

PUBLIC | ATION

2023

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Memorial Foundation English Writing Internship Program.

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Art Inspires Art.

The collection and temporary artworks of Public Art of the University of Houston System (Public Art UHS) are displayed in the public sphere. Instead of being contained in a traditional gallery, they adorn and activate the buildings and green spaces across the University of Houston System. These artworks often become familiar friends for students who pass by them every day as they study, work, learn, and live on campus. Public art is both the backdrop and a supporting actor in campus life.

Every time that I present a program or host a tour at Public Art UHS, I hear new ideas and insights from participants that completely change my perspective on the artworks. After I led a tour for her experiential, interdisciplinary “Arts in Houston” writing course, Josie Mitchell and I started talking about how the visual arts and creative writing can inform—and inspire—one another. PUBLIC/ATION grew from these conversations.

The purpose of PUBLIC/ATION is to encourage and publish student writing in response to artworks that, for some, may have disappeared into the background of their everyday commutes. Through viewing and interrogating Public Art UHS’s artworks over the course of a semester, writers created settings for fictional works built by imagination and allowed the artworks to spark personal and lyrical introspection.

We are pleased and honored to share the writing of these 12 talented writers with you in this inaugural chapbook of student writing inspired by art in the public sphere. The writing selections—each inspired by artworks in our collection or our temporary public art projects—range from incisive and funny to personal and deeply reflective. It is our hope that this art-inspired art will in turn inspire you.

Lauren T. Cross

Manager, Outreach and Public Programs
Public Art of the University of Houston System

Josie Mitchell

Writer and Creative Writing Instructor
University of Houston

Counsel

by Ariel Devlin

Ne compte pas sur moi pour t'écrire une longue lettre, pleine
de perceptions ingénieuses et de phrases définitives sur la vie
conjugale qui t'attend.

– Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette

My grandmother had marriages like pears that sat
overripe on the countertop, the sweet, crisp flesh
turning tart and bruising, the skin dimpling
sore and sensitive.

Three pears and four children.

I craved love all my childhood and when
I tasted it I was afraid to swallow
lest the afterbite carry the rot my grandmother knew.
At fifteen she dropped her maiden name; at twenty
I consider losing mine too.

Even if I, like you, won't always
listen, I understand that in life there is no
golden fruit. To preserve marriage's sweetness, let me
drink in my predecessors' wisdom:
feed me your mistakes and correct my path,

please waste your breath on me even if
you know that all the witty insights and
definitive phrases in the world
will be defeated by the ruinous strength
of my own love or foolishness

even if it won't save me from
repeating your sins, please have compassion
and write me a long letter.

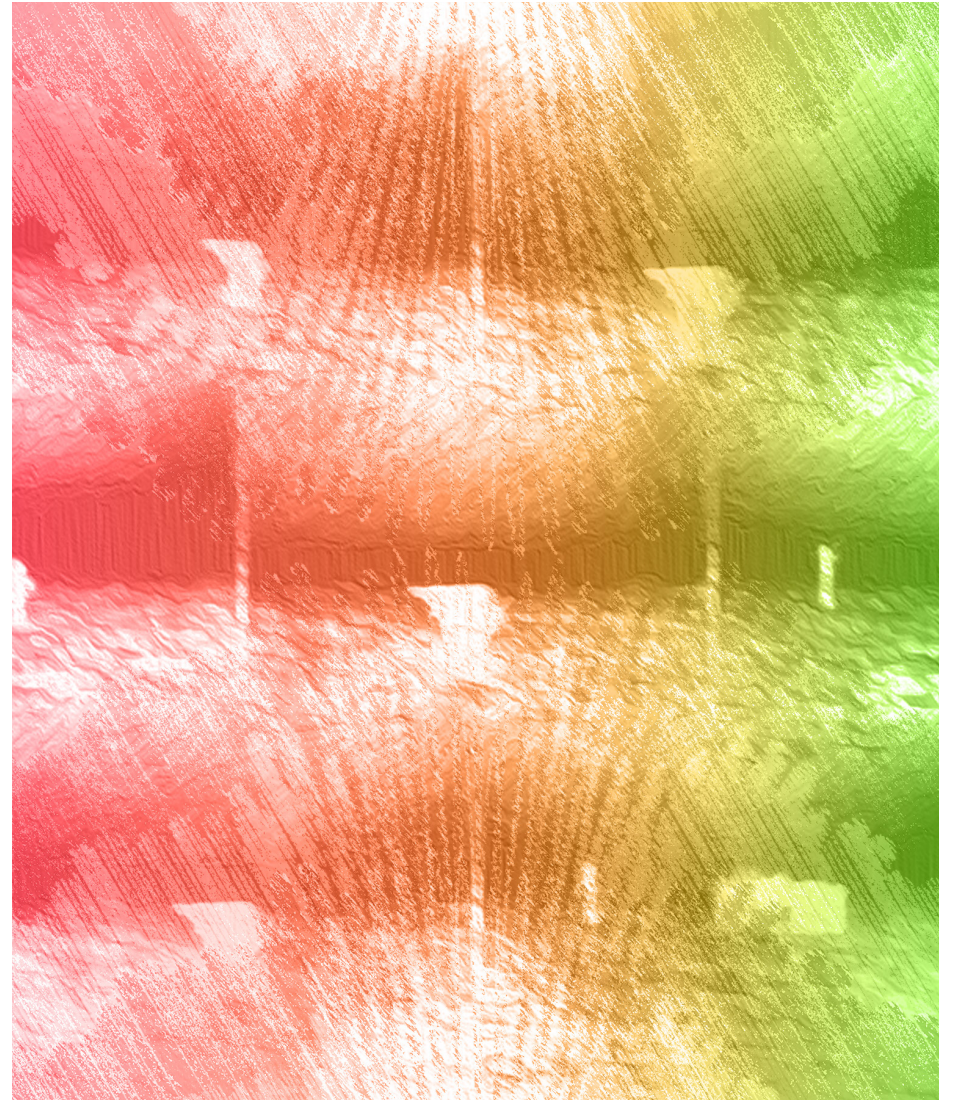
Writing inspired by
Jim Sanborn, *A Comma, A*, 2003

