

ACPA's
[OFF BRAND]
2019-2020



Dear Readers,

We hope you enjoy reading ACPA's inaugural edition of [Off Brand], our first ever art and literature publication!

We had hoped to produce a print version of this magazine, but due to the shutdown we adjusted our plan. Instead we invite you to enjoy this digital version, which without the constraints of page limits, is able to accommodate a greater quantity of poetry, prose, and visual art from our incredible students.

While this edition of [Off Brand] does not have a theme, we hope you'll agree that the submissions showcase the passion, wit, vulnerability, and strength of our ACPA community.

Thank you to our readers, writers, and of course our staff who diligently and compassionately chose pieces for this publication.

Stay safe, and see you next year!

For more information about [Off Brand], please email offbrandlitmag@artcollegeprep.org

Sincerely,

Ms. Autar & Mr. Lowery

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Enslaved

Leila Johnson, [Art]



Changling

Robin Josephson, [Poetry]

I stand on a stage
Performing the same defence
To the same doubting audience
I am the tragedian
playing out a mockery of debate
I cannot tell if the theater I stand in
Is anatomical
They want to cut me open
To see if what I claim to be is true
They want to play the haruspex
Reading what's written on my guts
"Do not make me prove my existence"
"You don't have a choice"

Pictures of the sky

Jake Bennett, [Poetry]

Brush strokes fly over the canvas,
Leaving big impressions
Sometimes beautiful, sometimes beautifully
flawed.

The warm colors fade together over time,
The blues and purples follow.

Painted waves crash against the painted rocks.

Eventually, a picture emerges.

