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# THE UC REVIEW

University College Literary Journal

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

**Coach House Printing**

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 center Indigenous people and land. We stand in solidarity with other marginalized nations, and conversations surrounding decolonization and reconciliation.

**Winter 2022**

## Masthead

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"Like a green shower locked in a cloud  
Above a gray walled rectangle  
Is the time waiting in a little golden bowl  
To be shattered into bright instants  
When my kisses will fall  
Over your eyes and your mouth and your chin  
Like sharp short glints of sunlight."

-Miriam Waddington (UC 1939)  
Poem, *Time I*

Waddington, Miriam, and Ruth  
Panofsky. *The Collected Poems  
of Miriam Waddington*. Univer-  
sity of Ottawa Press, 2014.

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## Editor's Note

To our beloved UC Review Community,

I would like to warmly welcome you to the UC Review's Winter 2022 issue, "Body/Archive".

This issue's theme embraces and welcomes a new semester of reconnections and discovery. Through their art, students were able to share intimate moments of reconciliation with their bodies and emotions. It comes to no surprise that the COVID-19 pandemic changed all of our lives, as the time we spent in isolation has given us new ways to view and interact with our bodies—the conversation we now have over its old and new imperfections, comforts, and discomforts. The body is an archive of experiences and identities.

As any topic on the body can resurface triggering experiences and feelings, we wanted to ensure that this issue was treated with lots of love and care. With this, we would like to share a trigger warning for the content that awaits you, such as gore, graphic description of the body, and death.

Take the time you may need to step away from the issue, and perhaps indulge in your own personal archive; whether that may be revisiting old photo albums, scribbled journals, or places that once felt your daily presence.

May this issue create a sense of familiarity and comfort for all who encounter it.

Sincerely,

**Maria Vidal Valdespino**

Editor-in-Chief, 2022-2023

*The University College Literary Review*

## Acknowledgments

If words could come close to expressing the immense gratitude and love I have for the UC Review, there would be volumes and volumes of love letters written. But as a student in their final year, there is never enough time nor energy to fulfill this desire. So, I hope that this letter can come close.

I would like to firstly say thank you to the entire masthead as a whole; the time and care that was put into creating this beautiful issue, is greatly appreciated and I cannot wait to produce the Spring issue with every single one of you. Your passion and love for the arts is moving.

Being part of the UC Review has been a highlight of my university experience and now leading the masthead, brings me so much joy. Therefore, I would like to thank two artists whom I admire greatly, Lina and Carson, as if it wouldn't have been for them, I wouldn't have known literary journals existed. It was then and there, in Spring 2019, that I knew I wanted to be part of a literary journal once I began university, and here I am!

To our Senior Editors, Camille, Allison, and Mariam, thank you for everything you have done to ensure this issue ran smoothly. Your passion, love, and commitment remind me of why I hold the UC Review so dearly to my heart, as it is the moments and memories we create through the work we do together.

To our Associate Editors, Xarnah, Jewel, Janine, and Nithya; thank you for your eagerness to be involved, your passion to support the journal in any way is appreciated so much. Your ideas, creativity, and commitment are what contribute to an amazing issue. I hope you all can continue to make the UC Review community a welcoming, safe, and unapologetically diverse one.

Mailey, our Creative Director, thank you for your artistic vision that enveloped the theme perfectly, from textures, colors to images. I am so grateful for your ideas and creativity.

Sylvia, our Chief Copy Editor, your work is admirable, and I thank you so much for ensuring all contributor's voices sing loudly in their work while ensuring their work is as best as it can be. Laiyena, our Promotions Coordinator, thank you for your passion for activism and equity along with ensuring all students on campus can attend our events and contribute to our issues.

To our Copy Editors, Isidore, Melissa, and Nora, thank you so much for helping the contributors express themselves in a beautiful way while keeping true to their work. Your time and support in ensuring our journal is copy edited properly is amazing, and I look forward to working with you all again next semester!

Now, to everyone who was part of the UC Review through the past four years, thank you so much. I have such grand shoes to fill, especially since you three, Tahmeed, Sana, and Ashley were all so wonderful to work with. Thank you for bringing something fresh and inviting every year, where you embraced the team with so much love, support, and passion. You made UC Review a home, as your support and leadership will always inspire me strive to advocate for a welcoming space within the literary arts (and all arts) on campus.

