

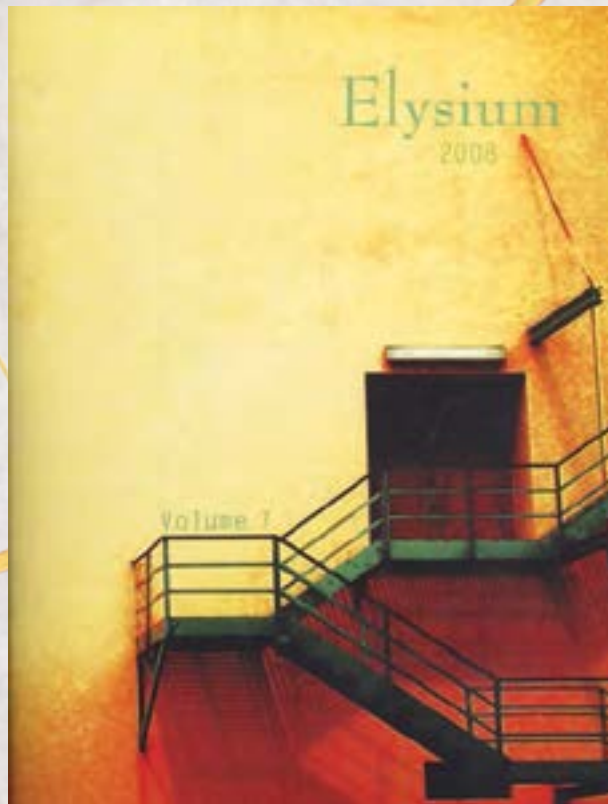


Something About Jazz

We are "Something About Jazz", a group that loves making music anywhere from jazz to pop



A DECADE OF ELYSIUM





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CLAIRAUDIENT

ANNMARIE RASKIN

He took out a cigarette with his lips; a pack of Marlboro reds, half empty.

A cardboard box thrown on my father's coffee table, the walls and shag carpet inhaled the smoke and his apartment turned a shade of grey.

An orange ash tray in my grandmother's house, an opaque womb. She leaves the remains of my grandfather's last drag as she taps the side with the tip of her cigarette; they are making love again. Siblings and cousins fought silently about who would inherit it after she died.

"That bitch Dara isn't getting it."

My sister and I stand on pink stone at the back of the house.

"Nick gave this to me."

She throws me a pack of matches and poses with the cigarette, weaving it through her fingers. The flame kisses the tip and she coughs up ashes.

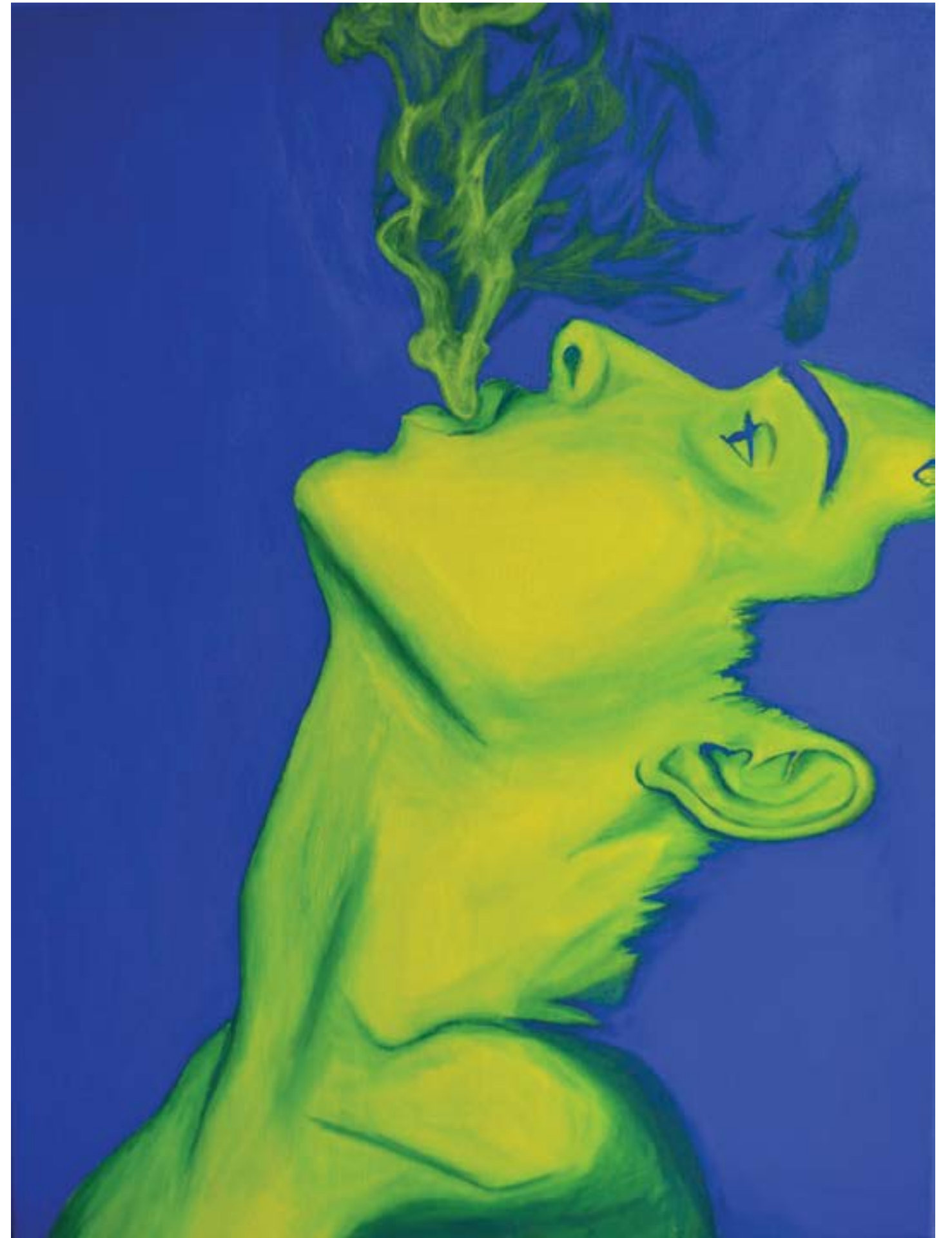
I meet her years later in the subway of New York, arm wrapped around a new lover. She recites the prayer of the past and tosses me a lighter.