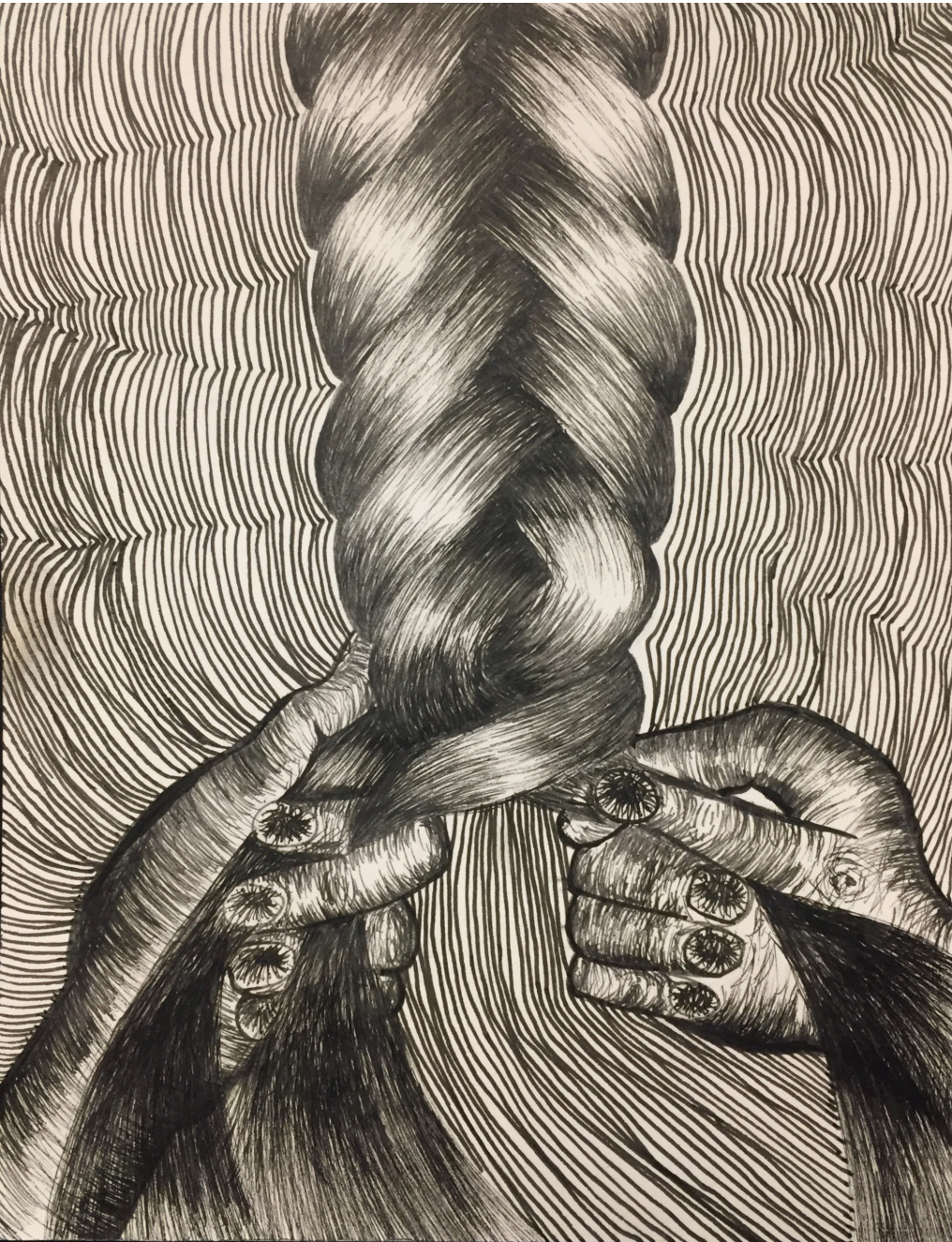


Strength

Chase Manley, [Art]

Simple Love

Grace Voithofer, [Art]



I have lost my crown

Katorya Washington, [Poetry]

i have lost my crown;
for all my bitterness eating
away inside my thoughts
i shall not be accused,
misused, abused and
broken
for i must weep alone,
i will never forget even
though we completely understand that our hearts
are prisoners of disbelief
that is why you cannot
comprehend this

Power Outage

Deltoria Williams, [Poetry]

I keep trying to turn things on to no avail.
and you keep telling me to stop flicking the light switches on and off.
but *flick, flick, flick.*

I ignore you afraid if I don't try, they'll just stay off forever.
Not knowing that the power's just out, and it'll turn back on when it's ready to.
You tell me this is why things break with me.
And I reply back this is what I was taught to do.
We stare at each other in this dark room, so far apart.
you let out a sigh, and my throat gets tight.
I don't want to fight again.
my hand goes limp, the light switch still between my fingers.
You tell me not to apologize because I say it too much,
and it's lost its meaning.
You tell me everything's just overwhelming and you don't want to deal with me right now.
I say I understand, then put everything I wanted to say away.
it wasn't a simple power outage, maybe a switch flipped in us too.
As you walked away, having said everything you wanted to.
I sat at the light switch.
Flick, flick, flick.
Trying to fix things in the only way I knew how.



Beginning

William Brown, [Prose]

It was cold and empty. Nothing but darkness in any direction. No object but one in the entire universe: a small dwarf planet sat in space. The planet was barren, lifeless except for the soul of the planet itself who waited for life. She was cold and lonely, the sole being in the universe, and yet she waited. She could feel, but there was nothing to feel; she could see, but there was nothing to see; she had all of her senses but the empty world gave her nothing to sense. Yet she waited, for she knew that something was approaching. And after a long time, though time had little meaning then, they appeared. Forty different beings, summoned from seemingly nothing, were suddenly on the planet. She called out to them but they could not hear her, they were not awake.

So she looked into their minds and into their dreams. She observed them, studied them, these beings that called themselves “humans”. They were an ambitious lot, and were as different from each other as beings of the same species could be. They were all so individual, but they all dreamed of the same world: a green and blue planet, full of life. They all dreamed of trees and grass, rivers and oceans, all sorts of different plants and life. She stayed in their minds, looking at the plants and animals, admiring this “life” that she had never known before. She learned a language that they all spoke and she listened to this beautiful world, the sounds, the sights, she saw it all in their heads. And every one of the humans that were with her, despite their differences, had a unified dream: to create. Whether it be by writing, by crafting, or by some other means, every one of them wished to make something, to manifest their ideas into something tangible.

Eventually, she realized that she had no idea how long she had spent in their minds, and these humans were passionate about a concept called “privacy”, so she decided to leave, seeing as they would wake eventually. But as she left their minds and looked upon herself once more, she had changed. There was a sun that she now orbited, a moon that orbited her, and she herself was covered in life and vegetation. She could feel the life flowing through her like rivers, and she could feel rivers flowing over her like life. She gathered up some earth and created a body like that of a human female, for she felt that she was quite a bit like what the humans called “mother earth”. She was

dressed in all sorts of greens, her hair was made up of a vine-like substance, and her veins ran with chlorophyll giving her skin a greenish hue. And in this new form, she chose a name from their minds. It had questionable connotations, but she felt that it fit her quite well.

