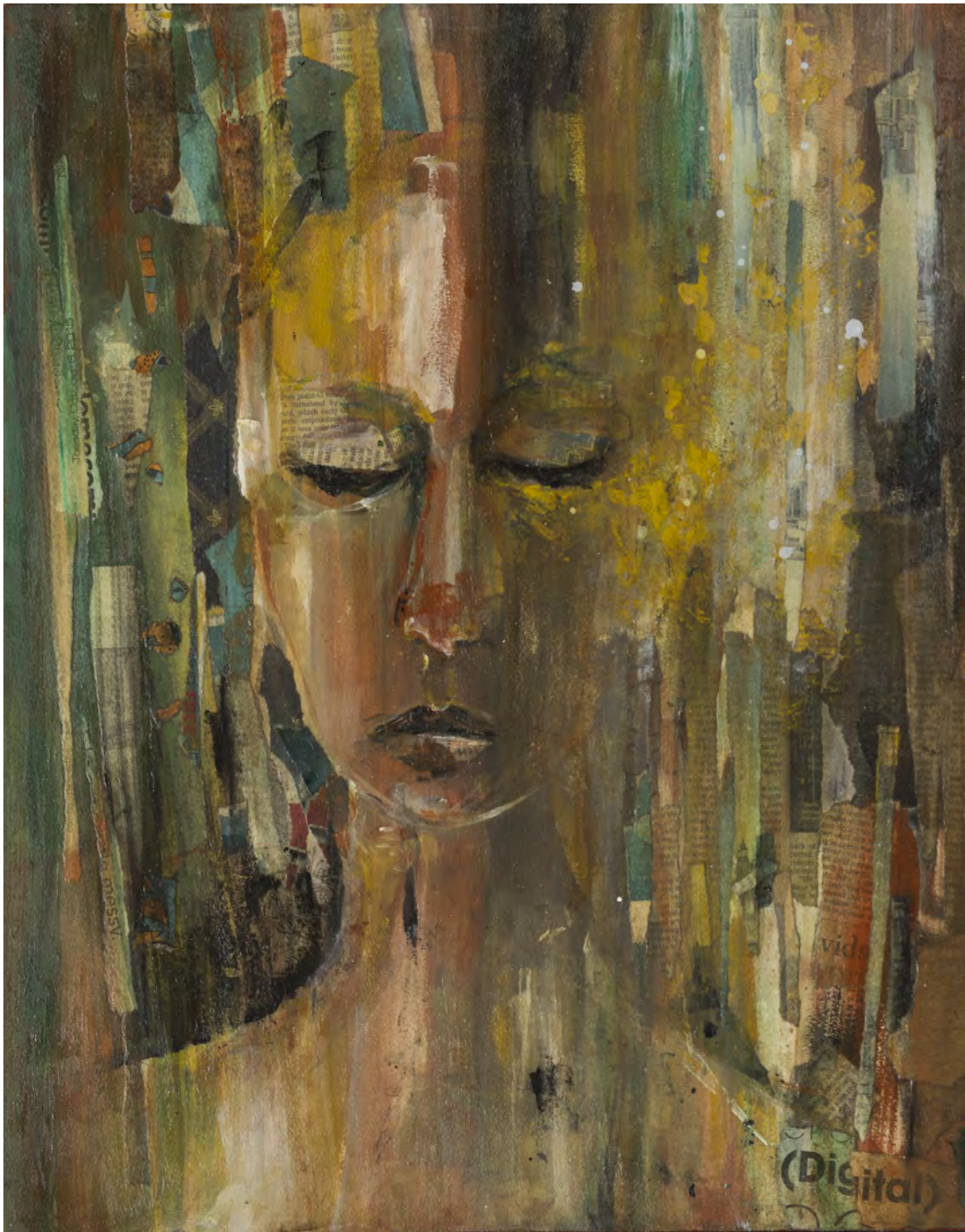


Sakatah



Spring 2016

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Love



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Shelby Goodfellow

This Wandering Stone

It has traveled many places. Black as night and smooth as silk, this stone is polished to the point of perfection. This stone has been eroded by its many journeys. Could this stone have cascaded down the rapids of a river? Possibly. Could this stone have swum with the catfish through the depths of a lake? Perhaps. Like a violin going with the flow of its music, this stone has gone with the river. It has found me, this stone. It has come far just to be held by me. In the palm of my hand, I see its journey. I see all of the possibilities for this stone -- all of the places it could have come from and all of the places it could go. What is to be next for this wandering stone?

Becki Trcka

November Afternoon

Oak trees and their autumn colored leaves
Littered across pebbles and dirt.
The sound of carp jumping in and out of water
Has me listening.

Teens on their phones,
A young couple
Paying too much attention to each other,
And an older woman trying to walk off her wrinkles,
Missing everything I came to see.

As the path winds back toward home
I can't help but think about
The things I've missed.

The Back Seat Driver

Just a quick glance back
to the second seat of his car,
just a quick glance
and what will I see?

A football with laces frayed,
crumpled chocolate candy wrappers,
a varsity jacket tossed to the floor,
smelly sneakers, and sweatshirt left from the gym,
a cooler full of empty cola cans,
rented videos not yet returned,
a roadside safety kit unopened from Christmas
schoolbooks piled with unfinished work
and a discrete box of Trojans tucked into a blanket.

Just a quick glance
and what did I see?
My son
is no longer
my little boy.

Kristen Drengenberg

Light

Left, right—no, wait, I mean left again.
My mind is as clear on which way to go
as the air is pure in these murky caves.

Just as I'm starting to think
I should sit tight and wait,
I see a girl.

This girl smiles and laughs,
dances and sings.
She beckons to me
and I trail behind her.

She teaches me to follow the wall.
Her merry mood is catching, and
soon I find
I'm singing along.

I don't know how long we've been walking, but when we find the exit
I think about turning around and getting lost again.
She grabs my hand,
holds on tight and leads me away from the dark.

