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Karis Lo, Oil



Mariana Yaremenko, Oil



Nicholas Fanelli-Salazar, Colored Pencil



Lily Peters, India Ink



Rebekah Halladay, Acrylic

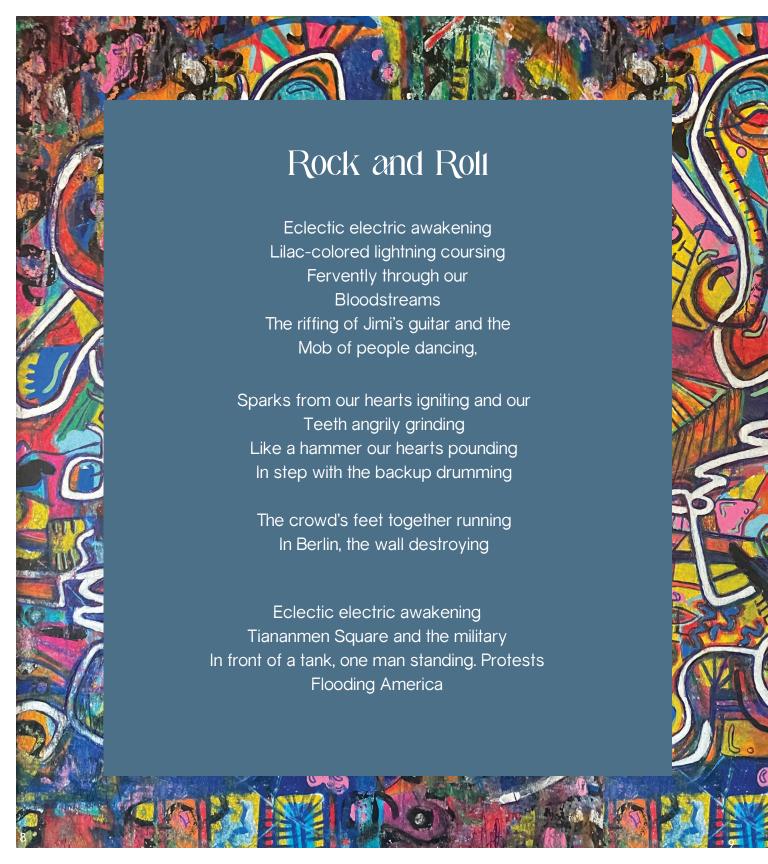


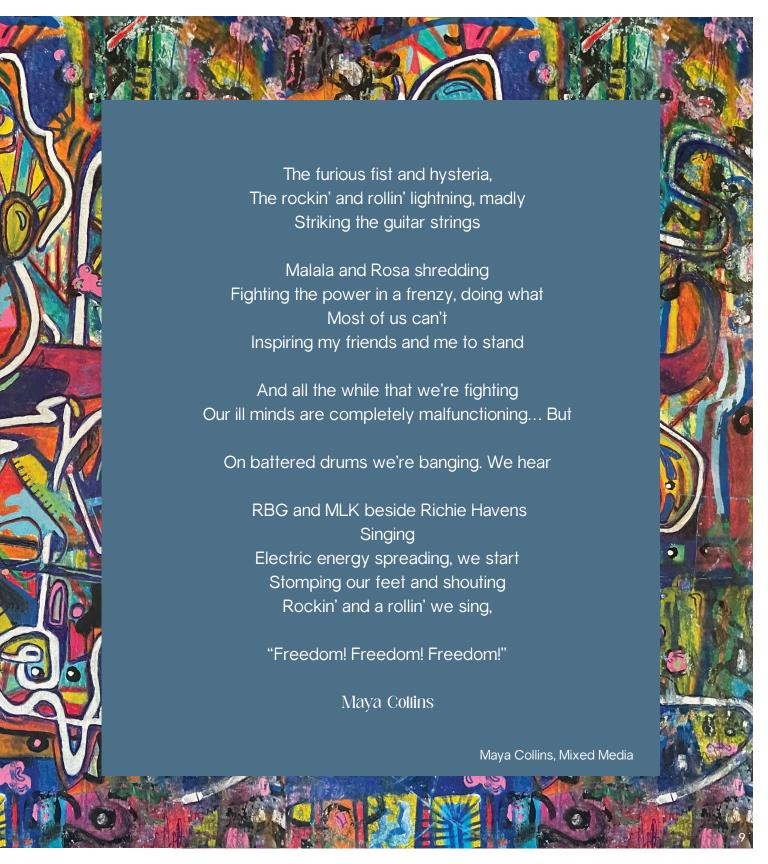


Wandering aimlessly like the breeze,
Nature sets my mind at ease.
I crunch the leaves beneath my feet,
And then I go to take a seat.
I sit for a moment to take it in;
Passing through would have been a sin.

For the world is full of beauty,
And I am yet one person,
Serving my duty,
Watching the world worsen.
The sky dulls and the summer ends;
The snow falls and the beauty fades;
But in the spring the world mends,
And each person aids
The return of joy.

