

**"All I desired was to walk upon such an  
earth that had no maps."**

-Michael Ondaatje (UC 1965)  
Excerpted from "The English Patient"

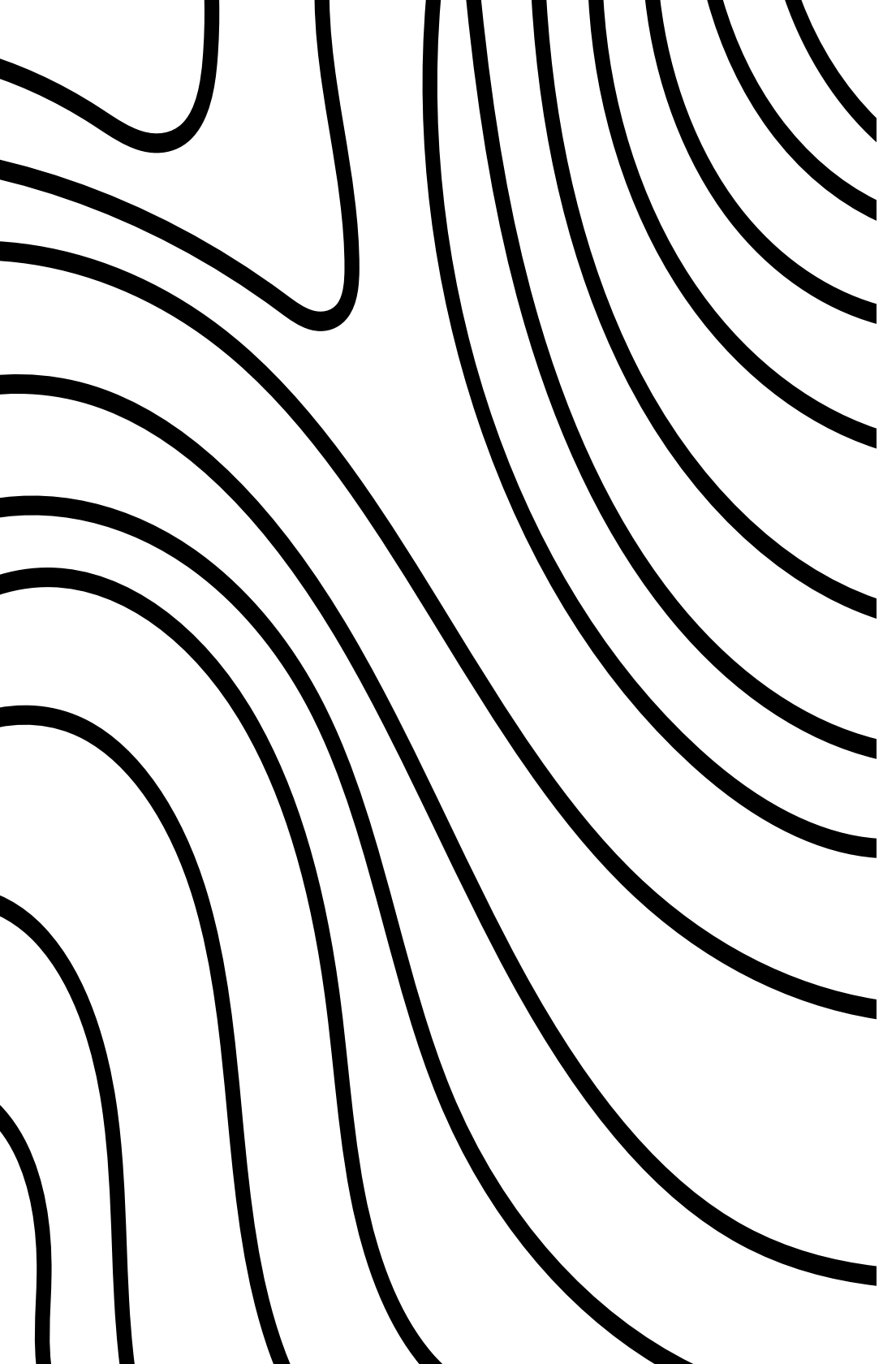


# THE UC REVIEW

University College Literary Journal

A biannual literary journal of University  
College at the University of Toronto.

Coach House Printing



## MASTHEAD

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This journal was produced and published on the traditional lands of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. We acknowledge our collective responsibility to uphold, protect, and centre Indigenous people and land. As well in solidarity with other marginalized nations, and conversations surrounding decolonization and reconciliation.

