

SCHOLAR'S **SHOWCASE**



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Photograph: "Restful" by Naciza Masikini

CURIOSITY:

A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

**Gurleen Chahal &
Naciza Masikini**

We are all wired with a certain question pulling at the back of our mind: why?

This question has spurred the greatest inventions, led revolutionary shifts in ideology, and manifested itself in creative thinkers who observe the world through critical eyes.

A simple thought, a simple question; we find ourselves actively wondering about ourselves, our environment, our pasts, and our future. We are attracted to the things that make us question our identity, our culture, our choices, and our world. This issue of the Scholar's Showcase aims to convey the curiosity that saturates the minds of Scholar's Electives students. We have aimed to compile articles and images that speak to the experiences that shape our minds and the wonders that leave indelible impressions on our perspectives.

We are excited to invite you into the minds of our contributors. As you sift through the words and forms pressed into these pages, we welcome you to delve into the meaning behind their messages, to analyze the questions posed by every stroke, and to embrace your own curiosity.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Jacqueline Grassi

Photograph: "Pier Walk" by Jacqueline Grassi

Last year, myself and three other Western students embarked on an amazing international learning experience at the University of St. Andrews in the Kingdom of Fife, Scotland. Our journey began with the Canadian Robert T. Jones Jr. Scholarship Foundation, which established this long-running exchange program with Western in 1989. This scholarship is open to four students every year from any faculty at Western, enabling students to connect with a global community of peers in St. Andrews. I aspired to be a part of this exchange, and so I found myself on a train out of Edinburgh, travelling into the Scottish countryside, about to begin one of the most remarkable years of my life.

At the University of St. Andrews, I was able to understand the study of my degree in Art History from a perspective outside of North America. I was able to partake in fascinating learning opportunities, from a lecture held at the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland to learning the basics of restoring artwork through hands-on experience. I gained invaluable insight by engaging with artwork directly, rather than through a textbook, applying theory to actual practice. As well, by getting involved in the traditions at the University of St. Andrews, I was able to meet my "academic family". My adopted family was comprised of a group of students from

around the world. We relied on each other for support and mentorship, forming lasting friendships. In this way, I feel that experiential learning, especially in the context of an exchange, helps students to develop both personally and academically.

Although I was away from Canada, I became more aware of how my values and identity have been shaped by

the country I live in. Our group of Western students had the opportunity to meet the founder of the scholarship, Roger N. Thompson, and visited the Canadian Embassy in London, England. In seeing the numerous cultural objects brought over from Canada on display, and viewing rooms representing every province, I felt very proud to be Canadian. Another highlight of our group's trip to London was an invitation to

meet one of the main patrons of the scholarship, Prince Andrew, at Buckingham Palace. It was a surreal experience, but one that helped me appreciate the exchange as not just a student venture, but a tradition that facilitates meaningful interaction between Canadian and Scottish culture. I will always remember my time in Scotland with great fondness and I hope that many more students will continue to partake in this extraordinary experience, or be inspired to go on an international learning experience of their own.

"ALTHOUGH I WAS AWAY FROM CANADA, I BECAME MORE AWARE OF HOW MY VALUES AND IDENTITY HAVE BEEN SHAPED BY THE COUNTRY I LIVE IN."

RESTRICTED ACCESS TO MEDICINES:

ONE OF THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES OF OUR TIME

QUESTION: IF A NEW DRUG IS DEVELOPED, BUT NOBODY CAN AFFORD IT, DOES IT STILL CURE DISEASE?

Alexander Pearson

Restricted access to medicines is one of the most pressing global issues of our time. Nearly a third of humanity does not have regular access to essential medicines, and in the poorest parts of Africa and Asia, this figure rises to over 50%. Of the 56 million people that die each year worldwide, more than 10 million perish from diseases that have available cures, compared to the 7.6 million who die of cancer. The reasons for the lack of access to medicines are diverse: high prices, lack of infrastructure (e.g. refrigerated storage for drugs, medical staff), and a lack of political will.

Contrary to common misconceptions, these issues are not limited to the developing world. According to the US Center for Disease Control, nearly 1 in 10 Americans cannot afford medications. The high costs are due to current patenting policies, which allow pharmaceutical companies to sell drugs at the maximum price they expect the market to absorb. This allows them to recover the money spent on research and development (R&D), which health economists estimate to be \$802MM USD/drug. However,

when prices are so exclusive that millions of people are being denied access to life-saving medicines, they are no longer justifiable.

Another major issue is that 1.4 billion people worldwide suffer from “neglected diseases,” such as dengue, lymphatic filariasis, and trachoma. Many of these diseases have no safe and effective treatments because the people who suffer from them do not constitute a sufficient market opportunity to attract commercial R&D. It is estimated that only 10% of R&D dollars go towards research into 90% of the world’s health problems.

As students, we are in a unique position to pressure policy makers at our universities and governments to change policies on patenting and research to make medicine more affordable to everyone and to encourage research into neglected diseases.