Thank you to John, from Coach House Press, who supported me throughout the printing process; this issue is beautiful, and textured, thank you for your expertise and advice. It is a pleasure to work with you!

Now thank you to all the contributors and members of the UC Review community, please continue to find your voice amongst the busy life of university and share all that you have to say, unapologetically. You help the UC Review be what it is today, so thank you so much and much love always.

May you all continue to decorate the world with your artwork and writing, and make it one more enjoyable to live in.

**Maria Vidal Valdespino**

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 13.5 million, and the number of people aged 75 and over has increased from 4.5 million to 6.5 million (Office for National Statistics 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people, and the need to ensure that the health care system is able to meet the needs of older people. The Department of Health (2000) has published a strategy for older people, which sets out the government's commitment to older people and the need to ensure that the health care system is able to meet the needs of older people.

The strategy for older people is based on the following principles: (1) to ensure that older people are able to live independently and actively; (2) to ensure that older people are able to access the health care services that they need; (3) to ensure that older people are able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and (4) to ensure that older people are able to live in a safe and secure environment.

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## *The Heart*

In the eye of the storm lies a home  
built of red brick and oak,  
gentle and tender,  
with walls that sigh,  
and arms to hold me at night.  
I hang up my coat—leave my shoes by the door;  
I sway with the beat,  
back and forth.  
The woods melt away,  
Thunder dims to a murmur;  
in the distance, waves crash on the shore.  
Stumbling blind through my body,  
I always find my way back here—  
to the place that grew  
in my mother's womb,  
long before I was born.  
I walk over floorboards  
that she placed with care,  
past stones that are soft to the touch.  
Every time they're torn down,  
her hands hold my heart  
as I build it back up from the ground.

Tehlan Lenius

## **Clairvoyant**

Fold my skeleton up like an apron; just let me live  
in a drawer of your little cottage life. I'll stop asking  
for your time or the light of day. When you want to be  
bewitched, I'll chip at my fingerbones and hang thin  
linens to block out the moon. You'll mistake me for  
one of your old muses, but you'll take me, so I'll sink  
into the mattress's impression of him. And while you  
reposition my limbs I'll recite my evening incantations:  
one for a fair sweep of skin, worthy of painting nebulae,  
and two for this skull's orbits to be filled with blue eyes.

Allison Zhao



**Eminence**  
Caitlin Holleran



## language of the living

my aunt asks if they will sleep butt to butt, and i tell her that would require a heavy amount of contortion from two corpses. instead, they will lie head to head, in their own little box in the wall—an investment from their younger years of love. my aunt thinks it's sweet. i tell her, *liz, it's not romantic, it's gruesome*. i woke up in the morning, squeamish, waiting for my walls to open to the catacombs. now, in the parlor where the family lurks, i wait for my body to stop taking itself apart prematurely.

i am confused by the concept of a wake. he is not a-wake, he is a-sleep, and there are people in the room asking me about college as if there is not a dead man in the corner who may still jerk up to expel his last breath. we are all counting, watching the clock, as if there is some unspoken timer that has not yet run out. my mom's cousin remarks that he looks so thin, so pale, that she would not not have recognized him if she didn't know. *allison, he's fucking dead*. he's pale because he's dead.

i think he has been dead a long time. i reckon a year. even when vertical, he was thin, pale, frail, forgetful. we're just now bothering to tuck him away; he forgot my name, my mother's name, and only remembered how to call his wife pretty. we were waiting, counting down the minutes until he forgot how to breathe, too. in the garden where corpses live, i wait for them to unlock the vault and tuck the dead man in to rest, finally.

at dinner, we talk about what we want when we die, which seems morbid, inappropriate, but i tell them all the same: *i would like a whole monument, but i am afraid of waking up in my own body even now, so i would rather you get rid of it somehow*. they look at each other, fraught, wringing hands, and i turn my head back down to my plate until my sister asks why i couldn't possibly have both.

