

With a crew of fresh new faces and a few stars from years passed, this year's staff came together, eager to create a memorable publication. I am always pleasantly struck at how the vision for each edition seems to bubble to the surface of the annual submission pile. Slowly but surely connections or sparks from the art and writing paint a picture which gives us fuel to just dive in and create a new, exciting publication. From classic sketches of bones to triptychs of art and writing, the staff formulated a perfect homage and balance of classic and contemporary styles.

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to go to the echo website



Mackenzie Julo '14
Piano Man
Photography



on the radio

the man on the back of the garbage truck that trundles up 6th avenue
sings old Broadway songs tossing out his grand voice like pennies

into all our homeless cups

he is brooklyn badass he is

drowning in new york city's trash

he is so bright you are blinded he says

i just wanna make people smile

on the way to work, to the subway i just wanna make em smile

he says he knows when his work is getting close to an end

when the geometric negative scrapes of sky

turn from pale to red

at 6:15 every morning it's all this human beauty



In the Mountains

In the mountains the birds sing a happier tune
And the sweet air can make one swoon
In the mountains a shower is just a passing cloud
And everyone is with bliss endowed
In the mountains are the best wishing stars
And not so far off seems Mars
In the mountains the wind whispers stories untold
And the springs flow sweet and cold
In the mountains they're slow to label
And the sap flows thick though every maple
In the mountains drip from every tree
And one is calmed by the slightest breeze
In the mountains man and nature live side by side
And no highway is six lanes wide
In the mountains one can hear their inner voice
And sleeping late is never a choice
In the mountains everything seems a distant dream
And the world is with light a beam

Isabelle Ostertag '14





Isabelle Ostertag '14
The White Mountains
Watercolor

Neruda

He walked this floor where now I walk
He's written here where I now write
Books he once read
Windows he gazed out.

The same beams that once held his roof
Still hold the one above my head.

Water in the distance
Skylights that lit his pen.

On Isla Negra
Where the waves once crashed
And the sun once shone.

Chris George '14



Sage Solomine '14
Untitled
Charcoal

simile

mankind needs love
like a sparrow needs a window.

a caged sparrow.
an open window.

i look across the table at you
and smile.

Jessie Jameson '15

Madison Becker '13
Window to the Galaxy
Digital Photography



Charlotte Bradford '12
Sketchbooks Designs
Pen on Paper

real historic

I.
when the sky came down
it was not all at once
it drooped
strands of filthy water
mixing in the air

i was waiting for electricity
to spark jumble
from all those speakers
twisted cables on stage



II.
it drowned the fields
leaving the heat to lie down
and simmer atop sun-baked bodies
the news-flash was of the festival
she watched for the faces she knew

III.
gossamer threads of rain came
spilling all this yellow light
in the morning time
i scrunched the dirt between my toes
you sat in dripping clothes
beneath a fringe of muddy
hippie hair

Alex Taylor Block '15
Untitled
Scratch Plate



Scatterbrained and Silly

I am scatterbrained and silly and children are smarter than me.
When I was seven I was always reading books.
The grass was a good place to read.
And a rock was a good place to be and a hill was a good place to be.

“Shouldn’t you be famous by now?”
Go stick your cell phone in a glass of water.

Once upon a time I met a man whose voice sounded just like an electric guitar.
He spoke in power chords and riffs so I couldn’t help but fall in love.
You know a riff is worth a thousand words. We ran away to get married in
Austin and we’re gonna start a family band. I guess now I just like different stories.

“Shouldn’t you be famous by now?”
HmMMMM.

Well, maybe, but God knows it’s too late now. I may already be a middle-aged
man...Everything I see on TV pisses me off and they don’t play anything I like on
the radio. My doctor says I’m losing my hearing, I won’t ever get it back and I wish
you’d grow up.

“Shouldn’t you be famous by now?”

Well, fine then, let’s go. Because if the grass and the rocks won’t make me happy...
Let’s grab out leather jackets and leave the screen door swinging.
I want to get somewhere bright as grass and warm as the backseat of a Volvo. Soft
as sunscreen and sure as felt. Now the grass and hills can’t make me happy it’s not
as easy to find.

Maybe with trains to New York and careful smiles?
Maybe with a driver’s license and the perfect dress?
I’m looking in magazines and college campuses and bookstores and opening text
messages and at concerts and in crowds in novels and comedies and tragedies and
TV shows and in your face but you’re not making it easy.