This girl, I've seen her before.
Once, a long time ago, maybe in a dream...
Then it hits me, this girl is who I used to be.

Briana Johnson

A Glimpse



Tate Romnes

Speaking Terms

My paddle carves through the water
which laps
against the keel of my canoe.
A poplar log drifts by
telling a story with its body,
one end holding axe-like marks from a beaver's teeth.
As I near the bank
I can hear the bottom of the canoe
scraping against sand.
I step into the cool water
And begin to cast my line.
The line arcs out in front of me,
my offering,
lands softly on the upstream side of a large rock.
I pray for the fly
to be sipped up by a waiting brook trout.
My prayer is answered.
I thread my gift onto the stringer.
As I slide my canoe back into the river,
she talks to me and I reply.

Emily Krause

The Fly on Pine River

The water is cold as I stand
Waist deep.
One, two, three, four.
Back and forth with the ticking of a clock.
It's been hours.
Stubborn Bass,
Where are you?
The river moves
Like a drunken sailor
Weaving and stumbling
Through the land.
I continue my rhythm
My wrist a tool.
One, two, three, four.
I look at the river and wonder.

Grandma's Hand-Mirror

Every summer my family would make the eleven-hour car trip from northwestern North Dakota to Redwood Falls, Minnesota, to visit my grandma. Minnesota always meant the whirring of cicadas, bountiful hostas, oppressive humidity, and the musty, mildew-and-mold smell of Grandma's basement that greeted me at her backdoor. The inside of her house still excites me. Filled with myriad objects, artwork, and photographs Grandma has collected over the years, there is no end of things to discover and rediscover. But as a child my favorite thing in that house was a beautiful and forbidden hand-mirror.

The mirror was kept in Grandma's bedroom on top of her bureau. I would wait until all the adults were in the family room talking, or outside—then sneak into the bedroom. I remember being so small I couldn't see the top of the bureau, but I could reach my hand up and feel for the mirror. It was very heavy with a perfectly round two-sided face—like a giant lollipop on an elegantly carved golden stick. It gleamed so delectably I could never resist it. I made this undercover excursion as many times as I could during every visit. I would always ask Grandma to show it to me, but she never let me hold it. This was when I'd ask her about how this wonderful thing came to be in her house.

My grandpa gave the mirror to Grandma as a surprise present sometime in the late '40s. She always said, with her impish smile, "He must have thought a lot of me because we didn't have much money then." There is a long crack on one face of the mirror. She told me my uncle Greg had dropped it once when he was a little boy. I was always mad he had broken it. The other side is only slightly marred by little white scratches. Grandma said she had heard that if a diamond was real, it would scratch the surface of a glass. To tease Grandpa once, she tested it out with her diamond wedding ring. I didn't understand how she could have risked ruining a mirror I found far more enchanting than any diamond.

This is the only mirror I have ever lusted and gloated over. In fact, I don't like mirrors much at all, but something about this one fascinates me.

Sara E. Floodman

There is more history in this mirror than the simple details of its physicality. As a young girl, seeing my own face was a delightful novelty, and Grandma saw herself as a beautiful young woman, at the age I am now, in the same, perfect circle of glass. Its memory holds the portraits of our smiles—reflections of themselves in the flesh, as well as in the mirror. I love the static exactness of its silver eye—faithful for nearly ten decades of our combined lives.

Nothing familiar changes much in Grandma's house, but the hand-mirror did. Another, old and plastic-framed one rests on her bureau. The special, magical hand-mirror, now rests on mine.

Winter Waking

Lit votive suspended
in the dark

the delicate red globe
of sleep split

open to doors
shuddering and air creaking in halls

cloud-light slid
in to seal the fissures

my leaded-glass head
still reeling

the votive swung in smoky cold
I lifted

aching eyes to
the sooty stub

it gave a white snap
and glowed palely

the delicate globe of morning
dawn-blue

Riley Hedstrom

Traveling Back

A glistening stone caught my eye, reminding me of the one that was thrown at me when I was eight, leaving a gash on the back of my head. To the right, an older man playing the guitar on his porch left me reminiscing. Showing up to music class and taking out my recorder only to find that someone had covered it in toothpaste was humiliating. Nearing the St. Croix River, I recalled the time I was pushed in fully clothed and cried because of the cold, or was it embarrassment? As I neared the end of my walk, a moist Q-tip lying on the gravel brought me back to the countless wet Willies I had received over the years. I couldn't help but chuckle. I guess that's what big brothers are supposed to do.

Tristan Ellsmore

The Monster and Me

My best friend, Logan, and I called it the “Mystery Forest.” We pretended that we were sleuths and teamed up with the Scooby Gang. This was a secret though. Mom wasn’t supposed to know. I found clues with Velma and everyone else tagged along. Logan assisted Fred with trapping the bad guys. One time we were chasing the monster down a hill, when my foot became lodged beneath a root. The monster tripped me. I tumbled down, crashed on my butt, and started to wail. The ongoing mystery became dangerous. Logan’s eyes darted around, scanning the area for the monster. After clearing the surroundings, he dashed over and hugged me. He was happy that the monster only hurt me a little. Mom saw me sitting there—bawling, ran over and picked me up. As I clung to Mom, I saw the monster laugh at me. Scooby’s gang was gone. Some adventures didn’t go as planned. The monster smiled as he ran away from my tiny grasp.

Felicia Steckman

What to Do on Vacation

Sleep until quarter to or quarter after noon.

Enjoy stepping outside into the sun and blinding yourself when you open your eyes. Stretch until your legs, arms, and back are wobbly, like a toddler still weak and just learning to walk.

Go to the beach and put your toes in the sand,

enjoying the feeling as much as the taste and texture of a finely made PB&J.

Lie on the beach until your skin is just a little pink, but not too burnt like when you cook a steak.

Embrace your alcoholic cocktail for breakfast as you would if having ice cream or a favorite food for breakfast.

