



SOUNDINGS

2009 SARATOGA HIGH
LITERARY MAGAZINE

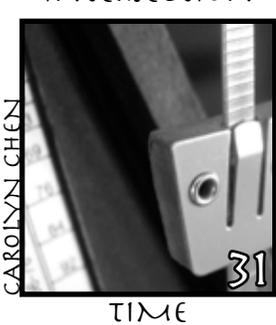
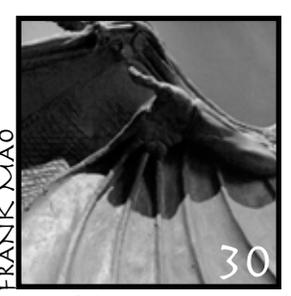
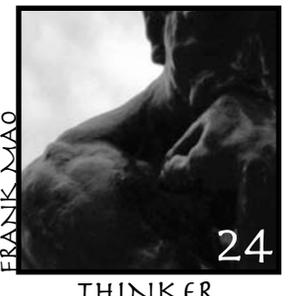
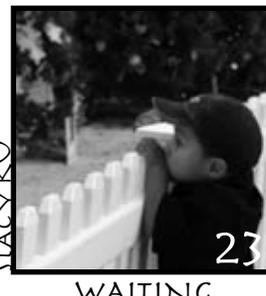
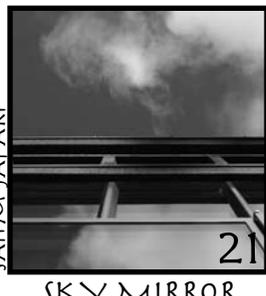
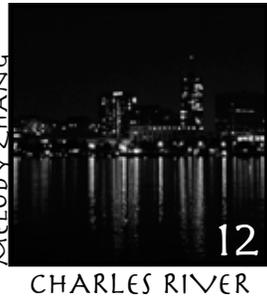
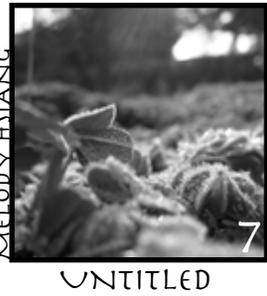
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ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY



INFORMATION AND POLICY

Soundings is Saratoga High's annual literary magazine, put together by a group of students from advanced journalism and poetry classes. We serve as a forum for student expression and publish poetry, prose, artwork, and photography.

Authors' and artists' names are not disclosed to staff members until after decisions are made on submissions. Staff members' votes determine final decisions on which submissions will be published.

The Mermaid

by Adesa Chang

Once there was this kid. This fisher boy, to be exact. One dark and stormy night he heard a high keening on the wind, and the next morning he found a mermaid on the beach.

She had ruby red lips and a tail that gleamed like jewels in the morning sun, but her scales were chafed by sand and her eyes shone dull grey. The boy noticed that she was almost dead. Deep gouges in the sand marked where she had thrashed and scabbled with her hands; something was wrong with her, she could not get back to the water.

He turned to leave. She lifted her head and let out an eerie wail, and when he glanced back the feral arch of her neck sent shivers down his spine. For reasons he himself did not understand, he went back and half-dragged, half-fought, half-hauled her to his house, dropped her in the fish farm pond.

His girl did not approve. All the fish was gone within a fortnight, though he never saw her eat. Day by day he fished for her and her eyes gradually returned to swirls of silver,



The Tenth Muse by Vickie Luana

but her tail remained at an odd angle and didn't flap as a fish's tail should.

At night she sang a harsh, keening song, and though his girl never said a word he could feel her lying in bed next to him, eyes wide open in the dark, her breathing uneven.

One day he woke up and his girl wasn't there anymore. He rushed to the pool and saw the fish tail floating upwards,

his mermaid's eyes completely black.

His first thought was that she'd poisoned her and run away. But there was no time for thinking; his mermaid was poisoned and he didn't know what to do.