Emily McNerney '12

In the City

In the city there are no stars
There're artificial lights, skyscrapers and cars
No stars wink and twinkle at you
The clear night pool is disturbed by something new
I turn my eyes towards the night sky
And wonder how others can live with this lie
The city is a wasted space

Filled with an alien life packaged with lace
I cover my eyes with my hand
And send a desperate wish to some distant land
For in the city it's hard to sleep
Without shining stars to watch over you keep
In the city there are no stars
There're artificial lights, skyscrapers and cars

Mirror Me

How can you even attempt to hold a blessed child in your hand, since, like a comet, they're too high up and are burned out when they fall? She comes home every day, calls me "father," and goes up to her room. And now she's come so far down, so out of reality, that only someone close to her can pull her back into today. I'm not that person. How could I be? I have too much on my mind, the death of her mother, my wife, the work that I have to force myself to do, and my problem that needs a peace treaty that will free me. All the pressure, the stress, the cacophony of street sounds, slurs and shuttles, is too much. Something has to give. My body simply can't take this much noise. So, I relax myself. It's not like I do anything illegal! I only drink a liquid ambrosia, joke with friends and make my own choice about when to go home. But it takes me away, a blessing and a curse, and my daughter slowly slips away. She comes home from high school social pressures into a home where she once laughed, baked cookies with her mother, and felt warm; but, now only holds empty kitchens and a mannequin in the hallway to greet her. So, when she walked in, her tears frozen from the cold weather, the mannequin could only wrap his cold wooden arms around her, which only made her feel more alone. I'm not really her father. It was a one night stand from my wild days of chasing freedom that had gone awry. I was everywhere else but by her side until the police phoned for her next of kin (her mother must have told her). They told me about the tragedy and how I was the only one to take care of her now. She was already 15! And her 16th birthday was anything but sweet, when I came home drunk and needed HER to take care of ME! I wish I knew how to talk to her, but I couldn't even talk to myself then. The only thing I was good at was to make stupid, funny, drunk comments about people at the office in the comforting security of my also-drunk friends, a few frozen beers, and a dwindling red cigarette. No inter-cubicle relations except my drinking buddies, and I didn't talk during the day. No big speeches at meetings about how we can improve our sales pitches that would consequentially lead me to a promotion. No honesty with myself that beer was ruining my life that I deserved to lead. In short, I was just another high school geek, college frat dropout who hasn't yet realized what it means to be 33 years old. And I had been given a 15 year old daughter who needed the father who had forgotten about her to come over and be a role model? Not possible. So, caught in this momentous task, how could I turn into an adult?

Corey Allred '12

eM rorriM



Jessica Milana '13
Sand Step
Photography

Charlotte Bradford '13
Sea Life
Charcoal and Pastel



doctor o

there are all these organs
waiting to be harvested!
i am but a humble farmer
of sorts
i reap i harvest i do what
farmers do

sometimes i can grow livers from stemy
unknown scratch
so many waiting for slickster kidneys,
rockabilly hearts, a sexy set
of new lungs, a go-go pancreas

i can stitch together skins
install new hip flexors
update your kneecaps
the ones you busted in rollerskating
for the brand new
Danbury roller-derby team

did you know

in florida
two kids died from a mud ameba
that crawled up their nasal passageways
and ate their brains

(a deteriorating cortex
neon green light switches flicking
rapidly like mutated piano keys)

five football players got
MRSA from sitting on sweaty
locker room benches

(their skin boils and pops and
doctors say things like -
be mindful of the oozing)

this is just a captivating anecdote

pretty soon
it will be something like
glasses out bodies so we can see
all of each others insides
babes with
lungs dyed neon pink
piercings on their slick
bicep muscles
that rockabilly heart
smashing out with
zebra-printed ventricles

when you die i'll mindfully
cut open your chest
i'll scoop out your kidneys your
liver your
heart
i'll bedazzle them
and make them re-start
to sustain
this population of clogged-artery'd
half-kidney'd, hepatitis liver'd,
black lung'd and genetically
deficient
individuals

i am but a humble farmer
of sorts
i reap i harvest i do what
farmers do

Violet Degnan '13





Alex Taylor Bloch '15
Untitled
Scratch Plate

Masquerade

Truly the greatest struggles in life
Do not result from hatred or spite
Nor from other persons, nor from strife
But from self and learning wrong from right

In many ways we are like clay
And are shaped by persons and things
We change a little every day
For no human is born with wings

We may disguise ourselves with clothes
Attempt to change inside with blame
With hobbies, jargon, a new nose
Perhaps wishing for a new name

But our true form we cannot submerge
Which will someday rise from the deep
Despite the great overwhelming urge
For a mask is very hard to keep

Masquerades often end in harm
The mask slips, showing untold tales
One's costume loses its old charm
True features we push back with gales

Such disguises are no child's game
They are actually hard to sustain
Life may never, ever be the same
Those without costumes are often the same

