



The **Crucible**
2016-2017

Facing Home

The Crucible

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2016 – 2017

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Most importantly, we appreciate the students who submitted their creative works. Without your talent and support, this 2017 edition of *The Crucible* would not be possible. Some of the literary works included were written in creative writing workshops and clubs offered by the English department, and some of the artwork was created in studio courses in the art department.

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The Crucible **Facing Home**

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Preface

For many of us, college is a time to separate ourselves from the past, to examine our lives on our own terms, and to define the persons that we are trying to become. A college campus is a fitting environment for this type of examination. It is a place to explore new ideas, to develop new interests, and to connect with new people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Separated from the immediate influences that molded us in the past, we can reshape ourselves for the future.

But distance from the past is not escape from its formative contributions. Each of us comes from somewhere, and whatever the details, our origin is woven into our identity. The places, people, and experiences that shape us, are integrally and inexorably a part of us.

In reading the great submissions for the 2016-2017 edition of *The Crucible*, we came to realize that many of them were origin stories and negotiations with identity. In showing glimpses of the formative spaces and people in their lives, these writers were demonstrating who they are, or who they are hoping to become.

Of course, not all origin stories are the same. Some stories are uplifting or humorous, while others are complex and challenging. Our title "Facing Home" reflects this diversity. Facing implies looking toward, as some of the selections do, but it can also connote opposition or endurance. These selections are as rich and complex as the people who crafted them, and we hope that you will enjoy them.



Jake Raville
Stairs
electronic art

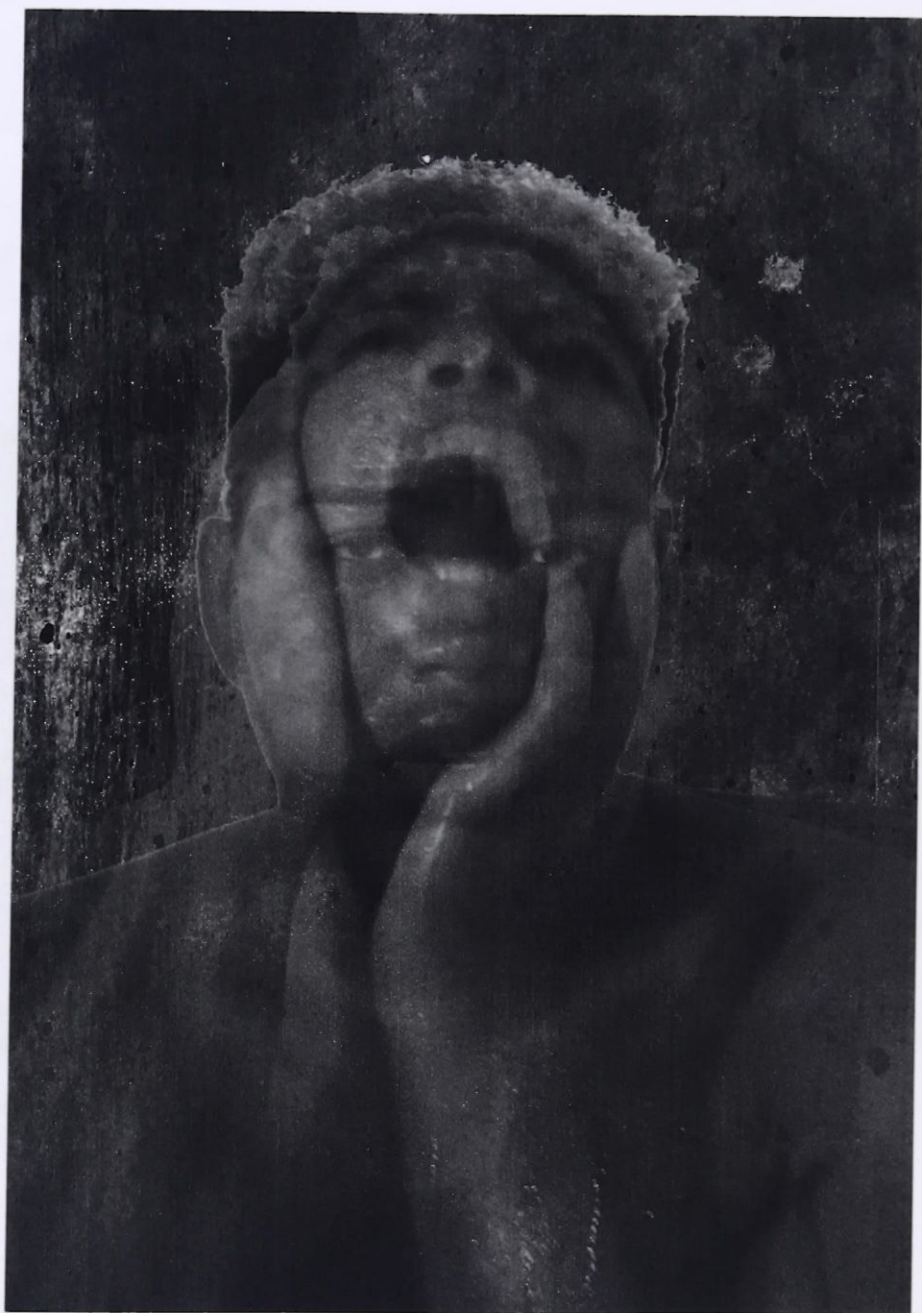
To be Dominican
Erika Divine

To be Dominican is to be every woman.
I come from plantains, rice and oxtails
and yucca and corn and
even though I don't want to,
I also come from *fincas* and a white slave owner
whose last name was Ramirez.
What a beautiful disaster created in the name of
money and lust
by a man whose last name was Columbus.
Entitled white men doing what they do best,
placing ownership on lands,
black and indigenous bodies on display,
open to anyone with desire for amusement,
like toys on clearance,
like animals at a zoo.
That might have been the first time we were taught
our bodies
do not belong to us
and the only time our bodies mean something
is when they're being exploited and abused.
I can almost feel the black and blues
on my ancestors' bodies,
hear the cries and desperate prayers.
The tears swell up in my throat
as they live and fight through me.
I like to think that maybe love existed too.
To be Dominican is to be every woman.
I have traveled across lands, oceans, and borders,
holding on to the little I get to keep,
like the way my ancestors taught me how to dance
and how to speak

the broken Spanish mixed with Indigenous and African words,
rolling off my tongue with ease and pride.
I have stories written in the palms of my hands;
like when I helped my grandma hand wash our clothes,
when I picked my first coconut from the tree,
the fresh sweetness giving me a break from the sun.
I remember the electricity being cut off and
running outside with candles in my hand
to hear the elders tell their stories,
the ocean's breeze running through my hair
as I sink my feet
into the sand that has over 500 years of history
printed on it.
The clear blue sky looks at me
as the wind whispers
the secrets Columbus and his men wanted it to keep.
That's why my voice is soft and I move my hands a lot when I talk;
I want you to hear them like I did.
I know I may look or act a certain way to you
but I am not a one-dimensional being for
I am a woman of many journeys and sights.
Black, native, white; I'm a walking paradox,
a living contradiction, hard to grasp but easy to admire:
my mere existence being the only thing that could have
prevented me from existing in the first place.
The side that I show you is not the only side that I have
as I'm a mixture of rolled R's, feisty mouths,
guitars strumming, fancy dresses, pride,
hips swaying, and drums playing...
because to be Dominican
is to be every woman.



Bianca Briones
Untitled
digital photograph



Bianca Briones
Untitled
digital photograph

Blocked

Marcus Bonaparte

On this block, we don't kick box, we beat box
with box cutters inside our throats,
we call it cut throat.

On this block, living is hard, and dying is free,
no sequels to see, so
"what you talkin bout, Willis?"

This block, where me and K-Jo were raised,
PS3 all through the days, at night
I was playing other games.

This block here, where they're asking,
"Marc, should I shoot?" I say,
naw don't buss,
K-jo can't grow up like us.

He needs his father like we all did.
Some single mothers did,
but the streets fathered most of these kids.

My best friend would shoot his dad through the back.
I just wish my dad was back, so I too
could have the opportunity.
"Hey dad, where ya been?"
*Load it, empty a clip.

