

THE MITRE

Process

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Evolution

On the Origins of Poetry

Math

Mind

Realisation

North America's oldest literary magazine

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Cover Illustrations by Sarah C. Novack



**On the
Origins of
Poetry**

Neuron, Kate Harris

2017

124th Edition of the Mitre

Celebrating the creativity of Bishop's since 1893

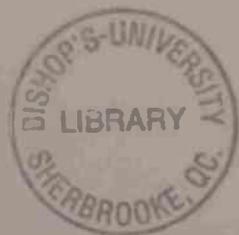


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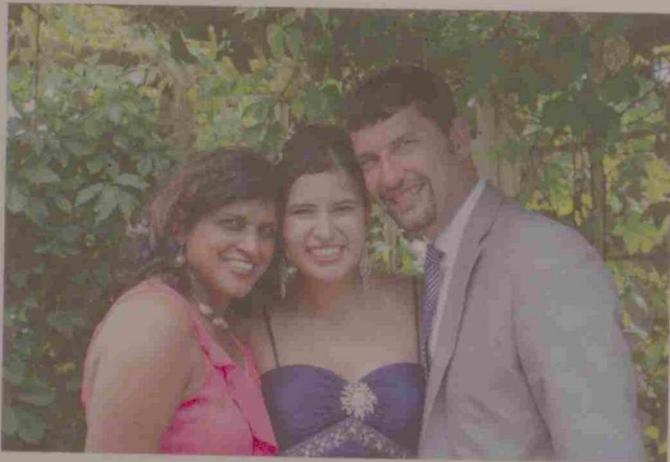
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For Brian and Abha

Thank you for showing me the stars even during thunderstorms



Meet the Editor

Asha-Maria Bost



For all that I love, *Charleston Lake*, Asha-Maria Bost

My parents say that I always had a story in my head even as a baby, babbling unintelligibly up at my mom. While playing soccer, I wouldn't follow the ball, I'd follow the white butterflies that would occasionally dart across the field. Where did they go? Where did they come from? I wondered. I guess that was the beginning, that state of wondering. Gradually, I found the two subjects I loved the most: science and creative writing. So I wrote down stories, read books and crammed pages of biology, psychology and math facts into to my head.

That wonder led me here, sitting in my parents home during March break, writing to contributors and readers as the editor of the *Mitre*. How lucky am I to be the editor of a literary journal that has been running for 124 editions! This experience has encompassed everything I love about Bishop's, especially the opportunity to blend all of my interests together and meet and create with amazing artists and thinkers.

So with all of my heart I say,

THANK YOU!



Foreword
Asha-Maria Bost



When Charles Darwin wrote his book *On the origin of the species*, he knew that his work was well-researched and ground breaking but he couldn't have known just how much his carefully laid-out proof for the Theory of Evolution would change the field of biology. The theory of Evolution shifted the world views of biologists and lay people alike, and now serves as the foundation of the study of biology.

Following on this spirit of discovery, this edition of the *Mitre*, *On the Origins of Poetry*, investigates the scientific process to show the relationship between science and creative writing. Even the act of publishing is a scientific process, in terms of how the methods we use to write down the written word have evolved with changes in technology. This edition of the *Mitre* investigates those roots and the process involved in thinking, writing, moving and creating. The pieces in this edition of the *Mitre* investigate how we perceive the world around us, how we navigate through life and how we interact with the natural world. These creative works showcase those moments when we truly understand or see the beauty in the details— the moments when the proverbial light bulb goes off and suddenly the clutter of our day to day operations is momentarily lessened.

Through reading *On the Origins of Poetry*, perhaps you will see the poetry in science and the science in poetry. Scientists and writers are similar in the sense that they both try to understand the world and find answers to the questions that keep us awake at night. They both help lessen the pain of not knowing— who we are and where we fit in this world. Happy investigating!

THE MITRE

The *Mitre* is North America's oldest literary journal and a mainstay of the Bishop's community. Earlier editions of the *Mitre* served as both a literary journal and newspaper until the creation of *The Campus* newspaper in 1944. Currently the *Mitre* publishes original creative works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, screenwriting and playwriting.

gravitational waves

Rosemin Nathoo

time traverses the stream
with the same limbs as the tree frog,
the same cyclic cry of the peeper—

I know this because of the snowy south slope
and ephemeral-shaded north,
I know this because of the human machines
which have measured those rippling chirps —
we are pretty impressive
(not that I understand these things, yet).

time traverses the stream, I believe,
unchanged at the other end, because
the frog is the same and your heart is the same
after years, if a little worn down.

to define the observing metaphor,
great thinkers invent a new language—
symbols that move like the world does,
curves that don't work like the word does—

but time is only a trick of the mind,
the space between
the edible maple seedling and
its mother (all carbon from air!)

Is there the same language inside?
the mycelium information ride,
the constant membrane capacitance,
the nature of the gradient?

We covet the details with all sorts of eyes,
but only one self is relevant—
the thing looking out, and learning.

Synapse

Shir Shahrabani

She enters the classroom;
You are consumed by
Serotonin. Oxytocin. Dopamine.
Chemicals and currents of electricity—

She claims her seat;
Opens her notebook to a page of
doodles and lyrics and psychology
In a room full of 193 human beings,
your attention chooses her

She sits there quietly;
With eyes that absorb
and reflect
and transmit light,
eclipsing the visible spectrum.

She raises her hand to speak;
Silky waves of sound
leave her lips,
gently floating across the room—

She tucks a strand of hair
behind her left ear
And you silently admire
how a recessive-melanocortin-receptor mutation can make her look so
beautiful

And you realize that
the universe has gifted us with
astonishing wonders,
and with vibrant vivacious visions

But in all of your years of wandering the earth
you have never stumbled upon a wonder
as magnificent
as she



Untitled, Juliette Laurier

"a poem a month"

Josh Quirion

You're not Kerouac,
 you can't just bang out
 timeless graphs without
 consideration and careful application.

You're not Bukowski,
 you can't write forty poems
 in one day,
 one woman
 one poem,
 one drink.

You're not the archetypal poet,
 click-clacking on his typer with one hand,
 rolling and smoking cigarettes with the other,
 intermittently swallowing servings of scotch.

No, you're not refined
 and sophisticated
 and beautiful
 like those classic poets that cause
 seismic shifts in the tectonic plates of
 cultural movements.

You just sit there,
 anguishing, lamenting,
 languishing as the machine
 stares askance at your insecurity,
 your impossible hesitation.

But that is who you are,
 that is the writer within,
 he's slow as change,
 ten words an hour,
 one poem a month,
 but by God,
 you know you'll never stop,
 and you'll supplicate the muse
 and you'll fall to your knees before
 her and kiss her feet,
 that is where you belong,
 prostrating there before her infinite wisdom.
 She'll oblige, one day,

"a poem a month"- Quirion

oh, one day she'll indulge
 your spirit with
 words eternal and with
 promises divine
 and you, you'll write them,
 at precisely the right moment,
 you'll draft that graph,
 slow as change,
 ten words an hour,
 one poem a month.

Statistics of Perfection

Asha-Maria Bost

Everyone wants to be 3 standard deviations from the mean.
You would be special —
A statistical unlikelihood,
near an end of the normal distribution
so far away that you'll have to reject your null hypothesis
and say you most likely belong on the alternate distribution

But it is lonely out there
traveling through that unknown
the probabilities of the alternate cannot be determined
and you are left in that imaginary space
an illustration dreamed up to make statistics palatable
for fresh faced undergrads. (Figure 1)

Even tutors like me make mistakes —
forgetting the difference between a sample distribution
and a sampling distribution because
even though I pretend to know, the concepts can jumble
and a three-letter difference in words converges into the same concept
until a score seems to fit on an alternate hypothesis

But yet,
No matter where you fall on a normal curve,
Or whether you mix up a sample or sampling distribution
You are more than the graph, numbers and statistics
We use to collect you
and place you within the population of choice.

No one finds the clarity in the uncertainty
of statistics without spending hours, staring
crying over well-worn textbooks.
The knowledge takes time to grow from
that foundation started with the day in grade three
when you learned the difference between the mean, median and mode.

The numbers don't define you.
These grades are meaningless
When compared to the experiences,

Statistics of Perfection - Bost

thoughts, feelings, perceptions,
Existing within you that no statistics
Or third party could ever understand.

So when you sit broken
After failing your first statistics midterm
Just remember how wonderful
It is to be a thinking human
Learning the language of means and deviations
And pick up the textbook and try again.



Figure 1, noble null and imaginary alternate, Asha-Maria Bost

Prophetic Cycles

Yann Audin

In 2035, a researcher from the University of Oxford founded the scientific field of futurology: the study of future events based on the analysis of the past. This field was so narrow and complex that only its creator, Earth's sole doctor of futurology, could understand it. On the 27th of October 2039, he gave a twelve-hour long talk to the UN. He titled his conference "The Cyclical Nature of Behavioural Indexes in Large Samples Applied to the Earth's Actual Population: Developed from Statistical History". It also had a subtitle: "The End of the World is in six days". He invited diplomats from all over the world; and with the invite came a 63 page long abstract. He also added a USB key with the rest of his thesis and research – a total of one terabyte of data.

Since the title was so long and complex, none of the great leaders of the year 2039 read it to the end and saw the subtitle, except for one benevolent dictator of a Democratic Republic. Thus, on the most important day in Earth's history, the doctor of futurology talked in front of a quite limited crowd. To assist him were two translators. They would tirelessly translate the entire twelve hour conference: the benevolent dictator's official language was Naukan which no computer could translate. I should also mention that, at one point, a Japanese tourist wandered off into the General Assembly Hall. Because he was a polite man, he stayed until the end despite not understanding a single word. I should also mention the incredible work of the translators. They translated a dense and technical text into an agglutinative tribal language extraordinarily well and thus anyone who spoke Naukan would have understood the entire presentation.

During his conference, the doctor of futurology explained the way to predict the future. With a series of indexes, he was able to describe every aspect of humanity: the higher an index, the worse things were going. Through extensive research, he concluded that for each index there was a cycle. The periods and amplitudes of the variations were as numerous as the indexes. In total, he needed 7301 functions to describe humanity. The formulas encompassed everything: wars, bad superhero movies, famines and weirdly spelled first names.

For the sake of research, the doctor of futurology had assembled all the information he had in one vast simulation. His goal was to

Prophetic Cycles- Audin

know if life on Earth would become untenable during his lifetime. The astonishing result was that on the second of November 2039, all the cycles were predicted to reach their zenith simultaneously. In other words, the doctor of futurology's model had foretold the end of the world with the convergence of every cycle he had indexed. You should know that the Aquaman movie by Alan Smithee, was quite bad as predicted by the bad superhero movies index. To explain the convergence of these cycles, the doctor of futurology needed twelve hours, and most of the time he used sentences that went on for over a minute.

Twelve hours later, only one of both translators remained, the other having fainted at the end of the eleventh hour. The Japanese tourist left the room in a panic, his tour group and guide long since gone. Meanwhile, the benevolent dictator rose, walked to the doctor of futurology, and addressed him in perfect English. At this point, the remaining translator also fainted, realizing that the leader had not even used the translation earpiece. The discussion between the benevolent dictator and the doctor of futurology lasted six hours. During this private meeting (no one disturbed them as they were afraid of the scholar's graphs), the two men made important decisions. The doctor of futurology's attempt to stop the end of the world was a failure. They didn't have enough power together to change the fate of humanity, but since they were both humanists, they devised a plan. The doctor of futurology would send his data into space, in the hope that another civilization might one day detect it. This other life form could then learn from humanity's error and avoid following suit.