In the end he went out and got her fish, more fish than she could ever want, because he was a fisher boy and it was all he knew. He didn't even know if she was alive or dead but he sat vigil

and after two days she moved and after three days she ate and he knew she would live. Her tail improved and her eyes returned

to silver and one day, finally, the boy took her back to the beach and let her free. She kissed him on the lips before she went, her eyes two unfathomable swirls.

The boy developed a faint cough after that. There was an emptiness inside his pond where the mermaid used to be, and an emptiness inside him where his girl used to be. He discarded his tools and left in search of his lost love. He never found her, but he would not give up. He traveled the world and became wise in the ways of men, keeping an ear out always for mermaid

lore.

His cough worsened as time passed, going from a faint pestilence to a thing that racked his body and plagued him constantly. Often he wondered if this was not punishment of some sort, or even... reward. He did not get his answer until years later, from an old wise man in a village full of children.

"A mermaid's kiss is poison," he said, stroking his beard. "Why, get too close and

she'll eat you, bones and all - her eyes will turn black and her belly distend..."

The children crowded around him, eager to hear more.

She had ruby red lips and a tail that gleamed like jewels in the morning sun, but her scales were chafed by sand and her eyes shone dull grey. The boy saw at once that she was almost dead.

The fisher boy opened his mouth only to succumb to a monstrous bout of hacking that shook his whole frame and – this time – simply would not stop until he was on his hands and knees, the tears streaming down his face, and he tasted copper and felt something warm and wet on the tip of his tongue and spat red onto the grass beside him.

He felt a tug on his sleeve.

"Did you just cough up blood?" a little boy asked, eyes wide.

"No," he managed, flashing the kid a ghost of a smile. "I've coughed up a piece of my heart."

FAITH BY FELICIA TANG



BY SARA GAMBORD

BEFORE AUTUMN

Join me, one last time, to dip
Brave toes into refreshing water
To make waves lap against tiles,
We'll sit, watching, pondering
Diving rings sunk to the bottom.

Join me, one last time, to toss
The bright ball into pale skies.
We'll gather inflatable animals
To collapse, listen to whispers
Of air escaping aquatic friends.

Join me, a first time in jackets,
To watch leaves change and fall.
Mourning the loss of warm days,
We'll pull a cover over the pool,
Invite Autumn to frost our world.

** this poem was inspired by "the pasture" by robert frost*



JESSE GIPE
PHOTOGRAPH
BY MELODY
HSIANG

It isn't much i ask;
good clean dirt to cake my hands
and feet
standing in
mud pies carefully created
and tossed with
love
around tender
green
shoots of
lettuce, basil,
general growth.
And the smell of the curry plant
To trail around my ears,
omnithankful
garden crown'd god

fairytale

Must I wait here forever in
 cinders
 As you search with my
 glass slipper?
Must I sleep here forever in
 this castle
 While you slay the dragon
 outside?
Must I dangle my hair out
 this tower
 While you decide if you will
 climb?
 If the witch knocks on my
 cottage door,
I won't take a bite from her
 apple—
 Because when you finally
 arrive,
 Galloping on your gallant
 stallion,
With a bouquet of roses in
 your hands,
 You will find me with
 another prince.

by mindy hsiao

by tom head

explosion!



silly girls

-a villanelle-

by Adeeti Aggarwal

Silly girls do silly things, you said,
They dream of handsome knights.
Maybe, I created you in my head.
I imagine you, picture all I've read
Of lovers serenading ladies at night;
Silly girls do silly things, you said.
Sure you will arrive, I leave my bed
To watch the moon shine so bright.
Maybe, I created you in my head
To come in armor, ask me to wed.
Yes, I sigh as dawn casts first light.
Silly girls do silly things, you said.
You reach for me; I jump instead.

Hope you'll catch me, pray I'm right—
Maybe, I created you in my head.
I awake alone—full of deepest dread.
I wished you real with all my might!
Silly girls do silly things, you said;
Maybe, I created you in my head.