equanimity

by Jacob Myers

There is an immense fog, a color that seems to bleed from the sea and from the sky. You can see the divide on the horizon, yet still a sameness occupies my mind, a peaceful calamity not yet realized by the four of them. I wonder what they are, and I wonder who is there, above the silent sunken ships and the drowned dreams of melancholy mariners whose anguish turned to languish and whose wearied wrinkles once told of riches not yet charted by cartographers on the faded fringes of a delicate parchment.

I wonder, who charts the sea here? Do they yet realize that what is beneath is what is above, and the same bloated bones of a hull harmoniously decayed is the same steel stridently persisting, holding up these structures despite a unanimous undersea ubiquity and an otherwise apathetic sky. As they are permanently nestled within the bountiful black depths of an ageless sea, so too are they buoyed into an ancient life, where the only difference is a matter of the horizon.



Writing and illustration inspired by
E. Dan Klepper, *Sea Stacks - Nautical Twilight*, 2022

The Echoes of Dǎ

by Niamh Clarke

From the shell of an oyster, she emerged,
Pure as a pearl, perfect and pristine,
But marooned on a solitary shore,
No Graces, Spring, or nymphs were seen.

Her feet fell on fiery ground,
Not on puffy clouds of celestial grace,
But on the scorching sands of Hades' domain,
Where murky waters battered desolate space.

The origin of her parents' strife,
Their fury over her mere birth,
Their shouts sent her spiraling down,
To crash into shells on a desolate earth.

No lustrous Cyprus, nor love's sweet luster,
But a realm of ruthless rue and rain,
Her shell, not a scallop's smooth splendor,
But an oyster's, warped and wrought with pain.

She bore a cold and callous steel,
And wasps, not angels, buzzed around,
And though her Mother professed to mourn
The Moon always mirrored the Sun's resound.

For their tears were treacherous, crocodile tears,
Ugly and devoid of any grace,
And though she broke free from her shell,
She still bore her Mother's wretched face.

Writing inspired by
Brian Tolle, *Origin*, 2014

Tranquil Cloak

by Anisah Khan

I haven't seen the lady in blue
for a while. Since I fell under her allure.

Entering campus for the first time,
I took tentative steps, scared to break a leaf.
Until my eyes adored her swatches. She was
curated from salty breezes, molded into peace
humans felt when bundled in fresh sheets.
She taught me to enjoy the textures of tranquility

It was a long since we enjoyed each other's company,
hearing students pit pat their shoes on
thirsty grass, following futures plans,
while I'm waiting for my turn

You noted the sweat
Not from a humid spring but
From deciphering calculus. Then
you prayed, seeing stained cheeks

I came back, breaking conversations
stomping on rusted leaves
to visit the lady cloaked in
blue, clothed from water, resting
in harmony, under a pastel sky.
Til my ears heard my blood hum

I thought she'd stay.
At least long enough to tell her
the path underneath my sneakers
changed.

I lost her tranquility staring at
The parrot's neon shades, their
Wings blinded my eyes
Yellow, Green, Pink streaks
Screaming at my face, flaunting
his new home, where my companion
And I used to meet.