The next five days were frenetic for the benevolent dictator and the doctor of futurology. The latter translated his concept and equations into a series of zeroes and ones. During this time, the benevolent dictator spent the entirety of his personal fortune, given to him with generosity by his people. He bought most of the Earth antenna arrays and ways to control the others, all before the end of humanity. They designed the signal to be 17 seconds long and powerful enough to be broadcast across the entire Milky Way.

The final days of the world were painful to watch, even more so for the two translators. They knew of their imminent death, but were not as busy as the doctor of futurology and the benevolent dictator.

Prophetic Cycles- Audin

They saw the signs of their civilization's demise as war, sickness and anarchy pulled down one country after another.

On the scheduled day, all of Earth's remaining antennas broadcast their message for 17 seconds. It had enough power to travel through space, at the speed of light, for the next 90 000 years before finally fading out. It would then become undistinguishable from space's usual radiations. The signal reached its first star more than four years after the death of the dictator and the doctor of futurology. At that time, the signal was at its most powerful, enough to shake the electrons of the sun's surface atoms.

The surges of energy passed over billions and billions of planets, but there was no one to hear. Life may not be uncommon, but intelligence is rare, hence no one in the Milky Way had technology to detect the signal. There was, however, one planet where the signal made a significant difference though. On a planet only ten parsecs away from the Earth, life had just emerged. The signal struck it at its greatest power, affecting hundreds and hundreds of amino acids for 17 seconds. Since these molecules had non-zero polarity, the signal shook them. Some created bonds together which would not have existed without the Earth signal. By extraordinary odds, the message partially imposed itself within the new DNA. It would forever carry long strings of weird and incomprehensible information. Well, I should not say forever, for there is a reason why some billions of years later, the civilization which came to grow on this planet also disappeared. It had discovered too late its own intrinsic cycles, a series of recurring indexes to describe everything most destructive within itself. The doctor of futurology meant his signal to avoid the repetition of humanity's mistakes. Instead, it became the basis for a new cycle, a self-fulfilling prophecy of which no one can know the beginning – was Earth the first link, or just another in a long unending chain of self-destructive civilizations.

Zero

Frank Willdig

When you're a zero, you don't seem to count,
Having no value, you just hold a place.
Your existence doesn't really amount
To anything more than an empty space.

Now, if you're number one, you carry some weight,
You come first in a line of countable things,
Tangible, visible, a physical state,
The measure of the world and all it brings.

But no one's a zero – it stands alone,
Mysterious as is infinity,
And just as real as a snowflake or stone,
Of greater value nothing can be.

Zero, indeed, is a marvellous thought,
A beautiful concept, nothing it's not.

On the Origins of Infinity

Keenan Wilcox

The classroom was silent. Another day, another hour, another waste of everyone's valuable time. The students didn't care, and why should they? For every theory there was a counter, for every argument a rebuttal - the time for doing what you learn is over. No need. It's all a show of status anyway. I begin reciting from memory.

"Every material thing is not only measurable, but also composed of smaller building blocks than itself. You cannot measure that which is infinite, and every material thing is measurable, and therefore not infinite. Infinite, on the other hand, is immeasurable, and even the smallest piece of infinite is also immeasurable. Because infinite is immeasurable there is no number to describe it, other than perhaps zero, and if you were to take a piece of zero, you would only be taking another zero because a piece of zero is simply still zero."

It makes sense. I guess they won't bother asking; I'll continue.

"Now because every material thing is composed of something smaller than itself, and every material thing is also measurable, and not infinite, we can conclude that eventually there must be an end to the building blocks that make up every material thing. If you were to go deep enough, you would inevitably find the "smallest building block" from which all other building blocks are made. You would inevitably find this because we know that no material things are infinite, and therefore there must even be an end to building blocks themselves, for they too are material things."

There must be an end to this. What a waste.

"Seeing as how this smallest of building blocks would be the first measurable material thing, it itself would not be made of anything measurable or material. In essence, the first material thing would inevitably have to be made from that which is not material, but instead immaterial. For example, you cannot have an apple that is made from apples; instead, it is made up of material things that are smaller than itself, such as cells, and even atoms. The logical and proposed existence of this "smallest of building blocks" proves that every material thing we see and experience is being held together by an underlying, unseen,

On the Origins of Infinity- Wilcox

infinite metaphysical network. This also proves that we, and every other material thing in the universe, must have been created from this "great infinite," which holds everything together, for if we are not infinite, and it is, then there must have been a time when this infinite thing existed without the material (or existed apart from us). In essence, the infinite can and will exist always, due to it being infinite (not having a beginning, or an end), while the material solely relies on this infinite to exist at all."

Door opens. Student enters. Well I guess they won't get much out of this now.

"This infinite must also then have some measure of intelligence, seeing as how it has created something apart from itself willingly. That which needs nothing has created something, and something cannot come from nothing, therefore there must always have been something, but this something must be infinite, unseen, and metaphysical. For example, if you have a rock sitting at the top of a hill directly on the brink of rolling down, it will never roll down unless one of two things happens."

I could walk out right now.

"One: The rock is somehow affected by outside circumstances, such as wind, or even someone pushing it."

I better stay.

"Two: The rock self initiates by rolling itself down the hill."

I'm doing this for myself from now on. Fuck it.

"Option one requires outside interference from something separate from the object (rock), and option two requires some measure of intelligence on the part of the rock itself, as well as the ability to enact that intelligence out in action. For example, a human can only walk if they have legs with which to do so, and they can also only walk if they have some sort of intelligence to govern how those legs walk. Both are required for the function to take place, much in the same way as they

On the Origins of Infinity- Wilcox

would be needed for the rock to roll down the hill without any outside influence. Seeing as how the infinite existed before the material, there must have been no outside influences available from which the infinite found interaction. It would only have had itself, and therefore must have self-initiated. For self-initiation to occur, it must also have had not only some measure of intelligence, but also the ability to carry out that intelligence in deed. This proves that there exists an intelligent meta-physical "being," which is not only at the source of all material existence, but which also can create. Whether this is the "god" described in the bible, or from other various religions, I do not know - but I do know that no intelligent action is taken for nothing."

Four more years until retirement. I better dumb this down.

**Polaris**

Tina Golab



Emmy looked out her window to the star-studded night sky. She stared, open mouthed, in awe. It was all so grand, so big, so vast, and so...endless.

She liked that there seemed to be no limit to the stars. When everything else in the world came to a stop, the stars would still be there, and that reassured her.

To her it almost seemed liked a promise that even after death, at least *something* would go on.

But out of all the stars in the sky, her favorite was the North Star, always facing true north, because while the vastness of the universe amazed her, it was also daunting, The North Star was the point in the sky that she could always return to when the rest of the world seemed to whizz by.

Just like explorers used the star to navigate unknown terrains and seas, Emmy used the star to find her way back from the dark places. It was because even when the world was at its darkest, the stars always provided light.

One night Emmy looked up at her stars. There was no moon tonight and she really needed the stars to tell her that there was still light in the world.

But as she looked between the pillars of smoke that rose thick and white in the cold from her neighbor's chimneys, she thought she could see something moving in and out of the smoke.

The figure had the shape of a human but Emmy could see no features on it, just a solid black shadow running over the rooftops.

Just looking at the shadow gave her shivers up and down her spine. As it ran it seemed to absorb the emanating light from the street-lights, muting them. And instead of growing brighter, the shadow only grew darker.

Then the shadow, bounding over the snow-covered rooftops, stuck a hand in the air and dragged it through the sky. As it did so, it plucked the stars one by one from the sky.

"No!" Emmy cried, reaching a hand out as if she could somehow catch the shadow. "That's stealing!"

The shadow showed no indication of having heard her and continued to grab the stars.

Then it came to the North Star. It had to use both its hands to yank it from its place since it had been there for so long. With one final pull, the shadow removed the star, the last star, and put it away, leaving the world in darkness.

"No!" Emmy cried again. "You have to put it back!"

Emmy's scream was loud enough to cause her mother to come running into her room.

"Emmy, what's wrong?" she picked her child up in an embrace.

"It's gone, it's so dark without it." Emmy grabbed hold of her mom.

"Oh honey, I know things are bad right now, but it'll get better I promise. You'll still get to see Daddy, he just won't be living with us anymore."

Emmy shook her head. "It's all gone, the light, the stars are all gone."

Emmy's mom wrinkled her brow in confusion. "Honey, I don't understand, the stars are shining just as they always do." As she said this she leaned to look out the window, where the stars twinkled as brightly as ever.

Emmy glanced out the window and shut her eyes quickly. There was nothing in the sky. It was dark.

She hated the dark.

"No, they're all gone and they're never coming back."

The days turned into weeks and weeks into months and still no sign of the stars. At first Emmy spent her nights wrapped in a ball with her eyes shut tight. Then she tried to make her own stars by cutting holes in her lampshades but that didn't work either.

She'd lost her guiding star and it wasn't coming back.

She'd sit sullenly at the dinner table, which worried her mother.

She'd barely touch her food, and her mother had long since stopped threatening that Emmy wouldn't get dessert if she didn't eat supper.

"I'm sorry about Daddy." Mom said one night just to break the silence. "I really thought he would call, or email, or send a letter or...or something."

"It's fine. I never really cared." Emmy pushed her dinner plate away and excused herself from the table.

She went to her room.

Her dark room.

She couldn't bring herself to turn on the lights anymore. Their man-made light couldn't replace the natural beauty of starlight. It was okay though, because Emmy had learned to live without stars. It wasn't the same, but she was slowly finding peace in the day. After all, the sun was a star too.

Emmy crawled on her bed to look out at the black sky. For once she didn't feel sad. Maybe it was because time had dulled the sharpness of the blow for her, but she was beginning to find that the dark wasn't so bad after all. It was scary at first but once you let yourself get absorbed into its quiet, there was a new kind of peacefulness to it.

Polaris- Tina Golab

That's when Emmy felt a lump in her pocket.

She crinkled her face in confusion. She hadn't put anything in her pocket today.

She reached in and pulled the lump out only to be blinded by a blazing light that took up every space in her room.

She shrunk back at first but when she realized what it was her face lit up as brightly as the star.

She had the North Star all along. Her true north was wherever she was, not wherever the shadow had taken them.

She took the star and threw it as hard as she could, and watched with satisfaction as it stuck right where it was suppose to, on the tail of the Little Dipper.

Emmy did a double take. Suddenly the sky was alive with light once again, chasing the shadows back to wherever they came from.

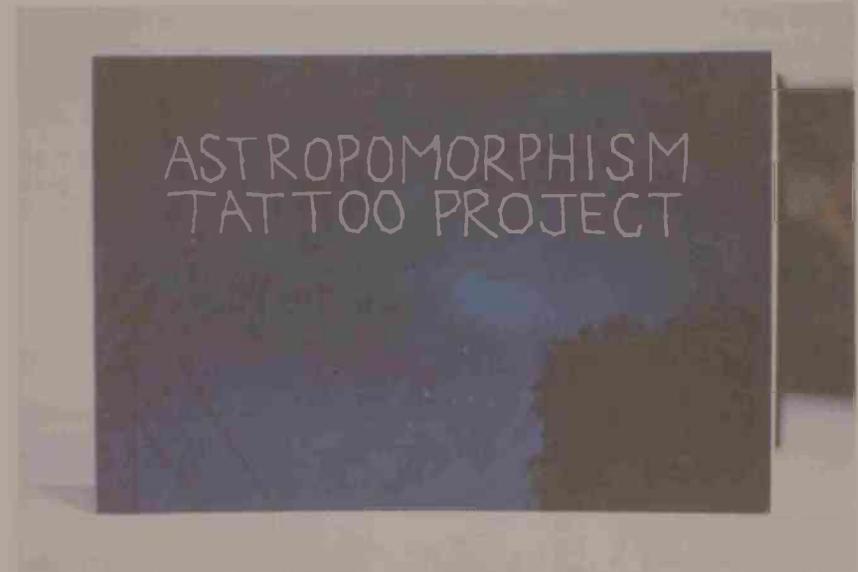
She gave a small shriek of glee, which caused her mother to come running again.