Take a nap and never hear the ring of your alarm.

Turn off your phone and ignore the ring of emergency.

Stay up as long as you want, maybe until the birds sing, not caring about when you need to wake next,

such as you might add whatever ingredients with no measure, when making cookies knowing they will still taste just right because you don't have to care.

Madelynn Street

Spur



Madelynn Street

On Deck

I'm next.

My heart pounds out of my chest,
and my horse begins to prance.

He knows it's almost his turn to run.

Is my cinch tight?

What if my saddle slips?

It's too late to fix now.

I hold him back with all of my strength.

Is my hat on good?

Will it stay on?

Will I stay on?

What if he slips and falls again?

What if my foot gets caught in a stirrup again?

Is my shirt still tucked in?

Is my back number still there?

What's the time to beat?

Why do I pay money to do this?

Why do I do this for fun?

What town are we in?

Where am I?

The announcer calls my name.

My mind clears.

Music blares and the crowd roars.

I can hear my family and friends cheering in the stands.

I remember why I put myself through this,

why I pay money for this,

why I do this for fun,

and why I live this.

I lean forward in my saddle,

and release my reins to let him go.

Madelynn Street

Horse in Mirror



The Willow's Dream

The willow spent its seasons
leaning out
over the murky lake,
almost as if it were
longing for its swaying branches
to be fully submerged.

As if it wanted to mingle
with the carp who were living
how the willow desired.

An axe would not be
the death of this tree.

As the lake suffocated
the roots of the tree,
it continued to fall closer
and closer
to its wish.

When the storm came to life,
so did the willow.

Its tangled ball of roots surfaced
and its canopy of leaves
collapsed
into the water
without a sound.

Arielle Schmitz

Ode to My Rock

A dark silver rock
was given to me by a helping hand
who looked as though she was set on a host stand.
It guided me through the world's rotations
that offered a variety of proclamations.
This rock was so smooth, silky, and warm,
it made me feel comforted, and reborn
like when your hands feel music for the first time.

This rock I slept with all through the night,
watched over me like a kite soaring in mid-day light.
My soul nobody could see it like you can't see air,
nobody could feel it like they didn't care.

This dark silver rock was like the wings to a bird,
it lifted me up
until I heard
the voice of a man who sounded stern.
I held onto my rock so tight,
I thought it might sink into the memories
that kept coming back at night.

Every time I have my dark silver rock,
it helps me get past my darkest art,
painted for me in this place called life.

Andrew Henrickson

I Saw You

The other day
When the clouds parted for the sun, and the skies transformed into a soft
milky blue
When the wind stopped gusting
and all that remained was a slight breeze
I saw you when the thermometer outside read forty degrees
and the last of the snow melted off of the pine tree next to my
window

I saw you the other day
When the fawn slowly crawled out from deep within the woods
looking disheveled as if it had just awoken from a great slumber
When I was finally able to put away my shovel
and all I needed was a light jacket
I saw you the other day

But, like the tease you are,
you left.
And with your absence, winter has once again presented itself at my door.

Patrick Lewellen

Howl



Camielle Rykhus

Siren's Song

I'm caught.

I am caught in a net of fingers laced through fingers
And words like "wow, you're beautiful" and
"I wish."

I am caught in a maelstrom 1304 miles in diameter.

I am caught being a siren,

Forcing artificial air down her sailor's throat,

Trying so hard to keep him from realizing

That each of us is exactly what the other wants

But everything that is not good for them to have.

I am caught trading fins for limbs and dark for dim

Because at some point

—I dream—

This monster that is me will finally become human.

Camielle Rykhus

Jet Blue

Those tear-streaked, pillow-creased cheeks
Are something I like to wake up to.
Your beauty in quiet battle—such
That not even I could argue.
Light cascades over dark
As sapphire eyes penetrate corrupted green.
You see gold follow my careful touch
Like you used to in your dreams.
Art is seen by art
Like I never chose to hide it.
Telephones ring
Til unattended they go quiet.
Morning defeats two nocturnal beings;
Metal vultures will always steal the wind from his cyclone.

Collin Francis

Joanna

He is young, just outside of middle school.
One day he sees her.
Black hair tangled, brown eyes shining.
A deep breath and he walks up to say hi.
She smiles and says hi back.
He soars above the Earth happily,
never wanting to come back down.
He goes to sleep that night, seeing her smile.
He wakes up and it's their sixtieth anniversary.
The house feels empty and quiet,
without her laugh resonating through it.
A picture sits on the mantelpiece
of a wedding years ago.
A black-haired beauty and her average joe.
He goes to sleep that night and sees her smile

Hamdi Abdi

The African Sun

Not a drop of rain has filled the parched land of Ethiopia.
The land is cracking, it's yearning for the skies to cry,
The tribes are yearning for the skies to cry.
Our throats have become equivalent to the parched land.

The tribes pray to the Sun God to let the clouds release their mercy.
But not a cloud has passed by in the sky of blue.
Only the African Sun is there floating like a ball of fire.
It's powerful, the rays can be felt deep to the bone.

The remains of the animals lie on the land that was once rich with greenery
The animals are dying, the crops are dying, and
We the people are dying.
Oh African Sun? Why put your worshipers in such misery?
You hold the key to life and death and yet
You're turning your followers against you.

They have left you for the African Moon,
The African Moon doesn't kill with heat but
It gives the tribes light when they are surrounded by utter darkness.

Ramsey Shaffer

Dad

Upon reminiscing of a time much simpler than the present, I have come to the realization that my most beloved memories are the ones of my father. My mind is dotted with the recollections of playing catch with a football in the backyard on warm summer afternoons, and of him pitching too fast when we played baseball. I loved visiting him at his downtown office where he sold insurance; I would spin myself around in his swivel chair by pushing off of his desk with my feet. He made the best chocolate-chip cookies according to my mother, and on Sunday nights he played casual hockey in a local men's league. He was one of the older guys at forty-one years of age, but nevertheless he did as much as he could. Then one weekend when I was seven, he suffered a fatal heart-attack at one of these scrimmages. Sound asleep, I found out the next morning that he had passed away.

