



The Secret Voice

2020-2021

The Secret Voice, 2020-2021

Editors:

Anna Ruvinov, *class of 2021*

Caroline Sarris, *class of 2021*

General Staff:

Savannah Harris, *class of 2022*

Chris Harvey, *class of 2022*

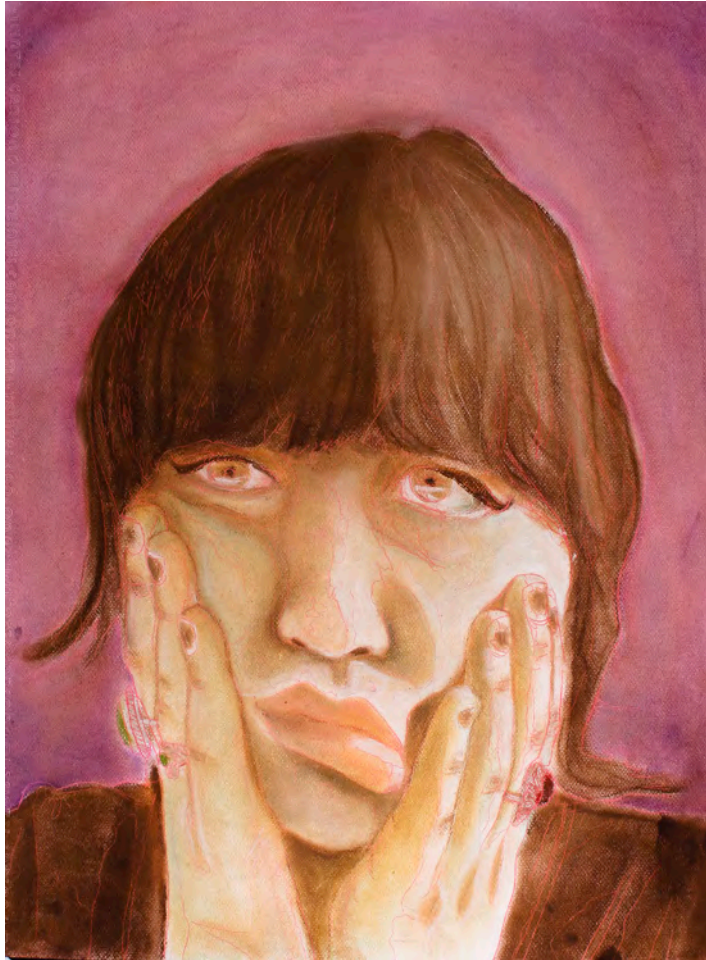
Avery Coons, *class of 2027*

Faculty Advisor: Sari Rotskoff

Cover art by Nia Stevenson, *class of 2021*



Emma Loncke, *class of 2022*



Kirsten Hoerman, *class of 2021*

Is it more important to be understanding or to be understood?

It's more important to me to be understanding. Understanding begets understanding begets understanding, and soon the whole world is understood. As much as that, being the person who understands another's plight can mean - or change - the world for the misunderstood. Moreover, understanding brings out a certain empathy in oneself, one that can only be achieved through seeking to understand another's hardships. This empathy is part of what makes a person's soul. Understanding can also soon branch into friendships, bonds tighter than that of Atlas to the sky, or Prometheus to the rock. It creates a bond so formidable that you know what the other is feeling before they feel it, know what the other is thinking before they think it, cater to their needs before they need it. Understanding creates relationships of steel, hearts of beauty, and lives of joy.

Abby Loiterstein, *class of 2025*



Nia Stevenson, *class of 2021*



Nathan Richter, *class of 2022*



Kate Epperly, *class of 2021*



Eddie Simon, *class of 2021*



Francisco Gervasoni, *class of 2021*



Aaron Zhao, class of 2021



Zoe Brandenstein, *class of 2021*

An excerpt from “Faekisiny”

Nobody broke the silence until Finley spoke up.

“When... When we fell through the portal, we landed in what I think was Dream. It was a forest of money trees,” he begins.

Interesting.

“We found a river, which I’m pretty sure was soda, then followed it—I’m pretty sure downstream—until we got to a sort of candy-land. The trees were cotton candy, the ground was bouncy, like a bouncy castle, the grass was a weird kind of green, and when it started raining, it was gumdrops. We eventually reached a building. I’m still not sure if it was a house or a mall. But it was... really creepy. You know the Sour Patch Kids candy? Imagine them, the size of a ten-year-old, and a lot of them.”