"What's wrong Emmy?" she looked about frantically.

Emmy pointed out her window and smiled. "The stars are back."

Astropomorphism Tattoo Project

Noémie Fortin



Astropomorphism Tattoo Project, Phase 1 (Detail), 2016, NO

Astropomorphism Tattoo Project – Phase 1

Summer sky in Dawson City rarely gets dark and starry. It sure is an event when you get to see the Midnight Sun going down and astronomical bodies coming to light over your head. And when it does, it draws your attention onto details you had grown to overlook living down south, where stars are just a part of every night sky. While staying there last summer, NO got fascinated with constellations and trying to identify them, which lead to the Astropomorphism Tattoo Project. This idea came in a discussion about these constellations she had with friends, when Étienne said he “almost” had Cassiopeia on his arm; he was just “missing a star”.

Humans looked up at the sky to identify imagery in the stars to form the modern constellations. NO looked down on bodies, searching for almost complete constellations in freckles and moles, and revealed them with stick-and-poke tattoos, adding the one missing dot to complete the shape. “Astropomorphism” could be defined as the attribution of celestial patterns to non-astral

Astropomorphism Tattoo Project- Fortin

entities, here the human body. This work is about connections: with the sky by transforming bodies to resemble it, with the participants when inking their skin, and between participants as they share this one dot tattoo on their skin. This project will continue until all 88 modern constellations are completed on different bodies.

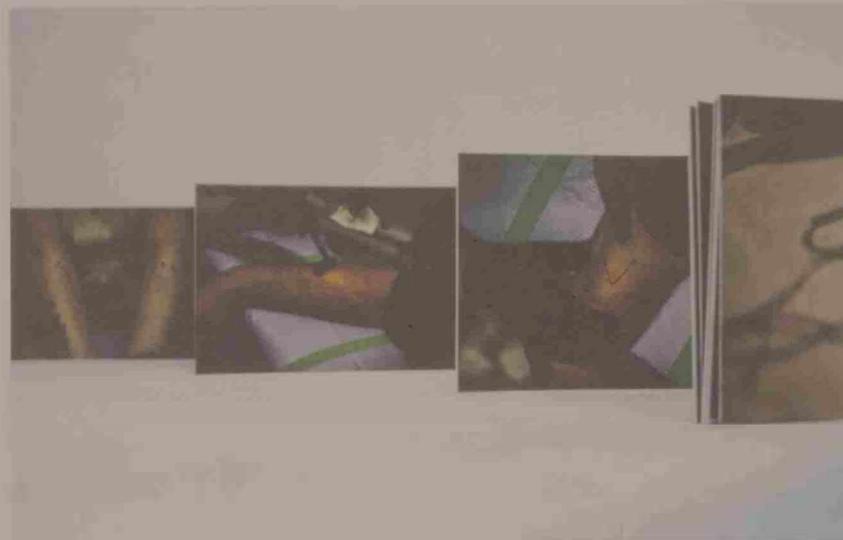
Stick-and-poke tattoos are used to create a subtle but permanent mark on the skin with a tool generally used in fabric or paper: the needle. Sure enough, working with a needle on the skin is different than on other regular materials, but the way it forces you to focus on the details and work with minutiae resembles embroidery work.



Astropomorphism Tattoo Project – Phase 1 (Detail), Vince's Cancer tattoo, 2016, NO

Documentation – Phase 1:

Documenting each step of the process involved in the first tattoo session, twenty photographs were printed and assembled in an accordion artist book. On some of the pages, the links between dots are stitched to “connect” the freckle constellations and reveal their overall shapes. This work explores the interdisciplinary nature of materials; from skin to paper, connecting both with needlework.

Astropomorphism Tattoo Project- Fortin

Astropomorphism Tattoo Project – Phase 1 (Detail), 2016, NO



Astropomorphism Tattoo Project – Phase 1 (Detail), Noémie's Libra tattoo, 2016, NO

Astropomorphism Tattoo Project- Fortin



Astropomorphism Tattoo Project – Phase 1 (Detail), *Hélène's Orion tattoo*, 2016. NO

Artist statement

Noémie Fortin, aka NO, is interested in relations: those linking people, territories, and communities. She aims to unite individuals around joint causes through her interdisciplinary art practice. As a way to connect with her environment, NO works with recycled and natural materials such as fibres and pigments. She inculcates in the viewer a vision of the territory that blends frontiers with her works emerging from a mixture of different techniques: drawing, painting, papermaking, embroidery, tattoo, printmaking, photography, and video. It is mostly through the documentation and archiving of her relational art that viewers can discover traces of her work, when they are not already actively part of it.

Native from Lac-Mégantic, NO became more concerned with our impact on the land and its ecology after the train derailment that led to the explosion of petroleum tank cars in the heart of her hometown in 2013. The explosion devastated the downtown area and caused a spillage of millions of liters of crude oil into the environment. Inspired by the resilience of her community, she then decided to give up her canvas and brushes to start creating in collective actions, involving others in her process, as a way to bring people together and resist.

All that's left

Katie Warriner

We hadn't come back soon enough. But I'd been busy with work. What a terrible, excuse, right? At least it's better than the real one: I was ashamed. Ashamed that it had been so long, that it took this to bring me back, that I wasn't Beth, wasn't there for him like she was, and now I never could be.

Beth's face wasn't letting me forget that as we pulled our old hatchback into the driveway of her East York home. We all got out of the car; my son Trevor, ran into Beth's arms, while my daughter Rachel hid behind Matt's legs as he grabbed our bags. Matt had driven most of the way from Halifax to Toronto, while I stared out the window, thinking absolutely nothing for eighteen hours. Now I hugged my sister, trying to avoid her scornful eyes and hide my own tears. We'd only be dropping our stuff off anyways, before heading to see Dad.

"How was the drive?" Beth asked as Matt headed dutifully into the basement to drop off our bags, our children running circles around him, working off the excess energy produced by a long two days spent strapped in a car seat.

"Fine," I said, nodding. "How have you been holding up?" I asked, daring to look up at her face for the first time. She was the same as ever, same dark, curly hair and blue eyes as me, but with a look as if the world was about to disappoint her once again.

"Alright," she said, but her eyes betrayed her.

"This sucks," I answered, feeling the sobs coming.

"Yeah, it really does," she responded, as Matt shouted up the stairs that we were "good to go."

Dr. Schultz, a greying man maybe only a decade younger than my father, looked awkward as he spoke. I think he wasn't aware that I already knew I was too late, that Dad was already too far gone, that I was going to be the daughter who never said goodbye to her father, the

Portions of the text of *All that's left* were taken from the following book: Farrar, J. L. (1991). *Trees of the northern United States and Canada 1st Edition*. Wiley-Blackwell.

ultimate fuck up rebel child who never redeemed herself. At least, that's what I got from his repeated throat clearing. Perhaps the good doctor just had a cold.

Regardless, the visit was short. And Dad was.... gone. I tried to hug him, but it just feels wrong when the other person can't hug back at all. The kids tried their best to make sense of the situation and, at Matt's whispered urging, "not upset mommy."

"I'm sorry you're sick Grandpa," Rachel said solemnly, her small frame stretching as best it could across his frail body. Never one to dare respond to a stranger's kind offer of a candy, I knew this was a lot for my little girl. It was hardly fair to her, expecting her to mourn a man she barely knew. But she did it anyway, because she knew she was supposed to.

According to Beth, Dr. Schultz and his team estimated Dad had two or three days left. Matt had asked me what I want to do with that time. Part of me felt like I should've stayed here, glued to the chair next to Dad's bed for as long as I could, and talked to him, but I had no idea what to say. So when Beth asked us to stop by Dad's house and grab some paperwork the next morning, I agreed with some relief, as if I had forgotten what was waiting for me there.



I should have left the kids at Beth's, I realized, as we pulled up to Dad's bungalow a few blocks away. Perhaps I hoped things had gotten better at the old house, but they hadn't. As we opened the creaky old front door, everything was exactly the same as it had been seven years ago. Except there was more stuff, if that was even possible.

"Wow," I heard Matt say.

"Yep, this is it," I responded as firmly as I could. Let's just get through this, I told myself. It was the only way. "I'll go upstairs to the office and look for the papers Beth wants, if you can keep an eye on them down here."

Matt nodded, but his eyes were still wide and bewildered. I tried to imagine seeing this place for the first time, like he was. All of the stuff, just random crap, everywhere, on every surface you could see; the dirty plates and broken pens strewn across the floor. It had become strange looking to me, having been away for so long, but it was also so familiar—just like Dad's office had always been growing up, and then the whole house had become when Mom left.

"Sorry about all this," I head myself saying, as Mom always had. I must've had an embarrassed look on my face, because Matt pulled me into a tight hug and whispered, "don't worry" over and over in my ear. I had to stop my body from just collapsing into his, and instead I dragged myself up the stairs and into the office.

"What's this Mommy?" a curious little voice asked behind me after I had been fruitlessly scrounging through a stack of file folders for fifteen minutes.

I turned to find Trev looking up at me, with a smile as wide as his face, an old book, *Trees of the Northern United States and Canada* by John Laird Farrar, open in his hands. One of Dad's many, many, many books. Like all the others, this one was about science. Trees to be exact.

"Oh, that's one of Grandpa's old books," I tried to explain, as if that captured my father's obsession.

"What does it say?" he asked. Trev was in the first grade and it was only October. They weren't quite at textbook reading yet.

"It looks like it talks about all the different types of trees you can find around here."

"Can we go and seem 'em?" he asked, as if this were as exciting as a trip to Disneyland.

"Sure," I said with a sigh, abandoning my search. Beth would probably be livid—I couldn't complete even this one stupid small task right—but I couldn't deny that lit up face. Or the opportunity to escape

this house.



“So, where are we going exactly?” Matt asked. I was driving for once, since I was the one who knew the way.

“The Don,” I said again, for the third time since our departure.

“Yes, but what is this “Don”?” he asked. It was clear who our son got his curiosity from.

“It’s the river, I guess.”

“You guess?”

“Well, I don’t know. We’d always just go there. It’s a park, basically. The “Don” is the name of the river it follows.”

“Like D-O-N? Like Don Valley Parkway?” he asked, referencing the main highway in the city.

“Yeah...I guess that makes sense.”

Matt gave me a look.

“What? I never thought about it! Dad would always just say we were going to the Don and he’d pile Beth and me and whatever dog we had at the time into the car and then we’d walk. And he’d talk. And that’s about all I remember. I never really thought about it.”

Matt nodded and finally gave up his questioning I pulled into the parking lot, which was actually just a dirt patch, the forest of trees starting on one side, Bayview Avenue speeding by on the other.

“Be careful, guys,” I reminded Rachel and Trevor as I opened the back doors, “There are a lot of cars around here. And be careful of the tracks. You never know when a train’s going to come by.” They nodded. Rachel took my hand and Trev took off towards the

woods without a second glance.

Like Dad’s house, the old path was exactly the same as it had always been. My feet remembered it more than my brain.

“This way,” I yelled to Trev and he came speeding up behind us.

