

KALEIDOSCOPE

Journal of **Art & Literature**

- Editors -

Cameron Phillips

Jakob Plotts

Marizona Dahlstrom

- Assistant Editors -

Alexa Dailey

Alonzo Hall

Jacob Eddington

Kennedy Brawner

- Faculty Advisors -

Becca Werland

Michael Maher

- Cover Art -

Jakob Plotts

Contents

Alisa Davis	15,26
Audrey Fletcher	1,9,10
Eric Littrell	3,4,5,14,18
Hannah Hildenbrand	20
Jacob Eddington	9,11,16,23
Jakob Plotts	12,19,24,25,29
Julia I Rivera	7,8,24
Mackenzie Threw	10,13,14,16
Marizona Dahlstrom	5,7,17
Michael Mills	1,6,13,18,23,26,27
Paula Cortes	2,20,25
Shane Thompson	28
Shelby Dare	12,15
Stephanie Ellis	21,22

Letters From Editors

Cameron Phillips

Kaleidoscope has been an exciting and influential experience for me. I have learned how to work with a team to make difficult decisions with a great group of people. I would first like to thank the other editors, Jakob and Marizona, for being such a pleasure to work with through this process. Also, I would like to say thank you to the assistant editors for all the hard work they put in this semester. Finally, I would like to thank Rebecca Werland and Michael Maher for bringing us all together and giving me this wonderful opportunity. I hope you enjoy this year's edition of Kaleidoscope.



Jakob Plotts

As a professional graphic designer, I am always looking for new ways to challenge myself. Working on Kaleidoscope has allowed me to challenge myself in ways I have never before. From challenges of leadership skills to challenging editorial tasks, I have gained much real world experience while working on the Kaleidoscope team. Working with the Kaleidoscope team has been a fantastic experience that I will never forget.

Kaleidoscope is the collective expression of students' emotions, ideas, beliefs, creative power, and hard work. As long as students strive to create and continue to challenge themselves, Kaleidoscope will be there to act as an outlet for students to express themselves to the world.

I would like to thank the faculty advisors, Rebecca Werland and Michael Maher, for giving me the wonderful opportunity to work on Kaleidoscope and for their enduring support of SRC's *Kaleidoscope: Journal of Art & Literature*. I would also like to thank fellow editors Cameron Phillips and Marizona Dahlstrom, as well as the assistant editors for their continuous support making this year's edition of Kaleidoscope possible.

Marizona Dahlstrom

Education: what's the point? Our college theme this year has led to many thought-provoking discussions, papers, and assignments over the past two semesters. Given the current budget situation in the state, I know that the role of education has been debated in city halls, universities, and colleges throughout Illinois, and it has personally affected nearly every one of us. Higher education is something I believe we all should have access to, and I've given a great deal of thought to why it's so important.

I've decided that the point is to educate and equip students to become an engaged body of citizens. We are called, as free people living here in America, to participate in our government; to vote and let our voices be heard; to be involved in our communities. Perhaps some don't see the connection between civic engagement and this magazine, but I'd argue they are strongly connected. In this issue of Kaleidoscope, you can see our poetry, stories, photographs, and drawings. Each student has their own opinions, and their own perspective. And each of us wanted to create something. Maybe you write just because you love it; or you draw to release emotion; or, like me, you take photos because you want to capture the beauty of a moment.

To me, Kaleidoscope is about so much more than pictures and words. Rather, it's about students of SRC putting our work together and showing the world what we can do. I thank each and every individual who submitted their work, and I'd like to tell you all that if you have something to say, let your voice be heard.



5 O'clock Coffee

Michael Mills



Questions

Audrey Fletcher

What makes the sky blue

And gives a blossom its lavender hue?

What makes trees tall

And strawberries small?

What makes you smile?

Think about it for awhile.

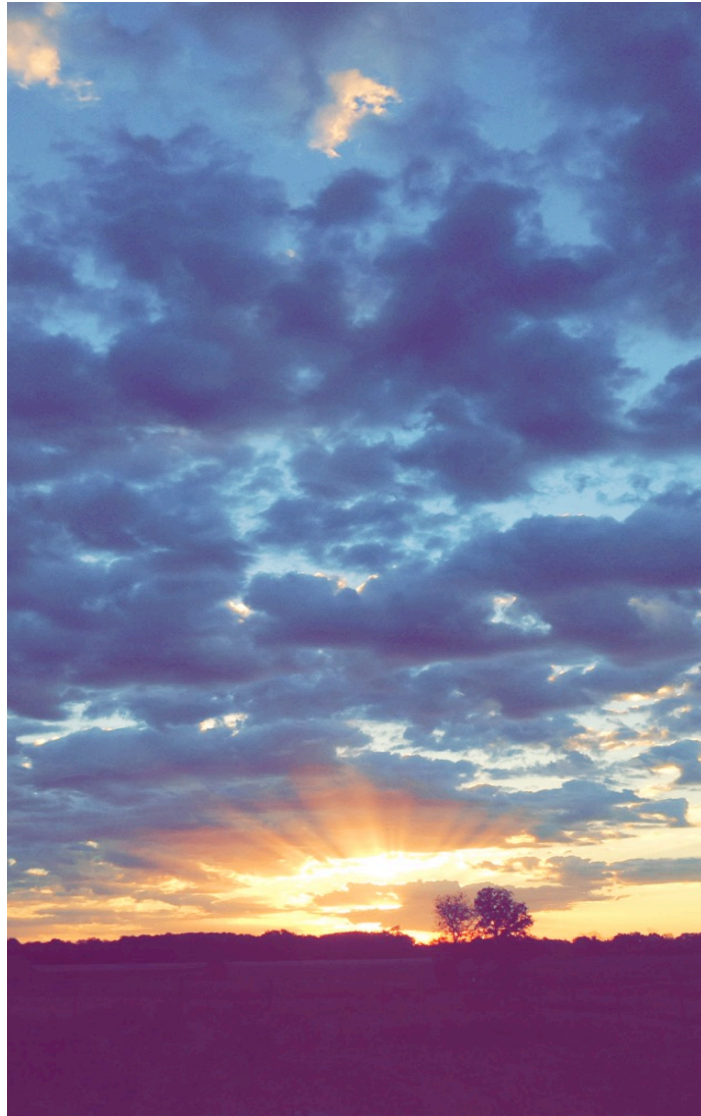
Ponder these questions—

If you take my suggestions

You just might see your day

In a whole new way.

