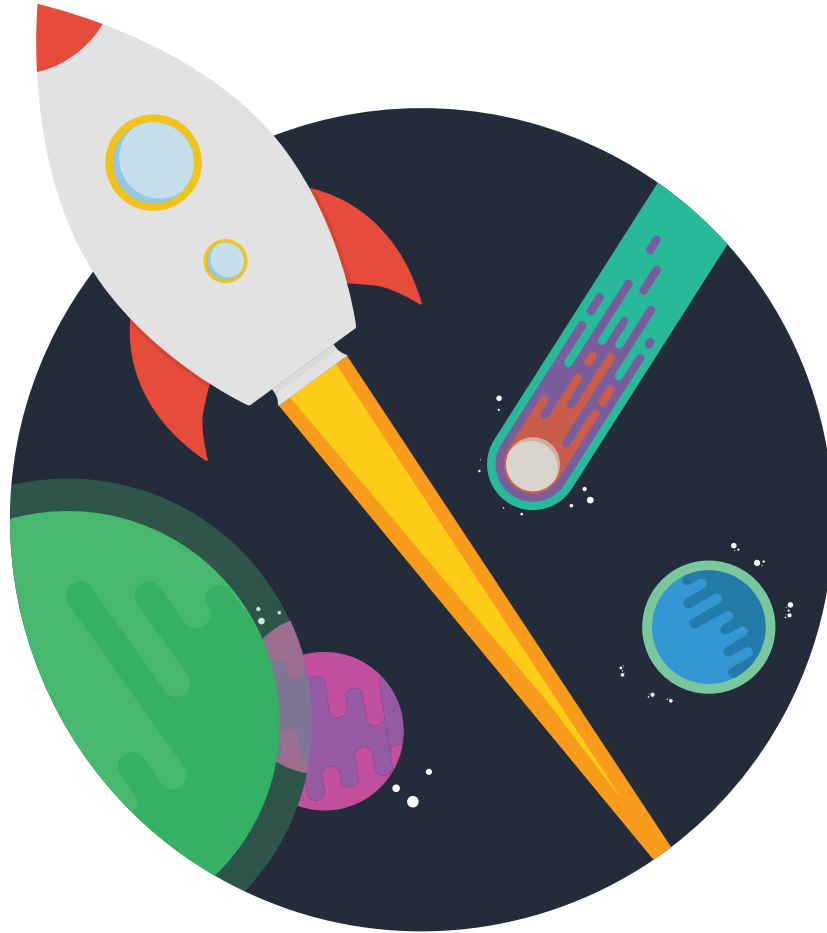
Did you hear what Linda Howitzer said about the Deacon's wife at the bake sale last Sunday? You didn't? Well, let me tell you, it was NOT very friendly.

Pre-heat oven to 400°. To start, take two white middle-class Americans, marry them early, and combine to produce an 11 lbs. baby boy. Heavily coat the boy in affection and support. Let sit. Once he has reached full cognitive recognition, remove the father and set to the side, keeping him within reach for holidays or the occasional birthday. Take about a dozen promises or so (enough to lose count of), break them all and stir into the mix. Smother the child with even more affection. Wrap in two layers during the winter. Apply 18 quarts of sunscreen in the summer. Watch him carefully. Beat, if you have to (you will have to), and alternate between praises and shaming. If you're concerned about fatty excess try a nice large lawn, or maybe some pee-wee soccer. Be sure to scold the coach until you have a nice red glaze. Pour all of this into an 8X16 raised pan. Cover. Marinate for 12 to 13 years. In a separate bowl add 1 part alternative rock, 2 parts Eminem, and a pinch of Elvis. Whip up some embarrassingly long hair (add some highlights for flavor) this will give an extra 'rebellious touch' to the whole piece. Throw in 2 cups of social awkwardness along with some raw Ayn Rand, a bushel of Hemingway, and 6 tbs. of Douglas Adams. Add a splash of spicy homoerotic curiosity (feel free to experiment). Cover and sauté over a low flame for 4 crushing years of high school. Be careful not to bruise the ego! Let simmer, stirring occasionally. When contents have cooled, add to the pan. Slide the pan into the top rack of the oven and bake for half a decade or so, checking every so often to make sure all those hormones have cooked away. The original recipe calls for a sober base, but you can substitute alcohol for taste. Rum works well. Beer is fine. If you want an even, pretentious finish consider using a degree in English with a spritz of creative writing minor (you can find these anywhere). Remove from oven. Season with some Palahniuk and Vonnegut. Use Nabokov for garnish. Present on a stack of magazine rejection letters and abandoned manuscripts. Let chill. Serves 4.

ARTWORK

“Painting is poetry that is seen rather than felt...”

Leonardo DaVinci



SPACE

Rini Malo

The idea of space is often confined into a small bubble, but there are so many places in the galaxy that we haven't reached yet. So I decided to show that space is more free, available, and unoccupied.



BREVITY AND BLISS

Ashley Arakas

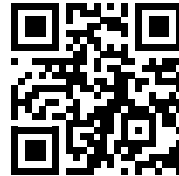
“Brevity and Bliss” is a piece out of a ‘Modernized’ vanitas series I started back in 2014. The overall composition consists of a still life that encompasses the transience of life through objective symbolism. In this piece I wanted the theme to reflect the brevity of life as well as the fragility of life. The bubbles, Lilies, and skulls being a direct reference of the brevity of life as well as the fragility of life and its passing.



WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Matthew Nierwienski

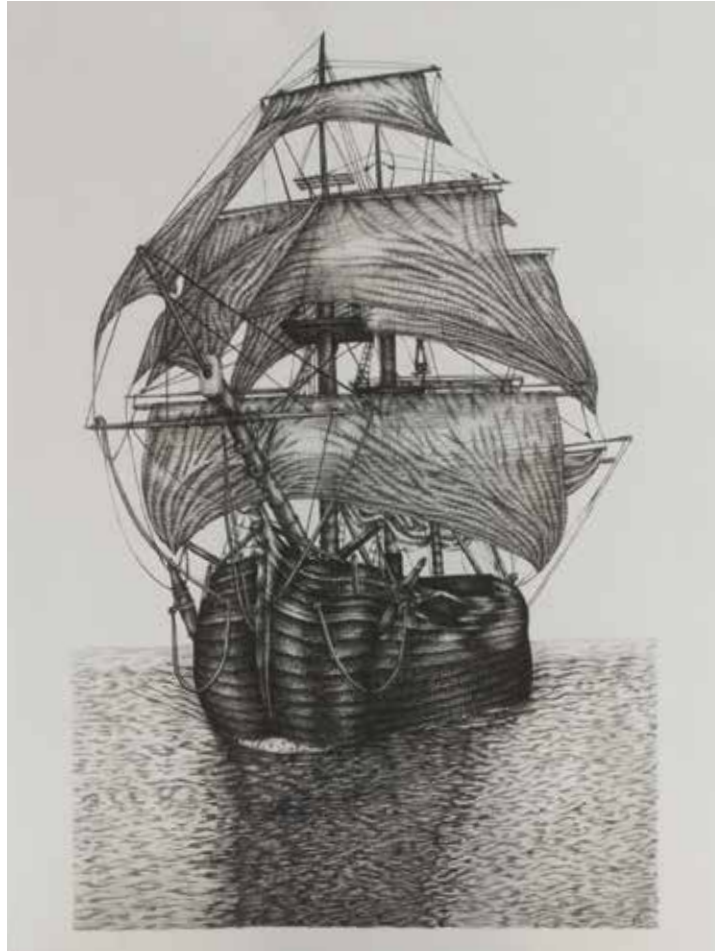
My goal as a photographer is to capture the beauty of a passing moment so others may feel what I felt at that point in time. For this photo I hiked to Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, Utah. After waiting anxiously in hopes of seeing a display of color; the sky burst into an array of pink and purple hues. Although only spanning a few minutes it was a moment I will cherish forever.



