

# estuary

acadia's creative arts magazine



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Spring 2018

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Have a submission? *estuary* accepts submissions of anything and everything that falls under the realm of creative that can be published in print, and future submissions can be sent to [estuary@acadiau.ca](mailto:estuary@acadiau.ca)

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**estuary creative arts magazine**

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# poetry



My love, you brought me  
wildflowers  
in brilliant, blinding hues.  
Lupins, a local treat.  
Blue Forget-Me-Nots to sit  
pretty in a vase but  
rootless, die, dry.  
And crimson poppies.  
How I loved the red  
living colour you  
ripped, pillaged the Earth,  
for me!  
But you knew.  
And I found out.  
My dear, those are not  
wildflowers.  
They were flags.  
A thousand reds, waving.  
Willing me to look past  
your meadow to the cliff  
just below.  
-Wildflower

Robyn Clifford



## Nova Scotian Girl



Colin Mitchell

I see fathers and daughters together  
and I stare because that kind of love  
is a foreign language that even my  
mother tongue cannot translate  
-Foreign

Robyn Clifford

## Warriors Rallying Cry

we convince ourselves that we are alone  
the future is clear  
but the past makes it impossible to  
recognize our present  
let alone see five feet ahead

and still, we take baby steps in a  
direction we didn't know existed  
worrying ourselves raw  
over people who stumble over  
our names; unfamiliar in mouths

they don't know  
the war we wage against our own minds  
thoughts become missiles  
memories are hand grenades  
splintering into shrapnel

everyday a battle  
one we aren't sure we can face  
but we keep trying  
for no other reason  
but to prove them wrong

stare up at the avalanche  
right before the fall  
scream into nothingness  
pray for something or someone  
for anything that isn't this  
because at least the scream  
means there is still room  
for hope to grow

Elijah D

Dark Water

Drifting through the dark water  
My pale skin turns grey as it floats beneath the  
opaque liquid  
I am suspended, weightless,  
    in your arms  
We are submerged into the black water  
The surface is completely still, as are we  
There is no sound, only darkness  
Consumed, we are formless

Tessa Leonard

## Tweet Poems

*Poems written in 140 characters or less*

-

I wonder if the sea has adhd

it's always

overlapping

overlapping

overlapping

simultaneous crescendos

foam like thoughts

erupting

-

the boat rocks gently

on the waves

you just have to remember

remember

what's holding you up

is history

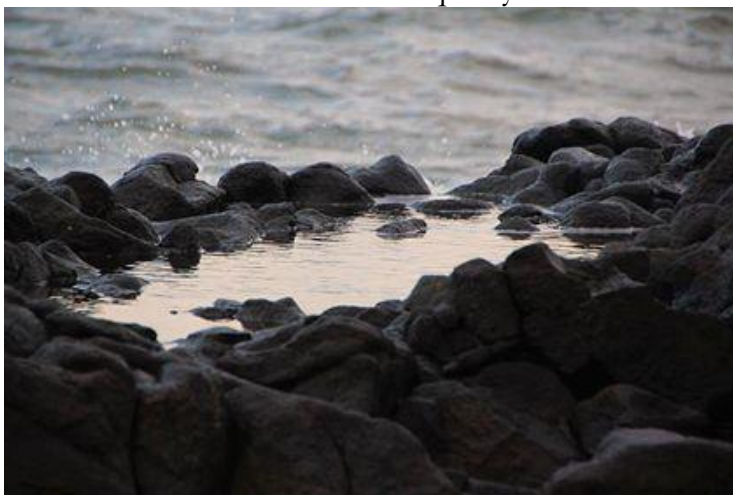
-

I believe if I can only  
reach  
high enough I will dip my hands  
into the sky  
and stars will stick to my fingertips

-

Edda Ahrent

### Pools of Tranquility



Ashley Hazel



# prose



## The Performer

The air in the common room was stale with the sour stench of spilled beer and sweat. Sitting alone in the corner of the room, Piper sipped at a pint of cheap ale, trying not to grimace at the taste. Peering over the rim of the wooden tankard, he briefly made eye contact with the elven rogue casually leaning against the hearth on the far side of the room. Caileagh winked at him, raising his own mug in a brief salute before taking a swig of foaming beer. Piper quickly averted his gaze, trying to hide his amused smirk as Caileagh's face contorted into a grimace and the elf disgustedly spat into the flames. Piper had to admit that even his own ale tasted closer to horse piss than anything else.

Leaning over, Piper retrieved his lute from the bench where it had been resting beside him. Setting his empty mug on the floor, the bard climbed up to stand on the table and grinned, drawing attention to himself as he started to play a quick and lively tune. He played beautifully, the lute accompanying his rich baritone voice as he sang. Soon a crowd had gathered about him, their attention focused purely on the bard. Piper smiled encouragingly as their coins shimmered and clinked, beginning to fill his empty mug.