Oh, wow. A candy-land...? I feel a smile growing on my face. This is the fantasy content I signed up for!

“And there were people with wings, and you know those little gremlin-toady things on the Nerds boxes? They are the creepiest!”

Flora shows us a picture on her phone.

“Wow,” I laugh. “That’s SO WEIRD!”

The picture is zoomed in on a blue Sour Patch Kid struggling to catch a Nerds mascot, which looks like it was hopping like a frog, despite only having two legs. I can only believe that they fall on their faces so much, seemingly so top-heavy.

Logan shakes his head. “I do not want to meet an angry Sour Patch Kid. Ever. Those things look like they can mess you UP!”

I focus on its face, which looks like it’s etched with hatred. I agree with Logan; who knew little smiling gummy candies could look so... murderous!

“Avoiding the candies, we went into the... building,” Flora picks up the story where Finley left off. “And talked to one of the people with wings. We got directions to the prison—”

“Wait, prison?” Logan and I say in unison.

“Jinx,” Logan mutters. I roll my eyes.

“Exactly what I said!” Finley says, meaning the “Wait, prison?”

“The Song told me I’ll find out what’s happening with the unregulated portals there,” Flora explains. “But the directions we were given were to the candy prison, which was... scarier than you’d think. They were mining rock candies from the rock candy mine—nobody seemed bothered by the free labor. And if you think the blue Sour Patch Kid was scary, then you haven’t seen the criminals.”

“I saw a yellow one eat a red one alive,” Finley says in a small voice.

My jaw drops. I can’t even imagine the screams. That must’ve been... both terrifying and cartoon-funny.

Flora shivers. “The Nerds there were like rabid dogs... and they’d sometimes eat the Sour Patch Kids, too. But we realized that we were at the wrong prison, so we got directions to another one.”

“What were you looking for?” I ask.

Flora opens her mouth, then closes it. “I don’t know... a specific prisoner, I think? I know what we found, but... I think it was just the Song guiding us.”

I nod.

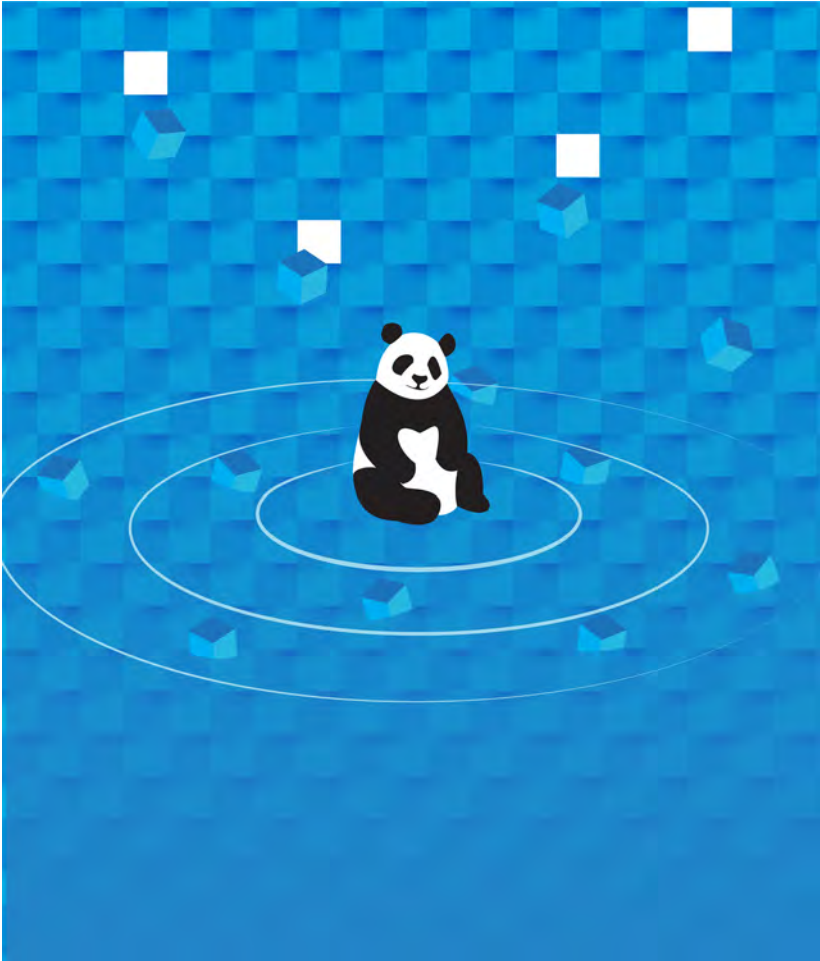
“So anyway,” she continues. “We got sent to two other prisons, one sketchy, one... colorful, before someone told us about a high-priority prison out in the meadow. We followed their directions until we got to a single cottage in the middle of the meadow, right where they said we’d find it, except its door was boarded up. I knew we’d found the right place.

