



KALEIDOSCOPE

JOURNAL OF ART & LITERATURE

Front cover designed and photographed by staff. Pictured is artwork “Emergence” by Davis McCarty, which can be viewed at the Spoon River College Multi-Purpose Building, Canton Campus.

The Kaleidoscope Journal of art and literature is a Spoon River College student publication, featuring short stories, poems, essays, song lyrics, photography, and fine art submitted by students and faculty. It is published each spring and distributed throughout the SRC district.

Peacefulness
Sarah Fulton



Contents

Amy Toothaker	7, 15, 20, 23
Ben Phippen	9, 28
Cicely Flynn	11, 19
Claudia Dennis	5, 23
David Maxwell	29, 30
Grace Coulter	14, 17, 18
Hannah Hildenbrand	6, 7, 19
Kayla Lacy	31
Khristie Brooks	9
Mary Nolan	16, 27
Peter Hostert	5, 10, 11, 21, 22, 24, 25
Rebekah Fletcher	8, 13
Sarah Fulton	inside cover, 6, 12, 16, 22, 28
Shelby Dare.....	13, 26

From the Editors

Javier Gallo

Inspired by the powerful drive that art has on some of us, I couldn't help it; I had to be part of Kaleidoscope. I had to snatch the opportunity while attending Spoon River College. It's the lens that helps me see what's behind and in front of our community. It helps me know what will happen in the future if I make this happen in the present. It's a way for me to experience the unexpected. It's a way for me and some others to travel through generations, and for them to come together to bring the nonsense out to the surface, for us to see, for us to judge, for us to appreciate.

Here it is, our 2018 edition of our beloved publication. It doesn't hide the process, it starts another one; it's its testimony, of every step that faculty members and magazine staff carefully and bravely took on it, every student that spent time on it, of every emotion put into it and on every word and image created, dedicated and perpetuated. I hope it's to you as provoking as it is to us. Here it is. I hope it tells you stories about the visible and invisible environment that surrounds you but will never let you turn the page as easily as a magazine. The ever changing times and their eternal space were captured to be shared with you, the one all this is for. Here it is. Scope it.



From The Editors



Cicely Flynn

I am so grateful for the opportunity I have had to serve as the Macomb editor of the Kaleidoscope Journal this year. Helping to create the Kaleidoscope Journal of 2017-18 has reignited my passion for the arts, as well as my appreciation for student activities.

I have been surrounded with such an extraordinary team on both the Macomb and Canton campuses. The Kaleidoscope assistant editors and faculty advisors have been instrumental in the success of the journal. They have all dedicated their time and energy into ensuring the success of this project.

We are all very proud to present the 2017-18 edition of the Kaleidoscope Journal of Art and Literature.