In Thomas Lynch's essay "Burying" (from *A Writer's Reader*) he discusses the fragile connection between the living and the deceased that he has observed during his time as a mortician. He buries hundreds of people each year, enough to make a good living. Everyone in town knows him as the gravedigger—they refer to his car as "the Dead Wagon" (381). Many people are concerned with what happens after their death; they are constantly requesting certain remedial things for Lynch to take care of after they are gone. However, the main point of the essay is not the action of the dead after death, but the actions of everyone else. The real sufferer of a peaceful death is not the loved one who has passed, but the friend and family member who live on in the wake of death. Throughout the piece, Lynch blatantly notes time and time again the somber reality of life: in the end, "the dead don't care. . . . [T]here is nothing, once you are dead, that can be done to you or for you or with you or about you that will do you any good or any harm . . . any damage or decency we do accrues to the living, to whom your death happens if it really happens to anyone" (384). In the end, Lynch falls example to his own lecture when an acquaintance of his dies and he is left to grapple with the aftermath, realizing for himself that it is

Ramsey Shaffer

indeed the living who are affected the most.

After my father's death many things changed. I was so young that a lot of it went over my head, but I eventually I came to the realization that I would never see him again. My younger brother had been just three; he was never fully aware of what was going on. Time raged into the wake and funeral process, and after a couple of weeks everything simmered down to what could be considered normal. Grandma stayed with us a lot of the time and made supper when Mom was busy. We adapted as a family.

In the fall of my senior year of high school I was voted onto the Homecoming Court. To prepare for Coronation—the first night of Homecoming week during which the king and queen are announced—a classmate of mine asked me to pick out a few photos that I'd like to include in a slideshow that would be played during the special event. I accepted the request and after school went home to find some photos; I looked through the dusty scrapbooks and framed pictures that Mom kept tidily in three or four bins under the stairs in the basement. Here I found countless pictures of my dad and me. In some, Halloween costumes mask our faces. In others we concentrate intensely on building the small-scale model of a Boeing-747 now kept in a separate bin in the same closet. In a few I am even crying. However, in the majority of them we are smiling, whether we are posing for the camera or simply goofing around unaware of the photographer.

I grabbed seven or eight photos and returned the messy closet back into the orderly stack of bins it had originally been. My dad had always kept things very neat; he was an organized man. The next week Coronation and Homecoming came and passed, nostalgia and confetti in the air. With all the activities of the week came opportunities to see relatives I hadn't seen in a while, as well as old family friends. I heard the cliché "Your father would be very proud" so many times my head was spinning. His name had come up so much, it was as if he was there in the flesh. But he wasn't. Much like what Lynch had said about his deceased friend, my dad "had become the idea of himself, a permanent fixture of the third person and past tense . . ." (388). But I wasn't sad. Melancholy and pride had woven together into a peculiar sense of contentedness.

The Restless Leaf

I almost didn't see you, little leaf
who takes up my path, but I don't mind;
I will follow, while you lead.

The wind swipes and shoves at you,
as if you were a swimmer,
caught up by a powerful wave.

Until you stop,
hanging on a crack in the cement
like a barnacle clings to its base
in fear of being brushed away
by the tide.

I watch as your hold slips,
and you are caught up
once again, by the wave.

But wait!
I spring
and stop you,
with a stomp of my boot.

You are now cast upon the wind,
whole no longer.
Twirling and twisting,
a wreckage,
spilled across
the sea of asphalt.

Pain

A hand smashed in a door,
leads to a crooked pinkie
and a new scar.

An application accepted,
and a student moves out,
as her parents sit in their empty home.

A secret is shared with a best friend.
And only later is it found out,
they've let everyone else in.

Nerves are on fire, every moment hell
but it's Mom's birthday,
so smile and say cheese!

Gossip stops, as they walk into the room.
They heard what people were wondering:
does homosexuality have a cure?

A home up in flames,
as photos and memories,
swiftly turn to ash.

A wallet in his wife's car,
with another man's picture
in the front pocket.

Abrielle Pogue-Tatge

Casino Crazy

Digital sounds ding, slot wheels
whirl, and change clings.

An older woman wearing pajamas
rubs her eyes then disappears from the penny machine;
a permanent dent now sits in her chair.
Frustration lies in the wrinkles of the losing poker man
who's glaring at the chips.

I sit down at the Wolf Run Slot and it
devours a twenty dollar bill.
I press the button and the screen begins to run.
A pack of wolves appears before me howling,
yellow lines connecting them.
The machine goes wild,
perhaps from the full moon.

Everyone nearby turns viciously and stares at me like I'm prey.
I won—
thousands.
Taking my ticket, I tuck it away
and quit playing so that I can head back to the hotel room.

Waking up that morning,
I look into my wallet.
All I see is a partially ripped dollar,
a few nickels, a bit of fur.

Abrielle Pogue-Tatge

A Magical River

My boat hull glides through mystical waters
and the night sky twinkles
like a jar full of fireflies.
Tonight, the air is calm
caressing my bare arms.

Nearby a rainbow Lorikeet whistles a lullaby,
with the crickets and frogs loudly
humming along.
The water is glowing an eerie blue.
And bioluminescent creatures
guide me through the narrow pathway.
Brightly budded lily pads
drift with the ripples of the water,
while bursts of fish
shoot wildly from underneath
like a display of fireworks.

A weeping willow hangs
over the side of the bank beside me,
shading a large dull fish
swimming gracefully in the brook,

all of these pages,
even the blank ones,
nature's coloring book.

Sol Dulka

A Slice of Comfort

I hold the warm
Slice in my hand.
Now able to grasp
Once it's been cooled
For a few minutes.

