



Mt. San Jacinto: An Anthology of Student Art and Writing

*This first student-edited issue of Flight Magazine for the Spring 2022 semester, Ruminations, asked artists to engage with themes of mental and emotional health within their work. We appreciate the candor and honesty with which all artists handled this theme. These works are genuine reflections of student experiences, and contain themes such as psychosis, paranoia, depression, and anxiety -- topics which may not be suitable for all readers.*

*We thank all of the students who submitted to the magazine this semester and Professor Mull for advising us in the editorial process. This magazine wouldn't have been possible without the hard work and dedication of Marielle Dumlao, Selene Hofstetter, Alexis Morrow, Aissiah Debatian, Alex Sokol, and Ivy Moorjani.*

*-Flight Staff*

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*What Have I Done?*

Amanda Armas

What have I done to myself? Oh, what did I do?  
Like seeing wreckage in a crash, and the blame is on you.

What have I done to myself? Oh, what did I do?  
At 20, I was on fire, now near 40, a lost shade of blue.

Oh, what have I done to myself? What can I do?  
How do I shed this weight, along with my blues?

What have I done to myself? Oh, what did I do?  
If you've ever shunned thyself, what would you do?

After you've done something you cannot undo,  
What do you tell yourself? What should you do?

I've kept this pain hidden and obscure, hitherto.  
So how would you fix yourself? And could I, too?

"It won't be easy", though cliché, it proves true.  
How do I save my own life, when repair is overdue?

*Within This Solitude of Mine*

Selene Hofstetter

I see the world through a window  
And feel the four walls of my room at my back.

I see the birds fly through the sky  
And feel my cat rub against my leg.

I see the clouds make their rounds  
And feel the sun slant off my face.

I see the houses encompass the sun  
And feel the darkness in the room.

I see my reflection within the window  
And feel my shadow creep along my skin.

I see the moon slip through my screen  
And feel the shackles at my feet.

I see the Milky Way pass by in a haze  
And feel the burden of time upon my chest.

I see the sun climb into the sky once again  
And feel the four walls edge closer.

I see the world unfold and breathe  
And feel my sanity leisurely escape.

I watch my reflection reach out to the sky  
But all I feel is glass.

My breath fogs up my vision and I succumb  
To this solitude of mine.



*Fleeting* by Alexis Morrow

## *Depressional Groundhog Day*

Alexis Calain

Tick tock goes the clock,  
another day waking you up on the dot.  
You hit snooze a fourth time,  
because what's the point of rising so sublime.  
You toss and turn, fighting the urge to pee,  
because the bed holds you closer than  
anyone you will ever meet.  
You look up at the fan,  
counting the blades swoosh by.  
Doing the same thing day after day,  
as if glitched in the matrix of reality.  
With both feet planted to the floor  
you pull your body to the door,  
questioning if the world will be brighter today.  
The sun then hits your face  
asking you to smile.  
For it has been a while  
since you have shown such grace.  
Lugging your body to the couch,  
you turn on the automated distraction of the day.  
For this keeps your mind from wondering to the dark place.  
With the day half over you head to bed,  
counting the steps until pillow meets head.  
Closing your eyes you dream of tomorrow,  
for maybe life will then not be so sorrow.

*There is No Price for Love*

Hannah Perez

There is no price for love, but there is for freedom.  
I set my eyes on the Statue of Liberty  
She stands as tall and as hopeful as me.  
And in her lifeless eyes I finally see  
Dollar signs, tickets to freedom that's no longer free.

If a lab rat is what they want, I'll surely pay the price  
With bad luck on the brain, I roll the dice  
Just for a chance to play amongst blonde mice  
With that statuesque woman as my only vice.

There she is, standing more worn than when she first came  
A French immigrant, now a household name  
And here I am, running under cover of darkness and shame  
Not wanted in my country nor hers, the same.

As we arrive my dreams of her glory cloud with doubt.  
The lies I practiced went through one ear and then out.  
But nothing will stop me from conquering this route.  
I've made my decisions, this is the only way out.

So nice I will play with these mice from the city.  
My skin is tough and my determination gritty.  
If they'd like to cast stones, I'll play stupid enough for pity.  
I'll let them tamper with my mind, even though it isn't pretty.

