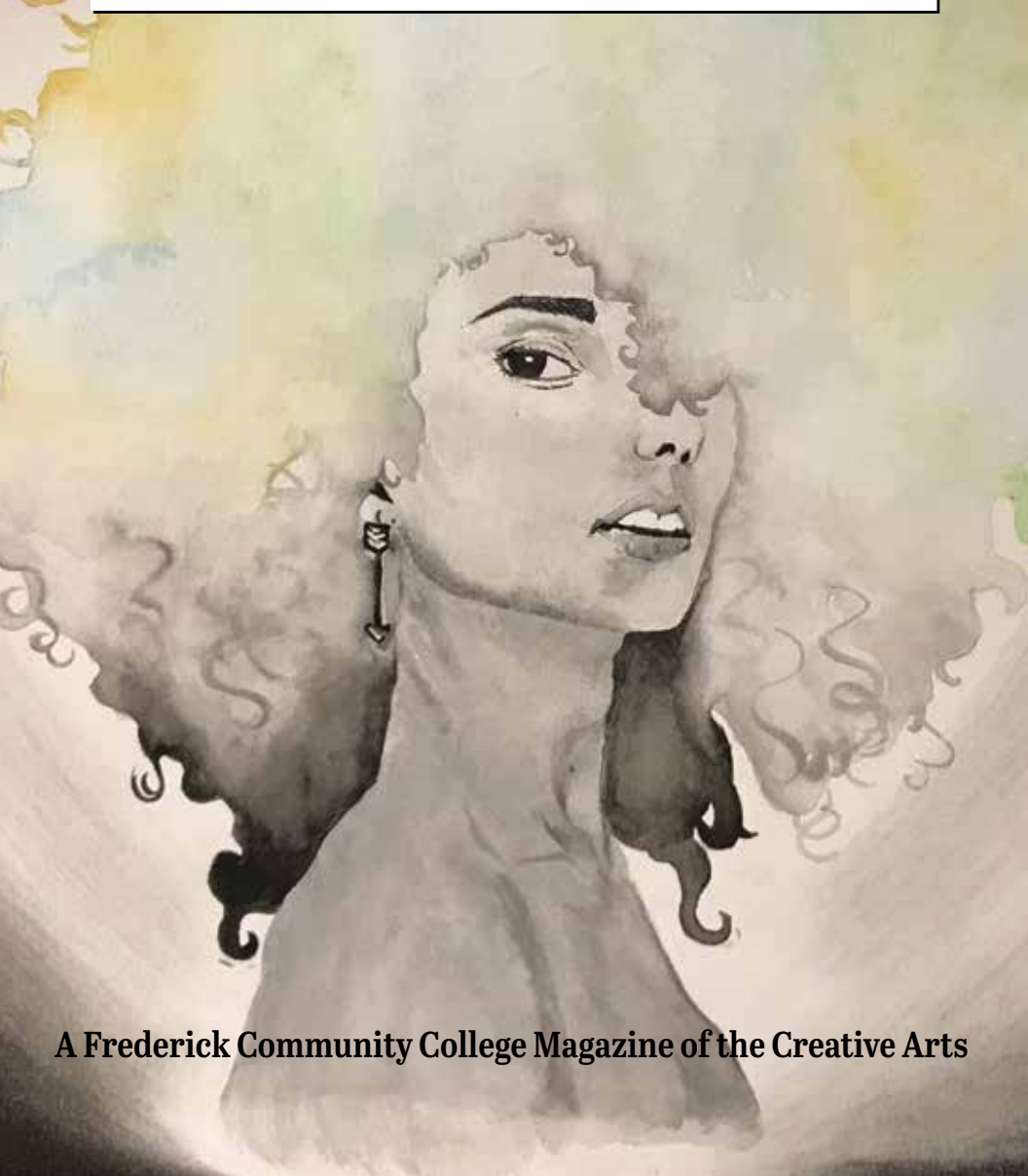


38TH EDITION

# Tuscarora REVIEW 2018



A Frederick Community College Magazine of the Creative Arts

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A Frederick Community College Magazine of the Creative Arts



*Chrystal Dickerson, Element of Freedom – Painting*



Francis Garcia, Owl – Drawing

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of the Frederick Community College magazine of the creative arts, the Tuscarora Review, is to provide an annual showcase for the outstanding literary and visual art created by the College community.*

**Submission information for the 2019 edition is available at:**  
[www.frederick.edu/tuscarorareview](http://www.frederick.edu/tuscarorareview)

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The 2018 edition of the *Tuscarora Review* has been a pleasure to put together and I am proud of what we as a community have created. This is the 38th annual printing of the magazine and we are working to make each year's possibilities greater than the last. Next year, submissions will be accepted electronically, which should help increase the number of entries and make involvement easier for those who do not visit campus regularly. Receiving more submissions means a larger pool of work to choose from and a better finished product, so we look forward to getting even more than ever!

In addition to this year's creative submissions, we have included an interview with Social Science professor John Sheldon. The design of the magazine was handled by our own graphic design students and we are pleased with the quality of their hard work. I would also like to extend special recognition to Keli Cleveland for designing this year's magazine layout. Finances are one of the primary concerns when allocating space for written works and art, and we could not include all of the submissions. However, the associate editors and I have done our best to include the selections we feel reflect well on the college community.

Our editors have been working since the start of the semester on selecting pieces for this edition and we are honored to take on the responsibility of making those decisions. This process is about a lot more than accepting or rejecting entries, as even those pieces that were approved all needed to be edited. It is the talent and ambition of FCC students that makes this magazine possible. Last year was the first edition to be completely student-led, and we are proud to continue that fledgling tradition.

My gratitude goes out to the graphics students who have turned a pile of submissions into what you see now. I believe that many parts of life, everything from paved roads to clear skies to pre-sharpened pencils, do not draw attention to themselves if they are serving their purpose well, and for every page of this issue that goes smoothly, someone has put time and effort into making that so. Additionally, I would like to thank Professor Jones for being a guide through this process for our editors. His experience and insight have been invaluable, and we are happy to have had the chance to work with him. It has also been a pleasure to work with Professor Sheirer, whose professional opinion has been integral to making this magazine possible, both from her leadership of the graphics classes to her vision for the finished product.

Once again, the *Tuscarora Review* is only as good as those pieces submitted to it. This magazine has existed for decades and I hope it will continue to receive support for decades into the future. To that end, please submit written and visual art! We serve no greater purpose than giving FCC a reason to be proud of its students' ideas.

— Jeremy Rock

# DEDICATION

We dedicate this edition of the *Tuscarora Review* to  
Dr. Michael Scott Cain (December 31, 1939-January 30, 2018).

A Vietnam-Era veteran, Dr. Cain attended college on the GI Bill following his tour in the US Navy in 1960. Following studies at Hunter College, Loyola University, and Towson University, Michael completed his PhD at the University of Maryland College Park. He devoted his career to his two great loves—teaching and writing. After 32 years at the Community College of Baltimore County, we were fortunate to have Dr. Cain join the English Faculty at FCC as an adjunct for more than ten years.

A popular literature professor, Dr. Cain continued to write fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, as well as his contributions as a literary and music critic.

Dr. Cain is missed by his family, friends, and colleagues.



*Photo of Dr. Cain provided by Susan Cain*

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☀ **Editor's Choice:** selections in fiction, poetry, two dimensional, and three dimensional art are judged according to emotional and intellectual depth, strength of observation and imagination, energy, freshness and precision of language, and/or technical accomplishment.



*John Nelson, Bonsai #1 – Photograph*

## INHERITANCE

*Sarah Bigham*

My grandmothers, they  
live within me, from  
both Virginias,  
long ago.

I feel we met, in  
the gloaming, they  
shared their features, and  
their smiles.

Now I teach, building  
skills and soothing  
souls, passing genes  
another way.

One day, they  
both will greet me, and  
we will all be  
finally home.



*Debbi Jacobi, Narrative – Drawing*

# FLOWERS

Jeremy Rock

Snow falls on Ohio back roads, crescent moon illuminating the white backdrop on which mottled evergreens are painted. There are no streetlights, no power lines, only unassuming black asphalt enduring the weather. The mountaintops and valleys are thoroughly covered, but the salt on the road keeps it mostly clear. A dark blue mid-80s Honda Prelude gleams through the slushy mist, its headlights the only unnatural light in the faint glow reflected by the snow. A man is driving, his arms stiff and fingers tightly wrapped around the wheel. He is wearing a stained Oxford shirt, the top few buttons left undone, and looks directly ahead with glazed-over eyes fixated as if unconcerned with ice or the curves of the road. His lip is raw from chewing it along the way and he has a knot in his throat, the kind that grows waiting for a jury verdict or the tail end of a funeral procession. I've gotta do this, he thinks, I've gotta make it back. His eyes soften, and he swallows. I can't let her think I've forgotten.