YETI

Gwendolyn Washington

In my design work I like to use bold colors and simple shapes. Recently I have made the transition from static posters to motion graphics. Adding the factor of time has allowed me to emphasize the narrative of my works. This piece is inspired by the zoom tool in After Effects because it is easily recognizable within the program. It is fun and I enjoyed creating it as part of my Instagram series. @gwen_washn10



PIRATE SHIP

Katie Riley

Over the summer I wanted to take on the challenge of making this detailed ship in strictly Micron Pen. I really enjoy the effect of cross hatching and the repetitiveness of the process to create an image.



TIME FLIES

Ashley Arakas

“Time Flies” is a piece out of a ‘Modernized’ vanitas series I started back in 2014. The overall composition consists of a still life that encompasses the transience of life through objective symbolism. In this piece, I wanted the theme to convey the ephemerality of life. The clocks, burning candle, and skulls being a direct reference of the briefness of life as well as the fragility of life and its transience.



WE ARE HUMAN

Alicia Marie

We should be celebrating our differences, not criticizing one another. Being different is what everyone has in common. After developing these images in the darkroom; I created two collages out of the same pictures. These diverse Coastal Carolina students have been put together to make an image of one person. I hope to make people think past the skin color of a person and to see them as simply human beings.



PICNIC BY FLIGHT

Rini Malo

Hot air balloons were once used as the main mode of transportation for long distances. While the height is frightening to me; I believe that being that high without a worry in the world is the most relaxing way of traveling.



SONG OF THE SOUTH

Brittany Clark

There are few sounds more Southern than the angry chirps of cicadas in the dead of summer. The sharp trills recall endless memories of childhood in the country, with sticky heat and grandpa swimming me beneath his legs. Yet Southernness has a dark past which conflicts with such a nostalgic love. Just as the beautiful trills of a cicada can turn into ripping shrieks at the close of summer.



RIVER

Sara Cox

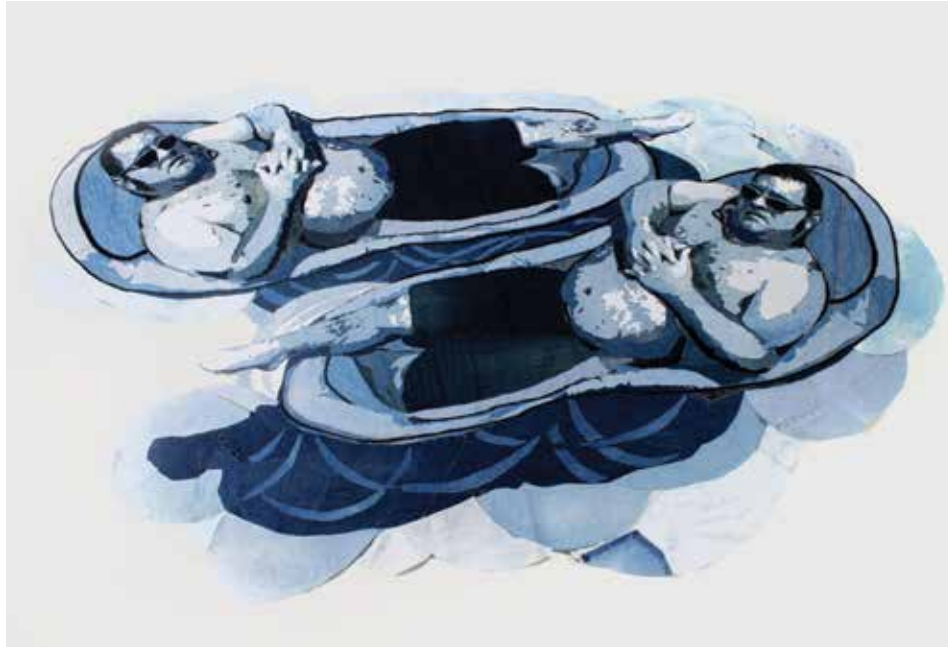
River is part of a larger series of mixed media landscape paintings inspired by Horry County. This piece was painted from a photo taken on the Waccaman River. The media of this piece was deliberately chosen to reflect a long-standing tradition of crafting among the women of my family. I applied fabric and paper to the canvas to resemble ripples of water and trees, painted the scene in oil paint, and finished with embroidered details.



RICE BOX

Christina Teruel

Fragments of my past and present life fuse together as influences of my work. These memories and emotions inspire me to create small, intimate metal work because they are precious and hold strong value. This piece is a reliquary that holds and preserves childhood memories of my dad's cooking. The handle transforms the piece into a music box that mimics the same sound of rice being poured and stirred.



ROB: PERMANENT VACATION

Jim Arendt

Art making is a way for me to explore our changing relationship with labor. My research focuses on transitions in macroeconomic structures through the lens of their effects on individual lives, communities, and workers' relationships to the structures of labor itself. I choose materials to work with while seeking to create a greater relevancy between content and form. Denim seems created to be abused. Its characteristics are mirrored in the individuals I choose to represent.



PRESERVES

Ariana Sellers

This piece documents the feeling of absence I experience when exploring my family lineage. While other families pass down recipes, my family does not. By taking a recipe from another family and preserving it in honey, I take their tradition and make it my own.



MORNING COMMUTE

Lauren Rose

This photograph was taken during my visit to New York City last spring. This was my first time on a subway, and I was quite fascinated with the mannerisms of the people whom you could tell were “native” New Yorkers. They were so used to riding a strange train underground multiple times a day, but to me this experience was new and slightly unsettling. The man in the photograph was casually reading the newspaper as entertainment for his commute.



DECADENCE

Ashley Arakas

“Decadence” is a piece out of a ‘Modernized’ vanitas series I started back in 2014. The overall composition consists of a still life that encompasses the transience of life through objective symbolism. In this particular piece I wanted the theme to emphasize the frivolousness of earthly materials and delights, as well as the ephemerality of earthly beauty. I wanted to draw attention in a playful manner on how even our most cherished objects cannot follow us into the after life, and how we cannot harness our beauty forever.

LITERATURE

“And poetry is painting that is felt rather than seen.”

Leonardo DaVinci

CNN SHAME

Kevin Godwin

SHAME ON CNN

The name trips me, George Fernandez, a ghost from some deep dark recess. Reading farther solidifies an image of a young, skinny, Hispanic kid, intent on proving that he was a man, a peer, someone worthy of the green. With that recognition I start again slowly; “George Fernandez, age 37, Special Operations Command, died April 2nd, from gunshot wounds received in battle north of Baghdad.” The picture framed by text looks nothing like the “GoGo” I remember (maybe it’s not him – that thought provides a moment of solace). I wonder if I look as tired and beaten as him.

The US ARMY invades Grenada

Twenty-five drunken paratroopers pile into the post theatre. On Direct Reaction Force One (DRF-1), as we had to be within 30 minutes of our unit (so that we could deploy within 1 hour), so all we did for that 90 days a year was watch movies, drink, and fight. Okay that’s all we ever did, but during DRF-1 we had to do it closer to home. Midway through some movie, long forgotten, a sterile PA announcement spit out that, “Soldiers of the 1st 508th recon platoon needed to report to their unit immediately. Everyone hold up three pairs olive drab, green boxers, or briefs.” Bitching about what we presumed to be another lame-ass equipment inspection, we slowly trudged/stumbled down Ardennes St. to the barracks. Electricity pours through swinging barracks doors, slaps you in the face, and pops your eyes WIDE open. Frantic scurry for equipment and weapons, ending in slurred curses.

“Fallout in 10 minutes,” shouted Platoon Daddy.

The ride to staging yellow ramp is silent; everyone turned inside-out, gut knotting and twisting, belly gurgling so loudly you look around to see if anyone is staring. Once there we’re instructed to ground

I tell my students that everyone carries with them a backpack of stuff, and for me that backpack is jam-packed: ADD, Army, wife, kids, life, Ritalin like lighting, college blurred, Chanticleer, now complete. The one constant has been writing, which has tied me to the world of bigger dreams. I wanted to be Hemingway, even a bad one, only to find that my life has been far too sweet to endure the pain and torment of becoming one.

our gear, empty our enormous rucks, and line up by weapon type. In typical lemming fashion we do so unquestioningly. Called forward by some unknown major I am asked how much meat (ammo) I want for the M-60, affectionately known as “the pig”.