And then, the humans awoke. They all woke up at the same time, sitting up and shaking their heads to clear the sleepiness. They looked up to see a lush garden full of life. And as they looked around in wonder they saw a beautiful woman who seemed to glow green coming to greet them. “Hello there friends,” she said, her voice was like water flowing through a riverbed, like wind brushing past leaves, “my name is Eden, and I am the soul of this planet. Welcome.”



Alcrocigator
Abdul Hassan, [Art]



WA

To Anyone Who Needs This

Katherine McGowan, [Poetry]

I am not you.
I don't know your situation,
and I will never claim that I do.

However, what I do know is
that
all is,
and will be,
well.

I have gone to Residential
twice;
yes,
two times.

I am determined,
committed to recovery.
Committed to finding myself,
again.

Recovery is
trial and error.
Recovery is
not linear
by any means.

Treatment is
tough, but
you are
tougher.

Start everything with
passion,
start it with
love.

Push
through
difficult times.
Sit with those
Emotions.

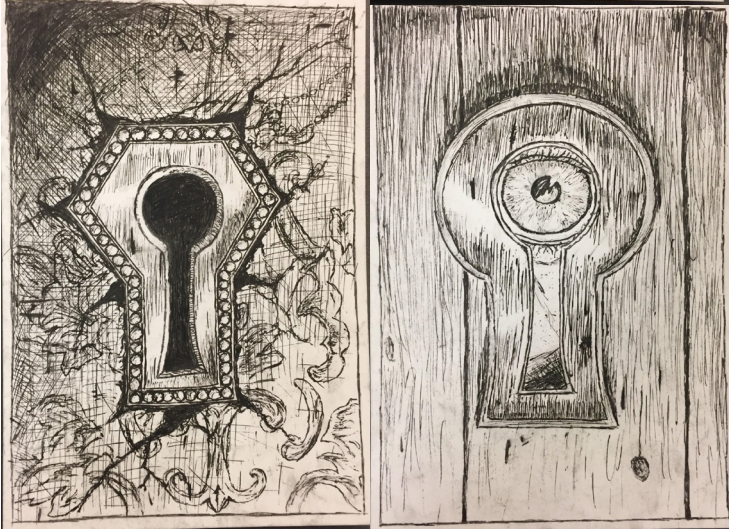
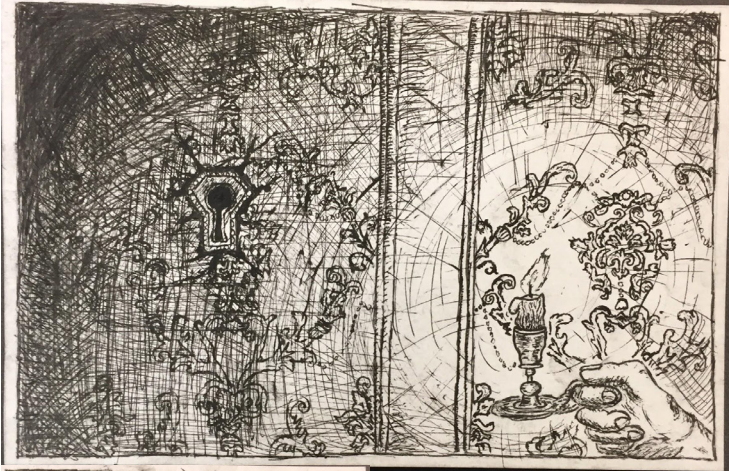
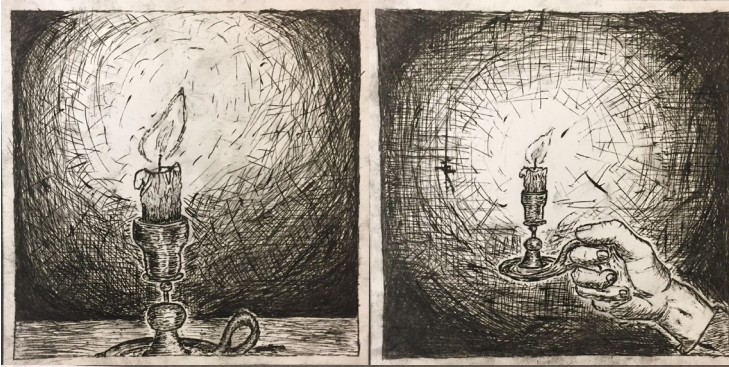
You are worthy
of recovery.