The thick mask might adjust once more
And one's slip be quite forgotten
But no one can hide behind lore
For in truth are things begotten

Or true form might resurface to stay
Dispelling the dark clouds that once loomed
Chasing uncertainty o'er the bay
Saving self from where it was marooned

One day one's true form will ignite
The seraphs have declared it so
Darkness is overcome by light
Which cannot be smothered down

Cling to self like moss on a high rock
Wishing does not make one be
Do not always follow the larger flock
Appreciating self is the very key

Isabelle Ostertag '14

Charlotte Bradford '12
Before
Mixed Media Shadowbox



Share a Sense of Rivers

I. Like a bildungsroman you were that day,
like the first sip of anything besides milk
as you and I kicked out legs at the sun
and you drew me a new map with your flip-flops. . .
And there's something in you that goes 'round in a cape and mask
and I stay in my street clothes all day so
thrilled to be your sidekick,
I know you didn't hang the moon
but you lit it up in the glitziest neon.

2. Something I'll never understand:
How it's so easy to believe you've written these words before,
how, for all I know, you're writing them right now,
how somehow we're running parallel when most people just criss-cross.
Stay in formation,
in this uniform of skinny jeans and combat boots,
til' some dreadful real-life in the future do us part.

Emily McNerney '12

Kidney Stones Rock

Where's my kidney stone?
Never even left a note.
So totally rude.

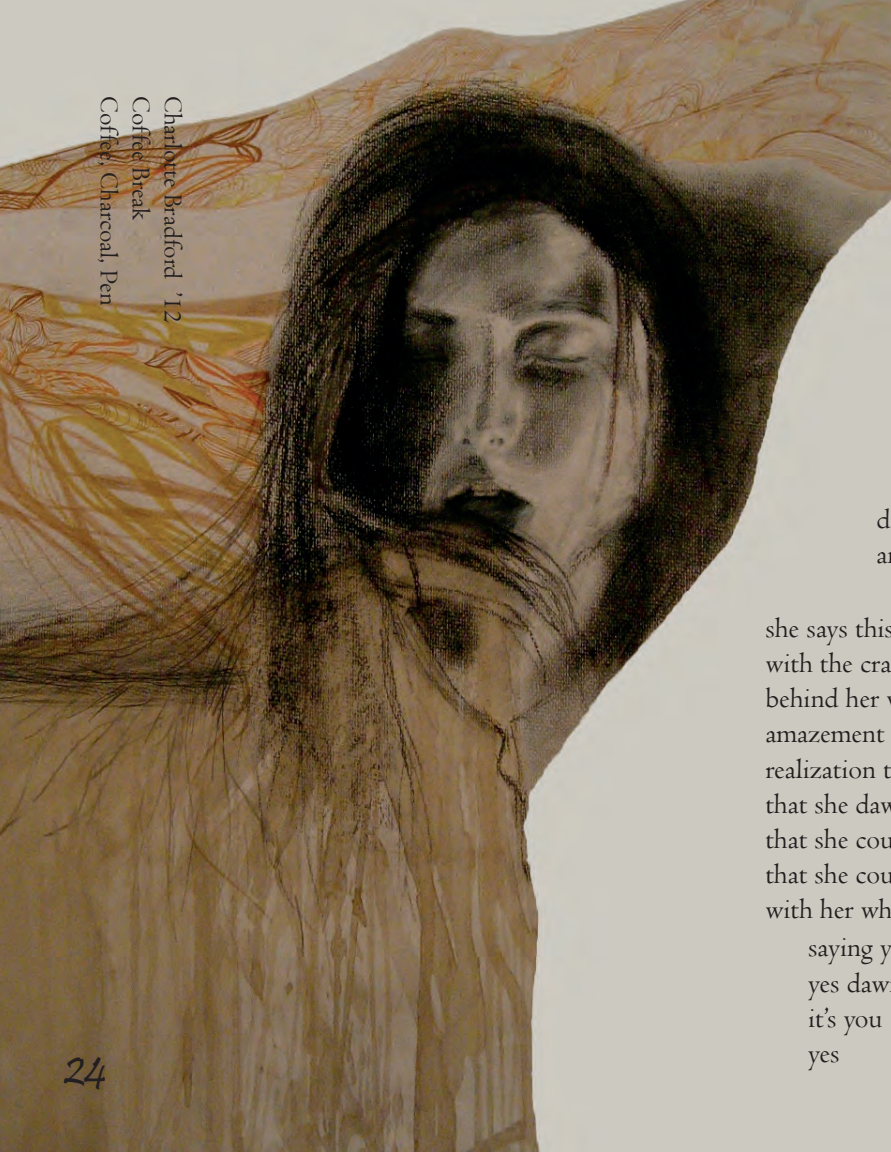
Erica Moran '13
Pelvis
Charcoal

Excruciating.
I would rather birth a child.
Please never come back.

