

VISIONS

MAGAZINE

VOLUME 22 SPRING 2022

ARTS & LITERATURE

SENIOR FEATURES

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SOFIA RUIZ
CHARBEL SAOUMA
MADISON SCHIFFER

COFFEE HOUSE

BACK IN THE
BARONI AND
BETTER THAN
EVER!



ABOUT VISIONS

Literary & Arts Magazine | Coffeehouse

Visions is a literary and arts magazine dedicated to showcasing the artistic and written talents of the Central Catholic community. These pages include works of art, prose, and poetry by students and faculty created throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

Since the founding of the magazine by Mr. Joseph Welch of the English Department in 2001, *Visions* has always sponsored Coffeehouse events to give the poets and musicians of our community a safe and supportive place to display their creative talents.

Over the last two years, the pandemic presented some significant challenges to this tradition - but we did our best to keep the lights on. After two remote broadcasts and one socially-distant Mainstage event in the Memorial Gymnasium, we were excited in the fall of 2021 to begin planning a traditional Coffeehouse in our unofficial home - the Baroni Hall. Unfortunately, the *Visions* Christmas Coffeehouse, a cornerstone of the Christmas season at Central Catholic since 2017 was rescheduled and then ultimately cancelled do to a rise in COVID-19 cases around the holidays.

With the coming of spring and a more optimistic outlook about the trajectory of the pandemic, we were finally able to host a real, live Coffeehouse on March 5, 2022. Our Spirit Week Coffeehouse on March 6, 2020 was the last major school event before the pandemic, and one day shy of two years later, we marked a return to normalcy.

The pictures included on these first pages are from that night - our new beginning. We are so grateful to say that *Visions* - finally - is back and better than ever!









IZABELLA ZOUJIN '23

Purple



SHELAGH MURPHY '23

Wallflower

*“Follow the feeling
Follow the feeling
Into Mommy’s arms you’ll go.”*

The little boy, no more than 9 years of age, sang as quietly as he could. In the woods that spoke of nightmares and ghosts and little, tiny pixies, if he sang too loudly, the white, sparkly fairies would come and cover him up and nip him. It had already happened once before - the little white fairies that fluttered throughout the mornings landed on his face and his arms since he didn't wear a coat. They had bitten with a cold intensity of an ice cube, before drifting away and disappearing. The glistening sheets of white that laid on the ground were fairy-towns, and the boy had to make sure to walk quickly through them, or else the fairies would burn the soles of his feet.

But not now, not today. Now the trees sang a song full of disharmony and discord, warning him to stay away and yet at the same time beckoning him to come closer. The trees framed a pathway, and the stars twinkled, as if trying to hurry him along to his destination. Even though his feet hurt (it's the rabbits, they're poking my feet with their twigs!), he could hear the sound of his mother's voice, calling him closer to her, wherever she was.

After some time the boy decided to look for some fruit to eat. A deep wail sounded from within his stomach, which meant that the boy needed something before he could go to sleep. He didn't want to go to sleep now, or else the monsters would come to grab him, and carry him deep underground to the place where not even fairies strayed.

He looked around, and he saw someone sleeping by a tree. Of course there were many trees around him, but one had a person lying underneath it. The boy moved closer, and when he peered at the person he saw tomato juice flowing out of the hole in his chest.

The boy wrinkled his nose. Tomato juice tasted really funny! And it also smelled really bad. He didn't really want to eat tomato juice, so he shook the person's shoulders. "Hellooooo??" the boy implored, "Do you have anything for me to eat?"

The person didn't respond, instead falling on the ground with his face planted in some fallen, dead leaves. The boy frowned. How rude! How could someone just ignore him like that!

The boy stood up, before something caught his eye. It was something shiny, embedded in the person's thigh. It was - a knife? Why is there a knife there, of all places? Really, people shouldn't be storing silver things in their bodies, the boy thought, but then he remembered all the circles that his mother put in her ears. They didn't hurt, so that means this knife mustn't hurt either.

He knelt on the floor, and slowly pulled out the knife, with the scent of cranberry juice entrancing him. As he took out the knife, more tomato - or was it cranberry? In the nighttime he couldn't see all that well, so he had to rely on his sense of smell, and he could smell lots of tomatoes. And also a hint of raspberry.

But he was hungry, so he didn't have a choice. He stuck two fingers in the hole where the cranberry juice came from, and the person suddenly made a large shriek! The boy jumped back, scared, but he fell on his bottom because he tripped on a big stone. It had lots of writing on it, but the boy couldn't read it - it was too dark. It smelled of tomato juice, so it must have been a recipe or something.

The person grabbed the boy by his throat, holding him up, and yelling things at him. The boy couldn't understand, but little tiny pixies fluttered around him, giggling and whispering. Usually what they said couldn't be trusted, but maybe their translation would work this time.

Before the boy could even concentrate, the person slammed him down on the ground, and the boy cried out. But...there was that warm feeling! The warm feeling came from his head, and he could smell raspberry. He remembered the song that the trees were singing, what his mother had told him.

*“Follow the feeling
Follow the feeling
Into Mommy’s arms you’ll go.”*

If he closed his eyes, he could feel it a lot more! Sometimes his cheek felt warm, and sometimes his stomach would suddenly feel pain and constrict, but that must be his mother sending hugs to him, right? He sang quietly, trying to tell his mother that he was okay and that he would be there soon.

There was a little bit of silence before the person - oh, he had forgotten about the person! The person dragged him, stumbling a little bit, before throwing him a ways off. The boy laughed, thanking the person for helping the boy on his journey. Even if it had bound to hurt, even if the leaves didn't cushion his fall and the growls of the monsters grew louder, that very nice person gave him lots of warm feelings.

All of a sudden, he hit a wall, and then he fell down, down, down. He plunged into a lot of water, and he coughed. But. It was very warm.

He could see his mother calling for him, her mouth curving at the corners into a smile, her eyes crinkling up. She was wearing a white dress, with a splotch of red in the middle. It reminded the boy of tomato juice, of the bad smell and the terrible taste, but that didn't matter, because now he was with his mom.

She smiled, and he dove into her arms, laughing and smiling all the way. When he opened his mouth to call her name, only bubbles gurgled out of his mouth, and he coughed. All of a sudden, something was choking him. He looked up at his mother, and she shook her head, as if telling him that it was alright. He smiled, and she squeezed him tightly. Although his clothes were a little wet, probably because of the tomato juice that he tried to eat, his mother didn't care. He felt his chest hurt a bit, but that was because of the tight hug.

He closed his eyes. He was home.



NAVIN RAMESH '24

Reflection in India

ELLA BERARD '23

Hallway



BEN HARRINGTON '23

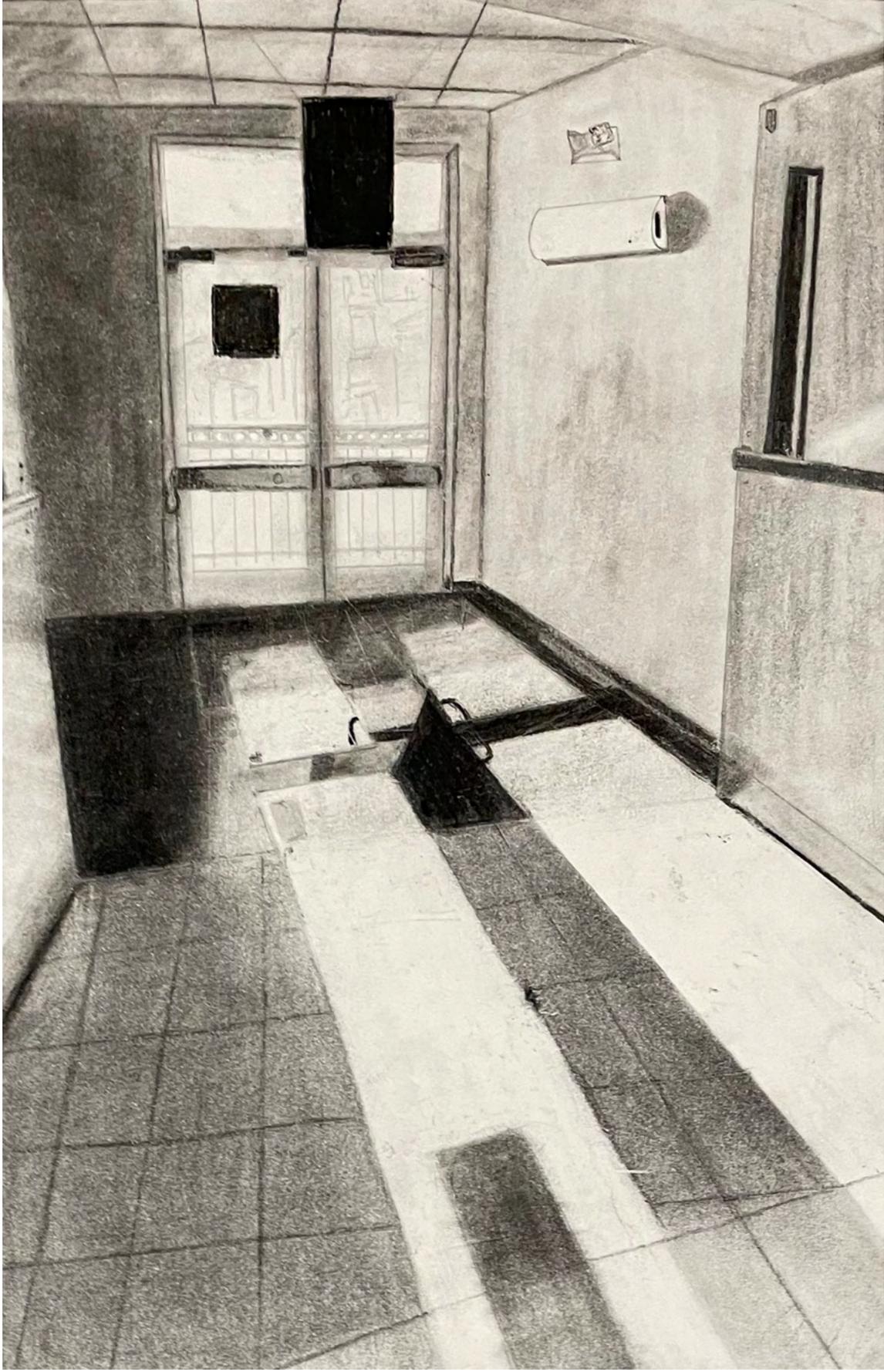
Hall



AALYAH SOTO '23

Freshman Hall





IZABELLA ZOUJIN '23

One Point Perspective

I cast a line into the still water
See ripples define the waves
The last signs of life in that mirror pool
They stop at the soft green edge
I watch them go
Slow and cool into the shore
Then throw my eyes to the doors
Between the trees
Skinny sticks of light that peep
From the goodnight sun
I collect them in my moon basket
And shoot them into an indigo sky
With my comet star gun
Complete with shimmering tails
Good for catching all the world's wishes
They peekaboo streak among the nighttime clouds
Stun the crowds so no one misses them
On their late night
I-wish-I-may
I-wish-I-might runs

MR. ROBERT RINGUETTE

I Wish I May

ALEXIS MARTOS '25

Nonsense

Sing to me, oh crimson canary,
Gaze out beyond thy golden cage,
Of your woes, you mustn't carry,
Same to say of your grievous rage.

Why must you blemish your wrists to defy the wrought silver chains,
Why must you tarnish your porcelain skin rolling in the sullied earth,
I beseech of thee that I may smolder those white-hot, searing flames,
I implore of thee that I may offer milk and honey for your desired mirth.

Dance for me, oh nimble swan,
Gyrate inside thy flaxen cage,
Of your dance, I watch upon.
You dance alone on your stage.

Why must you lance the vermilion silk with iron sheers,
Why must you scream, wail, roar, and make a fuss,
For the thought of ceding must prevail over the years,
For the secrets of fate are behind and beyond us.

Embrace me as we drown in an endless sea of stars,
And let the eastern zephyr carve our tedious paths,
For time heals extensive wounds, but never scars,
Release your desire for control and your useless wrath,

But to you, that be utter nonsense.

JOANIRELYS RODRIGUEZ '23

"The Kiss" by Gustav Klimt 1907-1908

Her smile drew him to her,
A radiant smile that she thought would lead to a healthy relationship.
But, shouldn't there be equality in a relationship,
Her answers matter,
Her no.

