

# THE IDEATE REVIEW

ISSUE 2 | SUMMER 2018



# EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers –

Welcome to Issue 2 of *The Ideate Review*. We are ecstatic to showcase our selected works of poetry, prose, and art that are related to our theme, global issues and identity.

We have noted an incredible range of works by talented writers and artists coming from diverse backgrounds this round. In total, we have received over 45 submissions from across the globe, including France, India, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States (Alaska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Washington D.C., etc.), and many more. The talents present in many of these works truly astounded us, which prompted us to choose selectively.

In this issue, you will find works that exhibit a strong relevance to our magazine's theme. We hope that you recognize the creativity and voice behind each of these works.

Jimin Lee  
Founder & Editor-in-Chief  
of *The Ideate Review*

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# ANCESTORS

LAURA POTTS

From the sour breath of quarry towns we came,  
to our scars the firelight a mother. In another land  
our broken chord stretched far on the moors,  
the flint of our tongue, the tinder, the coal,  
hung in their black sacks our lungs sang  
to the dead dark night of the child, too young  
in her grave. We wore the eyes of the damned.

Our biblical chant we took to the wars,  
candled the lanterns to hopes of our home,  
when Madame in her manor, high summer,  
forgot. In our hallway of night, watched lights  
in distant houses dream up their happinesses -  
all the bells of Notre Dame - and mourned  
in our trench, in our filth, in our lice,

for our spouses - their corpses - when our dead  
stank the ground. Hometown was lonely that year.  
Here, us, we never danced down promenades,  
our arms like silver chimes. Our drip was slow  
through time, gritted and gnarled, no child  
never aspired to living to three. We got a VC.  
And still died on the slump of our knees.

And in the candle of our last hour's sleep, across  
the moors and the mines, sit the ghosts  
of our shanties long-crippled in time. The moon,  
with his holy eye of light, still sits on his swing,  
smoking his pipe. Here, at night, tell them we saw  
the chasms and grey seascapes of fate, the cracks  
in mankind, poverty's shadows tall on the walls,  
our dark graveside flowers all dead on the day  
when our bones got up and, slowly, walked away.

Don't say that our stars are forgotten today.

Don't say I am nothing at all.



# COMFORT WOMAN

YEJI CHUNG

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# IGNORING THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY

PHIL GOLDSTEIN

There was a time when such remembrances were  
somber if anesthetic, a  
necessary nourishment of the soul, but  
distant, didactic, like a third-grade shoebox diorama.

*Of course we tried to get visas to America.*

Here are their shoes, their hair,  
their wilting candles of lives,  
permanently preserved.  
How could you forget something that burned you?

*How bad could it really be? It could always be worse.*

Now, it is urgent, fresh,  
coupled with tears and  
3 a.m. phone calls, not to the president, but  
immigration lawyers, our new superheroes.

*They need us, don't they? We're essential.*

With the stroke of a pen,  
80 years of  
historical memory gets erased  
like so many embarrassing tweets.

*Hide! But don't hide here!*

What happens to your face and heart and brain  
when fear consumes your body  
like a raging, toxic fire?  
What is left of you, you smoldering thing?

*Where are they taking us?*

Untethered from the laws of physics,  
time melts and bends and drips,  
and history has no meaning.  
What is memory without its persistence?

*I'm scared, Bubbee.*

Our generation's MS St. Louis will be  
our collective indifference and numbness to  
suffering we can't possibly imagine  
but too easily ignore or dismiss.

*Hush, meyn kleyn meyd, don't do anything to stand out.*

History's shame only comes later,  
like the quiet after a storm,  
but should be raging through the night,  
pelting our faces with its presence.

*You must let me die if I tell you to.*

What has not changed is  
the inhumanity of our leaders.  
What has not changed is  
the humanity of desperate wanderers.

*I will let you die, if it will ease your pain.*

“You shall neither wrong a stranger,  
nor oppress him:  
for you were strangers  
in the land of Egypt.”

*Bubbee*: Yiddish word for “grandmother”  
*meyn kleyn meyd*: Yiddish phrase for “my little girl.”