Diana Vink

## **Fox Cookie**

Give me skin  
And flesh and fingertips,  
Hair and ash and  
Nose and lips.  
Give me long stinky tongues  
And sporadic teeth,

when you break  
my eyes, my  
                  brows, my  
                                  ears, my  
white nose,  
candy coat and  
cookie dough,

when you lick  
the chocolate chips,  
taste the gelatin sweet, and  
                  bite  
my face and miss  
the crumbs  
                  that fall  
                                  to pieces

are you breaking  
                  you or  
are you breaking  
                  me?

Kaye Li

## **Dreadful (is a Lovely Word)**

Werewolf howls under midnight's moon.  
He never knew how his body would betray him,  
though he has always been feral.

Vampire longs to feel the sun beat down,  
but doesn't dare face that brightest star  
knowing she'd lose herself to it.

Frankenstein's monster and I are both  
electrified patchworks, built from scavenged pieces  
ever studied for brutishness.

Witch cackles as she flies away  
while the villagers, eyes ablaze, call for her punishment.  
My heart rises alongside her; cries out  
*something about you feels like me!*

The camera pans back to the wedding in the square.

I escape alongside every scuttling thing that hides from  
the light  
whose beam casts doubt on all that is natural—  
longing and living to build a web  
that will not crumble at your touch.

Now, I dance with fairies in fields between cities.  
We call upon our kindred, reminding them  
that bodies like ours make wonderful homes.  
They need not be hidden away.

Noga Shachak



**pearls and the shop clerk**  
Druphadi Sen

## autumn is the season of dying things

that night, i couldn't sleep. i kept thinking about the bird i buried in the backyard. first the dull thud of its small body crashing into my bedroom window, then the pale bloody smear as it fell. i rushed into the yard and took in the crumpled heap of bloody feathers on the grass. i cupped its tiny body in my hands as it shuddered, feeling compelled to raise it like an offering to some old god. make a prayer for it, maybe. but i didn't know who, if anyone, would listen.

i buried the bird under the flower bushes, the ones my father is so keen on pruning. in the warmer months he would spend hours of the dim blue evening alone in the backyard, tending obsessively to his garden. i think it is the only place he has ever found solace outside of violence.

the insomniac hours stretched on. i watched the candle on my windowsill burn down to its wick. as i stared into that blinking flame, i wished i were made of wax, all smooth and sculpted and beautiful. i wanted to burn too; not softly, but a fire blue-bright and all-consuming. i wouldn't leave behind any soot or ash. i would be easy to clean up, a sterile exit wound.

sometimes the sound of my father's footsteps downstairs keep me awake. tonight he is playing an old church service on the tv as he washes the dishes, the volume lowered most of the way. he is not a godly man except when he is gardening, wielding his shears with a sort of reverence. i watched him tend to the hydrangeas once, red petals littered the ground when he was done. this is what separates his hunger from mine —his is hereditary, but mine is primordial.

eventually, i slipped into uneasy dreams. i was in the body of an animal, some half-feral predator, and i was ravenous. i opened my mouth and an ocean of scents flooded in—burnt asphalt and rotten leaves, day-old garbage and faint exhaust. but nothing to eat. i walked on.

the dark orange streetlights encased the night in a sheen of amber, and the murkiness beyond beckoned me forward. i crept under the broken fence into a familiar yard. there was something i needed to uncover. when i looked down, my hands were my own again but my body was not. the sick hunger was not. it could not be. i plunged my hands into the damp, cool dirt and heaved it up, again and again. my shoulders heaved in a blur of motion. i felt my fingernails snag on something hard, then the tear of soft flesh. the pain was sharp and clear and i tried not to relish in it. i kept digging, warm blood and dirt clotting together. finally, i felt a lump. i reached down into the hole and dragged up the body of the dead bird. it had already rotted some—feathers melted away, writhing maggots nested in its cavities, gossamer bones sagging and broken.

it was perfect.

i hungered to make a feast of its carcass, and yet i could not move to eat it. i was struck guiltily by the tenderness of its decay. it had been eaten away carefully and delicately, first enveloped in dirt, then its flesh caressed by ants and worms.

i burned with desire, but slowly i set the bird back into the hole and buried it with dirt once more. then i stood and twisted open the garden hose. slowly, methodically, i rinsed the blood and grime off my hands.

when i awoke i was missing a fingernail. i looked at it and ached terribly for something i could not name.

this is all i know: i do not bite, but i have learned to scorn the hand that starves me. if hunger is perversion, i have yet to sink my teeth into something that fills me whole.

