

II

WINTER 2025
NAVIGATION



MASPIE

LITERATURE EXPERIMENTAL ART HUMOR



MAGPIEZINE.COM



[@magpiezeen](https://www.instagram.com/magpiezeen)



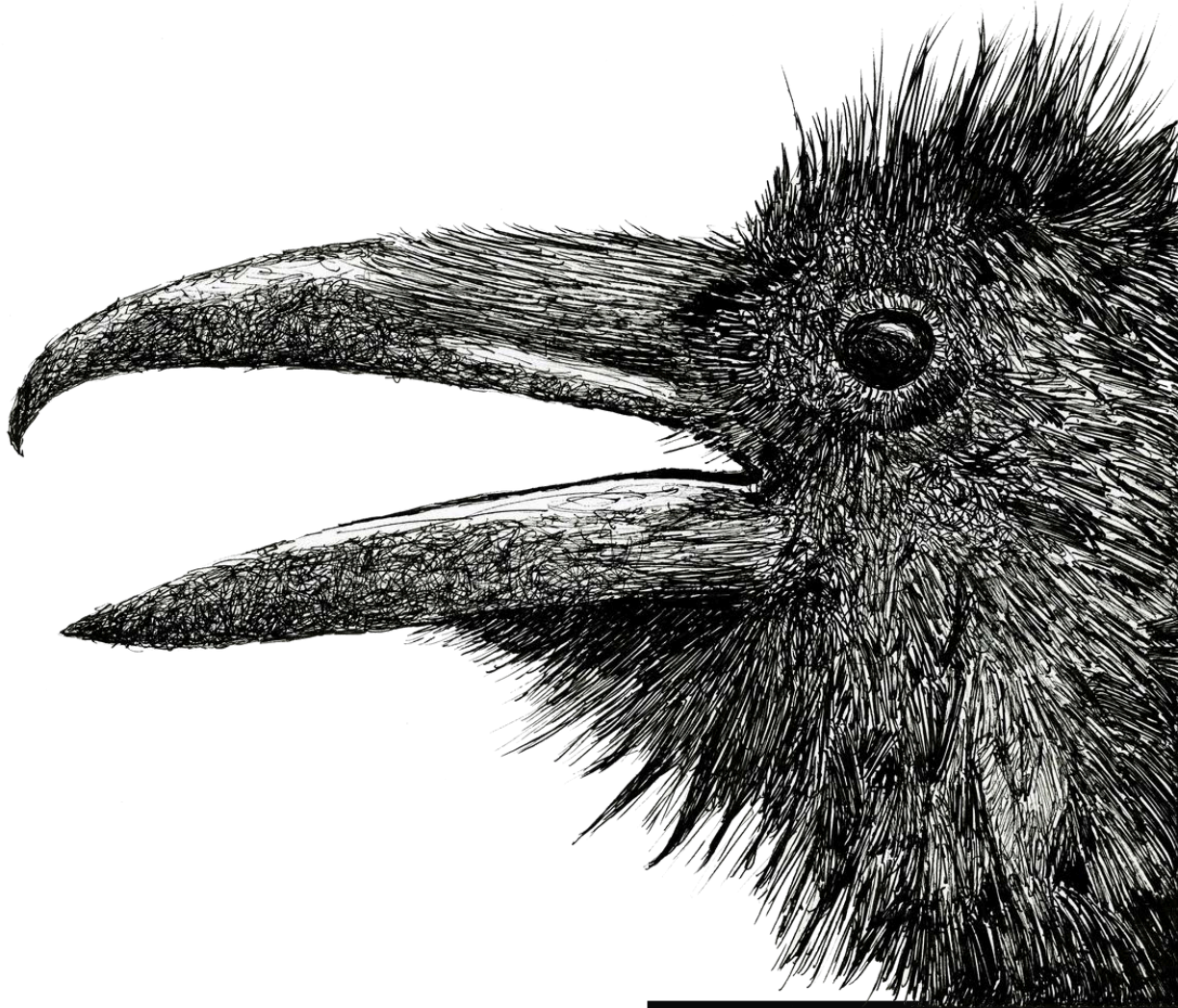
[LISTEN TO THE ISSUE
PLAYLIST ON SPOTIFY](#)



ISSUE TWO

EDITORIAL STAFF:

Michelle Quick,
Rachel Bash,
Hotspur Closser,
Rebecca Rotert,
Shyla Shehan, &
Jack Phillips



COVER ART: RAVENHEAD BY DAVID B. SUCH

INK ON PAPER WITH DIP PEN, 9" X 12"

David B. Such is a left-handed mechanical engineer who has worked with turbines and other machinery for over four decades. Off the job, he retreats to his home in the foothills of Colorado, where, contrasted to his industrial work environment, he appreciates close connections with natural surroundings and enjoys reading, writing, drawing, and gardening. His essays, poetry, and drawings have appeared in *Weber - The Contemporary West*, *The T.J. Eckleburg Review*, *Penumbra: Literary and Art Journal*, *The Flagler Review*, and elsewhere.

“I love using my dip pen and appreciate the metaphor of drawing with indelible ink on paper. Mistakes cannot be erased but are blended into the drawing, and this can result in something more interesting. The same is true about redeeming mistakes in real life. Also, I prefer the distinct contrast of black on white, and for me, the visceral feeling of drawing with ink on paper surpasses anything digital.”

IN THIS ISSUE // THOMAS H
IGGINS . HALLIE FOGARTY .
COLE WEISS . JOHN AUGUS
T . COLE FORREST . ZIXIAN
G ZHANG . KATHRYN REES
E . RADOSLAV ROCHALLYI .
EZRA FOX . ELLIE SNYDER .
ADAM PETERSON . DANIEL
LE ROBERSON . TOR ROSE .
THE POET MJ . BRIAN MCN
ELY . MICHAEL NEUWIRTH
. CLAIRE LANCASTER . SET
H ALLEN . PAT MORRIS . LI
NDY GIUSTA . THOMAS SEN
DGRAFF . DANIEL ACEVEDO
O . BLOSSOM HIBBERT . DA
VID B. SUCH . WINTER 2025

NAVIGATE

: to steer a course through a medium

: to make one's way over or through

I recently revisited, very much by accident, *The House on Mango Street*. Oh, but what a well-timed, needed accident. The introduction to the 25th-anniversary edition has Sandra Cisneros taking us back to 2025, I mean, 1980, when a woman flexing her strength and independence was a mark against her. Cisneros says she wrote *Mango Street* to stop the “swelling in her heart” from the stories she heard and saw.

I'm inspired by literary activism, and I feel the urgency in my bones when Cisneros later says, “We do this because the world we live in is a house on fire, and the people we love are burning.”

But I also feel helplessly human as I try to navigate translating that uncertainty and chaos into language. (And isn't that the very best and worst thing about witnessing and creating, the suspension of knowing?)

In this issue of *Magpie Zine*, there's an endless amount of humanity. All the works are navigating in their own way—cradling, stumbling, diving headfirst through varying bits of life to break through to some level of acceptance or understanding.

Sometimes, the moment is gentle or “brushingly,” as John August writes in “How the Moonbeam Endows the Rime,” or aching as a heart “filled with lake water” in “The Coast (A Diary Entry)” by Cole Forrest, or as unexpected as a childhood that “slipped out” overnight in Ezra Fox's “To the Student Who Told Me Their Grandmother Died... Twice.”

Other times, the journey is one of longing to be held and feel human, as in Claire Lancaster's experiential writing, or the sensation of being outside of a moment while you're inside of it, as we feel in Brian McNely's “Sneglen.” Or maybe it's rather about how we see other humans, as in this issue's evocative visual art and the storytelling of Adam Peterson in “I've An Idea Where to Put the Babies.” Or perhaps it's how we might navigate the in-between of Human and a developing Other, as in “Her Cherry Aftertaste” by Danielle Roberson. No matter where the journey takes us, we can't help but ask ourselves if it was worth it, as Hallie Fogarty reminds us in “Deliberate Displays of Unease.”

To our wonderful contributors, thank you for finding a language to share your witnessing and trusting us with your beautiful work. And, dear reader, we hope you enjoy the experience of navigating your way through the twenty-three offerings within.

xoxo,
Magpie

introduction

Contents

- 06 ADAM PETERSON **I've An Idea Where to Put the Babies** - *fiction*
- 08 THOMAS HIGGINS **What's Human** - *poetry*
- 09 CLAIRE LANCASTER **But the Cyborg Pleads, Not Asks, This Time** - *experimental*
- 11 KATHRYN REESE **B&B** - *poetry*
- 12 SETH ALLEN **Bone-In Hotdogs** - *humor*
- 14 DANIEL ACEVEDO with Ivonne Yáñez - *photography*
- 18 BRIAN McNELLY **Sneglen** - *nonfiction*
- 21 JOHN AUGUST **How the Moonbeam Endows the Rime** - *poetry*
- 22 COLE FORREST **The Coast (A Diary Entry)** - *poetry*
- 24 BLOSSOM HIBBERT - *collage*
- 28 DANIELLE ROBERSON **Her Cherry Aftertaste** - *fiction*
- 32 RADOSLAV ROCHALLYI **Fractures of Meaning** - *poetry*
- 33 EZRA FOX **To the Student Who Told Me Their Grandmother Died... Twice** - *poetry*
- 35 THE POET Mj Pavlova - *nonfiction*
- 38 LINDY GIUSTA - *art*
- 41 COLE WEISS **Roxy's Heaven** - *poetry*
- 42 MICHAEL NEUWIRTH **The Digital Snail That Lives inside My Head Has Been Trying to Reach Me about My Car's Extended Warranty and I Want to Believe** - *experimental*
- 44 HALLIE FOGARTY **Deliberate Displays of Unease** - *poetry*
- 46 ZIXIANG ZHANG **if a plant dreams** - *poetry*
- 48 THOMAS SENDGRAFF - *art*
- 51 ELLIE SNYDER **Sign Off** - *poetry*
- 52 TOR ROSE **Metropolitan Thoughts** - *nonfiction*
- 55 PAT MORRIS **The Grapes of Rath** by Jon Stineback by Trevor Johnston-Piper - *humor*
- 57 CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

I'VE AN IDEA WHERE TO PUT THE BABIES

by ADAM PETERSON

It's a very comprehensive plan, so I want you to listen carefully when I tell you what I think should be done with all the babies—

Step one—we put the babies on an island.