# SEVEN POUNDS OF TRASH A DAY

YVONNE HIGGINS LEACH

and that includes me  
and every other American.  
Every Thursday on our block  
we haul our rotting food scraps,  
our #5 and #6 plastic  
and Styrofoam containers  
to the curb,  
and I am thinking how  
my plastic coffee lid  
from Starbucks  
will take twenty to thirty years  
to decompose in some  
shapeless, three-hundred-foot high  
immortal slum of our bygones,  
how skittering birds  
will drum up  
some dead thing  
amid the bursting pile  
of tormented colors.  
Everything inside me  
is rattling  
like wind driving  
at a loose door  
for how pithy my  
small changes—  
not buying plastic  
water bottles,  
shortening my hot showers,  
turning down the heat,  
when I too  
am part of humanity  
that is simply changing  
too late, as if the earth can keep  
sustaining us,  
as if it's not really  
the earth at all.



# THE TRADITION OF ESKIMO ICE CREAM

JULEEN EUN SUN JOHNSON

*For Samatha*

Blizzard snow.  
Snow cone.  
Eskimo ice cream,  
comes as whale blubber.  
Traditional. Turn of  
the century.  
Slush, slushed hard.  
Harder. Rock to the head.  
Headliner  
Fire from a harpoon,  
not a gun. Turn of  
the century.  
Boat, boaters as engines.  
Not the motor, but  
a paddle,  
made of Sitka Spruce.  
Ceremony. Cemeteries of dead,  
deadly deadest.  
Come as spiritual noise.  
In a photograph,  
squiggle lines.  
Scribble lines.  
Lines as lining in  
fire light.  
Lightning does not come.  
It came as a whale.  
A whales spirits willed,  
as sacrifice for the year.  
A year possible last.  
Possibly last rituals.

Real Eskimo ice cream  
melting in winter.

# THE END OF TIME

AARUSHI BHARDWAJ

The cost of peace turns out to be too profound yet too simple to be paid.

It's a quarter past three in the afternoon.

The radio is buzzing with a low static noise. A mosquito lazily swoops in and settles on the dark mahogany of her desk.

A scone is lying half eaten on the thin, delicate linen of a napkin, topped with a dollop of cream dusted with small pieces of orange zest. An antique grandfather clock chimes in the living room and a pack of peppermint flavored gum lies half used beside an almost empty glass of orange juice.

It's normal.

It's monotonous.

It's *ominous*.

Truth be told, had always thought the end of the world would be more exciting.

The ringing stops.

She shakes her head.

She isn't sure when it happens, not exactly.

But it does happen.

It isn't as dark as it's supposed to be. Not when electricity is a swiftly diminishing service and it's past midnight in January. There's a thunderous surge of noise as the rickety old fence crushes under the weight of the incoming crowd. The fan overhead spins slowly, sluggishly, *tauntingly* in a precarious circle-

*"-destroy those who hate-"*

The crowd gets louder.

*"-four, three, two-"*

It's inescapable, unpreventable, inevitable.

*"-one!"*

The fan continues to spin.

*"-and that's it, knock it down!"*

-and then it crackles. Produces a short spark of orange and red, *fizzles*. Dies.

It's chaos.

It's pandemonium.

Her father and mother are fighting one of the Goldstein brothers. Two of her brothers are covering for Charlie, who is trying to fight off their old

*neighbor*. Her best friend is screaming murder and she whips around for half a second only to see her other best friend fall down in a pile of rubble to never get up again.

Better news is that she no longer *cares* about things like goodness, righteousness or *morality*. Her brother is dead, and her childhood best friend is dead and she can't bring herself to face- to *recognize*- the bodies lying scattered in her way and that *so many people are dead*.

The worst thing is that she recognizes some of those that come after her. It's jarring, the realization.

Peace being destroyed in the name of peace.

There isn't a bench anymore.

She doesn't know why it's the first thing she notices- leeches onto- but her steps are frail, and her eyes are bloodshot, and her hands are trembling, and she can't bring herself to look at the pile of bodies strewn along the streets. Streets she had walked upon- had called *home*.

She *can't*.

But the bench-

It's in pieces.

