

Newington College



# NEW ENIGMA 15

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poetry

prose

artworks

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# Foreward

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In this issue of *New Enigma*, the editorial team has attempted to provide a diverse range of voices from across all Year groups, including the preparatory schools. We hope thus to encourage creativity in all Newington Boys. Not only is creativity greatly useful in the boys' academic studies, creative art and writing also allow the most powerful expression of emotions and sentiments in a way that is both satisfying to the authors and enlivening or moving to the readers.

The theme of this issue is 'Transferences'. Transferences - change, movement, loss and discovery - are universal experiences of 'carrying across'. They constitute the subject of many of the greatest works of literature and art. In part, we hope that the pieces in this collection will convince the reader, especially one who has had to face syllabus-invoked set pieces of "Change", "Belonging" and now "Discovery", may come to appreciate that such concepts are not just figments of an examiner's thinking, and that real people find expression for their concerns in the transferences

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that writing subtly enacts. In the art works and photographs featured here, we find imaginative approaches to transferences on a range of themes: Jake Holden explores the changing nature of identity, for instance, while Oliver Oei questions social conformity. George Squires invites viewers to re-think animal-human perspectives. We want art and writing interfaced across this issue to promote perspectives on transference that enlighten, challenge and encourage reflection.

Some of the pieces included explore physical transferences in one's circumstances: Jack Alscher writes of the "carrying across" transference of an asylum seeker; the three pastiches of Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads* explore narrators' reactions to severe disruptions in their lives; and Sachin Kinger offers a personal response to an imagined transference of 'accident of birth ... geography and finance ... place and time'. The physical and cultural transference of migration is vividly depicted in Makuach Maluach's account of real experiences. Other pieces concern themselves with

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less obvious transferences: Costan Griziotis describes the transference one experiences in love, while Barnaby Haslem writes about psychological fears that carry across the mind during a dark night. Contributors have also been interested in what endures the changes and transferences of the years. James Ellis discusses the mental shifts a reader feels, and Jonathan Lee's essay makes a case for valuing literature in the modern world.

Finally, the editors would like to thank Dr Yvonne Smith for her help and guidance in the editorial process, Mr Stephen Houraghan for his design expertise in producing this issue, and all boys who submitted works for consideration.

We hope that you too will be moved and changed by the transferences found in this selection of works from the boys of Newington in 2015.

Eric Sheng, Fletcher Howell & James Paoloni, Editors.

# Stepping Forward

Jagroop Singh, Year 12

poetry

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The day is bright, the land is arid. The heat appears to have no end, neither does the horizon. Why is this man here? What is he doing? Is he searching, looking for something?

Or is he being searched for?

Is he lost?

Or is he home?

His mind is content and the beast he rides is powerful.

Do they know each other? Or do they simply need each other to survive?

Has he been degraded to the final instinct of survival or is he searching?

Like all the other beings, lost in life, not knowing what tomorrow holds, fear in the back of his mind.

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Or does fear even exist?

For now they continue on. The beast takes its forward steps. For that is all they can do.

Continue moving forward, hopefully stumbling into something.

Something worthwhile, a new meaning.

**Writer's comment:** I like to challenge people's views by asking why. I am influenced by Kendrick Lamar's raps and write raps myself. I am also influenced by Punjabi musical rhythms, as my grandfather was musical and I liked the stringed instrument he played. I have been writing since I was five and notice that a quiet person can see things that might be missed by talkers. I am a quiet person who has learned to talk. I want readers to think about their own experiences and find their own convictions if they lack them. People should be always stepping forward.

# Home or Lost?

Euan McKenzie, Year 8

artworks



Illustration by Euan Mckenzie based on Jagroop Singh's poem 'Stepping Foward'

# The Game

Harry Carr, Year 10

poetry

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The cry of the lips,  
Silence envelops the cavernous space,  
A wave closes out,  
Players are set. It's time to play:  
Those magic words leap.

Rain jars sideways,  
Silence is mystery,  
The game is yours,  
It's your move: pull down,  
Then take the chance to breathe.

Noise envelops you,  
Then numbs you,  
A cycle, on a never ending repeat.  
Up and down, a never ending repeat.

The rhythm becomes tiresome,  
Your legs are rocks,  
Those rocks are boulders.  
Rhythm becomes pain.  
Pain becomes everything.

Seems everything – torture – for eternity.  
Or that's how it seems.  
Finish is close, finish is near.  
Those last seconds the longest in the game.  
How much longer do I endure?

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The wall, the touchpad, the saviour!  
Why weren't you here earlier?  
I've been through so much, now  
Reward me. Game over.  
The race is done.

The wait, the uncertainty,  
The silence,  
The breaths,  
The cycle,  
The pain,  
The wall.  
They have all rewarded me.

For I have won.  
The silence becomes a cry of  
Triumph. Adrenaline shoots through your body.  
Accomplished!  
I have done it for the team.

# Red Vista

Aiden Chan, Year 11

artworks



**Artist's comment:**

I took the photograph during my holiday to central Australia. The vast spaces and roads that seemed to lead right to the horizon were my inspiration, as well as the huge distances between places we visited.



# Self Portrait Detail

Forrest Whitcomb, Year 12





# Discarded

Sam Clark, Year 12



artworks

# The Boy with Beautiful Wings

Benjamin Walsh, Year 6

poetry

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A boy stands on the face of a cliff  
And looks longingly at the empty clouds.  
He closes his eyes, and drops  
Opening angelic feathered wings.  
The boy soars above the misty clouds  
And smiles at the beautiful world  
With all its green, peaceful meadows  
And its warlike, raging oceans.  
The boy's smile grows, and its radiant beams give life.

The people are warmed by the beams,  
Those radiant beams of light.  
A baby flourishes in warmth,  
A village is built:  
A home for the people of the world  
Because of that boy with angelic wings.

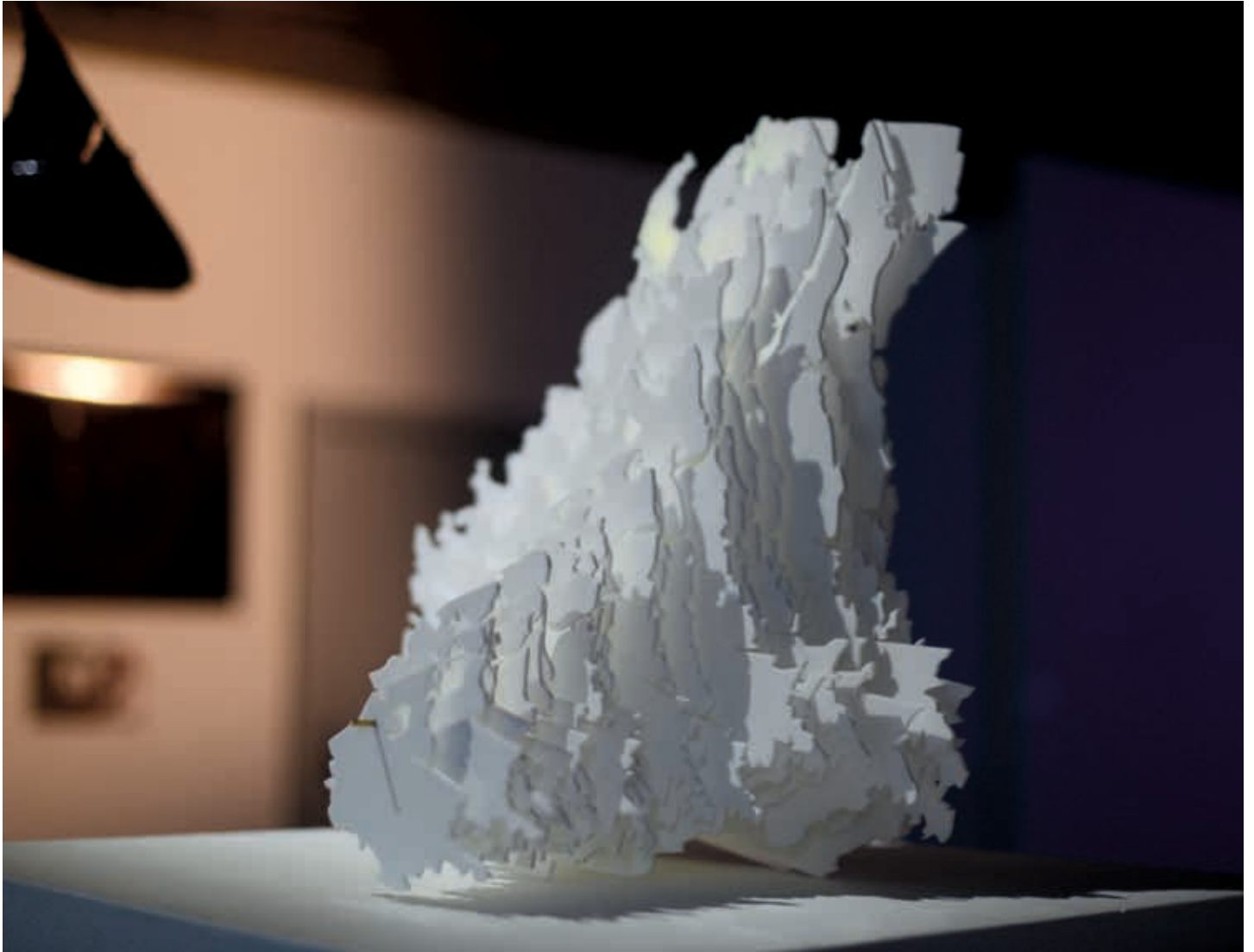
Animals doze in the heat,  
Nourishing their young and old  
In a paradise of forested trees  
Because of the boy with feathered wings.

