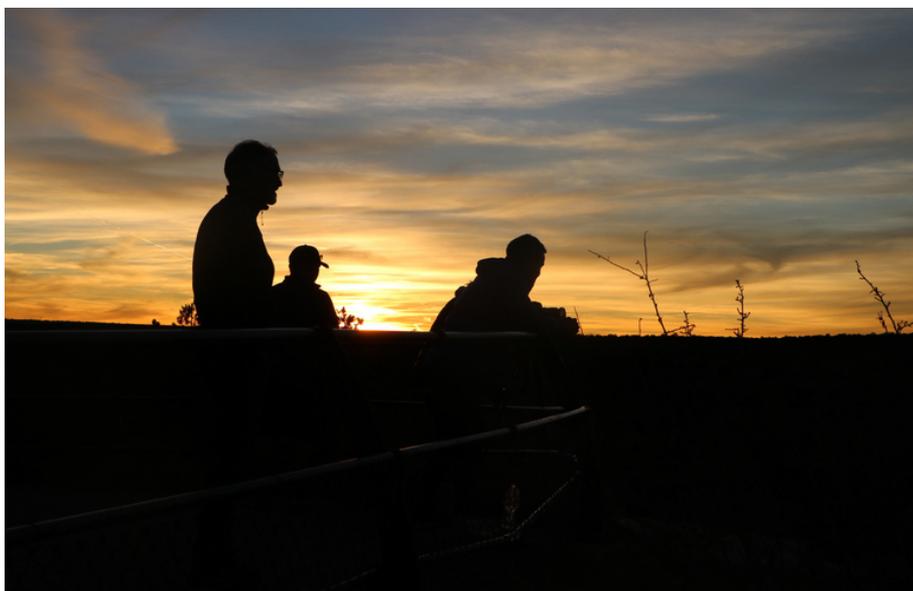
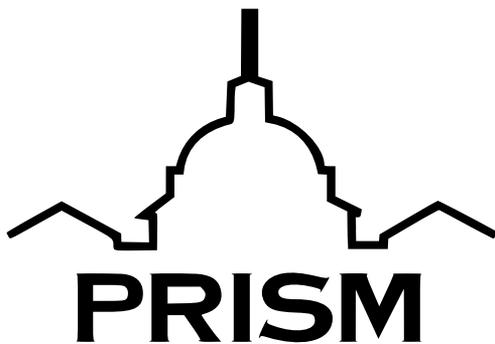


PRISM



Vol. 57
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VOLUME 57
CENTENARY UNIVERSITY

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I extend my sincerest thanks to Dr. Erica McCrystal and Dr. Robert Battistini for their help in making this magazine possible. Thank you to the contributors for allowing us to display your creative and talented pieces. I want to extend a special thank you to the editors. Without their dedication and care, this magazine would not exist. Finally, thank you, the readers, for supporting the voices of the Centenary community.

I hope you enjoy this year's edition of Prism!

Sincerely,

Izabelle Weisman

'Prism' Editor-in-Chief

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Fallen Angel

Natalya Tasso

It was a spring morning when the angel fell.
Tree branches snapped as the body crashed to the ground,
birds scattered,
engulfing the sky in cries.

The figure was painted red.
White fabric tainted around its frame,
wings bent in all ways wrong,
snow-white feathers swaying in the soft breeze.
Grass drank its toxin.
Water at its legs, polluted.

Days went on
and the body became one with the Earth,
as all things do.

i want to die in your arms

Hayley Testa

i want to feel the grip
of your finger tips
nestle in between each rib
of my rib cage,
as your other hand
tightly wraps
under the ditch of my knee
while I droop across your lap.
i'll listen to your heart
beat slow
and steady
as the pace of our love.
every thump
bumping,
into the temple of my forehead.
the forehead you've kissed goodnight
a dozen times.
i'll hold my gold leaf pressed dagger
dangling above our heads,
teasing,
taunting,
of what is yet to come.
i'll look you deep
into your clear sky colored eyes
before i raise the dagger to thrust.