Several wooden planks are splintered and scarred. The plaster is off in most of the places and there's more blood than paint on its surface and a peculiar grey *haze* that's sitting- settling- in the back of her throat, sticking to it, like a lump she has trouble swallowing.

She looks around with uncertainty.

She doesn't know where to go, not now.

And then-

She sees a familiar face detach himself from the arms of his parents and move towards where the bench *used* to be. A childhood memory of them eating ice lollies in the summer heat, lazing on that very bench ghosts on the edge of her mind. Despite herself, the corners of her mouth turn slightly upward. Two more faces emerge from underneath the shattered canopy of the boathouse; and there's the other three- faces streaked with blood, dirt, *shame*- and it's equally horrifying and fascinating, this fragile convergence of their shared pasts and delicate future.

Almost in unison, they reach the bench, mutely folding themselves into a tight huddle.

She sees the red of their eyes, the hollow of their cheeks- and something in her breaks seeing her friend's watery blue gaze turn haunted- and her grip on the wood is so tight- so *desperate*- that her knuckles have turned white with the sheer force of it-

But still.

She has never felt such crushing, overwhelming relief that all of them are breathing and all of them are alive and relief that they are standing and relief that *surpasses* the mixture of guilt and regret that has settled in her stomach and she is *relieved*. She knows that nothing will ever be the same and nothing can erase what they have seen, what they have *done* and nothing can bring back her brother. The gash on her forearm is permanent, but they're here, they're together and that's what matters- it *has* to be.

Still, no one speaks.

The weight of the moment is unbearably heavy.

Until it isn't.

Someone snorts.

It's sudden and uncharacteristic and totally unpredictable but it's *something* and something is better than nothing-

A muscle in her neck twitches.

It spreads- laughter. Contagious and so unbelievably reliving and its equal parts terrible and beautiful and war shouldn't be a part of any sixteen-year old's life. But they've seen things, experienced things that destroy the meaning of the word humanity but they're together and alive and *safe*- peaceful.

And it isn't comfortable, and it isn't joyful, but it isn't *vacant* either, and even though their homes are gone, *gone*- reduced to ruins and ashes-

They can be rebuilt.

She's sure of that.

People might dream that justice and peace win the day, but that's not how the story goes.

Perhaps the anguish of war is the cost of peace that, in the end, the future generations must swallow.

The thundering helicopters and the dogs snarling at crying children, those are the ones who know the cost of peace. The millions of Africans who fight for the abolition of racial injustice while the government saturates on the idea of war and desolation. The hundreds of innocent victims of terror attacks; those are the ones who pay the cost of peace.

The slaughtering of hope is the price a common man pays for peace.

# DESERTIFICATION

CEINWEN E. CARIAD HAYDON

June's tomorrows wormed into July.  
Dense and humid skies, charcoaled by insects,  
withheld wet mercy from earth clumped dry.  
Storms brewed then never broke. Clever  
men tied loose ends in frantic prayers,  
yet clouds withheld life from plants and birds.  
Scarecrows grew lazy amongst dead ravens,  
unfazed by rank air. Bodies decomposed,  
flesh to ash transition, complete, rendered  
in one heretic, hellish moment. Soon passed.

# A LETTER FROM MY FUTURE GREAT-GRANDSON

YVONNE HIGGINS LEACH

I will spare you the details except to say water rises with ghostly fingers, pulling its gray sheet higher and tighter, or water is nowhere—land parched, unforgiving, war torn. Air is heavy and unclean, or thrashes a windstorm of dirt and ash-dust so thick we can't see for days. To think the sun other than scorching and dangerous is an old dream. I could go on and on about the sounds of unnamed insects galaxy-ing across the black sky, the vanishing plants and animals, so little food, but I will spare you the lack of hope.

I write to you, great-grandmother, because it is your face I see when I close my eyes. Already too late for my parents and their parents, but not for you, and not for your generation. Did you think you were preordained? Sporting a veneer of singular survival, you were more concerned about your daily appointments and enjoying another evening of television. Simply easier to avoid drumming up the dread of an uncertain future?