I watch him inhale, exhale slowly, fall in love. He hands me a secondhand lover, I taste nicotine, his breath. I expect November, the warmth of a whisper, the darkness of my father's apartment.

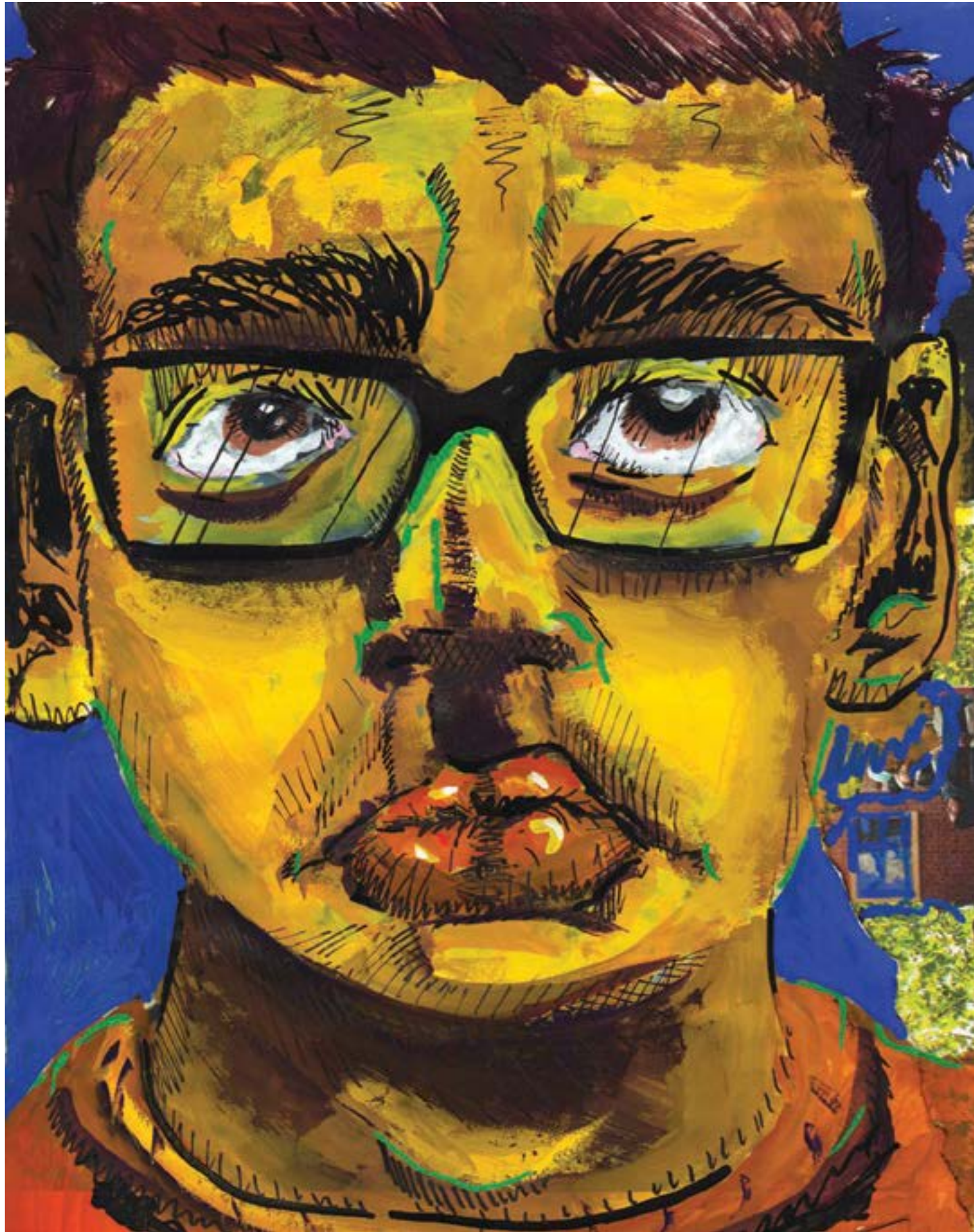
I inhale.

The smoke that is supposed to assemble through my chest gets lost in an internal labyrinth. I do not turn grey, nor cough up ashes; I feel nothing.

So I leave him.



Austin Morales, *The Boy Who Could*, Acrylic



Derek Abella, *Sunday*, Mixed Media

SOMETHING THAT HAS LEGS

EMILY MENDEZ

There's a candle in between my jar of pens and glass of wine that smells like you, but only after it's been lit and blown out.

And I vacillate between wanting to burn it and not, mostly because I'm an indecisive bitch but also because I'm sick of burning the things that I love.

I don't believe in hypnosis but I do believe that sometimes when I have my hand tracing crop circles in your hair I stop wanting to chew my pens and forget that one time my dad called me a whore for wanting to sleep in a real bed.

I don't believe in ghosts but I do believe that sometimes when I'm burning my morning toast I can still feel your hand, warm and constant on my back.

I'm not sure why I didn't curse until 10th grade or allow other people to touch me until 11th, but I do know that silence next to you isn't really silence at all and that your eye contact is like staring into a mirror.

Sometimes when I tell you I'm not good enough, all I want is for you to repeat it back, but with more conviction.

I don't understand why I'm jealous when I see you talking to anyone else because jealousy is a frilly emotion but I do know that I only met you this year even though I wish I could have said that years ago.

I'm sorry that I can't be happy all the time for you but I'm not even happy all the time for myself.

My mother told me to never love anything that has legs and can walk away but I don't really care much for her anyway.

FAULT

DEREK ABELLA

For some reason, the seats of our Lincoln Town Car
now smell like ten-year-old crayons rather than cheaply tanned faux-leather.
Above the steering wheel, on the seething asphalt, there's a shallow wrinkle.

I'm wearing cologne worth more than
our house.

I don't particularly remember why my fingers are calloused,
but I noticed that as I stuck their tips into the ground,
I couldn't feel.