Untitled 1
Paula Cortes



Untitled 2
Paula Cortes

Nana

Eric Littrell

I called her Nana. My paternal grandmother was from Eastern Europe, Poland to be precise. People outside the family knew her by her American name “Marie,” but her name was Torschka. Before she married my Papa, it was Torschka Povlak. She was from a family of means in her native land, rich in fact. She used to live in a mansion in the country just outside of Warsaw. She was accustomed to fine things when she was a young woman, and the comfort of her two sisters and mother being close at hand. She was the youngest. Her father was a business man of some kind and was active in some indirect capacity in local politics. Beyond that I don’t know. I don’t even know his name. These things I only know as second hand information from my Papa. My Nana never spoke of her life before America, and as I child I neve thought to ask.

My Nana was a small statured woman, petite. She stood about 5’3” and topped out at maybe 105lbs. She was thin, but not soft or frail. She was small, but deceptively strong. She had dark brown hair with a natural wave to it, even as she aged I never remembered it greying. However, later in her life, her hair began to thin and she began to wear wigs. She was very careful to match them with her own hair in color and style. This was the only overt vanity that I ever remembered about her. She always wore the same perfume. It was subtle, warm, and flowery. Her perfume was my first experience with aroma therapy. The little boy that used to be me could be made calm in the midst of any “childhood catastrophe” by being held close by my Nana and being enveloped by that soft fragrance that was synonymous with love and safety.

Nana had a warm and comforting face, and despite all she lived through, that face always seemed to have a smile. She was beautiful. Her skin was pale and smooth. The only wrinkles I remember were “laugh lines” which were a testament to her spirit, given the things that she had experienced. She never seemed to wear much if any make-up, except eyebrow pencil and modest shades of lipstick. She had a tall, flat and clean forehead that she either wore bangs, or parted curls over. Nana had big sepia brown eyes. They were a smooth and perfectly uniform brown. Looking into her eyes was like looking into two cups of coffee with just a hint of cream in them. Those eyes, whenever I looked into them, always seemed to show love no matter what the circumstance, even when I would misbehave. Her cheekbones were high, but not overtly wide or pronounced. Her jaw angled delicately at 45 degrees to a chin that was a soft rounded square. Nana had a typical eastern European nose. Its narrow root sloped at the end into a soft round forward facing tip. The sides broadened out into low delicate nostrils. Her lips were medium full and perfectly proportioned top and bottom. They were a soft cushion of love on my little boy forehead, cheeks, and “boo-boo’s.” Those lips would part in a warm burst of a smile that could take any calamity and make it all better. Although crooked, the teeth of that smile had never known braces, or fluoride, yet they were perfectly healthy. Nana’s front incisors were perfectly straight, tightly together, and were ever so slightly in overbite. The ones next to those were turned almost at right angles to the front ones, and those were accompanied by noticeably pointy canines. Her bottom teeth were lined up in a jumbled row of random crookedness. All this made that smile as unique as it was comforting. She looked like what she was - a beautiful Slavic Eastern European woman. She was the kind of woman that if one had seen her in public, one would instinctively know that she was not from here.

I do not remember her ever wearing pants. Although they were cheap, the dresses that my Nana wore were always tasteful

and reflected, in a subdued version, the class and style of her life before WWII. Her colors were always soft and warm. She never followed popular fashion, which is only temporary, but rather she exhibited a timeless sense of style. This was also evident in the two modest pieces of jewelry she owned. She wore a handmade watch of a singular design that was made from rare red gold from mines in what is now the Czech Republic. It was the first gift to her from my Papa when he was a soldier of the occupation. That watch now belongs to my sister who my Nana lived just long enough to have known. Around her neck she wore an antique gold and ivory cameo, also a gift from Eastern Europe from my Grandfather. Nana had no jewelry from her family. That had all been taken by the Nazis. She had a class and dignity about her, as if she were still the youngest adult daughter of a rich and influential man in Europe, and not the war bride of a factory worker in Decatur, IL. She walked with the quiet grace of a confident woman who had nothing to prove.

Although my Nana had a heavy Polish accent, her English was perfect. She spoke her new language effortlessly without ever having to pause to gather what she needed to say in her head beforehand. Her accented voice was very feminine and melodic, the sound of which could bring instant calm and smiles from me. Yet when command was needed, there was no mistaking that she was in charge. Having said that, I can never remember her raising her voice, shouting, or taking a nasty tone. She was the kind who believed that if she had nothing good to say, she wouldn't say it. That voice was a source of comfort and healing to me when I was a child. I remember being snuggled in her lap as she rocked back and forth in her chair singing to me in both Polish and Hebrew when I was sick or hurt. That act of Grandmotherly love was more potent than any Doctor's medicine.

My Nana did not seem, nor act, like a person who had ever had her humanity stripped from her and treated like an animal, yet there were things that she carried around with her because of that reality. She never slept during thunderstorms. She would slowly walk from room to room of her house, with her slim arms crossed in front of her, looking down with her eyes half closed until the storm passed. As a child I never understood that behavior. Once I asked my Papa about it after she passed and he told me that the storms reminded her of the Russians bombing from the east as they advanced towards Germany. She always wore sleeves, even when it was hot. Looking back, I don't think it was because she didn't want other people to see the number tattooed on her forearm, but rather that she didn't want to see it. She never would, and would not allow others to ever waste food. She would scrape the insides of food cans until they were as clean as if they had been washed. She would eat the heels from loaves of bread because she knew that nobody else would and someone might be tempted to throw them away.

My Nana passed away in 1978. I was eight years old. I'm not sure how old she was because she never talked about her age and, oddly, never celebrated a birthday to the best of my memory. Her birth certificate was lost, and her official documents in coming to the U.S. with my Papa had different birthdates and ages on them. I have a suspicion that one or more of those documents were either forged, or altered to expedite her coming to the states with my Papa. I do know that it was thirty-three years after she escaped death at the hands of the Nazis; her mother and sisters were not so fortunate. That was very ironic because, according to my folks, the Doctors had told my Papa that she had died of the culmination of long term health problems that were the result of her time in the ghetto and the camp. I was only eight and did not understand what that meant. Today, as an adult looking back, I want to know exactly what those things were that prematurely ended my Nana's life. I want to know her story, know the person she was, and her life before the war. I want to know her people because they were my people. Today my Papa is also gone, so I cannot ask. After my Nana's death, my Papa gradually became distant from the rest of the family and his grandchildren. I don't think that he ever completely got over her death, and became bitter and withdrawn from life.

He was the only other person who knew the answers to these sad and nagging questions that I will never be able to lay to rest.