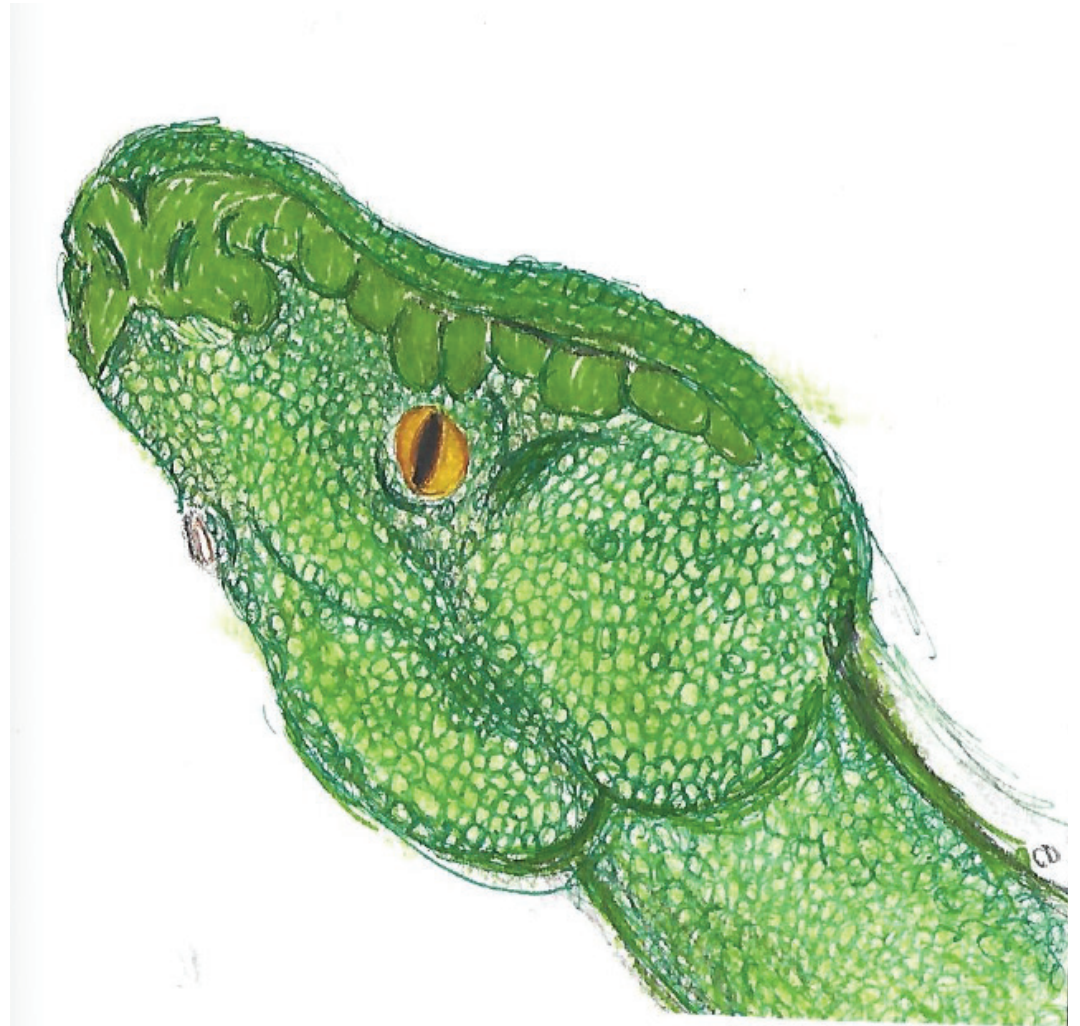
What's Your Prison

Peter Hostert

What's your prison? What's holding you back?
If you just listen I'm sure you'd find out
Many say her, I hear that a lot
Others say addiction is what I've got
Then there are those who say money's all I sought

But think for a moment just one is all I ask
Said the smile smiling that chilling mask
Not of things outside that are of this world
But the thing within your skull that you yourself hold
Think for just a second that maybe it's you
That's holding you down, not letting you move
Not the girl that you married or the job that you own
Maybe you feel like a failure and you're all the way grown

Break free from the norms that scream in your face
Live for you and your happiness, make your own place
Learn to love those around you both personal and public
Your rules are your own, do no harm to others
It's all in your head I can't stress this enough
Live for you and your happiness, not your republic



Viper
Claudia Dennis

A False Sense of Security

Hannah Hildenbrand

It's funny how a simple sense
Can tempt me to my core
And when that sense evades me
More of my soul I'll pour

This sense of being wears a mask
A grip inside you it will take
It'll clasp and cinch and tighten still
Until you realize this sense is fake

The more you seek it the more it steals
Until you're left without illusion
Then you wonder where you are
Somehow deep in this seclusion

But still the allure pulls me in
It calls me out by name
I'm drawn inevitably to my fate
For this enslavement I'm to blame

So run away and be at peace
Stop looking for control
For if you don't you'll be like me
A mind that's barely whole



Autumn
Sarah Fulton



Untitled
Amy Toothaker

Made Anew

Hannah Hildenbrand

A shining light within my world
Amid the darkness your beam swirled
The chaos and anger surrounded me then
But somehow you managed to reach right in

You grabbed my hand and pulled me out
Made me anew and vanquished my doubt
You polished my heart and gave it back
I got a new start and nothing I lack

I fought my demons with you by my side
I was never alone and don't have to hide
We fought and we conquered by day and night
Though the war is ongoing it's crested its height

I lived through the struggle now I see the world
With your help and your guidance
I'm a brand new girl
My hope and my rescue you came down to me
And someday again your face I'll see



Blueberries
Rebekah Fletcher



Old Man Forest
Ben Phippen

The Storyteller
Khristie Brooks

In my family there was once a storyteller,
And she would paint the photographs alive
Until it felt as if we were in those still memories.

But, there came a day where her stories had different endings
And in each blank space of her mind there would be small fillers
Of what happened, but they were never the same.

You could see in her blue, sunken eyes how hard she tried
Tried so hard to recall those distant memories,
but they were fading
Fading into black and grays, like those old photographs.

Her round face became hollow as she thought of
broken memories,
Trying to piece them together to find a whole one;
She never did.

In my family there was once a storyteller,
And she used to paint the black and gray photographs with color,
But, those memories became still once again
as her broken memories
Left her with nothing--not even her name.