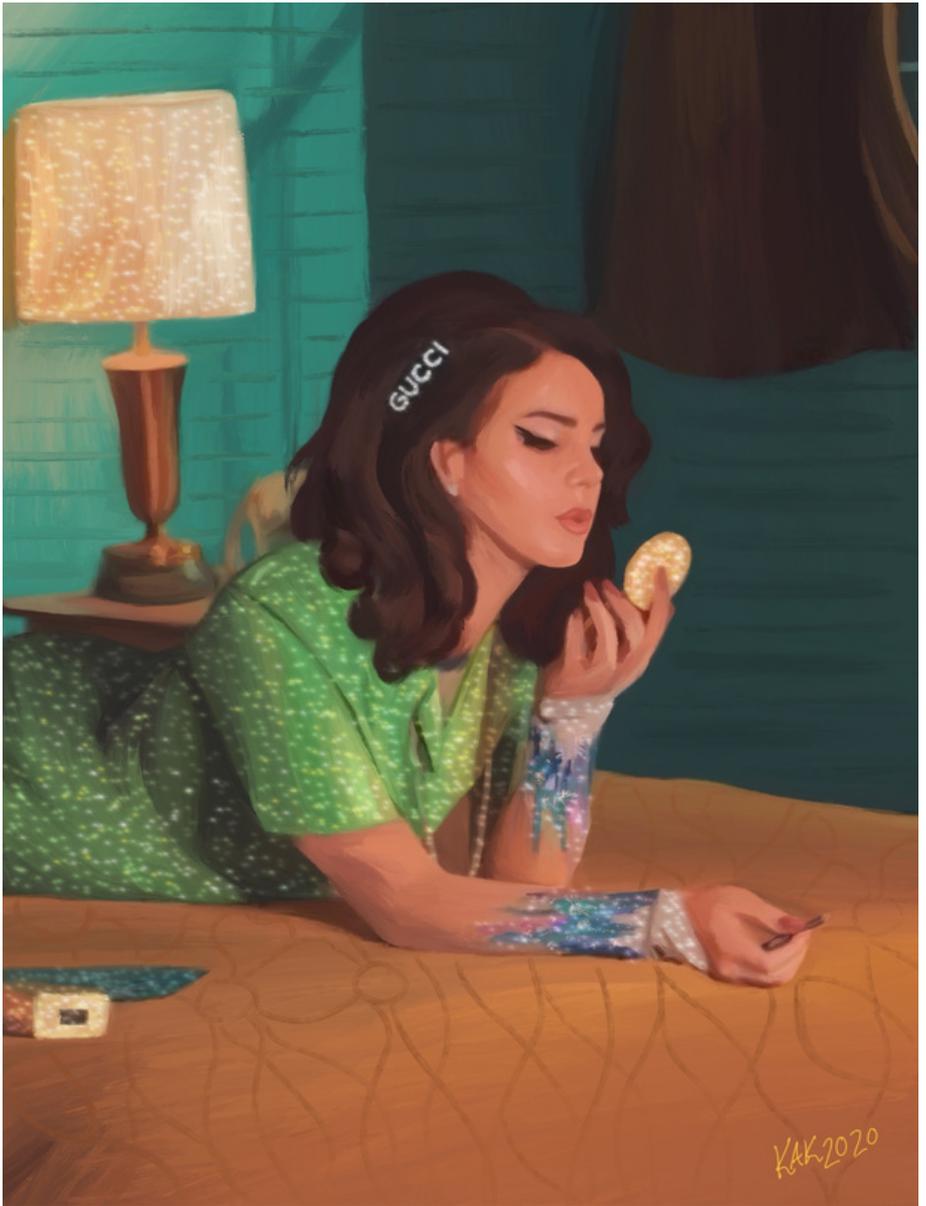
i'll work up the courage
to tell you
how much i love you once again
before driving the
freshly sharpened blade
deep into my chest cavity.
the dagger slices from
aorta
to diaphragm.
and with the blood
drenching your tightly gripped finger tips.
my love for you will pour into the open air.
our favorite memories:
moments of pure laughter,
smiles,
cries,
sentiment,
and vulnerability
spill into the atmosphere across our space.
it's an aurora borealis
of true love,
that sprinkles over your agony
and allows my peace.
it is like the ash of pompeii,
melting us into one
colorful,
dreamy,
momentous,
statue of togetherness.