Photograph “Laotian Jungle” by Gurleen Chahal

A MANIFESTO FOR THE COSMOPHAGIC

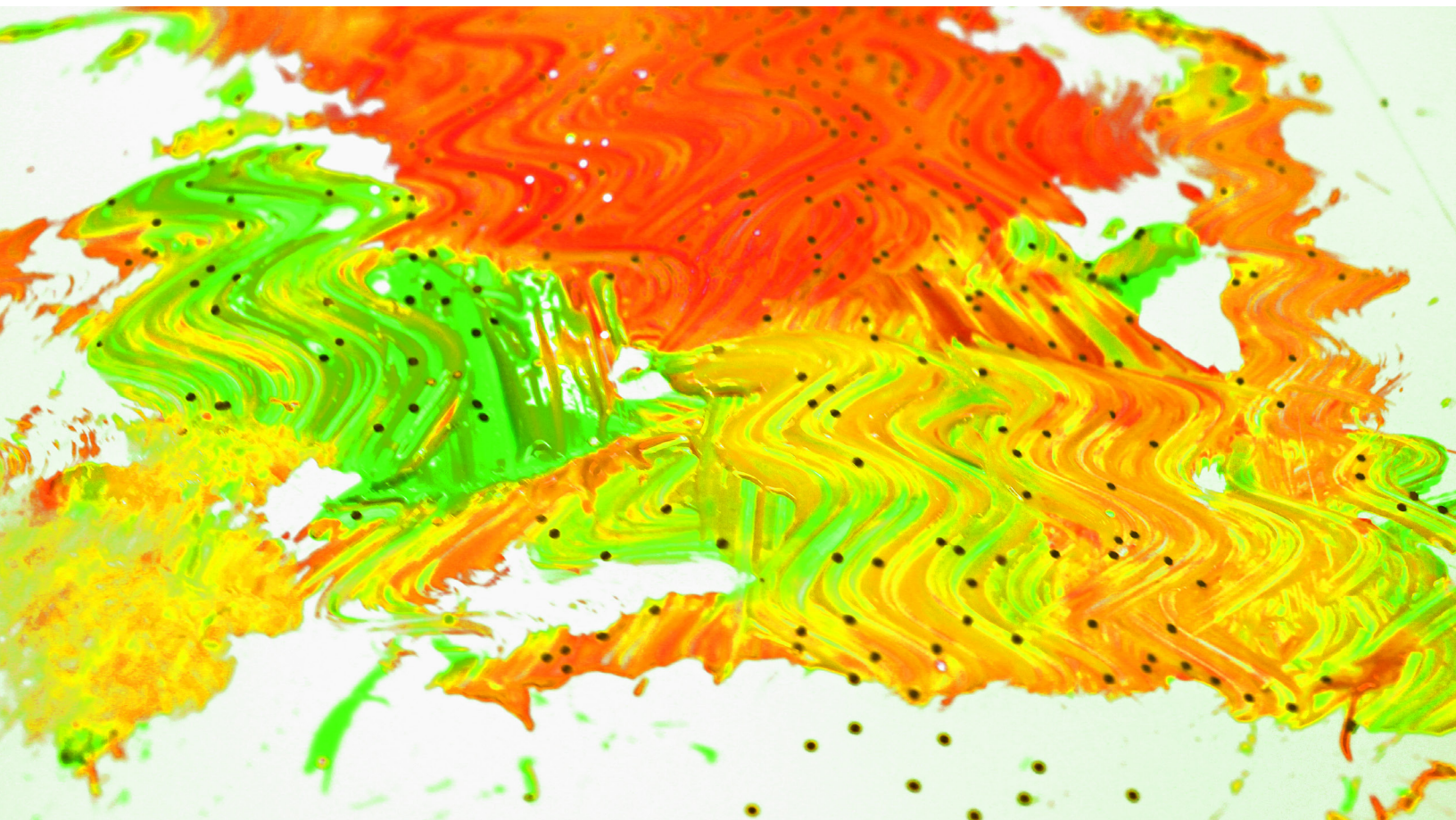
Emma Cohen

Wayne Koestenbaum, an American poet and cultural critic, first introduced the concept of ‘cosmophagy’ to me. In his book *My 1980s*, he quotes Susan Sontag as saying, “[c]orresponding to the primitive rite of anthropophagy, the eating of human beings, is the philosophical rite of cosmophagy, the eating of the world.” This phrase communicates something very complex that I had struggled to express: the desire and action of eating the world in great, unhesitant, enthralling gulps.

I find this idea of consuming the world both pleasing and spiritually desirable because it satisfies an overwhelming and sometimes painful longing for discovery – of life, art, culture, and experience. Cosmophagy means that I can line up cultural artifacts that I admire (books, poems, movies, songs, etc.), and then accumulate them into my being as if I am adding them to a personal museum collection. The

same principle applies to experiences; I picture myself as a physical container of moments that I think are important. As I collect them (or eat them) I become fuller.

To be cosmophagic is to be both a spectator of the world and one who participates in it. We are witnessing this chaotic life and also consuming it, somehow taking part in the madness. Human beings are constantly oscillating through time in a ceaseless, restless continuation, moving towards our own personal determinations of how we want our lives to turn out. We are creating ourselves as we search for identity, as we attempt to become ourselves. Being cosmophagic is beautiful because we intentionally and purposefully consume our world in a way we see fit. Through this conscientious consumption, we cultivate a self that faces both outwardly and inwardly.



Painting: "Awakening" by Naciza Masikini



VOLUNTEERS VOLUNTOLD

Noor Bakir

Photograph: "Impavid in Paris" by Gurleen Chahal

Departure day is arriving and after months of fundraising and preparing for your trip of a lifetime, good intentions and a sincere desire for altruism are not the only things to consider while packing.

Numerous North American non-profit organizations enter foreign countries to build infrastructure to help alleviate poverty, yet numerous citizens of these nations feel patronized by these initiatives. During an international service-learning trip to Kenya, I asked a teenager what he aspired to be, and without hesitation, he replied, "a doctor in America." This conveys that he sought happiness someplace other than his homeland. When volunteers display a sense of superiority to their community partners, they contribute to this dissatisfaction. Education, sustainability, and shared responsibilities are three principles of community service learning that collectively oppose cross-cultural arrogance.

To improve education, develop educators with varied skill sets who are able to criticize the curriculum. Learn the native language to communicate clearly with people who know the land best. Research your destination before you arrive. As educators, your ultimate aim is to provide citizens with the resources and the abilities that they need to be self-sustainable.

**"SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
IN ORDER TO CREATE LIFE
LASTING CHANGE EVEN AFTER
VOLUNTEER TRIPS END."**

Sustainable development projects reflect a commitment to the land. Service workers strive for the ideal of global citizenship, and this means that the work is a partnership, not a donation; a friendship, not a patronization.

Before volunteering for a task, ensure that you are mentally and physically trained for the work. International community service is overwhelming in the best way possible, so don't forget to maintain an open mind; yes, we have a responsibility to give back to the world, but the world has much to offer us, too. We must strive with humility for empathy and embrace our shared responsibilities.

The next time I visit another country and ask a local youth what they aspire to be, I hope that they enthusiastically reply, "a doctor" or "a teacher" and most importantly, an active citizen of their community. When choosing which organization to travel with after making the transformative decision to volunteer abroad, seek enriching experiences. You should be culturally educated. Know the country that you are visiting in order to know how to serve it. Support sustainable development projects in order to create life lasting change even after volunteer trips end. Lastly, work in solidarity with the locals of the country you are visiting and allow yourself to be a student of the world. So, as you pack and prepare for your departure, remember the general responsibility that must be shared among all of humanity.