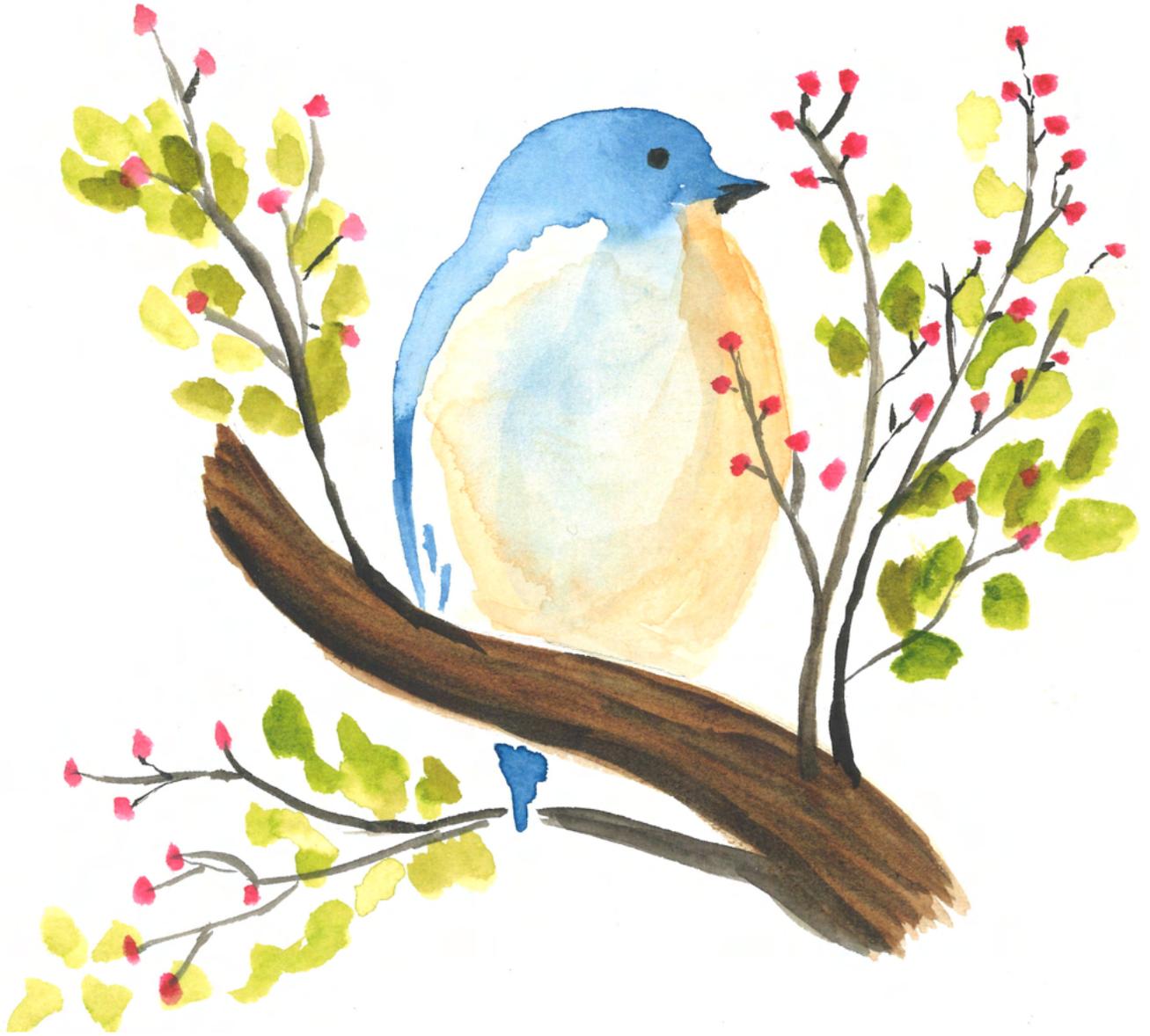
Her smile drew him to her,
A smile that led to stolen kisses and warm touches in the open,
But harsh grabs and strikes of anger given behind closed doors.
Her answer should have been heard,
Her no.

So now she stands in the "perfect" picture,
In a embellished yellow dress
While surrounded by jubilant flowers,
By happiness.

This happiness is fake,
Hiding the bleak reality.
A reality where the dress is later torn,
And tears adorn her face.

Her smile drew him to her,
Hiding her pain and anguish.
Her smile kept others ignorant;
Others only seeing her happiness,
Her cheerful gifts,
Her supposed yes,
But not her no.

Her smile drew him to her,
A smile that held so much hope.
But, now one can never find that smile,
Only a mouth that shouts no.



RANJANA RAMESH '23

Bluebird

J.C. '25

Always Remember to Say I Love You

The day abuelita died.

It was a Saturday morning, December 19th.
I felt numb, tears were falling down my face.

I could see my mama cry like a bird crying for their mama.
I couldn't look at my abuelita face to face on her deathbed.

My heart shattered like someone breaking glass.
Like someone ripping my heart out of my chest.

Everything felt like a dream. My head was in the clouds.
I hoped that this was all a dream and when I woke up,
this nightmare would end.

The only thing I regret not saying
that day one last time was I love you.
I love you abuelita.

Memories I had with my abuelita.

I remember feeling the brush through my scalp as
she laid me down on her lap to brush my hair.

The way she hugged me in warmth with the smell of
vanilla and flowers radiating off her body.

Flowers.

My abuelita loved flowers.
She had a beautiful garden that I would help her with every summer.
It was filled with roses which were her favorite.

She was my antidote to happiness.
Now she's the angel who protects me wherever I go.

We used to dance like a flower would in the wind.
We used to laugh so hard until my stomach started to ache.
She used to kiss me on my cheek but waited a few seconds before letting go.

I miss you abuelita.

How it affected me.

Life was never the same after my abuelita left.
Life was hard.

The only thing keeping me going is my mama.
My mama is my rock.
She helps me through all these obstacles.

I always used to ask my mama why.
Why did she have to leave?
My mama always responded back,
“Sometimes it’s hard to say why things have to be this way.”

At one point I was mad.
I was frustrated.
I was sad.
Grieving over a loved one is hard.
It's hard to let go.

I felt like Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz.
But instead of trying to find my way home,
I was finding my way back to happiness.

How my life is now after abuelita.

Life is now luminous, filled with love and laughter.
The love for my abuelita is still strong.
I miss her everyday.

I learned to live with the hole in my heart.
Her love and memories still live on.

Everything got brighter, life is brighter.
The dark clouds have left but still come and go.

I came over a big mountain in my life.
However, I know there are more to come.
After what happened to my abuelita
I learned to be more caring and grateful.

I learned to stay strong during hard times.
Now I know when I see my loved ones to
always remember to say I love you.

RIANNA SANTRA '24

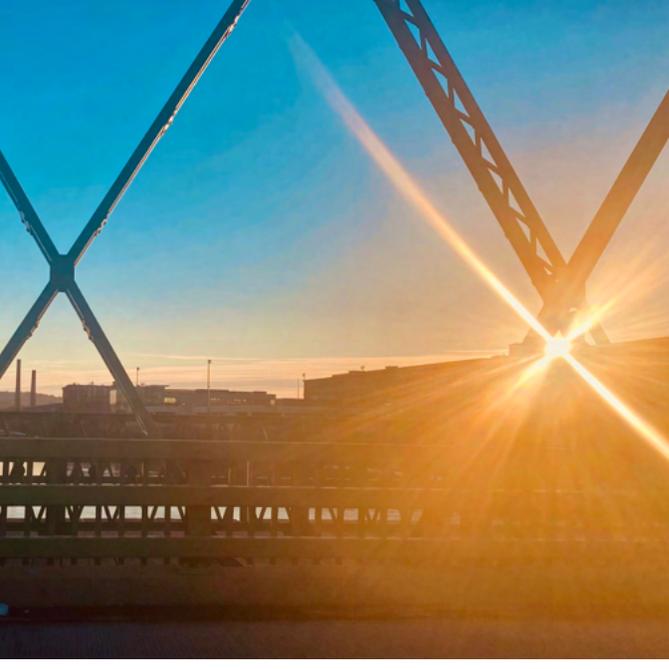
The Power of Language

Linguistics is the study of how languages are changing throughout the history of humankind. It studies how languages are formed, spoken, written, and then slowly dying out. It's fascinating to see that Latin, once the most widely spoken language in the Roman Empire, is now simply an ancient language that is studied in schools to know what English words mean.

Language is more than just words spoken together, though. It's also about emotions and stories. I believe that people first started speaking as a way to spread information with each other. Maybe it was to talk about territory, or about the next hunt, or what plants give poisonous rashes and what tasted good. It evolved to then talk about myths and legends, which passed down from generation to generation. It's one of the reasons why humans are different from other animals - we have language.

With my words, I try to evoke feelings from people from the stories that I write. Writing is one of my hobbies. Books are not just pages of words, but many words deeply bound by pieces of paper. I just think that it's amazing that we can write one thing and imagine another, just by seeing letters put together. You're reading my words right now and actually understanding them.

That's why the power of language is so powerful, and also why it can sometimes be deadly.



EVA NANJE '23



LAURIE TOUMA '25



EVA NANJE '23

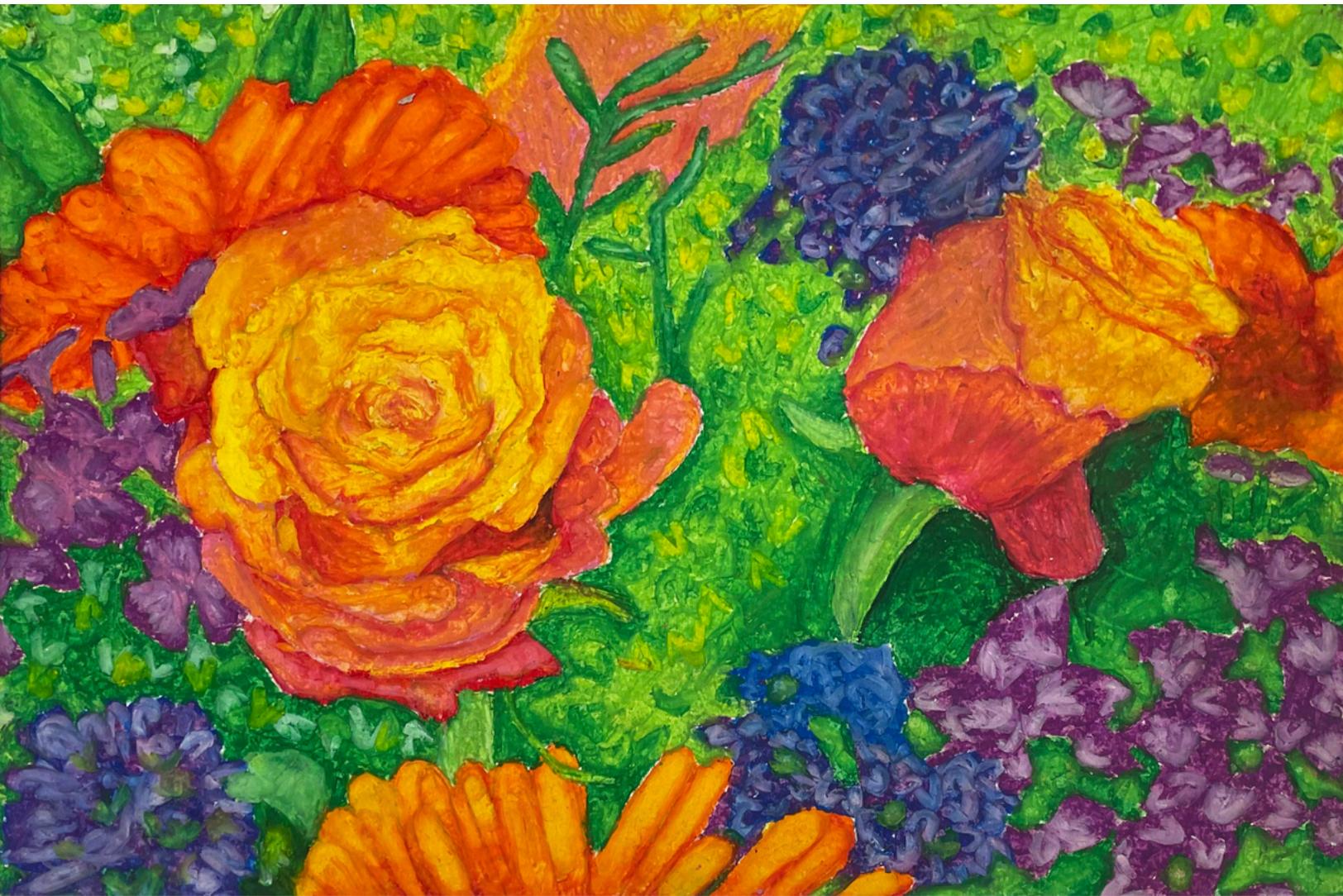
Dante Alighieri, born in 1265,
1321: malaria claimed his life,
Let's go back to his life in pictures,
And this bio ain't havin' no stricture!
Met Beatrice at the age of 9,
Dedicated poetry that was quite refined!
In Florence, Italy, Dante hit the scene,
Mastered the art of sonnet by 18!
A marriage with Gemma arranged at twelve,
Wed in 1285, ain't that swell!
Not so much for Dante, though,
For his true love was Beatrice, fo' sho'!
Dante revealed his emotions in 1290,
When Beatrice died quite untimely!
He published *The New Life* for her,
Citing the tragic love he did endure!
Exiled from Florence in 1302,
He and the Gheradinis removed in a coup,
After this, he wrote his greatest narrative,
The Divine Comedy was quite imperative!
Inferno, *Paradiso*, and *Purgatorio*,
Sure weren't described as a mere oratorio!
In it he secretly dissed Pope Boniface,
Cus' the Pope couldn't be publicly disgraced,
Beatrice appeared once again,
As Dante's guide until the end!
Eventually, although he went to Ravenna,
he would soon feel like he was in Gehenna,
Came down with Malaria that he caught in Venice,
That disease was sure a menace!
The Greatest Writer of the Middle Ages, but didn't see its end,
Wonder if you're in *Paradiso*, my good friend

BRADY BARRY '25

Dante Alighieri Rap



SAMANTHA LAMONTAGNE '22



SHELAGH MURPHY '23

Field of Flowers

MEGAN LINZER '23

A Single Calla Lily

My mother had never looked more beautiful than she did on her wedding night in her dress that sparkled when the moon hit it. My dad didn't look bad either in his gray suit and navy tie. I remember the excitement of the moment as my mom threw her bouquet of satin white calla lilies over her head. After 8 years I could finally say my parents are married: I didn't want the night to end.