*This poem was inspired by Sylvia Plath's poem, "Mad Girl's Love Song."



butterfly

by Nyssa Spector

Essence of You

By Yvette Young



IN A SINGLE BREATH

By Kara Wang

There are times at night,
Your body warm in sleep beside me
When you take my breath away.
It's many things, all at once:
The wisp of hair that wavers
Between your temple and air,
Suddenly lies much too still;
The shirt rip on your chest
You still won't let me fix
Taunts me with a sneer,

You won't find a heartbeat here.

Reason has no place in darkness
As your hand turns cold in mine.
I cannot tell you why my chest stills

As I wait for your breath,
As they pass silently by,
Only that the seconds scrape my lungs
Until the sweet sound of your exhale

FILLS ME AGAIN WITH LIFE.



My Condolences

By Mabel Hsu

I remember her using my trunk
As **strength** for tottering legs.
I remember her using my limbs
To climb to the highest branch.

Her memorial service closed
With hard hearts and teary eyes.
Trembling hands scattered dust
Of their **sister, daughter, friend.**

ABBY'S ASHES

By Raven Sisco

Now, I recall her with my blooms,
Each scarlet petal as sweet as she.
After twelve years of loving her,
She has *graced me* with her ashes.

*This poem was inspired by a
visit to the Peck Heritage Garden.

HOOKY

by Sara Gambord

I drive on the street just waking, sip
Steamy cappuccino, head once more
To glass and steel reaching for sky.
As always, honking fills the streets
Choked by smog; but today, my car
Avoids the traffic jam as he glides
To country roads. Passing all exits,
He carries me near the salty spray
Of waves on fine sand as gulls fly
Among kites. I turn off my phone,
Abandon now lukewarm cappuccino,
To climb down to the pale shoreline
Where sea foam will tickle my toes.



Charles River by Meloc



ody Zhang

LAMENTS ON A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

ADELA CHANG

The world around us simmers, bent awry –
the more we see, the more we turn aside.
Why bother when the die's so long been cast?
We've slept enough; let numbers be our guide.

It's happiness, but happiness can't last;
on cresting waves it crashes, surging past
all reason, washing up our greatest woe:
we can't turn back, time sweeps by far too fast.

The more we learn, the more we know,
the more we know, the less we slow,
the more we meet, the fewer we keep,
the more we turn, the faster we go.

I once knew a man who swam the ocean deep;
the day he surfaced he began to weep.
"I went so far," he cried, "to what avail?
"I lost in seeking what I sought to reap."

And so we roll, as snowballs down a hill,
for ever tumbling towards the latest thrill,
growing all the while, too fast to wonder why
until CRASH! – with a splatter, we lie still...

One of the most awkward parts of being a bisexual teenager is rooming. You tend to forget things like school trips, and when they jump into view, it is time for frantic searches. Finding roommates you know is critical. If, for some reason, you miss the sign-up date or do not manage to get in a room with friends, you are delegated to a room of barely known or utterly strange persons of the same gender. Most teenagers (especially females) are too nice to allow someone they barely know to sleep on the floor. Because of this, you end up sharing a bed with a near stranger, huddled in one foot on the very edge to avoid touching them accidentally. You stay awake all night, listening to the soft breathing of people who know each other. You wish you could sleep, but are afraid of falling off the bed or having one of those awkward dreams and talking in your sleep.

The wake-up call for the next morning is scheduled for seven am, but you are up at five thirty, taking your shower as quietly as possible with the door locked. You wrap your pajamas around your wet body and sprint to your suitcase and back when you realize you have forgotten both clothes and a towel. Your roommates stir, and you land spread-eagled on the floor, having tripped in shock at their waking. They, of course, wake up and insist on helping you up and making sure you are in perfect order. At least one of them wears the requisite negligee

UNTITLED BY JESSE GIPE

that shows her chest as she leans over you to check for bruises and broken limbs. You sit there in panic, pajamas clinging to you and showing every tiny, incriminating detail. At some point, you find an opening and duck out, only to find that one of your roommates now has command of the bathroom and is intent on her daily hour-long beauty ritual. The door, of course, stays open. Your roommates change in front of you as you bury your nose desperately in a book or search through your suitcase, trying to think of what could take you an hour to find.

