

ESTUARY

ACADIA'S CREATIVE ARTS MAGAZINE

Fall 2022

Estuary // Fall 2022

Cover Art: Talc under a microscope // Amanda Smith



Located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq nation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Epigraph	3
In the Blink of an Eye // Grace Naugler	4
Peppermint Nanny // Anika Potschka	4
Women to the Ocean // Dahlia Erick	5
Coffee Run // Zacch Titus	5
The Ribcage and the Willow // Kit McGarrigle	6
Study of Madonna in Glory // Sophia Norris	7
An Incarcerated Sonnet Of and To the Woodsman, from F.A. Wolfe // Gwen V. Williams	8
Meaningless // Zach Strong	8
The Stranger // Vincente Karich Stipicic	9
What Makes the Sidewalk Sparkle? // Monet Streit	10
How to Construct a Lie // Alex Bazin	11
The Blue Dress // Rachel Cameron	12
My Brother's Work Hat // Myla Briand	12
A Shade of Blue // Lukas Saklofske	13
The Stream of Hope // Yas Jawad	14
How to Start Over // Emily Rafuse	14
Insomniac // Lindsay Godbout	15
Sunrise // Sophie Ashton	17
Escape to the Muir // Mackay Kincaid-Webster	18
Do You Know What It Means to Miss Your Lover? // Gwen Trombley-Prozenko	18
Dust // Max Rowell	19
Grandma Was a Girl, Too // Jennifer Graham	20
Every Good Thing // Shaia Davis	21
Son with Photo // Emmett Hickey	22
Untitled // Lily Smith	22
Field of Winter // Megan Marshall	23
Editor's Note // Lukas Saklofske	24

*I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,
I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.*

~ Walt Whitman

*How mutable are our feelings, and how strange is that clinging love we have of life even in
the excess of misery!*

~ Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

In the Blink of an Eye // Grace Naugler

Porter explores perspective through her designs,
all twenty-five eyes perfectly unique yet aligned.
Stimulating swirls, radiant lines, or sweet petals
in ordinary things we must search for the special.

Filled with fear, fire, or tears,
eyes evoke emotions words can't come near.
Learn to paint, play a sport, read a book, don't quit.
To reach passions, goals, and dreams, we must commit.

Understanding different opinions is key,
no two people will perfectly agree.
Sacred traditions, contradictory world views, everyone is free
what will you choose to see?

Life moves swiftly, from childhood to corporate.
A constant cycle, you must work for it.
Innocence and joy turn to decisions and stress in reply,
all in the blink of an eye.

Peppermint Nanny // Anika Potschka

A token of love takes its form,
white, round, fresh.
Clatter, knock, clatter, knock,
comfort is squished into a pill bottle.
A small gift wrapped in a Kleenex,
welcomes the feeling of warmth.
Chalky white fills the gaps between your teeth,
and leaves you wanting more.
A delicate nudge reminds you to share,
control your urge,
be gifted with friendship.
Bottles of peppermints, sweet treats scattered,
here, there, everywhere.

Women to the Ocean // Dahlia Erick

The sounds of the forest and the crunch of rocks under the girls' feet announced their presence to the novel place. One chatters about a boy, overthinking, her words change but the thoughts stay the same. The listener tosses in a compassionate "mhm" and "of course" like pebbles into the waves. They come out of the trees, salty air blowing in their hair, to a small precipice before a rocky beach begins. One takes it languidly while the other carefully scales down, marvelling over the beauty of the ocean. Every step brings a new rock in view, promptly picked up, shared with delight, and dropped or pocketed. Blue, red, grey, smooth, full of crystals, too big to pick up, too pretty to leave behind. Soon the goal of their adventure unfolds: one pulls out her towel and swimsuit from her backpack, hesitating to change in the open. The other encourages her friend's liberty, herself having forgotten and resorting to underwear and her oversized hiking shirt, a giveaway-bag find worn on adventures for the pockets.

With the camera set up on a carefully selected boulder, pre-pictures are taken until both young women are satisfied that the atmosphere of anticipation and adventure has been captured. They're cute and a tad awkward, the pictures, but the genuine joy calls out from their expression. They turn the video on and plunge into the ocean barefoot over the rocks, they wade and then dunk under the water. The water is shockingly cold, and salty for two who'd both grown up far away from beaches. Thrilled with their bravery and independence, they splashed to shore, one ensuring the video has captured their escapade and the other surveying further down the beach, to a waterfall beckoning with the promise of washing away the sticky salt residue.