“I guess I can carry a few thousand 7.62 belts,” I watch as he slams down several ammo cans and tells me to “move out!” Never in my Army tenure had I heard such an exchange; the reality hits me like a bullet, RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES! Typically, when in the field or on a range, we search for every expended casing and count every round not used. Not this time. SOMEHOW much HEAVIER than anticipated. Additionally, as I move to the next major in a long line of majors with stuff, some supply guy hands me a few land mines, LAW (light antitank weapon), and some square metal box that I fear was filled with something far more dangerous. I hesitate but ask no questions. Next line provides sterile uniforms (no name tags or unit designation), followed by first aid supplies, new boots, and a long list of other meaningless shit.

Operations order (the who, what, where, and why of an upcoming mission) seems a blur, and I struggle for equilibrium. Grenada? I don’t know where Grenada is, couldn’t point to it on a map, or tell you anything that is made in that country. Near Cuba? Maybe, but I don’t really know where Cuba is either, and cannot understand why they are telling me. I look up and see GoGo (George), eyes wide, blown out, as if on smack, frantically searching the room for contact, explanation, meaning. He sees me, locks eyes questioningly, and I clench my fist showing him the tiny opening between thumb and forefinger. “Don’t worry. Everyone’s sphincter is tight GoGo, we’ll be okay.” His nervous laugh momentarily calms me, then terrifies as it all settles. We load the bird, a line of C-130’s.

The red glow of jump lights in the cabin door hides our faces in

the shadows. Like all paratroopers on a jump the 75 men on the plane fall asleep on takeoff. I quickly glance around once and then sleep protects me.

GoGo shakes me shouting, "Six minutes; time to prepare to jump!" Again he searches my face for some clue that I'm as terrified as he is; I am, but struggle not to show it and again wink and make the "sphincter fist". Afraid if I let out what's inside I won't be able to stand my emotions streaming energy, my fear palpable. Platoon Daddy screams in my ear over the din of the plane.

"Watch him, he's f.u.b.a.r." (fucked up beyond all recognition/repair).

I silently nod but it takes everything I have not to scream. "I'm only 20 years old, who's going to watch me? I'm f.u.b.a.r too!" Jump light red to green, the door sucks me out into the inky black tropics. The white of my canopy is bright against the starry night. Lights below twinkle green and red, remind me of Christmas, until I realize that they are tracers streaming across the sky. The red of the 75th Ranger Battalion (US Army elite infantry soldiers), and green of what I recognize almost instantly as soviet weapons held by an unknown enemy.

First body EVER encountered is a Cuban officer; fresh kill behind a Russian ZSU-24 anti-aircraft gun pointing skyward. Platoon Daddy kicks him in the head; gray matter splatters everywhere as we sprint past. Something willing us forward, far more afraid of this balding overweight Vietnam vet than any enemy in front of me. At the first security stop I pick brain off my uniform and vomit realizing that death is VERY final and not some peaceful ascension to some "better place." GoGo watches and gives me "sphincter fist", pupils plate-like, hands visibly trembling and spastic, wiping vomit from his jungle camo top. All night I lie there, guarding an empty field of embarrassment and shadows, challenging the wind and pasture, daring foes to appear, so that I can redeem myself to myself.

A few days later he appears out of the cane field; nearly naked, in tattered board shorts, old US jungle boots and a spotless AK-47 (we find out later that he stripped his uniform in an attempt to avoid detection - I guess he just couldn't part with the weapon, I understand). He is huge, so black he looks almost blue, glistening in the sun, smiling with an assuredness so contrary to this place and my station. I know he sees me and I awkwardly meet his gaze, making sure that he recognizes that I am not alone. I step

out first, a coward amongst a group of cowards, and face him for what seems like hours as he looks through me. He devours my fear, hears my screams for him to drop his weapon, and then slowly steps out further. He acknowledges my pleas with a silent negative nod, smiles, and slowly begins to raise his weapon. His eyes never leave mine, pupils deep, fathomless, resolute. A shared understanding of what will follow; I don't know and struggle to recognize his motivation, hate, apathy, sorrow, understanding? I shoot out of fear, unloading the entire chain of linked 7.62 NATO ball ammunition. I watch him bleed out. Magnificent life pours crimson red, mingling with brown earth and trodden sugar cane. Color and emotion so vivid they hurt my soul paralyzed in time and space. I hide my cowardice and heaving stomach with a cliché "FUCK'NA," accepting congratulations from the platoon. Platoon Daddy tells me the lucky ones die. He wishes he were dead sometimes. I see truth in his dark reptilian eyes. I will fear him forever and still occasionally see him in the dreams that sometimes creep in.

We got hit midday as we moved through a small village nestled in a steep walled valley that forced the shadows down on us, almost piling up at the base of the hill. It's sudden. Young dark barefoot children selling Cokes and smelly dried fish scatter with the first machine gun burst. The enemy's ambush is poorly executed and the kill zone misses me and two others (names forgotten) by some 50 meters. They are probably as frightened as we are. On adrenaline, I sprint to gain a flanking position, and start laying down support. Colors and tracers stream by in weighted silence, almost slow motion. The air is so thick that I swim in the smell of the children's fish, gunpowder, and that metallic taste of blood at the back of my throat. I curse Platoon Daddy's laziness and arrogance. A road in broad daylight? I hope he's down and bloodied but silently relieved when I feel his death black aura crawl up to me from behind. GoGo brings me back, spread out on the narrow sandy-brown dirt road wailing, bleeding, rolling back and forth, holding his leg as dirt flies all around him, the mountain walls rising up around us. We are not alone. Other bodies lay scattered about silent, unnaturally contorted, twitching as rounds slap meat and bone. I hear myself above the fury: screaming, crying, pleading, angry, scared, consumed with rage. I burn through rounds trying to draw fire, to silence the guns, **TO SILENCE GoGo!** I nearly shoot him myself in desperation! Twice I draw bead on his desperate flying form, and twice I move the point of aim away and fire. GoGo pleads for it to stop, goes fetal with white knuckled hands, clutching his ears, crying for his mother,

anybody. English and Spanish mixed and garbled. I watch myself, as if from above, run out daring them to shoot me. Screaming obscenities at all that can hear, loathing GoGo and the enemy with an intensity unrivaled. I grab him by the shoulder strap of his equipment belt and drag him out of the kill zone. He passes out from shock and I hold him, rocking him like an infant having a bad dream. His pissed stained bloody pants soak my leg. Platoon Daddy looks at me incredulously,

“If I had lost you for that piece of shit, I would have killed you myself.”

I have no response. I'd like to say that when we returned stateside that GoGo and I became lifelong friends. I'd like to say that I protected him from the ridicule of Platoon Daddy and the others that survived the ambush; the constant and relentless imitations of him in that dusty road, laughing so hard they cried. I'd like to say I didn't laugh along, but I can't! While adrenaline and whatever else I carried inside put me in a position to save him that day I was too weak to simply say, “Stop fucking with him.” (They would have listened). Platoon Daddy, with twisted and probably resentful fatherly pride, recounted other missions of those 33 days on that tiny tropical island; other atrocities, other “asses” I had saved, laughing off my tragic mistakes and blunders. I wear that shame. I got out of the unit the next year and never saw, spoke, or thought about GoGo until April 8, 2003, as I read CNN on the internet. I wonder if it's the same George Fernandez. What did GoGo do with the additional time given to him? Did he contribute to some greater good in the following 20 years, treat others better than we treated him, forgive us for our sins? It's funny the paths our lives take and the lessons learned along the way. I saved GoGo's life because I was ashamed of fear, failed him and myself because I was afraid to stand up, only to have him meet the same fate that terrified me so much.

I walk to class with Springsteen running through my head:

*I pushed B-52 and bombed them with the blues,
with my gear set stubborn on standing
I broke all the rules, strafed my old high school,
never once gave thought to landing
I hid in the clouded wrath of the crowd,
but when they said, “Sit down,” I STOOD up,
Ooh... growin' up*

A BRIEF GUIDE TO CRISES

Zach Thomas

A series of listings and reflections that should make sense to those who have gone through the various processes in which one ceases to be naive (or simply unaware), innocent, or a teenager.