I tried to move my eyes that pricked
under the presence of the parrot
but amongst the beaming palate,
Was a message on the corner
Written in her signature shade
"Big Walls, Big Dreams"



Writing and illustration inspired by
Muna Al-Bader, *Cultural Bonds*, 2021
DUAL, *Ave's Sonar*, 2022

Language as a Prison

by Srijith Kambala

Every night when I close my eyes, I'm transported home. My sister and I crouch around a chalk circle we've etched on to red earth. We are laser-focused on the chibolas - sea green glass spheres that we always joked looked like fish eyes. My butt hits the ground and I yell out in exasperation as she lands a lucky shot, winning the hand and seizing my treasured marbles. Having learned to tune out Maria's taunts and exaggerated victory jigs, I stare out into the horizon where the sun is beginning hide behind the Andes. Mama calls us inside for dinner, and as I step past the doorway, I'm met with the inviting smell of freshly baked pupusas.

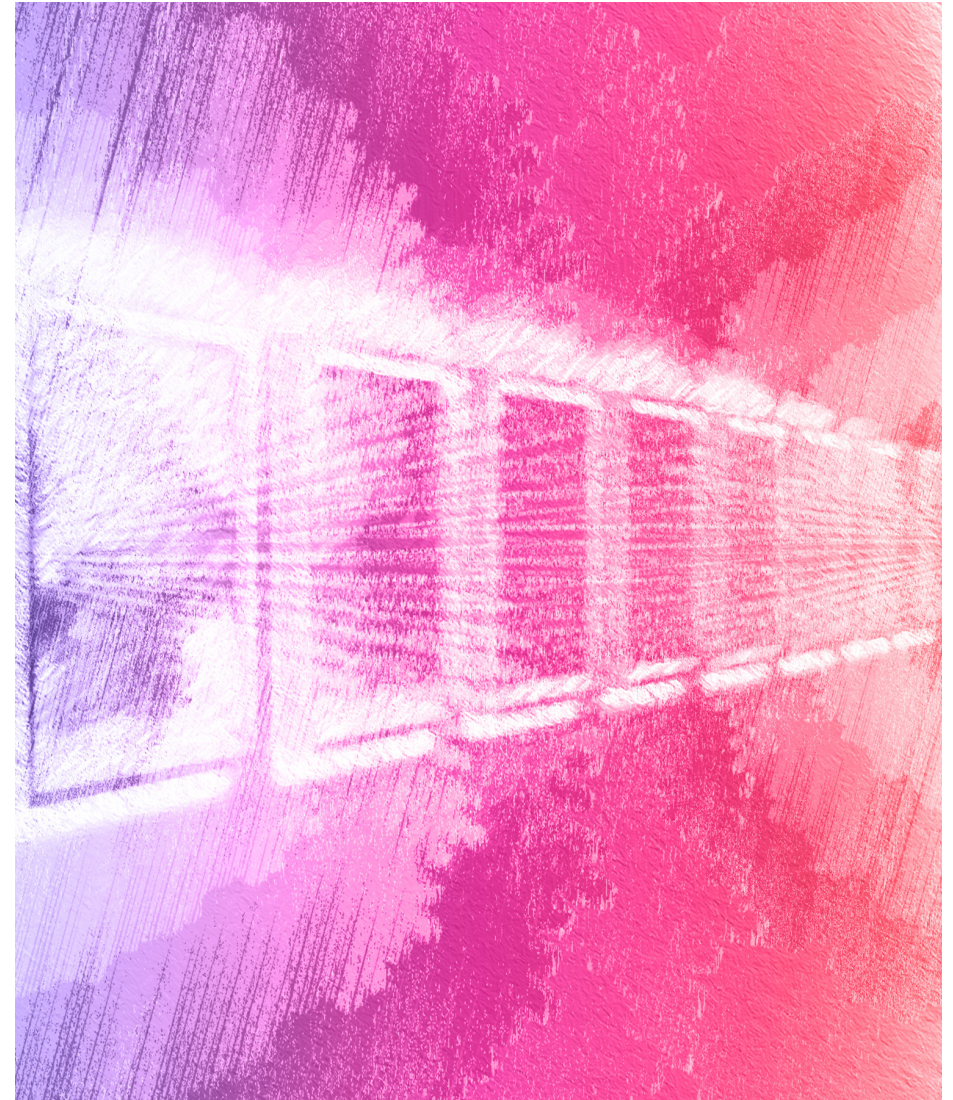
My memories of home and family are still so vivid, even if it has been years since home has been like that. In the last year before I left in 2015, the violence between criminal gangs and the government cracking down on them reached a peak, and nowhere felt safe. As 19 year olds with extremely limited employment opportunities, many of my friends either joined the gangs or the police, and lost their lives. My mom fearing for me going down one of those paths, refused to let me stay in El Salvador. We thought if we could migrate to "el Norte" - either Mexico or the United States, life would be safer. Yet, little did we know that our troubles were just beginning.