“What’s this, Mommy? What kinda tree is this one?”

“Oh, well,” I started, trying to recall something about the crooked, slightly furry tree with small leaves in front of me. “I’m not sure.” He seemed fine with this, thankfully. We kept going for a while, and though we were walking through all the gorgeous fall leaves and while my artist brain should’ve just been caught up in the beautiful variety of colours, all I could see was my dad. Twenty years ago. Thirty years ago. Longer even. Probably since the day they brought me home from the hospital— knowing him.

“And what ‘bout this?” Trev would ask every few minutes, holding up some stick or leaf or even handful of dirt. I tried to answer him, but all I could ever think of was my Dad laughing, tossing me over his shoulder and threatening to throw me down the embankment. Or him carefully explaining why all the leaves were different shapes. It would be useful, now, if I remembered what he said and could repeat it for Trev, but all I remember was the elated look Dad always had on his face and I couldn’t begin to communicate that.

“I don’t know, sweetie,” I answered over and over, feeling guiltier each time.

In between attempts at keeping Trev out of the river, Matt would take my hand and squeeze it. A few times I opened my mouth and tried to tell him about all the things I was seeing and remembering, but I couldn’t do it. I didn’t belong here without my dad.

“Can we turn back?” I asked Matt eventually, when I feared I might collapse on that very spot.

“Sure, of course.”

All that's left- Warriner

We shuffled the kids back into the car and I dropped Matt and the kids off at Beth's, instructing Matt to the ice cream place around the block with all the best invented flavours. I went back to my Dad's home and found Dad's book on trees and finally tracked down those papers Beth wanted. Then I headed to the hospital.



"The Conifers. The first part of this book describes the conifers – in botanical terms, trees in the division Pinophyta of the plant kingdom," I began, already tripping over my words.

"They are separated from broadleaf trees based on their reproductive structures. Conifers have no true flowers." I paused. "You always told us that Christmas trees were conifers, remember?" I asked, looking up, as if I expected him to respond.

"Pollen is borne on separate catkin-like structures, sometimes on separate trees. In most genera, the ovules, and the seeds that develop from them, are borne on the scale of a cone (hence, the name conifer from the Latin meaning "cone-bearing")," I continued. "That's actually kind of interesting."

I glanced up again, but he didn't nod or add some obscure factoid like he normally would've. The tears started up, but I forced myself to keep going. I got to *Section II: Broadleaf Trees* when he stopped breathing. Dr. Shultz came in, but he couldn't save him. I called Beth and she said she'd be there within ten minutes. And then I picked up the book again and kept reading.

It was all I could do.

My Worst Enemy

Cloë Jones-Philibert

I need to break free of your grasp
and your words that infiltrate my blood.
You develop in my head
control me, anchor me
like roots of growing chickweed.
You stimulate my frontal lobe
force it to live on its impulses
seduced, it pushes me,
to jump.

My family is gone.
I'd do anything to feel adrenaline.

I must remember
my will is stronger
than your seductive words—
stronger than how you make me feel
I am my own worst enemy and I know
my body, my actions,
all depend
on me.

Beer Claims his Life

Cloë Jones-Philibert

At four a.m. —It's five o'clock somewhere—
he takes his first sip.
He doesn't care whether it's ice cold
or lukewarm.

What does he care about?
First thing in the morning—the brown bottle
his five course liquid meal.

Before the ale,
he lived in a country house by a lake.
Horse nickers were his alarm.
He would put on his clean clothes, kiss his wife,
hug his beautiful baby boy
and tend to his chores.

Now, empty bottles
are his duty.
and Alcohol is the narcotic,
that coats his veins.
Slowly it poisons his reason
Becoming an insatiable need
That makes him weak, he forgets
to eat and beer is his only meal. His consumption
consumes him.
His stomach is an empty barrel longing to be filled.

His knees buckle. He straightens up
proud to have caught himself before sprawling.
Pride discovers a new dignified ground-level.
He used to be proud that he was the smartest
man in the room.
But now Drink has made him forget
his ideals .

The man in his mirror is a beaten up volunteer
soldier—scruffy and too old
He is slozzed out of his mind.

Beer Claims his Life- Jones-Philibert

He volunteers his own life
to spend it in a bottle.



Summit of a misty world, Rucu Pinchincha, Quito, Ecuador,
Clémentine Bouche

Case Study of the Scientist in its Natural Habitat

Giulia Maggio-Tremblay

Abstract

The scientist was busily putting together a research paper. Not only could this research ultimately help people with its promising findings, it was necessary to keeping a position at the university's lab. Necessary to keeping the family fed. While hunched over a keyboard poring over endless tables and graphs, that pressure balanced the globe on the scientist's shoulders.

Introduction

Sometimes the children did not see their parent for days. They would tiptoe each time they passed the closed study door, turning to signal each other with a finger to the lips the importance of thoughtful silence. They could be heard faintly through the walls sometimes, before they were shushed, or a door closed somewhere in the house to suggest they had moved their play elsewhere. Meanwhile the scientist dove into strings of numbers and letters, meta-analyses and pilot studies, searching for that elusive cure.

Methods

There never seemed to be enough hours in the day to get everything done. Often the scientist would have forgotten to eat had it not been for the gentle prodding of the spouse, who, would deposit plates of steaming nutrients, or glasses of reviving water to dilute the many yet insufficient litres of caffeine employed to maintain alertness. The scientist would often lose track of time, working long into the night before collapsing over the desk around dawn, and sometimes waking, confused, in bed in the early afternoon to begin the cycle again.

The days thus passed in a feverish blur, each one like the last, a scramble of staring at words until they blurred and scattered like ants in the scientist's vision. The battle against tired eyes, an aching back and neck, and a reluctant, foggy brain, defined these days.

Case Study of the Scientist in its Natural Habitat- Maggio-Tremblay

Results

On another such afternoon, the scientist woke unenthusiastically, the initial bloom of excitement about a new project now decaying like a cut rose left standing in the same water for too long. Perhaps *I am the rose*, thought the scientist vaguely. *I really could use a break, maybe a family vacation. I wish I had time to stop now, but I'm not even sure I can finish on schedule as it is...*

With that fantasy set aside, the scientist got out of bed, indulging in a groan that would be the only complaint voiced today, since no other ears would hear it. This thought caused the scientist to pause a moment and listen.

Silence.

Wow, the children really are well behaved, thought the scientist. *Unless they are away at school? But no, isn't it Saturday? I'll go find my spouse and see what's happening today. I can spare a moment to at least say 'good morning' before I return to my research.*

This decided, the scientist strode into the kitchen. There awaited a surprising sight- the room was empty, clear of even dirty dishes or crumbs to suggest a recent meal. Utterly bare. Brow furrowing slightly, the scientist checked first the children's rooms.

These too were empty. A final check of the remaining rooms confirmed what some part of the scientist had known or at least feared when awakening to the sound of silence. They had left.

The scientist thought of calling relatives to see if they knew where the rest of the family had gone, but decided against it. How would it look, having to ask where one's own family was? Everyone would know then how poorly the scientist was juggling the career and family life. It was too embarrassing. And it seemed too final to say the words out loud- *my family has left me; can you tell me where they are? Because I really want them back.*

Case Study of the Scientist in its Natural Habitat- Maggio Tremblay

But maybe none of that was necessary. Perhaps they had gone out simply and would be back soon.

They weren't.

The next days spent awaiting their return passed in a blur. An attempt to continue working soon ended when mental mutiny became apparent – there was no way to look at the work without seeing all it had cost. Instead the scientist drifted in a fog of pessimism and denial, swinging between certainties of reunion or of a life of scholarly isolation – what might once have been a palatable or even pleasant prospect, now turned to a punishing nightmare. Instead of a desk, now hours were swallowed up in front of a television set, taking the ice cream tub bought ostensibly for the children, and spooning straight out of it.

Discussion

The scientist was a mess, and knew it. All communication from the university and colleagues was ignored. Every other call, though, was snatched up from the phone always kept in reach. However, it was never the desired voice, never news about the scientist's missing family. Now the scientist could see how they had each tried to make things easier, the spouse by brewing coffee and cooking strengthening meals, and the children by refraining from disruptive play. It can't have been easy for them, and yet they'd endured without a word of complaint, or any thanks from their reclusive housemate.

The scientist's ears perked up at sounds coming from outside the house. Was that a car driving up? *No, surely not. I must be imagining it. Wishful thinking.*

And yet there followed a series of thumps and a scraping jingle before the front door was thrown open. The rosy-cheeked children went to call out, but were immediately shushed by their parent, saying, "We do not want to disturb – oh!" The sentence was interrupted as the scientist was spotted, still disbelieving, on the couch. "Hello, darling." And then, taking in the dishevelled hair, the wrinkled pyjamas, the flashing television screen, the tub of ice cream and spoon still in hand, and perhaps the face blank with shock, the spouse's brow furrowed.

Case Study of the Scientist in its Natural Habitat- Maggio Tremblay

"Are you alright? Did you finish your work?"

And suddenly the scientist was laughing. The spouse stooped to the children and whispered to them, so that, as the scientist doubled over with the spasms of mirth, they went past to their rooms. Only when the spouse approached and embraced the scientist, murmuring, "Oh, honey," did the scientist realize that the chuckles had turned to tears.

"I'm sorry," said the scientist, "I know I'm being silly, but I'm just... really glad you're home."

"It's alright," soothed the spouse, "we missed you too. But why did you not come join us if you changed your mind?"

"W-what?" The scientist stopped crying to stare up at the spouse, who looked even more troubled now.

"I told you we were going away for a week's vacation. I asked you if you were too busy to go and would prefer having the house to yourself, and you said 'sure'."

"Oh... I don't... remember that," the bewildered scientist admitted. "At all."

"Oh." Silence reigned as both reflected. "I suppose I could have left a note at least. I'm sorry if I worried you."

"No, I think in a way I needed this shock to remind me how much you all matter. Before a deadline, I guess I get a kind of tunnel vision and fail to pick up on cues from my environment."

The spouse grinned. "Oh, like the day and night cycle? Hunger? Personal grooming schedules? You don't say. I hadn't noticed."

"Oh, hush," responded the scientist, recovering a smile that had gone into hiding for the last week, "you love me."

"That I do. I'm sorry if you ever had to doubt that."

Case Study of the Scientist in its Natural Habitat- Maggio Tremblay

"And I am sorry if I had made you doubt."

"Never," was the reply, accompanied with a kiss to the forehead, "but it will be nice having you around more. The kids missed you, you know."

"Only the kids, eh?" There was only a mysterious smile as the teasing answer, warming the scientist from the core. The moment was interrupted by an indeterminate crash and a wail. The spouse immediately got up, but a hand on the arm delayed departure. "Let's go together this time," said the scientist, and they linked hands to go investigate what mischief the youngsters had gotten themselves into.

Conclusion

After all, this scientist was not merely a hermit scholar, but a spouse and a parent, and science did not happen in a bubble. A person without context, without love to balance duty and ambition, was like a research paper without data or references – invalid and incomplete.

Rat #A4

Asha-Maria Bost

The last day I saw you
The corridor was stained red
With the light of the exit sign

You were in your cage,
Nose turned up, whiskers flailing
Crouched in the corner, staring

Skinny, you were so skinny
Wheezing rapidly
Like after running on a wheel

Did I do this to you?

Did the gavage feeding tube pierce your esophagus?

Did the tube perforate your stomach?

Did I collapse your trachea from pressing too hard?

Or are you an anxiety baby like me?

