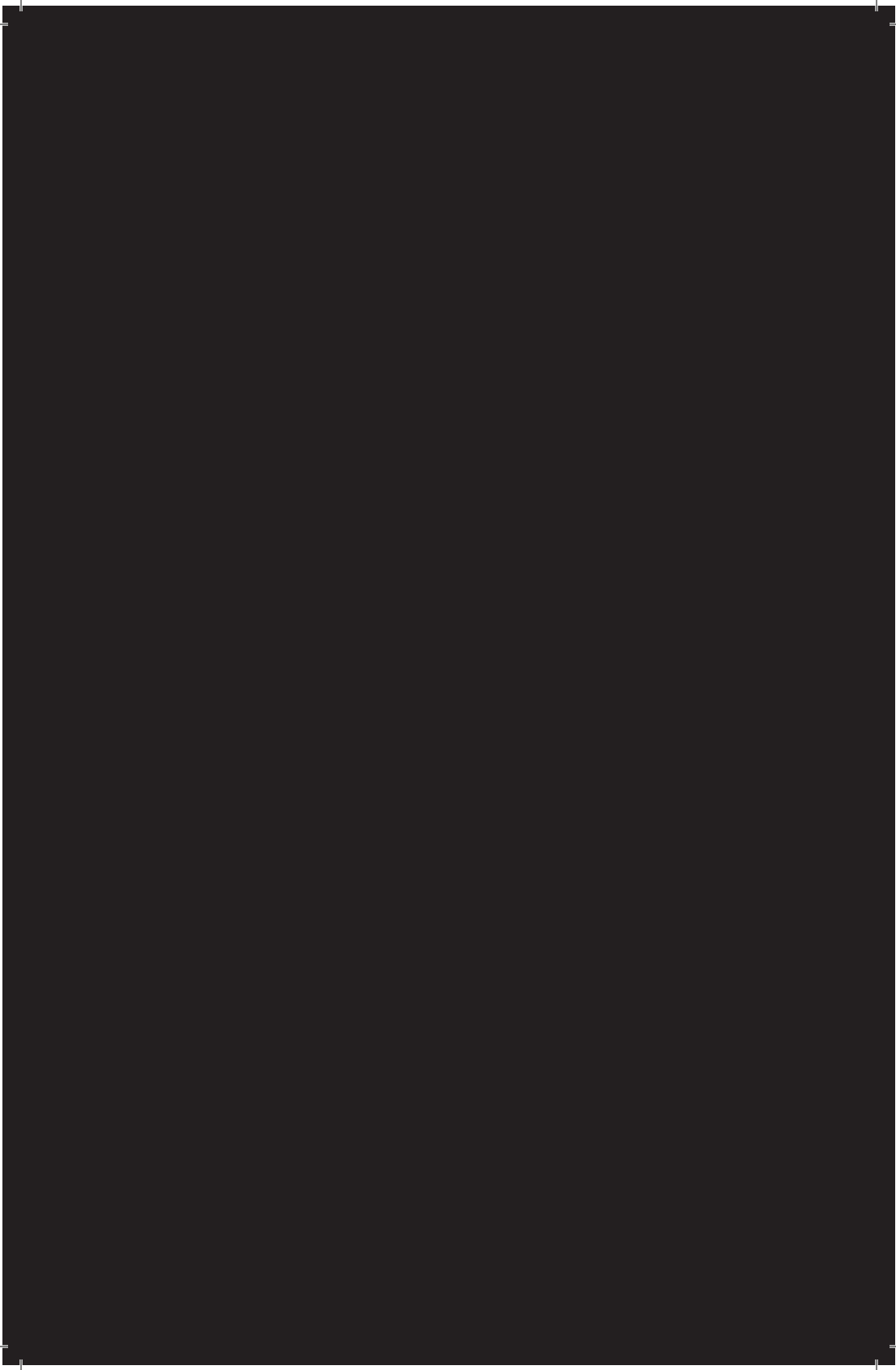


# TRANSLATION



Review







# The University College Literary Review

is the biannual literary journal of University College at the University of Toronto. It is published with the generous support of the University College Literary and Athletic Society, and aims to represent the diverse creative talents of our student body and alumni.

