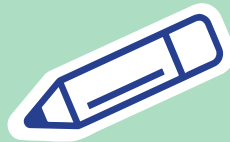


Spring 2024

RAMAPO
UNIVERSITY
LITERARY
MAGAZINE

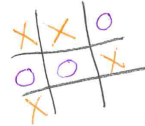


Literary magazine of
Ramapo College



Purpose Statement

Trillium is Ramapo College's literary magazine designed by and for students. Our goal this year was to provide Ramapo students with a voice, to work with contributors on revising and improving work, and to help facilitate the artistic journeys of Ramapo students. In this spring edition, we sought to tear down the wall between notebook and publication. We wanted to fill the campus's halls with imagery, language, and emotion contained within a wide selection of work. This issue's themes include grief, coming of age, and identity alongside other characteristics of the human condition. We invite readers to not only appreciate the work of their fellow students, but to actively participate in this process of creating and sharing art — one of life's greatest joys.



Trillium

Established in 1971, Trillium has been Ramapo College's literary and art magazine for the majority of the past 53 years. Staffed by students, Trillium features poetry, prose, and visual art of the Ramapo College community. The magazine is available across campus, free of charge.

Email: trillium@ramapo.edu

Instagram: [@trillium.rcnj](https://www.instagram.com/trillium.rcnj)

Ramapo College

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers six graduate programs as well as articulated programs with Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.

Trillium



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What do you think
of this font?

Ew no. Let's do
Georgia

... fine ☹️

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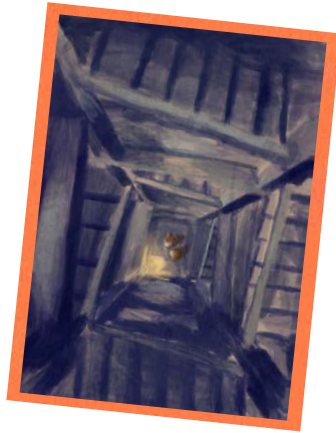
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Amtrak Lullaby

by Lauren Altman

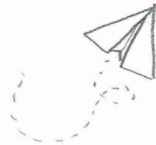
The train car is hushed
as Jasmine's voice comes over the intercom
at 4:00 AM
announcing that we have reached DC
that the rest of the service will continue
in about three hours
with a new crew
and the faint rustling
as the intercom is still on
the voices in the background are so soft
the entire sleepy car holds its breath
listening to overheard laughter
and muffled conversations
like going under anesthesia
doctors chatting
as we fade in and out of sleep
listening to their joy
the quiet clicks and crackles
a lullaby to the train





look from above

by Bella Marques



94 to Home

by Jade Sampson

you fell asleep on the way
home. we were fifteen minutes
out when you lost
your fight to stay conscious
these old country roads
are none too kind
to weary riders. i tried
to keep the ride steady
by reacquainting myself
with small town
speed limits and avoiding
potholes like your mother did
your father. all in the vain attempt
to temper the road's ill
manners. but i had
no reason to worry. for
you sleep like kittens
in late-july sun patches
immoveable, unwakeable, and so
at peace.



pretend this is for Rob

by Jade Sampson



we meet at a restaurant i've
never heard of and will for us
to not be in the wrong. you
tell me i look lovely and i say
you clean up nice. your fingers
trace my shoulders as you take
my coat to hang on my chair.
the waitress gives us
misinformed knowing looks,
and you share a bottle of wine
with yourself on the house. our
bills aren't separate and my dessert
comes with two spoons. so i ask
why men and women can't just be
friends. why does there have to be
more. because the only mores
are love and sex, and neither
option will work for us. and
the problem isn't even that
you're so much older. the problem
is your wife and kids deserve more
than a weak-willed man of the house
fallen to a nineteen year old
homewrecker. the problem
is you deserve so much more
than a child pretending to be
a woman. the problem is
and always will be
me.



It's different now

by Amanda Oliver

You broke my jaw and fed it back to me.
You made it taste like vitamins
when you held my hand in your callus.
I made it make sense
it was whatever.
Now I freeze in a random walmart
when I smell your cologne.



How I'd leave you

by Devon S Roberts

1. Quickly

Faster than goodbye, one last night, a grief fuck, fall asleep and wake up
again

So quick my departure forms a vacuum in spacetime my shadow folds
shut

This time—quick, turn around, you'll know when I'm gone

2. Slowly

6 years now, what's a few more?

