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Bruce Meyer

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Roshanak M. Heravi

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Hannah Beveridge

Acta Victoriana

Spring 2018

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Acta Victoriana, est. 1878, is the literary journal of Victoria College in the University of Toronto. It is produced and published on the traditional lands of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishnaabe and the Wendat, as well as other Nations that have been subject to historical erasure. As members of the literary community on campus, we recognize the need to be part of the collective conversation required for the ongoing process of decolonization and reconciliation.



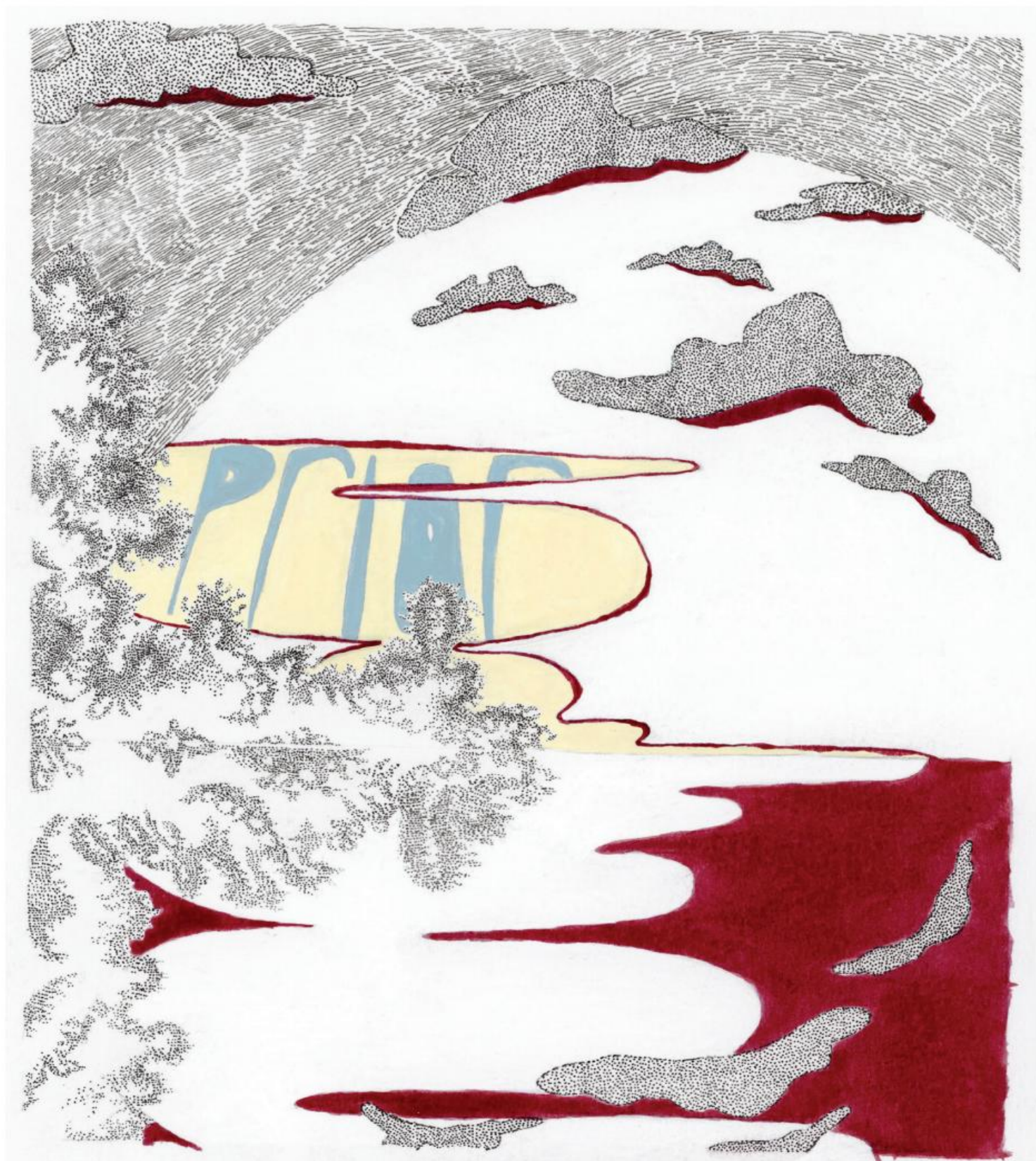
Letters from the Editors

The texts in this collection dwell in the peculiar temporality of spring. After so much snow, what comes now - the possibility of summer - is an inconceivable liberation. Some of the poems revel in this radical newness. Bruce Meyer captures the ethics of spring, tending to a sunlight because “it is new/and need[s] greeting.” Amelia Does depicts the moment after a heavy rainfall when the world is again undiscovered and open to transcendental possibilities, the magically real. Others look back to the winter which still hardens the earth. Antonia Alksnis turns the first line of Plato’s Republic into a meditation on marginalization in the text of philosophy. Nisarg Patel, in the guise of Urdu poet Ghalib, forgets the name of flower. Together, these texts present the antinomy of a spring moment: the lingering winter, inescapable and out of reach, and the impending summer, impossible and already here.