AN INTERVIEW WITH **DR. ADRIAN OWEN:**

Linda Fei &
Kevin Fan

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS & RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Dr. Adrian Owen, one of Western University's most prominent scientists, is currently the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience and Imaging at the Brain and Mind Institute. He is spearheading areas of international neuroscience research. Dr. Owen's research combines neuroimaging technologies like MRI and EEG with neuropsychological tests to study brain-injured patients. He is also developing web-based tools that assess cognitive function, and studying the causes of neurodegenerative diseases.



Sketch: "Terra" by Alexis Nicole Pronovost

What introduced you to research, Dr. Owen?

One interesting course in neuropsychology was all that it took to launch Adrian Owen into a career in neuroscience. He says, "I found it fascinating that the way you can work out how a brain functions normally is to look at the deficits in people who have sustained brain injury. That's the whole cornerstone of neuropsychology." Dr. Owen focuses on studying patients who have disorders of consciousness, such as the vegetative state, which follows from brain injury. After observing that some of these patients had preserved some cognitive function, he developed tests that allowed them to communicate, simply by imagining specific actions. These thoughts inspire brain patterns that MRI and EEG machines are able to measure. Ultimately, scientists are able to derive the answers to "yes" or "no" questions from these machines, despite the person's vegetative state.

Please tell us about your experiences with your patient, Kate Bainbridge. Did your relationship with Kate inspire your research on the brain patterns of comatose patients?

Dr. Owen's team showed Kate Bainbridge, a coma patient, pictures of her friends and family while she was in a PET scanner. "Immediately, the fusiform gyrus [the area of the brain involved in facial recognition] lit up like a Christmas tree. This was incredibly exciting. This was in 1997. That was the first evidence we had that a patient who, behaviourally, appeared to be vegetative, could actually respond in a scanner to some kind of external stimulation." Dr. Owen tells us that 20 years later, Bainbridge maintains regular communication with him through email. Despite her physical disabilities, she is cognitively stable. Previous studies have shown a positive correlation between the strength of a patient's response in a vegetative state and their progress over the next 6 months.

Have you explored the potential of developing a language based on brain scan patterns, which would supplement the current binary “YES”/“NO” system?

“A lot of our work is currently devoted to that”, Dr. Owen starts off. He mentions that ideas such as imagining individual letters “are just fantasy right now”; communication relies on imaging technology to provide a “robust and clear signal” produced by the brain. He says, “We are moving towards trying to develop a system based on EEG, which would allow someone to move a cursor around a screen to spell rather than imagine different scenarios. Again, this is technically extremely challenging”.

For vegetative patients who are conscious, the choice of life or death can- for the first time in history- be put in the hands of the patient. Do you believe that the current diagnostic tools are robust enough to bear the gravity of this choice?

Dr. Owen explains that while the response can be very robust in many patients, “the problem is what we do with the answers we get”. While it would be ideal to place the decision in the patient’s hands, there are things to carefully consider, such as the patient’s mental capacity. Dr. Owen notes, “We are working very closely with the ethicists here and the philosophers at the Rotman Institute of Philosophy to try and unpack solutions to some of these questions.” Currently, we have been able to pose less legally controversial questions to patients, and their answers have successfully helped improve their quality of life. For instance, researchers ask “Are you in any physical pain?”, and if the patient answers “Yes”, then an analgesic can be administered.

In 2009, Dr. Owen launched Cambridge Brain Sciences (CBS) Inc., a web-based platform that assesses cognitive function through online tests of memory, reasoning, concentration and planning.

What are the benefits of using CBS as a platform for clinical and pharmaceutical trials?

Online cognitive testing is widely accessible. This accessibility reduces the cost and time of in-person neurological evaluations that are necessary to appraise the effectiveness of drug trials. At the same time, it collects a tremendous amount of statistical information for further scientific investigation.

Have you considered developing CBS into a brain training app?

Dr. Owen’s team conducted a study to test the effectiveness of brain training apps on the market today. 11, 600 participants trained with these apps for six weeks and took the Cambridge Brain Sciences’ test of cognitive function both before and after training. Although participants’ performance on app-specific exercises

improved, their overall cognitive function and intelligence showed no significant increase. More research and development is needed before CBS can be made into an effective brain training tool.

Dr. Owen focused his early research on understanding the functional relationship between the frontal cortex and the basal ganglia involved in dementia in Parkinson’s patients.

What are some important findings in Parkinson’s research?

Dr. Owen responds, “One of the most significant discoveries we have made is about heterogeneity.” In patients with Parkinson’s, while some will dement, others may not and show frontal lobe deficit or display only mild symptoms even at late stages of the disease. “It depends on very complex interactions between genetics and the pattern of breakdown of dopamine-producing cells in the brain.”

What piece of advice would you give to an undergraduate student interested in neuroscience?

“Ask the questions you’re really interested in,” Dr. Owen answers without hesitation. He suggests that being open to fields beyond one’s specialization is very important. Dr. Owen himself is a great example. Although his research roots are in neurodegenerative diseases, most of his energy today is focused on exploring brain injury and the vegetative state.



Sketch: “Mehuea” by Alexis Nicole Pronovost



THEY CALL ME STACY

Sama Al-Zanoon

Photograph: "Overtime (super fan)" by Michelle Bunton

"Semen! Coffee for Semen!" the barista calls to the crowd of customers. You can imagine the horrified look on my face as I accept this drink. Starbucks is a nightmare of mispronounced and misspelled names, which is ironic, since one of the main incentives behind writing down names is to create a welcoming environment. In that sense, society is much like Starbucks, where people ask for your name then completely disregard how to say it.

My name is Sama (phonetic pronunciation: S-emma; Arabic translation: sky). I often have to respond to noises vaguely resembling my name, some more horrifyingly inaccurate than others. Someone once asked me if my name was short for Samantha. Another asked if he could call me Sky. I struggled at first, trying to understand the reasons why people felt the need to anglicize my name. Did they lack effort to learn my name at all? Did it symbolize a deeper-rooted issue of respect?

Many other people westernize their names to ease the process of pronunciation. Noor becomes Nora, Rayyan becomes Richie, Anduena becomes Andy. However, names and identities are tightly intertwined; these name

alterations are a distortion of a person's identity. This simple idea of the pronunciation of a name illustrates the amount of respect for another person and his/her cultural differences. Anglicization of names is an issue of acceptance. It is an undeniable problem if people feel the need to apologize for being different. The apologetic behaviour demonstrates a form of assimilation into Western society – a deletion of an individual's origin.

