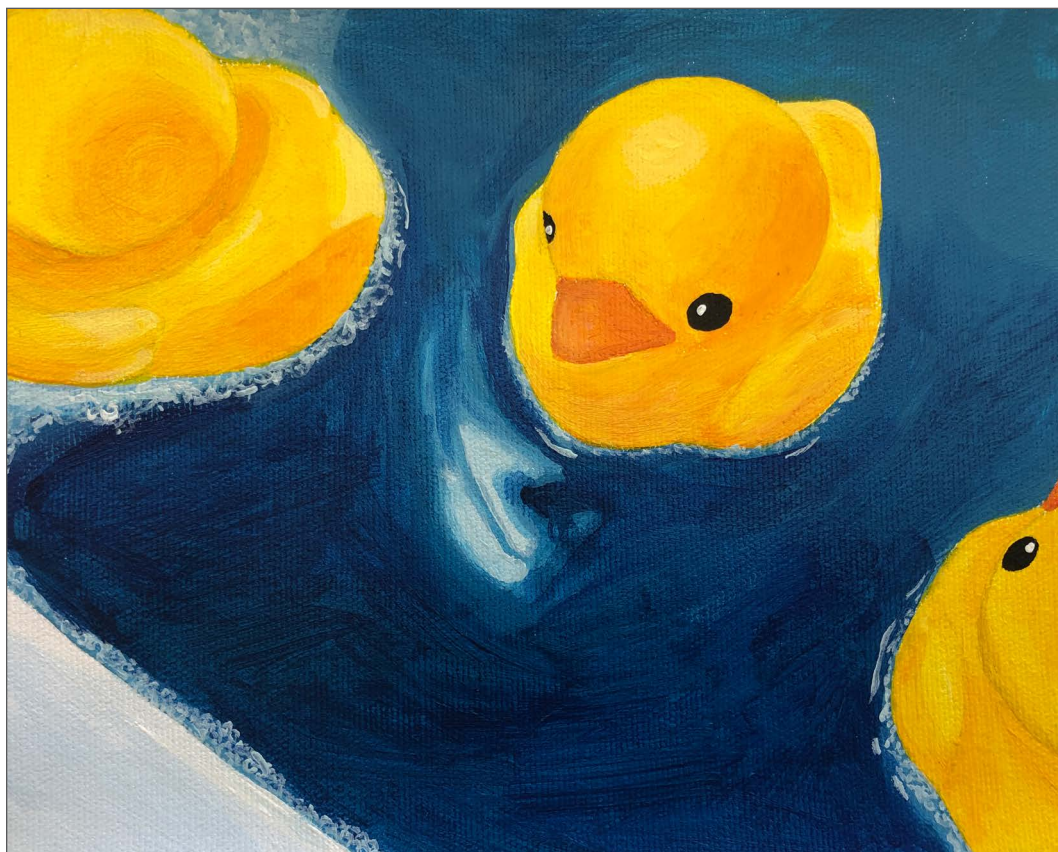




In A Grove 2023

Integrated
Arts Journal



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Cover—**Ella Pollitt '24**

Photography—**Simon Spivey**

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The Race

Micaiah '25 recited her original poem, The Race, during the all community Chapel on February 16 to give a voice to her perspective, during Black History Month.

I know I'm a stop
On the way
The way to freedom
The way to life
As it should be lived

I raise my hand
Scream "pick me" "pick me"
But no one will
So I call on myself
My knowledge
My understanding
My truth

But doesn't matter
Because soon it won't be my anything
The world will take it
And elaborate on something already
full length
Weaseling through the cracks
I'll break my back
And it will become something more

I'll shout from the rooftops
But I'll be drowned by the people

who think they know better
And maybe they don't
Or maybe they do
And if they do I have to preform the
run of a lifetime
The hounds are ruthless

Toothless?
No
With fangs the size of my body
Preying on the miserable
The hopeless
The ugly
But not me

I think I'm stronger
Better
And all is good until all becomes hell
And you realize you're not
So you falter in your ways
Counting days
Until their craze is numbed
When really the cycle has just begun



