

BLOOM



02

SPRING 2022

ISSUE 02: BLOOM

As the snow melts to slush, and the slush to streams that lead us to the riverbank, what do we find? In the softened soil, will the smallest of sprouts erupt and tell us of this new beginning? Will the sun be able to tolerate us for longer and will her warmth begin to linger in the nights?

Thank you for joining Block Party Magazine as we begin to welcome a much-needed Spring.



CONTRIBUTORS

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Maya Bewley

Xochitl Galvez

Bryana Lorenzo

Jay White

RUNA

Rashmeet Kaur

Kristen Donoghue-Stanford

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Hannah Dwyer

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INNARDS

Matthew Hanick

The oak frames a smile. If you zoom in on a pigment, the nettled pines outside your window brandish more than sunlight. The inner cambium's baby bacteria rush to color in warm weather like a close-mouthed smile sprouts psychic energy most millennials can get down with. Air shoots slam dunks through inner cells so that branches can quite literally branch out and try something new. Crisp tree stuff emerges strong as bark in a dog's mouth, entirely torn stem from root. Because trees can't skinny dip aka go without trunks, from top to botany they need structure, the gusty gooey internal transport of molecules, that constantly turn me on but also off bugs, people, nasty weather, and other disasters.

PINK MOON

Maya Bewley

Pinkmoon was inspired by lesbian visibility day falling on the same day as the Pink Moon. The piece is about finding peace, beauty and serenity. Specially in a society where lesbians are constantly fetishized in media, this artwork is a break from that socially harsh given title.



COFFEE?

Xochitl Galvez



LONGING PRIMAVERA

Bryana Lorenzo

A ladybug landed on the tip of your sun-kissed nose while you hung by your feet on my branch with the robin nest. My arms are long yet petite, and I feared your weight would break the one you hung on and send you tumbling down, robin nest and all. But you hung daintily, like a ballerina dancing upside down on a trapeze. The lady bug made you giggle, and that did make you fall, though only because your legs untangled for a brief moment. When you landed at my trunk, you laughed even harder, like it was a funny practical joke.

I was the centerpiece of a winding labyrinth, a short stubby laurel tree surrounded by mossy cracked stone. I was once a river nymph. I was once a maid. I once had a minor god for a father. I was once known as Daphne. Now each day, my branches are stroked by the god who locked me away here, the god whom I morphed into brush to escape. He chews on my clustered violet berries, so dangerous and bitter to careless mortals, but so sweet to him, like a decadent dessert. Each plucked berry is like a finger chopped off.

Perhaps that is why when you take your pruning shears to me, you are careful, delicate, with each cut. You are but a child—one whose hair is tangled and whose spectacles are cracked and who leaps in the mud and gets her moth-eaten clothes wet—yet with me each act is deliberate. Pruning me, you do not giggle. You hardly make a peep at all. You never touch my berries. I once dropped one for you, bumping one off your head so you'd notice. Your eyes grew wide, focused on, as if to ask if it was for you. You took my leaves lifted by the breeze as a yes. Even the berry you ate deliberately, avoiding the pain most mortals feel when they chew too rashly, and you even knew to spit out the seed.

You planted that seed in a pot and placed it a little ways out of my shade. You watered it each day as you watered me. It grew into a sapling. It swayed in the wind like a dancing princess in a music box. You swayed along, always far less graceful. Only when tending to me did you acquire your great care. The sapling grew to the size of a small shrub, leaves mint green. Each day you cared for it with pride—danced with it—like it was the future king of the realm and you were its happy governess.

Each winter, our leaves fell. Each winter, you disappeared, for why would the god who was my captor need a gardener when the garden lay dormant? It was me and your sapling and him in December and January and February. Me and the snow like falling stars crowning my leaves and crowning your sapling's leaves like the monarchs' of the labyrinth, of the last living creatures. Me and the sapling born from me were forever eternal.

The sapling was you and I was like your mother. Perhaps if I wasn't a laurel tree I would be your mother, for from the rags you wear as clothes and your raggedy hair, you seem to have no family to call your own. Perhaps me and your sapling were your family. Perhaps you were meant to be one with us as a laurel tree.

And thus, the years passed and the sapling grew and you grew and I swear you both grew in sync. You grew lanky, your hair longer and rattier, your clothes more rag-like, your grin wider and your teeth whiter. Your sapling grew the same, limbs long and bony thin, its leaves bright. You were both scraggly yet joyous all the same. I tried to share your joy of growing up and growing wide with you, even as my immortal limbs never grew or changed. Even as I was a constant perfect visage of myself, year after year, a living statue.

The only thing different were my leaves as you trimmed them, year after year, never losing your delicateness. With the sapling, now a young laurel tree, you were the same. Each snip and snap was as gentle as bunny footprints. Your touch only grew softer with age. But your limbs also grew more brittle. Your skin sagged when you smiled. Your hair was already gray when I realized you'd leave me one day, that you'd leave us. That we'd soon be alone with the god who was my captor.

I knew then the carnal, animal feeling to chase after something like a predator, to want to hold it forever. It was not the beastly feeling of a wolf after prey. It was a bear after her cub. A lioness after her kittens when she hears the hyena calls after dark. I wished for the roots to split from the ground in which I was buried to fall atop you in embrace. I wished for your feet to catch in the ground and turn to wood. I wished for you to be one with your sapling, and live and love forever with me as something of my own, another living, breathing, sentient being. Not a fruit from the edge of the Mediterranean. Not the richest chocolate grown from the finest cocoa trees from the Yucatán peninsula. I wanted something of me, of my roots, that knew what it meant to run and to skip and to frolic and to be alive and free. I wished for you to be a living, breathing cursed, laurel tree.

And I hated myself for wanting it.

I remember the day you didn't show up after that winter. You always came at exactly sunrise, always looking in the labyrinth like a toddler seeing Wonderland for the first time. You always ran around and tended to each plant like you were sampling from a grand buffet rather than gardening. You always came to me and your sapling first. Even when sick you came, as if the garden would revive you, provide an antidote for your ailment in the morning mildew.