Gabriel Yuan



**dawning nectar**  
Catherine Diyakonov

## Ink

There's a lover stuck in the window  
waiting.

& I haven't figured this part of the story out yet,  
who they are or why.

Go lay down before you bite yourself, disrupted from holding on to every  
soup you make  
*you're either a delinquent or confused*

First summer on my own          --          a dream I wake up from

that etched itself into my window  
full of loneliness and vegetable songs  
affordable, as it was.

Slow second summers come  
& gone  
with our plans and gas prices  
that shoot through our lungs and hit our minds like nicotine or homesickness.

I mourn Ontario's wild blueberries.  
I found a kitten among them.

There's a monster in my apartment smoking a joint  
coughing nothingness onto the typewriter.

Rion Levy



## Cystic Sister

### *Trigger Warning: Graphic Description of The Body/Gore*

She has this habit of picking her skin, this  
“Body-focused repetitive behaviour.”  
Popping the pustules,  
Little volcanic eruptions splatter on the glass,  
Magma oozes down her cheeks.  
She’s an incessant child playing doctor,  
Using her bloody nails as scalpels.  
I’m brought back to our youth,  
Her pudgy hands digging through the garden  
Drawing out grubs and weeds  
To feel the textures beneath her nails.

I’ve been stuck to her since birth,  
A mishap from the womb that wasn’t absorbed.  
Affixed front and centre on her face;  
I am what makes her recognizable.  
Yet she picks and prods and pokes,  
Desperate to separate us.

Clutching craft scissors,  
Inches away from our mirrored selves,  
She slices me open,  
Bisecting me like some biology experiment,  
Her eyes keen as a gecko watching its prey  
I am raw now, vulnerable and cooled by the air,  
Glimmering in the dingy light  
No movement except my rhythmic pulsation,  
No sound but the box fan  
Humming its tired rhythm.

She squeezes the life out of me with tainted fingers,  
And I'm red-hot, weeping, flushed with humiliation.  
Feeling myself fading,  
And I resign myself to slumber...

While she dreams, I wake, rejuvenated and raging.  
I swell to thrice my size and crawl about her flesh,  
Reshaping the eye that glared at me in disgust,  
As if we were not of the same blood.  
When she sees her reflection  
She will find a bulging alien,  
Punished for its gluttony.  
I have pummeled her without fists,  
With only the vengeance of angered flesh,  
The rage of skin unloved and rejected.