Many others were leaving like us, and we banded together with them, forming what Americans call, "a migrant caravan." To me though, that term ignores the reality of our situation. We were asylum seekers, not simply group that decided to migrate out of free will. I didn't choose to go through the ordeals of becoming separated from my mother and sister in Mexico, and losing all connection with them for seven years. I didn't choose to nearly starve to death in the Sonoran, and I certainly didn't choose to have this lame leg. My issues with how Americans word their discussion about us is a recent development however, as I only learned English beyond a basic level in the last two years. Education became my escape from my employment hell in Houston.

When I crossed the border, I found temporary shelter in Brownsville among other refugees from Mexico and across South America. I made my first friend in years, Edgar, and together we made it to Houston in search of work. He had a cataract, and I had a limp, and so there was little opportunity for us to work manual labor jobs. Instead, we found work in an Indian restaurant. The owner was searching for cheap labor, and since Indian cuisine had many similarities to South American cuisine he hired us and some other illegal migrants. Knowing nothing about labor contracts written in English, we signed whatever was put in front of us, and were soon locked into servitude. We were often paid nothing at all, our wages being replaced with leftover food, and were

constantly threatened with deportation. 8 of us were forced to live in a tiny hotel room, and for five years, we worked as indentured servants. Eventually, an government-ordered inspection of the restaurant led to the place being shut down, and our release from employment. I then entered a prolonged battle with the courts, until finally I was granted asylum with the aid of a civil liberties legal aid group for South American refugees. They helped me become educated and find the safety my mom had wanted for me.

After years of trying to communicate with my sister, I was finally able to reach her in 2022, and we reunited this year. When we reunited, our eyes could not remain dry for more than a minute, both because of how much we missed each other and also because of how much had changed. The journey to the north broke us down, and when she told me my mother died from illness on the way, it was as though all of my strength vanished at once. For months, I mourned and lamented the fact that I was only able to find out once it was too late. If only I was able to stay on the same bus as them in Mexico. If only my leg did not get caught on that barbed wire fence. If only I was able to learn English sooner, get out of that damned restaurant and find out about the aid group sooner. Each day when I wake up, I'm reminded that my comforts of childhood can never be replicated here in Texas. Still, I have found resolve. Together, my sister and I have opened Las chibolas, a pupuseria which will carry on my mother's legacy and memory.



Writing and illustration inspired by
Adriana Corral, *Latitudes*, 2019

Step Beneath

by Alexandra Jones

Lonely. Step beneath and sit.
Droplets of ice fall slowly onto your skin.
It's one at a time, to let you know they're there, and that it'll be
endless.
Shoulder, scalp, eyelids.

Relief. Step beneath, put your hands up.
Droplets that ease down, pop and produce a mist that engulfs
your silhouette, gently.
It feels soft, and you can smile.
Upper body, bare feet.

Desperation. Step beneath, brace yourself.
Droplets, tons of brick, plummet down like an asteroid entering
the atmosphere.
You can't see anything but shades of blaring white past your
soaked bangs.
Don't try to stand, just flatten till you're flush to the floor.
Entire body.

Love. Step beneath and look up.
Droplets brush your body beside your eyes and mouth so you
can gaze infinitely into an endless moment, an endless blue,
and smile.
Face, hands, chest.

Writing inspired by
Alyson Shotz, *A Moment in Time*, 2005

The Projector

by Nicholai Caterina

I am resetting the password for your skull. The first morning of a new season I do this. For each bone, tissue, & organ in your face. A nostril is like the nursery-rhyme you'll forget when you're older. An eyelid, so that I may transmit one last, amative gaze. When you notice the halo of refrigerating dead-fans, will you think of me? The way I cooled your resin-scalp, w/ a mixture of light & diode. We were endless. The password for your lips is Suicide. The password for your left ear is Song. In your program I have it set for you to duplicate each genus of love. Not least the worst kinds. You will remember these loves, synthesize & xerox these loves, before dispensing them into a currency lighter than breeze, that the rest of us may hold in our cold, gauzen hands. Broadcasts, nodal goodbyes, a jpeg of sex-just embrace. Think of what it takes to warm-up the city. Or better yet: our hands. You'll do this for me, & then I'll be gone.