Finally, you manage to escape your room, but your roommates (who come down an hour later, of course) pin you down at your table right in the middle of a dangerously revealing discussion with a close and trusted friend about that cute girl at the next table. The discussion must be cut off, and as long as your roommates are there, you frantically signal your friend not to say anything about who you like.

Stressed out and exhausted from lack of sleep, you load onto the busses and are finally out of reach of your roommates. The rest of the day goes fine, except for that seemingly ever-present 'swear word' -gay. Well, you can ignore that. You're having a fine time with your friends. Until it's time for curfew, at any rate.

So, you trudge off to your room, where your unfortunate companions are lounging around in their pj's watching television. They spin off, as girls have

a tendency to do, into a long and involved conversation on the merits of the various actors and characters on-screen. All their heartthrobs are male, of course. And, just to complete the agony, they insist on knowing your opinion. You have to 'think fast' and make up some nonsense about how strong and manly one of the characters is and bite your tongue to keep from remarking that the lead actress beats all the males by several miles.

The night is a rerun of the previous sleepless dream. The only difference is that you actually fall asleep out of sheer deprivation for two hours. When you wake up, your bedmate has draped herself across the bed and is holding your hand. She seems to be having an amorous dream, and you try to ease your hand out of her death grip without waking her. You manage to take your shower and change into normal clothes without a hitch, for once, but when you are finished, the pj top of one of your roommates has come unbuttoned. A great deal of chest is showing, and hard as you try, you can't stop peeking. You try and unobtrusively pull up her coverlet. She doesn't wake up, but five minutes later she is flashing the ceiling again. At five am you've had enough. You tiptoe out, and knock on the door of your friends' room. They wake up and let you in, reluctantly, and you snatch a couple more hours of sleep in a pile of pillows on their floor. Thank goodness the chaperones don't do room checks in the morning.

Les Misérables by Audrey Hogue





11 O'CLOCK

BY OLIVIA MILLER

DRAWING CITIES OUT OF FOG
INTO LIGHT TO BUILD OUR
OWN GATES (GOLDEN &
LIGHT)
WE ARE RACING UP AND DOWN
WAYS & MEANS, CRACKED
STREETS AND CRACKING
FEARS
FIRING OUR OWN ESCAPES FROM
FIRE ESCAPES—
FLOOR AFTER FLOOR & MY EYES
ARE RISING TO THE RISEN
SUN
(FLOWERS IN SILLS BLOOM INTO
YOUR EYES & FACE & HANDS,
BOUQUETS TO CARRY ME
HOME)
CRISS-CROSSING TELEPHONE
WIRES CONNECT HOUSE TO
HOUSE WITH CRACKLING
THOUGHTS
AND FERRY ALL THESE DREAMS
TO YOU AND BACK IN THE
STILL A.M.

FIREWORKS

Melody Zhang



BIOLOGY

When he saw her, his heart sped
Into overdrive, contracting and
Releasing at 220 beats a minute.
As winding arteries pulsed blood
To his brain, gleeful endorphins
Bounced back. Synapses began
Short-circuiting; fireworks flew!
With hot palms and seizing lungs,
He gulped like a beached tuna.
In one heartbeat she walked away.

Connie Shang

Boston
Melody Zhang



Making My Bed

Dreams fill sheets as I sleep, sifting through
REM cycles, but dissipate in groans and
Groggy eyes— I make my bed so they
Will find me again in the deepest of nights.

For if I didn't, I would not sit atop the Eiffel Tower
Sipping Irish tea, nor tiptoe into the White House,
Set hidden aliens free; never soar over lush valleys
With a secret crush, sail with Vikings, hear them sing,
Or even catch myself amidst the dream.

I would never trip on a log and wake with a jolt,
Couldn't eat asparagus that tasted like cake.
Would never meet Gandalf, Edward Cullen,
And Voldemort; or ever dream I was awake.

