

2017-2018

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Is ADHD a drug or an illness?

Zoom!

She goes flying past,

An inability to focus,

Trying to take a breath,

An un-wanting focus on the anxiety before her,

The constant flow of gasoline

Burning through her veins.

Bam!

She hits a wall,

A hard want to not think about the past,

A wanting to try and forget,

The tank hits empty,

And the feelings come crashing in.

A feeling of in pending doom,

Unable to control the feeling running her over,

Suffocating from the exhaust.

Damn!

It's broken,

She tries to patch the hole,

Before it comes crumbling down.

People tell her to calm down,

Tries to tell her to breathe,

But it's impossible to do so,

The air pump keeps going,

Hyperventilating, unable to focus

On the simple task of air.

Crack!


Her heart breaks as worries

Rack her brain,

Friends unable to understand as she fights

ADHD, *cont.*

Adara Piper-Webber



To keep going.

A drug to keep her moving,

Forgetting important details of a life

She goes shooting through,

The only way to stop is to let it hit,

To leave her bleeding on the side of the road.

Splat!

She let's it hit,

It feels as if everything but joy

Has crashed into her chest,

Reality has come to the end,

But what's wrong with her now?

To this girl everything is going wrong,

A constant fear of forgetting who she is,

Who she was.

The tank's empty,

All she wants to do is stay calm,

But she continues on this path,

Every feeling of pain goes shooting past,

All she wants to do is sleep,

Unable to stay to lay still and clear her mind,

She lets it go.

The feeling of everything rushing past her,

A frozen moment as everything stops,

A frozen moment of passing thoughts,

And she remembers.

Remembers the day of pain and regret,

But she stays calm.


Tears stream down her face like

Rain on a window pane,

But she continues.

ADHD, cont.

Adara Piper-Webber



Is ADHD a drug or an illness?
The question she keeps asking,
Its either one or the other,
People will never be able to understand her,
The inability to focus,
The inability to stay calm,
But she continues.
She those around her in a pursuit to let
Them know shes drowning,
Suffocating on the emotions dragging her down.
Take a breathe as she closes her eyes.
People may never understand,
But they don't have to.
Is ADHD a drug or an illness?
It's not a drug or an illness,
But just part of who she is,
People will never understand even
As she gets better,
But they don't have to.
The only person who ever needs to understand,
What's truly on the inside,
What's truly in the mind,
Is the person who holds it,
You.

Almost Insane

Bethany Jackson



Lion

A lion is still a lion,
If it's in a cage.
Whether alive or dyin',
A lion is still a lion.
Though born trapped and cowerin',
It can still unlock its rage.
A lion is still a lion,
If it's in a cage.

Simple Words

Sonja Sower

Thank you.

Two words.

Acknowledgment of some deed.

Gratitude to some nice person.

I love you.

Three words.

Proclamation of a feeling.

Declaration to a beloved soul.

The simple words that we utter may be infinitesimal in comparison to the million, trillion, 6.02×10^{23} words that we say.

And yet these few words have meaning beyond the little time it takes to speak them.

They serve a purpose other than the obvious.

For when we say these words, we demonstrate our care, our thoughtfulness, our compassion, our love.

These words transform a dreary day into a hopeful one.

A symphony of light winds its way up to the audience which hears the mellifluous notes that are the simple words we can say.

Each word is a beat on a drum synchronized with the beat of our hearts.

And the golden gateway leading to clear, blue skies swings open for someone when we allow these words to flow.


All just from a few little words.

These simple words are the words that can make a difference in someone's life.

For what we may believe to be simple may mean the world to someone who desperately needs a flame to light the candle that is his heart.

Beauty

Maleah Brand



How do we define beauty?

Is it having the “perfect” body and clothing?

Is it having the right color of hair and the best make-up?

Or

Is beauty on the inside, deeper in than the heart can go?

Is it showing kindness everyday without a doubt?

Who knows it's up to you, which will you choose?

Black and Blue

Sarah Manning

Through the unbearable heat, one thought came to mind: he would kill to have his compass back. Sunlight blazed down upon the shambling people around him, dappling their dust-covered forms in dark, leathery spots wherever rays could grasp bare flesh. He himself was not devoid of the sun's touch. His shoulders hissed from age-old aches, exposed by holes torn into his ratty tee. The only solace from pain was cast in the shadows of ancient grey spires. Above his head were the ever-constant presence of the concrete jungle which scraped the wispy clouds with fingers born from a world long dead. He hated that world.

His destination currently eluded him. Whether that was because he was going the wrong way or his destination didn't exist, he didn't know. His compass could have told him. *Could have*. He was wasting his breath with such a phrase. He knew that, and he was perfectly fine with that reality. It kept him busy, and busy was less time contemplating collapsing onto the burning asphalt and laying there until some buzzard decided to finish him off. At the moment, that sounded extremely enticing.

But the small voice in the back of his head reminded him to keep moving. He could not help but crack an empty grin: even now, his compass would not leave him be. He chuckled, a little too loudly when he realized the wary stares of those around him.

He returned their cautious glance, brushing the grip of his pistol lightly with his fingers. Thankfully, their harsh gaze returned to themselves and left him back to his solitary march. He fell short of relaxing when a woman peeled off from one of the congregations and wandered over to him with a confusing sense of purpose.

"Hey stranger. Long way from home, huh?" she drawled lazily. Attempting to lower his guard, some inner paranoia spoke to him. He slipped his hand back into his worn satchel to grasp his only weapon once again. The woman took note of this and let her forced smile fall short.

He barely grumbled, "What's it to you?" while he debated the situation in his head. She didn't seem perturbed by his response and stole a swift glance back at a close-knit group of five who walked a little ways off. Friends of hers, he figured.

Black and Blue

Sarah Manning

“Not safe to be travelling alone... don'tcha think?” she asked. The grimace he had been unawares of before hardened.

“I manage.” He didn't bother dressing up his choppy, harsh reply. He didn't need a group, especially so close to his destination. Well, he assumed he was close. The ever-increasing number of travelers was enough to give him that hope.

“Alright, just askin' ...”

The woman briskly left him for her group, exchanging word with the man he assumed to be their leader when she was safely contained. They kept their distance after that.

When he thought his situation had finally regained the sense of routine, a strange sight pulled him right out of the loop. Atop one of the smaller buildings stood a man. At least, he assumed it was a man and not just a statue. The man was dressed in strange black gear. A helmet obscured his face completely, and the only semblance of life came from two blue, glowing orbs where eyes should have been.

Deepnet.