"Isn't this incredible?" She was leaning forward, tense with anticipation and yearning, face quivering with joy that raged through her veins on occasions like these, eyes scouring the skyline restlessly. "This is what I've dreamt of my whole life. Having these exact adventures. Every time I do something like this, I can feel myself getting closer to the woman I want to be, y'know? She does things like this."

"Don't be ridiculous! You are that woman."

Coffee Run // Zacch Titus

Red Tim Hortons cups occupy busy hands
Annapolis shapeshifted to a ghost town
Leaves crunch underfoot and naked branches hiss in the gusts

I wish warm kisses of a July sun would return
The weatherman forewarns us on the nightly CTV broadcast
Next year at this time we'll perch around the same forecast
The same forbidding words filling our ears

The Ribcage and The Willow // Kit McGarrigle

The earth beneath me is rough, grass flattened under my bulk that has settled here. What is here? I'm not sure anymore. It's strange, I should be worried. But I'm not. There is no wind in this place, but the air is damp and cold, it has seeped into my bones, settled in central parts of me and burrowed deep. I've been sitting here for a while, at least I think so. I don't have anywhere to be, so, I am here. There is something sitting with the cold in my bones. It's heavy, different from the constant damp and chill of this place with no wind. It twists within me, curling around and shifting ever so slightly. I think I know why I'm here. This curling, twisting thing deep within makes me heavy, hard to move. I am so tired. My head turns, my eyes settle.

There is a ribcage against the tree. The tree is a pretty thing, gnarled and twisted and covered in the green spreading growths of lichen and mold. The bones that are propped against the trunk are also covered in this expansion of green. There is something tugging me. The tree, a willow sings to me. It does not move, there is no wind. It sings within me. I watch the ribcage. From within the confines of ivory white there are twisted approximations, vines and flowers pulled together and woven into a facsimile. Red catches my eye, a mass of roses. Off tilted slightly to the left. The roses move. They shift, rippling, rhythmic. The thing that sits in my bones ripples in turn. The singing willow is so loud, it tugs with a sharpness, but I do not move.

With the shifting of the roses there is a movement of green in turn. A mass of vines, woven and with small blue blossoms expand and retract. Is it breathing? I am so heavy, and so tired. The thing in my bones moves, pushing against the cage that I am. The singing changes, it grows softer and louder with the movement of whatever is inside me. It's sharp, but not painful. I can track its expansion inside of me. Even as my eyes are fixated on the ribcage against the willow tree. A willow tree that sings. A tree that is and isn't. I take a breath in, it's sharp and tugging. I cough. A single flower petal slips from my lips. The singing stops and my desperate inhale is loud.

My eyes focus on the ribcage as my vision swims. Our breaths match in time. I let go.

Study of Madonna in Glory // Sophia Norris



An Incarcerated Sonnet Of and To the Woodsman, from F.A. Wolfe // Gwen Williams

This is an old tale you perhaps have read.
It is well-known, this particular one.
Although in that tale, I end up quite dead
with rocks in my stomach, all howling done.

But I'm alive, old, and locked tightly up
all thanks to him, the wonderful woodsman.
I have no girls in red hoods on to sup
Nor on those pitiful, vengeful pig-men.

I vomited Red up. And he was there.
And still, he stalked and hunted me for years.
Every damn night and day, sword, gun, and snare.
I got tired. He won. I lost. Save the tears.

Woodsman named Garner, defender of woods:
Tell me, what's it like to be so damn good?

Meaningless // Zach Strong

In the attic wasting time,
Dust collects on things of mine.
I'm the addict I can't be.
More defects than one can see

Never-ending lullaby:
Not enough to lull the cry.
Ever-pending normalcy
Like a puff: a tendency

Sitting by the confiner,
waiting for my mind to stir.
Branches high above me rise,
Blocking doors into the skies.