This Winter Edition is on the theme of 'Translation.' And although its colour palette is black-and-white, the art of translation rarely is.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

08	MASTHEADS
09	COPY EDITORS
10	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
11	A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF
12	LOST IN TRANSLATION
15	PREFERENCE
16	MOON
17	EARTH
18	TRYPOPHOBIA
19	HOW TO TRANSLATE?
21	DRIFTING
22	CHINATOWN
23	THIS APP IS COMPATIBLE WITH YOUR DEVICE
24	DIASPORA PROSE
26	ARCHWAY
27	AUGUST 15, 2018
29	SERVICE
30	I REMEMBER

32	বিসর্জন (BISHORJON)
33	THE PRICE OF WATER
34	BIGFOOT
35	SWAY
36	AFTER AND AFTER
37	A POSTCARD FROM THE FOREST
39	BELLWOODS
40	CUT ME OUT
41	SITTING AT THE KITCHEN TABLE
42	THE TRUTH ABOUT TONGUES
43	MOEBIUS STRIP
44	INTERPRETIVE BIAS
46	I KNEW YOU WEREN'T THE ONE
47	RECEIVING IT ALL
48	AUGUST 1 <sup>ST</sup>
49	STOP. REWIND.
52	DO I KNOW YOU
54	THE NIGHT I PEED ON SECRET BEACH
56	SUNSET—QUÉBEC CITY, 2016



"I AM HERE TO CLEAR UP MYSTERIES, THAT'S MY FUNCTION. BUT I THINK YOU'LL MANAGE, I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR FACE. AND ALSO I UNDERSTAND YOUR IMPATIENCE, I KNOW WHAT IT IS TO FEEL THAT WAY. SO GO NOW, AND GOOD LUCK!"

—GAETAN BRULOTTE, "THE DIRECTIONS," THE SECRET VOICE.  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1982 IN FRENCH AS "*LE SURVEILLANT*".  
TRANSLATED BY MATT COHEN IN 1990 (UC, 1963).



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This edition of the UC Review would not have been possible without the work of many people.

Thank you Chen, for designing our fabulous issue and breathing life into what was just an idea for a design.

Thank you to Senior Editors Sana and Ashley, for being more enthusiastic about the process than I could have hoped for, and for giving this first-time editor wise counsel when I (frequently) needed it. Miggy, I couldn't ask for a more experienced, attentive, hard-working, and innovative Digital Editor. To Blythe—thank you for agreeing to serve as the Review's first Creative Editor and for spearheading some of my weirder audiovisual ideas. Thank you to Megan, our Chief Copy Editor, and her team, always searching for errant commas and wandering clauses. Thank you to Adela for captaining our advertising forces through the sea of social media, for organising our launch parties. For Anna, our stalwart and patient archivist: always my gratitude. And lastly, to our Associate Editors—Katrina, Charlotte, Arina, and Maria—thank you for every assist, idea, input, and motivation.

A very special thanks to our friends at the UC Lit: Danielle, Noah, and Thomas, the cool-headed, knowledgeable reps who were there with any support I needed. The team of the LCA, Sabrina, Liam, and Hannah, were likewise willing to buoy our artistic vision in the name of supporting student creativity. Joshua, Henry, and Ruth advertised our submissions, and we could not have the reach we do without them.

We also received advertising support from other publications: the Trinity Review, Acta Victoriana (and the VUSAC team), and the Gargoyle. Thank you all.

My thanks as well to John and the entire team at Coach House Press. Thank you for your creative suggestions and expertise. This is our second year working together after a long hiatus. I hope our partnership will continue into the future.

I will always be grateful to the past editors of the Review; those who revived it and built it into what it is today. Melissa, Albert, Jack, and Adina, thanks for getting us here.

Finally, my thanks to you, dear reader. Whether you supported us through our levy, submitted to us, or picked up this copy, you are the reason we continue to exist. University College is lucky to have such talent and backing. You are brilliant.

## ***A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF:***

Hello,

Welcome to the Winter 2020 edition of *The UC Review*, dedicated to the art, science, and very human activity of ‘translation.’

As the Editor-in-Chief of the Review for the 2019–2020 academic year, it has been my privilege to create a space for student art and creative expression. In January, the Ontario provincial government announced its Student Choice Initiative (SCI) policy, which relegated many postsecondary student levees as “non-essential.” As a result, students were able to opt-out of fees that previous generations of students had democratically voted to hold mandatory for the overall health of the student experience.

At the time of writing, this mandate has been deemed overreaching by the Divisional Court of Ontario, but the consequences of that legal decision are not yet clear. We may face another newly-upgraded form of the SCI in the future, or we may not. It’s hard to say.

Either way, I remain deeply grateful to everyone who chose to stay opted-in this year. You are the reason we at the Review can keep doing what we do: giving students a platform for the literary and visual arts. In this issue, we survey the many forms of translation in modern life. Poetry draws our attention to the perils of linguistic translation and what is lost in the process. Our visuals bear on the translation of space—across rooms and seas and entire planets. Day shifts to night and back again. We cross geographic and cultural barriers through student prose, and memories, dreams, and perspectives change in that transition.

Several works have audio recordings accompanying them. I urge you to scan the QR codes with your phone to check them out, or listen to them on our website at [www.ucreview.ca](http://www.ucreview.ca).

We are communicative creatures. That’s why we tend to think of translation as an act between two persons: I say something, you receive it, and an understanding is formed. But even more fundamentally, translation is the act of self-communication. Of drawing meaning from an experience.