Next year, we'll get rid of the advent calendar

Year eight, we'll split the bed

Nine, it's a good day until I look at you

No ten

3. Piece by piece

With a jeweler's loupe and an obsidian scalpel, I excise
each thread that weft our lives and suture
our heartstrings back into their respective chests
I grab unseeing at all that belonged to me and feel
my way back to myself

Take until the pile in our trunk is a hazard
blocking the rearview, each keepsake, the straw
threatening to break our Subaru Outback



4. Instead of fishing in other ponds

I'll follow where my line cast
trace the invisible silk with a finger
dredge the sludge for the bobble that brought you in
unfasten your lips and swallow the hook whole



5. Like a child

lost in a grocery store looking for his mother
disappeared behind an endcap of chapstick and bandaids
stuck in the cart
waiting for someone to notice



two

by Emi Pastor



Good Little Girl

by Jade Sampson

You didn't mean to say that aloud. You meant to bite your tongue as you always have – meant to let copper fill your mouth so words could not. But you were too slow to stop your traitorous tongue from saying what your mind's been screaming for too long to remember.

It's impossibly loud, the silence you've created. It's not often you manage to leave them at a loss for words. The few times you ever open your mouth, you're usually met with, You're so well spoken's, or, Who taught you how to talk like that's? Now, you're met only with horrified eyes and slack jaws.

Someone taught you early on that no one would ever love you for your honesty; you thought they were lying; you know now – looking out into a sea of pale faces – that they were the last person to ever love you honestly.

They don't look at you – not that they ever do – instead glancing nervously at each other as though they'd just stumbled into a hungry lion's den and don't know how to get out with all their lives. You kind of feel like a hungry lion; prowling your cage, licking the saliva from your lips, as the moment you've been desperately waiting for is finally at hand.

Take it easy now, they say, we don't want any trouble. There's affirming nods and incoherent murmurs from around the room, gentle winds on ruby embers; unfortunately for them, this does not put out your spark, only allows it to catch dry timber.

You feel your face growing severe, hands clenching into tight fists. You work your jaw, a smart response clattering around behind your teeth; but before you can spit it out, a hand lands on your shoulder.

It's heavy and damning. You don't look up, but you know he's staring at you, because they're all staring at him.

You need to calm down, he says. Like he can hear your heart hammering in your chest. Like he can feel the grinding of your teeth. Like he can taste the venom in your veins.

You need to calm down?

You want to shout how you've been more than calm through all their transgressions, severe and unending. You want to snarl how you've been calm in the face of every inconsiderate compliment, condescending and callous. You want to cry how you were calm everytime their hands left your cheeks reddened and stinging.

But the hand on your shoulder stays your tongue this time. The lion is beaten back into its den without so much as a meagre scrap. The flames are drowned in a single moment.

Yes, and this is how you are a citizen: You bleed. You starve. You nothing.



Agglatus

by Clinton F. Newton

After the creation
when the words have been splayed
and detailed and put in place
their final destination
right there on that empty page
it leaves me feeling so hollow

I need to grow, and move- fill this hollow
relentless and furious attempts at creation
though there is nothing in my mind but a page
where i's have been dotted, letters splayed
crossed t's turn to x's - no inherent destination
yet the words all fell and turned in place

In a dream's dream, lies a place
where pain is love and we are not hollow
if only it could be a destination
where you need not grieve creation
and your heart is not carved and splayed
or rendered on a howling page

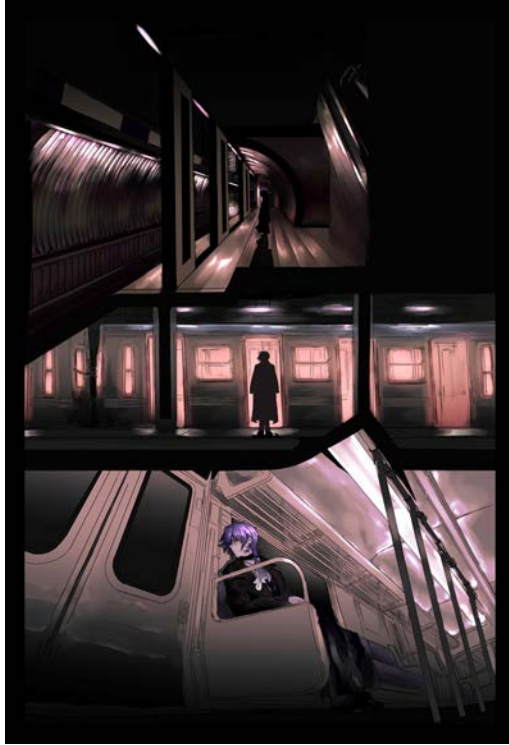
Eventually we all must turn a page
put the cover on, put the book back in place
on the shelf varnished or metal, with onlookers, propped up- splayed
yet dead, yet hollow
the end of a story, result of creation
earthen tomb, stone walled womb- our destination