I'm out of my dirty
Work clothes. I showered
And am on the couch.
The sausage and mushrooms
Are brought
Up to my mouth.

With the first bite
My tedious thoughts
From the day, leave.
Work is over. Problems
Are gone.

Cheese drips
Onto my chin. Sauce stains
My beard. Crumbs
Of crust fall
Onto my shirt.

T.V. is on at last.
Thank you, pizza
For doing what
You do.

Montana Meyer

A Different Person

I am made from damaged parts of my parents;
My father's reckless heart, my mother's flighty nature,
Soaring highs and devastating lows,
Restless, flickering and foolish.
When I smile I look just like him around the eyes,
And I don't want you to see anything that unseemly in me.
I don't feel as broken as I used to;
I've taken care to sand the edges that used to tear me apart.
I'm a gentle hurricane, and the bull in that China Shop
Who apologizes for making a mess and helps pick up the pieces.

Shannon Van Thomme

Pierre



Maren Grunnet

Dog Park

Chihuahuas circle you with chips on their shoulders
Self-assured ducks quack at any dog who tries to swim in their lake
A Labrador with crazy eyes kicks mulch onto your legs as she tears past
Why can't anyone pick up their dog's poop?
Yell and run to catch your dog as she picks a fight with one of those Chihuahuas
A shih-tzu that looks like a loaf of bread, and is just as soft, curls up on your lap
The Labrador's owner stands by the gate and calls for twenty minutes
 She keeps running laps around the park
 Her owner keeps yelling louder and louder
 It's no wonder the Labrador doesn't pay any attention
Your dog plods through the gate behind you, ready for a nap with dreams of roast duck

La Vie en Lavande

Buoyant honey bees float on the stalks of lavender, more bees than I'd ever seen, yet quiet as an open-casket funeral. Somehow people fear the dead more when they can see their puffed and painted faces and bees more when they're buzzing. Rows of gravestones a uniform dove gray fill the spaces between the beds of arching lavender and their bees. Jägermeister-esque deer carved cleanly into the stones stare out at me. Nearby, yellow rose blossoms flutter delicately in the breeze, but their thorny branches deter any thoughts of plucking one to tuck behind an ear. They have been manicured to perfectly frame the headstones, lovingly grown. Bees bounce from grave to grave to hive, yet as if they can tell the dead are hidden beneath six feet of dirt, they buzz a happy song.

On Any Day That's Not Quite Winter

As if she has forgotten that
we are still February, the air is warm.
Steamy rain streams out of clouds
into puddles. Adventurous carp flip
their fins, adding yet more ripples.

The air is shy as if
she's scared of carrying fish
from their pools, into the
arching birch trees. Waves of breezes waltz
lightly with the river's current. Delicate
whistles set the beat.

All of the water's inhabitants
quiet to listen. The air is humming
as if she has an idea
on the tip of her tongue.

Where I Write From

It begins
with mirrors of water
reflecting the sky's countenance

I crave
one blowing leaf
one drop of water

my mind stoops with distress
where fissures seep
like a tree emits sap

it begins
as everything does
my bones are of earth

but I cannot feel the root
the deep tap-root
where it all extends

the pain is electric
the copper wires
snap and spark

beneath the surface
currents crackle and hiss
shadows oily mingle

Sara E. Floodman

but still my mind kindles
and begins to work
things that might not

but that do
may mean something
of magnitude

Ocean Dwellers

Staring at the glistening blue surface
with its raging white tips,
the pungent smell of salt
clouded the air.
I sat and wondered.
Do they look to shore?
Powering against the pounding shore
fins flail
and scales flash
against the sun,
till the beach is reached
where he buries his fins deep
in the coarse, tan sand.
Carefully, he gazes at what lies before him;
swaying palm trees shedding coconuts,
sand packed and formed into castles,
umbrellas casting shade
upon the flabby pale creatures on land, and
towels in shades of red, blue,
yellow, orange and green.
He creeps
gracefully
along the receding shoreline
till he is swept away with the evening tide.

Brittany Birk

Sunday Routine

Every Sunday she sat beneath her weeping willow
gazing up at the ever changing balls of fluff
floating overhead. A fish that turned into a frog,
a bunny hopping mid-air, an alligators jaws unhinged,
and a baby elephant frolicking. Inhaling
her cigarette slowly, and playing with the smoke upon exhale,
she envisioned herself falling through the clouds
and wondered how they would feel
when brushed up against her skin,
or if they even had a texture, or could be touched at all.
She pondered that thought as she
lifted a slice of American cheese from the top
of the pile she stacked beside her. She unwrapped the slice from
its waxy prison and then popped small corners of it
into her mouth, trying to mimic
the shapes she saw in the sky above.