Viewed this way, no experience and act is free of an element of translating. The same holds for art. So as you read this issue, I encourage you to pay attention to what you are getting from the experience. Are you able to appreciate something that others might not? Is there anything lost in translation?

Yours sincerely,  
Tahmeed Shaftiq  
Editor-in-Chief, 2019–2020  
The University College Literary Review

## **BELINDA KUSUMA**

### *Lost In Translation*

*Cinta. Kasih. Sayang.*

These are three different words, with three different and distinct meanings.

They all translate to love.

I forget, sometimes, what it means to love. I forget which language I'm loving with. Can I truly say to someone that I love them, when what I mean by love is the other kind of love?

*Aku. Saya.*

These are two different words, with the same meaning. You will never be able to use them interchangeably.

Both translates to "I."

Sometimes it feels liberating, to be able to just say "I" without thinking of the context I am supposed to use it in. Sometimes I tear at my hair because the word "I" is just not enough to say what I truly meant.

*Kpleset. Mrosot. Nyungsep. Keceklik. Njungkel.*

Five words. All translate to fall.

But scarlet, crimson, burgundy, maroon, magenta, and vermilion; these are all different words with different colours associated with them. We just call them merah.

I never knew that there were different kinds of red until I read about them in English. I may never have known that there are different kinds of red. Now, this I that if, in those years of my life that I will never recover, many things that I perceived as just red were truly scarlet? How many of those are truly maroon?

Many things can be lost in translation — nuances and details vanishing in the chain between my brain articulating what I want to say, what I actually say, what gets transferred, what is received, and what is deciphered. Some are lost to the wind, never to be recovered.

Maybe there is a graveyard for these thoughts, these thoughts that never fulfilled their destiny. It could be one graveyard or many, different graveyards for different steps of translation. Which is the most filled — the first, the last, or somewhere in between?

Here is something I want you to consider. When you take offence to something (when—not if, when), remember that what you took offence to has been through multiple filters, each one different from the rest. Like sand going through a strainer, what you have in the end is very different from what you have at first. Imagine that, but multiple times. What you have in your hands at the very end would be very, very different from what you have at first.

Maybe what I am saying right now was not what my brain wants me to say, but what I received from it to say. Maybe what you're reading right now is not what I meant by writing this. Maybe what you understand is different from what you are reading.

Maybe we are all lost in translation, forever wondering where those lost pieces of information are.

**UVINA PERSAUD**

*Preference*

I was the light in his dark world,  
and he was the light in mine.  
Until one day he decided  
he liked the darkness better  
and blew out my flame.



**TRANSLATED BY UVINA PERSAUD**

तरजीह

मैं उसकी अँधेरी दुनिया की रौशनी थी,  
और वह मेरी दुनिया का उजाला था।  
जब तक उसने तय कर लिया,  
की उसे अँधेरा बेहतर लगने लगा,  
और उसने मेरी लौ को बुझा दिया।



REBECCA MICHAELS

*Moon*



REBECCA MICHAELS

*Earth*



**SABRINA ALMEIDA**

*Trypophobia*

The beekeeper does  
not mind making a home of  
herself not for them.  
The insect crawls to  
her eye and she is a comb,  
welcoming it back.  
Trypophobia:  
fear of clusters of small holes.  
Bees can smell fear but  
the air is vacant, no  
fear left for a beekeeper  
who studies stoicism.  
So the bee crawls on,  
blind to the fear pulsing like  
Honey splashed across  
her vision, on every  
landscape a Jackson Pollock  
chaos resembling  
the fruit of her labours /  
fear. The eye is just one more  
hole to make a home  
in, one more place to  
be afraid of carved out of  
your very fabric.



**CYNTHIA ZHENG**

*How to Translate?*

*Saudade*

is one of my favourite words.

It also just happens

to be a word that can't be fully translated into any other language.

*Saudade—*

A nostalgic longing so profound and so raw that only saudade can fully express.

Like many words

that get lost in translation...

that get misunderstood at times...

I too,

get misunderstood sometimes.

Words I don't mean to say

escape my lips

yet

words I wish I had said

never left my mouth.

If only I could express my thoughts

in the ways I wished to.

If only I could say what I wanted to

in the ways my future self would have done.

If only I could translate the insides of my brain

into the vast, big, gigantic universe

fearlessly.

If only...

Suddenly

I transport back to high school and  
we are having lunch at the cafeteria when  
in the middle of our conversation  
one of my high school friends  
kindly tells me  
to “express yourself”  
because I almost never did.  
And I wish I had this poem

to express myself back then.  
It wasn't because I didn't want to.  
It was because I didn't know how.  
It was because I was terrified.  
But if there's one thing I can say confidently now, it is this:  
*Saudade*  
is one of my favourite words.  
Because it is a word that can't be fully translated into any other lan-  
guage  
just like many many many of my thoughts.

