



genesis

literary and art magazine

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Letter from the Editors

The issue you are holding in your hands comprises the work of artists and writers throughout IUPUI. As campus begins to open up for in-person classes in the fall, this issue serves as our final document of student art created during the pandemic. The work and creativity bound within these pages is emblematic of the struggles of our time, our country, and ourselves.

As editors of *genesis*, we consider ourselves to be archivists of the artistic expression of our student body. In these selections, you will find a spectrum of vision possible only by the diverse and talented artistic community at this school.

As always, we are honored to present the pieces in this issue. No matter your taste, there should be a piece in here for everyone to find comfort in—or, perhaps, a challenge.

On behalf of those of us who are graduating—the warmest wishes to everyone involved with the artistic community at IUPUI. It's been a pleasure to work with you all.

We now present to you the first issue of the fiftieth volume of *genesis*.

Joseph, Abigail, Zoe, Sarah, & Zach
Managing Editors

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雪花的故事 - SNOW FLOWER'S STORY

Chloe Coy

"Children aren't coloring books. You don't get to fill them with your favorite colors."

(Hosseini 21)

All of my stories have begun with being lost then found, abandoned then rescued, unloved then loved. The Introduction explains that I was left on the doorstep of a teacher's college in a basket; I went to an orphanage. The Body is how I became adopted and joined my wonderful new White family. The Conclusion is that I am happy.

"The adoption story I'd heard so often growing up was supposed to remake me, give me everything I needed, make me feel whole. In the end, though, real growth and healing came from another kind of radical change—from finding the courage to question what I'd always been told; to seek and discover and tell another kind of story."

(Chung 222)

I do not exactly know how my story truly begins. But I want to acknowledge, because I never have before, that it does *not* begin with an infant in a basket. I was four-months-old when I was reported to the government officials as an orphan on a doorstep. Four months of relationships, memories, and places / spaces are not accounted for in this story.

"Your age at finding increases the chance that you may have come from outside the Shaoyang area, but if Family Planning was involved a local birth would be nearly certain. Both of these characteristics create significant complexities to making the connection necessary to locate a birth family."

("Birth Parent Search Analysis for Shao Xue Hua")

The dozens of babies, held or led by their caretakers, are for a different set of expectant families. His new baby daughter is not amongst this group of orphans-soon-to-be-children. But he gets out his camera anyway, just to document the moment. He zooms in. The quality is grainy — definitely a

'90s video recorder — but you can still make out the rosy, chubby-cheeked girl he is trying to focus on. You can discern her light green winter snowsuit, even amongst the dozens of other babies and eager adults. You can hear the filmer's voice, even amongst the excited squirming of younger children, chattering of parents, and crying of infants. Resting on the frame solely on the rosy, chubby-cheeked baby in the light green winter snowsuit, he says (to the camera, to himself, to his wife, to his three daughters next to him), "Oh my gosh. Look how cute that little girl is...."



Veronica [sister] and I are standing at the bathroom counter. She ties my coarse, black hair in a ponytail. "I look Chinese with my hair like this."

"Ha! That's because you are Chinese, Chlo."

"It is difficult to find the survival and revival of African cultural forms using our surface-sighted cultural eyes. Those surface-sighted eyes assess a cultural body by its skin. They do not look behind, inside, below."
(Kendi 86)

Throughout my second year of college, I truly started to understand myself as Chinese. I became closer with my Asian friends, had my first mentor who is a person of color, and attended APIDA Tea Talks on campus. These interactions exposed me to language for what I had (and continue to) experienced, such as *model minority*, *inferior minority*, *white*

savior complex, and *perpetual foreigner*. I found myself connecting to class readings, especially those from the Writing Center Theory & Practice course, which discussed essential social and / or political subjects related to racial identities and power dynamics.

“I wasn't aware that words could hold so much.
I didn't know a sentence could be so full!”
(Owens 103)

During the Spring semester of my second year, I had a professor who decided to organize her course in four sections: Regionalism & Local Color Writing, Literary Realism, Social Darwinism & Naturalism, and finally, Multicultural Voices. For this last section, we first were assigned to read selected pieces by Indigenous authors and then to write a reflective discussion post of at least 100 words. My post was 500+ words. Drawing from my research for my recent paper on Great Lakes Native American boarding schools (for a different class), I wrote:

These well-intentioned [boarding school members] are what Stefanie Kunze, a scholar in Indigenous studies and international relations, describes as “benevolent perpetrators.” ... Honestly, I feel like this Unit that we are currently starting, “Multicultural Voices,” may signify this mentality to some degree. Although it is extremely important to include a variety of perspectives and to discuss voices from people of color, making them a whole separate Unit feels othering... Why can't Native American voices be heard in the context of Regionalism and Local Color Writing? Are there no Asian Americans at this time who wrote in the Literary Realism genre? The list goes on.

I am home for the weekend, and my mom and I are taking our regular walk around the neighborhood. I start talking about how frustrated I am with this professor.

“Isn't it ridiculous??” I ask without looking for an answer as we pass some neighbors and do the awkward neighborly *nod* and *smile*.

Our conversation begins to grow outside of my Literature classroom and beyond my professor.

“Isn't othering immoral?” I ask, now looking for a more validating response. “Yes, it is,” Mom admits.

“Then how is it that what happened — othering — not immoral?”

“I have to think about it. I can't just deem it immoral or moral. That sounds so extreme. She was coming from a good pla—”

“But that doesn’t make it any more acceptable! That’s exactly what some of those boarding school teachers thought — that they were *helping* Native children. Just because they *thought* it was right doesn’t mean they *were* right. That’s what I was implying in my discussion post, and that’s immoral!”