I write to you by candlelight because our city is dead, because my wife and daughter—whom we debated having and now regret—begin yet another migration tomorrow. We will count ourselves lucky to be like the geese in your day: That by the tens of thousands packed the cerulean sky, and by some force landed in a new and safe season. In droves we will move over the shrinking earth in search of an ounce of predictable sustenance and some repose.

Consider this payback, having to read this letter. Pass it on to others in your generation, wherever they are. I see you wincing and trying to look away, like you did all those generations ago.

# AND STILL THE SHOCK- WAVES CRACK MY WALLS

ALEXANDRE FERRERE

Hangover, I opened the green door two stories under my apartment  
to a charming old lady, who once had lived in my place.

She was ten; I was none.

She showed me where once a German horse and a bestial officer  
laid dead, scattered on the ground by a sudden bomb;

She described how she had to step over the corpses  
on her way back from the bakery, bread falling from her arms,  
& returning Home, to see Mom one more time before the next blast.

She pointed at the caves where she hid for too long,  
at the close buildings where Germans slept,

At my calm room where once stood up a family on death row.

I listened in silence, my head ached, my heart moaned. Bomb.

# DEMOLITION

GRACE SEIFERT

A home has been taken,  
squatters rights do not apply.  
This was their home first.  
Creatures occupied this land before you cut it down,  
for you to create shopping centers and restaurants,  
they search for somewhere to sleep.  
Mothers try to find food for their young,  
while you look for a new dress,  
right above the graves of thousands.  
But the money they receive makes the guilt disappear,  
and their greed only grows.  
With every chop of the tree, the blood on their hands flow,  
but the green covers the red.



# HOPE IS A FLIGHTLESS BIRD

EVAN WILLIAMS

*In Response to Billy Collins's "Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes"*

Hope has feathers—  
But I can't fly  
When I'm looking up at a yellow eye—  
Tumbled free of pins and yet pinned  
While the fly buzzes at the windowpane—  
Its wings playing a funeral march for me and mine  
While the yellow eye waxes poetic  
About dividing water like a swimmer,  
But Brock Turner taught us all  
That there are types of breaststroke that land you in prison—  
Or won't, depending on who you are,  
Poet laureates and Stanford students are safe,  
But the fly still buzzes in my ear,  
Ringing, ringing, ringing out like a gunshot not yet released—  
He's cocked, locked, and ready to fire a load—  
Ready to bareback a swan  
And not worry about being bitten because he's a predator on the Sabbath—  
Believes that I can't respond,  
Either because I'm dead, or because I'm a woman,  
But one is not better than the other  
When hands on buttons are met with resistance—  
When a white dress puddles on the floor in an effort to  
Escape;  
The puddle is a weapon used by pirates  
To make me walk the plank—  
Dive head first into the shame—  
Ironic that my dive into the pool of escape  
Becomes another trap, me,  
Now clasped onto the complexity of men's egos—  
Clipped to their fragility—  
His ship moored to me,  
I become nothing more than a conquest in the eyes of history.



# SELF PORTRAIT

CHLOE KANG

# TALE OF TWO JANVI'S

TANEESHAA PRADHAN

You know that feeling, the instinct that another person is just meant to hear your story? That is the scene. Dark, with the buzz of the street lights, the drone of auto rickshaws and a woman recounting her life to someone she knows will mean a lot to her. These are her highlights.

## The Beginning

Eleven-year-old Janvi stands on the sidewalk of a busy street in Mumbai. She waits for her mother and looks across the street to see a huge billboard mounted onto a building displaying 'FAIR AND LOVELY'. She wrinkles her eyebrows and starts to think about the billboard through her childish lens. She thinks about how her auntie is four shades darker than her, but auntie's skin tone is never on a billboard. Her best friend Nir at school is as dark as the soil, but the sun always made sure to make her glow. Janvi doesn't think everything fair has to be lovely. Momentary anger and confusion at the media slips away as her mother comes back and they head off to the market.

As the first cracker shoots off into the sky at lightning speed, Janvi stretches her head back in wonder. Admiring the orchestra of light that decorates the sky, she is in a trance. Diwali is a very comforting time. Even though her neighbours disagree because there's fire everywhere, Janvi loves how the heat from the firecrackers keeps everyone warm in the winter. She snaps out of her reverie when she hears the revving of a motorcycle from across the parking lot where they were celebrating. The man who has gotten off the motorcycle scrunches up his face in annoyance as he looks at the fireworks.