A destination.
wouldn't that be nice, on an atlas page
to see a road of your creation
somewhere yours, to call home- a place
on a hillside by the creek, a hollow
where love and laughter are splayed

Here I am, carefully splayed
never knowing this would be my destination
hollow
page
this place
this creation

I feel hollow while splayed
since creation - how lonesome - with no destination
but this page serves well to be that place

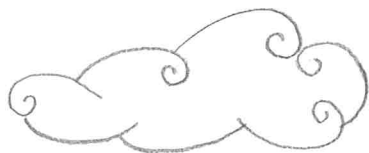
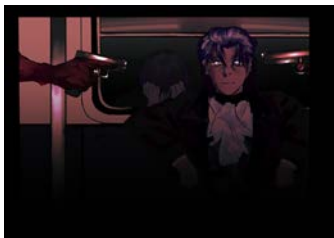




Benthic Buccaneer

by Evan Cedeno







Dueling

by Amalie Hindash

by Amalie Hindash

In The New York Minute



Puppet Master

by Nicole Dipre

The room is full of people, now I think it's spinning.
I don't know what to do, not in tonight's truth.
So I've stood in the shadow on the wall,
inching closer to the light as

my chest aches, my stomach twists the further
she goes, not knowing her fingers string
around my heart. She can't see it,
I'm in the ground just watching her grow,
Behind the red velvet rope at her portrait
framed in glass and glowing.

Under dimmed lights, the sound of her name
snaps me back to the laughter and color.
In the yellow, cramped bathroom
I pace and pluck petals from my head
to drown in love-me-nots.

She doesn't know I can't look at her too long
or I'll be lost and raw, peeled open like fruit,
all my nerves and juices free to see. And discard.

She's the Moon and I am just a cloud,
glowing at her side and fading into the night.
I used to float quietly in winter twilight,
I stir now from lightning into pouring storms.
I shrivel up in the Sun, but never enough to disappear.



dinner for a growing boy

by Amanda Jones

Eat my heart out.
Stab it with a fork
And throw the leftovers
On the top shelf.

Sprinkle it with
Salt and pepper,
Roast it over split
Firewood and watch
As the flames take over.

Wipe your face with
The sleeve of my
Torn shirt and
Wash it down
With my blood.

It's yours for the keeping,
Do with it as you see fit.



the well off Meads and Bullock

by Ashley Martucci

I was falling down– asleep
to prevent myself from dreaming.
I soon realized, how deep it goes,
my fear of getting sleep in.

Your warm breath soft on my neck,
soothe me slow to rest.
distorted music drowns my ears,
head placed on your chest.

I wish I could take steroids,
or something else to make me strong,
whether it's a dose or two,
tell me why it's wrong.

Once they find these thoughts that brew,
so cheap inside my head,
dollar-store-synthetic-sin,
Will I meet the dead?

**nihilistic
cynicism**

by Ashley Martucci



THEY'LL NEVER CATCH YOU
WHEN YOU FALL





A Dream of Japan

by Peyton Bortner

The Dream Otter

by Dana Livelli

*I dreamt of a home
with broken tiles and moss floors
where I crawled into bed...*

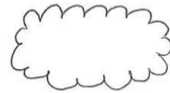
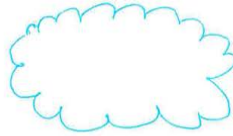
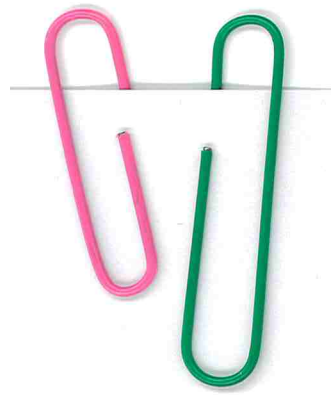
Scurrying, from the room over
up onto the sheets
was an otter who came
to wrap its tiny arms
tightly around me
and my long body,