We’re quiet for a few seconds as we pass the same neighbors, but now we just do the obligatory *nod*. They can obviously sense the tension.

By the third time around the neighborhood, I’m lying in the middle of the road, crying. Mom looks down at me, confused and sad. Fortunately, the neighbors seem to have gone home. Or maybe they saw me and turned around.

Between heavy, shaky breaths, I say, “It just hurts that you don’t understand this. That I have to explain to you why this matters, why it matters in general, and why it matters to *me*. Because othering isn’t just a frustrating topic to me — it’s my experience. And it hurts that I have to explain... when I know that Ammu and Rish [two of my roommates and close friends, both of whom are people of color] don’t have to explain this to their parents, because their parents have also experienced it. And I know there are just things you’ll never fully understand, but it just hurts that I have to explain it to my own family, my own mom.”

“My growing awareness of my in-betweenness peaked during this time in graduate school in a way that wasn’t possible growing up.”
(Conard-Salvo 92)

Mom sighs, “I know. Well, I don’t know. But I’m sorry....How have you felt othered? At school? By us?”

“Both. At Northpoint [the homeschool co-op my siblings and I had attended growing up], in class, whenever anyone mentioned anything about Asia or China, everyone would instantly look at me. Obviously, Grandpa. He is such a... white savior, Mom. Calling Meg [sister], Bella [sister], and I “Orientals” and going on about how smart we are.”

“But he does really love *you*. I think he says some of those because he’s proud of you.”

“No, he’s really proud of you. And himself. He’s proud that he raised such a selfless daughter who married a selfless man, and together, they selflessly adopted — saved — three Chinese babies. There’s also the time when I was talking about Grandpa with James [cousin] and Veronica, and

Veronica totally cut me off. She started telling the story for me, like *she's* the one who experiences it. And when I was talking about it around Val [my maternal aunt], not even to her, she stopped me. She said that she wouldn't hear any bad stuff about Grandpa, that he has been such a great father, and nothing can change that. But that's such a key example of white privilege. She has the *privilege* of knowing Grandpa like that — as a loving father."

"I encourage adopted people to tell their stories, our stories,
and let no one else define these experiences for us."
(Chung 20)

I conclude, "He can be a loving grandfather, but I also have to know him as a racist; I don't have the choice or the privilege to just ignore that part of him."

It's Thanksgiving Day 2006. I'm following Jenny [sister] and Avery [cousin] around. They are ten years older than me, so they're naturally cool, and I naturally want to hangout with them. They reach the garage door. Avery rushes through, and as Jenny closes the door behind them, separating me and her, she laughs, "Go back to China."

Looking back now, what pains me the most was my mom's response. I remember her comforting me, so at least she acknowledged that I was upset. But really nothing was done. She wasn't especially angry or disappointed at / with Jenny. It was like Jenny just called me a "brat" or some other insignificant insult siblings throw around almost every day. I recently told my mom how much it hurts that she didn't defend me. She nodded and said, "You didn't feel seen."

Randall: You just don't get it.

Jack: What don't I get?

Randall: What you said before. You felt uncomfortable on a golf course, and I probably wouldn't have been allowed on it.

Jack: Son, I'm sorry. That was a stupid thing to say.

When I look at you, I don't see color. I just see my son.

Randall: Then you don't see me, Dad.

("The Club")

"...words like 'other,' 'alternative,' 'marginal,' 'non-traditional,' etc.

These terms imply a norm, a stable center in which a 'main' rhetorical tradition exists and is augmented by 'additive' traditions."
(Powell et al. 1.1)

Gotcha Days are like birthdays without presents. Instead of celebrating the days we were born, we celebrate the days we were adopted. Instead of being told about how my mom went into labor at *X* time and was rushed to *Y* hospital and how I was *A* pounds and *B* ounces, I'm told about where I was found and approximately how old I was and how long I was in the orphanage and how I cried for the first 30 minutes when I met my new family, but then I was a happy baby. My mom says, "You just needed to be loved." This is one of the few instances when we talk about my past and I feel comforted.

"I'd always found it difficult to imagine my birth mother pregnant with me, difficult to grasp that my existence had been entirely dependent on a woman I would never know...
When I pictured my birth mother, I did not picture her pregnant. I pictured her holding me and saying goodbye."
(Chung 68)

It's Bella's 14th Gotcha Day. Gotcha Days are the one time a year we intentionally make an effort to acknowledge our Chinese heritage.

But when Veronica enters the house and sits at the dinner table by me, things shift. Nothing is the same since Thanksgiving, when everything fell apart. She begins talking about the Black Lives Matter movement, and we all, especially Bella and myself, engage in the conversation. But she doesn't just have a discussion with you about the topic — she acts like she's convincing you that Black lives really *do* matter, that "all lives matter" is missing the point, that the protests have actually been quite peaceful, that media coverage is biased. All these things I knew, researched, and agreed with. I respond with acknowledgement each time she mentions something in the news or pulls up a video or an article: "Yeah, yeah, totally! ... Yeah, I've already seen that video ... Right?! ... Oh, I actually read that a few days ago!"

It's seriously starting to annoy me.

Veronica leaves shortly after dinner, and I immediately share

my frustration with Mom, Meg, and Bella.

“She acts like she knows what it’s like to be non-White in America more than we do. I don’t mean I know what it’s like to be Black, by any means. But I know more about not being White more than any textbooks or news articles can tell her.”