“Now here is a tale that never gets old



You pay the bard in copper  
While the thief takes your gold  
And nimbly pinches your silver  
The question remaining is, I've often been told  
By those we've left to wonder:  
Was it the drinks that made us so bold?"

The patrons laughed and cheered but later, when they went home with empty pockets, they would realize that perhaps they should have paid closer attention to the words the bard sang.

Caileagh approached the edge of the crowd, seeming just as entranced as the rest of the tavern goers. Swaying aimlessly to Piper's music, he nudged one of the other patron's, mumbling a swift apology as he stepped back to give the fellow some space. As the man gave him an angry look, Caileagh shrugged and sheepishly tucked his hands into his pockets... along with the fellow's coin purse. The man, having returned his attention to Piper's singing, was far too distracted to notice. Caileagh continued making his way through the crowd, lightening their pockets as he slowly but surely progressed towards to the door.

While his accomplice made an exit, Piper continued singing for a few more minutes before hopping down from the grimy tabletop and scooping up the tankard, now overflowing with tips. "Many thanks, my friends." He cried, raising the mug in a flamboyant salute. "You're generosity

is greatly appreciated. We look forwards to seeing you all again.” He winked as he slung his lute over his shoulder and headed out into the evening, leaving the crowd to wonder what exactly he had meant by ‘we’. As far as the audience could tell, there had only been one performer.

Louise Hall

## Fresh Baked Goods

Lawrence lived alone in a bungalow down the street from the bakery that he had owned. He took over the business after his wife and three children had passed away in an accident on the highway. He no longer drove, and walked the same route to and from work every day since the funeral. One morning he arrived to find that the front window had been smashed. Not a penny was missing from the cash box, but tea biscuits were missing from the display. He scratched his head, cleaned up the glass and called the repairmen. When he closed the shop that evening, he left the door unlocked, imagining a poor woman in need of food to fill her child's stomach.

The next morning, the windows were still intact but his supply of pastel pink macaroons and chocolate croissants had depleted. Lawrence decided that the woman was beautiful and elegant, and began to bake an extra batch for the nightly visitor.

Night after night, Lawrence prepared for her visit, and ensured that the door was unlocked before leaving. Weeks later, he decided that he wanted to meet her. He closed up his shop, and waited by his desk in the back. He awoke early in the morning to the sound of footsteps and crept to the front, hoping to seek a glimpse of her. What

he saw was far from what he had imagined. A young woman smacked gum around in her mouth and chucked dainty pastel macaroons into a plastic bag, one after the other. When she pivoted on her heel and sauntered out of the bakery, he followed her to the run down part of town, where she and two children were setting up a table with a sign that said “Fresh Baked Goods.” The young woman shoved the bag of macaroons toward the eldest, and they set up shop for the day. Lawrence walked back to the shop and arranged for an alarm system to be set up in the bakery. That night, he made sure to lock the door.

Athena Grantwell

## The Zesty Taco

With my fur coat on, cigarette in hand and hair and makeup done I confidently made my way into the high class restaurant. The host lit my cigarette and showed me to my table of one. I sat down, crossed my exposed legs and readjusted my hair then looked thoughtfully at the expensive menu.

"Hello, welcome to Taco Bell, how may I--ma'am you are not allowed to smoke in here. Please take that outside and pick your wig off our floor. No-no please do not put out the cigarette on the floor."

I looked up from the menu and eyed the two men staring at me from the bar. I smiled at them, put out my cigarette in the ashtray and sipped on my chardonnay. I slipped out of her fur coat to expose my elegant red dress and continued to gaze at the men.

"You cannot drink from our soda fountain without paying ma'am. Please stop sipping from it. Oh god, put your coat back on lady. You are clearly revolting our other customers."

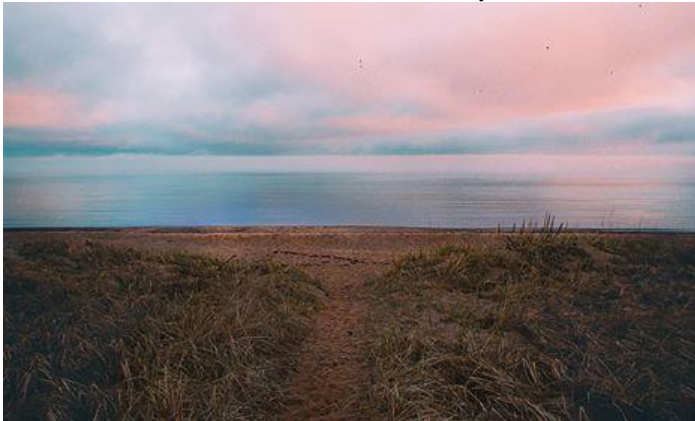
I nodded at the men who came towards me. They motioned towards the exit door with a sly wink. One of the men helped me put my fur coat back on and they escorted me back to my parked limo.

They opened the door for me then proceeded to join me in the back of the vehicle.

