

SpawningPool
Poetry Chapbook:
Diversity
Spring 2021

Shippensburg University

/OR

SpawningPool is a literary arts chapbook published at Shippensburg University by a small and dedicated team of undergraduate students. It is composed of Poetry pieces submitted by undergraduate students of the university.

SpawningPool accepts rolling submissions throughout the year and we publish our chapbook every spring semester. SpawningPool is a publication of *The Reflector*, which also accepts submissions year-round and is compiled each Fall semester.

Contact us:

Submissions and inquiries: **reflector@ship.edu**

SpawningPool Poetry Chapbook, Spring 2021

Text set in Bookman Old Style

Printed by Shippensburg University

Layout by Dale Crowley and Tristan Brownell

Cover design by Tristan Brownell

Poetry Editor:
Dale Crowley

Assistant Poetry Editor:
Tristan Brownell

Committee Members:
Haley Bennett
Cameron Crouse
Emily Fitzgerald
Ernest Frazier
Victoria Helfrick
Abigail Long
Bailey Milnik
Nicole Potts

Table of Contents

Me.....	1
Kaliyah Barnaby	
Untitled.....	2
Elijah Warren	
Untitled.....	3
Piper Kull	
Painting of a Girl.....	4 – 5
Samantha Smith	
What if I was a Cat.....	6 – 7
Samantha Smith	
My First Time at Field of Screams.....	8 – 9
Samantha Smith	
I Just Want a Drink.....	10
Keric Ellis	
Cower/Grow.....	11 – 14
Isabella Brignola	
Unity.....	15 – 16
Autumn Jones	

Car Crash.....	17
Bruce Washington	
Complaints.....	18
Bruce Washington	
Differences of Balance.....	19
Bruce Washington	
Adversity.....	20 – 21
Wayne Hood Jr.	
Untitled.....	22
Salma Aden	
Of Towns and Little People.....	23
Cameron M. Crouse	
Neon Colors.....	24 – 25
Cameron M. Crouse	
Black, Brown and Tan.....	26 – 27
Pierce Romey	
Untitled.....	28
Courtney Mayne	
Plastic Vignettes.....	29
Olivia Chovanes	

Color Love.....	30 – 32
Ariana Tomb	
Wings.....	33
Emily Fitzgerald	
Path Less Traveled.....	34 – 35
Abigail Long	
Words Unsaid.....	36
Abigail Long	
Asexuality.....	37
Anonymous	
Box.....	38 – 39
Anonymous	
Muse.....	40 – 42
Isabella Brignola	
What I know.....	43 – 44
Isabella Brignola	
What Love Should Be.....	45 – 48
Adam Bean	

Me

Do you see me?

Hear me Scream

Why so silent, I know you can hear me

Help me! Why aren't you helping me?

Why aren't you seeing me?

I'm bleeding, crying, screaming

Do you see me?

Breaking on the inside, while my happiness slips away

Hear me scream from the pain, and the blood dripping
down to the floor

Do you see me, I see me

Music blasting, and dancing with bright smiles

Heart filling with joy

I hear me

Laughing, no more tears, no screams

No more pain,

Do you see me?

Kaliyah Barnaby

Untitled

A man in camo approaches me preaching of a life boasting benefits and glory.

Immediately I'm captivated and before I know it, I'm hugging my family goodbye before boarding a westbound plane.

Lord knows the misery awaiting us in Missouri as the bus delivers us past the point of no return.

The Fort Leonard Wood welcoming committee showed no mercy as the weight of our decisions finally came to fruition.

Each and every day, each and every one of us combated the rigors of our situation.

The lack of prowess or power proved too much for some, and they returned home with their paycheck and memories alike.

Here I stand, however, now laughing at my former adversary among the victorious.

Elijah Warren

Untitled

My queerness walks into a bar
She wears a stiff jacket over a tube top,
Gets her ass grabbed by a bolder man,
A drink bought by a shy woman.
My queerness gets on the table and
reaches down to no one, but three reach back
The question quickly becomes
Who do I want to be seen with tonight?
My queerness walks out of the bar confused
On the arm of someone who might have
Called her "slut" earlier, or was it "stunning?"
My queerness refuses to choose
And she is deemed greedy and unfaithful
Said to be faking for a trend.
My queerness continues to return,
Despite the pleas from my mother,
Unapologetic, and shamelessly real.