Waiting for Spring By Gabriella Filian



Dua Lipa by Kayla Kirk



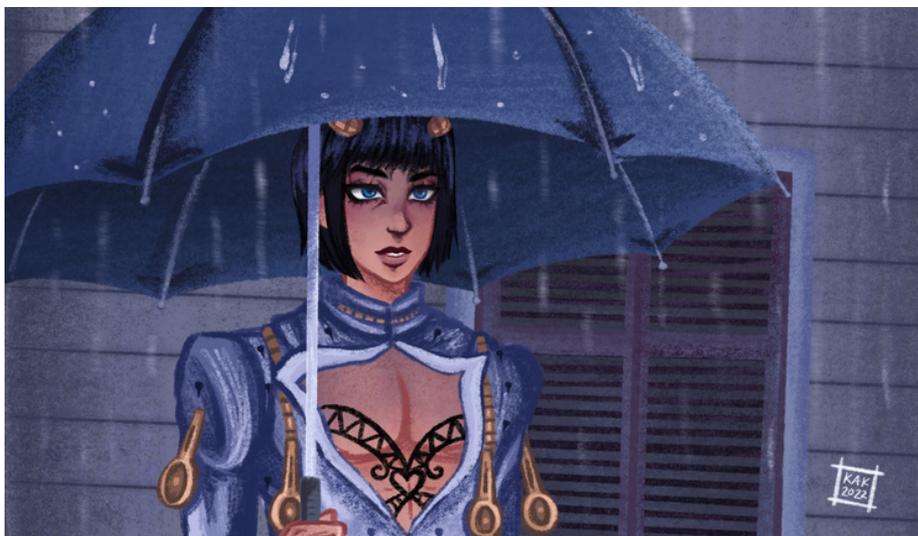
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New Untitled Style, First In The Series by Kuma D. Oso



Sphynx Villainry by Kuma D. Oso



Sun Splash by Willo Roche



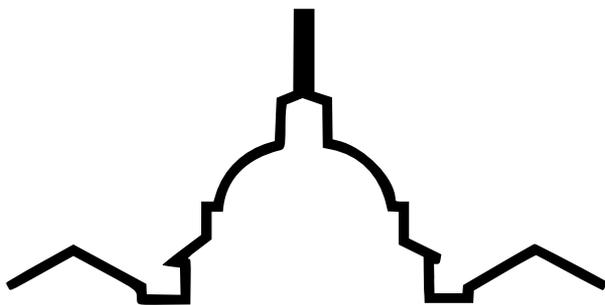
Reaching by Willo Roche



demon girl by Natalya Tasso



Last Night of Youth by Natalya Tasso



PRISM

Introducing...

PRISM OF THE PAST

The following pieces are
submissions from previous
volumes of *Prism*, courtesy of
Centenary University's online
archive.

Songs and Me

Alison Morris (1971)

When I sleep songs
 move through my head
When I am awake my
 consciousness is a prison
But the songs still linger
 behind the reality of day and night
Sometimes I think I am a song
 but I know I'm not
I wish I was.

Where I Live Is

Jac Ho Chung (2001)

Where I live is

where I make my history, never worthless...
also make myself, my personalities, and ME
It is so important who I meet, and what I do
because it is like a biography

Now I miss home
Now I miss my friends, too
Now I love them so much

I pray now

but this is where I live

Treasure

Helene Lorenz (2001)

She whom I loved in my youth, stands out in my mind as the most enigmatic creature that has ever inhabited these two planets. That was long ago, before the great dehydration of Earth. It was before the great union, before others and humans shared the planets and lived side by side.

My youth was quite carefree, as I was taken at birth to an observation colony. Back then, the others were still in hiding and still performing the primitive abductions of folklore. I do not remember my own mother, nor any of my other family, yet I do feel within me their existence. My family had been assumed onto the others' ship, and once humans went there, we never saw them again.

The colony I grew up on was on a remote island in the Pacific Ocean, which no longer exists. It was an all-male colony, all males, all that had under twenty earth years. The absence of females did not pain us as we knew no other life. We could not miss something that did not exist, except in the art and literature that the others presented to us.