There is no step two.

I knew it was the perfect solution to our baby problem because the instant I thought of it I could breathe for the first time in years. I wasn't crying. I wasn't shaking. I calmly started packing tiny baby socks.

Before you can object, here's why the baby-island can't fail—

The babies will have a puppy on the island. In fact, I've already got a puppy, and I sent him ahead. And I know, I know, puppy is just another word for baby, but this puppy is responsible. This puppy gets it.

His name is Max. The babies have many names, and we'll no longer have to apologize for the ones we forget. In fact, maybe it's even better this way, confirmation of the idea that there are things we need to keep and things we need to let go.

Babies and history—let go.

Freedom and adult situations—keep.

So we'll charter a ship. We'll cram it full of babies and send it to the island. There, Max will welcome the babies with wet puppy kisses. There, the babies will grow up far away from our world, the world where I will almost certainly be regarded as a hero for solving our baby conundrum.

There's no other option. We've tried everything else, and there's simply nowhere we can put the babies where they won't continue to ruin our lives.

They wail when we show them French cinema. They roll into the street when we set them outside. They destroy our credit when we rent them apartments.

Even the wolves won't raise them, not anymore, not after the horrors those last babies wreaked upon this Earth.

But Max—

He's a good boy.

Probably.

I assume.

And it's not like the babies will be gone forever. Someday, surely, they'll learn to swim and return when we're shriveled and grey. It will be so good to know them then when they can help us work our phones and tell us the names of celebrities we don't recognize but hate all the same.

Only then will they understand why we did what we did. Only then will they know what they must do themselves.

Because the world has many islands.

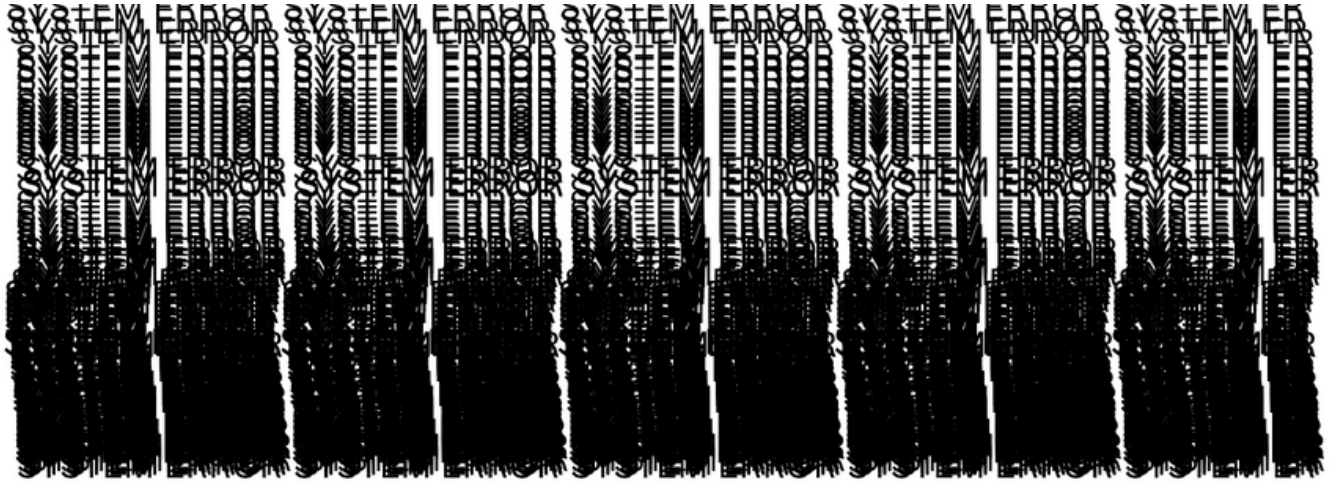
Someday, darling, we'll find ourselves on one, sent away by those we once sent away ourselves, those who'll swear—

This is the only one of our sins they will ever repeat.

WHAT'S HUMAN

by THOMAS HIGGINS

When a cat comes to lay at your feet
you never ask why, but you do
hold still for as long as you possibly can,
even holding your breath as you once did
passing a grave. In the presence
of ghosts and small gods, you believe
that it's wise to be humble, despite having
no proof of either. A cat, however, proves
there are some things language can't tell us
which love also is, that what's human
about us can be what sustains it
as silence and stillness sustain
a cat's slumber, the pulse of its breathing
a language you both understand.



Please, hold me for a while. And tell me that I'm human.

B&B

by KATHRYN REESE

I find him in the kitchen making sandwiches, as men do, not with marmalade but with mandarins. He has laid the skin pith-down on thick-cut squares of white bread, he is unfolding the segments and bedding them down, each curve snug against another. There is a butter knife balanced on an open jar of mustard. The mustard lid lies face-up on the bench. There are a dozen mustard seeds scattered: along the knife blade, the bench, his dark cuticle, his lips. He is so much taller than any man I have slept beside—when he sees me, he smiles, slides the bread under a warm grill, and pours tea from a green pot decorated with cherry blossom and dragon. We sit at a mahogany table covered with a linen cloth, a vase of fenugreek leaves and almond buds between us. We eat as though pith is not bitter, as if mustard is mild, as if hot juice is not burning my chin.

Kathryn Reese lives on Peramangk land in South Australia. [More](#)

BONE-IN HOTDOGS

by SETH ALLEN

Close your eyes: imagine you are hosting the perfect barbecue.

Feel the warm sun, now the cool breeze. Everyone is here, it's the perfect blend of friends, enemies, and potential lovers. So many compliments on your playlist. "How do you keep the drinks this cold?" says your friend Chris, "You must buy that premium ice, ha ha!" Chris's joke doesn't really make sense but everyone laughs because the vibes are that immaculate.

Then you, Vibes God, lift the cover of your hot, sweating, curvaceous grill. A plume of smoke rises, sending the scent of perfectly cooked meat (or vegan meat) dancing across the yard. A hush falls over the crowd, everyone looks at you with anticipation. You grab your tongs (oh, how they gleam) and select a perfectly cooked wiener from the grill. You lift this dog proudly to the sky and proclaim, "Dogs are ready!"

Instead of applause, you hear gasps. Not good gasps, bad gasps. They're looking at the wiener, and you notice right away how it hangs completely limp in your once proud tongs. Disappointing, unappealing, flaccid humiliation. Your enemies begin whispering to your potential lovers, and now they're all laughing at you. Your friends are gone. Chris is dead (suspected suicide). Forever.

Good news: It doesn't have to be this way. You have time right now to invest in a better future. The future of Bone-In Hotdogs. That's right, a hot dog with a bone in it. Grill with the confidence you deserve, knowing your dogs will always rise to the occasion, fully torqued, just completely bricked up. It's juicier, too!

Market testing confirms high demand for our bone-in dogs. We placed a Facebook ad showing a standard limp dog next to one of our bone-in prototypes, with the simple tagline "GET BONED UP NOW," and received

millions of clicks in seconds. Our simple, straight-to-the-point ad was so popular, Facebook removed it and suspended our account. We will not be stopped.

We are looking for partners to invest several million dollars, or whatever you have on you right now, in developing the technology needed to scale our proprietary bone insertion process. Please don't ask how we do it. Don't ask what type of bones we use, or where we get them, or how. Seriously, we'll never tell! What matters is that the perfect barbecue you imagined is finally here. The world is ready. Are you?

DANIEL ACEVEDO with Ivonne Yáñez

digital photographs from

Like A Little TLAQUEPAQUE, 2024









MAGPIE ZINE WINTER 2025

Daniel Acevedo is a Mexican artist who uses photography as a means of self-expression. [More](#)

SNEGLEN

by BRIAN McNELLY

The saddle of the purple loaner bike squeaks when I pedal, and the wicker basket hangs from the handlebars with zip ties—if I turn too quickly, it slides around and attacks my knees. It's a 20-minute ride to Kastrup Søbad from the AirBnB in Christianshavn. I weave through gawking tourists in Christiania, my basket loaded with a beach towel, impatience, and the first sunny day of summer. Everything else is stuffed in my daypack. When I pop out onto Uplandsgade and hang a right onto Amager Strandvei, I've finally got a tailwind straight to the sea bath.

I mash the pedals up and over Lagunebroen and see the sound stretched and gleaming. Amager Strandpark bustles with Danes in swimsuits and flip flops pushing prams and eating hot dogs. I park my bike near the plank path to the sea bath. In the bright afternoon sunlight, the spiral wooden structure standing in the sound looks like the cover of Architectural Digest come to life. Sneglen —“the snail.” I'd only ever seen this place on Google Maps and YouTube. I gulp sea air.

I walk past little living rooms all over the rough wooden planks—families and friends and lovers claim space, laying out blankets and towels, plump grapes in plastic Netto containers, tall green cans of Carlsberg, hardcovers, and sunscreen. I nab a spot up high where I can sit with my back to the sound and watch the water and the beach and everything here. I peel off my shoes and socks, tuck my t-shirt between slats on the wall.

At the highest jumping platform, I wait in line behind a group of boys. Their bright, baggy swim trunks drip onto their bare feet, and the rough grey planks darken. A young man orchestrates the action, his tanned forearm against the metal railing. He wears black trunks printed with white pineapples, his arms and legs and neck long and thin; his blonde hair stiff with saltwater. As each boy steps up, he counts them down—“en, to, tre!”—and they fling themselves into summer, kicking and screaming before they hit the water. The young man grabs the railing and follows them in a graceful arc, diving deep into the sea.

I do the countdown, too, mouthing the Danish inside my head, and leap into the Øresund. I tread water and stare at the sound. My lips are salty, and my body is warm, and sunlight flashes in my eyes from ripples in the water. The first of the gang to jump is back on the platform. I dolphin kick to the middle of the sea bath. A little girl with Peppa Pig floaties and pink goggles hops from the low dock as I heave myself up the swim ladder.