**"THE APOLOGETIC
BEHAVIOUR DEMONSTRATES
A FORM OF ASSIMILATION
INTO WESTERN SOCIETY
— A DELETION OF AN
INDIVIDUAL'S ORIGIN."**

Canadians pride themselves on the idea that they celebrate the differences between cultures—it's what fosters our great multicultural society. However, the feeling of being strange always lingers for those with foreign names. The disregard for an individual's cultural background becomes a significant contradiction to the welcoming image Canada attempts to portray. For a country that's known for Tim Hortons, disregarding my name – and thus my identity – is feeling a little too Starbucks.

WHITE*

David Freedman

As a Jewish person, with the struggles of racial oppression becoming increasingly apparent to mainstream society, I have wondered where my place is.

Over the past few millennia, Jews have faced systemic persecution with recent examples including the Holocaust and North American universities' quota systems. The former involved the genocide of six million Jews, decreasing the global Jewish population from 17 million people to 11 million people. The latter involved mechanisms to decrease Jewish enrollment in higher education, including the explicit quota systems and concurrent introductions of discriminatory legacy preference and "character" essays. Even in 2015, researchers from Brandeis University in Massachusetts, found that three-quarters of Jewish undergraduates reported facing anti-Semitism in the previous year. The historical and modern context of institutionalized anti-Semitism cannot be overlooked in understanding how Jews fit into society.

While I face prejudice due to my Jewish identity, I also benefit from the socially assigned privilege of being white. For example, walking down streets at night, others are not fearful of me because of the colour of my skin. When entering job interviews, I am not immediately assessed with preconceived notions of my competencies or lack thereof in certain areas. However, there is a caveat that interviewers may judge me differently because of my very identifiably Jewish name. I am both considered white and "the other".


Where does this leave me? I am unsure.

I am Jewish and I am white, grappling with the many dimensions of privilege.



Photograph: "A Lone Alloy" by Gurleen Chahal



An abstract painting featuring bold, expressive brushstrokes in a variety of colors including black, pink, green, blue, and tan. The composition is dynamic, with large, overlapping shapes that suggest a sense of movement and depth. The background is a mix of these colors, creating a layered effect. The overall style is gestural and emotional, with a focus on color and form rather than representational accuracy.

Through an intuitive response to material, this painting attempts to visualize personal narrative and biography via an enigmatic methodology of aesthetic production. The ambiguity that falls between the subject and material reveals, or rather utilizes, the poetic potential within the language of painting.

Painting & description by
Michelle Buntton



Sketch: "Elements" by Alexis Nicole Pronovost

WH4T 4R3 YOU 4FR41D OF?

Robert Nanni

"I'm going to give you a math test now, please pull out a pencil and eraser."

Did that sentence bother you? Statistics suggest that 20% of you would say yes, and the reality of mathematics anxiety predicts even more of you would have been perturbed in some way. With the rapidly growing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, having a fifth of our future work-force fear math implies potential setbacks in areas of research.

Sufferers of math anxiety experience an unavoidable state of tension and trepidation when anticipating a math-specific task, even one as minor as listening to a math lecture or calculating the cost of an item. This worry places a load on the individual's working memory, allotting less brainpower to solving the problem at hand.

My Scholar's Electives research last year investigated first years' math anxiety levels in relation to the familiarity of the operations they were performing. Would you rather add than divide? Are you equally worried about both? The results show that addition is hardly an issue, but

any operation beyond that invokes an impending fear in the math anxious individual, rendering them unable and overwhelmed. Having learned addition first in grade one, we're likely more comfortable with this first contact between us and the math world. It is going past that point that makes math anxious individuals uneasy.

So maybe you are actually good at math, but too afraid of the content to properly use your frontal cortex resources. My research in this field explored some of the ways in which first year students are affected by math anxiety, and potential applications for education. The hope is to interrupt any development toward a math-fearing self. Why deter someone from finding the drug to cure cancer or HIV just because Calculus 1000A gives them a bout of anxiety or makes them anxious?



5 PLACES TO VISIT IN **LONDON**

Sophia Wen

Sculpture: "Chin Up" by Michelle Bunton

New to town? Here are some of my favourite more relaxed daytime activities accumulated over my past few years at Western.

Aroma Café

717 Richmond St.

A quiet, beautifully decorated, European-style café, Aroma is perfect when you want a study environment away from the cubicles and concrete of Taylor or Weldon. Attached to the fantastic Aroma Restaurant (which is also recommended if you're looking for a fancier meal), this café and bakery is a quaint, less franchised alternative to Starbucks (Note: this Aroma is not related to the Aroma Espresso Bar franchise).

Covent Garden Market

130 King St.

Located conveniently just across from Budweiser Gardens, Covent Garden Market is my favourite place to find affordable, varied food. Open daily, it features a collection of great local and international vendors, an outdoor farmer's market from May to December, bakeries, ice cream,

live music, seasonal events, and other food and gifts. I can never resist getting gelato or macaroons whenever I visit.

Thames Valley Parkway

I stumbled upon the trails surrounding the Thames River in first year while on a run and soon realized that London has one of the most extensive urban-trail systems in Ontario. Accessible from the neighbourhood near Elgin Hall, Western Rd and Oxford, and many other places along the river, these asphalt trails extend over 40 km and are connected to another 150 km of additional trails. The trails connect many parks, including Springbank, Harris, and Ivey Parks, and are perfect for long runs or bike rides. The parks and other vast grassy areas are ideal for picnics, Frisbee, or other outdoor activities during summer.

Museum London

421 Ridout St. North

The best part about this art, history, and cultural museum is that, unlike most museums, admission is by voluntary donation (perfect for when you're low on cash). The exhibits

feature local and other Canadian artists, artifacts from around Southern Ontario, as well as new shows. The museum also has many events, including a weekly art session every Sunday, special holiday galas, and free tours around the Thames River and downtown London.

