

# genesis

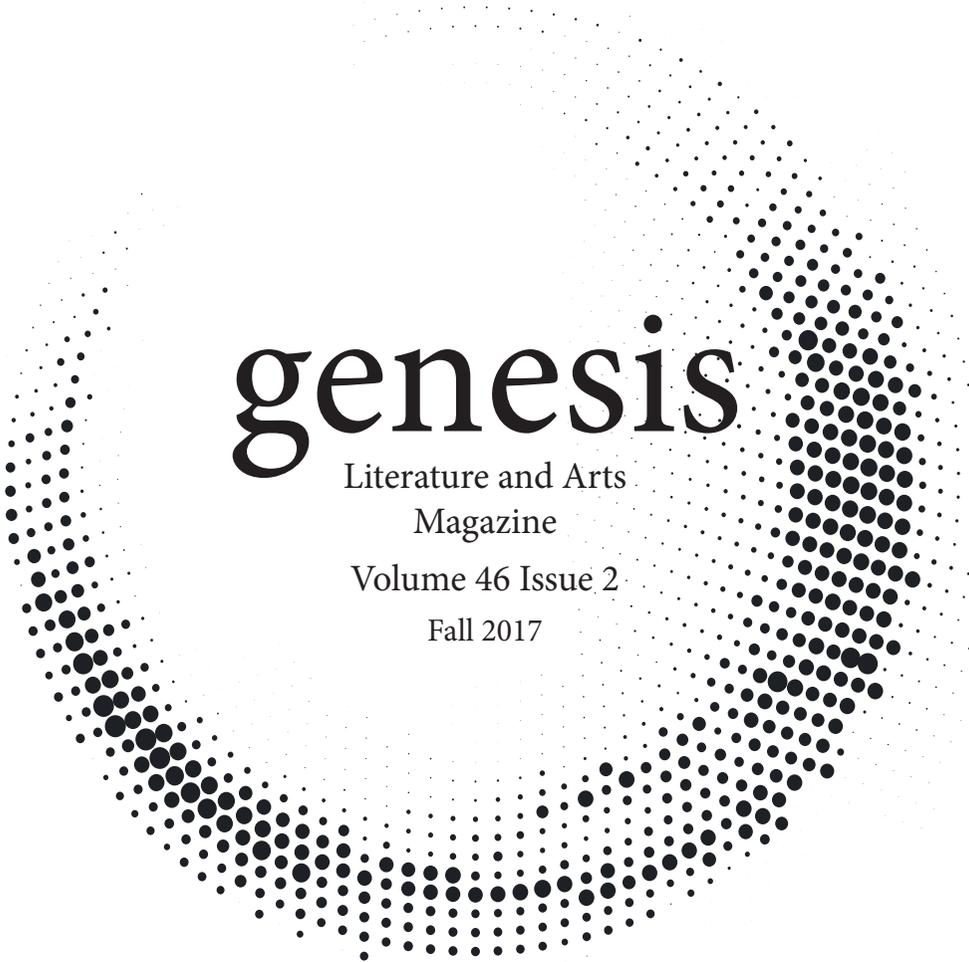
Literature and Art Magazine

Fall 2017

**genesis-** the origin or coming into being of anything;  
development into being, especially by growth or evolution;  
the process or mode of origin  
< the ~ of a book >

Copyright © 2017 by the Trustees of Indiana University.

Upon publication, copyright reverts to author. *genesis* is published in the spring and fall through a grant from the Office of Student Involvement of IUPUI and the IUPUI School of Liberal arts.



# genesis

Literature and Arts  
Magazine

Volume 46 Issue 2

Fall 2017

We would like to thank the following:

IUPUI Office of Student Involvement,  
Liberal Arts Student Council,  
Indiana University School of Liberal Arts,  
IUPUI English Department,  
Western Publishing,  
and friends of *genesis*.  
Vector images designed by starline/Freepik

# Staff

---

## **Managing Editors**

Matthew Daugherty

Ashley Williams

## **Senior Editor**

Sarah Bahr

## **Editors**

Kane Hawkins

Caroline Niepokoj

Wesley Stevens

Meredith Thomas

## **Faculty Advisor**

Sarah Layden

## **W280 Apprentices**

Veronica Baker

Alyssa Hostetler

Amanda Binder

Eva Kanyuh

Caitlyn Bruszewski

Selena L. Martinez

Madison Carnes

Olivia Pretorius

Elizabeth Coffman-Mackey

Jourdan Reemer

Lex Daugherty

Kendra Stutzman

Sarah Henderson

Pierre Watson

Kayla Hensley

Christopher Weston

# Letter from the Editors

---

Dear Reader,

Thank you for picking up a copy of our Fall 2017 issue of *genesis*. It has been a joy, and a challenge, reviewing all the submissions the staff received this semester. Our submitters' creativity in their work and passion for their craft continues to amaze the staff each semester. In this issue, we're proud to bring you a diverse collection of works, from new voices to some returning favorites.

The featured contributors worked hard for their inclusion. As authors, artists, or poets, they know the looming threat of rejection. Every creative mind faces it. What makes great writers and artists is not just what they create, but also how they handle the rejection. We were honored that many of our contributors this semester, despite initial rejections, utilized our suggestions for revision and resubmitted. That tenacity and courage in the face of rejection is what makes working on *genesis* a pleasure

To all of our readers, who have carried us and continue to carry us in your backpacks and handbags, to and from your classes, we are so grateful. We thank you for all the support you give us in our mission to showcase the incredible abilities and diversity of the students at IUPUI. Please continue reading and, if the spark of imagination ignites, submitting. Without you, *genesis*, would not exist.

Ashley Williams and Matthew Daugherty  
Managing Editors

# Table of Contents

---

## Poetry

A Poem for the Next Generation of Women	46
<i>Caitlyn Bruszewski</i>	
A Summer's Night on Skid Row	43
<i>Corey Cole</i>	
Standardized	21
<i>Corey Cole</i>	
Dwarf Planet	24
<i>Ronan Harkins</i>	
Soft Boy	32
<i>Ronan Harkins</i>	
Metaphor	40
<i>Kate Marquam</i>	
Paper Lanterns	18
<i>Kate Marquam</i>	
Birth Giver	6
<i>Piper Rowley</i>	
My home is home to many	15
<i>Mario Stone</i>	
Nosferatu	36
<i>Mario Stone</i>	
reflection.	39
<i>Michaela White</i>	