The name came from some buried memory, but the implications with that name caused only fresh wary. The black-clad man turned his head to speak into a small metal device. His voice was garbled and broken through the mask. The man turned to the people below and ordered them loudly.


“Hurry it on up, civvies. We aren't waiting forever.”

He felt relief blossom in his chest, conflicting with the edging discomfort at the sight of the man. The entryway before him was carved in tall chain-link fence. Artificial lights blinded him as they shone upon the base. One thought entered his mind as all his senses were flooded.

He had made it.

Death is...

Alexis Torres



Death is a phase.
Death is in a hospital.
Death is in the ICU Room #15.
Death is a cold body asking for blankets.
Death is a rising fever temperature.
Death is the sign on the glass door DNR.
Death is confusion.
Death is tubes going through your body.
Death is insulin running through the IV into the bloodstream.
Death is blood.
Death is a disease.
Death is not being able to catch in time.
Death is the Kaiser Permanente dumbass doctors.
Death is a cure to pain.
Death is never planned.
Death is a part of life.
Death is something that will eat you alive.
Death is a bad dream.
Death is reality.
Death is a blessing.
Death is to see who will be with you in heaven.
Death is seeing how many people cared.
Death is your last words.
Death is the time to go.
Death is losing someone/something.
Death is the way of resting in peace.
Death is a type of change.

Empty Boxes

Kieran Phillips

I am me.

--What, is that not enough information for you?

Did you want my life's story wrapped up all neatly into a three-minute parable? Pfft.

--Oh, you did?This is a bit awkward.

Okay, well you'll get a bit of who I am from this.

First off, I'm a girl, but who cares?Oh right.

Everyone, unfortunately.

Even the ones who don't want to care judge us a little by our gender.

Even those of us who write slam poems against stereotypes usually define ourselves by one of the two checkboxes on the medical form.

And those who don't?

Society is currently screwing them over.

And then there's sexuality.

Who cares if I like girls, boys, both, neither, or anyone who, you know, I share common interests with?

--Everybody again!?

Damn, society, you are *really* letting me down.

Do people *really* think any of this matters?

It really *doesn't*.

A trans boy's brain works just as well as a boy fortunate enough to be comfortable in the body he was born in.

A first date between two girls is going to be just as awkward as if it were between two straight people.

None of these things change who we are.

And yet, too often, we put people into boxes with multitudes of labels on the front before a single word escapes their lips, and we shut the files away in the back of our brains only to add more the next time they wear something different or act "weird".

So let me ask you:

Empty Boxes, cont.

Kieran Phillips

Why do we need labels?

Why do we need to identify ourselves as girls, boys, or nonbinary?

Why do we need to identify as gay, straight, bi, or pan?

Does it change who we are?

Any of it?

No.

If we keep defining ourselves this way, then we tell society that the boxes are okay.

They're *not*.

Personality never stops developing, and should never be a big deal or a sudden realisation when someone doesn't fit in boxes so shallow that nothing of substance can fit inside.

We need to *erase* the boxes.

I know it's hard to think about.

It won't happen today, tomorrow, next week, or next month.

But who knows about ten years? A hundred?

Look at the exponential curve our society's taken and you try and tell me that it's stupid for me to believe that maybe,

One day,

We can truly be equal.

I won't blame you, but I will disagree.

In the words of John Lennon,

"You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you will join us, *and the world will live as one.*"

Just think that one day we could,

Together,

Stop the judgement, stop the hate, stop the violence, and start seeing each other,

Empty Boxes, *cont.*

Kieran Phillips



Truly,
For the first time.

Just try to hold on to that dream with me.

Just try.

I'm me.

If that's still not enough for you, see if you can fit everything you are into a multiple choice answer box. I cannot and I will not.

Why?

I am not clever.
Just why am I doing this?
Oh well here it is.

Books

The world lost in words
Let's be lost within that world
Under the covers

Rain

Tears from the mother
Gentle drizzles towards the earth
Tears that bring up life

Puppies

Wan-wan, I want one
Nice soft fur that cuddles up
My best friend from birth

Summer's End:

Before you can blink,
The endless summer days wilt.
Freedom lasts so short.

Heroes

Need not strength nor wit,
Heroes can be anyone.
Even you or me

Haikus, cont.

Khang Trang

Tsuki (moon)

She lights the night's way.
So high and bright in the sky.
She's the sun of night.

Stand

Summon your courage
Stand by the friends you have made.
Your place is with them

Friends

They make you smile.
They will make you cry and laugh.
They are your dear friends.

Siblings


The little girl cried.
Her brother watched and left..
He came back with food.

Soldiers

While they walk alone,
They have family at home
Wishing them good luck

Rainbows

They accept all love.
They are searching for rainbows.
Won't you join them too?



Two simple letters repeated twice
That make people run like a pack of mice
Just because someone decided to define
An extremist group in these simple letters.
Yes I agree what they do is treachery
But I didn't decide that we are alike
Even if we both like Mike and Ike.


These monsters described as men
Will need more than hell to pay for their sins
A tidal wave of pain
Should be their only gain
For the amount of innocent lives cut short
By their need to resort
To violence
But because these creatures exist
Doesn't mean our features mix.

Isis

Is the name girls should be proud
And wear it like a medal of honor
Not cower from the terror
Of being called a terrorist or a killer
My name is the embodiment of the goddess of magic
And nothing tragic.
A name for life to take flight
And not for them to die
By the need of greed.
She is a creator not destroyer
For she was equal to all
Tall or small

I.S.I.S. *cont.*

Isis Piper-Webber



Didn't care if they had every penny
Or were wishing for money
She would save a thief
Struggling with grief
Or show someone uptight
It's going to be alright
Lead a politician away from corruption.
Help a mother to discover a new way to live life and keep her kids safe.
She is the goddess to help and heal
Make people feel like they are real.

I Know for a fact I try to act
Kind and caring
Even if I dislike
How childlike their actions are.
I believe just because my name was stolen and maimed
A weave of conspiracies shouldn't bleed into my being.
For it isn't just me
Who deals with these problematic acts
Every man, woman, and child
Who decided to follow their religion
Shouldn't be called a terrorist
Because they wear a turban
Since they have the same gods
Doesn't mean they do the same jobs
You force them to suicide
To make them die
Like their "brothers" on the other side.
So it doesn't condone a tone
When you stutter my name.
Glare my way but say it was just a stare.
Just means you don't care

For my name doesn't mean
For you to treat me like florine
Or as an animal
You want to send to the kennel.
We shouldn't be told
Our friendship must be sold
Just to satisfy a parent's concern
That their child is exposed to risk.