SPRING 2022

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear reader,

The 2021-2022 *University College Review* masthead and I are proud to present to you our final issue of the school year, entitled 'Elsewhere.'

This edition is an homage to places outside of our present realities. It is not about where we are but where we used to be, where we could be, and where we're going. By piecing together these 'elsewheres,' we draw the intricate, often messy, maps of our lives.

The following pages are filled with reminiscences about past homes, longings for far-off destinations, and recollections of simpler, more innocent ages. Each testifies to how where we have been – whether mentally or physically – has altered our perspectives and enriched our senses of self. These are stories about the places we no longer occupy but which nonetheless occupy a place in us.

May this edition teach you to treasure the place you are at now, for it will one day be your 'elsewhere.'

Sincerely,

**Ashley Manou**

Editor-in-Chief, 2021-2022

*The University College Literary Review*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This, the eighth and final issue of the UC Review on which I will work, has been an honour to create. I am so thankful to our contributors, who are creatives of astonishing and unique talent. Your creativity has built this issue; you have taken what was merely an idea and brought it alive. This publication is indebted to you and your artistry.

Thank you to Maria for being an incredible Senior Editor and rising to the challenge of designing this issue at the last minute. I think you'll agree that she did an incredible job. I am overjoyed that she has accepted the role of Editor-in-Chief for the coming school year. Her enthusiasm and spirit are unmatched and are part of what has made this past year so enjoyable. I am excited to see the wonderful things she accomplishes with the UC Review and beyond.

I also owe a great deal to Allison, another talented Senior Editor, for bringing her shrewd eye to the Review. Her voice is always appreciated at our submissions meeting, and she is a great help in discerning the most suitable works for each edition. She has also contributed to both of this year's issues and proven herself to be a thought-provoking and skilled writer.

Next, I would like to thank our Associate Editors, Nithya, Iman, Manisha, and Elaine, for their dedication. Their assistance has been invaluable, and they have done an incredible job copyediting alongside our Chief Copy Editor, Sylvia. Sylvia is hardworking, thoughtful, and knowledgeable. It has been a pleasure to work alongside her these past two years.

I so appreciate Charlotte, our Art Director, for her creative contributions and keen insight. She has been such a bright light at the Review, and I will miss her warmth and energy.

Thank you to John from Coach House Books for his assistance in making this issue a reality. He does beautiful work and has been a great help to our publication over the years.

Lastly, to all of U of T, thank you for always making me feel that there's nowhere else I'd rather be.

**Ashley Manou**

# CONTENT

## TO-DO LIST MADE FROM LOVE

Rion Levy

-Don't worry about the cat stuck there, in the cabinet, crying for darkness and treats. Worry about the pot of gold boiling over as your gin turns cold sitting on the veranda in Spring.

-Don't worry about the smell of perfume under our noses that the city asks we bring indoors constantly; I have room for only one sore lover in the morning who bathes constantly, as he should please.

-Don't worry about the hole dug into my fake wood floor, filling itself in every night before a mouse comes to dig it out once again. Neither you nor God will fall in it.

-Just worry about the daisies and Wordsworth's handkerchief sitting on some island lost to time and camera stills, and worry about where other lovers go to write poems about fresh pasta water and the worlds they see in daydreams.

## GREENER GRASS

Elaine Lee

Each lawn along our street buzzes to life every weekend like a renewal of vows. My grandfather is at the helm of the lawnmower, my sister and I and a fleet of tadpole cousins swimming behind its green spray. We are knotted to his cord, chasing his stoic back, laughing at the abundance of bumblebees.

I get older and my cousins move away and my grandfather moves out and my sister folds inward like the bowed neck of a paper crane. While wearing mud-clotted rain boots, peeling clementines in the locker-lined hall, Elise tells me the scent of freshly cut grass is a cry of pain, a wail of trauma.

I get older and I mow the lawn alone. The lawnmower is brutishly roaring, not sputtering with mirth. Across the street, two children plunge into a sprinkler's cold toss. I tell apologies to each amputated blade, so immeasurably removed from its birthplace. For the benefit of the children, if they should be listening.

## HIGHWAY 60 CORRIDOR

Kieran Kalls Rice

Light and airy,  
The pair of us  
when we'd begun.  
But we're sluggish more with every passing step.

In the gloom of winters  
our disposition sinks  
at four o'clock  
alongside the sun

We are in the underbelly of the escarpment,  
two tiers from Glenfern.  
Houses lord above,  
as in,  
ranking shaped  
threat on threat  
of ugliness that won't invite us in

It is the dead centre of the city  
where we sneak behind the estates  
And think to ourselves,  
only wealth so acute  
could account  
for such a sanctuary,  
a last grasp  
of yet-to-be spoiled land.