- Stephanie Moorhatch







Elizabeth Matty, Acrylic

#### Hobby

Often I am advised to do what I love,
And the willingness will simply appear;
But what I love does not reciprocate the feeling,
And suddenly the love becomes unclear.

I have a passion, and yet no fruit;
My tree refuses to bear.
My practice seems all but working,
So why should I even care?

Truth be told, life is more than talent
Because everyone is unique.

If we all could capture the eyes of the world,
Whose interest could we pique?

- Kate Myers



### THE TREES THAT USED TO GROW

I saw them in the distance – some kids playing in the snow;
I saw them in the distance, by the maples, pines, and oaks.
I saw them in the distance, singing their playful song;
I saw them in the distance, by the new paper mill that needs logs.

I see them in the distance – those trees, old and rotted;
I see them in the distance, now ready to be shredded.
I see them in the distance, lumberjacks gruff and old;
I see them in the distance, once children in the snow.

I will see them in the distance – by the dying light;
I will see them in the distance, sawing day and night.
I will see them in the distance, once carefree in the snow;
I will see them in the distance, by the trees that use to grow.

- Josh Yuen

# I'LL GIVE YOU TWO

and built-in sinks. The teacher had contrived the groups using a computer app which took a list of all the students in the class and randomly arranged them into groups of a set number. Each group had a table supplied with the materials of the experiment. The students had each been given worksheets with questions on them and the teacher - a female-repeated instructions periodically since it was the last class on Friday. All the while, a few of the boys were busy finding out nothing from the ongoing experiment except for every possible way in which the materials could invoke other meanings, ones that would make them smirk and start to giggle. One group, in particular, happened to consist of a relatively popular, normal featured, brown-haired boy; a blond-haired girl; and another young man. This third member's name was Wyett Connor. He stood at an average height, his hair was black, and his face was handsome. He was of the nature that he got all A's, and most of school didn't interest him very much; as a result, he was identified as a serious, melancholy, not-in-any-sports, intellectual of sorts.

The class was working in groups that day in the lab

room, which had tables with dark, shiny countertops

About half-way through the lab, there was an interstice between the most recent step of the experiment and the teacher's further instructions. This pause was prolonged by the teacher having left the class to go get a stack of papers from the school printer, which had been functioning temperamentally the past week. The class, unable to proceed further into the experiment, collectively celebrated the new reign of idleness which would last until the teacher returned. The brown-haired boy and the blondhaired girl stood on one side of their group's table. Meanwhile, Wyett, on the other side, was looming over his lab paper, having just stilled his pencil as he was rereading his summary of his conclusions after the most recent step, which weren't much different from what he had "hypothesized" earlier. Both the other boy and the girl had long finished scribbling their answers, which they had discussed out loud and made identical so as to feel the security that if one of them failed, they both did. Now, they were waiting around for Wyett to finish writing. When the other boy saw that Wyett had put his pencil down, he asked him, "How do you always write so much?"

"I don't know. How do you always write so little?" said Wyett, without looking up.

"Did you go into the deep philosophical meanings of your conclusions?" suggested the girl.

"No, of course not. You think I could do that in so short an amount of time?" said Wyett.

"What deep question could you answer in a short amount of time?" posed the girl.

"Hmm. How about this?" continued the boy. "What is the meaning of life?"

At this point, the normal answer would have ranged somewhere between "to serve God and enjoy him forever" and "42," but Wyett, finding no immediate answer that was serious, said without looking up, "Why do you ask?"

"Because we want to learn your ways and obtain your wisdom," was the only non-serious reply the boy could find.

The girl, following him, added, "Yes, teach us your great knowledge," attempting the intonation of a pil-grim who has journeyed far and braved wilderness to reach the dwelling of some hermit known for his wisdom.

"You say you want to know?" came the reply, which, though appearing ominous, was Wyett's attempt to prolong the discussion, hoping the teacher would re-enter at any moment. "Do you really want to know what 'the meaning of life' is, or do you just want to hear my answer?"

"We really want to know," the boy's replied with an

invented assurance.

"Well, I'm sorry to say that I can't tell you," said Wyett, looking up from his paper and then off to the side.

"No, please, please tell us," came the girl's imitation of pleading. "Wait – if you can't tell us, does that mean you don't know?"

"Yeah, wouldn't that mean you don't know?" added the boy, to sound like he had thought of this at the same time.

"Wouldn't it?" Wyett retorted, glancing in another direction.

"You can write an essay for a lab question but can't tell us what the meaning of life is?" the boy asked. "Oof," reflected the girl.

"I said I can't tell you," – the others' attention slid right back into place with the sound of Wyett's lengthened voice – "because I can't tell you unless you tell me what you mean."

"You know," said the boy, "the meaning of life." He tossed his arms meaninglessly. "All this, you and me, everything that ever was and ever will be – just what's the purpose of it all?"