Carl Christian Abrahamsen

In this age of pragmatism, we are expected to comport ourselves in terms of a particular kind of efficacious truth, i.e., intentions and actions are only worthwhile if they yield sensible outcomes. The prevalence of this utilitarian mentality is nothing new—a certain kind of practical poetics, if you will, reigns. So it is not strange that many of us are compelled to take a well-reasoned turn towards surety—scrambling to get by, we craft strictly outlined trajectories firmly rooted in what is and what should be. Though the collective banner of reason is being wielded more aggressively than ever, the hazier of us, the less firm-footed, must find some other recourse. The works in this volume are often sad, sometimes surreal, and frequently playful, and yet the one commonality amongst them is that they reach beyond mere fact as the bearer of meaning. I hope that these works will inspire you, Reader, as they have inspired me, to not fixate on what is immovably true, but to find your own patterns of order—whether in the new sunlight, in the unyielding spring rain, or even in something not plainly in view.

Eleanor Lazarova



like, before this one by Nikki Watson

Sub Zero

Bruce Meyer

I spent the night
pulling three blankets
around my body
and trying to keep

a dream of sunrise
alive inside me
because it was new
and needed greeting;

and I tried to ask it
why it wanted
to arrive on a day
where the worst things

are glorified by skies
where the stars shine
no matter how frigid
and I had my answer.



Marriage

Anna Stabb

is forty years of acrid white-out blotches
bleaching fountain ink pen. and a girl

listening through a screen door
quivering with mayflies; watching

her mother search for the words that will
undo what was foreseen by her mother

and her mother's mother. four generations
of women lingering on Marauder Crescent,

hoping one day their goose pimpled arms
will be worth the amber insides of a bottle.

lifetimes wasted serving Alberta whiskey
watered down with Brita filtered ice

and witnessing pale stubble-d skin
boil over like a rusted kettle of blood.

inciting closed fists or open palms that
draw patterns of the galaxy on shared flesh.

too many years of using journals as
a tourniquet for shattered momentum.

A marriage/mirage. Gifted ink creating
delicate compositions/calligraphic poetry.

but dust engulfs their words piled on shelves
and ink on torn pages turns into vapour.

New Market in August

Sabrina Islam

Bur-flowers force their way out of the tough leaves. Their whole existence intensely contrasting the impossible rain. They scatter on the broken pavements, waiting to be trampled over. We are in New Market, gliding past people, allowing ourselves to be periodically carried by the crowd. We align our bodies and set sail with the waves. Passing by rushing ladies as they pick up anything their eyes catch. Turning the objects in their hands, the excitement in their dark eyes quickly replaced with disdain, and just as fast, they leave the object where they found it with a “hmm.” My eyes are on the vendor standing behind the cart, already moving on to the next customer who reaches her hand just as enthusiastically as did the woman before her. Time is as limited as space. This place must feel cold at night. The gates pulled down. The stores locked away. The vendors walking or taking the bus home. Too late, their children asleep. And again, too early for them to meet in the morning. Gone again to the bustling stands, bantering with the vendor standing next to his cart. Compatriots. He knows more about this man than he would ever know of his own children. He will fight with him for a customer. The customer confused, but relatively sure she needs these bangles, will ultimately buy the pair. Now, he shares the money with the vendor in the next stand. There are no expectations. There is nowhere else to go. There is just this life, vibrantly alive. Here, the week ahead is all one can care for, really. The mothers throwing buckets of water on the children in the community shower before leaving for work. The children going off to school, hopping on the school vans, the doors locked behind them. Their grandparents living outside Dhaka, like my aunts, waiting for them to visit this year, and if not, the next. And if not, the next. Woven in the days, the seasons steadily pass.



Frog Man

Amelia Does

After it rained he sat on the sofa and looked out the window.
It started to rain again.

When he opened his mouth there was a frog sitting on his tongue.



Early Spring by Aya Danzig



Coyote Moon

Jacqueline Larkin

“How about this one?”

My brother, Rick, points to a lone slot machine nestled between the ATM and coffee station.

“I have a good feeling about this one.” He nods approvingly and makes his way toward the neon-lit monstrosity, glowing indigo blue. The image of a luminescent coyote fills the screen, a full moon rising behind it.

A sense of relief washes over me. I was tired from the half hour spent casing the floor of the prairie casino, searching for Rick’s elusive “lucky” machine. My feet, already sore from a full day of waiting tables, had begun to ache.