Two years prior, he had driven on this road through much heavier snow. On that day, the chill was the kind that bites the inside of a person's lungs until it drowns in a warm bed or drink, and the roads were slick with weeks of melted-and-refrozen ice. Every mile or two, the car would pass a house decorated for Christmas, glowing with cheer or pretense or tradition. The travelers in that car did not share those sentiments.

"Do you really think I'm not trying as hard as you are to make this work?" Jamie shouted, looking directly at him. "Do you really think I don't care? I can't believe this." The man listened and looked straight ahead at the road, watching snowflakes like kamikazes diving onto the windshield and grille. "I moved out here, knowing no one, so I could be with you. I left my friends and my job for you, and you think you can tell me I'm not committed enough? What else do you want from me? What else do you still need to feel like I'm doing my part?" she asked, her eyes focused and lips trembling with need for an answer.

"I don't..." Ben said, sighing. "I don't know." His shoulders were tense, and his face was pained. "We've lived together for what, three years now? Four? I know how important to you I am, how important to you we are, but I want a more outward recognition of that." His tone softened. "And you're saying it yourself. You're effectively as committed as you could be. Why is it such a big deal for that to be formal?"

*"His eyes soften,  
and he swallows.  
I can't let her think  
I've forgotten."*

"Why are you so fixated on marriage? We've talked about this! I'm not ready for someone else's name, I'm not ready to be a wife." She scraped her tongue with her teeth as if the word tasted foul. "I'm just not! You know I love you and I want to be with you, but it's suffocating to think about my identity being erased like that! Ben, I just want to be able to exist outside this timeline of marriage and kids and a first house and then some tired blur until retirement, and I feel like once we're married that gets put on a stubborn, inescapable timer. Don't you want more than that?" She wrung her hands. She had been resting her feet on the dash before all the arguing, but now she was small and kept her feet to the ground.

Stunned, Ben asked, "You don't want kids . . . ever?" He completely stopped looking at the road and turned to her. "I thought you wanted them just as much as I did. Not right now, maybe, but—" He looked away from her, back at the road. "I'm just so afraid of missing out. Of not being around for their firsts, their loves, their graduations, all of it. I want to see our children find what we've found." His voice was on the verge of tears. Jaime put a hand on his thigh.

"They will, just not yet," she said, a warmth restored to her voice. "You want to be the best dad to those kids you can be, right? If you want to have stories for your kids, lessons, life experience to guide them through whatever happens, you've gotta experience it all yourself. What they go through will be different, but the best parents try to understand their kid's world and there's no way you can do that if all you ever do is have kids, right?" Jamie looked over at Ben's face and he was crying in silence, letting out stifled short breaths over tightly pursed lips.

The sound of wipers against glass punctuated the quiet, and snowfall washed over the windshield in thin, hazy waves that marked the heartbeat of the storm.

"You know what?" he said, voice shaking. "You're onto something. You and I are building a life for the kids just by being together. We'll get there." He took her hand in his and kissed it.

"Every day we're together is a little bit more we can give them," she said, squeezing his hand and smiling. The snow was whipping harder against the glass, and the headlights' beams were splintering into shadows across the road ahead. "This is just like us, huh? Fighting and everything's suddenly okay again. Well," Jamie told him through an incredulous smile, "I'm happy this is how it is. Every time I have doubts about you, we end up here. Safe and certain."

The tires needed only to slide a dozen feet off the road for the car to end up in that tree. With the roads patched with ice and especially at night, it could

have happened to anyone. At that high a speed, the spinout crushed the passenger side, and the car was not found until the following morning.

Two years later, the man is driving the Prelude. Morning is spreading into the sky, amber dawn crawling over the horizon, and the snow-covered ground shines bright back into the cloudless air. Shortly after the sun fully comes over the mountains and hangs contentedly over the valley, Ben arrives. He gets out of his car, one hand on the roof to deliberately pull himself out, and stands. His legs are weak and no one has shoveled the grounds this morning, but he did not come to wait. Ben goes to the trunk and pulls out a bouquet of asphodels, brilliant white stars like snowflakes. He limps up the mausoleum steps and kneels before an inscribed monument, laying down the flowers. In his thin shirt and jeans, he shifts his weight and sits on the snow-covered granite. He folds his hands together, puts his head down, and talks to the stone, his breath visible in the morning light. His chest shudders and he smiles. "I made it. I'm here for you now," he says aloud, then pauses. "We'll get there." The wind does not notice.



*John Nelson, Arm Vase – Photograph*





Abraham Moreno, *Beast* – Illustration



Abby Mills, *Beast* – Illustration



# A GRAVEYARD ON THE HILL

*Christopher Rahman*

**F**our new graves needed to be dug. An arduous task for the gravedigger, even without frozen ground that could dull any shovel. But the weather had turned, as there was no longer a chill in the air. There was a bite. Still, the gravedigger set about his task as usual though his grip was tighter, and he dug with an unsuspected vigor. Death may not wait, striking a person whenever she pleases, but these four would have to. The priest had brought them to the hilltop church for the service and the burial. There were two adults and two children. The priest had left as they had arrived. With the entire family gone, there was no one left to mourn. But more importantly for the church and the priest, there was no one left to pay.

The priest walked away from the comfort of his church after a brief time. He wore a thick, wool coat and prayed it was enough to hold back the cold. His coal black hair, slicked back, was hidden beneath a wool cap, and his usually pale skin was flushed red in the wind. The cold of winter's breath had no mercy. He scanned the church's substantial graveyard. The gravedigger was there most days, even when no graves needed to be dug, tending to all those long forgotten by the world above. The priest found him, eventually. Even amongst the dead, the man did not stand out. He was dressed to fight the winter air, his large coat disguising his slight frame. He looked to be middle-aged, his brown hair streaked with grey. The rough leather of his skin revealed a man who spent too much time in the sun. His eyes betrayed his youth. They were a piercing blue, bright. The priest's eyes, which were coloured the dark grey of storm clouds, were dull in comparison.

"Good morning," the priest said, no conviction in his words. The gravedigger had stopped his work. The priest looked at the four coffins, two were adult-sized and the others were much smaller. "They were found by the roadside, their wagon ransacked. A family traveling somewhere from some place." The gravedigger nodded.

"There wasn't any sort of identification on the bodies, so we couldn't contact any family. No one's going to visit them," the priest continued looking around, as if searching for someone, then looked back at the gravedigger. "It's rough out here. You can just throw them all into one grave if you need to. No one would care."

"I would." The gravedigger went back to his grim task.

The priest let out a breath. "God can be cruel." He turned and walked away.

The gravedigger said nothing. His hands gripped the shovel tighter. His jaws clenched. He should be unaffected by the priest's callous attitude, had faced it almost every day and even understood it. The priest had to take care of his congregation. He could still alter their lives. The dead were dead and would

always be. It made sense. At least it should, but the gravedigger had dealt with the dead most of his life and he knew all those gone had been a person, alive in memory or not. So even in the bitter cold, four graves would be dug. The gravedigger's shovel barely broke through the frozen ground. The graves would take time, so the gravedigger prepared for a long day. It was easy, with only the dead for company, to get lost within oneself.

The gravedigger had been a farmer's son, in a farmer's family. He had two older brothers, and they all ran the farm together with their father. Too young



*Marco DeLauri, Possessed Things – Illustration*

to work the fields, the young man spent much of his time with his mother. He would help with supper, with washing and cleaning but he would always find a way to escape outside. The young man would search for his father with the impatience of youth, ready to be like his brothers. His father would act surprised and praise the boy's initiative, giving him a small task as a reward. But the minute the boy would look away, his father would grab his son and carry him back to the house, laughing the whole way. Most days were like that, filled with the simple joy of life. Then the war came.

The young boy was twelve, the child in him fading more and more each passing season. Soon he would be fully grown, but not soon enough. His father and brothers enlisted, leaving him and his mother to care for the farm. They worked hard for a couple of years, living a quiet life if not a luxurious one. They enjoyed each other's company, as only a mother and son could. The sickness came when autumn was fading. His mother grew weak quickly, unable to do the smallest chore. They had to hire an old farmhand. He wasn't the smartest man and his age was catching up to him, but he worked hard.

The young man knew his mother's time was almost over. Where there was a laugh, was now a rasping breath. Where there was a smile, was now a painful grimace. The young man could do nothing. There was no medicine, no cure for this curse. She passed quietly in the night. Her son started the rough task of digging the frozen dirt. He was joined soon after by the only other soul he knew, the old farmhand, the man too old not to understand grief.

They buried her after a full day of digging. The young man marked the grave with a makeshift cross he made by tying together two pieces of wood. He knelt next to the cross, his tears falling on the fresh dirt. The farmhand put a hand on his shoulder. "God can be cruel," he said. The only words of comfort the boy would receive.