The boy is a forger of paths for the worlds  
And he has made us majestic ones,  
Magical paradises of possible futures:  
Gifts from the boy with the feathered wings.

# Frames per Second

Forrest Whitcomb, Year 12

artworks



# Breathe

Justin Ting, Year 12

poetry

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Sniffing clouds of chalk like  
whispered sighs, I breathe in  
hot kisses tickling the underside  
of those once delicate nostrils  
in all the sweetest spots – fluttering  
eyes and hearts are beating, beating,  
and gasping more, and something is growing  
within.

It's suffocating in a senseless world.

# Love's Arms

Costan Griziotis, Year 11

poetry

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Your world freezes,  
Almost as if you hadn't lived.  
Your eyes widen and you are transfixed.  
What happens next is a dream,  
It can be long,  
It can be short,  
But no matter the length,  
You feel blessed.

It's like a wave that hits dry sand  
It makes a swish, goes mushy.  
It's like a drowning man inhaling air,  
It makes him gasp.

Tears on the inside,  
Accompanied by tears on the outer.  
A smile within,  
And a smile of the lips.

You are overwhelmed with joy,  
A sense of freedom and belonging.  
You reveal your wings,  
You fly into something beautiful:  
Into love's arms.



**A poet's view:** The point of poetry is to allow people to find comfort within themselves and peace, knowing that there are people feeling like them and facing the same struggles. Poems should be there for everyone to enjoy.

# Book Hunting

James Ellis, Year 12

prose

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Sitting at the corner coffee shop just off Trafalgar Square in London, I notice the people around me as I look through the window, all happy and going about their daily routines. I take a sip of my coffee and put the book down. I'm not sure whether the window I'm looking through is the one I'm most interested in. I feel a calming satisfaction in watching people enjoy themselves as they ride the lions of London but being behind the window is rather restrictive in my interaction with the rest of London.

I move seats; now I'm looking out from a much higher window, thirty thousand feet high in fact. I'm sitting directly in front of the jet turbine, watching the engine purr as it passes over the rice fields of China. From the window, I imagine the fields of farms, producing rice from the water of the mountains, high-end irrigation with high production but little reward. I find peace and pleasure in my view over the Chinese rice fields but it quickly bores me as there is really only one thing to see. I put my book down and move over to the window by the sunny bagels and croissants.

I look out of the window. A picturesque view of all of Paris moves around me as I take a look around the River Seine. The Eiffel Tower stands tall

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and proud in its might as the ferry sails past it. But part of the view is plagued by the masses of people all flocking to get their piece of French merchandise sold by the scammers and thieves working for the bigger man. But looking beyond them, I can see the beauty of the Parisians, the food, the luxury cuisine and five-star restaurants that attract queues as long as the Eiffel Tower itself. But the city of love is also a city of crime. As I approach one of the docking platforms, three men at the back reveal their machine guns and urge everyone to get on the floor. Excitement begins to fill my veins as I long to know that will happen to everyone. But as I try to get into a more comfortable position, a child bumps into me and knocks my glasses and book out of my hand.

He apologises but I find it best to move to another window away from life's annoyances. I'm liking this window, looking out of the turbo-charged muscle car on a German Autobahn, being chased by police, not for speeding, of course, but because there are four sacks of money on the back seat worth a total of four million Euros. The car's reaching in excess of two hundred kilometres an hour. I feel like I'm being pushed back into my seat; it's hard to breathe. The police

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are still in hot pursuit – they have helicopters and their high-end police sports cars behind me. My driver pulls a lever and releases a spray of road spikes.

I feel the last two books are most certainly my thing. I leave the window and go over to the checkout desk. The lady smiles as she hands them back over to me and apologises again for the children. I tell her not to worry and exit the library.



# Observing Time as Space

Forrest Whitcomb, Year 12

artworks





# Why Literature is Still Important in the Modern World

Jonathan Lee, Year 8

Over the years, technology has overtaken the time we give to literature, essentially suffocating the hours of thinking, researching, writing, experience and knowledge condensed for us into books, plays and various other media. "Literature" has almost become an obsolete term; its influence appears to be taking a downward trend. However, in my view, literature carries facts and philosophies, stories and soliloquies, and a multitude of information which cannot be replicated. These ought to be preserved and appreciated more in the modern world.

Literature – all of the books, plays, oral tradition, prose, poetry and other texts we have – is entertaining and purposeful. Since the dawn of time, we have been transferring thoughts and memories onto sand, rocks, scraps of animal hide and eventually paper. These records are memories: stored events, visions, perspectives and stories recorded for the cultural knowledge and entertainment of future generations. The folklore of any culture is distinct and shapes the personalities of those who follow. As noted by Meg Moseley in her article "The Importance of Fairy Tales", literature gives us "cultural literacy" as well as "a sense of wonder and strong curiosity about the world". She goes on to state that "A world without

wonder ... is sorely lacking in joy". I believe this should be regarded as an axiom and not merely an opinion. Our world today grew from literature and continues to grow. This vital foundation of learning cannot be neglected. To do so would close gateways to imagination and mask the basis of knowledge.

Literature is a form of expression; it secures one's thoughts, however controversial or disconcerting. These snapshots of the mind of someone else are concentrated and brought together differently for all individuals. People throughout history have recorded what they believe justify things in our world – a notable example being Sigmund Freud who founded psychoanalysis and proposed many theories (some agreeable, some controversial) regarding human behaviour. Literature also archives for us the research of classical philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Archimedes and Cicero, and the teachings of ancient China and India in the thoughts of Laozi, Confucius and Gautama Buddha. These thinkers recorded their beliefs (and discoveries) which have changed the world significantly. They stood as the foundation for the work of future philosophers, and of us as innovators of the modern world. Without them,

we would not have been able to write that textbook you read, invent that iPhone in your pocket and keep moving forward. Literature allows us to consult the minds of those before us and progress as a humanity of ever-growing minds.

Stories and records of never-before imagined events are delivered to us via creative literature. Elements of the real world are interlaced with mythology in all cultures. These are now shared world-wide. Epic poetry, for example Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil's Aeneid and Ovid's Metamorphosis, tell stories of earlier civilizations, ancient wars and interactions imagined between divine beings and mankind. These sought to justify why things "are" and give us food for thought in addition to entertainment. They have great historical and artistic merit. In more recent times, new plays and books, both fiction and non-fiction, have expanded our minds and nurtured our understanding of the world.

Literature is a world within our world and it is omnipresent. Attempting to hide from it contracts the mind and dilutes our individuality. Each one of us will have a unique interpretation of a piece of literature and that is not to be doused, changed or erased. We all have our own minds – moral principles,

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ethical ways, ways of learning – and literature adorns them with new knowledge. It sprinkles new ideas into what we already know. This marvellous process happens as we investigate the world of someone else which would be impossible without the conduit of literature. Although some ideas may be confusing or dark, they still allow us to perceive our surroundings in a way that remains beneficial, as for instance in reading George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or hearing the tale of *Cinderella*. Upon first glance, these are next to impossible to relate, but the mind trained by reading can see that both make us aware of imperfections in our world and the existence of evil and prejudice. By looking through the eyes of someone else, we can experience what they have experienced and learn what they have learnt. Such an inspirational pathway should be made more obvious to-day.

In placing literature higher in the hierarchy of valuable things in the contemporary world, we shine light onto the thousands of years through which precious principles, history, stories and ways of the world are observed, recorded, passed on, shaped and preserved. Literature fuels the ever-moving donkey-cart of time and must remain significant in our world if we wish to continue feeding our understanding.

# Asylum. Journey for Australia.

Jack Alscher, Year 9


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I had never felt so much pain. Great gashes in my arms, legs and body burned like the Afghan sun in summer, as the icy sea off Western Australia tried ruthlessly again and again to drown me. I am a refugee, that is, I don't have a home anymore, and neither do I want one where I used to live. Afghanistan is dangerous - perhaps even more so now, when the Taliban forces are so desperate to reclaim territory. I swallow seawater, over and over again. My mouth becomes dry, despite my surroundings. I hear the cry for help - from God, from fellow passengers, from anyone. No one answers. I have never felt so alone. Will anyone help me now? Does anyone care what happens to me? The smugglers working under false identifications in a back street in Indonesia will definitely not care.

This fateful morning, when the overcrowded ship started to list badly on its side, the helmsman left us, and took the single dinghy back to shore, leaving two hundred people with no water and with little fuel left. He left us without looking back once! Will he ever remember the people he abandoned, alone on a wide, endless sea, who trusted him with their lives? Maybe he thinks it's all part of his job. Yet we all cried. Cried for the knowledge that we wouldn't reach Australia on this ship, cried for abandonment, cried because no one remembered us, cried for the knowledge

that we couldn't communicate between us, cried for the terrible truth that some of us wouldn't survive to see dawn tomorrow, the only glimmer of hope that we had on the ocean.