Rick slips in a twenty and the machine flickers to life. I watch as he selects a line sequence. Then another. And another. Oscillating between three lines or five; five lines or seven. I’m tempted to tell him it doesn’t matter much—he’s strategizing moves in a game based on chance. A game where tactics are as much an illusion as the machine’s faux-gold exterior. A more favorable approach would be to rub and tap the machine just so, or to say a short prayer to the gods of luck and superstition, imploring them for a streak of good fortune.

Instead, I hold my tongue. It’s his birthday after all; my younger brother’s one request as a newly legal adult was to visit the local casino and place a few bets. Win big, maybe. Rick motions to the empty chair alongside him and I take a seat. The machine he’s playing is a fully automated, twenty-first century edition. Absent of slots, there are instead a series of illuminated buttons displaying different line options. A new-age monstrosity stripped of the charm and nostalgia of its predecessor—those archaic behemoths with their ball-tipped levers and plastic cups brimming with coins.

Somewhere along the way, the casino culture had lost its sheen; the tacky and enticing patina that drew me to movies like *Casino* and *Good Fellas*—my dad’s favorite films. I had envisioned dry martinis served by busty waitresses in fishnets and Joe Pesci lookalikes casing the floor, while a jazz singer crooned sweet melodies before a ruby-colored curtain. Instead, there are waxen-faced gamblers nursing tall boys and bar staff who look like they

haven't slept in days. The space stinks of stale smoke; the stained burgundy carpet is tacky beneath our feet.

Glancing around, I notice the glassy-eyed stares of gamblers fixed on the spinning images of neon-lit sphinxes and plump cherries. Their fingers poised on the "bet" button, ready to administer the next hit. Perhaps charm didn't matter, so long as the promised rush remained the same.

Rick taps a sequence of buttons and the animated coyotes are set in motion. An intricate network of lines emerges and Rick wins a whopping \$3.50. I watch a few rounds, trying to make sense of it all, but the motion makes me dizzy and I turn away.

"Hey Em, can you grab me a coffee?" Rick asks his eyes locked on the rolling imagery. I pour two cups of house blend from the no-frills coffee station, which is absent of Coffee Mate. Returning to our seats, I rest Rick's coffee in the machine's cup holder.

"Black OK?"

He nods.

There was an accident on the Trans-Canada Highway, on the outskirts of Regina. It happened in late spring, when conditions were clear. Our father, aged fifty-two, veered off the road and flipped his car into a ditch. He died on impact. The police report stated he'd been speeding, about fifty kilometers above the posted limit. A conclusion drawn from the tire marks examined at the scene of the accident. It seemed there was an awful lot one could determine from tire marks—their tread and trajectory—a revealing sequence of lines.

Months later, I drove to the scene of the accident—the place where he died. I pulled onto the highway's shoulder and stood for a long while, examining the lines, only slightly faded, that veered sharply to one side before disappearing into the ditch. I studied their appearance, trying to interpret some meaning, hoping they might hold answers still. Vehicles sped by, some slowing, others honking, no doubt with irritation and surprise at the strange woman standing at the roadside, staring fixedly into the center

lane. But the marks revealed little else apart from the glaringly obvious—a loss of control. In the end, I wondered whether the details really mattered, when knowing them or not, the outcome remained the same.

I remember the calls. The initial outpouring of support from friends, co-workers, relatives from out east—peripheral figures I barely knew. They called, checked in, cast their concerned tones across the phone line like inquiring bait: an invitation to meet for coffee, an offer to stop in with groceries. And the casseroles. Dozens of them. An unending assortment of casseroles: tuna, chicken, potato gratin, macaroni coated in a medley of cheese—which we stored in our deep freeze. For months we ate casserole, more so for sustenance than to appease any real appetite. To this day, the memory of chicken and broccoli with rice nearly makes me retch.

For the most part, I dodged such kindnesses. Dreading the sympathetic and searching expressions that probed the tender places I wasn't ready to touch upon. I resented their expressions—the same pitying glances I grew up with, but never fully knew how to deflect. The looks of people who presumed to know the full story when in fact they knew a mere fraction of it. The CliffsNotes version. An abstract that skimmed the surface of my family's history.

A dead mother.

An alcoholic father.

Two kids, a brother and sister, with little hope of doing any better in life.

I wanted to face those outsiders with the defiant stance that it hadn't been all bad. There had been moments—happy refrains when we went on road trips and camped in the prairie hills, which bordered Buffalo Pound Lake—a body of tepid water spanning thirty kilometers in length. Run off from the adjacent banks percolated in the summer heat until the water thickened to an unnatural opacity, so that swimmers emerged with a distinct green film coating their skin.