I wouldn't run from cops on the streets of Vegas,
Or ever shop with flirtatious French women.
I couldn't conjure Dan Brown-like conspiracies
Nor catch a thug obsessed with Hello Kitty.

So when I awake I fold sheets, softly tuck in
My dreams and when I sleep, they'll be here for me.

Adeeti Aggarwal

The Mirror

by Nicole Ng

he man looked into the mirror. He had bought it less than two hours ago—a simple full-length, thankfully free of scratches and smudges. Childishly he raised his right hand. The person in the mirror raised his left. The man studied his reflection warily. Mirrors were not to be trusted. They never reflected him as others saw him, but in some impossible perspective that only existed in mirrors.

Uncomfortable with looking at the person who wasn't really him, the man broke eye contact, glancing up to check his hair instead. As always, not a black strand was out of place, not even in the unruly thatch that fell slightly over his left eye. A glance down reaffirmed his professional image—the clean-shaven jaw, the impeccable clothes. He worked hard to impress his superiors, hoping one day they'd realize that this young new engineer was ready to move on to bigger and better things.

But they never did. He was just another comfortable worker, hard-working but not outstanding. His minimal office socializing almost seemed to detract from his upright appearance rather than bolster it. No one ever paid him any attention, not even when he scrambled to meet their horrible deadlines. The man darted a frustrated look into the mirror. In fact, just yester—wait. The man jerked back to face the mirror. It couldn't be...

The man in the mirror, the man who was him and yet not him, was smiling. His reflection was smiling at him. The man's hand slowly crept up to his face, feeling the hard set jaw, the slight frown. His reflection was smiling.

All the man had time for was a step back before his reflection suddenly reached out and grabbed his wrist. Horrified, the man tried to shake his arm loose, but to no avail. Determinedly, his reflection tugged the man closer and closer. Meaningless protests spilled from the man's mouth, but the other either did not hear him or did not care. All too soon the man reached the mirror. He couldn't make a sound as he saw—and felt—himself pass through.

A warm breeze hit him.

He glanced around quickly at his surroundings before looking fearfully up at his captor. Expecting an evil clone, so popular in movies, he was surprised to see that his reflection no longer looked exactly like him. The black hair was longer and messier; gone were the immaculate clothes, and in their place, a T-shirt and jeans. However, the face was still the same. It was still smiling, too—a convincingly warm smile.

"What did you do?" the man demanded. "Who are you? Take me back! What did you do? Take me back right now!" To the man's amazement, his reflection just laughed gleefully.

"I can't believe it worked!" he grinned.

"What worked?" demanded the man.

"The mirror! You! I've been working on it for my whole life! I can't believe it!" The twin looked over the man. "You don't look exactly like me though, do you? Hmm."

"I could say the same," the man said defensively.

His look-a-like glanced up, surprised. "I guess you could. Ah! I'm being so rude. Of course you're confused. No don't leave yet!" He grabbed the man, who had been inching back towards the mirror. Now the man realized that the room they were in was not exactly like his bedroom either. Everything was slightly off, somehow... "I want to talk to you! Please, just listen—I'll explain."

"Don't touch me!" the man growled. He fought frantically to get away, panic setting in.

"Okay, okay! I'm not touching you!" His reflection backed away. "Just relax! I'll explain, really. I'm not going to hurt you." The man took a deep breath, and forced himself to calm down. This guy didn't look that tough. He'd just have to wait for the perfect time, catch him off guard.

"First off, I'm not your evil clone. Truly. This is probably" the twin laughed suddenly and corrected himself "actually, this is most definitely hard to believe, but I'm actually you—but in an alternative reality. This reality. My reality. I'm you, but also not." He cleared his throat. "I'm sorry if I scared you, but I'm an inventor. I invented this mirror, which allows the person looking into the mirror to get a hold of their other

self in the alternative reality. I was actually just testing it, and apparently it works.” He laughed again. “Pretty unbelievable right? But I’m really rather curious about how I am in your reality. First off, my name’s Leon. I presume yours is too?”