This proved correct. We lost the battle with the ocean in the middle of the night, somewhere to the north of the Australian coast. We couldn't bail out enough water. We couldn't control the ship. We didn't have a radio. We couldn't survive the sea's might. Little by little, no matter how much we tried, the water crept in. The women and children wailed into the night. I felt awful. But I could not stop bailing. I hoped the other people felt the same way. We had all come from different backgrounds, but our plight was the same. Our exhausting efforts could only try to delay an event which would eventually come. I felt cold, frantic fear, and, for the first time in my life, I thought I would die. Not leaving Afghanistan, not crossing the border, nor flying in a cargo plane when no one knew I was aboard had frightened me. Not even being locked in a cell in Jakarta when I reached the smugglers was enough to make me scared. I had accepted the risk of the escape - and all parts of the journey were part of the sacrifice in order for a better life. A life free from the constant worry of roadside bombs, of little to eat in freezing winters, and nothing to keep my

An abstract image showing vibrant orange liquid splashing and bubbling against a white background, creating a sense of movement and texture.

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family cool in sweltering hot summers. Yet, to have come so close to my goal, to have come so close to being able to support my family, and to be so close to death now, I was scared. The other men around me also whimpered, as they threw bucket after bucket of seawater over the side, into the dark sea consuming everything, including us. Thinking of what they had lost, and might lose now.

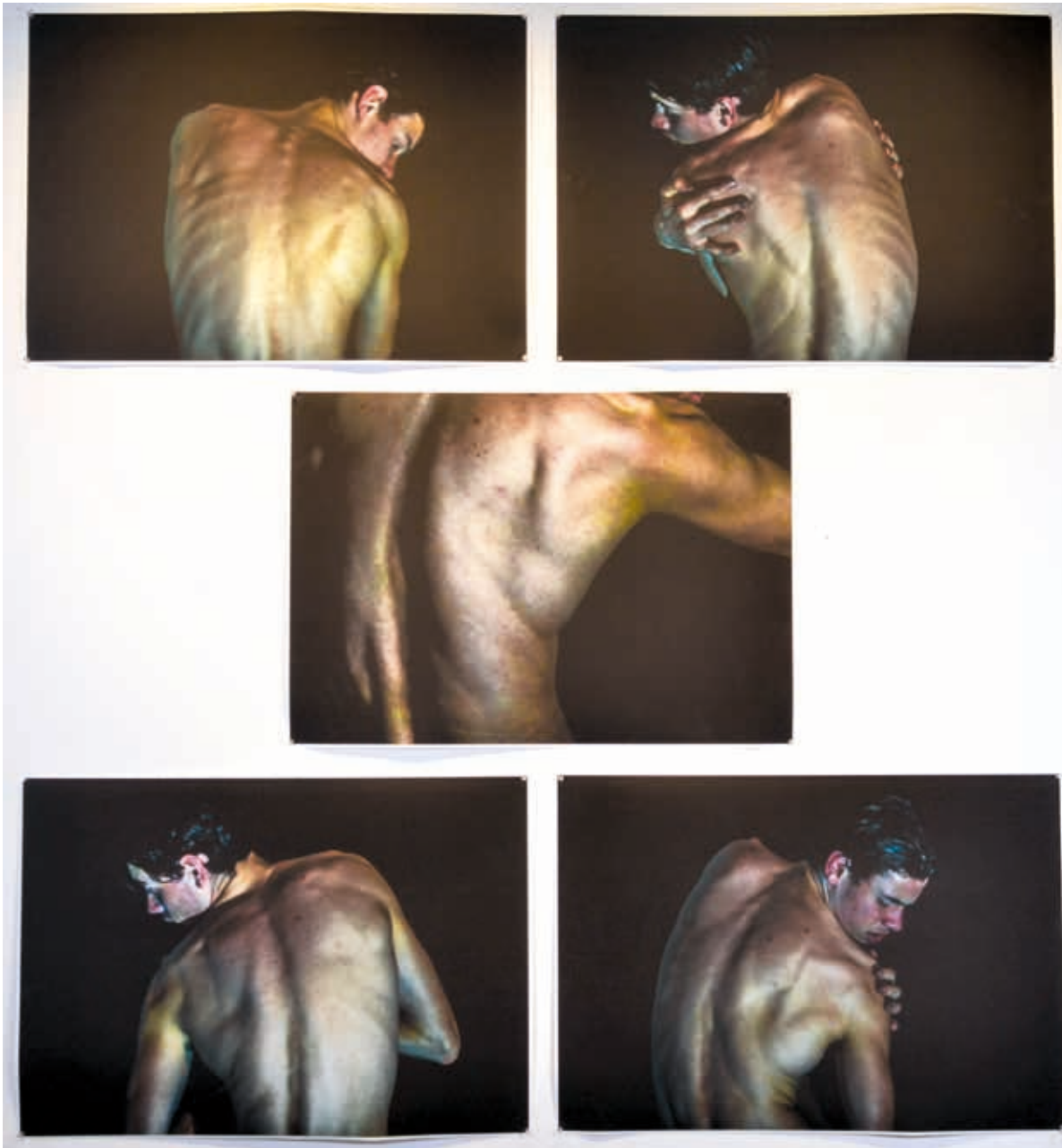
It came, in the end. The sea destroyed us. Ripped us apart. A tumultuous splitting, and the sea burst through the hull. There was no time to think. No time to move, and grab my things from below, with people screaming, running from it. The water burst through the sides of the tiny fishing boat that had delivered us so nearly to safety. Then I jumped, severely scraping myself, into the ocean, into the very thing that was trying to kill us all. The little ship ploughed on, oblivious to the danger, into the night, before it sank.

The screams eventually subsided. I was so thirsty, and exhausted, but didn't dare stop kicking, otherwise I too would die, the ignorant sea claiming me too. Dawn eventually came. It seemed a world away. But I hoped, and kept on hoping. I didn't stop kicking. Did anyone know, or care about me anymore? I am alone. I am alone, praying and alive, in a wide, terrifying, cold sea.

# Growing

Sam Clark, Year 12

artworks



# Mountain

Jack Alscher, Year 9

poetry

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The only connection that links me and the valley  
is the steep, steep edge of the cliff.  
I look over the edge of the mountain:  
This is impossible.

I drink the mountain air, in great, deep draughts;  
I smell the sweet, harsh scent of crisp, freezing wind,  
Goosebumps pickle my skin,  
There is an empty hole where my stomach should be.

My feet grip the edge of the precipice,  
about to fall into the long curve of snow.  
Every frozen muscle is tensed  
And a boiling sensation in my brain tells me to flee.

The sharp gusts of wind  
make me stop and think.  
But my body can't help itself taking me over the edge,  
I am not offered a choice.

My feet lose contact with the world,  
And every moment spent  
Here, in the air,  
Feels as if gravity has ceased and I am floating in space.

In a rocking, moving form, I race down the hill,  
Soundlessly shifting from left to right.  
Down the slope, my body slides and moves,  
A little dot in a world of white.  
A little dot in a world of white.

# Taking the Leash

Oliver Oei, Year 12

artworks

**Artist's Comment:** I wanted to show an adult man thinking as he holds his tie in his hand. Will he put it on as usual as he prepares to go to work or will he pull it apart? Will he conform to what society expects of him?

His fingers are at an angle to resemble the knot in the tie. I worked from a photo I had taken. I like to draw still life using human figures. I look for details in the way people place their hands. To me, holding a pencil and the way you use your hand, arm and fingers when drawing are special skills. They have different roles, tensing and pressing in various ways onto the paper. Drawing allows me to share my thoughts in an individual way. I might pick one theme but it is open to everyone to relate to it in their own way.