Her funeral was in the first week of March. It was a cold, dark, and cloudy day. It was an open casket service held at the funeral home adjacent to the cemetery where she was buried. No Rabbi, no eulogy, just a viewing and then a burial. Jews do not usually embalm or have open casket funerals. As a child, I was oblivious to this. Looking back today, I never remembered my Nana and Papa going to Synagogue. I can only guess as to the reason why. Perhaps Papa chose an “Americanized” secular service for the benefit of the majority of people who came to pay their respects to my Nana. Maybe, like Eli Wiesel, my Nana turned her back on her faith after all that she must have seen and experienced. Maybe they both did. It’s yet another question I will never know the answer to.

Although I was only eight years old, I understood death, and knew that my Nana was gone forever. I was devastated. My Nana filled a huge space in my life, and in my heart. When she died, it left a hole inside of me that has never filled in. I remember my mother taking me by the hand and walking with me to see my Nana one last time. Tears silently ran down our cheeks. The casket was a dark wood that was very shiny. The lining and pillow my Nana rested upon was light pink and glossy, perhaps satin or silk. Laying in her casket, Nana looked no different to me than she did in my earliest memories of her. She looked like what she was - a beautiful Slavic Eastern European woman. In death she still had a class and dignity about her.



Petrified Child

Marizona Dahlstrom



The Servants
Michael Mills

Surreal Woman
Michael Mills





The Road Not Taken

Marizona Dahlstrom

Hope

Julia I Rivera

**Wishing you could just drift
Standing at the edge of a cliff
Whimpering because of your pain
That's nipping away at what makes you sane**

**Waiting to see if you can still feel
You slip further away from what's real
Whirling around the blue endlessly flows
You feel a need to join it in its depths below**

**Wondering how it would feel to just take flight
You are fighting the urge with all of your might
Wanting to heal for someone else's sake
You name the things that have made you break**

**Willing yourself to not be a coward
You feel suddenly empowered
Watching the sun rising in the sky
You fall to your knees as you start to cry**

**Whipping around you start to walk away
And you smile because tomorrow's a new day**

Choices

Julia I Rivera

She was mine right from the start
Never from her would I part
She showed me the meaning of happiness
All this was done with a simple kiss
She is an angel that was sent to me
With her I learned to truly be free
She wants me to be her shining knight
And I strive for this with all my might

But no longer can I deny
That another has caught my eye

She was my angel's broken friend
Never did her heart I expect to mend
She showed me how to really have fun
All night we'd talk till the morning sun
She is the spark that ignited my fire
With her I could only soar higher
She wants it to be just her on my mind
I strive so hard to keep her satisfied

But now I have come to see
I need to choose with whom I want to be

I know what I have to do
To my heart I must stay true
I love them both of that I'm sure
However, to one I must give a parting word
I toss and turn, in and out of a restless sleep
This needs to be done so my sanity I can keep
I tell her I'm leaving, holding back my own tears
Her eyes run free, staining her face with black smears

So I left her, though it caused great anguish
My spark I ended up having to extinguish

Years later I will marry my angel
My mistake never will I tell

Autumn Afternoon

Audrey Fletcher

Golden colors all across the hill—
I watch the light from the blue sky spill
Across the land, its ups and its downs,
Afternoon light on the little towns.

It brightens life up, it warms the day
A quiet, peaceful, gentle display.
I love the feeling these moments bring
The peace and love that makes my heart sing.

Looking Towards The Finish

Jacob Eddington



Flowers

Audrey Fletcher

Flowers so fragrant,
Flowers so sweet,
Flowers so pretty
Out by the street.

Posies and pansies,
And bright blue sweet peas
Out in the garden

Put the world at ease.