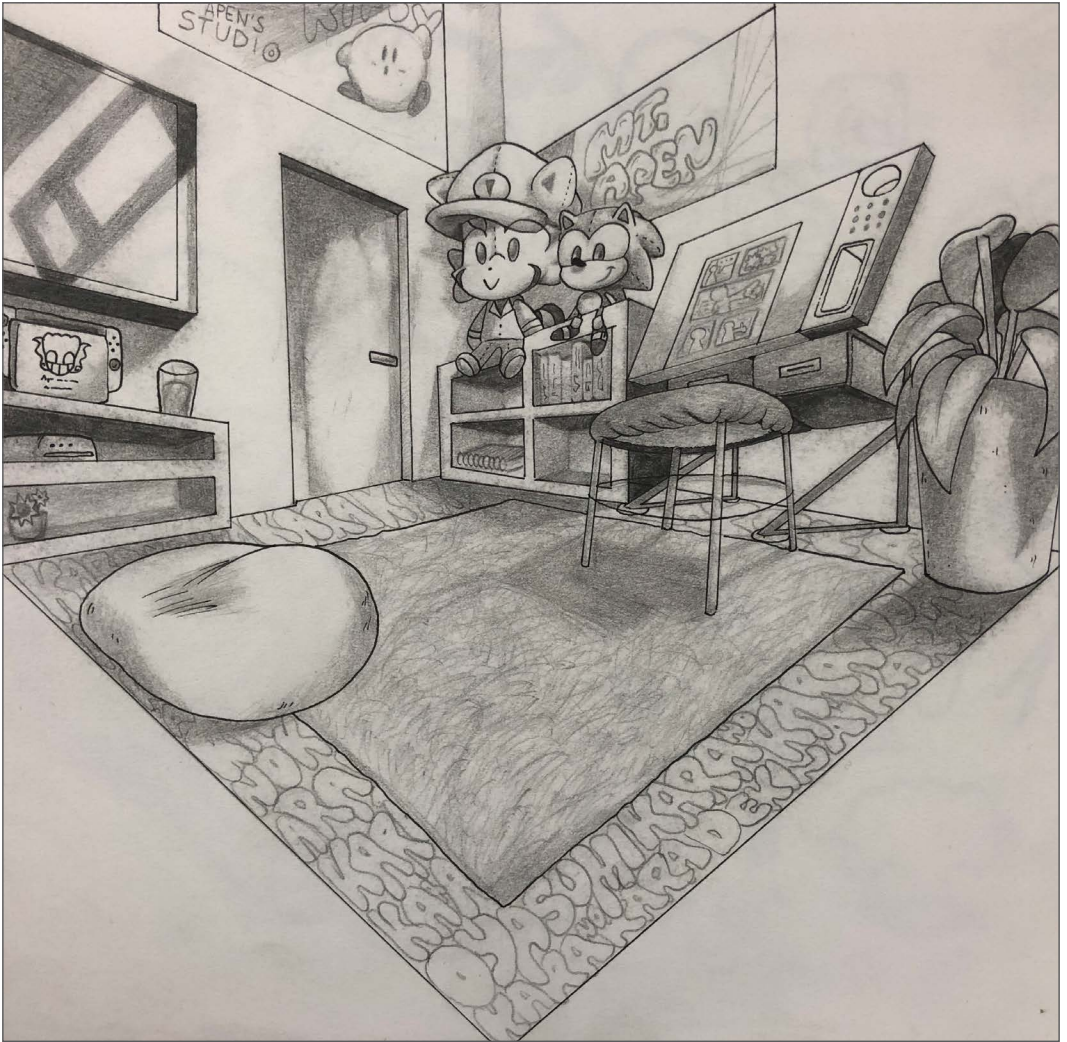


Aiden McKlmon '25





Evelina Nasybullova '23



Fractured

The crack in the wall
Spreads down and out
Breaking the things
That I had just fixed
Tearing all the glue
That has held me together
Smashing the puzzle
I had just finished

The crack in the darkness
A sliver of light
Something to save me from this
endless night
The silence all around
Comes crashing down
Pieces falling to the ground

The crack in the bars
That have been holding me here
Trapping me inside my own mind
I rattle the chains
Swinging from my wrists
Binding me to you
Until the very last breath

The crack in the masks
That we wear all-day
No one knows what my face looks like
It's better that way
What if they saw what was underneath
How I've been beaten
And broken
And bruised
See how she used me
The way I used you



Amelie Fenton '23



Abby Roberston '25



Suzanne Tian '23

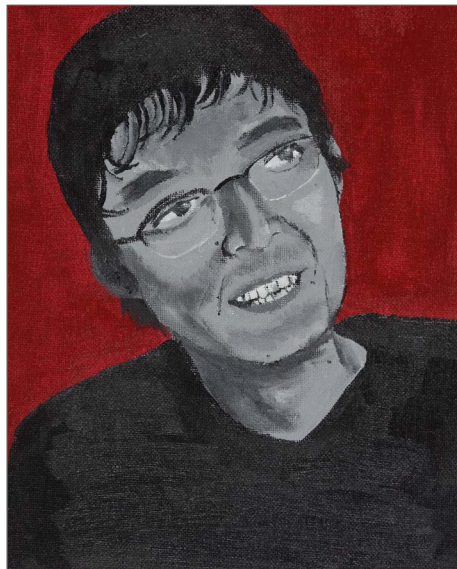




Anna McDonald '24



Fiona Zhou '26—1st Place, LCS Maple Syrup Label Contest



Edna Sung '25

She Who is Alone

And it was all a dream. Miss Sola smiled absentmindedly as she read through the last of her students' works. They'd been released hours earlier while there was still light, but she'd noted the sunken sockets of some of her students' eyes and silently promised to finish grading their short stories.

She knew too well how hard it was for those eyes at home. She was a woman. This meager fragment of her whole being had her rights limited to corroborate 'the advancement of society'. That's what they'd been told. Eleri Sola hadn't been her mothers choice.

Mother spoke like a broken record. Persistently shoving fear deeper into my juvenile body. I'd regreted life; knew mine ruined hers. Mother had never loved me the way other parents could. Not when she'd been forced into unwanted, unexpected, motherhood.

Staring down at her students' short stories, messy letters came back into focus. Miss Sola sighed in resignation of her seething consciousness. She needed a reprieve from her thoughts. After sorting the short stories into each students 'RETURNED' folder, lined neatly against the vast window sill, Miss Sola made her way to exit class 104. The sound of two inch heels reverberated through the halls of Stonewall Elementary School as Miss Sola wandered towards the library. The sounds of her heels faded out as she passed the Legislation Board.

The board read, "The Supreme Court has overturned Roe: North America has begun to enforce its trigger ban to prohibit abortion entirely ~ The Revolution ~ February, 2150." Heart pounding, Eleri's hand moved to feel the rectangular bump in the small of her back. Since The Revolution, all females are tagged

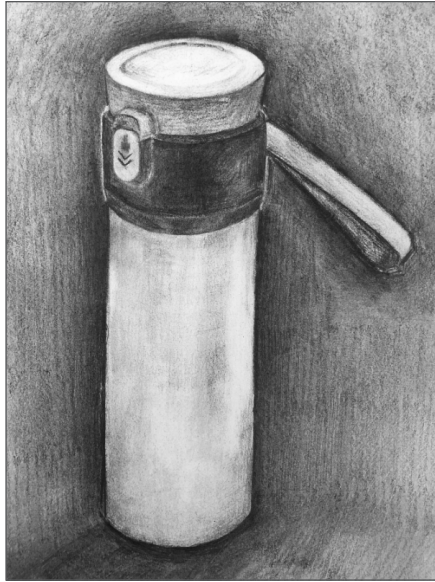
in the lower spine: a chip connecting to the nervous system and permanently eradicating their choice in fertility. Her mother had been robbed of her choice; discovering her pregnancy in March following the passing of the new legislation. The chip had already been placed. *The understanding of Mothers' future came in full force.*