The young man's father and brothers never returned. Whether they died, were captured, or just left, the boy did not know. All he knew was that everywhere he looked, he saw his mother. Chopping vegetables. Hanging his wet clothes, muddy from the creek. Smiling at something his father said. Laughing at a stupid thing he and his brothers had done. And then she was not there. He knew he could not stay, not on that farm, where the pain was fresh each morning. His pain made a cage of his home. He left.

The gravedigger stopped, nowhere near finishing his task. Maybe it was the cold that had stopped him, or the heaviness of loss framed inside those tiny coffins. The gravedigger tossed aside his shovel, careful not to hit a single headstone. He stomped towards the church. Less than halfway across the graveyard, he stopped, letting out a long sigh. The gravedigger turned to walk back when he saw a young woman approaching, a child walking with her. The woman was almost covered from head to toe, only a sliver of her face was bare. Her hazel eyes almost invisible as she squinted against the wind. Her small, delicate nose and rounded cheeks unusually pink. A small, black curl peeked from under her hat. She smiled as she pushed her daughter forward. She was

much the same as her mother, except her eyes, which were a clear blue.

"Daddy, we made you some food to keep you warm," the girl said, handing over a small container. The gravedigger smiled.

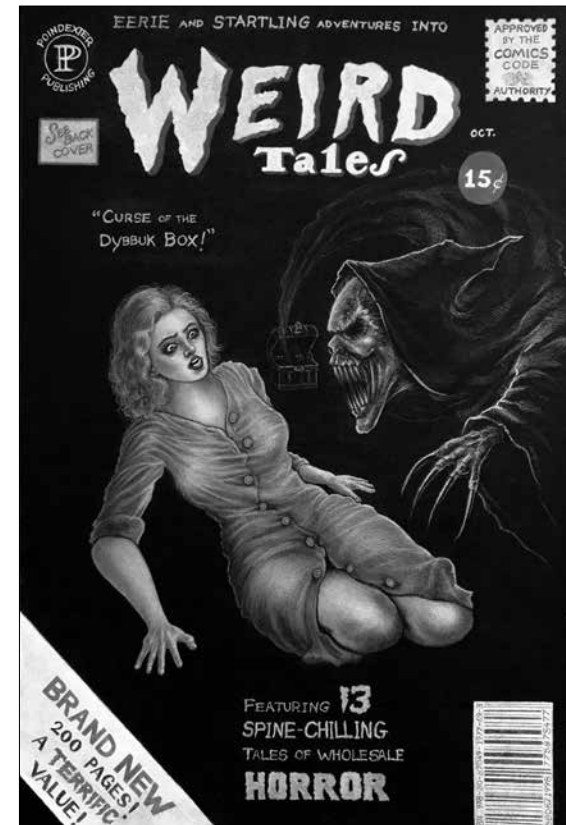
"Thank you, sweetheart, now go inside and warm up." He motioned towards the church. His daughter smiled, gave a quick nod, and bounced towards the church. He looked at his wife.

"Really, thank you."

"It was her idea, I would've left you in the cold. I know how you love the outdoors." She smiled. He nodded towards his daughter making her way towards the church at her own pace.

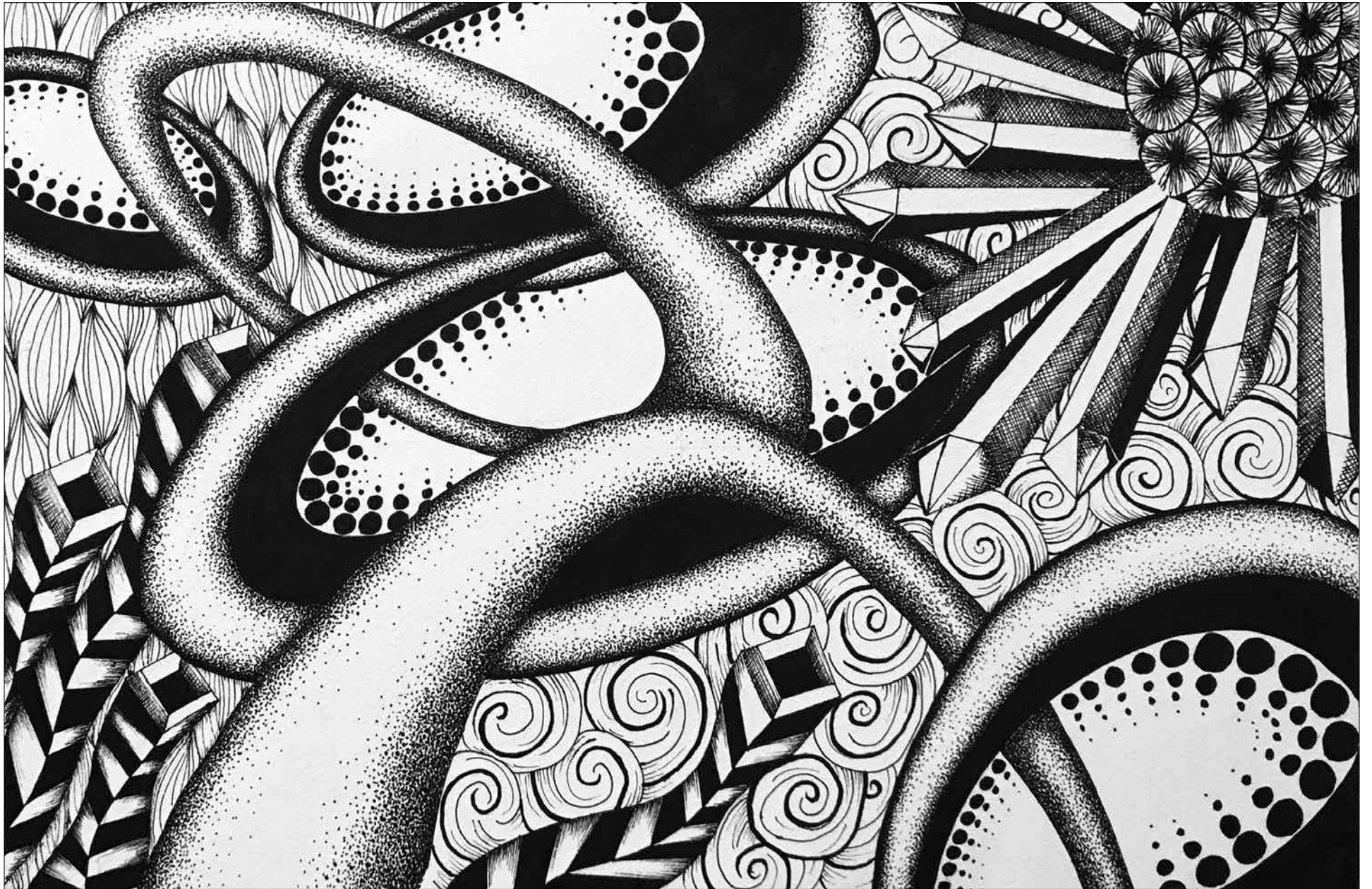
"Sorry, I think she loves it too." He said, and nodded towards the church. "You should get inside too, warm up before you head back."

After a quick kiss on the cheek, she did just that. He watched them go into the church then resumed his work. God can be cruel, he thought. But He can also be kind.



*Brandon Stewart, Possessed Things – Illustration*





*Paola Dumadag, Crystal Orbit – Drawing*





*Brandon Stewart, Childhood Memory – Illustration*



# THE DAISY

Ronan Bogley

**B**oom! A few yards above the trench where Private Williams was crouching, a mortar exploded, sending shrapnel in all directions.

The date was August 30th, 1944. The Allies were fifteen days into Operation Dragoon in Southern France, fighting to secure ports on the French Mediterranean coast.

Private Williams and a handful of his battalion were currently pinned down by German artillery. The air was filled with the stale, acrid smell of gunpowder, and the whirring sound of bullets flying past them had become no more than a white noise. The rain had turned the trench into a pit of mud.

Williams noticed that there was an opening amidst the gunfire, so he popped his rifle above the trench wall and fired, his bullet striking an oncoming German soldier in the head, his helmet splitting open as he fell motionless onto the grassy plain. When Williams ducked back down, his eyes fell on something that he had not noticed before. Gazing at him from the precipice, some of its roots hanging over the side, exposed to the cold air, was a single, solitary daisy.

When Williams saw it, he thought back to a time and place where the fields were a place of blissful solitude, and not the place of nightmares and machines. He found himself returned to a time about twelve years gone, when he was eleven years old and lived in upstate New York with his parents and brother and sister. The three siblings went to the same elementary school, and after the final bell had rung, he would take the one-mile trek with his siblings back to the house. If the weather was nice, they would often stop for hours in the wide field by their house.

On this day, spring had come into full effect. He could hear the birds chirping, the insects buzzing, and the emerald leaves whispering in the light breeze. He could see the yellow rays of the midafternoon sun cascading through the trees, to fall and melt into pools of light on the lush green grass below. He could see the bees racing to pollinate the flowers, and the wonderful blooms that lasted but a blink of the eye decorating the trees, their petals even now being carried off into the field. Finally, he saw himself and his two siblings, one of their hands in each of his.