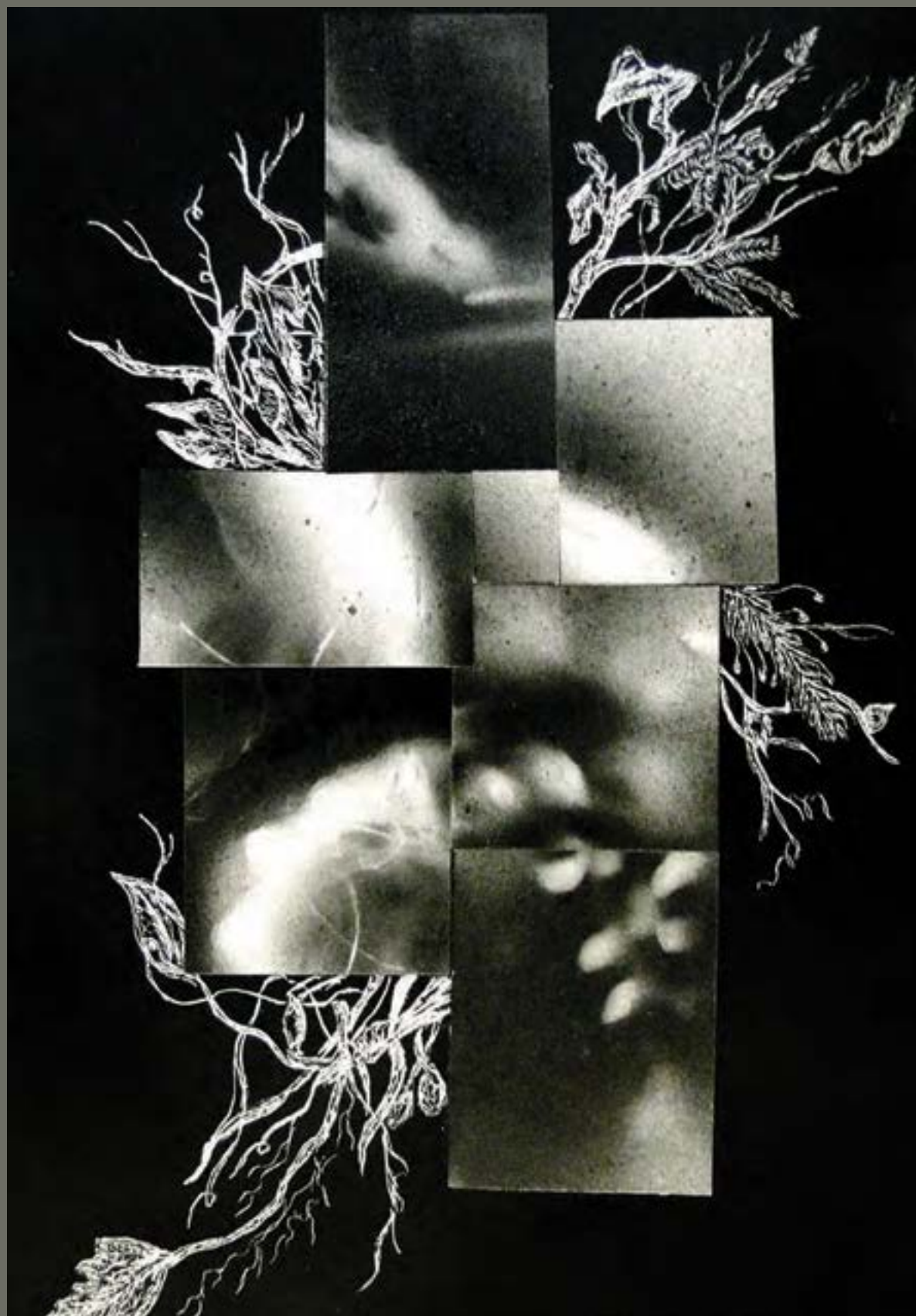
You were in the driver's seat, hair soaked in honeymoon sweat.
We were married seven years ago,
and you still refuse to get out of your nightgown.
It is our shared fault.

There used to be four almond trees that littered
our driveway with pods, and I would kick them around after
you threatened me with divorce and laughed.

At least I kept the car clean.
Even though you can't see it behind the sheet of exhaust,
there's still a chip of paint on the trunk
from the second "r" in "Just Married."



Austin Morales, *Harlot*, Acrylic on Canvas



Amber Plaksin, *цвѣток (tsuyetok)*, Spray paint and scratch board

ON 1945

JOSIE LO BELLO

White-wash my fire into a shy, rosy thing.
Your bath of ink and ammonia
scrubs away at my intricacies until
I am all ashes and names and numbers.

Take care to be thorough;
Get through to the lungs and cast out every breath.
Carve through the tender divisions of the heart
and label each piece: Good. Evil.

Re-sew your flags with thicker thread of vaguer color.
Burn my footsteps from the earth
so that you may strut guiltlessly
Across the flesh of this aborted memory.

To your children I am but a myth,
an ashy shame in the glass of their grandfathers' eyes :
two shy, rosy things that once fell on a Japanese seashore.



B R Y C C E



Bryce Davidson is one of America's freshest musical talents – an 18-year-old singer and songwriter from Miami who's electrifying the entertainment world.

In the past year, she has performed in London (Feb 2013) and New York (August 2013) to sold-out audiences with British Singer/Songwriter, Lauren Aquilina. She reached #1 on the local ReverbNation singer-songwriter charts and built a worldwide following through social media, with more than 14,500 plays on Soundcloud.

"When I am not at school, you will find me making music," says Bryce, a 2014 YoungArts Winner in Popular Voice.

"There is something so powerful about putting poetry to song that makes me never want to stop."