On this block, my homies idolize murder
while I contemplate
would I, or would I not.
I think I would, and in time, I think back

I know grandma wouldn't like that,
but she never had that cold black hammer
swung in front her face.

She never had her pockets ransacked,
then ran home, and felt ran through,
as she cried in her mama's hands, saying
"Mama they got me."

This block here, where rocks and weed
equal to currency.
You either do drugs or you sell some.
They won't give us jobs, so we jack and
and I pray to God,
Lord, please forgive us.

On this block here, where fingers can
trigger tears,
why can't we all hold hands?
My greatest fear, is not me dying here,
but it be me holding death in my hands.

It may not be sweet, but home is home.
It made me,
but not my tombstone.



Jake Raville

Car

digital photograph



Caitlin Mallory
Untitled
digital photograph

Two AM Exchanges
Breanna Bolinger

Every time you say, "I hate you,"
it starts with a smirk that drives
my insides into acrobatic flights.
It ends with my ribs aching
and my lungs yearning for air.
You always find the spots on my sides
that cause me to giggle, like before
time weighed us down so heavily.
I reach for your soft bristled hair
but your mouth nibbles at my ear.

Your voice is only a whisper, barely audible
over Hugh Laurie's incessant cane-banging.
I hear my name escape from your chapped lips.
It sounds like the ice cream truck on a scorching August day
but I can't eat ice cream anymore.

The show ends and the TV darkens.
We pull on layers too heavy for our chests
to rise at normal rhythm. We exit
through doors slamming shut
as soon as they open.
Knowing the harm it can do
but lighting flames to white sticks anyway:
as the smoke rises from our mouths,
our clouds merge for a moment only
to disappear into the dark, cold blue night.

Hometown on Heroin

Ashley Hostrander

"This epidemic affects individuals of every age, gender, race, and background. The increased use of heroin has catapulted Pennsylvania to seventh in the nation for drug-related overdose deaths in the latest federal statistics."

Senator Gene Yaw, Center board chairman, June 2015.

We all sit together in our high school health classes,
listening to "one bad decision can end your life,"
not knowing who will grow up to be addicts,
not knowing the person sitting next to us goes home
to a mother who would
rather buy crack than dinner.

On our daily commutes, we see young kids
running across busy streets, but no parents.
They are too dazed, too distracted dealing to
supervise them, unseen and unheard until
the kids almost get hit by a car.
The same kids grow up, running the busy streets.

Williamsport, PA, home of
the Little League World Series,
home of a heroin epidemic.
We have probation programs
to help bully people into staying sober,
clinics to give you a high, not nearly
as strong as desired.
We all went through the D.A.R.E. program,
then dared each other to take a hit.

Sometimes the desire to be high
devours the motivation to know better.
The decision is to end the pain of reality.
The agony is finally clouded
by a short-lived euphoric bliss.
The aftermath is devastating,
the sickness is crippling,
to the point where
that kid sitting next to us
decides to hang himself,
rather than endure one day
of sobriety. It's much more than
one bad decision
that can end your life.



Caitlin Mallory
Untitled
digital photograph



Jessica Long
Enlightened Path
electronic art

Noon Summer
Morgan Bittner

The wind blows steady
as the leaves on the branches bask
their colorful veins in the nooday
sun. Mama lugs an old wicker
basket, piled high in lumpy blues,
out to greet the line.
Stretched far between two sturdy
wooden beams, the iridescent
rope holds still as it bakes
in the heat. She reaches down
and grabs a pair of blue jeans still
soaked from their bath. They pull
the rope down, heavy as they are kissed
by the warm wind. She clips their loose
belt loops so they hang tough from
their tops. The wrinkles spread
from bottom to top as she shakes
out their folds, giving them form.
The basket begins to lose
its load as the rope holds the weight
of the dripping cloth. Mama starts
back in, leaving the sun to do its job.

The Edge of the Stream Bed

Morgan Bittner

We ride once again
down that dinky path,
the path we travel often as the cold
months give way to warmth.
The truck slows to a halt
as I plant myself on that rusty, old tailgate.
My skin soaks up Nature's sun-glow,
as I hear you call upstream to me, another
on the line. You work to reel
him in and again, I am mesmerized by
the perfect silhouette your body gives
off in the reflection of the rippling water.
Heat glimmers off of your freckled
skin as the red hairs peek out from underneath
that dingy, broken-billed fishing hat.
You throw out another cast, tirelessly,
waiting for that trophy trout. The murky
water kisses the soles
of your boots; gently rolling
on the rocks, you balance.
You turn in after another long day,
hands still moist from the fish's skin,
as you take hold of the wheel. We ride
through the cover of pine trees, chasing
the sun as it slowly fades into the mountain.

A Closed World

Justin Nobrega

Like talons of ice, it claws at your heart,
your spine, piercing and breaking them.
Like a caring touch, or warm drinks, it heats up
those very things that are crushed.
Velvet soft, brushing against you, flowing
over you, encasing you in flowing waves,
harsh, strained, hidden, wrong, truthful,
all things that bring a dream to life.
A closed world,
a lonely world,
visions granted by Breksta,
her guidance in the dark night.
An open world, free and full, with faceless
shades of your past and present;
that open world, with freedom gone
from the world we view as real as it rests in chains.
A dream, twisted by those around you,
perverted and corrupted, turned into horror.
A nightmare, come true,
amused at its work in tearing you apart.
When you are asked about your dreams,
what do you say?
You tell them that you do not remember,
and yet, you know full well the pain they cause.



Emily Appolonia
Untitled
digital photograph

Why I Am Afraid to Commit
Breanna Bolinger

Calmly she climbs the stairs.
She puts each step centered
on the rung above the next.
Making it to the top,
she pauses and looks about.

All the other kids slid down
in pairs but she sits alone.
They smiled and laughed
as they slid down
fast, ending with a fun splash.

He's at the bottom waiting,
waiting for her to slide down.
He says, "I'll catch you baby."
I see her grip the sides of the slide
tighter and her legs push up against
the sides of the slide. She begins
to slide down. He begins
talking to another girl in the water.

She's in the water now.
Her body thrashes, feet
trying to find the floor.
Why is no one helping her?
"She has to learn to save herself."

Daughter
Breanna Tripp

I am the wish that took years to be granted.
Always asking God to fulfill such a joy,
years have my parents waited to add one,
last child to the tribe
only to have waited thirteen years to succeed.

I am the loss of a loved one before me,
filling shoes that will never quite fit.
They say that when God takes something
he gives another in return.
I guess I am the gift, or
bargaining chip.

I am the third chance of hopes and dreams,
that didn't exactly make it out the first time.

I am my mother's hair, dark and thick with feelings.
Stubborn with a maternal instinct.

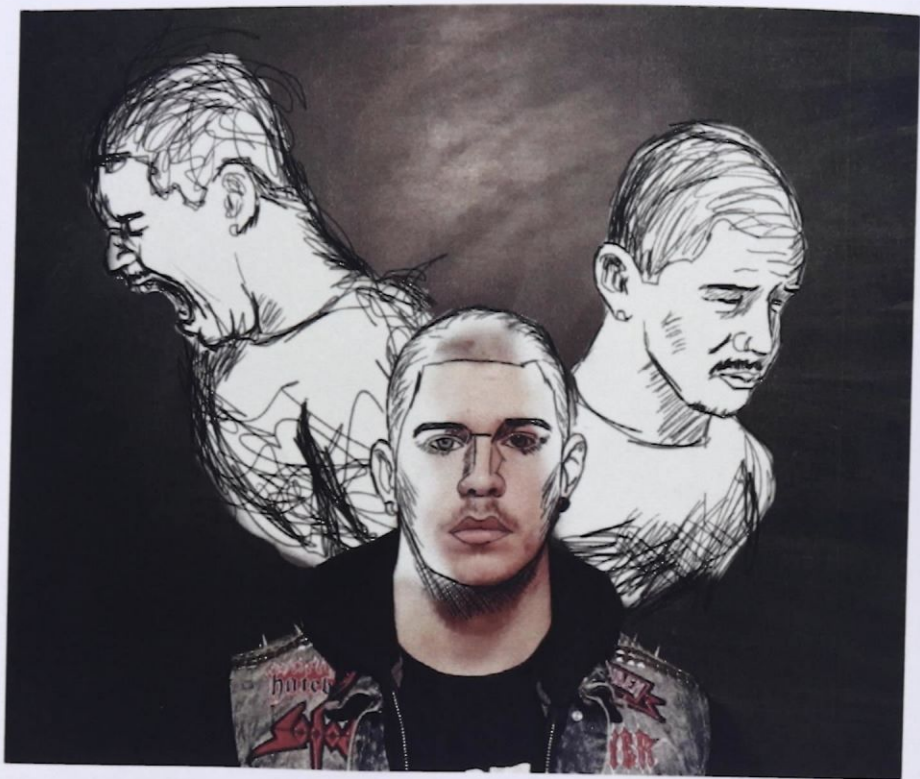
I am my father's ending,
a last chance at making life count.