Come to the realization that neither of your parents are superheroes. Distance yourself from religion but respect the religious. Outgrow childhood asthma. Eat mostly plants and drink mostly water. Experience at least one night of casual sex with a beautiful woman. Discover later that she lied about being single. Understand that the universe cannot plot against you when it doesn't know you're here. Get claustrophobic in the city. Be hospitalized by anxiety. Be advised by the doctor to find a new hobby (after he laughs at you). Leave the country. Do not pursue single mothers. Lose faith in bipartisan politics. Confront health scares with confidence. Confront pregnancy scares with nausea. Fit in the pants you bought two years ago. Be unable to afford both health insurance and doctor's visits. Make yourself vulnerable to those who do the same. Be patient with the elderly. Run two days a week. Welcome the thought that you have roughly eighty years here, but only when a quarter are already gone. Find comfort accepting that you'll decompose in soil just like all others who have refused to fear the quiet night.

1+1=22

Lisa Gilbert

Poetry and love have gone hand in hand forever, and likely will continue to do so. This poem uses metaphors and similes to describe how someone's passion or talents can be turned against them by the one they love the most. It's a piece about the give and take of a relationship, and how sometimes things simply don't add up in the end.

This is how you lose her.

It's like math

1 + 1 = 22

Give her meaningful words

Prose or poetry

Measured syllables

Metered sounds

Accept hers in return

Note the hesitations

The pronunciations

The articulation

Listen to the tenor of her voice

The quiet whisper of emotion

Veiled in metaphors and similes

Championed by motifs

Take those woven words and

Place them on a scale as if

They can be weighed and measured

Turn them into a standard of affection

Reconstruct those free thoughts and

Convert them into shackles

Bind her to you

Transform her vulnerability into a muzzle

Draft all of this into a contract

Sign here; initial there

Use her own words as a form of restraint

Silence her expression with technicalities

I've grown accustomed to the silence.

CALL TO ACTION

Kimberly Frisch

They tell us girls that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a man shall be stationed in our every act? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our men shall have bound us hand and foot?

There is no retreat, but in submission and imprisonment! Our chains are forged, they have been for years! Their clanking may be heard on the dollars of men and in the sense of women, in the deprecated female image, in the toys our children play with! This war is inevitable-and we must let it come!

It is in vain to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry for peace, but there is no peace. The war is already begun! Our sisters are already in the field! They have been for years! Why stand we here idle?

Sisters, it is natural for humans to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren, till he transforms us into glass dolls choked by corsets and wedding bands, pitted against one another. But is this the part of wise women, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth, to know the worst and to fight to change it.

There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to achieve those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which

When I first read Patrick Henry's Speech to the Virginia Convention for a class; I was struck by his passion. I also couldn't stop thinking about how his words about the British and the colonists could be turned into a feminist work. I altered his writing and added a few lines of my own to produce an adaptation that fits this modern revolution.

we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we must fight! An appeal to our army of wives, sisters, mothers, daughters, an appeal to our army of women is all that is left us!

What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is a Christmas card life so dear, or unilateral peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and suffering of their fellow people? I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!

PLUTO

Alyssa Conner

| *“Pluto” is about reaching for a dream that’s too far away and being stuck in a monotonous reality.*

The lights inside the Wal-Mart were harsh compared to the pitch black outside. A few customers still wandered the aisles aimlessly. Daniel watched them without focus, his eyes growing heavier minute by minute and day by day. When he first started working here it bothered him- customers staying late. Back then he had something to come home to besides pills, a bottle of beer, and the late-night news. Now, at age sixty-one, Daniel couldn’t muster the strength to feel anything but tired.

A short middle-aged woman, struggling under the weight of her over-sized purse, waddled over to the counter, Styrofoam balls and spray paint rolling around in her cart. As he started ringing her items up she explained.

“It’s for my son’s science project. He’s creating a solar system diorama.”

Daniel nodded, his head now feeling heavier than his eyes. The woman loaded her items onto the conveyer. She struggled a few times, trying to hold several of the Styrofoam balls in one petite hand. A tiny Styrofoam ball fell out of her hand and glided down the conveyer. After Daniel rung it up he held it for a second too long, rotating it between his fingertips.

He recognized it as Pluto.

Daniel first became acquainted with the solar system when he was five years old. His father had plastered a poster of it on his bedroom wall while Daniel sat cross-legged on his bed and listed off the planets. “That’s the Sun, Mercury, Venus, and Earth,” he said and then added, “That’s us.” Daniel rocked forward on his feet. “Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.”

Daniel went over to the wall, stumbling over his sheets and blankets. Pressing one hand against the wall he pointed to a smaller circle at the end with the other hand. “What’s that?”

“That’s Pluto,” his father answered. “It’s a dwarf planet.”

Falling onto his knees, Daniel pressed his nose against the poster. “A dwarf planet?” he giggled. It was awfully small.

As he pulled his knees to his chest and wobbled from side to side, he decided his favorite planet was Pluto.

“I’m sorry, Mr. Future Astronomer, but if you want to be Mr. Astronomer, you have to study for your astronomy test!” Daniel felt Candice’s weight leave his side as she rolled away and sat up. It was still warm from where she was lying. Her long black hair fell over her face and she laughed as she pushed it back.

Daniel lifted himself up on his elbows. Candice’s eyes crinkled up at the edges as she smiled. She was only twenty but she already had traces of crow’s feet and other wrinkles on her tan face. Probably from smiling so much. Daniel couldn’t think of a time when she wasn’t smiling.

“Alright test me,” he challenged, giving her a quick wink.

Candice sat up straighter, Daniel’s notebook held out in front of her. “Okay,” she started, “What is Pluto’s surface composed of?”

He leaned back and stared at the ceiling. One night Daniel decided to cover the ceiling of his dorm room with pictures of the solar system, diagrams, and, of course, Pluto. He remembered the night like it was yesterday. Daniel standing on his bed, ankles shaking as his bed protested against the weight, trying to stick the poster,

which once hung in his childhood bedroom, onto the ceiling. His roommate, Tom, muttering for him to just go to sleep. But Daniel couldn't sleep. He couldn't sleep until the solar system and all its planets were on his ceiling.

"Uhh- hold on, I got this." A pain shot up from the bottom of his neck as he hung his head back, staring at the ceiling. "Magnesium? Sodium? Both?" he guessed, scrunching up his nose. He sat up, his palms pressed into his bed. "We can just skip that one."

"What?" he asked. Candice was looking at him weird, her lips pressed together. Her face looked almost pale from the light of the moon coming through the window. She wasn't smiling and it made Daniel feel self-conscious. He'd bragged to her about Pluto all the time. He was supposed to know everything.

"That's wrong."

"What do you mean? What is it made of?"

Candice looked at him for another second before looking down at the notebook, tucking a strand of hair behind her ear. "Um...mostly nitrogen ice...and methane and carbon monoxide," she murmured. She let the notebook fall into her lap as Daniel let himself collapse onto his bed.

"What is it?" the woman asked him.

He looked up, blinking quickly. "Sorry, I was just thinking about something."

"That one's going to be Pluto." She smiled smugly. Almost too proud of herself, hands gripping her shopping cart with a strange flair. She leaned forward and added, "It's a dwarf planet."

"I know," he mumbled, ringing up the rest of her things.

I know, he repeated to himself.

The woman picked up the plastic bags and placed them in her cart, light pink lips stretched into a smile.

I know. I was going to be an astronomer.

She wished him a good night and then left through the automatic doors.

Don't you know that? I knew the sizes of all the planets. I knew their proximity to one another. I knew everything about them.

A voice came over the speaker and announced, "Attention shoppers! The store will be closing in fifteen minutes." A few customers began to head towards the check-out counters, but most continued shuffling through the aisles.

Don't you know? I could tell you anything about them. I could touch the stars.

Daniel looked out at the night sky, almost a solid black. He couldn't see the lady through the dense darkness.