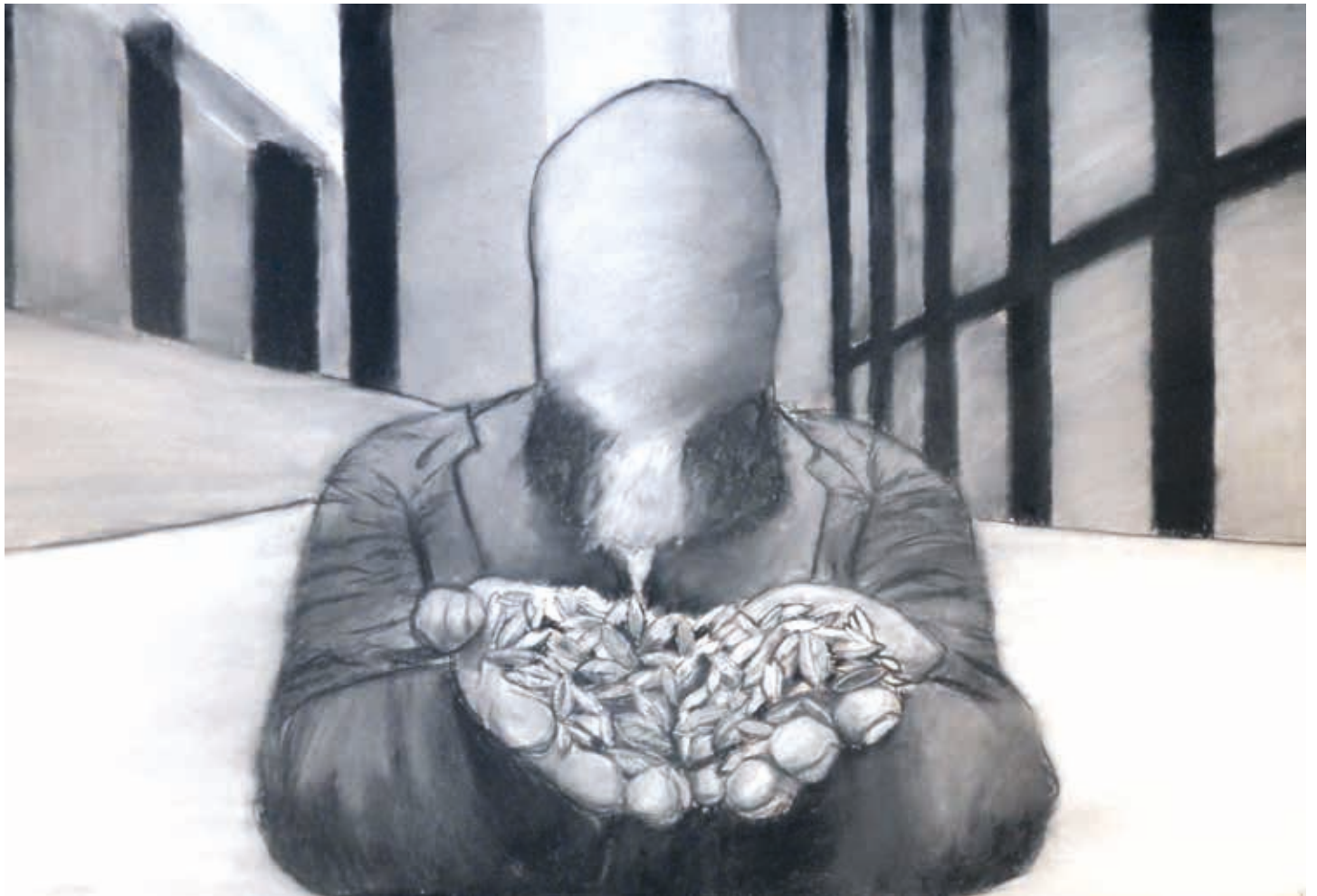


# Faceless Identity: Sunflower Seeds

artworks

**Jake Holden, Year 12**

**Artist's Comment:** I wanted to present a portrait of the artist Ai Weiwei and his work featuring sunflower seeds. I composed a charcoal portrait accompanied by two screen prints of the artist.



# Another Way of Seeing

Sachin Kinger, Year 12

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The well-serviced, black bars of the gated community rattled rapidly along their rack, excluding us from the luxury and security within. My uncle was a highly successful real Estate Agent in Jaipur, so I had been whisked from the comfort and convenience of my Sydney home into the marbled floors and deep beds of his mansion only a few days before. It was my first visit to my roots and as an excited young teenager, I had been delighted with the sumptuousness of this new, private world where the pleasures of the West mixed and melded with the exotic aesthetics and culture of the East.

I had asked why we were travelling in this slightly rusty, dusty, white van this morning, instead of in my Uncle's silver, streamlined BMW and had been surprised when he laughed dryly. "Where we're going, Boy, it wouldn't last the parking!"

I didn't understand.

"They're locusts, Raj – just locusts. You'll see!"

I subsided into the torn white seat behind my uncle's Hindi driver, who would not have understood a word we were saying.

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As we bumped uncomfortably off smooth, well-finished roads and headed to the outskirts of the city, a sense of being overwhelmed assailed me once more. I felt choked and smothered, beaten small. Instantly, I was reminded of my first breath of Indian air, having landed at Delhi. An overpowering combination of crippling heat, palpable particles of pollution and the suppurating smells of a myriad mighty odours had made my first breaths an actual battle. Now, the ancient air-conditioning system of the van saved me from that challenge but the crowds of people all around the van, slowing its speed despite the constant honking of the driver, was another kind of shock to my sense of self. Small street stalls, pushed bodily into tiny spaces on heavy carts, studded the sides of the road. Fruits and vegetables (many I could not even name), cloths all the colours of the rainbow, shoes and souvenirs, pots and pans, clay containers and water jars jostled on trays and makeshift tables for space to be displayed. The variety of humanity rivalled the variety of produce: women and girls in brilliant or shabby saris; men in western suits or torn jeans and ancient shirts; toddlers somehow playing underfoot; dread-locked fakirs and

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holy men robed in orange folds; cripples grovelling in the yellow-grey dust and everywhere the beggars with their grimy hands, small hands and large; desperately outstretched, reaching, touching, grasping at the small hope our presence seemed to offer.

"See? Locusts," reiterated my uncle.

I sank even further into my seat, completely unable to connect with the world outside the window.

When we reached the vase factory which was my uncle's destination, it was surrounded by high fences and shielded by huge gates. The driver wound down the window, pointed at my uncle and said something in Hindi. It was obviously enough. We were waved through so that he could purchase cheaply a collection of objects to decorate some of the spaces he would be selling. It was obvious that he was a favoured and recognisable customer.

He climbed out of the van, and disappeared into the huge square building, obviously expecting that I would wait for him, but my curiosity had been aroused. "What sort of products needed that kind

of protection?" I wondered, in my innocence.

I pushed open one of the enormous double doors and gasped. Commerce excursions in Sydney had exposed us to factories: clean and ordered, if noisy places, but technologically advanced worlds where O.H. and S. rules and regulations obviously reigned and workers were garbed in overalls and protective work boots, eyes shielded by safety goggles, heads by hard hats or hair nets, hands with gloves – all as necessary. And those factories had had adults working in them.

The dimly-lit, square hall did have windows along each side, but they were tightly shut. The heat was like a weighted club beating down on all parts of one's body. Four huge fans in the corners turned sluggishly, making as little difference as toy propellers on children's boats adrift at sea. The floor was littered with objects; rusty, new, broken, useful, sharp, blunted. Clay was mixed and moulded, shaped and painted; finally cured in a series of huge kilns. Wonderful, graceful, interesting designs, completed, stacked and packed for transport and for sale, waited near the Manager's Office in one corner of the room. But

all this was as nothing to me, for I was looking at the workers.

Bare-footed, sweat-soaked boys – boys my own age and a little older, glanced at me in surprise and with a degree of disbelief; then, as if embarrassed at their own temerity, they shifted their attention back to the jobs on hand. My light-skinned, puppy-fat suddenly seemed a pale obscenity when I compared it with their dark deprivation. Their worn, exhausted faces made me conscious of my own smooth, relaxed and pampered skin. Their hands and arms were burned and scarred, though strongly sinewed. I thought of my whining complaints at home when told to take out the garbage bins.

"Raj!" My Uncle's irritated voice cut through my contrasting comparisons. "What are you doing here? Back in the van, please."

His stomach distorting the line of his shiny red korde, oily-haired and sweating fatly, the Manager stood beside my uncle, ingratiating as lubricant in an engine when meeting my uncle's eyes, but threatening as a raised whip when glaring at his youthful workforce.

My guts churned within me. But for an accident of birth, but for geography and finance, but for place and time, I had seen what my own life could have been.

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On the return drive, I watched our driver and the streets with new eyes. As the security gates to the mansions slid smoothly back, I plucked up my courage.

"Uncle, when you see their working conditions, don't you feel....."

"Feel? Feel? Listen, Raj – it's nothing. They're locusts. I'm buying from them, right? Without people like me, they'd be dead, starved. And there are just too many of them to start seeing any differently. That's the way it is here. You can't afford to perceive it any other way, not if you're going to survive. And we do – we survive really well. Come on into the house. All you need is some hot chai and cholles to make you feel better."

I watched him slam the gates of his consciousness back against his emotions, and wondered if one day I would be doing the same.....

# Study of Skin Series (Charcoal and Chalk on Paper)

artworks

George Squires, Year 12

**Artist's Comment:** I wanted the series to examine the faces of animals that are hidden and forgotten by consumerism. Each portrait is of an animal that is highly valued for its skin. The tangible, photorealist detail of the creature's fur alludes to this focus, adapting the traditional purpose of portraiture.

The series confronts the audience, each animal pleading with the viewer to look beyond their nature as commodities. The series was part of my Skin to Skin exhibition which featured works about ownership, violence, commodity and manipulation – all issues that surround our relationship with animals.







Leopard



Mink





Cow





Sphinx

# Driven

Isaac Carriline, Year 8

prose

On the way to "Little Dynamos Indoor Play Centre" the rain remains constant. There are a few cars on the road so the journey progresses quickly. Jane and Nick stop at some traffic lights and wait.

"He has taken us in the direction with the most traffic!" snapped Jane.

"He always does things like that," added Nick.

"And the most bumpy road. The birthday cake we put so much time and effort into will be ruined."

"It's either the direction with the most traffic, the bumpiest, longest road or the wrong route. Why on earth do you do this, you stupid...!" Jane yells.

"Everyone will be so happy and relieved when our gorgeous boy arrives. Cheer up," Nick assures her.

James is strapped into a car seat behind Nick, excited and all smiles.

My resentment continues to build and fester. How could they dismiss me? What went wrong? Once, they listened to every instruction I gave. Now they think I am obsolete.

At first, I adored my new life. I remember how idolised I was when Liz and Alex first adopted me. I was an excellent instructor to them. They valued me until they had their first child, Ben. And then they neglect me, start to yell at me, abuse me, make me change my language and talk about selling me. This is not going to happen again.

The lights are turning green.

The road seems clear. Jane is putting her foot flat on the accelerator and the speedo shows ninety kilometres an hour.

I don't deserve to be neglected and dismissed.

"Make a legal U turn," I instruct.

"Make a legal U turn," I direct.

"Make a legal U turn," I repeat.

"Make a legal U turn."

Jane is becoming flustered. She slows and starts a quick U turn.

Noise. Brakes. Impact.