Gods Dammit I am me and no one else
What happened to not judging a book on a shelf.
I am not a Killer
Or a really big sinner
But I believe you should treat me
Better than a pack of rotten meat.
For my rights to this name
Was long before their claim.

I is for the goddess inside

S to all the girls that share my pride

I to prove to others I am me
And finally

S is to help heal our suffering

That is who I am
Not the terrorist you damn me to be.

Falling for Meteorites

Koral Dodson Sorrels

The sun casts over seven billion meaningless faces and one soulmate's glare, of meteorite kisses and asteroid punches awaiting one ray to notice the seventh billion meaningless face.

The moon casts over seven billion hopeful faces while shying away from the soulmate it revolves, of radiating smiles and budding scars awaiting one shooting star for the sun to realize... they are all under the same solar system.

The earth casts under two significant others, the two hopes of the galaxy consisting of iridescent violets dripping cancers concern

...waiting for a telegram broadcasted to both through a satellite

and I love you

So, if a rocket flew past with a soulmate of a different hope, will someone dream of them as well?

Song

Richard Sternesky

— ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■ — ■ ■

This is how I feel when I think that I let go
I can sense the ebb and flow of my ego
Every little thing in the air how could I know
What the past, the present, the future hold
Why does it all coalesce into one blur
What if I don't want that how do I observe
My right to fight for my own memory
What do I do when I can't even see my enemy
What's, the best, response, to such, a question
I got all these answers floating in my head but
None of them will last the test of time when we rewind
Take a look at the history book what do we find
I don't even know, anymore, cannot tell a lie
Wish I could, then I would, it would turn out fine

This is how I feel when I'm going through a tough time
All I want to say: words that I can't can't find
All of my concerns, all my fears all on my mind
Remember my mistakes that I made? Now they're landmines
Make a wrong move, take a wrong step and that's it a wrap it's a done deal
Meanwhile I'm saunterin, wanderin, in this hell it's ambulatory
Isn't it wrong for them to add insult to injury why won't somebody call an ambulance for me

Everything I hate, about myself in the limelight
People look at me, all they sees a finite
Portion of my life, still they think they know what's right
"Oh you know what's up? Is that right? It's about time"
It's about time

Song, cont.

Richard Sternesky



Order and complete disarray there's a fine line
Walking on this rope I just hope that I don't die
But it's a fine line, and we're up high, so I just might
Everything turns back on itself in this routine
Like my cycle of thoughts taunts on repeat
How do I express my stress, can't even see straight
Still in my mind I know you won't believe me
How do you expect no less than perfection
When all I have to give is myself and
Maybe you don't know the toll of regret but
I think it's probably you think that you get it
So you neglect, forget, check out, assume that
Everything you know for sure, that's how it's always been
Why can't you just see the truth behind our struggling
All we really want is a key to the exit
You know, something we can get that'll end it
Maybe it'll last, prolly won't, but who cares

The Danger Generation


Anonymous

Behold the Danger Generation
Where nothing is safe and it's better to hate
The other side from across a line
That shifts and blurs, divides mankind
Where identity matters more than merit
Where it is ash over fortune that we'll inherit
The best educated become silenced
The loud make right, they damn the violence
But condone it if it works for an agenda
Have squabble long enough to ignore a referendum
These are my people
My brothers
My sisters
Kindred, each of us all
A church with no steeple
Because we're just the others
We know nothing at all

Introducing the Danger Generation
Born in suspicion, Cold War nerves that won't listen
The enemy is within and nowhere is safe
A gunshot for anyone, based on a mistake
That one can identify or agree upon
Every solution is shut down as a "greater harm"
While under the arguing goes another kid
Spiraling out of control, from the angst that he hid
It boils up now, and of his few options

The Danger Generation, *cont.*

Anonymous



Take the bottle of pills, or load dad's shotgun

These are my people

My brothers

My sisters

Wounded, each of us all

Smart yet so feeble

Because we're just the others

At risk of the fall

Someone save the Danger Generation

As we are all muted, our movements all diluted

A headline for a few days to make a change

To be forgotten again later down the range

An impossible target to hit with no round in the chamber

Condescending lectures become a hammer

To land upon any who dare to speak

Upon those who criticize the great divides the last generation reaped

We will inherit the earth, but will it be too late?

As our voices are gone, and our hearts are so full of hate

These are my people

My brothers

My sisters

Withered, each of us all

Daunted by the world's new evil

Yeah we're just the others

We know nothing at all

What is Love?

Olivia Nevadomski

Some may try and tell you that you are incapable of love.

That because of who you are, you will die forever alone.

But who gets to decide what happens in your life?

Love is defined as; an intense feeling of deep affection.

What does that mean, and why wouldn't you be able to have that?

Love makes your heart beat as fast as the kid tapping his pencil in the back of the room. The way it pulls your entire life story and places it within another's heart. The blood pumps and fills your toes with a numb feeling, that goes away with every kiss. Each breath gently grazes your skin and grasps onto your hair, giving you goosebumps.

Love is like an out of body experience. One that is unique to each person. One minute you're lonely and confused and the next you are captured by an unexplainable essence of nothing but everything.

Love is security.

Love is knowing you can be exactly who you want to be and nothing will change. Looking past the flaws and accepting another human for uncontrollable faults.

Love is realizing that everything you hate about yourself is exactly what he loves most. And hopefully, after time goes by, you'll begin to love yourself the way that he does.

Love is the loss of words; yet its a never ending stream of them. Words that can't quite explain the feeling you get. Or how your heart can't keep up with the speed of your racing mind.

Love is an addiction to a foreign drug. Something so strong, it should be illegal. People will give their hearts away and not realize the effects. The crazy, and the wonderful.

Love is a wind that sweeps beneath your feet and takes you to places so magical- you'll never want to return. The taste of the air around you leaves you wanting more and the person you're with makes it home.

Love is heartbreak. A sense of panic and despair. When your heart drops to your toes and keeps going. Back to where life began and all you knew were the warm walls of your mother.

What is Love? *cont.*

Olivia Nevadomski

Love was the tears your family shed after seeing you for the first time. The way you cooed and opened your gooey eyes made the family, full.

Love was getting a scrape on your elbow. And when you began to cry, your mother wiped your tears and gave you your favorite colored band aid.

Love was starting kindergarten at five and waving goodbye to your parents. Only to be surrounded by life long friends and teachers that would set you up for success.

And as you continued to grow, your definition of love changed. After heartbreak, first relationships and countless of friends. The concept was different.

The love you once felt for that person may seem meaningless,
Only to change when you meet someone new.

Love is devotion and commitment.

Love is putting another person before yourself.

Love is looking into someone's eyes and getting lost in the sound of their voice.