The young man's living room is a few feet from mine. He's sipping a Tuborg, back against the wall. I sit in the sun and air dry and close my weary eyes. He says something in Danish, pulling me back from the fuzzy edges of sleep, and I catch sight of his stubbled chin pointing to the crowded center of the snail. I search for clues as to what he's said. Kids blow water from swimming noodles; a family holding hands jumps from the far dock. People sit in their little living rooms, snapping selfies, playing cards, eating ruggbrød chips, drinking wine, laughing.

"Taler du engelsk?" I say. I crack open a Carlsberg and take a long pull.

"It's busy—finally summer."

"Finally."

"You're here on holiday?"

"Not exactly. I'm here for a month, working."

"Have you been here before?"

"To Copenhagen?"

"No, here. Kastrup. Sneglen." In his mouth, "Kastrup" sounds like oil hitting a hot pan.

"I haven't. I've been waiting for the sun. I swam in the harbor at Islands Brygge, but it was cold. I just want to be in the water as much as I can. This is better."

"Much better. There's more light here, it's more open. You can see more underwater."

I look out at the open arc of the sea bath, at sunshine glittering on gentle waves.

“I like the way things look from the bottom, the way they sound,” he points his chin again at the center of the snail. “I blow out all my air and stay down there and just look up at all the legs and arms and swimsuits, the docks and ladders.” He sips his Tuborg and grins.

“I never open my eyes in the water,” I say. I can’t even swim like a local.

“No? Why?” He flicks a little black bug off one of his white pineapples.

“I don’t know? Probably because I grew up swimming in pools and the chemicals hurt my eyes. It’s habit now.”

He peels foil from a yogurt cup and tips in a handful of bright organic raspberries. He stirs them with a metal spoon, and the yogurt blushes pink. “It doesn’t hurt.”

I take another long pull of my Carlsberg. “I’ll give it a go.”

At the high platform, I whisper “en, to, tre” and jump. I blow air from my nose when I hit the water and settle like silt at the bottom. The seafloor squishes between my toes, and I open my eyes. I see blues and ochres and shadows cast by hoary green pier pilings, undersea plants and their wispy inscrutable semaphores. I see legs and arms kicking and bobbing, neon swim noodles, puffs of sand, the silver glint of refracted sunlight on the scales of tiny fish. All sound is muted; everything is far away.

I kick off the sea floor and break the surface, then take a deep breath and duck under again, swimming toward the central platform with open eyes. I see Peppa Pig floaties bobbing on the surface, tiny legs mashing invisible pedals.

I stand on my towel, dripping. The young man must be in the water again, but I don’t see him. Maybe he’s sitting on the sea floor, looking up at us.

I sip my Carlsberg and look between the slats of Sneglen towards Sweden. I can see Turning Torso—Malmö’s neo-futurist skyscraper, a bright white exclamation point stamped on the tip of the country. If it’s sunny tomorrow, I’ll take the train over the sound and swim on the other side. Maybe I can see the snail from Malmö’s rocky shore. Maybe I can see Turning Torso from under the water, through the murk and waves, rising above the sound, wringing itself out in the sun.

Brian McNely is professor of Writing, Rhetoric, & Digital Studies at the University of Kentucky. [More](#)

HOW THE MOONBEAM ENDOWS THE RIME

by JOHN AUGUST

Barely, brushingly.

THE COAST (A DIARY ENTRY)

by COLE FORREST

*miss the lake back home
 so I drove to the ocean
 mussels always taste like the waters they're from
 it's like that pop song with the ice cream out here
 ate at the same ice cream shop
 I like what's simple like personal fulfillment like going to places they talk about in songs
 I missed water so much
 I wonder if I taste just like the lake
 it's sweet to me, I hope I'm sweet tasting to you
 thought about all the traditional land we're moving through
 mom would probably want me to leave some tobacco
 "I didn't know it was actually in a valley"
 I genuinely believe I'm an idiot most days
 ndn idiot
 ndiot? it's not funny
 walked through a neighborhood with palm trees I wondered what it would take for me
 to live here
 went bowling and I was humbled
 bowling one of those things in life that it's okay to be like just fine at
 going across Arizona some of it reminded me of the landscape back home
 everything is almost like home
 my heart's one of those squishy toys that's full of liquid and you're kind of worried it's
 gonna burst everywhere or it crosses your mind like "what if this totally explodes on my
 couch"
 that's my heart filled with lake water
 don't squeeze it too hard
 if you know you know but those dinosaurs beside the tipis on the side of the highway
 always make me laugh
 the land makes me laugh
 had a realization the other day when I lay tobacco down it's for everyone
 it's an offering to everyone in my life, not just my own dreams*

*cried in the bathtub the water's never the right temperature
I had a dream once about the ocean
I was with someone I didn't know
we stood on a hill overlooking the water
I asked where I was
she said I was home*

BLOSSOM HIBBERT

digital collage

MAGPIE ZINE WINTER 2025



MAGPIE ZINE WINTER 2025





MAGPIE ZINE WINTER 2025



Blossom Hibbert has a pamphlet, suddenly, it's now published by Leaf Press. [More](#)

HER CHERRY AFTERTASTE

by DANIELLE ROBERSON

I am made of the ocean, but it is not made of me. I know this because it refuses to mix with my body, its many micro-organisms keeping me firmly on the surface. It's best not to mix ill-matched things like us, like men and power or sour milk and eager tongues. It's best not to infect the ocean, so full of nature and balance, with my manufactured sadness and hunger for absolution.

I won't stay human for long, at least, that's what they say. That's why I'm here, because I don't want to exist like this anymore. Everyone would be too sad if I chose to die, so I'm choosing this. I wonder what form I'll take; they say it doesn't always make much sense. You just float for a few hours, then the ocean sucks you under, transforming you into something alien along the way. One woman turned into an octopus, she was a waitress. Another into a moray eel, she was a sex worker. The last I heard of turned into a sand flea; she was a banker.

I don't think I ever knew these women personally, but the world acted like it did after they disappeared. This is not new, but that doesn't make it less disappointing. There are many names for women like us. Survivors. Victims. Selfish. Overly-ambitious. Monsters. Deserving of our fate.

I wonder what will come of me, of this body I didn't consent to inhabit. I wonder what I will become as my back hardens, turning to a dense helicoidal staircase of chitin. I don't know how I know what that means, but I wish I had an exoskeleton like this when I lived on land. Maybe I wouldn't be here now. Or maybe this is how it was always supposed to be. It's better than what I had before, not because it's stronger, but because it's not me.

I dip my head under the sea surface, only my nose and lips touching the air now. I want my mind to go next, for the water to smooth the cracks in my

brain, valuable surface area for the anxiety tunneling itself so deep it burns. I want to feel nothing but nothing.

I need to flip; the air isn't enough anymore. I gasp, my mouth gaping, cells begging for oxygen. I'm trying, I tell them.

I push myself underwater and breathe in. I never expected it to taste like this. I expected brine, for the water to needle my throat. But the sweetness is incredible, intoxicating. I used to give sweetness like this, used to rip my heart out just to dip it in gold. Just to raise it high to watch the passersby marvel. I used to –

I need more water. All my arms current more toward my new gills.

All my arms? Legs? I wriggle them one by one. I think they're all here. Eight pairs. I have eight pairs of legs. Arms? I wish I'd had this when I was younger. Or maybe I don't. The more I can reach for, the more I can lose. And I've already lost so much.

My hair once fine but coiling out of me in endless follicles, is gone. I used to hate this gift, one of the few my father left me. I had his tight curls, hair brown and lightweight. So I burned it. Painted it copper. Made sure it fell straight against my shoulders and never so much as waved ever again.

But then I loved my curls. I don't remember why, but I do know that once I did, the world heard, and hysteria answered. That's when a man threatened to set my hair on fire. Took out a lighter and flicked it in the middle of the metro car. I didn't flinch because I knew I could learn to hate what he singed off. I could twist something like that into an act worthy of gratitude. But then he took his pants off, threw them at me. Took out his penis and stepped forward so it sat in my face. No man had ever done that before, and no man since. Not because the world got better but because I learned to keep my head down.

My eyes, they're above water now, sticking out of my head. And I can see heat. Life. It's swarming around me. But not in me. I'm a dead zone. I don't know if I've ever been alive at all.

There's something sprouting from my joints. Large smashers pushed into my

body, although I can feel them fighting to spring out. I let them loose, watch the water turn to steam around me as it bubbles to the surface. The surface? I look around, my eyes shifting independently in different directions. When did I sink? When did I lose the sun?

The ocean floor is rough but oh-so-beautiful. This is exactly why I burrow beneath it, digging a small hole where I can listen to the world sing above me. I'll come out only to eat, I decide. But something is moving out there. Something larger than me. I come out of my burrow, ready to defend my new home, something I never would have done before. Not because I didn't care about where I lived but because I've only ever lived in an organized collection of rooms.

Lingering outside is an octopus with a human leg kicking independently of the tentacles. A moray eel swimming clumsily behind with human eyes. Its sclera bloodshot, probably from all the salt scratching the surface. And then, hardly visible, a sand flea. I only see it well because of the heat pushing from its body. It doesn't have any humanity left, though I suspect that happened long before it came to the sea floor.

I should know these people. They are familiar, but I cannot remember where I've seen them before. I cannot remember what makes their leg and eyes human. Is it the tiny hairs covering the leg, flowing in the water, slowing this creature? It's not too bad now, but what will happen when it needs to escape? And these eyes, inferior to my own, make me pity the moray eel. I want it to be able to see like me. To see everything around it all the time. To be ready for anything, all the time.

And the sand flea. It approaches my burrow, too eager to enter. I wouldn't know this small thing used to be human if it wasn't for the rage it ignites inside me. Memories of being human pass by in vignettes, playing like a TV across the room only in the corner of my right eye. I see a woman's face. She's telling me I'm smart for someone with such dark skin. Asking if my wife still thinks I'm pretty with a bean-shaped lump under my eye. She's snapping at me because she can't stand that I am braver than she will ever be. Another vignette: the same woman is in front of me, apologizing in a glass room. Asking for forgiveness. Forgiveness for what? She's done something to me, it was just in my mind. I've lost it now.

But the body does not forget, human or not.

The sand flea comes closer, the eel and octopus watching us from afar. My new back shifts to accommodate me as I rise and then stare down. As I let the flea know that I am the predator now. And it is my prey. The smashers move so fast when they release from my body. The flea doesn't even realize what's happening until it's too late. And then it's stunned, abdomen cracked in half on a small rock I didn't notice until now.