"Did you hear what happened earlier? Some old fart stripped off her musty fur coat then the police were called for assistance. I guess she was naked as a newborn and in hysterics when they forced her in the back of the cop car. If only this shift would be that exciting."

Meig Campbell

the ocean has its days



Ashley Hazel

## Rainbow Belt

My rainbow belt was different. It was made of a thick fabric, slightly soft to the touch, yet stiff enough to keep its shape. Instead of holes and a loop, it had a buckle with a small metal piece that when pushed right or left, allowed you to tighten or loosen it. I could never get it right, and the belt would be either too tight or too loose. I would tuck in my shirt while wearing the belt, exposing the horizontal stripes and the hips that puberty had so kindly graced me with.

It was intermission between act 1 and 2 of the musical's Saturday evening show. Cast members milled about, donning pastel dresses with aprons, suspenders, ruddy brown trousers, and black lace-up boots, a stark contrast to my crew member attire of solid black, save for the rainbow belt. Voices of tiny actors giggling outside the loading dock carried into the late May twilight, and the voices of people inside the theatre echoed in the concrete and wooden walls backstage.

My cast member peers were mostly in the school house acts, and I usually chatted to them. One such person was named Faye. Faye's costume dress robin-egg blue, just like her eyes, and was worn with a snow-white apron. Blue ribbons kept her black, French-braided hair together on each side of her head, sitting at shoulder length.

Intermission was over, and both cast and crew members had to get back in position. I was fumbling with the belt buckle again while chatting to Faye and the others. This time, the metal piece was stuck. The other youth left to get ready for the upcoming scene, but Faye stayed behind with me. She said to me, “here, let me help you.” Her slender fingers were able to adjust the rainbow belt, making it fit perfectly to my body. I was completely still, both physically and spiritually, transfixed at what was happening right in front of me. Faye smiled and commented how nice the belt was on me, and I thanked her. We then parted, going in different directions. Neither Faye nor myself said anything of the belt after that intimate moment.

After that day, I shoved the rainbow belt in the bottom of my dresser, not to be found for several more years.

Molly MacDougall



## Pretending

I bring my wine glass to my lips, letting the bouquet of the tart pinot grigio introduce itself; letting the bright, yellow flavour dance across my tongue. I wish I was dancing now, bare feet resting on top of his, sunlight kissing our necks as we swirl around our apartment laughing until we lean against the barn board accent wall.

I love barn board accent walls.

With my head tilted up to the ceiling I can almost forget that I'm alone, sitting on my ass drinking cheap wine. I'm not dancing with him anymore or leaning against a charmingly decorated wall. He's gone, and I need him to stay gone, because his hands don't support me the way they should and his words don't reflect love. He isn't what I need him to be. I'm alone, and I'm sitting in my bed covered by a powdered blue comforter that displays bushels of hydrangeas.

I hate hydrangeas.

Kelsey Crosby

UBC rose garden



Colin Mitchell

## Blue Hands

He was the chip in a robin's egg.

The only thing that stuck in my head the day we were set to be married was the story he told me from when he was twelve. He said he didn't mean to disturb the nest. He didn't know there were babies inside, waiting for their mother to return with food. When the bundle of sticks and leaves fell from the sky, he felt his heart fall alongside it. I had never asked why he was touching them in the first place until the cold metal of his 'I do' slid around my finger.

He was the heat of a fresh blueberry bruise.

My mother laughed when I told her we were trying for a baby. I described the tiny bean that I felt kicking underneath my bellybutton, the songs I would sing for her when she was ready. My mother brought me into the room I used as a child and told me there were extra sheets in the linen closet.

He was the fixed cobalt steel holding him captive.

She fluttered around like a butterfly with one wing for the whole of the afternoon. I could see dials spinning inside her mind, words parting silently between her lips. My daughter was too strong to keep in cages. Her nose was the same shape as his, but her brow bone was chiseled from the gap between my own. I followed a trail of ruffled dresses and jagged mascara wands to where she stood, painted in red. I gripped the doorframe of the

bathroom beside the spot where his picture to use hang  
as the walls grew smaller, smaller, smaller.

He was the powder blue sheen of the morgue in daylight.

I had watched the puddle of my own blood spread under  
my legs into the soft cotton of our bed sheets. One time  
he explained to me that blood ran blue through our veins  
and only turned red when it was oxidized. I wondered if  
my baby would be cloudy purple when I stood up.

He was the rich darkness of the sea under the first night  
of the new moon.

I wrote a note that day. He always told me he hated  
reading, so I jotted in cursive. I explained where he  
could find the keys to his truck once he calmed down. I  
explained how to get the perfect temperature in the bath  
that he could never quite find like I could. I explained  
the steps to forgetting our daughters first and middle  
name. I thought about kissing the back of the letter with  
bold red lips like they did for drive-in films but I knew I  
had already left enough blood behind.

Sarah MacDonald

fern resting on a bed of moss



Ashley Hazel