They walked to the top of the hill, the breeze blowing his sister's long hair in front of her face. Here they stood, taking in all the palette that met their eyes. Simultaneously, they dropped to the ground and rolled down the green mound. When the boys came to the bottom, they started to laugh but when they got up to walk to the top again their sister was still lying face down. Williams walked over to her, gently rolled her over, and saw that she was crying. There was a scrape on her knee. He held her head against his shoulder and looked for something to cheer her up. That's when he found it. A daisy.

Boom! Another mortar strike made Williams come to. The sound of the German forces was closer than before. He looked again at the daisy. Then, with tears in his eyes, he gingerly reached out and plucked it. He put it to his lips and whispered, "I love you."

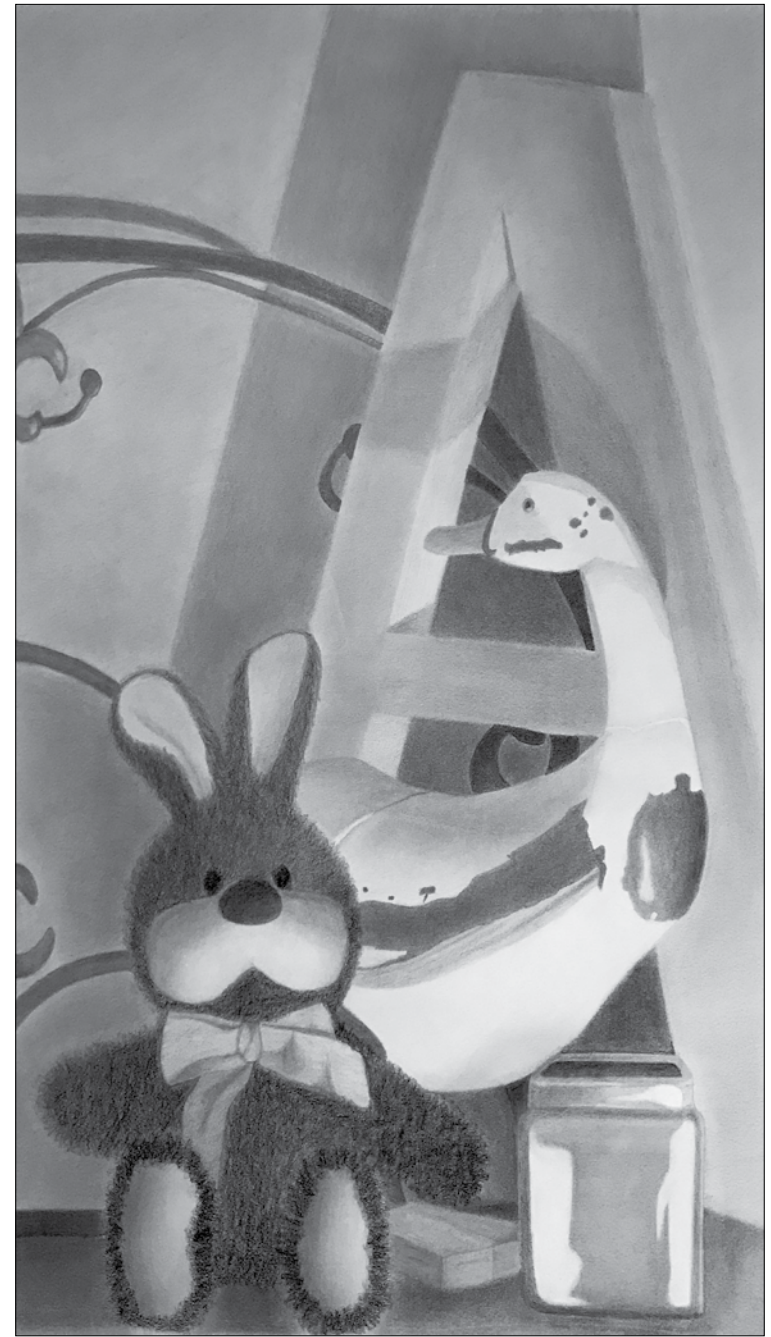


Robert Taylor, *Beast* – Illustration





April Hopkins, *Oxymoron: Savage Beauty* – Illustration

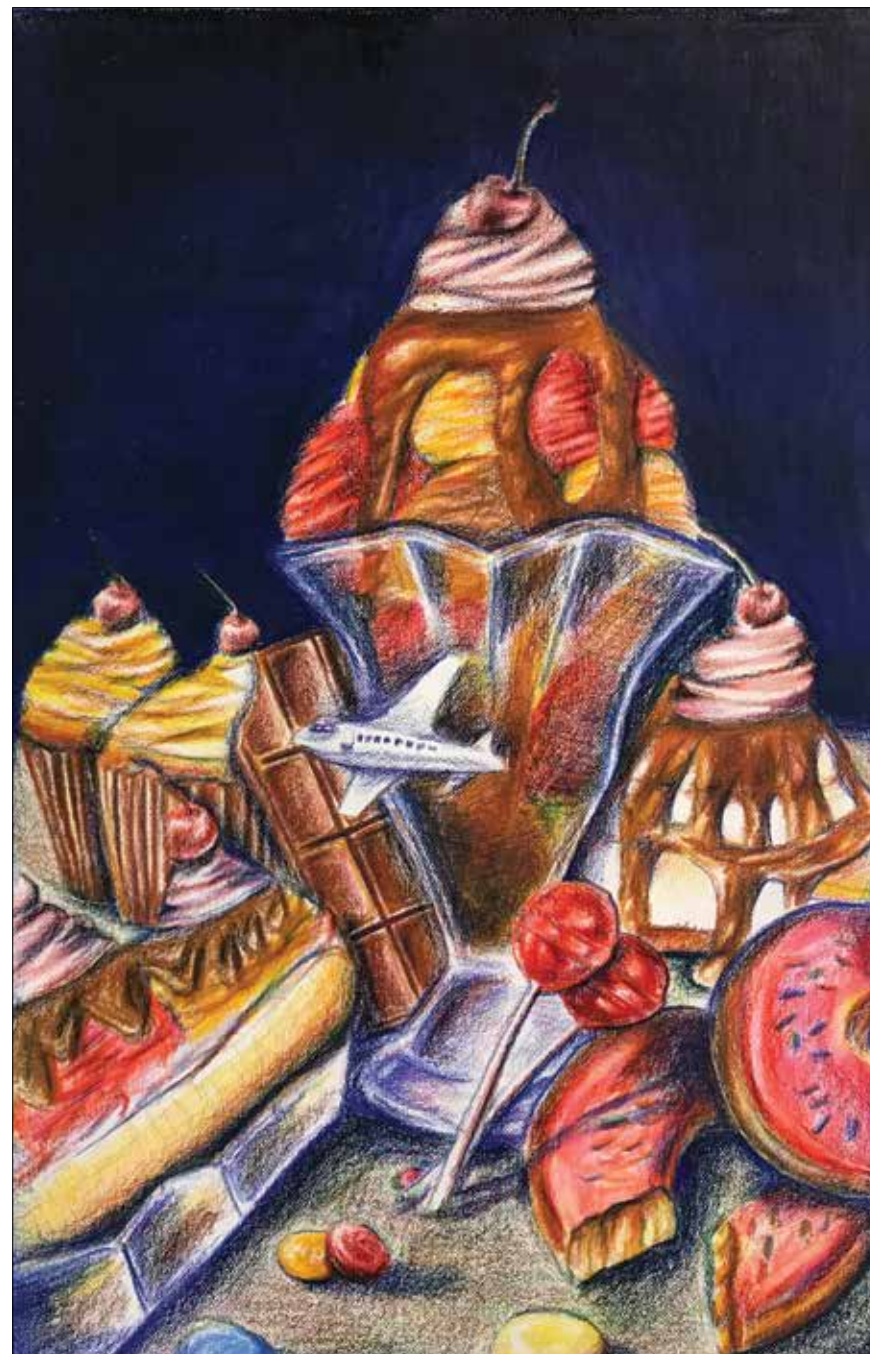


Alexis Jones, *Studio Still Life* – Drawing





Jack Vernon, *Geisha Family* – Drawing



Ayana Harding, *Word Project: Delicious* – Illustration





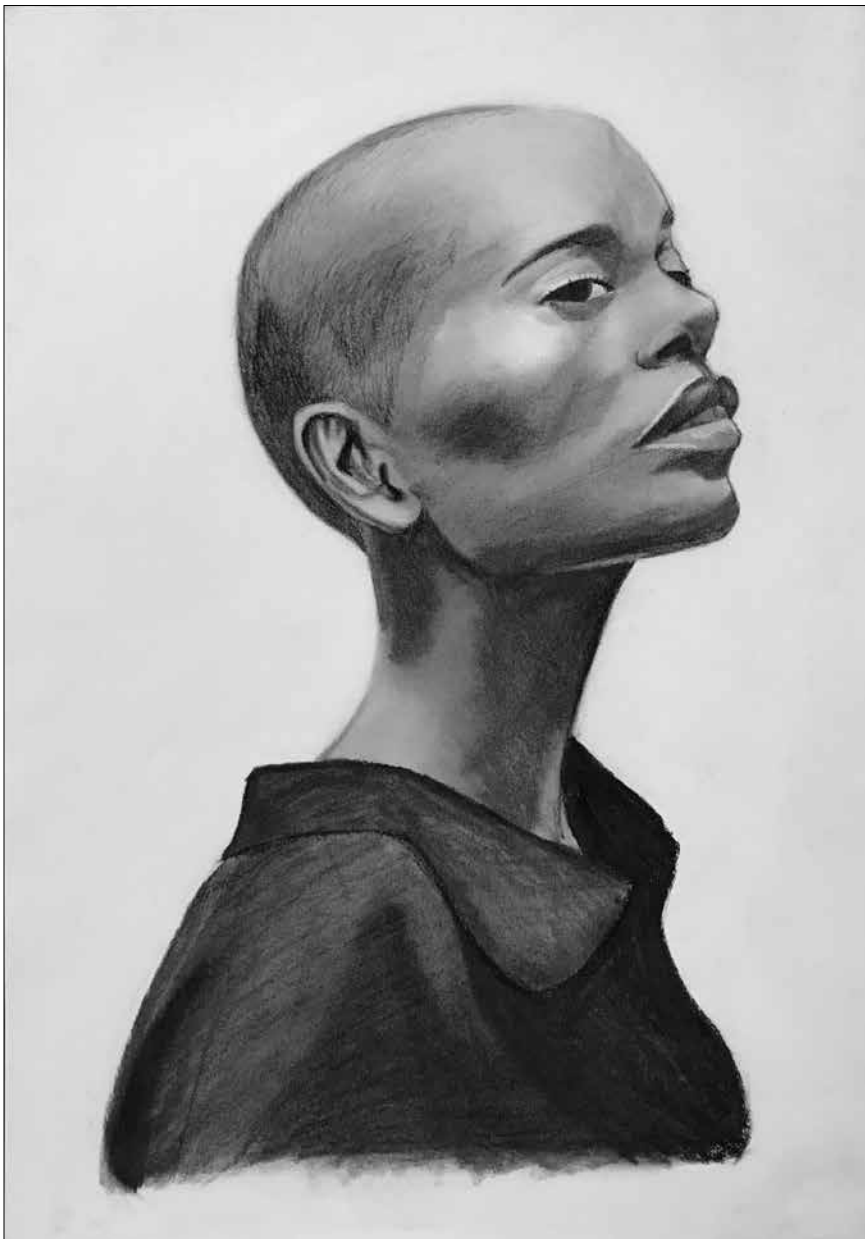
*Carolyn Sangi, Portrait – Photograph*



Stephanie Wolf, Word Project: Ferocious – Illustration



Rebekah Smith, Portrait – Drawing



Abby Mills, *Portrait* – Drawing

## POISON FOR POISON

Kaitlin McCaillion

I hear a throat clear as I walk to get my mail one morning, my eyes drawn in the sound's direction. Letters dangle from scarlet-tipped fingers and a devious smirk rests on Ashley's lips as I walk slowly towards the fence dividing us.

My gaze doesn't leave hers as I rip the papers from her hand, watching a plastic smile cover her features. "I really hate this whole feud we've had going. You should come to dinner tonight and we can right these wrongs with a little champagne," she says sweetly.

I narrow my eyes at the thinly veiled malice in hers, but I force my lips into a tight smile all the same. "I'll bring dessert."

It's not an unusual occasion for Ashley to invite me for a meal, pretending to be a caring neighbor. This always results in a tension-filled dining room where knives are gripped tightly and weighted remarks are thrown carelessly.

It's now an unspoken agreement that Ashley burns my chicken and I make apple pie, her least-favorite dessert, and we dine with bitter smiles and feed off the resentment on our enemy's face. Neither enjoys the other's company, it is all a delusional power balance meant to fool the opponent into thinking the match is over.

It's a strategic game, playing nice. It's a square on a board or a pawn moving forward, waiting to snatch the king. There are no forfeits or ties, it's win or lose. The satisfaction only comes when the loser is destroyed and left in the dust.

When I moved in a year ago, I was met with heated glares as I painted my shutters black and my mailbox pink, "destroying the reputation of the neighborhood." It wasn't my shutters that scared her, of that I'm positive. It was the way I dyed my hair electric blue, it was the way I let Aerosmith drift through my windows on warm summer days. It was my pitbull puppy chasing rabbits in the backyard, only feet away from her pampered Chihuahua. It was my darkened skin as I stepped out of the moving van and locked eyes with the man trapped in Ashley's iron grip.

My hand raps harshly on the pristine white wood of the door as the clock strikes seven, a covered glass pan clutched against my chest. The door opens and reveals Ashley adorned in an intricate black cocktail dress, her red painted lips plastered in her signature smile.