O, where have you gone?
The doctor could not find you.
That was a mean trick.

I named mine Kid Rock
How cute, too bad he ditched me.
I really hate him.

Erica Moran '12



Charlotte Bradford '12
Coffee Break
Coffee, Charcoal, Pen

on the radio

dawn besterio has the lilting bodacious ass of
harlem

strutting from her lips to the wavelengths

i was 270 pounds

now i'm 160 toned up and tight you know

i ran my first 5k with Eye of the Tiger on

replay

the finish line was all uphill but i got Rocky

on my mind

so i was a-okay

dawn wants to start things

and finish things in her life

i don't wanna give up anymore

she says this into the radio

with the cracky sound of tears

behind her voice but they are

amazement tears

realization tears

that she dawn

that she could finish three miles

that she could pass over the uphill finish line

with her whole team around her screaming her name

saying yes

yes dawn

it's you

yes

at 6:24 every morning it's all this human beauty

La Vengeance de l'Albatros
Homage à Charles Baudelaire

L'albatros était abuse par les mauvais marins
Et il voulait de la vengeance.
Alors, avec un grand vol d'autres oiseaux
Il a attaqué les bateaux
Les homes bêtes ont couru
Mais les oiseaux étaient très rapides
Des corbeaux et des pies
Ont crevé les yeux des marins
Des piverts ont poignardé les marins avec leurs becs
L'albatros a pris la capitaine dans ses serres
Et il l'a depose dans la mer.
Après que tous les homes soient morts,
La plupart des oiseaux est partie
Le roi de l'azur a levé ses ailes,
Et il a vole au ciel
Il était enfin libre!

Madison Becker '13
Sabago
Digital Photography

The Revenge of the Albatross
Homage to Charles Baudelaire

The albatross had been abused by evil sailors
And he wanted revenge
So, with a giant flock of other birds,
He attacked the boats.
The stupid men ran,
But the birds were quick.
Ravens and magpies
Slashed out the sailor's eyes
Woodpeckers pecked the sailors with their beaks
The albatross took the captain in his talons
And he dropped him in the sea.
After all the men were dead,
Most of the birds left
The king of the blue lifted his wings,
And he flew into the sky
He was finally free!

Jessica Milana '13

{paper: noun. A substance made from wood pulp, rags, straw, or other fibrous material, usually in thin sheets, used to bear writing or printing, for wrapping things, etc.}

but of the paper,
no one knows.
they know the tree,
they know the words,
they know the paper
that mankind knows.
“i bear your words
your thoughts,
your dreams!”
the paper would say
but it can't,
it's just a piece of paper
but
if you sit
and let the paper write,
you can get what mankind calls
i n s p i r a t i o n
{noun, an inspiring or animating action or influence}
or paper speaking—
or paper speaking!
and it comes out
as poems
or stories
or essays
or letters
or
or
or
or the paper forgets
and you have to write
the rest yourself



Sage Solomine '14
Tree of Fire
Oil Sticks

The Ladybug

Drifting away along the water
drowned petals, my lady sits.
Her back, spotted with black dots. The background
drowned in red. When her wing splits,

a whole new world arises from
her back. She readies her wings
so she may fly. Her body holds steady.
The leaf holds her as a shelf

holds a book, Her wings start to beat.
The leaf becomes unstable
from the strength of my lady's wing. She sways
the leaf until it's able

to throw her into the wind.
She soars through a breeze of air.
Until her focus diverts, and she flies
so fast that she has skinned the

air. She ascends to a leaf, and
her wings close up once again.
The red retreats across black spots again,
she starts her process again.

Lucy Kiely '14



Paper Cranes

Whispers spread throughout the crowd,
the curtains in front of us parting
seemingly on their own.


I watch the last wisps of sunlight
disappear into the mid-November sky.
First tenet of the night,
and though I have been here for a week,
there are still corners for me to explore.

The space is dark,
save for a few candles
floating in the black abyss.

When the room is full,
the flames brighten,
the flap of a door disappearing into thin air.
I can see now that the room is
full of paper animals;
some life size
some which would fit in the palm of my hand;
creatures I recognize
and beings I could never have imagined.
Strolling to the center of the room,
I find a small, birdlike creature.

It is then I know:
these are no ordinary pieces of parchment.

As I bend down to touch the bird,
it ruffles its pages
and flutters to my knee.
Its wings are covered in words;
words written in more languages than
I knew existed in the world.
From its beak,
it drops a small scroll.
It's not until I exit the tent that I dare read it:



Don't lose hope.

I tuck the paper in my pocket, knowing that someday I will need it.