We see  
Mohawk marks  
adoption, co-option  
Nothing sanctified in  
Fires

fueled by  
gasoline, whiskey,  
the spirit of a nation.

A slow motion  
approach of red checker  
bringing  
the squatters jaw:

don't you understand these are compassionate boys of  
the country?  
If I am not mistaken, Wheat Kings begins with G.  
Mind you, this was in  
killbear, killfox, killowl.  
where glory and order reign  
and  
conservation is enforced with a pistol

My sad sack kickback  
amounts to  
eviction,  
wall-to-wall shame.  
Should've said  
railroaded to deprivation,  
twisted collegial soul.

Your  
Highway 60 corridor  
throttling this earthly thirst

After the ejection  
it is six o'clock,  
blindingly dark  
and  
we cannot find the car



It feels like hot panic  
rising from the absurdity of this union

The snow not brightening the dark.  
Reels of time.  
Under no circumstances retrospection

What is this,  
but a stranger's pale face  
resting on my shoulder

If there is nowhere to go,  
except home, and,  
nowhere to look but each other's eyes—  
burdens and tax  
dear,  
folding underneath  
the force of  
I would prefer

It took us this long,  
these years washed away  
to see what's turned out  
from an incurable affair

Our egos of the afternoon traded-in  
to thumb down our ritual,  
nighttime fear

## WHAT I CAN RECALL FROM MY CHILDHOOD

Brooke Collins

Return to the cradle of lemon trees  
Homesick for the bay breeze  
That came in through  
The window of your childhood kitchen  
The light in your childhood bedroom  
Your childhood—  
Pretend to remember now

Too far removed  
From Kansas  
The digicam  
Elementary school hallways  
Filling bottles from the fountain of youth

When you get your first car  
Drive out to the suburbs  
Curl back the old bile  
Realize you don't know which house  
Which life  
Used to be yours

**Chrysanthemums**

Changhao Li



## HOW I REMEMBER NEBRASKA

Allison Zhao

a body in an open field, electrified  
fences jarring young bones into  
some land of life.

fields  
scraped like raw skin  
farmland cratered with bloodless,  
microscopic wounds,  
pulsing.

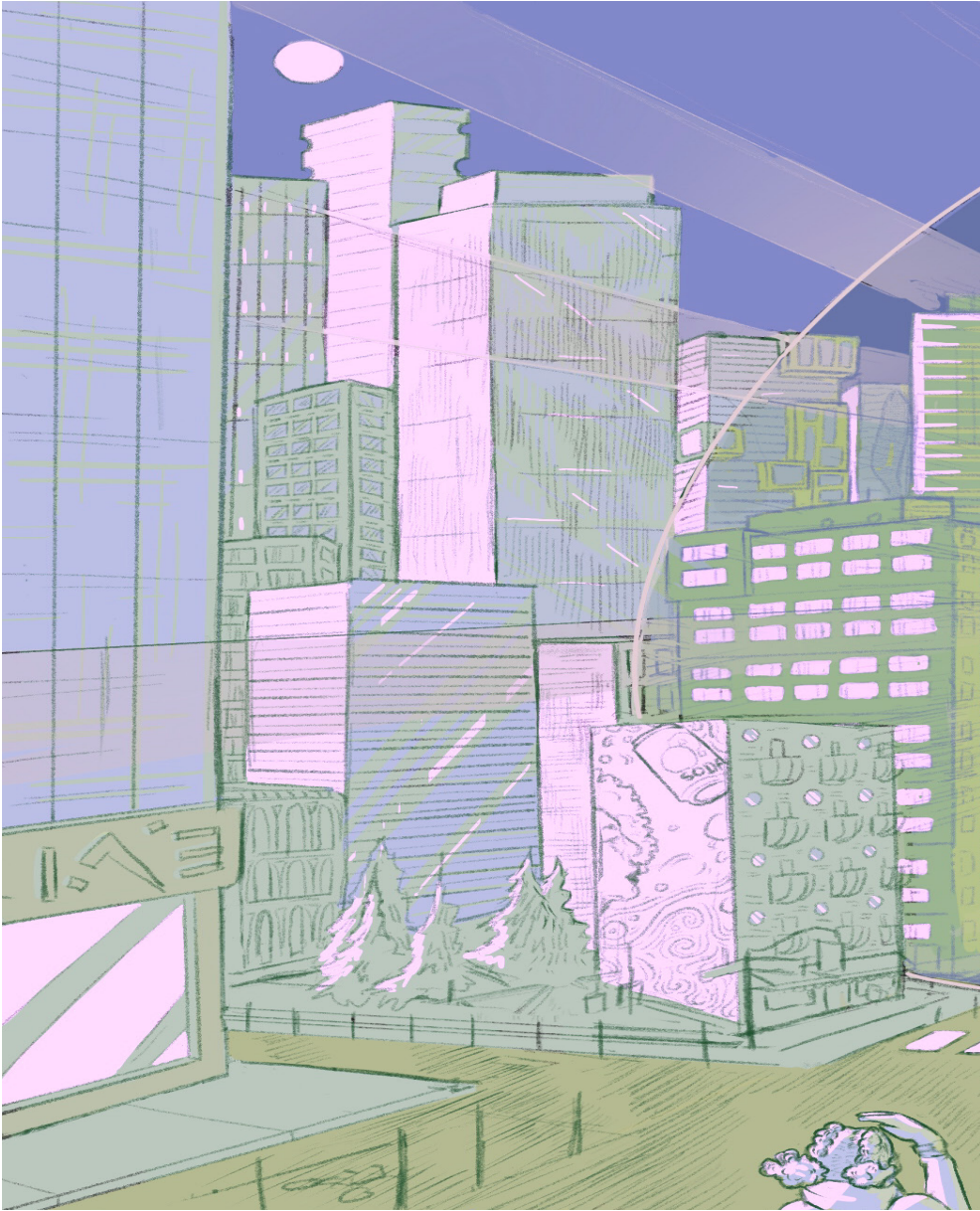
a corpse  
looking up at bleached  
skies, crosshatched by planes,  
daylight comets, wild  
solitude.