Life on the island was good. We got to eat as we pleased. We got to play ball on airy white beaches until the hour when dusk consumed the blue and transformed the earth into a dreamy pink memory—a memory of a lucid epoch existing only in dreams and innocence past.

She whom I loved happened to come to the island by fortune. One of the elders, 74Drew, first spotted her yellow vessel floating about a mile off the Eastern shore. We organized a group and swam out to retrieve the curious vessel. When we laid our eyes upon her, she was sleeping. I do not know what we first noticed about her. I do not think that the younger boys even knew what she was. My heart bursts with precious endearment when I recall the comments of young 34John, "It is a very strange fish."

Back on our beach, her eyes remained closed so that all of us could look upon her with no proper shame. To describe one's first site of a real woman awakens my naivete and youthful lust, which has since dissipated. It was I who noticed the subtle differences in her body from ours.

I was first drawn to the odd freakish hands. Unlike the hands of mine and my brothers, they were smooth and fragile. Her fingernails were unsanitarily long and a strange color I had not seen yet in nature. Metal rings adorned her fingers. How odd! She was a seemingly boneless creature with no outward signs of structure. We poked her with our fingers and felt no bones, only softness. She was an odd sort, boneless and hairless. That is, she lacked hair of the body like that of the elder boys. The hair on her head was very unsanitary. It was longer than the code of our colony permitted. In length, it was almost to her legs. The color of it was also quite deviant, as if she had spent too long in the afternoon sunshine, yet the hair was very soft. And softness reigned in the small cameo face of our sea treasure that we had brought to our beach that day.

We removed the cloth that had adorned her body so that she matched the clothless state of our own bodies. It was after we removed the cloth that our lives were forever altered— that something was borne in us. I experienced a glorious epiphany of sense and awakening. I could see the same fervor in the dancing, liquid eyes of my brothers.

It was true that all of us on the colony differed from one another in some way. ³⁴John had brown hair and white skin. ⁷⁴Drew had brown skin. I was told that my eyes were the color of the ocean during states of serenity. We were all aware of these differences, and they meant nothing to us.

The differences of our sea treasure were far more than physicalities. They were variations in capabilities and needs. They were sacred, and we knew that we should not touch her anymore. Looking upon her naked while she slept brought us a feeling of shame, like when we wronged or forsook our brothers. One by one, the stars miraculously engulfed the dusk until a bright confetti illuminated our beach. And just as the moon lazily ascended to greatness, she began to open her eyes.

We watched her from afar, as we did not want to disrespect or frighten her. When she stood upright, we broke into a little laughter because she was so small in stature. I only had seventeen earth years behind me, and she was only about half of me in height.

She saw us first, and when she did, she began to speak in unintelligible gibberish. She walked towards us very quickly and grabbed Drew and pressed his body next to hers and wrapped her arms around his neck. She did this to several of the boys, and it upset them all very much. For when the embrace ended, each boy looked green, as though he was going to spit up his supper.

It was immediately clear that we were not going to be able to communicate verbally, but we knew what she wanted. She wanted to eat and drink, so we obliged.

As she put the food into her mouth, we watched intently, like seagulls hovering over a beached whale. Piece after piece disappeared into the soft pink orifice, an uncharted cavern of unspeakable events that we did not know about, yet sensed within our guts.

We took her to the sleeping house, and we got into our respective beds. Then came the event in my life that haunts me so today. She chose to sleep in my bed, with me. I do not know if she or I ever fell asleep, but I do know this: she held onto my arms all night. She pressed her body next to mine all night. She grasped me tightly, and I grasped her back. It was as if we both knew that the others were on their way to assume her, but she could not have known that.

Morning broke over our earthly paradise with the gentleness of the evening tide. The sweet morning mist hung low, and she was gone. She was gone yet she remained. She remained in the hearts of all of us that had fed her on the colony. She remains with me today. None of us wanted to be on the island any longer. We wanted to swim away in search of more sweet creatures like the one that had come to us and slept in my bed.

I have not held such a woman since then. Most of the women on this planet have been interbred with the others and have gills. Women with gills are fine, but they do not excite my insides with belonging like the memory of my treasure on the beach...Ah, the beach. I sigh for the entire lucid epoch of my youth, which has drifted away, a billowy cloud running from a storm. I am consumed by my memories and consumed with contempt for the others who walk with me by day. I loathe them because they took something good from me. They took her from my bed where she was warm, and I was complacent in my surroundings.