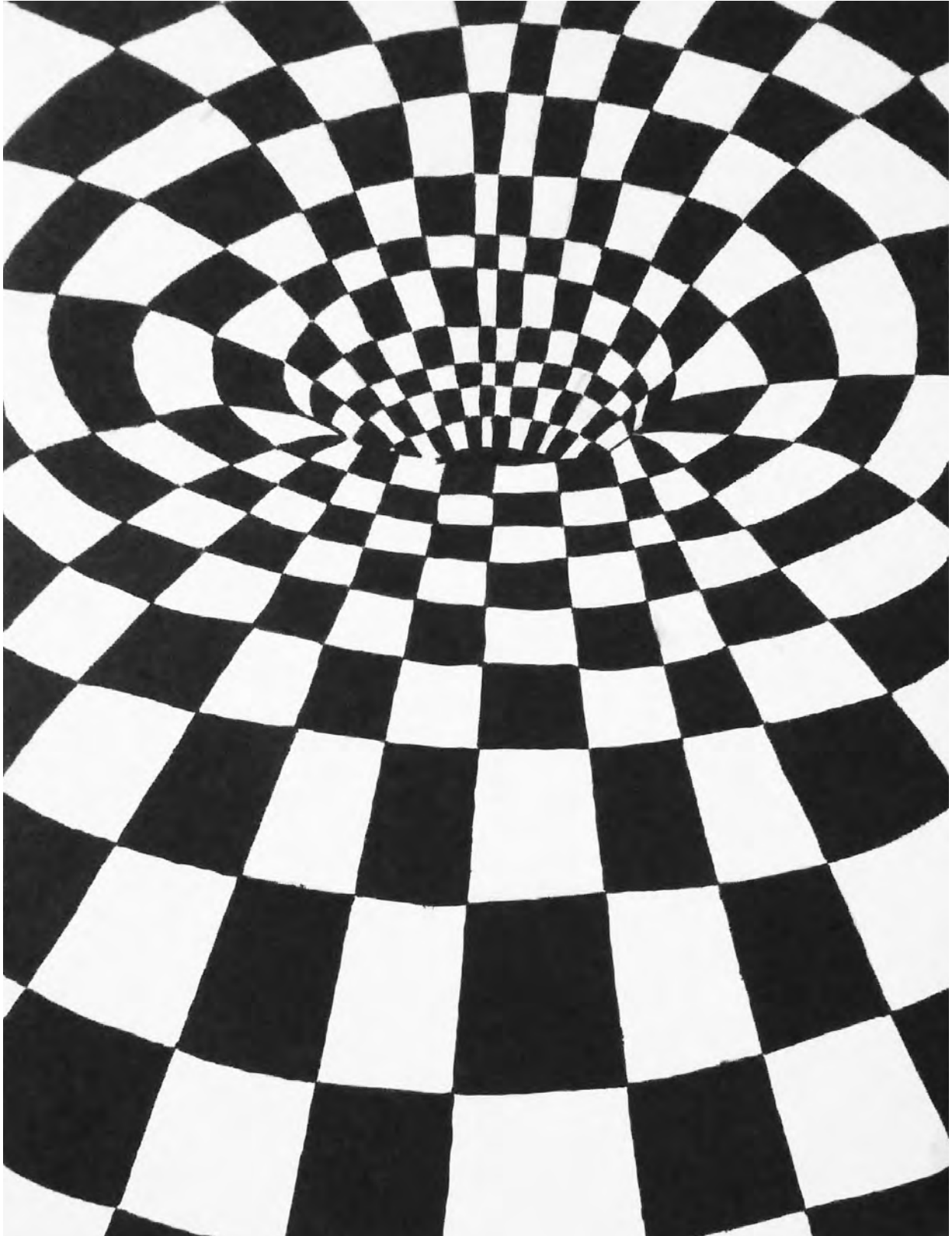
Briana Johnson

The Commute



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



South Central College Student

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



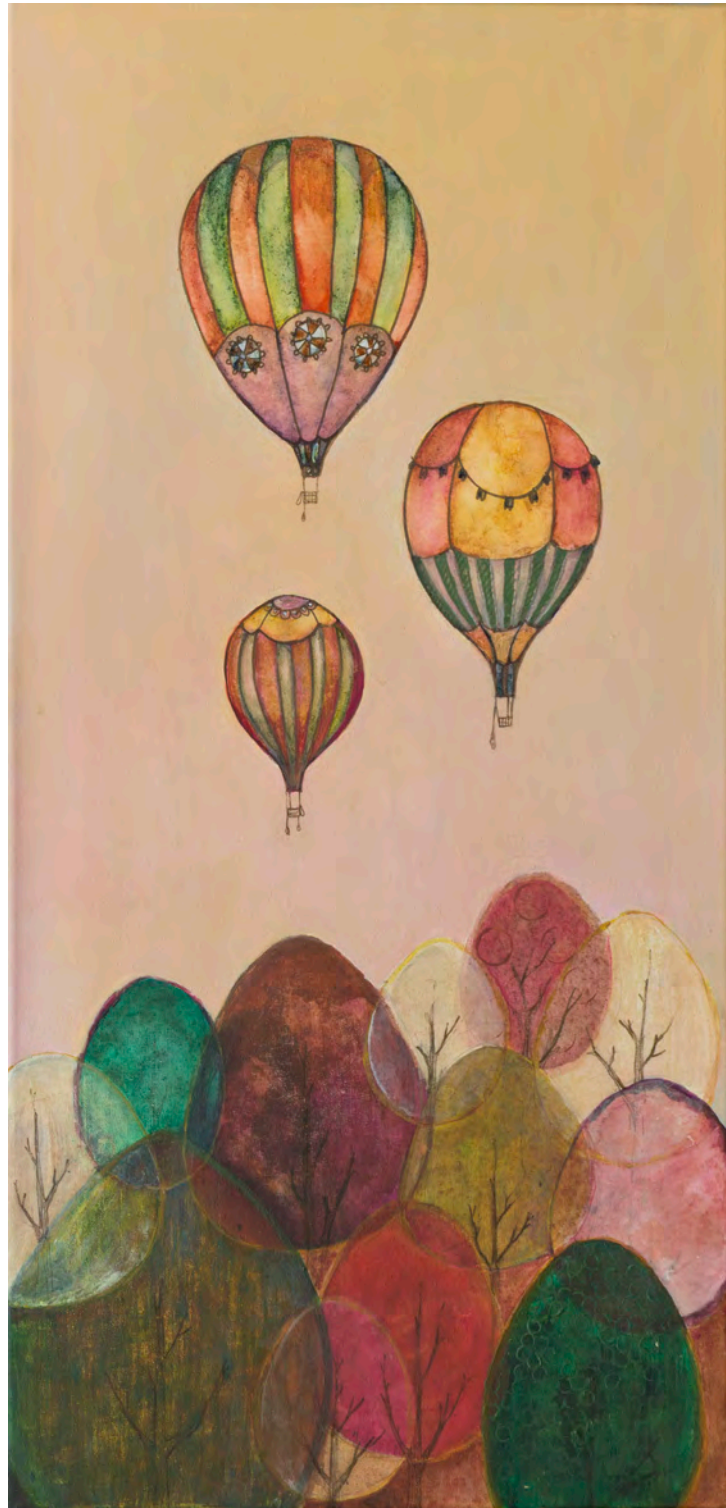