## Art

The Day of the Dreader	41
<i>Serena Boehmer</i>	
Reflection	31
<i>Caitlyn Bruszewski</i>	
Frostbite	38
<i>Zach Carrico</i>	
Octo	20
<i>Harrison Higgs</i>	
Ripple Bench	44 - 45
<i>Devin Johannis</i>	
Mahogani. 2017	34
<i>Julian Jones</i>	

if lovin screw is wrong, I don't wanna be right	25
<i>Will Knapp</i>	
Liquids	26, 42
<i>Ben Levart</i>	
The Infant Factory	37
<i>Matt Panfil</i>	
Victoria of the Insects	33
<i>Matt Panfil</i>	
Forever Moments.	22 - 23
<i>Isaac Schmitt</i>	
The Trumpeter	14
<i>Lynzi Stringer</i>	
Flower	17
<i>Connor Stump</i>	
Bloom	8
<i>Olivia Wilkins</i>	
Vulnerable	13
<i>Paul Williams</i>	

## **Fiction**

Visiting Hours	9
<i>Trenna Soderling</i>	
How to Walk to the Library	35
<i>Anna White</i>	

## **Creative Nonfiction**

Beauty	27
<i>Elizabeth Coffman-Mackey</i>	
Contributors Notes	48

## **Best of Fall 2017**

The Day of the Dreader	Serena Boehmer
<i>Best of Art</i>	
Beauty	Elizabeth Coffman-Mackey
<i>Best of Creative Nonfiction</i>	
How to Walk to the Library	Anna White
<i>Best of Fiction</i>	
Birth Giver	Piper Rowley
<i>Best of Poetry</i>	

## **Cover**

Liquids	Ben Levart
---------	------------

# Birth Giver

*Best of Poetry*

Piper Rowley

She is an emotional, infrequent phone call  
late in the evening.

Small and fragile.  
Tiny, breakable, fleeting.  
The abruptness of her fragility  
has winded me.  
She has been shrinking in my hands for years,  
eventually,  
she will disappear.

I remember her blank white skin  
and long, small-town ponytail  
only from pictures.  
Her skin is leather brown now,  
cluttered with ink  
as incomprehensible  
as her thoughts.  
She has a wispy, dyed-black bob now,  
graying severely at her temples.  
Long hours,  
hard drinking,  
a-pack-a-day,  
childhood trauma,  
adult mistakes  
gray.

Her body is a collection of unpredictable slopes  
and swells.  
Celluloid divots and aged stretchmarks.  
Dispersed round nipples, a relic from her child-bearing,  
and a jutting scar above her navel,  
evidence of poor health.  
Short legs and long torso,

carried by pink soles,  
cracked and calloused.

Her face has become gaunt and exhausted,  
lined with deep regrets and troubles.  
She looks older than her years.  
Blue eyes  
soul-aching vacancy or  
a pale and unforgiving landscape,  
wintry and vicious when provoked.

She is unapologetic wine stains on carpet,  
diet Mountain Dew mixed with vodka breath.  
Absent apologies,  
scatterbrained advice,  
and subjective, inconsistent realities.

She is a familiar ghost,  
a source of shame,  
a place of guilt,  
the origin of homesickness.

She has always been a memory.  
The possibility of unhappiness  
heirloom of imbalanced chemicals  
dormant in my veins  
I was born trying to escape.

Her angry missed calls collect  
unheard in my inbox.



# Bloom

---

Olivia Wilkins  
Chalk Pastel

# Visiting Hours

---

Trenna Soderling

I pushed my hands through my hair, leaning against the window of my car. Everything about today threatened to push me over the edge: the stopped traffic on the highway, the sky, which couldn't decide if it was raining or not, the way the air conditioning blew on my face no matter which direction I pushed the vents. I looked at the newspaper on the passenger seat again, the one that had now been there for four months. Its pages were creased, the pictures sun-faded, but the article I had fixated on, had obsessively read, lay facedown.

I sneered at it, cursing myself for leaving it there. I should have thrown it away months ago. I could have spared myself the visceral disgust I felt as I looked at the finely printed lines tattooing the pages. Instead, I let it linger, let it sit there and mock me every time I saw it.

Looking back to the road, I saw the miles of traffic surrounding me. The line of stopped trucks, RVs, and motorcycles was so irritating my skin began to itch all over, a rash of stress coating my body. I leaned my face into the air again, felt the hairs whip my face, leaned out of the wind's path, checked the map to see how much longer it would be. Thirty more minutes. Thirty more minutes of the newspaper staring at me and the engines rumbling and the vents and the sky's indecisiveness. I turned off the air and rolled down the windows. Using the opportunity to glance around, I saw buffaloes fenced into a large pasture, out of place in the surrounding cornfields and prairies. Looking at them, I had to laugh. Of course they would box up animals here as well, keep the migratory creatures trapped over the space of a few miles.

The line of cars inched forward momentarily and stopped again. I slammed on the brakes and screamed in frustration, hitting my hands on the wheel. An elderly man in the car next to me saw me, put his hand over his heart, and smiled. I flipped him off and pulled forward, out of his line of sight. I fiddled with the radio, turned it on and then off again. I put my hair in a precarious bun on top of my head. Took it out. Picked at the remaining rose gold nail polish on my fingernails. Tapped my fingers against the steering wheel. The dashboard. My leg. After an eternity of waiting, I saw my destination in the distance. It had to be the jail. Nowhere else would have that many fences.

I pulled into the parking lot and approached the building, expecting high metal gates and spools of three-foot barbed wire topping the fences. Instead, I was met with tan, cinder block walls and a huge metal door with a disproportionately small window set in the middle. The stone was almost worse than the fences; heavy, unyielding, secretive.

Pulling on the door, I felt the resistance of its weight.

The guard inside was just as unfriendly. I assume she had been hardened by years of watching children, spouses, and parents approach her with tear-lined eyes and shrunken shoulders. She had probably seen thousands, even hundreds of thousands of visitors walk by her into despair. Slowly, I approached her desk. She was fuzzy behind the fingerprint-smearing, bulletproof glass encasing her. Before I walked forward, she began speaking, a speech apparently so routine that she only glanced up from her monitor once while giving it.

“Take off your jacket, give me your phone, keys, wallet, and fill out this form.”

She pushed the paperwork and a pen through a slit in the bottom of the glass. I glanced over the pages, scanning for places to put my shaky initials. Once I had turned in the forbidden items and pushed the clipboard back under, she looked through the document with one hand held up, signaling me to wait for her approval. She remained disinterested as she read. After what felt like an eternity, she waved me forward and pushed a button that opened the next metal door with a deep buzzing sound.

The inside of the visiting room surprised me, a sea of tan jumpsuits and hung heads. Not like what you see in those prison TV shows, the ones with the orange and the yelling and the threats. At least not here, where visitors could see you. No, here it was just over-washed khaki and shame, nonviolent criminals clumped together to wait out their sentences.