I called my supervisor in a panic
Holding you in my hands
You squeaking from my fear

She told me not to worry
That the most humane thing to do is
To put you out of your misery

She told me to finish with the others
Collect stool samples and
Feed them their ration of peanut oil or saline

And so I did, repeating
It's okay, it's okay, as I slid
The gavage tube into rat #A5's esophagus

Rat #A4- Bost

After I finish, I scribble notes
 In my black book and wheel the squealing cages
 Into the housing room

I could not avoid you any longer
 My throat tightened as I wrote an E
 On your cage, slating you for death

I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

I am not cut out for this line of work.

Telegraphy

Jeff Parent

Behind our campsite,
 the one we get every year
 (except in '96 when Brian had chemo)
 and big enough for the kitchen tent,
 there's a long strip of dark dirt
 what used to be a rail line
 where the odd
 pocked spike still mushrooms
 "but only after rain," observed Brian,
 the scientist,
 every time.
 Just beyond that
 at the butt-end of the lake
 shallow and brown,
 thick eyeless fish suck at
 drowned telegraph poles.
 All but one. Still standing,
 "An arthritic finger
 dialled into the firmament."
 Brian, the poet, declared.
 He took notes:
*Hums like an overpass
 when heat-lightning smothers the park.*
 and
*When the lake laps its root
 the water pulls back like a nettle-stung dog.*
 and
*Sheds oily pinheads
 that settle in the muck like cheap talk.*
 By late August, that same muck
 pushed up copper shoots,
 wiry,
 tadpole headed.
 They'd dry out slow in the sun
 then vanish to God-knows-where
 by September when we packed things up,
 and always
 when Brian wasn't looking.

Oakwood Collegiate Institute

Sophie Luu

In senior year,
my day begins broadcasting
the morning announcements
over the P.A. system
(alongside Kenny)
after the national anthem.



The perils of deriving
a solution
to a problem
is beyond any capability
of mankind to compute
the mass of the sun
given the length of a horse
and x number of apples.



The irony in dramatic irony
comes into play
when I,
an audience member
has no clue
as to what is going on
in Act I, Scene II of Hamlet
following Hamlet's soliloquy.



Unlike the nucleic acids
that code for genes,
the genetic makeup
does not account for the changes
found in my DNA.
My identity is under the influence
of environmental factors.

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Oakwood Collegiate Institute- Luu



Discussions are appetizers
alongside the main course.
Starters include discussions of:
class,
teachers,
students,
TV shows,
movies
music,
boys and the menu of hors d'oeuvres
extends until the bell rings.



Chemical compounds react
in beakers and flasks,
but the most explosive reactions
are the ones where
my heated temper
come into contact
with the acidity
of my solution.



With a different pair of cultural eyes,
I am able to see
the absurdity of life
that L'Étranger describes
without getting lost in translation.



I defy the law of gravity.
My head takes to the sky,
placing my energy

and momentum
between the clouds
instead of on planet Earth.



Toots and screeches from one section,
belches from another,
accompanied by the occasional pass of gas
from the back section.

This orchestra was supposed to be (an)
“ensemble.”



Memories are kept in a yearbook
along with bad paid-for senior photos.
Signatures are sprawled
on the front and back covers:
friends remind you of the best of times,
teachers wish you luck for the future.

First Year: How it Comes and Goes

Katia Zuppel

Hair was pulled into buns,
tank tops and short shorts were everywhere yet—
nothing could subdue the sweltering heat of summer.

The theatre was full;
a mass of dreamers, each one here
for different reasons.

Business owners, engineers, teachers and scientists—
All seated side by side
excited for what was to come.

Around the room many were focused,
some chattered among themselves,
while others were on their phones.

None were fully aware of what awaited them.

With a change in weather came a change in attitude.
Strides were slower, clothes were layered
and no one seemed to have slept a fulfilling night.

Phone calls home occurred less often
and all-nighters, more frequent.
Nerves stirred like branches on trees.

Eyes wandered out windows,
while the howling wind blowing through the leaves
drowned out teachers' reviews.

Exasperated and exhausted, final exams completed.

Boots kick up snow on late night trips for food.
Bags carried down stairs and through
the horrid winds of Canadian winters.

First Year: How it Comes and Goes- Zuppel

Sadness overwhelms those of us
 who were once strangers
 and now call Lennoxville home.

The uncertainty of the first few days now replaced with excitement and
 longing for next semester.



Au fil de l'eau, Lennoxville, QC, Juliette Parlant

Evolution of an Education

Gray Zaidlin

On a Sunday in early July, 1995, I was dragged kicking and screaming into this world, and I never really stopped. I was born in my parents' bed, with my older half-siblings in the room. My sister, 12 years old at the time, saw my umbilical cord and announced to the room that she had a new baby brother, when in fact, I was her new baby sister. I am sure Freud would have had something to say about this first interaction in my life. My parents wrote down my birth information like an athletes' statistics, and mailed out a card announcing the "players" and "coaches" in my birth. The "players" were my older siblings, who would go on to pretty much raise me. To my parents, this information was important enough that they wanted to write it down and make a record; my parents wanted me to remember where I started and who was with me in the beginning. In doing so, they made it a part of my history.

I can't remember much of my early childhood, but I do remember the day my parents told me that my mom had cancer. I didn't know what that meant, but I knew it was bad news. It was March, 2001, and I was still small. I don't remember how they told me or how they explained what it was, but I remember feeling this incredible, visceral rage. My skin was hot and suddenly I felt too big to fit in my tiny body. At six years old, I could have sworn that Gray became red and then she became blue and somehow I was seeing this happen to Gray but I was also Gray and my chest was rising and falling and my lungs were small but strong as I screamed and stomped through my house. My eyes were storm clouds and rivers ran down my cheeks as I thundered my feelings. That was the last time I cried about it. I was never going to be small again.

When you grow up with the Grim Reaper hanging out in your house, you grow up pretty quickly. I had always been a precocious child. I clutched thick novels to my chest, reveling in the surprise of adults when I told them, that *yes, I had read Harry Potter all by myself, and I could even tie my shoes by myself! Want to watch?* When my mom got sick, I went from being just a child who read to a full-fledged reader. One of my first memories is of reading a book about diabetes in the library. My dad is an insulin-dependent diabetic, and I wanted to understand. I didn't, because I was four and all I knew was that sugar

was delicious but sugar could hurt daddy but it could also hurt daddy if he didn't have enough. When my mom got sick, I was ready. I was old enough to read, and to me, that meant I was old enough to *understand*. I didn't know that just because the words were on the paper and I knew what they meant, didn't mean that I understood what was happening.

"My mom has breast cancer. She's going through che... chemo... the... chemotherapy." Chemotherapy is a tough word to say when you are six and you are scared but pretending to be brave. I didn't understand what was happening to my life and why daddy always looked sad and why mommy couldn't play with me anymore. But I could understand that there was a doctor and a hospital and that chemotherapy was going to make mommy all better. I spent my seventh birthday in the chemo ward, curled up beside my mom and reading a book.

For the school holiday assembly that year, my grade one class was going to recite *Alligator Pie*, by Shel Silverstein. We'd had to memorize it and write our own verses to match the rhythm. I remember coming home from school and reciting it to my mom over the hum of oxygen tanks and the heavy silence in the room. I was so excited.

I also remember the day that my mom died. I was in my room with my brother and he was reading a book to me about a princess in a tower who needed to be rescued by solving math riddles. I hated math. I remember hearing a gasp from the other room and when I went in, my whole family was around my parents' bed. In the following hours, I would sit on my kitchen counter and comfort my family as they cried.

The year after she died, a group of moms at my school walked in a 60 kilometer walkathon to benefit breast cancer research. They walked for my mom. My Nana, then aged 78, participated in the walk and made the local news. I was interviewed, too, and asked why I was helping the team. I didn't say anything, but I had wanted to say, "So that no one else has to go through what I did." I didn't say anything because I was the support in my house and everyone told me that I needed to be strong for daddy. My interview never made it on air.

I came to Bishop's because I was scared to leave home but wanted to be brave for a change. With plans of becoming a doctor, I began

my major in Biology, with a concentration in Health Sciences. In the first week, I bought my textbooks with pride and listened intently in class, sure that I was finally taking the first step towards achieving my dreams.

Flash-forward a few weeks, and I was reduced to the kicking, screaming child I had been since birth. My chemistry labs left me in tears, and my calculus assignments plagued my dreams. I would wake up in a cold sweat, thinking about proteins and mitochondria. After meeting with my faculty advisor, I made the decision to switch from the Bachelor of Science program to the Bachelor of Arts. I would be able to take the big-picture biology classes that I enjoyed, avoid the classes that were causing me so much trouble, and even have room for a second major. My advisor recommended I take introductory Psychology in my second semester as it was required for my Bachelor of Arts in Biology.

Fresh from winter break, I sat in my first Psychology class, fully expecting to feel the same apathy I had felt with my other required classes. Instead, once my professor began lecturing, my pen rarely left my paper. I left the class with ink smears on my palms and a list of psychologists and famous cases that I rushed to my dorm room to Google. Psychology came easily to me. That is not to say that I drifted through the class with little effort. Instead, I spent more time studying for that class than I really needed. I was so interested and engaged in the material that I would do extra research and work just to get a deeper understanding. I became my four year old self, reading a book about diabetes in the library; I wanted to know for the sake of knowing. The parts of Biology that I loved to study were intertwined with Psychology. I wanted to know how the world worked, and my biology background gave me an advantage to understanding the physiology involved in the study of the mind.

I don't mean to say that Psychology is an easier to discipline to study than Biology is. But for me, I do better when I am engaged in the material, and I am happier when I do better in school. I still get stressed out about school, still thunder my feelings, and I still put too much pressure on myself at times, but overall, I am happier. I am willing to put in the blood, sweat, and (literal) tears because I finally am getting

Evolution of an Education- Zaidlin

the answers about life that I had always been looking for. When I officially switched to a double major and began telling people, I no longer felt this heavy weight on my shoulders. I didn't feel like kicking and screaming anymore. Instead, I felt relief.

A Quick Note about my Writing Process

I think an interesting part of our life stories is that we choose to see what is important to us, and as an extension, it is interesting to think about why that is important to us. In this way, history is circular. I wanted to tell you the story of my life in a way that celebrates an evolution of education but that also rejects the notion that I have progressed further simply because I have aged. I have always approached life in a scientific way; that much hasn't changed. I may have grown older but there will always be a part of me that is six years old and scared and searching for answers.

Recipe for a Sleepless Night

Charlotte Peters

5 cups of coffee

drink with abandon and immediately regret

6 cups of hot water

because when you couldn't sleep mom would give you warm water instead of milk and you would drift to sleep

with the musty taste of the mug under your tongue

2 pending essays

3 pillows, lumpy

3 texts received at 5:00am

I don't know what to do

me neither

2 worried about him and her and them

wait until thoughts are at a rolling boil

how

how

how

1 heaping tablespoon of awareness of thyme

Set aside 5 cups of the hot water for a hot water bottle. Do not use.

Combine first 5 ingredients: coffee, hot water, essays, pillows and texts.

In separate bowl sift together worry and fatigue until fully blended.

Fold the two mixtures into each other.

Set temperature alternately too hot and too cold and cook for 3-7 hours.

It will feel so much longer.

Boxes

Asha-Maria Bost

You tap me on the shoulder and say:
 "Why do you draw boxes so much?"