I am the only one left,
not yet ready to fly the nest.

I am my own blank page,
No definitions can hold me back.



Jordan Dykes
Untitled
digital photograph



Jordan Dykes
In my head
digital photograph

Son

Joel Williamson

I am the discard pile on the table,
only used as needed. I am
the clothesline in the winter,
too icy and brittle for clothes.

I am his words spoken monotone, blessing
the boring food and preparation.
I am the needles in my mother's
sewing kit, her forgotten ironing board.
I am the tools in his tool box,
his unfinished bathroom.
I am his guns stored in the basement,
cleaned, polished, pristine.
I am space between his embrace,
the spare key under the rock in the garden.
I am not his life's goal.
I am the pain in his back, the gray in his beard.
I am his mistakes, his faults. I am
the broken stained glass in his church.
I am the empty seat in his pew.

An Escape of Memory

Breanna Tripp

As my grandmother rocks quietly in her wooden chair,
she repeats for the hundredth time,
"better days are coming... I just don't know when."

Her thin gray hair that pictures have
proven to be the curliest of blonde
tucked subtly behind her ear.

She looks up at my brother,
her first grandchild, and asks
"did you come from Mom's?"

Her mind does that sometimes.
Forgets.

Forgets that her mother passed long before this day.
Forgets about the three men she's raised.
The nine grandchildren who visit often.
The one granddaughter who left before her.

I don't remember when her mind started to turn to a blank.
The years we spent together after school: all an empty slate.

I do remember the first time I visited her,
once her mind was all but there.
The way she questioned whether or not
my cousin and I were twins.

And the way I watched her type in my uncle's
old phone number to a phone with no plug.
3-3-8-8.
Her anger when no one answered.

I don't remember why I stopped visiting often.
Maybe it was harder for me because
the memories were still present.

But I will remember the woman who helped raise me.
Her guidance flowing through my mind daily.
Hoping I'm fortunate enough to never forget.

And I will remember my guardian angel,
who received her memories back, on that cold December day.
I guess, for that angel, better days finally came.



Valerie Cesare
Untitled
digital photograph

Geology
Delia Page

“Dirt people” they call us
as we sift through sediment
and tap on rocks.
But we are the caretakers;
the Earth, an old house.
The plate tectonics move
and creak like squeaky floorboards.
The oceans and waterfalls grumble
like old rusted pipes that
moan and groan from the
deep underground rivers
of the basement.
The green grass growing
like a shag carpet spread out
in front of the fireplace;
the hearth, volcanoes.
The very mountains stand
as pillars, beams, and
banisters that hold up that
blue masterpiece of a ceiling.
The very core of the Earth operates
like an eternal generator that keeps
the flickering lights, the
dazzling gems from dying out.
The deserts and beaches, dusty mantles
that are gently swept by
the breezes of time.
Walking down the hallways
of this grand estate,
where the Seven Wonders
are simple paintings,
hanging along the limestone
corridors in granite frames.
We are the butlers and maids.

Drinking Literature
Breanna Bolinger

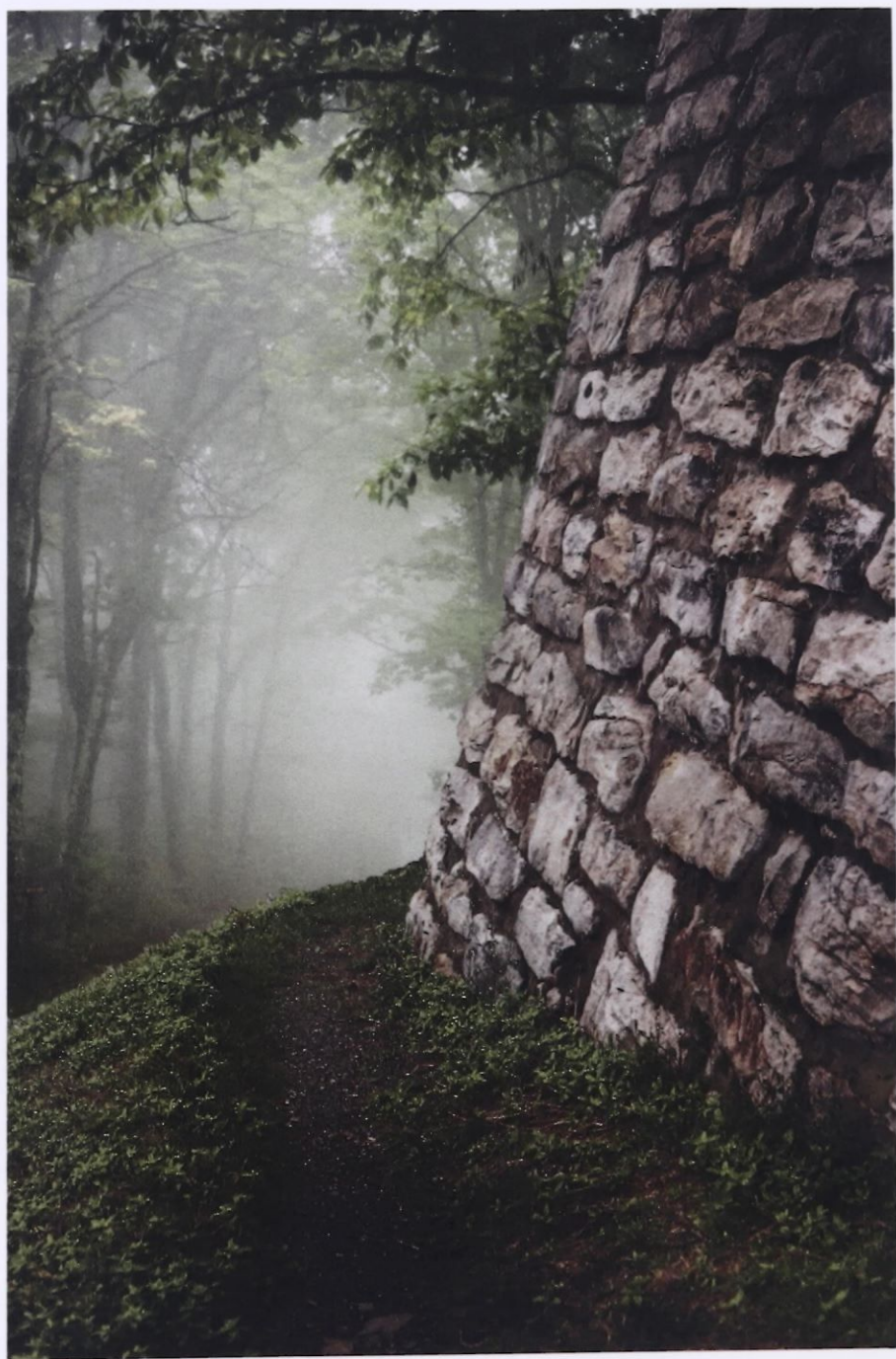
Names swirl around my cup.
Woolf, Hemingway, Poe, and Plath,
all jumbled up and bumping against the sides.
The young writer stares as the bell jar touches my lips.
Slurping and gulping, each letter slides easily down my throat.
A red letter hangs off the corner of my mouth.
You'd think I had stuffed rocks in my pockets,
with the weight of these words.