My self-education and increasing (re)engagement with my Chinese identity does not just consist of interesting historical facts and personal relationships. It also involves confronting how I, and my people, have been complicit and have perpetuated racist, white supremacist, Eurocentric beliefs / attitudes / actions. Namely, anti-Black racism. As people of color, Asians can relate to how other non-White people experience White, American hegemony. Yet, many Asian Americans have turned against their Black neighbors in order to be perceived as the “honorary white” and / or the “model minority.” To prove ourselves “better” so that we are treated better.

“...we must learn our own people’s stories of how they’ve come to be in a place, and of how they’ve lived in that place, in order to walk a path of accountability and solidarity.”
(Doughtery)

In a recent op-ed piece I wrote for one of my English literature courses, I drew from Deanna Pan’s *Boston Globe* article “Asian-Americans, Long Used as a Racial Wedge, Are Confronting Anti-Black Racism in Their Own Communities.” Pan recognizes how the Asian American community has and has not confronted their “fraught histories of anti-Blackness.” I connected her article to the assigned course reading of Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, writing:

Swift’s intentionally unreliable and biased narrator reflects the same issue Asian Americans continue to deal with today: the distancing of oneself from a marginalized group, particularly Black people, in order to promote their own superiority. Gulliver does this with the Yahoos, and Asian Americans have (and still do) perpetuate social injustice with anti-Black racism. Therefore, it is necessary for Asian Americans to avoid following in Gulliver’s footsteps, and instead, stand with the Black community in their fight for equality, inclusion, and equity.

Mom, Meg, Bella, and I are sitting on the family room couch, staring at the family laptop. On the screen, there is a Google Hangout meeting with Veronica, Danielle, [my third oldest sister], and Sue [the therapist]. This is the first time Meg, Bella, and I have joined family therapy. We begin with introductions and the questions for why all of us are here: *How / Why are there two distinct sides in the family? Do we want to bridge this gap? If so, how?*

Meg shares that, to some extent, the gap is natural. Veronica is sixteen years older than Bella. Dad died when the older girls and the younger girls were at very different stages of life, with Veronica being in college and Bella having recently been adopted. Veronica and Danielle counterargue that the parental roles they have been forced to take on are unnatural, too much, unfair.

Bella mutters, "Well there's also the fact that we don't look like each other."

"I know my place in my adoptive family is secure.
That is not the same thing as always feeling that I belong."
(Chung 207)

And I feel my floodgates open.

"I'd broken one of our unspoken rules: We were always supposed to pretend
our life was one long and incredibly fun adventure."
(Walls 69)

Before my parents adopted me, my name was Xue Hua Shao. Xue Hua means "snow flower." I always thought it was fitting, given my love for the winter season. I also liked to romanticize the meaning by thinking of myself as a bright flower surviving — even thriving — in a harsh snowstorm. I shared the name Shao, which is the equivalent of a last name, with all of the other children in the Shao orphanage of the Hunan Province.

My name is now Chloe Xue Hua Coy. It implies a mix between two cultures, two races, two families, and two very different overarching stories. It's not always a harmonious blend, but the name fits.

While my identity/ies as a Chinese American, transnational transracial adoptee is just one part of who I am, it has been the most difficult piece of me to learn, understand, and appreciate. It has been filled with excruciating sadness, devastating hurt, and deep anger. Nevertheless, the experience and practice of educating myself has also brought me closer to others who are truly, imperfectly, and compassionately willing to see and love all of me — Mom, Meg, Bella, Phoebe, Ammu, Anne, Rish, Paul, Noel, Nick, and more.

“I am breaching the sacred pact of our family, our once-shared belief that my race is irrelevant in the presence of their love.
But withholding hard truths and my honest opinions would also sell short the love I have for them, and they for me.”
(Chung 208)

Now my stories will begin with belonging then abandonment then security. The Introduction explains that I was born to a Chinese mother and a Chinese father; for whatever reason, I did not remain in their care for long. The Body is how I joined a White family that is just as complicated, painful, and joyous as any other. The Conclusion is that I am learning to be content.



Owl

Ayla Walter

Watercolor painting, 22" x 30"

One or Another Ayla Walter

*Young girls
gathered here.
Wet voices, speaking of only sweet sharp things
of being smothered
of being cut and sliced
and threaded through a needle's eye.*

A list of things I am angry about
still:
the unknown multiplex of moments
I've forgotten, on purpose or otherwise
bug-bites and small things
fingernails and tangled hair torn smooth
my stomach churning sour milk into butter
making acid sweet, turning light cream heavy
the speechless gravity of it all.

The flinch before a plate hits the ground.

The story so far is that some subtle hand molded me
like this, squashed me and tugged
and I failed to hold firm
this maybe fiction
maybe magical realism
maybe I'm not clay but a tree
and I'll feast yet upon what's been buried.

What did you learn in school
I was the swimming and sword fighting girl
I was the woodland creature
felt closer to the Hydra than I ever did my peers
or like the Furies, I went to sleep each night imagining I felt wings forcing
their way out my back.
I couldn't always fly, you know.

Once I was furtive
once I was child king
and philosopher; Calvin and Hobbs
stuffed animals to dress as instead of dolls

*Wet voices
sharing sweat, and shaky truths.*

In Fantasy, I always sided with the dragon
still:
I won't eat the girl.



You Greet Opulence at His Throne
Serenna Bottoms
Procreate, 2550 ppi x 3300 ppi



"11.53.52 PM 04.13"

Mailinh Ho

Oil on paper, 9" x 11"

Fatalist Ramblings

Caitlin Price

Now's a different era. It's different than genital-free, hard plastic. Polyvinyl chloride mimicked curves I'd see in long car ride, car seat daydreams. Different from being a grade school outsider too queer for swimsuit clad pool parties and weekend sleepovers. Kids hadn't had the vocab, but knew I was our butch cafeteria lady type weird minus the cropped hair and sports bra flattened tits.