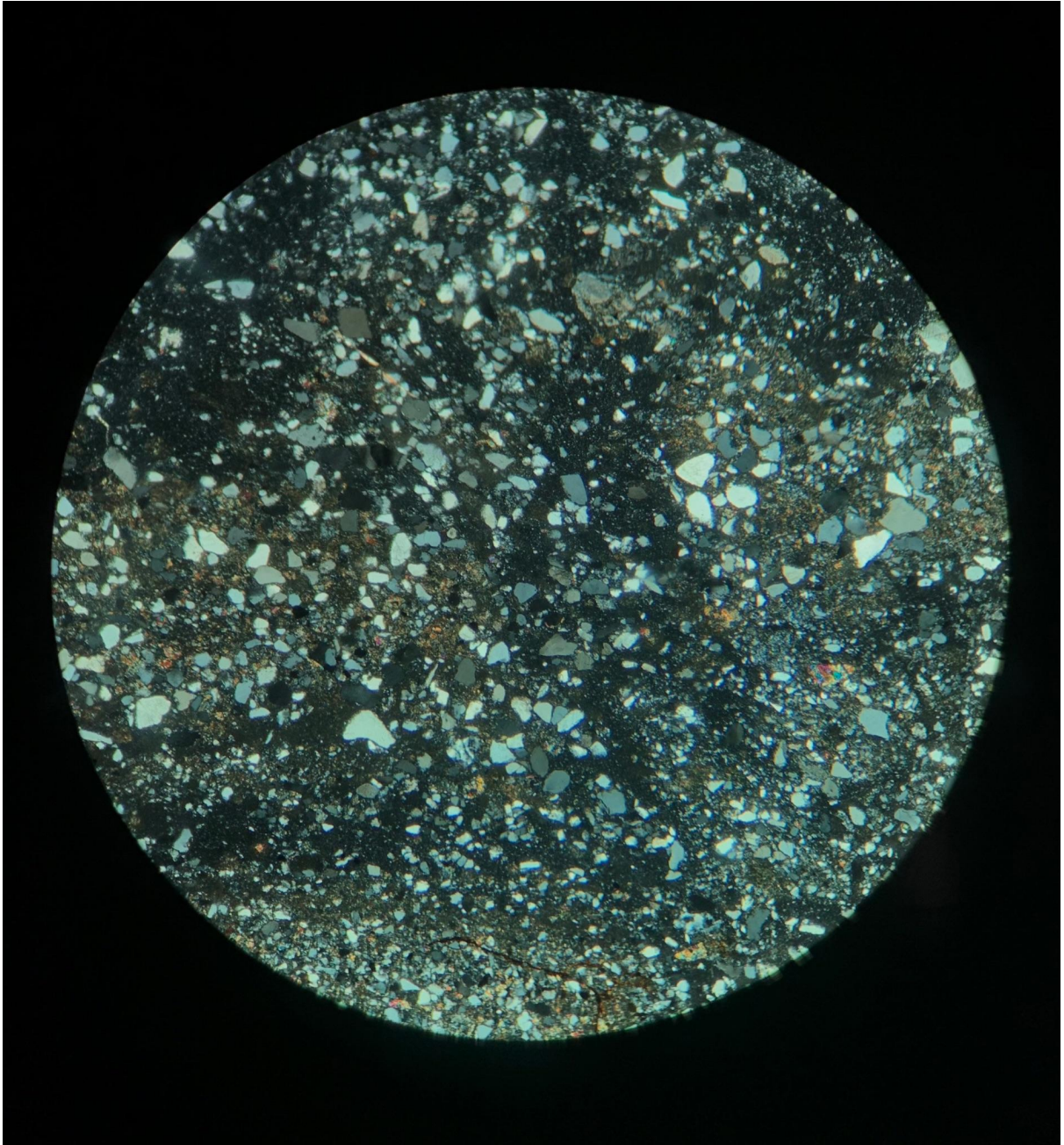
Feeling nothing's such a waste
Greed or pride I'd rather taste.
Never knowing what to do
bred inside me doubtful stew.