The First of Many

Peter Hostert

They laid in the quiet, they reveled in it. Soft ferns and prickly stems nudged and rustled against their dormant bodies. Dictated by the wind, the plants seemed to whisper as they were blown about, a silent warning of the things to come. It was dark overhead but the moon was bright. It cast its silver glow upon the demolished buildings that towered crookedly in front of them. The night could not hide the war that had laid waste to the humble city that stretched out in front of the two young men hidden in the ferns miles away on top of a hill.

“You think we’ll see anyone?” whispered the one on the left.

“Anxious to get the first one out of the way?” replied the other in an undertone.

The one on the left clicked his tongue indifferently, “Nah, just wondered.”

They were silent again for some time, listening to the wind rustle and occasionally commenting on something in hushed and whispered tones.

It wasn’t until a half hour later that the one on the right spoke, but this time his whisper was firm and alert. “Movement at four o’clock, third level, fourth window from the corner.”

The one on the left tightened and focused. “Found it,” he replied quickly, settling his scope on the spot his partner had described. Magnified by a hundred times, it

seemed as if he were hovering above the desolate window frame. He rose and fell with every sip of air he took. A certain power had manifested into the young man through this scope. An invisible force with the ability to rob that which is most coveted, waiting ever so patiently to be unleashed. For a moment nothing moved, but then a man’s head became visible, just barely. The sniper could tell he was being careful but it would not be enough.

Suddenly, Kevin Knox, a fresh high school graduate from Farmington High, found himself in primal authority over the man who huddled against the worn stone wall. He was most likely trembling and praying that he was unseen as he went about his business (whatever that could be during the disastrous event of war) from any prying eyes like the ones hidden low in the ferns. As suddenly as he appeared, Kevin wished he could just forget he had seen the man, but because certain things were expected during terrible times like these, he knew this wasn’t an option. So both men held bated breath for their own reasons.

Kevin let himself focus, let his body gage where he needed to aim and suddenly, before he realized what had happened, an eruption of sound and pain exploded around the two boys who lay flat on their bellies in the ferns.

Kevin saw the man’s head explode; it was a beautiful shot. Perfectly placed, it reminded him of the melons he used to shoot back home with his father, but this was no melon. The juices of the man’s body and his mutilated brains smeared the dusty building, painting war’s ugly picture. Kevin watched through his scope as bits and

The First of Many (cont.)

pieces of the man's skull clattered to a rest around the slumped carcass, now just mere fragments after what Kevin had done. Still only a teenager and already a killer. A teenager who made twenty-four dollars an hour. That was bucko bucks for Kevin who was still young and didn't understand that what he was sacrificing made almost any salary remedial in a comparative sense.

But Kevin understood money and he knew that he needed it to survive. He had what they wanted and they had what he needed. He would be applauded on returning home for the brave deeds and acts of valor he had shown under times of duress. But none of that mattered, for in time Kevin would forget those things. They would be a blur amid all the other blurs of life. But the one thing he would remember was the sight of a grown man's skull coming undone, all from a shaft of metal that he, Kevin, had triggered through his head.

All of this and more flooded Kevin's brain at the sight of the melon headed man, it froze him in a petrified trance and he began to cry profusely. Letting go of his gun, he covered his face with his hands and began to sob. He wanted to go home; he missed his sweetheart and the nights of harmless childhood debauchery with his friends of old.

His partner looked over enduringly at him and patted him on the shoulder, "It's okay," he said in a soft, reassuring tone. "You'll get used to it."

This only made Kevin sob even harder.



One-line Portrait

Cicely Flynn



(left)

Bubbles

Sarah Fulton

A Race

Rebekah Fletcher

Swimming at light speed,
A blur in the lane. Flipping.
The wall comes too soon.



