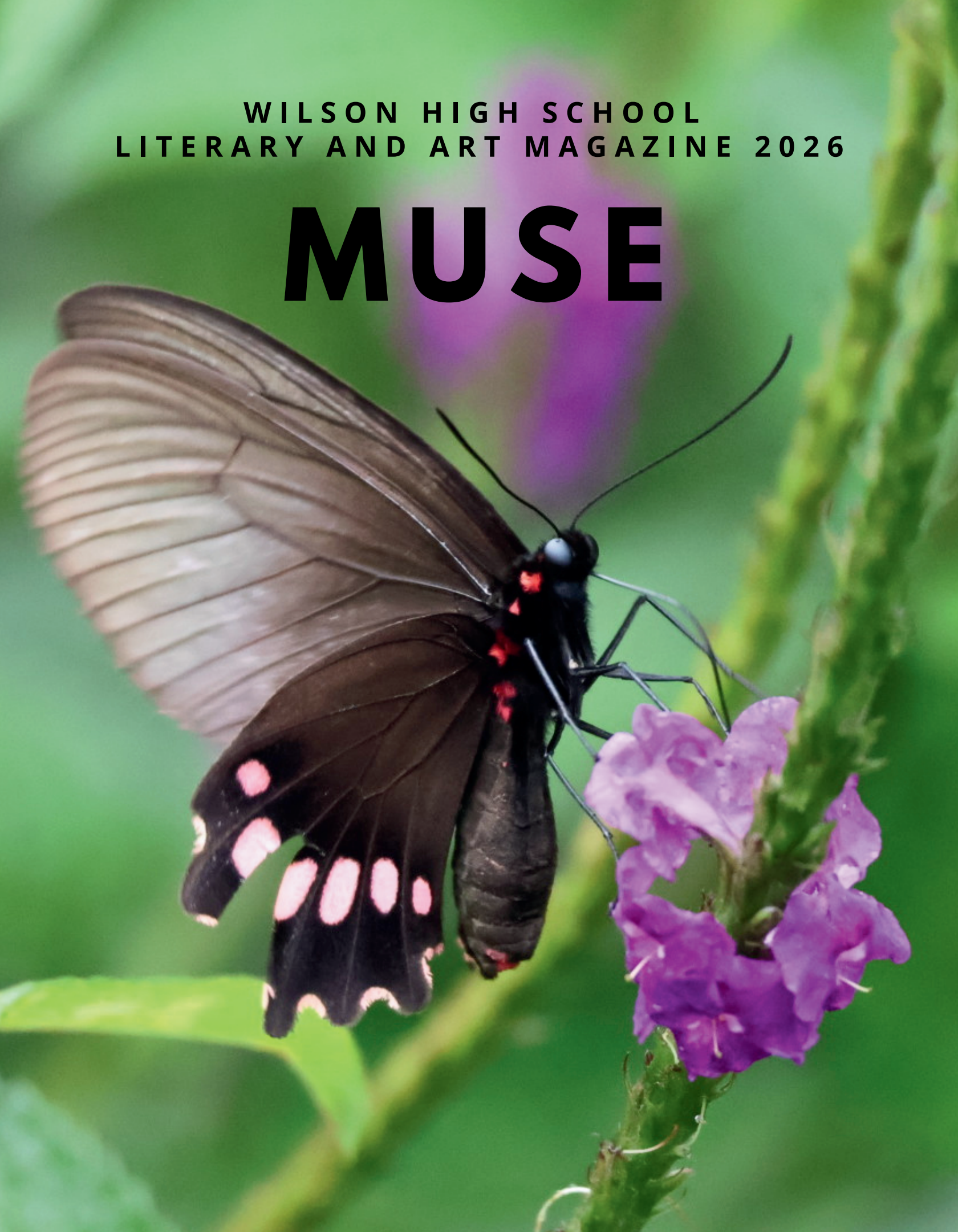
WILSON HIGH SCHOOL
LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE 2026

# MUSE



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Editors: Addison Hodges and Amelia Parrott
Advisor: Laura Anne Hofler
Principal: Dr. Eric Robinson

# Letter from the Editors

*I learned, if I listened long enough, that I would always see or hear the wild hawks below." --John Lane, Neighborhood Hawks: A Year Following Wild Birds*

Like Lane's hawks, the creative spirit often lies in plain sight, waiting for us to notice and use it. We are pleased to showcase the creative spirit of Wilson High School through our second annual Literary and Art Magazine, *Muse*. The collection curates a wide variety of artwork and creative writing from across our school community as we invited all students and staff to submit.

The theme of this year's publication is nature, inspired by a day at the Farm at Florence 1 with our Literature class last spring. Author John Lane joined us after we read his nature memoir, sharing insight on his writing process and helping us craft our own extended metaphors about our day on the farm. The experience fostered an appreciation for the wild that is all around us and the way we can use words, images, and figurative language to capture the power of the natural world to speak to our human experience.

Since then, that spirit has permeated our halls and led to other Farm visits--an IB Literature workshop with poet and Francis Marion University professor Adam Houle, a Creative Writing session of journaling in the woods, and an Art class's initial sketches with notepads and charcoal. The opportunity for our students to sit in stillness and observe the natural beauty of our Pee Dee Region of South Carolina inspired much of the work in this edition.