“Actually,” the man replied coldly, “it’s not.” There was a terse silence. Leon looked surprised, then thoughtful. “And I’m not telling it to you either, so if you don’t mind, take me back to my house, or country, or whatever, right now.”

“You mean your reality?” Leon corrected gently.

“Sure! My reality! My world! My universe! Whatever you want to believe,” the man spat out, frustrated. “Just take me back!”

Leon sighed and shook his head. “I can’t stop you. Just go back through the mirror.” He gestured to the mirror leaning against the wall, exactly where it was back in the man’s own room. The man took a deep breath and darted a suspicious glance at Leon. He started walking slowly towards the mirror, still keeping his eyes trained on Leon’s disappointed face.

As he approached the mirror, he eyed it doubtfully. It looked pretty solid. He stuck his hand out—and it went through, startling the man enough to jerk his arm back. Leon coughed politely. The man looked furiously at him again, and then returned his attention to the mirror. He cautiously stepped through, felt a sticky suspension, and then breathed a sigh of relief as he looked around and recognized his own room.

He turned back around to face the mirror, half expecting to see Leon behind him. But it was his own reflection in the mirror, looking sadly at him. A few seconds later it changed its expression until it was frowning, and it was once again just a simple mirror. The man frowned even more deeply.

It was impossible. Inconceivable. Ridiculous.

And yet...

Oh, what the heck the man thought. He stepped through the mirror confidently.



Leon looked up in surprise as the man strode darkly back out of the mirror. “You swear this is a reality alternative to my own? It’s not a trick?” Leon looked at him, speechless, and only managed a weak nod. “Fine. Then show me how it’s alternative.”

Still blinking away his shock, Leon said slowly, “Well, the proof is everywhere. Look around. Look outside. Everything should be almost like it is in your reality, but a bit different.”

The man walked over to the window and looked out. Sure enough, those were his neighbors. There was the woman pruning her roses—no wait, here they were lilacs. There was the shy old man, here eagerly playing with the street children. The man stepped away from the window to look at Leon. He saw the laughing crinkles on his face, the easy smile, the comfortable sandals. He saw himself, in an alternative reality.

He saw himself, happy for once in his life.

“Noel,” the man said slowly. As Leon began to smile, he added more clearly, “My name is Noel.”

MASTERPIECE

Jason! Look at my song!
My younger brother
Waves a scribbled sheet.
I frown, gnash my teeth,
And clench my fists.
You drew on my paper!
His smile wavers. I grab
Vincent's masterpiece, tear
It into tiny pieces. Scraps
Flutter to the ground.
Eyes welling, he confides,
It was a song about us.
I crash to shaky earth,
Fumble on hands and knees
To piece together his song.

—Jason Huang

Clarinet
—Frank Ma

THE LAST COOKIE

Warm and gooey from the oven
He knows he started out innocent,
Squeezed with love from a scoop.

His skin smoothed and patted
Before he birthed beneath a cozy 350°,
Surrounded by his fellow doughboys.

He never knew his lopsided curves
And lumpy chocolate chips
Meant a lifetime of watching
The spaces around him grow,
The buttery circles that taught him
He was something different.

As crumbs tumbled from him,
He knew his time was coming.
A buttery disposition can't last
Forever, he thinks. Too soon,
Moisture will creep into soft cusps
And—he shudders, I will be stale.

This last cookie wants to tell you
Beneath his crumbling curves
He has a heart of melted chocolate
And a soul of satin sugar.
But I want to tell you: too late,
This last cookie is mine.

—Kara Wang



Waiting
— Stacy Ku

Bachelor

by Alice Liu

In the last pew of the church,
Jim fidgeted between parents.
Lifting himself on small hands,
He struggled to behold what lay
Over the sea of combed toupees
And marveled at winking glitter
Twinkling on the blushing bride.

The organ trumpeted its song
Upward to trembling beams.
When the procession stopped,
A dull voice sighed and prayed
As the audience rustled in pews.

Jim tugged at his tight collar,
Noted red spreading on cheeks
From heat of six hundred people.
Women with bulky hats fanned,
Admired the pair, their passion,
Recollected more youthful days.