Piper Kull

Painting of a Girl

Each time I look upon her face,
I cannot help but smile,
because Grandpa gave her to me
to keep my head up a while.
She looks as though she is lost,
but seems to know exactly where she is.
The flowers by her feet,
and the flowers in her basket
swing gently in the breeze
as she rests among the grasses.
The barn panels creak
as these old structures often do,
but this does not bother her,
she has other things to do.
She seems a little sad,
but maybe she's just thinking,
of all the things young girls do,

never even blinking.
Each time I look upon her face,
I often wonder why,
this little girl upon my wall
looks like she's about to cry.
I like to think her worries are often small
and maybe someday she will forget them all.
A smile will spread across her face,
bright enough to keep even the sun in place.
Her worries fade and life moves on,
just as each new day begins with dawn.
I look forward to that day,
I may not even know what to say,
as I look upon her face and know
We have found our space.

Samantha Smith

What if I was a cat?

I like to sit and think
what my days would be like
if I was a cat?

I would be with a family
one filled with love
that lets me play in the grass
of their great big backyard.

The adventures I could have
playing with butterflies and the sun
just like children do

I am a cat named Kitty Kat.

My little girl calls me Kat most days
but sometimes when she is sad,
she says in her quiet little voice
come here Kitty Kat.

This name of mine, that I have been given
let's me feel the warmth of the sun

and play with butterflies in the great big backyard of my family,

just like my little girl who so often calls me Kat.

Samantha Smith

My first time at Field of Screams.

I hear the whispers of those behind me
and the screams of those in front
or are those my screams?

They yell at me from both sides

I cannot understand what they are saying
but it startles me nonetheless.

I really want to keep moving forward
but in front of me the father holding his son's shoulders in
comfort
while the boy grasps his own ears,
seem to walk at a snail's pace.

I feel a hand reach out,
my shoulder touched
my ankle grabbed
my face nearly collides with a swinging door.

I just want to get out of here,
But I just can't seem to let go of the thrill of it all
So, I stay.

I endure it.

And in the end,

I laughed about it

Samantha Smith

I Just Want A Drink

My whiteness walks into a bar
And I immediately feel guilt,
Guilt for having privilege
When I strive for equality.

My straightness walks into a bar
But no one sees me as such.
They infer my high femininity
To me being homosexual.

My Christianity walks into a bar
And I am seen as the judge
When all I want, is for judgement
To be left up to God.

I walk into a bar
All of me in one
"Hey, Rum & Coke! Make it strong!
I've had a helluva day!"

Keric Ellis

Cower/Grow

Tribute to Ada Limón and Alison Bechdel

You are crying in the shower.

You didn't mean to,

But the chance to sob,

Without being caught,

Only comes once a day,

In those constrained tiled squares.

You can't feel the tears leaking out,

Because the constant downpour

Of the showerhead makes it too

Overwhelming to separate

The millions of drops,

Falling to the floor.

A book has never upset you so deeply,

That the rest of the day

You are no better than a ghost

Wandering the scenes of pages

As a spirit must wander through

Their memories,
Unaware of the world around them.
Perhaps it's that one line
Echoing through the crowded library of
Scenes and facts, stuffed in the shelves
Of your subconscious.
You reach out to pick the troublesome leaflet,
Viewing the picture of Bechdel in a bookstore,
Hiding in her trench coat as the image reads.
Bechdel speaks, though,
Through the strict boxes and captions.
She says
"A Revelation not of the flesh
But of the mind."
She was your age
When this revelation occurred,
And she too hadn't found any proof
Of the revelation she describes
Besides identifying with other voices

She learned to follow.
You both held a similar question
And in your life, you clung to others
Who you knew or hoped
Were like you.
For the first time,
You begin to ponder what it means
To join this group of diverse humans.
To follow in the footsteps
Of Shakespeare,
Audre Lorde,
Oscar Wilde,
And of course, Alison Bechdel.
For the first time, you consider
The repercussions of accepting such a legacy
But to deny now would be to deny yourself.
It would be to allow a part of yourself to die
And shrivel up
Like a rogue leaf fizzling into ash