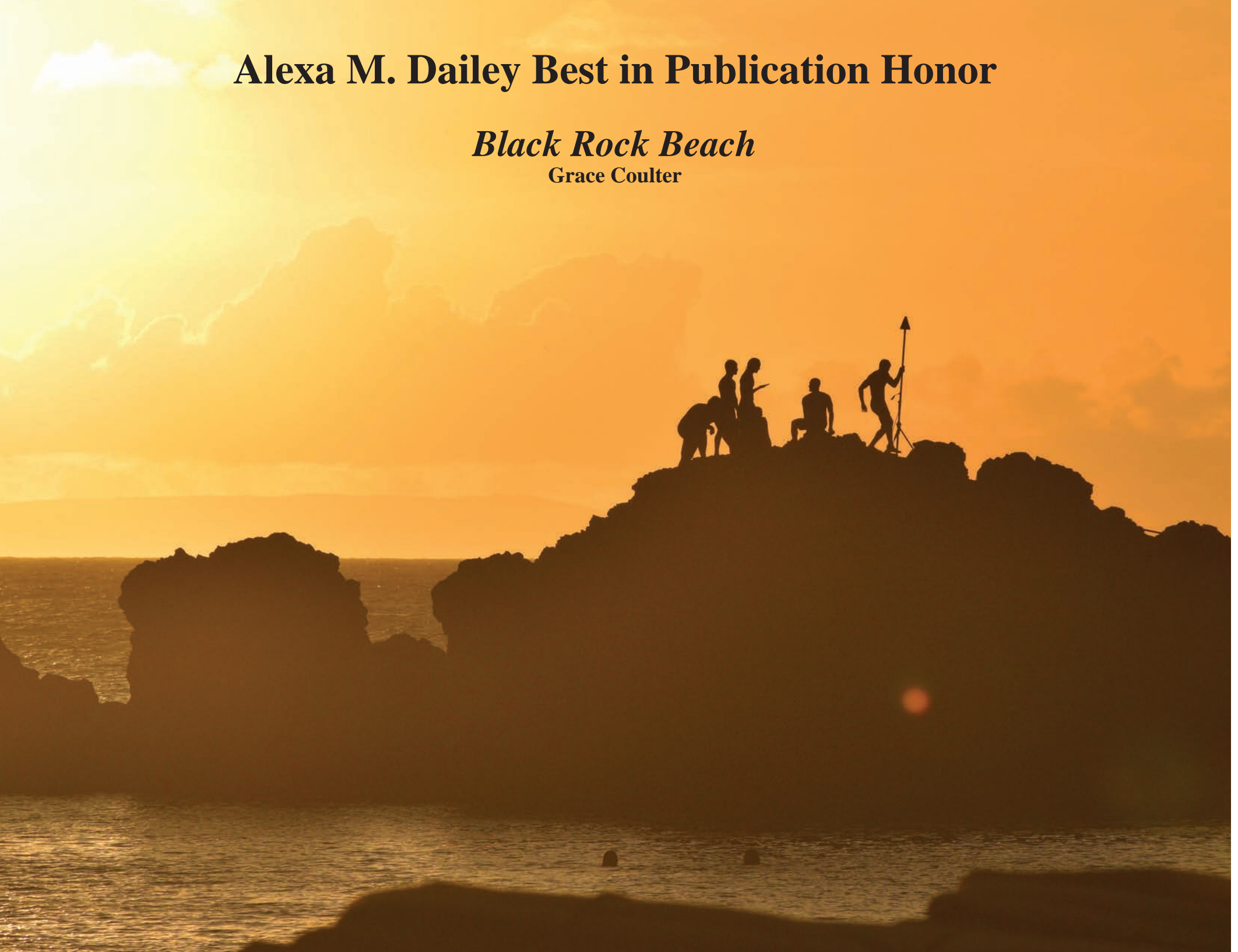
Happy Waves

Shelby Dare

Alexa M. Dailey Best in Publication Honor

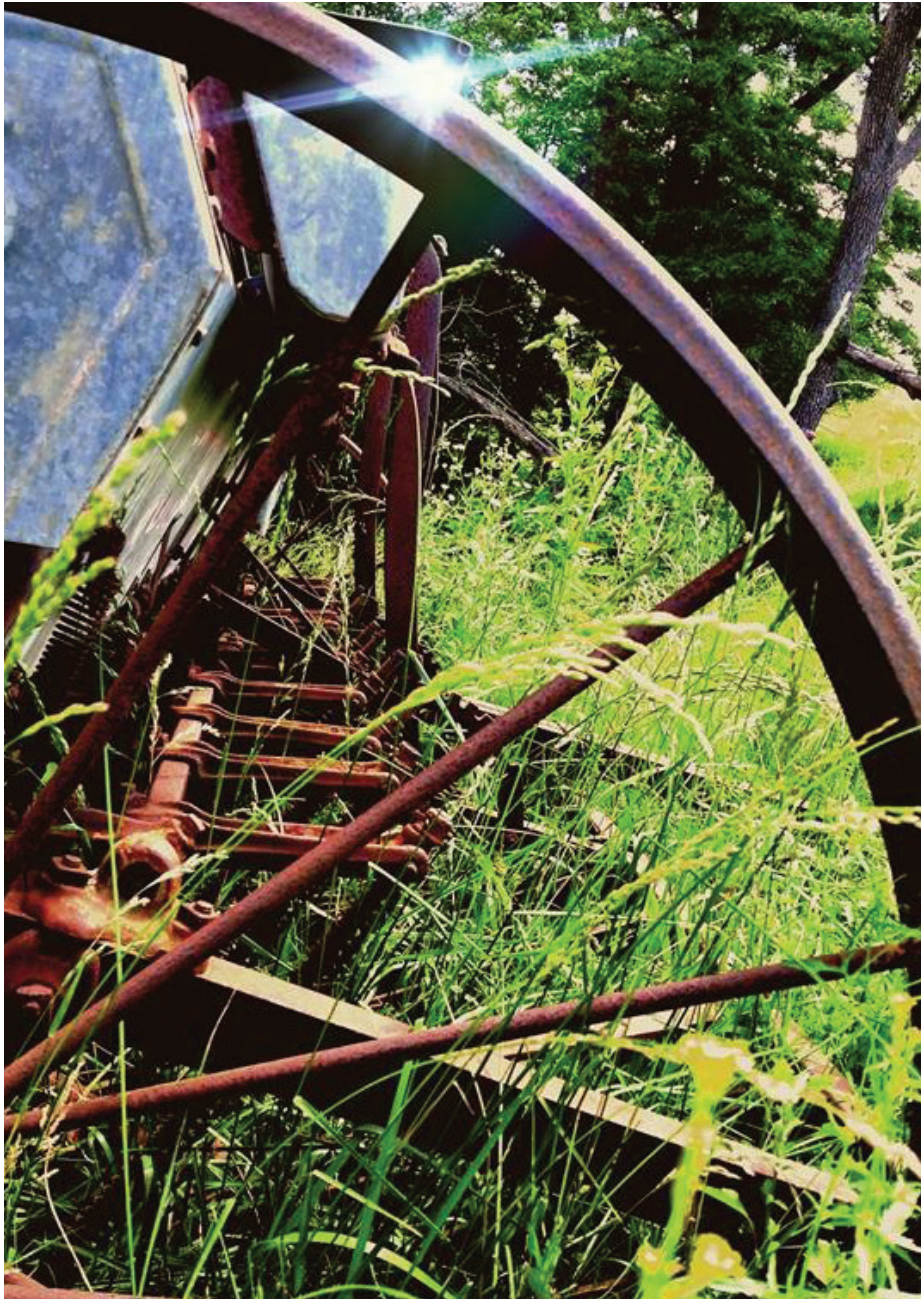
Black Rock Beach

Grace Coulter





Untitled
Amy Toothaker



Antique Planter
Sarah Fulton



Waterfall
Mary Nolan

(right)

Haleakala
Grace Coulter





(left)

Blue Jay

Grace Coulter

Enveloped

Hannah Hildenbrand

A life force draining beyond control
Our blood beloved our crimson gold
Too much too little a balance fought
To whom it matters it matters not

The power it flows a sea of red
The storm inside now leaking dread
The winds now brewing taking their toll
Flickering lives trying to hold

Flowing around its needed gifts
The life within me suddenly shifts
The bright waves rolling a soothing bed
My vision blurs while seeing red

The blackness surrounds my inner thoughts
The life that I had is suddenly naught
The blood is gone and so am I
Carried away by darkness' reply



Christmas Birch

Cicely Flynn



Untitled
Amy Toothaker

Untitled
Amy Toothaker



Just My Skin

Peter Hostert

Embedded deep within
This ink is here forever
Regrets never linger in my mind
A message inside each and every design

Embedded deep within, are these stories on my skin
Extracted out from my mind, dermal tales they provide
Consuming my surface spreading slow, this art allows my soul to glow
In time my mind will wander and flee, the ink will be here reminding me

Embedded deep within, is this life on my skin
Colors branded on me bright
I become a beautiful sight
The mark of a criminal some may say
Judging eyes for them, I'm prey
I lead my life does that make you afraid?

Embedded deep within, is my soul not my skin
Markings may mar my surface, sure
Didn't God say don't judge by the cover?
Self expression is utter bliss
Something you all should not miss
My life is art so is my skin
Let me live the life I've been given