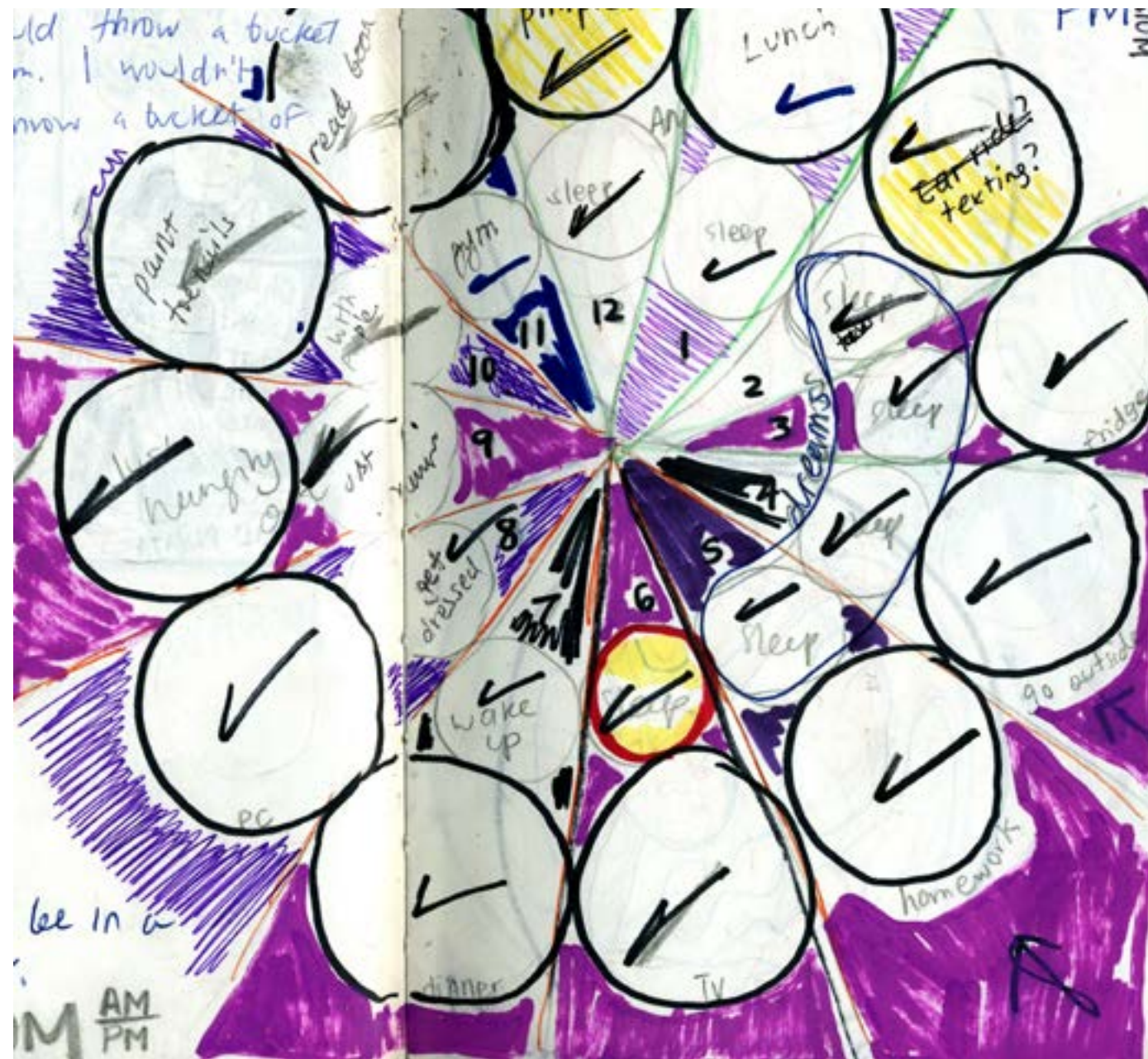
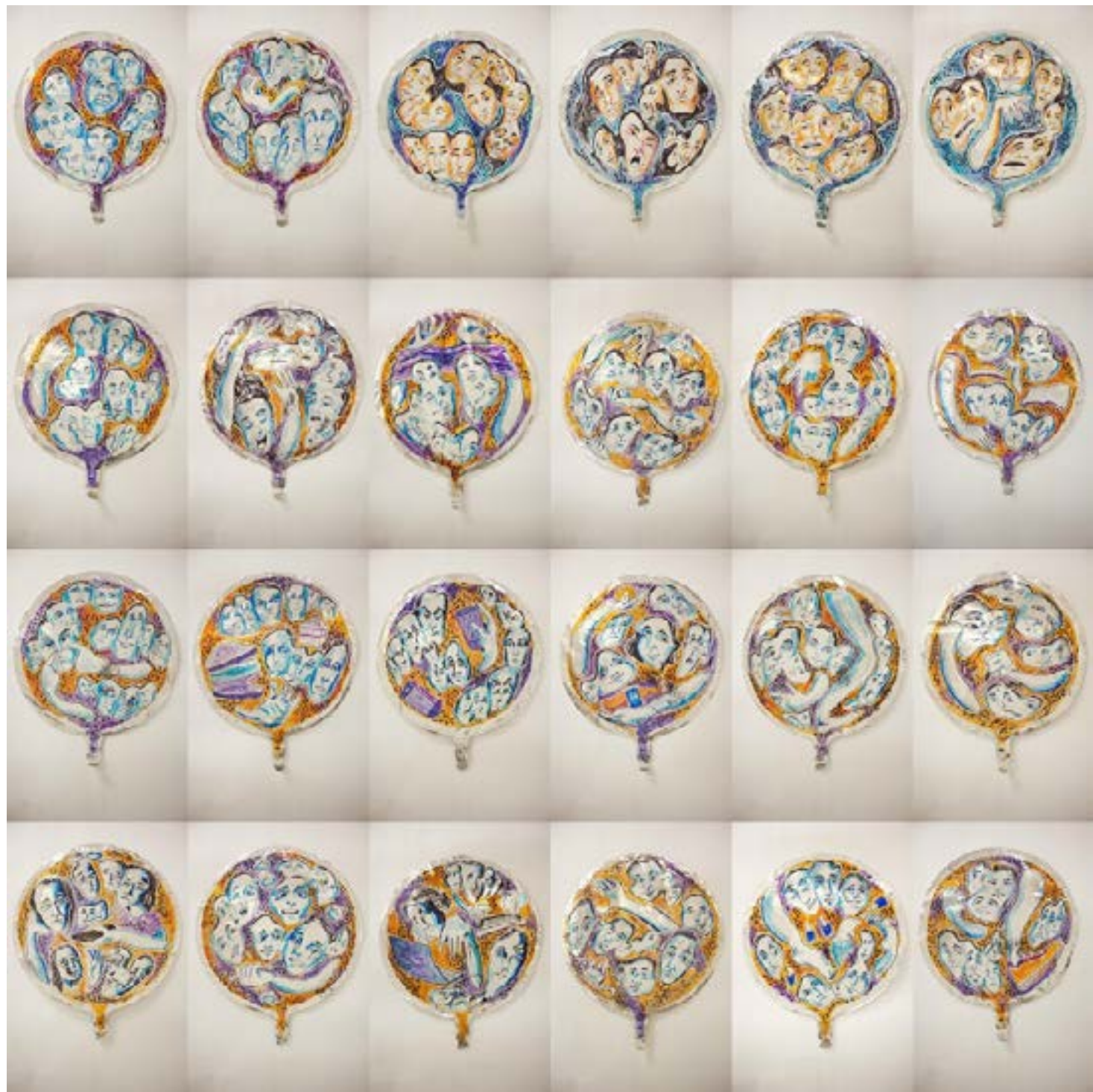
Nathalie