Candlelight

Mackenzie Threw

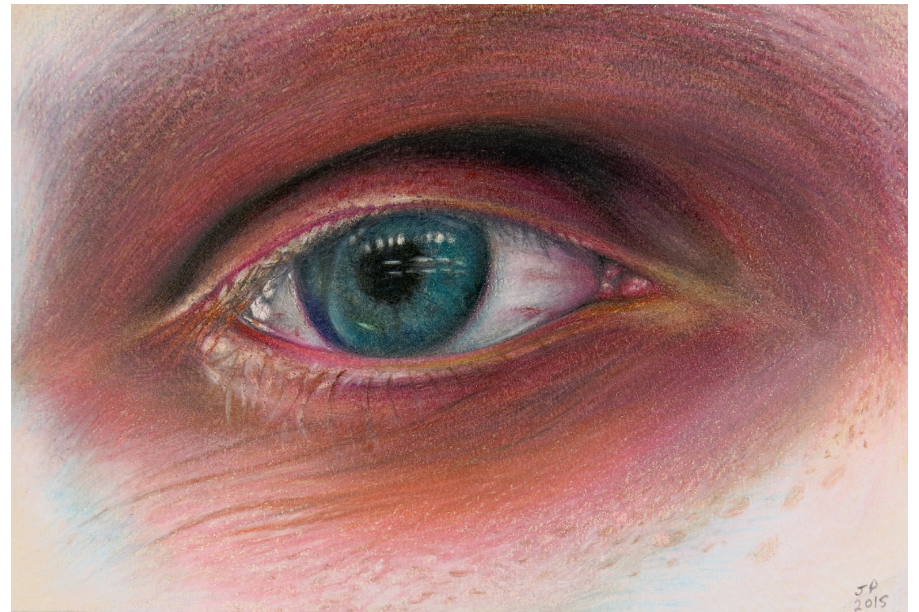
Nature's Beauty
Jacob Eddington





Escape
Shelby Dare

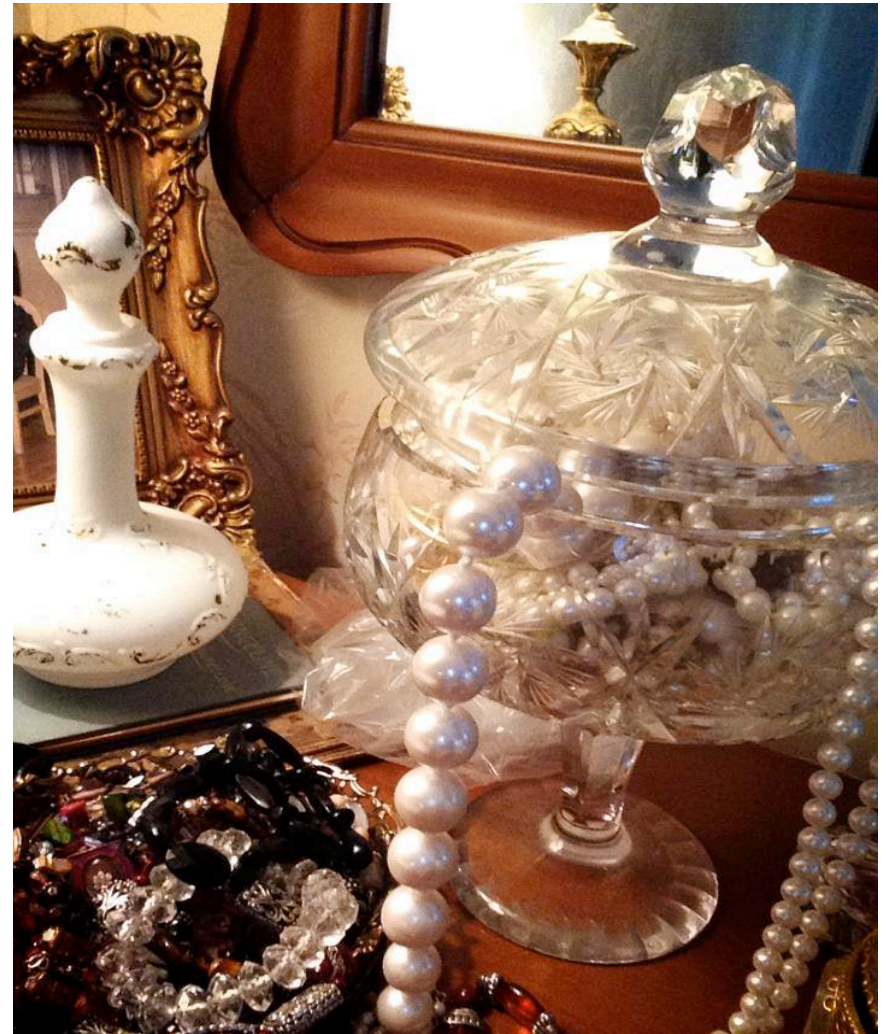
Eye Portrait
Jakob Plotts





Me So Mea
Michael Mills

Vanity
Mackenzie Threw





Fiona
Mackenzie Threw

It Was Years Ago

Eric Littrell

The things that happen, have happened, echo from the past
Sometimes that echo is as strong as thunder

It was years ago, and it was yesterday

I can still hear it

I can still see it

I can still feel it

It follows me around with its hand on my shoulder

Keeps the emptiness from filling

I still give it the water of my life

It was years ago, and it was yesterday

Things we do, have done, echo from the past

Sometimes that echo is as loud as a scream

It was years ago, and it was this morning

I can still hear it

I can still see it

I can still feel it

It's in my back pocket

It's in the jacket I wore today

I see it on my face in the mirror

When I have tried to run away, it's there on my shoulder

It's on my hands

It won't let me rest

I still give it the water of my life

It was years ago, and it was this morning

The paths we take, have taken, echo from the past

Sometimes that echo is as hard as a fist

It was years ago, and it is right now

I can still hear it

I can still see it

I can still feel it

It's in the center of my chest

It's lost, but I know where it is

Wine I will never drink

A starving man that will never eat

A bird that will never fly

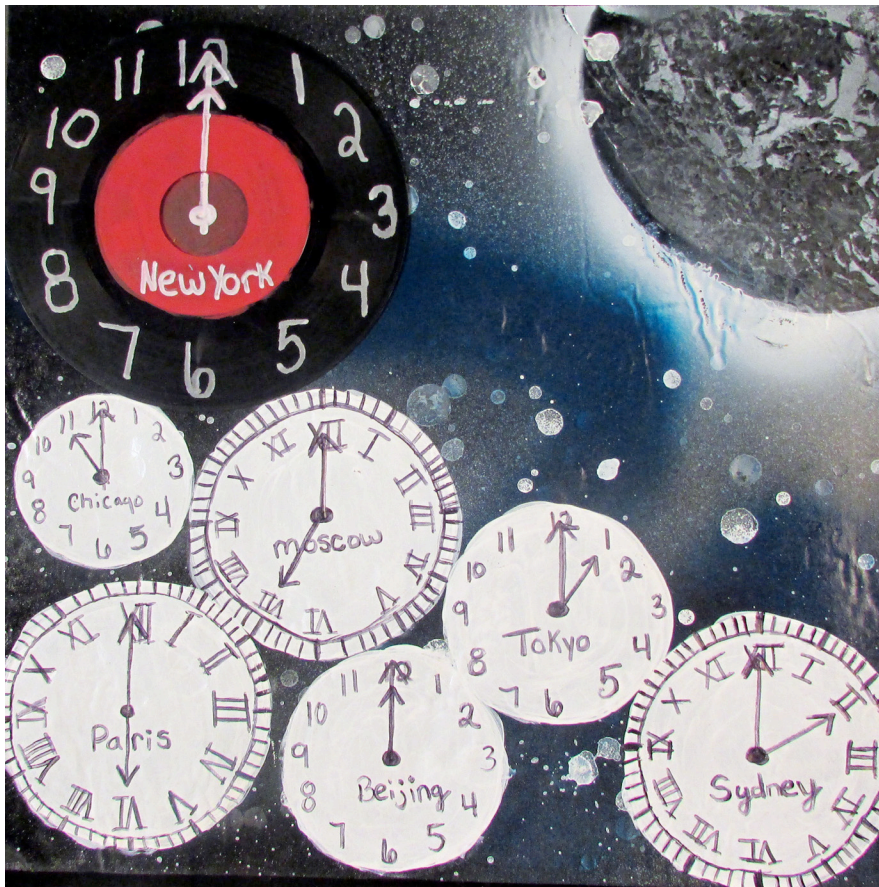
It will never comfort me

I still give it the water of my life

It was years ago, and it is right now

World Times

Shelby Dare



When I Wished Upon A Star

Alisa Davis

When I wished upon a star
I always wondered where you are.
Are you near me?
Am I close to home?
I prayed to God,
I won't be alone.
I wanted a lover,
But I needed a friend.
I wanted true love
But the question was when.
When I wished upon a star,
I always feared that you were far.
I knew I had to wait,
Because now wasn't the time.
But I dreamed of this guy,
That I could call mine
So I prayed to God again,
Find me someone to keep.
It was the faith that I had,
That sent you to me.
Now I wish upon the skies
I'm always dreaming of you and I,
To grow, to live
To explore, to give
To love, to laugh
To make new paths
For you I let my guard down,

I let you in.
It was never a regret,
To have a true friend.
When I wish upon the moon,
I could not stop thinking about
you.
The way you smile,
At me, you stare.
The way you hug me,
I know you care.
Cause we fell in love,
Such a deep gift.
The two of us
Was such a perfect pick.
When I prayed to the son
The dreams were right,
You were always the one.