She leads me in and directs me to the dining room with a long mahogany table resting in the middle, fine white china situated at each end. I set my pie down beside the other food and take a seat.

We dine in relative silence, only small bits of biting conversation before we reach dessert. "Where did you live before you came here?" Ashley asks, glancing at me out of the corner of her eye as she takes a grimacing bite of the pie.



"Brooklyn," I answer, keeping my focus directed on my own slice.  
 "Why did you leave?" she inquires with another poorly concealed glance.  
 "Troubling neighbors, believe it or not," I say, bringing my head up to meet her eyes across the table in an icy stare.  
 "How unfortunate," she muses, meeting my glare.  
 "I promised champagne," she says suddenly, standing and crossing to the kitchen. She returns moments later with a bottle and two glasses.  
 "It's funny how you happened to choose this town. I would think you'd have

*"I knew you  
 were no good  
 from the minute  
 you arrived."*

quite the trouble adjusting to the environment," she says, pouring each of us a glass. She returns to her seat across the table.

"Brooklyn and Malibu aren't as different as you would think. It seems like the people are about the same," I trail off, watching Ashley throw me a sarcastic smile.

"Well, you seem to have gotten comfortable. I'm sure Rob would agree." I

stiffen at the mention of her husband, auburn hair and emerald green flashing through my mind. I reach for my glass and take a long sip before replying.

"The both of you have been very welcoming." I stifle a painful cough as the sensation of the liquid in my throat grows sharp. I look up at Ashley in flooding realization.

"Oh, Rob's been very welcoming, hasn't he? You know, maybe you should consider closing your windows at night. Or locking your door when you leave. Or closing your blinds when you sleep with my husband." She stands and walks over to me as I fall to my knees, clutching my throat and coughing violently.

She grabs my face and forces me to meet her eyes, her nails digging sharply into the skin of my cheeks. "I knew you were no good from the minute you arrived. You destroyed my neighborhood, so I'm going to destroy you."

Ashley lets go of my face and I crumble to the floor, blood trickling from my mouth. As my eyes fall shut and my chest lifts one last time, I hear a whisper from above me.

"Poison for poison."



Nicole Campbell, *Beast* – Illustration





*John Nelson, Study of shadow and Light: Calla Lily – Photograph*

## WHENCE COMES HEAVEN

*Sarah Bigham*

Come to me

as dappled light seeps through ancient oaken branches,  
illuminating everything but you

Come to me

while doves peck aimlessly at pavement, wings  
forgetting how to soar

Come to me

after long-grooved roads abruptly end, dust  
gathering your tears

Come to me

your inner sister, behind your ribs, in the catbird seat  
sitting just below your heart

Come to me

we will keep you, here within you,  
protecting you, from the dark



*Stephanie Freniere, Left Behind at the Bottom of the Box – Drawing*

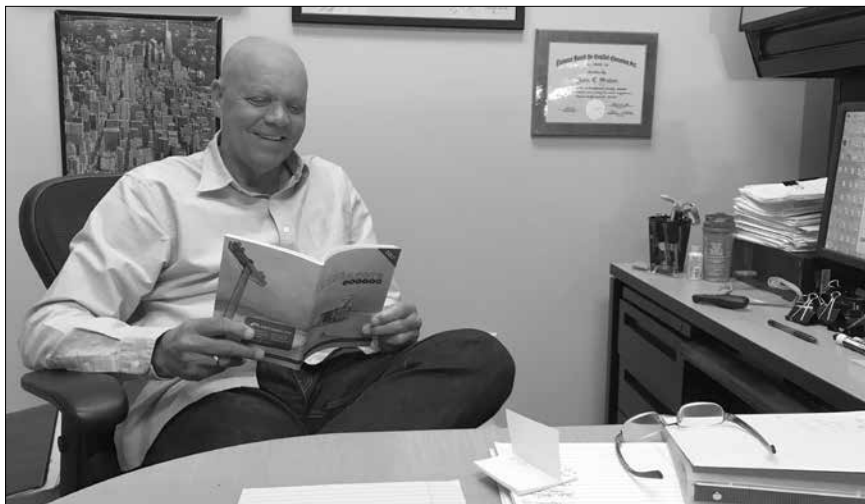


Photo of Dr. Sheldon by Lisa Shearer

## INTERVIEW WITH DR. JOHN SHELDON

PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSOR AT FCC

*Charles Herrmann*

**O**n the back wall of Dr. John Sheldon's office are two framed pictures of the Frederick Community College campus: one from years ago when the campus consisted of only the A, B, and C buildings, Sweadner Hall, and the gym, and one featuring the modern campus we know today. Dr. Sheldon feels as though it was "another lifetime ago" since he began as an instructor.