Avery P '24

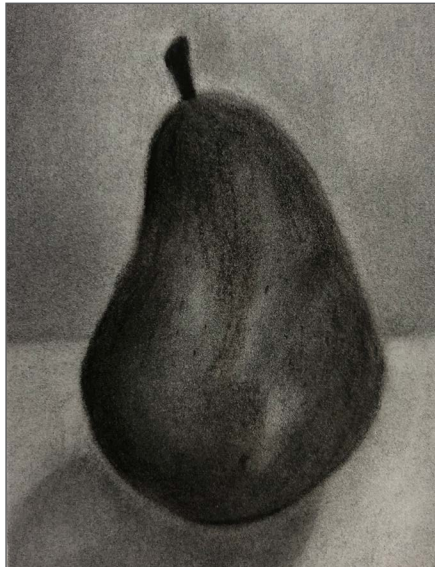


Emily Liang '23





Yukun Xie '25



Anna McDonald '24



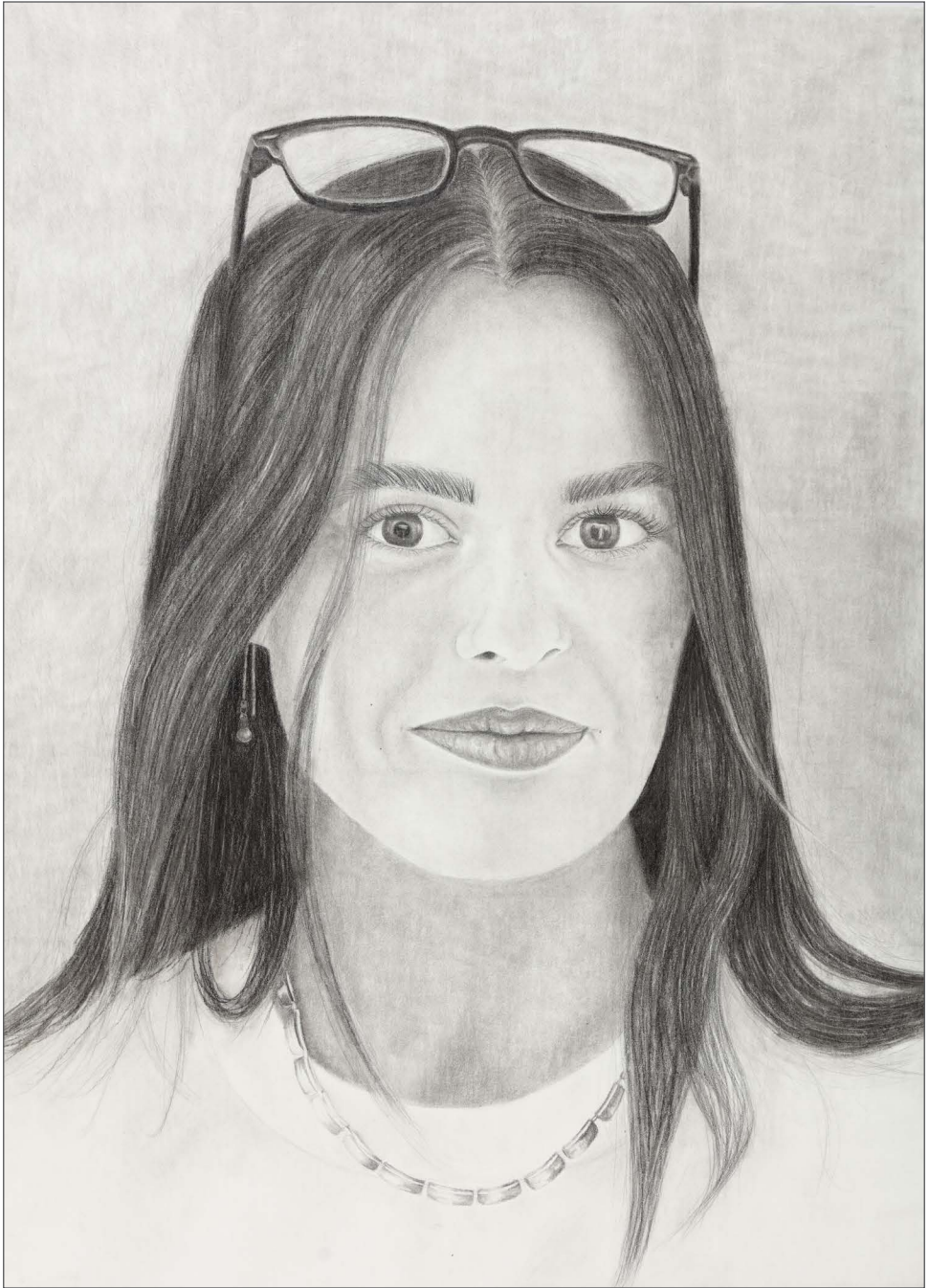
Dale Liu '26



Mackenzie Hogan '24



Ansheng Zhou '26



Dominique Thiele '24

Places that no Longer Exist

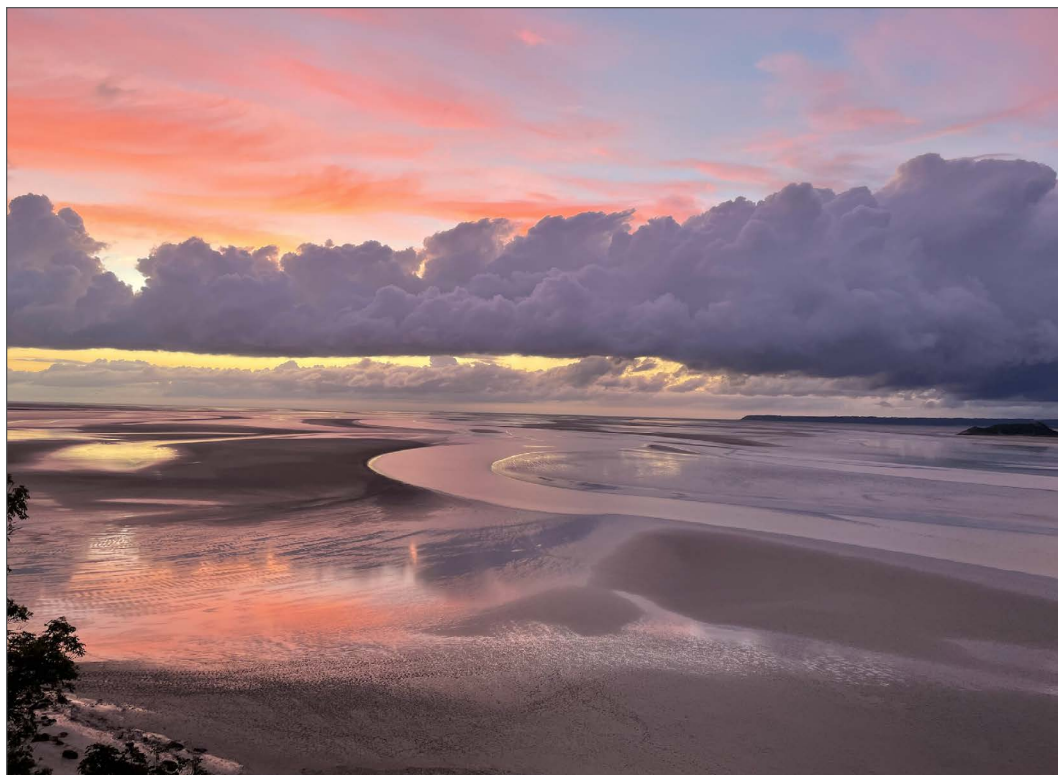
Tiny fragments of my soul
are scattered around places that no longer exist.
I search for them in new places
hoping to collect the remnants of the person I once was
But i always fail
i always end up a little more lost
a little less than the version of myself i so desperately cling to
Perhaps i am subject to a life with pieces of myself which I cannot
rightfully call my own
I want her back.
I want to rip her soul back from the hands of whom I so delicately placed

time is simply acceptance
There is a mosaic of myself existing in whom i have loved
For love is a selfless act
To give yourself away,
knowing she may never return

So i remain,
In places that no longer exist.
maybe she doesn't want me anymore
Maybe i have to stop looking for her
In people who resemble home
Maybe
i accept that i am forever lost,

in places that no longer exist.





Mackenzie Hogan '24—Tie for 1st Place, LCS Photo Contest, Category: Joy







I Understand

When did my nose become too big?
my eyebrows far too inched together,
the rims of my eyes so deep it resembled generations of abuse,
my skin a shade too dark for the world encompassing me.

When did my appearance become the single thing
that orbited my identity?

Growing older, my definition of *perfect* was ever-changing.