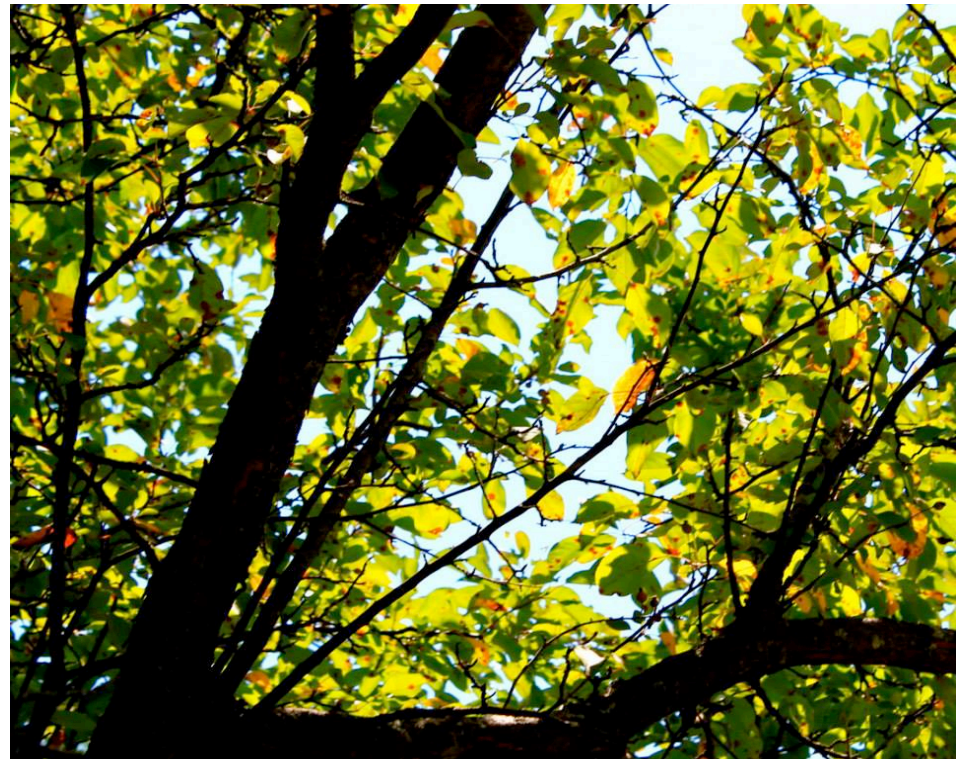


***Family Sticks
Together***

Jacob Eddington

It's Not Easy Being Green

Mackenzie Threw





Frosty Winter Morning
Marizona Dahlstrom

Monday's Childhood Proclivities

Eric Littrell

I wear black on the days when I don't want to speak
It's my uniform when I have trouble seeing the sun
A cup of gas station coffee to at least get the solid parts moving
A dollar eighty-three and an "I'm good." To the clerk who
doesn't really want to know how I am
Fake smiles and rehearsed responses so the drones can stay
asleep in their matrix
I'm feeling generous, or is it that I just don't have the energy to
wake them
Gotta get through the day
Or it will be forever
I have important things to do
But I won't actually be doing them
I have places I need to be
But I won't actually be there
Not today
Perhaps tomorrow
Today there is just a bare representation of me in the world
A wash faded and threadbare set of clothes with shoes and a hat
Even if anyone looks up from their devices, no one will notice that
I'm not really there
Where I am, who can say
I don't know what to call it myself
All I know is that I feel alone there
And the only good Chinese restaurant is closed

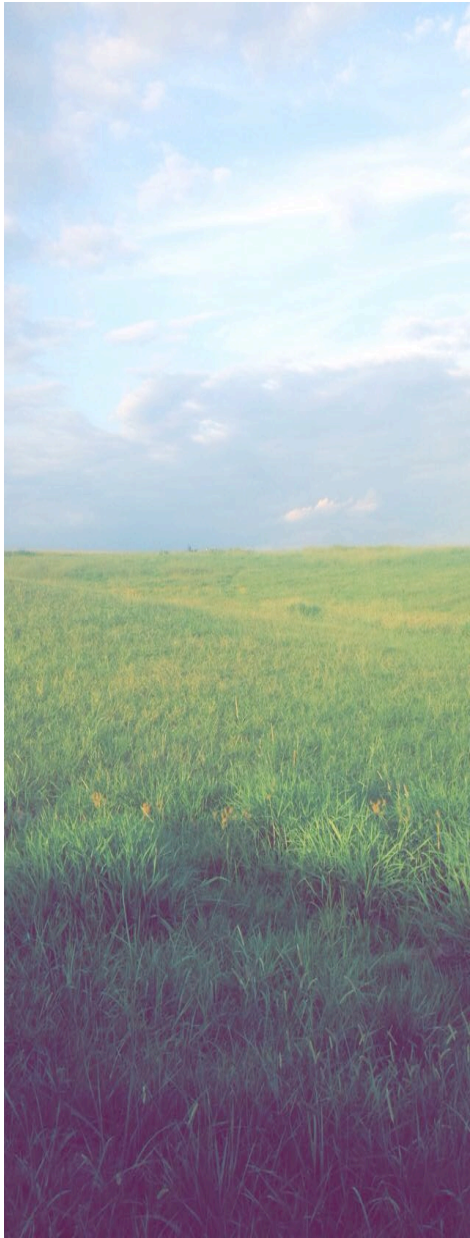


Out Of Time

Michael Mills



Watch Your Step
Jakob Plotts



Untitled 3
Paula Cortes

Quietly Sleeping

Hannah Hildenbrand

**Quietly sleeping down for the night
I watch intently for even a slight
The precious, the new, the innocent child
She may only be mine for a short little while**

**The doctors they told me she soon will die
If ever I may I just won't cry
She's alive for these hours and short they may be
I wish if only it could be me**

**I sit here and watch while my vision is blurred
As I try to ponder why this occurred
Too soon she is dying I must understand
The nurse keeps saying "let go of her hand"**

**There's no prom in her future or riding a bike
Nor kissing the boy that she may really like
The future was hers I'm begging You God
Take me instead, just spare her this rod**

**Her daddy he loves her but she'll never know
Because he's deployed and not yet home
How do I tell him? What will I say?
Our baby is gone, she fought hard today**

**Her breathing slows down, her heart stops beating
It's at this moment I know that life is fleeting
Her battle is over, so hard she tried
But today I too was the one who died**

**Now I'm quietly sleeping, I'm down for the night
I watched intently for even a slight
The precious, the new, the innocent child
She was only mine for a short little while...**

From Victim To Victor To Warrior

Stephanie Ellis

I see poison excreting out of the very opening that can bring life. The poison rushes over the victim like an acidic waterfall slowly eroding at the tissues of the heart. As the poison enters into the blood stream, it begins seeping into the brain matter, destroying the thoughts that are present to build one up. Words begin to take form as arrows tipped with a numbing poison. The archer aims straight for the heart knowing that the serum will penetrate the whole being through the blood. Never relenting they just keep aiming and shooting the arrows. A thick dark cloud begins to embody the victim closing out all light. I see them shaking, searching for some sort of light to break through, yet there is none. Bigger children stand by and watch: some laughing, some ignoring, and some joining in on the attack. The arrows become larger and the poison is thicker, overwhelming the victim and taking them down to a level that seems unreachable.