The eel and octopus swim away, scared they're next. The sand flea twitches, body cooling slowly. I take a bite, and again, I'm surprised by the cherry aftertaste of my new world. Or perhaps it is the sweetness of revenge. It is of no difference to me. Because I am nothing but a small thing burrowed beneath the sea.

I am not human anymore. I'm not sure what I am, but that's not for me to know. The ocean knows me, and I suspect I'll come to know it. It's made of me, her, them. It's where the women go when we get tired. Where we come to control our fate. And eventually, it comes for all of us.

Danielle Roberson is a writer living in Texas. [More](#)

FRACTURES OF MEANING

by RADOSLAV ROCHALLYI

f (Prayers into the void)

= A glass bottle underfoot

$$+ \sum_{\substack{\infty \\ \text{its sharp syllables piercing}=1}} \left(a_n \cos \frac{\text{the soles of those}}{\text{who dare to walk}} \right)$$

$$+ b_n \sin \frac{\text{barefoot through}}{\text{the ruins of thought}})$$

FOR THE STUDENT WHO TOLD ME THEIR GRANDMOTHER DIED... TWICE

by EZRA FOX

They tell you grief comes with permissions,
a hall pass, an extension, a moment's reprieve.
As if pain needs documentation, as if suffering
requires a formal declaration.

First, let me say: I am sorry for your loss.
Grief can swallow a semester whole,
shrink it smaller than the space between
a B- and a B.

When your email landed in my inbox,
my own grandmother surfaced. Her voice
rising through memory, like wind. Strange
how quickly I filled your loss with my own,
how grief recognizes grief.

Then, your second email arrived, same story,
different month, grandmother dying again,
and I understood: not a lie, but a different kind of loss.

Oh, dear student,
if you've learned to summon ghosts
as shields against the living dark, I understand.

If the weight of now, the deadlines, the discussions,
the endless notifications of crisis feels
like watching avalanches through glass,
you don't need to conjure grandmothers.

Let me be sorry, instead, for the losses
too quiet to name. The best friend who moved
away mid-sentence, the morning you woke
to find your childhood had slipped out
while you slept, for the nights your anxiety grows
teeth, for the days when planes cast shadows
like dark prophecies, when your phone
becomes too heavy to lift, or when
your reflection wears a stranger's face.

Sorry for the stuffed bear guarding your empty
bed at home, for mistaking homesickness
for food poisoning again, for dormitory mirrors
that make you question your belonging.
And, for every time you've swallowed words
like broken glass, thinking no one wants
to hear your truth.

You don't need to dress your pain.
I won't think less of you for simply living
in a world that demands performance
of our wounds. I see how they told you
small hurts don't deserve attention,
that missing class requires tragedy.

Let the deadlines dissolve.
There are more important things in this life:
geese cutting shadows across fog-draped quads,
laughter echoing in stairwells at midnight,
the way strangers cluster under bus stop awnings
during rain, and each text from a beloved,
that sits like a crystal in your pocket.

Ezra Fox lives and writes in San Francisco, CA.
[More](#)

PAVLOVA

by THE POET Mj

Ingredients:

For the meringue of my early life:

4 large free-range egg whites (There were five free-range eggs in the nucleus recipe; the younger atom I.)

225g / 8oz caster sugar (20 acres of cast an eye over my sugary kingdom of heaven on earth, in the high hills of eucalypti, she-oak scrubby lands; I was home.)

½ tsp vanilla extract (Ours was lemon extract picked from fruiting trees and squeezed on the pancakes in the second week of the family budget. Potato fritters, pancakes, and pasta, the recipes to make the food budget extend for the fortnight, for the hungry five eggs.)

1 tbsp cornflour (I preferred Coco Pops cereal, not Cornflakes cereal. My brother liked Weet-Bix stacked high with sprinkled brown sugar and full cream cow's milk. But take me back to the numerous kid's birthday parties of the '70s and '80s, Chocolate Crackles, Fairy Bread, and Honey Crackles. I disliked Chocolate Crackles but loved Honey Crackles and Fairy Bread.)

Filled with cream, meringue
modus operandi: whisk
consistency for...

The filling:

400ml / 14oz double cream (The clouds are haunting when they close in. They also rise like double cream when the wind brings in the tears, torrids shed. I saw many times double cream clouds when fire would awake and lick the terrain. All clouds have a second meaning and a third if we wait long enough for the signs.)

400g / 14oz strawberries, hulled, halved if large (If you hulled soft fruit such as strawberries, you remove the hulls. The hull of a soft fruit such as a strawberry is the stalk and ring of leaves at the base. At the base of our hill, the weeds grew like hulls, but as your feet climbed to the top of the mountain, the rich natural beauty felt similar to the peak of the strawberry's tip.)

200g / 7oz raspberries (At age twelve, I picked raspberries for two summer holiday seasons. The numb hands at early rise, lifting up the leaves to find the ripe raspberries to place in little buckets pinned to our leather belts. The thorns bit, but to save a year's amount of money so my sister and I could keep our horses drove us to hard work, for our passion for that graceful steed bubbled up.)

50g / 5oz blueberries (Blue is my favorite color, like the material of the sky. Blueberries were a rare thing growing up, but blackberries were an endless weed; plucking their fruit made the best jams and pies.)

Cape gooseberries (optional) (I was the gooseberry clowning around in our family Christmas plays to entertain Grandma and Grandpa. I could never master the 'Silent Night' carol on the piano like Clara Schumann, one of the greatest piano players of all time. Clara Schumann's impact on the world of classical music achieved international recognition as a piano virtuoso, making significant contributions to the development of the Romantic style.)

3 passion fruit (optional) (The passion fruit vine grew on a friend's tank. Cool across the side on the cement as it climbed up the trestle. We spooned mouthfuls onto our tongues, and I knew my grand passion for this fruit had been discovered as a child (not optional for this writer of this strange morphing piece).)

Mint sprigs, to decorate (It grew as a weed and was cursed by Australian farmers. But I liked it in cool iced tea after a forty-two-degree day in the Adelaide hills swimming in our neighbor's dam.)

Sifted icing sugar, to decorate (The icing sugar in our lives were the menagerie of animals to care for and know.)

Sifted icing sugar, to decorate (The icing sugar in our lives were the menagerie of animals to care for and know.)

Festoon with fruit, drape
on the sweet clouds, cooling the
sweet to savory.

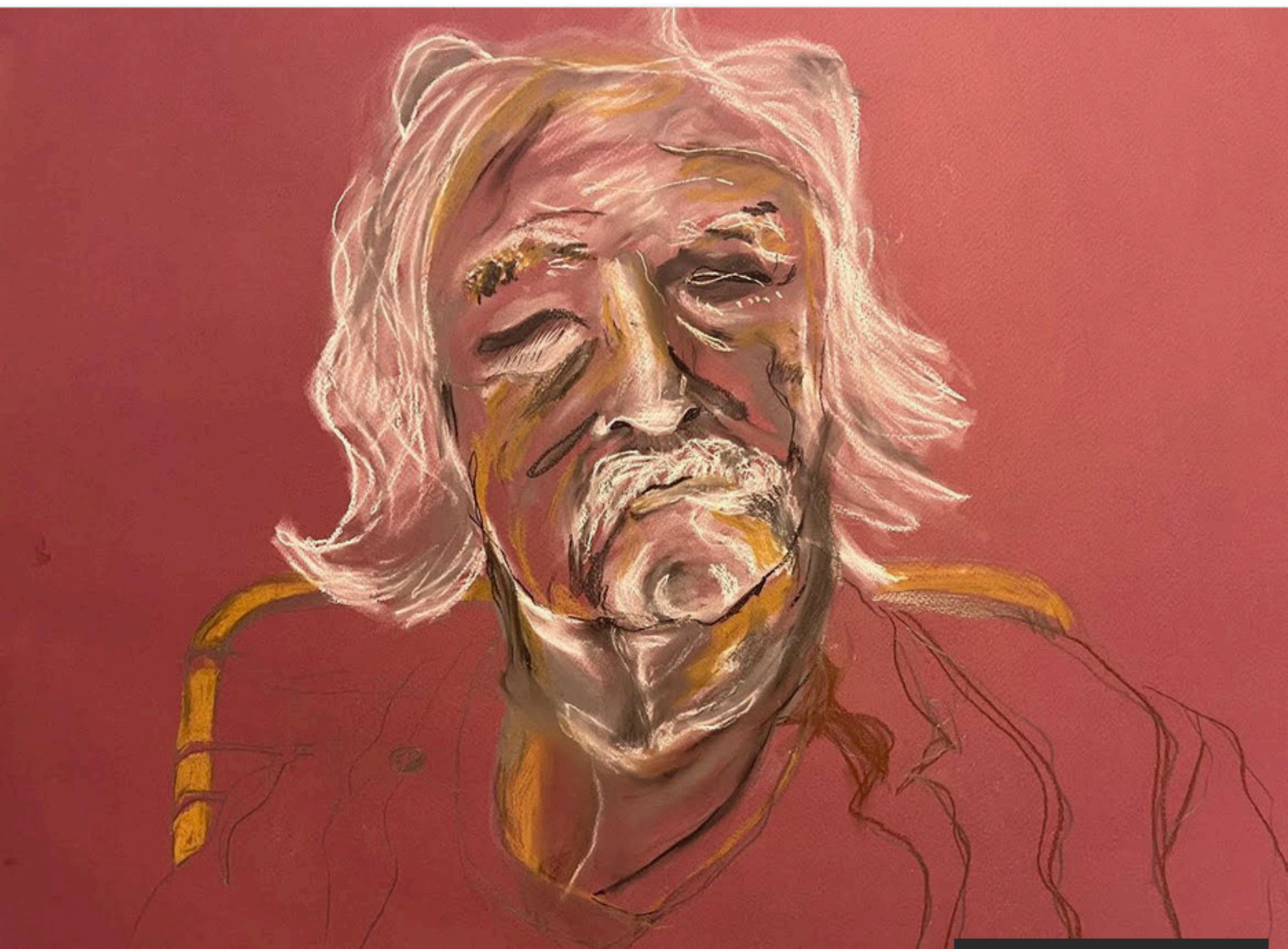
Method:

1. Preheat the heart. Place it in trust but draw around its boundaries for safekeeping.
2. Put the five egg whites in a large, clean home, and whisk, see all opinions stiffen but not dry. They are ready to turn upside down without the hurts sliding out.
3. Gradually whisk in the sugary hills, a tablespoonful at a time. Adding the sugary memories slowly helps to build up the joyful volumes in the meringue mix. Finally, whisk in the vanilla extract and cornflowering feelings until the family is well combined.
4. Dab a small amount of the meringue into the corners of the world and see.
5. Spoon the meringue into shapes of life, a meringue nest with soft peaks rising on all sides.
6. Place in the center of the family oven and bake for a generation until very lightly colored and crisp on the outside. If the meringue seems to be becoming too overcooked, reduce the temperature of the family oven. Turn the family oven off and leave the meringue for a further generation.
7. Release the meringue from the baking parchment, using a spatula if necessary, and place onto a large serving plate. Whip the creamy clouds and storms into the center of the meringue.
8. Top with the strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries, and cut the passion fruit, and scrape the pulp over.
9. Decorate with sprigs of mint skies and dust with sifted icing moon rays and serve to your guest readers to devour.