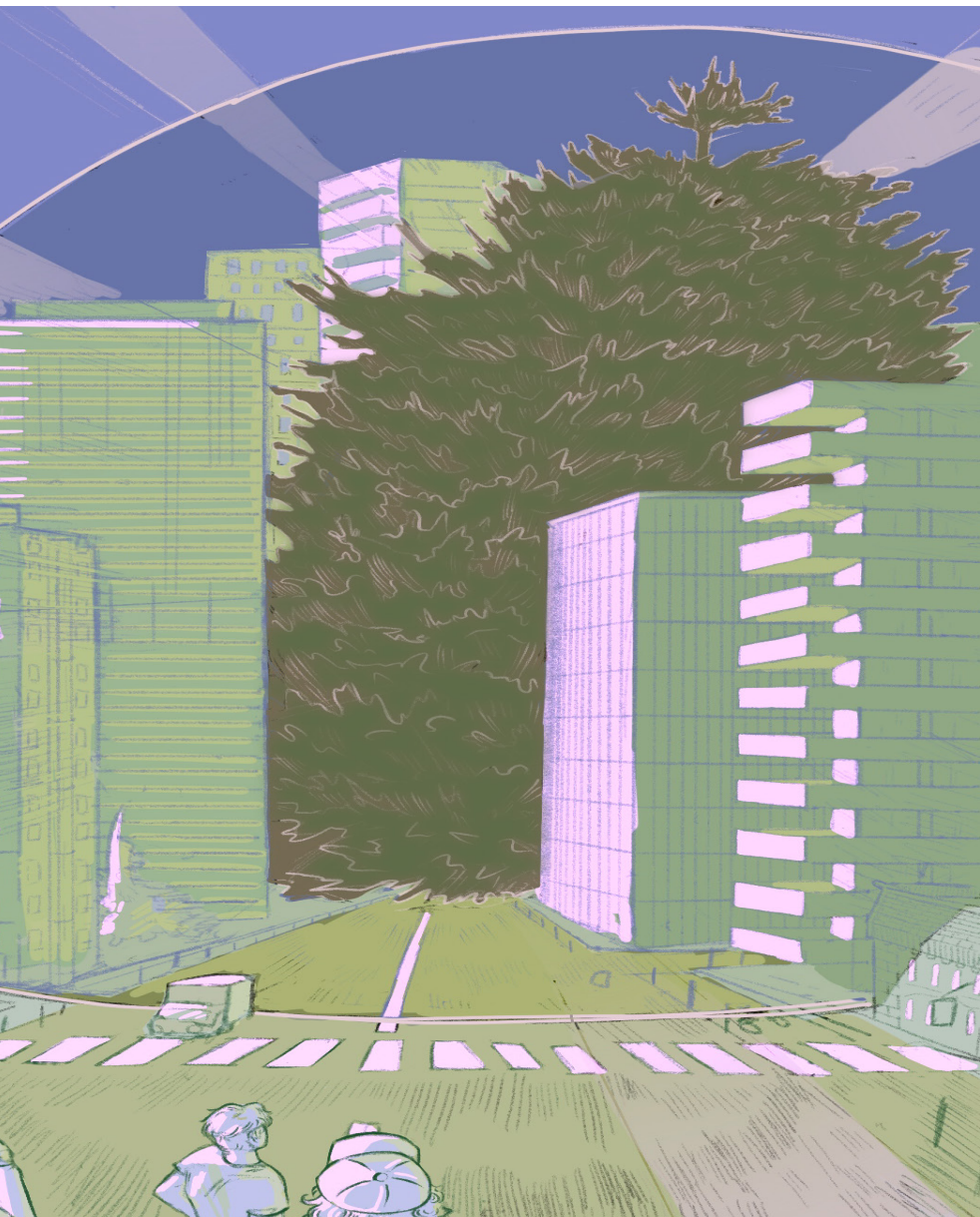
walking up  
rivers like sluggish veins  
into heartland, backwards, home.