As I looked around the room, a number was called over the intercom. I walked toward the one empty table left, a short square foot or two with a set of worn-down chairs placed around it. I tried to scoot in, wanting to hide more of my feet, but I found the chair wouldn't move, stuck in place not only by bolts but by years of rust cementing it to the stained tile floor. I sat there for a minute, avoiding eye contact with everyone around me, unsure of what to do now that I was stripped of my possessions. Over the sound of the conversations around me, I heard a door swing shut, the same metallic banging that had followed me into the room.

I looked up and saw him, the one island of familiarity in this place, the one thing that should have brought comfort, but didn't. I was suddenly aware of every muscle in my body; felt my lips twitch downward and my stomach heave and my chest contract and the blood rush to my hands, then my feet, constantly downward, away from my brain. As he walked towards me I stood up, sat down, stood up. It was only as I was falling again that he reached me, grabbed for my hands, and held me as I tried to remain upright.

“Hi, dad,” I said.

I fell against him, felt the rise and fall of his breathing as I used him

for support. I was buried against his chest, the way I used to hide when I was little and we would watch Star Wars and Darth Vader came on the screen. Unfortunately, the disinterested guard picked that moment to look out into the room.

“Move apart.” Her voice echoed between my ears, made me acutely aware that I was not at home, that I was here, in a prison, visiting my father.

I let go and stood on my side of the table, pausing a moment before I sat down. His movements slowly mirrored mine.

“How are you?” I asked quietly.

He looked around and shrugged.

“I’m here,” he said.

The drab faces encircling my vision on all sides painted a grim vision of his experience, a prison purgatory—in low-security, but imprisoned nonetheless. He was subject to searches, made to stay in line, to tolerate verbal abuse from those corralling him. At least that was the one thing those shows all got right: these were not people. They were numbers, dehumanized and disregarded.

“So, how have you been?” he began awkwardly.

“Good, it’s been good. I got the lead in the school play,” I said. “Sandy, from Grease.”

I saw his look of shock and pride. It had taken me four years to prove my talent to my director, to get the female lead in any show, let alone a musical.

“Wow, I bet that’ll be really great.”

“Yeah, thanks. I’ll make sure to record it for you.”

As we sat there in the hours we were allotted, he told me stories of the other inmates. I knew he was trying to convince himself that he didn’t belong there, that he was saner, less dangerous than the prisoners surrounding him.

“One of these guys, Bill, his new thing is alligator soup.”

“Alligator soup?”

“It was a teapot full of cafeteria beef and water.”

I tried not to gag and instead let him purge the stories from his system. The more I learned, the more uncomfortable I became, picturing the dad I had grown up with dropped here. There would be no mixtapes or chocolate-covered blueberries, no driving around on brick roads or watching old movies. He was stuck here, with alligator soup and khaki jumpsuits and thick, brick walls enclosing him.

I looked at him again and saw not my father, but what the guards, the taxpayers, the law saw him as. A middle-grade drug dealer. Not

society's biggest threat, but an outlaw nonetheless, someone who needed to be locked away in order to send the message that his behavior wasn't tolerated, that he wasn't tolerated. I rocked back and forth in my rusted chair, holding back tears, unable to listen to him anymore. He stopped his story and asked me if I was alright. I inhaled, the breaths catching in my chest. I couldn't answer him, could only ask a question in return.

"Why are you here? Why did you do the things that got you here?"

He stared at me, caught off guard by my question. Confrontation was not a trait of mine; it never had been. We sat in silence for a while before he finally answered.

"I don't know."

It wasn't an answer, but he was never good at those. Lack of explanation had followed every familial tragedy, like when his father died or he lost his job or when he left my mother. I went to the bathroom to blow my nose, then returned to finish listening to his stories. My recovery was quick; unknowns were my norm.

At last, visiting hours released their clutch on me. I tried to figure out a way to stop my heart from beating against my chest, tried to mentally reach inside myself and push it into place as I said goodbye, and gathered my belongings back from the guard. It took all of my power not to sprint back to the parking lot, to keep my steps even and slow. When I finally reached my car, I opened the door and slid into the seat, only to be greeted by the newspaper.

I leaned over and grabbed it, crumpling the pages beneath my fist, obscuring the story I practically knew by heart.

*Cross-Country Drug Bust Incriminates Dozens.*

A list of names, punctuated by line breaks, committing his identity to a felony for the rest of his life. The ink had soaked into the pages, black-and-white representations of a three-dimensional whole. The people who read the article would never know the way he watched golf because it reminded him of his father or the frustrated rasp his voice would get or how it felt to hug him after he came home from work. They would only ever know that he was part of a drug ring, that he had made a series of bad decisions and gotten caught, that he would face the consequences. They would never know his regret or his depression, would never hear the way he had apologized to me the first time I had spoken to him after he got caught. They would never know anything about him besides what was on that paper.

I sat in my car and tore up the article, piece by piece until no amount of puzzling could put it back together. The gas pedal hit the floor as I drove out of the parking lot, accelerating away from the jail, past the buffaloes, back to my now-fatherless home. As I sped down the highway away from the jail, I grabbed the pieces of newspaper off my lap and threw them out the window, letting them stream behind me.



**Vulnerable**  
(from the "Society" Collection)

---

Paul Williams  
Raku-Fired Clay



## The Trumpeter

---

Lynzi Stringer  
Photography

# My home is home to many

---

Mario Stone

*written @ Saint Matthew's House, homeless shelter in Collier County, Florida*

Here time is sharp, cuts lights  
out at ten as the lingering chatter dies down  
like gossip found out.

Music persists  
but louder than headphones are the snores  
and sharper than time are the coughs  
sporadically torn from  
dry,  
jagged  
throats and wet  
lungs.

It's half past two  
and a hack of a cough is killed  
in a pillow—a snuffle blips,  
the night's most humble sound,  
and the bite on my thigh  
the loudest by far. Jealous,  
the bites on my arms scream  
to the bites on my calves  
and the bites on my ankles,  
a choir of fire. Nails  
tearing skin add to the din,  
and so it goes on—  
cough itch scratch itch  
itch cough itch scratch.  
Itch.  
Itch.

Sleep's no escape  
as I wake to find  
the black bed  
bugs scurrying

*My home is home to many*

bloated  
off me.

My nose curls  
as I  
jab  
and feel  
them crush  
beneath my disgust  
to red  
fetid memories  
on white sheets.

Relax

I take a deep breath  
and let myself feel  
my shirt shifting on my skin,  
the night's only caress  
except for my pen.