His eyes under his black hair seeming to have fixed on something, Wyett began slowly, "I still can't give you an answer," his expression lifting almost into a smile, "but since you seem so eager to hear me say something, I'll give you two."

"So you can give us an answer," said the boy, as though he had just put the best chess player of all "I can't give you an answer, or one answer," said Wyett, his voice bright, "but I can give you two answers – or really – two little stories..."

"Okay, let's hear it!" said the boy, as if it were a game of truth or dare.

"We love stories!" Added the girl in a mock-infantile manner.

Meanwhile, the printer produced for the third time a blinking red icon relaying that it was out of paper, which, as it reached the teacher's eyes, was met by an inimitable glare of fury. Having stuffed it with as much paper as she could find, the teacher stomped off in the direction of the school tech manager's office.

"Okay," said Wyett, "the first one goes like this."

#### Story #1

Picture a child's bedroom. The light, soft and warm, is gathered and bright in one corner and diffuses across the ceiling to the darkness in the other corner.

The room is about square and has two windows with their thick curtains drawn. Above the ceiling is an interstice of rafters and then cold air against the stars of a clear winter sky. The two walls which are part of the exterior of the house are composed of a layer of wood

and a thick layer of brick, and beyond them is the freezing air, which, though it moves with a stiff breeze, does not touch the wood on the interior side of the brick. The other two walls separate the room from the rest of the second floor, all of its spaces familiar, sharing air with and supplying warmth to the bedroom. Beneath the sound beams of the floor is another familiar room where the lights have been turned out. Below another layer of floor is a dark space crowded with strange forms, whirring and wheezing and blinking with pin-hole lights. It is good that this space is removed by two floors from the space of the bedroom, yet it supplies all the warmth and electricity necessary to it. The floor of the basement is cold cement, breathlessly inseparable from the frozen layers of sediment and bedrock beneath it.

Meanwhile, above, the bedroom is furnished in a comfortable and orderly fashion. Familiar pieces of bedroom furniture gird a neither meager nor extravagant bed. The hardwood floor glows like caramel under the light and, in other places, disappears into darkness under a piece of furniture like a train track entering a tunnel.

The walls are painted a temperate yellowish peach and open to the neutral color-wheel of the ceiling, empty apart from a motionless ceiling fan which hangs veiled in shadows like an oriental lantern in a holy shrine.

The light comes from a single lamp on the bedside table with a shade to filter the bulb's glare. During the day, meanwhile, the windows supply light in several phases: breathing soft gray at dawn to gently flick sleeping eyes awake, increasing as the day's events take shape, then solidifying into parallelograms of sunlight which slide across the floor, slinking up the walls and tightening in angle as the afternoon hours pass. Then the soft gray returns, warmed by the evening sun still reflecting on the trees outside and, after the sun has left the empyrean darkening, the windows glow for once like square blue gems marbled with the black lines of outside trees before turning ink black, over which the curtains are drawn again to keep out the chill of the night.

Smaller objects inhabit the furniture and the empty spaces of the walls. Books are arranged in the bookshelf according to their kind. The tops of the bookcase and the dresser host framed photos that hallow faces of family members, quietly preserving a moment in time.

Larger pictures inhabit open spaces of wall, some displaying grander scenes, while others are recognizably painted or drawn by the inhabitant himself of the room. The desk is home to a wide variety of small

things: pens and pencils, papers, notebooks, scissors, and staplers. Down in the shadows, a large oriental rug lies in sleep on the floor.

All the room—its light and its darkness, its boundaries, its furniture, its sources of light, and all the little objects that populate it— is home to a little boy. He is eight years old and would tell you so.

It is his drawings that inhabit the walls and his pens and pencils roosted in the desk. It is the faces of his grandparents, cousins, and parents that consecrate the dresser tops. As for siblings, he has a sister who is four.

It is about eight o'clock and his bedtime. He is lying in his bed, his father next to him on the side closest to the door, about to say good night, having finished reading to him. From outside the half-opened door, the boy can hear the clank of utensils and the sound of running water as his mother is loading the dishwasher downstairs. His sister has already been put to bed in the adjacent room. As if to illustrate how all the aspects of the room reach their final purpose in him, at this moment, the whole scene of the bedroom seems to culminate amidst the covers of the bed where he lies.

The quilt and the pillow and the headboard of the bed seem to form the semicircular chancel of a cathedral around his head, while the rest of the bed spreads out before him like a sanctuary. Watch closely: as his father leans toward him to whisper him goodnight, the father's face is suspended above his son's such that the line between the two sets of eyes completes a vertical axis. If you look up and down from face to face, you can see the reflection of his father's face in the boy's and the boy's face made mature in the father's, looking down on him with his dark eyes and beard.

Presently, the child looks up at his father, snapping the invisible thread for now. He says, "Dad" "Yes," says his father.