The very concept of *perfect* was one that had not yet existed in my docile mind.

Perhaps it all began with the best friends that would purely resemble the
standard blond-blue-eyes-just-the-right-shade-of-pink lips.
When school dances awaited the corner, you'd be suffused with the hope that
he might ask you, although you knew it would always be her.

Did it begin when you scrubbed baking soda on your arms and legs until they
bled, only to try again the next day?
countless nights silently praying that maybe you'd be enough
if you didn't quite look like you.

Maybe it really began when you'd see glimpses of your father's anger in
a reflection of yourself, creating a stamped memory of a reflection you'd grow
to hate.

Maybe it was when you failed to soak your mother's tears flooding down her
soft face, painfully realizing that imperfect was all you would ever truly know.

Deep within the origins of my mother's home country,
an oppression exists in parts of the world where a woman's body is one that
must be
clean,
untouched,
modest,
and all else above but her own.

The belief that a woman's sexuality must be controlled
as if it is something that may slip away if unattended for just half a second.

These women are strapped down,
unable to release the hold of the foreign laws that condemn women for body
parts, sewed shut,
merely to be reopened by a man
who fails to recognize the meaning of the word *consent*.

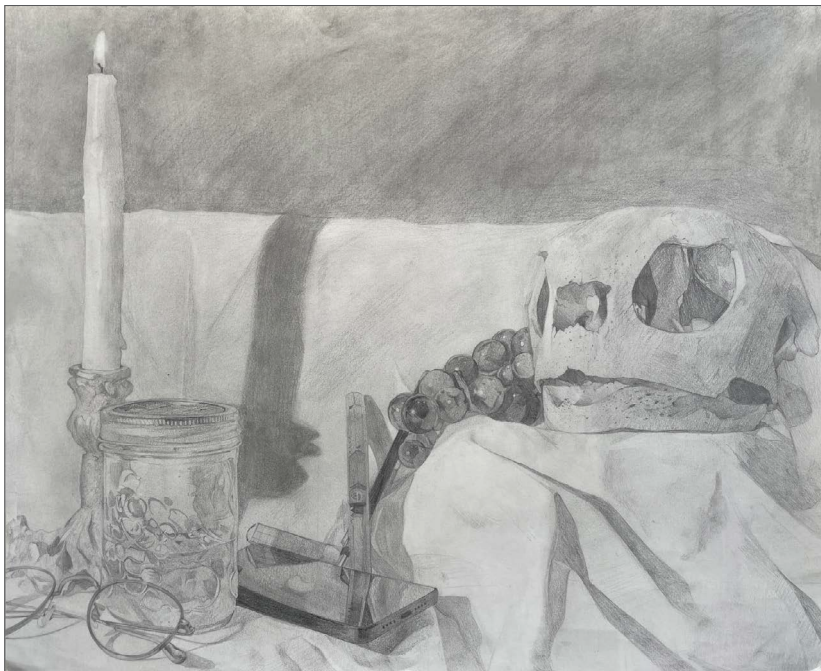
So, when I attempt to soak my mother's tears,
I am attempting to soak up a world's ocean of suffering
passed down generations of hurt.