The victim doesn't know the extent of the injury at first. They pull the serrated tip of the arrow out, not knowing the numbing serum entered their stream of blood at first touch. It's a slow fade. The heart begins to slow and weaken. Their lungs struggle for oxygen rapidly at first and then slows as the blood flow and oxygen became less. Their core begins to shut down the extremities to conserve energy for the vital organs. The very things that bring life are withheld. They begin to suffocate within themselves.

The victim begins to show fits of rage, sadness, tears, withdrawing from the group that once tried to protect them from the arrows and poison. Strange but the victim begins to spew the poison out of their mouths towards themselves. They stand looking in an object that reflects the very person I see. As they stand in front of this object, they begin to excrete the same poison that was spit at them. They are becoming a replica of the archer that injured them. They begin to shoot arrows directly into their own hearts only with these arrows they penetrate deeper.

The victim then begins to seek out to find a substance that is of liquid form and begins to drink it. I feel as if it is a poison of some type that is given to them for exchange of a few pieces of paper. I didn't realize that a liquid could cause such a strange behavior. The victim begins to sway to and fro, the uttering out of their mouth seems as a different language then I first heard. The more they drank this liquid the more the victim begins to act in a strange mood. One minute they are crying and wanting help with their infected bodies and the next minute they are spitting the poison out at others that pass them by. They draw their bow and aim the arrows towards another's heart and release it. It is a direct hit. The poison tipped arrow has now entered into the body of another and the behavior begins to repeat. The victim is now being used as a weapon to disperse the very poison that infected their body into others. The victim quiets themselves and slips into a deep sleep; failing to realize the poison they have spread with arrows they created.

The poison and the numbing serum has not finished its final attack. I see a seed being planted. A seed that begins to take root in the very spirit of the victim. This seed does not have a bright future; there will be no beautiful blossoms. The seed begins to take root. The root has thorns and thistles that penetrate deep into the individual's spirit and heart. This seed will not bear luscious profitable fruit. The root appears to have bitterness running through it, feeding it and helping it grow. The root begins to blossom. The blossom is not that of a beautiful flower you see in the spring; this blossom is ugly and oozes poison, with the aroma of death. The roots begin to absorb the only nourishment the victim has left to live on. It begins to inhale all the pure, invigorating oxygen and releases a toxic gas. The purpose of this gas is not to kill the root but to suffocate the very joy that still has remained. As the toxic gas becomes thicker and stronger in potency, the very bones of the individual that holds its frame together becomes frail. The victim has been infected through all parts of the body now; they don't have much time before death becomes them. This death is not a physical death, but a death of the mind, soul, and spirit. This death is existing but not living.

As I continue to observe this ongoing torture, I think to myself, can this victim survive? Will this individual ever be rid of these toxins? And then as quick as the first arrow penetrated them, something began to happen. A person shining like the sun entered into the room. He opened His mouth and rivers of living water began to pour out. The waters began to rush over the victim. The victim was being nourished again with a liquid that was not affected by the poisons. This living water was surrounding the poison and purifying it; all of the toxins were being removed and discarded. The poison was being transformed through this living water.

The man shining as the sun began to make melodies like I have never heard before. Speaking in a language I didn't quite understand. Sweet sounds that begin to break through every dark, heavy cloud. The clouds began to develop holes, getting thinner and thinner. The melodies began entering into the very places that were blocked by thorns and vines of bitterness. I see a flash of life! How was this happening? As the rivers of life continued to penetrate the toxins and the melodies continued to counteract the heaviness, this light bearer began to have a sweet oil that flowed out of Him. The oil was thick and had the aroma of myrrh and frankincense. The oil began to anoint the victim, filling every crevice and wound. I see a soft glow, as if there is an ember inside of this once dark, gloomy, dying individual. The ember is as red as the blood that was spilled when the arrow hit. The ember began to grow. The more rivers and the more melodies that were released the greater the light that glowed from the ember. Then the oil reached the ember. There was no longer an ember but a full blown flame. The flame began to overtake the entire being, burning the roots and the vines of bitterness turning them into ashes. The oil began to flow through the victim and pushing out the residue that was left from the poison and the numbing serum. Whatever the oil touched, it healed. The oil saturated the ashes, out of the ashes I seen life. I beautiful, green bud began to emerge.

Standing before the object of reflection, the individual put down the arrows with poison tips. From him the oil began to flow, feeding the flame. The longer he allowed the oil to flow, the more the body came alive. The victim was being transformed into a victor. The man who was as the sun continued to breathe fresh air, release rivers of life, releasing the melodies, and pouring the oil upon him. The mixture of the individual and the man doing these things together began to form a type of protection. I could not understand the things being formed in front of my very eyes.

A helmet of type was beginning to grow around the individuals head, a shield began to take form in his hand, a sword of type shaped like a book began to grow in his other hand, a new type of covering was being placed upon his feet, and a material was placed around his waist that the letters T,R,U,T,H on it.

I stared in a daze trying to figure out what was happening to him. Then the revelation came; this man who was once a victim and had been transformed into a victor now resembled a warrior. He had armor on. What is all this for? Wait, I see the archer and the one who spits poisoning returning but this time they are not alone there are more of them. They attacked and I feared for this man; I had just watched this man regain life. I wanted to run and protect him from these arrows and the poison so he didn't lose life again. Yet, all my questions began to be answered. The man who radiated like the sun began singing a beautiful song that ignited the flame to full power. The melody was that of a battle cry, proclaiming, "You have waged this war before, it overcame you, but now you are equipped, now you stand as a warrior." The man raised his shield, drew his sword, and stood firm in the new covering on his feet. The shield blocked the arrows and they fell. The one who shot poison, spat it at his head, the helmet guarded the toxin from entering into his ears and his mind. The man drew his sword and began to quote words from the sword that rose out of his inner being where the material of TRUTH was. It was a direct hit upon the enemy. I began to get nervous for the man's back was not guarded, there was no protection there. The enemy seen this opening and began to draw close to his back, and then the man who was bright as the sun stood behind him and blocked the enemy. This man who once was near death due to these very arrows and poison now stood victorious. The men had battled and the two of them defeated the enemy.