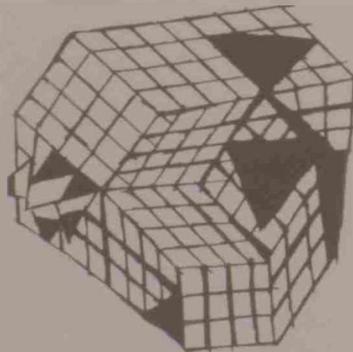
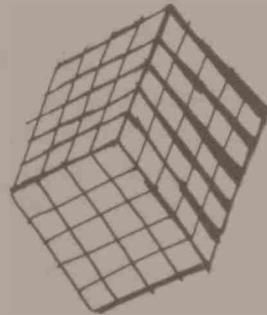
I don't have a good answer
 But I've been drawing them since I was a kid
 Trying to make the lines straight, and proportional
 so that all the tiny boxes have the same height and width
 Even if they may be slanted into a rhombus.

No matter how hard I try
 I can never make the boxes perfect—
 Lines are curved,
 Lines darkened to cover up mistakes,
 Boxes on one side larger than the other
 Even when I use a ruler.

Yet even in the face of this imperfection
 Drawing them calms me
 Helps me focus when the teacher is discussing
 The process of long term potentiation
 Or when the panic before my Honours thesis
 Presentation sets in.

I wonder when my little quirk
 of drawing boxes turned into something
 I need to concentrate.
 I wish I could've had a better habit
 like drawing daisies
 Or caricatures of faces—
 Something more digestible.

Maybe the boxes are a reflection
 Of me, feeling trapped yet calm
 Inside the worrying of my mind
 Fighting against that voice repeating the words
 "never good enough, never good enough"
 "they would be better off without you"

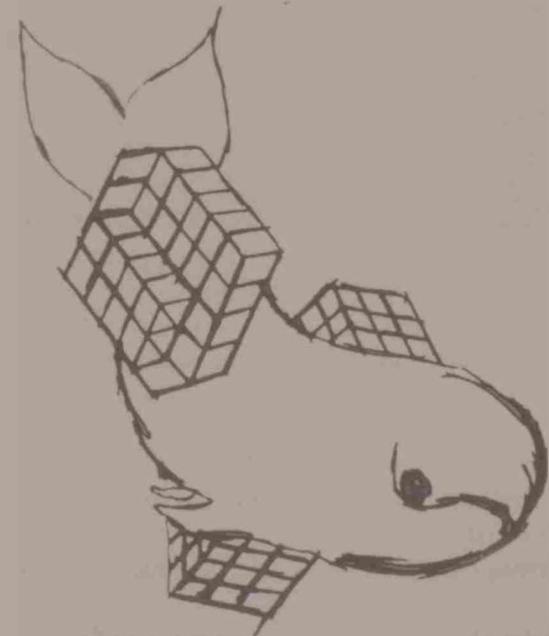


Boxes- Bost

Or then again they could just be boxes.

"Well you should try something else.
 Maybe a fidget toy.
 You're wasting paper!" You say.

For a minute I stop drawing
 But then like a puppet my pen traces
 the outline of a box on a page,
 but with a twist—
 a right whale emerges underneath
 blowing beauty into
 conformity.



Equester

Tina Golab

3, 2, 1

66 feet until take off.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

1200 pounds of muscle and bones
hurdles you over a fence –
Your pulse echoes in your head.

4, 3, 2, 1

Heels down for balance
Tight calves for pace and position.
Strong abdomen and open shoulders.
Following soft hand to stay out of
your partner's way.

1, 2

It's all about the angles.
Make full use of the corners.
The less you cut the corner,
the straighter your approach,
which results in a better take off.

2, 1

Maintain the rhythm.
Too slow or too fast
could get you into trouble.

78 feet until take off.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Pat your horse and let them know
they've done well.

3, 2, 1

A ball of butterflies sits in your
stomach.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

It takes 3 seconds but it feels like
you are hovering mid-air –
A sense of calm floods over you.

4, 3, 2, 1

The world fades away.
Voices drown out.
You relax in the familiar tempo of
pounding hooves.
It's just you, your horse, and the
jump.

1, 2

It's all about the feeling.
It's instinctual.
A hand on the neck
and a leg over the saddle
and suddenly
there's not a care in the world.

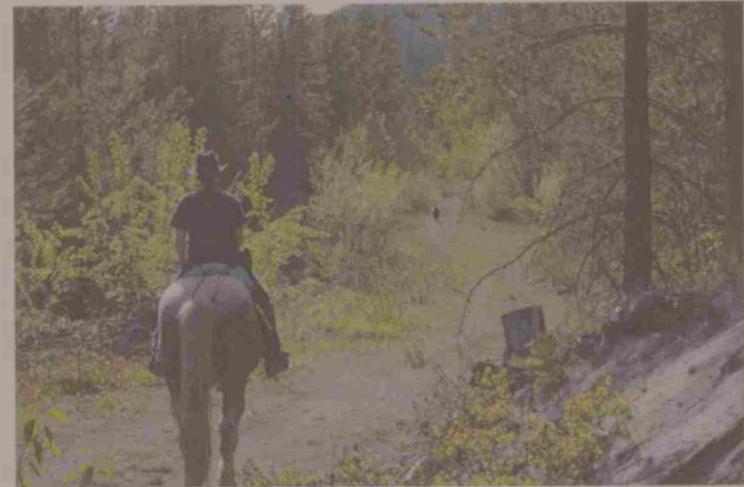
2, 1

Get lost in the rhythm
as you sway
to the beat of the hooves.

Get ready to fly.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Hug your horse and tell them you
love them.



Run, run, little Teddy Bear, Chilcotin Mountains, BC, Clémentine Bouche

November

Hayley Bernier

"1/30"



1/30, Hayley Bernier

Here I am, struggling —
the idea fluttering away before I get my fingers around its
neck.
Who is to say what veins I'm pulling on —
what strings now lay frayed.
An addendum of a forlorn tree, lying at my feet,
no longer the surplus that confirmed growth, but instead
a desiccated frailty.

Proof of another completed circle.

November- Bernier

"4/30"

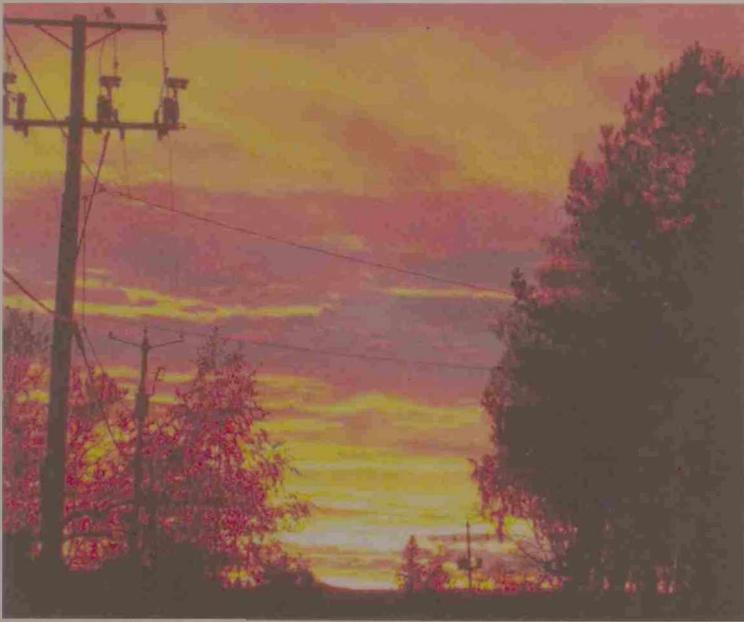


4/30, Hayley Bernier

You asked me to write you in,
capture your name inside a verse or
penned tale born from delicate grey matter.
And then, as soon as I swirled my pen on the final letter
it seemed like the ink itself had captured you —
kidnapped you into the pages with which it had melded.

Because after that, I never heard from you again.

"10/30"



10/30, Hayley Bernier

We may only exist
In the remnants of the world we wanted —
But take pause
Have comfort in the great
Unknown
Because it is
Waiting to hit us over the head
Or grab us by the shoulders to say

Look up
And be grateful.

"21/30"



21/30, Hayley Bernier

I woke with a demon splayed on my chest
An Incubus, lying in wait
and I sighed a dark cloud
hoping to shake out whatever
had been breathed into me.
I went out and was captured
in a whirlwind of snow,
the air crisp, cooled and
cleaned by the white crystals.

Sudden frozen oxygen.

Fairbanks

Cloé Jones-Philibert

The rain trickles onto my hat.
 The morning dew is fresh and the forest is asleep.
 Fallen branches crackle under my boots,
 while the bird choir rises and shines.

The river accompanies the bird choirs.
 It is the background music,
 the heart of the chorus;
 strong and steady
 the river is a lead singer,
 the main attraction.

Moose, bear, deer,
 lynx, fox, coyotes,
 squirrel, bird, fish,
 and human all follow
 the beating drum to one serene place.

The roars of the rapids intensify
 I enter the water,
 the flux deviates on me
 pressure is applied to my waist and thighs
 and the river and I become one.

My line is prepared; my fly carefully picked;
 a dark fly before daylight charms the river.
 I straighten my rod like an artist
 I brush my paint canvas
 Breezy, fluid,
 and continuous strokes,
 bring me closer to satisfying my thirst
 to extract fish.

The successful swish of my whip delights.
 I listen to my line inhale and exhale.
 Before I know it,
 I escape from my world.

Fairbanks- Jones Philibert

The river transports me to a world of wonder,
 a multiverse where time is meaningless.
 The only time that exists on Fairbanks
 are the rays of sun or glares of the moonlight.

Before I know it the river seduces me.
 I, in turn, mimic its grace.
 My eyes sprint across the stream; my gaze seeks
 to unravel the secrets held by the river,
 where salmon hide.
 I faithfully plot my cast.

My bait infiltrates the river and flows downstream.
 I am steady so long as my fly is in action.
 In its idleness, I strip back my sonar.
 Without warning my line is trapped;
 trapped like it were bolted to bedrock.
 The vibrations travel up the line,
 down the rod
 to the core
 of the handle.

The salmon soars.
 I am blinded by its radiant silver.
 I return to the universe of time,
 where I am expected to be a human again;
 where I am the predator.

How can such a small thing be so dear to me?

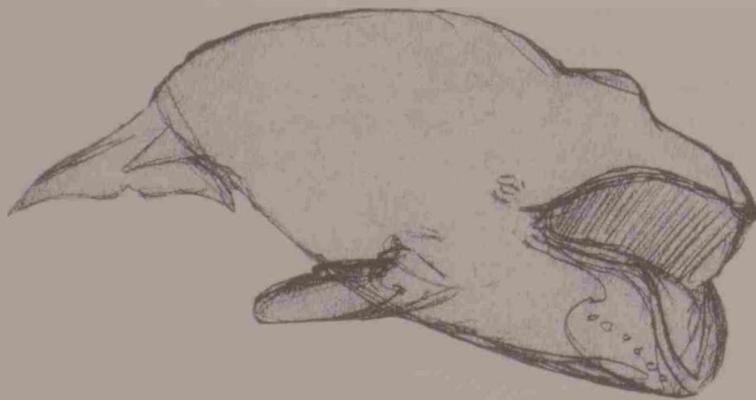
Oliver Rind

How can such a small thing be so dear to me?
This wooden Baleen that shares my name,
Latched to a key that lets me go far and wide
In what I deem my four-wheeled casket.

We've shared sixteen years, you and I,
Carried you with me since I first visited your kind to the north-east,
Where the mountains rise and where the air is perfumed
By the algae and salt from the River.

I've seen the likes of you, only larger and alive,
Pluming out of the Indian ink waters.
Every time I see you, I'm reminded of your ancestors,
Who too may have been the make
Of some elderly man with artful hands.