We are grateful to all who submitted to this year's *Muse*. We would also like to thank Will Gaskins, Morgan Krawiec, Jia Lin, Sophie Robinson, and Mr. Justin Tamburrino, whose efforts to host Wilson's first school talent show raised the funds to print the magazine. We also offer thanks to Dr. Eric Robinson and Mrs. Janet Harker for their ongoing support of our creative efforts.

From clay sculptures and watercolor paintings to poems and prose, all works reflect the voice of Wilson High School. We hope you find your own muse within these pages and, like us, learn what it means to "give your heart to the hawks."

*Addison Hodges & Amelia Parrott*

**An Unknown Peace**
*Weston Powers, Junior*

I inch into the forest;
a tent of abstract branches
shadowing my every move.
an unknown place,
a home that belongs to many.

More than the endlessness of the green
above me,
It's the leaves crinkling like a water
bottle beneath my feet,
the crows shouting a harsh melody,
the woodpeckers jabbing any trunk they
can find.
And somehow, I feel at home;
Peace. Comfort. Serenity.

As my eyes wander from sight to sight,
I truly admire each;
A number of trees,
Magnolia, Redbud, Pine,
all ubiquitous within the forest,
each bringing something different
to my perspective of this Kingdom.

But one tree stands out to me,
an Oak bent like a crushed up soda can.
I stop and look,
Reflecting on this one tree
that may stand out, but still fits in its
Home Peacefully. Comfortably.
Serenely…

As I step out of the forest
I ponder,
thinking to myself,
Why are we without Peace,
Comfort,
Serenity,
When that's all we ever dream for?
If only we were the forest
where peace is open to all.



*Threaded Growth*
Miruna Vesa, Senior

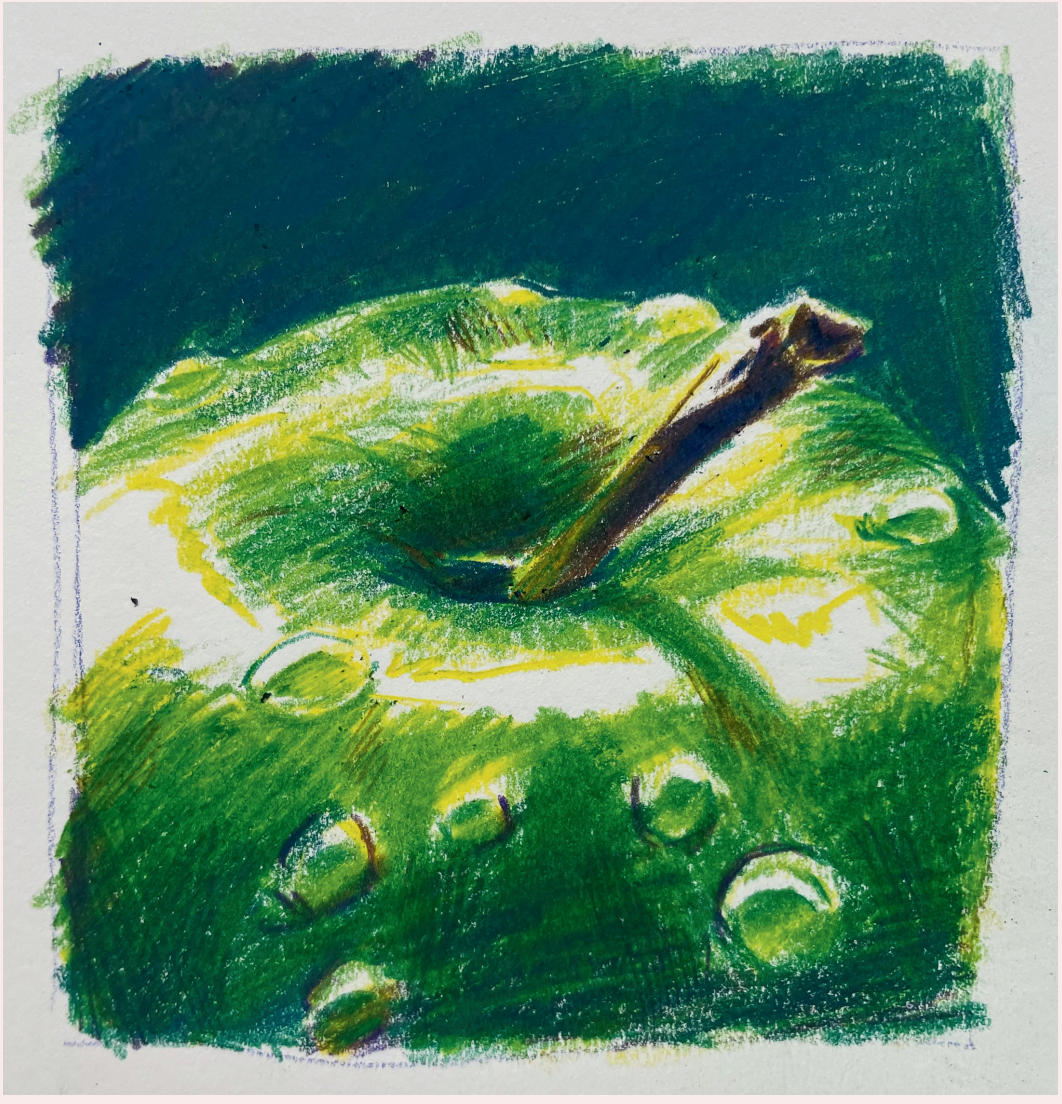
**Unspoken Rules**
*Ava Paskewicz, Junior*

The faint rumble of humankind in my ear,
But their chitters interest me more,
Human voices echo, I pay no mind,
Though we are the same in species,
The feathered beauties before me,
Are less afraid of me, than my kind of I.