The Stranger // Vincente Karich Stipicic

As I walked inside the bar, a strange feeling washed over me. At first, I couldn't place it, my eyes travelling across the entire place to find where it could be coming from. The place was dark, the only light either coming from the windows as moonlight poured in or the flickering light bulbs that hung above. Most of the customers barely glanced at me, most content to simply focus on their drinks. But then I saw them. In the back corner, four of them. All of them, short, pale, and thin. Bleached white hair and ruby-red eyes stared back at me, smoke from a cigarette flowing from each of their mouths. Each of them looked identical to the other. Same clothes, the same expression, even the same drink on the table, with the same amount of liquid left in all of them. My eyes met the red of the one in the centre, and everything seemed to freeze for a second. The cheap music of the bar seemed to fade, as I stared into the glittering red eyes of the man in front of me. Then he spat out the cigarette and stood up, his copies doing the same. They left their booth and walked towards me. My eyes wide, I moved out of the way as they passed me by, one by one, not even looking at me. Except for the last one. He glanced up at me and smirked as he pulled something out of his pocket. "If you're ever bored" he whispered, his voice sending whispers through my spine "I could always use another brother" he slipped a small white card into my pocket and stepped outside, the door slamming shut behind him. I stood there, frozen for a minute before I shook free of my stupor and stepped outside, hoping to demand an answer. Only to be met with a cold empty parking lot.

I still have that card. It's still in the pocket. I never dared take it out. I never saw those strange men again. But every once in a while, I swear I can see them, out of the corner of my eye. Smiling and waiting, beckoning me with a free hand. But when I turned to look, there was no one there.

What Makes the Sidewalk Sparkle? // Monet Street



How to Construct a Lie // Alex Bazin

“Why are you home so late?”

This is the easiest part to screw up. Just don't panic. Remember, the truth is whatever you decide it to be. Don't answer too quickly, it'll sound rehearsed if you do. Don't take too long either, or else he'll think you're making it up on the fly. Start simple, a favourite of mine is going with something he'd say.

“I couldn't take the train from Bay Station so I had to walk to the next one.”

“What? Why not?”

“There was something sketchy going on. Might've been nothing, but I wasn't going to stick around and find out.”

Now this is perfect because he's the type of person to automatically assume the worst the second the sun goes down. Hell, Frank'll assume the worst out of people most of the time.

“Well why didn't you just let me know? And why do you smell like pot?”

I don't even think he's trying to make it hard at this point. The play from here is simple, just weaponize guilt and make sure you seem like the good guy.

“Well my phone died and I'd've used a payphone if I wanted to wake you up. I really thought you'd be asleep by now, I wasn't about to wake you up over nothing. As for the smell, I guess that's just what I get for walking around the city at night. You know I wouldn't get like this willingly, I hate that smell man. Look dude, I'm sorry I kept you up, but I really wasn't in trouble.”

The look on his face softening is a good indicator that everything's working as planned. But here's the thing, sometimes, you can do everything you need to but life just has different plans. I say this because right as I'm getting ready to smooth everything over, my buddy Brent decides to send me the highlights of tonight's hijinks. My phone buzzes. My eyes lock with Frank's.

“Dead huh? Why don't you go ahead and show me?”

There's no graceful bailing out of this one. For a split second, I consider burning it all down. It's not like he's my actual parent, he really doesn't have authority. I don't see the point in resisting though. It'd only make the inevitable worse. I pull my phone out of my pocket and turn the screen on. I don't even have time to unlock it before Frank says,

“You're fuckin' dead.”

The Blue Dress // Rachel Cameron

blue and bold,
acrylic and oil creating the definition of one's body
broken people surrounding them,
ungendered being;
defined shape of body filling the canvas
cut of the dress, dive of the V
light reflections on the gloss of the paint.
unframed, with height
different pigments in the skin
curves and outlines,
stance of a superhero.
from a distance
up close, the experience is blurred.

My Brother's Work Hat // Myla Briand

The once sturdy structure fell
shaped by rough callused hands
the skeleton bent and broken
now perfectly fitted to his head
the worn fabric stops his overgrown dark hair
from falling into his eyes

the inside rim is stained with sweat and dirt
rusty brown smudges confirming endless days.
12-hour shifts spent sculpting black rubber
4 am mornings spent hauling lobster traps
protection from the beating sun.
My brother's hat rarely leaves his head,
the cloth in constant contact with his sympathetic skin

The hat joins us at the dinner table
birthdays and events.
Held together with a delicate thread
woven with light and love
bonded by laughter and devotion
removed at the end of the day
in wait, on his bedside table
for the labour ahead

A Shade of Blue // Lukas Saklofske

As the Worth of Words looks outward

Above all authority

Imagining this

Sublime

unintelligible world

Which gleams through half extinguished thought

Why not face me?