## TO FOLD A CRANE

Yanni Santos

from the red-marked  
pages of half-of-a-try,  
instill the discipline so:  
Instill implies a stillness  
    —withdraw me from this  
until I collapse, ballooning  
far from paper.  
I'm soap bubbles  
on the edges of porcelain,  
lining up curves  
into neatness,  
reflecting the harshness  
of the fluorescent lights,  
erasing each stain, absorbing  
each wrong into iridescence,  
collapsing into another  
and another, washing  
ink with soap, making  
paper from the pulp,  
meshing the mixture  
through the mold  
to dry, folding  
(a wing tip  
angled corner  
tucked in) into  
something sharp  
and something flat  
and something striped  
with brilliance.





## TAKE BACK

Seavay van Walsum

## VIEWMOUNT PARK BREAKDOWN

Nina Katz

Even after all this, I don't feel inspired.

*Pauses*

*Wind speaks softly*

*Pauses*

If anything, I've talked myself into a knot.

*Wind snickers, agrees*

*Congested sniffle*

*Contemplative hum*

*Considered breath*

Shadows shudder upon greying leaves,

Unrelieved, unwound, unkept.

Something stirs:

*Distant cries*

*A child's enraged aria*

No. Just scuttling scooters.

Only I, bereft, lounge bluntly

Upon a bench.

This sun-suffused November noon

Nods along, mocking me with its

Golden smile.

*Rolling wheels slither past*

*Eye-contact with fluffy mother*

*Thoughts trail after them, never quite*

*reaching—*

Unremarkable clouds.

Inarticulate sky.

*Hoarse voice*

*Nothing left to say*



**3:39 AM**

Tehlan Lenius

i walk the yellow tightrope  
above the asphalt sea,  
all is silent save the quiet rhythm  
of bare feet on empty streets

the houses have no eyes  
the streetlights never lie  
the only soul in sight  
is the shadow guiding me

our roles have reversed  
with the death of light:  
my hand in theirs,  
i let them lead,  
a passenger of the night

## WHAT I DID WHEN NOBODY WAS LOOKING

Mathea Treslan

When nobody was looking I hugged a tree  
and her sap licked my cheeks like a mama cat  
although I wasn't quite sure who was mothering who  
I peeked down the trail to see if anyone was coming  
scanned the horizon for the two old dogs who plod  
alongside the old woman's naked feet like molasses  
thought they'd die for sure last winter, she says  
but they just keep going  
they just get slower but they don't stop  
—here they come

pine needles tickle my arms  
and I wonder if I'd ever considered this tree before today  
not as the woods on the park trail but as an individual  
if the wind knocked her over would anybody miss her?  
has she fed and been satisfied with the consolation of  
her bosom?  
drunk deeply and been delighted with her abundant  
memory?  
I wonder how many insects call this solid wood home  
and whether I would scream  
if one crawled on my neck  
all creepy-crawly-like

when nobody was looking I dug my toes between her  
roots  
like a trellis  
and I stayed



**CLEMATIS**  
Changhao Li

## **MY BUDDY DIONYSUS CAN GET US IN**

Brooke Collins

Dionysus is here Thursday night at the pub  
Wrenching back thighs  
Lifting pints  
Pouring over picklebacks

The Bacchae are the lulu girls you dismiss as fickle  
Was her name Aimee?  
Anna? Alexa? Agave?  
How many different ways can you spell Ashlee(i)(g)(h)  
(y)?