Our reflection became *ugly* when we were compelled to abide by the
definitions created by our very oppressors.

The deep-bronze complexion of my disdained skin,
the disparate shape of my aquiline nose,
the thick hairs between my eyebrows
desperately inching their way back to each other as if lovers torn apart,
the bags cushioned beneath my protruding eyes;
speak for more than solely my appearance.

They speak for my injustice;
they speak for the generations of women before me and the generations after.
Although I may never understand the precise moment the young girl in the
mirror felt her reflection so deeply, I understand why.

I understand, and I want to tell her that her reflection—it speaks for more.







Winston Wang '24



Yukun Xie '25





Evelina Nasybullova '23

Lonely Spiral

Yin and Yang
Light and darkness
Universal balance
But who will be here to balance my
rocking boat
My weighted scale
The monstrous earthquake that is me
Always
Always thinking
Always moving
Always shaking
Always destroying
Wrecking everything in its pathway
The shaking
Oh the shaking
It's inevitable
Thoughts no longer credible
My heart is racing
While my hands hold
My arms my sleeves
And the air leaves
Am I dying?
I want to scream
"You need to breathe"
Breathe
Breathe

Breathe
Breathe
Breathe
Slowly oxygen finds its way back
through my lungs
The thoughts still circling now turn me
numb
This is routine no it's never done
They say you need to call someone
But who
Who
Might I ask
Who should call
To be the light to my darkness
The yang to yin
The 10-ton weight I need to lift pressure
off my chest
I don't know and you don't either
And suddenly my throat is clogged
My mind is fog
And the shaking
Oh the shaking
Here we go again





Matthew Zhang '25



Robin Younger '24—1st Place, LCS Photo Contest,
Category: Global Adventures and Nature





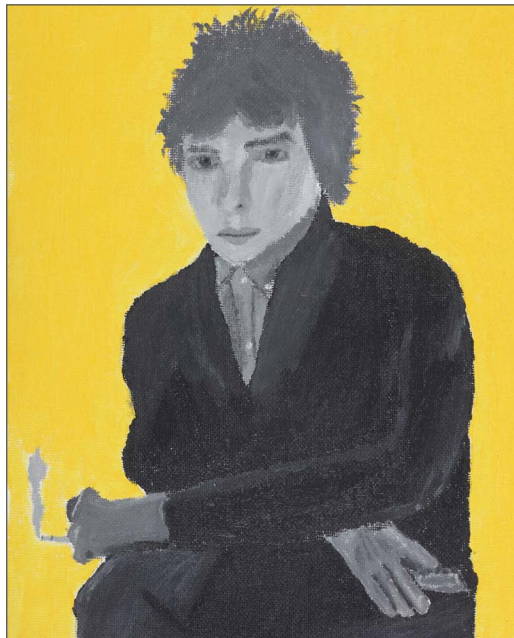
Yasmina Bevan Turra '25

Elephant Poop —A Beautiful Thing

Elephant poop, it's called dung, Really. . .
One elephant a day produces 50kg of dung, Silly. . .
Tons and tons of dung, sitting on the ground
In the hot sun, just waiting to be found
Dung has many uses, who knew
The most popular is paper, don't be blue
The paper does not smell like poop
It smells like real paper, keep in the loop
Let's save the trees in our communities
This would provide many opportunities
Increase oxygen on our planet, help stop climate change
Let's collect elephant dung, we won't look strange
It's a beautiful thing, elephant dung
Just don't put it on your tongue!