But you didn't come today, and I knew you wouldn't come tomorrow or the next day. The only thing that was left of you was your sapling, now fully grown and standing tall and proud as a second centerpiece. It grew so large and close, our branches grew intertwined. Once, I tousled its leaves, the way a mother might tossle her child's hair. It shook slightly, then grew stiff. Only when the wind came did it sway like a street dancer. Only when the wind came did it show longing to run, frolic, and skip at all.



HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED WATER?

Jay White

Horizon's breath.
There is a rise and a fall.

I watch you sleep and I think
you promise me the
future.

Blue and green
eyes—spectrum of oceans.
Are the pools of you safe?

I am a dog in need
of reprieve from barbs
and tongues saying "I love you"
as a chain before it is tenderness.

Blood spills onto hardwood
from thinking;
knowing my own
rivers running under are acid.

Inhale. Tonight, I trespass again
but in crystal clear.

Are you honest?
Within skin I don't trust,
you feel the same
temperature as me so I forget to thrash
and let go of weight.

Tomorrow I will covet
this suspension. I will float
with a buoy
in the tide of horizons.
Exhale.



UNTITLED

RUNA

acrylic, oil and oil pastel on paper, 29,7 x 40,7 cm (11,7 x 16 inches) plus the frame, 2021



FLOURISHED THOUGHTS

Rashmeet Kaur



RK



Bronze, 2021



GARDEN

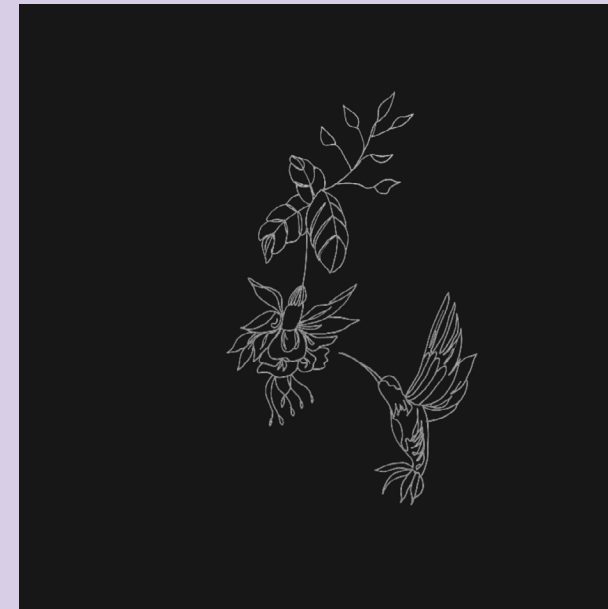
Kristen Donoghue-Stanford

“Garden” exists as a possibility of immortality in destruction. The bronze sculpture, created through the organic burnout process, saw to the destruction of perennial flowers and berries stitched into an embroidery work. The work was placed into a mould and incinerated in a kiln, only to be reborn in bronze. These blooms are granted new life through death, a process seen many times in art through the portraits of muses. It is Gothic, and lonely, and the shift in physical weight echoes the emotional labour that exists in all muses - in all women.

BLOOM

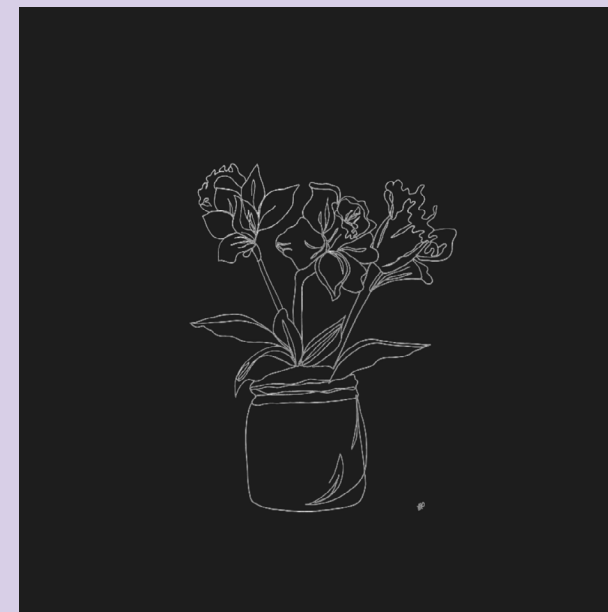
NECTAR OF LIFE

reminds us to be adaptable like the hummingbird and to enjoy the sweetness of life. Find beauty in change and seek out joy.



BLOOM WHERE PLANTED

reminds us that although we may feel like we are stuck in a jar at times, we must gather up the courage (and closest friends) to grow and bloom unapologetically. We are here to take up space.



SOUR SQUEEZE

reminds us that even sour moments in life can be turned into something sweet and refreshing. It shows us the need to release the bad taste and change our point of views.