You are no hero here  
Wear your Nike  
Sit in your breadth  
Call yourself a feminist for reading The Penelopiad  
And “like, totally getting it”  
Trust me  
No Jason or Achilles  
Can be found in the Planet Fitness

Dionysus is your drinking buddy  
You tell him he's sweet  
Not like honey, but like sweat  
For the girls on Cithaeron  
Girls gone *wild*  
He's the man for that!  
He can get us into all the good parties  
Just send him the instas of the girls you wanna bring  
And he'll do you a real favour  
So what if they wake up in the light of day  
And wish they had never met you  
That's life when your buddies are gods, right?  
The chorus just never stops  
Singing  
Your  
Praises





## SWAN LAKE

Changhao Li

## **KAMALA**

Adam Zivo

with my hand i will press from you that old self that is  
dying.  
with my tongue i will excavate his debris  
until you are made new and  
fit to conquer me.



## FREE SWIMMING

Mathea Treslan

It was August, when the peonies droop all heavy 'cause they're filled to the brim with fat black ants. Lily and me were best friends. It worked out really well, 'cause I like blue freezies and white freezies the exact same amount, and so does Lily. So my mum snipped our two freezies right down the middle, and we sat on the swings in my backyard while my brother Howie chased the Canada geese.

We always have lots to talk about, Lily and me.

She asks me, why does your bathroom look so rich, all glass and no squeaky plastic?

I say I dunno, my dad works at the bank where all the money is.

She asks me, have you ever seen an angel?

I tell Lily no, that my dad's an atheist, and angels aren't real.

Well, says Lily, my sister and I both saw one.

Lily looks like she's about to cry, but then she tilts her chin up real high and tells me her dad says not to listen to anybody if they ever start saying God's not real, or how babies are made.

Lily's dad is one of those confusing grownups, who's your friend but kind of scary at the same time. His name is Keith and he takes us to Fairytale Park sometimes. It's this big place with a Ferris wheel and a haunted house I won't go in, not ever. Not even when I'm thirteen.

At Fairytale Park there are little houses with flowers in the window boxes. They're fun to hide in, which Lily and I really like. Sometimes Keith pretends to be a villain and chases us, shouting about the Big Bad Wolf or Fee Fi Fo Fum. And then he sticks his big fat arm in the skinny window hole and says, who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf! Me and Lily press tight against the wall and we just about scream our heads off laughing. I don't know if we're really scared or not. But then sometimes Keith puts his head in, which makes me scared for real because his mouth smiles big but his eyes are black marbles.

Lily's mama Sue picks us up, Keith and us kids, in the minivan that smells like stale french fries. Sue clucks her tongue at Keith because he didn't pay to stop their cat from having more babies, and now there is a puddle of new cats on the bathroom floor. Keith does an evil laugh and says don't worry mama, I will be taking those kitties for a drive to the country that they won't soon forget. A nice little trip up North. A one-way ticket to paradise.

I scream a short scream, and Keith chuckles and says that new kittens barely have brains. He tells me I am being sensitive. The minivan drops me outside my house all sticky with tears, and my mum says that Keith is probably only joking about the kittens, but that some people like the Lowells have old-fashioned ideas about the best way to handle their pets.

In August we go swimming at the park pool, because the air curdles and the bugs are hungry but they can't bite you under the water. My brother Howie and me, we go swimming on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Sundays, too. Sundays are free swimming days, when it doesn't cost any money.

Lily and Lily's little sister and their mama only go swimming on Sundays.

My mum says to my dad, they sure do like those free swimming days, the Lowells.

My dad says, anything free, they flock to like June gnats. They're the first ones out on Saturday morning looking for garage sales, and their kids are the grubbiest grabbiest candy-grabbers at every parade.

Yes, says my mum. The Lowells are easy to spot.

I ask mum if her and Mrs. Lowell are friends and she says, not really, but they care about each other like neighbours do. Neighbours from the other side of the street are neighbours just the same. I guess that's why we always swim together on Sundays. Mrs. Lowell and Lily and Lily's little sister and my mum and Howie and me.

Last week's Sunday was especially hot, and me and Lily couldn't wait to do somersaults in the deep end. That's why we were pulling our mums' swimsuit straps to get them to hurry up and go faster. Out of the damp changing room and onto the hot dry deck. We were laughing hard and leaning all our weight against our mums so that we were diagonal. It was a riot. Only, Lily's mum's swimsuit was loose and slippery, so the top of it fell right down around her waist like flabby snake skin. Then her face turned all red and she scrambled to pick it up. I think she knew it was purple and splotchy and mean at the top of her belly below where her boob hangs down.