Writing and illustration inspired by

Masaru Takiguchi, *Orbit I*, 1968

Ralph Helmick and Stuart Schechter, *Modulation*, 2000

Nick de Vries, *Frisian Horses*, 2014

Bloody Disco Nose

by Kayla Huhn

The sculpture has no title
At least not that I know
Because of this, I've christened it:
The Bloody Disco Nose

The name, it makes one wonder
To whom such a snout belongs
My greatest guess? A titaness
The legend of folk songs

I see the mirrored giant now:
Her skin shimmers and glistens
She's warned again of thoughtless men,
But giants rarely listen

A human warrior steals her heart
He charms her with a feast
He sings a strain of beauty famed
But beauty is a beast

His song is not quite over
When the first sharp arrow flies
The men attack from front and back
Ignoring shattered cries

The warrior plays his final note
The bright mirrors stain red
Mosaic of a broken love
The titaness is dead

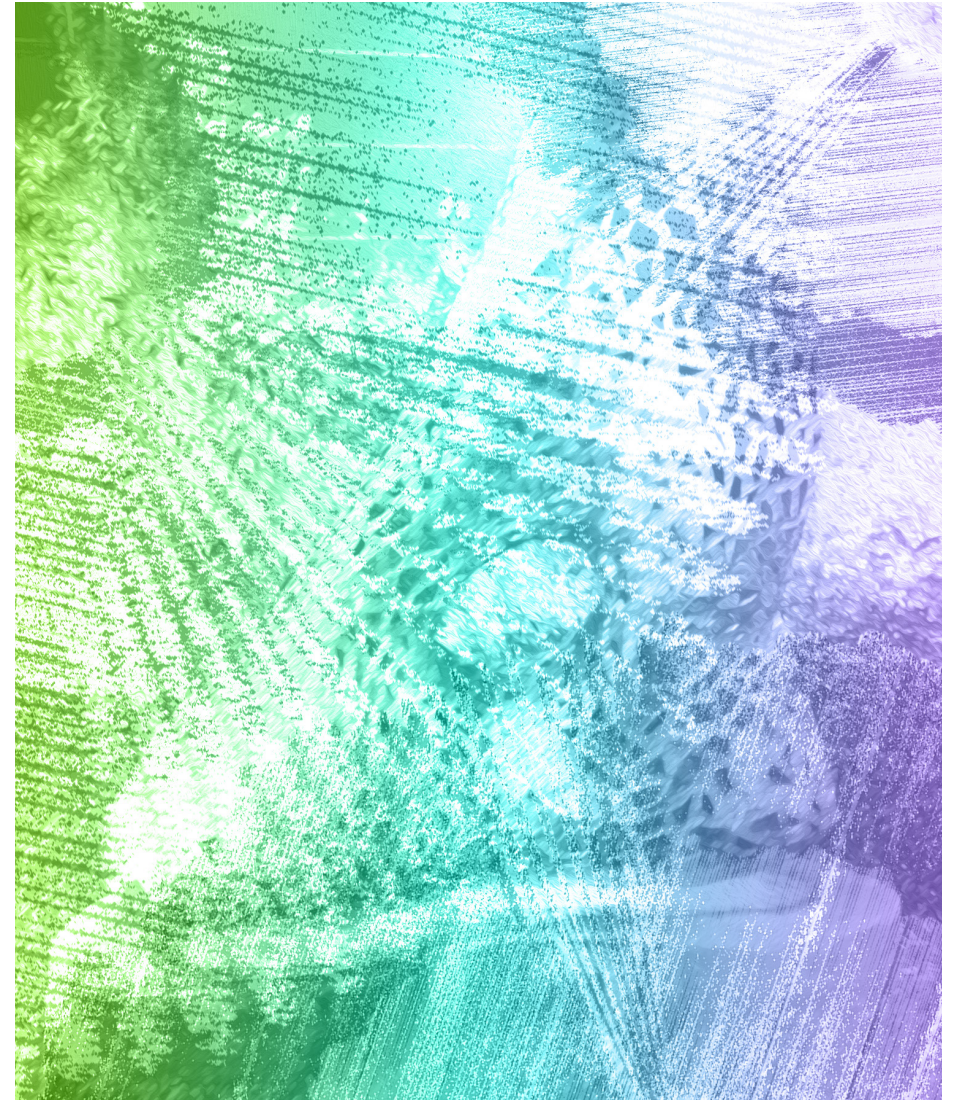
The fighters, they divide her up
Her bones, her heart, her toes
Her teeth, her tongue, and both her lungs
And finally: her nose!