Francis



CARO BEGUIRISTAIN





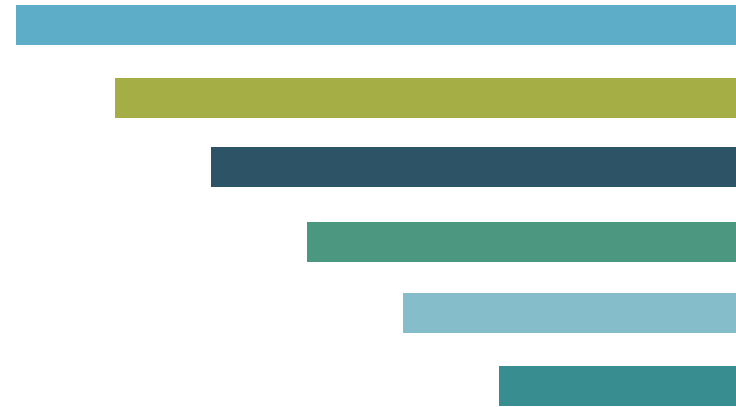
Amber Plaksin





Olivia Galeiras, *Instinct*, Mixed Media

IMMORTAL SHADOW: A RAP JAKE NAMON



Light blinds, but in the dark you adjust your eyes
Do we live in the black or white with diminished sight?
If the former have we completely adjusted bona fide?
What's wrong and what's right may have a thin line
However where it is cast, is different in each mind
More questions, less answers, take it without thought
Like a bucket of Colonel Sanders
Chew with glee; add some small talk and banter
You are now a sheep, owned by biltsVander
Chew, chew on your salad salamander
Without doubt, no sense no antlers
Chew, chew on your salad salamander
Without doubt, no sense no antlers
In this day and age where... wait

This is not a phase; it's always been this way
Just because it was a different style
doesn't mean the message was not the same
still controlled by fear, molded by shame
We may adhere, to changing the pieces
But never the game
What if the slate was scratched in such way
That it didn't need wiping away today?
A whole new layer under debris and decay

For most this food for thought is simply just food
for play
But really, who's to say?

Chew, chew on your salad salamander
Without doubt, no sense no antlers
Chew, chew on your salad salamander
Without doubt, no sense no antlers

There's a madness to my method
But I don't keep it under wraps, I keep it under raps

To give me leverage
They call me chromos cause I'm never second to seconds

Word play, so invest
It's got its own toy and beverage
Beckoned to negate the negligence, and spread the message
How the overloads are invisibly twisting
Your favorite appendage
You get nothing in return but, false incentive
You are contaminated by cancer, not infested with festives

Chew, chew on your salad salamander
Without doubt, no sense no antlers
Chew, chew on your salad salamander
Without doubt, no sense no antlers





Carlos Lopez, *King of the Can*, Acrylic on Canvas

STAY GOLDEN

ANYSSA CHEBBI

His hands gripped the steering wheel as he struggled to stare straight ahead. He managed to pass by the first one despite her bright makeup color scheme and gave himself a mental pat on the back. He had his beautiful girlfriend waiting for their date at 8 o'clock; he could wait.

"They're everywhere . . ."

He used to just be able to avoid certain parts of town. Now it felt like they were waiting for him on every street corner.

It probably had to do with the economy; in the end, doesn't everything? They provided what every man wanted . . . and affordably. The business was growing exponentially. He kept driving. He had made it all the way to 20th street when he saw her. She was so much younger than the rest; fresher, more naïve. He couldn't help himself. Feelings of regret were already beginning to sink in as he put his blinker on and pulled over.

As he approached her, his olfactory senses were assaulted by her strong, enticing perfume. It wasn't at all like his girlfriend's; this one was definitely cheaper, but sweeter nonetheless. This was his vice, his dirty habit that he'd been trying to kick. He knew it was bad for him but the perks drove him crazy. He could ask for whatever he wanted and didn't even have to leave the privacy of his car; he was completely anonymous. It was a thrill to be doing something he knew to be so wrong, something that the government was trying to outlaw in some states. The only thing he hated was payment.

It was a grotesque necessity that made the exchange all too real. But that was it. Just as quickly as it had begun, it was over. There were no remnants of its occurrence except the balled up wrapper on the floor of the passenger's seats but he felt it in his stomach and knew that he had cheated. He took the car out of park and drove home; away from the warm, golden arches of her embrace to the all too plain seeming salad abandoned in the fridge.

This is not a story about prostitution.

MIDNIGHT IN CARACAS

ANTONIO CHAHINE

I approached my chemistry class. Beehives of students gathered at the doorway, buzzing excitedly about their weekend plans. The atmosphere felt warm, inviting. Once in the room I saw Josephine and Danielle sharpening their pencils by the door, but when Danielle spotted me, she smiled, put down her pencil, and offered me a nectar-drenched cupcake. I buzzed in delight. Sitting there waiting for the bell and nibbling my cupcake, I looked around the room and thought:

“This classroom feels like home.”

No one could have guessed that just six years ago I prayed just to be standing there.

It all began on a chilly December night in Venezuela. We were dropping my aunt off at her house when we heard car doors fiercely shutting behind us. In a dreadful second a man dressed in black was brutally pushing a semi-automatic revolver against my father’s temples. My father drew back, clenched his fist, and hit the intruder in the face. Enraged, the robber tore open the door on the driver’s side and pushed my father to the passenger’s seat, taking control of the steering wheel. In a flash, two other armed men wearing masks broke into our car. Holding us hostage, the robbers plunged through the ill-kept streets of Caracas at full speed. The suffocating fist of fear muted my voice.