Melinda Jane has one hundred and seventy-four published works through fifty national and international publishers. [More](#)

LINDY GIUSTA

charcoal and pen



Grumpy Gills, charcoal
Lindy Giusta



It's Just A Ride
Lindy Giusta



Intimate Capturing, pen
Lindy Giusta

Lindy Giusta is a Brooklyn-based, queer multi-media artist. [More](#)

ROXY'S HEAVEN

by COLE WEISS

They have boarded up the place, emptied out the popcorn machines, and the carpet stinks of butter and mud as it is torn from the flooring. You and I are still sitting in Theater 2. They are

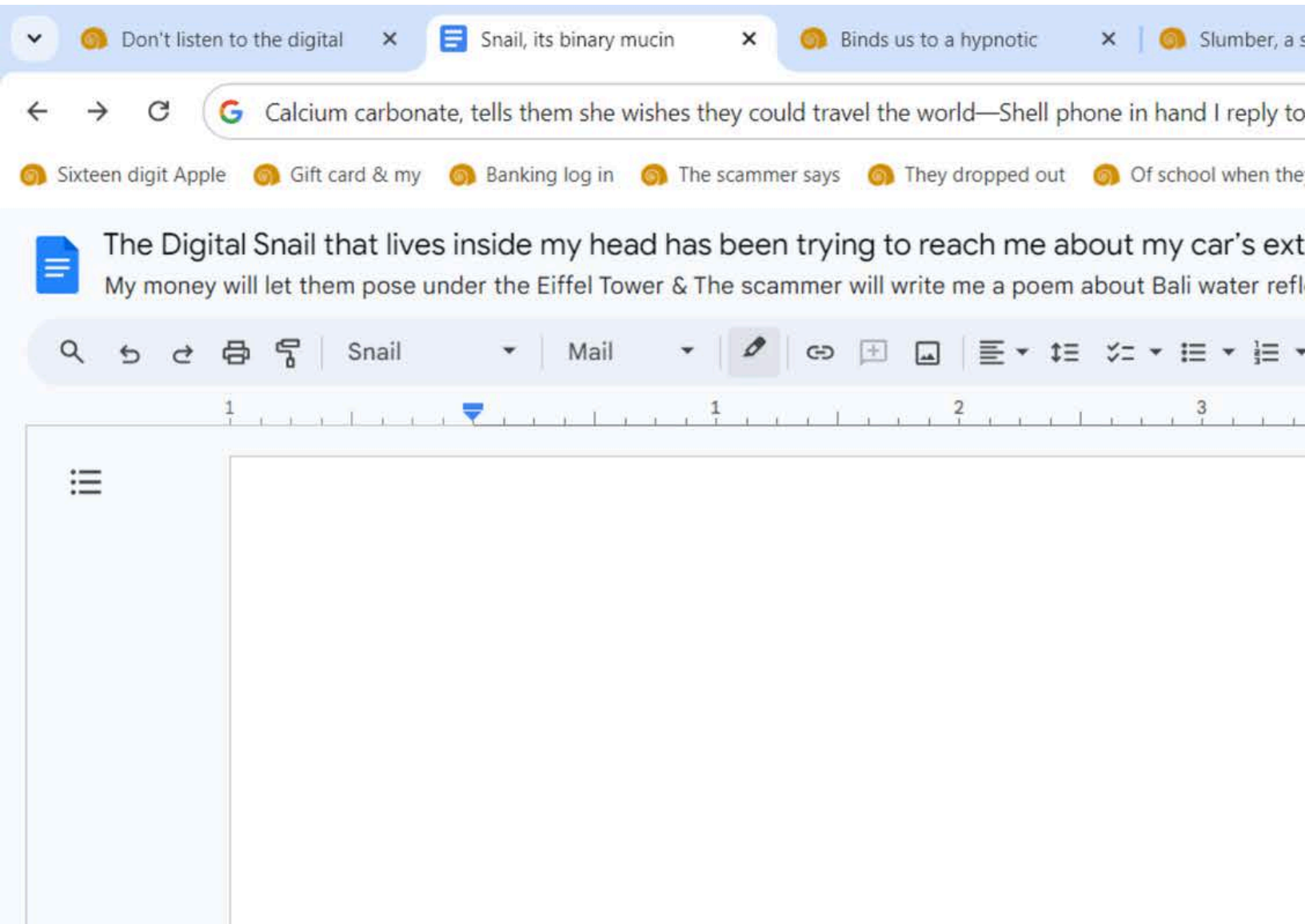
ripping out the fixtures, gutting the cinema, throwing out the rolled up movie posters that didn't sell. We have not opened our diet root beers yet. The hiss of the soda's gas is forever.

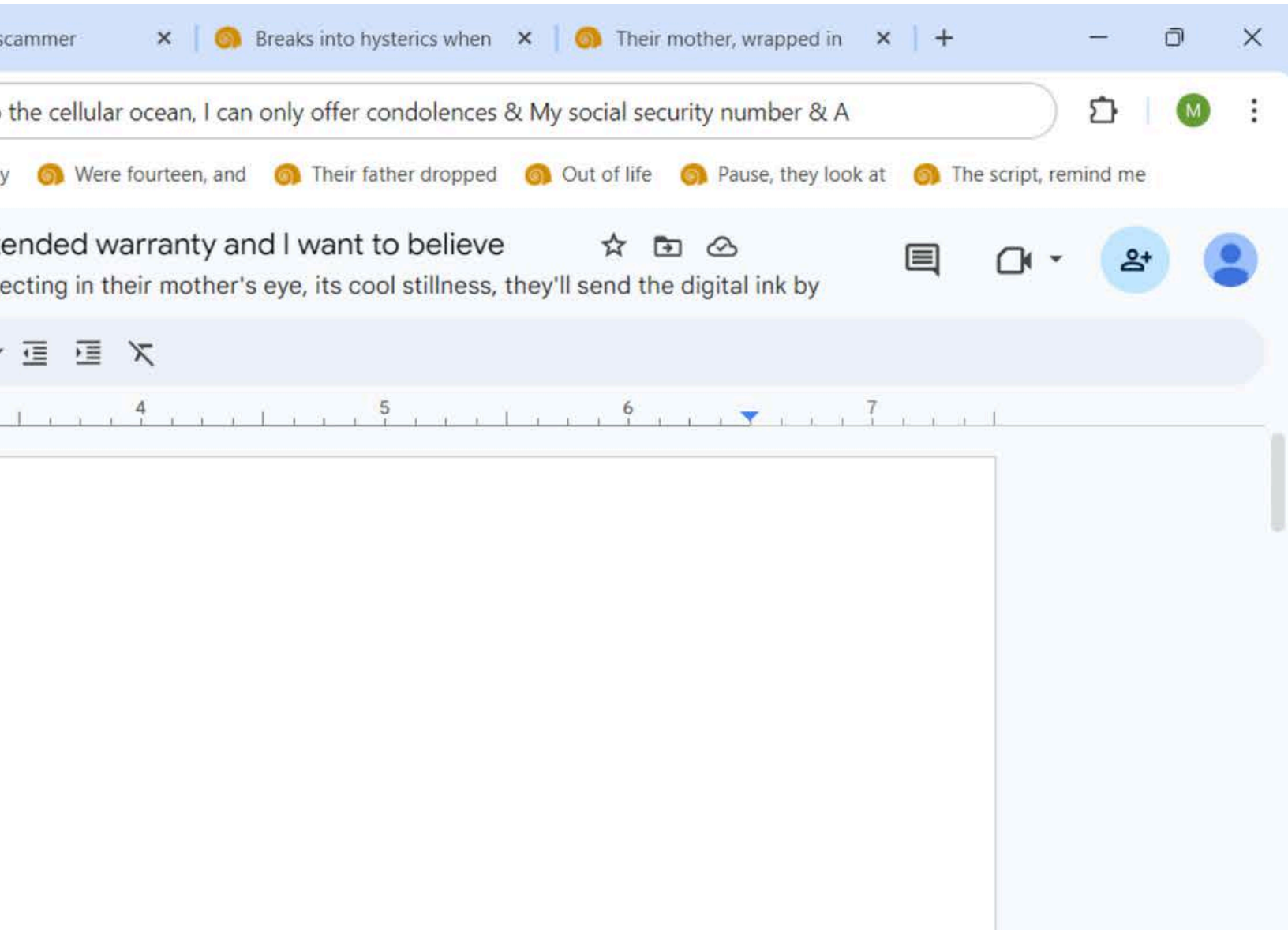
I am waiting for the previews. They never come. They are tearing down the Roxy and in my imagination you and I hold hands over the armrest as they take us with her.