Flower

---

Connor Stump  
Digital Painting

# Paper Lanterns

---

Kate Marquam

the ghosts of the undead write  
themselves into the strangest  
places. the signature in a painting

on my wall, the restaurant I walk  
past weekly but haven't entered  
since the holiday art gala when

he wore Levis with a suit jacket,  
swirling wine in the bottom of a blue  
plastic cup printed with the name

of a charity. after dinner while everyone  
was laughing he told me that September  
Tenth of 2001 he was in the twin

towers, and what if the planes  
had come a day early? then he pressed  
a box of chocolates into my hand

and wished me a Merry Christmas.  
I didn't throw the tin away until  
I moved six years later. sometimes

I worry that I loved him into non-  
existence, that I mistook my own  
poems for answers, like when I wrote

that his ribcage was made  
of rice paper. he tore so easily  
but goddamn, he could light up

a room. the ghosts of the undead  
write themselves into the strangest

places, and when I say undead I mean

alive and maybe happy somewhere  
else. I mean maybe someday we'll  
walk into the same coffee shop

and I'll tell him that I've tried to write  
myself out of loving him for three years now,  
but still can't take his painting down.



Octo

---

Harrison Higgs  
Photography

# Standardized

---

Corey Cole

1. What is education?

- a. Memorization of facts, figures, names, and dates  
filed not only in the yellowed, dusty pages  
of countless forgotten volumes,  
but the vulnerable gray of 56 million youth  
given few alternatives.
- b. Operation of gridded assembly line  
classrooms completing black and white  
make-work assignments  
to fill empty vessels  
and earn graduation pink slips.
- c. Indoctrination into the majority  
whose glaring stares bully  
the kid with a smudged free lunch stamp  
on his hand which fails to rise  
to his heart  
as they stand and pledge  
allegiance to a flag they don't understand.

Perhaps, none of the above.

Perhaps, thirty minutes isn't enough  
time to find the true blue of the sky you're painting  
or the right line break  
in your poem.

Perhaps, the warm-up  
of a Zumba routine won't get your heart racing  
and Ode to Joy  
isn't all of Beethoven's Ninth  
and god forbid we let you have recess.



8.25



380

Forever Moments.

---

Isaac Schmitt  
Photography



*accident*



*pinned*

# Dwarf Planet

---

Ronan Harkins

You only saw me as a vagabond among the stars  
Left to float adrift with no sun to call home  
Constantly being filtered through the vast vacuum of space  
I made like Icarus toward any sign of hope  
But fell just as he did

And if it would make you happy  
I'd drown with you in Neptune's waters  
Because swimming in oblivion would be better  
than enduring the distance between your flames and me  
I'd propose to you with Saturn's rings  
We'll swing amongst the debris of asteroids and tilt their orbit

We can honeymoon on Venus  
And raise a family on Mercury  
They are the only two planets in your solar system without a moon  
They look only to you  
Solitary in their revolutions

I almost didn't realize that there were bigger things  
Than the ocean or the hundred-year-old sycamore  
But you are bigger and brighter  
Than anything that could ever grow inside of me

There are 92 million miles of emptiness between you and me  
I long for the day that you'll reach out with burning hands  
And take into your burning arms  
All the lonely planets  
Although a millennium seems too long  
To have never touched the ones you love



if lovin screw is wrong, I don't  
wanna be right

---

Will Knapp  
Ink with Digital Color



# Liquids

---

Ben Levart  
Photography

# Beauty

---

*Best of Nonfiction*

Elizabeth Coffman-Mackey

This is Danville, Illinois. It's the summer of 2003—June, to be more specific. The sky is blue, so bright it looks almost white, and it's the annual Arts in the Park festival. Heat waves shimmer just above the tar-black pavement of the streets, and the whole of Lincoln Park is filled with the noise of brassy bands and chatter, the scent of burnt popcorn and popsicle juice. I am sprawled on the sidewalk, an array of chalk before me and my tongue stuck out as I try to sketch out my masterpiece with childish hands that grip thick stalks of chalk in tiny fists.

I'm baking in the sun, bare knees chafing against the grainy sidewalk when I color and shade at the top, and getting indented by emerald green grass when I move to work on the bottom. I'm chalk-streaked. I'm in the zone.

I have lost the competition once again.

There is a girl three sidewalk squares down who has recreated the American flag. It stretches from one side of the sidewalk to the other, and she's gone over each of the thirteen stripes so many times that the red of the flag actually looks red, not just the dusty-pink-gray that is the closest sidewalk chalk can approximate to my favorite color. All fifty stars are evenly lined up, and there is no sign of the cement under her flag. It's boring. It's unoriginal.

It wins.

Flies are buzzing around my forehead, attracted by the sheen of sweat all over me. My square of the sidewalk is not a bastion of color against the street. The lines are not clear, and the judges say when they think I am not in earshot that they do not know what it is.

I had been practicing for the competition for months. This piece of the sidewalk, it's the epitome of my art. What I colored was a map of my fantasy world. I tried to bring to life with pale pigment on the ground the world I played in inside my head. It was comprised of lush, rolling, green hills, thick pine forests, a clear, blue river, and fantasy-red fruits. In my head it is gorgeous. On the sidewalk, it looks like scribbles even though I am six and much too old to be scribbling.

Even then, I know it's not good. But still I am heartbroken when the judges do not call me for first, for second, for third, or for runner-up. I cry on the way home, my hands still covered in dust in every pastel shade Crayola could make.

This is not a story about art.

This is Indianapolis, Indiana, sitting on the edge of my seat waiting for my classmates to say what they thought of my story. It's autumn of 2017, but it's so hot and muggy outside that the air conditioner is blasting all through the classroom. There's an institutional chill in the room, and the nervous tapping of my feet on the linoleum floor makes a horrible plastic-slapping noise.

"All I had to say was 'damn,'" my new favorite person in the class says.

"Well, that isn't a very helpful critique," my professor says.

The class full of kids masquerading as adults in the classroom goes around in a circle as they take turns vivisectioning the story on the classroom floor until it bleeds out and dies. Defenseless, my story is torn to ribbons. It is too confusing, it's too long, it's not long enough, it's showing and not telling and it's telling and not showing and the paper is bloodless, pale as it gets carved up with markers and pens.

"The real problem is that there's no moment of reckoning," the professor says. "This is a good story, but how does it come together? You've got to narrow your focus here."

I don't want to take my story back home with me anymore.

This is not a story about writing.

This is Urbana, Illinois, wearing my best velvet dress and listening to the symphony in Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. My best friend and my mother flank me in the plush, fold-down seats that start to hurt by Act Two.

The symphony is otherworldly. Instruments weave together like the tapestry of the fates. When I close my eyes, I am not in the crowded concert hall with 2,000 of my closest strangers, struggling to stay awake under the dim lights. I am back inside my mind, running through the lush forests that refused to be committed to paper, or I am swimming through a crystalline ocean that could not be conveyed with pens, or I am flying through the sky—I am a connoisseur of skies because they are different every day, even in my mind, even in make-believe.

My fingers on my lap try in vain to find where the notes should go, but I do not know these notes. The chords and the melodies do not sound like scales, and my hands fall flat as I give in and let the music wash over me, crashing in waves of sound that soothe and excite, calm and bring life.