Honey Locust Tree

Sarah Fulton



Honorable Mentions

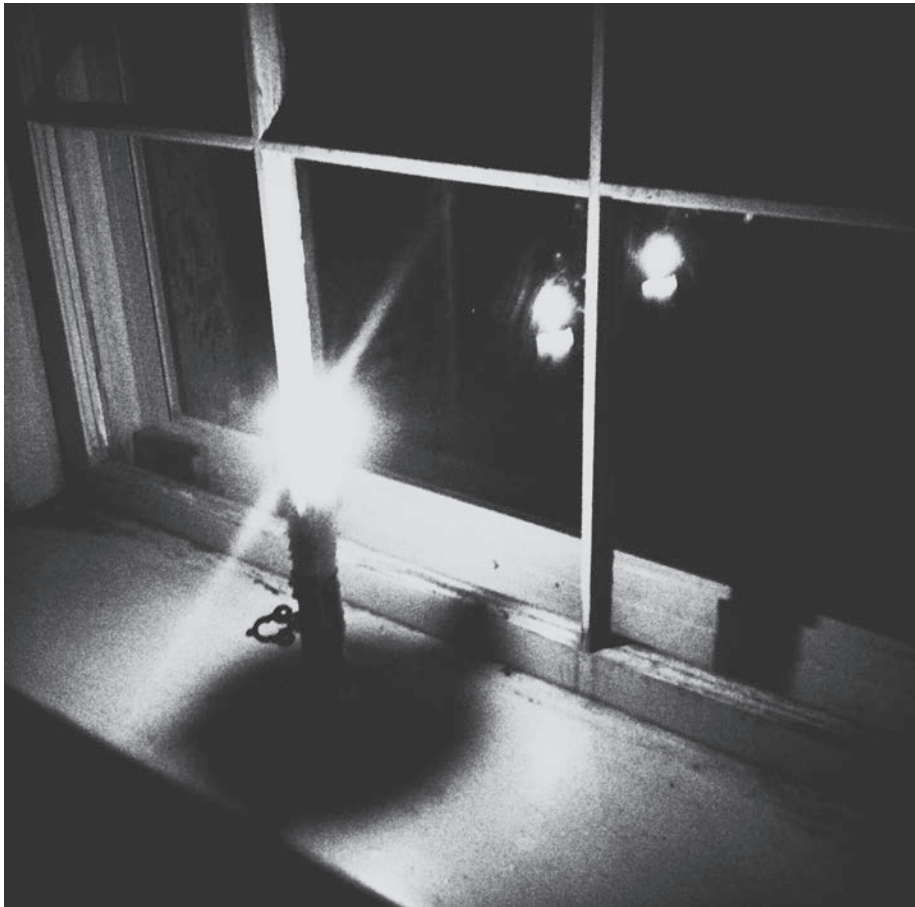
Ink

Peter Hostert

I think I'm in love with ink
Let me show you my thoughts and see what you think
What a beautiful process, preserving the potency of
my brain
Why do it? Money, personal gain, maybe fame?
Ha! What a shame. Don't take me for a lame
Look around, I live in the Digital Age
Where screens and the internet is all the rage
The money and fame has been lost for the page

Then why? You say with a smile so sly
I say preservation for when I die
A healthy lie with more truth behind it
Like how "when" could be now, so I remain literate
This output of thoughts puts me on the ground
Level headed and happy, I've got no time for frowns
Blessed was the day I learned to arrange
This output of ink onto this page
And blessed could be you. Oh! If you only knew
Just try it and show me I've got nothing to prove

Untitled
Amy Toothaker



Bird
Claudia Dennis

Insatiabilis

Peter Hostert

The murky river water lapped gently against the mossy hull of a wide gondola. The prow silently surged forward, slicing through the mist and murk like a phantom overnight clouds. A desolate shelter made from poles and festering rugs and cloth was situated at the center, and a soft melodic humming emitted from within. The sloshing of oars pushing through water was a cryptic cadence to the sweet humming and was produced by two figures at the back of the gondola who were hooded in mangy cloaks.

Busy at work inside the shelter sat a small, pudgy girl, no older than sixteen. She held a brush in her left hand and a palette of paints in the other. Concentrating hard, she squinted at the canvas in front of her, the tip of her tongue poking out between her teeth as she studied the angles and colors of her piece. Stunning beyond belief, her model sat upright on a stool. Lewdly dressed in sparse garments with wavy black hair that cascaded down the left side of her body, a woman of pale complexion stared haughtily at the young painter. With soft snowy skin and sharp collar and cheek bones, the woman resembled a winter night, her hair the descending darkness that captivates so many, drawing them into its cold embrace. Her eyes were the exception; they seemed to smolder in their sockets, shifting and flickering but never changing from that deep mahogany red.

“Is it almost finished?” urged the wintery woman as she was gazing upon the painter who continued to stare at her canvas, deep in concentration.

“Essentially,” replied the painter in a blasé tone of voice.

She had become accustomed to the impatience of her patients. Many of her fellow colleagues frowned upon her calling the people she painted this, but she considered what she did treatment. Most of the people she saw were the same, desperate and impatient to see how someone else perceived what they looked like. It was so important to them to find people like Relandoh and pay them hundreds and hundreds of Kernals because unlike everyone else they could formulate what they saw upon a canvas. And this, for many of Relandoh’s patients, was the healing touch they wanted.