Men with gray brows recalled
Quick heartbeats at altars where
Each of them kissed his bride.

Soon, the whole crowd rose,
Stowed teary memories away;
But the bachelor of five years,
Yawned, gloomy over sitting
And listening to a dreary priest.

Jim crossed his arms, vowed
To attend weddings nevermore.

Thinker

by Frank Mao



London Intersection

by Audrey Hague



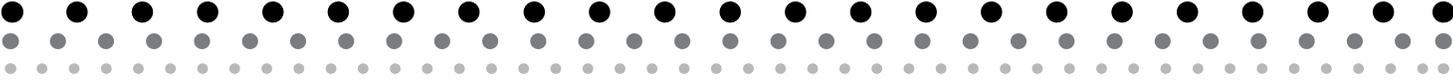
Lala

by Raphael Kung

I hate the way you always seem
So cheerful in the morning cold,
While I, a mortal born of flesh,
Can't help but freeze bitterly.
Yet seeing you, I smile as well,
And echo your shining face.

I love the way warmth
Flows through your hand,
Like cocoa melting marshmallows,
Thawing mine with just one grasp;
How when grey lords loom high above,
You speak to me, a wind chime melody,
That carries those clouds elsewhere.
Once before none dared approach,
People ignored my ashen husk,
Walking down emptying streets.
Before meeting you, I will admit,
I was broken, with patches all over.
Hair in jagged clumps, wrinkles
Growing over bags of skin; I stood
Slouched, unable to lift my head.
Your eyes saw the torn seams,
For a quilt, radiant beneath the dust.
You cringed at first, picked me up,
And cleansed the dirt piling
On my shoulders. Hold me close,
I flicker into past pictures no more,
As long as we can stay.





The Boy

by Adela Chang

The boy lay in the grass, eyes half-closed, enjoying the warmth of the sun upon his body. A squirrel chattered. Footsteps sounded nearby, followed by a low exchange of voices, then passed on, fading into the distance. The world lapsed into silence.

The boy lay where he was, one arm flung carelessly across the ground and the other arm cushioning his head. He could feel the rough grass poking up through his fingers and the sun heating his skin. *I should move*, he thought, but his fingers did not so much as twitch. He felt drowsy and thought about yawning, but did not yawn. Lying very still, he thought he heard a faint meow on the nonexistent wind.

A cat? he thought. He had always wanted a cat, but his mother would never let him. The grass beside him rustled. The boy listened, eyes closed. He imagined the cat venturing closer, staring curiously at him with large green eyes. He wanted to open his eyes to see if she was really there, but they seemed to be held fast with glue. Instead, he took his imagination further. In his mind's eye, he saw her stand undecided, tail-tip waving back and forth, for the longest time. Then he made her suddenly decide, and turn, light as a feather, to curl up by his side. She was so real, he could almost feel the rise and fall of the furry little body nestled beside him.

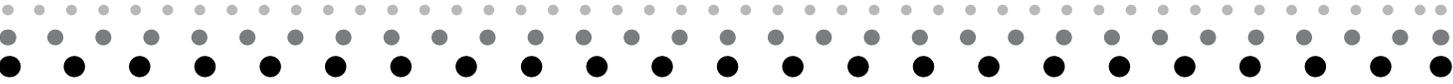
I want to pet her, he thought, but his hand remained stoically stagnant in the grass. The heat was beginning to burn his arm. He thought he could still feel it, the ghost of a little body beside him. He tried again, and his arm refused to move.

I want to pet her, he thought, but his hand remained stoically stagnant in the grass.

The boy gave up. It was better this way anyhow. When his hand touched empty air his fragile dream bubble would pop, and then he would lose even the phantom creature he had managed to capture. Lying as he had for the past twenty minutes in the grass, the boy's breathing deepened as he relaxed and slipped off into sleep.