Richard Kessinger
Complementary
digital photograph



Samantha Haines
I used to love her
digital photograph



Caitlin Mallory
Untitled
digital photograph

Lazarus

Jora Lam

They call me Lazarus. It weren't a name I picked for myself, an' it weren't a name I'd wanna use for anyone. But they call me it, an' I answer to it, so I'm guessin' that's my name. At least, it is until I move on somewhere else, and I get me a new name. I had many names o'er the years, you see. It's hard to keep track, just like it's hard to keep track o' the time when you don't see the outside for a long time. Night and day blur together, just like names do, ya' know?

They call me Lazarus, because it were Lazarus that Jesus rose from the dead, ain't that how the story goes? I'm guessin' time's eroded my memory of it. And seein' as I ain't been to Sunday-school since nigh on 19...37? Well, I don't know if you can fault an old boy like me for forgettin'. Most people today, far as I wager, can' even remember what they had for breakfast. I don't remember the story o' Lazarus, raised from the dead, but I think I rightly recollect my names. Most o' 'em anyways.

The first name I e'er had was the name I was gived when I was born, you see. My name used to be Levi. Since then, I had many names, but Levi was the first, an' he was the most important.

Now, I couldn' tell ya'll much about Levi, 'cept that he weren't but seventeen when he died an' that I used to be 'im. I know he had a Mama and a Pa, an' that he had some little'uns to be lookin' after. I don't precisely recollect how many, like I don't remember Mama and Pa's names or their faces. If'n I think real hard, I can remember "Grace" an' "Isaac" an' "Henry", but they's more than that, I know it. And I'll be damned 'cause I forgot it all.

But the person who was Levi, me or he, I

ain't sure no more, died when we was seventeen. An' I remember that. I still got marks from it too, lots o' little marks on my chest and neck and shoulders, little burns and holes from buckshot. Not a fun thing t' be lookin' at.

I remember it real good, mostly 'cause I remember Letha. She was a pretty girl, with her hair done up in curls an' her eyes, blue and shiny like marbles. Her Daddy an' my Pa got on fine, but her Daddy was as mean as they come, an' I ain't forgot that neither.

Letha had her sisters an' brothers too, an' her ornery old man always had me by the arm an' tellin me not to get with Letha 'til we was married...if'n we was gonna be married. We didn't listen to him none, Letha an' I. She was just as ready as I was, an' she took her daddy somethin' serious, but not that serious. An' Letha had a lot of sisters, one of 'em I remember right well too—it's funny the things you remember, ain't it—she was just as ornery as her daddy. I'm thinkin her name was Dorothy, though most folks called her Dory, an' she was always goin' about stickin her buzzard nose where it don't belong. One day she done stuck it really where it didn' belong—in the bedroom while me an' Letha was ah..canoodlin, I guess.

We didn' know she'd said nothin' til Letha's daddy kicked down the door and pointed a shotgun right in my face. We'd been carryin' on like this all afternoon an' he just bust down the door with the barrels at chest level. I don' like to think o' the next part much. I don' think he meant t' pull the trigger, though. He had his hands on it, maybe he thought he had the safety on, maybe he meant t' be scarin' me, but Dory come through the door to gloat an' startled her daddy, an' the man pulled the trigger.

I still got marks on me, from when I was Levi. I took the brunt of the shot. Letha got hit some, I think. There was buckshot in that shotgun, an' it tore up my whole chest. I reckon I bled all over that bed,

an' all over Letha. I think she said she shared it with Dory. It don't matter much anymore.

When I look at them marks, them scars all on my chest, I think that gettin' shot must o' hurt an awful lot. But thinkin' bout it, tryin'a remember it, it's like... You know when you get hurt, you fall down the steps, or you trip an' roll over yourself, or you get hit by a horse cart, everythin' kinda happens in a confusion. You try 'n remember it but all it is, is a blur an' the world's turnin' over so fast you ain't sure what's goin on? Well, it's like that, I guess.

When I remember it, I know there was an awful lot o' screamin' and cryin'. Letha's hurt and she's in tears, tryin'a back away as far as she can. Levi's closin' his eyes, but I know he's tryin'a keep 'em open as long as he can. Letha's old man is droppin' the shotgun, he's runnin to try an' do something, and Dory ain't sayin nothin. I didn' see her face, but I hope her little smug face just melted right then- an' the world was goin' black at the edges, dark and cold and then here was nothing.

I'm guessin' you're startin' to see why they started callin' me Lazarus in the last couple o' years. I had other names before, an' Junior gived me this new one. Thought this was all funny, laughin' at an ol' revenant's misfortune. But Junior thinks everythin's a knee-slapper, even himself, so I ain't mad.

An' I ain't mad at Letha's daddy for doin' what he done.

I weren't mad then an' I ain't mad now. It ain't gonna do me no good to hold onto it like that. He tol' me not to be doin them things, neither, an' I done 'em anyway, 'cause kids... they don' listen. What he done to me ain't the worst thing he done, though I guess he coulda been the start o' all this, the thing that made me this way.

See, as I'm sure ya'll've figured out, I ain't exactly in my grave. I go back t' look at it erry once in a while, it's nice, old though, an' I can barely read the name on it. Sometimes I look at it, an' I feel cheated. An' maybe I was. 'Cause I didn't get t' stay in my grave, I didn' go to them pearly gates, no angels sung me to sleepin'. I woke up. When I woke up, I wasn' Levi no more.

I opened my eyes to the all-black an' the first thing I knowed was that I was starvin. I guarantee ain't no one experienced a starvin' like this unless you gone feral or somethin'—or unless you's like me.

I woke up, an' all I could think of was makin' that hunger go away, that need. I needed somethin' so badly I hurt all over, every inch o' me was screamin, my throat burnin' up. My jaw, that sucker stung like you wouldn' believe, an' so did my hands. I remember pain, but I don' remember how I got out o' my grave. I remember hunger, but I don' remember how far I walked fore I made it t' where I wanted t' be. I remember movin', ramblin' across the dark with my legs draggin' an' my chest achin so bad. An' I just had this itch to get to bitin', get to bitin' something.

So I did. That's when it all clears up, ya'll, all the memory starts makin' more sense, the night is more clear, more dark, more cold. I kinda wish I'd never woke up, to be truthful, 'cause when I woke up, there was screamin. God, it was an awful sound. Screamin 'bout Levi what rose from the dead. Levi who rose from the dead an' who was chewin' on daddy's livestock. I think it was Dory what was screamin', an I wish she hadn' 'cause I woulda continued with that cow. Instead I turned on her. Her that got me shot an' kill'd.

Now that I'm thinkin' bout it, that's the point I guess where I'd stopped bein' Levi. Where I weren't him no more, where I weren't that sleepy

farm boy whose daddy butchered hogs an' sent his young'uns to church on a string. But maybe it were sooner 'n that. Maybe it were when Letha's daddy shot me square in the chest. Maybe Levi never was. I dunno, don't think I'll ever know.

When I come to myself again—myself bein' some nameless ghoul that was Levi one time—I made myself stop. Dory was on the ground, her little body all twisted up, her face all writhin' with fear, bleedin' out in the grass. I don't think she could scream, an' I knowed somethin' awful then. I wanted more o' that, whatever it is I wanted, blood I guess, but somethin' in me wouldn't let me get much further.

So, takin' all the burnin' ache with me, all the fear, the death, the memory that was Levi, I run off int' the woods. I felt the burnin' in other places now, in my soul, deep in my chest, makin' me feel empty and hot. The summer night soothed it, made it ache less. I hid in the trees, an' I could hear the screamin. It was Levi that done it, Levi-now-Lazarus rose from the grave.

That night, I stopped bein' Levi, an I ain't been him since.

Now, uh, you might be askin' yourself, what the hell is this weirdo talkin' about, actin' like he's almost 90 yea' ole? Why's he goin on 'bout how he been shot an' kill't? Well, ya'll ever heard of somethin' what's called a revenant? I'm thinkin' that's the right term, though I guess there's lots o' differin' ways you could call us.

I think the word vampire's got a real popular ring to it, but tellin' folks you's a vampire ain't gonna get you taken seriously. You tell 'em you's a revenant and they get all serious-like. "Oh Mista Lazarus, don't be callin' yourself that," they say. Most people must got it in they mind that they think they know what a revenant is, but hell, I been livin' this way fo' over 80 years an' I still ain't

got it down.