I love the green woman who has braved the storms of the sea,  
for once she was a beautiful brown just like me.  
And I love who I love no matter who will disagree.  
And that is the price I pay to be free.



## *Echoes of Silence*

Donna Chavez

The room has been blown apart, broken, and left exposed to the elements. As if terrorism weren't enough, vandals came in and left their marks on the walls claiming this place as their own. Others joined in to finish things off. Ashes, shattered windows, and broken furniture. The room is left unrecognizable. This was a place where young people came to learn, to fill their minds with knowledge, and to dream of a bright future. Now, there is silence, a silence that echoes with the voices of the past. I make my way towards the door. I pause. What is left of the school will be demolished. Erased. As if it never existed. I'll never teach in this room again. I get to the doorway, stop for a moment, and look out the shattered windows one last time. I can see the sun shining through, strong, bright, and warm. I can see the hills in the distance, and beyond those hills the town where I will start a new life.



*Hear Their Cries* by Donna Chavez

## *The Empty Spaces*

Mykaila Ware

Echoes of turmoil and distrust follow them everywhere;  
chasing them like prey.

The endless journeys haunt them in times of peace.

Prayers for a haven or sanctuary are spoken  
to a god with no clear answer.

Paradise is found in the eyes of the travelers, in the land of frees;  
but lost in the eyes of those who call it home.

Even in darkness, there is light as the traveler  
dreams of honey and neon lights.

Spaces in the soul once filled with light  
grow dim with fear and anger.

There is no warmth in these spaces; no home.

There are only ghosts here; only husks in human forms.

Wounds and hushed cries lay buried or trapped in the air.

In a new land, the travelers are free at a heavy price.

They choose to rise instead of falling; choosing to fight  
instead of hiding; they show the world who they are.

Keeping secrets; Keeping burdens of the mind from others.

There is little difference between them.

Mountains of wealth and grandeur surround the weary travelers.

While the barren deserts of home remember them.

Hands of help and trust follow them; spaces of the souls are full  
again.

*Little Home*

Victoria Beattie-Phillips

I am open, I am new,  
Please stay if you need, I have plenty of space  
Sure, my doors may be old, but they are new for you to run through with  
childlike wonder,  
The walls may be blank, but they are ready for you to fill with smiling  
faces,  
My piping is new so you won't have to worry, you can fill baths with  
water to soak your tired feet,  
My floors may creek so don't be alarmed when walking about,  
Pull up a seat, the dinner table is ready for four  
Throw wood into the potbelly stove and enjoy the heat  
Open the French doors for the spring and summer breeze  
My windows are waiting, what do you see?  
My roof is ready for any storm so relax I can handle the rain on any  
winter night and sun in the hot summer days  
The trees are scattered about, they were planted by many so one day  
shade would comfort my days,  
The patio swing blows in the breeze so take a seat and enjoy,  
Some days the sky is screaming with colors, morning and just before  
nightfall so don't miss the sight,  
Moon and stars will fill the night sky so cuddle in a blanket and stare for a  
moment  
The grass will grow tall, please give it a cut maybe once or twice, I like to  
look kept  
The fence is sturdy so let your dog free, she can sniff the bushes and trees,  
You may see a deer or two don't be afraid they enjoy the apples down the  
way  
Neighbors are close but won't be a bother if you need a cup of sugar, go  
on and ask  
Come see my place and have a little taste.  
again.





*Blur* by Alexis Morrow

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*Ziploc and Thumb Tacks*

Heather Watson

Twenty minutes. I just have to survive this twenty minute trip to Target without having to participate in any conversation or melt into the floor, Alex Mack style. Please no eye contact. Please no, “Hey girl. It’s been too long.” Please, please no awkward, misplaced feelings of obligatory small talk. Yes, I am finding everything just fine, thank you. Except, I think I lost track of my deep belly breaths and my parking lot pep talk and my self-care intentions. And I think self-soothe and self-sabotage are filed too closely together in my mind which is now self-destructing. Twenty minutes. But I am too aware now. I let it in. I’m reminded now with each passing glance from strangers that my eyes don’t fit right anymore when they try to find rest in the nooks of smile lines and my skin feels too baggy and I wish it was camouflage. I remember that sick is written on my face