“Well, hurry up, I’m becoming sore and stiff from sitting here,” the model, named Melandra, said. Even when she complained her voice was velvety and smooth. “But do a good job, I didn’t pay you to make me look like a fool.”

Relandoh only gave a sassy “mhm,” maintaining her concentration on her canvas as she stroked it delicately with her brush.

There was silence for a while, but finally Melandra spoke once more, bored and sore from her simple task. “You can see my face, right? It’s not blank on the canvas you’re painting there?”

This got Relandoh’s attention. She stopped what she was doing and looked up slowly at Melandra. “Are you ill?” she asked acerbically. She hardly noticed the crimson paint that fell from her quivering brush onto her leg.

“In a sense, yes,” replied Melandra, but she fell silent after this. Relandoh stared quizzically at the gorgeous woman for several more moments before shaking her round flushed head and going back to her painting. While Relandoh worked, Melandra glanced over at a large lucrative mirror that was propped precariously against one of the poles that held up the structure the two women were in. She let out a pensive sigh

Insatiabilis (cont.)

inlaid with longing as nothing stared back at her, just an empty stool, uninhabited and ugly.

“Aaaaaaaaand... finished!” stated Relandoh, proudly lifting her brush up off the canvas and setting it down with her paint encrusted palette. She leaned back and admired her work for one moment but was spared only that as at the words “finished,” Melandra sprang to her feet and rushed over to where Relandoh sat.

“Let me see it, let me see it!” she insisted excitedly, grabbing the canvas from its easel.

“Wait! You must let it dry first before you handle it like that!” But it was too late; Melandra already had possession and she turned the painting around in crazed desperation so that she could gaze upon its results. She let out a strangled scream before letting her face contort with livid rage.

“There’s nothing! There’s nothing here! It’s blank, you haven’t painted anything, you cheat, you liar, you scoundrel!” She snapped the damp canvas over her leg, which smeared her beautifully pale skin and reduced the painting to splinters. Turning upon Relandoh, who was wide eyed in terror at this unannounced tirade, Melandra struck her across the face several times until the overwhelmed painter collapsed to the green and brown deck of the gondola where she quivered, curled up in a ball with her hands over her face.

The two hooded figures in mangy cloaks appeared on either side of Melandra from the back. They said nothing but just stood and looked at the painter who was cowering on the deck.

“Dispose of her,” commanded Melandra waving her hand in a whimsical way and turning her back on Relandoh.

She brushed past a decrepit sheet of cloth, ignoring the dire protests

from Relandoh, and looked down at the convoluted water their gondola sliced through. Filled with anguish, she let out an anguished cry. No one knew how she felt, how tortuous it was to be hailed and pampered yet never know truly why. She began to sob and shake, letting her pain drown out the sounds of Relandoh’s. She couldn’t take it anymore, she had to see, she had to be reminded, if only for a minute. Maybe it wouldn’t happen this time.

Hands trembling, she withdrew a locket the size of her palm from her garments. Holding it up to her face, she ran her thumb across the side until it snagged on a latch. There was a sharp click and the locket cover sprang open to reveal a mirror inside. The air got caught in Melandra’s throat at the sight in front of her. There, reflected in the mirror was Melandra, as beautiful as could be. Her snowy white complexion could freeze any who looked upon it and leave them in a trance that could last a lifetime.

But something was wrong. It was subtle at first, but didn’t take long to come to fruition. The features upon her face began to droop and sag, taking on the consistency of hot wax. The sharp, distinct edges became smudged and began to drip away, falling to the ground in tiny splats that resembled the beginnings of a rainstorm.

Melandra tried to catch what was left of her gorgeous face in hopes of keeping it in place, but the goo just slipped through her fingers. She gave a cry of despair and fell to her knees, staring through heavy lidded eyes now at the grotesque reflection in her mirror.

Even her sobs were reduced to a mere shadow of what she once was, allowing her to hear the strangled scream and splash of Relandoh as she was washed away like the face she had painted.



Sunset Cliffs
Shelby Dare

(right)
Untitled
Mary Nolan





Jack Frost
Ben Phippen

LuAnn
Sarah Fulton



Pullman

David A. Maxwell

I'm an avid pool shooter. I've been playing pool since I was 8 years old. My father taught me to play in the early Autumn of 1973. It was overcast and the weather was turning cold. The strong wind was howling and dodging around the houses on the block. I'd been looking forward to this day with great anticipation, and finally that special day had arrived! He'd refused to teach me until I met the basic criteria of being able to reach the rack dot with my outstretched hand while keeping both feet on the floor, and I made sure I could do it before I made the claim.