How ... could a simple ... stubborn ... SAT NAV like me have ... known there was ... an

oncoming truck?

# Nightmare

Barnaby Haslem, Year 7

prose

I wake to the sound of rain hitting the windows. I look around, and see nothing but darkness. The sound of rain rings around the old house. I brush my face. The sound of rain is interrupted by a blunt noise from above. I feel my heartbeat quickening.

Was that the sound of thunder or the house cooling? Or something more sinister?

I bury my head into the pillow to try to calm myself. I begin to wish that the sun would rise, and the night would stop. Soon I begin to drift into sleep, but something scratches on the window. I jump out of bed and wish I could scream. I open my curtains and look into the night. Nothing, but darkness and the dim lights of the city. I convince myself it was just my imagination, and glance at my phone: three am. Just two more hours to go. I rest my head down and try to fall asleep.

As I drift into sleep, I find myself lost in a forest, running towards ... no, not towards, away. But away from what? I stop and look around: pentagrams everywhere. Suddenly, I see it. An indescribable horror. I look into its eyes, or eye sockets or even just dark patches on its face, seeing its dark soul. I try to run but my legs can't move. I feel the beast's breath on my neck

and brace for the impact ... Nothing. I wake up and still see nothing but the darkness of my room. I glance at my phone: quarter past three.

I get up. My throat aches for water, and I shuffle towards the bathroom. I turn on the water and fill up a glass to drink. Out of the corner of my eye, I see something move outside the window. I look out and see nothing. The floorboards creak as I walk back to my room. I feel the lack of sleep press down on me like a rock. I lie in bed but can only think about what might be outside the window. I feel alone and scared, my heart beating fast.

Time begins to slow down. Each second crawls on for what seems hours. I see a flickering shadow and start to panic. Is someone in there?

I begin to think rationally. My dog would bark, I know, if someone were in the house. Besides, I live in a terrace. The neighbours are likely making the noise, and people see crazy things when they can't sleep. I feel the dopamine ease through my body as I close my eyes and fall asleep at last.

Looking back, this whole experience has helped me overcome my nightmares. In the words of Franklin Roosevelt: "we have nothing to fear but fear itself".

**Writer's Comment:** I like to think up stories when I am bored or waiting somewhere. As I enjoy reading science fiction and fantasy novels, as well as historical books, I find my imagination becomes active as I write. I find scary stories rather enjoyable. Most art exists because of imagination so I like the saying that "everything man-made exists because someone wondered".

# Manoeuvre

Sam Clark, Year 12

artworks







# Emerina

James Paoloni, Year 11

I hesitated.

"Uh General, I have just one question. Has your daughter agreed to accept this?"

His smile faded slightly.

"Yes, I am sure she has. Why do you ask?"

I was entirely honest with him.

"It's possible that she might refuse to go back to being human."

He nodded.

"It's true, she might. But this bitter rivalry has to end. If she refuses, either persuade her or force her to undergo the process."

Reluctantly, I accepted.

"Understood."

I ended the call, and flew towards the lab. On the way, I stopped at the viewing bay. The view was beautiful and empty; the clouds a cotton mist, and darker edges suggesting a storm on the horizon. As I observed, I saw my reflection shadowed on the clouds. My hair remained spiky, as it had always been; the emerald

in my forehead appeared cracked. My green skin seemed to gleam less and my diamond-shaped pupils stared back at me, still heavy with the weight of all they'd seen. As I looked at myself, I felt almost alienated by my own appearance. I was not the same person I was back on Gemstania.

I left the viewing platform and entered the lab where Emerina was working. She had a white lab coat over her royal robes, and was experimenting with gemstanite, a synthesized mineral that easily bonded with any element. As I approached, I looked at her; she had every feature of my sister. Her diminutive figure, her knee-length hair, her calm eyes; I felt as though I couldn't do this. She retained my sister's delicate appearance, but something powerful emanated from that small frame. I wiped away a tear, but this wasn't her. This was a human who had been transformed into her. I had to do it; this rivalry had to end.

I walked up to her side.

"Emerina, could I please talk to you about something?"

She turned to face me.

"It depends what it is. What is there to

talk about?"

I hesitated. "Well ... I found out how to reverse the genetic seal, so you know what that means."

Emerina froze, a look of dread across her face. "I'm going to the training area".

As she walked towards the lab door, I blocked her path.

"Emerina listen."

She stepped back and glared at me; her look could have melted steel.

"You've known for a long time that this would happen, so why are you running from it? Didn't you agree with your father that as soon as I learned how to change you back, you would accept it?"

"I know, but ..."

She stared down at the ground, a tear touching her eyelids. "After all the battles we've faced, I feel more alive than I've ever felt. And this power is incredible. I don't feel like I can throw all this away."

I placed my hand on her shoulder.

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"I understand that this is hard for you; and, to be honest, I would like to keep you as my companion."

"Then why don't you let me stay this way?"

She sat on the ground, the tears flowing rapidly.

I was honest with her, "This rivalry between your father and I has to end, and this is the only way."

She got to her feet. "No; there's got to be another way."

I was getting a little irritated.

"You know your dad tried to kill me when we fought Vitrolax in New York?"

That shocked her. "What? How? I thought he was using your ghost transparency to his advantage. Anyway, you can't use me as a sacrifice for your stupid rivalry. Tell my dad I'm not going back."

I sighed, "Your father warned me this might happen, so I have no choice but to do so."

I raised my hand and channelled my emerald energy towards her. Her emerald glowed, and her eyes

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drooped; in a little while she would be rendered unconscious. Unfortunately, my control over the emerald energy was still limited, so she was able to block my power.

She looked at me furiously. "So that's how it is, huh?"

In an instant she smashed through the huge skylight and made for the centre of the approaching storm. For fear of what she might do, I pursued her into the blackened clouds. I found Emerina deep in the clouds, the storm spiralling around her. Within seconds, a massive sphere of inferno erupted from her palms, striking me and singeing my skin. Using the spiralling air to her advantage, she formed a tornado around me and I was pulled in. The electrocuted air struck me instantly; I could barely manage to remain floating. While I was stunned, she shot a gigantic stone at me, which collided head-on. Almost instantly, she launched a razor vine from her arm, which quickly constricted me. Steaming, as a final strike, she unleashed a blizzard, the cold wind whipping me around. Fear of her future actions was the only motive that kept me fighting.

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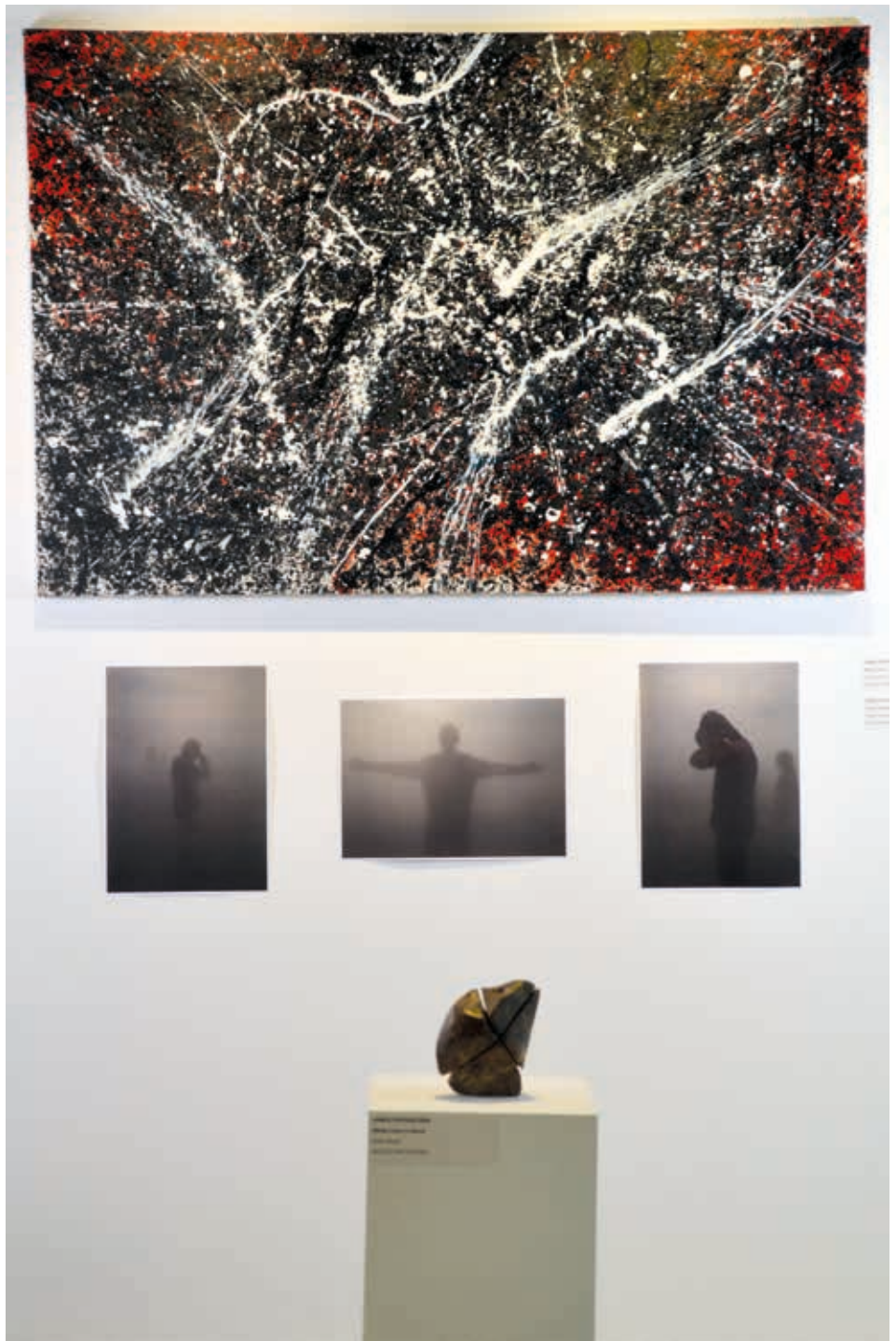
Weak, and on the verge of falling, I thought that I would have to kill her. Yet suddenly, as I looked up, her body faded into a single green glowing orb, which then flew rapidly towards me, then into me and stayed within.

