2014

Inside Out, Spring 2014

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Inside Out

INSIDE OUT
JeffArts Literary Magazine

Spring 2014

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The Jefferson Arts Organization was founded primarily to offer Jefferson students the opportunity to express themselves through art. The Jefferson Arts organization focuses on such media as art and photography, writing, and music and supports diverse activities including live readings, art exhibits and musical performances. In addition, the organization publishes *Inside Out*, an annual art and literary journal which showcases photography, paintings, sketches, short stories, poems and essays contributed by Jefferson students. All of these activities are designed to bring more diversity to the Jefferson community; to allow students, faculty and staff the chance to stop and reflect on their daily lives; and to provide a creative outlet from the rigors of school and work.

View the online version of *Inside Out* at
http://www.jefferson.edu/about/inside_out.html

Foreword

This year's edition of *Inside Out* includes a wider selection by our student jury of writing that blends nicely with paintings and photographs. Each submission reflects the purpose of our journal, to provide an opportunity for students to express themselves through art. Underlying this expression, I found a repeating theme of boundaries.

Starting with a picture of a staircase leading to a hidden world above and closing with a scene of land meeting sea, many of the images relate to a place where different worlds meet. Poems focus on the interplay of day and night, standing on a pier, escaping at the edge of a bay, exploring an attic full of memories.

Coincidence? By taking pen to paper, brush to canvas, and eye to lens, our students playfully explore the boundaries that are part of their experiences. In similar fashion, as we learn about the art of caring, we study, then try to master the art of working at the boundary of patient and professional. This boundary is a delicate touch point, reserved and intimate, fleeting and profound.

Enjoy the works that follow and consider what they mean to you. We are fortunate to have so many talented students who can express themselves both Inside and Out.

Michael J. Vergare, MD
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Thomas Jefferson University
Spring 2014

Submission Information

Inside Out is a presentation of artwork, photography, short stories, poems and essays that is published annually. All full-time and part-time Jefferson students are welcome to submit work and to apply to serve on the magazine's editorial board. Submissions may be emailed to Dorissa.Bolinski@jefferson.edu. Photographic submissions should be saved as a .jpeg file using the highest resolution possible. Artwork should be photographed from a direct angle, without glare or visible background, and saved in the same manner as photographs. Artists who submit non-photographic material will be given the opportunity to have their accepted pieces professionally photographed by a Jefferson photographer in order to assure the best presentation in the printed magazine.

All submissions will be reviewed anonymously; not all submissions will be printed. Please note that entries will be judged as submitted; *Inside Out* will not crop, sharpen or otherwise adjust an improperly-saved graphic submission.

Manuscripts (prose, poetry, translations, short plays, etc.) should be submitted in a Word-compatible document, and saved under the name of the piece (or "untitled," if applicable).

All submissions MUST be accompanied by a separate cover letter document containing the following:

- Author or artist's name
- Email address and local phone number
- College, department or undergraduate program and year in school
- Genre/medium and title of each submission

Inside Out does not publish anonymous submissions or previously published works. Further submission inquiries may be addressed to JeffersonArts@jefferson.edu.

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Miranda G. Law

<i>Trinity Stairs</i>	Becca Julian	<i>Front Cover</i>
<i>A Surfer's Twilight</i>	Jonathan Elias	<i>Back Cover</i>

Kami L. McManus

Cheerleader Graffiti

Ethan Sellers

Jake had his old Stratocaster and I had 22
Autumns' worth of wind-whirled leaves in my ears,
So we snuck up in the school's padlocked attic,
A room covered in graffiti, names like Kim
And Guinevere blazoned in fading coral spirals.
We played Bob Dylan to dust-ghosts
Slumbering in the floor boards
And the names of cheerleaders (They had to be cheerleaders)
Written on the wall that Jake and I spun
Like sand through the smoke of our imaginations,
Placing grains along their slender backs,
Iridescent Mandalas, tributes to their balance,
Their mysticism, the dark penumbras
Lurking beneath their swaying breasts.
Crystal particles hissed and sizzled like oil
Where the heat of their skin and the vibrations
From Jake's thrumming guitar strings met,
The particles rising from the Andromeda-shimmer
Of their bodies, helices of swirling stone dust
I drew through the cracks in my teeth
To coat my throat, exhaled so it settled in dunes
Across their shoulders. When Jake
Began to sing, they rustled their skirts,
Our school's colors chanting
Along their thighs like shifting heron feathers
In a pool of slumbering morning-mist,
Their pom-poms shaggy oxen meandering
Through fog tendrils. Light sifted like sawdust
Through ceiling cracks to spark and fade,
Trace the looping letters of the graffiti,
The past volatile as split orange rind,
Catching fire from the friction
Of Jake's fingers stroking spirits alive.

Amy Tressan

Ethereal

David Chou

What is it about the night—
Whose dreary eyes bring shapes
To life,

Doting, always, on fading facades—
That lets us be fearless
For some pre-allotted time?

Always the same, aching
For made up stories
And plans

Like an aluminum can.
It gives you wings, you say.

Rooftops—
Closer to where we
Dream of staying,

And sun-kissed shoulders go to hide—
Ever-so-gently tilt us one-by-one
Toward sleep.