That was over a decade ago and now that memory survives only in the dust of their wedding album. My family had moved from South Carolina to a big home in Cleveland three years ago when my dad got transferred to the Ohio branch of his bank, and everything was perfect at first. It was sad moving away from the sunniness of South Carolina but I would do anything for my family, unfortunately my mother did not feel the same way. My mom walked out on my dad and me one year ago today and with only one paycheck we couldn't afford our home anymore forcing us to move into a studio apartment. Every night I pray for my mom to come back because without her, our family isn't complete. I used to be able to talk to my mother about anything but now I can't even get a text back. My dad's rarely home since he always has work and even when he is home I don't feel comfortable talking to him about my problems. I'm a desolate island in the middle of nowhere when I sit in the apartment.

It takes me twenty minutes to trudge to my school each day and the only consolation is the garden that has slowly been growing in the common area. Flowers of all colors alongside fruits and vegetables that could fill a stomach for weeks. The only thing missing would be a satin flower. Instead of going to school I went to the general store instead. The store was barren for the most part, but because of the new garden it had a little seed aisle. I grabbed a bag of calla lily seeds using my useless lunch money to buy them. Maybe with a little water, some sun, and soil my mom will come running back. Everyday for three weeks I came to the garden to water and nurture my flowers. It was amicable there. Everyone talks to each other and no one feels isolated. The plot next to mine was filled with flowers from an older woman who shared the same smile as my mother. She took special care of her plants, but that didn't stop her from helping others in the garden too. In my eyes she was a mom. She was a mom to nature. A mom who spent all of her free time with her loved ones. A mother who would never leave her babies behind. My mother will always be my mother, but she will never be my mom.

I waited until she left before I plucked a calla lily out of my garden and asked another person in the garden who that woman was.

“Her name is Ana and she lives in B38” she said. I shuffled up the stairs trying to think of what to do, but when the time came to knock on her door I struggled with what to say. Instead I left the calla lily on her doorstep and quickly walked back to my apartment. As the week passed she didn’t come to the garden. I watered her plants and a few people left food at her door. It took another whole week before she finally returned to the garden. She looked at me with loving eyes and handed me a fresh calla lily with a note that read:

I have had a long life of watching people, but without getting to know them. This flower makes me want to change that. Calla lilies were my mom’s wedding flower. She died when I was two and my dad didn’t remarry until I was 18, so I never really had a mom. Some of the other gardeners came and told me your story and I don’t want what happened to me to happen to you: I would love to take the time to get to know you and pass on my knowledge of gardening. Would you be my garden mate?

My eyes filled with tears and my throat sunk to my gut. She engulfed me in a hug and I whispered in her ear, “I love you mom.”



SYDNEY BERARD '25

In the Coffee Tree



EMMA BORERO '25

Symbols of Change

ANONYMOUS

Promised

I promised you the sun, moon, and stars,
And I am a man who pays his dues,
I promised you I'd heal your scars,
Even if I have to capture the sky's hues.

I promised you the heaven's sunlight,
To warm your freezing skin,
And to bear fruit in your never-ending nights,
Yet it is in vain for frost-bitten cold still resides within.

I promised you dusk's pale glow,
To guide your way through the endless abyss,
Yet you still chose to see blind; voicing your woe,
Expecting to stumble into numbing bliss.

I promised you the diamonds above,
To let you shimmer like shattered glass,
I let myself carve them without love,
To let you rival the shine of brass.

I promised you the sun, moon, and stars,
Yet your heart longed for so much more,
You collect your things in crystal clear jars,
For you only value my burnt-out, bygone yore.



ALLIANA ICART '25

On the corner of Boulevard Street, near the Big n' Beefy, there is a homeless man who usually stands there, with a sign saying that anything would help his situation. Though many, many people drive past him every day, it is rare that someone stops to give to him. One day, a Mercedes in which a rich business owner sat stopped at the red light. As he waited, he glanced over at the homeless man. "Should I give him some money?" he thought. "No...he'll probably spend it on alcohol or something that isn't good for him." The light changed, and the rich man went on his way. The next time the light turned red, a working-class mother with her minivan full of kids was at the front of the line. "Should I help that man?" she ponders, "No... it might not be safe for us to open the window to him, and the light will change soon anyways." After she had gone, the light changed to red a third time. Nearest to the light, a broken down car stood idling. Inside, a construction worker on his way home after a long and tiring night shift noticed the homeless man. The worker was not rich, but without hesitation, he gave the homeless man a water bottle, yogurt, and 5 dollars, which he had been saving for his own breakfast. Though we are all perceived differently in society, the way God perceives us is not by our wealth or status, but by our willingness to give.

NAVIN RAMESH '24

The Good Samaritan



MILVIA GUZMAN '22

Cold Night

ZULLYMAR CASTRO '22

i avert my eyes to a portrait of my younger self,
the thought of time hasn't yet crossed my mind.
now i wonder where'd all the time go?
perhaps over our heads, around us, past our ears.
we are too blind to acknowledge, value, or even admire the perception of time.
admire the highs. admire the low.
take a step back, look at how much you've grown.
have you changed for the better?
do you miss the old you? are you satisfied?
as time passes over us, watches us, laughs at us.
as time keeps ticking, we keep in motion.
time is valuable and unpredictable.
time is many thing,
foolish is not one of them.

SKYE TALANIAN '25



"Why is it snowing in April?"

Rain,

Rain,

more rain,

"Boy, this summer is hot!"

Naive wrapping us in its denial

Climate change.

"The virus isn't real"

Chin masks: noses

"But I can't die from it"

Pfizer? Moderna? Johnson and Johnson?

Coronavirus.

Beauty filters

"Hide your thighs"

Calories

Influencers

Chats snapping, grams instant;

Social media.

Gases tearing eyes

Lit up streets

"But everyone's lives matter?"

Frustration

Minorities unheard

injustice.

Donkeys bashing elephants

Elephants bashing donkeys

"It's all his fault"

Fighting, conflict, **b**

r

o

k

e

n

Money, religion, flags;

War.

I was raised by a conflicted,

ruptured,

world.

MR. ROBERT RINGUETTE

Twilight Spider

Under the soft amber glow of a streetlamp
At twilight
You see the string of a spider's web.
Thin, black, bejeweled
Tiny glimmering beads.
You spy the spider and coax him
Towards the line
And as he climbs
The blue grey street begins to glow
Veins of purple and pink.
Heart-beat, stomach-leap
You jump into a run
Down the alien grounds
While the houses around you continue to sleep.
High-kneed and with choo-choo fists
An all teeth smile spreads across your face as you Whoo-hoo!
Down and through the magical space.
A child's bliss when you reach a gated fence
Grab hold, legs fly
And you spin free below
That twilight sky
Believing, reeling, feeling
The pulse and the glow
Of the purple and pink
You think
With dreamy, half-closed eyes
Of that spider smiling with you
Under the sky.



LIZZIE WELCH '23

Baked Apples (above) | Raider Plaza (next page)



I heard you some time ago
laughing
living.
you were walking around with no direct purpose.
only what you so desperately wanted.
the lifestyle, the lyrics, the sounds.
to be who you want,
when you were about 7,
second grade, maybe third.
the spelling tests where the teachers gave no help.
but you could do it
all on your own!
come on now,
just figure it out!
you don't notice do you,
that this life too has syllables?
but there are no answers to the test.
you just have to sound it out.

JULIANA BOURAPHAEL '23

sound

Down the deep rabbit hole,
Following the white hare,
The journey through Wonderland won't be a stroll,
There is no time to spare.

Heed labels telling you to drink,
Just to get through a door,
For you might just shrink,
And there's still so much in store.

Take a seat at Hatter's table,
Have some tea and cake,
I promise this is no fable,
I swear this is not fake.

Meet the brothers Dumb and Dee
They might just be the kindest yet,
But they still play tricks don't you see,
And there's still so many you haven't met.

Be wary of a cat with a wicked grin,
And stripes adorning its back,
His guidance will make your head spin,
For misdirections, he does not lack.

Bow before the Queen of Hearts,
Mind what you say,
For if you anger her at a start,
She will take your head away.

So Alice, how was your stay?
Did you like the twists and turns,
Maybe you'll come again someday,
Or maybe cautions something you'll learn.

ANONYMOUS

Alice in Wonderland

HELENA BERNIER '23

Still Life



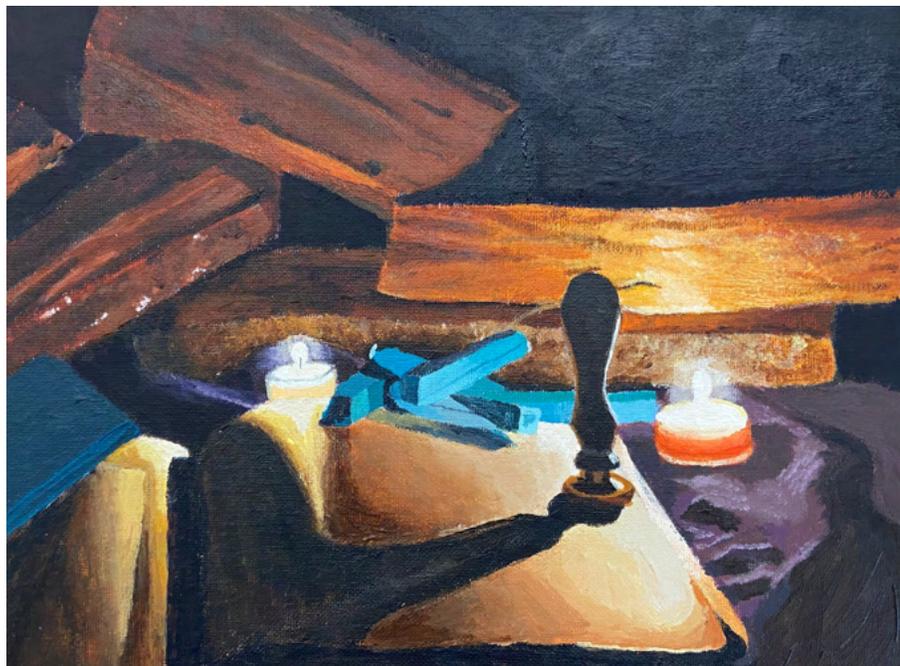
MILENA LYONS '23

Reflection



LIZZIE WELCH '23

Candlelight Letters





BEN HARRINGTON '23
"STICKS!"



AALYAH SOTO '23
Great Plate

ADI MUSCAT '22

Not Sponsored by Twix



SOPHIA CAMACHO '23

Eggs





GIANNA SURPRENANT '23

Plants



MIKAELA SKELLEY '22

Still Life

MR. TRISTAN MACDONALD

Mapping Ghost Country

Maps have always fascinated me. Maybe it's because they seem to give us a God's-eye view, a taste of divinity, in letting us glimpse the whole that is ordinarily lost behind the particulars in which we're embedded. Apparent patterns seem to appear that could only be perceived from a distance, and, in our most inspired moments, we have intimations of an order just outside our reach. A line that seems too straight to be natural, a mountain or island unexpectedly jutting up from expanses of flatness, a road ending for apparently no reason: such things have primed me to see the world almost as a volcanologist does, with vast plates of the mundane interrupted by fault lines where mystery can finally seep to the surface.

I've always wanted to find those lines, those points where epiphanies can bubble up from the hidden depths of reality. All the stories of treasure maps, of X marking the spot, convinced me early on that specific spots on the planet must contain our fulfillment. Our lives' adventures must have a destination we can pinpoint on a map. So, whenever I would go to the bookstore as a kid and see a new atlas on sale, my parents would have to employ their most cunning rhetoric to prevent me from buying it. Maps from *National Geographic* plastered my bedroom walls, providing a convenient and engrossing distraction when homework became particularly dull. On a map of Massachusetts, I marked the vital sites of my life, traced the jagged coastline of Boston Harbor, and planned expeditions to the western towns whose names appeared alien to me.