Instinctively my desperate mother and aunt sat on top of me to shield me from danger. The robbers were savagely swinging their lacquered guns so close to us that I can still remember their paralyzing, cold touch on my skin. As I peered through a crevice between my mother and my aunt, panic seized my spine. I saw my defiant father tussling with the robber who thrust his gun against my father’s head. The cold sweat trickling down my

spine slashed my body open. Frantic prayers ran through my mind. I froze in horror, petrified that the robber might pull the trigger and steal my father forever—

At that moment, my father’s cell phone rang, breaking the tense silence. Without thinking, one of the robbers answered. My uncle was on the other end of the line. My family who detected his muffled voice all screamed in the background.

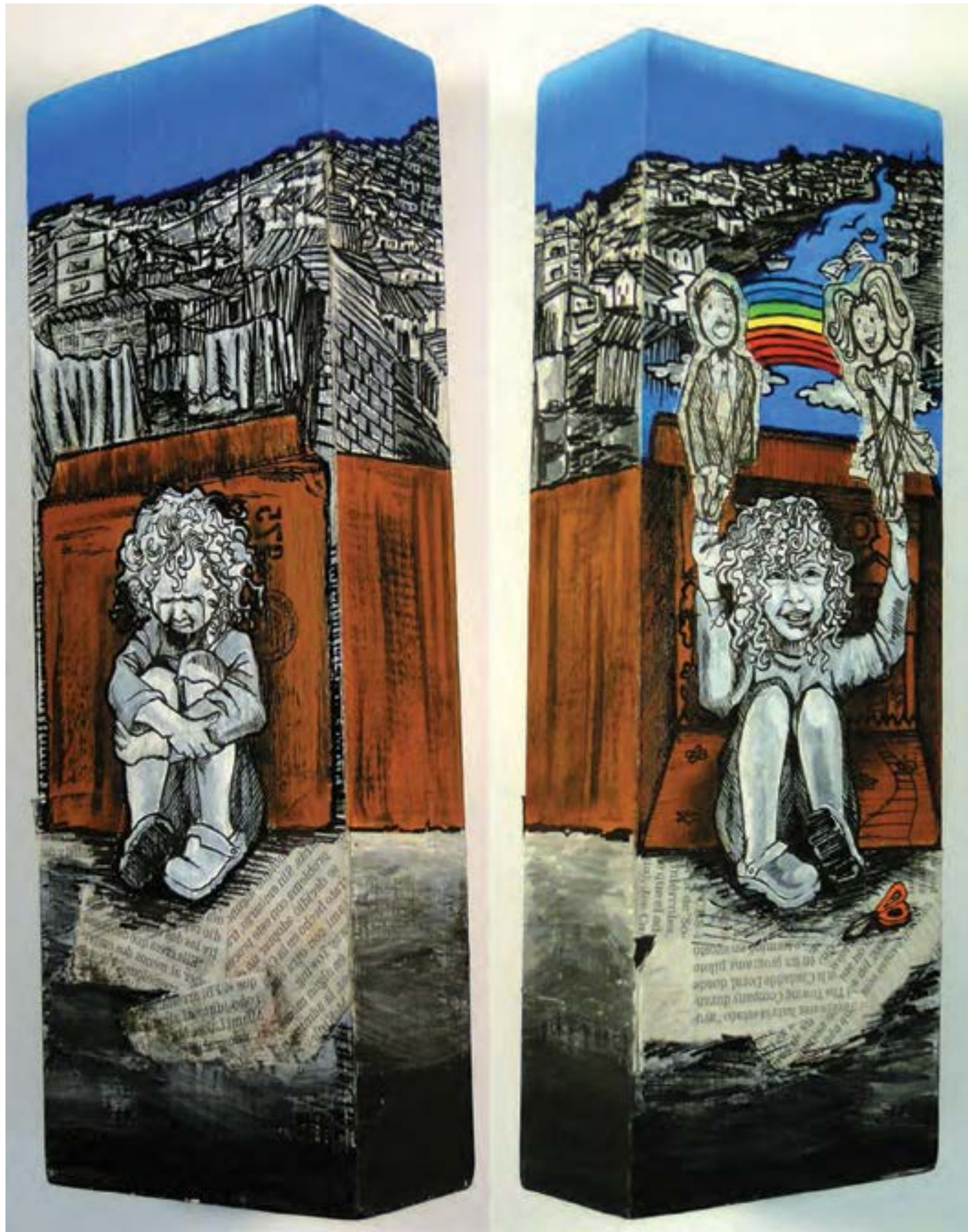
“Don’t dare to lay a finger on my family. . .” my uncle threatened.

The robber hastily threw the phone to the side. Anxiety and fear now possessed the three men. Their plan had been detected. Now facing possible capture, the driver abruptly stopped the vehicle on the edge of a lonely, steep path. They shoved us out of the car and watched as we rolled down the embankment.

There, lying in the mud, fearing to breathe, I could not help but dream - dream for a country that provided safety for my family - dream for a future where I could ensure my own children would live securely.

As a child of six, I began to contemplate my life under a very different light. I yearned to be here in the U.S. where I could pursue my desire to study medicine and one day establish a family freed from constant fear.

My thoughts returned to the present and to the classroom. The clamor of laughter and excited talk slowly subsided. I continued thinking about all the odysseys that I had been through and quietly smiled. A new dawn and a new sunrise bloomed in the horizon.



Sabrina Mendoza, *In Search For A Home*, Painting on Wood Block

MY ARTWORK IS A PROTEST

AN INTERVIEW WITH SABRINA MENDOZA

ANNMARIE RASKIN

When I first met Sabrina, I had heard of her story and admired her art but didn't know the complete details. Her artwork, displayed in the magazine, depicts the physical impacts of poverty, a subject about the young artist is familiar which due to the condition of her home country. I had the opportunity to sit down with her and listen to the gleaming Venezuelan share her background story and the inspiration for her work.

Where are you from? What's your background story?

I'm from Venezuela. I got here in 8th grade and I learned English and got into art. I had an audition to get into Coral Reef but I had to go back to Venezuela in November of 9th grade because my Visa had expired. I came back the next year.

How has your artwork changed since you had to go back to Venezuela?

In my artwork there is a theme of poverty. I often have paintings of poor neighborhoods and children crying. My artwork is a protest of everything happening in Venezuela.

Were you making art in Venezuela before you came to America?