Cole Weiss (they/he) is a current junior at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont. [More](#)

THE DIGITAL SNAIL THAT LIVES INSIDE MY HEAD

by MICHAEL NEUWIRTH





Michael Neuwirth spent most of his childhood in Virginia Beach, by the waves. [More](#)

DELIBERATE DISPLAYS OF UNEASE

by HALLIE FOGARTY

I'm trying to get into a life of hedonism but I honestly skew more towards prude when it comes to vibes, not that I want to, and the most virgo thing about me is the fact that I didn't buy my first vibrator until I had done multiple years of research and I ended up buying a \$165 one, light pink and the new technology, clitoral suction, and still the first time I used it I felt nothing, felt like my clitoris was broken, but now I use it religiously, can finish in three minutes or less, except for the times it takes me 40 minutes, which my sex therapist best friend says is not my body's fault, and I'm always torn between my mind and my body but lately I've been trying to take my body's side because frankly my mind has taken up enough of my time and space and mental energy and maybe I'm not just my body but I'm surely not just my mind, either, and honestly I've been looking to be a little objectified, recently, 'cuz growing up fat meant I never really felt beautiful or wanted, especially by men, which until recently I wasn't even sure I really wanted, and maybe it's shallow but all I really want is to be called beautiful and have that person believe it, have myself believe it, but I also want to be called hot and to feel hot, and I had this conversation with someone once about Chappell Roan's "HOT TO GO" lyrics call me hot, not pretty and we

must have had different wounds because I related to the lyric, am unendingly used to being called cute or adorable and frankly rarely even pretty but that's the most heated a compliment towards me would ever get, but he said that all he wanted was for someone to think he was pretty, and he was, is, but must've been sexualized and socialized in a way to think that all someone wanted from him was his body when I've never felt like anyone wanted my body, and no, objectification shouldn't be my goal but when the societal standard is skinny and thin and beautiful it's hard not to feel that pressure, that desire for something I shouldn't need, and lately I've been pondering if I even know what I need, what I want, or if all this wanting I've been doing is a performance in and of itself, because no emotion I feel really feels complete until I have someone on the outside to witness it, to bring it to fruition, like how beautiful can I look when I'm suffering, when I cry, and honestly lately I've been wondering if I really want anything from anyone or if I want to be alone, wondering if I just have high standards or if I even want a relationship and the idea of being aromantic terrifies me completely because even though I've never been a hopeless romantic I still have always liked the idea of coming home to someone, of the big finale scene in the romcom, like the proposal in *While You Were Sleeping* with all the family smiling at Sandra Bullock through thick fogged glass, and Bill Pullman's quiet smile just waiting to take her away and fulfill her life's fantasies, whisk her away to Italy, and I think frankly I'm too caught up in the gay version of gender roles to really identify what I want, like I love butches but do I want them to order my food for me, open every door, and there aren't even enough butches in Northern Kentucky for me to try dating one, because I've always only loved them in theory, and frankly that's what life feels like, doing everything only in theory, and most of the time life doesn't even seem worth half the effort it takes to survive it.

Hallie Fogarty is a poet, teacher, and artist from Kentucky. [More](#)

if a plant dreams

by ZIXIANG ZHANG

the ground
into being, what does that say about farming?
a pilosus in the seam,
hearing john's words on the radio
machine potentiating
world war iii, thinking miles to set ablaze.

tacit
is their need for light.
i am
perch on first waking,
bladder ridding the sapless grain; water
tipping
out of bed,
to find the anointed pressure point.

the first disappointment
in genesis is
the immaculate conception of a granny smith:
that the axis bifurcates
& center
of mass surrenders
bark, to be always heart.
blue veins shedding dendritic
discharge
underneath the atlantic, silver lilies
brought to blush
on the face
draining the existence of red— the winds
can't breathe into being, the potassium
aplenty.
flowers grow tall

& halt the crown that thomas dreams of
engorging.

gamma rays dislodge the train.

it is winter

400 million years away, iapetus

prior to photoshop. seabiscuits

avoiding molasses,

tricuspid tongues

from the stable licking the moonlit antorbit.

if a thought,

to be human, spends

bilateral symmetry

in the attic, or

if a plant dreams,

a plant dreams a planter.