“We found an open window, and when we yelled into it, someone came. She said her name is Ella, and she and her brother were wrongly imprisoned.”

“And then,” Finley finishes, “She directed us to a portal platform, and we spent the night there before activating it.”

“Wow, that sounds like an adventure!” I squeal.

Everyone grins. “Yep,” Flora agrees.



Paige Robinson, *class of 2022*



Vicky Xiao, class of 2021



Charlotte Baird, *class of 2023*



Juni Asikainen, *class of 2023*



Charlie Staley-Brain, *class of 2023*



Brooklyn Rhodes *class of 2023*



Caroline Sarris, *class of 2021*

ESCHATOLOGY

when the world ends,
what then? what then?

my dear, it is already
ending; you already
know what happens
next:

nostalgia will be the
rocks in your pockets
and you'll drown;
we'll drown together.
we'll congregate in the
sunlit meadows and
see ashen skies and
stagnant rivers in which
to gulp lungfuls of lethe.

and then the angels
will come? with their halos
and all; with their harps
they'll sing that we were
good; we were righteous,
even at the end of all things?

my dear,

the only angels
you'll be seeing is
your past lover's smile,

the only halos the flickering
fluorescents at the end of
your childhood street,

the only harps the sound
of your mother's voice
singing you to sleep,

so when your lungs burn
with river-water, serrated
angel wings cloister your
corporeality, blinding
halos burst behind your
eyelids, holy harps bloody
your eardrums,

mind your lover,
your streetlamps,
your mother's voice, be
cause at the end of all
things, they are the only
things that are real, that
will have ever been real,

because you were not
good. we will not be good
at the end of all things.