Later that day, Janvi thought back to that moment and imagined what Diwali looks like to an outsider: a bunch of people dressed up in really fancy clothes setting off environmental hazards. Through the lens of this 'outsider', Janvi felt a little shame for celebrating the festival. The tiny shame demon followed her into Holi. No one ever feels ashamed of Christmas.

This one time, she had to collect paper for her school. She went with her brother to every house she could find. Janvi remembers an auntie opening the door, smiling warmly, giving some paper, and then jokingly making a comment about how her brother was doing all the heavy lifting. At eleven, Janvi had limited knowledge of how gender plays out in society, but she knew that all her teachers always wanted a boy to lift the tables and put them in their right place. She knew that her father asked her brother to lift the suitcase at the airport even though Janvi was standing right next to him. She looked at his arm and then her own; his had less muscle. It made her feel like she had to be dependent, and protected, and *smaller*. Smallness was a learned mandate, and the girl grew into womanhood to find that she had this quality that she didn't want.

### The Middle

At sixteen years old, Janvi was an anxious mess. The anxiety intensified whenever anyone asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up. Janvi was going through quite a transformative stage. It all started when she dramatically sat down her parents and told them that she did not want to be an engineer. They nodded and said. "Okay, doctor and lawyer options are always open, so no problem dear!". Frantically, Janvi began looking for things that made her passionate. Coming back to the present, she realised that she was a creative at heart, soul and mind. Her parents for accepted it, even though they did make her question herself a thousand times. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger, she repeated to herself. But the acceptance did not uproot the stigma planted in her brain.

The other thing that always bothered Janvi was one of the reasons her parents were okay with her choosing the humanities. It was because she is a girl, so she can make a decision that won't always earn her money. The first time she realised was when she overheard a conversation about a boy who *dared* to major in sociology. She flinched and felt shame overpower her. An eternal paradox for the minority had emerged. This paradox forced Janvi to choose between a stereotype and her desires in life. By refusing to make one choice, she had become a stereotype.

Graduating high school was terrifying in its intensity. Janvi could just feel that the next few years were about to be transformative. As she visited other countries to apply to universities, she found herself at odds with her accent. All her life, she had been surrounded by people who sounded like her. With her hard t's and stressed syllables, she fit in. During an

interview for a university, Janvi was surprised to realise that her accent started to mirror that of her American interviewers. It was like suddenly she was clay waiting to be moulded. She had heard stories and seen people change the way they look, sound and exist because of the same reasons. She always thought that there was no reason to do that, but looking back it made perfect sense. When you live in a country that idolises the West more than its own Gods, you learn to do the same.

## The Second Middle

Turns out that the coming years were transformative in the wrong way.

The biggest shift of Janvi's life was the move between continents. She moved to New York during her last year of college. She would say she's well off, especially because she got a job at a publishing firm. At work, everyone called her Jane. They told her 'Janvi' was just not 'suited to their tongues'. Whenever anyone summons 'Jane', it takes moment for her to respond. Names are really funny words, she realised. She never underestimated the power of words, but when you *were* the word it was easy to take it for granted.

'Jane' was an assimilationist. She went to the farmers' markets, got vegetables whose names she had never heard of before, and used only pepper and salt as seasoning. She forgot how it felt to light a diya. When she called her mother every weekend, she took off her mask. Her accent hardened, she said "haan" more than "alright, okay". She told her mother one Saturday in a wry tone, "I have become Hannah Montana, but without the best of both worlds."

Outside of work, Janvi (part-time Jane) let her cultural lines blur a little. She noticed some peculiar things. For example, she never felt comfortable singing along to Bollywood songs when she was in India because she had to appear 'western'. This policy flipped upside down when she was with her American friends. The amount of people who can sing along with a Bollywood song with her reduced, so she blasted them whenever she got the chance. She even put Hindi songs on her phone. The Janvi five years ago would have internally cringed at Hindi songs on *anyone's* phone. Funny how a country could change your playlist.