Now is different than years of straight sex splurging like one good screw could've proven that my parts worked because nothing felt as good as girls looked. One night, on a middle school like dare, I felt a girl's lips against mine. Drunk and sloppy, we moved like exhibitionists. I named her "Fireball Cinnamon Whisky" and assumed she was straight as she disappeared into a crowd, leaving my life as quickly as she entered. The taste of her lips washed away with vomit and Listerine, but the memory of her mouth visited me as I went home with my boyfriend and settled in for another comatose screw.

Now is different than the solitude like mid-days at dive bars. Quarantined with Catholics, I regressed to a secret dyke as my mind belonged to a body that wanted to evaporate into air. Days were spent with a word processor and nights were spent with films on my old flat screen. Nostalgia inspired my choices as I watched the Larry Clark and Gregg Araki movies I snuck as a preteen. I fell asleep with *Paris is Burning*, envisioning a life outside of a red state suburb.

I'm in a different era now. My fingers go numb pounding into my keyboard—vomiting out verbs I can't vocalize. I crack my knuckles and skim dating apps, finding couples looking for thirds. It feels like another year of my loner lesbianism. Online musings lead me to Instagram, where I find old friends getting married, having kids, and leaving the state. One day, maybe I'll really scratch my itch, dig in until my skin tears and bleeds, and flush out "Fireball Cinnamon Whiskey's" mouth and all the lips, pussies, and tits I've experienced since then, and be able to join them. Maybe I'll live as if I have multiple bodies. One body for me and one body for my Catholic parents. I'll drive one until its miles are up and then I'll move on to the other.



The Bandage Project
Olivia M. Van Renterghem
Bandages and Acrylic paint on masonite, 12" x 9"



Untitled
Emma Schwartz
Nupastel and Charcoal, 18" x 24"

One Room

Laura Tuzzio

Here's how to fit 60 years of life into one room. Have a kid at 17, then have another at 19. Throw in a third at 21. Three kids, one bunk bed, two bedrooms, three holes punched into two walls, one marriage over. Two grandparents raising three grandkids. Take a job, quit that job, take another, no, another. Keep looking, dreams are out there. It's been a few years, new guy, don't get married, have another kid. One woman, two men, four kids. Four is good, even numbers work. Kids are hard. One aunt one uncle raising one fourth child. Get a new guy, take a new job. Quit that guy, keep the job. Not that job. Hit the road but come back, climb down from that 18-wheeler to tell your kids you're married again, that's two, two husbands, one wife. One driver, one passenger, one mom M.I.A., 18 wheels take you far, far away. Write your kids, don't forget to write the kids, greetings from five states away, three postcards, four letters, three kids, no, four. Take that punch, that's one to the head, one to the stomach. That's two hands that grab, two hands that slap, two hands that shake, one mouth that screams, one foot that kicks. Kick number two husband out. That's it, you're done, no more husbands, zero. Remember your kids, they're out there. Four kids, three to talk to, three to see. One holds out, the second one, she remembers. One joint, one pill. No, one thousand joints, one hundred pills. No job, none. No parents, gone. No second child, who's still remembering, done. One mattress, no frame, one closet half full, four boxes hold dozens of pictures. One letter, one laminated memory of the second child who won't see you, won't speak to you. One purse, three pill bottles, 12 dollars. One patch. One arm with one fentanyl patch. One room holds all the mementos of one life's mistakes. One patch for one overdose, it only takes one. One room, one life. No, just one room.



"Mom's Wearing Pants"

Caroline Hawkins

Oil on canvas, 16" x 20"



Kluay Kluay
Chanya Ruby
Oil on canvas, 36" x 48"



The Amber Planet
Sara Lansdell
Digital, 3000 x 1500px

The Home Front

Corlan McCollum

1928. A diva from another era dies alone in her Paris apartment. A week later, her various debt collectors find her dead. All her assets are liquidated. Three of those assets, a pair of frilly pink chairs and a faux fur coat, slowly work their way into the hands of Chase bank, who'd lent her far too much money when she was younger to jump-start her acting career. The Depression comes. Chase needs to sell as much as possible. At an auction, the chairs go to a young woman from Advance, Indiana, and her young husband buys her the coat as a gift. He dies when he goes off to fight in France as a volunteer. What is she left with? An empty house, decorated in frilly, pink things, and faux furs. She goes to work in a munitions plant when the war comes and her savings run out. Eventually, she adopts her nephew when her brother and sister-in-law are killed in a bombing raid on Casablanca. They're unhappy people, in a house fit for young lovers. She can't find anybody to take the furniture, and can't bring herself to wear the coat, so she puts them away in her mother's attic. Her mother dies. She's in the hospital from the dangers of handling material components of artillery shells. Her nephew, who never took to calling her his mother, comes home from training to sort out the estate, and the war ends. He could've been the pilot to drop the bomb on Nagasaki. In his resentment, he sells everything, and moves to California and settles down, where his wife never makes him think about his past, and neither do his affairs. The chairs and coat split at a garage sale, the coat traveling south to West Baden and the chairs moving to Lebanon. The coat came back when its new owner found an unopened love letter containing one thousand dollars in a hidden inside pocket, written by the volunteer husband to the wife he'd never be able to give a child, but the nephew was long gone. They left the coat to a local history museum, but those never do well, and it closed its doors, to nobody's notice. All the exhibits were put in booths in antique stores, like the chairs, who had gone from owner to owner, each of them discovering that pink frills pairs with nothing. Except, perhaps, for faux fur coats, which they had been reunited with, and will be forever because nobody wants pink frills or faux fur.