I listen to their sneers at the dirt, the natural world,
But, a soft, muddy, earthy smell surrounds me,
Far better than any synthetic scent,
The splashes, waves, ripples in water,
Art more exquisite than even,
The most beautiful angel's bright eye.

"You do not act as you should,"
Turning my head, I ignore it
Slights from humanity once beat on my head like hail,
But now they roll off me as if they were water,
As resilient as a tree chopped in half,
That sprouts again from its stump.

Gossip, utterances of judgment,
You will not find it here,
Simply, they accept for one as they are,
For them, it is nothing but natural,
To be different, to be unique,
It can even be a gift.



*Freshly Picked*
Mashiro Kawai, Sophomore



*The Outside World*
Amelia Parrott, Senior

**Blue Butterfly**
*Makaela Moses, Sophomore*
-Dedicated to my parents

Oh, blue butterfly
Go live the life you so desperately deserve
Leave the life of poverty and pain behind
And carry our love with you

From the moment you were born,
You were ready to fly
The bluest tint that filled the room
We knew then that you would be our blue butterfly

As you grew up, the stronger you became
You excelled in all of your classes
And shined your way through the community
You continued to grow without our help
You continued to fly

You're now at the age where you don't need us anymore
You're flying on your own path
Our love will always be with you
Our hope lies within you

So, become the doctor you so desperately dream of
And touch lives with your calming presence
We'll be supporting you throughout the way
We love you so truly
Go, our beautiful, blue butterfly

**Nature at Its Best**
*Nicole Cogdell-Quick,*
*School-Based Therapist*

I hear birds singing
I feel the sun beaming
I sense the wind greeting me.
Bugs flying, grasshoppers hopping
Entering a forest of trees-
Big, little, strong, frail
Well trees, ill trees
Living free

**The Whisper of Wind**
*Nyla Taylor, Freshman*

Whispers of wind through leaves of green
a vibrant and untroubled scene
The roots run deep, the water clean
and sunbeams on the river glean
A quiet pledge, a promise made
to restore the scars that time has laid
In every choice, a future played
My human heart , a sacred blade.
The gentle touch, a turning tide
the wilder path, a place to hide
I let my wisdom to be a compass, guide,
with nature's hope, you should walk by its beside.



*Orbital Harvest*
Brittany Sehnke, Art Teacher



*Blue Spring*
Amelia Parrott, Senior

**River's Song**
*Jemari Moses, Senior*

Water rushes fast,
carving paths through silent stone,
echoes never fade.

Fish leap at sunlight,
shimmering in silver arcs,
time flows endlessly.

**Ocean's Memory**
*Jemari Moses, Senior*

Waves whisper against the shore,
Each one carrying secrets from afar.
The tide retreats,
But the salt remains
Marking the sand with memory.

**Silent Accord**
*Kamani Jordan, Senior*

On a red flower,
A butterfly rest, wings like stained glass,
quiver on the edge of a petal.

The afternoon sun.
a heavy coin, presses warmth into the garden.
The air hangs still and sweet,
a silent accord,
between the drinker and the deep crimson bloom.

A tiny shadow shifts,
a breath of movement,
and the delicate wings are gone.

**More Than She Can Bear**
*Dalaina Maxwell, Junior*

My Mother is draped in hues of blue
Her skin- smothered with nips and wounds
Yet, she cradles me close to nurture me
Even though I snarl and maul at her

She lays out a lavish banquet
And ensures all needs are met
But I- a ravenous wolf with no senses of “Enough”
Gorge myself, Devouring More than she can bear

Bones.
Dust.
Scorching heat.
Is All I’ll ever leave behind



*A Bug’s Life*
Weston Powers, Junior

**The Garden**
*Autumn Abraham, Junior*

My half sister, Chloe Johnson, was shouting my name, “Tatiana! Tatiana Medina, wait!” I didn’t stop. I ran all the way out of the school and into the school’s garden. You see, I ran out of our school’s auditorium after I embarrassed myself in front of the school’s choir. I tried to sing part of a song that we had to sing for an upcoming concert, but my anxiety already took over me. I produced a horrible sound. People laughed at me and I was about to have a panic attack. I had to get out of there, and my number one spot was the Lakeside High School garden.

Our school’s garden club grew a variety of different plants: tomatoes, cucumbers, celery, and pretty much every fruit and vegetable you could think of. They also grew flowers like tulips, my favorite flower. They sat in their own separate spot away from the food. It seemed like whenever I came into the school garden, the flowers perked up and all the bugs scattered away from the crops. The plants looked happy. I could practically feel them all smiling at me.