The Root Cellar Organic Café

623 Dundas St.

Before visiting the Root Cellar, I never knew organic, locally grown, and even vegan food (though the menu also includes non-vegan and non-vegetarian options) could taste so good. With a large variety of extremely healthy but delicious meals and drinks, the Root Cellar is a fantastic café and restaurant in one. It also regularly holds events for book lovers, painting sessions, local musicians, and more.

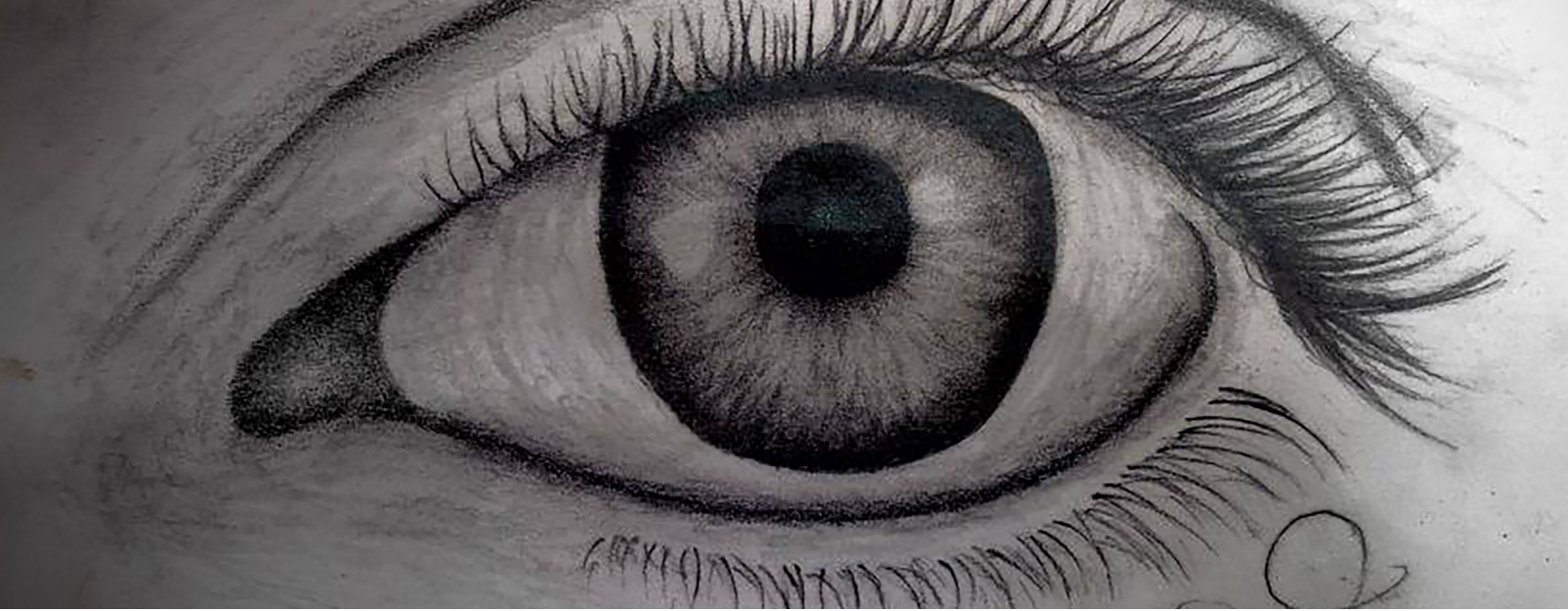
An abstract painting with thick, expressive brushstrokes in various colors including teal, green, yellow, pink, and black. The composition is layered and textured, with some areas appearing more saturated than others. A large black triangle is superimposed over the center of the painting, containing white text.

AN
EXCERPT
FROM

**CULTURAL
APPROPRIATION
& INTERSECTIONAL
IDENTITIES**

AN ESSAY BY
NACIZA MASIKINI

Painting: "Test (4)" by Michelle Bunton



Sketch: "Insight" by Hina Afzaal

Western society is constituted by people with a variety of cultural identities. Culture forms an integral part of one's identity, as it is the way in which one interacts with the world your environment. It is the collection of beliefs and behaviours which are indicative of certain group membership; it includes all factions of identity such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, etc. However, Western society functions as a white, middle class, hetero-patriarchal entity, therefore the cultures of minority groups are marked and 'othered'. This establishes a societal hierarchy, which governs intercultural relations. It places white, hetero-patriarchal cultures as the telos and Black cultures as the anti-telos. This hierarchy was founded by the logic of slavery, which made Black bodies inherently slaveable and thus defined them in opposition to white bodies (those who were inherently free) (Smith). As a result, Black bodies cannot escape the commodification of capitalism. This logic also established the mentality that Black bodies were inherently violable. This violation is not only physical (i.e. labour exploitation, Prison Industrial Complex (re Davis), violence sexual assaults, etc.), as it extends to the intangible components of a body such as one's identity. These violations are often invisible to non-Black bodies, as they are naturalised in society. This is achieved by positioning these violations as the only reasonable outcome for Black identities. This same logic was used during slavery to justify the rape of Black women, who were deemed to be "sexually aggressive wet nurses" (Collins), and animalistic. The white patriarchs imposed a cultural identity onto Black women. This imposition is a form of cultural appropriation. Within the framework of capitalism, as the force that "commodifies all its workers and the profits of one's work are taken by someone else" (Smith), cultural appropriation is the commodification of

identities. As it is, "the adoption or theft of icons, rituals, aesthetic standards, and behaviour from one culture or subculture by another" ("Cultural Appreciation or Cultural Appropriation?"). Furthermore, it operates in two ways; Imposition and Distortion. Imposition occurs when the dominant group creates cultural identity archetypes for a marginalized group. These archetypes are rarely based on fact but they are made salient and naturalised in society. They are then imposed on the marginalized groups with an expectation of fulfilment. Distortion occurs when the dominant group modifies (either through addition or deletion) a cultural aspect. Imposition is the most common form of cultural appropriation of the Black woman's identity.

Patricia Hill Collins notes two fundamental archetypes of Black womanhood created by the white patriarchy; the Mammies and the Hoochies (Collins). The Mammies are characterised by their ability to serve white interests and the Hoochies are characterised by sexual amorality (Collins). These archetypes were established because Black women are a threat to the white hetero-patriarchal order. Not only do they deviate from the order physically but also because they have the ability to create more deviating bodies. Therefore, these archetypes were created to control Black womanhood and are made salient by mass media. The cultural appropriation of Black womanhood through the lens of capitalism, is an oppressive force that has been used to justify and perpetuate the subjugation of Black women.