Not all stories are tragic. The new owner of the coat was

one of the first US-based saleswomen at Eli Lilly. When the local history museum closed, the couple running it had more time to enjoy their retirement. The nephew had three boys and two daughters, all of which grew up to be outstanding people without traumatic childhoods. Every single one of his affairs felt loved.



A Lady in Layers
Shae Marie
Oil on linen, 16" x 20"

Address Unknown

Laura Tuzzio

Della Dear,

He says your name. In his sleep, I hear him. I think of you often. Your hair, your face. I wonder if you look like me, or if in his attempts to escape me, you are my opposite. Maybe in every way or only in some. Do you love him? Does he love you? I don't know any Dellas, so he must have found you. Found you in a place he knew I would never be. What kinds of places would I never be? What kinds of women are there? You were there, Della Dear, waiting for him.

I wonder if his eyes look the same when he's looking at you. Are they that same endless deep blue? The same blue I see in the eyes of my children. Our children. Did you know he has children? They're beautiful and they love me. They love my hair, my cooking, my soft soothing lullabies. He loves when I sing to him. He says I'm his songbird. He says I am his comfort. Do you sing, Della Dear? Is that how he found you? I imagine he misses my voice when he is away. Maybe you sing to him and make it easier for him to stray.

He goes on these trips; he says work is work. The work feeds my children, the work buys these clothes. The work can make families; the work can break families. Work. I hate the job that we can't live without. I work. I work on the reflection I see in the mirror. I know he likes my face. He likes the way my lips curl up at the ends even when I'm not smiling. He likes my face. The rest of me I can't see. The mirror's too short. Maybe it's that part, the part I don't see, the part of me he'd rather leave be.

What about you, Della Dear? Is your mirror longer? Maybe you can see what I don't see. Maybe he wishes you were me. He's been mine for so long. I don't know when I became so giving, so sharing. Was it Missouri, Kentucky? Oh, all the places I'll never be. My mother used to tell me I was never very good at sharing. It was a problem in school and with the neighborhood kids. I suppose I never grew out of it. I wonder if you like to share, Della Dear. Maybe you are stingy? Sharing is good for some things, some people, just not for me. Your mirror is probably longer than mine.

How does it work? Do you see him often? Is he happy when he sees you? I wonder if he touches your hair the way he touches mine. No. I know him. Maybe you don't know him. You don't know him the way I know him. His coffee on the left with a splash of cream, paper on the right, buttered toast and sausage. He likes his blue tie best. I always pack it for him. Suitcase in hand, a kiss on the cheek. A kiss. On the cheek. Where does he kiss you, Della Dear? He sleeps with his socks on. But maybe you know that.

His wife,
Anna

Fog Like a Veil

Katherine Scott

Fog like a veil

drapes a pale buick bride
driven down the aisle by her trucker uncles,
hoping they will press her hand to the grit of the familiar driveway.

Hushed music accompanies
this slow march through the peaks
when semis, soaring past
in a free fall,
strew gravel like petals as they gallop by

The sleep drunk party, counting deer as they pass
sprawl torpid arms over buckles.

While the driver's baby blues
contract and contort,
attempting to wheedle road dashes
through a film of lace
cascading over night.

One hand clenches the wheel,
the other a procession of coffee cups
and sleet presses kisses to her windscreen.
Unconscious copilots,
holding their peace,
will never know how elusive runaway grooms can be.



Do you remember me?
Michelle Andrea
Mixed media on paper, 19" x 24"

Low Rent Ghost Story

Ayla Walter

I pretend to have a ghost
that I scavenged for it's picture frame
from the parking lot dumpster of my Dad's apartment building in
Valparaiso.

The frame turned out to be plastic but I kept her anyway
in the back of my car for months
named her Lenore, and then Marcelle,
and eventually disassembled her frame to paste her up on the inside
front door of my own apartment.

I like to think that she's mounted high enough for her scribbly black
eyes to see out the window.

That the little doll figure of her picture might be happy to be recused
from the dump

and given a place where her faded pink background offsets so nicely
the dark wood of the door.

And in exchange for the kindness of being able to watch daily
movement of sunlight across the walls and cheap wooden floors,

I pretend that my ghost protects my apartment.

I pretend that she gets along with my cat
that they both play together while I am out.

I made meaningless symbols in red crayon on a white glass plate
and burnt the welcome letter from building management before her in
the entrance alcove.

I'm no practitioner, but I definitely don't have to pretend that Marcel
cares more about my residency wellbeing than the landlord does.

At least the rent is cheap and ghosts, especially pretend ones, have very
few needs.

I don't believe in ghosts, that should be clear,
if I did perhaps I would not invite and love Marcelle into my home as
much as I do, and I do.

But I am no big believer in anything beyond the fact that there is so
much I don't know.

So I don't believe in ghosts

but not so much that I'm interested in hearing about how your second
cousin or your best friend's friend had something totally impossible
and spooky happen to them and they *saw* a ghost with their own eyes
just so you can try to prove it to me or expect me to try and disprove it

back to you-
like most people, I'm not that interested in proof.

All I can tell you is that things going bump in the night
are just bumping noises
that happen all the time
in the night to me.
One more of those banal mysteries
to fill in the corners of the world like dry brown leaves
each one with it's own story I'm sure, but I don't know them.

I don't know Marcelle's story,
all I can tell you is that most likely it's just an old commercial art
print, maybe one of hundreds meant for a kitschy wall, and it doesn't
even look that haunted in the daylight when it's not reflecting a dim
streetlamp from fake gold edges and leaning up against a dumpster in
the late hours of the evening
but I decided to take her home with me. On a lark.
I decided to love her. And I don't believe in magic but,
I do believe in magic.