There was a summer road trip when we drove out to the Badlands near Drumheller, Alberta, before continuing on our way to Calgary. We went tubing down the Bow River, a spine of water extending through city limits, and stayed with a friend of our dad from high school—a man named Gary. Gary had long, stringy hair and a casual air about him. As though he could give or take the life he led. He owned a 1947 Chevy, which he had painstakingly restored and talked about endlessly during our stay. Temperatures that week soared to record-breaking highs, and it being too

hot to play outside, my brother and I took refuge in Gary's unfinished basement, which functioned as a rec room — furnished with a threadbare sofa, old movie posters, and a television mounted on an overturned milk crate. There was a pool table set in the far corner and a dartboard, which hung on the far wall, the cement pockmarked from stray darts.

During a heat wave in mid-August, we watched National Lampoon's *Christmas Vacation* on VHS—my brother's favorite movie. The picture was garbled with big wormy lines that wriggled across the screen, distorting Chevy Chase's features. But having watched the movie a hundred times before, I simply reenacted our favorite parts, conjuring scenes of humor and wit with memorized ease. I remember my brother, eight years old, rolling around on the floor with laughter, as I played the role of Cousin Eddie, pumping trailer waste into a sewer.

Laughs always came easily when the jokes were scripted. When I had Chevy Chase to help lead me to the punch line.

The drive home from Calgary had been my favorite. As we approached Medicine Hat, Rick caught a glimpse of the Saamis Tepee, rising two hundred feet high in the distance. He pleaded to stop and take a look, and my dad, in a rare concession, pulled over, even agreeing to pose for a picture beneath the structure's steel heights. I have the photo, framed upon my mantel, the image grainy. My brother smiled brightly, wearing a faded Led Zeppelin T-shirt; a highly coveted Goodwill find he had discovered while in Calgary.

Dad stood just behind, his broad shoulders framing my brother's far narrower ones. Hands in his pockets, his expression notably more subdued and set within the wide angles of his face. Angles, which over time would sharpen as his fleshy, more wholesome parts retreated from the dark excesses of addiction.

Skimming past acres of prairie field as the summer light faded, we drove in silence. Open space unfurled for miles around, punctuated by the distant forms of clapboard houses and shadowy herds of cattle. Our father was the first to break the silence. He told a story from when he was eight years old; he and his cousins had decided to hike into the prairie hills to camp overnight.

As darkness fell, the coyotes began to howl, and too afraid to sleep, they had decided to pack it in. Having forgotten a flashlight, they stumbled through the dark, catching glimpses of the trail as the moonlight shifted in and out from behind the clouds, before parting entirely, to reveal a crescent moon in a sea of shimmering stars. "Up until that moment, I thought for

sure we were dog meat.” Dad winked into the rearview mirror at us, wedged in the backseat between our bags. The flats of homebrewed beer Gary had stocked our station wagon with, stowed safely on the front passenger seat. The car trunk teeming with tools from dad’s primary occupation, doing odd jobs around town, fixing people’s toilets and clearing rain gutters for beer money. We leaned over the centre console, eager for the rare opportunity to hear our father impart more than a few words.

After dad died, I sheltered us from others. Life details were provided only when necessary, as a formality to teachers and counselors during scheduled meetings where we discussed Rick’s progress in school. Although he had been stripped of both parents before his twelfth birthday, Rick, always a diligent and promising student, continued to thrive.

“He seems to be adjusting quite well. He’s excelling in all his classes. He’s well liked amongst his classmates.”

“How?!” I wondered, as I retreated further inward.

I spent the first few months after Dad’s death in my room, barely leaving bed as I wrestled my depression into submission. Anxious for Rick when I could barely care for myself. I kept waiting for him to act out, to devolve into a problematic youth. Instead my brother deviated from bad behavior. Instead, he flourished. Still, I waited for the similarities to emerge. The sordid ones I had become accustomed to mediating. That I had become reliant on making right. But beyond possessing the same dark eyes and angled features, which broadened in his adolescence until he resembled our father entirely, he remained unfalteringly his “own.” Gradually, over time, we made room for a future less burdened by our past. However, on nights when he couldn’t sleep, my brother would ask to hear the story of when our dad was guided home by a crescent moon, chained to the stars.

I watched my brother slip another twenty into the machine. It spurred to life, the coyote’s lithe form illuminating once more. Lines connecting, disappearing, and reemerging with renewed significance. Their meaning unclear but concrete all the same — a random pattern, yet their relationship still real and fully intact, filled with hidden meaning and infinite possibilities.



Lilith by Ya'ara Eshet



Jay Walker

Lily Wang

White before impact
Headlights complete in sight
and silence
Still as snow as driftwood
Middling the sea/street, at the
Center of gravity/street, waiting
for drag:dr:ra:a:g

--->>> heart heart heart >>

Drag (with you)
(My heart)

Tunnel In

John Oughton

The dream left me with a directive—
explore tunnels until I reach an end.