Chris Harvey, *class of 2022*



Elise Wheeler, *class of 2022*



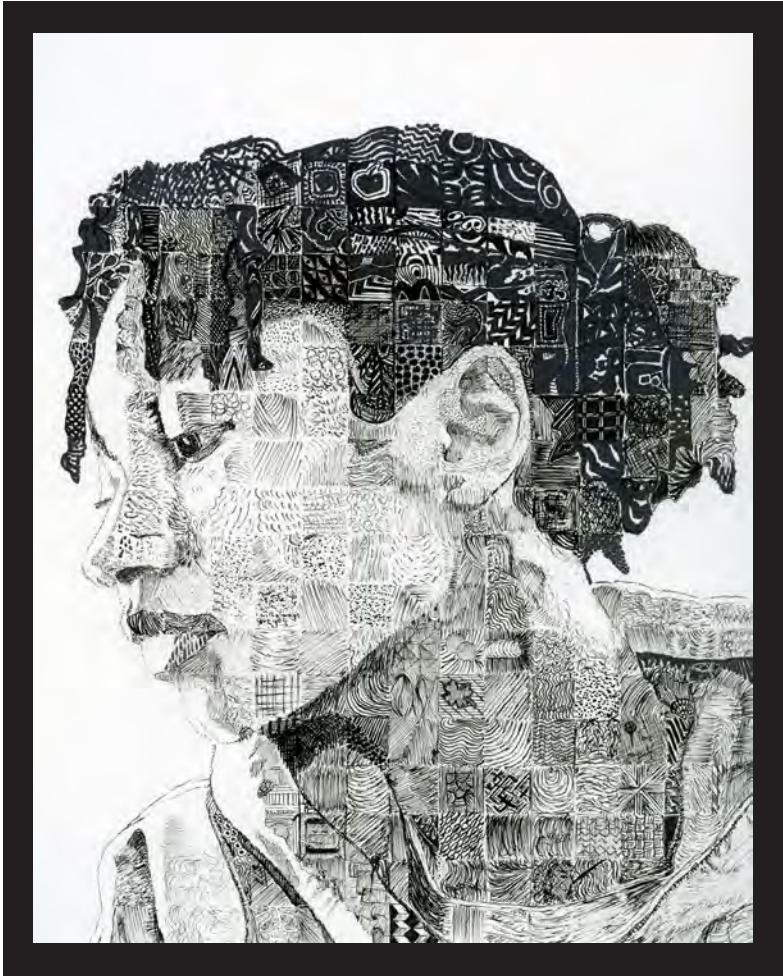
Lily Yang, *class of 2021*



Elanah Sykes, *class of 2024*



Annika Capellupo, *class of 2024*



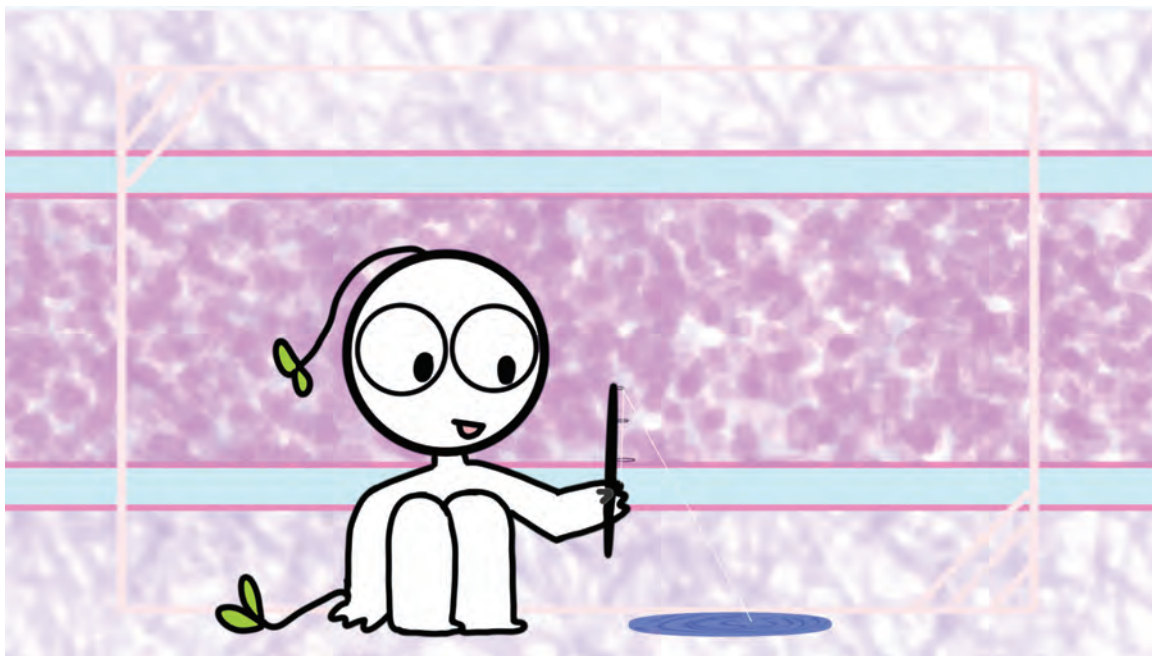
Leah Borland, *class of 2024*



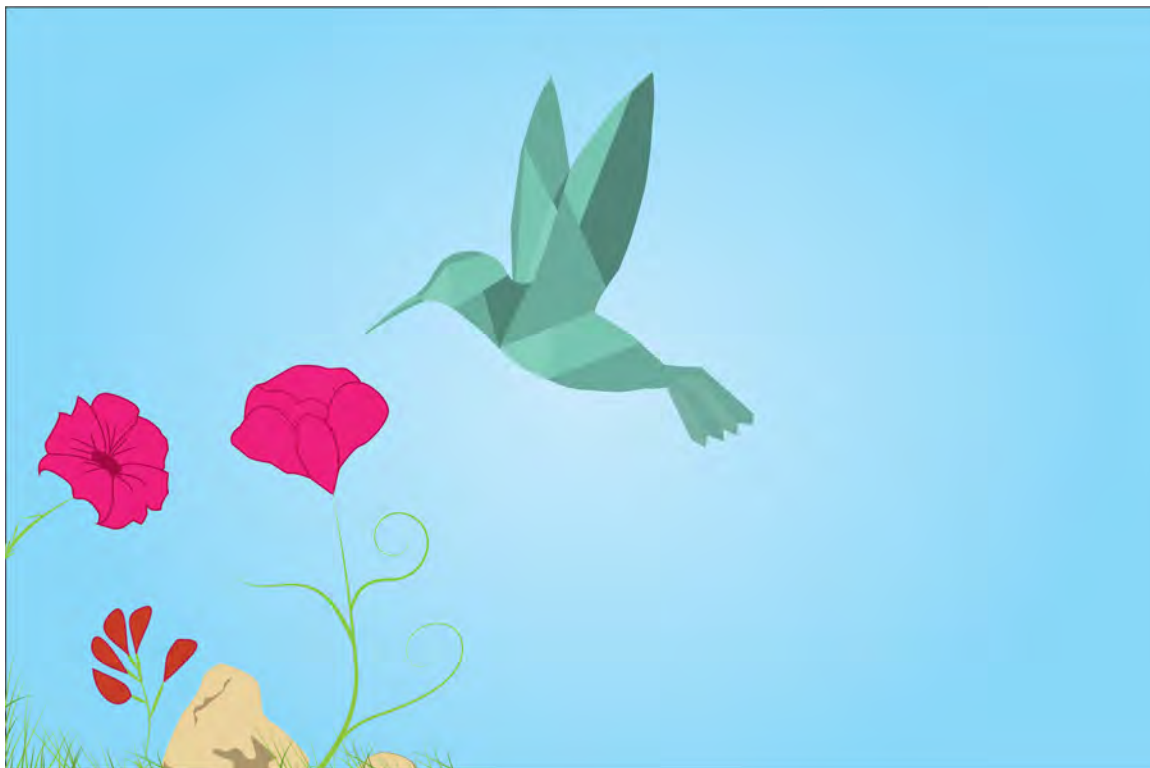
Caroline Ott, *class of 2022*

My small child-sized body rattles like a wind chime, with words and phrases I will never comprehend. Its silver metal frame and poles that hang downwards covered with rust and scratches, proof of memory of the past. Occasionally, when the wind blows hard enough the chimes will clash together in a terrifying but beautiful clatter, and, when the wind stops, which it always does, the silver will twinkle, leaving little remnants of the past storm.

Sloane Shatzer, *class of 2024*



Diana Hunigan, *class of 2025*



Shelby Ditter, *class of 2021*



Rita Ni, *class of 2021*



Frances Surmon, *class of 2021*

(Deaf)

Deaf and Blind

(Blind)

I was eight years old

I was twelve

When we lost something

Something I didn't know
I needed so much

Something I relied on
for my life

Something I felt like -
Something I felt like I
couldn't go on without

The sight has always
been most dear to me

The sounds around me
have always been special
but

Now...it's my whole life

Hi, I'm deaf

Hey, I'm blind

And I'm missing
something.

When I first lost my
hearing

There was only one
question in my head

It was like everything
was gone, like I was just
watching a movie where
I can't turn the sound
on. It was frustrating
really.

Where am I? Why do I
feel so alone and lost?

It was like I was all
alone, in a world where
everything around was
blurred, with no return.

When I first went blind

There was only one
thing I was wondering

It was like my eyelids
were melted together,
and no matter how wide
I would open my eyes,
nothing would change.
It was quite upsetting, to
be honest.

Through the school
hallways,

I feel eyes on me.

Someone is either
looking at my hearing
aids,

Or my walking stick.