Or at least, magical thinking. For free, I will tell you that everyone
no-matter how analytical or practical they claim themselves to be
has at least one totally irrational belief.
Deep down in their shifty gut
it's a human right I think, or a gift
to see what isn't there.
I mean, without the vision who makes the art? and without the art
who makes the future?
and without ghosts how could we say goodbye without losing what we
can't survive the loss of?

So I pretend to have a ghost,
who watches over my apartment
in exchange for the kindness of being able to watch daily movement of
sunlight across the walls and cheap wooden floors.
And more than anything I believe that we do not offer kindness
because it is deserved,
we offer kindness because we deserve to be kind beings.

Because love
however received-or not received- doesn't go to waste.
I don't know where it goes, but I have faith in that.



Holy Hashbrown!
Shae Marie
Digital, 3" x 4.2"



Cricket
Serenna Bottoms
Procreate, 2550 ppi x 3049 ppi

Eli in the Passenger Seat Ollie Stewart

Somehow, in the heart of nowhere
Your fingers part the evening sky
And in the space you bend, your will to cold air,
I see why some people spend their whole lives

On these roads that no one ventures anymore
A flare of red against the dusk
Raised veins; like yours
And you reach out to touch them 'cos

If not here, then nowhere.
If not you, then no one.

“Drive faster,” and I do
With you laughing in the face of them:
The gods you would petition to
Before you learned; We purge our own sins

With my hand around your knee,
Buried beneath things you shouldn't know
No one's ever been so seventeen
As Eli with his head back, eyes closed



Unexpected Beauty
Olivia Adam
Photography, 25" x 19"

She Set Herself Aflame

Rachel Back

Do not look at your daughter in disgust
and say, "I raised you."
Because she knows that in her,
you raised hell itself.

You raised the fire of the earth.
Put it in her soul where she tended
the flame with careful hands,
feeding it kindling until it burst from her

like hairspray meeting the wicked
warmth. She refused to stop
when in her anger your world burned.
Consumed in hot golden flames,

were the pillars of hate you poured
the foundation for. Now ashes fall
towards the black scorched floor.
Do not look at her and despair

at the arsonist you have armed.
And when she sets out with match
in hand to incinerate the pieces
of herself you crafted

with needle and thread, know that hell
is your reward. And she walks
barefoot through the smoldering coals.



Angel Child
Chanya Ruby
Oil on canvas, 40" x 50"



“The Hô Down”
Mailinh Ho
Oil on canvas, 50" x 70"



In a World of My Own
Shae Marie
Mixed media, 22" x 30"



"Your Mom's Hair Didn't Look Like That"

Caroline Hawkins

Oil on canvas, 16" x 16"

Escaping St. Peters, Indiana

Rachel Back

I buried myself in the cold asphalt street.
I trapped myself in the earth between
life and death. I was a stake pulled
from the hard garden ground, splintering
in half when the earth refused to give.

From my grave, I watched two trees
stretching, reaching desperately
for the other with branches too short,
hacked away by jagged chainsaw teeth.
Their separation mocked by those who hewed
their limbs from their body. Their roots
are left burrowed deep on either side of Blue Creek.

A portal to the afterlife opened
in their reflection with a whispered
promise, a gateway to freedom,
where I am no longer torn between life
and death with part of my soul cleaved
from my body. A winding road opens
in front of me leading the way out

of town to a city where hands can cross
the divide and caress the face of their lover
without the fear of being sawed in two.
St. Peters had become my prison,
Blue Creek my cell block, and if I remained
I would serve a life sentence buried between
the two trees, the lovers reaching
but never catching the other.



Wild Geese
Ayla Walter
Watercolor painting, 30" x 22"



View From the Harbor
Sara Lansdell
Digital, 2471 x 4278px



Spidersilk Overgrowth
Sara Lansdell
Digital, 3000 x 1500px

Cobweb Words

Shannon Kucaj

Hairy spider legs
tiptoe over goosebumps
planting on plump lips
tip tapping teeth as she sleeps
awaiting her moist mouth's answer.

Just a tiny opening
for silky strands
to crisscross between teeth
a home for dewy egg clusters
to hatch, craving warm juices
to fill their little bellies.

Once they've gotten a bite,
her gums will swell and pulsate,
allowing nothing to stop them
from hiding in the deep crevasses,
killing her ability to speak.

Artists' Notes

Olivia Adam will be a senior in Fall 2021 majoring in Visual Communication Design and minoring in Art History and Digital Humanities Studies. She's a part of the IUPUI Rowing Club as a varsity women rower, team captain of the women's squad, and club president. She continues to keep herself busy with her recent passion for collage art and embroidering. Check out her work on Instagram: @liv_art_olivia

On "Unexpected Beauty" — "A compositional photo taken on an abandoned train."

Michelle Andrea is a Venezuelan artist currently graduating with a Painting degree from Herron School of Art + Design. Her work focuses on human geography and the importance of cultural awareness.

On "Do you remember me?" — "Reflecting on the people I've met in the past, I consider the quantity of photos I have of people that I do not remember. This piece explores those relationships that did not continue to develop and the faces I have completely forgotten. I wonder how many people I've met don't recall me being in their life either."

Rachel Back is a senior at IUPUI, graduating this May with a degree in Creative Writing. She enjoys Lord of the Rings and watching Marvel movies with her dog, Roman.

On "Escaping St. Peters, Indiana" — "'Escaping St. Peters, Indiana' is a poem about not fitting into community/family expectations and the near spiritual that can occur when an individual is not able to express themselves in a closeminded town."