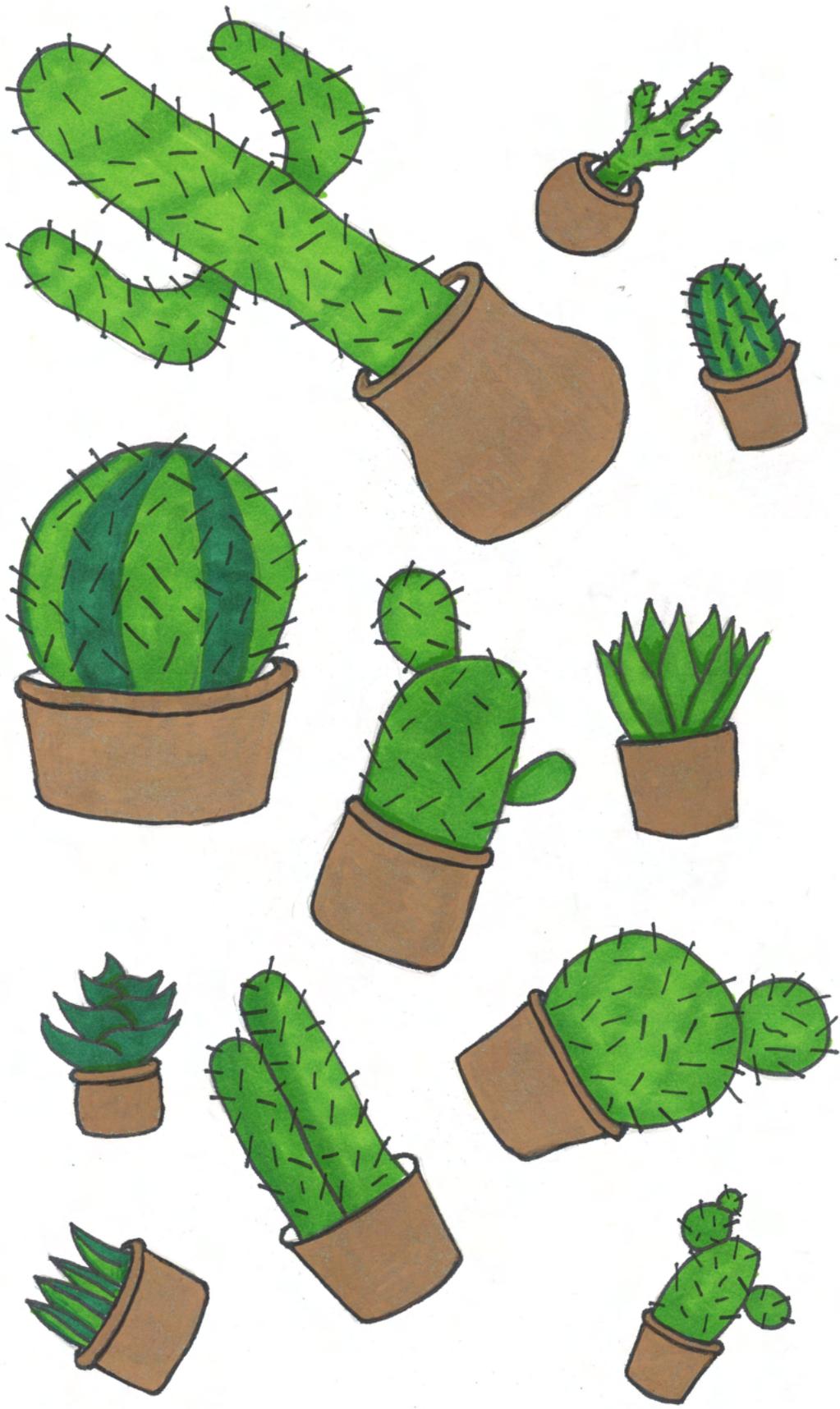
But one part of the state, for reasons I can't fully articulate even with the benefit of hindsight, possessed a paradoxical combination of mystery and an absence of allure. The Quabbin Reservoir, the largest body of water in Massachusetts, looks like a ragged gash in the middle of the map, a cluster of connected tears in the forested hills, like a claw mark. Maybe my lack of interest in it stemmed from its lack of visibility; the road comes close to it at only a couple unrevealing points, and it never runs along it for any real distance, so the reservoir exposes its full breadth only to hikers willing to walk miles into the woods. That deep in, even the omnipresent hum of highways is snuffed out, leaving a silence that suburbanites like me say they want but that they never quite know how to handle for any extended period of time. It doesn't seem to fit such a small, tame state as Massachusetts.

Over time, the Quabbin exerted more of a pull on me as I learned about the towns disincorporated, demolished, and flooded to create it in the 1930s. Imagining the submerged town commons, the lost halls once hosting church dances (often the best chance for romance in such rural regions), I couldn't help but hear in the silence not only the natural peace of the wilderness, but also, just beneath, an artificial and unsettling absence. The extent of the emptying started becoming clearer to me when, in my twenties, I began systematically hiking the trails surrounding the reservoir. All the land around it is depopulated and owned by the state, with dozens of numbered yellow gates leading to trails that disappear into the forest. One usually encounters few fellow hikers, so the loneliness combines with the soundlessness to conjure a sense of disquiet that grows the further in you go, discouraging solo trips too deep into the woods. It's as if, like an astronaut, your lifeline to help and human connection would snap if you walked far enough.

Each trail is designated with the number of its gate, and each branch off it is marked with a sign containing that number, a hyphen, and the number of the branch (with the first branch off Gate 39's trail, for instance, being 39-1, the second 39-2, etc.). After hiking some of these branches one day, I checked the internet to see if I could find a complete map of them, but no such trail map existed. While state websites showed the main paths, they displayed hardly any of the branches. That baffled me; the idea of some geographical feature not being represented online almost seemed to negate its existence for me, like it had dropped beneath the consciousness of the whole world. I had some luck only when I found a couple of the lost towns' maps from the nineteenth century, before disincorporation; almost all the trails and their branches turned out to be former roads, forgotten and empty of the houses that once stood beside them (though a few cellar holes still lay hidden beneath the brambles here and there). Nevertheless, even on those old maps, the roads lacked names. As in a sleeping kingdom in a fairy tale, a spell of anonymity always seemed to linger over the place.

Adding to the sense of unreality is the town of Petersham bordering the reservoir, which my wife and I explored early in the COVID lockdown this spring. The town is marked by both quaintness and decay: a white-steepled church and a general store on two sides of the town common, and, on another, a rambling, abandoned, condemned hotel-turned-Catholic-school. Plus, in another part of town, a collection of cellar holes surrounds a triangular village green hidden deep in the woods where one of the disincorporated towns, Dana, used to be (having been consumed—and left undigested—by Petersham). The lockdown made even the populated part of Petersham seem uninhabited and ghostly, as if the sense of emptiness had metastasized outward from that lost community.

In the future, as I explore the region more, I hope that emptiness slowly comes to be filled in for me; I hope the liveliness lost in the lockdown and the memories dissolved in the flooded towns are all resurrected, letting Massachusetts' living children like me enter deeper communion with the past beneath our feet.





MR. MARC PELLETIER

MR. RICK CAVANAUGH

(opposite)





MRS. LAUREN ROESER

Cactus



MR. MATT JOYAL

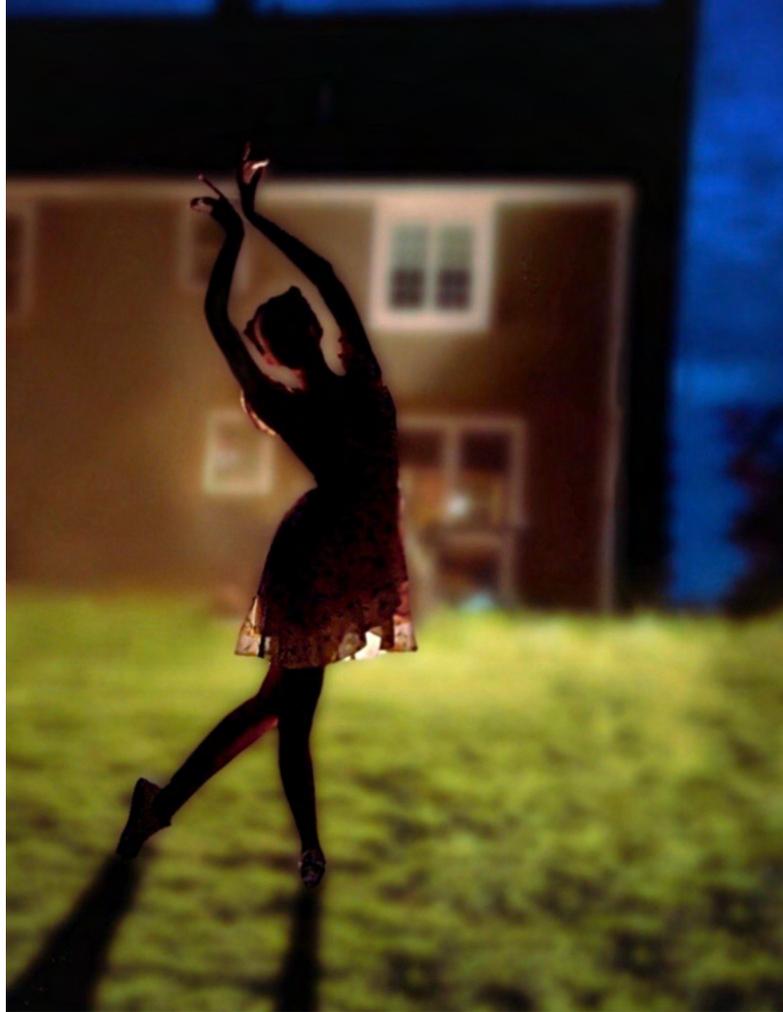
Fofoti

**SEMINAR
FURNISHES**

MAYLA ALMEIDA

SENIOR
FEATURE





TIANA ALVAREZ

SENIOR

FEATURE





CAROLINE CLARK

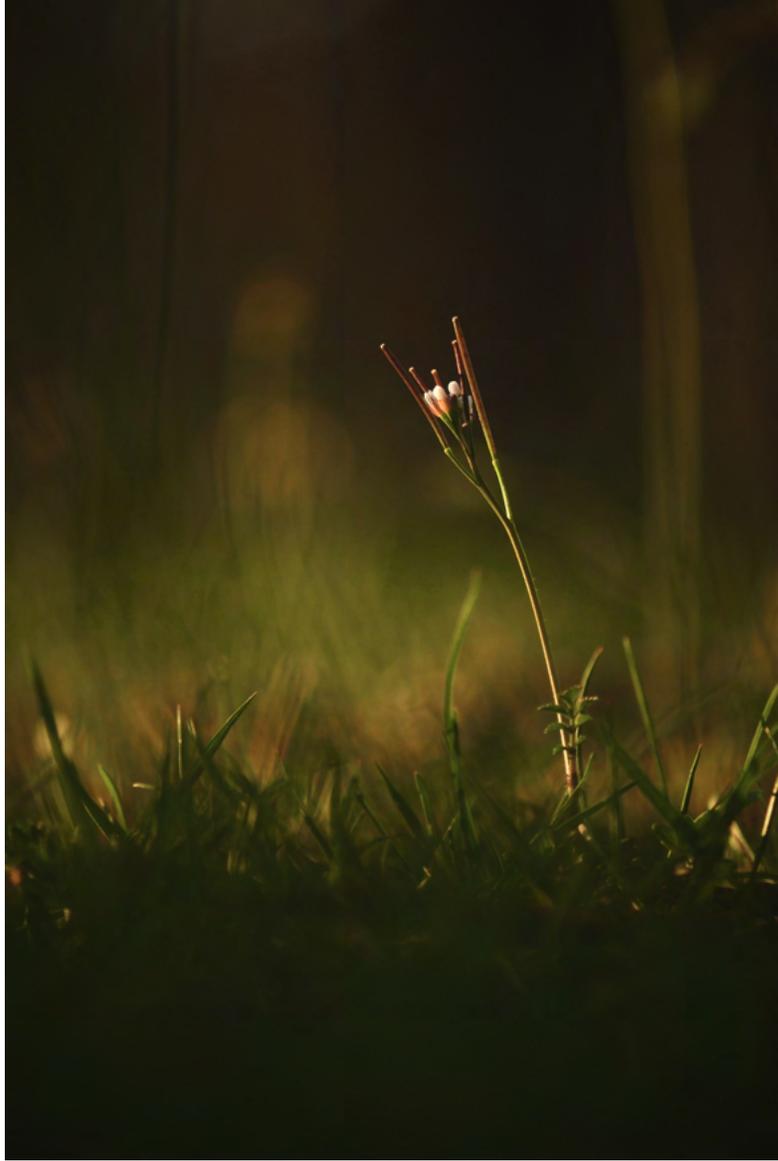
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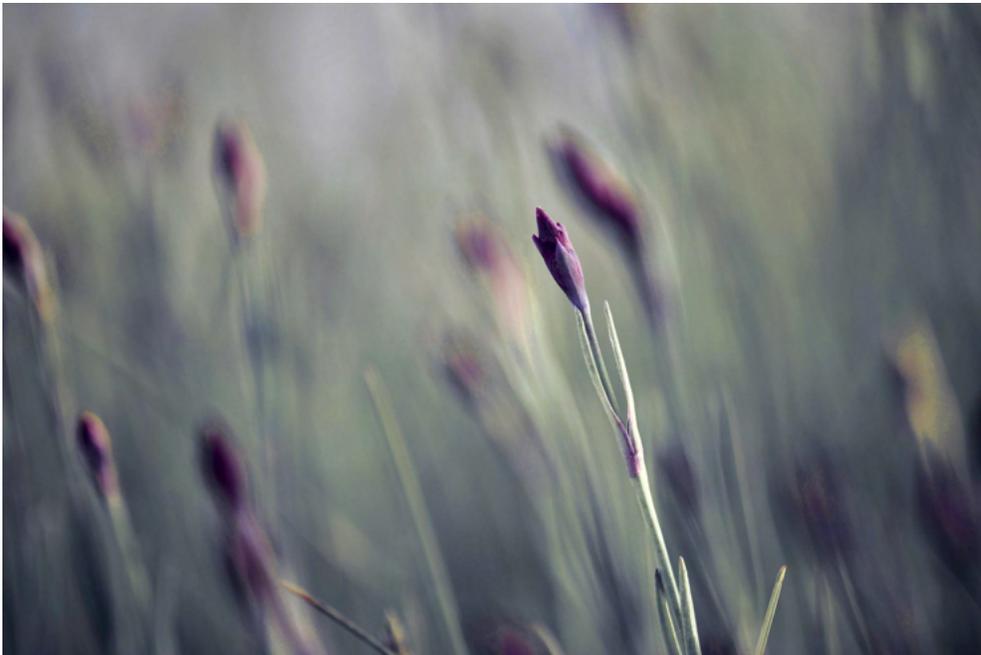
FEATURE



wish

*afternoon snack (opposite top left)
stillness (opposite top right)
dewdrops (opposite bottom)*







lighthouse (top)
juliet (bottom left)
sea of stars (bottom right)

cherry blossom (opposite top)
windswept (opposite middle)
honeybee (opposite bottom)

TOM CUCUDDY SENIOR FEATURE

Autumn's Peak

A box of old cassettes
Full of songs without regrets
And some photographs
of my best friends

I think about the past
Four years flew by way too fast
I just hope the good times
never end

In the car we'd ride
To the hill to watch the sky
As the sun set behind the trees

Driving in the dark
After going to the park
How on earth did we get to
the beach?