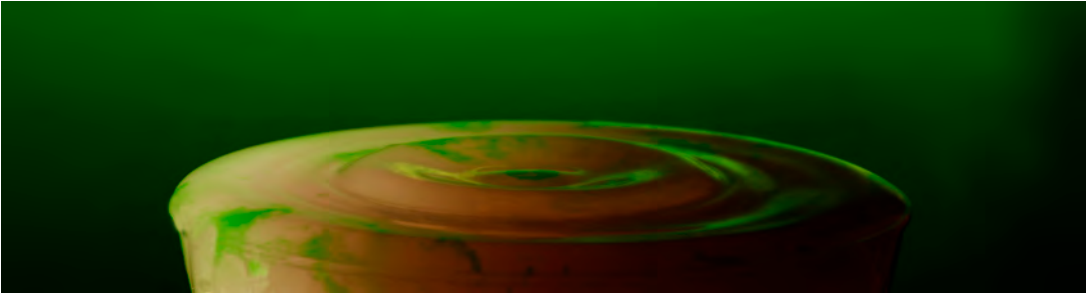
It's almost as if,

It's just like

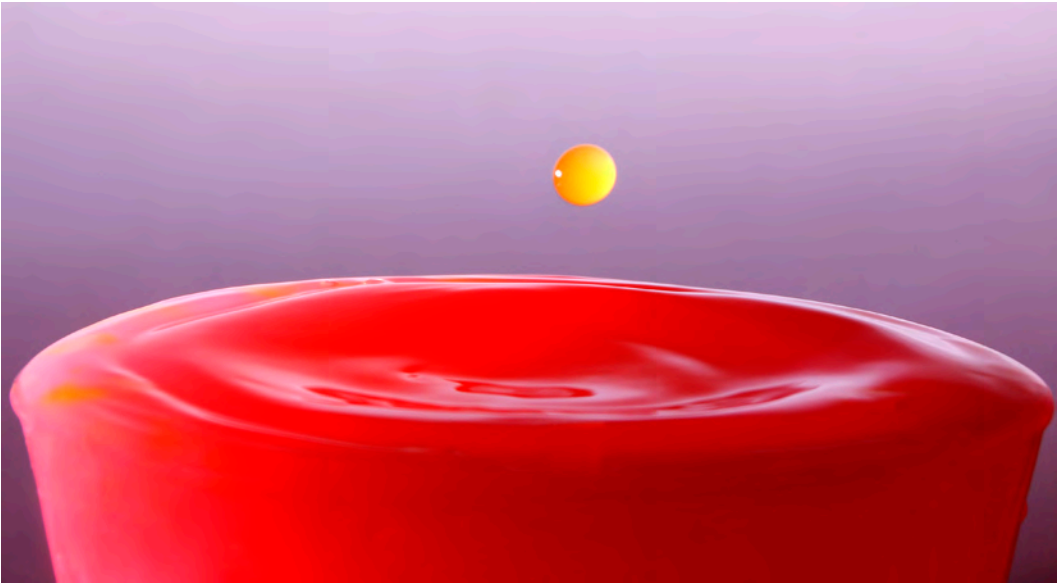
I can't escape.