I couldn't believe what had happened. Instead of being changed back to a human, she had chosen to unite with me. I felt her strength, her power, her pain; all that was essential to her had bonded to me. As the sky became darker, I stared up at the full moon and silently said, "Thank you ... Emerina."

# White Lines Installation

James Peppercorn, Year 12

**Artist's Comment:** I have been influenced by Jackson Pollock who wants the viewer to connect with each work in a different way. 'White Lines', influenced by the famous 'Blue Poles', represents my feelings at the time I was working. I felt many emotions, including anger and frustration, but I tried to transcend them into the aggressive motion and feeling seen in this artwork. By creating slashing motions with the use of massive white lines over a layered background, an audience can draw on the energy produced when creating art.



artworks



# Reaching Though

Jake Holden, Year 12

artworks



**Artist's Comment:** I want to look at the truth of identity in 'Reaching Through'. It is about honesty and the reality that we can't just change identity by behaving differently. The hands represent this truth, as they reveal a lot about a person – how they move their hands, as well as their physical appearance.

# O Tempora O Mores

## ("Oh the times, Oh the manners!" Cicero)

(Pastiche I)

Eric Sheng, Year 11

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Peregrine

PEREGRINE SITS IN AN ARMCHAIR IN A NONDESCRIPT DRAWING ROOM.

Juvenal was right about wishes. I wished for an honourable retirement and got it. Only twenty years early.

Headmaster called me in this morning, the same chap who had the impudence to call me Perry on his first day but he's an American so I pardoned him. Now at least he's learned to say Peregrine, though presently it was 'Mr Foster'. Valiant attempt at courtesy but for getting the name wrong. 'It's Forster, Mr Owen,' I said, 'like the writer'. Blank look.

My contract was up for renewal at term's end, so I sensed what was coming. The usual rigmarole about community-responsiveness and parent surveys and difficulties with small classes; how discontinuing Classics was the only thing to be done. 'We need a casual teacher,' he said, 'And there's a spot in P.E.' P.E.? I'd sooner be dead.

I'd always been in Owen's bad books, ever since doing my profession development presentation on

blackboard; made a point of coughing loudly. Didn't like what I said about Latin not needing computers and not belonging in modern languages either. Amalgamated classics and moderns the next day. No culture at all; another year under him and I'd be turned into kipper anyway, so I told him I'd get my things packed and don't suppose it'd matter leaving three days early. Seemed only too relieved; offered me some cardboard boxes 'on the house'. No taste either.

After break I broke the news to my classes; none of the sixth formers sitting for Oxbridge so it doesn't matter. The third form fan-girls asked for an autograph on my honours thesis and I did a lecture to them about taking it like the Roman, what Cicero said, the usual. And of course let them know who's behind it; don't expect me to give Owen an easy run of it; I'll write him an Ibis sometime.

Pauses. Looks out the window.

Always wanted to live in the country; mind you I'm not at all the Alfius type from Horace; little cottage somewhere's what I want, with gardens and a good field for cricket, as suits an English gentleman; only there's

not much demand for Latinists in the country.

Fade out.

PEREGRINE SITS AT A BUS STOP WEARING WAITROSE UNIFORM.

They preferred 'Perry' for this (gesturing to label on his shirt) but didn't insist. Manager even thought 'Peregrine' gave some class to the establishment: 'We're not Tesco here are we?'

And it all went fine until yesterday morning, some Asian woman came in, not more than thirty with pods stuck up her ears; gave me this coupon giving £3 off for purchases over £30, and wanted her things, whole trolley of them, done in batches of £30. Told her it wasn't how it worked; 'If they'd meant that they'd have given three pounds off for every thirty pounds,' I said. We wrangled some more but I wasn't going to yield – interpolation in a text is strictly forbidden – she was still protesting when I shouted 'next' rather pointedly.

Whereupon she said to me, earphones on and all, 'I have the terms in the booklet here. Hold my carnations!' The

**Prefatory Note:** The following three works are pastiches written in the style of the television monologues *Talking Heads* by English dramatist Alan Bennett. In each of these monologues, a single character speaks in front of the camera for the entire piece, recounting, in episodes, what has happened and his or her reaction. We are not told the whole story and the audience can infer that things are not as the narrator makes them out to be. The narrator often glosses over what she or he does not wish to be known. The pastiches imitate Bennet's style, as well as the layout of his scripts.

bloody cheek! 'Hold your carnations?' I said. 'Only thing I want to do is shove 'em your nose.' Could see that put the wind out of her. Ripped her pods out, grabbed the toaster and stormed away.

Came back in two minutes with the manager in tow, smirking; thinks she's got me now has she? Had a word in the office, wrong attitude and not having me in the partnership; it's a zero hour I'm on so he can do that straight away. And good riddance to that! Nothing to me, just a summer job.

Went home and paid off the rent, which was due the day before but the landlord's usually lenient enough, only he's in a frightful mood since some blacks had stolen a television set and vanished and wanted us to start paying him in advance. Well I thought I'm an English gentleman and my home is my castle and why shouldn't he trust me? Anyway I'd caught sight of a better deal for a single room in Ripon Star, so I asked for my deposit back, packed my stuff up and left in the morning.

The deposit's come in good time; Father's coming up to visit and I thought I'd better to take him to a

restaurant. Nothing wrong with having him at home, only I couldn't give him a definite address; I'm a bit mobile at the moment, you see, looking for the perfect place.

Fade out.

EARLY EVENING, PEREGRINE SITS ON THE GRASS NEAR A COUNTRY ROAD UNDER A STREET LIGHT.

Had a game of ruggers this morning, which was convenient since I shower at the club anyway. Water's better than at home; got a nice shampoo too, smells like oranges; four or five entries still left in my club pass.

I'm having a little experiment tonight. Had dinner early at the church and caught the bus out here. Living the rover's life. 'Bed in the bush with stars to see, bread I dip in the river.' Owen would call it Classics in Action.

I've always wanted to live in the country, and now's my chance; the ground lies better than in town at any rate. And wouldn't it be grand if Martial's right about four autumns not wearing out a toga.

Half smile. The dialogue is more broken up.

Heard they're running a Latin summer school at Newcastle again this year, might have something for me. Bus fare's reasonable.

Opens a newspaper.

Night janitor wanted at the council chambers; pays a pittance.

Pause.

Of course that's not the point; keep myself fit in body and mind, not letting Cicero down.

Long pause.

O tempora o mores ... Never got Cicero at school, but I think I understand now.

Pause.

I suppose I'll be Perry on the application.

Postscript: Cicero's phrase 'O tempora o mores', 'Oh the times, oh the manners', is taken from Cicero's First Oration Against Catiline, in which Cicero deplores changing manners and attitudes in Roman society. The piece offers a response to the phrase in modern times.

# The Mental Sanctuary (Pastiche II)

Marco Stocca, Year 11

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DENNIS IS A SOFTLY SPOKEN MIDDLE AGED MAN. HE IS PALE AND DRESSED IN A WHITE ROBE. HE SITS ON THE EDGE OF HIS BED IN AN UNFURNISHED ROOM WITH ONE WINDOW. THE BLIND IS UP. IT IS MORNING.

This place is suffocating. I don't belong here. "You're a danger to society," they say, but I have never broken a law in my life. That's the truth. They say I killed a woman... I didn't. That's the truth. They say the evidence is indisputable, but I didn't kill her. Someone else did. They say I see people.

Now I am imprisoned here, with all the crazies. They say I have schizophrenia, tried to explain it to me. "I know what schizophrenia is," I said, "I'm a doctor and I know for sure that I don't have it." I used to treat the types of people who are in here.

Ronald next door likes to count. He counts steps, breaths, tiles, actions, anything really. Looks like a very severe case of Arithmomania if you ask me. Apparently he killed a person that

stopped him counting once. They tell us not to disturb him. Susan in 2F is nice, wouldn't hurt a fly, she sees her two kids. "Aren't they cute Dennis?" she says, "They sure are Susan, beautiful little ones." I say. I know not to tell her that they aren't actually there, it wouldn't be good for her, make her remember what she did to them.

A nurse comes round every now and again to give me my pills, sits there to make sure I swallow. I do. Paula always likes to point out that, "You know Dennis, you're the most cooperative one in here," I always put on a smile, thank her and tell her how lovely it is to hear her say that. But it isn't. Always makes me remember where I am, where I shouldn't be.

GO TO BLACK.

Come up on Dennis looking out his window. It is morning.