My mind's been stuck in
Autumn's Peak
And I can't seem to leave
this state
I lack resolve and my heart's
too weak
I just drift away and can't
think straight

Memories

It seems we're out of time left
together
Before we have to go our
separate ways
Who knew a few years wouldn't
last forever
With happy hours pass the
happy days

And everything we'd do
Was all because of you
I hope because of me
You've made some memories

I want to let you know things
will be alright
But you know I'd never lie
to you
Of course there will be lonely
days and sleepless nights
So take all the good times to get
you through

Call me if you must
You know in you I'll trust
Maybe you and me
Could make more memories

And when this song ends
We'll still be best of friends
Take this time from me
And make some memories



Frankenstein

With all my broken bones
And all my bloody scars
I'm better off on my own
This has gone way too far

You think you can control
My body and my head
The parts that became whole
You stole from all the dead

I'm not the perfect man
You built me up to be
I won't be tricked again
And someday I'll be free

I will escape your grasp
I will tear down your walls
You gave me all I have
But you don't know me at all

I'm so damn sick and tired
Of feeling sorry for myself
To get what you desired
You sacrificed my mental
health

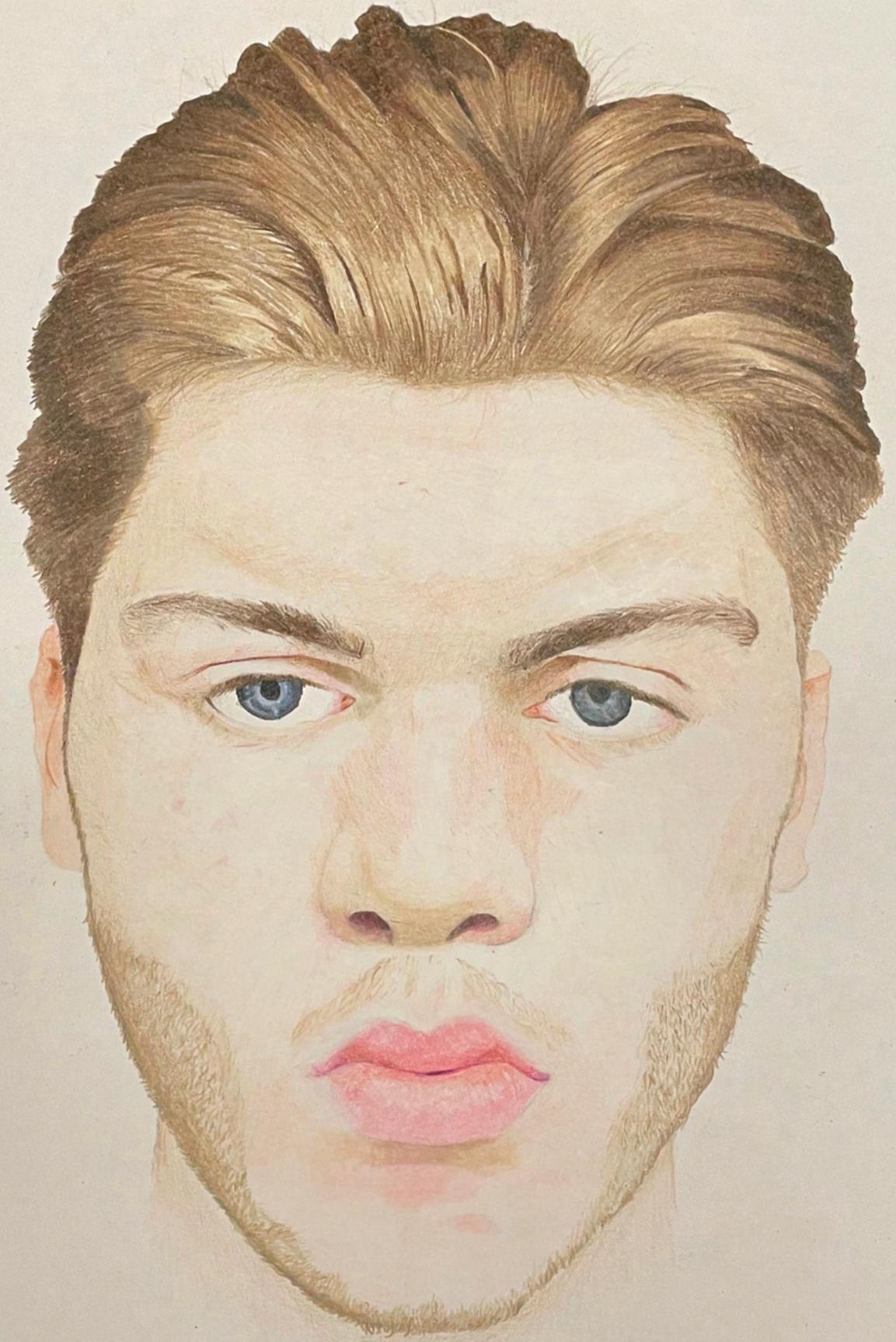
I'm done being your slave
You cannot hold me down
To avoid an early grave
I'm leaving this old town

You're gonna make me lose
my mind
Tearing me apart like
Dr. Frankenstein
I think I'm running out of time
It feels like my heart's not
even mine

JACK DELANEY

SENIOR

FEATURE





GABRIELLE DEROCHE

SENIOR
FEATURE









JARELD GARCIA

SENIOR

FEATURE

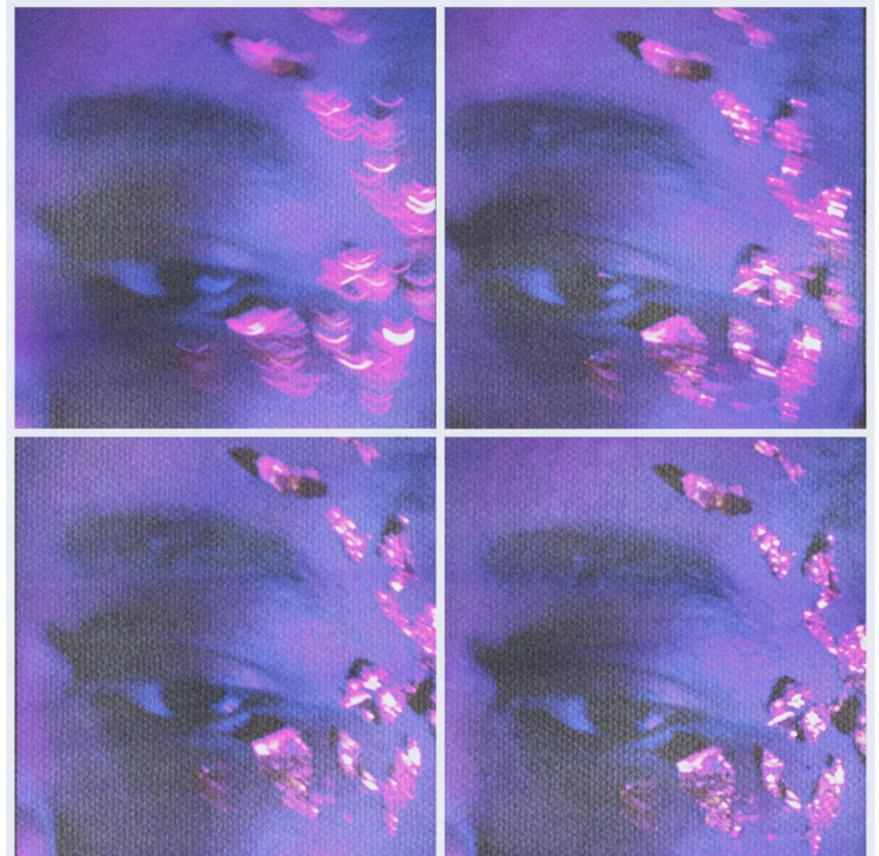
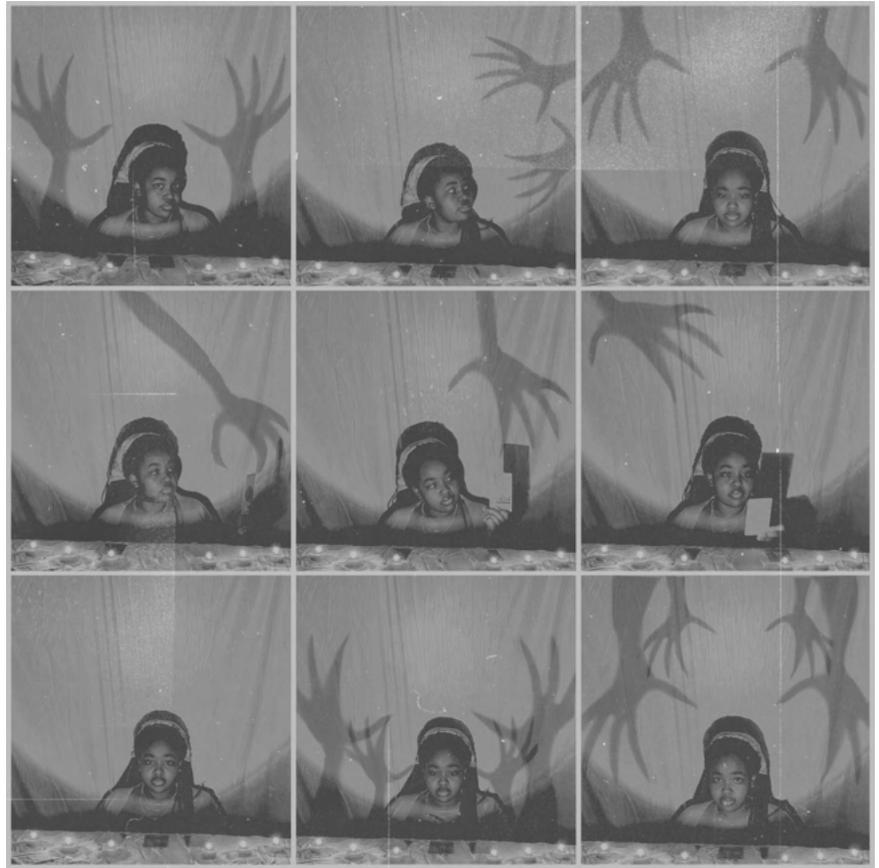