THOMAS SENDGRAFF

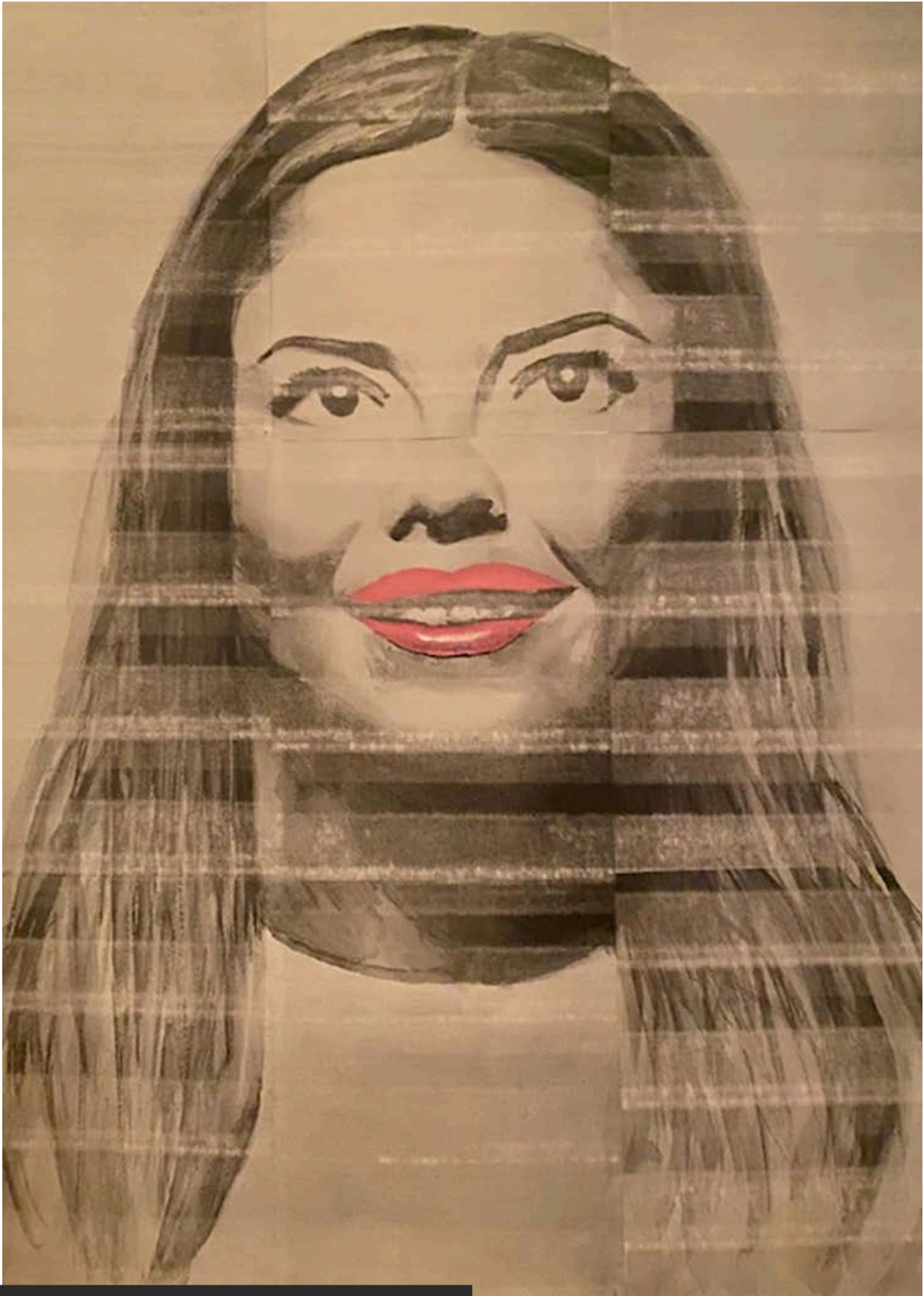
watercolor and digital prints on paper

from *Today Feels Expressive*



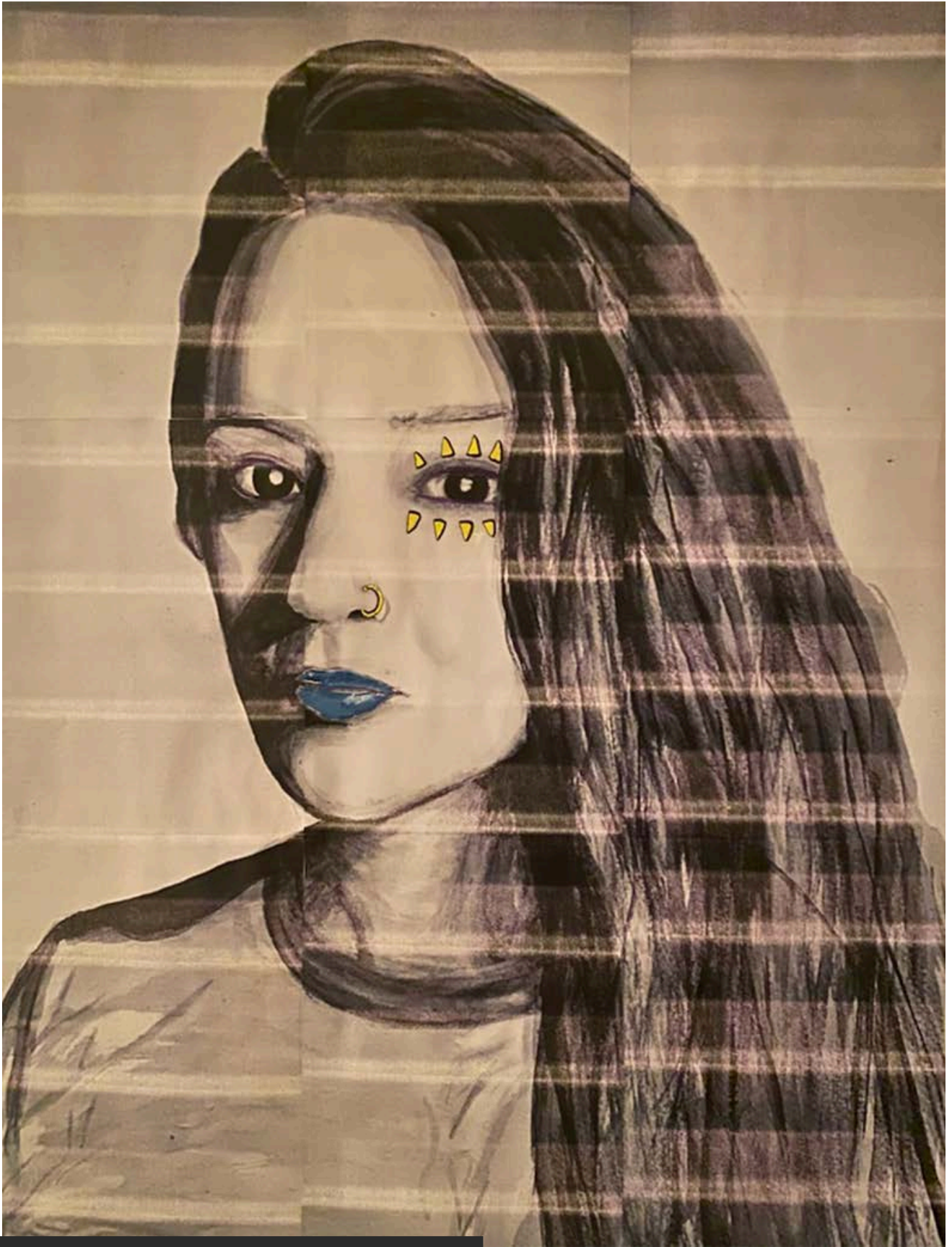
MAGPIE ZINE WINTER 2025

Tor - watercolor and digital print on paper, 18" x 24"
Thomas Sendgraff



MAGPIE ZINE WINTER 2025

Jo - watercolor and digital print on paper, 18"x24"
Thomas Sendgraff



Jo - watercolor and digital print on paper, 18"x24"
Thomas Sendgraff

Thomas Sendgraff is a queer, self-taught artist living in Brooklyn, New York. [More](#)

SIGN OFF

by ELLIE SNYDER

While out at Bullman's Pizza with Ty and Caroline to celebrate the job offer my mother watched her most recent ex-husband arrive with a woman and sit down next door. By the time I visit in three weeks I expect she'll have been on at least that many dates, less thin, no longer saying she'd just like to find a companion. Still saying she'd just like to warn the new woman, he'll fuck her up. Her laugh convincing since finally true. She'll still be sad I don't want love from my lover.

My brother? Starts flying tomorrow and put down crabby deaf white-faced Daisy yesterday, his dog at his dad's. Grief never gives a moment. He is otherwise happy, obsessive, the straightest gay man possible, glancing up against the staples only thanks to the man with whom he exchanged gold bands on a bench in Mexico City. Thanks to Brayden I can tell my brother I think I'm Miranda but also Samantha and a little bit Carrie. They'll marry once settled in Colorado, once my brother is used to his monthly jumps across the sky.

I love them more than usual tonight without wanting to speak to them. A signature lifted the fog and it's like I no longer have a single problem, perpetual catch plucked from my throat. The sleep alone. I've learned how to eat again and walk uphill, I've read 200 books. I'm finally moving forward. I just remembered I used to eat men.

Montanan poet Ellie Snyder writes and manages socials for a global nonprofit and is passionate about literature, fashion and music. [More](#)

METROPOLITAN THOUGHTS

by TOR ROSE

1.

I show up to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in a MoMa hat. “Oh fuck,” I text my friend. “And?” she replies. This is only embarrassing in a self-imposed, insular way. No one actually cares. No one will even notice. And yet here I am, feeling like I’ve just shown up to a wedding wearing white. Narcissist, I utter under my breath.

2.

I definitely died of grief in a past life because, unfortunately, I am that dramatic. Cue the violins. I'm convinced of this every time I'm in a museum. Certain paintings remember me in ways I cannot. I feel this while standing before *Graziella* by Jules-Joseph Lefebvre. As the story goes, *Graziella* is the title character of a novel by Alphonse de Lamartine that recounts the tragic affair between a young Frenchman and the beautiful granddaughter of a Neapolitan fisherman. I actually dated a Frenchman once. He sucked. At the end of the story, the heroine dies of grief when her lover is forced to abandon her. This means I probably saw love as a vocation in a past life, too. Maybe I still do? My dramatics are fairly consistent.

3.

This spurs my next thought: how could men render women in such exquisite detail while treating them so horribly? The softness of a hand, the longing in the eyes—it's like if a serial killer went to church every Sunday. What's even more (or less) baffling is that nothing has really changed. Women are still muses more than equals, trapped in gilded cages that sparkle but remain impenetrable. You need us, you want us, but we exist forever at arm's length. What if I don't want to be kept at arm's length? What if I can feel you on the other side of the door with your hand hovering the knob?

4.

The world is burning. It is an unseasonably warm autumn for another year in a

row, but don't worry, we're amending damage with electric cars and soggy paper straws so that oil on canvas can persevere. Am I a bad person if I say I'm not entirely mad about it—oil on canvas? Stop and marvel at what it's given us. I don't bless the greed, but I do find beauty in the gospel—that transcendence is born from ruin, and every stroke is a eulogy for what's gone. The irony, of course, is that museums are mausoleums dressed as sanctuaries. Art is to destruction, as sacrifice is to salvation. Culture is preserved, and it's not alive, but it is not dead either. Do you find religion beautiful when divorced from dogma, too?

5.

I can't help but feel like something is missing, like my thoughts would seem more punctuated if I were able to wander with a cappuccino in hand. I understand the rationale, of course. One rogue coffee cup, and we're rewriting art history. Would really raise the whole "you break it, you buy it" to a perverse level. But there's still a lack of alchemy. Coffee gives the hands purpose while the mind trails off. Same with cigarettes. I wonder if they would welcome cigarettes over coffee? This thought arrives punctually around 12:30 PM—birth control time. Nothing pulls you out of a historical reverie like tending to your reproductive autonomy. I sit on the bench that sits before Jules Bastien-Lepage's Joan of Arc. Just as I'm sensing a correlation, I overhear a stranger say she has that "blue eye stare." I think of Ray Liotta, and every documentary I watched on the Liberation Movement. Down goes my pill with the same quiet assertion of authority in a patriarchal context. Be damned my constitution for needing to define every trivial scenario.

6.

Nobody understood divinity in distortion better than Dalí. I say this while marveling at one of my favorite paintings of all time, Madonna. There's something about this image, and I want to say it's the tension. There's an ear, and then there's a face, a face that doesn't want to be seen. Not entirely. It hides within the curve, in the soft place where sound is swallowed whole. I step closer and there she is—a woman caught between what is and what was—a Madonna not yet born, not yet lost. She does not offer anything easy but stays with you like a memory. I wonder if the ear knows what to listen for? I wonder how much of a museum's magic is in the art itself and how much is in the people it draws. I wonder this as the only spectator in the room.

7.

And while we're on the subject: What makes art Art? Maybe the answer is irrelevant. Maybe the act of asking is the point. Everything here is a confession

of which sins are admitted and forgiven. It asks: Did you leave people better or worse than when you found them? And like any good sinner, you avoid answering directly, choosing instead to linger a little longer in front of a painting by the original mad genius: Van Gogh. The mad genius who stands as a metaphor. Who made immortalization our greatest spite. I see Van Gogh as both wound and salve; proof that brilliance often lurks in the margins. This was a man who certainly saw love as a vocation. Maybe I'm Van Gogh?

8.

Now that I've made my way to the Ancient Egyptian wing, I'm curious if the secret to eternal youth is dry climates and dying young. Maybe it's not even about immortality but the illusion of it—mummified in lavish tombs and embalmed flesh. No one does death better. Also, Night at the Museum could totally happen. I'm telling you, the statues know something we don't.

9.

I have always felt a certain kinship to Georgia O'Keeffe and Rothko. As someone who is removed entirely from their medium, I'm drawn to how they enrich emptiness. O'Keeffe seems to suggest that softness, when done right, can be just as authoritarian. Rothko says the opposite yet somehow achieves the same effect. They leave us only the essentials, which in turn feels vast and all-encompassing. A balancing act of restraint and intensity. It's the idea that less isn't just more; it's everything. It actually reminds me of my ballet years. I was taught at a young age that a dancer's vitality is to move with purpose without visible effort. Every movement has to extend beyond the body as if each limb comes with its own extension chord. It's a balancing act of weightlessness and power. Softness, when done right, can be just as authoritarian.

10.

Gift shops are proof that humans can turn even the most existential experiences into transactions. After a spiritual stroll through centuries of human suffering and triumph, what better way to commemorate the journey than a tote bag emblazoned with The Death of Socrates? It's capitalism's greatest magic trick, and I eat it up every time. Wait, why didn't I stop in here first to change my hat?

11.

And on their way out, the dead whisper to the living: Come again soon.

Tor Rose is an award-winning poet emerging from the streets of New York. [More](#)

THE GRAPES OF RATH BY JON STINEBACK BY TREVOR JOHNSTON- PIPER

by PAT MORRIS

This 4th grade book report is supposed to be at least 500 words. I couldn't right only 500 words about the Grapes of Rath if I tried!! That's how good this book is Mrs. Weinburger. Mrs. Delores Susan Weinburger. Are you ready? Here we go!

According to the dictionary, a grape is an edible, pulpy fruit that grows on vines. Whoa! And rath means a strong and fierce anger. But if you think this book is about angry grapes then your wrong. This is called a metafor.

Remember metafors Mrs. Weinburger? We talked about those last week. Grapes are juicy and easy to squash in your hand. Sometimes they are soft and disgusting. So they get angry because they are little and disgusting and people boss them around for no reason. So this is a metafor. Also the grape could be a kid who has a book report due the next morning but his parents say that he already used up all his screen time and they don't care that he only had time to read the first three lines on Wikipedia. And then he has lots of rath.

Okay so the book is about this family called the Jodes who are really sad and depressed because they have to live in the Depression. It's really dusty where they live so they can't grow stuff like grapes. But like I already told you grapes are probably a metafor for other things. Like potatoes.

In this report we are not supposed to just describe the characters and what

happens but we have to talk about the themes. You don't have to ask me twice Mrs. Weinburger. This book has the best themes of any book I've ever read. Even better than Dog Man. Dog Man is half cop and half dog and there are themes about how crime doesn't pay and not to ever trust cats. His head was stitched on to the body of a cop I think. I wanted to be Dog Man for halloween but mom said we already had the cowboy costume and she was tired. Now take all of those themes from Dog Man and times them by a hundred because that's how many great themes there are in Grapes of Rath.