Love is realizing things will get hard but choosing to never give up. Despite the voices in your head yelling at you to run. To leave and never turn back.

Love is being able to give and never ask for anything in return.

Love is walking outside and feeling the sun kiss your lips and embracing the cold crisp air for a hug.

Love is getting lost in the woods and finding a trail leading home. Where the fire is burning, the beds are made up and warm food is out on the table.

Love is everything. It can drive you crazy and turn your world upside down. It can hurt you, it can heal you. No matter who you are, and what you stand for-everyone is capable of finding love.

Beast Woman

Allison Miller



Daniel's Stairs

Sonja Sower



Jaya Valdez Gallegos Marching Baritone

Owen Hartmann



Mythical Sunset

Sonja Sower



Native American Street Musician

Taken in Santa Fe

Owen Hartmann



Portrait of a Japanese Woman

Allison Miller



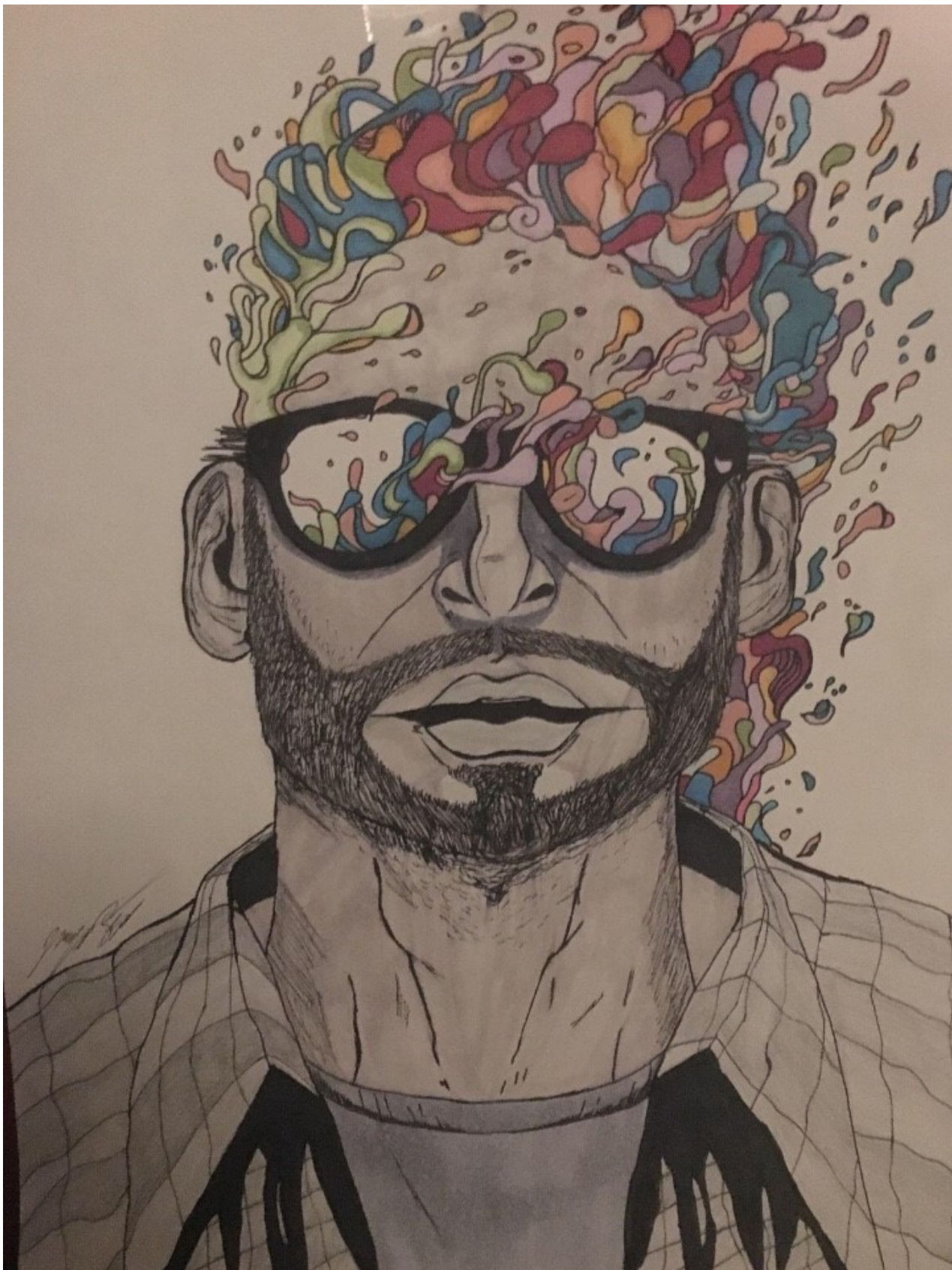
The Continuation of Creative Expression

Jackson Fojut



The Reality I See in Others

Jackson Fojut



Feelings

Zoe Schacht



Senior Feature

Kaylee Strehler



Senior Feature, cont.