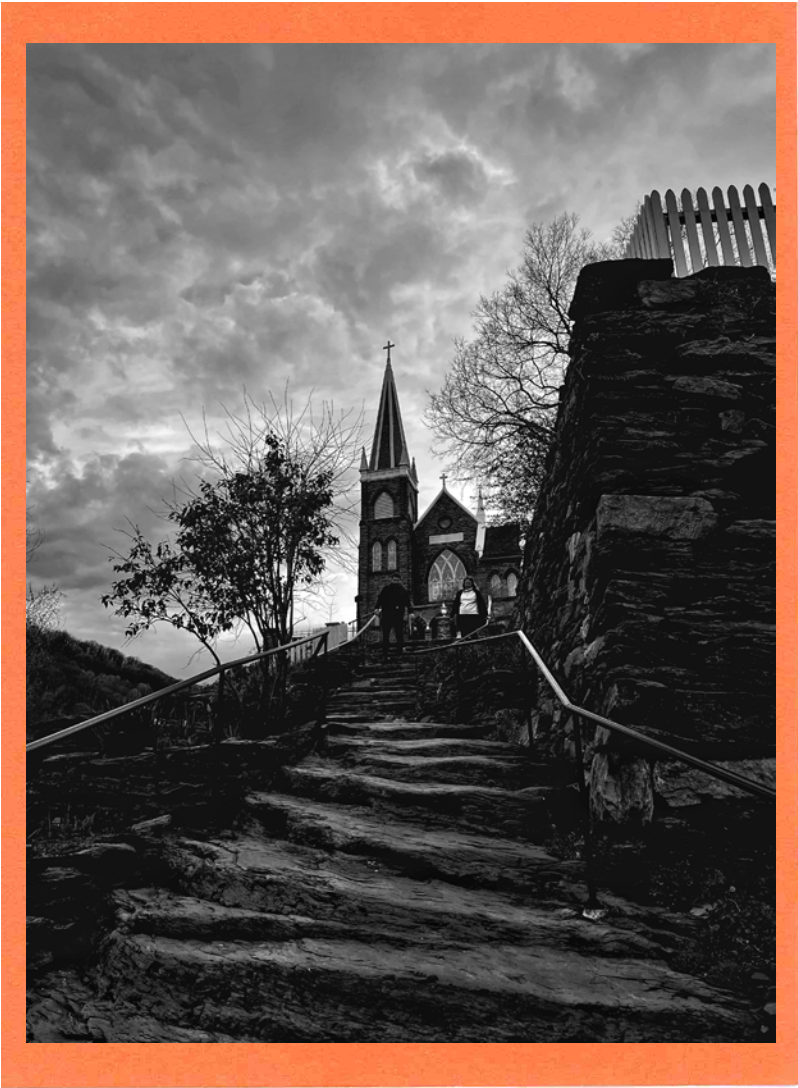
- I saw it as if from above
Then settled into his warmth
and felt secure from his love

It took another moment
to realize how absurd
So when it clicked,
I kicked that otter to the curb

I woke up shortly after
to crashing waves of remorse
in remembrance of my otter
and how quickly I turned coarse

I looked to you and said
"An otter cuddled me in my dream"
You brushed the hair from my eye and said
"I hope the otter was me"





Crooked Steps

by Amalie Hindash

Century

By Jacqueline McGarry

Oh how lovely and amusing
a hundred years can be
to those who are just
hearing of its existence.

I don't know about you,
but it is hard to fathom
a life before this one.
What came of it?

What were the tears that were once shed
forced to accommodate?
Have they responded to the dread
that wailed from a corner of the Earth?

Did they rejoice at the feeling of freedom, and
then freedom again,
all while reminiscing why the freedom was
furnished in the first place?

I believe that a century is meant to be recalled
not through the sounds that sounded, nor the
novels they yielded,
but through their hair-trigger ends.

Onto the next
and then
onto the
next.



Criminal Sons

by William Jackson

In high school, a guy named Owen I never really interacted with asked me if I hate not knowing my father. Without putting much thought into the answer, I said “yeah it’s not fun, but it’s whatever.” He also never met his father, but when I asked him how he felt about it he said “I love it.”