I can feel this place getting to me. I make it my mission every morning to make my room as nice as possible, keeps me from turning into everyone

else. I make the bed, fluff the pillow, and open the blind so that all that pure light can shine in. I think it helps to stop the demons from inside of everyone else's heads, the ones tapping at mine, trying to decipher the lock that is holding them out.

The only period where I am able to socialise with the other patients is at mealtime. It's normally quite a drab and honestly degrading affair. There's not much of a choice when it comes to food, usually just some slop with a fancy name attached to it. I know that they're not allowed to dish up anything that patients might choke on. It also allows us the ability to eat with the Institution's favourite utensil, a plastic spoon. I can see why they don't like the use of knives and forks; you know, with the types of people in here and all.

I am starting to chat to a few more of the patients here, helps me remember my previous life. The life before they locked me up in this godforsaken place. There is Maxine and Willie who both suffer from varying levels of

schizophrenia; Josep, a middle aged Spanish man who is Bipolar; and then there is Mark, he is in his mid sixties, suffers from psychotic depression yet, believes me when I say that I'm not crazy. "Don't worry Dennis," he says, "I believe you. Same thing happened to me. The thing is though...this place turns you into what you're not." Strung himself up from support bar in the shower two days later.

"Don't think of it as a prison" they say, "Think of it as a sanctuary, a place where you can relax and hide from all your fears." But that's the thing, this sanctuary doesn't allow me to hide from my fears, it just shoves them right in my face.

GO TO BLACK.

Come up on Dennis in the same room, yet his blind is drawn and the bed is unmade. He is clutching the sheets. It is morning.

I don't open the blinds anymore; I've started to see the man. The real killer. He keeps coming to my window, likes

to scare me. He taps on the window with the same bloodied scalpel, then points at me with it. He's coming for me I just know it. I tried to tell some of the nurses, but they don't listen to me, they say there's nothing to worry about. I know that they know. They're on his side.

I refuse to take the pills now; I know that they're poisoned. They don't allow me to eat with the other patients, probably because they don't want me telling the others of their secret. They want to get me.

I can't sleep; always got to keep an eye open otherwise they will sneak in. When I lie down I can hear the man lurking outside my window, I hear his breaths...slow and ragged. He calls my name.

I can't handle it anymore. I'm going to go for a shower today, I'm going to escape.

FADE OUT.



# Anorexic Georgia (Pastiche III)

Fletcher Howell, Year 11



The light is bright. Georgia, a large fifty-year-old woman, is sitting on her bed. Her room is very messy, with junk food packets everywhere.

Saturday's are a nightmare, especially downstairs. You'd think that people would know their way around a parking lot without having to drive at walking pace and jolt to a stop whenever they saw a person, even if they are literally on the other side of the earth. Could they be anymore inconvenient? Anyway, when I finally make it to the staff lot, my card doesn't work, so I have to back track to the help desk. What a mistake. It would have been easier to drive through the glass doors and park at the bottom of the escalators.

Some woman yelled at the poor guy for ten minutes. "I don't think three dollars is reasonable for two hours parking" she said. "I'm sorry Ma'am but you were outlined the cost before entering the building", he replied. "Well, I'd like you to tell your

manager that I will never come here again"; like she's going to change something.

When it's finally my turn, I'm already an hour late for my shift. "My card is broken" I say, getting straight to the point. He can clearly see that I'm in a hurry. "Alright, well it's going to take an hour for it to reprint. And access is only valid for people with cards" he replies, in a mocking tone. That was it. "I'm in uniform. I've worked here for fifteen years. Can't you write me a temporary something?". "No, sorry, company policy". It was like he was a robot, the same response. "Well, I'd like you to tell Centre Management that my car is going to stay right here." That ought to set them right. I stormed off to the elevator. Fifth floor.

When I finally clocked in, I noticed Susie eating one of those Light n' Easy lunches. What a joke. She weighs half as much as me, and looks good.

I'm doing just fine. And the food looked disgusting anyway.

## GO TO BLACK

Georgia is sitting in a dim room. There is less rubbish. It is evening.

New shipment in today. A whole new line of exercise equipment. The company is trying to attract younger customers, and apparently selling treadmills and exercise bikes is key to that. I don't see the point. All the people who buy them are in a "I'm going to lose some weight" phase. Doesn't last long, and they end up as being part of the living room furniture.

A group of them came in around four o'clock. Without being mean, they were fat. Clearly in need of some sort of program. So, they come to me. I'm not sure why. I mean, I'm not the most clued up when it comes to that of thing, but anyway. Even before the conversation starts I hear their teenage globule of a child demanding some form of fat laden substance. Makes me hungry just thinking about



it. Well, the man came over. "Which of these would you recommend for a family, wishing to tone down a little" he said. He was awfully buttery about the whole thing. If we are honest, he needed a bit more then just some toning to cure those flabs. I said he should find one of the fitness girls; they'd more likely be able to help him. However, he was not having any of that. "Oh, I thought you might know something" he replied. Flattered.

I was so surprised to finally hear someone refer to me as looking fit and in shape. I had been working out recently. I walked to the neighbours' house last week to ask for some milk.

## GO TO BLACK

Georgia is sitting in a dark room. She is larger than before. The only light is a weak lamp.

We had a fire drill today. Same time

every year. I was tidying up the kid's pyjamas when it went off. You know about the hour in which it will happen, so I try to be in the same place each year. Time myself.

So, the crazy panic rang out. Couldn't hear myself for the screaming, and to think, the exits are everywhere. Well, our designated quickest way out was a set of stairs in the back, it leads five storeys down onto the street. After funneling a mother and her five little girls from the toy section, I started down the stairs. Two minutes to the door, a new record.

Funny thing though. I hadn't made it much passed halfway when the alarm stopped. That never happens. I'm usually out on the street, calming distressed pensioners and reunited mother and child. In fact, this time, I went out the exit on floor two. Out of breath. I just stood there, tired, unable to move.

This warden came over to me, asked what had happened. "Oh, just running around upstairs getting

people out", I replied. It must have been that: I'm not unfit. I don't need to lose weight.

## GO TO BLACK

Georgia is running on a treadmill. It is day.

Helen made me go see the doctor. Apparently- though I don't believe them- I collapsed. Coronary issues they said, told me if I wanted to live longer I'd need to lose a few pounds. But that's not why I'm running. I don't believe any of that stuff. I've started a pact with Helen, the new girl at work. She is fat. No hiding that. But I care about her. So to help, we've decided to workout together. I don't need to lose any weight, but anything to help.

# The Wall

Jake Holden, Year 12

artworks



**Artist's Comment:** Each plaster cast in 'The Wall' uses my face as a mask. The differences between each mask reflect the changing nature of identity. I think our true identity is often hidden beneath performance.

# Perspective and Perception

James Oakley, Year 12

artworks



# Exhibition

James Peppercorn, Year 12

artworks





# Elements

James Peppercorn, Year 12

artworks



# 24 Hour Psycho

Daniel Khouri, Year 12

prose

Time slows down, intruding on my once coherent state of mind, sending a plethora of dissociated fragments of excruciatingly painful emptiness. The once sporadic beating of my pulsating heart abruptly halts. Like a child being condemned, my eyes remain fixated on the invasive screen, causing hallucinations to devour my thoughts. I writhe in the unbearable pain, forcefully allowing a shriek to escape my parched throat. I am met with blank expressions which simultaneously, in one swift motion, turn back to the screen almost as if they are nucleons bound together by a strong nuclear force.

"SHHHH some of us are trying to watch the film with the degree of intensity it requires!"

I vaguely determine a strange solitary shadow sitting in the corner where the sound waves resonated from a moment ago.

"The degree of intensity it requires!"

In an attempt to understand what he had said, I summon all my energy to comprehend the plot as one normally would when viewing a film. Not surprisingly, I find I am able to recognize scenes and anticipate every move as I am so familiar with the original film. The once nightmare-inducing thriller I had viewed as a teenager, and had vowed never to watch again, no longer has a chilling effect on me. My eyes skim each frame several times awaiting

suspense. It never arrives. The once fluid motion of the windscreen wipers sweeping back and forth now obeys quantum theory in discrete, countable movements. The crushing slowness of their movement constantly undercuts my expectations, even as it ratchets up the idea of suspense to a level approaching absurdity.

I could not comprehend why people so eagerly embraced the trespassing of their personal space. Was it not human nature to feel comforted by the liberty of life and existentialism? Why are the audience confining themselves to this gloomy theatre for their sole source of joy?

"With the degree of intensity it requires!"

The phrase constantly resonates throughout my body almost consuming my entire being. Time had lost its meaning now; lurking on the edges of my mind were the hands of a clock indicating 3:24. Was it night or morning? The excruciatingly painful feeling slowed down and silent appropriation of Alfred Hitchcock's Psycho had taken control. I felt my eyes leave the clock face and dart back to the screen, replicating the swift motion of the others in the audience I had previously noticed.

"C'mon Eric it's just a movie."

"Only the best film of the 60s."

I force my thoughts to go askew from the content of the constantly blaring screen.

"It's just a movie... just a movie."

The ability of fiction to enter the subconscious and contribute to the shaping of the way in which individuals perceive the world is largely underestimated. Take this film, Psycho for example. I now have paranoia of even the most fundamental processes such as showering. I fear that some insidious creature is anticipating the perfect moment to plunge a knife into my heart. Thirty three years down the track and I still maintain a high level of alertness of my surroundings while showering. Yet if "it's just a movie," why does horror feel the need to make extinct any glistening ray of peace and safety one may find in oneself? Why are we urging ourselves to belittle and deny the emotions associated with fear, denying the right of passage of apprehension to consume our psyches?