Monica Loney

WHEN THE MOON RISES

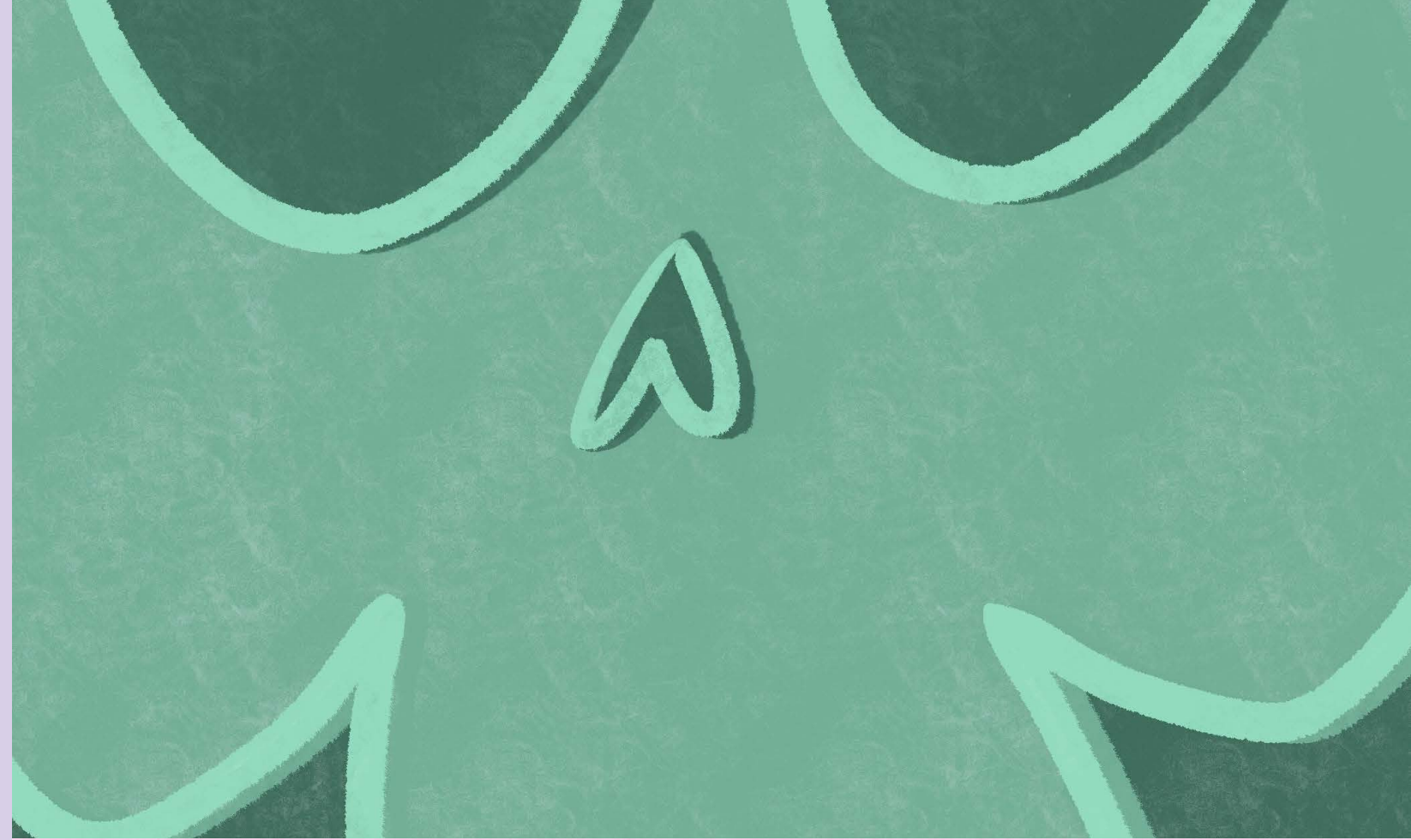
Sabrina Almeida

Late afternoon light washes over
the roses wilting on my desk,
the way they swoon
to the surface
like your bangs falling
across your eyes in sleep.
Your tranquility somehow tragic,
the silence of fluttering eyelashes
like petals swaying to the floor.

The decomposing darkness
is harsh against
your crimson edges,
the sanguine blush
of your cheeks.
You will be beautiful
even when you are gone, fragments of you
lingering on my notebooks, caught in the carpets.

I will worry about this
when the moon rises,
but for now the roses
are alive

I smile at you
across the table.



SA 0111

DOYENNE

Ruth Niemiec

Wake up, she says.

It's a quarter to noon and we've been sleeping for twelve hours straight.

I say there is nowhere to be, nothing urgent of importance to do.

She keeps steady, a sort of slow down pace, sure, but she breathes purpose into each morning, like blue smoke rising over a forest in the evening.

She grinds the coffee beans and I watch her as she stands pressed against the counter, both palms lay flat.

There she is, leaning forward, a willow's bough into a river.

Draping over the cool blue water.

The sunlight floods our kitchen.

Small but everything we need. For now.

The light frames her hair and her neck, her brown eyes and purple bathrobe.

She sips the coffee quietly and I'm just walking by, when I hear that she lets out a little "hmm" like she's solved a life mystery. One a day.

Always learning.

I trudge to the sofa and pick up a controller, pick up the game where I left off at 11:30pm the night before, though time seems irrelevant.

And the longer we go on like this, will it be? Shouldn't think about it.

Makes my vision blur, then: head aches.

She asks me what I want to eat and bakes bread in the oven, not before folding and stretching it beneath her wide palms, as if in a trance.

She hasn't cried yet.

But I have.

In the shower, leaning up against the tiles with my back, my bones pushing against my flesh, wanting to gel with the walls, so that I become the space and not inhabit the space.

I wonder if that seems strange and I get out of the shower, like waking from a nightmare.

We eat the bread with soup she made too, beans she grew in the garden and tomatoes, ripe and sun kissed.

She says it's a shame to cook them all and eats one raw, the juice runs down her chin as she grins.

She hums as she cooks and I look out the front window, waiting for a stranger to walk by.

At night she picks up her cross-stitch pattern and continues quietly.

When I look at her, I can see that she's thinking, her eyes are full of grace and wonder.

I continue my game. I will have to buy a new one soon.

When we go to bed, she rolls over and says, "up early in the morning, have to mow the lawn, want to help?"

and she's smiling.

I ask her if she's bothered by the state of the world. She just shrugs, "can't do anything but keep

going".