Kaylee Strehler



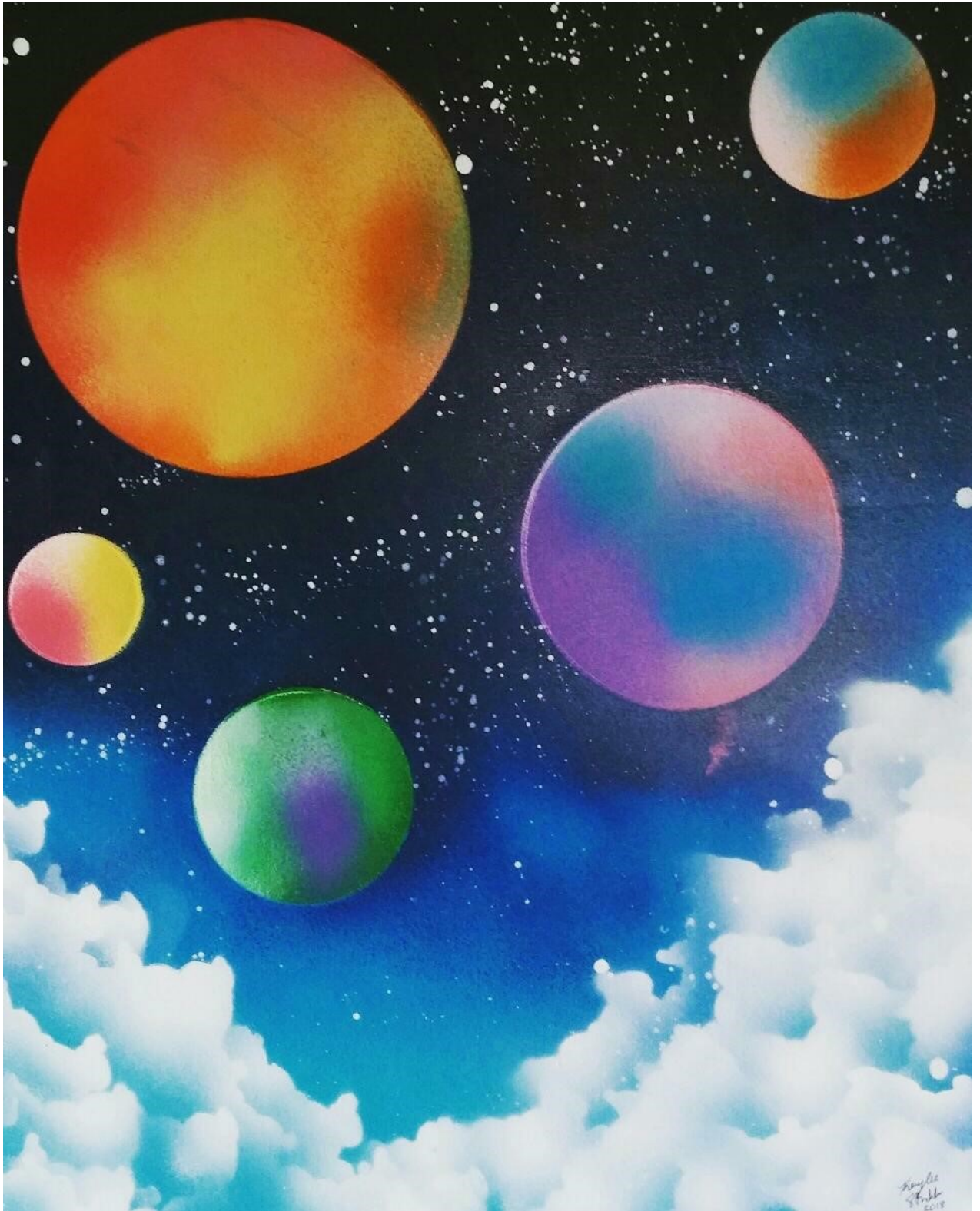
Senior Feature

Kaylee Strehler



Senior Feature, cont.

Kaylee Strehler

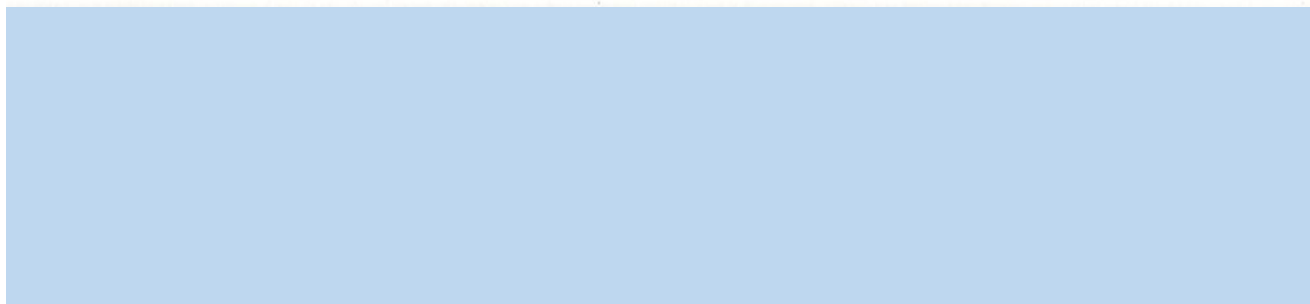


Senior Feature

Kaylee Strehler



Kaylee
Strehler
2017



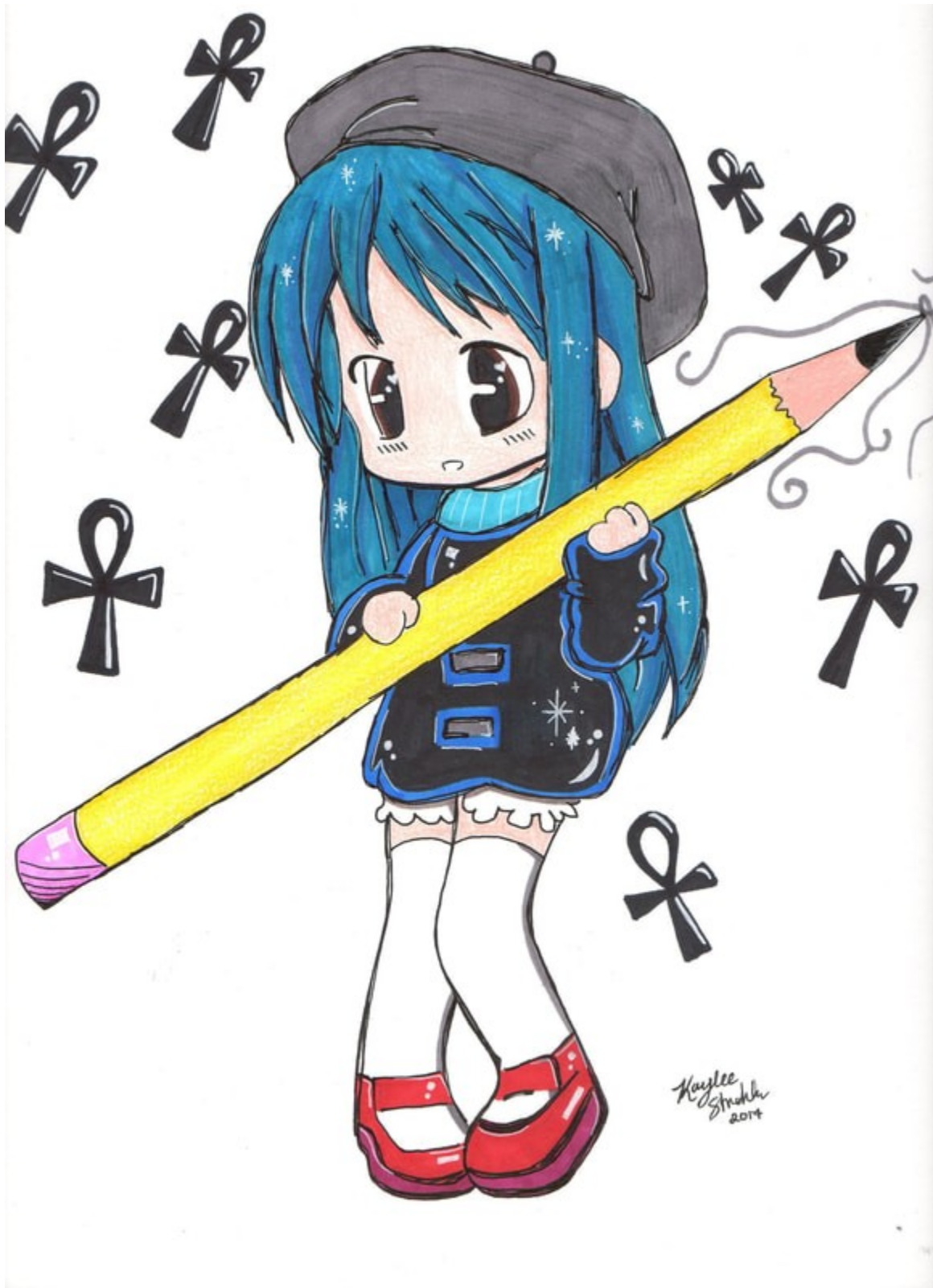
Senior Feature, cont.