However, Janvi couldn't stand for this much longer. The realisation hit her hard one night when she was out with her friends, and the conversation of

stereotypes came up. When it came to Indians, Janvi *always* found herself becoming the representative of all the people from and related to anything Indian. It was exhausting. Her inner self always wondered, what was it about the western understanding of cultures that made it a necessity to assign characteristics to each ethnicity? One of the marked differences between her home and America was that Western cultures were seen as fixed and separate. As she went on a rehearsed tangent on the pros and cons of Bollywood and how it is very similar to Hollywood, she looked into the eyes of her listeners. They seemed slack, listening but not hearing. As if she will always remain the mouthpiece for the same conversation every Saturday night. She took a deep breath after saying some things even she didn't understand, excused herself and left.

After the wake up call, 'Jane' was slowly deteriorating. It was like complacency became a stranger. Her coworkers started noticing the increasing regularity of her telling them how problematic they are. Janvi also went to her first human rights march. It was the first time in a long time she actively did something rather than just supporting it from afar. She made sure that every Saturday night her friends understood that they are speaking to *one* Indian who is relatively privileged. There are others with different struggles. Her voice cannot be theirs, but it can amplify.

Janvi was now free of the shackles of judgement. She did not stop to think if an act made her appear like too much of a woman, too much of a minority or too much of a social justice advocate. With no limitations, she started to work towards things she authentically cared about. With the help of the only other Indian who worked in the building, she organised an outreach campaign for people from the same state as her. She researched the consequences of the glorification of fair skin in South Asian media. As much as the damage was obvious, she was not naive. Research can only do so much. Someone needed to take this research to the streets.

"Hey, do you think it's smart to move across the world back to my home after 15 years of trying to make New York City my home?"

"Sounds like it's not home here, darling." Said the man playing violin on the subway.

Well, he had a point.

## The End

It felt like coming back from a vacation, to be honest. Mumbai was like she remembered in her nostalgia. Nostalgia glosses over the millions of staring men and mosquitoes, but it was home regardless. After being attacked with hugs by her family and friends who were basically family, she got into the car and drove towards change.

‘Call me Janvi’ is the culmination of having lived in two societies with the same identity. It is a broad program, but it focuses on change through media. Janvi will put the people on the billboards. By that, she means that the real city with its darkness, lightness, scars, bellies, and frizzy hair all up there to be romanticised by little girls and boys on sidewalks. It took her some time and two continents, but now she does not stop to think of the outsider when lighting a firecracker. Instead, she calls the outsider in.

# DREAMERS

GRACE SEIFERT

Where the sun doesn't shine,  
and the wind blows colder.  
Where the birds don't sing  
and the kids cry louder.  
That's where the rich ones live  
and shun the others.  
The thinkers and the dreamers,  
with their thoughts running wild;  
so wild that they're locked up in cages  
and shipped away back "home",  
somewhere they never truly knew,  
a place they never really loved.  
Over a ocean of their parent's tears,  
who only ever wanted to give them life.



# MY CHILD EYES

MADISON LAZENBY

The day I saw the President, my mom and I were standing in the Walmart parking lot on a wet spring day, the ocean in front of us rolling over itself in what I thought was applause. There were still plastic bags and shingles littered on the sand, but the roads had finally been cleared that morning. I was about six years old, my mom was still walking, and she and my dad hadn't started thinking about having a third child yet. They watched the news a lot, but they told me it was because nothing good was on the air anymore.

The Walmart we would go to was right on the edge of our Florida town, only a stone's throw away from the beach and the line of hotels that ran down the coast. It was a good Walmart, the kind that sells clothes, food, and beach gear, all while actually living by the price match guarantee lifestyle: essentially, a Costco without the membership. It was also right across the street from the best hotel in town, if not the whole state.

It never took very long for word to get out that a reality show winner or a former child star was staying at the Grand Alexander Hotel, because you could see them from the Walmart parking lot. These celebrities always assumed that no one would find them as they took a walk on the beach because our town only had about 5,000 residents, with about a quarter of them in diapers. When I was in high school and had nothing better to do, my friends and I would drive to the Walmart and watch through the car window for anybody we might recognize. Sometimes governors or senators would come to stay there because it was both the level of comfort they were used to and close enough to "the people" to be good for their image.