Their trophies fetch a pretty price
Though pretty they are not
At least to all who can recall
The stories they forgot

The giant's spirit rests anew
Next to a peaceful tree
Right above the center for
Accessibility

She watches students come and go
In them, her own reflection
She wishes them a kinder world
And grants them her protection

Oh, dear Bloody Disco Nose
Your obscurity's a shame
But I, for one, enjoy the fun
Of pondering your name



Writing and illustration inspired by
Denise Kroneman, *Genki*, 2005

Brighter Realms

by Xavier Daugherty

My mind wonders in futility amidst this crowd,
Is it folly to dream aloud?

Will huemankind forever ruin unto dark—
Bleakly blotting these times with turmoil without reproach of

Heaven! Eye mind wanders with crestfallen optics
As I walk on the excited palms of my feet, giddy through the sole,

upon approach to the brushed gilded handrails.
Smooth as unblemished gold, and not for sale.

As if signifying this space is a privilege to behold, royal.
Scarily sacred. With eerie airs—the boards underfoot creek,

But the cheery high vibrations humble me meek.
Walls drawn to life to create a brand-new world,
As if Harold wielded a magic pen from the great beyond
Or a stylus with artificial intelligence...
Instead of a purple crayon.

I can't help but think "What if?"
What would the world be
If we let the inner child draw
All over the walls?

Every now and then, we should honor that discarded light, that
Abandoned child; light sensibility; creativity.

These color-coded walls that surround
Are a camouflage with which we imprison that spark.
Just as in us, something lies like
the Buried Life, underneath.

The spilt drink puddles
Engraved onto walls are like pieces of a puzzle.
I subtract the abstractions, but
There's nothing to solve.

Upon these are the mundane:
On one wall I see a lazy boy. A sofa and a window too.
A room within a room to be lived in, or perhaps the den.
A code of color above, stacked like dishes,
And letter beckoning, "This way next!"

I follow the text and swear I find
A community pool within its lines; the public's sea.
As a turnaround, I observe the shadow of a man
Staring back at me, His knowing yellow moon gaze reflecting,
"Are you comfortable with conformity?"

This room is a realm that mystifies the mundane
and uplifts the moody lid of my helm.
The hues perform, the aromatics do acrobatics
Above with decadent decor of jellyfish chandeliers
And candy cane tentacles that sting sweetly to my senses,
Bearing fruity vibrant tones in tasteful sounds.

It's a citrusy medley my saccharine soul wants so badly to sink
Its teeth into, instead of black and white
Manchineels around the world.

I feel as though the vivid life is not a mere pursuit,
but like this presence, a right of emission.
Within the confines of failure and folly, eyes realize.
I am meant to chase realms and write
worlds brighter than this, our dark dimension.



Writing and illustration inspired by
Jorge Pardo, *Folly*, 2021
Carlos Cruz-Diez, *Double Psychromie*, 2009

The Snake Is Out (And About)

by Cade Kennedy

The date was January 1st 2023 on the University of Houston main campus. It had just passed midnight and there was not a human soul in sight. Of course, no students were on campus, but even regular employees like university maintenance workers and groundskeepers had been told they didn't need to be there. In fact, they were actually told they couldn't be there, as there was going to be some sort of construction overnight that needed all personnel to be gone. This was a cover of course.

The Snake is Out is a massive outdoor sculpture by Tony Smith. It was made in 1962 out of painted steel, and is on loan to the university by the Menil Collection. The Snake is Out has a secret. Everyone at the university assumes that the sculpture is hollow, and that's what the artist and the higher-ups want you to think. The truth is that The Snake is Out is not just a sculpture, it is an automaton. The seemingly hollow interior is actually filled with whirring gears and rotating joints, rusted and distressed by time, but still fully functional. And though the sculpture sits motionless 364 days of the year, part of the artist's agreement with the Menil Collection and the University of Houston is that it must be turned on once a year.

The University does comply with the artist's wishes, but because a two ton metal sculpture lumbering around the campus is not exactly safe for students and faculty, it is activated in the middle of the night on a day where no one is around. Barriers are set up around the field to protect nearby buildings, and a secret button is pressed on the interior of the sculpture. A shrieking mechanic grind can be heard, as the hundreds of gears inside whir to life. The Snake is Out moves by simply rotating each of its sides, coiling them together and then pushing them out, in a similar way to how a snake or worm moves. This gives some extra irony to its name. After it is activated, The Snake is Out squirms its way around the field a few times, guided by a preprogrammed path that its caretakers have meticulously planned, before it slowly returns to its pedestal. After the dust settles and the sounds of metal grinding over metal fade, it's as if nothing had ever happened. The next day all return to campus as normal, and The Snake is Out waits patiently for the next year to go out and about again.