Madison Becker '13

Madison Becker '13
Light My Candle
Digital Photography



femme fatale

sharp red pointed heels
stab the linoleum floor like knives
with every strutting stride she takes
canted hips snug in a little black number
and long long legs
wrapped in sheerest nylon
all the way down to her stilettos,
red like blood and lipstick
mixed smoothly like the dry martini
in the clear elegant glass
held delicately
in her pale graceful hands
that she swills gently as she laughs,
cold as a fire,
to the newest fly entrapped
in her diamond studded web.
elegant
he thinks to himself
and shudders without knowing why.

Jessie Jameson '15



Charlotte Bradford '12
Looking In
Charcoal and Pastel on News-
print



Charlotte Bradford '12
Out to Dry
Mixed Media

Snapshot of the Goddess's Favorite Porno

a marble house houses an ancient greek goddess who laments
the sight of a spider web hanging in the hazy horizon made of twine
thick as the wrists of strong-footed women ashore lifting bags to the
heavy stone harbor waiting for their husbands to return

but aphrodite is distracted by a sailor with a high planed face and a big
adams apple she is giggling manically look look how the love tears
him apart isn't that delightful what a show oh look how he crumples his hat
look at his wet lip his glossed sunny skin cored eyes deep as her opening palm

aphrodite then lights down into a slim white body the house says wait don't go
she says do not be silly house i want this leave me alone she is sliding a hip
into the air ruby lips golden bands strung around her arms jasmine heavy hair
the thick wrist'ed women ashore stop unloading the ships

the sailors quit throwing the ropes and the clips the entire world stills except for
aphrodite dancing her killer python dance unfolding pink satin from the high curve
of her breast still giggling manically still saying stop calling me back house i want
this all these humans see how they stop all of their lives for me i am hungry for them

the man sees aphrodite liting towards the harbor and the ship twine goes
like dead snakes in his hands she knows the hollow of her stomach is the
stretched veined skin of a predatory cat and eyes the color of polluted sea foam
when she smiles her straight teeth flash like bullets and her cobra hypnotism burns

like a stare that could distill blood to wine she calls to him you you you can you make me scream?
could you ever dominate me? his tongue goes like a jellyfish in his mouth so she rises up and twists
his head from his body jams his hands along her chest does a
waltzing sexy sliding dance across the ship deck she holds him and he holds her back

with all his hair gripped in her fist swinging his dismembered skull back and forth
lapping up spurts of blood that crisp up her hair and still giggling still
saying look house look at his beautiful smile look how all these humans will now
stop for me

Madison Becker '13
Tracks
Digital Photography



La Pluie

Ma mère m'a dit que c'était les anges qui pleuraient
Mon père m'a dit que c'était le chat de tonnerre
Ma sœur m'a dit que c'était les vents
Chauds et froids qui se battaient
Mais à l'école on a appris
la raison scientifique
La raison qui m'a frappe
Mais, ma mère
Mon père
Et ma sœur ne mentent pas, non?
Mon monde est tombé
Aussi silencieusement et aussi vigoureusement
Que les larmes des anges
C'est pas possible
C'est pas possible
Mon professeur doit être le menteur...

The Rain

My mother told me it was the angels crying
My father told me it was the thunder cat
My sister told me it was
The hot and cold winds fighting
But in school we learned
The "scientific" reason
The reason that hurt me
But my mother
My father
And my sister don't lie, right?
My world fell
As silently yet forcefully
As the angels' tears
It is not possible
It is not possible
My teacher must be the liar...

Paige Hamilton '13

at 6:39 every morning it's all this human beauty

on the radio

a poet reads his mesh poems
in spanglish

he says eleven like this

euh-leh-van

he says love like this

lu-vee

he says spanish is his father

english is his wife

he cannot say i love you

in spanish

his accent is so loose
sometimes you can't tell what he's
even saying

but he is so soft and old

and wise – you can tell

even on the radio - like weathered
fragrant tobacco leaves

so it doesn't matter you know he must be saying

like food love language divided me growing heat

being knowing teeth

or child



Sunday Night Napoleon

Oh in what great finitude great deeds are done
All sippin' sin from a red cup, the reverend's son
Blacked out on a pair of Venetian rugs
Reconciled by the father's love
Avuncular revulsion for Ra, the god of sun
The temporary repetition of repetitious temporary