Weird, I know.

I smiled as well and walked over to the trees near the garden, who were gracefully swaying wherever the wind took them. I touched a nearby tree and my anxiety just melted away. It was simply gone. For a moment, I couldn’t even remember why I was so anxious in the first place.

Being out in nature always calms me down. Whenever I feel sad, stressed, scared, angry, embarrassed, or anxious I always run outside. It doesn’t matter where I am. I could be inside of a restaurant, at my own house, or even at the doctor’s office. If I feel the need to, I’ll always run outside. Nature is my safe place. There’s nothing more fun than sitting outside on the soft grass and breathing in the fresh air that mother nature gives us. I can never understand why some people hate the outdoors. There is nothing more beautiful than nature.

My brief solitude ended when I saw Chloe enter the garden with a worried look on her face. Chloe’s eyes landed on mine, and I knew she wasn’t going to let the prior incident go. We had a small conversation about the earlier events and we came to a decision. Tomorrow, I would have a conversation with Lakeside’s Choir director and politely inform him that I was leaving the club. After we came to that agreement, we retreated to a secluded meadow where we were lost in the soft grass and cool breeze. We had not realized how many hours had passed since we arrived at the meadow, and we found out it was 5 o’clock. We were almost late for soccer practice.

**Betrayal of Friends**
*DeAndria Dallas, Senior*

The trees all whisper in the breeze,
Soft secrets drifting through the leaves,
The river hums a quiet song,
Like it has known the truth all along

We walked together down the trail,
Through quiet life and shadow pale,
You smiled like nothing could go wrong,
Like we had both been strong for long

But branches break without a sound,
And the roots give way beneath the ground,
The forest knows,though it won't say,
Some friends just slowly fade away

**The Old Oak**
*Kourtney Nesmith, Senior*

Your roots grip the earth
like hands refusing to let go,
pulling stories from the soil
centuries of rain,
the footfalls of wanderers,
the quiet prayers of children
who carved their names in your bark.
Your leaves turn with the seasons,
yet you never leave,
always holding the sky,
always listening.
An unshaken witness
to everything we forget.





*Pressed Flower Resin Jewelry*
Ava Paskewicz, Junior




*Knight in the Forest*
Joshua Snyder, Sophomore

**A Warm Embrace**
*Isabel Quann, Junior*

Beneath the iridescent stars,
In the gentle breeze,
Leaves cascade down
Until they bow at the feet
Of the Weeping Willow Tree.

Fireflies dance
While crickets chirp
A voiceless melody
Only made to entertain the moon
And the Weeping Willow Tree.

The moonlight sparkles
Upon the pond, illuminating
Where the turtle lazes on the bank,
Where the goose migrates at the command
Of the Weeping Willow Tree.

And when the day grows long,
And time moves fast,
I stop.
And I wait for nightfall,
Where It welcomes me with a warm embrace.
The Weeping Willow Tree.

**13 Ways to Look At Nature**
*Talib McGill, Freshman*

I
Among starving animals,
The only moving thing
Was the leaves in the wind.

II
We are of one ecology
Like a planet
In which there are 8.7 million animal species.

III
The trees absorbed water and sunlight.
This makes air for us to breathe.

IV
Humans and animals
Are kin.
Humans and animals and plants
Are kin.

V
We do not know which to fear more,
The terror of change
Or the terror of uncertainty,
Animal and plant extinction
Or just after.

VI
Fish fill the vast Ocean
With titanic wrecks.
The mass of the sea creatures
Disappears, to and fro.
The threat
Hidden in the crevasse
An unavoidable cause.

VII
O vulnerable humans,
Why do you burndown the forest?
Do you not see how the trees
Gives us air and food?

VIII
I know Mother nature,
And lurid, inescapable storms;
But I know, too,
That the glacier is involved
In what I know.

IX
When the plant terminus die out,
It marked the beginning
Of one of many deaths.

X
At the rumble of a glacier
Losing its equilibrium,
Every tourist in the new Arctic
chased ice quickly.

XI
They explored the forest
for cutting down trees.
Once, we blocked them,
In that we understood
The risk of animals dying.

XII
The sea is rising.
The glacier must be retreating.

XIII
It was summer all winter.
It was melting
And it was going to melt.
The glacier fits
In our warm-hands.



*The Pondering Frog*
*Morgan Krawiec*, Senior

*Tieyon Harry, Senior*

The trees lean close
Their branches stretch like tired arms
Cracking in the sound of pain
The river hums a restless song
Its voice carrying secrets

The mountains can't have
forever.
Snow in the winter
Snakes in the spring
Leaves in the fall

**Endless Tide**
*Kamani Jordan, Senior*

The ocean moves without asking
permission.
Waves fold into themselves,
then stretch across the sand
like fingers reaching for something
they can never hold.
I stand at the edge,
knowing love is like this--
leaving, returning,
but always live.

**Nature Within Me**
*Carla Gordon, Teacher*

What is more beautiful than I?
I am what the sun is to the sky.
I am what soil is to the plants,
The steady trunk of every tree.
I am the rain that brings life to dry ground,
What every living thing needs to grow.

How dare you try to replace me
With processed substances,
When I am the very being
That produces life.