Kaylee Strehler



Senior Feature

Kaylee Strehler



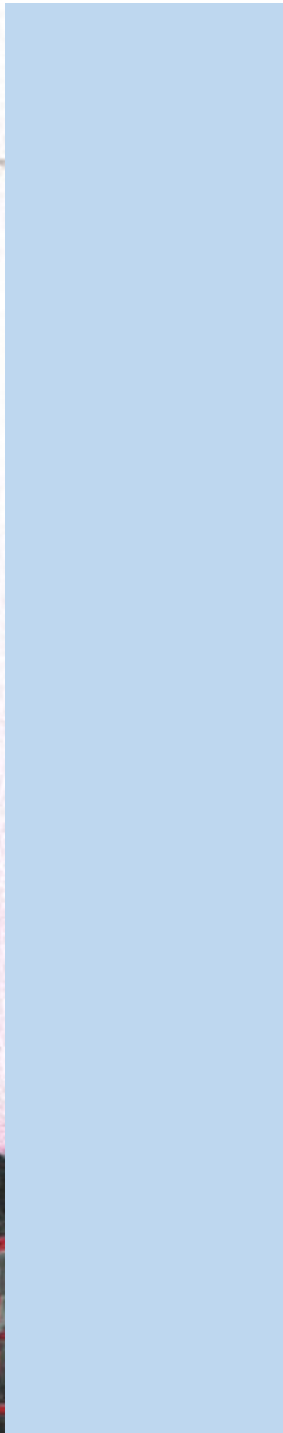
Senior Feature, cont.

Kaylee Strehler



Senior Feature

Kaylee Strehler



Senior Feature, cont.

Tal Landin



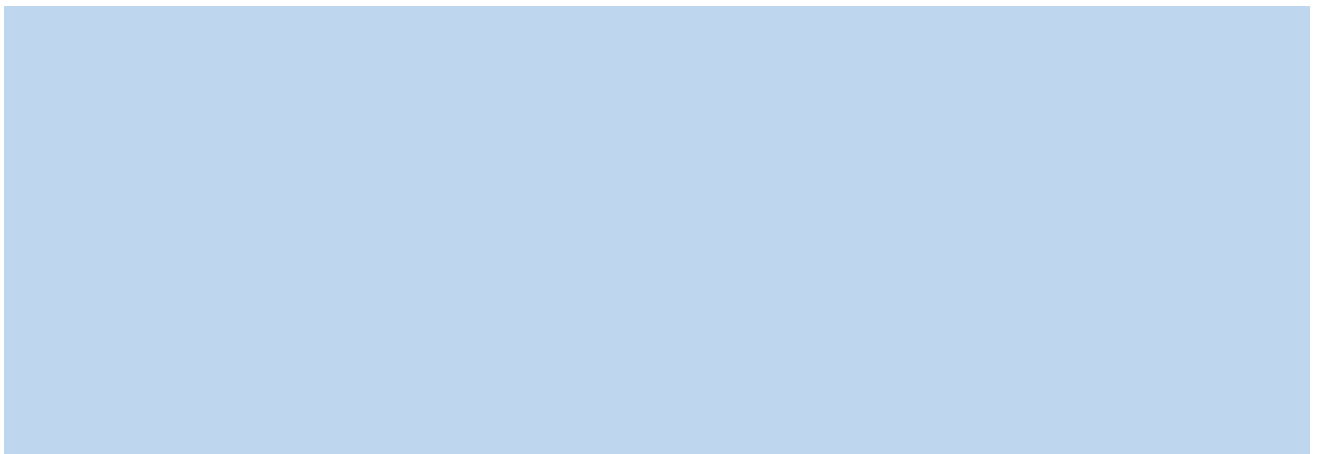
Chibi Gift

Senior Feature

Tal Landin

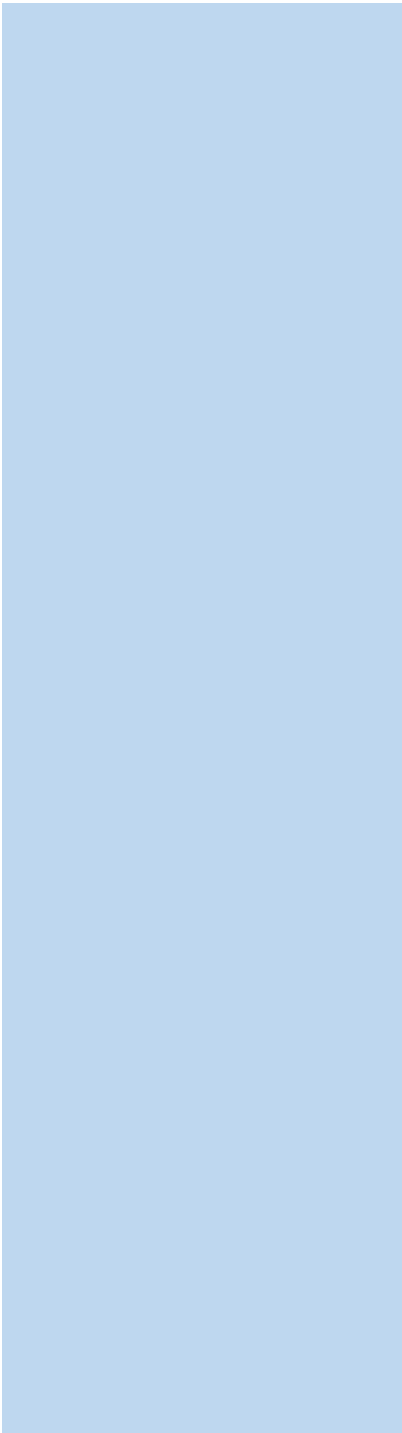


Chibi Head



Senior Feature, cont.