First passage to birth tight, rhythmic contractions
pain for mother and passenger.

Leapfrogged to the final sensation of body,
narrowing shaft of light as blood pools everywhere

but in my ever-busy brain. The telescope,
tube of light, grounded at its ends by warped glass

beckoning stars closer, an enemy's face trapped
in extremis, scanning for the way out.

Front car of the subway reveals
how we fall sideways along the city.

Dante, lost in the forest of middle age, might
welcome an aperture at his feet, clearly leading

somewhere. And beneath the earth's top layer,
hurry blind moles we never see, officers,

escaping prisoners, secret watercourses,
rivers of optic cable and shit. Dank smell of earth.

It's like this – you walk through the stony cylinder,
whistling a little for comfort, and never know

when the train's louder melody overrides,
you with nowhere to go.



Ice Age

John Oughton

For *February*, acrylic on canvas, by Wenda Watt

Blue of the long vowel
immoveable
black of rock scraped
by glacier's implacable
blade.

That balance
between rock-solid and
solving into sand
how to walk
roots down into the fissures,

Unseen under the ermine mantle
sliding down from the north
to bleach all colour
into blanc / white

Hear the note of rock
one long cold note
stone, stone, despite
the tonal slide
icing over earth



It shattered and it poured by Laura Demers



Untitled, 2016 by Michelle Homonylo

▼

She mosquito



The Minotaur

Stephen Brown

The knife sharpening man is the Minotaur, a portmanteau. He rides a converted Pawnshop tenspeed into Centro on Saturday's, with a wet stone grinding wheel
And a dollarstore kazoo, kickstanding his kit on the sidewalk beside the building
Even if you don't see it as such, you'll have to see it the same way at some point
Mimicing ventriloquists at sideshows at stop lights, the immigrant is the inmate
Helping us do what we can't do ourselves, about a copious amount of fall color
The trees and the smell of trees, and so I took my one good kitchen knife downstairs
And sat downstairs outside in the sun, as women in housedresses and the Taqueros
Also stood outside in line in the sun and said nothing, and no one knew of a superlative
For that, which is the point of a perspectograph, if there's a point to perspectographs
It was the trees and the smell of trees, within a tight skin of air and a mandolin kazoo
Even if you don't see it as such, you'll have to see it the same way at some point
When the I-with breaks with the with, the series of scenes you see are symptoms
Social systems, where the knife sharpening man is the Minotaur, winking at you

From behind a pair of dollarstore sunglasses



You've been, puppeteer'd, the university you, counting out balloon condoms
Of coke among cacao husks in market sacks, from behind the farmer's market
At a table in the sun tying the latex tight, connecting dots into continuous lines
The scam is to send a group of disadvantaged women grafted with coke pellets
And one who's had a colostomy, the scar almost a sickle of C-section, and hope
At least one container goes undetected, is a lesser known form of monadology
When the envoy becomes the enemy, and is thus indissociable from the enemy
The clouds take on a taketian texture, tending to fracture instead of fold or blob
And there is no body, no ribs, skulls, pelvis's, irritations, but shells of vessels
Digital solitudes, gaps in linguistics, as a gringo cracker in the market calls out
Cold cuts to a bloodied apron with tits, what's time sensitive makes the timeless
Seem untimely, you think, what a lot of lovely, kicking a Coca-Cola red can white
(When the I-with breaks with the with, the series of scenes you see are symptoms)
Walking back to the station, you buy a ticket to a place you can't pronounce

From behind a pair of dollarstore sunglasses



Apoplectic Cardinals Harvesting Tomatoes on the Shore of the Red Sea

Margaryta Golovchenko

Someone has to do the dirty work
to ensure the daily standard for pristine plates
and a sated imagination.

Nature's neck on the cutting block, the server
and the served. The implication
is white hands, or a bunch of beautifully-strung
nonsense.