Windy Schultz

Coffee Cups



Windy Schultz

Hot Air Balloons



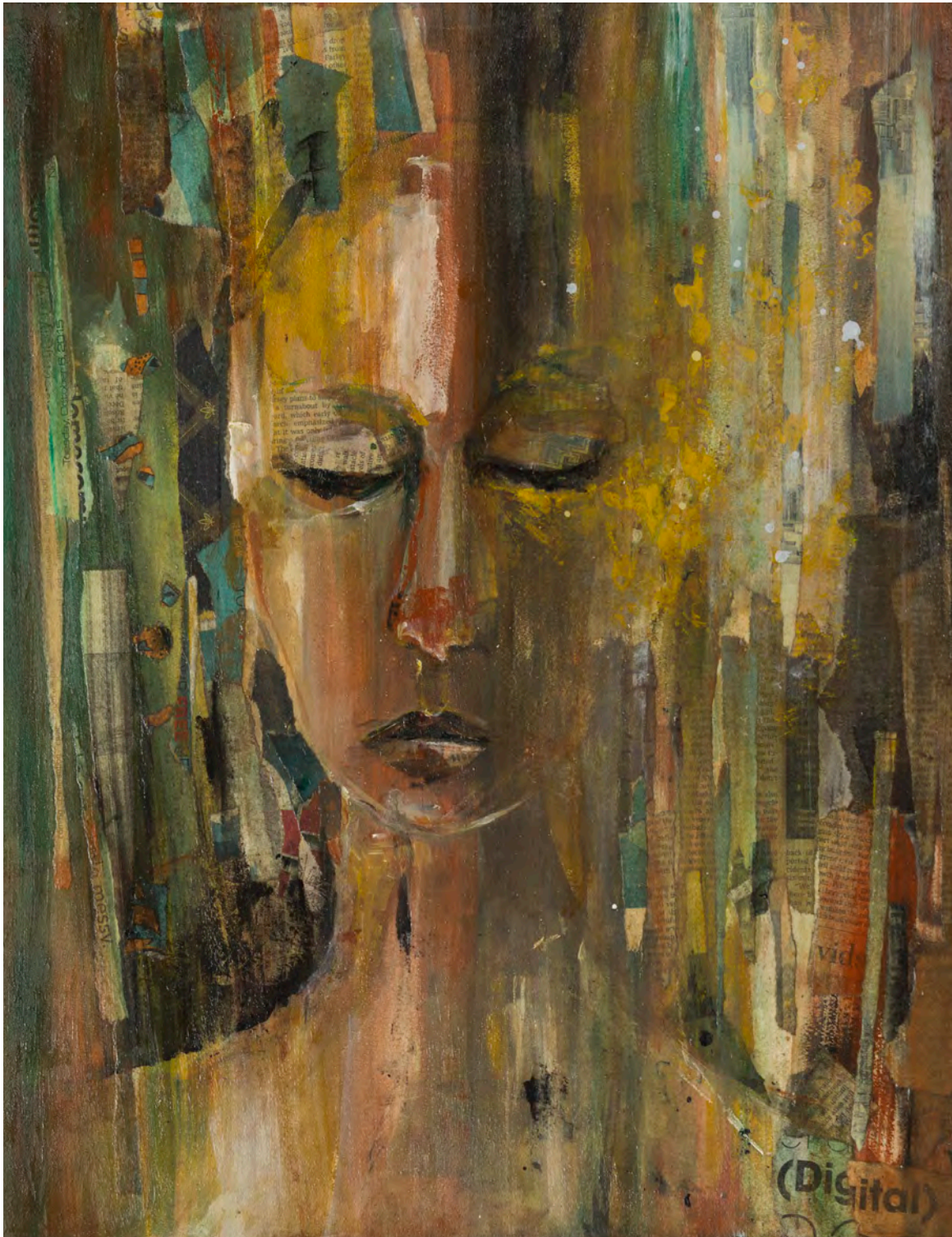
Windy Schultz

Portrait with 3 Moons



Windy Schultz

Sublimation



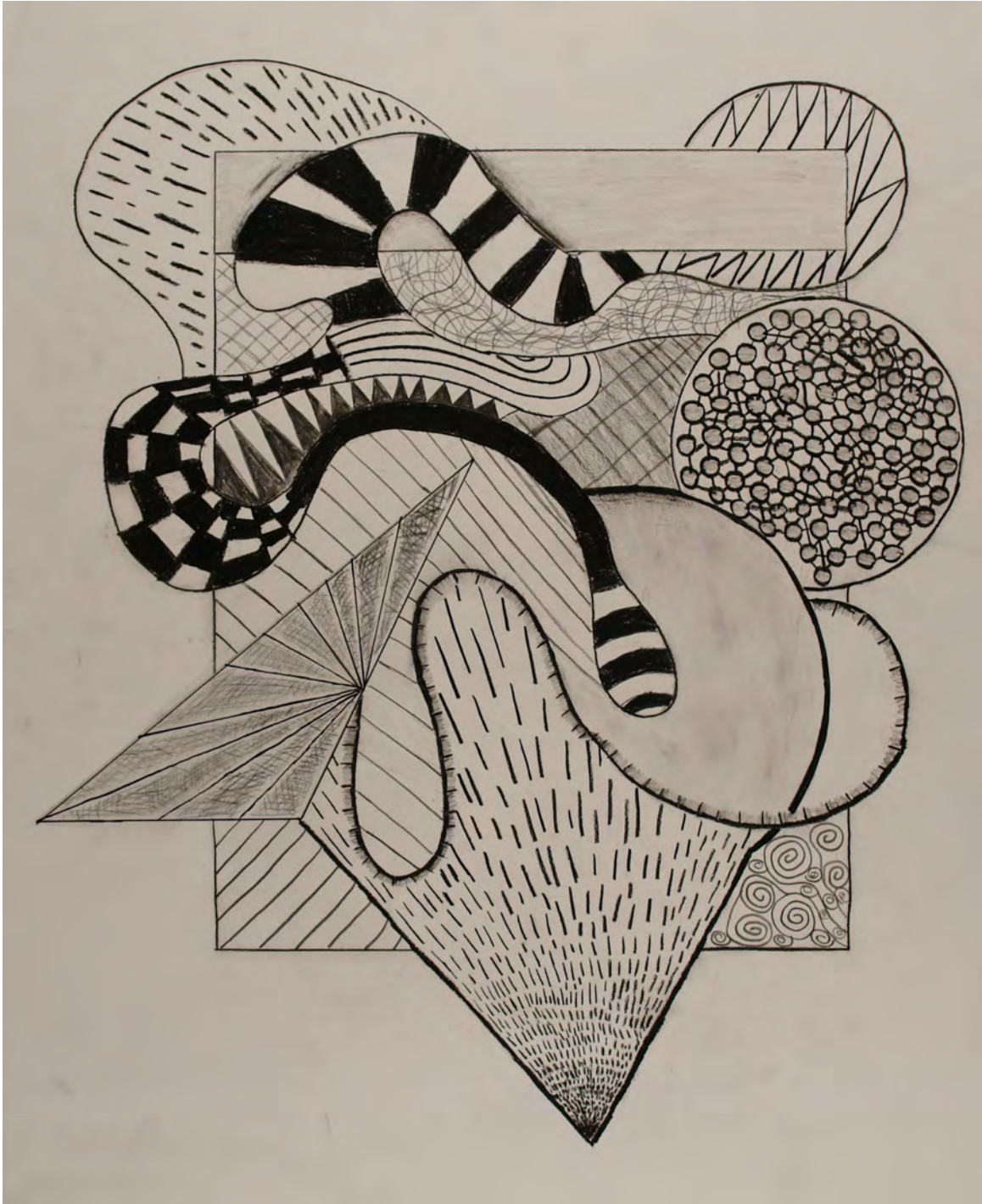
Windy Schultz

Sunny Side Up