All is,
and will be,
well.

From: Anxiety

Archer Calingo, [Art]





Why There Is No War:

Megan Ewbank, [Poetry]

We have no war,
No sir, no war
For if we marched
Our throats would be parched
And all the water would freeze.
We would sneeze from the slightest breeze,
Our eyelids would fold and mold together,
Frost falling from our lashes,
Like the snow and the ash has.
We have no war
No sir, no war
for it is too bloody cold!

Witching Hour

Marco Montoto, [Art]

Praise the Narcissist

Damien Palermo, [Poetry]

Praise Me

Captain of my own splendor
Upon the vicious waves of insecurity
Curling waves tamed
Not by the virtues stricken dumb
With laurel wigs
And jowls draped pale and with shining sweat
Like their perfect silken mind
And their supposed mental tranquility
That formed in faking selflessness
But I instead

Praise me

Not statues of gold and blinding nothing
Empty, stolen nuance
Robbed and passed from hand to hand
But pure perfection's rotting warrior
An ancient statue stained with time
And given meaning by self destruction
No hollow stony maiden
But wodon wooden true
Devoted to no other than I

Praise me

I am your Mister Hyde
The violent ugly truth of self
The misshapen made perfect
Entropy formed equity
Chaos in unending inhumanity
Beyond the mind of human's being
Praise me

The holy king slayer
Wielding silver tongue
And perfect pen
Even though I cannot spell
Praise me
Each step I take is step alight
A walking god
Settled amongst men nowhere near I
Mighty Zeus swinging lightning bolts of mind and matter divine
That is I

Praise me

Know me
Know I am the Lord of Misrule
Lord of knowing beyond the mortal mind
Knowing self as self and self as known beyond knowing
Contradiction in knowing's greatest form
Lies being truth in juxtaposed perfection
Madness running wild
In lips rolling perfect lies
Conmen perfect prophets

Praise me

And know I am no god
But know I am the closest thing to it

Praise me

I am your humanity
Aggressive and refusing
Narcissus wasn't beautiful until he found the mirror
Flaw forming beauty

Praise me

Praise the narcissist

Downstairs

Arin Davis, [Art]

adults be like
stop using colloquial language
in ur poetry it is fat
like a layer of oil on water
and i say old people
don't you understand
that i am genuine
like a flowing stream
and you are a clogged drain—
besides
don't they realize
there is no water underneath this poem
it's all oil baby