and on this body. I've been trying to eat but suddenly my mind is much better at math and shame ultimatums than it is at remembering how to swallow or nourish or rest or deserve. Old habits die hard. But I hid the scale again and I hid the hand mirror and the tweezers and that sewing pin that I keep stuck into the wood frame of the bathroom mirror, except for when it is performing surgery or separating wet mascara lashes. And the fabric measuring tape is wound up so tightly that it couldn't wave me down if it tried. But the strangers know none of this. Twenty minutes. I don't know what is worse, the thought that the truth is lost in translation or the thought that every single person here is fluent in my body language. I am a flashing neon sign. So much for camouflage. I think the secret shopper is misinterpreting my shifty eyes as a loss prevention code-red. He's not wrong. But what's lost/stolen/damaged is spiritual and has nothing to do with the candle I picked up and put down twelve times before I decided not to compromise the budget for self-care. And the laser pointer eyes of every person here are setting me on fire but much to my dismay, they have yet to burn out my retinas like my third grade teacher promised they would. Condemned to 20/20 vision. And suddenly I don't know what to do with my hands and I can't tell if they are shaking because of too much caffeine or too little food or lack of sleep or maybe it's the atom bomb of anxiety sitting in my diaphragm pulsing and radiating through to my extremities. That which we call a rose, by any other name would still smell like a nervous sweat and an emergency ziploc of Xanax. And I know the world is focusing on all the ugly things I'm wearing because I've turned inside out and my guts are sad. And now I'm thinking. Ticking, racing, crawling, itching thinking and thinking and thinking and overthinking. And that's the worst kind of fuckery to dabble in. Shapeshifting thoughts that shift shape from helium to lead. Twenty minutes. Come back to your body. That's always the advice. But I can't tell if my body has

taken flight or has begun to sink into quicksand Target floors. Come back to your body? Maybe that works when your body isn't a traitor. It's mutiny in here from brain to guts and I don't know that anyone knows who they are revolting against. Sometimes it is a black hole or a mudpit or kaleidoscope panic traveling at lightspeed. But it is always war- in body and mind. And I think the three of us want to take care of each other and maybe we think that we are. But we are products of our environments- and the worlds inside and outside of us are so unkind and so we are so unkind to one another- and so we blame and we loathe and we degrade and we punish and we fight until we're forced to surrender- and we beg each other or the universe or God. And we wonder why we can't find peace when we are conditioned to interpret peace as suspect. Twenty minutes... and five things you can see, smell, touch, hear. Strangers' eyes, copper, my sternum under my hand, my heartbeat. Dried nail polish on linoleum, too much perfume that reminds me of my grandma and church, the tap of index then middle then ring then pinky to thumb and back again, my heartbeat... Come back to your body. I should've grabbed a cart. This fucking brain. I don't know what I came here for but I'm leaving with some \$8 wine and maybe some thumb tacks so I can pin the corners of my mouth up by my eyebrows before the next Target trip. I'm great, thanks... I found everything just fine.



*My Neighbor's Tree*

Alex Sokol

I threw stones at tadpoles  
that drifted down my creek  
and stomped their bodies to sand  
when they swam up my knees.  
I saved a wet bee  
with a plastic bottle  
christened it with pee  
then cast it back into my stream.  
But when I choked on a cherry pit  
picked from my neighbor's tree  
I cried for my river  
running lifeless to the sea.



*Dew* by Victoria Beattie-Phillips

*Is It Me?*

Amanda Armas

How does one react when their parent dies?  
How should one feel to bid early goodbyes?

How does one respond to the news that their first love has passed?  
How can one write a eulogy, for who's time here should've been vast?

Then how does one move forward, once their best friend has died?  
How does one resist damning God with fierce and resentful chides?

Can one ever feel safe enough to love again, like those they've lost?  
Or should one hide from the world, 'cause their stars must be crossed?

One of the most frightening parts of all, is a part that no one can see,  
In wondering, if all those I'd loved and lost, began dying in loving me.