Tal Landin



Koto SplitBoard



Senior Feature

Tal Landin



Nishi Boy

Senior Feature, cont.

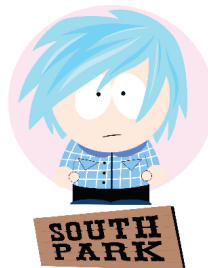
Tal Landin

Piece of a Puzzle



Senior Feature

Tal Landin



@Tal_BPP

Senior Feature, cont.

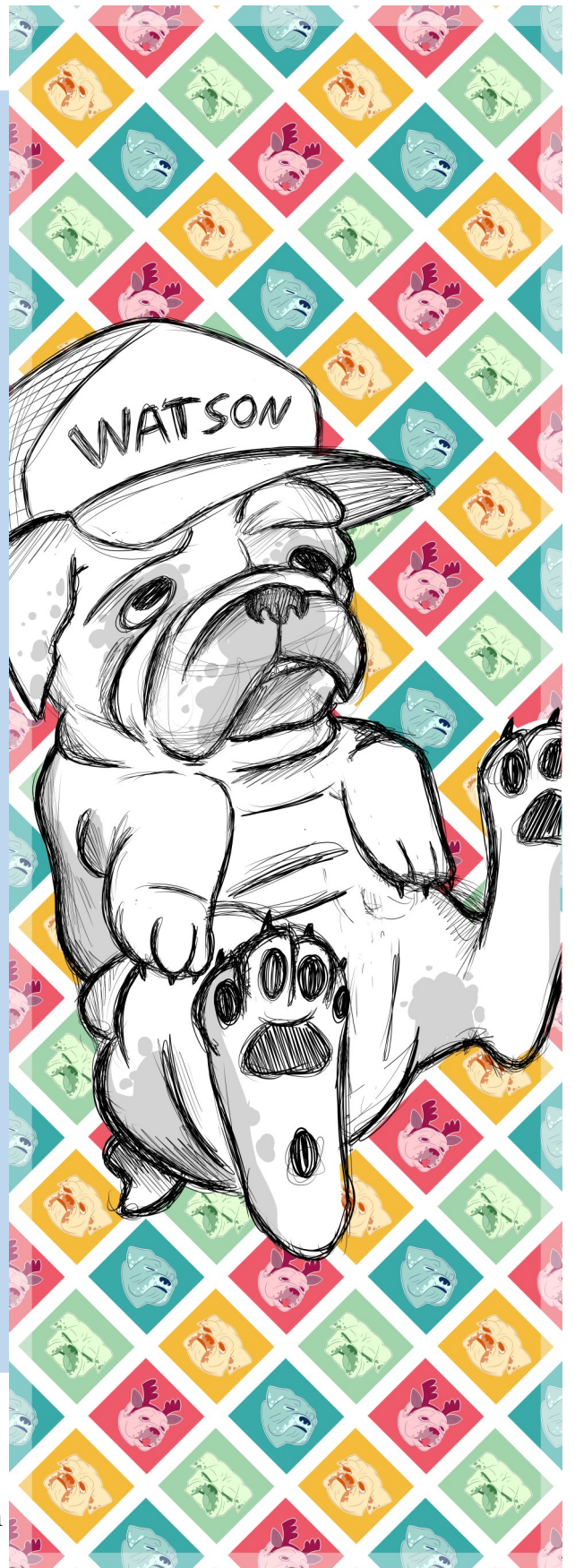
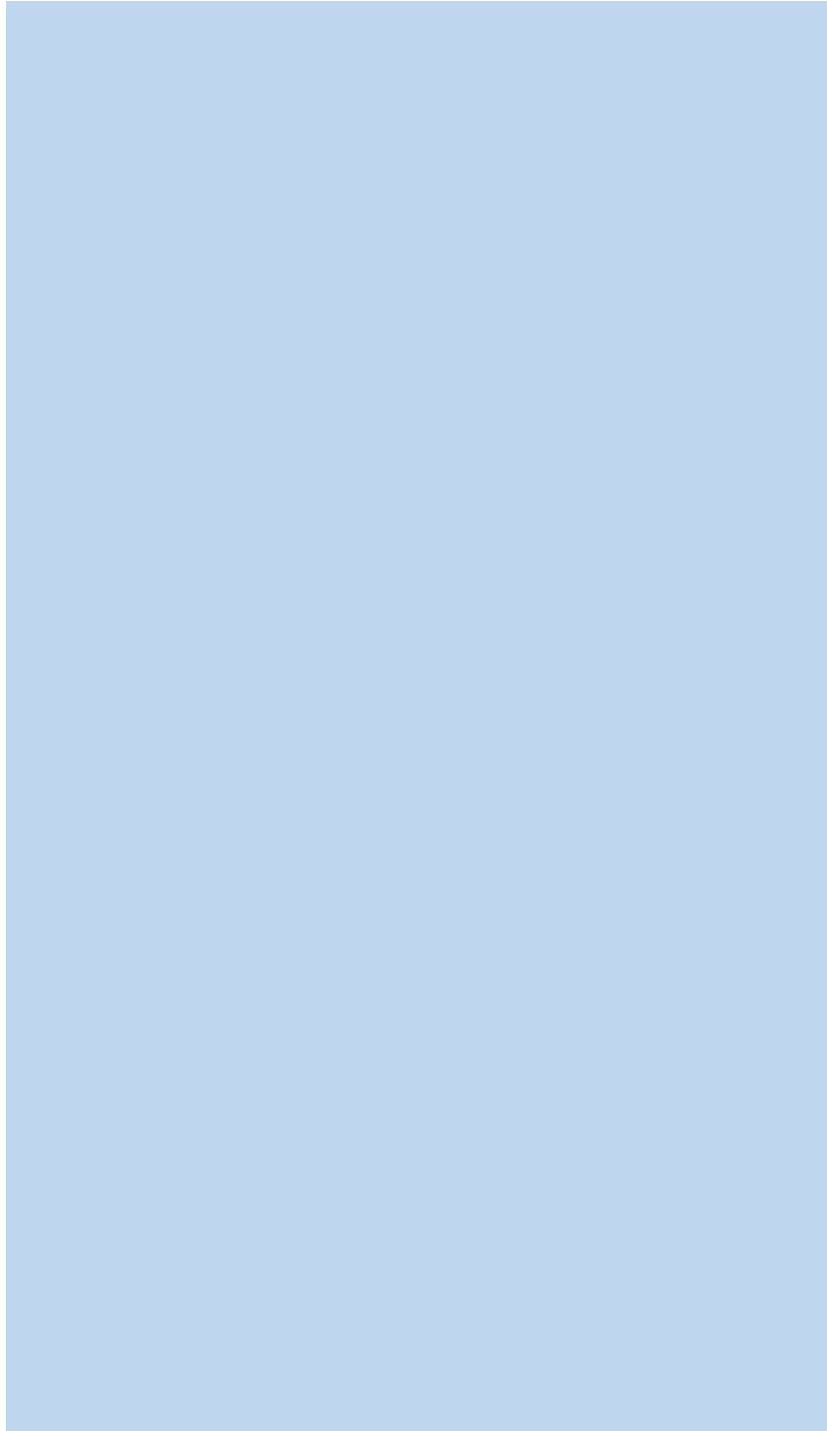
Tal Landin