He looked down at his hands. His knuckles were knotted and his skin was like tissue paper. He clenched his fingers into a fist and then unclenched them, a short and sharp pain running through his bones.

Don't you know I once held the solar system in my hands?

A GAMBLING MAN

Skyler Aldrich

| *This is inspired by a piece written by Stephen King called "All That You Love Will Be Carried Away."*

That's just one of the reasons why he was sitting in the slum motel room with his lips around a pistol. The other reason? Matthew likes to drink when he gambles, even if his bar tab is as long as his arm and the only thing he has left to wager is his soul. After two stints in rehab that ended with empty promises and half-empty flasks, his wife had taken the children along with the beat up mini van and went to her mother's. Who couldn't help but point out that she was right about him all along. Matthew began drinking and gambling again, although he never really stopped, and lost the ranch house that had been in the family for two generations.

So for the last two days when he wasn't sleeping at the slot machine or passed out at the craps table; he called home a run down Motel 8 off of Interstate 87. His room was at the far corner of the first floor, bordering an empty field and a nearly empty parking lot. It was right next to the ice machine and the parking was prime according to Matthew. The carpet, once a lush eggshell, was matted down hugging the floor. Its once bright white hue was tarnished by years of dirt, cigarette ashes, and large stain patterns created by unknown substances. The single queen sized bed, pressed against the wall, had a mattress that was older than Matthew's addiction. The once white sheets had seen better days.

As his finger found the trigger he paused as he heard rain starting to fall outside. The window was bare. The tropical inspired curtains were pushed back, allowing for a clear view of the outside world. Slowly, he lowered the pistol and placed it on the sagging mattress. He stood up and made his way to the window, a frown darkening his expression. This is not how he wanted to die. Sure, he could deal with the crappy motel room, and the fact that the pistol laying on the tan bedspread was a gift to his wife on their tenth anniversary, but he hated the rain. Living in a run-down shack with an abusive father and a drug addict mother, the rain was the barrier

against the sound of his parents arguing. As he grew older his love for the rain turned to a pure hatred; each drizzle bringing with it the faint screams of his mother and the sound of his father's open hand hitting skin.

He sat back down on the bed, walking backwards until the back of his knees hit the mattress. His eyes never leaving the increasing downpour. Taking the pistol in his hand he weighed it before lifting it back up to his mouth. *I'll give it five minutes*, Matthew thought, the gun resting against his lips, slightly parting them. *If it doesn't stop in five minutes I'll pull the trigger*. He promised himself this as his eyes turned to the clock and he began to wait.

Matthew was a gambler.

LORENA

Zach Thomas

| *A sonnet-like recollection of a stranger in Latin America.*

I felt your warmth bearing flowers on a rust road
in the Caribbean. Saw your streets full of tan
hombres playing baseball. Ernesto's tall glare showed
raw will: towering, encouraging this small man.
I dipped toes in your teal bath beside the highway.
While old soot puffers buzzed and tore above, I spent
time keeping quiet watch over the tides each day,
looking for you as molasses hours came and went.
I heard your steps through crumbling alleys, vine-eaten,
winding. Through the sleepy years I foraged for joy,
dozing in the sand your calm summer breeze neatened.
You slaked the thirst, softened the way of this stray boy.
Our legs draped over the Malecón's ledge last night.
Oh, that you would have me as salt air sailing 'round
gently over your breasts and charcoal hair. Your right
hand met my left. Your lips widened at the stars, found
their way to my cheek. Thank you for pink prints whose shine
mimicked coral. Thank you for the drops of cool brine.

SMALL TALKS

Sam Ikner

I dug this piece up from one of my old notebooks. Originally, I had these two really developed characters in my mind, but when I wrote the dialogue between the two it came out all wrong. So I tried writing about them post-breakup, and I ended up with this really neat “unsent letter” that wasn’t like anything I’d ever written before.

You never liked small talk, and that’s how I could tell you stopped loving me.

You were always talking about big things: galaxies, infinity, gods, love. You talked about abstract things until they were so concrete that they threatened to crush you with their weight. I always loved hearing you talk, watching your lips move as they created beautiful ideas, even though it usually ended in confused tears.

But then, one day, you cut those things short. You asked if your hair was okay, which it always was. You inquired about my favorite color, my favorite food, if we were going on enough dates. Little, stupid, insignificant things that you said we’d been ignoring for too long. You built thick walls around our conversations, boxing our brains in to the weather outside, or what was on T.V. I didn’t like it, but I entertained your queries. I just wanted you to keep loving me.

I didn’t know how to bring you back. I tried knocking those walls down, but you complained that I was too violent. You said you needed space, so I gave in. But I gave you too much. You never came back. You created another safe place, another world of conversations that I wasn’t allowed in.

You always hated small talk, just like I did. But good God, do you know what I’d give just to hear you say, “lovely weather today”?

BURNT BONE FRAGMENTS

Emory Hooks

I was five when I set myself on fire. The hair still doesn't grow quite right where my blackened stomach bubbled like tar. It's been over twenty years, and I remember the bubbles but not any pain.

I don't know how much pain Mama was in during her last days. My older brother Edsel and I had set her hospital bed up in the living room six months before she lie in it with hardly the strength to lift her head. She never smiled or spoke anymore; her only sounds were cries of pain, and there was so little fat to her, if any, that I feared hurting her with the slightest touch.

Body fat can make a good fuel source, but it needs material such as clothing to act as a wick. Like that in a wax candle, a wick absorbs the fat and pulls it into the flame.

In their NFPA 921, "Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations," the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) defines fire as a "rapid oxidation process, which is a chemical reaction resulting in the evolution of light and heat in varying intensities."

On that night over twenty years ago the only light was that of the fire in Grandma's backyard as we—Edsel, Grandma, and I—stood around it. I set myself on fire by touching a lit branch to the front of my Spider-Man t-shirt.

"A human limb burns a little like a tree branch," says John De-Haan, a fire investigator at Fire-Ex Forensics in Vallejo, California. "First, the thin outer layers of skin fry and begin to peel off as the flames dance across their surface. Then, after around five minutes,

I can't help but write about my mom. She died in April of 2013 after six years of suffering from Early Onset Alzheimer's. Even when I start writing about something else; my thoughts always go back to her and she starts to take over the page. I'll probably never stop writing about her.

the thicker dermal layer of skin shrinks and begins to split, allowing the underlying yellow fat to leak out."

° C	° F	Response
37	98.6	Normal human oral/body temperature
44	111	Human skin begins to feel pain
48	118	Human skin receives a first degree burn injury
55	131	Human skin receives a second degree burn injury
62	140	A phase where burned human tissue becomes numb
72	162	Human skin is instantly destroyed

A body is cremated at a temperature ranging from 1400 to 1800 degrees Fahrenheit.

We cremated Mama because Alzheimer's had left her too wasted to be presentable as an embalmed corpse. Her body weighed maybe eighty pounds.

An average human body takes from two to three hours to burn completely, and will produce about three to nine pounds of ash. The amount of ash usually depends on the bone structure of the person and not so much their weight.

Mama's bones jugged up against her skin. Her concave stomach sloped down from her protruding ribs. Mama, at 5'6 with a slender frame, had always seemed so small to me, so small compared to

my 6'3 frame. She'd only shrunken further during her six years of living with Early Onset Alzheimer's. It aged her. Her papery skin didn't belong on someone only sixty years old. Grandma, the only family member that would help me with Mama, looked to be about the same age as Mama despite the twenty-four years between them.

What families receive after a cremation are not ashes exactly; they're given a grayish, coarse material made from the ground-up remains of bones.

Inside the cremation chamber the body is subjected to a column of flame aimed at the torso. The heat ignites the container the body is in and dries the body. As the soft tissues begin to tighten, burn, and vaporize from the heat the skin becomes waxy, discolors, blisters, and splits.

If my stomach had blisters I don't remember them. I can't say for sure how badly I burned my stomach. It didn't scar. I never needed any skin grafts.

Superficial partial-thickness skin burns, previously called second-degree burns, involve the top two layers of skin, are painful with air movement or air temperature changes, are red and seep fluid, usually form blisters, and turn white when pressed.