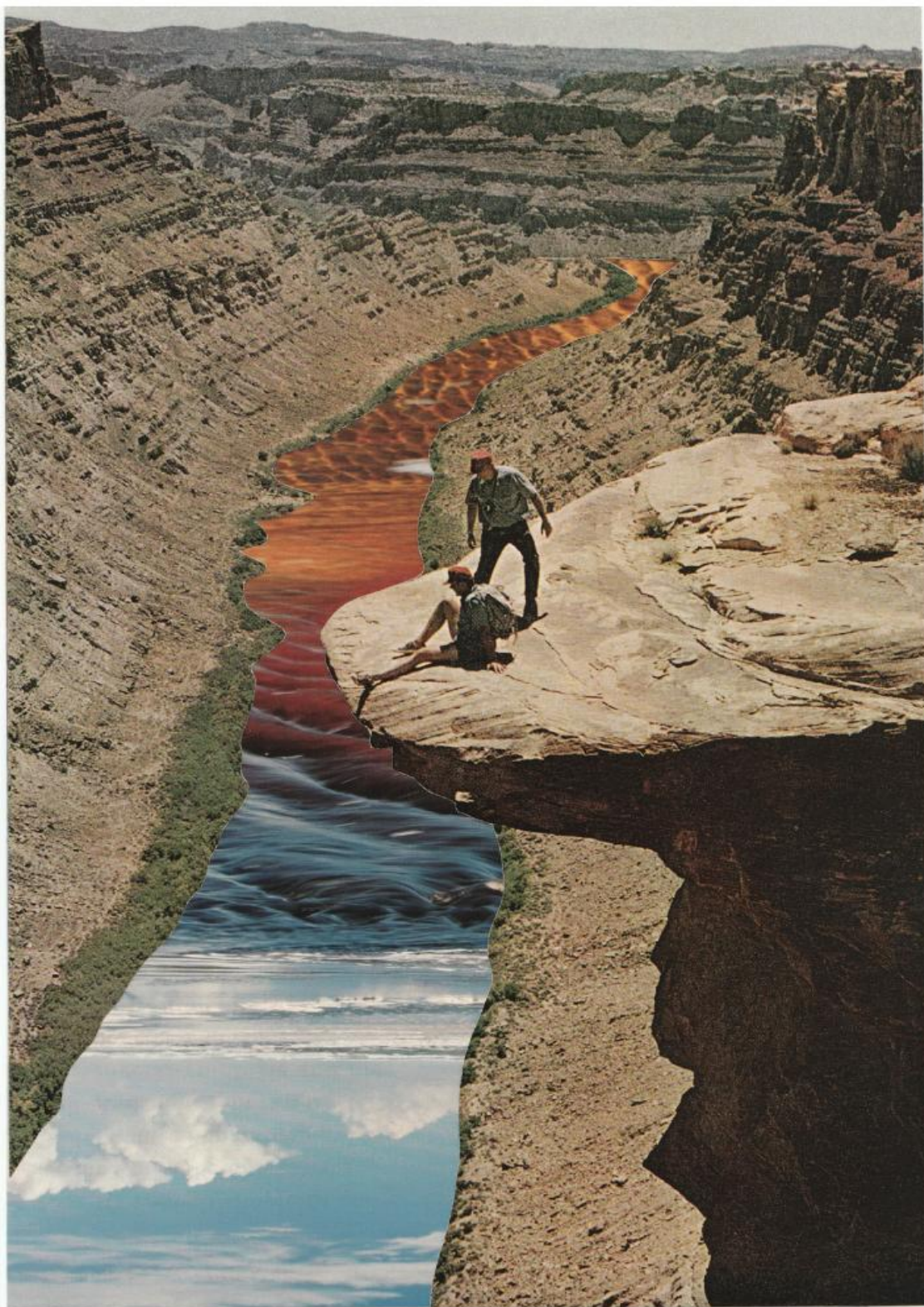
Change the red to black.
A question remains: how does one see anything
amid uniformity?

(To avoid insult, use the term "masses"
for added mass.)

Change paint to pencil crayon to
human being. If medium can be categorized. Watch change
change consequence, watch it rise like the tide.

This is the market economy for the fantastical. This
is but another work of art, which in turn
is an extension of a body part
that has been purposefully mistuned.

It is not the result of an aurora borealis effect.



low tide by Lanh Hrafn



Cellar Baby Eulogy

Cody Caetano

fruit fly quidditch
as you chafe my belly hair
your green mouth lip-chaps my chipped-lips
I rip the covers off your stomach
and empty it in mine
a fuzz, foxy juice
gifting my headache sunshine
but after I suck it up
and erection shifts to play
you are a fixture on the fireplace
left until cleaning day

so now you sit in the bin
next to pizza box and gin
forevermore, I love you
my discount Niagara wine

Republic

Antonia Alksnis

I went down to the Piraeus – and that's where they stopped me.

You're not allowed here, they said. The Piraeus is closed.

He gave an Alcibiades smile, leaping torchlight and cold white moon bleeding charm on his closed, locked face. The other one stayed silent, lips sepulchre-tight, and if they hadn't been the rocks would have come tumbling out on my winter-white feet, bare on the road in the chill of nighttime, tumbling out tearing his lips, tumbling words that might actually have convinced me.

The Piraeus was closed. The murmurs, the others in the dark, casual dissent forgotten before it left mouths. The torches out. The moon in. He touched my shoulder, already turning. Me, in. Him, in. Let's go, he said, the Piraeus is closed. That's where they stopped me. He turned back around. The Piraeus is closed, he said.