I talked to Junior 'bout it once, he's a good boy, looks like he'd probably died some'ere in his thirties I think, dunno how long he's been with us. But he's younger 'n me, so he got more know-how 'bout how the world works now. I'd say I know a little bit more 'n him, at least from firs' hand experiencin'.

I done forgot what I was talkin' 'bout, didn' I? Ah, yeah, revenants. We can't be in the sun, 'cause it don' agree with us much. I met some Negro revenants one time or 'nother, and they could go out in the day, but they had t'come back in after couple hours, seein' as they got sunburnt. Me, if'n I went out in the sun, I'd reckon I wouldn' last too long, prob'ly burn all t' shit. An' maybe one day I'll do just that, but not now.

We drink blood too, lots of it, though some others I met don' drink no blood o'humans. Some drink it from other rev'nants, others from animals, I guess. I dunno why you'd wanna go chewin' on a cow, seein' as I done it once and it didn' exactly help me none. I met some o' us that eat the whole person, 'cept for the bones. They's some real uh... well, they ain't no way to be pretty about it. They's some fucked up folks, but they ain't the worst I seen. I don' think that hearin' bout that'll make sense jus' yet. There's a lot of story t' be getting' to, innit?

Guessin' I ought to get on with it.

But I ain't. I wanna give ya'll a clear picture of what you're learnin' about now, what you think you know 'n what really is. I guess the best way t' do that is t' talk about what we look like.

So Junior, I mentioned Junior I couple a' times I think, I said he was in his mid-thirties, prolly. Yeah, that's it, he's a white man with some big brown eyes, an' they glow in the dark, oh do they glow. They like someone put a flashlight under a jar o'honey, that's the color they is. And God he is pale, bless his heart, sometimes I can see his veins. Sometimes

when I look at my hands, they's the same way. By the time he'd become one o' us, Junior'd been startin' to go grey and bald, an' I think that's pretty early for a young'un; I ain't never had the chance t' go bald, seein' as I were Levi once, an' Levi died pretty damn young.

One time I asked Junior what I looked like, an' he looked at me an he said, "Laz, you look like a jackass, but a good one, you know?"

"Like hell I do, Junior. I could say you look like a rat-turd but you wouldn' know what that means." He give me that lopsided, gap-teeth grin o' his an' I laughed at 'im. I know he didn' mean no meanness by it, him bein' like Letha's daddy that way, Junior.

He hitched himself back an' he looked me over, an' then he looked up at the rottin' old ceiling, "Well Laz, I ain't sure where to start. You look mighty young. If I had a kid when I died, he might'a been your age, I wager. You're awful white, boy, but ain't we all?"

He seemed to think about it, an the lightness of his beard were just enough, y' know, made him look a mite more rugged. "You look like a kid, alright. All assymetric-like. Like you's got a long neck an' big hands, and you prolly didn't finish growin. But you're talkin' about how you look, but not how you grewed."

Junior paused, takin' me in some, "I'm gonna tell it to you straight, Laz, you look like some-one done hauled off and punched you straight in the face. Real hard. Twice." He grinned to hissself then, as though this was funny somehow. "You got them big, young eyes, all bright blue, prolly like the sky'd fallen in 'em, I'd wager, though you ain't seen daylight in about a century, I guess."

"Almost a cent'ry, Junior, getting' there though."

"Don't hang me ya' old fart." He rolls his eyes, but again, he's smilin'. "You got teeth like a cat, I think, they ain't real big, maybe that's how you got by with bein' human the way you did, Laz. An' even though you're pale as a goddamn ghost, it ain't like you can't tell that you was tan once. Got splotches of freckles all over your face."

"How's my hair, Junior?"

"Needin' a trim, if you want me to be honest." He looked down at me then, and rested on his knees. "You really need a trim, Laz. I'll take you to the guy I know, he's open all night for folks like us, don't take much to get you a cut, neither, couple bucks if you got 'em."

"A'ight, I'll consider it."

I didn' think I needed no haircut. I always liked t' keep my hair long, but I guess it were at the point where I'd get it cut. I was about t' make comment on that, an' then he said, "You ever think of writin' that big story you tole me down? The whole thing?"

"Do what?"

"Writin' it down. Y'know, so that people can read it or something. Make a little money off it. People won't think it's real, 'course, you'll become some kind of celebrated author, maybe. Lazarus something. Get you a pen-name maybe."

"I dunno if I should be doin' that, Junior. People like us tend t' gettin' a little testy if you start talkin' 'bout it to livin' folks."

"Then don' publish it. Jus' write it down, Laz. Maybe you'll remember some stuff."

An Junior wasn' smilin' like usual. This wasn't no knee-slapper. He was serious.

"I'll think on it," I said to him.

An' I thought on it.

An' now I'm writin' it.



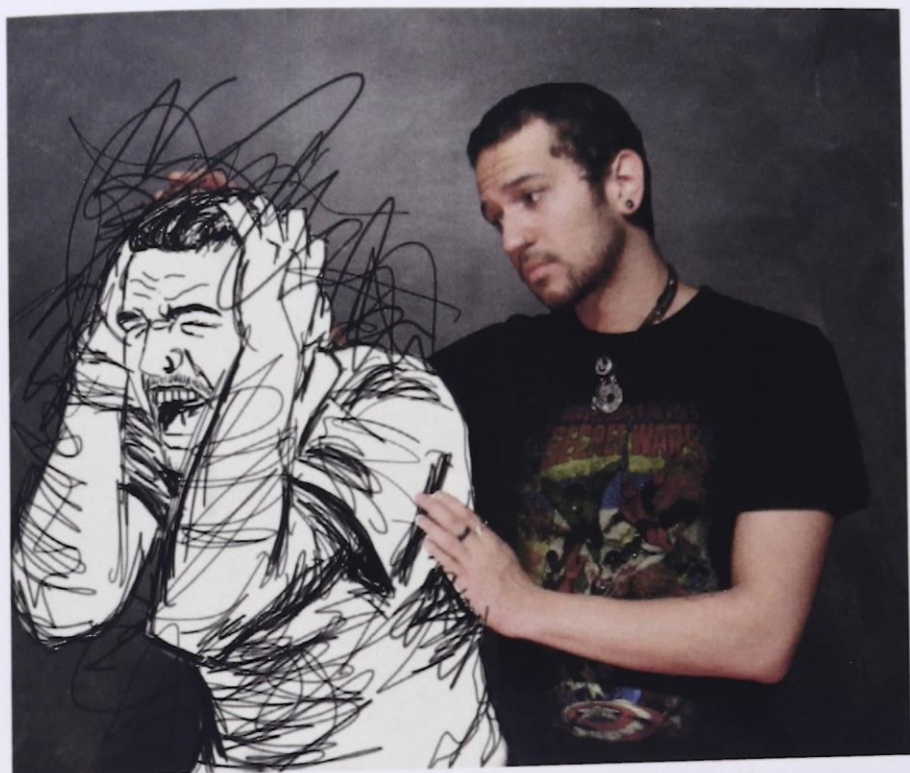
Zach Hommey
The Unknown
electronic art



Zach Hommey
When does it end
electronic art

Gentrification
Erika Divine

Oh, I understand. You build
The projects, to move me and my people into,
while you
turn our hoods into luxurious suburbs we can't move into.
You turn our apartment buildings,
made of orange bricks and decorated with graffiti art, into nice condos.
I'm sure you see the brown and black bodies being swallowed by the
darkness
that is poverty, scrapping for pennies on the street,
wondering if the landlord will give them one more month.
Yet, you take down our bodegas – small owned business; bright-colored,
loud with bachata
blasting from the speakers and cheap,
and replace them with Whole Foods – big business; dull-colored, and
white-owned,
just like Starbucks, while getting their coffee and fresh fruits from
companies who practice cheap labor.
You take down our restaurants and make fake, cheap copies,
bright lights blinking big – “authentic ethnic food,”
but all you have are white cooks.
Streets, filled with crayons,
are now white pages,
waiting to be colored.
Families of color,
displaced once again like our ancestors.
Do not be fooled,
because we are not in chains and whipped.
We are the new slaves.



Jordan Dykes
Untitled
digital photograph



Caitlin Mallory
Untitled
digital photograph

Small Death On the Lamp Stand
Judeaa Wright

At night, your body
covers me like a river,
you ebb and flow
between my thighs,
swaddling your hips.
I hold on to you.