I remember the fluid the most. It oozed out of my skin.

If it's clear, it's serous fluid (blood without the larger cells). The integrity of the skin is impaired enough to let water, some plasma proteins, and other small stuff leak through the sieve that once was intact skin. Some of it probably leaked out of cells that died in the fire and then broke open.

Once the corpse is completely burned the chamber is then cooled and the cremated remains, which are often still recognizable as human skeletal remains, are swept with a long-handled hoe or wire-bristle broom into a tray. The bones and remnants are put into a grinder that uses ball bearings or rotating blades. The remains are

pulverized and poured into a plastic lined container or an urn of the family's choice.

Mama didn't go into an urn. We put her in a pretty wooden box just big enough to be held with both hands. The box of Mama's ashes sat in a safe at Meares Funeral Home for eight months—eight months of nightmares, of seeing her stupid dead face every time I closed my eyes. No one in the family wanted to take her ashes home, no one wanted the responsibility, and I couldn't be in the same building as them without reliving the moment she took her last breath. Then we waited for my brother Edsel to get out of jail as the memories of Mama's six years of suffering seeped out of the repressed depths of my brain.

Edsel taught me how to take a punch. From the time we could walk he was always hitting and bruising me. I always called out for Mama anytime he had me pinned with his fists raining down.

In December, black rain clouds were thick overhead when we interred the box with Mama's ashes in the family plot. Grandma's gravestone, on the other side of the plot, had hands clasped in prayer and the years 1926 and 2011 carved into it. Mama's open grave was no deeper than the length of my arm.

The cold handfuls of dirt I cast into Mama's grave did nothing to exorcise her from my mind. She was still there, rattling around inside my skull. I wish I could remember her as the woman she once was; as a kind but busy doctor and a loving but absent mother. I wish I could remember her smile, her real smile, not the saddening smile of a woman pleased by her own delusions. She'd look to the empty air in those moments, often gushing about how proud she was of her children, talking about us as if we were still young and small.

To embalm Mama the morticians would've had to break and reset her jaw. She struggled for each loud, rattling breath her last two days and died with her mouth hanging open. I couldn't bear the thought of someone hurting her, even postmortem. Cremation, the obliteration of every trace of her suffering through fire, seemed the more merciful of the two. If we'd buried her with her jaw wired

shut, then I'd always know she's not smiling down below.

If there's a Hell Mama's already been there. Hell is losing more and more of yourself each day, plagued by jagged memories. Hell is not knowing your own son and being oblivious to his every effort to help you. I had to give up the six years I should've been using to get both my Bachelor's and my Master's to be Mama's live-in caretaker. And had she been aware of her surroundings, I know Mama would've hated for me to be the one changing, bathing, and spoon-feeding her instead of going on with my education. What fear could Mama have of a lake of fire after the cleansing warmth of the cremation chamber?

As Mama lie dying in her hospital bed in our living room I wanted to strike a match and watch it all burn: the torn wallpaper, the ripped out phone cord, and the ripped up linoleum in the kitchen. Let the violence of Mama's confusion become ash. Would I have pulled her from the burning house? God no. Life is too cruel and death too kind.

Assuming there is sufficient wick material, the body can sustain its own fire for around seven hours. During this time the heat causes muscles to dry out and contract, making the limbs move. Bone takes longer to burn, so by the end the skeleton is laid bare, coated in the greasy residue of burned flesh.

Once the burn becomes severe it's burned down to the nerves, so there's not initially any sensation in those burned areas.

Grandma was the one to rip the burning shirt off me. I remember her stomping on the shirt to put out the flames, but I can't remember anything of what she must've done to care for the burn. Her experience as a retired nurse undoubtedly kept it from being more severe.

Putting ice on a burn can damage the skin and cause frostbite.

I learned to be cold. In those six years I hardly ever hugged Mama

and never told her I loved her. I wasn't there to show her love she'd forget in the next five minutes. I was there to clean up her shit and piss. I was there to restrain her when she tried to slap Grandma. I was there to let her hit me, her small hands smacking my chest with dull, hollow thuds.

I remember holding the lit branch out toward Edsel's chest. He moved to one side and I followed him with the fire, but it brushed against Spider-Man's masked face. If not for Grandma yanking the shirt off me, I might've been put in the ground a good twenty years before Mama.

In a fuel limited fire the fire growth is not limited by a lack of oxygen. As more fuel becomes consumed by the fire the energy level continues to increase until all of the fuel available is burning. Then as the fuel is burned away the energy level begins to decay.

Deep partial-thickness skin burns, previously called third-degree burns, extend deeper into the skin, are painful with deep pressure, almost always form blisters, and do not turn white with pressure. Deep partial-thickness skin burns take more than twenty-one days to heal and usually develop a scar, which may be severe.

It's been two and a half years since we had Mama cremated.

"The thing to remember with a burn is for every time I cover a burn with a skin graft, I'm creating an equal space that's open that the body has to heal." - Dr. Nicole Bernal, director of the UC Irvine Regional Burn Center

I don't know how to be whole again. I let Mama's life supersede my own for too long. For months after she died I kept waking up at 3 AM, expecting to hear her cry out with a nightmare of her own. I can't keep her out of mine, where she's living, breathing, and in pain again, and there's no happiness to be had in the moment I wake up, the moment I realize once more that she's been reduced to ground up ash and bone.

LEAVES

Zach Thomas

| *Reflections on my childhood visits to Virginia's Appalachian region.*

brown leaves: perfume sweet like tobacco,
remind me of your teeth
after you started smoking

and the new scent your clothes acquired.

red leaves: tags worn like blisters,
remind me of your hands, tattered
by hours chopping maple.

You sometimes asked me to refill your thermos
with instant Folgers.

yellow leaves: siblings of sleepy last embers,
remind me of coal that kept furnaces rumbling
through power cuts in ninety-five

while you and the rest in the mountains took
to paint fumes and moonshine.

black leaves: those remind me that you said
in winter we remember the birth of Christ

and the death of everything else.

LIQUOR LEADS TO SENTENCING

Lisa Gilbert

As someone who has studied and experienced a myriad of gender related issues; I've found that writing out my thoughts on these matters have been a great way to communicate the issues that are most important to me. I believe poetry is a language that can not only be understood, but can be felt as well. I hope others feel something when they read these words, and that it provides some sort of comfort.

They will tell you it is your fault
They will tell you that you asked for this
In that black skirt
Peach lipstick
High heels
Perfect porcelain face

They will tell you
That your drink can speak for you
That your vodka
With a twist
Was your acceptance

That you were asking for it

That by walking out your front door
By chatting him up for five minutes at the bar
By flashing a smile
By your eyes sparkling
By being willing to talk to someone other than the friend you showed up with
By turning your head to look at who walked in the door

That you were asking for it.

Didn't you learn not to talk to strangers?
You can feel their condemnation
It is a heavy weight
That you feel crushing you
Coming in from all sides
Like a house of horrors
Trapped in a room of mirrors
They show everything and hide nothing

Before you can even say a word
Breathe a sound
The jury has convened
And their decision has been made

They will stare at you
With their eyes like machetes
That cut at you
Cut through your entire self
As if you were nothing more than an overgrown field of weeds
While your chest
Tightens
Tightens
Tightens
The ropes around your rib cage are constricting
Constricting and all you want to do is scream

I DID NOT WANT THIS

You feel a flutter in your chest
As your heart beats frantically
Attempting to hammer out its message
A quick, sharp staccato
Pleading innocence before a court
That proclaims you guilty before proven innocent
The hummingbird beneath your breast
Flies faster, faster, faster
Attempting to soar in its cage
Not knowing that it never stood a chance

You should have known better

As little girls we are taught the tricks
Keys between your knuckles
Pepper spray on your key ring
Yell for help
Use your knee
And hit
Hard

As little girls we are taught to fight

That it is our responsibility
That this is reality
And that you are expected

To protect yourself
From them

We trade in our tiaras and tutus
For shackles camouflaged in security by society
Not knowing that before some of us can even give away our innocence
That it will be taken from us
That you will be robbed of your worth
Your value
That anything you ever hoped to be able to offer
Will be gone

You are tarnished goods,
You idiot child

Because of them

But you are more than an empty shell
Your value is not measured in virginity
In innocence
Your worth cannot be measured by society's prejudice
Their ill-conceived notions
And their lesson plans that boldly state
Don't get raped, you stupid slut.