At this point I was getting sick of repetition. I might have sat in a marble atrium and shouted at the gleaming stone and learned as much as I had been learning. So the Piraeus was closed. The marble atrium was empty, columns tall, tiles winter-white and veined – my feet invisible, if there had been no shadow to mark their position.

The rocks tumbled out on the echoing floor and they used them to build the columns. That much I knew. I didn't know when the columns would come down. That was part of the reason I wanted to go down to the Piraeus.



Violets and ivy crowning him, archetypal smile in place, he arrived at the atrium late and reeking of – violets. He didn't give a – he didn't mind that the Piraeus was closed; he might have sailed the fleet right by if he wanted, but he didn't give a – violet. He gleamed. He might have shouted at the stone for hours and basked in the rich quality of the sound they threw back, the sound of his voice reflected in marble, and thought he was learning. He didn't give a – he didn't care about the columns.

They were supposed to be made of marble, but they were rocks and stolen pebbles and I might have known it if the Piraeus was open. Instead I stood there, slack-jawed and mute, feet going numb, watching the columns and blushing for shame and horror.

He had rocks in his mouth; he didn't. They came out anyway. The columns cracked, and the Piraeus was closed.

You're not allowed here, they said.

I went down to the Piraeus and I lay prostrate on the docks and by the time they found me, the columns were already falling.





Rape of Nanking by Roshanak M. Heravi



Frank

Carolyn Chung

I'm riding my bike up and down Frank's street so the sadness can't hurt me. It's three-thirty-five in the morning, the cold air making a tight band around my forehead, and every time I round the block my flesh feels looser around my bones.

Somehow the only thing I can think about is the astronauts I saw die on TV when I was a kid. There was something wrong with the air inside the rocket ship, so all the astronauts caught rabies and elbowed each other's ribs in slow motion, or that's how I remember it. They were all naked and sweating, and they had skin marbled with grey. One of the astronauts, his face knotted like a dark head of cauliflower, opened the exit hatch with slow white palms and then all the astronauts' lungs burst like overfilled tires.

I breathe it in all fine. Frank's voice, his teeth, his glasses. His sister. Her short hair and white toenails, what it felt like to corkscrew my hands into her dress that night. That feeling inside me, like accordions of light folding and unfolding. The way they their house smells like lilac and sleepy hillsides, how whenever I walked in the door I could feel summertime on my teeth.

And then I breathe out—burst lungs blowing air bubbles into my blood, blood that'll soon freeze. And the darkness and the sadness going on forever, like Frank knew it would.

I just wish he hadn't done something about it.

It's snowing now, and Frank's mom is standing on their lawn. I stop my bike in the middle of the street and ration my breath into little clouds. She's in a parka and fleece pajama pants, ungloved hands at her sides. The porch light is on behind her and the screen door is open, but the lights inside the house are still off. All around us is powdered darkness. More than anything I wish it would bury us.

And then there's this moment where Frank's mom is staring at me, and I'm staring at Frank's mom, and we're both just staring down into that abyss we both know, and I can feel the sky on the back of my neck, feel how old it suddenly is—and I know just how alone we all are. Then the moment's over and she takes a step toward me, into all that shadow, and I bike home as fast as I can because it's all I can fucking do.

Bananas

Peter Jickling

Bananas have become a staple.
They're tasty, hassle-free and healthy,
I'm told.

I like them green-tinged –
texture meaty.
But they're fine yellow and brown –
texture ignorable.

There's a peel on my desk,
my third today.

The compost is full.



From, The Unwritten Poems of Ghalib

Nisarg Patel

What can one write
 When the days nod
From afar
 And the name of flower
I saw just yesterday
 Slides from my memory

And is lost.



Cliff Jumping by Hannah Beveridge



Biographies

Antonia Alksnis is a third-year student at Victoria College. She is a philosophy major, with minors in political science and classical civilization.

Hannah Beveridge is a sixteen year old artist living in Toronto, Ontario. She is currently in grade 11 and attends Etobicoke School of the Arts.

Stephen Brown is a Canadian Poet living in Mexico City. His poems have recently appeared in *Canadian Literature*, *The Indiana Review*, *Geist*, *Vallum*, *Prism*, *Exile Literary Quarterly* and are forthcoming in *Hotel Amerika* and *Sugar House Review*. He teaches in the modern languages and cultural management program at Universidad Anahuac in Mexico City.

Cody Caetano is a Pinaymootang First Nation and Portuguese writer whose work has appeared and placed in *PRISM International*, *a.side*, *Hart House Review*, and *Mindwaves*. He is currently enrolled in the MA in Creative Writing at the University of Toronto.

Carolyn Chung lives and writes in Toronto.

Aya Danzig is an artist based out of Toronto, Ontario. Her work spans a variety of mediums: photography, collage, illustration, print making and writing to name a few. Within the coming year, she hopes to complete her first book, an anthology of illustrated text and social media conversations. Aya is extremely grateful to have her work in this issue of *Acta Victoriana*.