At times your sight is deafened

Not by the fog, but your dreary intercourse with human subjectivity

Apparently

your Words aren't Worth sober pleasures

Whilst

In the fog we envision our own treasures

Selina D'arcy

Stands where he once stood

pondering

at the fog below

Blindly self-defenestrates into sad

humanistic music Although

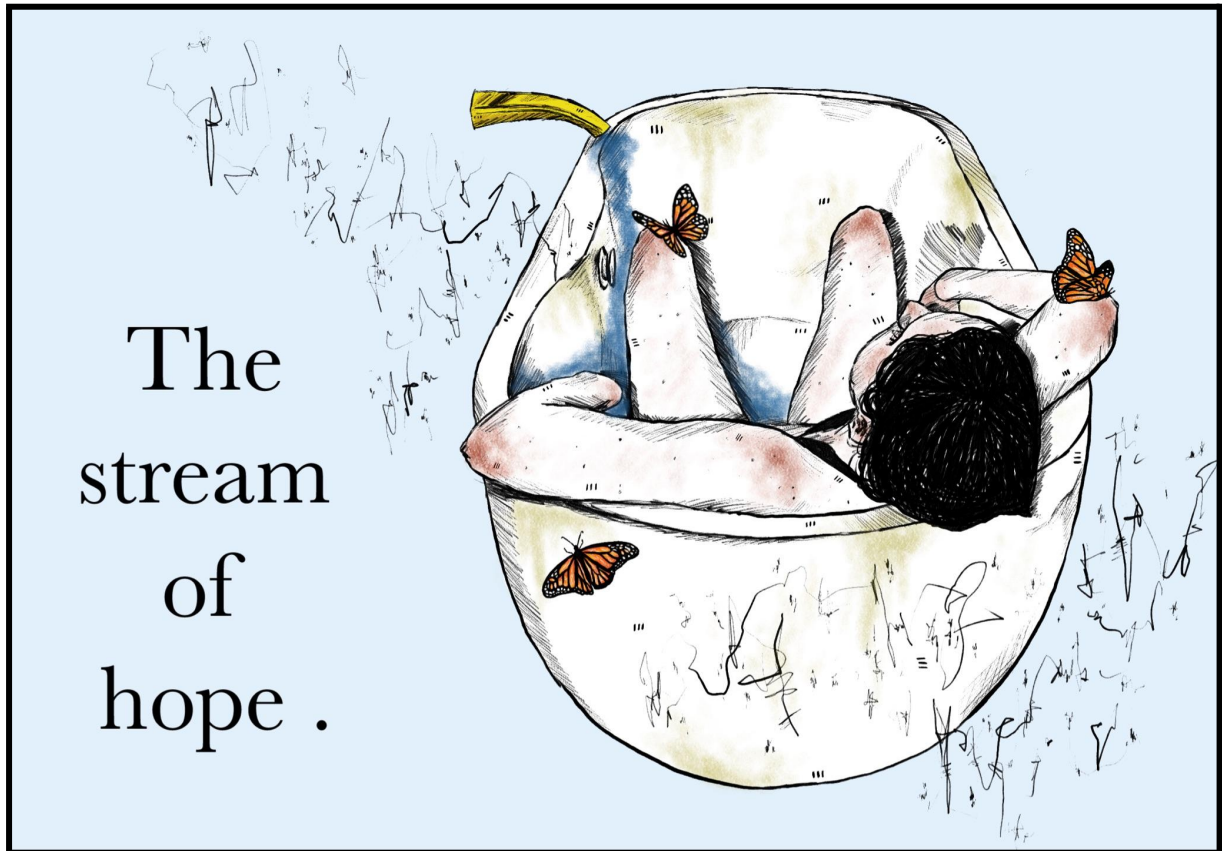
Something different transpires, I see her eyes

Undergo

The true vision of sublime nature which miraculously

Glow

The Stream of Hope // Yas Jawad



How to Start Over // Emily Rafuse

How can we recapture what has been lost?
There is a graveyard in my mind for you,
I didn't know that what I did would cost
me the one I loved best. What do I do?

Without my younger self beside me,
I am left alone to find what matters.
Sometimes I wonder just how I would see
things if my soft heart was not in tatters.

So I will leave flowers by your grave,
and look to new beginnings, to find some
peace and love, to find what it is I crave.
I made it through what had once been my sum,

and now, far from an encore, this will be a new
story, a new path to follow, for you.