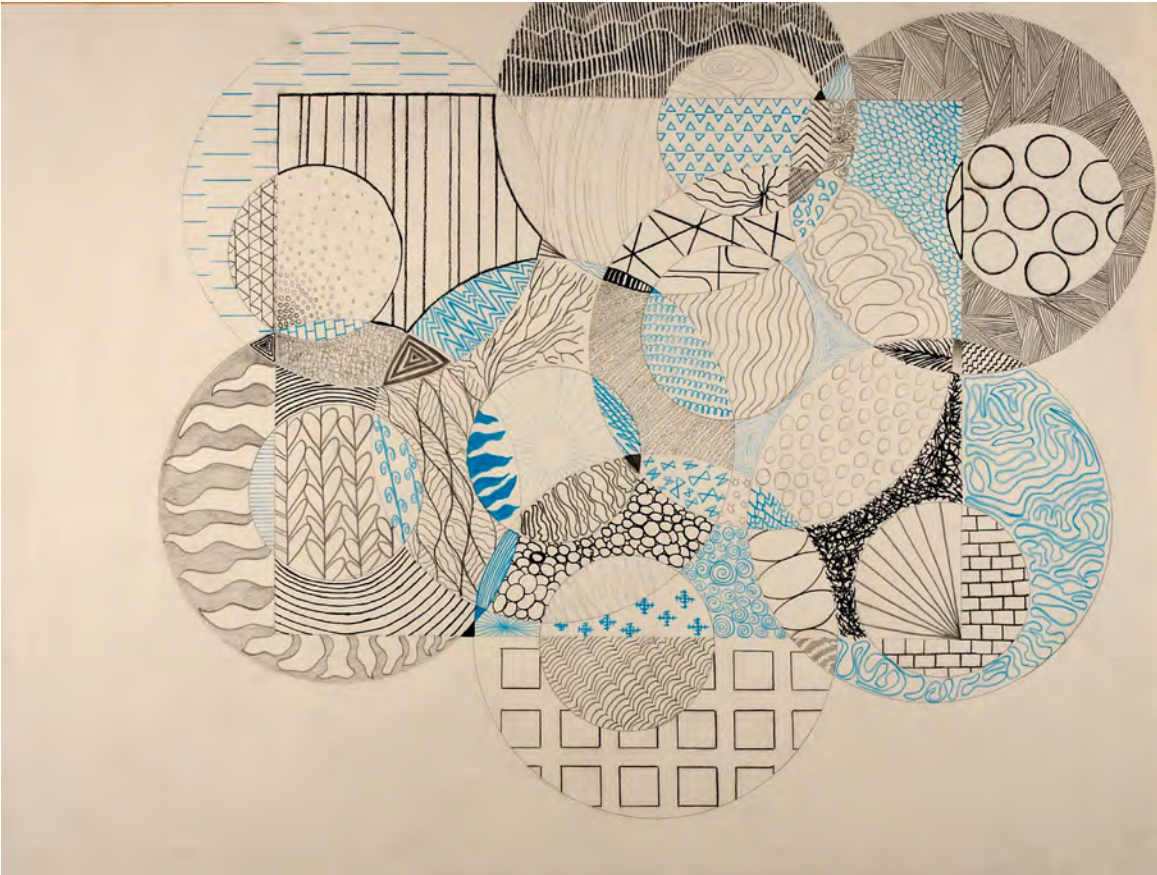
Adam Kluge

Untitled



Alyssa Behrends

Untitled



Carissa Woller

Untitled



Lisa Fontaine

Untitled



MaryJane Reed

Untitled



Miranda Flores

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled



Cynthia Hagan

Untitled