Sweat dripping from your chin,
a light drizzle of rain.
You have the face
of my past lovers.

Mouth spread in pleasure,
eyes hiding in the back
of your head.
You drug your tongue
against the outline of my collar bone.

Lying in the light
of the small death I bring you,
your back arching,
I listened for the sound
of your smile in the darkness

The musicality of the absence of love,
the notes that swayed
within the silence.

The curve of my wrist
as I reached for the lamp
you always left unplugged.

Picking Berries

Joel Williamson

Though you sit amidst thistle and prick,
I reach past your arms to your fruit.
Though tangled stakes stick at my face,
my nimble fingers close 'round to pick
 the most full, beautiful of all.
 My sweet love, essence of fall.
Your fragile skin: heavenly to break.

Liquid spills gently off the beads, singing
Of time past. Our soft embrace, so innocent.
Though I will forever remember, sighing
 in mirth, Summer at its end. Next year:
 another bush, another berry,
 more brambles to fear.



Jake Raville
Untitled
digital photograph



Jake Raville
Untitled
digital photograph

Dear Crumpled Dollar Bill
Ashley Hostrander

Like searching for a Megalodon in Mariana's Trench,
in haste, I swirl the belongings in my purse. I search
the whirlpool for you, in desperation,

as if I have a paper to submit
in one minute and forgot to save it to the desktop.
My hunger claws at my core like a crow picking at a skeleton.

I feel the impatient energy beside me,
behind me. I know you're in here,
but my agitation blinds me.

Adrenaline rushes through my veins;
my throat is dry; it begins to burn.
I feel like I'm being run down

in a dark alley with only left turns. I will not forfeit!
You, the last of my hard-earned two-weeks:
I have nothing edible. My anxiety peaks into

a fit of rage! Every object is ejected.
The demolished building you called your home
sits next to me, rejected.

Who's protecting you from your departure,
holding you hostage for the keeping?
Why do you hide your face, like the weeping?

A corner of you peeks from behind the receipt
you're entwined with— like lovers forced to part,
you share your last embrace.

I don't even smooth out your face.
Soon you'll be lost in another's purse,
stuck in a pocket, wadded in a wallet,

and you'll always end up at the same
destination: a McDonald's,
the college student's salvation.

Changing
Morgan Bittner

A blanket of leaves covers the
depths of the surrounding trees,
a warmth for the grass below.
Wind howls as Fall gives way to Winter's call.
Crackling as you step,
carrying a conversation of their own,
echoing across the empty ground.
Tangled amongst each other,
veins yearning for another to break free
succumb to Nature's ordinary deletion.
A sapling once full now stands bare,
naked to face the cold.

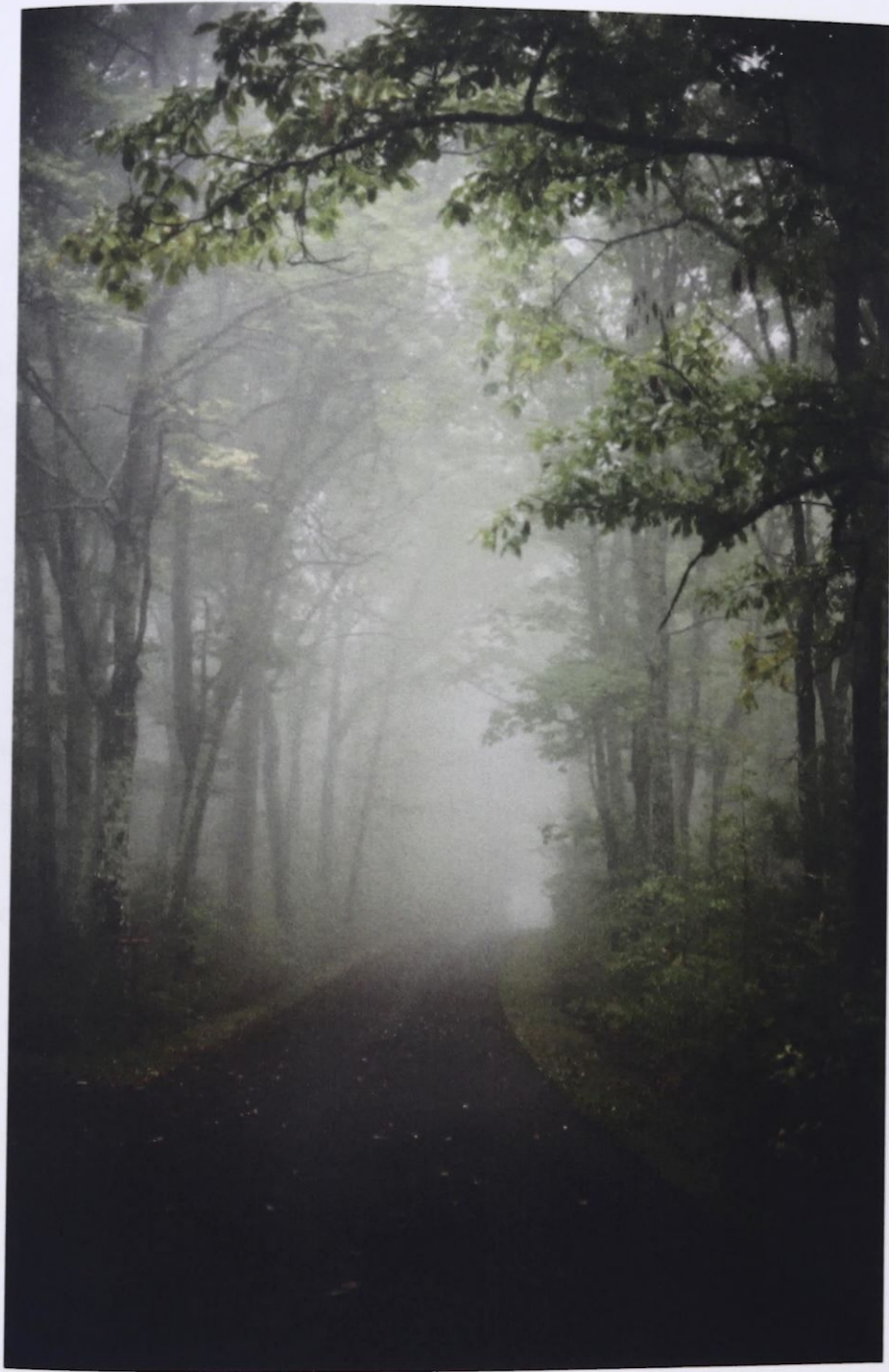


Samantha Haines
Winter Two
digital photograph

Nirvana
Erika Divine

You're like a rainy, gloomy day filled with dusk
Wet concrete and mud beneath your feet, pulling you in.
I'm not pessimistic, just a Capricorn.
The stars have already written that I'm just realistic;
I've already thought about your death:
Sure, swift and painless for you but I'm
shattered like dishes who have hit the floor way too hard,
no longer beautiful and bright like the orange-red leaves of autumn,
my favorite season,
just fragile and broken like the unlucky orange-red leaves of autumn,
The ones on the sidewalks, stepped on.
I can almost hear the crunching of my soul.

Still in this physical realm of man-made inventions,
I hope that your soul reaches peace,
the war inside of you ending for good.
Even if you hope to commit the unthinkable,
that you reach a place of happiness, surrounded by love,
over abundant, soul-filling love,
perhaps, that you become part of nature.
One with the roots of a tree, forever still and calm.
After all, we really are just molecules of energy trying to find
Nirvana.



Caitlin Mallory
Untitled
digital photograph

The Breath
Samantha Nash

He inhales, and for the briefest of moments he feels at peace.

His father and grandfather before him had said that there was no glory in war. He knows this now firsthand. People always talk about the innocence of youth, but he has learned that you don't truly lose your innocence until the blood of another human is on your hands. Death stains his tattered soul, soaking it in shades of red and black.

There was a time before all of this where he was truly innocent, eighteen years old and fighting mad, ready to do anything to protect his country, his freedom. When he looks in the mirror he knows he hasn't seen that kid in ten years. The things he has seen, the war and carnage: he can't forget it no matter how hard he tries. And does he ever try. Crawling into the bottle only works for so long. At some point, he always sobers up and remembers, but if he's honest with himself, it never makes him forget. It just helps dull the pain for a bit.