"I wanna do that," I think to myself when the music stops. "I want to make music like that. I want to make people feel like that."

My mother speaks before I say any words out loud.

"You could do that, you know," she said. "If you practiced your

piano everyday like you're supposed to, you could sound like that."

Piano practice sounds nothing like that. I can hear new songs in my mind, folding and crashing and dancing like rivers. Music that sounds like water or adventure or love, I can hear, I could write it, I know I could.

But she's right. I can't play music. I can barely hit two notes at a time on piano without crying in frustration.

This is not a story about music.

This is an old beige Toyota with the windows rolled down, kicking up dust as it blurs past forests and mountains down the old dirt road. Rap music pounds out of the speakers and fills up the car. It should be drowning us, but just enough sound leaks out of the open windows that we can still breathe in the musty summer air.

She sits next to me, cool and in control in the driver's seat. Her makeup is perfect and unsmudged. Her hair blows around her face but never tangles up or gets in her mouth. Her waist is trim and her eyes are smoky. She loves me, sometimes, but not as much as I love her.

"You're perfect," I say, in more words, words that come out bitter and accusing.

"I try harder than you," she says in more words, words that sound like biting classroom insults, words like "lose weight" and "don't be a slob."

She is a whole human being, and I can't hold my shape at all. She is solid and I am liquid. She is disgusted by me because I'm not trying, and I can't tell her I am trying because if I'm trying and this is as good as it gets then that is so, so much worse.

This is not a story about love.

This story is me trying to say something and never having the words to, never having the guts or the balls or the brains to pull something to completion and not really trying to. It's a story about letting all the stitches show in your clothing, having a life that isn't seamless and art that's riddled with mistakes. It's about sending letters that aren't thought through all the way because it's better than agonizing over them forever and never saying anything at all.

This is a story about Kintsugi, the art of filling in the cracks of broken pottery with melted gold. This is about beautiful damaged goods.

This is a story about the mosaic I made when I was very young. It was made of pieces of broken glass pressed into wet grout, and it was supposed to be a sunset, but it didn't look like anything but colored broken

*Beauty*

glass.

But when the light hit it, it didn't matter.

No one knew what it was, no one knew what it meant. No one knew it came out the way it was supposed to, and it didn't. But no one could deny that it was beautiful.



# Reflection

---

Caitlyn Bruszewski  
Photography

# Soft Boy

---

Ronan Harkins

Sweet princeling, you eat your strawberry jam  
And drink their honeyed words, telling you who to be  
You pray at night to gods thought long dead  
One day, they will answer but you don't know when  
In the morning, you study martial strategy and Latin  
In the afternoon, they teach you grace on your feet  
And plate your tongue with silver

Silly princeling, they know not what you dream of  
Morpheus makes the images of beautiful blood-soaked men follow you  
You've never held a blade with true conviction but you wish to  
You wish to feel reverie for the trees and the battlefield as they do  
You wish to walk the earth with no fear and the gods behind you

Savage princeling, they don't know your true form  
You are a rabid wolf trapped in the body of a child  
When you sleep, you feel the claws tearing your inside flesh  
This skin is too tight  
This skin does not fit your body

This skin is an unrelenting snake with endless coils of muscle

Soft princeling, one day you will be the man you wish to be

You will be queen, they say

*No, I will be a man worth fearing*

You are as a rose, they say

*Maybe but I am thorn-mouthed and relentless*

Softhearted, they call you

*Yes, but that does not make me weak*

*I am not what you make me*

*Only I know me*

*Only the gods can make me*



## Victoria of the Insects

---

Matt Panfil  
Cut-Paper Collage, Alcohol Inks



Mahogani. 2017  
(from "The Within" Series)

---

Julian Jones  
Photography

# How to Walk to the Library

---

*Best of Fiction*

Anna White

Shrug your backpack over your shoulders and lock the front door behind you. Readjust your plastic-frame glasses and maybe your bra, if no one is looking. Check to make sure you remembered your wallet and take to the streets. Stand at the bus stop and observe the horizon. Watch as the clouds drift, and feel the gentle spring breeze play with your hair and shake the tulip buds. Board the bus, and spend the duration of the ride in 1964 South Carolina with Lilly Owens and Rosaleen from *The Secret Life of Bees*. Get off at your stop. Go along your way. Admire the art district, and the comic book stores and boutique shops bathing in the late afternoon glow. Think about the concert this weekend, and pull your skinny jeans up a little. Wave at your friends that you see as you pass. Keep walking, and turn the corner now.

Notice the strange man leaning on the stop sign at the end of street, wearing jeans and a dark jacket. Draw your head up; push your shoulders back. Keep walking. Try to think about your book, or your trip to the library. Glance about for people you know. Now look around for anyone. Inhale, exhale. Keep walking. Feel mechanical, like a robot thumping down the sidewalk. Imagine your knees are screws, your brain a motherboard. Inhale, exhale. Keep walking, even though you're nearing him. Raise your chin a little higher. Curl your robotic hand into a fist, and make sure your thumb is in the right place, just in case. Imagine that your flesh is metallic; you are no longer human. Inhale, exhale. You're getting closer now. He's looking at you, and he's standing a little too tall, staring a little too long. Keep walking. Wait for it. You're next to him now. His mouth falls open. Keep walking, and purse your lips, letting his voice ring in your metallic ears. When he finishes jeering, resist the urge to fight back.

Keep walking, and feel your metal skin convert to rubber. Your hair is plastic, too. Feel disgusted, dejected. Lower your chin. Imagine you are human.

# Nosferatu

---

Mario Stone

I lurk in the black  
room with one frail light  
above me. She hovers

naked like a moon  
draped in crimson. Around her  
famished men with cadaver grins

and sickle fangs beg at her feet.  
She holds out her palms and gasps  
as they sink into her wrists.

She bites her lips  
as her skin splits—blood drips  
into their mouths. Their black veins

glisten and throb, pulsing  
through taut skin.  
Their eyes blacken

as she lays her head back,  
moaning, her hair floating  
amber smoke.

I watch her and purse my lips, gently blowing  
strands of silver curling in the black  
spelling words like “Love” and “Forever”

and “Only You”—her bleeding  
stops as my words wrap  
tight around her ankles and wrists.

She floats into my arms  
and burns to gold. Her sweat  
sweet mist as I kiss her. I feel her

pulse throb through her lips  
as her eyes glow rose  
and mine shine black.



# The Infant Factory

---

Matt Panfil  
Cut-Paper Collage



# Frostbite

---

Zach Carrico  
Photography

# reflection.

---

Michaela White

I'm just sitting.

I'm sitting in the bathtub. My knees are up against my chest and I can see the scrapes on them,

My arms are wound around them, my veins showing through, my knuckles scarred, and

I can feel my ribs through skin though I am not touching them.