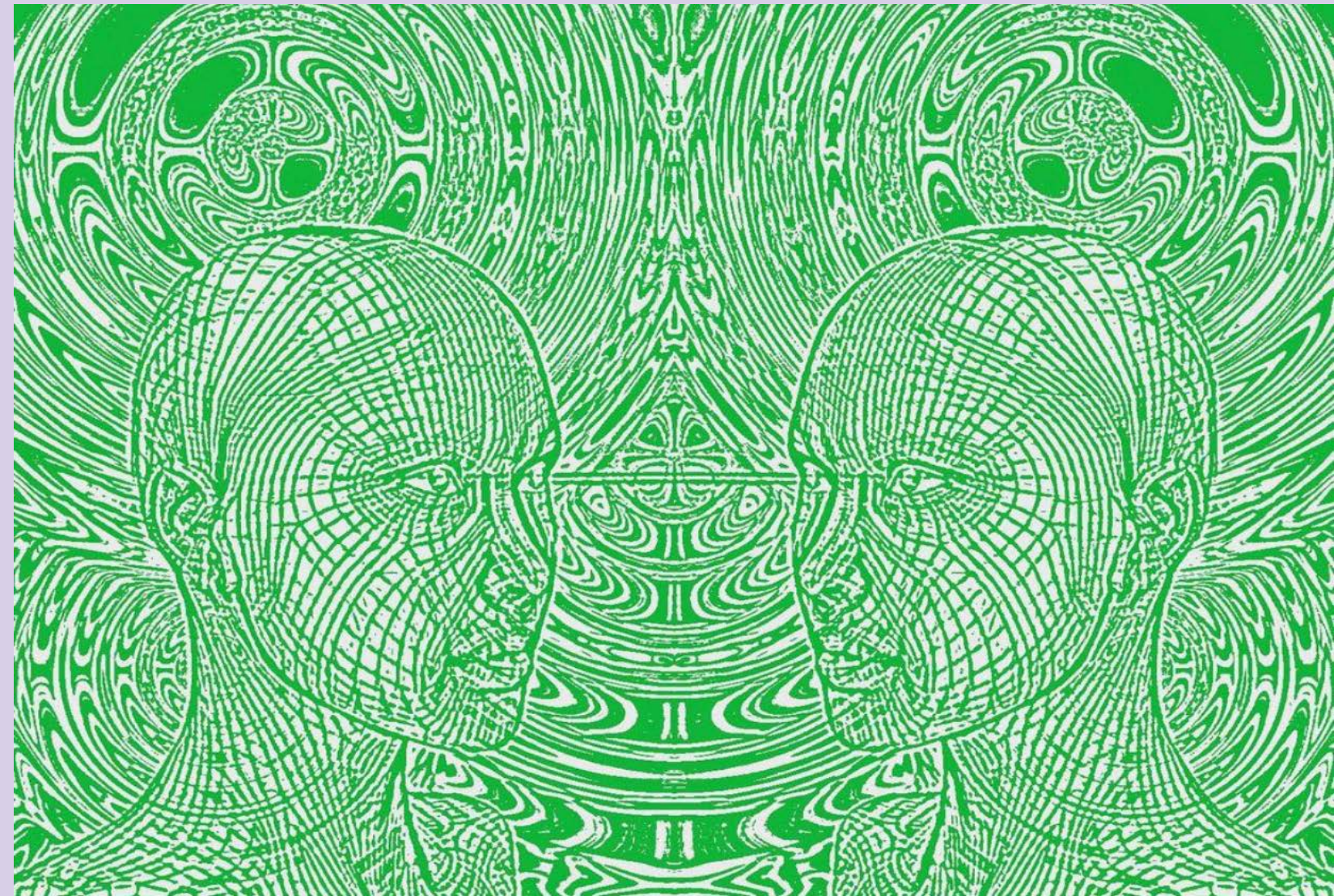
She turns out the light and I lay in the dark, staring at the shadows leap across the ceiling.

I do this five times before we wake again.

The next day is the same, with slight variations.

SEEING YOU THROUGH ME

Jane Hamilton



BLOOMING MAD

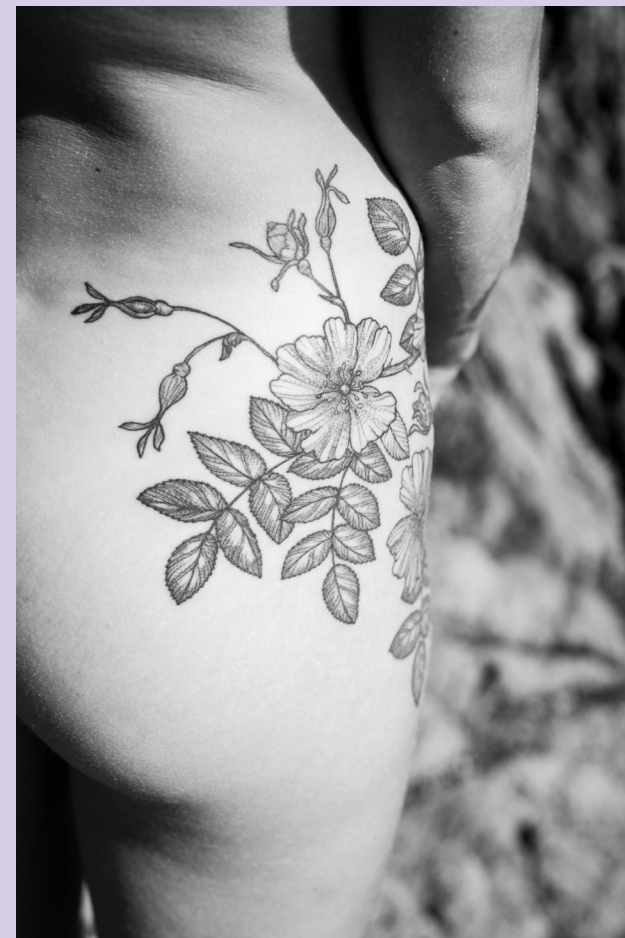
Hannah Dwyer
& photographs by Kris Henry

Like many people with endometriosis, I have had a long and frustrating relationship with the medical system. The twists and turns of my saga - feeling my disease progress as I return to new specialists year after year, undergoing the same invasive and inconclusive imaging procedures over and over again, curled into the fetal position in countless public washrooms - hardly feel worth recounting, because there is a very good chance that you, or someone you love, has lived a very similar story.

If you don't know, endometriosis is a chronic condition in which tissue that is similar to the endometrium, lining of the uterus, grows outside of the uterus, embedding itself into tissues, emitting estrogen, and thickening and shedding each month, just like the endometrium does. The results are internal bleeding, the creation of scar tissue and adhesions (like internal scabs that can stick parts together that ought not to be stuck together, and which might later be ripped apart in the course of some normal activity like pooping or having sex), blood-filled cysts (which might grow larger cycle after cycle and then one day rupture), inflammation and autoimmune response, nerve pain, and damage to whatever tissue the endo is growing in. It is most commonly located in the pelvic region, but it has been found throughout the body, including the diaphragm, sinuses, and even bones. The most common symptom is extremely painful periods. Since doctors are for the most part taught that painful periods are normal, and the only treatments are hormonal contraceptives and anti-inflammatories, the average length of time between onset of symptoms and diagnosis of endo is ten years in Canada, hovering between eight and twelve years for almost all "developed" countries.