COLLEEN KABARIA

SENIOR
FEATURE

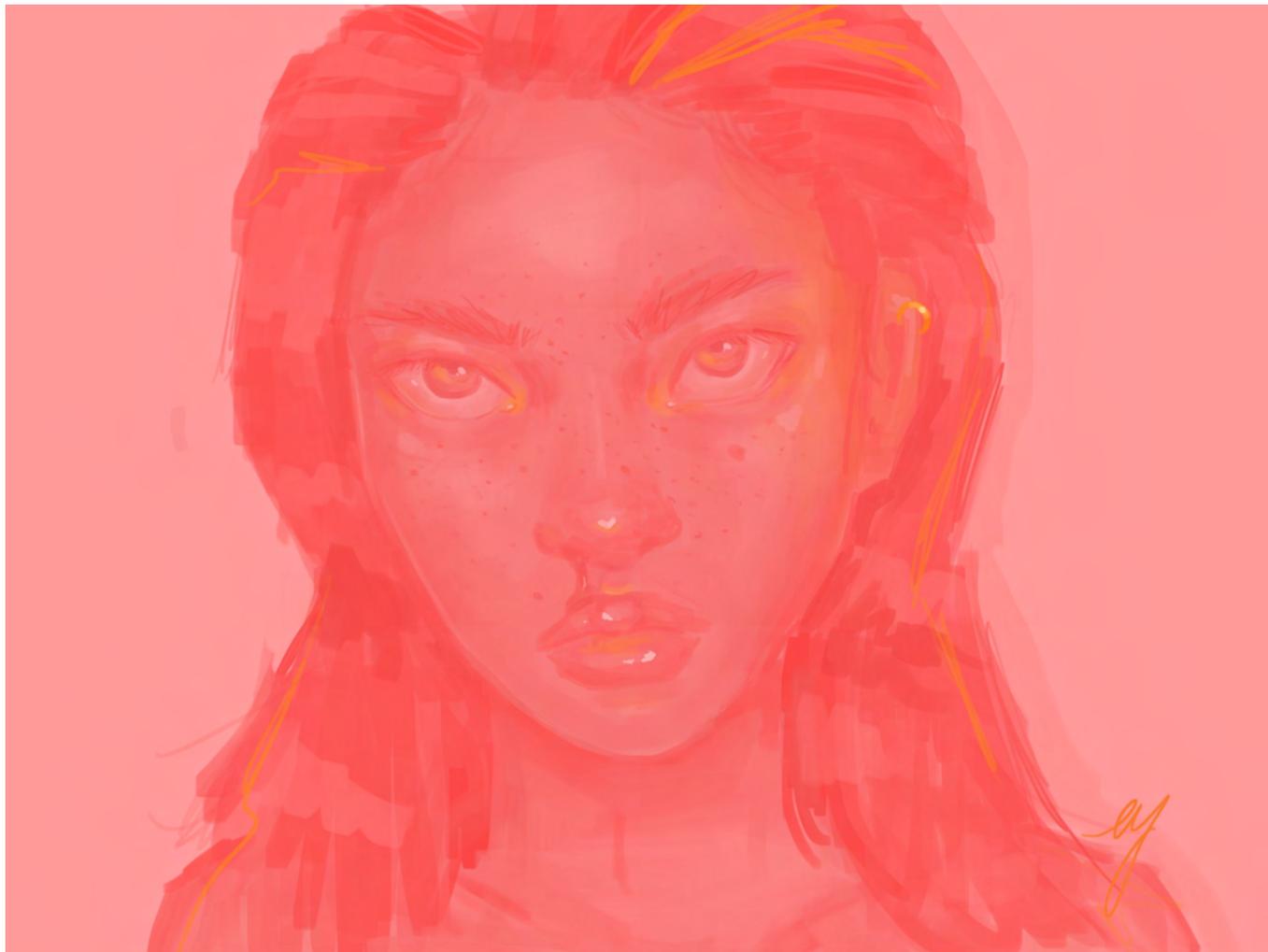
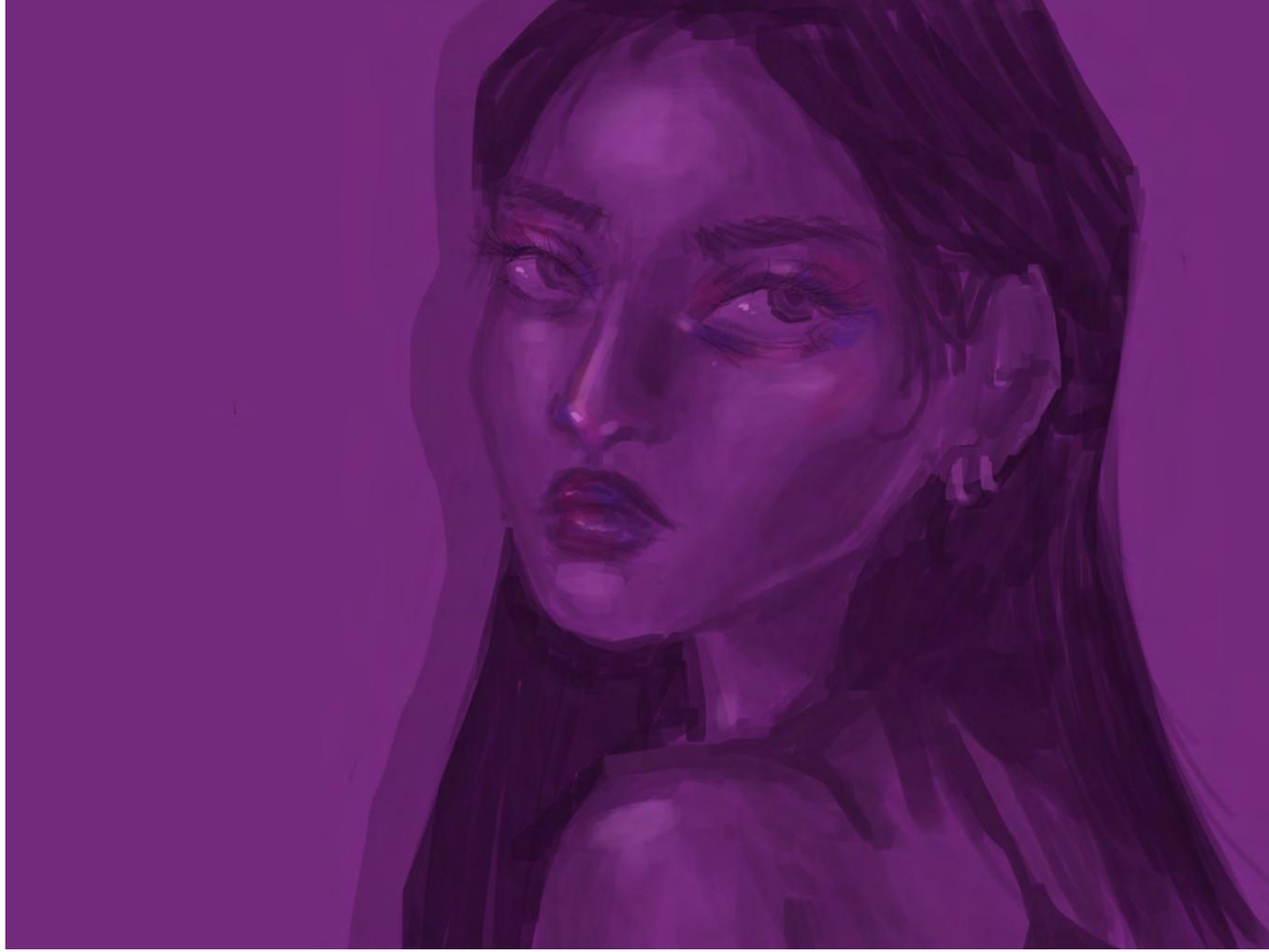