Too Cloudy for Stargazing

Senior Feature

Tal Landin



Watson

About the Authors

Meleah Brand

My name is Maleah Brand, I am 15 years old, and in ninth grade. My inspiration for writing “Beauty” was because so many teens are so insecure about their appearances and often times don’t realize that looks aren’t everything. Today’s society is all about how you look and what is in, what is out, but what truly matters is what’s on the inside and personally I was hoping this poem would help open my eyes and others to change society’s opinion on true beauty. My hobbies are volleyball, helping my church’s children faith formation classes and junior high youth group, volunteering, and going to the park and gym. Currently, my dream career is to do something in the movie business whether it’s directing, writing, or acting because movies have an impact on how people live their lives and I want to create movies that inspire people to be kinder, stand up for what they believe in, facing your fears, and so much more.

Jackson Fojut

I’m Jackson Fojut attending Bear Creek High School as a 10th grader(sophomore) at 16. My inspiration comes from the the people I meet and their personalities flowing out of them through color as the “reality I see in others”. Additionally with other hobbies like drawing I enjoy traveling, baseball, snowboarding, and design as I strive to be a graphic designer for the future.

Sarah Manning

My name is Sarah Manning. I am fifteen years old and am just about finished with ninth grade. The inspiration for my story isn't anything deep. Some pictures of decayed buildings in Detroit and the dystopian world of an unsatisfactory writing assignment from the first semester was enough to inspire. When I'm not writing for school, I usually write for fun. My only other notable hobbies are playing video games and piecing together an overly-complicated timeline including everything I've ever written. As for a dream career, I would say astronomer. I can't live without writing for more than two days, but I don't think I could make it professional.

About the Authors

Kieran Phillips

My name is Kieran Phillips, and I am a sophomore at Bear Creek High School. I am sixteen years old, and I wrote the slam poem “Empty Boxes.” I wrote this poem for my creative writing class, and I was generally inspired by the overall trend of stereotypes and labels put onto people throughout this world. I think that people should be able to define themselves by what they whatever they want to: by what they believe, what they enjoy, etc. However, society often just simply doesn’t allow that. The world tends to define us by the things we can’t control about ourselves, and that is the essence of my inspiration for this poem. As for my everyday life, I enjoy reading, watching nerdy shows and movies (as well as some that aren’t as nerdy), making music with my violin, voice, and other instruments, as well as playing video games and learning more about writing and filmmaking. My dream career is up for debate, but I would love to go into something involving writing, music, mathematics, science, or some impossible career involving all of the above.

Isis Piper-Weber

My inspiration for my piece was the infamous I.S.I.S. terrorist group and people starting to only associate my name I received long before the organization had existed. So this was about venting off my frustration of people and their lack of understanding that not everyone that has a name meaning the same thing are the same people. This was to create a separation of all that is associated with the extremist group, including all that they have taken away by using such a name like Isis.

I love to go on hikes and almost anything active. I also find enjoyment in writing, drawing, and singing for as good or bad I believe I am. My favorite hobby though is M.M.A. which is martial arts classes.

My dream career is to be a detective working homicide cases. It has always been my passion to help others and maybe even change someones ways, no matter how naive that sounds.-- Isis Piper-Weber, Junior.

About the Authors

Sonja Sower

My name is Sonja Sower. I am in 11th grade, and I'm 17 years old. I painted and wrote my pieces following the death of my 15-year-old brother Daniel. He was a freshman here, and he was the most amazing kid you'd ever meet. After he died, I was torn apart, and I still am, but I thought of the values that such a premature loss could teach so that I could find something positive to think about instead of letting the pain consume me. When I painted "Daniel's Stairs," my original intention was not to make it about Daniel. Originally, I was just looking for something to paint to distract myself, so I asked Owen what to paint; he suggested that I paint the Miracle Staircase, which he sent me a picture of. I tried my best to capture the staircase as he had photographed it, but it really sucked, so I decided to make it into something more abstract to cover up my lack of artistic ability. I decided to move the stairs to the sky, and then I started thinking of the song "Stairway to Heaven." After I made that connection, I figured I'd dedicate the painting to Daniel. The little bird in the sun was just something I drew on an impulse, and I decided to stick with it. However, I definitely had Daniel in mind when I wrote "Simple Words." After someone kills himself, it's easy to question a lot of things about life. I decided I would encourage people to be kind, to be compassionate, to spread love. I never want anyone to feel so much pain, which is why spreading kindness and voicing our love is so important. People need to know they matter. Because we all matter.

Kaylee Strehler

My name is Kaylee Strehler and I am a senior at Bear Creek High School for the 2017-2018 school year. I currently am 17-years-old. I have been creating artwork since I was little as a means of leisure. However, I work on my art professionally on the side. My art brand is called StrehlerArt and my work can be seen on my website StrehlerArtPortfolio.weebly.com or on my Instagram: @Strehler_Art. My hobbies are anything artistic/creative including art, photography, dancing, musical instruments, and singing as well as learning languages. My dream is to eventually become an Ambassador, Diplomat or a Consulate, but I would still remain an artist on the side.

About the Authors

Khang Trang

My name is Khang Trang and I am a 17 year old Junior. My inspiration for writing were my friends and family because they said it would be a good idea if I were to submit something to Bear Ink. Another part of my inspiration for writing was that it's just fun to write. My hobbies are playing video games and reading. My dream career is exploring the world and traveling a I please while making money as an author. By traveling and learning about the world and meeting the different sides of people, it will help me write better stories whether for money or for entertainment. The main reason why that is my dream is because there is only so much you can do in life, thus I have to spend my time enjoying myself as much as I can.



Bear Creek High School

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