"Today in school the teacher read us a story," he slowly begins, "about a king who went to find this very old man — and he's the oldest, wisest man and he lives alone in a cave, and the king traveled a very long way to get to the cave because he wanted to know what..." He paused and heard the phrase pronounced again in his head, "What the meaning of life is."

"And what did the old man tell him?" came the father's reply.

"Well... we left off at the part where he was still journeying."

The father sits back; his movement is noted by the boards of the bed. "So, what were you going to ask me?"

"Daddy, I think you're wiser than the oldest, wisest man that ever lived. Daddy, you know what the meaning of life is, don't you?

The father looks straight down into his son's eyes and says: "I love you, son."

And, in his much smaller voice, the son sends back his reply. "I love you, Daddy."

Then the son wells up with the realization that he is in his place, is where he is meant to be. The whole bedroom is good and secure because his father is in it — anywhere in the world he would be secure so long as his father were there. And to exercise this knowledge, he presses his head back against the pillow and stirs his shoulders to feel the sheets shifting under him. He does this to experience the thought of all the layers of covers that keep him warm, all the layers of his security, and all the layers of the universe — spinning in the dance of cosmic order to deliver the sacred charge of repeating — in an infinity of colors and forms — the image of the Father.

#### Story #2

The wind is ripping down the city street. The buildings which rise like blocks of ice on either side are the perfect wind machine, channeling it as a rifle channels a bullet, from their uninhabitable gray roofs down to their marble bases the color of cold smoke.

It is January and the cars swerve and accelerate, brake and blast their horns on a chapped and salt-stained street, ridged by thin shreds of frozen brown slush. Coats and hats with people in them seem to blow down the sidewalk with the wind, dozens at a time, while off to the side by the edge of the street the wind grabs at the unhatted, dirty blond, curly, and messy hair of a college-aged young man.

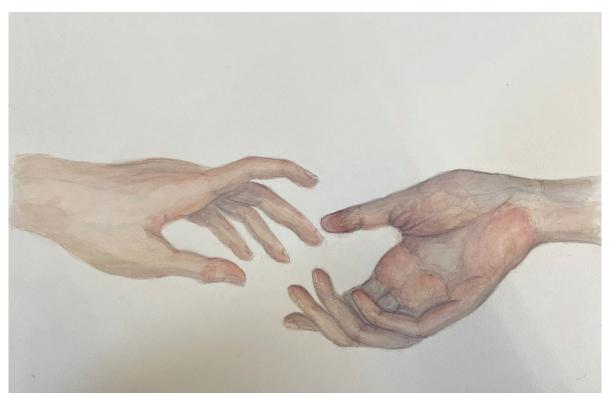
Under that hair burns the mind of a young philosopher, blood-thirstily truth-seeking, aflame with ideas and swept with unexpressed passion as the city street is swept by the wind. Perhaps he is studying at one of the city's universities and has chosen as the final project for his psychology class to perform a study on what the average person thinks on deep philosophical points and is collecting data by standing at the edge of the sidewalk and pulling people aside to answer just one quick question. Whatever the cause, there he is with no hat on his head and only a windbreaker meant for tennis over a threadbare sweater that he's been wearing for ten years; he has at his side a poster which he made at two a.m. one night, urging people with crayola marker to support his class project. He had at first held this poster aloft, but now he has learned to prop it up against a parking meter, allowing him to store his gloveless hands in his pockets.

Presently, he spies a man, signified by a big, black, suit coat, flanked by a briefcase and topped by a generous hat, coming briskly down the sidewalk on a trajectory so as to pass right by him. He rallies his mind for action, and just as the big black coat is about to permanently pass by him, he steps forward in an intentional manner and says, "Excuse me, sir, I don't mean to bother you," pointing to the sign. "I'm performing a study for my final project for my psychology degree, and I want to know your opinion on just one quick question."

As he is saying this, the man in the coat is revealed to be shorter than he imagined and to have a pink, chubby face with beady eyes, bolstered by reddened cheeks from the cold. For a moment, he looks the young student over and the sign he points to, and then says without expression, "Okay. What's the question?"

The student pauses as if he expected him to say something else and then responds,"I want to know, sir, what you believe is the meaning of life."

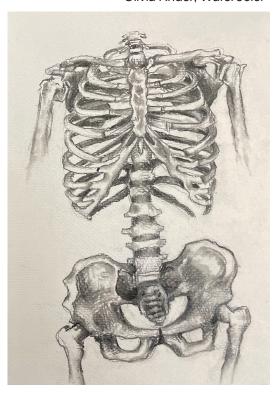
The man's reply could not have come more swiftly. "Then why don't you just shut the h\_\_\_ up." Quickly, he turns away and is again a big black coat blustering down the city street towards some timely destination — an expensive briefcase nudging at its side, a large hat atop its collar, and a gold watch under its sleeve always ticking.