A few feet away my phone goes off, again and again,

People asking questions, looking for solutions I can't even find for myself--

For once I ignore it.

Water drips down my face, moving around the hollows of my eyes,

My freckles are stark on my paper-white skin, and I know that I look strange,

That I am a strange creature here and now and always,

Sitting in this bathtub with water running down my body, hair in my face,

Trying desperately not to think of anything.

I stare at the tiles of the wall, but they don't stop it.

The only color left is my bruises.

I wish I was not in love with color.

I am a strange creature. Believe me, I know.

# Metaphor

---

Kate Marquam

the fall is not a  
metaphor for my  
father. the sunlight  
strained orange and  
gold through brittle  
leaves is not his

eyes when pumpkins  
replaced flowers in  
grocery store parking  
lots. my smile is not  
that of a jack-o-  
lantern—hollow

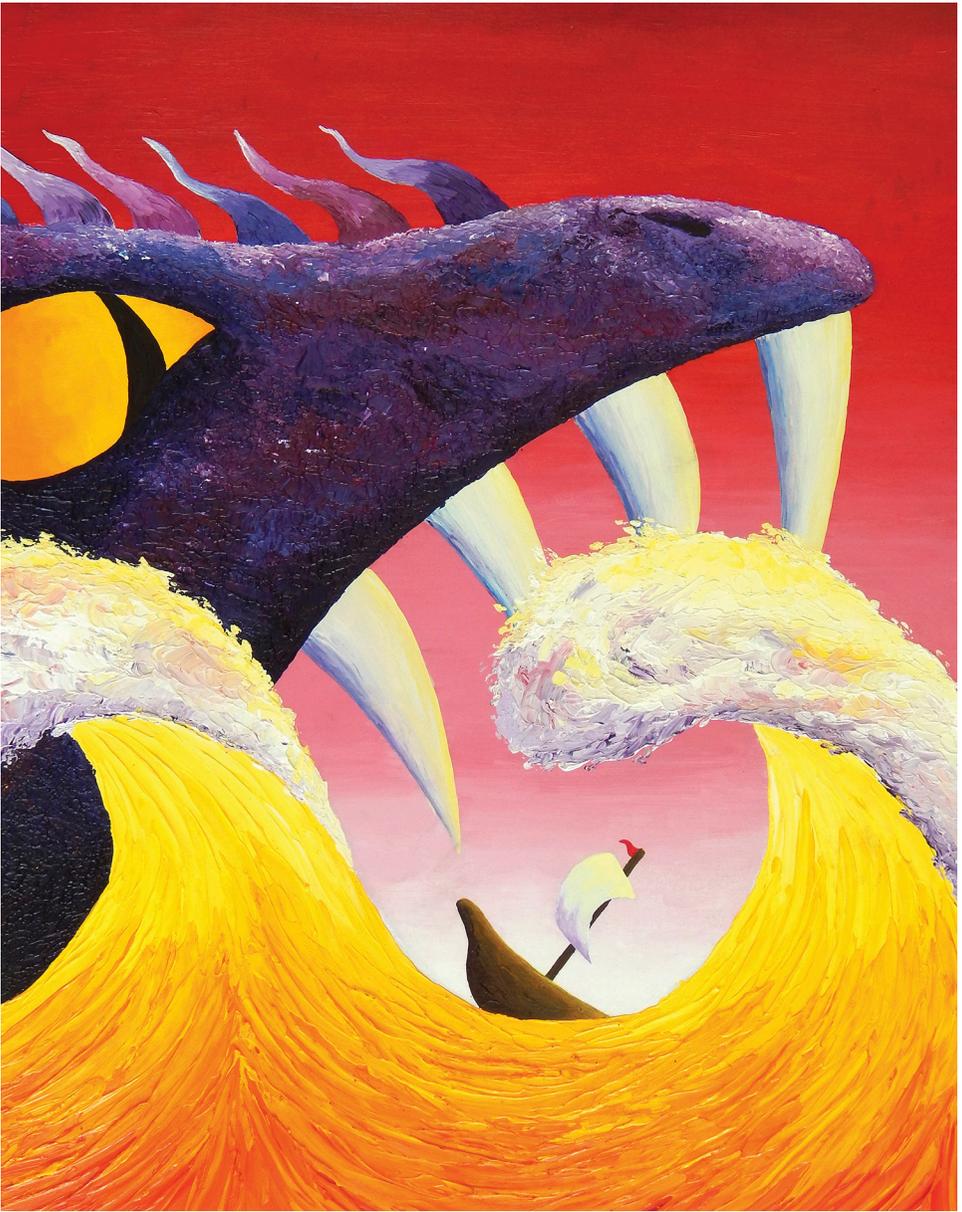
but glowing. when  
people ask if I'm  
ok, I tell them that  
shit happens. people  
die. the flowers die

every year and the  
world never ends,  
but the fall is not  
a metaphor for my  
father. my father

is not a broken  
tree that couldn't  
survive the long  
winter, is not a

season, but I can't  
watch the pumpkin-  
orange sunset without  
searching for his

eyes somewhere  
beyond the horizon.



## The Day of the Dreader

*Best of Art*

Serena Boehmer  
Acrylic Paints



# Liquids

*Cover Art*

Ben Levart  
Photography

# A Summer's Night on Skid Row

---

Corey Cole

Down the block  
Addicts lurch and dodder  
outside the service station  
at 10th and Rural  
like moths to a gaslight.

Strung-out whores  
promise good times  
desperately strutting like  
feral cats on the prowl.  
Their glazed eyes lit  
by the orange glare  
of street lamps.  
Peering through  
the night, my windshield,  
and myself  
coming home late.

Police and ambulance sirens,  
M-80's, .38's, and the cruising bass  
of a Monte Carlo with a bad muffler  
mix with a train horn that separates  
the right and wrong sides of the tracks  
stir me from sleep  
in my new bedroom.

Light pollution and smog  
render the sky a tepid brown.  
What happens when  
entire generations pass  
without seeing the stars?