His relief comes in that beautiful moment between sleep and wakefulness. A moment where he can forget who he has become, and remember the man he used to be. It gives him strength to carry on, to keep fighting for a cause he's not even sure he believes in anymore. He longs for it, that fragile peace, that one breath.

He exhales.



Iarygina Anastasiia
Untitled 17
digital photograph

The Homeless
Ashley Hostrander

From the passenger side,
I hand the last of my change to a stranger
in Pittsburgh, who holds a sign,
"Out of work. I have 3 kids."
You ramble on to me about how
"they chose to live this way,"
inform me of "the bad choices they
must have made,"
tell me that I, "probably
enabled a drug problem."
I respond, "maybe I fed a family,
or if they went to the liquor store,
I'm glad to give them one more party."
Just stare in front of you,
careful to not make eye contact,
as you complain, "it's a waste to
give *them* what you've worked
so hard to earn."
Maybe I'm too sympathetic,
or maybe you don't have
enough compassion.
Maybe I'm biased because when I
want to find my grandfather,
I have to drive under
all the bridges in Williamsport.
When I find him, it makes his day
that I've offered him a blanket,
a conversation, and if I have it,
some change. So excuse me
while I ignore you,
as you yell at me to
"never give the homeless
change from my car again."

Why I'm Afraid to be Rejected

Erika Divine

Far away across states,
established in a tiny apartment, with wine in my cooler,
I can see myself.

I wake up, brew some Café Bustelo,
the Cuban coffee aroma swallowing my place,
along with the memory of my father making it for my mom as
the TV plays Spanish soap operas, voices loud and dramatic,
and I know that my mom is lying on the couch,
watching them in the living room

I have not yet entered.

Early morning, the memory will play and play and play
like a broken record in an empty house as

I sit in my kitchen with the loudness of silence.

Sip

Sip

Sip



Jordan Kruse
Side Winder
digital photograph



Jordan Kruse
Streetview
digital photograph

Pencil Sharpening Jealousy
Ashley Hostrander

I feel her stare
on the back of my neck
with each turn
of the crank.
The sharper the tip,
the louder her silent screams.

I examine the tip,
now a wood nub.
I restart. It roars.
I glance up in curiosity
to see who's distracted
by my clatter.

Her smug expression
in my direction
makes me smile inside.
I re-examine my tip.
Satisfied, I sit
next to the man
she wishes she could have.



Jordan Dykes
Coke Ad
digital photograph



Zach Hommey
Searching
electronic art

An Ode to You
Judeaa Wright

Little sister, you're too good for anybody,
too good for the fire-filled night sky,
too good for him to pass you by,
your feet grounded in a dirt planet,
your soul soaring through the celestial bodies.
You're determined, resilient, extroverted and persistent.
You light up like a candle in a cave
as you tiptoe from one side of the room to the other,
you, witty with comebacks that could slay dragons.
And me, with my terrible dancing and legs that fall too short.
And me, with my mouth that pours acid,
and my heart chipped on the corner
where the light refuses to spend time.
You are whole,
complete, with a heart made in the likeness of a feather,
tipping the scale into the fullness of day.

Grandmom Debbie
Amiyra Brodie

I remember
you, five feet something,
just enough to not be considered short,
with your dread-lock hair,
dressed with shell beads
that always brought me back,
to our trip to Jamaica.
When I, panicking,
kicked and screamed as the water, ocean,
nearly consumed every inch of my small frame.
I still can barely swim.

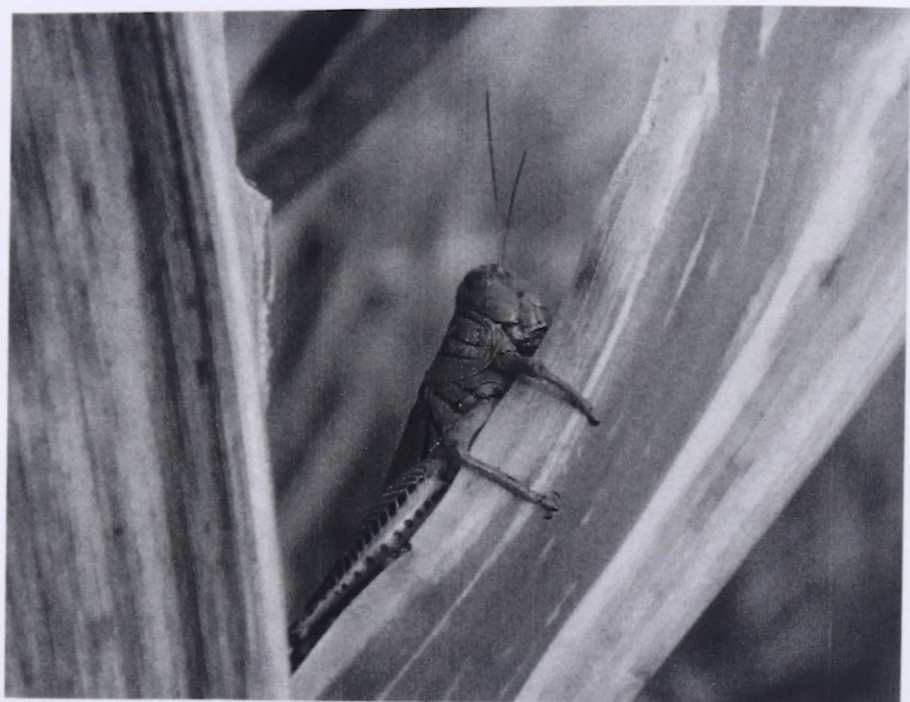
I remember
your hands moving,
in the garden, feeding,
in the kitchen, preparing the night's feast.
Overdone in portions;
just right in flavor, all at once.

I remember
trips to Cowtown, New Jersey,
like a ritual of Tuesdays,
where the smells of braided pizza pretzels,
funnel cake and perfume are mingled.

I remember
you, always
genuinely and lovingly,
giving all of you,
your time shared, split
between grandchildren, distant or close.
Though you only received a miniscule portion in return,
you proceeded to give some more.
Remember?



Jake Raviile
Untitled
digital photograph



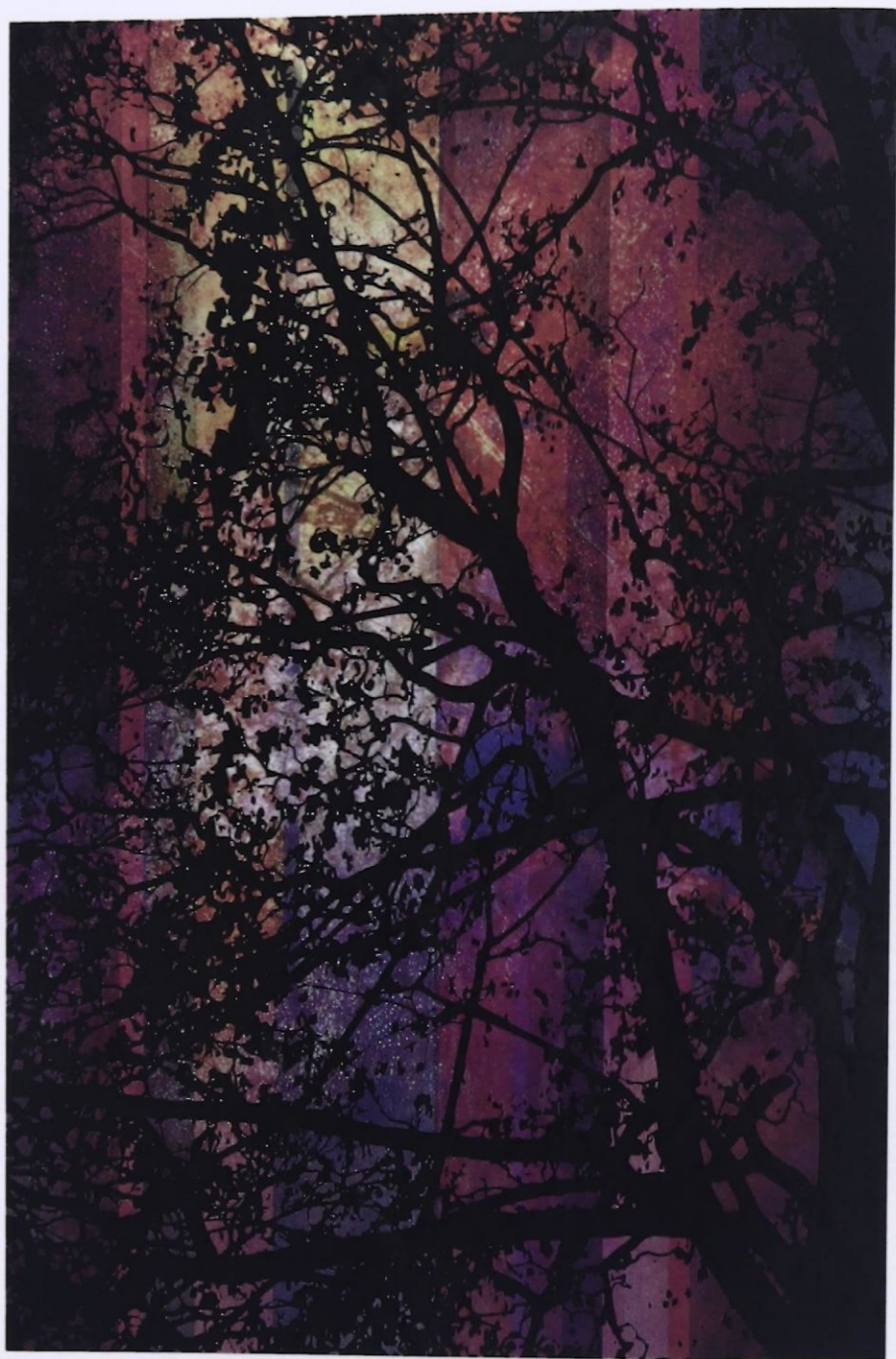
Tyler Crise
Husk Hopper
digital photograph