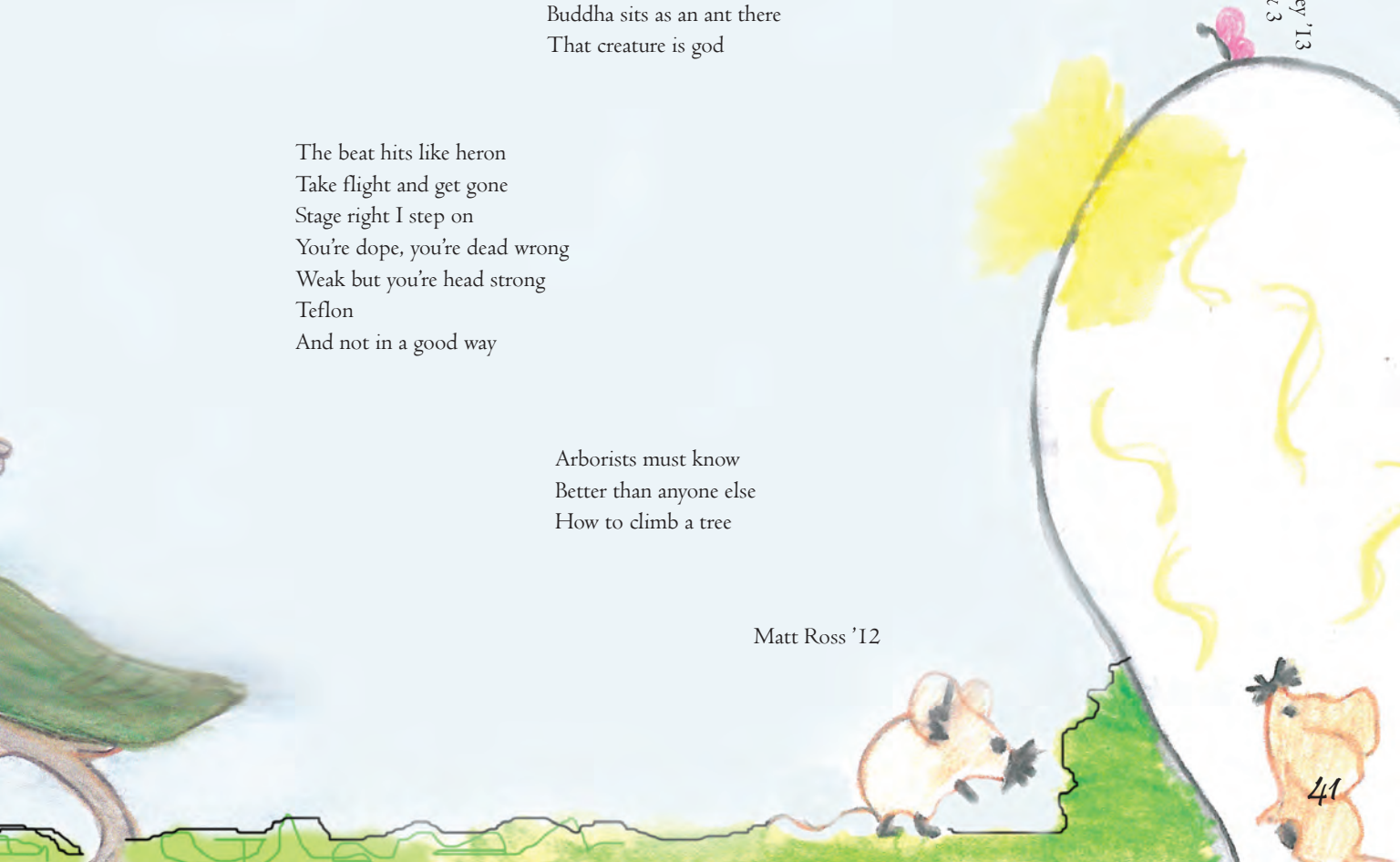
Weak or strong decay
The universe expands length
Up up or beyond

Cosmic rays fill space
Buddha sits as an ant there
That creature is god

The beat hits like heron
Take flight and get gone
Stage right I step on
You're dope, you're dead wrong
Weak but you're head strong
Teflon
And not in a good way

Arborists must know
Better than anyone else
How to climb a tree

Matt Ross '12



Shannon Carey '13
Local Latte
Digital Photography



One Sip, One Pen, One Paris.

My mother had been a Francophile most of her life. Stacks of books either written from or about Paris littered my house, and on occasion I would skim one that had an intriguing cover or title, but for the most part I lacked the same enthusiasm for France that my mom did. That was until I started to read Hemingway, or rather a book about his life. I was required to do a biography book report on a famous artist in fourth grade, and of course I had always seen the book just lying around so I chose to use it. At first I just was intrigued by Hemingway, but soon I was more interested in the city and its writers' culture--meeting at cafés, writing some of the great literature of the 20th century; it sounded like paradise.