Anya Carter



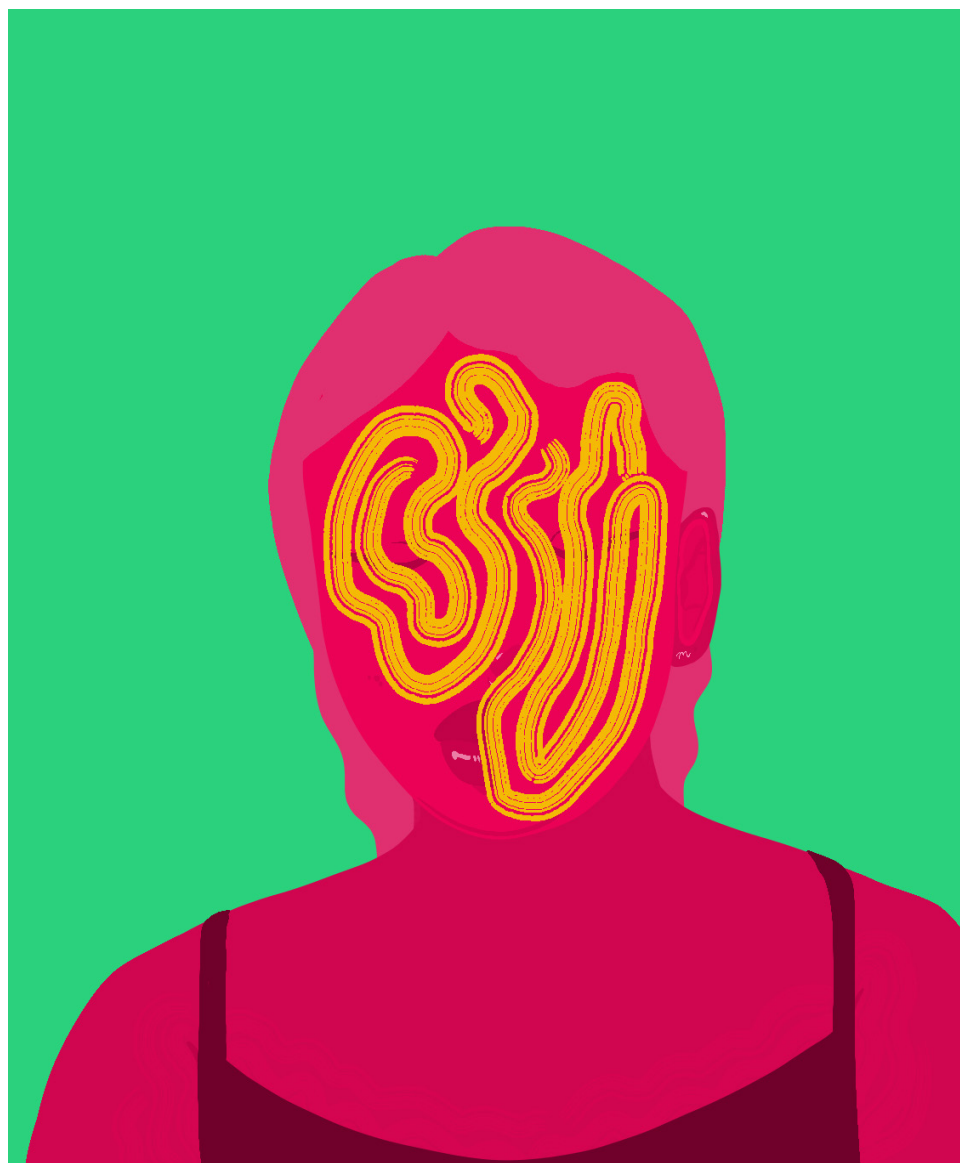
**The Colourful Body**  
Maria Vidal Valdespino

## **Naked in the Snow**

Pained spurts of hot air shoot  
from the veteran's ashen  
lips. Tension teeters; then slowly,  
soothing trickles of relaxation seep  
within aged tendons sinking  
into Winter's sand.

He is  
here and there: homeless  
in the world and where it matters.  
He is floating,  
riding atop frozen waves being  
tickled by crystallized foam. Overhead,  
an arctic tern glides amidst placid grey skies,  
drifting away from time.

Talal Kamran



## **Confusion**

Maria Vidal Valdespino

## Playing Piano

My father stopped listening to the radio in '87, the same year he sold his car, cut his hair, and learned about me. Never sang a tune, my old man, but he planted every measure in his head to take root or be washed out with the rain. His fortes were finding snails and watering the piano, even when this weedy wisp of a child said that ivory wasn't for her and grew out her nails to shred dandelion leaves instead.

Back then, the music room windows rattled louder than the front door when slammed shut. I learned to claw out Chopin with a spiderlike touch and made a point of killing ladybugs that got indoors. When I was sixteen I cut the garden fireflies off from my nocturnes for good. I traded them for friends' couches and bathtubs and backseats, but kept finding that memory wasn't an exoskeleton my hands could shed.

The lilies in our backyard were going on three summers when I finally let myself back in through the gate; too old to be a prodigy but not yet prepared to press my ashes into a punk rock record. I brought my regrets in seeds and photos of my other homes. Let me look at you, my father said, here where you can hear the cicadas and the breeze. By then he'd started sleeping earlier and kneeling less, but he claimed he could carry me until the last day of his life.

When I said I had started to play again, with the smallness of a schoolgirl who had thrown out her homemade lunch, we only had to lift the bench's coffin lid. I'm no good anymore, I told him, and no amount of practice will bring me back. But he settled himself back into his chair and closed his eyes, and only then did I remember he'd once listened to every stumbling note.