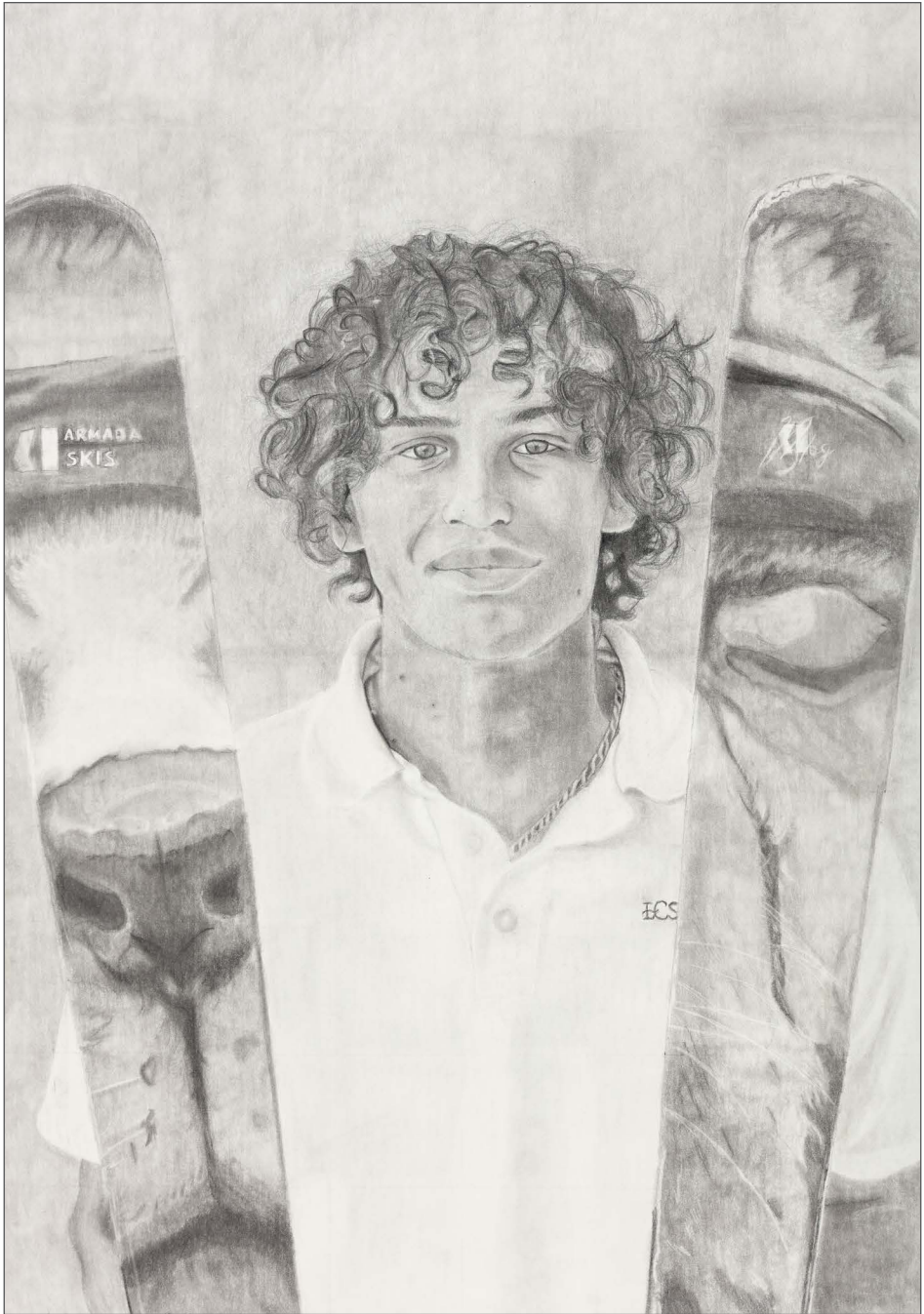
Dominique Thiele '24



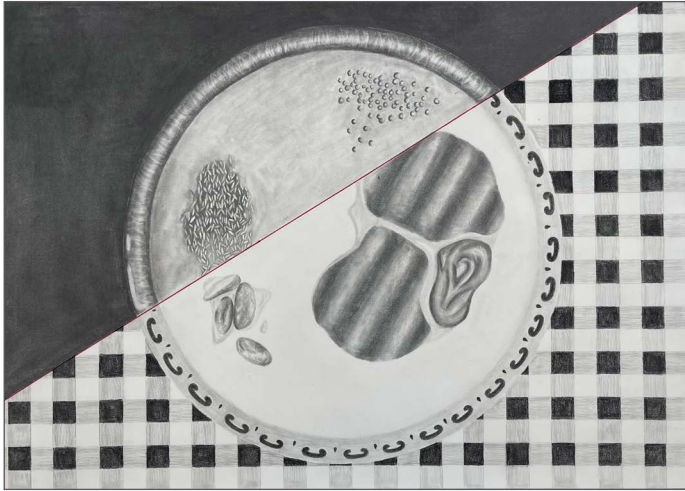
Harrison Buck '25



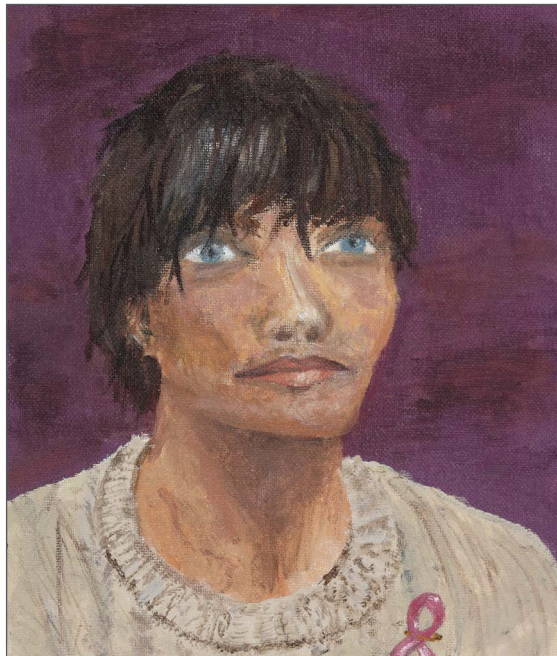
Bill Ting '23



Dylan Rasmus '24

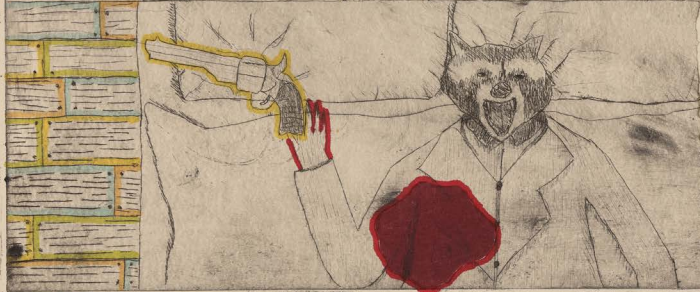


Dominique Thiele '24



Livi Ambler '25

...the current reveal of interest.
 Nearly everyone on Earth consumes some food regularly in most of the world, this is just a matter of preference.
 There are the wrong microbes won't smell it. I will smell slightly sour and pleasantly yeasty. This emits some ride. A successful organism is usually present in the air or on the surface of the beer and some soundough starters use water. Or they may be left to happenstance. Being a bit of a previous fermenter to may be simply introduced through the process, and passed down through the generations. Thus pressed into service may be things before they even reach the lips. The space, allowing his microbial members to spread. Fermentation extends the microbome in food samples and weeks. Have tried producing cheese from bacteria transferred from their makers' hands. Some people can vary because of the different weight and even mood. Ferments made by which assists with digestion, helping determine a person's mouth. The gut bustles with bacteria.