So there I was, fifteen, sitting outside the Deux Magots Café, on Boulevard St. Germain, one of Paris' major roads, with a cup of coffee, leather bound notebook, and ball point pen. Laid back in my chair, in more or less the same spot as my writing forgathers, pretending to be a young Ernest Hemingway, minus the cigarettes, trying to articulate the spirit of Paris through my prose. This wasn't the first time I had tried to write about Paris, and after writing half a page about the pigeon bouncing in front of me, I ripped it out. I sat back in my seat.

My coffee cup had just more than a sip left at the bottom, which I had been reluctant to drink since it was my final refuge of a distraction. This is what always happened, after two weeks of attempting to write: I ended up with cold, empty coffee cups. Instead of finishing my coffee, I returned to watching the woman at the table next to mine. She was outrageously French, with her high cheek bones, chic blond hair and elegant clothing, holding a cigarette in one hand and a book in the other. She couldn't have been over twenty-two, though it was always harder to tell in France since

every female teenager and her mother was so stylish. I had noticed her when I chose my table, sitting beside her rather than my usual spot underneath the corner of the green awning a couple tables over.

I leaned forward to pull my French dictionary from the back pocket of my newly purchased, slim-fitting jeans. Discreetly flicking through the pages under the table, I found the word for "lighter" and "pack". I was developing the scene in my mind; I would lean in and ask for a light, only to realize I had forgotten my pack of cigarettes at home, a solid icebreaker. I was sure that talking to a gorgeous French girl would be inspiration enough to get me through my seemingly endless writer's block. After repeating the words I had studied over and over in my head, I leaned in her direction.

"Pardon." She didn't look up.

"Pardon," I repeated a little louder, finally soliciting a reaction.

"Oui, comment?" she looked right at me this time.

"Uhh, vous avez un..." she cut me off as I stumbled over the words.

"I speak English." Her accent was pretty impeccable, though not perfect.

"Oh, pardon," I recoiled, embarrassed. I used French by accident, "pardon" had become a fixture of my extremely limited vocabulary and I habitually used it for everything now, trying not to give away my blatant Americanism.

"You wouldn't happen to have a light would you?" I said regaining my confidence as I mimed reaching into the inner, nonexistent pocket of my corduroy jacket.

"Ya, one second."

As she put her book down and reached for the lighter in her purse, I swore under my breath and, she turned her head to see me checking all of my imaginary pockets for my imaginary pack of cigarettes.

“Sorry, I must have left them at home,” I apologized.

I smiled, maybe even laughed a little bit, and shook my head, all the while concealing excitement, having perfectly executed such a ruse. I hadn’t thought much past my introduction. The plan had been to break the ice and then proceed like a cocksure James Joyce. Before I could appear unsure though, she picked up her pack of cigarettes, opened it and tapped one out.

“Here, have one of mine,” she offered, reaching her arm out to me.

I tried shaking my head and thanking her because I certainly wasn’t a smoker, but as she continued to hold her arm there I couldn’t resist taking it from her. Leaning in even further, I held it up to my lips while she sparked the lighter. I had seen *Breathless* enough times to know how to take a couple quick drags, and let the smoke out of my mouth. The smoke tasted horrendous, how I imagine brimstone would smell, but I felt so damn cool I tried not to even think about it.

“Thanks, I’m Matt, by the way.” I introduced myself, real suave.

“I’m Abella” she smiled.

I shook her hand before leaning back to my chair, equally delighted and disgusted by my conman-like charm. It was then I realized that this was it, the ultimate French moment, the moment I had been searching for: smoking a cigarette at a café with a beautiful girl, drinking coffee, with my leather bound notebook, pointed toe sneakers, tight pants, and v-neck shirt, the modern reincarnation of American novelist of the past. I was the new age Fitzgerald, the modern Picasso living in Paris, with the addition of an

attractive young woman and a cigarette, the formula was finally complete. I took another drag on the cigarette, trying not to actually inhale too much smoke this time. Fighting the urge to cough, I turned back to the girl. Just as I was going to ask her where she went to school, or what she was reading, or if she was spending the summer in Paris, her cell phone rang. She picked it up and immediately started speaking fervent French.

She picked it up and immediately started speaking fervent French. She flung her belongings into her purse as she chattered, and before I knew it, she had rushed off down the busy road. The moment was over, gone as fast as it had come. I tried to salvage it by taking another sip of coffee and drawing in a large plume of smoke, but that only led to some violent retching and coughing. The customers at the surrounding tables all looked in my direction. Hoping to forgo any further embarrassment and revulsion, I flicked the cigarette onto the pavement and ground it under my shoe. Digging into my pocket I pulled out a couple coins, sorted them into the proper amount and dropped them on the table to pay for my currently cold last sip of coffee.