I see you and see all that is not man,
All that is pure and real,
All that is but pain of memory.
How can such a small thing be so dear to me?



Bowhead whale, Sketch, Oliver Rind

Whale Love

Asha-Maria Bost

You are like a goddamn whale. Not some random cliché
humpback whale that gets all the glory
because he gives jobs to tour boat operators
and "sings" songs that can be heard a mile away
over the roar of thrashing waves.

No, you're an endangered whale.
Like critically endangered. Like if a submarine strike
happened to hit you while you were going about your
day to day business, that would be the last of your species.
Then everyone might cry because you were gone—
Or respond with a shrug and a Facebook like.

You're a North Atlantic Right Whale, species *Eubalaena glacialis*.
Fat and glacial slow. Slower than a Sloth.
I've seen sloths. They do not move unless you poke them
with the most delectable looking leaf—
Or they like you.

But your distinctive blubber has it's distinctive charm.
And your flipper-arms are really small but you're hilarious
when you try to slap my face and miserably fail.
And the callosities around your eyes that look like
crusting snot with clumps of pus
really do complement your red hair.

Your rate of food intake is approaching a new record,
packing in the krill in a couple tasteful gulps
really saves you breathing time.
And who knows maybe you'll be the winning whale
of the PanOcean Biggest Eater Competition!

When you breach sure the fat kind of jiggles,
but you're one of a kind
and I wouldn't want it any other way.

Le Lac

Stephanie Paquette

Un jour d'automne
 J'me baladais
 En toute nonchalante
 Quand
 Surgissant des profondeurs
 Obituaires
 Du lac
 Apparut un homme

Le plus beau des morts
 J'eusse pensé
 Avec,
 comme chevelure
 Des amas d'algues rouillés
 Et une carrure
 Aussi robuste
 Qu'un cadre de porte
 Usé

Prends ma main
 Me gronda-t-il
 J'obtempérai sans soupir
 Et posa mes longs doigts
 Parmi les araignées envahissantes
 Qui, sans grande honte
 Couvrait son corps

Suit moi
 Me murmura-t-il
 Et, emplit de colère funèbre
 Je le suivis,
 S'enlisant dans les eaux et
 Nous dansâmes
 vers les fonds noirâtres.

À première vue
 L'endroit paraissait assez
 Foncé

Puis l'homme mortuairement
 mort
 Me prit par la taille
 C'est bras parfaitement taillé
 En boa constructeur
 M'éprirent

Voulez-vous bien regarder
 Me punit-il
 Mais oui très chère coquille
 Mais regarder, quoi?
 Dans cette pénombre
 Il n'y a que très peu à voir
 De toute façon
 Votre odeur déconcertante
 Me déconcerte certes

Voulez-vous bien voir
 Au-delà de ce qu'il y a
 À voir
 Bien d'accord
 d'être en désaccord
 J'en fis de même,
 Et fronça les sourcils
 Pour mieux voir
 à travers le voile
 Moribond du Lac

Puis, pareillement
 à un émerveillement
 La lumière apparut
 En mollusque désesparé au début
 Mais grandit en lion
 Puis en Phoenix,
 S'appropriant l'espace
 Comme une septuagénaire obèse
 C'était sans aucun doute
 merveilleux à témoigner

Le Lac- Stephanie Paquette

Larmoyante
 J'ouvris grand les yeux
 Les étoiles de mer
 En dentelle et talon haut
 Déambulèrent sur scène
 Tandis que les anguilles
 Assises autour d'un café
 Humèrent la fumer
 de cigarettes

Maintenant vous savez
 L'homme six pieds
 En dessous terre
 M'enleva
 Et,
 retournant à la surface
 Me fit cadeaux d'un baiser
 Volumptueux en saveur
 Mais langoureux
 Puis reparti parmi les follettes
 Des fonds vaseux

Prenant mes
 jambes à la ceinture
 Je fuis
 Non l'homme décadent
 Mais bien la décadence
 De la réalité ambiante
 Et qui
 Par peur du rejet
 M'entreint amoureuxment
 À la gorge



La Cave, Cuba, Stephanie Paquette

Just Chemicals

Haydn Juby

Love is just a bunch of chemicals floating around in your brain. We've all heard the phrase. Perhaps from a friend seeking to console us after a recent heartbreak, or from a cynical aunt who has one too many cats. It's become something we tell ourselves to trivialise love. We've tried to make love into something we can shrug off if things don't work out how we want. We don't like to feel vulnerable, and what is a better way to reduce life's most powerful emotion to something so scientific and abstract? You know what's really more important than a bunch of juices stewing around in the grey blob in our bone dome? Nothing. That's what— nothing. Those chemicals are so damn powerful that they control my entire life. And you know who makes those chemicals? Us.

The first time my optic nerves caught sight of you, God, it was stimulating. My brain was absolutely tickled as your image loaded up inside my visual cortex. I'm pretty sure that first sight of you etched its way into my long-term memory, because I can close my eyes right now and revisit that first moment in technicolour. Endorphins probably deserve the thanks here, as they're responsible for remembering your every small touch and kiss. They let me remember the nights staying awake and thinking about how best to talk to you. But it might just be the way you smile too. Love's chemical soup was just in its first stage of controlling my every being, and you didn't make it any easier.

When you said: "Yes, Saturday night sounds great," my phenylethylamine just jumpstarted. The resulting cascade of dopamine and norepinephrine was pure life. We felt the dopamine rush of a first date, and that feeling of unending adrenaline every time our hands met. We'd touch, and at the same time, give our substantia nigras and ventral tegmental areas a healthy squeeze. fMRI scans have found our high was similar to the brain activity of people suffering from cocaine addiction. I'm pretty sure cocaine isn't that good though. Of course, with dopamine there comes testosterone, and that's a whole other story - one I'd rather not share with the other readers of this inquiry. The paper might lose its scientific integrity quickly.

Then came the madness. Pure chemical warfare. And it was amazing. I'd sit every night by my phone with low serotonin levels, waiting for you to remedy the anxiety. Your very voice was in control

Just Chemicals- Juby

of my sanity and the primordial swamp bubbling in my mind. Each sentence would soothe my amygdala, and lure us into all night conversations. You knew how to work that amygdala so well that no negative information was encoded in my hippocampus. Then we'd have to hang up. It would be a straight cortisol overdose until we next saw each other. But, eventually, the dopamine would come back, and we'd grin, drunk on each other.

However, as we all know, dopamine cannot last forever. Eventually, receptors bridge due to high stimulus. Attraction can take two routes: it fades or it becomes a new, lovelier chemical. We took the latter route and our madness turned into oxytocin - also known as the "love chemical." Secreted from the pituitary gland, and the absolute deepest depths of our hearts, this is my favourite of our brains' concoctions. Paired with vasopressin, it's the delicious cocktail that makes me want you every day, in and out. Day in day out, the oxytocin leads me back to you. However, it's best to run tests repeatedly to find any flaws in the method and to examine the results. Pretty sure I'm not going to find any, though. Oh, and also, you still get that dopamine going every time you do that one thing.

So, still want to tell me love is *just* chemicals? That it's *only* a bunch of sauces stirring around in some grey matter? Call it what you want, but I call it the best thing that's ever happened to me. As much as I like science, I don't need to know what dopamine is, how the pre-frontal cortex works, and all those big words to know that I love you. Thanks for the chemicals, sweetie. They're *just* the best thing in my entire life.

Western Wisdom

Josh Quirion

I walked, my old shoes victimized by gravity and malnourishment, in the direction of a public loo where I'd deposit my dog-tired ass and squeeze for a semblance of bowel movement that'd see a dozen Cliff Bars and a monkey's fistful of bananas jettisoned from my beat flesh bag.

Through the dark, illuminated by the faint orange hum of a basketball court light, I perceived a silhouette, leaning lousily on an ink-blue Volkswagen, handling some paperback literature and sucking on the teat of a bottom-drawer vineyard red. The fellow tramp reacted to my presence. Lazily, through the curtain of his long spicy hair, with cigarette coarseness, he hurled a sound through the night, the traveller's salute, the one syllable utterance suggesting nonchalance and implying comradery—'sup,' he whistled whimsically.

As one would if he were laying horizontal on a divan, to a shrink, or sitting ass-sore in a wooden confessional, to a preacher, I unveiled my day's misfortune, like an auctioneer displaying an antique pendulum clock, presenting it ceremoniously, one hand hovering above it in circular movements. I expressed my elaborate list of hardships and hard-shits and carried on and on about the martyr that I'd become, a cosmic victim of consequence, a spittoon for the gods.

And with empathetic flair, the monosyllabic shaman reminded me of something sacred that I'd forgotten, the sobering prophetic truth escaped from his mouth—'Ya but dude, we're in Whistler.' Instantaneously, I was cured, alive, circulation sprinting, pulse hastening and heart thump-thumping jubilee jams.

Shortly thereafter, I bid buddy farewell and went on to expel one of the holiest deuces of my life. He's engraved in my memory, that sagacious hobo, his offhand coolness and ability to see the big picture and describe it simply so that a sightless skeptic might distinguish the splendour and colour of its truth.

Perennial

Cloé Jones-Philibert

As that chapter comes to an end,
the yearbook closes shut.
It now thrives in the dark
among other books
buried at the bottom of a box.
The yearbook remains closed,
but the memories
are only a flip away.
Just a normal perennial having sex.
I laugh at my puny human
who sweats about LGBTQ people,
meanwhile, I sit on her bay window,
on her bathroom sill,
on her kitchen counter,
where she cooks and eats.

I have sex everywhere in her house.
She put me there, she watches me fuck.

Without even knowing it
she is the most twisted of them all,
with her contemporary cactus.

She judges how others live their lives.
She wastes her breath to comment on
what happens behind her neighbors closed doors.
Has she ever stopped and thought—
what happens in front of her eyes on her ground, in her home?

I sprawl out my vegetation.
In the dirt
I grow.
Sometimes I even go asexual.
I split my gametes.
I breed my offspring on her countertop.
It's dirty work.

Love Yourself

Payton Burnett

I am me,
 Payton Burnett.
 I am a beautiful
 Creature
 Full of
 Many
 Living, loving molecules
 That form my mind and body, and
 guide me on this path that I follow.
 The magic of science lives
 Inside my delicate body,
 Creating a human
 Unlike others before me.
 Who am I? Who will I be?
 I am Queer. I am twenty.
 Empathic. Musician.
 Creative. Trusting.
 I find beauty
 Within trees
 In your faces,
 And in books.
 I will always
 Be me.
 Always. Be me.

first generation

Rosemin Nathoo

to those born landless to lives luxurious,
 dislocation is a feat
 of the most meticulous making:
 pencilled plans for a holy house
 of consistent renovation

(God does not live in a house.
 God is as homeless as us).

I've tuned my own footsteps to
 finely-carved alien drums (only the beautiful ones),
 and step as to never be stepped on;

I cream my coffee to the colour of my skin
 but never see reflection.

and these meaningless mental meanderings,
 from plant to poem to the
 delusional math of the stars
 were open to men in the past (but not men like you) --
 though my brothers went straight-arrow
 through you to the aerodynamics which carry you to the comfort of
 high-rise concrete, perhaps
 a woman's mind is more circular

can I
 study the basics, ignoring the bloom,
 study the science, ignoring the
 drums of its language?

if my own body
 waxes and wanes,
 can I
 calculate the pushes and pulls while I
 live in the intertidal opening?

first generation- Nathoo

these, I suppose, are the trivial trials,
the world of a canadian girl;
no, I did not know your war.