From the very first time I sought care for my endometriosis, shortly after my first period, the relationship between me, my body, and the world I was trying to navigate was tangled and prickly. Both my mother and her mother had endo and endured a lifetime of being simultaneously over-involved with the medical system and under-served by it. Every dismissal, belittling, or normalization of my pain hit with the weight of three generations of compounded trauma and suffering. I ached and grieved for myself, for the life I missed out on while being in pain, and for all the extra work I had to do and money I had to spend to feel just a bit less shitty. But I also hurt for my predecessors. I couldn't help but wonder what might have been different if all the women in my line hadn't spent years of their lives in excruciating pain that nobody seemed to be interested in doing anything about, all the while being gaslit and told that the pain they were experiencing was just a normal part of being female.

In the absence of helpful information or advice from the many doctors that I saw, I had no choice but to become a lay-expert in all things endometriosis and menstrual health for myself. Horrific birth control side effects, an unwanted pregnancy and D&C abortion at 19, and some very dehumanizing encounters with psychiatrists who had no capacity to view my mental illness in the context of my hormonal disease and chronic pain, galvanized my dedication to the issue of the relationship between female bodies and the medical system. It became my life's work. I would not necessarily have chosen to become known as the girl who is always talking about periods, but I had no choice.



Becoming an advocate for myself and for people like me, who need care for issues that are specific to the female body, from a system that has chronically really sucked at that stuff, was necessary to mitigate my own suffering.

What I learned was simultaneously beautiful, exciting, and fascinating, but also heartbreaking, gruesome, and infuriating. It became very clear to me that the pain I was experiencing as a result of both my endo and the repeated collisions with a patriarchal and capitalist medical system was not my pain alone, but a pain that was shared with many women throughout many generations.

In learning about my body and how to take care of it, I became fully enamoured with the magic of human sexuality and reproduction. The more detailed my understanding became, the more I wanted to sing from the rooftops: Our bodies are amazing! So precious! So smart! I grew to love observing my fertility signs to know when ovulation was approaching and when it had happened. I gained a degree of self-understanding and agency that no health class or doctor's office conversation had ever made me know was possible, and I felt empowered in my relationships to everything and everyone in my life. I trained as a doula so that I could be as close as possible to the magic of human reproductive biology.

At the same time, I grew increasingly resentful about the fact that so many of us are denied such body literacy. I thought that my unwanted pregnancy and those of so many others could have been prevented if someone had taught us that there is only a six-day fertile window in every cycle. So much unnecessary suffering in the world could be traced back to women/females not being properly educated about how their bodies worked, and consequently being subjected to medical interventions that were informed more by inherited standards of practice, institutional/logistical requirements, and pharmaceutical lobbying than by current, evidence-based best practices and respect for the individual patient's self-determined best interests. I saw these dynamics play out over and over again in the worlds of birth, menstrual cycle health, and fertility control.

I learned about the sordid misogynistic history of obstetrics and gynecology, and how the past still echoes through the medical system as we know it. For example, giving birth while lying on your back actually bends and compresses the birth canal. It is more difficult and more painful to push out a baby in this position, and more likely to result in tearing and the use of instruments to pull the baby out, increasing the risk of lasting injury to both the birther and the baby. This



birthing position was first introduced when King Louis XIV demanded he be allowed to watch one of his mistresses give birth. Thereafter, the position rose in popularity. In early modern Europe, midwifery was being made illegal or otherwise coming under intense levels of state control, and a certain privileged sect of male, prestigiously educated doctor (who had no experience in the realm of childbirth, as this had traditionally always been the domain of female healers and midwives) was being instated as the only legitimate form of health care professional. The use of forceps became the hallmark of the highly educated surgeon, and the evidence for the inferiority of the midwives' knowledge and practices. Laying on your back and having the baby pulled out with forceps became the standard of "safe", "medically managed" birth, even though this method obstructs the normal physiology of birth and introduces new dangers.

In Toronto in 1971, my grandmother was forced to give birth lying on her back, with her legs strapped to stirrups, and her arms also restrained. Many people to this day are forced to give birth lying on their backs, and misinformed that tearing, use of instruments, and extreme, unmanageable levels of pain are normal parts of childbirth, rather than conditions that are created by the methods of medical management. This is one of many examples of obstetric and gynecological care practices that were introduced because they served the interests of either the male care providers or the patriarchal social order more generally, and which persist to this day despite the existence of evidence to contradict their use. In many cases, the evidence may have been there all along, if the knowledge of the midwives and their apprentices in the communities that they served had not been criminalized, demonized, and extirpated from the commons.

Another chapter in the disturbing history of European and colonial gynecology is the one about the flippant, non-consensual removal of reproductive organs. The ovariectomy, developed in the 19th century, was often used to "cure" behavioural problems in women, such as insubordination and lust. It was performed with such gusto that surgeons would boast publicly about having removed 1500 to 2000 ovaries in total, and ovaries would be carried around on platters at medical conferences as part of the entertainment. This practice too haunts my lineage. During one of my mother's endo surgeries, they went ahead and removed one of her ovaries without consulting her. Her gynecologist also neglected to mention it to her at the post-op appointment. She only found out it was gone when it was mentioned to her during an ultrasound investigating subsequent pelvic pain two years later