As explosives crack the mountain's shell.
To accept the dangers,
To decide to walk beside those
before, beside, and behind you
To love them all as brothers, sisters, and siblings
You will never meet,
That is to love yourself.
There is a new responsibility that comes
With the acknowledgment of the truth
That you are not straight,
That the talisman of "Not Queer"
Will now be a lie merely because
You know it now is false.
Your tears fall with the shower once again
And with your happiness and fears coalescing
You cower,
You grow.

Isabella Brignola

Unity

How wonderful is it
to live in a world where being different
is a form of freedom.

The colors of our skin
merge to create a tranquil today
and a promising tomorrow.

Our right, as human beings
to love each other passionately,
no matter the circumstance.

Where religion is embedded
In different forms to ensure
The same purpose: faith.

We celebrate our differences
by clearing our fragile minds
and learning about them.

How wonderful is it
to live in a world where being

diverse brings us together as one.

Autumn Jones

Car Crash

I'm sitting in my car

And I see your car coming

I start to drive towards you

Slowly but with focus

Our eyes lock as our headlights glow

We ain't playing chicken

Then bang it happens

An accident on purpose

Airbags bust open and our souls leave the body

This is the only way suicide is bliss

A kiss

Bruce Washington

Complaints

It's Sunday

My Father and I don't really have a bond

My Brother and I don't really have anything in common

My Grandmother is getting older

My Girlfriend is my twin yet a total stranger

My Friends are too far to be close

My Mother is overbearing and treats me like I'm five

My Dreams are blurry

My Nightmares are clear

My Life is going too fast very slowly

Bruce Washington

Differences of Balance

Fuck fat people the fit rule

White lives matter just as much as you Nig

What? Why can't We say it?

They talk about imbalance all the time

Why can't We?

Nothing run smoothly

Why does everyone think they are greater and We're less

The symbol We throw up is how they see and treat us

Bruce Washington

Adversity

Adversity gives many others trouble,

Plagued others with trouble,

Adversity gives you near feeling of trouble,

But adversity will not plague you with trouble,

You will soon realize you are not the same as others.

Adversity is what makes most weak but will make you stronger,

Makes most naive but will make you wiser,

Makes most insecure but will make you confident,

Makes most fear but will make you courageous,

Adversity is a necessity that everyone needs,

Only a few understand the need,

You will understand this need

Once an Individual understands the need of adversity,
they crave it,

You will crave adversity,

Adversity becomes a building block that these individuals
look forward to,

You will look forward to adversity

Knowing that each roadblock they overcome they become a stronger more well-prepared individual than ever imaginable in life.

You will be more prepared for life more than ever imaginable.

Wayne Hood Jr

Untitled

Scared of failure and falling down.

After climbing a tall ladder on an unstable ground.

Doubting myself thinking I'll fall into a hole.

Where I can't get up and feel hopeless once more.

The standards I have set upon myself is difficult to reach.

But the taste of satisfaction I get after, cannot be described in a speech.

Having faced numerous obstacles before

Yet, I'm still terrified when I face a new one and fall onto the floor.

But what is an achievement when there is no obstacle to face?

Does it mean something, or did you get too comfortable in your own place.

Salma Aden

Of Towns and Little People

I know a little town
where little people live,
and there's little food to go around
and only prayers to give.
They are subject to the large town
of which I call my home
where little people in larger suits and gowns
refuse to unlock their treasure troves.
There are larger towns, smaller towns,
with people small all the same
who refuse to look up or look down
and insist on going by different names.
And ALL insist on being large and thus feed themselves
the largest lies,
though there are no large persons. No divide. Only other
small people - minoritized.

Cameron M. Crouse

Neon Colors

Saturday night. On a bright
fluorescent street.

As a performance on a stage,
the neon colors meet
to surround a couple's hands
that are squeezing ever tighter.

They dance about their focused eyes
to delight him and delight her.

The lights pour into their pupils
in a never-ending stream
of shades and hues far diversified
that puts them in a lustful dream.