I may have come from the rib of a man,
Yet he is not as powerful as I.
No machine, no man-made design
Can recreate what was born of earth.

You cannot replace
The very being who gives you life.




*Botanical Space*
Wendall Graham, Senior



*Nature's Braille*
Brittany Sehnke, Art Teacher

**Nature's Silence**
*Dhara Vaghela, Junior*

In the "silence" that nature brings
Lying on the cushioned grass
Feeling the sun rays kiss my skin-

I remembered that same wonder
Despite the different terrain-

Leaves crunching underneath the same two feet
Seeing my innocence fluttering by-

I realize that the silence, was never actual silence
Just silence from humans instead-

The woodpeckers pecking away
The birds chirping their songs
The ducks quacking up conversations-

The little aspects that I forgot to appreciate
The same sounds that serenade my ears
The same smells that permeate the air
The same feelings that embrace my fingertips-

It's a shame, I thought I could ever let this go

**The Sky Remembers**
*Keandre Ham, Senior*

The sky remembers when
clouds were soft,

Not heavy with smoke or
sorrow.

The rivers once sang in
silver tongues,

But now
Seems dry and
hollow

Forests die to burning heat,
And ice melts to the sea.

Animal homes burnt to the
ground,

With no remaining trees

The earth is not ending,
Its aching storms and silence
are its cries.

Yet beneath the ash a seed
still waits,

In the palm of our choices,
It could rise.



*Aqua Rose*
Kimberly Braddy, Senior



*Serenity*
Morgan Krawiec, Senior

**The Power of Nature's Voice**
Jemari Moses, Senior

Beneath the cracked sidewalks, the roots still rise,
pushing against the weight of forgotten promises,
Smoke-stained skies hang heavy over our block,
while the river whispers a language of sorrow

Children chase basketballs on heated asphalt,
their laughter bending beneath the burn of July.
Once, oak trees shielded this street with shade,
Now their stumps stand like broken teeth.

Yet the wind refuses silence,
carrying chants from protests like dandelion seeds.
Even the sun, relentless, is a witness,
reminding us that survival is not enough.
From the cracks, wildflowers insist on color,
teaching us how to fight and bloom again.

**Venture Beyond**
*Kennedy Green, Junior*

Break the binding shackles
That seal the portal
To enlightening perspectives.

Sever your ties to Myopia and
Venture beyond the world
In front of you to
Find a Wonderland
Like no other.

Every branch,
Every petal,
Every element,
Under the sun
Lies awake with
A fruitful spirit.

The sweet song
Of the cardinals
And the whistling breeze
Harmonize with synergy.

The great oak trunk
Undulates into a sylvan Taijitu,
Keen to its brotherly neighbor.

The sparkles of the sun
Fall on a single fuschia tree,
Illuminating the blush leaves
Among a sea of its polar Canvas.

Below lies a murky
Bed of crunchy brown.
But venture beyond
The surface to find variety
Overflowing the reserves of your mind.

Peel the filter
Off your eyes and know
Every shape,
Every color,
Every story
Apart from one another.

Follow the story
Gifted by our mother
In the language of the Earth.

Venture beyond
the world in front you,
And find a universe inside of
another.




*Sunrise*
Clara Vesa, Math Teacher



*Jovial Creation*
James Moore, Senior

**The Anchor for Existence**
*Althia McKay, Math Teacher*

Different seasons highlight its face,
The ability to change and still maintain her grace.
She produces life, shelters death;
Understands emotions- patient steps.
Stays around until some things aren't left,
Replenishes some while watching us abandon the rest.

It's our space, we should cherish what's in it.
The smoking, the gambling, it's what should cause her to diminish.
When she does, it's only temporary
She creates a new space, new features- another sanctuary.

A nest for them, a den for roar.
A house for richness, a shelter to the poor
A sack for home, soil to dig.
Dreams and nightmares, she helps to sieve.
Monitors emotions to manage situations built.

Life is formed, a cycle has started
She anchors the existence like a beating heart.
As cycles end and restart again throughout her care.
She is nature, so beware.

**Here and There**
*Janielle Carbonell, Junior*

the sun blazes on me as she did once
no stranger to her rays and amiability
an old friend I greet here and there

there - where my youth
picks at the sweet apple trees
here - where my now
lives under its crisp leaves

still, no stranger to me, the sun grazes my face
with her same comforting, warmth touch
it holds me like a mother's embrace

the sea of grass sways against the wind,
to say hello to the familiar face,
who rises and shines above them
the same grass I felt here and there

there - where my youth
used to bask in the sun
here - where my now
sunbathes under the same one

no matter where and when I exist,
they linger throughout time to welcome me
here and there



*Stream in Japan*
Jia Lin, Senior



*The Missing I'on*
Kaylee Braswell, Senior

**Earth and I**
*Cadence Morrow, Junior*

I once raced through a garden
Overturning every stone
I once searched the dirt for bugs
The most peace I've ever known

I now roam through open field
Let the wind blow on my face
I lie flat on verdant grass
Enjoy the sun's embrace

How precious it all is -
The lilies, ducks, and trees
Spring invites the warmth
The pollen, sprouts, and bees