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Rocky Raccoon

Riley Dagg

1980

May has come again, without fail
It will be gone but will come again
When the flowers are beautiful
When my younger brother runs
May will be there
Even though we are gone
May has come again
When the father limped
When the pocket watch stopped
When blood ran down the street
It is already May 18th
When we moved forward together



Emily Liang '23



Victoria Snape '25



Snigdha Garikaparthi '24



Anna McRonald '24



A Long Walk Home

The city at night was almost as ugly as it was in daylight. All its buildings seemed to be made of the same dull brick, from the foundation to the top, all to government regulation. The roads were cracked, pot holes scattered throughout, perhaps attempting to replicate its worn out voyagers, who trudged daily through the broken roads, paying no mind to one another. The city's occupants, sadly, did not get any better under the cover of night. After all, life doesn't stop when one closes their eyes.

In this dark, starry night, Aster walked, her shoulders straight and broad. Her gait steady, her head high. She wouldn't allow herself to be identified as anything other than the man she was pretending to be. She knew she shouldn't be out this late, let alone at all. It was illegal now after all, for a woman to be alone at night, and as of recently, some were pushing for women to not leave at all, even if accompanied. *And of course, it's all for our safety isn't it?* She thought with a mental roll of her eyes.

The fucking ridiculousness of it all. God if anyone knew I was here, simply existing, breathing, out of that damned house, that so-called 'home', I'd be dead in a minute. Safety, what a luxurious word, a dream truly. A goddamned delusion, for when have I ever been safe? When have any of us been safe? Locked up, hidden, terrified out of our minds in that cursed prison.

Aster had wondered if she should have stayed, shouldn't have left. Had spent a moment fearing the repercussions - the matron's screeches and painful punishments echoing through her mind, each striking like a lash - then allowed her impulsive nature to push her forwards.

She had always, *always*, been there for Jude's birthday, and with her recent shortcomings, she couldn't afford not to see him. *Jude couldn't have had a*

worse sister, rang through her mind like a curse. Aster shook her head and kept walking, ignoring her thoughts. She attempted instead to focus on her posture, making sure she looked less prey-like. Each step had a certain stagger to it - a confidence. For being a woman might've been a horrid sentence, but being a meek man wasn't all the better.

Mariam Attyani '24

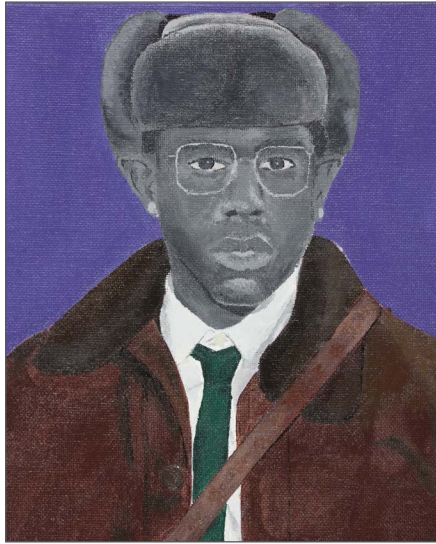


55

Livi Ambler '25



Esme Chapman Korchinsky '23



Lasse Dressler '25



Fiona Zhou '26



Aidan Sumner '25



Anna McDonald '24



Poem

I've been lain down into the dirt for the forest to claim,
calm and cold.

Leaves and branches,
garnished with thorns,
pin me to the ground.

They seize my stomach and my thighs.
They seize the last of my soul as it leaks out
through the shredded patches of my skin.

They slither into a hole in my liver and scratch at its insides,
my insides.

Quick, before the forest claims me,
I never told you how much I love you.

And I have forgotten to leave a note.