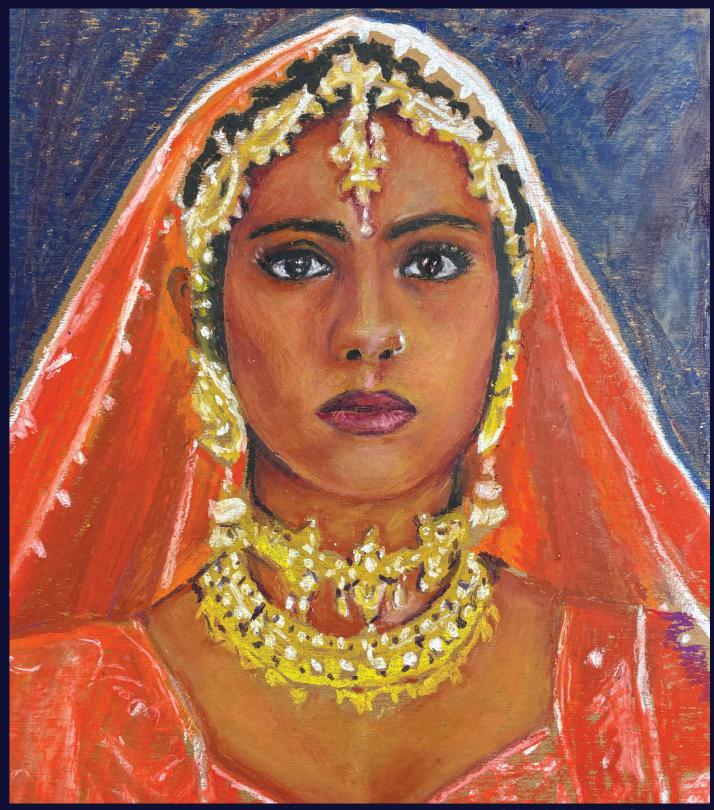
Olivia Krider, Watercolor



Candice Wang, Pencil



Candice Wang, Charcoal



#### THE GENTLE POET

A man of contemplation in whose hands
The fairies have placed a pen, not a sword;
A gentle poet, whose lyricism demands
All attention. And out flow from his lips
Mankind's great questions, painted in words:
Questions of the soul amid suffering.
He dares to speak of that which is unheard.
In his eyes are scattered constellations;
His complexion glows with knowledge, wisdom.
The gears of his mind defy limitation;
His voice utters nature's muffled rhythm.
In his grasp lie the power, glory, fame,
Yet the soft, humble heart remains the same.

- Candice Wang



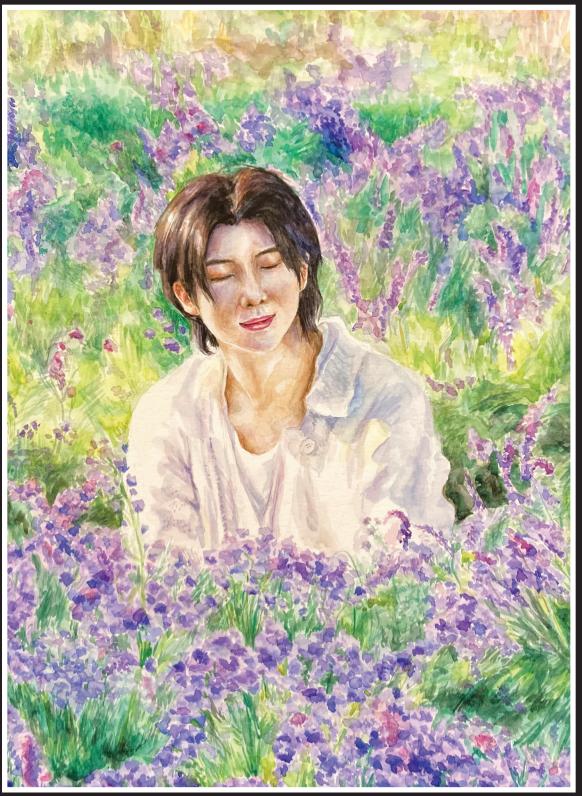
Hugh Nicholson, Colored Pencil















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## TRUTH IN YOUR HANDS

How dreadful it is to stare at a clock:
Tick tock tick tock, it mocks,
As it counts down a minute, an hour, a day.
We rush and hurry from that place to this,
Attempting to fill all our time,
Not letting one second go amiss,
Trying to possess every penny, every dime.

Yet, truth be told, we know we all have an end: Trains steam ahead, knowing the tracks will stop.

Unconsciously we deny it, by avoiding the thought.

When the time is soon to harvest the crop, We lower our heads as death impends.

Those walking in darkness have seen a great light—
You pause.

You see the truth in the blazing bright— The cause:

Back down goes your head and on you go
To your imminent doom, which is far below.
You have the truth yet refuse to believe,
And the most logical thing that you can conceive
Is that the true is false and you are right—

You think your mortal knowledge is the highest of heights.