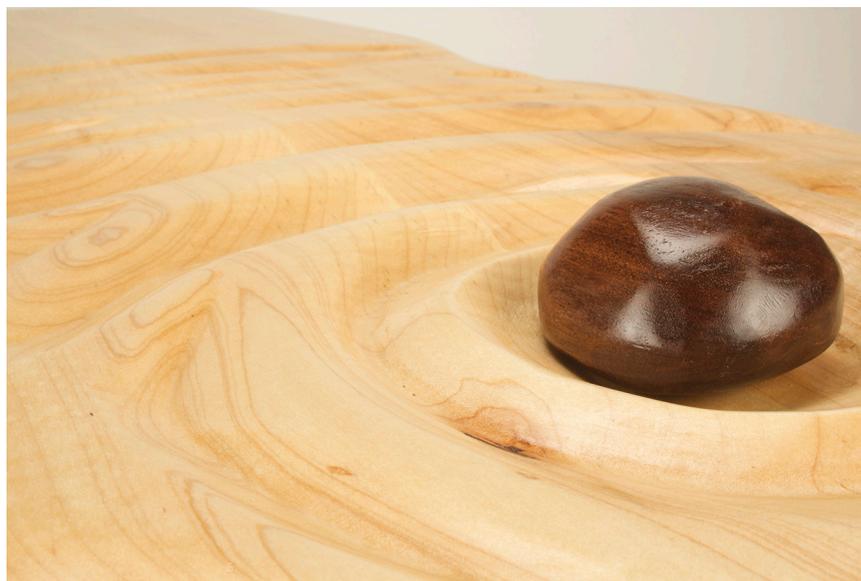
Life becomes a word  
with a hollow and mundane meaning.  
A checklist:  
the next hustle, the next high,  
the next meal, the next fuck.  
Checking boxes  
until Jesus or gentrification come.  
I teach their children,  
but they've seen more than me.



## Ripple Bench

---

Devin Johannis  
Soft Maple, Walnut



# A Poem for the Next Generation of Women

---

Caitlyn Bruszewski

I walk the streets at night  
hoping, wishing, praying  
That my clothing does not hug my body too tight.  
That you cannot see the definition of my curves.  
That my perfume does not travel through the alleys  
to those waiting for someone like me  
to walk the streets at night.

Alone and unable to resist  
when they say,  
“Take off your clothes  
or we will hurt you.”

But someone like me is always around  
and in danger.  
Someone like me is you.  
Someone like me is her, and her, and her.  
Someone like me is your mother, daughter, sister.

I put on clothing that masks my body  
because I want to, need to, must hide  
it away because it is an open invitation to a man.  
If I wear shorts, a skirt, a dress, a tank top  
my freedom of choice is an open invitation to a man.  
To touch, to stare, to judge.

So I put on loose jeans and a turtleneck  
because then I will not be seen by a man  
as anything more than a prude.  
But then it becomes a challenge.  
The desire to conquer my body will wash over him,

And the judge will tell him he gets a punishment  
of 6 months for branding me as his behind a dumpster  
when I will die unhealed from the tragedy.

The land of the free is only referring to the man  
because my body is not free.  
My body is not my own.

Every inch of my being burns because I am told  
that he has a right to touch me, grab me, take me  
because I was there and beautiful.  
How could he resist?

How could it ever be expected that a man was at fault for rape  
when the woman was dressed provocatively?  
But if I do not dress this way,  
I am told that I will not be loved by a man  
because then I am not a trophy.

Keep a man happy because he is your lifeline.  
Be beautiful, quiet, sexy, ignorant.  
Be all things and hope he accepts one of them.

But a change is growing within me,  
rising like a wave  
and I will crash  
into this damn patriarchy  
that has taught me to dress  
to please a man but not to please myself.

That I was unfit for him if he had to  
hit, cheat, rape, or demean me  
because men do not want us to know  
that they are weak.  
Because only a weak man would  
hit, cheat, rape, or demean  
his wife, daughter, mother, sister, lover.

And I am learning not to give away  
my freedom of choice to any man.  
So I finally say,  
“Grab me by the pussy,  
and I will grab back.”

# Contributors

---

**Serena Boehmer** is currently a junior studying Drawing and Illustration at Herron School of Art & Design. Over the years she has experimented in many styles and mediums, and although she continues to try different methods and techniques her favorite mediums continue to be charcoal and acrylic paints. When she graduates, she hopes to become a freelance illustrator working mainly in children's books.

**Caitlyn Bruszewski** is a second-year English major who aspires to obtain a certificate in Public Relations. She hopes to one day work in publishing, where her love of writing and photography can be most prevalent in her daily activities.

**Zach Carrico** is a queer photographer who is currently getting his B.F.A in Photography at Herron School of Art & Design. Personal & editorial/portraiture are two areas that heavily drive his work. You can see more of his work on Instagram: @faglogic.

**Corey Cole** is a senior P.E. major who will be student teaching in the spring. He would like to thank his family, friends, and professors for their support. Hopefully, he isn't left out of the table of contents this time.

**Elizabeth Coffman-Mackey** is a junior at IUPUI and a creative writing major. She has been writing fiction for as long as she can remember and recently branched out into nonfiction.

**Ronan Harkins** is a young man in search of adventure. Usually, those experiences happen between the covers of a book, but they are adventures nonetheless.

**Harrison Higgs** has been photographing for two years and documents everyday life through gestural movement and light. His inspirations stem from street art and artists like Tyler Shields and Vivian Maier. His passions lie with event and commercial photography.

**Will Knapp** is interested in space, drawing robots, and funk. See more of his art at [willknappart.com](http://willknappart.com).

**Ben Levart** has been an avid photographer for the last seven years. He looks to capture the audience by creating images that are shrouded in mystery, and that spark thought. Ben hopes to turn his photography abilities into a career in the future.

**Kate Marquam** is a creative writing major in her second year at IUPUI and a spoken word artist who loves writing poetry for the page and the stage.

**Matt Panfil** is a second-year graduate student at Herron School of Art & Design focusing on intermedia art including cut-paper collage, experimental film, assemblages, and interactive installations. Since February 2017, Matt has worked as the head curator at HEALTHNET, a new collaborative art & music DIY space in Fountain Square.

**Devin Johannis** is a junior at Herron School of Art & Design majoring in Furniture Design. His body of work emphasizes craft and design while still maintaining conceptual significance. When formulating ideas for furniture, he often references European design from the 14th to 16th century and re-imagines it for the modern era.

**Julian J. Jones** is a conceptual artist, with a passion for movement and expression. Featured in *Elegant Magazine*, *FEROCE Magazine*, *Volant Magazine*, *PUMP Magazine* and *Shuba Magazine*, Julian's photography displays his abstract style. After art school, Julian wants to move to Europe and work with elite modeling agencies and magazines.

**Piper Rowley** is an Individualized Major, with an interest in therapeutic writing. "Birth Giver" is her third submission to *genesis*.

**Isaac Schmitt** is a first-year student at Herron School of Art & Design. He is pursuing a degree in Integrative Studio Practice. The four images included were all taken at a public pool in St. Louis, Missouri, Isaac's hometown.

**Trenna Soderling** is a double major studying English with a concentration in Creative Writing and ASL/English Interpreting. She's an avid pursuer of languages and the arts who spends much of her free time with a book or journal in hand. Apart from this, she enjoys acting, soft blankets, scenic routes, and petting every dog that crosses her path.