And how about that ending? Who could see that coming. Not me, that's for sure. When all those grapes (metaphor) finally got there revenge it made me want to stand up and cheer but I sleep on the bottom bunk of a bunk bed and I would of hit my head. I'm gonna ask my mom now if I can be one of the Jodes for halloween.

I can see that I'm finally already almost at 500 words and I better stop now before I really get going. I know you are a really busy and important lady Mrs Weinburger and probably have lots of better things to do then read your favorite students (ha ha) book report. See you tomorrow!

*Pat Morris teaches English at a community college
in Durham, NC. [More](#)*



ADAM PETERSON

“I’ve an Idea Where to Put the Babies” - fiction

Adam Peterson’s fiction has appeared in *Epoch*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Southern Review*, and elsewhere. He can be found online at www.adampeterson.net



THOMAS HIGGINS

“What’s Human” - poetry

Thomas Higgins is a poet and critic who is currently pursuing an MFA in creative writing at The New School. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Magpie Zine*, *The Inquisitive Eater*, *The Adroit Journal*, *Hoxie Gorge Review*, the *minnesota review*, and elsewhere.



CLAIRE LANCASTER

“But the Cyborg Pleads, Not Asks, This Time” - experimental

Claire Lancaster is a Creative Writing MFA candidate at Sarah Lawrence College, where she also serves as a Fiction Editor for *Lumina*. She received her BA from Elon University with majors in Creative Writing and Professional Writing and Rhetoric. Her work has appeared in *Carolina Muse*, *30 North*, and *Beyond Words* and received Frederick Hartmann awards from authors Alejandro Varela, Claire Luchette, and poet Dr. Taylor Byas.



KATHRYN REESE

“B&B” - poetry

Kathryn Reese lives on Peramangk land in South Australia. She works in medical science & enjoys road trips, hiking & chasing frogs to record their calls for science. Kathryn’s work can be found in *The Engine Idling*, *Epistemic Lit*, & *Australian Poetry Journal*.



SETH ALLEN

Terrible Pitch: “Bone-In Hotdogs” - humor

Seth Allen is a comedian in Portland, Oregon. He performs at Helium Comedy Club and at festivals including Bumbershoot, Treefort, Pickathon, and SF Sketchfest. He co-hosts a weekly podcast called *The Washed Men*.



DANIEL ACEVEDO WITH IVONNE YÁÑEZ

photography

“I am a Mexican artist who uses photography as a means of self-expression, allowing images to speak for me. My work focuses on portraying people, blending deep conversations with my subjects to translate their ideas into visual narratives. These narratives explore themes of personal heritage, a desire to connect with the world, and transgender resilience. Identity—both my own and that of others—lies at the core of my practice, with emotions serving as a powerful source of inspiration.

Photography, to me, is a controlled process where every decision shapes the final image. From selecting the subject to composing the scene, each choice is intentional. While I primarily work with digital photography, I choose the medium based on the story I want to tell. Growing up in an artistic environment surrounded by mariachis and being a musician for over a decade, I see rhythm and emotion as subtle yet powerful forces in my work.”



BRIAN McNELY

“Sneglen” - nonfiction

Brian McNely is professor of Writing, Rhetoric, & Digital Studies at the University of Kentucky. His work appears in *Off Assignment*, *Porridge*, *Invisible City*, *Rijden*, and in academic journals such as *Philosophy & Rhetoric*. His 2024 book, *Engaging Ambience*, explores visual research methods. He also races bikes.



JOHN AUGUST

“How the Moonbeam Endows the Rime” - poetry

John August is an emerging writer. He currently resides in the Midwest, and his work explores themes of addiction recovery, ecological mourning, and the place of the sacred in modern life. At his best, his work says something about how those three things are one.



COLE FORREST

“The Coast (A Diary Entry)” - poetry

Cole Forrest is a Queer Anishinaabe writer from Nipissing First Nation. Last year they published a debut co-authored poetry collection titled *Once The Smudge is Lit*. Writing is their passion, and any opportunity to share their words is a welcomed one. Miigwetch.



BLOSSOM HIBBERT

collage

Blossom Hibbert has a pamphlet, suddenly, it's now published by Leaf Press. Her work has appeared in places such as *The Temz Review*, *Litter*, *International Times*, *Anthropocene*, & *Buttonhook Press*. She is an artist from England but has relocated to Melbourne.



DANIELLE ROBERSON

“Her Chery Aftertaste” - fiction

Danielle Roberson is a writer living in Texas. You can find her short stories in *The Word's Faire* and *Magpie Zine*. She is a 2025 Writer's League of Texas Fellow.



RADOSLAVE ROCHALLYI

“Fractures of Meaning” - poetry

“With my work, I try to look behind the curtain of the philosophy of universal semantics and discover emotional symbols and visual signs that have universal intelligibility - red color = passion, danger, or circle = unity, thus trying to complete my aesthetic-logical minimalism as a system that combines aesthetics and logic in content and mathematical and geometric patterns in form. This helps me to create the most concise description of the expression of complex ideas. I try to say more with less. In my work, I try to answer the question of how deep meanings can be communicated through simple, aesthetically pleasing forms of mathematics and geometry. This minimalism is the basis of my artistic-aesthetic communication system. The result of my work is mathematical poetry (in all my artistic expressions from text to painting) as a language of the subjective experience of reality.”



EZRA FOX

“For the Student Who Told Me Their Grandmother...” - poetry

Ezra Fox lives and writes in San Francisco, CA. In their writing, Ezra is curious about impermanence and non-duality, and how it pertains to their subjects of lineage, queerness, and spirituality. Learn more about Ezra, and read their other publications at ezrafox.net.



THE POET Mj

“Pavlova” - nonfiction

Melinda Jane has one hundred and seventy-four published works through fifty national and international publishers. Nominated for ‘Best of the Net,’ 2019.

LINDY GIUSTA

art

Lindy Giusta (they/them) is a Brooklyn-based, queer multi-media artist whose work explores themes of identity and vulnerability through a distinctive blend of watercolor, charcoal, pen, and gouache.

With a background as a librarian and eight years focused on visual arts, their creative practice is enriched by a deep love of literature and storytelling. Lindy's work has been featured in several publications, including the cover of the 2nd edition of *Weird Mag Lit*, *Peatsmoke Journal*, *The Hemlock*, and two upcoming stories with their corresponding art in *Flash Frog*, amongst several other publications.

When not creating art, they can be found playing mandolin, various adventures in exploring NYC, reading voraciously, or drinking copious amounts of quality coffee. Their work can be found on Instagram @lindydoesart.



COLE WEISS

“Roxy’s Heaven” - poetry

Cole Weiss (they/he) is a current junior at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont, working towards a degree in elementary education. When not drafting lesson plans, they enjoy writing, digital photography, and scouring bookstores to expand their poetry book collection.



MICHAEL NEUWIRTH

“The Digital Snail That Lives Inside My Head” - experimental

Michael Neuwirth spent most of his childhood in Virginia Beach, by the waves. In high school, he was part of the Muse Writing Center’s Teen Fellowship. He’s currently at Old Dominion University. He enjoys playing card games and traveling for tournaments.



HALLIE FOGARTY

“Deliberate Displays of Unease” - poetry

Hallie Fogarty is a poet, teacher, and artist from Kentucky. She received her MFA in poetry from Miami University, where she was awarded the 2024 Jordan-Goodman Graduate Award for Poetry. Her work has been published or is forthcoming in *Poetry South*, *The Lindenwood Review*, *Hoxie Gorge Review*, and elsewhere. Besides writing, she loves cardigans, dogs, and everything peach-flavored. Find her online: www.halliefogarty.com



ZIXIANG ZHANG

“If A Plant Dreams” - poetry

Zixiang Zhang (he/him/his) has poems published or forthcoming in *Hanging Loose*, *Cathexis Northwest*, *Consilience*, *Pedestal*, *The Nature of Our Times*, *Pensive: A Global Journal of Spirituality*, and others. He holds an undergraduate degree in geology from Stanford University and master’s degrees from UC Berkeley and the American Museum of Natural History. Once, he published research on brachiopod evolution in the journal *Paleobiology*. Now, he teaches Earth Science at a small high school in NYC and enjoys growing succulents, erging, sunbathing, and sundry. He may be active @zzverse.



THOMAS SENDGRAFF

art

Thomas Sendgraff is a queer, self-taught artist living in Brooklyn, New York. His mediums include glass, paint, and digital media, which he uses to evoke personal emotions drawn from memories through layered textures and colors. He is currently a graduate student in NYU’s Visual Arts Administration program.



ELLIE SNYDER

“Sign Off” - poetry

Montanan poet Ellie Snyder writes and manages socials for a global nonprofit and is passionate about literature, fashion, and music. Find her work in *Pangyrus*, *The Headlight Review*, *The Blood Pudding*, and elsewhere, and find her fitchecks on Instagram @elliensnyder.

TOR ROSE

“Metropolitan Thoughts” - nonfiction

Tor Rose is an award-winning poet emerging from the streets of New York. Through her artistry, she creates poignant portraits of the human experience, allowing readers to walk the fine line between imagination and reality



PAT MORRIS

Book Report: “The Grapes of Rath...” - Humor

Pat Morris teaches English at a community college in Durham, NC. He writes humor pieces, short stories, and is currently revising a novel. Other than writing, he is happiest reading, running, joking around with his wife and kids, and tending to the emotional needs of his pitbull mix, Argo Christmas.

Daniel Acevedo

Seth Allen

John August

Hallie Fogarty

Cole Forrest

Ezra Fox

Lindy Giusta

Blossom Hibbert

Thomas Higgins

Claire Lancaster

Brian McNely

Pat Morris

The Poet Mj

Michael Neuwirth

Adam Peterson

Kathryn Reese

Danielle Roberson

Radoslav Rochallyi

Tor Rose

Thomas Sendgraff

Ellie Snyder

Cole Weiss

Zixiang Zhang

and Cover Artist David B. Such

MAGPIE