ADELA JEON

*Drifting*



**BLYTHE HUNTER**

*Chinatown*

The best times are frail seconds  
When the boy on the street sees me as his own  
Not asking who I am or where I was  
But wondering who I could be to him  
Comfort, then, is being tongueless  
Void, futuristic, chameleon, a thing projected onto  
Not the girl with familiar eyes  
That become foreign in syllables



## **BLYTHE HUNTER**

*This app is compatible with your device*

Sometimes you have to copy-paste  
And wait for Google Translate  
To tell you who you are



## NAZANIN ZAREPOUR

### *Diaspora Prose*

Returning to Iran—a land which I was not born but wish I had been—is naught but a Shia pilgrimage.

Not because Iran is Shia. Rather, because it is with similar mourning that I confront this very soil my mother, father, and I would visit every summer.

1997–2015, as the months grew warmer, I was carried across the ocean by my parents to be acquainted with a life to which they were anything but unacquainted. And it is seldom discussed—how alienating it is—to confront a land with your mother and father and experience an entirely different theoretical terrain than they do. After all, it was their home, and I, just a visitor.

I return again at the ripe age of 22—this time not only without my parents but also without the summer's scorch.

Muharram passed before my arrival, yet the pilgrimage for me had just begun.

It takes simply the door of my late grandfather's home to make me cry a parallel army of tears that my grandmother would shed at Ashura. Just the image of the stained-glass window, fresh cantaloupe, and the sound of my grandfather asking me to teach him English on the back of a

newspaper clipping.

It brings me the same religious yearning as a pious follower in search and in awe of his Creator.

I, too, am searching for this ancestral Creator, this Self, and this identity—to which I am

spiritually linked yet temporally not. Here lays another source of my identity, yet it is seldom

tenacious.

And so it goes, as the mourning of Muharram, I find myself in a fruitless quest to understand

Mortality, Essence, and Self. And so it goes, I shed my grandmother's tears at the sound of

“Hossein.”



SKYLAR CHEUNG

*Archway*



**KASHI SYAL**

*August 15, 2018*

Let her be quiet with you and she'll radiate, unfurl,  
expand, and seep through the tarnished brass of a  
hollow sax.

She left  
the wine on the table last night, shards of  
pigmented pomegranate sea glass staining  
the seabed. The nectars that tumble from  
her lips, are now strewn across the  
varnished oak.

A sunflower  
stands upright in the vase propped  
against the mirror of her vanity table. A  
miniature carousel horse, a necklace—  
unfastened, a watch face held by two  
worn straps and a rubber band.

Sweet bread dusted with icing sugar, all things  
whole: bagels, brie, and French baguettes.  
Wholesome goodness arrives with the waves that  
kiss her shoreline. And it leaves with the leaves  
that have escaped autumnal trees.

An understanding has been reached from  
the contented sighs of half-finished bottles,



scattered pillows, and duvets pushed back  
against the heat.

The clock, the sink, the creaking of the house all  
amplified by her quiet.

There is safety in these hours; before late nights become  
early mornings—tread softly.

Softly, softly, softly.

The TV is no longer being watched. She  
inhales the guise of closeness and grieves its  
ending. You are cocooned in her entirety,  
but she, she is growing into her hands.

## SHELLEY RAFAILOV

### *Service*

Mournful melodic  
Cold October evening  
Long skirts long sleeves  
Brown pews beige walls  
Wine-coloured heavy tomes  
Gold glittering lettering

Perfect wigs prying eyes  
Through a curtain sheer  
To the room below, bestow  
The teachings of God  
Upon sinful sorry children  
Take the English copy, dear

Half is original and ancient  
Indecipherable prayer  
Background music sung  
Hauntingly solo, sporadically  
En masse like awakening  
A slumbering spirit above

All rise in solidarity, soldiers  
Of a higher power, praying  
I send my own message  
For peace and mercy  
I don't know what they sing  
I am twenty pages ahead.



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DEBASMITA BHATTACHARYA

বিসর্জন (*Bishorjon*)  
*Immersion; Relinquishment*



the hands of God  
painted yellow  
three eyes staring back as I  
watch from behind my father's legs  
*"Eita or prothom bar, o shamne jak?"*  
*"It's her first time, can she go to the front of the truck?"*  
blaring lights, blaring sounds, blaring voices  
we finally reach  
and as I  
watch her float away—the last time I will see her  
for a long time—  
I remember another time I had seen her,  
in the other place, where it gets cold at this time of year,  
and there is no truck, and there are no lights, no sounds, no voices