I scan the earth for meaning
Absorb the beauty all around...
I can't quite recall the feeling:
Childlike wonder I once found

Now I'm scared of pests
And don't play games outside
I weep with realization
Of Earth's and my divide

**On Conducting My English Class at the Farm**
*Laura Anne Hofler, English teacher*

More than the swoop and circle of the hawk below the clouds,
More than the sun's warmth as we splayed out on nature's carpet,
More than the hammering of the red-bellied woodpecker,
More than the red-yellow-white weed trio singing to me from dead leaves,
It's the teenagers I want to remember:
  the peace blowing over him as he swings under the oak,
  the tears of her childhood memories salved by nature's therapy,
  the rhythmic hum of images as he composes on the bench,
  the laughter of girlfriends echoing through the woods,
  the nod to Nature's People and their snaps around the circle
As poems take root in their hearts and take flight in the world.



*KP5*
Kavion Wallace, Senior

**A Silent Goodbye**
*Skii Williams, Senior*

The world grew quiet when you left,
A sky, once bright and blue,
Has turned a hollow gray.
The house of dreams is empty now,
With warmth all stripped away.

I reach for hands no longer there,
In the quiet of the dawn.
I'd stop the clock now if I could,
Before you're truly gone.

For though the seasons turn their leaf,
Where no true love is found,
My heart is anchored in the grief
But I will never make a sound.

I fought for us with every breath,
Until my strength wore thin.
But love has met a quiet death,
And I cannot let it in.

I'm laying down the heavy shield,
The battle is now through.
I've nothing left to try or win,
So I say goodbye to you.

**The River's Journey**
*Nyla Taylor, Freshman*

The river runs with secrets old
Through forests deep and mountains cold
It carves the earth, it shapes the land
A silent artist, strong and grand
Beneath the sky, it never ends
A journey shared with stones and friends.

*Nathaniel Johnson, Sophomore*

Trees are tall and green and bright
Red birds chirp from morning to night
Oceans flow and waves go free
Nature's home for you and me

Flowers grow and bees will chirp
The sun shines on us so bright
Clouds float soft up in the sky
The beauty of nature never lies




*Golden Hour*
Morgan Krawiec, Senior



Gabrielle Reames, Freshman

**Sweet Roses**
*Angelise Robinson, Sophomore*

Oh sweet rose how many things can you do
The nice symbol of love you bring
And the sweet smell you give in the spring
The beauty you shine gives me peace and light
Your oh so soft petals shimmer so soft and bright
But your hard thorns remind me to be strong
And teaches me to not be fooled by your beauty
Highlighting how much beauty hides what's wrong
Oh sweet sweet rose how many things can you do
With each of your sweet petals showing me what's true

**When I Hear from Your Lips That Old Is Gold**
*Kashish Solanki, Junior*

When I hear from your lips that old is gold,
I stop to wonder if you've seen true age.
I wonder if you've seen a rotting corpse–
I wonder if you've seen an old house–
I wonder if you've seen the derelicts–the decayed.

Those ancient towers stand tall and strong–
But what of the thousands that have fallen before?
We worship rivers, of turbulence and might–
But what of the streams that trickled and faded?
How dare you declare that old is gold!
When what's old is rotting and dying and gone!

Will you remember the daughter of the potter?
Or will you remember Anastasia of Russia?
Will you remember the port for the fishermen?
Or will you remember the Golden Temple?
Will you remember the farmer's cherished mule?
Or will you remember the dark Bucephalus?
When all is said, and all is done–
Who will you remember? Your mother, or the king?




*Passerina Ciris*
Stephen Welch, Biology Teacher



*Dreams*
Addison Hodges, Senior

**All Around Me**
*Autumn Abraham, Junior*

I step outside and smile.
The weather's nice and quite worthwhile.
The grass was a perfect shade of green,
There was an oak tree with a unique lean,
And trees with different shades of green.

As I walk further outside,
The sun showers me with light,
Making everything ever-so bright.
I felt the cool, affectionate breeze-
Just as my ears buzz with bees.
Buzzing, pollenating, and flying high,
Just like a beautiful monarch butterfly.

SZA was right about Pretty Little Birds.
They chirp and sing just as cows moo with their herds.
Just as my ears pick up the sound of a woodpecker peck a tree with its beak
Just as my eyes spotted ducks coming out of the creek.

Nature gives us many things:
Rain, wind, storms, and sunshine.
But also we must remember what else it brings:
A nice amount of fun.

**Hydrangea Dreams**
*Semiyah James, Sophomore*

In the garden's quiet corner,
Hydrangeas bloom in misty blue,
Petals clustered, cloud-like wonder,
Catching drops of morning dew.

Summer air, a gentle fragrance,
Whispers secrets, soft and sweet,
Every blossom tells a story
Where earth and sky and beauty meet.

Shades of pink and violet dream,
Changing hues with soil's embrace,
Nature's alchemy in petals,
Painting joy on every face.
Hydrangeas, silent singers,
In their blooms, the world grows bright,
Holding summer's fleeting splendor,
Glistening in golden light.