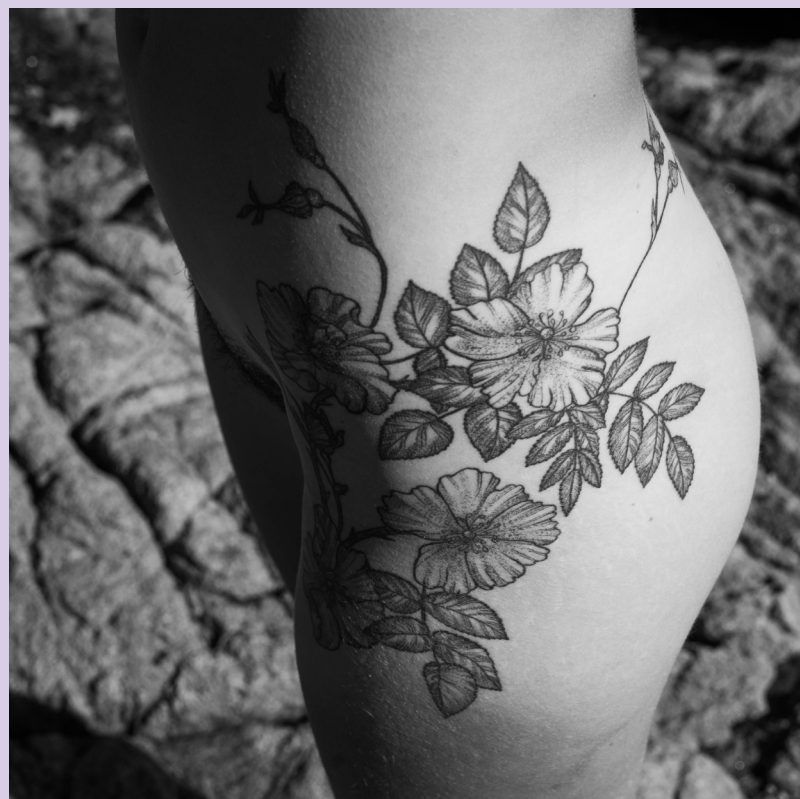
It was with these violations and betrayals in mind, along with knowledge of the recent public attention that was being given to the widespread practice of using unconscious female surgery patients for medical students to practice doing internal pelvic exams without needing to obtain consent, that I went under the knife for my endometriosis in 2020. I advocated for myself in every way that I possibly could, including getting the nurse that was preparing me for surgery to reluctantly agree that I could keep my bra and underwear on during the procedure. This detail was very important to me, as I had previously been sexually assaulted in my sleep and I had a very legitimate lack of trust in the medical setting.

When I woke up from my surgery, I could immediately tell that something had been done to my vagina. My underwear was filled with iodine. Everything hurt. I asked three people in the recovery room why and no one answered me. I emailed my gynecologist asking about it and she responded, but not to that part. My recovery process after the surgery was physically and emotionally excruciating. I felt as if, on an energetic level, my deepest insides had been poked and prodded and my deepest traumas shaken loose. On a physical level, that is exactly what

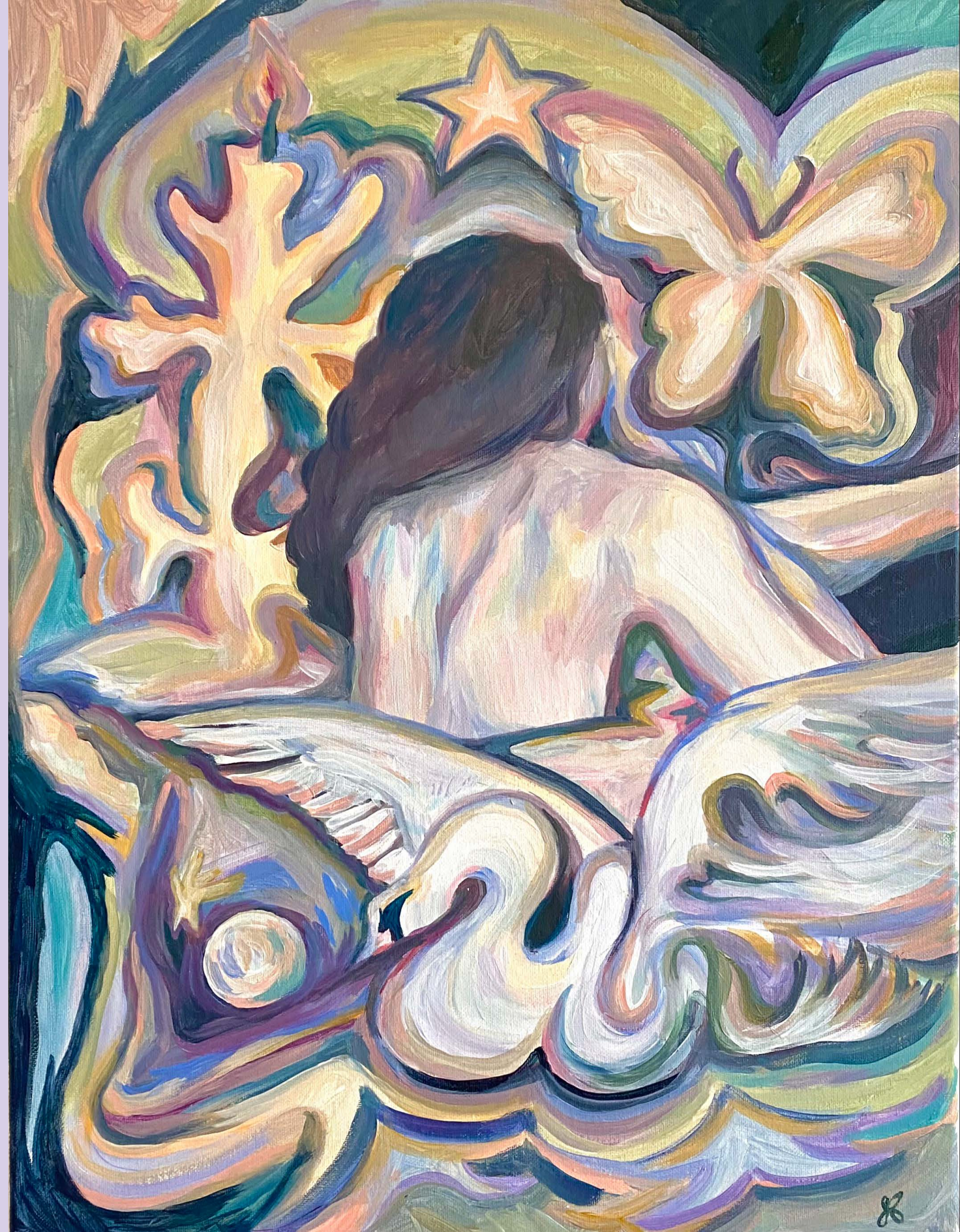
happened. Several months later, still feeling very tender, endo symptoms not improved at all, I decided to obtain a copy of my operative report to see if any insights could be gleaned. It was at this time that I learned that the surgical procedure that had been done to me was not in fact the one that I had consented to during my conversations with my doctor.

Despite all this, I healed. Slow and steady.