In this context cultural appropriation is oppressive because the bodies, who are being appropriated, do not benefit from this system. Based on the societal hierarchy, Black women have very little power. When we analyse the two most salient archetypes of Black womanhood in our



Painting: "Test (2)" by Michelle Bunton

society, The Black Lady and the Hoochie Mamma, it is apparent that they were enforced to regulate the behaviour of Black women. These images "represented a different set of [values for womanhood], than provided to their White counterparts" (Collins). The Black Lady "are represented as asexual, assertive, working women, who take jobs away from white men" (Collins). The Hoochie mammas "are gold-digging, sexually aggressive women" (Collins). While these two archetypes could not appear to be more different, they deny Black women the right to participate in certain spaces.

The fundamental similarity between the Hoochie Mamma and the Black Lady is the representation of masculinity/lack of femininity. The Black Lady is forced to be asexual because she does not live up to certain expectations of femininity. She is assertive, a trait historically attributed and appreciated in masculine identities (Collins). As a result, her assertiveness is viewed as anger and sass, this renders her unfeminine and makes it extremely difficult for her to find a male partner. The Hoochie Mamma is also assertive, but in this image it translates into sexual aggressiveness (Collins). Since the Hoochie Mamma enjoys sex and actively seeks it, she is viewed as being too masculine in both her gender and sexuality (Collins). The Hoochie Mamma is thus amoral and unable to live up to feminine gender ideals.

The Black Lady and the Hoochie Mamma's inability to

live up to traditional feminine gender ideals, renders them unattractive in White Heteropatriarchal society. White feminine identities are the telos of beauty. Not only do they deviate from femininity in their mannerisms, their appearance further disadvantages them. Beauty is defined in opposition, whiteness is beautiful blackness is not. This is why Black female features are not appreciated on Black bodies. When a white woman adopts a traditionally Black beauty characteristics, she is viewed as beautiful/trendy, while the Black woman is not (re: the comments on Ciara and Zendaya's dreads vs. Kylie Jenner and Beyoncé trying Kylie Jenner's lips). Her Black features deem her unattractive and in the work force unprofessional. There are regulations in the workplace, which function to control Black women's appearance. The US military for example, while they did not outright ban 'Black hair styles', "[they] restricted or banned cornrows, braids, twists and dreadlocks" (Byrd & Tharps), all of which are traditional Black hairstyles. The only hair style options left available for Black women in the military is either to perm their hair or wear weave. Black women not only have to conform to White beauty standards in order to be considered attractive but also if they want to excel in the workforce. When Black woman do not conform to these regulations, their 'unprofessional appearance' justifies employers' decisions either not to hire Black women, or to pay them significantly less.

While affirmative action appears to correct this, it

disadvantages Black women. The Black Lady, who has a job, is viewed to have taken jobs away from white men (and men in general) (Collins). Since they have to be hired, “it may be easier for them to find work but they are paid significantly less” (Collins). Black women are the source of cheap labour in the workforce and thus they are exploited. They are not compensated fairly for their work, and this system functions to perpetuate class differences associated with the social hierarchy (Young). As a result, career growth for Black women is highly restricted. In 2013, Forbes reported that the percentage of Black CEOs of fortune 500 companies was (1.2%), with Black women constituting 33% of that figure (Covert). On the basis of affirmative action, Black Ladies are viewed not to have accomplished their achievements on their merits. Their successes are doubted (Collins), simply because they are Black women and could not have had the intelligence to achieve. When they are recognized as intelligent they are viewed as acting white, or white washed. This is because intelligence is not a trait of Blackness. When a Black body is seen as intelligent their race is discredited, as they have transcended Black values and can no longer be viewed as Black. In contrast, the Hoochie Mamma does not encounter these problems because she does not have a job. The Hoochie Mamma is a welfare Queen of sorts, “she is happy to live off the state and take advantage of the hardworking people, who support and sustain the system” (Collins). She is ghettoized and deemed unintelligent and lazy because she does not have job. Her mannerisms render her unprofessional and either makes it impossible to get a good paying job or any job at all.

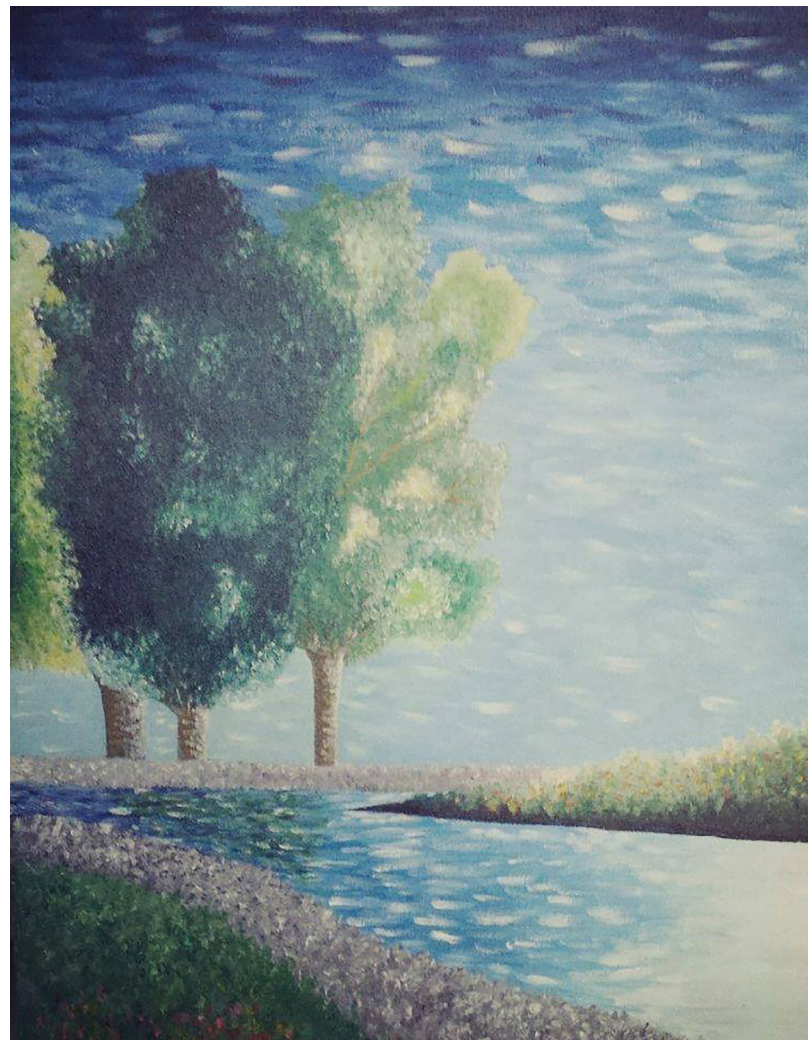
The Hoochie Mamma and the Black Lady archetypes were given currency in the mass media. These images were marketed to society and used as a means to justify and naturalise the restrictions placed on Black women. Not only do these images disadvantage them economically, it establishes the precedent that Black women are unable to achieve the telos and thus should not enjoy the privileges given to White bodies. Whenever Black women speak out against their oppression they are labelled as angry (because they are being too assertive) and are discredited as such.