Keyao Song, class of 2022



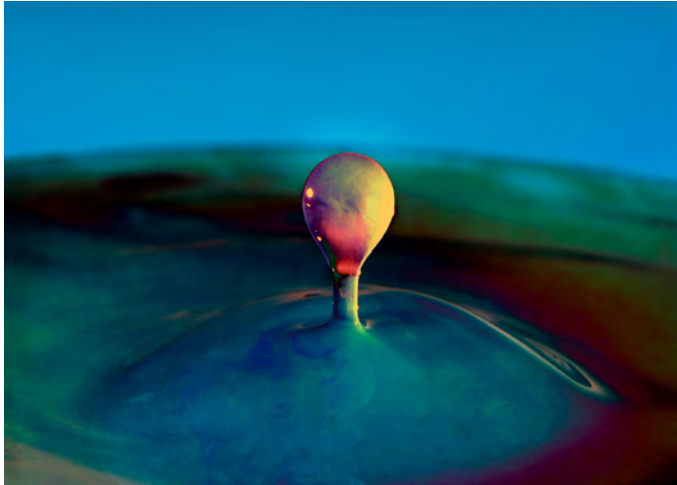
Eddie Simon, *class of 2021*



Elizabeth Nestor, *class of 2021*



Lucas Kazmierski, *class of 2021*



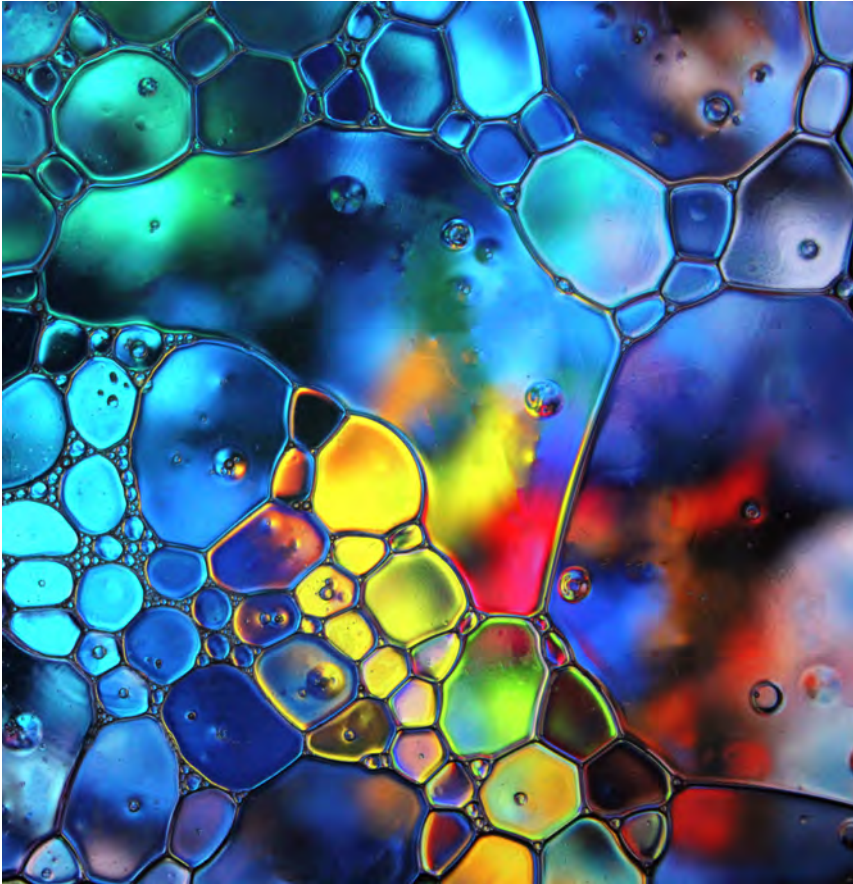
Josh Schultz, *class of 2021*



Sofia Gutierrez, *class of 2021*



Ben Haller, *class of 2023*



Jimmy Li, class of 2021



Ava Battram, *class of 2023*

“World Changer”

As everything outside my window changes,
I wonder if something inside must change too.
As the world changes outside my control,
I wonder if I’m a world changer.

As I see a black silhouette hovering above the world with her hands out-
stretched
Captivating an audience at rest,
With a story sewn in her eyes, breaking the song of silence when they rise,
I wonder how much she cried, sighed and denied
Before she climbed that platform, un-tongue tied, dignified.

As I look into the mirror,
I wonder why I see a blurry hard cover.
As I try to read my moistened eyes,
I wonder how I fall down a rabbit hole into a world beyond the chapters in
my head----beyond disguise.

As I try to jump to the end, where my story should be sewn,
Told by my hands which would be flown, my words which would be grown
and my thoughts no longer alone,
I wonder if I'm falling flat on my face or if I'm falling into place.
As I turn to the final chapter to speed up the one that is no fun,
I wonder if that will make it harder to get beyond page 1.

I wonder if that silhouette is at the end of her story----where there is sup-
posed glory and nothing retaliatory.
I wonder if her hands can't stop stretching like mines.
I wonder if she didn't skip pages and if she took her time.

I wonder if she thinks she is not a perfect ending nor can she create one.
I wonder if she is humanized by the occasional cry all day and lack of what
to say.
I wonder if she feels pressure behind closed doors when people preach her
name
Believing she can make a change,
All while she cowers like she was sixteen again and belts an outcry of
shame.