Writing inspired by
Tony Smith, *The Snake is Out*, 1982-1983

Squirming Underneath the Skirt

by Melanie Adhikary

I could feel his saggy, slithering eyes
crawling up my thigh, each stare poking an inch higher.
“This is my niece,” she said; the corners
of her mouth erect, like the Joker.
“Mmmh” was his reply.
My heels dug into the floor of mud
that stretched along a yard of wet grass; the shit
only bred trees whose branches carried twisted,
muggy banners of celebration. As he shed each stare,
he wrapped his arm tighter around my aunt Helen,
suffocating her waist, stiff
as an anaconda on its prey.
It was my grandmother’s 82nd
birthday; likewise, it was his 82nd stare

at my ass.
By the time the banda left, his muckstained shirt was mostly
beer, cigarette dust,
and my cousin Isela’s nude-shimmering lipstick. The scent
made its debut onto every skirt that traveled down
the stairs of the patio.
Twisting in my sleep, I feel nothing
but his forked tongue slithering
up my leg.
For now, there’s nothing to worry about,
nothing to fear;
except for my cousin’s baby shower
next week.

Writing inspired by
Helen Altman, *Rattler*, 2012

Say What People Will

by Naveera Majid

As immigrants, sometimes we come to America from battered, “third-world” countries, bringing in our emotional baggage of personal traumas and cultural insights. The knowledge of only our first language—our mother tongue—can render us unable to understand the unfamiliar language of the new world we begin to live in. I also see art as a means of understanding an unfamiliar language, in some cases. Art itself can also be perceived as another language entirely—a means of conveying information that’s gathered.

My desire to forget the past often overcomes me especially since my bond with the country printed on my birth certificate is lackluster, but every time I see what’s on the news about Pakistan, my feelings turn ambivalent. I don’t like to hear about the Prime Minister blaming women for the rape epidemic there or how Pakistan is one of the worst countries when it comes to intimate partner violence or details on the most recent honor killing case, but I need to.

War-torn countries sometimes lose the histories of their people, and even the remnants of their ruins can seem to wither away. I have heard from my grandmother, stories of British colonization and the Partition when women jumped into wells to avoid meeting their fate, which consisted of being

raped by British soldiers. She is ninety-something if you do the math, but no one really knows how old she is since her birth certificate and other important documents were lost or destroyed, rendering her history an unfinished puzzle. It reminds me and makes me think: hey, let’s not view history through rose-tinted glasses.

I was born in Karachi, Pakistan, but I have no intense connection to that part of my life because my parents brought me to America when I was five years old. Despite that, I’ve been able to keep a tight hold on my cultural ideals as my parents made sure to never fail when it came to instilling certain beliefs in me.

While Amma was pregnant with me in Pakistan, Abba visited often. He was making trips to and from America, working odd jobs in an attempt to eventually catch the elusive American Dream. And once I was born, those visits transformed into the decision for Amma and me to join him.

On my first day of school, I cried while leaving my parents, as the kids in the classroom said the Pledge of Allegiance, because I didn’t know what to say or what to do or where to go. And though that’s to be expected in such a circumstance, this was made worse when my teachers made me sit by another girl who also spoke Urdu, as if it would be her job to help me learn English.

Elementary school was the start of the time I realized that I didn’t belong or I wasn’t wanted. Boys and girls alike pointed out that I “said things funny” and that my food looked

and smelled awful to them. I've heard from my thirteen-year-old brother that this happens to this day.

This alienation and othering was the start of my relationship with wanting to become nearly invisible. But Desi women are always being asked to make themselves small. Mothers tell their daughters from a young age that they need to be quiet, cover up, not laugh so loud, and close their legs. They say this is a way for their daughters to protect themselves.

I say it has nothing to do with protection. It's about us submitting and minimizing our existence for other people's convenience.

For some women, this turns into acceptance of abuse from the men in their lives. In our culture, we're taught to work through everything with our partner. Divorce seems like an "easy escape" to those scrutinizing the people who choose to decide on divorce. Many Pakistani women in Pakistan and America alike don't see divorce as a viable option because though it's technically legal, there are too many factors involved which make divorce seem like an option that's not worth it. Too many people counting on you to take care of them. Too much shame associated with it.

We're also told to limit ourselves because our plans mean nothing compared to the plans others already have for us. The first time I very excitedly told Amma that I wanted to study beyond my undergraduate degree, she told me to not study so much or else I'll run out of time to make a baby. I was taught that

I must conform because everything I do is for the sake of others.