Insomniac // Lindsay Godbout

Sleep was the mistress I served
But she was never fair.
All I wanted
Was her to sweep me up in her intoxicating arms,
Spin me into the sea of linen,
And allow me to drown.

But that never happened.

My eyes would burn,
But Sleep always kept her distance.
Sometimes, I could feel her presence
Start to fall over me.
But Anxiety and Regret would chase her away.
Sleep didn't belong to me the way they did.

How many times did I try to summon Sleep
By counting the blades of my ceiling fan?
1...2...3...4...5
1...2...3...4...5
1...2...3...4...what's the fucking point...5.

Sleep was largely untameable.
There were nights where I thought I'd find her
At the bottom of a bottle of cough syrup
Or after a parade of tablets.
But elusiveness isn't so easily persuaded.

Eventually, I held man-made Sleep in the palm of my hand
Throw it back,
Swallow the bitter reality.
Begrudgingly, Sleep would make her appearance,
But only because she had no other choice.
There was no dance,
No grand seduction in which I couldn't fight.
Only darkness.

That is, until I met you.
I do not know what deal
You must have struck with Sleep,
But she was always at your beck and call.
Ready to serve you.

I don't believe it a coincidence
That Sleep appeared for both of us
The first time you made love to me.
I think even she knew that you were something special.

Slowly, Sleep started to linger.
You always fell asleep first
But I didn't mind.
I could feel your even breaths
Caress the back of my neck
And lose myself in them.

I always woke up first,
But I didn't mind that, either.
I could pull you in a little closer
And breathe in the cologne I grew to love.
Sleep became a language only we could speak.

I was starting to think that Sleep was now a part of me
But some things are not to be.
Circumstance and Misfortune
Chased you away
Along with Sleep.

Now, as I reach over to the empty space in my bed,
Remembering what I once had,
I know that there are some things
That can't be taken with a sip of water at bedtime.

Sunrise // Sophie Ashton

It's a quiet winter morning
and nothing can be heard,
except a brush of wind swarming
the whistle of a bird.

It's as if the sky was sliced last night,
right as the sun was waking.
It opened up with colours bright,
released the beauty waiting.

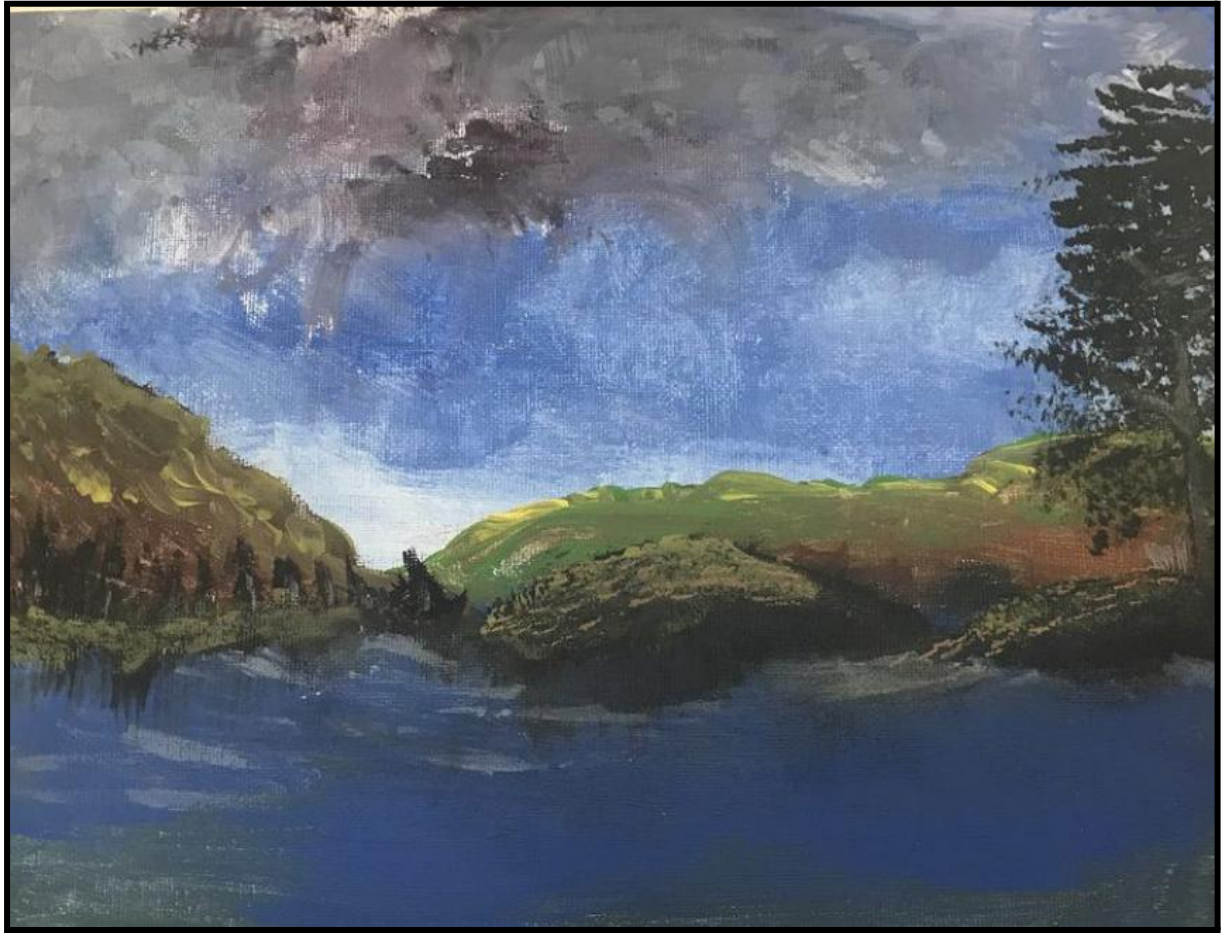
I feel I own the world right now
as the sun lights up the dew,
creeping up the sky like a plow,
cutting through the calm blue.