A graduate of Edinboro University and Penn State University, Dr. Sheldon had only initially planned to teach psychology at FCC for three years, and then move on to something new. Much to his own surprise, he is still teaching general psychology, adolescent psychology, and social psychology at FCC with a purpose now in 2018.

For him, teaching isn't just about conveying the material and helping students simply enter a career; it's about making an impact on the lives of the students he spends all those class periods with. His passion for the job, on both a professional and personal level, and desire to inspire others is what separates him from the pack.

While many things have changed at FCC over the years, Dr. Sheldon more than accepted the challenge of adapting and being the best teacher he can possibly be.

It has been our privilege at the *Tuscarora Review* to sit down and get to know not just Dr. John Sheldon "the professor" but Dr. John Sheldon the person.

**Tuscarora Review: What initially drew you to teaching in this discipline?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** Probably my first psychology course. When I set foot on a college campus, I knew that I was going to spend my life on a college campus.

I don't know what it was about it, but I just felt at home. When I took my first psychology course, I identified with the instructor immediately, and for some reason, I knew that was eventually what I wanted to do. From there, I continued to pursue this subject, and I was lucky enough to be able to do so.

It's very difficult these days to become trained in a particular discipline and then go find a job in that field. You have to be very focused to have that happen. I was one of the lucky ones, and now, here I am.

**Tuscarora Review: Did you ever practice psychology or have you always been a teacher?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** When I was in graduate school, they made you practice some. I knew just based on that experience that I didn't want to do it full time. I wasn't cut out for it; I'm impatient. When you're dealing with people, and you're in that kind of a setting, you have to be very patient and wait for them to get to the point where you know they should be mentally. To me, that was very frustrating. I just wanted to say, "Here: go from here, do this, do that, just get it done. What's the problem?"

I really wasn't cut out for it temperamentally, and it's a burnout kind of an occupation. You need to be a special kind of person who likes to talk to people about their problems day in and day out. I knew that wasn't for me. I knew I wanted to teach, and I knew that being a therapist wasn't going to be for me.

**Tuscarora Review: What are the inherent challenges that come with teaching in this area given that science constantly progresses and we've learned more and more about the human brain?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** Well, I think that's the big challenge. Keeping on top of what we are learning, but somehow trying to condense the most important aspects of that into a course and making it manageable for students at this level.

And sometimes, when I'm in a classroom, I'll talk about things, or I'll say things that are beyond the understanding of lower level psychology students. I have to catch myself and help define and clarify what a certain term means because students at this level are just beginning their careers. I think that's always a challenge. You have to remember who you're talking to, where they're at, and to be able to appeal to students of all abilities at a community college.

**Tuscarora Review: To your point about that challenge, is there something about teaching at a community college that has made you want to stay and not move on to a higher level?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** Yes, that's a good question. When I finished up my doctoral program, part of the program was to do an internship. While I was still in it, I took a course on community college and the community college student, and it appealed to me right away.

I ended up doing my internship at a community college, and my faculty mentors in the program were not happy with me when I decided to do that. They wanted me to go to a university, and I said that I didn't want to do that because of two things:

Number one, I like the democratic nature of a community college, the fact that everybody has a shot, and the open-door accessibility. On a philosophical level, I like what community college is about. And secondly, because community colleges offer several opportunities to do and study lots of different things as opposed to a four-year college where you get slotted very quickly.

While I've been here, I've been able to counsel, do student activities, do administrative work, been able to teach. I've been all around the college doing different things, and I wouldn't have gotten to do that at a four-year school. I've really enjoyed the flexibility, the variety, and the challenge.

I had only planned on being here for three years to gain experience, and then to move on to a different college, but here I am a lifetime later still at FCC

**Tuscarora Review: Is there something about FCC specifically that made you want to stay?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** [Chuckles] Well, one thing that happened is that I fell in love with a girl who ended up becoming my wife. I met her here, and she is from the area, so that's what's kept me here for a while. The next thing I knew, one thing led to another, and now I've been here my entire career. It was kind of ironic to me. I only wanted to come here for three years, and now I've spent a lifetime.

So much for planning! [laughs] Sometimes you have to have a Plan B, and even a Plan C. And even looking back, I don't regret not moving on. I've had great colleagues, a great experience, met a lot of great people, and I've had the chance to do a lot of different things.

If I were to do it all over again in the teaching realm, I would have made the same choice, I believe. But if I were to do an entire lifetime over again, I may or may not have ended up teaching necessarily.

**Tuscarora Review: What makes you say that?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** The profession is changing, and becoming more like a business philosophically in terms of cost-effectiveness, outputs, and measuring effectiveness and how well you're doing. It's become more about teaching students in order for them to get a job, learning to get a job, and I'm not so sure that there's not a place for that, but I'm not sure that's what education should be all about.

Education should be about expanding people's awareness and thinking. Teaching them to enjoy learning and seeing the world in different ways. That kind of gets lost in how much money it costs, and how many students are able to get jobs, and how many people are passing or failing a course. That's a different focus, and increasingly moreso. I'm not sure I'd pick that the second time around, but you never know.

**Tuscarora Review: Does that put pressure on you? Knowing that you have to cater to people in that different way?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** Yes, yes it does. The pressure on me is to adapt, and having been here coming up through the collegial model of education and transition-

ing more toward the business model does put pressure on me to change, and understand, and retool how I approach things. Being able to see the positive and negative qualities of the business model, but still be able to hold onto some of the things that I feel are important from the collegial model.

So yes, it is a challenge, but that's what keeps us going. If there was nothing challenging about teaching, we'd become stale and bored. So if nothing else, FCC has been a challenge over the last X number of years.

**Tuscarora Review: What the biggest difference between FCC when you began, and FCC now?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** You used to know everybody, and you used to see people on almost a daily basis. In the present day, that's impossible. It's too big, too busy, too much to do, too many people. It's hard to get around and know people. There are a lot of people who have come to work here that I haven't gotten a chance to meet, and I regret that, but it's just the size and scope of what FCC has become.

But the students remain the same. You get all different kinds of students, and I've always told people when they ask me that the students here are really my heroes. The nature of their lives, more often than not, are very textured, and they deal with all sorts of problems that the person at a four-year institution might not. They might be working, or have a family. They may have financial problems, they might have kids or be married and are trying to get their education on top of all of that.

From their perspective, that's normal, and that's the way life is. But having been to a four-year college and seeing people who have time to focus exclusively on their studies is a dramatic difference. The pressures community college students face is vastly different, and that's what makes you all my heroes. I enjoy working for the heroes, and that's why I teach.

**Tuscarora Review: Does that make it all the more rewarding when you see someone coming along, grasping the concepts and material, and succeeding?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** Yes, yes, and that's an interesting comment. That's why I like attending graduation. I truly love watching one of my students I've had in my classes walk across that platform and receive their degree.

And you never know who you're affecting. The interesting thing about all of it. I'll teach, and like any other instructor, at the end I'll get the student evaluations, and they'll range anywhere from 'super' to 'nuts'; you're either a hero or you just shouldn't be allowed in a classroom teaching. You never truly know who you're impacting.

And then, one year later, five years later, ten years later, you'll get a note from somebody or you'll run into somebody and they'll say, 'Your class was the best class I ever took,' and say thank you. That's the kind of stuff that feeds the souls of the faculty; being able to know that they were able to change and influence somebody's life for the better.



Funny story actually, I was in Wal-Mart last year, and I'm looking at something, but then I hear this booming voice from behind me saying, 'There he is! There he is!'

And I'm looking around thinking who this person could be, and it turns out to be one of my former students. She told me, 'You! You saved my life,' and she was with her adolescent daughters. She had actually taken adolescent psychology from me. She turned to her girls and said, 'This guy right here, and the class I took, saved my life.'

She didn't go much beyond that, but I assume maybe she took some of what she learned in adolescent psychology and used to raise her daughters. But that really touched me. Occasionally you'll get that kind of thing, but more often than not you're left wondering, 'Did I reach anybody this semester? Did I reach anybody this year?'