ONCE UPON A TIME

Teagan Smith

| *This is a coming of age piece that highlights the transformation from girl to woman.*

I am the ruler of all imaginative good in this world;
society is my kingdom.
I host the most prestigious tea parties,
play dress up,
change my name to “Queen...”
I do decree, however,
time is liberating.
When I stood before the mirror in my bedroom,
dressed for my reflection,
I tried to dance.
No, I can’t dance;
 my reflection can dance.
She dances with red lipstick stained upon her lips:
 just red lipstick.
My reflection is not a lady of taste.
She prefers the taste of Coca-Cola on her tongue.
My reflection blasts classic rock music so loudly
the mirror shatters;
the barrier breaks.
My reflection can play a rebellious melody on her
guitar-
air guitar
but it doesn’t matter if the instrument is tangible
because it sounds beautiful to me.
My reflection breathes teenage angst.
Her jagged gasps slit my corset.
I exhale.
My reflection is happiest when she is free.
I am happiest when I am alone.
And we both lived happily ever after.

SIX

Veronica Good

I met Carol in a support group. I had just gone over the edge and broken my brother's nose. He was looking at my movie collection when he put *Die Hard* after *Ghostbusters*, and I lost it. I had just put those movies on the shelf, perfectly alphabetized. He ended up with two perfect, although asymmetrical, black eyes and looked like a raccoon for a couple weeks. He told my mother about the whole episode and she decided that I needed help for my "little issue." Mom doesn't want to believe that I have a mental disorder.

Group was more stereotypical than I could have anticipated. We sat in a circle saying our names, explaining how our disorders had gotten bad enough to land us in a small conference room in the Clearview Rehabilitation and Counseling Center. When I joined the group Carol had already been there for a year, but she was twenty then. Everything was even. Her number was ten. Rather than try to overcome her obsession Carol did her best to separate herself from anything that did not work with the number ten. Unfortunately for me I was twenty-four, so she steered clear of me for the most part, instead chatting with Kyle, thirty, and Nora, a wise fifty, and tolerating our group leader Sarah who had to be at least thirty-six, but she swore she was a solid thirty and would be for a long time.

I won her over four months later on her twenty-first birthday. She was deep in an anxious state about the upcoming year that was divisible by ten exactly two and one-tenths times rather than an even two. I came to group high on the smell of ten perfect red roses each cut to have ten inch stems. I'd like to say that she accepted them with surprise and grace, but she snatched them, crying over the number and running around looking for something to measure the stems with. It wasn't until she had assured herself and the entire group ten times that the roses were all tens. They were perfect. I made sure of that. Carol decided that the roses were enough to overlook my age flaw but only after examining my driver's license

I was inspired to write this piece by a book I read a long time ago called "Kissing Doorknobs." The book explores a young girl's struggle with an issue she doesn't know is OCD, and I wanted my story to explore the struggle of someone who is aware of their OCD, though on an extreme level.

where she found that my birthday was October 20, 1990. "How lovely," she had whispered.

It may sound strange, but dating someone as obsessive compulsive as Carol was difficult. I had the same disorder, yet hers was so much more specific than mine. Disorder was my trigger. A crinkled bed sheet, a smudge on the window, a disorganized collection of anything was absolute torture for me and had to be fixed immediately. Everything just needed to be perfect. Carol though, everything had to be ten. Lock the door ten times before we go to bed. Shower for ten minutes. Take ten sleepy steps to the toilet in the middle of the night. We couldn't go swimming in a pool that wasn't ten feet at the deep end. On my twenty-fifth birthday she made me a cake, vanilla and round decorated with perfect symmetry, but the candles. There were twenty candles and ten half candles. "Do the math, and its twenty-five," she said, but I knew to her there were thirty.

But I endured. Carol was beautiful, all wavy blonde hair and pretty blue eyes. She was smart, quick, and witty. I sincerely believed she was my perfect match. Otherwise I would not have been able to stay with her. It was Carol that couldn't stay with me in the end though. I wasn't perfect enough to fit within her world of tens. One night, six and a half months into our relationship, we were on the couch watching the tenth season of *Bones*. I wanted to watch reruns of *How I Met Your Mother*, but it only had nine seasons. Out of nowhere Carol turned to me. "What's your favorite number?"

Not thinking I replied, "Six." Six.

Her expression fell into something dark then. I expected an episode, screaming, fighting, the end of us maybe. She got up off the couch, practically jettisoned herself away from me. Escaping my embrace with an "excuse me." When she disappeared into the kitchen I was at a loss. There was little to no chance that a mistake

like this could be made up for. I sat, head down, one fist pressed desperately against my grim mouth, waiting for either a goodbye or just the soft click of the door shutting behind her. I was not waiting for a gun.

Carol emerged from the kitchen with a horrible violence about her face. Her right arm was raised straight in front of her; the small revolver she had gotten for herself on her twenty first birthday clenched in her shaking fist. I remembered when she bought the gun, saying that twenty-one would be a bad year. I told her I didn't think it would be that bad. The worst thing was that she didn't say a word. She just pulled the trigger. She shot me, planted a bullet deep in my thigh.

I screamed something incoherent somewhere between "ow" and "God", and took off toward the bedroom to grab my cell phone. The plan was to call for help. I wasn't mad, but when an episode gets this bad it has to be dealt with. I needed back up of some sort, mostly for my safety but for hers too. Halfway through the living room bullet number two bit me in the same thigh, from behind this time. It was then that Carol finally spoke, or screamed rather, "TEN!" Falling into what I assumed was shock; I was forced to crawl backwards into the bedroom as she put four more shots into my stomach and chest. Backed up against the nightstand, I watched her stomp forward the gun still aimed at me.

There was a squelch as she stepped in the trail of blood I had left behind. I closed my eyes waiting for some big finale, one more shot to put me out of my misery. Carol's hair hung limp around her face as she pulled up her shaking arm and set her gaze directly between my eyes. I looked away and waited. Everything was already starting to get a little dark, breathing was a chore. "Ten," she whispered.

Click.

Carol's gasp burned my ears. "TEN! TEN! TEN!" Three more clicks. Looking up through the dark haze, I watched Carol sling the gun to the floor. She looked at me like an abandoned puppy. This was the same way she had looked at me on our first real date when we had planned to stroll through a large historical garden, but opted for a movie when she found out that their oak alley had two perfect rows of twelve of the grand trees. Unable to talk, I saw her crumple to the floor before me, pulling at her hair and sobbing "six" and "oh no."

As the last tendrils of consciousness began to escape me I couldn't help but notice how oddly circular and perfect my wounds were. Maybe I was hallucinating, but they were just gorgeous. Carol was crying and I was bleeding out. I never had made it to my phone, and she was in hysterics, so there was no chance of calling 911. She wouldn't have been able to dial the number anyhow. $9 + 1 + 1$ is eleven. I wish Carol would have noticed how perfect they were though, if only there hadn't been six of them.

OUT OF THE SUNRISE

J. Thomas Minton

“Out of the Sunrise” was inspired by “Into the Twilight” composed by my favorite Irish author/poet/playwright William Butler Yeats. I wrote this poem in response to an invitation to attempt to write a poem in the style of someone I emulated.

Thanks, W.B. Yeats, for your “Into the Twilight”

Newborn heart this morning new born,
so dear are your songs of day and night.
Smile, heart, once more in the warm sunlight.
Try, heart, once more to be whole and not torn.

Your father, Barry, was never stung
through leather bindings or hardened clay.
His ropes held your enemies at bay,
hanging from spires, ladders’ broken rungs.

Go, heart, and find a channel or some rill.
Near there’s a magical neighborhood
of black and white and evil and good
that practices living simple goodwill

while God sits loving His only born,
while peace in the world is never in sight,
while mankind stands shiv’ring in warm sunlight,
while you, newborn, pray to be whole and not torn.