After the battle, the warrior thanked the man who shown like the sun. This light bearer encouraged the warrior and told him there will be more who come, but continue to do as I have taught you and shown you. The light bearer told the warrior that He would always be with him to strengthen and increase his flame. The warrior looked at the light bearer and said with tears stinging his face, "You are my savior, you came to my rescue when I had no life left in me." The light bearer replied, "I am the way the truth and the life, any man who comes to me or cries out to me with his heart, I will save."



Starved Rock
Jacob Eddington

Harmonica Man
Michael Mills



Injustice

Julia I Rivera

I stand still and just take a look around
And it feels like my eyes are finally open
People are walking by with their heads down
Looking like their spirits have been broken

Everyone's just sitting back, biding their time
Waiting for someone else to courageously speak out
Against the lies we are fed, "everything's fine"
From where I am standing I have my doubts

Innocent blood once again is being spilt
People are afraid to be the voice of "reason"
Terrified that would mean that they'll be killed
Or even "worse" be accused of committing treason

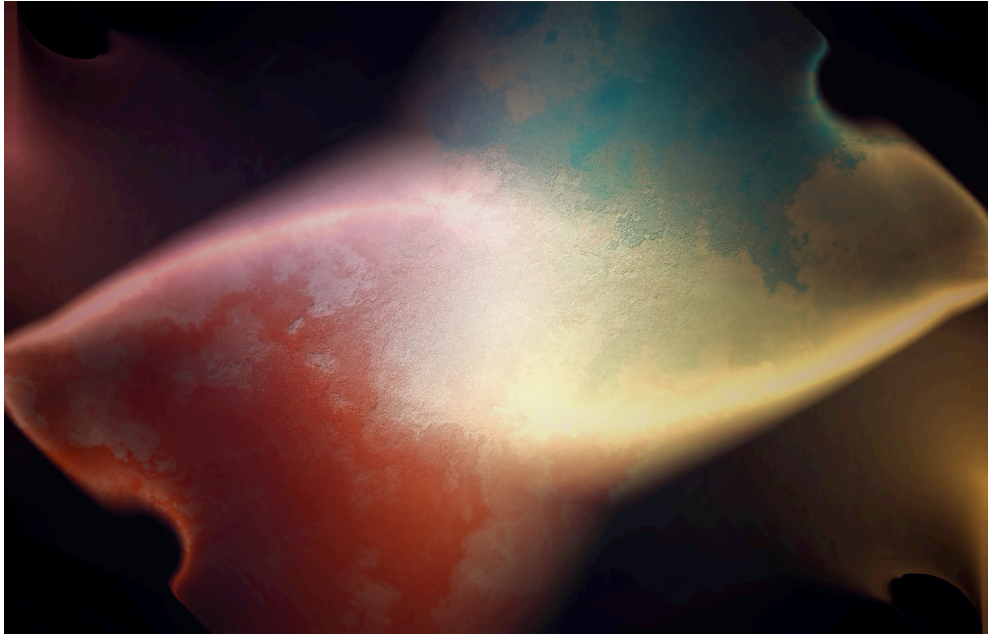
History has this habit of repeating itself
Yet we do not take it, read it, and learn
All we need to know is sitting on a dusty shelf
Real knowledge is in danger of being burned

I will take a stand, if only just with my pen
Hoping that my words will make a few take notice
Wishing that we will see it's not us against them
United we are strong, we have power, no-one's worthless