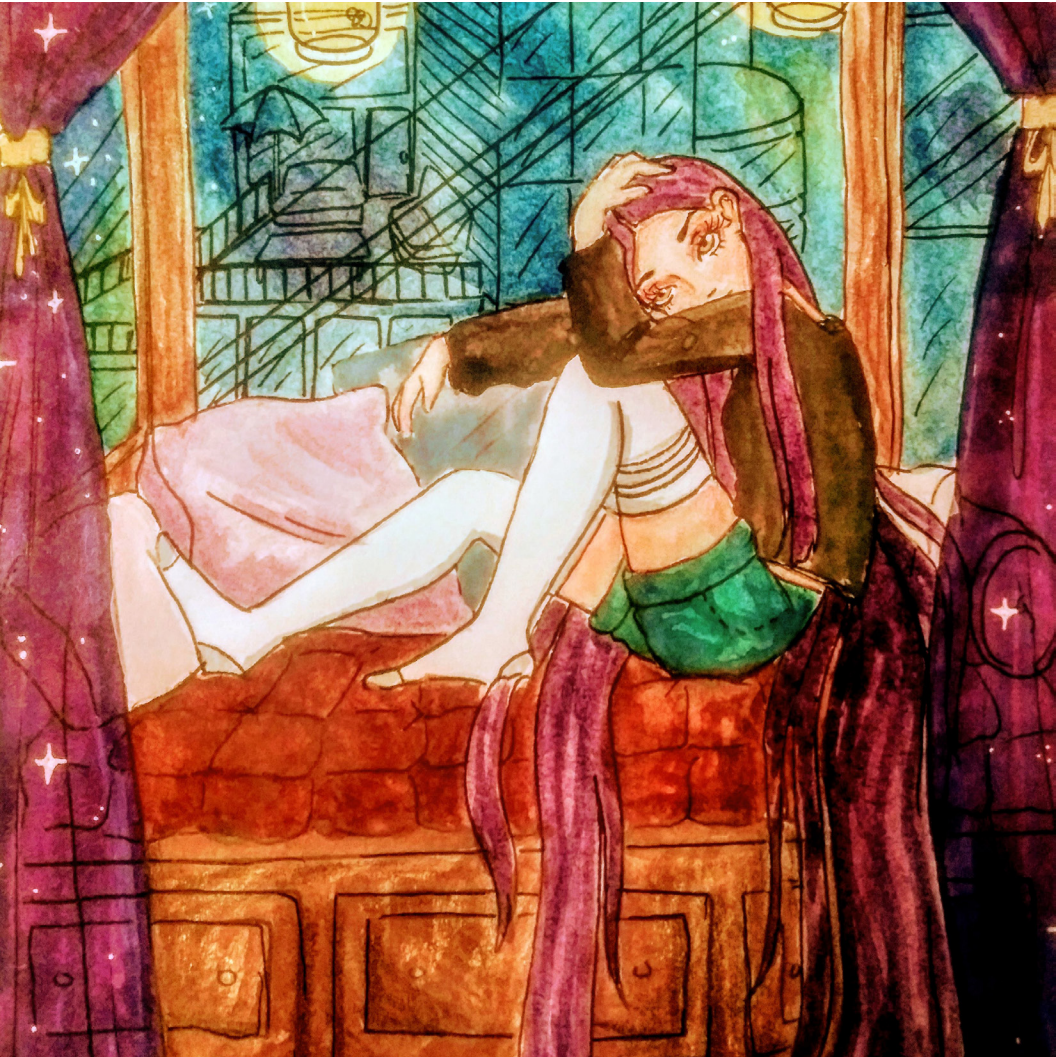
oil baby

Evan Hopkins, [Poetry]



Fireflies

A'Lisa D. Harrell, [Art]



We are artists

Lexi Johnston, [Poetry]

We are artists,
We have the power to create.
We are making and creating, the next, world altering mind, boggling,
perspective shifting art.
We are the heroes that will change the world; we'll save it, or at least we'll try.
We are the dancer, the photographer, the musician, the singer and, the writer.
We are you, yes you,
The reader.
You, me, us and them.
We might not have created anything magnificent...yet.
Key word: yet.
**We will write till we run out of ink, draw till we're out of paper, sing
until our vocal cords are fried, and dance till our joints give out.**
We will create something, And, it will change the world.

Direct Deposit

Iris Dow, [Poetry]

"I promise we'll pay you back"
Are not the words a girl should hear
From her parents
The year she gets her first summer job

A job she held in her back pocket
Like a trinket a child would save up to buy.
Now that she has the means
She must be able to supply

Rent is due and mom's awake
At the kitchen table with the overhead light off,
Because everyone else was
Fast asleep

She sits with her head glued to her hand,
Like a Depression-era father, who's nursing a drink,
His brow knotted and twisted in anguish
As he weighs his family's options

As soon as that direct deposit goes through,
The girl's two weeks of hard work
Go to keeping the lights on and
Keeping food inside the cupboards.

Is this a way to live? She thinks
Who could truly be to blame?
But the guilt swats those thoughts away
Just long enough to spare a few more dollars.