And, at once, they turn.

Their eyes meet just like their hands.
They fall into each other's being
as an unheard whisper rocks the land -
"Colors are heaven's treasures
and angels mix the palette,

and give to us our rightful measure
that we might find a balance.”

A realm of rainbow. A swirling bliss.

One that incites a lover’s kiss.

Cameron M. Crouse

Black, Brown, and Tan

Black; the color of the magnificent night sky

Black; the color of berries sweet enough to be baked in a pie.

Black; the color of luxury cars that everyone loves to drive.

Black; the color used in sleek and clean designs

Yet, why is it when it comes to me

Black is a color no one likes to see?

Brown; the color of a strong blooming oak tree.

Brown; the color of a big bold mother grizzly.

Brown; the color of soil the root of all life.

Brown; the color of milk chocolate so silky and sweet.

Yet, why is the color Brown seen as weak on me?

Tan; the color of the sand meeting the sea.

Tan; the color of gazelle leaping gracefully.

Tan; the color people wish for their hands.

Tan; the color of the mountains that are formed in these great lands.

Yet, why is the color Tan seen as aggressive on me?

Black, Brown, Tan all colors of the land. Seen as colors of beauty, love, and strength but, you don't see that when it comes to me. You see anger, destruction, and hate.

Well, it's time to change what you see.

I see beauty, love, and strength. I see something magnificent and full of grace. I see colors that stand hand in hand as they march across the land. I see Black, Brown, and Tan as colors of man.

And man, oh man are they colors to see.

Pierce Romey

Untitled

I was looking at life through rose colored glasses,
now life is on a rainbow spectrum.

I no longer see red as violence and anger,
but love and passion.

Orange does not represent danger,
it is warmth and happiness instead.

I began to hate yellow when all I saw was madness,
it was once again my favorite when I looked in the mirror
and saw optimism throughout my face.

Green clouded with greed and spite,
turned into growth and prosperity.

Blue dimmed my world to melancholy thoughts and
suspicion,

now it radiates wisdom and serenity.

Purple exposed feelings of power and pride,
all I feel now is independence.

Now I am no longer looking through rose colored glasses.

Courtney Mayne

Plastic Vignettes

I don't know why
there are bottle caps
dotting the sand
like christmas baubles

or why the
seagulls rattle their beaks
upon the plastic

on my sidewinder
bare feet
upon the plastic

the sun casts an orange glare
with dashes of pomegranate
i can see the malice
within the sky

Olivia Chovanes

Color Love

The color of love cannot be black,

ebony is its own category

in the language of love,

Next to red-head

and below Asian.

Ebony is not love,

It is kink,

It is “I love black girls”

whispered by a white man

who doesn't know

She's not ebony but black.

Black is not love

without the underscored

Mocha, Caramel, Macchiato,

Her skin is not your favorite

candy flavor.

Mocha is not love

It is coffee

mixed with whip-cream
to alleviate the bitter
of Black.

Mixed is not love
It is combination
not unlike a poodle
High-end and Designer
but don't call her bitch
She's mixed.

Love is not color
It is the wherewithal
by which to buy
understanding.

Love is not kink
Or color Or breed
Or nose Or lips
Or hands Or eyes
Or butt Or thighs
Or skin.

Love is found somewhere
within.

Ariana Tomb

Wings

A little birdie in a nest,
He was much different from the rest.
Feathers red, green, blue,
Nobody has ever walked in his shoes.
Fly birdie, fly,
You can still reach the sky.
They may not understand you in this little nest,
They may not think you are the best.
But you can always find birdies just like you,
Birdies that accept you and love you, too.
You are worthy of many things,
Now fly and flap those colorful wings.

Emily Fitzgerald

Path Less Traveled

My dad once warned me that if
I followed “that path,”
life would be more painful.
There would be stares and whispers
that would eventually consume me.
It was his way of
trying to protect me from a world
he thought I didn’t understand.
What he didn’t know
was that I had been made aware
of how cruel the world was
long before I found the courage
to tell him about her.
She was the “path” he was referring to I guess,
as if it was some sort of decision
I could make in the same way
I decided what to eat for lunch.
If only he knew that despite

the uncomfortable stares and whispers,
loving her was the easiest decision I ever made.