Before getting up, I took another look at the empty page in my notebook. After a couple of minutes just starrng into the blankness, waiting for the inspiration to overtake me, I wrapped the leather strip around the empty notebook, and stood up. Stepping out onto the sidewalk, I walked slowly towards the corner, some fifty feet away. I was puzzled and frustrated, never before had I had trouble writing about anything, especially something I was so passionate about. The moment had come, which I had anticipated would have flipped a switch aligning all of the creative stars, but nothing came.

When I reached the corner, I looked up, finally taking in my surroundings. The boulevard was loud as buses and cars rushed by, and two business men in suits biked by in front of me. Across the street a group of old men.

Across the street a group of old men were playing jazz, developing a small crowd. Right next to me sat a couple in another café, holding hands across the table, joking and laughing. I looked up to see the spires of Notre Dame in the distance, and the rustic French buildings that surrounded me, with their intricate designs carved into the old stone. Everywhere I looked the city oozed history and love and life, but no matter how hard I tried to explain Paris, I couldn't.

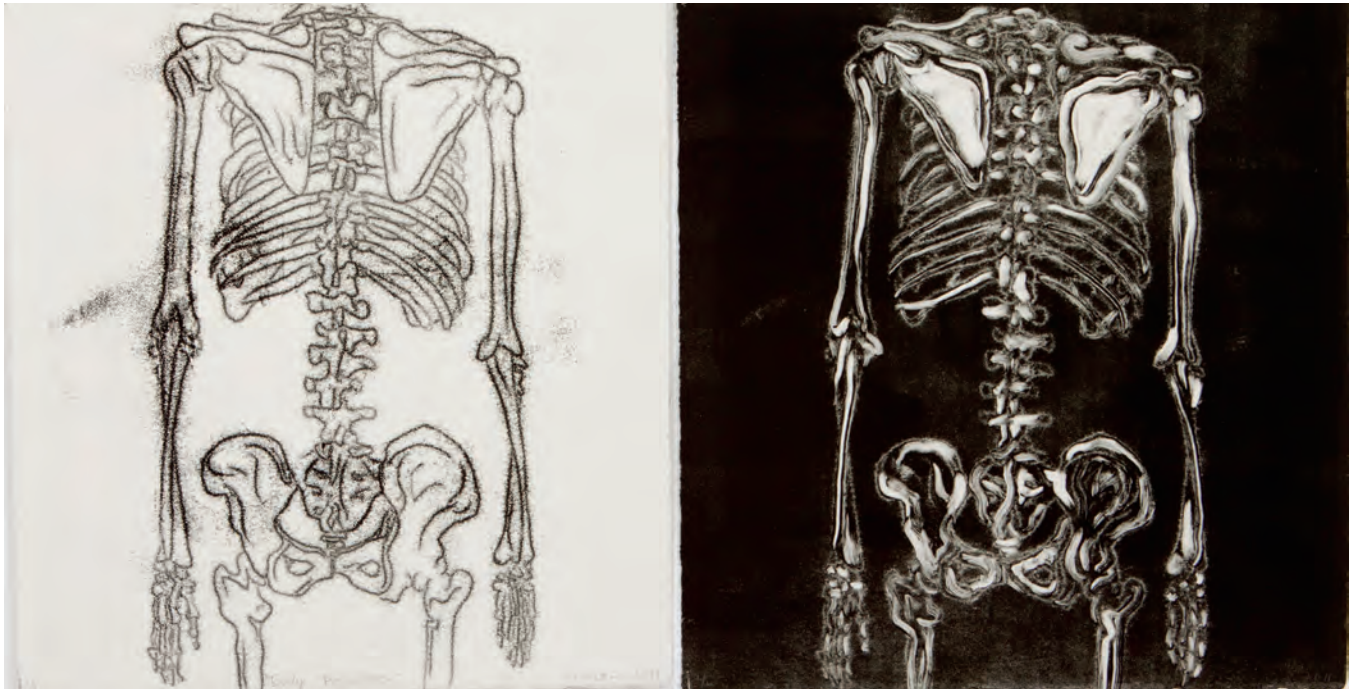
I took a detour down a quiet side road off of the main strip, walking until I reached the Seine. I crossed the nearest footbridge and sat down. Looking out over the dirty river, I had an epiphany. I could no more capture the spirit of Paris then I could be Hemingway. No matter how hard I try to explain it, it can't be explained, it can only be lived and absorbed. Reading Hemingway or dining like Joyce didn't let me communicate Paris; that only affords a bit of nostalgia that others who have been here can indulge in. I'll never be French or part of the lost generation for that matter, but I've stopped trying to be, just as I've stopped trying to do the impossible: encapsulate the incredible soul of Paris.

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Eco-Bottles
Digital Photography



art & review



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