Pinky Promise

Wenniver Navarro- Lopez, [Art]





Out of focus

Damien Palermo, [Art]



The sidewalk has cracks

Louise Reeves, [Poetry]

The sidewalk has cracks and
Shacks that
Contain men
With guns

Surrounded by puddles of hope
From 'things'
Much stronger
than you

Yes, the trees make it hard
To see and breathe and be
No where else to turn
though
Your body
Is burned
From the flames
Of a life
You can never return to
In a place
You hopefully
Will never see

Your boots are dirty
Your vision is blurred
The trees
And storms
Don't want you -
They try to
Push you out

Dehumanized and 'dangerous'
There is no map of this
Long and dreadful path.
Forced to live in the
Overcast of trees
Dodging
Tiptoeing around
The stingers of bees and mudslides much bigger
than you or I
Will ever get
Yet,
You must push on

Sonnet #1

Tori Auld, [Poetry]

By Atlas I was wooed to bear the weight
of worlds upon my back and crumbling down
I saw the fear reflected in my gait.
And from the mountain top I fled to ground.
By Tantalus I was convinced to reach
For fruit the gods forbid to eat; commit
A man for crimes befit a lousy leech.
A tortured soul that time forgot to miss.
But when I met Prometheus I knew
His punishment was undeserved; the crime
Unfit for him to bear a lifetime through.
Who needs a liver when a god has time.
To suffer in the world is for mundanes;
And now I will, my soul I bear, insane.



She loves me, She loved me not.

Deltoria Williams, [Poetry]

Based on "Vase with Poppies" -Vincent Van Gogh

the wind blew calmly that day.

we walked past the house with the hanging mailbox,

past the empty lot,

past the rusty blue truck no one ever came to get.

our hands brushed against each other, until you held mine.

you were smiling at me.

I was tripping over my loosely tied shoelaces, trying to keep up with your excitement.

still we continued to walk.

as the sky went from a pastel blue with white scribbled about, to a mulberry color that stood out against the gray houses that started to line the street.

you told me to close my eyes,
that you had a surprise.

I wasn't ready to invite darkness, but I was so used to the path we walked on, it didn't scare me.

as you told me to lift my foot up, one after another.

I knew we were going up the wooden steps,

they're probably a faded brown now.

I knew we were near the top, when you stopped like we usually do to look at our initials carved deep into the last step.

But, I haven't been to the top in a few years.

the smell of wild flowers and daisies invaded my senses that day,

as you had yelled "open your eyes"

and a garden stood boldly in front of me.

lit by lightning bugs, and the setting sun.

the garden glowed in red hues.

you asked me if I knew what flowers they were, and I didn't know.

but, I held one in my hand, plucking off petal after petal.
whispering "she loves me, she loves me not"

you ignored me, and told me the red flowers were poppies,

I forgot the rest.

that day the wind blew calmly.

I remember how much I loved you, sitting at a vase filled with poppies,

poppies that weren't grown from your garden.

poppies that don't know of a love that never truly blossomed.

but, still a vase filled with poppies, because I don't want to forget that walk we took while holding each others hand.



Beachy
Chris Vale, [Art]

Fatty Fries For Americans In Suits and Ties

Yashua Bolden, [Poetry]

Candidly Canadian geese immigrate, to feast on fatty fries
in a black and white suit and tie
They soar, they stride, as they pass us by
so we playfully toss them our french fries
Over the years we watch them grow greatly ranging in size
Now in blacken hood and white neck tie
I watch as they duck and hop our fences under street light
Oh how fond they've grown of our murky ponds
Oh how they've learned to appreciate the American way
Lashing out with serrated tongues
they run the neighborhood blocks and ponds
Far beyond a normal tempermet
outnumbering residents 10 to one
Grazing for trash and french fries
their angel wings would usually mean they'd die
Though in our promised land they thrive
In the land of green ponds and French fries
they pass our car with heads held high
No predators in sight their nature has turned from frightened to rearing
for fights
How far they've changed
breathing american air
their homeland long gone
They walk their young through crosswalks and pavement plains
The Canadian goose has forgotten its lane

Killing Innocence

Emily French, [Poetry]

Soft blankets and a sweet hum,
A soothing bottle of milk.
The bell that jingles upon entry,
Warm smiles and a soft kiss,
The calming cradle, rocking softly to sleep.

Peanut butter on celery snack,
Nap time on a blue cot,
Staring at the ceiling for the hour.
Not wanting to share the toys,
Getting stuck at the top of the jungle jim.

Watching Goosebumps with the big kids,
Reading books instead of napping.
Fill the coloring book,
Finger paint each picture, laughing,
and suddenly waving goodbye.