Abigail Long

Words Unsaid

I never knew how much the word “friend”
would sting until it had been four years
since we began dating.

Four years of building a love stronger
than that of our parents,
a love that is harder to crack
than graphene.

But when her dad introduces me as her friend,
the ring hiding in my sock drawer shudders
and I wonder if they will ever notice
how much we love each other
or if they will watch us vow to sickness and in health
without ever saying “this is my daughter’s girlfriend.”

Abigail Long

ASEXUALITY

Sex

An activity my body craves, but my mind does not

As my sister is obsessed

And my friends spill their guts

And every Netflix show illustrates

And I sit here wondering what is wrong with me

I grew to hate my body and its desires

But only because of the glorification of something that
makes no sense to me

They say it will get better

I just need to work through my trauma

Then I will be cured

As if asexuality is a disease

As if the only reason to deal with my inner demons is so I
can receive sexual pleasure

But it all feels so wrong

Tristan Brownell

BOX

The way society was constructed refuses to include me
A box that was made just for me sits in the corner of my
room constantly

It seems to have made a difference in the atmosphere
around me

Like a dark cloud hanging over my head,
Or a nagging headache that cannot be cured.

I thought if I threw the box outside,

It would leave me alone

But it came back stronger each time

Begging and pleading for me to open it and conform to the
workings of the outside world

I refused.

With every weak muscle in my body,

I set fire to who I once was

Or rather, who everybody wished I could be

Some say I should miss her, but I don't

Some say I will regret my actions in the future

I guess we will find out

The only thing I know in this current moment
Is that as I watched the box burst into flames,
For the first time in so long,
I smiled

Tristan Brownewell

MUSE

I know that I will find love one day,
So stop saying it as if the words balm
The burns that sear my flesh
Each time I remember,
I am alone.
I get it; I'm a good person.
I understand that my love will,
One faraway day,
Warm the heart of another lonely soul.
I have tried to start as friends.
I search the activities for new people to bump into.
I turn to my peers in hesitant classrooms.
I call out compliments with the bravery
Of a soldier charging into battle.
Shut the fuck up with your hollow consolations
And let me mourn each hour that passes
As I sleep clinging to large teddy bears
Instead of holding someone I love.

Permit me to weep
As I question why I can't find
Anyone, to whom I can pour out
The flowing lyrics and praises
I long to whisper into beautiful ears.
I want the right to be upset,
Without a million people telling me
How good I am,
How I will find someone,
And how I don't need anyone to be happy.
Because I know don't need anyone,
But I want someone.
Your flattery, warnings,
Compliments, false anger,
Friendship, and advice
Do not soothe the aches
And anguish of always being second best.
Yes, I have friends,
And hobbies, and passions,

But what a shame it is,
That no matter how much I wish,
I do not have someone to curl up to
In the dead of the night
And offer the sweet nothings
that I long to share.
What a shame it is that someone with
Such beautiful writing,
Cannot write for anything
But class and myself.
Every artist deserves a romantic inspiration,
If they desire it,
To awaken their tongue with the butterflies and giggles
That friendship and self-love can never quite replicate
So let me lament the time wasted,
while I wait for my muse.

Isabella Brignola

What I Know

I don't know if it's because I'm not enough

I don't know if I'm too fat.

I wonder if I'm too smart.

I wonder if I don't wear the right clothes or makeup,

Or perhaps I'm too friendly.

I don't know why I haven't found romantic love

Even once in my life.

I don't know your name.

I don't know the color of your hair.

I wonder what talents you may have.

I wonder what your passions and dreams are

Or what makes you cry at midnight beneath covers all too thin.

I don't even know your gender.

But I do know I will hum your name and pronouns,
and swap them in for those in great romantic ballads.

I will run my fingers through your hair,

No matter the color or texture.

I will weave lyrical tapestries about your passions,
and praise your talents as Nick describes Gatsby's smile.
My arms will hold you close on those dark nights,
where pain suffocates you in a sea of self-torment.
I don't know who my first love will be,
Or When,
Or Where,
Or How I will meet you,
But I do know that I will love you.