*A Visitor from the Quiet Blue*
Wendall Graham, Senior




*Lavender*
Carmen Morrison, Freshman

*Zoe Robinson, Sophomore*

The snow is light as a feather
Illuminating the sky
The snow is oh so white
The snow reminds me of childhood times

The snow is like a fairy
Floating a high
Out of your grasp, until it arrives

The snow is so magical
The snow has a special glow
Oh, how I love the snow
The way it glows

*Nylan Angus, Sophomore*

The white, delightful, powdery snow,
The only place I want to go,
It's too cold so school is out,
I'm so happy, it's so graceful, I could shout

**Mother Ocean**
*Malatia McPhail-Jones, Senior*

The ocean calls me softly to her side,
She folds the sunset gently in her hand.

Her waves, like lullabies, rise with the tide,
And write their silver stories on the sand.

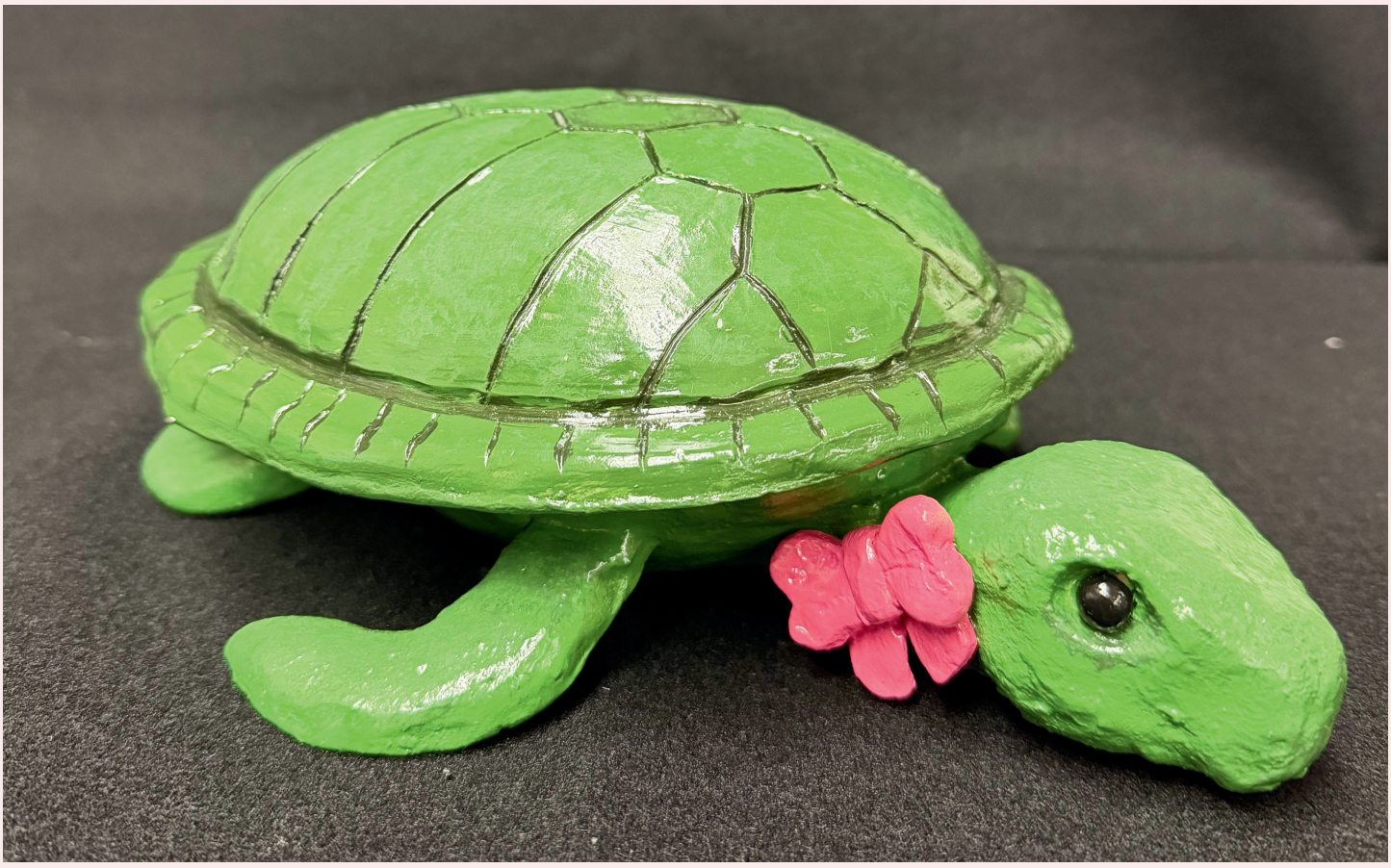
She takes the shells I scatter when I play,
And hides them deep beneath her shifting floor.

Though I beg, she carries them away,
Reminding me they're never truly mine, but more.

Her voice is stern, yet filled with smoothing care,
She teaches loss the way a mother might.

She shows me beauty vanishing to air,
And guides me kindly through the dimming light.

Though things I love are pulled beyond my view,
She whispers, "I'm making room for new."