**Mario Stone**, author of *The College Dropout's Guide to Poetry*, has returned from procrastination hell and self-imposed limbo to offer you a peek behind the madness. When he's not engaging in controversial acts of worship with pretty nuns, you can catch him laughing at the abyss at [TameTheRuckus.com](http://TameTheRuckus.com).

**Lynzi Stringer** is a journalism student also studying music. She's a singer/songwriter in a few bands around town and the culture editor at IUPUI's *The Campus Citizen*. She likes to take pictures a whole lot.

**Connor Stump** is a freshman at Herron School of Art & Design, focused on traditional drawing and digital art.

**Michaela White** is a first-year Visual Communication Design student at Herron School of Art & Design. She has been interested in writing free-verse poetry for as long as she has pursued art, and writes most of it during long nights owed to insomnia.

**Anna White** is a sophomore at IUPUI. She is a psychology major, and minors in Creative Writing and Spanish. "How to Walk to the Library" is her first published work.

**Olivia Wilkins** is a freshman at IUPUI currently studying drawing and illustration. She is passionate about all things art and has a unique love for florals, as displayed in "Bloom." Olivia plans to pursue a degree in the art industry and is excited to see where the next three years at Herron School of Art & Design take her.

**Paul Williams** is a freshman attending Herron School of Art & Design. While in high school he had mostly worked in sculpture, ranging from a variety of mediums, such as plaster, clay, wood, and cardboard, he plans on majoring in Furniture Design and is more than eager to pursue his career in the arts.

To our contributors:

*Thank You!*

# Like to be a future contributor?

*genesis* publishes a new issue every semester. Submissions are currently open for our Spring 2018 issue.

If you have:

Short stories  
Flash fictions  
Screenplays  
Poems  
Comics

Sculptures  
Pottery  
Paintings  
Drawings  
Photographs

Anything creative!

**We want to see it!**

“Best of” in Fiction, Creative Nonfiction,  
Poetry, and Art  
wins a \$100 Scholarship!

Submit your work to [iupuigenesis@submittable.com](mailto:iupuigenesis@submittable.com)

Follow us on social media for up-to-date info on events and submission periods.



[facebook.com/iupuigenesismagazine/](https://facebook.com/iupuigenesismagazine/)



[twitter.com/iupuigenesis](https://twitter.com/iupuigenesis)



[instagram.com/iupuigenesismagazine](https://instagram.com/iupuigenesismagazine)

# Want to join the team?

It takes only two classes to be eligible to join our staff!

First, learn the basics in one of the following:

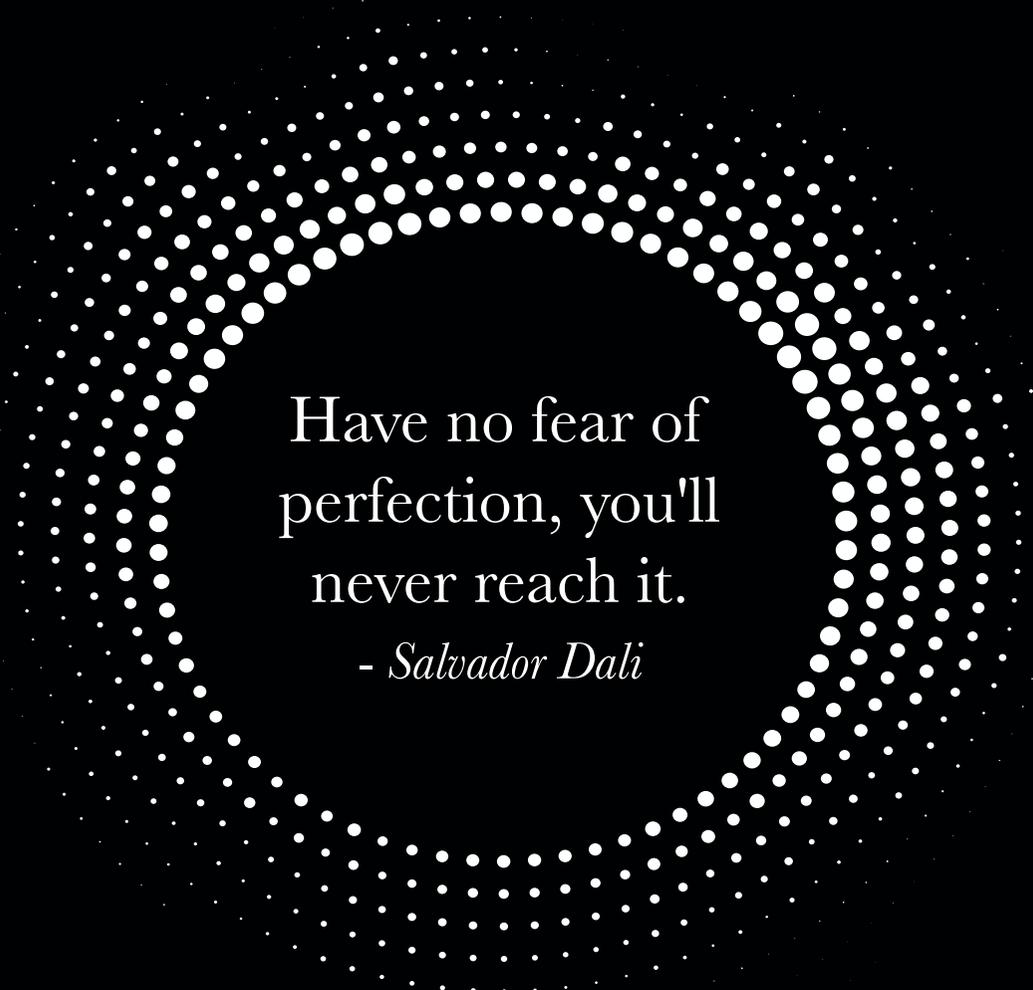
- English W206 Introduction to Creative Writing
- English W207 Introduction to Fiction Writing
- English W208 Introduction to Poetry Writing

Then, complete your apprenticeship in:

- English W280 Literary Editing and Publishing

All editors are eligible to a one credit internship per semester!

For more information, email us at [genesis@iupui.edu](mailto:genesis@iupui.edu)



Have no fear of  
perfection, you'll  
never reach it.

- *Salvador Dali*

# Contributors

Serena Boehmer

Julian J. Jones

Caitlyn Bruszewski

Piper Rowley

Zach Carrico

Isaac Schmitt

Corey Cole

Trenna Soderling

Elizabeth Coffman-Mackey

Mario Stone

Ronan Harkins

Lynzi Stringer

Harrison Higgs

Connor Stump

Will Knapp

Michaela White

Ben Levart

Anna White

Kate Marquam

Olivia Wilkins

Matt Panfil

Paul Williams

Devin Johannis