Allison Zhao



**If the Glove Fits**  
Caitlin Holleran

## Honey

I stick my fingers in the wound. Dig deep, searching for gold or honeycomb or the metallic sting that proves I'm hurting enough to be a spectacle. I don't want to read about queer misery unless it's funny. I crave literary sweetness. But sometimes I start out tender, brushing the edge of the gash, and end up dismantling myself. I read something I wrote years ago and think, *I was so sad back then* or *I'm so glad I don't feel that way anymore*, but then I try to find that joy, put it into words, and instead

I just plow deep into the pain—let it envelop me.

All of it leaves me with a bitter taste in my mouth and all of a sudden I'm fourteen and freshly heartbroken, or seventeen wondering if you'll love me, or eighteen knowing that you can't (or at least not in the way I wished you would). I'm twenty wondering if anybody will. I'm thirteen coming into myself, or seventeen doing it again; then I'm nineteen or twenty-three or forty-five trying again and again and again and panicking panicking panicking because I don't think I've ever known who I am. Every day Katie tells me something I hadn't realized about myself and I have to reassess and it all leads me back to thinking of you.

Do you still think about me? I think I was platonically infatuated with you. Maybe I still am. I thought I was over it; thought there wasn't much to get over.

It's ridiculous. I'm always obsessing over people who should be non-factors in my life. I guess I'm not one to let go easily so I ride the bus again, and again I picture you as the sun's favorite child, unwinding yourself in that gentle heat. Then, the wholeness of you with your glittering surface always threw me. I stood at the shore and dipped a toe in, hesitant. Just like that, you gifted me wisdom I grew to need. Now, I wish I could swim your cranberry depths, all of it tart tart tart and so fresh and so raw. But I waited to see how things would play out so they never did.



This time of year—Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur/My Birthday—always leaves me melancholy. In an instant, the new moon waxes ‘til it’s full and starts to wane again; I blink and the trees are all but bare. The leaves decompose underfoot while my mother tells me that I waited until after Sukkot to be born and I ask myself if it means something, like I was already people-pleasing in the womb. I knead knead knead the challah and remember how stoked I was to show you all I could do with my hands. I hoped writing this would get you out of my system, but instead I’ve been thinking about the futures we wanted, the ones left unconsummated. I wonder if we fit together better in hindsight or if my love for you was actually as honeyed as I remember. I still want to run away to the woods and live out our genderless post-capitalist beekeeping homesteading fantasies but cottagecore is a colonial aesthetic and we’re both city slickers anyways. We haven’t spoken since last December but I yearn yearn yearn to recapture the ease with which we fell together then came apart.

My rebirth this fall has been painstaking labour, but maybe this winter I can be someone else’s baby.

Noga Shachak



**What Was Left Unsaid**  
Maria Vidal Valdespino

### ***The Limbs***

Arms overhead,  
sun sparks fly as they stretch,  
fingers blue where they brush  
the cerulean sky.  
Rivers and roads unfold through the fields,  
leading in from the fingertips  
and up from the toes.  
Muscles ripple in the wind  
and bend with the breeze,  
the soft, sloping hills giving way  
to the loose roll of the shoulders.  
As the sun streams down from above,  
legs race over silk grass and soil,  
where the heart's rhythmic cadence  
lives in the muted vibrations  
of feet thudding against earth.

Tehlan Lenius

Contributors &  
Creative Details



## **Allison Zhao**

*She/her - Victoria College - Year 4*

English Major, Public Policy Major, Urban Studies Minor

Allison is busy renegotiating her relationship with Chopin. When she surfaces from that, you might see her around.

## **Anya Carter**

*She/her - Innis College - Year 4*

Book and Media Studies Major, and English Major

I'm a science fiction and horror fiend, but I've only recently learned to love writing again. When I'm not drowning in essays I can be found bundled in a blanket pile, crocheting while I watch crime documentaries.

## **Caitlin Holleran**

*She/her - University College - Year 3*

Biochemistry Major and Global Health Major

Hi I'm Caitlin, I was born in Toronto but grew up in Texas and decided to come back to Toronto for university. I've always loved to paint but started seriously getting into painting during the lockdowns when I needed a creative escape from being stuck inside.