Those purple splotches looked just like the boiled eggplant that makes Howie cry.

Our mum turned red too and she passed Lily's mama a towel and said let's sit down Sue, let's have a chat, and told me and Lily and Howie and Lily's little sister to go wait in the showers and rinse the sweat off before we swim. I think Lily's cheek had a tear on it, but it might have been the shower water.

The Lowells stopped coming to free swim after that and I did too, because Sundays weren't as fun without Lily. I didn't see her much after August because we went to different schools.

I guess Lily's dad didn't pay to stop their cat from having more babies, because that October I got a tiny orange kitten for my birthday. My dad laughed, and said that my kitten's blood was not of noble ranking.

She's a Johnstone kitten now, said my mum. She's risen above her humble Lowell roots.

I looked my kitten right in her big kitten eyes and told her not to worry, she was lucky to get taken to my side of the street. I wonder if her brothers and sisters wander below tall country grass looking for a toy mouse to play with. I wonder if they know they are Lowells. I think she won the kitten lottery, my tiny orange kitten.

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT IN MY ROOM

Nina Katz

Inevitably, we find ourselves here again:  
You, red-eyed and reminiscent.  
Me, pity-choked and repulsed.

The lines in my palms  
Are born from your abandoned poems;  
I am mute as you recite what isn't yours.

You warble Yeats or Wordsworth,  
You always did fashion yourself a Romantic—  
I wonder why I ever believed words had any worth at all.

I owe everything to you. It's unbearable.  
You luxuriate in the weary weight of  
Your murmured memories and I simmer like

The buried love letter I found,  
Forgotten in the folds of your old anthology.  
I hid it again because

You'd surely construe the curves  
Of my mother's careful calligraphy  
As a death threat.

I start twisting my wrists to wring our twinned veins  
But they're too deep and we're too here  
And I've too little control and

It's late. I've said too much.





## Fishing in a River of Fire

Seavay van Walsum

## THE BIG JUMP

Brooke Collins

Oil leaked in the lake the summer before we all left  
Capture this:  
Quasi-kids cutting through the colours with a quiet des-  
peration  
Jumped from the bridge  
Finally taller than our fathers  
Braved the dark  
Past the rocks  
Broken tailbone beach  
Old men doing god knows what

Toby's toe gets caught on a fishing hook  
His silence catches across the crag

On the ride back, we are all sticky damp in the back of  
the truck  
Meet his eyes in the rear view  
He is crying real quiet  
This is as good as we're ever gonna get  
Soaking in the slippery streetlight of stars



## COMPANION

Adam Zivo

at the border of a rotting veranda,  
the night salivates and  
i pluck thoughts of you  
and make a shawl from them—  
mornings paralyzed in sunlight,  
toes twitching amid dust motes,  
sensation whittled down  
to scratchy wool.  
this will be mine.  
then the thought melts away,  
a curl of smoke in the dark,  
and the night is still there,  
its oesophagus patiently gaping,  
leaving me breathless.





**TANZAKU**  
Changhao Li

## **THE CRONWELL CAFE**

Brooke Collins

Never have I been more home overgrown  
Than those leaky breakfast mornings at the Cromwell  
cafe

Sipping melting milkshake  
Wishing we could stay in those cracked vinyl booths  
Knees clicking like shy kisses  
No parameters of digital distances

Foggy August air  
When we got old it was easier  
To see how beautiful those  
Queasy, half-baked mornings were

## COCOONS

Allison Zhao

You whisper to me in a college town in a tone I cannot place. I've heard whispers that you're on a spiral downwards, and this place has reached its branching ivy down into the silk cocoons of your heart, passed by silkworm branches, to pinch the damp wings of a half-transformed butterfly. Some misery wormed into your arteries, and makes you tip in butterfly kisses and swear out loud, saying that this is just the tip of the iceberg of your newfound happiness. Loud mouths swarm over each other every night, mouthing along to music pumped over the sound of the night express, till I'm not sure your mind will ever be called sound again. Mind the gap in the train tracks on your way out of here, you say, and you don't keep track of pseudo-lovers, but you'll miss me keeping you warm.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## **ADAM ZIVO**

He/him - University College Alumni - 2015

Philosophy Specialist

Adam Zivo is a weekly columnist at the National Post and a serial social entrepreneur focusing on LGBTQ activism.

## **ALLISON ZHAO**

She/her - Victoria College - Year 3

English Major, and Public Policy Major

Allison Zhao has been losing track of time. She is currently running low on pens, and can be found in the same places she's always been in.