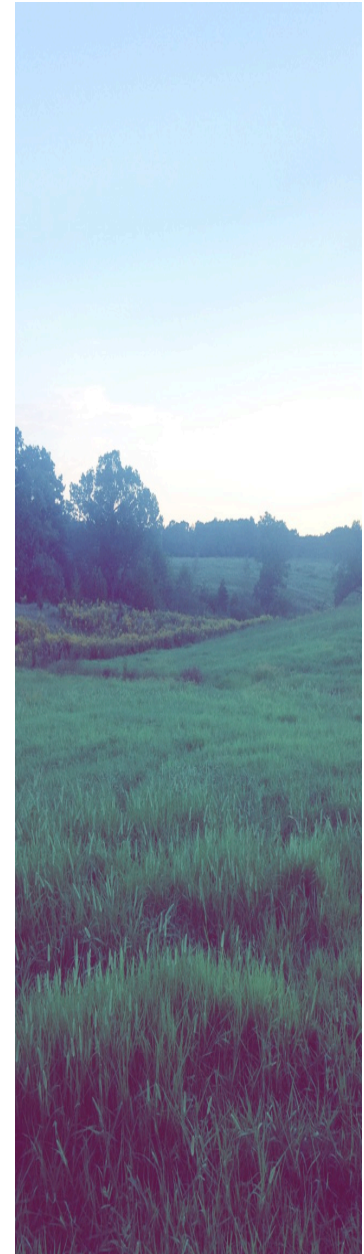


Still Mitt

Jakob Plotts



Abstract Folds
Jakob Plotts



Untitled 5
Paula Cortes

You Deserve To Be Loved

Alisa Davis

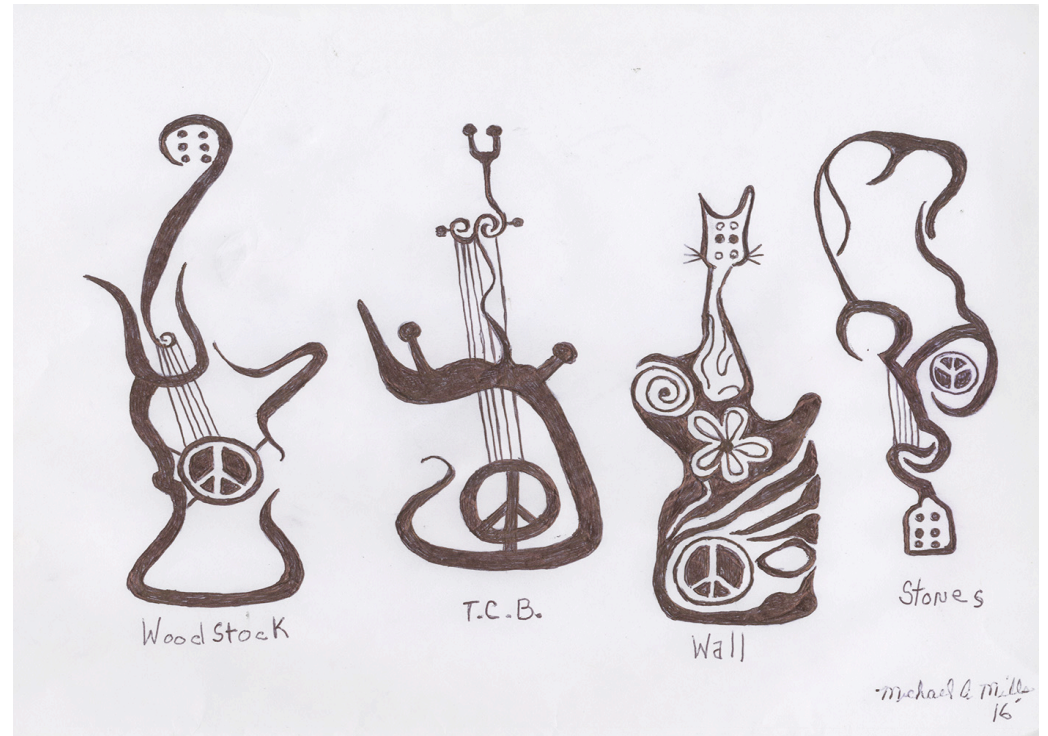
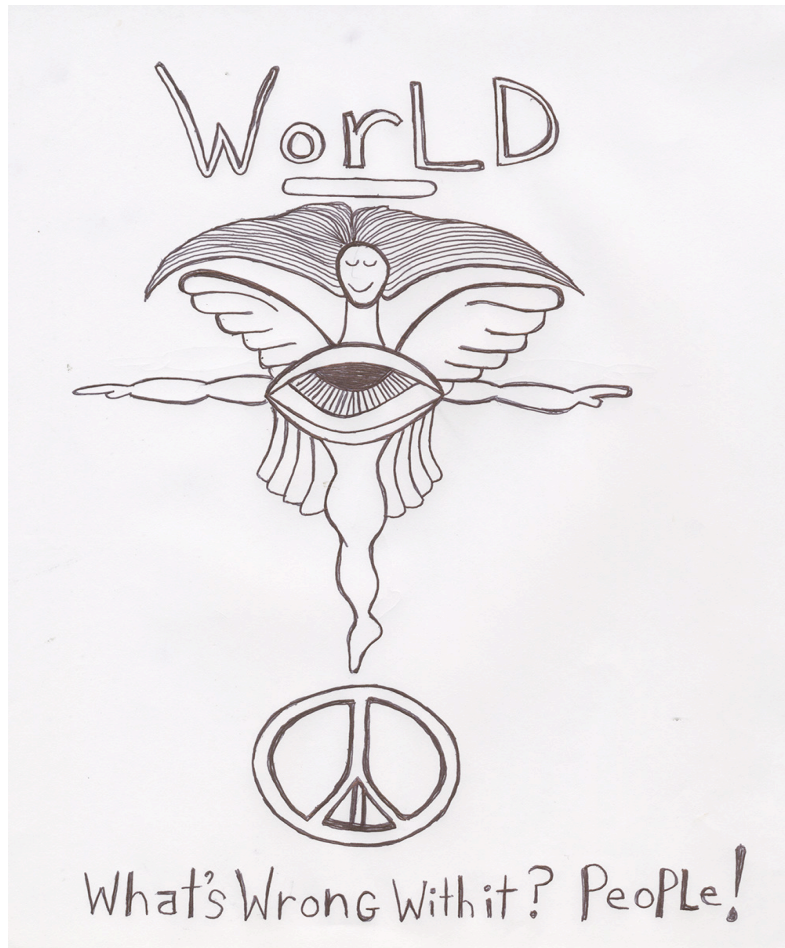
**You deserve to be loved
To be held,
To be kissed,
To be comforted.
You grew up in a culture,
That believed love is something that is earned.
But it is not.
You deserve to be loved.
Loved by your family
Loved by your friends
Loved by him.
Loved by yourself
Sometimes you push that love away.
As if it's okay,
To be held by the bars of the prison
You lock yourself in.
Where only you can see the beauty of your amazing gifts.
But what is this life,
If it's not shared with the ones we love?
That's unfair to your body.
That's unfair to your soul.
That's unfair to your heart
You deserve to be loved.
Worth more than the word toleration,
You deserve to be loved by the hands who's willing to wait for you.
In the arms of a secure, passionate and comforting person.
People tell you,
You're strong.
And being strong is courageous
But allowing yourself to receive love is not outrageous.
It is humbling.
It is wise.
You deserve to be loved.
Always remember who loves you.
My biggest strength but strongest weakness is loving myself the way God loves
me.**



Bubblegum Face
Michael Mills

World Piece

Michael Mills



Guitars

Michael Mills

Education: What's The Point

Shane Thompson

In my words

My name is Shane Thompson and I am a recovering drug and alcohol addict. Although I have struggled with these issues for years, I have been clean and sober for over five years, and I am now doing very well in my life. I am now in the place in my life where things are starting to look up for me. I have dreams, a plan, and for once in my life I believe I can achieve them.

The Spoon River College 2016-17 theme “Education: What’s The Point” means much more to me than anyone can understand. It means survival, family and hope. Before I started college I had no dreams, no plan, and I did not believe in myself. I mean, I had an idea of what I would like to do, but I really did not think I was capable of doing it. I realized that I have to change and become the best husband and father possible. I then, with some help from a close friend, decided to start college

So you ask why I am sharing this with all of you. Education is much more than a degree to me; it is a way of life that is much more positive than my old life. Education means survival. With education I am staying focused on bettering myself and staying clean and sober. Education is family; my children have someone to be proud of, not disappointed in. My wife can wake up every day and smile, because I am working hard to improve our way of life. Education means hope; the hope that with me paving the way for my children they too will go to college and live a better life. They can then pass onto their children the values they have been given. The next time you look at the poster that says “Education: What is the Point?” I want all of you to think about maybe not today, or maybe not tomorrow, but one day you may have someone else in your lives that means more to you than anyone can ever understand. With education you can learn and build many skills to help you be the best possible person you can be. Education can give you hope that your children may follow the path you paved for them. “Education: What’s The Point?” The point is to give you the best opportunity for success, and we are all capable of success. Someday life may be about more than just you. Someday someone may be depending on you. Why not give yourself the best opportunity to do just that, through education? That is The Point.



Valor Or Not
Jakob Plotts