"Sorry to interrupt you sir, the premiere of "Twenty-four Hour Psycho" finished half an hour ago, we must prepare the theatre for the next screening."

I made it. I sat through twenty-four hours of my teenage phobia and evolved into a changed man. I have escaped the enticement of the accelerated state of simulacrum in which I was unaware of being trapped.

"Actually I'm here for the second screening."



# "Exuvia" detail

Forrest Whitcomb, Year 12

artworks



# The Taste of Milk

Makuach Maluach, Year 11

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In Africa, I was often forcefully reminded with a stick that to pass an exam, understanding the problem is half the solution. My parents decided that it was time for a new life, a life that changed me forever. My family and I had just arrived at Sydney International Airport. The sun was scorching hot outside. The fifteen hour flight had seemed to last two weeks. We eagerly stared towards the crowded walkway, looking for people of our kind, people who had the same skin colour and the ones who could speak our language. We felt like we didn't belong. I wanted to go back to Africa but I was a long way from home. I had never been in a world like this before.

We had been waiting at the airport for two hours when suddenly a tall, coltish man came to our attention. He walked toward us with a big grin on his face.

"Welcome to Australia," he said.

I could not understand what he was saying but my cousin translated it into Dinka. The man later turned out to be one of my uncles. My cousin

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told us to collect our luggage and we started following the tall man. We stopped at a shop and we were told to get something to drink. We saw milk in the fridge so that was the first thing I grabbed. I was eager because it had been several days since I had drunk milk.

Now the milk had an unfamiliar taste. It was not the milk we always have back home. This one was different; we all glanced at each other frantically. I placed my milk carton into my small backpack and kept walking. When we arrived at the car park, we were very nervous because we had never been in a car before. We had lived in a village all our lives without such transport.

As we drove off, I looked out of the window and thought to myself, "Wow! Welcome to the real world!" I had never seen so many cars in my life. I felt like I was on another planet. A few days ago, I was in my country going through the routines of my daily life and now here I was in a completely different world manoeuvring through rushing

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traffic. I was very tired and I quickly fell asleep.

When I woke up, a mysterious sign caught my attention. It said "Welcome to Blacktown". I was very confused. I thought it must be a detention centre where they kept all the black people. "What other reason could there be for the name?" I exclaimed to myself. It also seemed realistic because the longer we drove, the more black people appeared on the streets. I didn't ask the man who was driving; I guess I didn't want to make him feel uncomfortable.

We kept driving for another ten minutes. I was eager to get wherever this man was taking us. I needed to get some rest and then explore this new world. A few minutes later, we stopped at a humungous house where a coal fire thrust sooty smoke into a chimney. A tall woman walked out into the living room. Her hair was neatly braided and she gave us a broad smile. "Welcome," she said. She was my aunty who had disappeared during the civil war in Africa. She and my mother were very

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happy that they could be reunited. She directed us around the house. I was amazed to see so many black people in the house. We were being made to feel comfortable and, at that moment, I felt like I was already home.

After we showered and had some much needed rest, we were given Coke and Fanta to drink but were not interested. All we wanted was milk. We were again given the same kind of milk we had been given at the airport. I still felt angry somehow that the milk was different. And I was not interested in any other food than fried rice. I hated sausages, thinking if I ate them I would become fat like a pig. My mindset was disrupted; my body was in Australia but my heart was still back in Africa. My father told me once, "Don't let other people control your destiny. Accept change and move forward."

Fast-forward five years later. Here I am sitting on the train on my way to Newcastle, sipping on my carton of full cream milk. I love the taste now. Looking onto the freeway off in the distance, the line of traffic is comforting

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as I have become familiar with it. If I were at home at this moment, I would be in the backyard watching as the sausages sizzle on the barbie. I would also be driving along the streets of my new hometown in our blue Mustang. I take great pride in my schooling and I value education. I teach my mother English every weekend and she is gradually learning what I have learned, another language. It's hard because she never went to school.

One thing I have learned is that the process of change is extremely difficult but it can be an inspiring experience. It can make you look at things from a very different perspective.



# Dessert to Dinner

Sam Gilfedder, Year 11

I saw him pull up. He came in on a second-class, substandard moped that looked like it came straight out of a 1970s kids show. After a long ordeal with a pothole in the parking space he eventually got the bike in an upright but precarious position. A tacky professor's cardigan loosely secured with two non-matching buttons. The cardigan was tattered and stained to the nines. There were large patches on the elbows in what I assumed was an attempt at false intellect.

You could already tell he was trying too hard.

The helmet released a shaggy head of ginger hair and I almost cringed at the sight. It wasn't anything specifically that painted him in a defeated blue-colour manner but a collection of hints that lead me to an overall distaste for him. I began to stare at another man in front of the band, which was positioned in the corner of the room. He seemed more like my type. Although I wasn't really searching for anything in particular, just something that would interrupt this event. But there was a queer feeling that tempted me, and we hadn't even met yet.

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The buckle clicked and I removed the helmet from my head, liberating my shaggy hair. I glanced towards the crowded bar, and there she was. She gazed calmly into the corner of the room at the quartet of violinists. Her face was outlined from above by the lights, accentuating her silky, olive skin. She elegantly raised a glass to her lips and sipped from the inside, carefully tasting each drop. Dressed in an angelic white winter's dress, she lit up every corner of the room. Her allure was obvious. I was intrigued, excited, elated, I just wanted to know everything about her: her name, her favourite song, what she did on weekends. I was in awe of her, and we hadn't even met. I walked toward the door and stepped inside.

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He approached me and reached out his hand in a formal greeting. Our hands met and we exchanged names, although I don't recall what he said. Darren or Dale or something weird like that. For the next five minutes we engaged in simple conversation, with him often re-adjusting his glasses back onto the bridge of his nose. As he repeatedly did this, I caught myself staring at his finger, watching every

movement and following it on its path to the centre of his misty eyes. But could he be my type? His gentle tonality and subtle nature invoked a keen sense of interest and as the night drew on, I found myself laughing at his faulty humour and smiling when he smiled. I was only snapped out of this sense of gaiety by his loose tie and ill-fitting shirt which made me re-focus on the man in front of the band.

His quiet nature only made me want to know more about him. As he continued to speak and blush, the cardigan and shaggy ginger hair began to fade in my mind. The only thing I could notice were the images forming as his words flowed out of his mouth. But surely he couldn't be my type?

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I walked toward her and dumbly stuck out my hand while mumbling my name: "Darren". Holding out her petite hand, she then politely shook it and replied: "Jennifer". The name seemed to be formed by her tongue with sheer grace and sophistication. Jennifer, I thought to myself and breathed it out. She sat there and engaged in simple conversation for the most part of an hour, occasionally staring out into the

night and mystifying me as to what she was looking at. She nodded and smiled, even laughing coyly at my pathetic jokes.

I clenched my fists under the table but only released the tension by moving my glasses back onto my face several times. These constant readjustments gave me a split second to truly stare without her wondering what I was looking at. I continued to get tangled up in strings of words as her beauty caught me like a rabbit in headlights. Bewildered but calm too. I just loved everything about her. The intricacies intrigued me, while the obvious delighted.

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We stood up and he guided me outside. We walked side by side for block after block. It might have seemed monotonous but I didn't find it dull. His knowing about every topic we mentioned amazed and surprised me. His was certainly not a false intellect.

All of a sudden we stopped. He turned towards me and whispered something but by then I was becoming engulfed by him. Everything about him. His strange fashion choice become a

quirky attraction. I leaned toward him and we kissed. This wasn't my first kiss but it felt like the first kiss that mattered. I wanted to preserve this moment, this sliver of time when the night was cool and bright with reflected light from the moon and the stars. His 'seventies moped, tattered jacket and mannerisms – even his untidy ginger hair – couldn't stem my feelings. If there was a type for me, then he matched fine...so far.



# The Best That Never Was

Jack Tiftis, Year 12

artworks



# Iceberg

Kerry Zhang, Year 12

artworks



# Trapped Beneath

Felix Shannon, Year 12

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How would I describe our lives?  
Would it be an open field, you raise your wings and fly?  
Would it be an underworld, restrained and with no sky?  
Would it be a homely thing, or something to survive?

Constrained by mortal coils, yet free within our minds,  
This life is like a box, assembled by ancestors,  
Selected by our hearts, and refined by our minds  
How do we decide where we draw the line?

How would I describe our lives?  
We're running out of time, but it doesn't hold us back,  
We're fleeing from a reality that will come back  
and bite, a hole to which we dedicate a plaque.



# Our Lives

Felix Shannon, Year 12

artworks



**Artist's Comment:** I based this work on the poem 'Trapped Beneath' (printed opposite)

# Saying Goodbye

Richard Zhang, Year 10

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The old bird croons, lulling the boys to sleep.  
She watches them nod off, gives them a light  
kiss. They push her away, a deep  
slash in her throbbing heart. A sad 'Good night',  
and she leaves. There is no goodbye. Behind  
her stoic carapace and tight lips,  
hurt slithers like a snake, to probe and find  
her soul, grows restless as the years slip.

The cold wind chills the graveyard. The boys – men –  
sob and mourn for their mother, gone now;  
they remember her. They can't forget when  
her bright eyes clouded with the fog of sorrow.  
Like in dream, they wish for the past again,  
to tell her goodbye, good night, one last time.





Newington College