I did not know your war,
but I cannot wear your trauma in shackles
(I need every inch of my skin).

in such selfishness, I lose a great compass,
lose direction,
grope blindly for god

because bodies are built, then embellished, because

you are half of me
(reverse the pronouns)

From the Notes of Altonian Cecily

Katharine Mussellam

Day 461 of our Mission

Jennifer gave birth to her and Louis' child yesterday. The other humans responded to this fact with supreme joy, yet another thing they do that is completely foreign to me. We celebrate milestone birthdays and anniversaries on Alto, though the intervals are different than those here on Earth, but the actual birth of a child is not received with such uninhibited congratulation. It is hardly the accomplishment that earthlings make it out to be.

Still, I acted as though I understood their excitement and sent them my congratulations like the rest of their friends. Later, noting that others were making their rounds to come and visit them, I paid my respects at the hospital. From my conversation with the new parents, I ascertained that the baby is producing waste at a healthy, which means frequent, rate and that already the fundamental characteristics of humanity, such as the desires for food and attention, are present in its still largely undeveloped mind.

I spoke to Thaddeus, one of my fellow Altonians, about what I have seen. He is here to observe other aspects of human life by quantitative means – he has much more of an affinity for numbers than I – while I must observe the social patterns, or other things qualitative, but my field interests him, too.

Thaddeus said he would like to log the dietary habits of the child to help complete the Altonian book on earthling biology, but I told him that we cannot do that without the parents finding out, and then they will not like us because such behaviour is beyond what is considered acceptable for humans. He asked me how I can know this if I have never seen anyone do what he suggested. I told him it is because discussions of such matters are taboo, only touched on in the basest of comedy or by medical professionals, even though eliminating is a basic bodily function. To compromise, I suggested to him that we note how many times a day it passes waste and compare it to the habits of adult earthlings.

From the Notes of Altonian Cecily- Mussellam

Day 493 of our Mission

Thaddeus no longer cares about the frequency or the volume of waste expelled by human babies. From what he can gather, they are similar enough to the adults of the species that it is not important information. But I am called a woman on this planet, unlike him, so I have been called on for assistance in the care of the infant and have seen more than he has. I do not care for numbers— numbers are not human— but many times I have seen the child eating and passing waste, more than its parents have.

I have also observed that many humans have brought objects to the infant's family. Many of them make a jingling noise, which the infant responds to with presumed delight. The parents mirror the child's expression as they shake the object, but as soon as the baby sleeps they do not show the same interest in it. Instead, they focus on their books, computers, and phones, the latter of which sometimes make noises of their own, but it is not the noises themselves that give them the most pleasure.

Day 606 of our Mission

Today, Louis offered to take care of the infant for the entire day so that Jennifer could have time to herself for a change. Jennifer called me to join her and she took me to the shopping mall.

The mall is an overwhelming place, full of earthlings briskly walking back and forth, the stores full of more products than they all can buy in a single day. Some younger ones seemed to enjoy themselves there, taking their time and laughing with their fellows. But others, mostly the older ones, did not demonstrate such mirth. They appeared focused, moving quickly into the stores to make their acquisitions, in a hurry to let go of their money to fill their bags with goods.

Jennifer was more relaxed as she browsed racks of dresses. She told me she needed some new ones, since those she already has are several years old. I asked her if they were worn out. She responded that they were not, but were "out of fashion," so she needed to replace them with new ones.

From the Notes of Altonian Cecily- Mussellam

Day 725 of our Mission

Jennifer and Louis's friends, Theo and Cassandra, have done what earthlings call "breaking up." Cassandra called me after it happened, seeming to trust me with this information despite only knowing me for approximately two years. She said that she was happy about ending the relationship, though it was difficult to do since she and Theo had spent so much time together. She said she had to break up with him, because she did not feel the same attraction to him as she had before. Being with him was no longer "fun," a word that I have slowly grasped as a combination of the words "interesting" and "amusing."

After describing to me how she had told him that she no longer wanted to be his "girlfriend," she likened this experience to one in her youth, when she stopped being friends with another girl. They had stopped enjoying the same activities. The girl was no longer "fun" to pass the time with, no longer a relationship of value.

Day 901 of our Mission

Thaddeus showed me a garbage dump today. Earthlings also sometimes call it a landfill. As we walked there, he told me that this was where the trucks took the bags that earthlings left in front of their houses every week: the bags full of the by-products of their activities and items they no longer wanted.

I was amazed by what I saw, for, like many of the things I have seen since arriving on this planet, none exist on Alto. Gigantic piles of refuse extended out into the horizon. Thaddeus knelt beside me, measuring the pH levels and the chemical breakdown of various items and of the soil. He read out numbers and the names of the contaminants that were present. Touching the matter in this place was practically enough to make a human sick, let alone consuming any of it.

Thaddeus said that the fumes from that place could not be contained. Even if it was imperceptible, they would spread out across the city and into the clouds, which would eventually rain on other places.

Day 1000 of our Mission

I am still not habituated to the smell of car exhaust, which I was reminded of when a truck drove past me this morning on my way to procure some vegetables for my meals. Thaddeus once told me of the frequency at which earthlings filled their cars with gasoline, how quickly it burned, and the effects of the chemicals in the air. I don't remember how much they emitted in a year, only that it was an astronomical figure.

I spoke to Jennifer on the subject, and the earthlings are aware of it. Jennifer even told me that she is alarmed by the facts, which she has read about and heard on television many times. But she also drives her car every day, sometimes multiple times. Louis loves the car because of how well it performs its functions.

Day 3478 of our Mission

Jennifer and Louis no longer have the gifts that their friends gave them for their child when it was a baby. Though it is still young, it is no longer interested in the noisemaking items that once made it happy. It is now only satisfied by more complex activities. If it enjoys noises, they are those made by musical instruments, which its parents also like. Some of the old toys now belong to another family with an infant, but others were put in the bags that the trucks take to the dump. The two did not have room for those old objects once they began to buy more things for the child now that it is farther along in its development.

Day 4709 of our Mission

Thaddeus and I are going to leave Earth today and return to Alto. We can no longer stand to be around the earthlings.

It is not that we dislike them. They are fascinating, passionate, complicated creatures, capable of abstract thought and incredible invention. They can think very rationally, but are equally capable of highly irrational thought. Above all, they are an excessively suicidal life form. Not necessarily as individuals, but as a species.

It is not their fault. Wastefulness is written into the essence of their beings. They have made their prosperity for themselves, but they will also be the executors of their own destruction. We do not wish to be present when that occurs.

Mundum Cerebro

Haikus, Stuart J. McKelvie

Every grain of sand
has a world, and Heaven is
seen in a flower.

When neurons fire, The
Doors of Perception open
to nature's wonder.

Sometimes, though, firing
can incite brain rages, and
we suffer anguish.

But - inhibition
quells Hell's torments!,giving Light
to that World Divine.

The Places I Know Best

Oliver Rind

The places I know best are those at peaks
where I can gaze out at the rolling hills;
the trees, caught in the summer winds
undulate like the swelling of the sea.

The places I know best are the recesses
far from man, untouched and undigested;
they are the places where the breakers
froth and roar against the strands
or within a clearing in the deep woods
where I can look to a spangled sky,
and ponder on the higher altitudes.

The places I know best know the moon
who veils the earth with frosted shafts.
The places I know best are where the songbirds sing
and pierce the quietude of mountainsides.

The places I know best are found
nestled amidst the nature of the world.

The Secret Garden

Gabrielle Lesage

I

Canadian maples adorn the autumn landscape
A bright canvas with splashes of vibrant color
An artist delicately paints each single leaf

II

The tall legion becomes one big forest
Creating a natural shield
a shelter for small creatures

III

The tree was once but a small sapling
Relying on its creator for survival
cradled in Mother Nature's embrace

IV

The lone maple is its own guardian
The sturdiness of its trunk its true defense
A pillar standing its ground

V

Its brute force is matched by its gentleness
The branches create beautiful music
The wind whispers a lullaby

VI

The tree is an everlasting candle
Its flame leaves a fresh perfume
The light a guiding star

VII

It is a breathing creature
An old soul thrust into a new world
Branches reaching for the sky like fingers outstretched

The Secret Garden-Lesage

VIII

The tree is a symbol of life
As one falls, another one grows
A cycle of rejuvenation
That is the beauty of nature.



**The Secret Garden, Chawton House, Alton,
Hampshire, Gabrielle Lesage**



Flying above the Andes: Birds fly because they haven't been told they couldn't, *Guagua Pinchincha, Quito, Ecuador, Clémentine Bouche*

Night Crossings

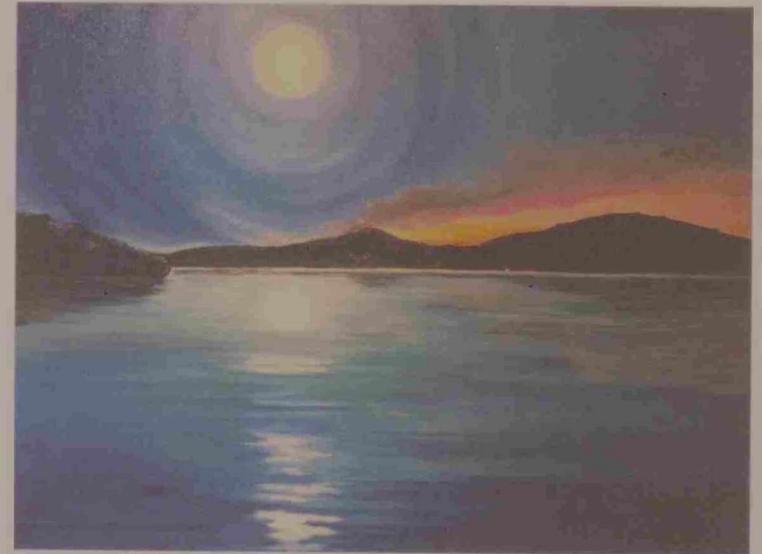
Frank Willdig

Here in our coniferous darkness
fireflies flicker by the shoreline
and fly off into something primordial;

A loon calls out from the invisible
bay, an owl hoots
to our astonishment.

Here, as we paddle across,
even the stars speak to us
in the rippled reflections

of the lake.
They foretell the simple truth
of a good day tomorrow.



Moon over Massawippi. *18x 24 oil on canvas, January 2017, Louise Thibault-Gearey*

All but the Loon

Trevor Gulliver

The sun broke
that fifth day
awakening a thunderous flock
of new feathered things
winging over the still cooling earth
flying up to call out
opening their virgin throats
with the cry,
the first cry,
"It is good. It is good."

In the dark, fertile mass
around the roots
of all new, green, and living things
a burrowing, buzzing
tunneling swarm
hummed and crackled
putting to music
"It is good. It is good."

Teeming life in ocean, lake, and river
moving as one
darting, dancing
to the rhythm
"It is good. It is good."

As the land rose up
took shape and spat out
the horned and hooped beasts
each according to its kind
the chorus sang:
"It is good. It is good."

Joined now by the coyote's excited laugh,
and wolves howling in celebration
and the worshipful whinnying of wild horses
each one trumpeting the arrival of the next
with "It is good. It is good."

All but the loon- Gulliver

All but the loon.
Much earlier that fifth morning
Just as the day-old sun burst its fetters
and crawled from hiding
the loon composed a cry of mourning
a plaintive eulogy
for the soon to be broken silence
the silence of an unrippled lake
the silence of the wind, which had not yet rustled leaves
the quietness of rain, yet to softly thud upon the earth
the wave, yet to break upon the shore
the sad cry of the loon
announced the unsheathing of the world.



Beaver's Pond, Beaver's Pond, Gold Bridge, BC, Clémentine Bouche