There weren't art classes in school; so, I went to drawing classes. When I came here I made portraits and they were sent into exhibitions. I started to make detailed artwork and use different techniques.

What are some differences from America and Venezuela that have impacted your art?

Venezuela has many poor neighborhoods. The people are so defeated, and they don't care about their future. They know that things can't get better.

Which artists have inspired you?

I'm a weird artist. I don't take references from other artists because I'm not really familiar with other artists.

Do you want to pursue art in the future?

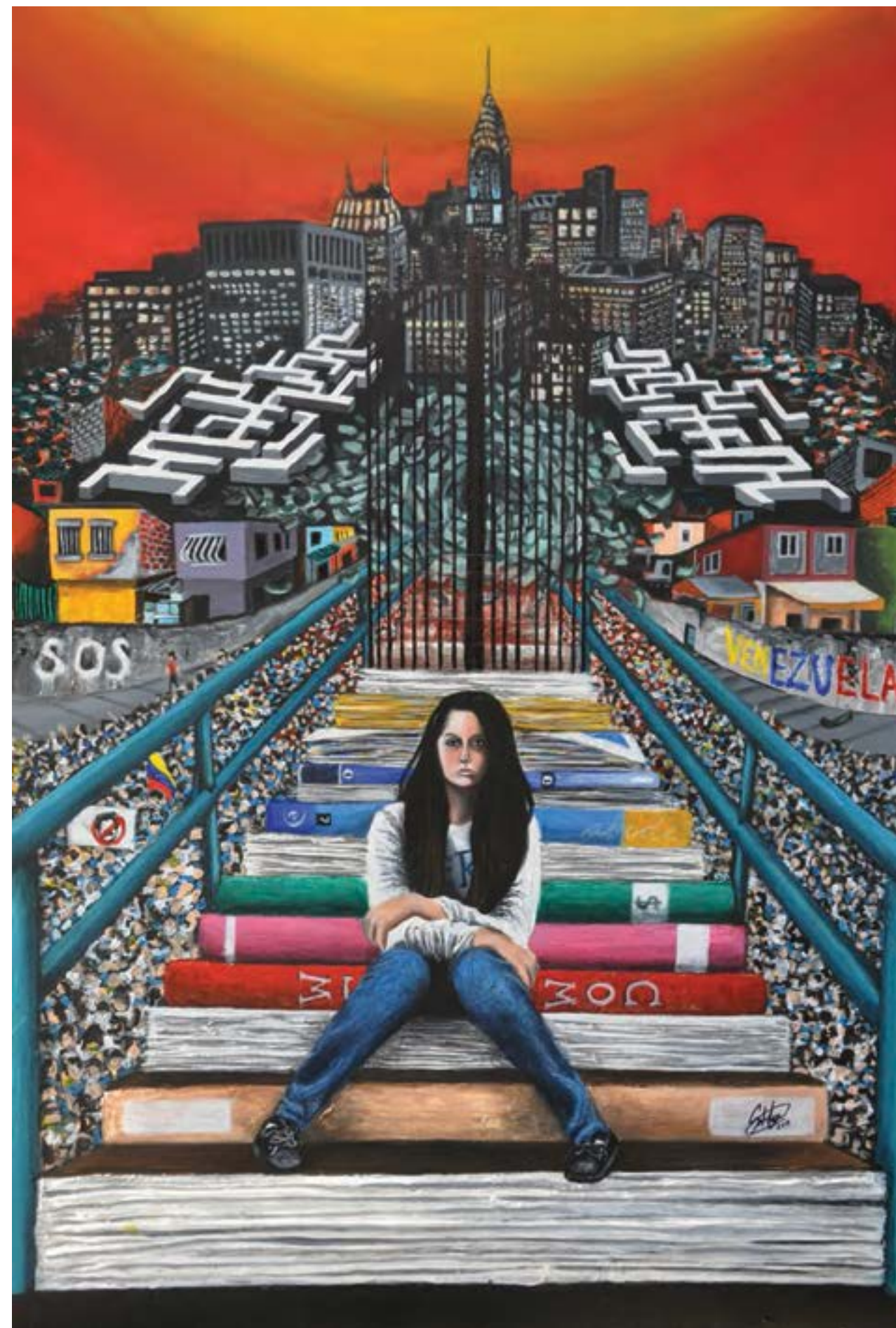
I want to continue art, but I can only do that if I get a scholarship.

Do you want to go back?

I don't know if I want to live there.

Is your situation here resolved? Will you have to go back?

In two years I need to get my Visa renewed. There's a possibility that if things get worse in Venezuela, I won't be able to live here anymore.



Sabrina Mendoza, *Revolution at its Highest Level*, Acrylic





Lilah
Saunders

sings "Million Dollar Man"
by Lana Del Rey

GUNFIRE AND BRIMSTONE

DANIELLE COOGAN

A seagull routes over dead seas
that call back to eras past.
Bodies lay strewn empty in the desert sun
which burns like a vengeful diamond
in an azure sky.

The intensity of colors mirrors the
intensity of their lives.
They live in the forgotten regions
of another man's consciousness.

Their bodies are vehicles
raised to work and
receive no pay.

To sketch their history
is to draw boundaries with
crayons and machine guns.
To tell their story
is to mistake their needs.

Across rolling cerulean hills
angels walk on the sands of time,
foreigners to want or depravity.
Skyscrapers rise behind them.

Gulls chatter at their picnic baskets
not knowing the hole left in eternity
and the price paid for trying to
own what wasn't theirs.



Trystan Davis, *Elliott Key*, Digital Photography

CRY

PAULA LOZANO

My father once told me
how to be strong,
to stand above loved ones
and leave where I belong.

My Mother once taught me
image is all.
To appear store wealthy
and push them not to fall.

Before my grandfather left
he forgot to say
crying is for fools
and for those who choose to decay.