Because that is what our amazing bodies do. A year after my surgery, some things that I used to love, like running, were still inaccessible to me, but my body had developed new strength and new skills. I had found a new love in pole dancing, it turned out to be the perfect way for me to tend to my body, working out my scar tissue through stretching and bending and bringing me feelings of mind-body connection, resiliency, and power. As my strength returned, I stepped into a new evolution of my role as reproductive health educator and advocate, and I began to see that I was able to help other people tap into their bodies' innate intelligence and resiliency and take greater control of their experiences within the realm of sexual and reproductive health.



To celebrate my own hard-earned wisdom and healing capacities, and to show the world and myself that despite centuries of opposition my body is mine alone, I decided to gift my pelvis with some endo love in the form of these wild rose tattoos. They are the visual record of my unfolding as I heal for myself, the ones who came before, and the ones who are to come.



ALTAR OF LOVE

acrylic on canvas, 20 x 16, 2022

“These two works were both completed at the start of the new year and deal with ideas of entering and becoming a new version of oneself, along with the many ways in which elements and archetypes from our past inform our future selves and can manifest in our minds as we grow and move forward.”

- Julia Lindsay

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF THE SUNSET...

acrylic on canvas, 20 x 16, 2022



NORTHWIND SWITCH GRASS

Seeara Lindsay

free me from the walls of my childhood home
rip me from its womb
strip me of all my clothing
and lay me in an open field
where my soul can breathe
and my limbs can expand

[i no longer feel at home here.
their gaze is suffocating.
my favourite shoes don't fit me.
my voice doesn't reach you anymore.
you don't look at me the same.]

m y b o d y s l o w l y s t r e t c h e s u p w a r d s

i can be soft and whisper
i am no longer yours
i am held by the wind
my voice reaches the stars
and they listen.

here i am seen they see me and hear me and get me
i love me she loves me i am loved and i take no steps backwards and
here i am seen they see me and hear me and get me
i love me she loves me i am loved and i take no steps backwards and
here i am seen they see me and hear me and get me
i love me she loves me i am loved and i take no steps backwards and

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU CONTRIBUTORS

It goes without saying that the magazine would not be possible without each of you. All of the work you shared has taught us more about the world and we are eternally grateful that you have trusted us to share that to others.

THANK YOU ABIGAIL WILEY

Your work from the earliest days of Block Party until now is the reason we know what we are. You helped us envision the endless possibilities of this magazine with each and every design you sent. Block Party would not be Block Party if not for you.

THANK YOU MADDIE FRECHETTE

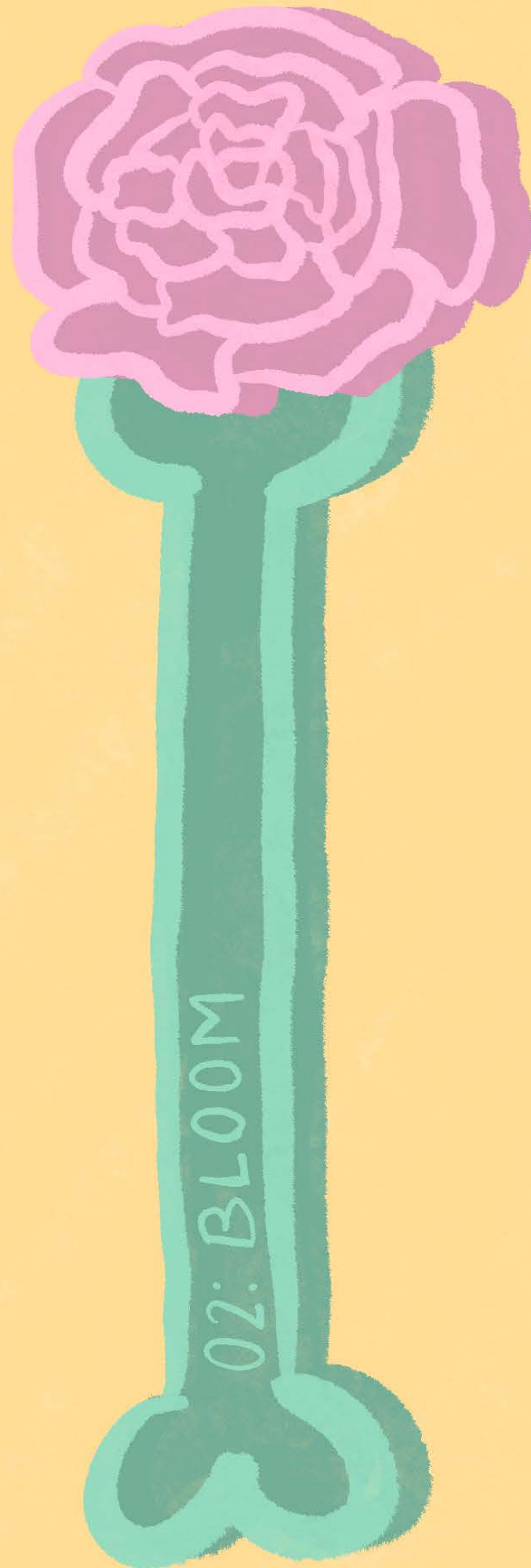
You are the best of us. Each issue, each word we write, is always dedicated to you. We love you.

THANK YOU UTSC CREATIVE WRITING FACULTY AND STUDENTS

The Creative Writing Program has been the roots of which we find success for Block Party and our own personal endeavours. From workshop to book launches to readings to Discord servers, we value all the time spent with each of you, and ask that you know all the work we do at our little magazine, is an extension of that.

THANK YOU FAMILY AND FRIENDS

To family, and to friends old and new, we would not embark on this journey if not for you. You all are the people we aim to please and the support you have so graciously demonstrated at each step of this ongoing process does not go unnoticed. We hope you enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed organizing it for you.



BIOGRAPHIES

Matthew Hanick (he/him) is a queer poet based in Toronto, Ontario. He is currently a student at Ryerson University completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. His poems have appeared in *The White Wall Review* & periodicities.

Maya Bewley (they/she) is a Toronto based artist that focuses on the feminine lesbian experience. They're currently in their last year of high school at Etobicoke School of the Arts as a contemporary arts major. Maya's work challenges the definition of the queer experience given by society, which is often fetishization, so her work is learning to find peace in peoples own sexuality and queer community.