**SKYLAR CHEUNG**

*The Price of Water*



## HADIYYAH KUMA

### *Bigfoot*

I want to see Bigfoot and tell him he is loved. I want to go as Frankenstein's monster, so he will not be afraid of me. In the woods or desert where all things are quiet and shy, I know I will feel most myself. Most holidays I have been a ghost. This Halloween I am going as someone who has both a body and a mind. Small evolutions, big footprints. I want to ask him where he was born and if he remembers his mother. Once I was trying to be nice and my mother said, "Nice? We are poor and I don't want you to be generous." But has he ever gone to HomeSense to see the plastic witches? My mother and I go to HomeSense to make sense of a home. If you wanted, I would invite him to live with us. You would take up the entire apartment, floor to ceiling, wall to wall, and it would always be warm in here. We'd re-decorate. I could make my bedroom floor a special thing, since you'll realize most things I used to think were special are unremarkable, like how Cheerios are dry and clouds are water. I would transplant the forest floor into our apartment. It would be the world's only constantly remarkable thing, kept secret only for you. It would just be a mirage, but I would tell you so you wouldn't be hurt by the beauty of a lie as simple as this.

**HADIYYAH KUMA**

*Sway*

Last night the power  
went out and the  
coward moon  
stuffed itself  
inside the clouds  
At the grocery store  
I passed  
through countless bodies  
which means  
you could've been  
that jacket sleeve  
against my wrist  
and I will never know  
I once told an artist  
she could trace black  
ink into the creases  
of my dry hands  
Make my body  
into a thin  
coffee stained map  
She said  
not enough people  
set stories at night  
If there is—  
and there must be—  
a map

**HADIYYAH KUMA**

*after and after*

my ghost loves your ghost my spirit  
loves your spirit my soul loves your  
soul my specter loves your specter  
my ghoul loves your ghoul my love is  
your apparition; I piece metaphor into  
the muscle of this heartbreak thing  
we needn't any body to embody this  
ridiculous mourning and by the way  
the sun was once a ghost and now  
does its haunting in recall's penumbra



**SANA MOHSIN**

*A Postcard from the Forest*

When I was younger all I wanted to do was to grow trees. Not even leafy plants or sweet-smelling flowers to press in between the pages of novels, but majestic, mammoth trees as far as the eye can see. I wanted to grow them in our miniscule garden in Lahore.

I ate fruit all day, much to my mother's delight. I would peel mandarins and the skin stuck inside my fingernails, the lingering scent of citrus lasting till nighttime. The mandarin slices would be eaten quickly but the seeds spat on a small plate with care, after-school cartoons forgotten. A spoon would be stolen from the kitchen and used to push aside the coarse dirt until a sizeable depression formed, big enough for Dadi<sup>1</sup> to lament the state of her garden, her complaints falling on deaf ears. I must have planted dozens of different kinds of seeds: apples and lemons and melons, marking the places with toothpicks and hosing them with what must have been much more water than needed. Nothing ever came to bloom, of course.

I don't know when or how this obsession came to be, or why my mind specifically chose trees. Perhaps it's because when I was younger, there existed a Lahore filled with parks and gardens and grass, cleared away in recent years to make way for countless highways and flyovers. Or perhaps it's because of my Dada<sup>2</sup>, a character out of a Marquez novel, whose accidents and afterthoughts generated into real, breathing things. He had always been one for serendipity.

There is a story in my family: once one of Dada's friends sent over

fresh papayas, cultivated all the way from Sindh. Devoured thoroughly by inviting family members from across the city, sliced with chaat masala and lemon zest sprinkled over—because Pakistanis can't even eat sweet fruit without adding more flavour. The remnants were thrown outside, forgotten until a sapling was seen growing in the tiny plot of land connected to our house, cultivated only by sporadic rain and the-too harsh sunlight of Lahore. Bit by bit, the sapling became a plant, and then the full-fledged tree that exists today, that has been a part of the house even before I was born and my Dada's pride and joy.

Freshly picked papayas were a staple in my childhood, straight from the tree, waiting on a glass plate as we came back from school.

---

<sup>1</sup> In Urdu, 'Dadi' refers to one's paternal grandmother.

<sup>2</sup> One's paternal grandfather.

NAZANIN ZAREPOUR

*Bellwoods*





**ERIKA DICKINSON**

*cut me out*

If I were made of felt,  
all my edges would be soft  
I wouldn't feel anymore  
because all my feelings  
would be already felt.

I wouldn't notice the pain  
in my jaw,  
how my shoulders meet my ears,  
how my insides  
feel raw

felt raw

I would be a 2D shape.  
Please cut me out  
and make a scene,  
lay me flat  
and love me.

Play with me.  
I don't mind,  
I've felt this all before.