Yet still the clock laughs as its victims are hunted,

Consumed by the world in which they're confronted—

A hopeless, bitter, and aching planet Floating through space, just a ball of granite.

But a beautiful planet, all in the same, Created with love and called with a name: Bestowed with a mission, a purpose, a calling; To run towards love and away from our falling.

The singular thing that keeps our hearts beating—

Love.

The darkness does not understand the light—Love.

Not an emotion or temporary feeling But a powerful thing that has lost its true meaning—

A transcending force that we merely reflect,

The dots to which we shall never connect.

The transcending force that sent His lone son—
A perfect, unblemished,

Holy One-

To die on a tree midst a world in upheaval;

"If is finished": the hate, the nauseating evil.

Death has no grip. Where is your sting? This weary world at last may sing. The dark powers vanquished, the return of the King Who gave his own being to ransom everything.

What is this?
Our heads remain lowered?

This gorgeous story of fail and redemption Is quickly drowned out by earthly exemption?

Settling for lies and evading the truth, What foolish children!

What ignorant youth!

This truth. This radiant truth.

This reconciled and redeemed and brilliant truth.

It's open for anyone willing to know

That they are LOVED more than words ever show.

It's written in the sky, painted like a picture; In tall, grassy fields, the breeze gently whispers. In the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea,
This impossible love which sets the captives free.

This truth in your hands and deep in your soul
Which makes you complete,
filling that hole;
That disbelief and isolating doubt
Which drains you of hope, a perpetual drought.

Low and behold, come will the day
When you breathe your last breath with the
truth in your hands.
Will you perish in misery,
or with that truth will you stand?

By: Sam Dixon

Rachel McEneaney, Watercolor

### The Power of a Smile

Smiles make the world go round I once was told.

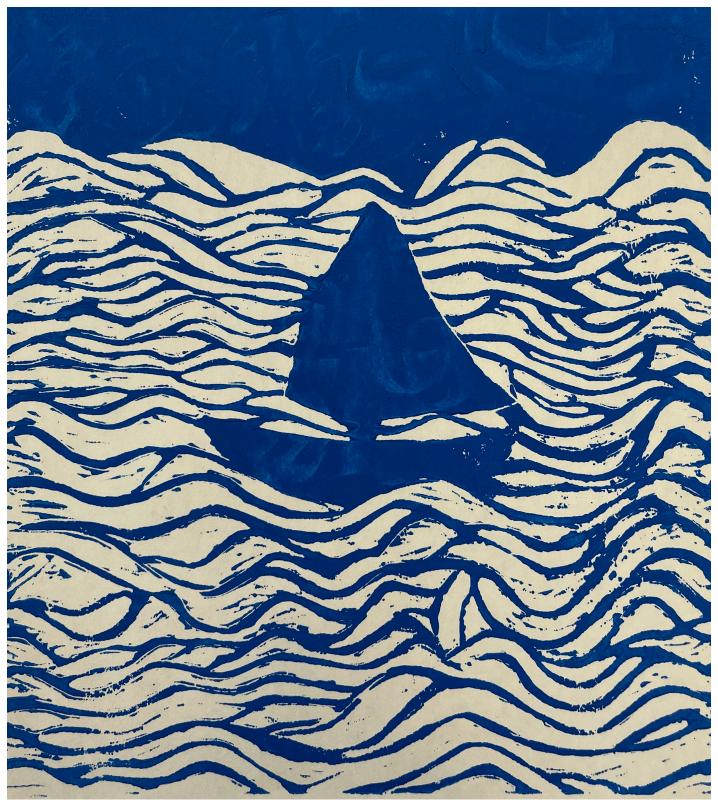
That sincerity of a crinkled eye, full-toothed smile has the power to change a day, even a life.

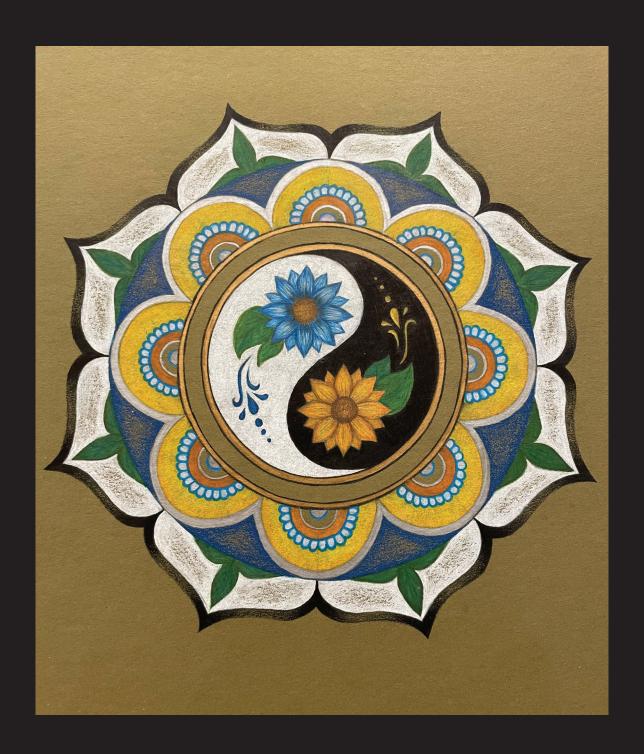
"That's dramatic," one might say, but I've seen the power of a smile. I've lived the awe-inspiring magic of a heartfelt, lip-curled smile.