Xochitl Galvez is a multidisciplinary artist who lives in Miami. She currently attends Paul Mitchell the School Miami. She enjoys creating intentional work with the materials and mediums used. She is interested in pursuing a career in fashion.

Pushcart Prize nominee Bryana Lorenzo (she/her) has had fiction featured in *Outlander Zine*, *The Graveyard Zine*, *Rhodora Magazine*, and *Le Château Magazine*, and with more of her work forthcoming in *Agapanthus Collective* and *Pile Press*. Her piece, "Longing Primavera" was inspired by the old Greek legend of Phoebus and Daphne, the story of the god who was cursed by Eros to be madly in love with a river nymph, who begged her father to turn her into a tree to escape.

Jay White (he/him) is a queer poet that lives, works, and writes in Washington, DC. Jay's poetry has appeared in *Beyond Words Magazine's* queer anthology *Beyond Queer Words*, *Day Eight's* art magazine *Bourgeon*, and *Block Party Magazine*. Jay earned his BA in Communications from the University of Maryland and loves grey clouds, getting lost in the woods, and soy candles.

RUNA was born and lives in Lisbon, Portugal. She is currently undertaking a Master's Degree in Painting, at the Fine Arts Faculty of Lisbon University. She dedicates not only to painting, but also to writing and photography in travel chronicles.

Rashmeet Kaur (she/her) is currently an undergraduate student at the University of Guelph completing a Bachelor of Science degree. Her mixed media artwork and poetry have been published in *Margins Magazine* and *creatures* among others. You can visit her online at <https://dissectionoftheself.wordpress.com/> or follow her @_rashmeet.k on Instagram for more artwork and poetry.

Kristen Elizabeth Donoghue-Stanford (she/her) is a Canadian Artist currently residing in Caledon, ON. She is primarily a sculptor working in bronze casting, mould making, and embroidery, however recently she has broadened her mediums to film and written artworks. Her work currently researches by practice the Gothic and its relationship to societal views of femininity and womanhood. Influenced by feminist literature and Gothic fiction, and an

abundance of horror films, she seeks to analyze the presence of women as inherently Gothic and utilize it as a method to reclaiming agency and autonomy. Donoghue-Stanford obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts from York University in Toronto, Ontario in 2020 and recently completed her Masters in Fine Arts from Chelsea College of Arts in London, England. She has shown work both nationally and internationally.

Sabrina Almeida (she/her) is a 22-year-old poet from Toronto, Ontario, where she works for a marketing agency. Her poetry is featured in publications such as Acta Victoriana, Existere Literary Journal, and sidereal magazine, among others. When she isn't writing, you can find Sabrina scouring the city for the best cafes and binge reading romance novels (or find her on Instagram @sabrinalmeidapoetry).

Monica Loney: I am a Metis artist from Barrie, ON, who focuses on the continuous line to represent the flow state we all wish to achieve in life and the universal connection we all share. I have had the pleasure of travelling all over the world and through passionate pursuits in art and human connection, I have discovered the healing power of art and hope my works spark personal insight and empowerment to those viewing the pieces. I currently have a piece on display at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario at their Gathering Place Exhibit as well as empowerment focused cards being sold at a local shop in downtown Barrie. I have done a few murals within local businesses in the city and currently have a personal gallery on display at a tattoo shop as their artist of the month.

Ruth Niemiec (she/her) received her BA with a major in Professional Writing from Victoria University. She is a writer of non-fiction, fiction and poetry in English and Polish. Her latest written work is forthcoming or recently published in Dumbo Feather (aus), Mamamia (aus), ABC Everyday (aus) Neon Literary Magazine (uk), Coffee People (us), Parliament (us) and Rhodora (in). Ruth is a love and relationships columnist for Perfumed Pages Magazine. Ruth reads creative non-fiction for Catatonic Daughters and non-fiction for Kitchen Table Quarterly.

Jane [Hamilton] is a graphic designer based in Toronto. She is still currently in her senior year of high-school. She has been doing graphic design consecutively for 9 months. Before then Jane was using her phone to make her work. She is now proficient in the Adobe suite, designing graphics, clothing, and producing prints. Jane has an extensive portfolio on her Instagram where she showcases her work.

Hannah Dwyer (she/her) lives on Sinixt, Syilx, and Ktunaxa land and labours towards reproductive sovereignty in her work as a farmer/food system advocate and as a doula and sexual/reproductive health educator. She wants nothing more than for all people and communities to have what they need to live and make life on their own terms. She loves tending the Earth so it can nourish the people and caring for people so they can steward the Earth. Her writing has been published at Gods and Radicals Press and The Strand.

Kris Henry (she/her) is a queer photographer, feminist and activist from unceded Coast Salish territory (Vancouver, BC). Her passion is to liberate the human body from the confines of patriarchy, and to celebrate sensuality through her craft. She also deeply loves flowers, birds and wild places, and spends many hours photographing that magic, too. More of her work can be found at <http://krishenryphotography.ca/>.

Julia Lindsay (she/her) is a Toronto-based artist whose work explores themes of the sublime, synchronicities, inner archetypes, and the mystical. She is currently completing her degree at McMaster University in Hamilton, where her work has been published in several student-run magazines such as Incite Magazine and Into Existence Magazine. These two works were both completed at the start of the new year and deal with ideas of entering and becoming a new version of oneself, along with the many ways in which elements and archetypes from our past inform our future selves and can manifest in our minds as we grow and move forward. Julia's instagram can be found @8ofwands and website at <https://juliaroselindsay.wixsite.com/mysite>.

Seeara Lindsay (they/she) is a black/ brown, and queer actor and interdisciplinary creator currently based in Tiohti:áke (Montreal) and Tkaronto (Toronto). Seeara uses performance, abstract poetry, photography, and cinematography as mediums of expression, focusing on work that explores identity, race, sexuality, gender, and spirituality. Seeara is currently in their first year of acting at the National Theatre School of Canada, where they continue to train the use of the body, voice, and text as a means of storytelling. Seeara hopes to create work that is radical, challenging, honest, joyful, and community building.



BLOCK PARTY

Edited by Joseph Donato & Isla McLaughlin. Logo designed by Abigail Wiley.

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Block Party is based around Tsi Tkarón:to (Toronto, Ontario) on the traditional lands of the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of Scugog Island.

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