Isabella Brignola

What Love Should Be

What is love? A boring question I know
But an important one as I'll soon show,
love is quite strange, simply an oddity,
I could try to describe it, but you just have to see
Love to me, is waking up grateful,
For that someone out there who's all kinds of special
So how I wake up, and this is my way
Is wondering, what will they give me to love about them
today.
Perhaps their smile will be extra big and extra bright
Or maybe the simple act of giving life some extra light
It could be the simple act of saying hello,
Or an I love you and a hug before I go.
Go, as in leaving for times too extended,
It's that terrible feeling of waiting I wish simply ended.
The waiting of
being able to hold you again,
Not knowing when you'll be back, not knowing when

Whether a day, a week, a month, or a year
Oh god a year, what fear, the fear of waiting a year
But when the waits all over, and distance has come to end
It's a magical feeling to be back with a friend
That's right a friend, best friend, yes they're the same.
What you're just in it for a touch? Damn what a shame
Cause that's not love, or at least not to me
Love is more magical, when it's something you can't see
It's that tiny spark, that goes off in your head
The kind of love that gives you courage to get out of bed
To help each other, support each other, to heal and to
grow,
Is there a way to describe this happiness? I guess we'll
never know.
While I may stand here, and tell you what I think love
should be,
When it comes down to it, what love is, isn't up to me,
For love is strange, like I said at the start
Love is different, like snowflakes or hell, modern art
Love may seem like a mountain, oh so steep

But just have faith, and like faith, take a leap
For a simple hello, is a good place to begin
Sure you may be awkward, but haven't we all been
Naturally, I'm no expert, maybe this wasn't the best pitch
You want a love doctor, well go and watch Hitch
You know, Will Smith tries to get Paul Bart laid,
Speaking of which, have you seen how much the Fresh
Prince gets paid
60 million a year, for doing movies like Aladdin, so unfair
With that kind of cash he could just buy Bel-Air
Am I getting off topic, that's not a surprise,
The only time I'm focused, is looking into your eyes.
Was that line smooth, great! I'll save it for later,
Or was that too cheesy, damn get the grader
Now that I think about it, that last part doesn't make too
much sense
But hey I'm in love, so that's my defense
Yes I'm love, as deep as deep goes
I could give a name, but chances are that person already
knows

And all seriousness, if you have that someone near, hug
them tight

And always make sure they feel safe and alright

I leave you all now, and wish you all the best

I'll give you all the time to let this digest

So be proud of who you are, cause that's where it begins

Love who you want, cause after all, love wins.

Adam Beam

Acknowledgements

Neil Connelly, Advisor of *The Reflector* and *SpawningPool*:

Thank you for all the guidance you have given us and our organization throughout the year. You play an important role and we would not be where we are today if not for you. We truly appreciate everything you have done for this club.

Our Executive Board:

Angela Piper

Luke Hershey

Kaitlyn Johnson

We are so grateful for the guidance and support you have given throughout the year.

Angela: We can not thank you enough for your dedication to this club. You have created an environment that has allowed all of us to thrive and grow on our path to becoming better poets. Your leadership has been instrumental in making *The Reflector* and *The SpawningPool* so amazing in this unprecedented year of adversity.

Luke: Thank you for all of your guidance and technological skills. We loved your always pleasant personality and willingness to assist in whatever was needed. Your presence will be missed as you travel your future path.

Kaitlyn: Thank you also for all of your help and support this year. With your help and dedication, both

The Reflector and *The SpawningPool* are better publications than ever before. You will be missed.

Kim Hess, Creative Services Coordinator:

Thank you for your dedication and willingness to work with our committee. We are grateful for your role in making this publication happen and recognize that we could not have done it without you.

Our Poetry Committee:

These publications would not have happened if not for you. We are so grateful for your hard work and dedication. Your passion for poetry is clearly evident and is what makes this committee so extraordinary. To those of you who are graduating, please know we will miss you. Your ambition will be hard to replace. This club will not be the same without you, but we know you are on your way to accomplishing great things in your life.

“Diversity: The art of thinking independently together.”

-Malcolm Forbes