He woke with a chill. The sun hung low on the horizon and most of the field lay in shadow. His eyes darted first to the small patch of grass just beside him. Nothing was there. He sighed. Wishful thinking, after all. Shaking out his rumpled clothes, he stood and stretched, then began heading towards home, remnants of warmth still clinging to his limbs.

He did not notice the two stray strands of gray fur that fluttered from his shirt, nor did he notice the slight dent in the grass in a space he had perceived as empty.





Transcend
by Vickie Huang

The Rhino's *Ballet*

by Jason Huang
We look at frightened ladybugs,
Fallen trees, and trampled flowers
And think, *What a tragedy!*
But the rhinoceros asks,
With a tear in his giant eye,
Is it so wrong for me to dance?

At Arlington Cemetery *by Sarah Tang*



When the Bees and Leaves Return *by Adeeti Aggarwal*

The last bee hovers around a wilting sunflower
As the last leaf turns tawny on the oak.
Rays of honey spill through my window
As I sift through my closet wondering
What to take with me. I reach to the top shelf
And pick a dress. Kids size 4 reads the label
Smudged from too many hot cycles as my fingers
Glide over tattered ruffles at the neckline
And grass stains on the side from catching ladybugs
Under summer's simpler sun. I press my dress
Against my body, flash to curtseying at a lawn party
Where I danced on my father's shoes. I sigh,
Then fold the dress to give to the Salvation Army,
Perhaps to fit someone when the bees and leaves return.

Pretty Please? *by Melody Zhang*



by Flora Chang

Seedling near my window, you stand
Only inches high and olive cloaked,
Yet gravity cannot stop your growth.

From a pale bulb, beige roots grew
While stems stretched through soil.
Now, your determined leaves reach
With open fingers towards sunlight.

My little plant, how you inspire me!
As shoots we will mature together,
For our blossoms have yet to sprout.

This poem was inspired by Robert Frost's TREE AT MY WINDOW.

Beqjinninos





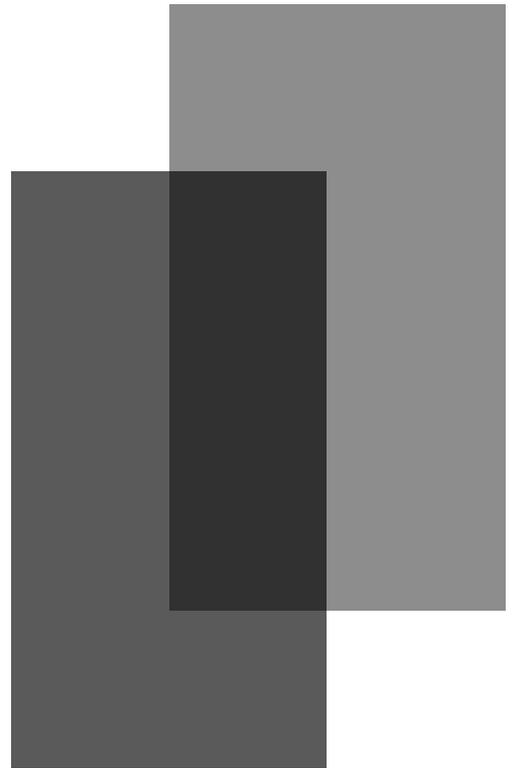
The Man with Wings Frank Mao

CAGED by Raven Sisco

If I could spread my wings
And no longer stand a statue,
I would escape from Earth
To feel the sky rustle feathers.

If I could spread my wings,
I would fly to softening sun,
Remember fellow sculptures
Frozen to binding ground.

If I could spread my wings,
I would swirl into daylight,
Listen to the sighing breeze,
Soar away and never land.



reminiscences

Jesse Gipe

The edge of the music building rests
Quiet in the absence of several incongruent rehearsals.
Against the whisper of nesting birds
And the tap of my feet
I hear a ghost;
The frantic phantom echo of a metronome gone crazy at three hundred beats per minute.
It's just the pool filter,
But it sounds like marching season.
So close that one can feel
Well,
Anything.



time

Carolyn Chen

SOUNDINGS