Apparently, the hotel owners hated that they were so close to the Walmart. They actually paid to have the Walmart repainted and to have more flowers for sale outside, like they were trying to disguise it as a greenhouse. The Walmart also had to put up signs in the parking lot saying that if anyone was there to take pictures of the celebrities, they had to buy at least one item per hour they were there.

This rule was not really followed when the President came to stay.

It was only maybe a month after a really bad hurricane had scraped along the coast. Our apartment building sat on the top of a hill that was pretty far from the beach, which was the only reason my mom and dad were able to buy our piece of it for so cheap. A lot of people came to stay with us after the flooding downtown and the winds blew in their house windows. I didn't recognize most of them, but my mom told me that whoever was sleeping on our couch was a friend from church whom I wouldn't know because I still only went to Sunday school.

I don't think my mom knew that the President would be there when we went to the Walmart to buy bottled water, milk, and toilet paper; I think she only realized it when we got out of the minivan, but there were plenty of warning signs for us. Of course the roads would be busy once they were finally opened again, but the traffic was heavier than any normal day when there had not been a small natural disaster. We saw some college students with signs made of poster board and people wearing t-shirts with slogans on them as well as camera crews and vans with the logos of our local radio stations on them.

When we got out of the car, she was slow to unbuckle me from the car seat, as she was looking across the street the whole time. Once I was free, she let me stand on the roof of the car, her hand on my back. We watched the people gather.

We weren't the only ones there. I saw at least two boys from my school on each of their parent's shoulders and at least four Walmart employees with binoculars. Some of them were smiling, I think, but some were also standing with one hand shielding their eyes from the sun and the other hand on their hip, like they were watching dolphins leap out of the water in a slow arc before plunging down again—just spectating.

Through my child eyes, I saw at least a million people swarming the marble entrance of the hotel and pressing to get closer to the glass doors, half carrying signs and shouting songs and half wearing red-white-and-blue t-shirts with smiles wide enough to split their faces in half.

Then a bunch of motorcycles came down the road and cleared a path through the parking lot for a long black car. I watched a man in a suit surrounded by other men in suits step out and start shaking hands, smiling and waving at everyone present, even the ones that yelled in his face. I almost thought it was funny when he actually kissed a baby's forehead, but I didn't laugh as the roughly one hundred feet between the two parking lots seemed as short as the distance between my family's apartment and Mrs. Gordon's down the hall, who would yell at us through the walls when my brother and I were playing too loud.

My mother was still frozen for a minute after the man went inside and there was a dip in the shouting before it was reinvigorated, this time directed upwards, to whatever room he would be staying in. I had to squeeze her hand for her to blink a few times and then let me down.

"Was that the man on the TV?" I asked, holding her hand as we walked into the rush of air conditioning inside the Walmart. I thought the store looked incredibly empty compared to what I had just seen.

She nearly dropped her purse as she searched for her list while holding onto my hand in a white-knuckled grip. "Yes," she said, her voice breathless but otherwise neutral, "yes, it was."

# CONTRIBUTORS

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POTTS

Laura Potts is twenty-two years old and lives in West Yorkshire. Twice-recipient of the Foyle Young Poets Award and Lieder Poet at The University of Leeds, her work has appeared in *Agenda*, *Prole*, and *Poetry Salzburg Review*. Having worked at The Dylan Thomas Birthplace in Swansea, Laura was last year listed in The Oxford Brookes International Poetry Prize and nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She also became one of The Poetry Business' New Poets and a BBC New Voice for 2017. Laura's first BBC radio drama aired at Christmas, and she received a commendation from The Poetry Society in 2018.

YEJI  
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Yeji Chung is a rising senior at Wayland Academy located in Wisconsin. Her hobbies are playing team sports including soccer and beach/indoor volleyball. She particularly enjoys being in a quiet room working on her art, with a focus on painting, sketching and photography. She hopes to study communication/journalism at university and become an adventure journalist.