-Rachel McEneaney

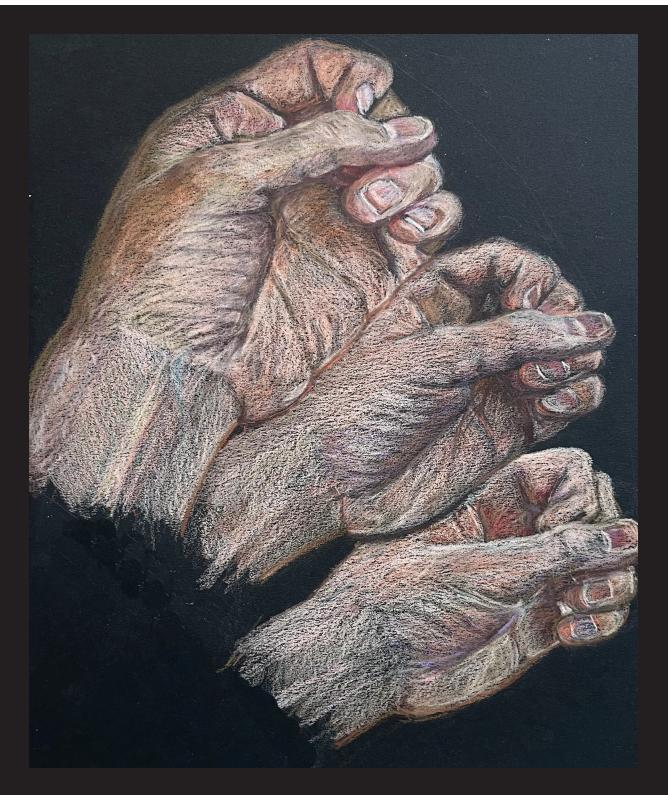


Kelly Johnson, Printmaking





Nelo A., Colored Pencil





## The Little Steps

I wish I could maintain friendships;
I wish I could think before I speak;
I wish I didn't get stuck on castlists;
I wish I could turn the other cheek.
But for now I need to see
The good evens out the bad
Because there are so many little things
Like the happy and the glad.



The smile that was painted
Is now a constant glow.
Failure, I couldn't take it,
But now I view it as growth.
The food I wouldn't touch
Is now my daily meal.
When once I barely laughed much,
Now I giggle and squeal.

Then I hated breathing every day, now I wish everything would slow. Then there were no reasons to stay, now there are no reasons to go.

– Sadie Serfass

## IMAGO DEI IN ECONOMICS

Underappreciated, unloved, undignified—

#### The mother.

Raising the next generation, Eyes always on the horizon—

#### The mother.

Selfless, gentle, kind, yet undignified, Left off to fight alone—

#### The mother.

Left to protect her young, Left for riches and praise, Left for honor and dignity—

#### The mother.

They are told to get a job,

To make some money.

"That is how they will be dignified,"

Given honor, praised—

#### The mother.

Shamed, forgotten, left to die-

#### The poor.

Right in front of our busy world's eyes, Yet forgotten, treated as dirt—

#### The poor.

Grasping for any form of sustenance, Forced to beg—

#### The poor.

Avoided, neglected,

And stripped of their humanity—

#### The poor.

Noticed, praised, dignified-

#### The money maker.

Always chasing more, Leaving for riches, hoping for honor. Fighting for attention, Willing to cut someone down, Told to keep going—

#### The money maker.

"You're on the right track.
Forget the simple. You're too busy; you're dignified"—

#### The money maker.

Chased after, fought over,
Treasured, praised—

#### Money.

A double-edged sword,
Given, yet not to be loved—

#### Money.

Needed, yet not to be wanted, Dies when you die—

#### Money.

Not the standard of honor, not the standard of dignity—

#### Money.

A gift from God, Yet not the point of life—

#### Money.

"The love of money is the root of all evil."

This broken, horrible picture, Our world.

Cruel, unfair, unloving-

#### Our world.

Broken, yet not all is lost...

"Let us make mankind in our image."

Imago Dei, dignified as is,
"Fearfully and wonderfully made—

#### Humans.

Broken, yet perfect reflections of the Holy one, Tainted by sin, made clean in His love, by His blood—

#### Humans.

Perfectly loved, perfectly saved, Perfectly dignified—

Humans.

- Sam D'Antonio

Candice Wang, Colored Pencil



Evezi Omuyeh, Photography



# There is a King

There is a king

Who gave up his heavenly throne

To be born on dirty hay

And knows how it feels to have nothing to call

his own.