You just have to take it on faith that you did, but you may never know it.

**Tuscarora Review: Especially since teaching is largely a thankless profession.**

**Dr. Sheldon:** Exactly. You don't necessarily get out of it what you put into it; it's not transactional. You have to be content with it. In psychology, it's what they call 'delayed gratification': the ability to delay any kind of positive impact or feedback from students anywhere from a semester, or even never. You just have to take it on faith that you're doing something good.

It's like parenting. You'll put much more in than you'll ever know in terms of the effect you've had on your children. You've got to be in it for the long haul. I don't expect pats on the back, 'Attaboy!' or thank you's. That's not why I'm in it. You have to believe you've made a difference and move on to the next group of students and try to do the same.

**Tuscarora Review: At the end of the day, do you feel like you've been able to accomplish what you set out to do?**

**Dr. Sheldon:** In terms of my life and my career, I think I can honestly say I've lived a life that I was meant to live. Would I have liked to have fame, or fortune, or would I have liked to have traveled and seen places I've never seen? Yeah, I would have liked that, but when I look at myself, who I am, and the choices I've made based on the options I had, I lived the life I was intended to live.

I'm content with that; I don't have any regrets, or misgivings on what I did or how I did it. It worked out the way it was supposed to based on the choices that I made, and I think I made choices that were pretty close to who I am and what I wanted.

When it comes time to check out, as we all do, I'll be able to walk away from either the job or life knowing that I gave it my best shot. Maybe in my next life I'll live something different, but this is it for this go around. And I've done okay. I have a wonderful wife, three kids, a salary that I can live on, a job that I love, colleagues I adore, students that are my heroes.

[Laughs] There's no reason for me to be unhappy other than being greedy because I wanted more, but then I'd be ashamed of myself for saying that.

**Tuscarora Review: I completely forgot to ask: how long have you been teaching here again?**

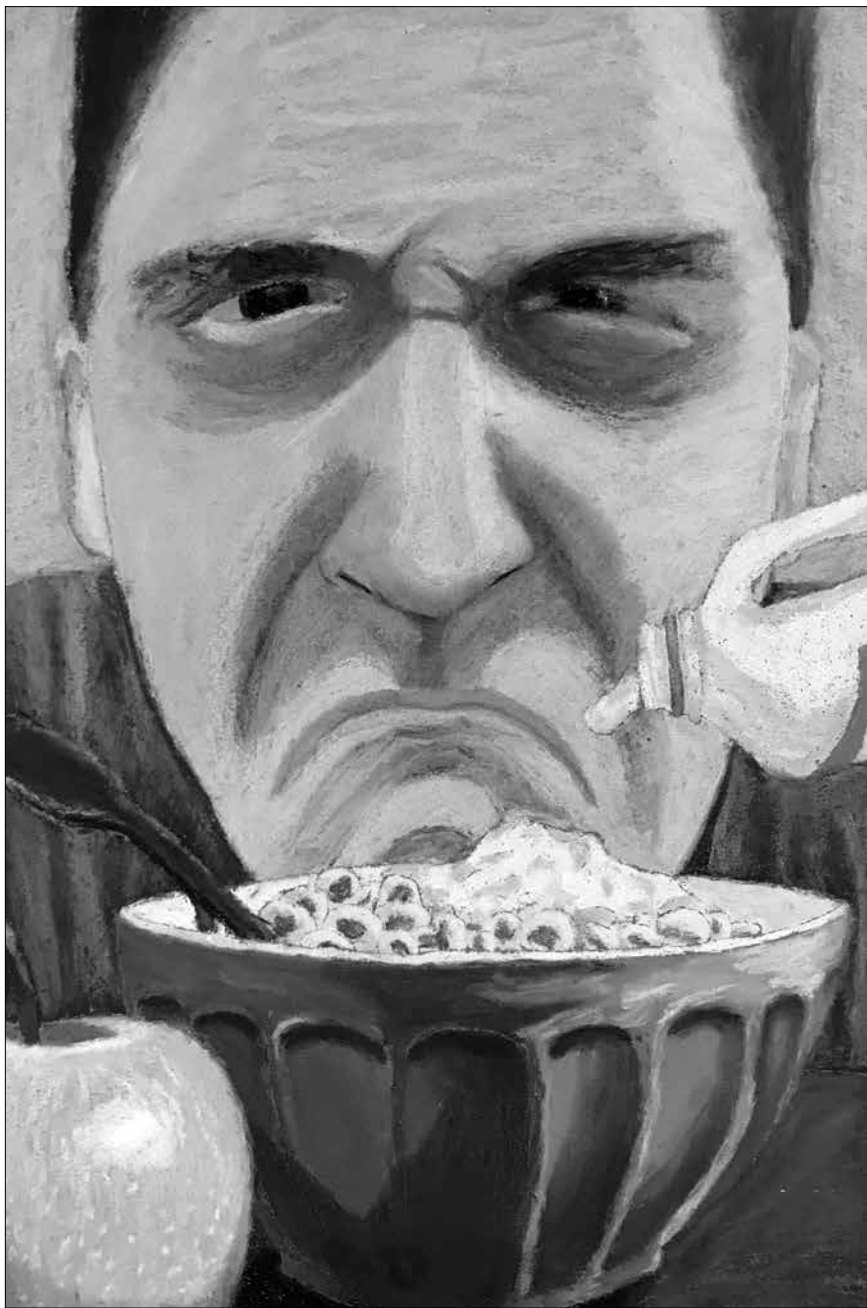
**Dr. Sheldon:** I figured you'd ask that, but I don't tell people how long I've been here. I give them elliptical answers like 'a lifetime' or 'two lifetimes,' because when you give them a given year, they automatically start doing the math in their head and begin attributing either significant or insignificant things to you.

I don't want people to do that to me. I want people to see me and understand me for who I am. The closest I'm going to come to an answer is that when I came here [pointing to the pictures of FCC on the wall], campus looked like this, and now it looks like that.

It's been a good ride. It's been a whole lifetime, and time well spent.