I remember the tavern, but the name escapes me. It's a small neighborhood tavern with the doorway on an angle, straightening the curbside corner with its large frame and heavy wooden door. Inside the smoky, dimly lit tavern, the smell of stale, spilled beer assaults you as you enter. Not unlike most taverns you find in any neighborhood, in any city, this one was located near the old Pullman Rail Car assembly plant, at 112th and Langley Street on the south side of Chicago. Dirty tree lined streets, with large houses falling into disrepair, a pale shadow of the former glory days when the assembly plant thrived. This was "Pullman," where my father lived and ran the tavern where he taught me the game of pool.

He was part owner of the tavern with his two friends, Al and Mike. Al was a short, stocky Mexican man with heavy lids over red, bloodshot eyes, a large bulbous nose, black hair, moustache and long

sideburns. He was the cook, and spent most of his time in the small kitchen, where the smells and sounds of onions and garlic, searing meat, and the treasures of the fryer wafted through the air, or at the end of the bar nearest the kitchen door. Mike, who everyone knew as "Magilla," was a big man at 6' 6" and 275 pounds, long, greasy, unkempt black hair hanging down into his face where he constantly brushed it away. He was the bartender. Magilla stood behind the long "L" shaped bar with the equally long brass foot rail along the base. The armrest along the outer edge of the bar was scarred and faded from countless burdens rested and sorrows drowned. A mosaic of colored liquor bottles lined the shelves along the wall behind him. A few small, round tables across from the bar ran along the bare brick wall below blacked out windows.

The pool table was in the "Back." The back of the tavern had a small banquet room, aka "The Pool Room," and a small intimate alcove with an overstuffed couch, a pair of old easy chairs, and an antique oak coffee table with two drawers in it where nightly my father held court. That's where the action was. That's where everyone wanted to be. That's where, illuminated under the "Old Style" beer lamp, was the 4½ x 9 foot, coin operated pool table. Probably the one item in the place that was kept in perfect working condition. The felt was a rich, bright green color, and was very clean. My father waves me over. Today's the day I've been waiting for! Today's the day my father will reveal to me the secrets of pocket billiards.

My father's name was Dennis and he had brown hair and blue eyes. He was 5' 5", athletically built, and very handsome. His wide smile was infectious, with the telltale family gap displayed in his teeth. He was quite the ladies man, and on more than one occasion it got him into more trouble than he'd like to admit. He was also the best pool shooter I've ever met.

Pullman (cont.)

“The first things you need to learn,” he announces, “are a proper closed finger bridge, stance, grip and stroke.” He takes the cue in his hands and shows me with the index finger and thumb of his left hand wrapped around the cue and the middle, ring, and pinky fingers, along with the heel of the hand, firmly anchored to the table. He’s right handed, like me, and he stands with his left foot pointed toward the table and his right foot, pointing to the right. He has “LOVE” and “HATE” tattooed across the fronts of his knuckles, a decision he tells me he’s always regretted. He keeps a loose but firm grip on the butt end of the cue, and with his right arm from shoulder to elbow level to the ground, he slowly draws the cue back and forth, steadily. He knows I’m eager to learn, and I’m afraid to forget anything he tells me.

He leaves me briefly to attend to some business, and I keep practicing. I feel the cue in my hands. I see the light glinting off the balls. I smell the baby powder used to absorb moisture and allow the cue to

slide more freely through my fingers. I see the blue streaks of chalk against the green of the felt. I approach the table, take the cube of chalk and scrape it across the tip of the cue. I draw the shot out in my head, measuring the distance, the speed, the angle, the carom-angle. I draw a breath, hold it, and shoot. As the balls move, and collide, and reposition themselves in response to my shot, my father returns.

I’ve missed the shot, and he begins to explain why. He covers all the fundamentals, as well as a few lessons in “pool etiquette” that afternoon, like not standing in a shooter’s sightline and correctly calling shots to avoid misunderstandings, and after a few hours I’m starting to get the hang of it. He says I have potential. He says I have a “good eye.” I’m pleased with myself. The glass of pop I’m drinking tastes better, the music coming from the jukebox is better, the food from the kitchen smells better. Everything in this priceless moment is better because of this time with my father. Times like these are rare. How rare I wouldn’t discover until many years later.

(right)

Untitled
Kayla Lacy



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A STUDENT PUBLICATION
2017-2018



SPOON RIVER
COLLEGE