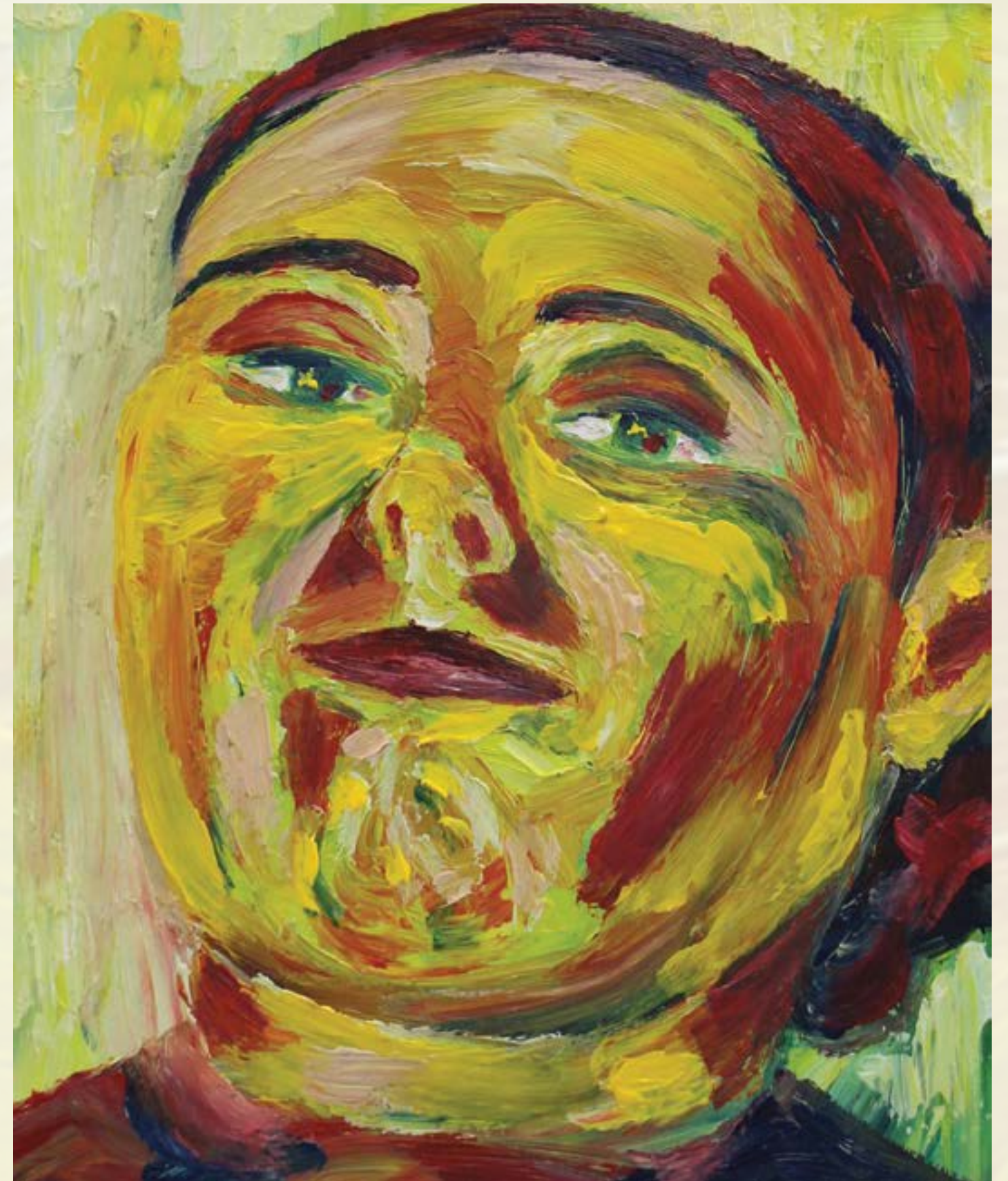
How absurd.

Don't you understand that it is my
catharsis?
That time builds up and hardens within
me
until I burst, realizing I was suffocating,
letting all the tears rush down my
body cleansing all that tainted myself
in one liberating sigh?

Don't you realize that it reminds me I am
human?
That I have senses and emotions that matter,
that exist- that become
concrete with every drop that pushes
its way out from the tough shell
that you created?

Don't you realize that I'm not weak?
That I am stronger than I have ever been;
I have just been strong for too long.
The one being immature here
is the one that cannot embrace his own
emotions.

And don't you understand?
These tears are more genuine than that
face you yield to the world.
Besides, they are not for you.
Don't flatter yourself.
You are stuck in a testosterone time
that will decline.



Natalie Molina, *Yo*, Acrylic



Tiffany Zambrana, *Flawless*, Mixed Media Collage

A PASSIVE RESISTANCE

ALEJANDRA DE LA FUENTE

When you bring her home for the first time,
she tries to plant thick roots in your mattress.
They never bloom because her hands slip on the weeds that keep spreading
even as you keep your hands pressed against her concave cheeks.

Once, she says she is an afterthought and each call of her name on your lips is a rebirth.
Like learning how to crawl again, she reaches for you.
And you, half-mast, guide her to shore.
But most days, you are a tugboat
desperately searching for the distant light of her whispers,
to find our way home.

She squints to find the smattering of stains she's left behind on the grooves of your hips like
washcloth promises – wrinkled at the edges.
She traces them like constellations and names each one,
whispers them against your skin when she thinks you are not listening.

You look away; you're always listening.

But her native tongue is destruction, forged by her own fire
and you're trying to learn the language in your own way:
soft-spoken shatters into her sleepless nights
you feel her stirring and you keep her eyes shut,
the sound of her blood drumming in your ears is the sound of the solid ground beneath her
slipping as she grows restless once more.

And while she lays there, civilian plane disguised as shooting star, you do not wish on her.

One day she will land; it will be
far, far
away from you.

NOTHING BUT LAUGHTER

NICOLE GARCIA

nothing but laughter
and a tie dye sky
yet you doubt there is beauty
in what lies before your eyes

a vast landscape
filled with nothing but joy
void of the dishonesty

this is the moment
this is that place
present in my dreams
and now reflected in my face

this smile, you see
brought about by its own will
my enthusiasm for like
will not be tainted
can't be killed.



Daniel Ochoa, *Venus Fl-eye Trap*, Acrylic, Watercolor, and Markers

It Don't Mean A Thing If It Don't Have That Swing!



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Join us in
the courtyard
for refreshments.

Please refrain
from sitting in
the cafe. That
is reserved for
patrons only.

Thank you for
coming, and
we hope you
join us next
year.



BOOKS & BOOKS

Our most sincere thanks to Mitch Kaplan and the entire Books & Books Staff who have hosted us for the last seven years and who continue to support the arts.