Amy Shin '26



Mortada Bouhadja '23



Katelyn Hansen '24



Elliot Stewart '26



Willow Roberts '24—Tie for 1st Place, LCS Photo Contest, Category: Joy

Tiger Stripes

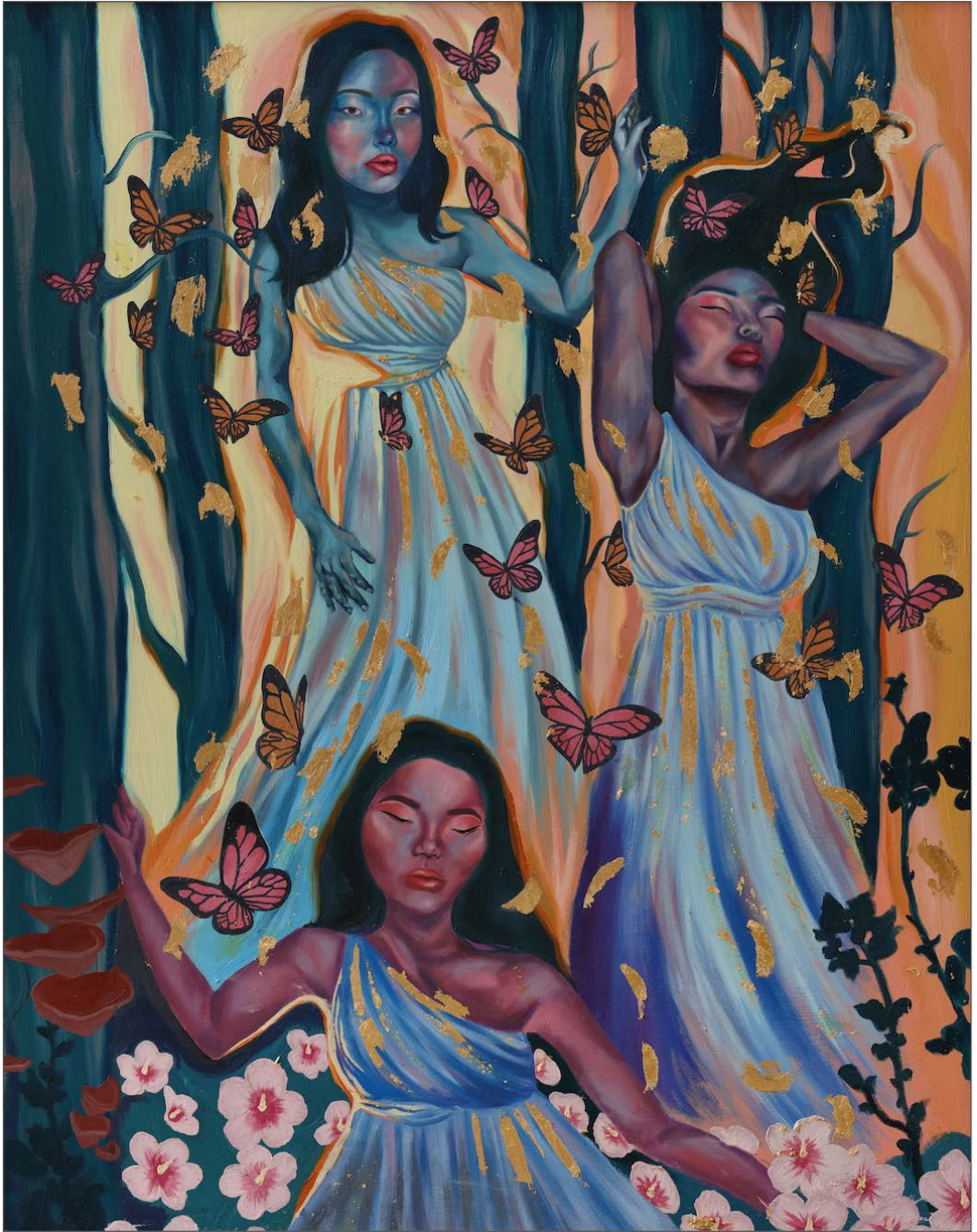
Tiger stripes are not purposeless
They break up the shape and size of tigers
So they can blend in with their surroundings
Trees and tall grass
A concept hard to grasp until you have your own
Some are fortunate enough to be birthed with them
I had to make my own
Prowling through white-lighted buildings with others that look like me but are
never “like me”
Having to make more and more strips because to blend is to breathe and to
breathe is to live and I need to live to laugh to love to live is to know you’re more
than just a body that just happened to be placed on this uneven playing field
They’re darker and deeper and incredibly visible against my skin
The outcome is not ideal
And I’m told that tiger stripes weren’t made for “us”
By then it’s too late I have so many I’m blended to a point where my bones mesh
with the wind
I’m invisible to all
Tiger stripes are not purposeless
They are meant to camouflage
On humans they work to stand out
They eat away at you until you’re more stripe than skin but that won’t stop you
from trying to make more because if you can just get to the right amount of
stripes you need to be normal it will finally be worth the tears you shed and the
red that still stains your favourite t-shirt
Reminding you that tiger stripes are not purposeless
They don’t make you normal
They make you better at feeling worse



Amalie Noergaard '25



Amelia Peng '23



Alana Kim '22—Peter Dalglish Art Award Recipient 2021-22



Dawn Liu '26



Leyla Kembar '24



Neil Shah '26



My Biggest Fear

If someone asked my biggest fear
I wouldn't say the dark,
Or the flu,
Or even a great white shark;
But you.

You're the first person I see when I wake up in the morning,
And the last to say goodnight.
You're the only one who listens, even when we fight.

When we're alone in the night you tug and you pull, but you've already won.
You trace the dots on my face left by the sun,
Map out the scars drawn on my arms
But how can these landmarks be mine
when you're the one who put them there?
You dug up the ground and planted a blade, but there was no pain.
And when the grass grew back, it didn't grow full of roses or flowers,
it painted a stain.
A stain of despair, guilt and pain.
A stain that acts as a reminder of you.
You can never leave my side,
You will never leave my side,
You're engraved in my arm.

And despite all of this,
All the time spent with you,
I do not know you.

I hate you,
I hate you.

I can not escape you,
Your body is a waste of space

You tell me to “conceal your marks - they don’t suit your face.”

It’s okay to let go, no one will know.

After all, you’ll just be replaced.

I won’t have to look at you,

You won’t look back at me.

Because after all,

The mirror is our worst enemy.

Poker.

I was never taught how to play the game,

Though I learned to never reveal my poker face.

We’re taught to conceal, but never to reveal.

Not when I’m angry,

Excited,

Especially not when I’m sad.

The other players can not know what lay in my hand,

For all they know I have the Royal Flush but my face will never tell.

Essentially, we’re all just pawns in a poker game.

Each one of us with a separate hand,

Some dealt better than others, but that’s the luck of the game.

The hand we’re dealt will determine our run and our fame, creating a name

Either renowned or pronounced deceased

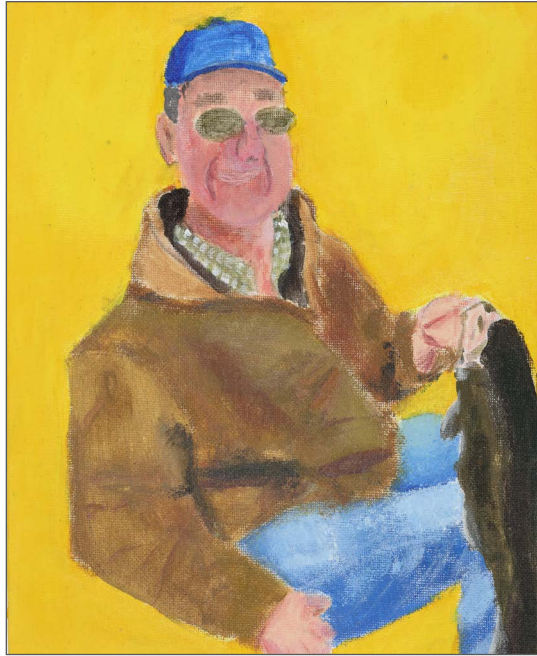
Because that’s the luck of the game.



Ellesse Chen '24



Judy Yu '23



Grayden Clark '25



Jasmin Hasselkuss '24





Arthur Dressler '25