Sunset on the Nile

E. DeStefano (2007)

Lucky to escape the city heat.

An invitation to

A country retreat.

Passing hours beneath swaying palms,

The light slowly changes,

The evening calms.

Oxen graze, their work is now done.

Shadows by the river;

A vanishing sun.

Birds fly off to a hidden site.

The earth becomes silent.

The day turns to night.

Glad to be touched by a cool breeze.

The cows in the distance;

A landscape at ease.

A Clearing in the Woods

Mary Newell, Ph. D. (2007)

Trampling in thick woods
Multi-toned leaves drifting, settling, crunching underfoot
Trees, shrubs, more trees
Cushioned in auburn needles
Rough bark caressed by spongy moss

And suddenly there's a clearing,
A grassy open field
Lit by a radiant sun
And the ribs expand
As the breath slows and deepens
And the thoughts clear
And the sunlight
Enters.

Born-ing

Some say we have doubles
in the other half of space
an other self or self-to-be...

like the jaunty yellow waterlily-bud
swishing its shawl
atop a splayed-heart pad
whose fringed edges
echo the ripples of the lake

where the lily's blinking reflection
unmakes the bud
even as the flower is being born.

To Those Who Think My Book Collection Too Large

Catherine Godlewsky (2015)

O Book that crumbles in my hand,
Whose lines I dearly love;
There's none so bold with me to skim
Your moldered, hallowed cove.

For, not much longer will those threads
That anchor thought's own wake
Withstand the most caressing touch
My gentle hand can make.

Your covers long ago were stripped—
Before we two could meet—
But still clings gilding to thy sheets
To show grandeur's retreat.

Found so poor, neglected, dying—
None can blame my greed in trying
To save each book.

If Blood Is Thicker Than Water

Jade Piatt (2019)

if blood is thicker than water,
why does water compose it
or distill it
or dilute it?

if blood is thicker than water,
why might it come in pools
or rivers
or streams?

if blood is thicker than water,
how could it be drawn
or diverted
or drunk?

if blood is thicker than water,
why would fathers leave
or sisters envy
or mothers prey?
and what should viscosity matter?

Fireflies

Elizabeth Brouse (2021)

Losing someone you love is like setting a firefly free.

Sometimes as kids, we would catch fireflies in the palm of our hands.

We may have even put them into a container just to marvel at their repetitive glow.

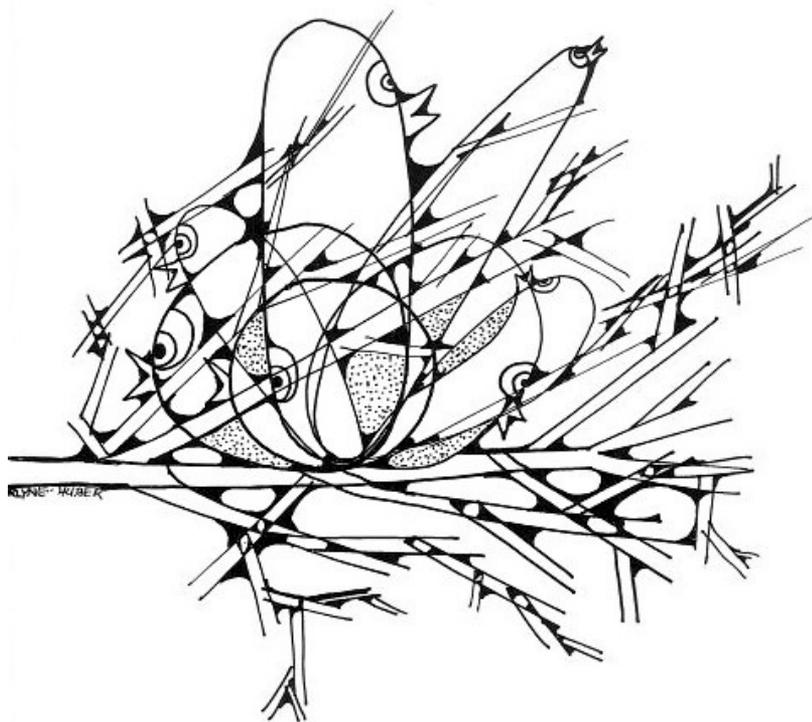
I'm no expert, but I'm sure fireflies get a little lonesome on their own.