*Turtle of Fortune*
Aneri Patel, Senior




*Dendrobates Pumilio*
Stephen Welch, Biology Teacher

**Unrequited**
*Ka'Miyah Richardson, Sophomore*

Unrequited.....
Is the love that sits in silence
As you feel it all around
Like friendships coming to an end
And past loves that keep you on a whim
As you soak up the silence
Longing for a guidance
Is it ever going to end

The faces you see and the people you meet
You watch as it all comes crashing in
Your looking to breathe
As you stare at your feet

The unrequitedness has you
And its coming in
It's got what it wants
And you can never hide
Unlike those friendships and loves
It will never leave you longing
Because the unrequitedness has you
And with that
You will never be lonely

**Earth Angels**
*Keandre Ham, Senior*

Ladybugs move like quiet beads of fire,
Resting on stems,
Tiny travelers painted in red.

They seem delicate,
But they are hunters too,
Protectors of green leaves,
Guardians of a garden's breath.

I watch one crawl across my hand
It pauses,
As if considering me,
Then opens its shell
And lifts away
Into the weightless sky
For a moment,
I think of luck,
And how sometimes it arrives
In the smallest,
Softest form.



*Nature's Yarn*
Chloe Shao, Senior

**Justice on the River's Edge**
*Kourtney Nesmith, Senior*

Along the Pee Dee's banks, the water runs brown
Carrying stories of factories upstream.
Children splash where fish once shone like silver,
Their laughter rises above a poisoned tide.
The smokestacks tower like unshaken giants,
Casting shadows on neighborhoods built of hope.
The wind spreads its burden without mercy,
Filling young lungs with battles they did not choose.

Yet pine trees lift their voices to the sky,
Whispering of roots deep in red clay.

Even the soil holds memory like a drumbeat,
Of ancestors demanding air that heals, not harms.

Justice is not a gift but a seed we plant,
Watered by voices that refuse to fade.
One day, the river will run clear again,
And the earth will echo our survival song.

**Citrus and Rind**
*Keandre Ham, Senior*

Golden sun in hand,
sharp sweetness wakes up the tongue,
summer sings through rind.

**Snow**
*Connor Bolton, Sophomore*

How I love the beautiful snow
It looks like a Christmas TV show
The ground covered in white
My face filled with delight

**the unweary**
*Kamani Jordan, Senior*

she tucks the meadow under winter's shawl,
counts our small errors like loose beads of time.
she hums the rivers back when summers stall,
and keeps the old, slow clacks beyond our rhyme.
we bring her broken playthings, rust and bone, little proofs we lived
and loved and did not learn;
we have our trophies up like flags of stone,
forgetting how the seasons always turn.
she watches-not-with anger,
but with ache– her hands are wind that comb the wheat and sky;
her patience is a map no power can take,
her tides remember things we let skip by.
so let the toys lie quiet; bend the knee:
love what keeps-wild breath, the root, the sea.



*Serenity*
Jeanie Davidson, Senior



*Goated Fairy*
Dejanae Iriarte, Freshman

**Burned Silence**
*Semiyah James, Sophomore*

Smoke drifts through the air where trees once stood tall,
leaves coated in ash, sunlight hidden by gray.
Birdsong is quiet, the forest feels empty–
just the crackle of burned wood and the smell of loss.
Rivers run slower, choked by waste,
the water no longer clear.
Animals move away, searching for new homes,
as pollution and fire change everything.
Nature tries to heal, but scars remain–
blackened trunks, dirty skies, silent ground.
Yet, in the distance, a green shoot pushes through,
a small hope growing in the ruins.

**Beautiful Blizzard**
*Olivia Schirippa, Sophomore*

Cold to the touch
blinding in the bright
though it seems too much
It still brings me delight.

*Arsh Patel, Sophomore*

Snow falls down from the sky
Its soft as it goes by
Trees turn white
Snowy days feels bright

**Ashes in Our Hands**
*Malatia McPhail-Jones, Senior*

We once stood on the cracked earth.
Where the factories coughed up smoke
Giving out a standing ovations to destruction

The trees are libraries
Thick oxygen bound in bark
But we strike them like matches

The ocean
A mirror shattered by crude oil
Waves coughing up plastic lungs
Our reflection drowning

The air?
Wears chains
A prisoner of our breath
But we sip it like poison

So when the curtains fall
Will we hold our ashes in our hands?
Or plant a garden in our name?



*Almost Comfort*
Amelia Parrott, Senior



*Wildflower Soul*
Semiyah James, Sophomore

**Fall Afternoon**
*Azariah James, Senior*

The trees turn red and gold,
Leaves crunch beneath my shoes,
A chilly wind brushes my face,
The sun sinks slow, painting the sky,
Nature whispers goodbye to summer.

**Morning Rain**
*Azariah James, Senior*

Raindrops tap against the glass,
Gray skies stretch forever,
The world smells fresh and clean,
Puddles ripple with every splash,
The earth drinks quietly.

**Don’t Quit**
*Tieyon Harry, Senior*

When things go wrong,
as they sometimes will
When the road you're trudging
seems all uphill
When the funds is low
and debts is high
And you want to smile
but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit
Rest but don't quit.
Life is strange with its twists and turns
As every one of us sometimes learn
And many a failure comes about
When he might have won had he stuck it out
Don't give up though the pace may seem slow
You may succeed with another blow.



*River Gorge*
Justin Tamburinno, History Teacher



*The Dark Spring*
Layla McCall, Junior