PHIL  
GOLDSTEIN

Phil Goldstein is a journalist and poet who has been living in the Washington, D.C., area since 2008, but writing poetry seriously since 2000, when, as a precocious 13-year-old, he wrote a poem about how unpopular he was in 7th grade and why being popular wasn't all it was cracked up to be. A few years later, Phil became the co-editor of the Suffern High School's art and literary magazine, *Chamelon*. While a freshman at Boston University, Phil helped co-found BU's first and only slam poetry/spoken word club, Speak for Yourself, and performed with the group throughout his time at BU. Phil continues to write poetry regularly.

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Yvonne Higgins Leach is the author of *Another Autumn* (WordTech Editions, 2014). Her poems have appeared in *South Dakota Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Cimarron Review*, and *Wisconsin Review*, among others. After earning a Master of Fine Arts from Eastern Washington University, she spent decades balancing a career in communications and public relations, raising a family, and pursuing her love of writing poetry. She splits her time living in Vashon Island and Spokane, Washington. For more information, visit [www.yvonnehigginsleach.com](http://www.yvonnehigginsleach.com)

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Juleen Eun Sun Johnson was born in Seoul, South Korea. She was adopted and taken to Valdez, Alaska, where she spent her formative years. Johnson earned an MFA in Visual Studies from PNCA. She's currently an MFA candidate in Poetry at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her work has been published in: *Cirque: A Literary Journal*, *Nervous Breakdown*, *The Rio Grande Review*, *Whiskey Island Magazine*, *Switchback*, *The Dunes Review*, *NECK Press*, *The Indianapolis Review*, *Poetry Mistress*, *Ellis Review*, *Ephemere Review*, and other journals. She was a Poetry MacDowell Colony Fellow in 2018. Johnson currently writes and creates art in Amherst, Massachusetts.

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Ceinwen lives in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. She writes short stories and poetry. She has been widely published in web magazines and print anthologies. These include Fiction on the Web, Alliterati, Stepaway, Obsessed with Pipework, The Linnet's Wing, Blue Nib, Picaroon, Amaryllis, Algebra of Owls, The Lake, Ink, Sweat and Tears, Riggwelter, Poetry Shed, Southbank Poetry, Smeuse, Bandit Fiction, Atrium, Marauder, Prole, The Curlew and coming up in Mothers Always Write. She was Highly Commended in the Blue Nib Chapbook Competition. In 2017 she graduated with an MA in Creative Writing from Newcastle University. She believes everyone's voice counts.

ALEXANDRE  
FERRERE

Alexandre Ferrere is 28 and lives in France. After a Master's degree in Library Sciences and a Master's degree in English Literature at the University of Caen, France, he is now working towards a PhD on American poetry and edition at the University of Nanterre, France. He wrote a Master's thesis on the poetic influences behind the poetry of Allen Ginsberg, and a comparative study on Allen Ginsberg and Richard Eberhart. His essays appeared in *Beatdom* and *Empty Mirror*; some of his poems appeared/are forthcoming in *Rust+Moth*, *8poems Journal*, *Structural Damage* and *Riggwelter Press*.

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Evan Williams is an incoming freshman at the University of Chicago. His work has been recognized in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, as well as in the annual Princemere Poetry Prize.

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Chloe Kang is a high school junior attending North London Collegiate School Jeju, South Korea. Her art practice involves experimenting with different types of materials and she loves to explore the way that textures and colors can work off each other. She was recently published in three literary magazines including *The Adroit Journal*. Chloe is currently putting together her portfolio and looking forward to attending a university in America.

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Taneeshaa Pradhan is a 16-year-old literature enthusiast residing in Dubai, U.A.E. Her poems have been published on the Poetic Heart and Girls Right The World. She also runs a blog for her book reviews on Instagram called @book.erly.

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Madison Lazenby is a rising senior at Millbrook High School. There she is the founder and editor-in-chief of the creative writing club and an associate editor for the school newspaper, the *BlueXpress*, where she has covered stories ranging from the local Women's March and the National School Walkout. She is also a graduate of the UVA Young Writers Workshop, and she has been recognized by the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and the Apple Valley Creative Writing Contest.

# THE IDEATE REVIEW

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