So then, how can we possibly protect ourselves? We are not taught—not equipped—to face a world in which there is such deep disregard. A world in which an eight-year-old girl named Zainab Ansari was raped and thrown into garbage. A world in which a woman named Qandeel Baloch was murdered by her brother as an "honor killing" for bringing dishonor to her family, despite the fact that her online fame provided the main source of income for their family. A world in which, on Pakistan Independence Day, a woman named Ayesha Akram was sexually assaulted by hordes of men who were climbing fences so they could grope and beat her.

Some of these seem intense and extreme to some degree, but this is the reality of the state in which Pakistan is in at this moment. But that's not the only reality.

Pakistan has had its own version of the Me Too movement with the same name, called Main Bhi. Multiple protests manned by women have happened in Lahore and Islamabad with women holding signs which say that there's no honor in honor killings. There's outrage every day, and it's increasing. And we already know there's strength in numbers.

As a Pakistani woman living in America, I know the privilege of education I have which some women will never get to have. This is why Malala took a bullet to her head.

The power of storytelling, then, is immensely important. We should not be overlooking the beauty of women. They go

above and beyond for the people they love, but they never get a chance to do this for themselves. I think it's because they don't consider themselves to be someone they love.

They should not feel shame simply for existing, breathing, living. When I was born, my aunt told Amma not to feel bad for not having a son, even though Amma was deeply happy to have a daughter. But when I was seven, after waiting for years to have another pregnancy, Amma had a miscarriage. I can imagine the shame that must've permeated through her body. She felt as though she had failed as a woman.

Because my mother and I are not the only women in the world who will ever experience these pains, I want to experience and create art that evokes a deeper understanding for others about a culture that is not their own. Exploring our histories and uncovering the hidden truths of our past can give us hope for the future. We must give voice to others even though voice is not something you can truly provide to others because it is already there and it is their own.



Writing and illustration inspired by
Shahzia Sikander, *Witness*, 2023
Muna Al-Bader, *Cultural Bonds*, 2021

About the Writers

Ariel Devlin is an English and French double major at the University of Houston. She's loved writing poetry ever since she was small and recently has started playing around with creative nonfiction. In her spare time, she likes to explore Houston's coffee shops, learn languages, and visit art museums.

Jacob Myers is a senior at the University of Houston. His main hobby is reading, and his favorite genres are literary realism and southern gothic. Whenever he isn't reading, you can find him writing, which has long been his primary form of expression.

Niamh Clarke, a Houston, TX native, was brought up by Irish immigrant parents. Currently a senior at the University of Houston, she is pursuing a major in Literature and a minor in History. Her expertise and interests revolve around British and Irish literature and poetry.

Anisah Khan is a writer based in Spring, TX. Currently pursuing her undergraduate degree in English at the University of Houston, she has been honing her writing skills for over eight years. Her works of fiction, poetry, and critical essays have been recognized by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers.

Srijith Kambala graduated from the University of Houston in 2023, majoring in Biology and double minoring in Global Engagement and Research and Medicine & Society. During his senior year while taking the "Arts in Houston" writing course, he wrote his piece of fiction as an ekphrastic response. Srijith is currently studying as a first year medical student at Baylor College of Medicine.

Alexandra Jones is a senior at the University of Houston pursuing a degree in Media Production.

Nicholai Caterina was born in New Jersey and raised near Galveston. He is a junior at the University of Houston majoring in Creative Writing.

Kayla Huhn is a senior pursuing a dual degree in English and Spanish. When she's not in a class or student teaching, she enjoys baking, roller skating, and playing in the band at football games. She has greatly enjoyed her time at the University of Houston and is glad to honor one of its more forgotten yet dearly beloved art pieces with a poem.

Xavier Daugherty is an eclectic writer whose canon is rooted in all things anime, cosmic, and irreverent humor. His writing (just like his brain probably) is on a spectrum and centers in waves on deep introspection and the human condition. As a nerd and aspiring author, he hopes that his light words and musings not only raise consciousness, but are the incantation that dispels despair, ennui, and anxiety.

Cade Kennedy is a senior at the University of Houston pursuing a degree in Economics.

Melanie Adhikary is a senior at the University of Houston majoring in English with a concentration in Creative Writing and minoring in Film Studies. For the past few years, her writing has centered around aspects of feminine agency and struggle. She hopes to explore these topics further within her writing.

Naveera Majid is a Pakistani American advocate, poet, and scholar who pursued a degree in Creative Writing in the Poetry concentration with a Sociology minor. She is a Mellon Scholar, Rowan Fellow, and was awarded Alternate status for a UK study grant through the Fulbright Program. Her essays have received many honorable mentions for the Rowan Writing Competition, and she received the 2023 Howard Moss Prize in Poetry.

Special Thanks

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And to the PUBLIC/ATION writers, deepest thanks for sharing your creativity with us.

Public Art
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