Some may argue that these archetypes are not controlling images and that they are forms of appreciation. Since they are forms of appreciation, they cannot be oppressive simply because this is how Black women are naturally like. This argument fails because cultural appropriation and appreciation are fundamentally different. For this to have been a form of appreciation, these archetypes

would have had to be based on a deep understanding of Black womanhood. Additionally, Black women would have to be benefitting from this system. Since these archetypes were not created by Black women, it lacks the understanding of the Black female experience. Moreover, there would be more than two fundamental archetypes, as an appreciation system would not restrict the domains of Black womanhood. An appreciation system would not force Black women to police their bodies and force them to avoid certain mannerisms/expressions of identity. An appreciation system would be mutually beneficial and therefore, would allow Black women to speak on their own behalf, without being dismissed as angry or their race being discredited. Since these archetypes restrict the domains of Black womanhood, these archetypes are a tool used to oppress Black women. Therefore, the cultural appropriation of Black womanhood is a form of oppression.

References available here:

success.uwo.ca/scholars/scholars_electives/about/scholarly_scoop.html



Painting: "Chapman Valley" by Hina Afzaal

A POPPED BALLOON

POEM & ANALYSIS

Nicholas Pincombe



Homebound all by myself, walking downtown,
I heard a young mother talking about
Christmas with her two young, bright-eyed children,
“Santa will come in three months’ time - don’t pout!”

Hearing her say that name so late at night
Turned me into a helium balloon,
Floating off the cold, hard, dirty concrete,
Landing upon the warm side of the moon;

But...POP! The homeless boys pointed out that
Santa won’t come because, “North Pole’s too far!
And ‘cause we three don’t have a welcome mat.”
My heart: a dropped wine glass behind a bar;

They heard the noise, but I had walked away,
For home, to a lonely overnight stay.

Painting “Triad” by Naciza Masikini

The narrator seems to change in this poem. He is content to be alone at the beginning, but at the end, he is disturbed by his loneliness. Two metaphors convey his transformation: a balloon popping and a wine glass shattering. The onomatopoeia of “POP!” represents how rapidly the change takes place. In both cases, the original object is irrevocably damaged; this symbolizes the narrator’s disillusion after he learns that these homeless children do not believe in Santa Claus.

I express the children’s lost innocence in the following homophone: there are “two young” children who are “too young” to have lost their respective faiths. If Santa Claus represents kinship and affection within a family, if he is a symbol of hope and optimism, as I believe he is, then as these children literally reject Christmas, they symbolically reject these principles. The narrator interprets this situation as a profound manifestation of despair, which is powerful enough to break his heart.

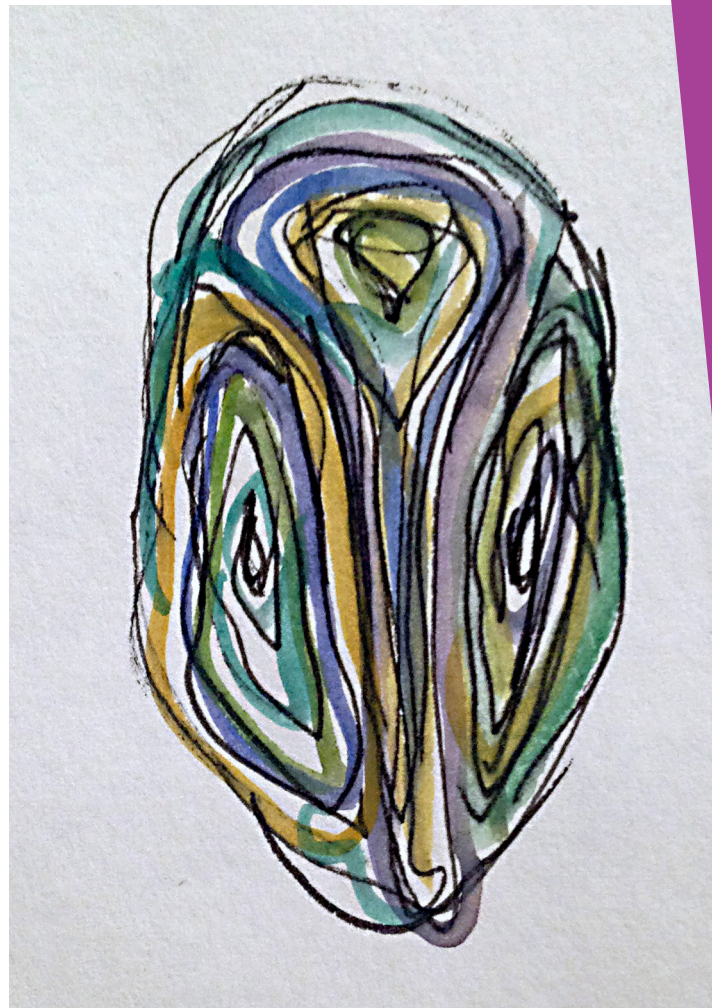
In his book *The Sickness Unto Death*, existential philosopher and Christian theologian Søren Kierkegaard maintains that despair is a mode of being in which one does not have a self. But what is a self? He says, “A human being is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity, in short, a synthesis.” Without either element, a person is incomplete, and emptiness will prevail in his soul. Therefore, the children are in despair, because they lack a sense of the infinite, of the possible. Hence they are experiencing the despair of necessity; that is, the despair of considering life to be futile yet mandatory.