There is a king

Who was mocked and gossiped about,

Who was plotted against,

And knows what it feels like to be an

outcast.

There is a king

Who was betrayed by a trusted friend,

Who felt the sting of forfeited friendship,

And knows how it feels to be sold out.

There is a king

Who prayed and shed tears in a garden,

Fearing the oncoming storm,

And who knows what it's like to be afraid of

the future.

There is a king

Who was broken on our behalf,

Who was beaten and bruised,

And knows what pain is like.

There's a king

Who bled out on a cross.

Who felt the agony of nails driven deep into

his flesh,

And knows how it feels to die.

There is a king

Who rose on the third day,

Who showed that death is not the end.

And who cleared our guilty slates.

There is a king

Who is not so far removed,

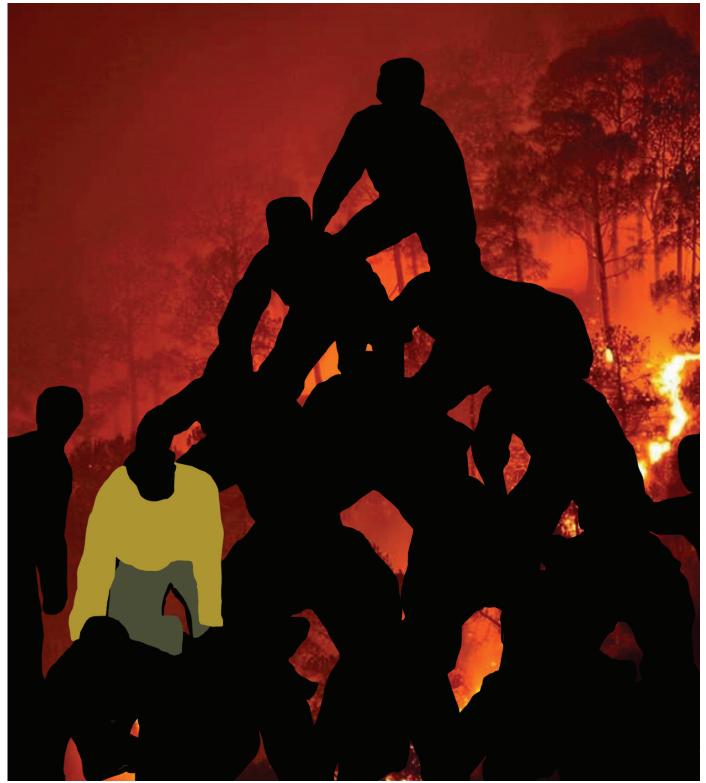
Who knows how hard it is to be human,

And loves us all the more.

- Maryn D'Antonio

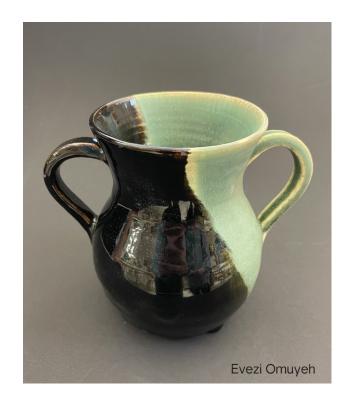


Julia Metzgher, Colored Pencil





Sarah Sax, Ceramics with Leaves

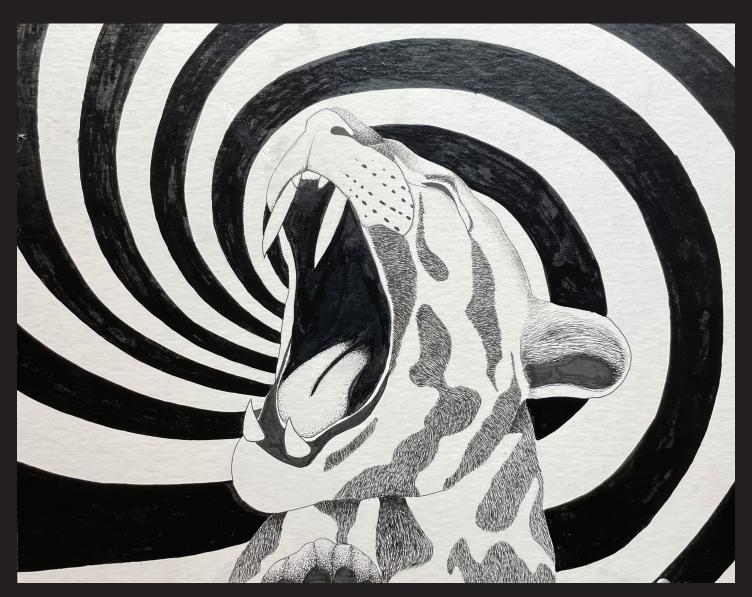








Yulu Tao



Claire Wichard, India Ink



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