The stinging crimson bleeds right through,
like the sky has been stained.
The bare tree branches reach up to
the cool air, unrestrained.

The sky's bright hot, crispy red
melts the cold below.
The dewy grass peaks up all wet
amidst the shining snow.

This wondrous spectacle floods the air
as I take in the show.
I only wish I could ensnare
the magic of this glow.

Escape to the Muir // Mackay Kincaid-Webster



Do You Know What It Means to Miss Your Lover? // Gwen Trombley-Prozenko

A cold bed, a too-big shower, a blanket that swallows you in it all.
No limbs fighting for sheets. Leftovers in the fridge where there shouldn't be.
A half-drunk bottle of wine; corked and waiting.
Hangers waiting bare in the closet.
A door waiting to be opened.

Dust // Max Rowell

september—the last vestiges
of setting sun, another go around
my tongue stained every colour
from beer warming on the counter,
and you, and the wet leaves
of thunderstorm afternoons.
now, soft dawns, the air slowly conjuring
what little chill it can muster
to bury you in violet, and me in my
long sleeves and sadness. i try to kill
the autumn while it's young,
before it can grow cold and
wish it was never born. i try to kill
everything in me that ever pined
for anything else.
i am home one more time
to watch the apples turn red
and the tides slip away like
they always do, like clockwork.
i think you are a scared cat
sometimes, approaching me
guarded, all your teeth in your mouth
when you feel ready. i will
lie with no defenses and i will
bear the weight of your open claws
with some semblance of grace.
summer is bleeding down my arms again,
and i am a giant human heart, and you
are the jacket on my shoulders
when the leaves dry into dust.

Grandma Was a Girl, Too // Jennifer Graham

Come little darling and sit here with me
I want to tell you a story
Your nanny ran a theatre company
She called it the *Maple Finklehurst Academy*

The stage floor was made of Peruvian Mahogany
The curtains stained ruby and plumb like these pillows
Gold ropes pulled them open and stage lights shone brightly
On hourglass ladies dancing in rows

Their eyes dazzled beneath blue powdered lids
Their lips smiled widely in ruby-red drips
In corsets and fishnets, they kicked up their heels
Swivelled their hips, arched their backs into a finale of cartwheels

“It sounds just delightful!” “And it was darling, sheer pleasure!”
It’s part of the reason this red string’s ‘round my finger
And there was more to that theatre than pleasure you see
Double knots on this ribbon remind me of things bigger

The *Finklehurst Academy* taught her lessons you can’t learn in books
That life is more than fancy pillows, plush curtains, and good looks
Take chances, be bold, and get up when you fall
Go after your dreams, child, life doesn’t make house calls.