On "She Set Herself Aflame" — "'She Set Herself Aflame' alludes to a girl burning down the world around her as she realizes it has been toxic, and she does so by using the tools instilled in her by

her family.

Serenna Bottoms is primarily a digital artist and focuses her work mainly on character designs. They are a nonbinary artist and hope to blur the boundaries of fashion and design with their art. He also hopes that his work inspires others to create their work.

On "Cricket" — "A character design of an android named Cricket dressed in techwear fashion."

On "You Greet Opulence at his Throne" — "Opulence is a wealthy android. So enamoured with the idea of opulence he made it both his name and mantra."

Chloe Coy is a senior at IUPUI majoring in English Literature and minoring in History and Public & Professional Writing. She firmly believes that reading and writing are freeing acts through which readers and writers (that is to say, everyone) may become more inclusive, accepting, and loving.

On "雪花的故事 - SNOW FLOWER'S STORY" — "[This] is a collage essay that was originally written for a course focusing on counterstories and cultural rhetorics. Drawing from class materials, my favorite books (and show), my past writing, and my lived experiences, I attempt to answer the overarching question: "Where do I know from?" This essay pieces all of these different aspects of my life together and documents my own counterstory as an Asian American transracial adoptee. Not only do I hope that my essay spreads awareness about race, culture, identity, and adoption, but I also hope it force readers to (re)examine their own experiences and roles regarding these issues. Thus, my wish is that '雪花的故事 - Snow Flower's Story' connects to, affirms, and/or challenges your own story."

Caroline Hawkins is a studio artist working on getting her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the Heron School of Art at Indiana University Purdue University of Indianapolis (IUPUI). She is currently senior planning to graduate in May of 2021 with

a degree in painting and an art therapy certificate. She then plans to continue her education through art therapy. Caroline primarily works with oil paints on canvas. Her work explores how chronic illnesses passed through generations continue to shape family history. It investigates how we perceive our past through the lens of genetics and medical history, eventually shaping how we use our memory. Caroline has previously shown her work in an exhibition at the Garfield Parc Art Center in March of 2019 and the Harrison Center in June 2021. She has been given several awards including, the 21st Century Award, the Paul Zimmerman Mem Endowment Scholarship, and the Nicholson Scholarship.

On "Mom's Wearing Pants!" and "Your Mom's Hair Didn't Look Like That" – "A person's health is not only connected to their healthy lifestyle and their 'personal strength.' Instead, we know that a family's medical past plays one of the most crucial parts. Photography evolved enormously over the past few years. While the cost associated with taking and printing photographs was prohibitive in the past, people chose to record only the most significant moments. Nowadays, our enormous digital photo libraries range from birthday parties to hundreds of random pet photos. We stopped associating photography with precious moments worthy to record. My studio practice, while based in painting, is very closely linked to photography. I was very intrigued by my grandparent's old photo collection of relatives and friends. I had a desire to get to know the people in the images and learn their stories. Few of the photographs had writing on the back listing names and dates of the people, recording the moment in my family's past. Making my grandparents' memory crucial to fill in the gap. The more recent photographs that I reference in my paintings are characterized by a use of a very finely selected color palette. Although at the first glance this color palette might appear very limited. The limited features on the figure make them familiar. While my paintings might appear simple in color and detail, my process to achieve this simplicity is heavily based on the conceptual nature of the work, anchored in color theory, figurative abstraction, refined material manipulation. My work has focused on storytelling through the lens of medical science, including genetics, and how

people of all backgrounds can experience the same health issues. After becoming more aware of my surroundings and through research, I can see that a person's medical story is not the most significant thing about them but the individual stories they can create through experiences."

Mailinh Ho (1997) is a Vietnamese-American cowboy with a penchant for painting. You can see more of her work @mickiesen on Instagram.

On "11.53.52 PM 04.13" — "A portrait painted over zoom."

On "The Hô Down" — "Although issues surrounding the portrayal of Asians and Asian-Americans in the media has come a long way since the 1920s, there continues to be a lack of representation and a lingering problem with the tropes of the 'Model Minority' and 'Forever Foreigner.' The Vietnamese diaspora has resulted in an influx of first generation Vietnamese-Americans who face the struggle of maintaining their cultural heritage while seeking acceptance as a fellow American.

Mailinh Ho's work explores the complexities of contemporary identity through playful iconography and self-portraiture. Through self-portraiture she encourages the viewer to examine the contemporary dynamics of race and gender as a result of diaspora through her experience as a first generation Vietnamese-American. Her work confronts the topic of modern-day microaggressions with a cheeky attitude, forcefully rejecting stereotypical notions of Asian Americans while reconciling her Vietnamese heritage and American upbringing."

Shannon Kucaj is a sophomore at IUPUI majoring in English with a concentration in Creative Writing with a minor in Psychology. Currently, she works as a Writing Center Consultant and is an aspiring editor and poet. In her work, she likes to explore emotion through symbolic imagery and honest self-reflection to discuss the human experience. You can read more of her work on Instagram at @kucapjpoems.

On "Cobweb Words" — "[This] is an exploration of fear meant to be interpreted by others in their own way."

Sara Lansdell is a concept artist and illustrator looking for work in the movie or game industries. She loves traveling through and beyond our world with art and stories. artstation.com/saralanart.

On "Spidersilk Overgrowth" — "A traveler in this web-covered world happens across an abandoned structure. Might there be valuable supplies inside?"

On "The Amber Planet" — "Visitors to the planet will every so often build a small structure or temporary dwelling, but none stay very long for fear of disturbing this natural paradise. Therefore, any abandoned abodes are quickly overtaken by the local flora and fauna."