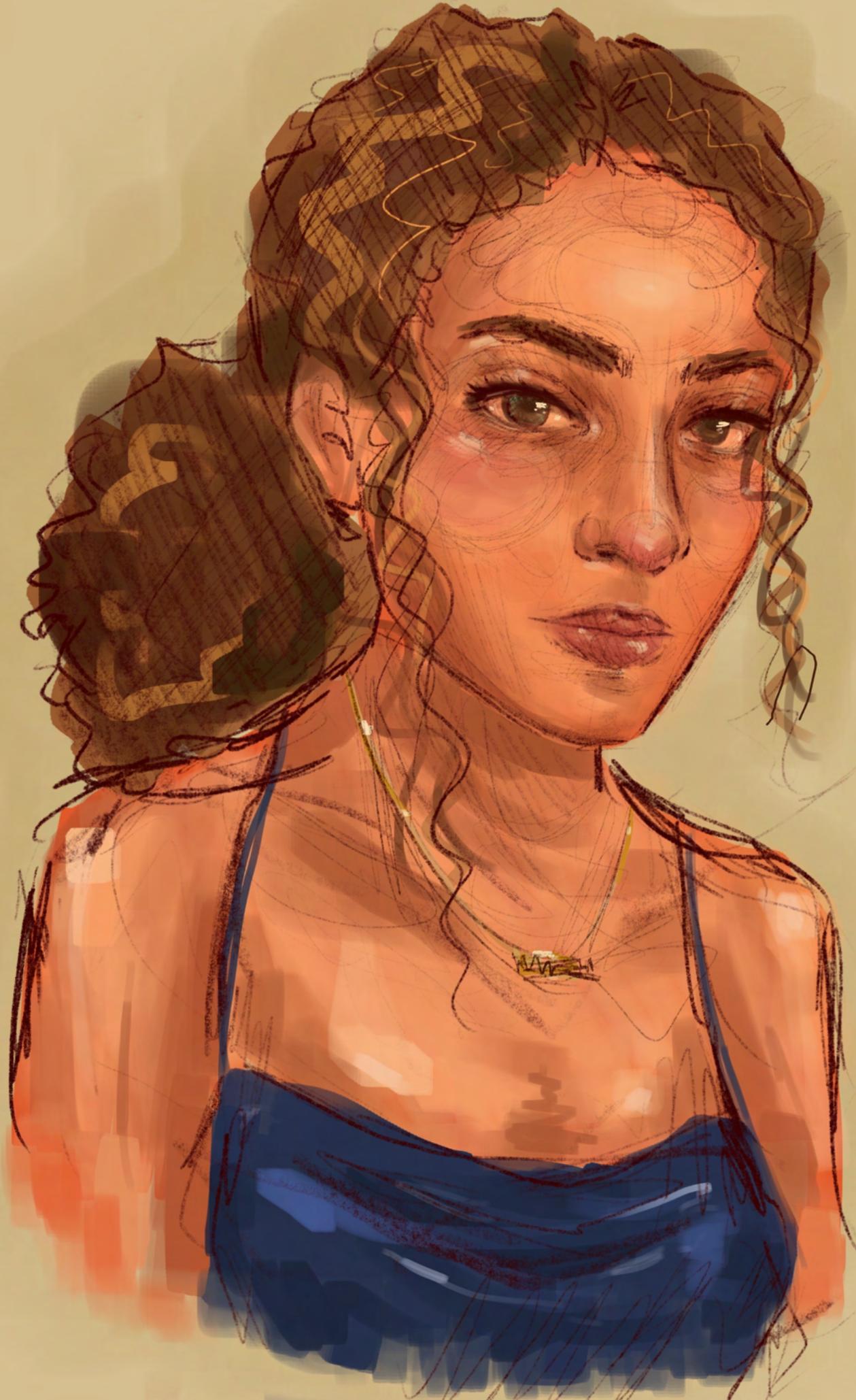
CATE MANGIONE

SENIOR

FEATURE



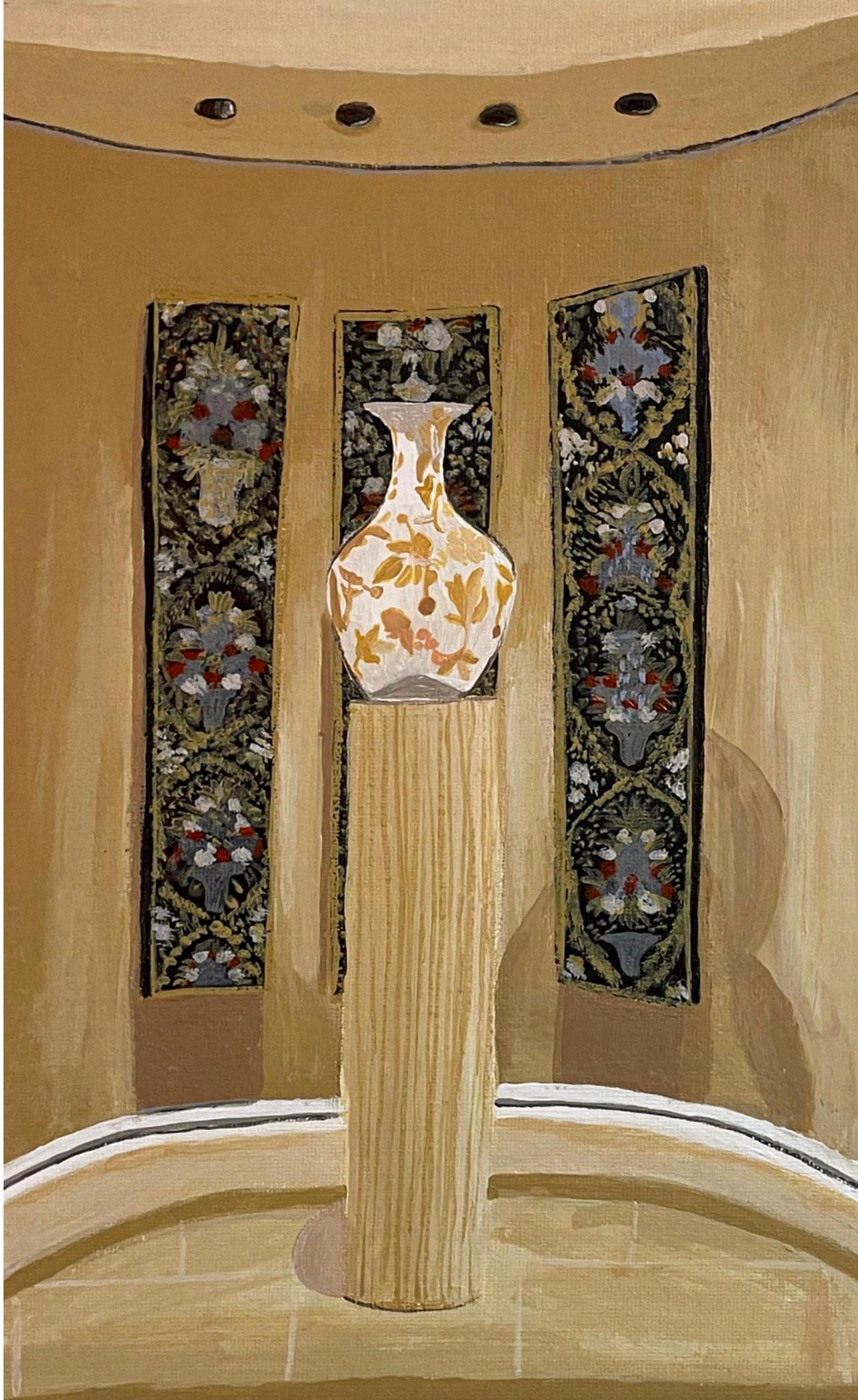


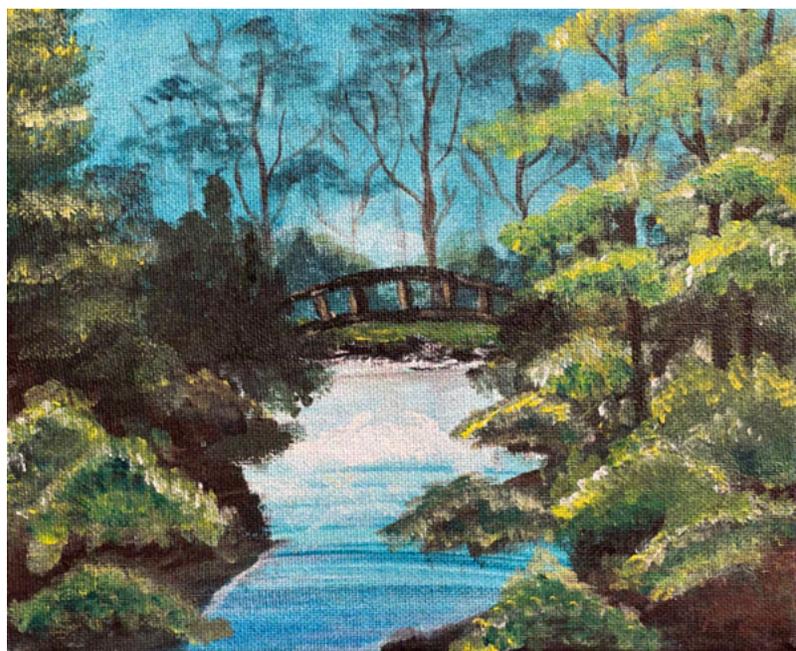
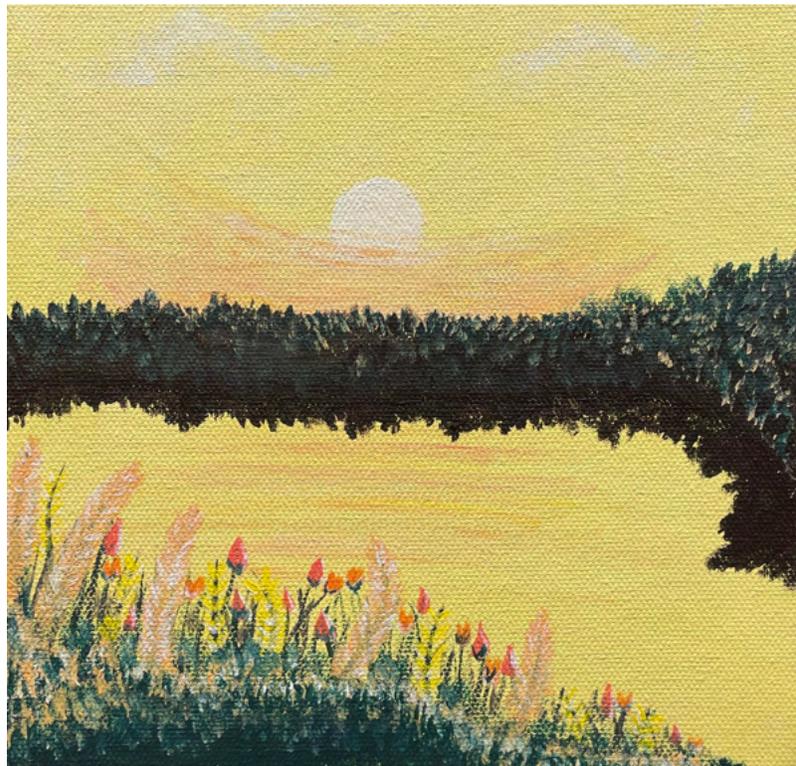
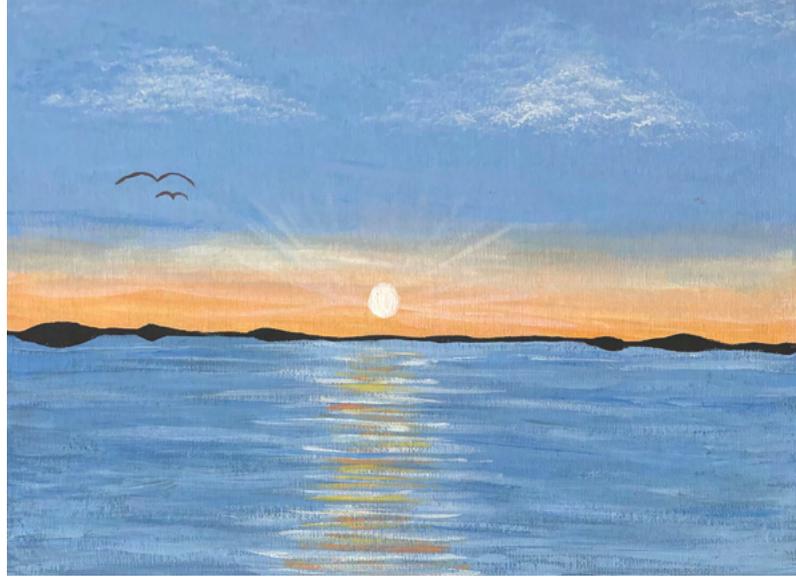




SENIOR
FEATURE

AMY NGUYEN





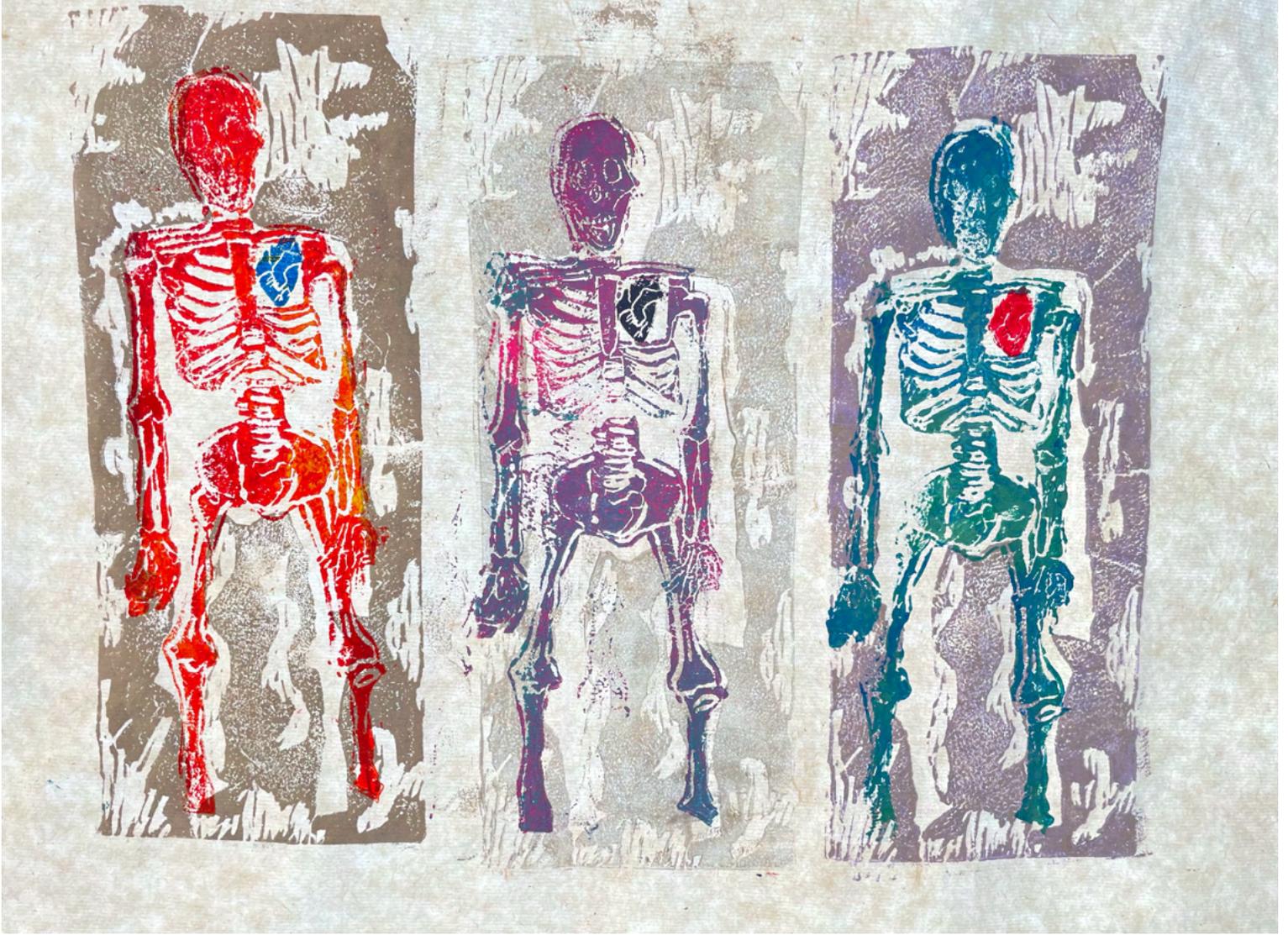
The Pot (opposite)
Bridge (above)
Waters (top right)
Peace (middle right)
Forest (bottom right)

DANIELA ROSARIO

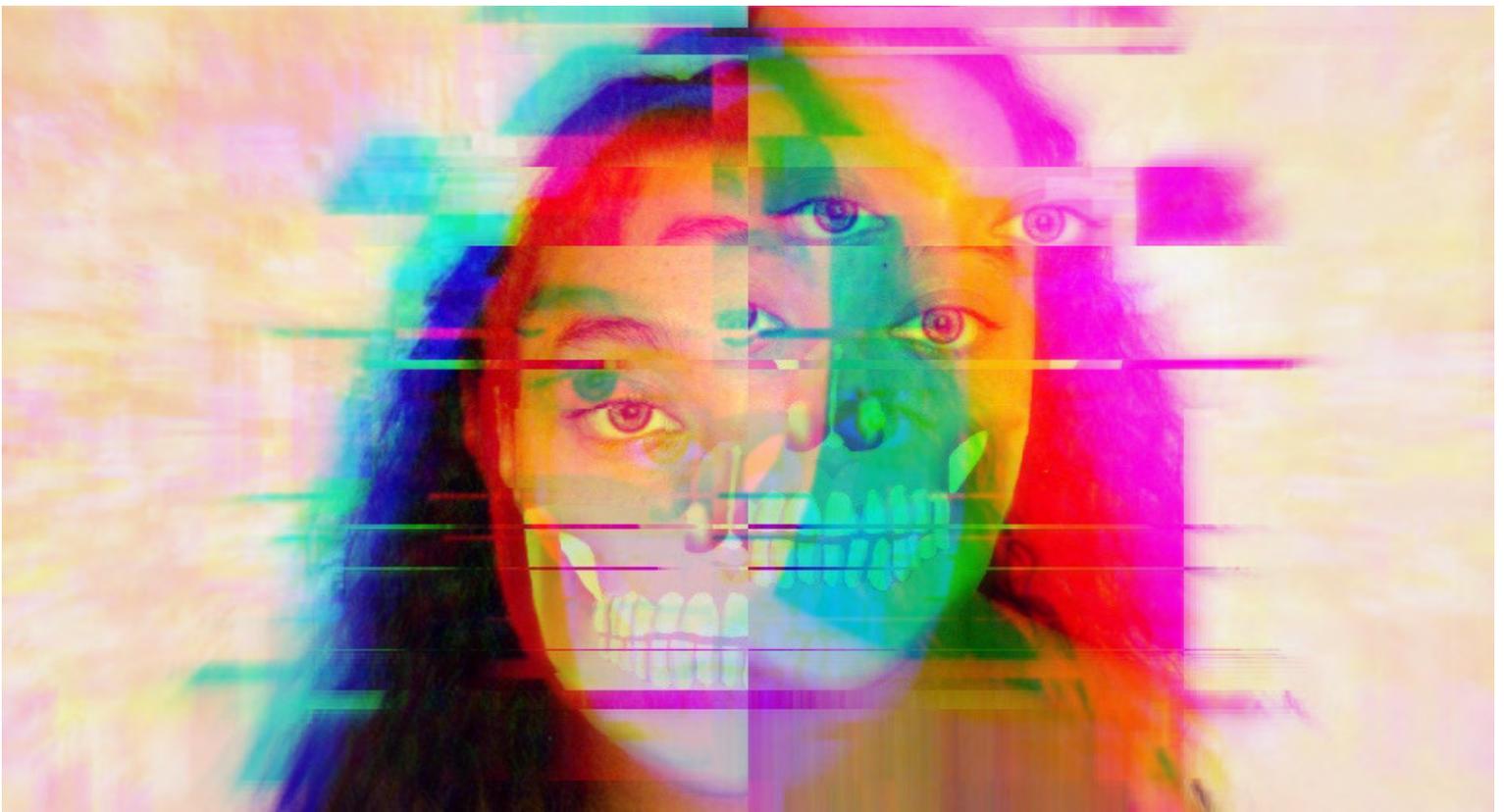
SENIOR

FEATURE





Stockholm Syndrome (above) | Fractured Reality (below) | Body Dysmorphia (opposite)