Every Good Thing // Shaia Davis

—Hate and violence are destructive creatures, and far too many people have let them both carve holes into their hearts.

—Yes, corruption does have that tendency.

—Mankind is capable of terrible things. Atrocious, unthinkable, wicked deeds. Hate and violence have capsized the ship that holds every good thing—joy, wonder, hope—and watches as it sinks.

—There's no denying that.

—Then, pray tell, what is the point? When the world is up in flames and far too many people seem content to keep choking on the smoke, what is the point?

—The point is hearing the unbridled laughter of children. To feel the early morning sun caressing your skin. To taste freshly grown strawberries, to see the ocean on a clear day, to smell your favourite bakery. This is the point; the reason that if the world was set aflame, there will be those who would use every ounce of water in their bodies to put the fire out.

Son With Photo // Emmett Hickey

One cold afternoon, Liam Howard fumbled through his pockets looking for his keys, but could only find an old photo of his parents from their wedding day. He knocked several times hoping for someone to be home, but knew it was to no avail because who would be home at two o'clock on a Wednesday? After a moment of pondering, he realized that the backdoor might be open, and with all the excitement of potential warmth and video games, he sprang to his feet and ran down the walkway separating his family's home from their neighbours.

In the backyard he looked at the great oak tree that had stood there firmly, hanging over their porch and his parent's bedroom window for as long as he could remember. With his eyes wandering, he looked into the two large windows and saw his mom standing there, naked. With disgust he quickly turned away, but, then, his eye was caught by the movement of another naked figure. He winced again and hated the thought that his parents left work early to fuck, but he also couldn't help but feel the love his parents had for one another after thirty-five years and how it was really a representa- he stopped himself as he realized the other person wasn't his dad.

That whore, he thought, how could she— he paused for a second to think, and then proceeded to run as quickly as possible from where he was standing. Once he felt he was far enough away, he stopped, and he tried to think about what he just saw. How could he have

ever called him mom a whore? After all this is the same woman who used to sing him to sleep with her soft and angelic voice, gently rocking him back and forth; and the same person who just a few nights ago sat on the couch, cuddle up his dad and said, ‘You are the only company I need on a Friday night’ and gave him a kiss. He thought he saw love in their relationship, but now he wasn’t sure what he saw.

Later that night, the five of them sat at the dinner table. His mom and dad sat across from each other sharing a look while his brother and sister fought over who’s turn it was to eat with the good fork, and Liam sat quietly, playing with his food. His mom looked at him with her motherly smile and asked ‘are you okay, my handsome boy? You don’t seem yourself tonight.’

‘Yeah, I’m alright. Just feeling a bit queasy’

‘Are you sure?’

‘I’m sure’

‘Okay, Baby. I love you’

‘I love you, too, mum’.

Untitled // Lily Smith



Field of Winter // Megan Marshall

The path guides me,
like a familiar friend.
The crisp air turns my breath to fog,
resembling the clouds in my head.
As my breath dances with the falling snow,
I can begin to let go.
The fluffy snow covers the unbeaten path
and looks like a soft blanket,
waiting for me to crash.

My new boots now have a mud stain,
at least I can prove I tried.
At least this attempt
shows not all my hope has died.
“Go for a walk,” they say,
then the feelings will melt away.
The fog begins to clear from my brain,
as it has lifted from the path;
maybe, maybe I’ll be okay at last.

For now, I have this,
this friendly path.
The only friend,
I know won’t go bad.

Editor's Note

Special thanks to Dr. Wanda Campbell for her assistance and support in making this edition of estuary a reality.

The creative works in this edition are from a broad range of students, all of whom have contributed some excellent pieces. Each submission contributes to the creation of a coherent collective representing Acadia University's talent and variety. We would like to thank these students for their personal effort and amazing artwork since there would be no creative arts magazine at Acadia without them.

Estuary // Fall 2022

Editor // Lukas Sakofske

Faculty Advisor // Dr. Wanda Campbell

Cover Art // Amanda Smith

estuary

is published at the Acadia Printshop with the help of Acadia's Department of English and Theatre. Online versions of this and other past issues can be found at

<https://english.acadiau.ca/get-involved/estuary-arts-magazine.html>