An unfamiliar setting,
Clear book-bags and unlockable lockers,
Surrounded by power hungry predators.
Stolen lunches leave you hungry,
Feeling so alone.

These tan halls, so endlessly empty.
Kicked to the ground, spit on,
“What was that, girl?”
“Who do you think you are, girl?”
A blinding rage taking over.

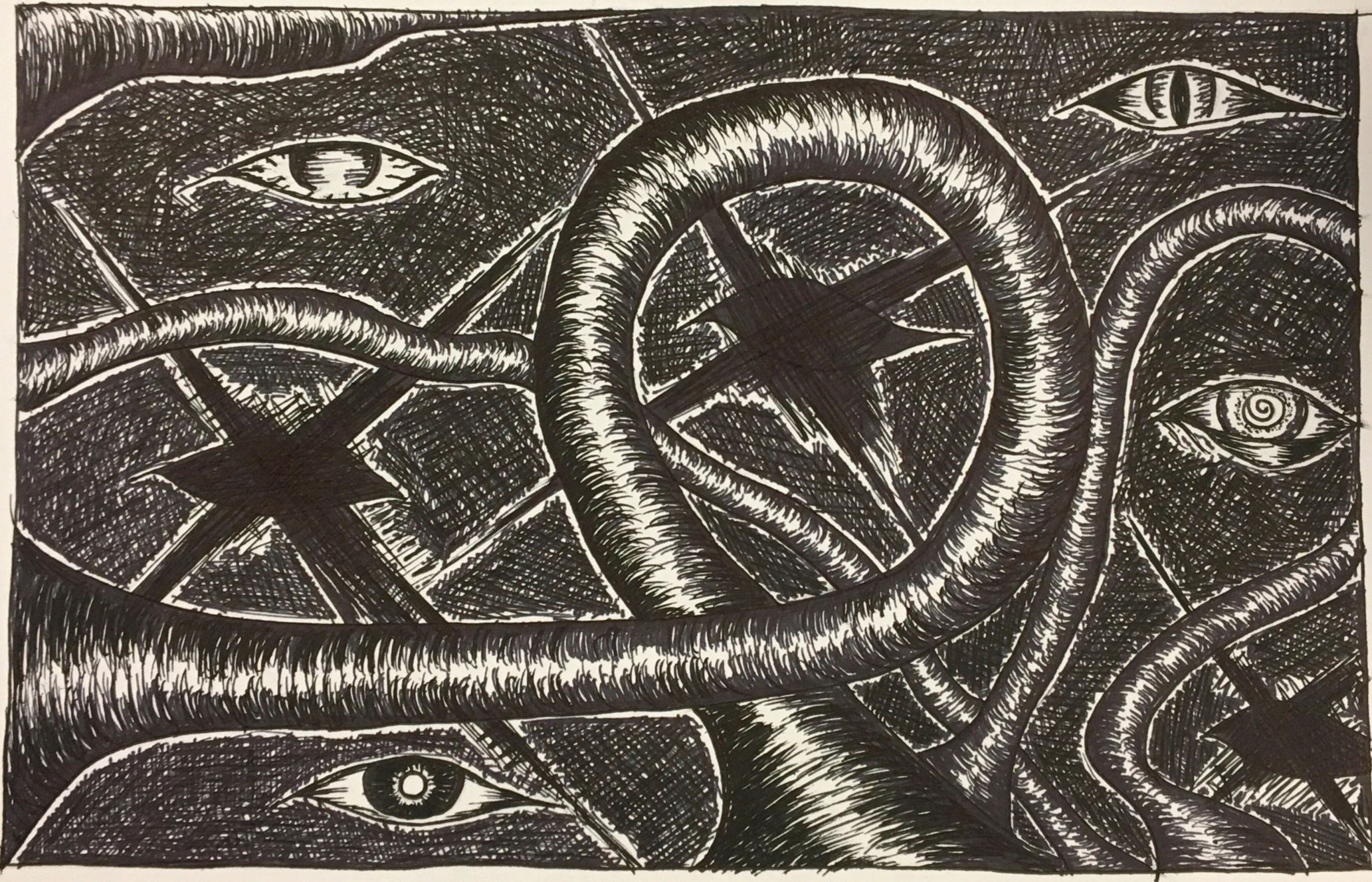
Fighting back,
Pushing them into the blue lockers,
Fists full of dark, curly hair,
Blood spills but did you really win?
What is a win if you end up the same as them?
A violent bully.