**ERIKA DICKINSON**

*Sitting at the Kitchen Table*

There's nothing poetic in the suburbs.  
Except that we have a really loud wall  
clock that counts down the minutes before my  
parents will get home. Except that the cat  
sleeps beside me all day and his heavy  
snores keep me company. Except that the  
neighbour never answers her phone and she  
always lets it ring and I wonder who's  
calling her. It sounds so urgent but it  
makes my head throb. Except that her husband

died on December 22nd and  
we didn't find out until June 15th.  
His widow doesn't garden anymore  
and she doesn't answer the phone either.

**ERIKA DICKINSON**

*The Truth About Tongues*

I had to touch my tongue to remind myself  
that it was still in my mouth.  
A dry tongue doesn't feel like sandpaper;  
it's a kitchen sponge.  
It sucks your finger into it, taking moisture  
from your clammy hands.

It lives in a dense cave,  
covered in a cloak of tiny buds.  
It's pinker than my skin:  
it's the colour of my skin when a flashlight is pressed up against it.  
It aches,  
a reminder of a dry hangover,  
a punishment.  
It was overused and ran out of fuel.

I talk with my tongue in my cheek,  
talking with my mouth full.  
I roll my tongue into a clover but I can't roll my "r's."  
I talk with my tongue  
in my cheek because  
it prevents me from  
biting it.

**SKYLAR CHEUNG**

*Moebius Strip*



LIAM P. BRYANT

*Interpretive Bias*

I like the subtle way my face leans to the  
right,  
As if to ask a question I already expect—  
cheeky, with a fake dimple, and slightly  
suspect.  
With eyebrows cordoning off my  
cheekbones,  
and two hazel eyes cut between fields of  
doughy tan.  
Some quite-but-not-quite curls fall above  
my forehead,  
before excusing my ears to a telemetric  
span.  
Follow the runway path of my nose bridge  
to its terminus,  
and meet my lips, which,  
should the light catch them right,  
make my chin and jaw look like we planned  
this beforehand.  
But the truth of the matter is that my face  
has been changing—  
hair and oil and skin and time,  
all've mixed their media on this palette.  
A paste translated through second chances,  
chamomile tea,  
and other ephemera like the morning light.



Each morning we exist is a delight—  
the time and place where the world prepares  
to meet you once more.  
With a nod, with a knowing smile,  
and a wink to the past versions of myself,  
that live within my eyes, my nose,  
the crinkle of my lips,  
a cupid's bow refraction,  
Scars from head-to-pavement interaction.

Oh, I love myself.  
Otherwise, how could I be?  
No—you must imbibe, indulge;  
parse every fiber of yourself,  
look in the mirror,  
and ask how you ever spent twenty years  
regretting living in that skin—  
Within those eyes, that nose,  
that stupid cupid's bow,  
the dimple on your cheek.  
It all goes to show.  
All it takes to love something fully  
is a pesky matter of perspective.

**LAIBAH ASHFAQ**

*I Knew You Weren't The One*

You climbed from my heart  
Made your way up my throat  
Bile rose, I choked and spat you out  
Now you reside at the tip of my tongue  
Despite everything  
My mouth is still a home for you

**GRACE MA**

*Receiving it All*

“The greatest gift / the purpose of life  
is to serve others,” S answered me.

I felt like I was confusing myself,  
trying to reply in words as genuine as hers.

S and her doe eyes, kind hands  
adorned warmly by two gold rings.

I knew I could serve,  
and I did serve, privately and publicly.

But like summer burrs,  
the weight of owing clung light and tight.

Something natural, something insistent  
in its accumulating power.

So I would serve again to try again,  
would imitate the air and hope for flight.

Such it was, a process of context,  
comparison, history, growing up.

And such it is still,  
this disguised process in forgiveness.



**GRACE MA**

*August 1st*

On a familiarly humid morning,  
my bike caught a pipe, sent me knees to asphalt.  
A skid. An event.  
That night Mom tied garlic to the cupboard handle.  
Dad was pacing slightly, told me his dream:  
I had drowned, emerging before the end of the bridge.  
He also said, with a rare graveness,  
how it was a bike that left my grandpa bedridden.  
Eighty, and still insisted on biking.  
My aunt would call from North Carolina, begging my cousin  
to hide the bike!  
No matter—he found it again, and on a rainy day met his fate.  
Mom pulled out the Baiyao,  
and Dad tapped the white powder onto the pain.  
This medicine, long ago, was learned from a tiger,  
observed covering her wound with herbs.  
Too squeamish, Mom retreated.  
Dad showed me the scars below his eyebrow, on his hand, on his foot.  
Guns, knives, fences... that was the rural life,  
and I, tanned copper from commutes, stiff with injury,  
Felt myself edge fondly towards that lost world  
that I would never earn—too pleased, curious I was.

**BELINDA KUSUMA**

*Stop. Rewind.*

He smiled at me.

Stop. Rewind.

It was a sketchy part of town. I was holding my keys between my fingers, hoping that I was ready for anything that could happen, knowing that I would never actually be ready for it. I walked fast. I walked with my eyes straight forward, alert to everything that was happening beside me and behind me. I walked fast.