Laura Demers is a visual artist who currently lives and works in Toronto, Canada. She received her B.F.A. from the University of Ottawa in 2015, and completed an M.A. in Art History and Theory at the University of Toronto in 2017. Despite her background in painting, her current practice and interests manifest themselves in writing, drawing, print, and digital media.



Amelia Does is a writer whose work has appeared in Cineforum Italia, Incite Journal of Experimental Media and Synoptique. She is the author of two chapbooks (*The Yellow Piano*, *Baby Eat Violin*), a biography (*Do Not Look Away: The Life of Arthur Lipsett*), an upcoming novella (*The Coming of Jarbina*), and a children's book (*The Walking Tree and Other Stories*).

Ya'ara Eshet was born in Israel. Studied at the Bezalel, Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem. Illustrated for daily newspapers, magazines and literary publications, as well as over thirty children, youth, and adult books. She has worked with advertising agencies and design studios on various projects. Her work has also been featured in numerous exhibitions in museums and galleries, and art fairs in Israel and Canada. Eshet has lived in Toronto since 2003 with her family and a variable number of cats.

Emmy Fu is a third-year student at the University of Toronto and an editor of the *Trinity Review*.

Margaryta Golovchenko is an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, and serves as editor for *The Spectatorial*. Her work has most recently appeared in *The Trinity Review*, *The Brasilia Review*, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry*, *Contemporary Verse 2*, and *Figroot Press*, among others. She is the author of the poetry chapbooks 'Miso Mermaid' (*words(on)pages press*, 2016) and 'Pastries and Other Things History Has Tried to Kill Us With' (*dancing girl press*, 2017). She is convinced she used to be a hedgehog in her past life.

Lanh Hrafn is a multimedia artist from London, Ontario. Their work focuses on how cultures have preserved information, the regulation or censorship of that knowledge when released to the public, and how these practices will continue to evolve into the future. They live with their partner Rin and Norwegian forest cat Danté.



Roshanak M. Heravi is an emerging artist from OCAD University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting. Her current body of work is a mixture of abstraction and figural painting, which initially began from collaging and juxtaposing old family photographs along with impressions and observations taken from the works of her favourite modern and contemporary artists. As a growing artist and painter, she is keen on fulfilling herself through the process of painting, rather than the end result.

Michelle Homonylo is an artist currently living and working in Toronto. She is a recent graduate at the Ontario College of Art.

Sabrina Islam is from Dhaka, Bangladesh. She spent her early childhood in New York, Connecticut and Florida. She teaches college writing at the University of Maryland and American University and holds an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Maryland. She has three short-shorts appearing in the Fall 2018 issue of *the minnesota review*. Her writing engages with return, lost love, and family relationships.

Peter Jickling is a poet, playwright, and journalist from Whitehorse, Yukon. His play, *Syphilis: A Love Story* premiered in 2011 and subsequently toured western Canada, winning Best Comedy at the 2013 Victoria Fringe Festival. His first poetry collection is forthcoming from Guernica Editions in 2019.

Jacqueline Larkin currently resides in Calgary, Alberta, where she works as a part-time writer and a full-time administrative professional in provincial health care. She attended the University of Calgary, where she graduated with a Degree in Communications and Culture. She is currently pursuing a Certificate in Professional Writing, also from the University of Calgary. She enjoys composing short fiction and nonfiction and has been running her writing blog, *Undertones*, since July 2017. Her work will be featured in forthcoming issues of *The Maple Tree Literary Supplement* and *Dote Magazine*.

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Bruce Meyer is the professor for the fourth year poetry composition course at Victoria College and author of more than sixty books. His most recent book is *A Feast of Brief Hopes* (short stories, Guernica Editions 2018). The poetry books *McLuhan's Canary* (Guernica Editions, January 2019) and *Selected Poems* (Black Moss Press, October, 2018) are forthcoming.

John Oughton recently retired as Professor of Learning and Teaching at Centennial College. His work has appeared in many periodicals and anthologies. He is the author of five poetry books, most recently *Time Slip* (Guernica Editions) and a mystery novel, *Death by Triangulation*. John is also a photographer and guitar player.

Nisarg Patel is in his third year, majoring in English literature at U of T. "There is no respite, except in literature," he tells himself everyday, and later doubts his own grand statements.

Anna Stabb is a second-year English and Anthropology student at the University of Toronto.

Lily Wang is on the train to Toronto, dreaming a dream to write.

Nikki Watson is interested in pulling from late nineteenth and early twentieth century style illustration and reworking these techniques with a focus on organic imagery and inspiration from the current artist she admires. She hopes to centralize the process of making work as a feature just as important as the product.

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