But we held on to them for a little while because they were purely unique and stood out from all the rest.

We didn't want to set it free, but we needed to do what was best.

When the one you love flies away, they are no longer in pain or alone.

They are free and they are glowing; looking back down at you.



Untitled by Arlyne Huber (1971)



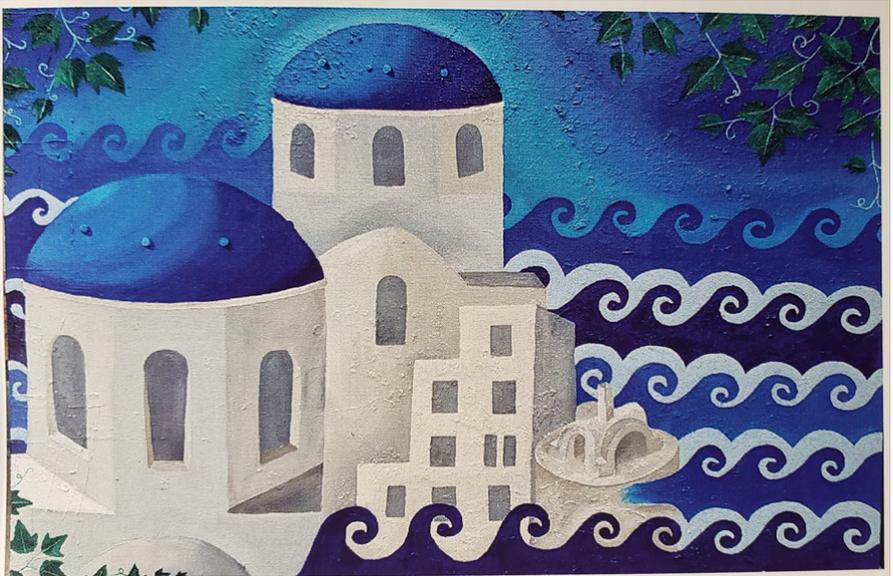
Untitled by Yuko Hara (1998)



Untitled by Coree Reuter (2007)



Swan Lake by Madisyn Jackman (2013)



Oia Santorini by Michaela Correll (2018)



Forest Flaming Fantasy by Emily Day (2019)



Whisper Waves by Natalie Lombardi (2021)



HOPE by Karrie Kanzenbach (2022)

SUBMITTED BIOS

Kayla Kirk is a sophomore double majoring in fashion design and fashion merchandising. Her hobbies outside of school include painting, drawing, and sewing. In the future, Kayla would love to be able to work in the fashion industry and travel for her job, and she would also love to own her own fashion business one day.

Kuma D. Oso is an art and music lover that adapts their art style to whichever music plays. Inspired by Bruce Lee, they push through creative obstacles to become the artist they feel destined to be. Kuma's hobbies include the gym, Gunpla, late-night thrashing, live shows, and DnD.

Willo Roche is a 22-year-old individualized studies major expecting to graduate in 2024. Currently, Willo works as a Sports Photographer at Centenary University, attending and photographing for the school's teams, editing, and submitting photos for the teams' use.

Natalya Tasso is a sophomore majoring in fashion merchandising. She is the art editor of *Prism*, volumes 56 and 57 (this edition). Her hobbies include drawing, painting, digital illustration, graphic design, playing video games, creative writing, and language learning. Natalya hopes to incorporate art, fashion, and traveling globally in her future career.

Hayley Testa is a psychology major with a minor in journalism. Despite the professional writing her career entails, she has a genuine love and passion for writing poetry and short stories. The poem "i want to die in your arms" represents struggling with deep depression and suicidal ideations while being in love with your romantic partner. She is proud of the piece, combining the beauty of romance and death into one piece, and hopes others enjoy reading it.

**THANK YOU
FOR SUPPORTING
THE 57TH EDITION
OF *PRISM***

Keep on Creating!