## **Catherine Diyakonov**

*She/her - University College - Year 1*

Humanities

Catherine Diyakonov is a first-year undergraduate student interested in studying the intersection of the arts and the sciences. In her free time, Catherine loves to unwind by listening to music, painting, writing short stories and poems, and playing the flute and piccolo!

## **Diana Vink**

*She/they - Victoria College - Year 2*

Literature and Critical Theory Major, Creative Expression and Society Minor, and Women and Gender Studies Minor.

Diana Vink is a second year at Victoria College, originally from New York. Her work focuses on her experiences with gender, sexuality, and mental health, diving confessional-style into the depths of her brain for an honest, at times painful exploration of their innermost thoughts and feelings.

## **Druphadi Sen**

*She/her - University College - Year 1*

Life Sciences

Druphadi Sen is a first-year student who enjoys reading, writing, and painting. Her work has been displayed in UofT's ArtSideOut and StartYPA's Youth Presenting Art. She is from Toronto, Ontario.

## **Gabriel Yuan**

*They/Them - New College - Year 4*

English Major and Urban Planning Major

I am deeply and psychologically afflicted by Richard Siken's poetry. I cannot stop garnishing everything I write with a pinch of religious trauma. In my spare time I create for The Gargoyle as the editor-in-chief! I mostly write short-form prose with a dash of fantasy.

## **Kaye Li**

*She/her - University College - Year 2*

Specialist in English, and Minor in Literature and Critical Theory

Kaye is an aspiring writer from Hong Kong. She wishes to share a teapot of Pu-erh with someone, and is lately obsessed with internal rhymes.

## **Maria Vidal Valdespino**

*She/her - Victoria College - Year 4*

Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity Major, Women and Gender Studies Minor, and Sociology Minor

Maria is a big fan of bright colours and textures, adorning herself and her work in pinks anytime she can. She is always open to new illustrative and design projects, and can be found on Instagram at [@vidalvaldespino!](#)

## **Noga Shachak**

*Any/all pronouns - Woodsworth College - Year 2*

Political Science Major, English Minor, and Sexual Diversity Studies Minor

Noga Shachak enjoys writing about love, queerness, history and horror. Some of their writing has been featured in UC's Gargoyle. They despise/struggle with writing bios.

## **Rion Levy**

*He/him - Victoria College - Year 3*

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

Rion Levy is a Toronto-based poet concerned with the end times.

## **Talal Kamran**

*He/him - Victoria College - Year 2*

Talal Kamran is an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto. He'll spend this winter reading, snowboarding less than he'd like, and working away at very important things.

## **Tehlan Lenius**

*She/her - Woodsworth College - Year 3*

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

Tehlan is the poetry editor for the Hart House Review and a content writer for the Howl Mag. They spend most of their time fantasising about their next writing project and very little of their time actually writing it.



## **About Our Art**

### **Catherube Diyakonov's Work**

Acrylic on Cotton Duck Canvas

This abstract painting is an exploration into how the complexities of one's mind can manifest in the body, and by extension, the soul or aura. The base of the painting resembles the vibrations one's mind emanates, signified by the foggy strands leading away from the silhouettes. These silhouettes have a diverse set of colours and textures which tell a story of struggle. There is a clear, yet fluid dichotomy between the top and bottom silhouettes, encouraging others to reflect upon their pasts and how the experiences they have went through have shaped how they tell their stories.

### **Caitlin Holleran's Work**

Acrylic on Canvas

For the hands painting it is acrylic on canvas portraying many colored gloves, and the faces piece is also an acrylic on canvas piece of four women in various shades of purple.

### **Druphadi Sen's Work**

Photography, Digital.

Inspired by both Edward Hopper and the artist's own hometown. While this photograph is a meditation on fragmented, intimate moments, the sense that a bustling city exists in the background is equally prevalent. The photograph invites viewers to find commonality and resonance between the subject and themselves rather than to simply remain a spectator. Through a sort-of empathetic intrusion, the work hopes to pay homage to Caroline Walker and Vivian Maier, and ultimately, reflect the female gaze.

## **Maria Vidal Valdespino's Work**

Illustration and Collage, Digital.

Maria's three pieces are a combination of illustrative and collage pieces created on the application Procreate. They are reflections of her personal experiences with her own body, to celebrate its beauty and acknowledge its insecurities.

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