CREDITS

SUSANNE VISCARRA

Editor, 1990



Q: How did you start working for Archarios?

A: In late spring of my sophomore year, after I had been copyediting *The Chanticleer* for several months, I was invited to a Student Media Committee meeting, and I didn't know why. At the meeting, I was told that the committee would like to restart Archarios as a student-run literary/art magazine, but they only wanted to do it if I would agree to be the editor. I couldn't have been more elated to be asked, and free tuition made it even more attractive. I jumped at the offer and began planning the magazine immediately! My first stop was to ask Paul Olsen to be the advisor because I knew I would need the most help in learning how to create the publishable end product, or the visual layout.

Q: What was it like working as the editor?

A: I loved it! For many years I had envisioned working in publishing because of my love of reading, and Archarios afforded me a large step toward that goal. I was creating the magazine from scratch, so I

met with two of my professors and several Student Affairs staff to figure out how to create the initial budget. I also spent a lot of time reading up on magazine design, Library of Congress rules regarding copyright, how other student-run magazines handled the selection process, and so forth. Thankfully, Paul introduced me to Stephanie Biegner as a candidate for the art director position, and we made a great team: Archarios won national awards the very first year! Stephanie and I saw possibilities beyond the printed product, so we also created salable postcards and T-shirts from some of the best art we had printed that would translate well in those media. We even sponsored an open-mic night in the Student Union for students to read their writings, play music, tell jokes--whatever they wanted to do--and the magazine supplied coffee, tea, milk, cookies, pastries, daisies and smiley-face pins for the event, which was highly successful. It was a very exciting two years that I treasure still today.

Q: How does it feel to know that Archarios has reached its 25th anniversary?

A: It's quite heartwarming that something I started from nothing, with a lot of help from Paul and Stephanie, is still going strong. I'm delighted to hear that Archarios is continuing to win awards, on the state, regional, and national levels. I was touched and honored to be invited by Alison to be interviewed for the 25th-anniversary issue. I haven't visited Coastal in all of these years, and I'm excited to go back for the release party and especially to see Paul and Stephanie. In light of Archarios' 25th anniversary, we made the perfect team back then--apparently.

STEPHANIE ARNOLD

Art Director, 1990



Q: How did you start working for Archarios?

A: I was approached by Paul. It was such a brainstorm of an idea to revive the magazine, it just kind of evolved with everyone saying “Yes, let’s do it.”

Q: What was it like working with Paul and Susanne?

A: Susanne was all about details, grammar, and accuracy – nothing like me. Her attention to punctuation was hawk-like. We butted heads from time to time, but we worked well together and respected our differences. I think Susanne and I both recognized that we excelled in areas that seldom overlapped with the exception of wanting to produce quality work that we could all be proud of. Producing something cohesive was definitely one of the driving forces for both of us. Paul was such a great influence on all of us. His experience and knowledge was what got us off and running, and his encouragement kept us from quitting! He wanted us to succeed and produce something great. He always held us to a high standard, showed us details

we may have missed, and pushed us forward like a proud Papa. He was a great mentor and very supportive of all our talents.

Q: How does it feel to know that Archarios has reached its 25th anniversary?

A: I think it’s wonderful. It is a testament to Paul’s dedication, the faculty, the contributors, and all the students that have worked on the magazine over the years. It takes a lot of time and effort to pull something like Archarios together. It’s neat to see other’s vision and skills come alive in a printed piece like this. While it has always had the same intent, its execution is always different and new. Our first magazines were paste-ups on photo boards. Mac’s were just coming out. They were prehistoric beasts with basic functions and very little memory. One book took about 20 floppy discs.

Q: Any words for Paul?

A: Thanks so much for all the guidance, advice, and support you gave me. After all these years I still look back and appreciate the influence you had on the beginnings of my career. I know how important it was for you that we succeeded with this magazine, in work, and in life. That concern showed by how much time and effort you put in all of us. I’m so grateful for your friendship!



PAUL OLSEN

Advisor, 1990-2016

Hello is the beginning; it is the start of the adventure, meeting new people, making new friends, facing new challenges, and directions that are not charted. Success is never guaranteed and the future is often ill defined at best. My hello at Coastal started with Susanne Viscarra and Stephanie Arnold. Susanne was the impetus for the start of Archarios, and Stephanie was our first art director who gave us our style. Without them none of this would have happened.

Goodbye is the end result of the hello. Whatever time has passed from the first hello is now the subject of “I remember”.

My time for goodbye has come, and all of the cliché’s apply. “Where has the time gone”, “It seems like only yesterday,” etc. It is a unique place to be because you never see yourself arriving here. The end of one road always leads to the start of another with a new hello along the way. I am not sure what that road will be, or where it will take me, or how long I will be able to travel it. I do know that the goodbyes I take with me will sustain me on my journey and be the cause of great joy forever.

I want to thank all the editors, art directors, and staff of Archarios for a marvelous 25 years. Their dedication, drive, and work ethic are what made Archarios such a success. Their publication has won over 80 national and regional awards, and Archarios has become one of the most respected student produced literary-art magazines in the country. What more can I ask for?

I want to thank everyone at Coastal Carolina University for their support and encouragement over the years. Certainly without a supportive and tolerant administration Archarios would not have been able to flourish.

Of course I would be remiss if I didn’t thank the professionals from Sheriar Press, who have been the reason that the print quality of Archarios was always maintained at an award winning level. Their willingness to go the extra mile for our students proves the true metal of their company, and their commitment to education. Another hello fondly remembered and one I am most grateful for.

Finally, I want to dedicate this magazine to one of the bravest women I have ever known. She was a real fighter who ultimately lost her battle with cancer. She was the art director for our 2001 issue and she leaves behind a husband, three children, and a host of friends who miss her sorely. Leah Miller we thank you for showing all of us how to be brave, fight the good fight, and make success out of adversity. We love you and miss you.

Goodbye,

Paul

ALISON LANE

Editor, 2016



It has been a pleasure to work on this publication for the past two years. I've come to know Theresa and Paul through this process, and they've made this job so enjoyable. I'd like to thank our wonderful staffers Rini and Ryan for all of their hard work, and for giving us two great semesters. I've developed a soft spot for Archarios during my time on this publication, and will carry it with me always as my first editing position. I thank Paul for pushing me to be the editor I am now, and wish him all the best as he prepares for retirement. I'll miss him next year, but I look forward to working with Jacob Cotton to start Archarios on the path for the next twenty-five.

STAFF



Ryan Case



Rini Malo

TERESA CALABRESE

Art Director, 2016



In a world so dependent on technologies built for speed and near perfection; I urge you to put pencil to paper, paint to a canvas, capture an image in film, or mold with your hands. Get out and eat, sleep, and breathe your art. I urge you to live your art! Archarios is a reminder of the possibilities that come from our own process and creation.

It has been an honor and a privilege to be the art director for the 25th issue. I'm proud to celebrate how this publication has molded students and the world with their work. I would like to congratulate Paul Olsen, our advisor, for staying on course and seeing out his visions for Archarios. Our publication has won over 80 national and regional awards during his time. I feel blessed that he has shared his wisdom and guidance with me. Jacob Cotton, the advisor for the coming year, is what we artists call a bad ass. In academic terms; he is innovative and has an exciting outlook for the next 25. I have no doubt that he will continue to uphold, and even improve, the publication's competitive and creative standards.

Now, go out there and LIVE YOUR ART!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Archarios would also like to thank Sheriar Press for their commitment to our publication through the years. Their efforts have been greatly appreciated and invaluable. We thank our photographer, Jeremy Razook for all of his contributions. We would also like to thank administrators such as Dean Ennis, Whitney Comer and Debbie Conner. Our judges Jason Bordt, Jennifer Boyle, Jeff Case, Hastings Hensel, Treelee McAnn, Armon Means, Joseph Oestreich, and Logan Woodle. We would also like to thank the staff of TEMPO and The Chanticleer. You have all played such key roles in the creation of this publication, and we thank you.