Then those heroes, passing plight,
Hope for one last flight before
Returning home

Only to lie awake, smiling.
A lilt, a kind brush,
Or was it my imagination?

Sepehr Sedigh

Mediumship

Michael Joseph Kolachny, Jr., RN

The chill
morose
drumming
from the heart of Africa.
Where
Man-first saw his ghosts
refined
but not Brilliant-Cut
pounding with muffled restraints, voices
murmurs screams and whispers
Man- attuned to their wallowing
wailing pain and bloodshed

The Happy

are Soft-spoken

They find,
a Medium, who can hear them.

Sepehr Sedigh

Julia Huntington

Amy Tressan

Nona Lu

Amy Tressan

Yuhang Zhou

Diway Bermudez

**At dusk I carry stones through slow mist to stack
beside the sea; its cosmic tongue beckons**

Ethan Sellers

When I breathe at open windows I breathe
with my fathers' lungs—their Marlboros &
brine-wind, their rattling longing. When I dive
at vast pools, it is with my fathers' arms
I accept the slow embrace, the tumbling
silence, still-dance. I remember their backs:
wide & gold as rippling wheat fields, they work
riggings, calloused hands an aching anthem.

Are my hands so different? Their pull on
patients' skin, the cordage of tendons, taut
to feel each fiber, stethoscope a
sextant against a stormy chest—heartbeat,
tide-pulse, the body's ever-breaking wave.

Kami L. McManus

The Pier

David Chou

Only on the bay does my mind escape—
Sea moss freed by wake—
Fully conscious of gold mist.

The distant trees lift themselves
Like cool blankets over the sun, and vestiges
Of warmth forget my skin.

I am entranced by the sails
Heading south, back home from
The open waters past the lighthouse—

A beacon of arrival, or departure
For a less peaceful place—where white-capped
Waves careen and fluster.

I prefer the steady sounds of rigging,
With collective defiance,
Playing the steel masts of thirty boats,

The wind its conductor, the breeze mine.
Our single comfort: being tethered
To a vessel not yet adrift.

Daniel Gealy

Daniel Gealy

Diway Bermudez

Axis Mundii

Michael Joseph Kolachny, Jr., RN

A sullen mountain of **dusty dreams**
protects your **Aquarian** heart
from the feel of the cold, raw **earth**

I'm waiting for you
at the top of the pillar-
the celestial zenith

The Axis Mundii

standing with the **records of the universe**
all there is, was, will be
yet,
it is merely trivial to you
your heartache takes precedence
over the entirety of the cosmos
the Frivolity of Man
is nothing to your day-to-day

waiting
I'm at

The Axis Mundii

to you, something blue
Vishnu
a God in your eyes alone
your hopeless mortal existence
something betwixt the **Earth** and the Spirit.

Sepehr Sedigh

A Penned Heart

Mark McShane

In so many words,
There are none.
My fears slowly subside
In a wave of comfort and beauty so timeless and true
That my soul ceases to churn.
Crashing swells begin to roll gently ashore,
And the warm wind,
Satiated,
Serves only now to direct my course.
Adrift now,
Unsure and unafraid,
I gaze up at the March sky
And find that I am without my tedious questions.
I have nothing to ask of it.
I am quiet and unwavering.
Because of pen to my paper.
An ink not my own.
Intruding
Only to promise
That, in time, the storm will settle,
And it will be there,
Adrift,
To meet me.

Miranda G. Law

Just What His Holiness Ordered

Nithin Paul

Even the infamous Delhi heat failed to keep the crowds from thronging into the hall. His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, had been speaking for an hour now and the floor had been opened for the audience to begin chipping away at his wealth of wisdom and knowledge. His talk had ranged from scientific advancements in astrophysics to the role of compassion in one's life, and the attendees, drawing from all corners of the capital city of India, seemed eager to get his insight on some of their own conundrums and half-baked thoughts. Nevertheless, it was an intellectual crowd, one could say, judging by the way they dressed and the manners in which they whispered amongst themselves, creating an almost subtle air about them. But once the house lights were turned up, even they seemed like children in front of the headmaster here. The aura of near enlightenment and complete comfort with which the Dalai Lama held himself seemed to almost remind those in his presence of their own lack of fulfillment in life. But sitting there amongst an overflow of spectators, gazing at a projected screen just outside the venue and protected from any such trance placed upon the onlookers indoors, I too felt a draw as I found my body leaning in, straining to absorb whatever I could from this icon of world peace.

Alas, a man stood up and introduced himself as a doctor. My ears perked up. The Dalai Lama returned a slow courteous nod in turn. While there had been much talk of finding peace within, he began, coming from a profession that often bears witness to a human being's lowest points and greatest hardships, he admitted that he often struggled with being able to comfort many patients going through much pain. Too often, even modern medicine could not offer complete relief, he finished in a somber tone. I remember the Dalai Lama silently nodding at the end of the doctor's implicit question, his pause only heightening the anticipation for an answer.