I kept my eyes forward because it was dangerous not to do so. I kept my eyes forward because I did not want to know what was going on beside me or behind me. I kept my eyes forward because if I looked around, I would be targeted even more.

Somehow, I still managed to see a boy, a man perhaps, walking in front of me. No, not somehow. In this part of town I am always watching, always alert. He was wearing a black coat, and that is all I noted of him.

I kept walking. He did not.

I did not ask. I kept walking. I kept my eyes forward. He stopped. I kept walking.

Stop. Rewind.

It was not that I did not care about what was happening next to me. It was just that this is my part of town, and that this part of town would never be anything more than that for me. My part of it. I knew everything and everyone in it, while simultaneously knowing no one

and nothing in it. Sometimes that is just how it goes.

I was not there, per se. I was just watching from my spot in the darkness. Why was I in the darkness, you ask? Well, that is just for me to know. Mind your own business and I will mind mine.

It was not like it was obvious; it was not like they were the only two things that were moving. They were in the darkness, same as everyone here. The only light that shone upon them was moonlight. Maybe that is the way they wanted it to be. Maybe that is all they could be, together alone under the moonlight.

Someone walked past, loudly, with fast steps. They should not have bothered. Nothing here is going to hurt them but they walked fast anyway.

Two people under the moonlight. I wondered how long they had been there. I stood up and walked back. Back where, you ask? That is for me to know.

Stop. Rewind

I had been here for years. I have seen things I did not want to see, and I have seen things I desperately wanted to see again.

This was something I saw again and again. Two people in love. Maybe they will have a happy ending, maybe they will not. Maybe they will come back here again, in a few years' time, having spent years together. Maybe they will come back here again, each going their own separate ways, not really caring what happened to the other. Maybe they will

not come back here again at all.

I saw this again and again, and I cannot say I desperately wanted to see this. All I can do is watch from a distance. . .

Stop. Rewind.

I couldn't say I approved. I also couldn't say I did not approve. But did they have to do it right in front of me? Could I not be given my peace? There were plenty of places they could do it without me seeing.

They had been doing this forever, and I am getting sick of seeing this. I took one last look at them, and closed my curtains. There was no need for me to see them going over it like that. I should not need to close my curtains. They were the ones who should move somewhere else.

I closed my curtains, yet I still thought about the two people down there. (Maybe I did not approve of them. Maybe I was just missing the feeling of being alive. Who knows? I did not.)

Stop. Rewind.

I smiled at her.

**MAHAILA SMITH**

*Do I Know You*

It's cold.  
Are you hungry?  
I'm lonely.  
I'll get you a bagel.  
Where do I know you from?  
Here, for you.  
From the TV,  
You know my wife? (Are you, is it you)  
new drifting prescription,  
Sorry I'm bad at faces, I'm  
my name moves  
down one square  
each crossword morning.  
Adriatic, DNA.  
Found new shoes  
in my locker at the pool.  
Analogue watch in the left one.  
What's your size?  
27 years.  
3<sup>3</sup>  
cheese and crackers for when you're  
Hungry?  
Tired,  
knitting. (I'll give  
up and pull out a yarn nest.  
Cut it up and mail it,

answer: What are you making?)  
Like two hand piano scales when  
you were little.  
I think I heard you  
when the violins were tuning.  
Before you called? Et après.  
We'll say I love you at the end.  
Lucky for me,  
don't know you, well.



**PADRAIC BERTING**

*The Night I Peed on Secret Beach*

“Here we are now, entertain us  
I feel stupid and contagious  
Here we are now, entertain”

–Nineties Bard of Angst

“Stop,” you laugh  
and tease.  
I smirk,  
“Just watch me.”

Tumbling down  
the lush green grass,  
just below  
RC Harris  
Water Plant.  
Hot yellow  
moon,  
on the Lake Ontario coast.  
Past high schoolers  
kissing,  
their senior year  
toast.  
Hacking their darts,  
drinking their cider,  
burning out at the

horizon of  
adulthood.  
Every adolescent  
memory  
coursing through  
my bladder,  
I whip out my penis.  
The spirit of Ondaatje screeched  
the Night I Peed on Secret Beach.



ALEXANDER NG

*Sunset—Québec City, 2016*





# CONTRIBUTORS

## Sana Mohsin

**3rd year | Economics and English | St. Michael's College**

Sana Mohsin is currently an undergraduate at the University of Toronto, majoring in Economics and English. She likes trees and peppermint tea, and hopes to somehow make a career out of reading and writing.

## Nazanin Zarepour

**5th year | Political Science and Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations | UC**

Nazanin Zarepour is a student at the University of Toronto studying Political Science and Near Middle Eastern Civilizations. She is a writer and photographer—works of which can be found in publications such as Acta Victoriana, FEELS magazine, and the Trinity Review.