On "View From the Harbor" — "This was made as part of my thesis project, which is a re-imagining of Pinocchio set in a modern fantasy world. Pinocchio and her father Geppetto live outside the city in a large building by the harbor, which is an old railroad-station-turned-home-turned-workshop. This image was the second-to-last design stage before the final concept for the house."

Shae Marie is graduating from Herron School of Art and Design with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drawing and Illustration and a minor in Art History. She is inspired by the wonderment and timelessness of classic novels, as well as her Catholic faith. She creates art that guides the viewer on a journey of truth, beauty, and goodness. Marie was a finalist in the Awaken 3.0 digital exhibition with the 'Focus Beauty Initiative' in 2021, and was published in the historical book, 'Postcards from Quarantine' in 2020."

On "A Lady in Layers" — "This painting presents a classical twist on collage and portraiture. Each image is rendered to mimic the style of collage all the while remaining completely two-

dimensional. We also see several different ladies compiled to make up one complete figure yet staying consistent in style and posture. This painting was first digitally collaged going through various renditions then ultimately selecting this version. It pays homage to the original paintings all the while creating something new and modern."

On "Holy Hashbrown" — "In this little comic a cute and relatable scene occurs. Friends gather around a table, getting ready to enjoy a meal when the most unlikely friend orders the most ambitious meal. When the dish comes out all of them are shocked by the size of the plate. They are all wondering how their friend will manage. In the end the friend peers over her plate in all its glory ready to devour her food and all her companions can think is, holy hasbrown!"

On "In a World of My Own" — "In this piece, we are introduced to a lady being represented in physical likeness and essence. The viewer is invited into this world that exists solely to understand the subject in a personal way. Everything is intentional here. Exploring the details in this painting prompts questions about the character of the subject which are only answered if you speak with her. It is mysterious, magical, and maybe even a little bit odd."

Corlan McCollum is a real human being from Pittsboro, Indiana, who loves to explore the worlds of his characters.

On "The Home Front" — "'The Home Front' is a story about a few of the many things one sees at an antique store but can't imagine anyone at any time ever wanting or making."

Caitlin Price studies Creative Writing and English Literature at IUPUI. She illustrates and self-publishes books in her free time. One day, she hopes to publish queer literary fiction.

On "Mask Etiquette" — "How it feels to be a retail worker during a global pandemic."

Olivia M. Van Renterghem is an honors student at Herron School of art and design studying to be an art therapist. She is currently a sophomore and has plans to go to graduate school to obtain an Art Therapy license. In the future, she hopes to help underserved communities with mental health issues. Currently, Olivia is planning to volunteer in a hospice center or other institution helping others through art.

On "The Bandage Project" — "By creating body parts with bandaids I can explore the universal themes of the human condition such as pain and healing. A bandage is intended to protect and heal so representing a figure through bandages brings up themes of strength, trauma, and resilience."

Chanya Ruby is a graduating senior pursuing a Painting Degree at Herron School of Art and Design. Her work focuses on the animistic traditions of Thailand by using oil as her medium.

On "Angel Child" — "Child angels are dolls that are possessed by benevolent spirits and are believed to bring good fortunes to the owners if you take care of them well. It became a craze in Thailand in 2016."

On "Kluay Kluay" — "This piece represents the superstitious world of Thailand featuring an iconic horror story and combining it with Western imagery. This work is about a female spirit in Thai folklore, she appears to be a beautiful young woman who haunts wild banana trees."

Emma Schwartz is a Junior Drawing and Illustration Major. More of her art can be found on instagram at emmaschwartzart.

On "Untitled" — "This piece is commenting on how the female body is seen an object by men."

Katherine Scott is a current English Literature student at IUPUI who received her BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design. She was born and raised in the midwest and spends her time rock climbing, drinking too much coffee, and creating art.

Ollie Stewart is a 22 year old Film and Media Arts & Science double major at IUPUI. A queer filmmaker, author, and artist of color, Ollie aspires to create stories for young girls in underrepresented communities.

Laura Tuzzio is a junior pursuing her B.A. in English. She enjoys writing across multiple genres and is always seeking publication opportunities. When she's not focused on school or her writing she enjoys spending time with her family, watching documentaries and traveling.

On "Address Unknown" — "This is a hopeful letter written by a wife to a woman she's never met, but knows exists in the times and places her husband is away from her. She has written it for herself. Because she does not know an address to send it go, her questions will go unanswered."

On "One Room" — "This is a prose poem depicting what remains of a woman's life, carelessly lived. Sixty years worth of memories accumulated in one small room left for her family to find."

Ayla Walter is a senior Drawing and Illustration student at Herron School of Art and Design. They make artwork exploring themes such as nature, birds, science, and philosophy. They also write poetry and make mini-zines which can be found for sale at local bookstore Irvington Vinyl and Books.

On "Owl" — "This painting of a barn owl started out as a class assignment but I didn't finish it in time to be well graded on it. Still, I couldn't let go of my vision for the piece: the reference image I found of a barn owl staring solemnly out of the page on a teal background and with all the beautiful details of its feather patterns... I wanted to get them all just right. So whenever I couldn't prod myself to work on classwork, I spent my time finishing this painting. I think the end result was worth the wait."

On "Wild Geese" — "This painting was my final assignment for a watercolor course I took last fall. I wanted to explore the

transparencies of light and layering effects with everything I'd learned about watercolor through one of my favorite subjects which is birds. I depend heavily on image references for my more naturalistic works and actually used photoshop to craft this composition of overlapping geese which I then painted. The title "Wild Geese" is a reference to the Mary Oliver poem which happens to be one of my favorites, but didn't necessarily inspire the imagery."

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