Fighting the boys who tease and the girls who judge,
Fighting against group leaders,
Fighting against yourself.
So many fights that dialing 1 gets momma on the phone,

Every call answered with: “What happened this time?”.
Day after day,
Fight after fight,
Slowly losing yourself to a mask,
Succumbing to the violence.

All for what?
To build a reputation that wasn't you?
To earn the respect no one wanted to give you?
Or was it for attention?
Maybe it wasn't any of that,

Maybe it was you trying to swim.
Kicking your feet, frantic and sinking.
A scream below the crashing waves,
Unheard by those walking past,
As you slowly drown behind the mask.



Inside My Mind I
Paris "Bleu" Caliman, [Art]

[Authors & Artists]

Willow Addington: Willow explores putting meaning into art. She also likes learning because it's like collecting skills!

Tori Auld: I used words to make something and here I am without any that have meaning. Maybe that's the really poetry...

Jake Bennett: Hi- I like literature- I use my poems as a place to create, express myself and vent. I personally love literature because I've never been great at expressing my feelings, I use poetry to better explain how I feel and explain those feelings better to myself. I also like to write because I like how it feels to work on something and get it to where sounds great that also expresses how you feel!

Yashua Bolden

William Brown

Paris "Bleu" Caliman: My name is Bleu. I like coffee, movies, soaking up the sun, and occasionally letting people know what goes on inside my mind.

Archer Calingo: The idea for this drawing came to me when I was anxiously doodling on a piece of paper with paint on it, waiting for a friend to pick me up for a sleep over. When I came back, I decided that this would be a great idea to make a whole drawing out of where I'd just go with the flow and make something out of the paint blobs on the paper. In short, if it weren't for my anxiety, this wouldn't have been created.

Arin Davis: I'm simply goblin. Do not care about complex ideas, only draw pictures and lay in the dirt.

Iris Dow: Iris Dow is a Junior here at ACPA. She is partial to the color terracotta, a lover of novels about women coming of age, a fan of bad crime shows, and constantly annoying everyone by talking nonstop about the Metropolitan Museum of Art and also manifestation.

Megan Ewbank

Emily French

Marcus Gersing: I'm a 15 year old artist and i'm in love with the color purple.

A'Lisa D. Harrell: This was one of my first watercolor pieces and I love how it turned out. And it made it to [Off Brand].... ayyeee.

Abdul Hassan: The reason this art peace is called Alcrocigator is because I'm not sure if it is an alligator or a crocodile. The viewer may see this peace as a crocodile or an alligator, art is Objective. Jk it's a crocodile.

Evan Hopkins: Hey it's me Evan, hope you like my poem, have a nice day.

Leila Johnson: Did I sacrifice my soul to the ceramic demons? Honestly, I don't remember.

Lexi Johnston: No comment.

Robin Josephson: I'm nonbinary and all I want to do is crochet more sweaters for my furbys, OwO. the idea for this poem came to me while reading the fanwiki for pathologic at 1am.

Chase Manley: I'm a amateur photographer who has a knack for finding the right angle and way of editing that simply fits.

Scar May: This piece is made to explore the media and our perception of such, to view the piece completely it must me moved around and touched which can be justified as a commentary on modern day media interaction.

Katherine McGowan: My name is Katherine and I wanted to share support with you. You are strong and deserving of recovery!

Marco Montoto: I was born in a crossfire hurricane and howled at the morning driving rain. But it's all right now, in fact, I crosshatch.

Cassandra Moore

Wenniver Navarro-Lopez: This art piece was inspired from a friend that always loved holding our pinkies and not the whole hand.

Damien Palermo: I like to do things

Louise Reeves

Chris Vale

Grace Voithofer: This was inspired by me and my mother's love for braids and braiding.

Katorya Washington: This is about a toxic relationship and the person is letting go of their past.

Destiny Willard

Deltoria Williams: A wallflower that happens to stand out.

2019-2020 [Off Brand] Staff

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Become involved with [Off Brand] magazine!

- Join our staff next year!
- Submit Art & Literature next year!

Email us for more details
offbrandlitmag@artcollegeprep.org