## **BROOKE COLLINS**

She/her - Victoria College - Year 3

English Major, Cinema Studies Minor, and Creative Expression and Society Minor

Brooke Collins is a writer and undergraduate at the University of Toronto studying English, Cinema Studies, and Creative Expression and Society. She grew up in Sarnia, Ontario.

## **CHANGHAO LI**

He/him - University College - Year 3

Art History Major, and Philosophy Major

Changhao Li (he/him) is an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, double majoring in Art History and Philosophy. As a Toronto-based photographer and art historian on the academic track, Changhao's primary research interest is in contemporary East Asian aesthetics.

## **ELAINE LEE**

She/her - Victoria College - Year 2

English Major, and Public Policy Major

Elaine is always looking forward to patio season.

## **KIERAN KALLS RICE**

He/him - Woodsworth College - Year 1

Indigenous Studies Major, and English Major

Kieran Kalls Rice is a first-year student who spends his free time reading Indigenous literature and writing.



## **MATHEA TRESLAN**

She/her - Victoria College - Year 3

English Literature Major, and International Relations  
Major

Mathea began telling stories recently, and has no plans to stop. She is from Owen Sound, Ontario.

## **NINA KATZ**

She/her - Victoria College - Year 2

English Major, Drama Major, and Creative Expressions  
and Society Minor

Nina Katz is a writer in her second year of study at U of T. She loves to read, sing, and spend as much time outside as humanly possible.

## **RION LEVY**

He/him - Victoria College - Year 2

Literature and Critical Theory Specialist, Spanish Minor,  
and Material Culture and Semiotics Minor

Rion Levy is a poet who knows pretty much very little or nothing about most things and wants to change that.

## **SEAVEY VAN WALSUM**

They/them - Victoria College - Year 2

Literature and Critical Theory Major, French Minor, and  
Critical Equity & Solidarity Studies Minor

Seavey's work depicts visual allegories of anthropogenic destruction or retaliation in a magical realism style, their larger-than-life landscapes in this style casts a sense of scene and story. Seavey is the Vol 64 Art Editor for The Strand, their other visual and written works can be found in The Varsity, The Goose, and the LCTSU journal.

## **TEHLAN LENIUS**

She/her - Woodsworth College - Year 2

Literature and Critical Theory Major, English Minor,  
and Creative Expression and Society Minor

Tehlan is a former child and aspiring writer who spends most of their time lamenting over the fact that they don't know what to write.

## **JULLIANA (YANNI) SANTOS**

She/her - St. Michael's College - Year 4

Art History Major, and Philosophy Major

Yanni is currently the Arts section editor for The Mike and an associate editor for Acta Victoriana. She writes poetry and short fiction, with a present focus on family, guilt, consumption, and human relation to the environment. Her work is featured or forthcoming in Mnerva, The Spectatorial, and Goose: An Annual Review of Short Fiction.

## CREATIVE DETAILS

### CHANGHAO LI

Pages 15, 25, 28-29, and 40-41

**Medium:** Photography, Digital.

**Project Title:** In Between.

Inspired by the aesthetics of Edo Period Japanese shikki (Lacquerware), traditional Chinese brush painting, William Morris's wall covering design and the Chinese Gongbi pictorial style. Adopted the tranquillity and smallness illustrated by Masao Yamamoto's work of art coupled with Miho Kajioka's tanzaku design, Paul Cupido's color toning and their serene attention to simple things; this project expresses a more intuitive personal artistic vision and one that resonates with what philosopher, Yoshinori Onishi, categorized as Wabi-Sabi which strives for a "wandering walk" between reality and the metaphysical realm. The work challenges the essence of photography as a hyper-realism art medium. Photographer Barbara Cole achieves this by capturing impressionistic imageries. The project does this by producing images of what Christopher Dresser during the New English Art movement would call a "semi-conventional" design, thereby moving one step away from naturalistic depiction by adopting east Asian conventionalized imagery. It further blurs the boundary between the concept of artistic photography and decorative design, therefore raising questions concerning the distinction between art and design. The project strives for a photography style that moves away from realism and approaches a more conventionalized expression. One that wanders between reality and impression, between naturalistic and conventional.

## **SEAVEY VAN WALSUM**

Pages 20-21, and 34-35

**Medium:** Digital, Procreate.

"Fishing in a River of Fire" began as a composition study inspired by the artist Jon Juarez. The cliffs are based off Gulf Hagas in Maine, USA, where the artist grew up.

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