Grief

Joel Williamson

I'm standing tall, upright,
watching a sea of faces
float by. My bootstraps feel
tight as my skin:
my face pale as the snow below.
Lips pressed into an unreleasable grin,
mumbling words to shoes as they pass,
"Thank you," or only nodding.

Mountaintops climb more easily
than walking up the gravesite hill,
My brothers and I stand as a wall:
still, strong, eyes staring into ripped earth;
tears fall to the stone that marks his father.
The box, lowered, finally rests
as many before him on the same hill.
Tilled ground fills the imperfection,
erasing the grass that so recently existed.



Zach Hommey
Immense Desire
electronic art

Writer Biographies

Morgan Bittner is a senior education major, majoring in both English education, and as special education. She is graduating in the Spring of 2017. Morgan is a member of Sigma Tau Delta, an English honors society, and Phi Lambda Theta, an honors society for education majors. Morgan is an active mentor for the English department at LHU. She is looking forward to finishing up her last semester at Lock Haven and beginning her career in a classroom of her own. She spends the majority of her time off adventuring with her golden retriever puppy, Hodge, and binge watching endless seasons of *Criminal Minds*.

Breanna Bolinger is a senior, who majors in English.

Marcus Isaiah Bonaparte is a Senior and Communications major at LHU. He enjoys the art of words (rapping, poetry, spoken word), and he loves to entertain.

Amiyra Brodie is a first-semester Senior who is majoring in Social Work, with a concentration in Women's Studies. Amiyra is a long-time writer of poetry and a self-proclaimed bookworm. One of her hobbies is spending time with like-minded, kind people with whom she can laugh and be comfortable. Family is extraordinarily important to her as that is where she finds her inspiration.

Erika Divine is the pen name of Erika Ramirez. She is a twenty-year-old junior who majors in criminal justice, with a minor in sociology. Poetry is one of many things she is passionate about. She's also an intersectional feminist and social justice activist.

Ashley Hostrander is a senior who is a Secondary Education English/Special Education dual major with an Early Childhood Education minor. She is a member of the SSS Program (Student Support Services), English Club, and Council for Exceptional Children. She is a non-traditional student who previously attended LHU as a Social Work/Psychology dual major. She hopes to pursue a Master's Degree in Alternative Education and become a successful teacher.

Jora Lam is the pen-name of S. Rachel Lam, a sophomore student from the Shenandoah Valley. She is inspired by a combination of her Virginian and German heritages, and loves working with the macabre and eldritch in her pieces. Currently studying to dual-major in the fields of English and psychology, she plans on using her understanding of both subjects to help improve her work.

Samantha Nash is a senior who is majoring in secondary education English. In her spare time she enjoys reading, writing, and playing hockey.

Justin Nobrega is from Pleasant Gap, Pennsylvania, but spent much of his childhood in New England (specifically Rhode Island). His hobbies include writing, reading, history, and card games.

Delia Page is a junior who majors in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in geography. She enjoys writing poetry. Her identical twin sister Danielle is her best critic.

Breanna Tripp is a senior from Renovo, Pennsylvania. She majors in secondary education, with a concentration in English.

Judeaa Noelle Wright is a recent graduate of Lock Haven University. Her inspiration for writing comes from the lives of those around her, as well as her own personal life. Judeaa currently teaches a classroom of two-year-olds, but still finds time to express herself through writing.

The Editors

Michael Eubanks is a senior who will graduate in spring 2017. He is an English major with a concentration in creative writing. In addition to serving as an editor for *The Crucible*, he has also edited or contributed to other student publications and is a member of the English Club.

Joel Williamson is a History major working through his junior year. Joel is married and hopes to find a job in education after completing his post-grad studies. His hobbies include writing poetry, hiking, and playing a variety of instruments with friends.

Artist Biographies

Bianca Briones graduated from LHU in fall 2016 with a BFA in graphic design.

Caitlin Mallory is a senior Graphic Design major from Mill Hall, Pennsylvania. She is a nature enthusiast and photographer.

Emily Appolonia graduated from LHU in fall 2016 with a BFA in graphic design.

Iarygina Anastasiia is a Graphic Design major at Lock Haven University. She is originally from Russia and came to the United States for her education years ago. She has been here ever since. She is highly interested in print design and photography. In her spare time she likes going outside and taking pictures of the interesting places that emotionally connect to her. Her work represents the present in the reflection of history.

Jake Raville's work is done mainly through manipulation of photos.

Jessica Long is a sophomore majoring in Art with a concentration in Graphic Design. She is a total geek who got her love of art from watching anime and admiring the graphics in video games. Her piece which appears in this journal is an abstract interpretation of the song "Agnus Dei" by Rufus Wainwright.

Jordan Dykes is a Graphic Design major from Brookhaven, Pennsylvania. He has great interest in drawing and print design. The first photo (with the girl photographing herself) is about your art being an extension of yourself; you are what you love to do, and in this case, the girl loves photography. The second photograph is about the battle some of us have with the dark, and at times, chaotic, thoughts in our heads. The third photo has a similar theme. Sometimes, no one truly knows what you're going through and so at times you feel like you want to scream, but you have to try to keep it all together; it's a secret war.

Jordan Kruse is a Fine Arts major from Pennsylvania. His concentrations are in drawing, printmaking, and photography. The images in this journal depict ordinary places in a different perspective.

Rick Kessinger is a Graphic Design major working toward his B.F.A. with a secondary focus in photography.

Samantha Haines is a senior studio arts major with a concentration in graphic and online design.

Tyler Crise is a second semester junior hailing from Mount Holly Springs, Pennsylvania. He is a graphic design major who focuses on digital art that revolves around his emotions and life experiences. Tyler also aims to make advertisements and perhaps freelance someday with his graphic design skills. He also has an interest in photography. His piece "Husk Hopper" was a class assignment for his digital photography class. For this assignment, he was required to take a photo that included texture.

Valerie Cesare is a junior majoring in business administration with a concentration in management.

Zach Hommey is a Graphic Design major from Woodsboro, Maryland. He is also the art editor and designer of this edition of *The Crucible*. Many of his works are done through manipulating photographs in Photoshop and Illustrator. The series of work shown in this book focuses on the desires and ideas we all have in our minds. The works are meant to show the endless possibilities we all have and finding where we are meant to be.