The children’s realism is, however, somewhat positive, for neither does Santa Claus exist, nor should they expect expensive toys for Christmas. Being pragmatic about what is possible and what is not mitigates the grief of being a homeless child. This suggests that the narrator’s pre-existing unhappiness reveals itself as a response to the children. We do not know, after all, why he was “homebound all by [himself], walking downtown” on a September night. Perhaps he is projecting his demons onto the children.

The narrator’s heartbreak makes sense in terms of inordinate individualism: the tendency to focus exclusively on oneself.

Although he empathizes with the suffering children, the narrator ignores them because he is contemplating his lonely night ahead. When the family “heard the noise” of his heart shattering like a wine glass, they notice him on the sidewalk. He could have told the children that Santa Claus is real, thereby encouraging them to hope for a better future. Yet he walks past without saying a word. Instead of participating in the family’s evening, the narrator prefers to remain concealed in the shadows, all by himself.

Therefore, this poem teaches us to step out of our comfort zones and engage with the world. Autumnal leaves are beautiful, and we should look at them. Christmas morning is magical, and we should look forward to it. Young children are precious, and we should protect them from the harsh realities of this world for as long as we can.



Sketch “Untitled four” by Michelle Bunton



FOR HAMAIIKA

A CREATIVE PIECE

Photograph: "Shadow's Reach" by Gurleen Chahal

Gurleen Chahal

It is always 4:11 in the living room.

Small fingers reach upwards for the hands on the clock. She tries and tries and tries, but cannot reach. *Still* too short, *always* too short. The room's dark curtains rest thick, heavy, and closed around her. There is no way to tell if there is light beyond the room and she can't tell the time at all.

A shout comes from the other side of the wall, shrill and grating: "Mr. Dokken! Mr. Dokken!" Irritation slithers up her spine and creases her cherub face; the thickest curtains in this world couldn't block Old Yapper's voice from the house.

The motionless clock had once sat atop Yapper's mantle, until she found it laying on the geezer's lawn, hiding behind a 'For Sale' sign. Daddy had bought her the clock for her eleventh birthday, after an afternoon of sweets and soccer, back when her smile had been as light as the balloon she'd held. Yapper's incessant wails about how Daddy spoiled her ("Matthew Dokken, control your demon!") had gone unheard by the cheerful duo.

They had bought the clock because it was colourful and pretty and she pointed and he paid. His teasing eyes had looked at her warmly as he called it "the clock that never tocked" and then joked that she should follow its example. She had responded by promptly sticking out her tongue and claiming that he wasn't very punny. He had laughed and ruffled her hair (a flaming auburn that perfectly matched his), and then she ran into their living room, across a lawn stitched with lurid reds and murky browns, with him chasing close behind.

It was always just the two of them on her birthdays. She still remembers that afternoon; after he trapped her in his arms, they had mounted the clock upon their mantle and played Spies together. "*My code name was Casper when—*"

The sound of a lock clicking open interrupts Hamaika's memories. It seems that Daddy managed to escape Yapper.

He forcefully flings open the door, slamming it into the wall, but she is too familiar with this version of him to flinch. She plasters on a hesitant, overly bright smile.

She tries, "How was your day?"

But, as per usual, he doesn't bother answering her. He just staggers towards the whiskey on the mantle. Tears should come, but they don't anymore. She does not want to blame him. "*It's the bottle's fault, not his.*"

She approaches him carefully, slowly stepping in front of him to wrest the bottle from his clammy hands. *Let go*, she wants to say, but the words are lodged in her throat, like how liquid is lodged in his. When she struggles to loosen his grip, she sees that his eyes are as glassy as the bottle that frequents his mouth.

She tells a joke, to make him laugh with her like he used to, but he doesn't even smile. Instead, his face reddens with rage, and he throws the bottle at her head. She thanks her reflexes (honed from numerous rounds of playing Spies) for being able to avoid the shower of shards as the projectile shatters against a wall. She grimaces as gold rivers shriek on muted wallpaper.

It seems he had one too many... and then eleven more.

She knows he didn't mean it, but she still tells him to apologize. In response he just stares; he just *keeps* staring at the photo on the mantle. Then he turns his gaze next to the photo, where there is a clock that has long since lost its luster. She sidesteps just in time as he roughly pushes the frozen face down to the floor and starts beating it with his bare hands, screaming with a terrible fury.

Eventually, he tires himself out. He crawls shakily to the wall, meandering around the mangled things that decorate the crimson carpet. He slouches back against the mantle with his knees drawn up, his face sloppy and sticky with

liquid. He does not meet her gaze, and his attempts at saying her name are slurred. Having finished the last bottle, his bruised hand reaches up pathetically for another.

She thinks bitterly, *"it is so messy in here, but you can always find a bottle."* She steps over to his feeble form and looks at the unframed photo of the woman with almond eyes and inky hair. It hurts to look at the mother she never knew, but it hurts even more to look at her father, so she turns to look at what is left of the clock.

Although cracked in many ways, the face still shows 4:11. Forever frozen, forever trapped. She wishes the damned clock would continue moving; maybe then her father would, too.

"But broken things never forget their cracks."

Initially, she had thought she might get to meet her mother, but she has since learned that she can't leave this room. Only one person ever enters, but he sees nothing beyond a photo and a bottle. She wonders if she might have grown to be as pretty as the woman from the photo he clings to whenever he cries. She'll never know now, of course, because she is as stuck as her father: a man with graying hair and a face as fractured as the clock.

"Time is a cruel fate."

And so she lingers with her quiet steps, trapped in a room that is overcrowded with fragmented memories, empty bottles, shattered glass, and one empty, shattered man.

"My code name was Casper when we played Spies. Daddy had said that I walk so quietly, he wonders if I'm even here." She looks at the face again, and she covers her ears because it is still screaming 4:11.

"I am eleven forever."

Hamaika is not the only one who sees what happens in the living room. An older woman watches from the other side of thick curtains, where the light is so bright it burns.

The mother stands waiting with an emptiness between her fingers, where a smaller palm should be.

Forever she begs,

"Please let her be with me."

Writer's Notes: *Hamaika* means both infinite and eleven in Basque.



Photograph: "Illuminate" by Naciza Masikini

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