Now it is hard to fully grasp what I took away from his ensuing response without actually hearing the Dalai Lama speak or at least imagining him do so. His tone, accent, and incomplete mastery of the English language truly embellished his response as he sat up and gave a reply that, to the best of my memory, went something like this:

"Hmm.. yes, yes I see. Very tough sometimes... Maybe what you do could depend on situation. If patient is sick because of bad karma from bad actions... like taking drugs or smoking cigarettes, then his soul could benefit from purposefully building up his good karma. Like taking action to mend relationships broken or do something for environment... But many time, sickness is not consequence of action. Like from cancer or from accident... then only thing that can be said is that in every life, there will always be pain... but there need not be suffering..."

The Dalai Lama paused now and I could see the doctor breathe in deep, seeming satisfied and willing to accept the answer. I too mirrored his sentiment thinking that I too understood. But right as he was about to sit down, the Dalai Lama added, *"Or you could just do what I do."* All of us leaned in closer again, eager for the golden bullet answer, *"Take a couple glasses of whiskey and just knock it back. It always helps me."* He flashed the doctor a thumbs-up and a big smile.

While I still chuckle when I think back on the memory, I find that his response to wellness and suffering has provided me some fodder for alternate thoughts on the topic, especially as I immerse myself in my medical studies.

Wellness, I have come to think of as a quality composed of a series of layers built on the foundation that we might call our innate psyche or the sub-consciousness that determines not only the way in which we perceive and experience all things, but also in how we respond to them. The penultimate example that captures and develops this very concept can be found in Hinduism's teachings on yoga. It is described as an eight stage process that focuses on disciplining the mind and the body before embarking on the last stage known as 'samadhi', the final journey towards what is colloquially known as nirvana, or true inner peace.

All of which leads me to three converging thoughts. The first being that since I can only understand nirvana in an abstract manner given my lack of experience in, well, experiencing it, I have taken the liberty to broadly interpret it as a realization of the true value of all things in life. The second thought is that if pain, an experience that takes its roots in our minds and bodies, can indeed be separated from suffering as the Dalai Lama claims, then perhaps suffering comes from our inner-most psyche. The final thought was that just trying to wrap my head around such esoteric subjects for longer than a few minutes can cause some mental pain and suffering in itself.

Nevertheless, what I have taken away from that talk and added to since then has left me to ponder much. I wonder if it is the misproportioned placement of value on all various things and ideas combined with a lack of discipline of mind and body that leads to the corruption of the very foundation of our wellness, thereby making us vulnerable to suffering. For this is the only way I could see it to be fathomable that while one will certainly experience pain in life, they need not ever experience suffering.

However, these matters of philosophy and development of the soul often take time, and pain does not seem to be patient enough to wait for us to reach nirvana before coming. So perhaps, in order to hasten along our enlightenment, we might be able to call upon a different type of spirit; one that can be poured into a glass and knocked back. It might not be what the doctor ordered, but His Holiness certainly did.

Miranda G. Law

Angela Wong

Diway Bermudez

Milkweed Dreams

Ethan Sellers

After class, Nathaniel and I trudged through the fields behind school to Oakwyn Pond, fishing rods swishing like cattail over our shoulders. Instead of sunnies, we caught Dawn, the angel two grades above us, wading amongst reeds, slender fingers trailing glistening rivulets. Her wet blouse was fog across the tension of teenage skin, the peak of her breasts like our skyward prayers. When she saw us, we raced the whole way home, milkweed whispering dreams across our aching thighs.

Miranda G. Law

Winter Passing

David Chou

I'm fortunate that five minutes feels like ten
As I peek out of sheets at my blinking phone,
Illuminating the residual mist on my window
With a shade of red I cannot yet read.
These mornings are slow, despite the light air,
And even the robin's voice is still,

As if frozen in time with lingering will
Cautiously I slide out of bed into the chilly apartment,
Angry with myself for leaving the heater off again,
A subtle reminder that there are too many things to forget:
The bills or the meter or the first sign of spring.

The cool air follows me into the kitchen
And settles on the tiled floor,
Like my sheltie when I used to come home from school,
Following my every stride and tickling my feet,
But the stovetop reminds my tired eyes
That it's only the beginning of the week.

Jonathan Elias

Home Song

Mark McShane

The world is vast
And at times, it seems, endless and unforgiving.
Light,
True light,
Is few and far between.
And often, the wind bites so fiercely.
Until my eyes tremble open.
And my mind's ear turns to a distant ache.
Past the locked doors of snowy streets.
And a sound so simple and pure
Stretches from the strings of man
To cut the night
And call me home again.

Kami L. McManus

My Father's Stars

Amy Tressan

How could I have foreseen what we could have shared, I do not know.

I did not understand who you were in all your insufferable moments. For all your faults, your smothering, your anxiety-induced tantrums, I loved you still, yet less liking in tow.

How could I have imagined that I would miss you with such guttural aching, that the sun rose with your piano and set with your boundless Latin roots. And for all that, I did not know my hate was love.

I am older now, wiser now. As I walk your walk, I can see your musical soul, I can hear your ever-turning mind, I can smell your crisp musky aftershave, I can feel your endless, infinite love for me.

Oh dad, maybe one day I will meet you on the other side of your telescope.

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