*Carolyn Sangi, NYC – Photograph*



*Zachary Opishinski, Word Project: Sour – Illustration*



*Kelsey McClung, Untitled – Drawing*

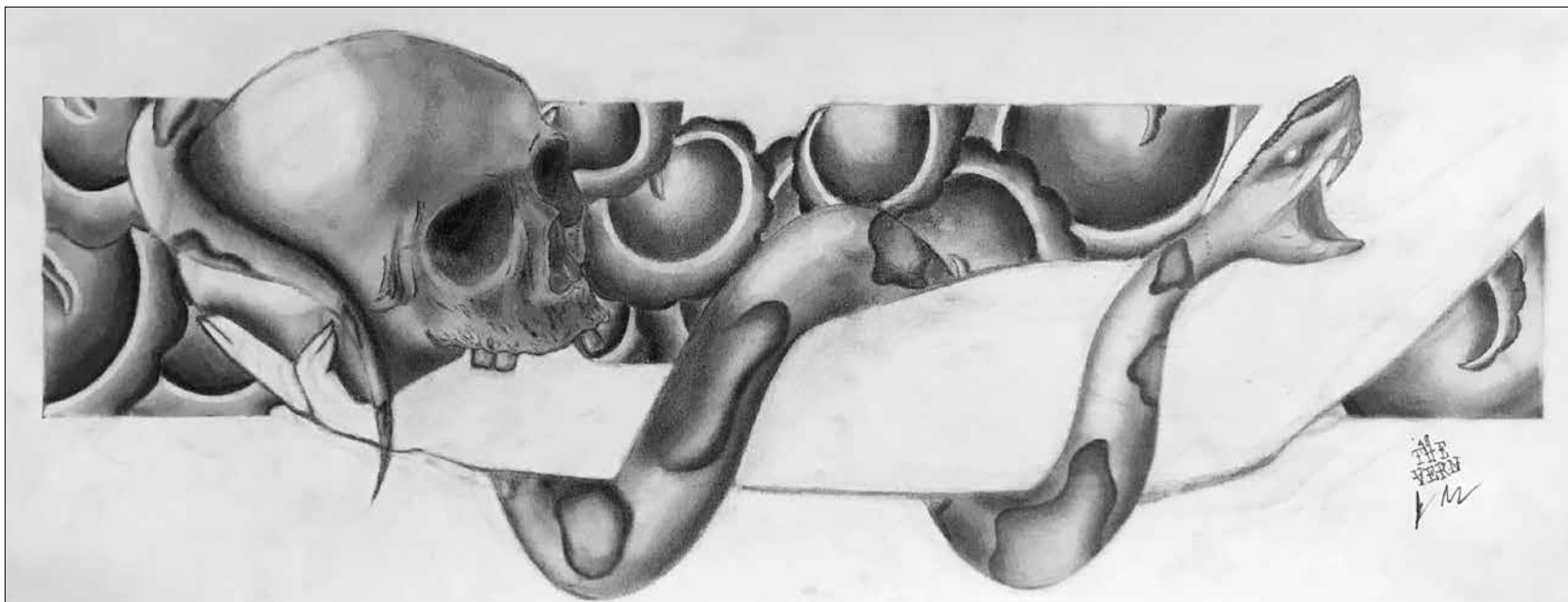


*Aaeza Kahn, Portrait – Painting*



*Nicholas Riley, Portrait – Painting*





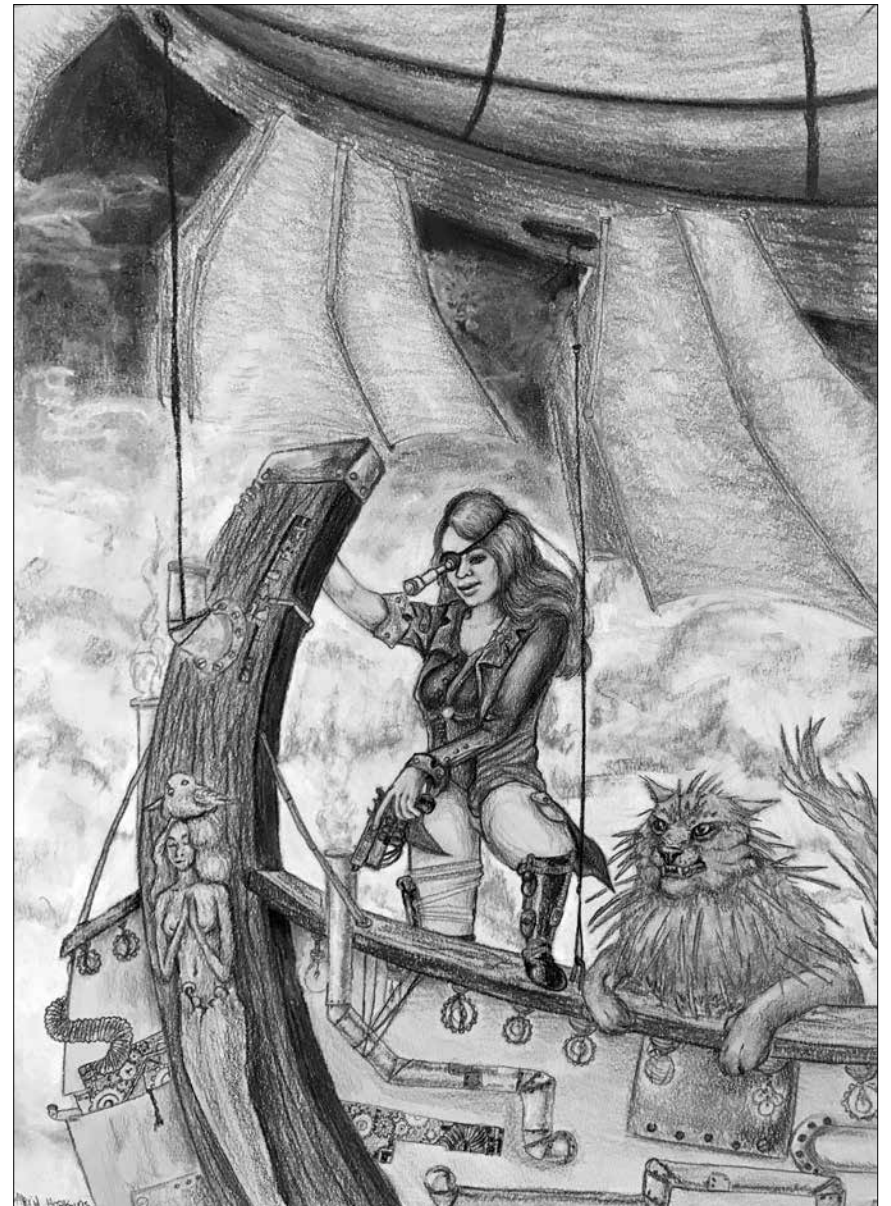
*Jack Vernon, Withheld – Drawing*



*Julie Huffman, Home of the Brave – Drawing*



*Angel Baron, Limbs of Spirit – Drawing*

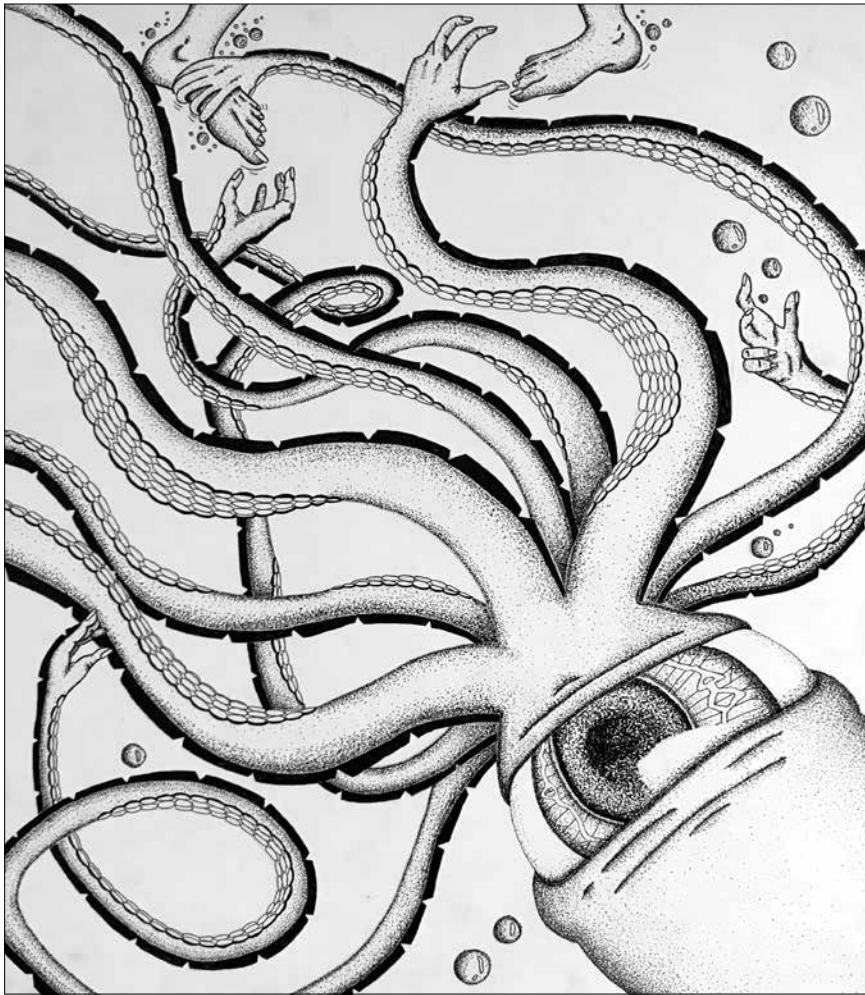


*April Hopkins, Steam Punk – Illustration*





*Kelsey McClung, Untitled – Drawing*



*Zoe Sharrer, Beast – Illustration*



*Alexis Jones, Narrative – Drawing*

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS & ARTISTS

**Jeremy Rock:** I've lived in Frederick most of my life. I am in my second year at FCC, and I plan to transfer for an English degree in 2018. I love dogs, the night sky, and short stories that change how I see the world.

**Ronan Bogley:** I was in Magin La Sov Gregg's creative writing class, and wrote this piece. I'm majoring in communications. I've been around Frederick my whole life.

**Kaitlin McCaillion** is seventeen years old and is in her 4th semester at FCC. On top of writing, her favorite hobby and overall passion in life is theater. Kaitlin is overjoyed to have begun her journey into the literary world and is looking forward to changing the world one word at a time.

**Christopher Rahman:** I have lived in Maryland my whole life. I am majoring in computer science, though I have a passion for creative writing. I hope to publish a novel someday.

**Sarah Bigham** teaches in the Social Science Department at FCC and lives in Frederick with her kind chemist wife, three independent cats, and an unwieldy herb garden. Her work has appeared in a variety of great places for readers, writers, listeners, and artists. Find her at [www.sgbigham.com](http://www.sgbigham.com)

**Artwork** for the magazine was submitted by art, photography, and graphics professors for consideration.



## COLOPHON

This edition of the *Tuscarora Review* features fonts designed by José Scaglione, Veronika Burian, and Morris Fuller Benton. The headlines are set in Franklin Gothic Condensed, designed by Morris Fuller Benton in 1906, and the text in Abril Titling, designed by José Scaglione and Veronika Burian in 2011.

The magazine cover is printed on 80 pound Endurance Gloss Cover, the text is printed on 60 pound Finch 94 Smooth White Offset paper.



Abby Mills, *Auburn Flow* – Drawing



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