Savannah Harris, *class of 2022*



Dalia Al-Sagr, *class of 2022*



Cohen Panneri, *class of 2024*



Elizabeth Nestor, *class of 2021*



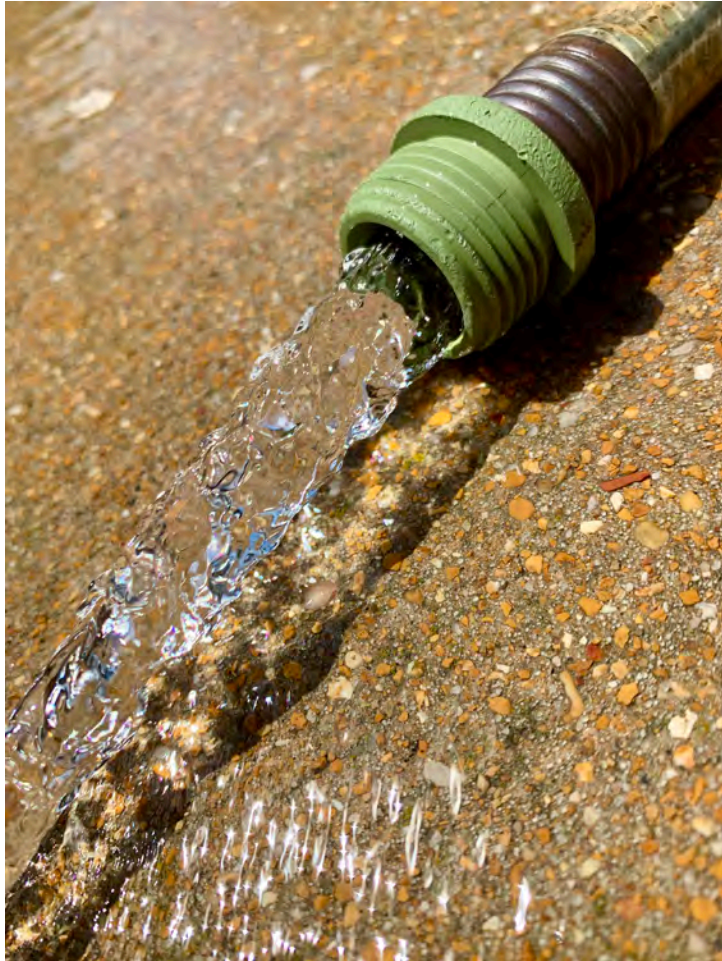
Biaya Kayembe, *class of 2022*



Megan Ash, *class of 2022*

Z

Unity, they cry out
We must be united as a country!
I glance at my television screen, befuddled at their words
Unity? How am I supposed to unite with people eager for me to fail?
I am tasked to unite with lawmakers happy to see us shot in schools
Unite with individuals who have shrines to Hitler in their rooms
I must be the bigger person and be kind to men who find my relationships with women “sexy”
The same men who brutalize a man who dares to wear lipstick
I am expected to shake hands with company CEOs
Who take swim lessons in their piles of gold while their workers starve
I must smile at politicians who got through college debt free
Knowing that they will never give me the same opportunity
I once again find myself asking the figures on my TV
“Why couldn’t you?”
Is this one more burden placed on the backs of the freshly minted adults?
Not only must we fix the Earth’s trauma
But we have to unite an America fractured by your rhetoric?
You teach us as kids, take accountability
Make up for your actions
I ask you, then, to practice what you preach
You wonder why the young people are so disillusioned
You blame it on smartphones, on the social media apps we use
Say “the internet has corrupted us”
Has it ever occurred to you that perhaps we use it
To escape a world where we are treated like children yet tasked with responsibilities of an adult
“The youth don’t get politics” but “the youth are our future”
We are the future, sure
That’s how time works
But we do understand at least one thing about politics
It is not meant for the young
It is not for the young
We are tasked to unite with a government that does not try to reach us
That does not advocate for us
And to that we say
“Ok boomer”
For humor is the only way for us to cope



Ben Haller, *class of 2023*

“Shrimp Doing Contortions”



Amali McBride, *class of 2025*



The Secret Voice is an annual magazine whose mission is to display examples of excellent work in literature and the fine arts.

Submissions are accepted from Whitfield School's current community. Students volunteer to work on the magazine for an entire academic year and learn about criticism, layout design, and editing in preparing each issue of The Secret Voice for publication.

All submissions are reviewed in anonymity and are selected based on literary and artistic merit.

To submit to The Secret Voice, email:
the.secret.voice@whitfieldschool.org