## Belinda Kusuma

**1st year | Life Sciences | University College**

Belinda loves to read and write, even though she sometimes doesn't have the time to do so. She also dances and plays the violin, but that seems irrelevant to this.

## Erika Dickinson

**4th year | English Specialist and Philosophy Minor | University College**

Erika is primarily interested in writing and dancing. She has aspirations to both write and dance.

## Hadiyyah Kuma

**3rd year | Sociology | Victoria College**

Hadiyyah's work has been featured in places like The Rumpus, the Hart House Review, Cosmonauts Avenue, SmokeLong Quarterly, and Yes Poetry. Her debut chapbook tired, but not spectacularly was recently published by The Soapbox Press. Hadiyyah's poetry has been nominated for Best of the Net 2019.

## Blythe Hunter

**4th year | Book and Media Studies, Cinema Studies, Creative Expression and Society | Woodsworth College**

Blythe is a Chinese adoptee who loves film, nice clothes, and has daily existential crises.

## Shelley Rafailov

3rd year | Human Biology and Psychology | University College

Shelley is a third-year student whose entire philosophy can be boiled down to “all you need is faith, trust, and a little bit of pixie dust”. She is fuelled by coffee and spite, and exists in one of two states—power-walking across campus or snoozing on the subway.

## Mahaila Smith

3rd year | Archaeology | University College

Mahaila Smith is a young writer from Ottawa, studying to dig. Her poems can be found in the Hart House Review, and in Half a Grapefruit ([hgfmag.com](http://hgfmag.com)).

## Debasmita Bhattacharya

2nd year | Political Science and Sociology | University College

Debasmita spends copious and slightly concerning amounts of time watching stand up comedy. She dreams of one day being onstage with them. When she’s not doing that, you can find her complaining about the TTC, admiring dogs, or wishing she was a part of the Von Trapp family.

## Grace Ma

3rd year | English and Environmental Science | Trinity College

Grace Ma would do a lot for poetry and wool socks. She thinks any time is a good time to talk about the climate crisis.

## Liam P. Bryant

3rd year | Art History and Latin | University College

Liam dabbles in the creative arts in hopes that one of them pans out to a job one day. He loves the idea of vacuuming, wishes humans never invented capital, and can’t stand the idea of a soggy sock.

## Laibah Ashfaq

4th year | Global Health | New College

Laibah would define herself as a sporadic creative as her inspiration comes and goes in the form of words she eventually pieces together to form poetry. You’ll probably find her at Gerstein with her headphones on, zoning out.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Padraic Berting

4th year | English Literature and Political Science | University College

Although born and raised in a sleepy New England, Padraic has seamlessly fallen in love with the chaotic buzz of Toronto. Check him out staring at the same 4 Lawren Harris paintings in the AGO, or rambling incoherently about the heyday of the early 2010s Southern New Hampshire emo scene to anyone.

## Uvina Persaud

3rd year | NMC and Religion | University College

Uvina has always loved reading as a child. As she grew older, that love of reading encouraged her to start writing her own short stories and poems. She now currently has an Poetry Instagram page with more than 500 followers: @poetrybyuvinapersaud.

## Kashi Syal

3rd year | English Literature Specialist | University College

Kashi is (barely) a '90s Brit Baby—she flits between South West London and Toronto. A lover of herbal teas, early mornings, and big cities.

## (Cynthia) Tianyang Zheng

3rd year | Social Sciences and Humanities | Innis College

Tianyang loves to read and write. You will often find Tianyang surrounded by books, music, and food.

## Sabrina Almeida

3rd year | Rotman Commerce Woodsworth College

Outside of class, Sabrina is the president of UofT Spoken Word, an explorer of campus cafes, and a born sweet-tooth. In the future, she hopes to publish her own book of poetry and work in a marketing role that allows her to travel.

## Rebecca Michaels

4th year | Ecology and Evolutionary Biology | University College

Rebecca Michaels is a fourth-year undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, majoring in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, with minors in English and Visual Studies.

## **Adela Jeon**

**3rd year | English Major, Minors in  
Philosophy and Practical French | UC**

Adela is a third-year student majoring in English at the University of Toronto. She is thrilled by the increasing number of empty film canisters she's accumulating on her desk. This is Adela's first time having her photography published in a journal.

## **Skylar Cheung**

**2nd year | Political Science  
Victoria College**

Skylar Cheung is a Toronto-based photographer and oil painter. Her work depicts the irony of commonly accepted notions inherent in modern Western culture. Her work will be featured at the Joint Mathematics Meetings 2020 in Denver Colorado.

## **Alexander Ng**

**2nd year | Economics and Psychology  
| University College**

Alexander Ng is a visual artist based in Toronto. Using the photographic medium, he strives to capture the character of his subjects and preserve moments in time.

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