SOFA RUZ

SENIOR
FEATURE

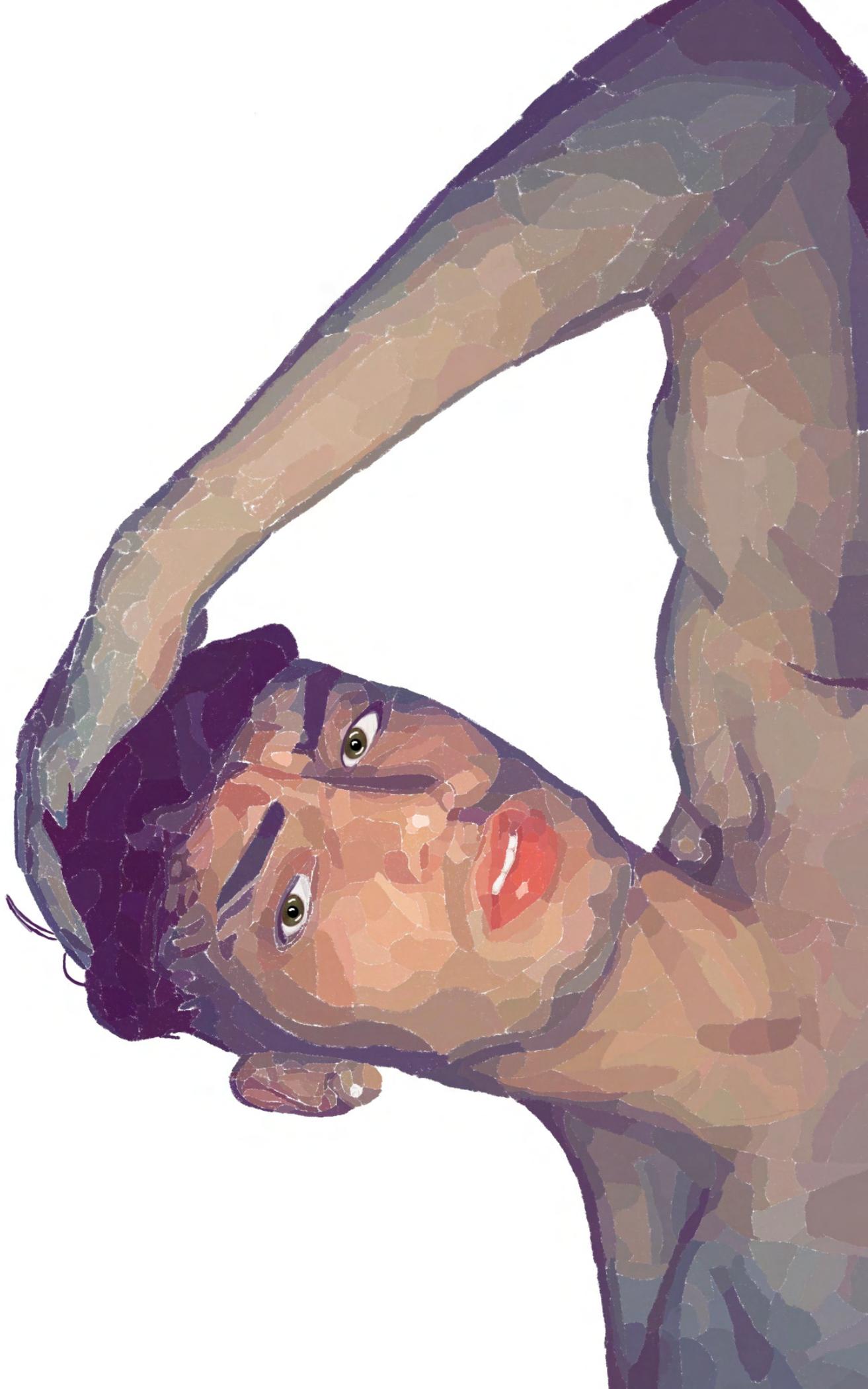




CHARBEL SAOUMA

SENIOR

FEATURE



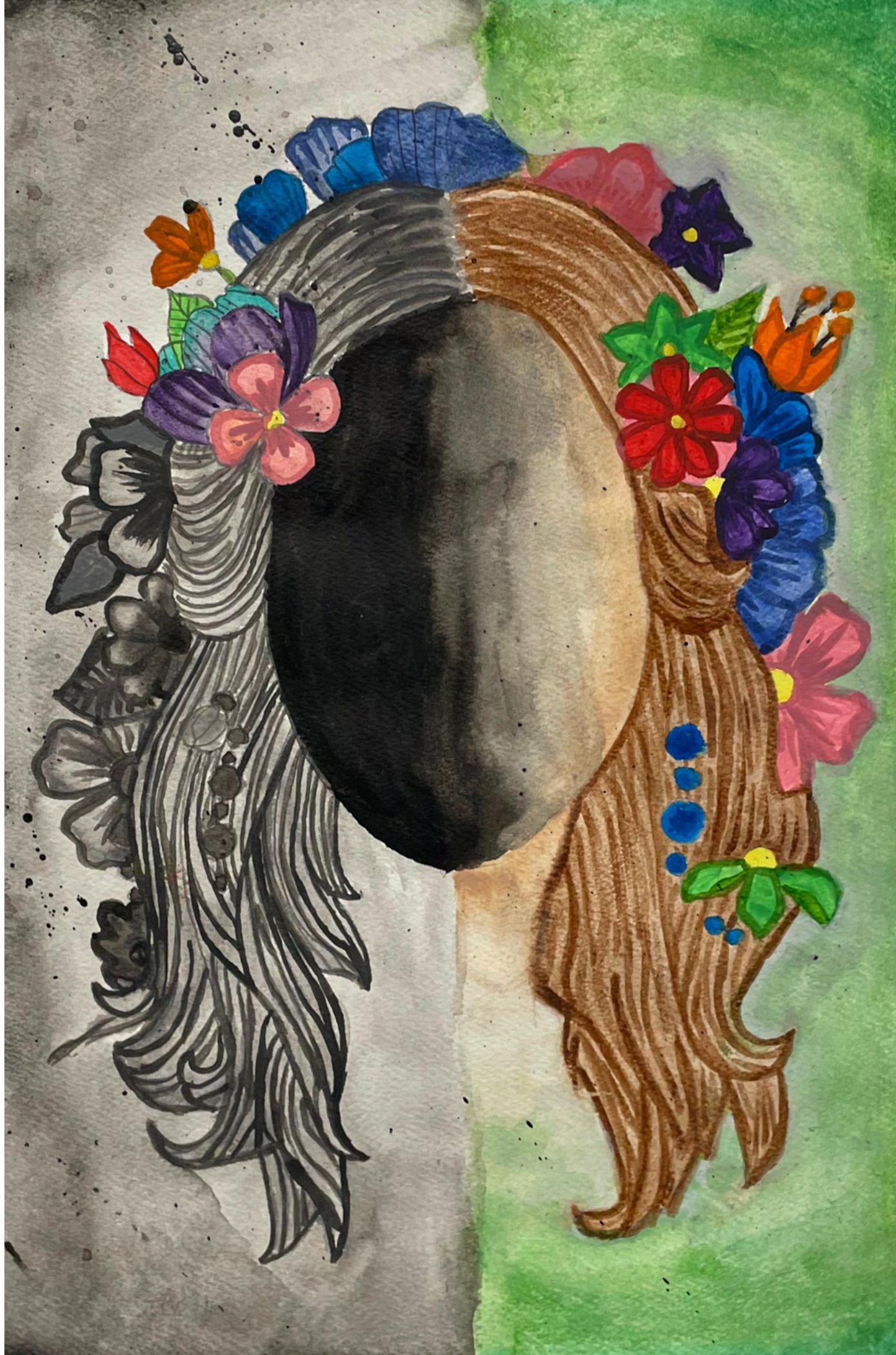


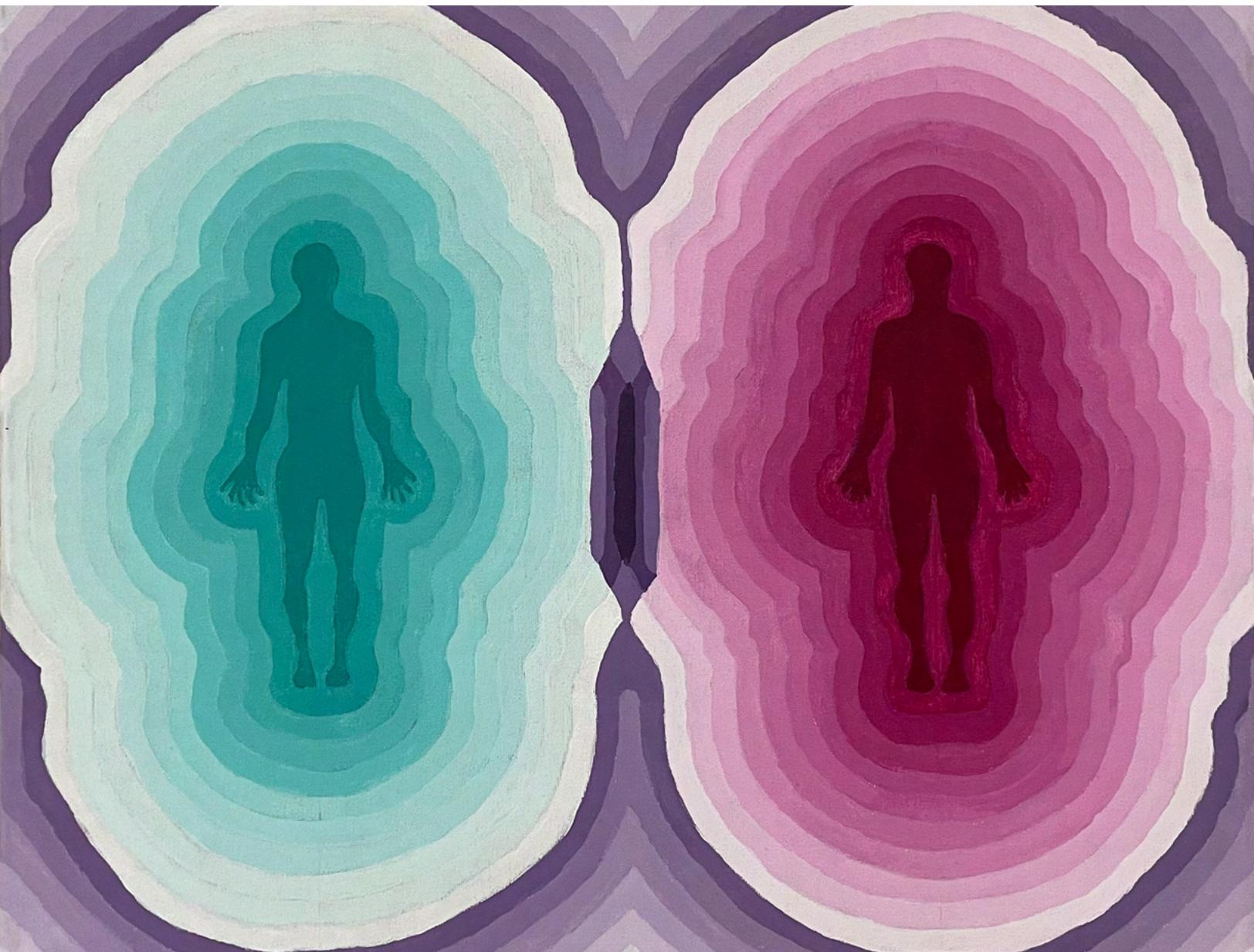
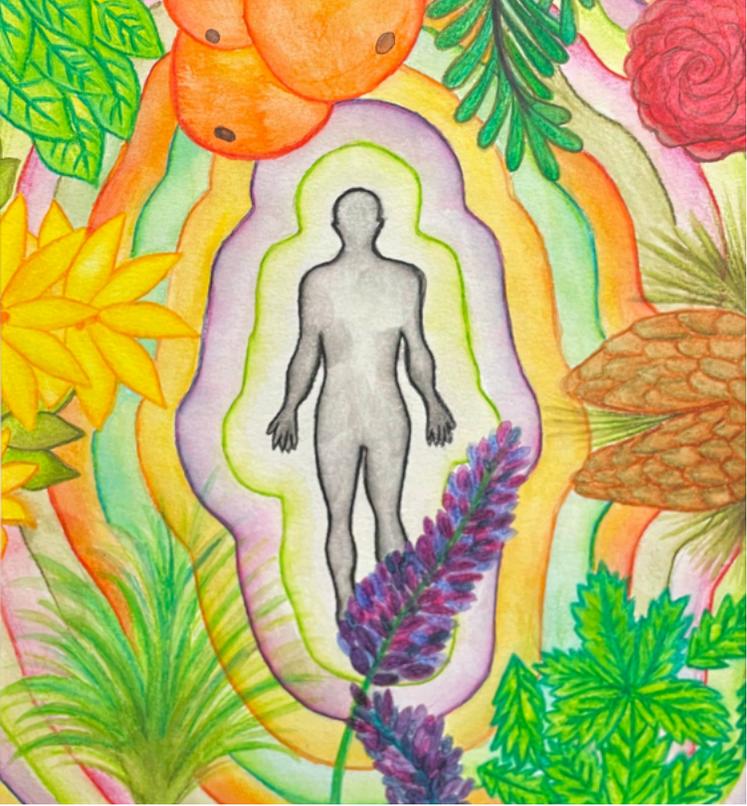
You on My Mind (above left) | *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (above right)
My Favorite Part (below) | *An English Man* (opposite)



MADISON SCHFFER

SENIOR
FEATURE





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