I asked Owen why he felt that way, and he spoke at length about how his dad had committed murder while his mother was pregnant. He said he’d never want to know a murderer and it gives him peace knowing he’ll never have to interact with him.

Given the fact that I’m a natural born instigator, I pushed him harder on that answer. “But don’t you wish you could just have some sort of closure? How does your mom feel about it? Don’t you feel some sort of natural connection that you’re curious about?” After each question I would hear the same answer. “Nope. No. Not really. Not interested.” I was shocked. My entire life I had wondered about who my father was, and here was a guy in a similar situation to me with a completely opposite mindset. Well, my father wasn’t a murderer, but he’s also a criminal. From what I’ve been told, he’s spent most of my life hiding from law enforcement and to this day nobody has any idea where he is.

I told Owen this story, and responded with questions completely opposite of mine. “Why would you want to meet someone like that? Don’t you feel some sort of shame being related to him? Does your mom even want you to think about him?” After each question I too replied with similar answers. “I’m just curious. I’m still his son. My mom understands.”

We continued this conversation for weeks, spending time between classes trying to understand each other’s point of view. He would compare me to being a hopeless romantic, one you read about waiting for Prince Charming to fall from the clouds in a white carriage. I would bring

him articles highlighting the nature vs. nurture debate, explaining how the two of us were more connected to our dads than we're willing to let off. For example, Owen got into buying and selling drugs. Now that's not murder, not even close, but it's still illegal activity. Meanwhile, I became a master of stealing items from convenience and grocery stores. "See," I told him. "We're both criminals in a way. Doesn't that make you just a bit more curious about our connections to our fathers?" He still wouldn't budge.

A few months later, Owen's mom got a call saying that his father was on his deathbed. I told him he had to jump on the opportunity. "I'm never going to have this chance, you have to do it." I could tell he was actually considering it for the first time. Usually when we have these conversations he's incredibly passive, giving me one or two word responses. This time he paused between answers, looked down at his salad instead of his usual direct eye contact, and played with the buttons between his black leather jacket. I could tell he was becoming uncomfortable with the whole situation, so in lieu of my typical line of questioning, I just told him I'd support him no matter what direction he decided to go. Tears started to run down his jacket and drop into his salad. "I'm not hungry anyways," he said with a chuckle. We didn't speak for the rest of the day.

The next day I woke up to a text he sent at 4:30 in the morning. "Mom and I are on the way to see him. I'll see you Monday and report back." I was so eager I felt as if I was meeting my father for the first time too. Owen and I had become so close over the past few months that our feelings about our respective fathers were intertwined. I began to understand more why he felt the way he did, and clearly in taking this step, he understood my side too. I spent the weekend imagining all the ways this could go for Owen.

What if they get along really well? What if his dad dies while he's visiting him? What if he hates it and blames me? What if his dad



dies before he gets there? What if his mom has cold feet, I mean she's nervous too. What if Owen releases his anger and attacks him?

Monday came, and on my way to school I was so anxious I forgot to get off at my stop on the subway. I barely made it before the bell rang, and given that our first period was homeroom I knew we'd have an hour to go over everything.

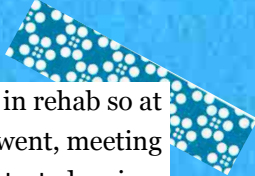
I ran up the stairs and rushed myself into the room, but Owen was nowhere to be found. I figured it was an emotional weekend for him so he was likely taking a mental health day. I didn't bother texting him either, I thought he might need some space. The next day I got off at the right subway stop, a little less nervous but still eager to hear about Owen's weekend. I got to class but he wasn't there again. Our advisor, José, asked to speak with me in his office.

"Will, I know you and Owen are close, and his mom thought it would be good for you to know that he overdosed during a suicide attempt." My body went numb. "Is he still alive," I screamed with tears starting to flow down my sweatshirt. "Yeah, he's just in the hospital." I asked to go home early that day, and José without hesitation said yes. On my subway ride home I couldn't stop thinking about how this was my fault.

If only I had backed off... My best friend is in the hospital because of me... My own curiosity caused this... He was so insistent on not wanting to meet him, why didn't he mention this could've happened... Would I try to kill myself if I ever met my father...

When I got home I ignored everything. I pushed my cats out of my room, closed my door, shut my blinds, turned off my phone and laid face down on my bed. For the rest of the day I stayed on my bed. My pillows became so drenched with tears I had to change pillowcases twice.

The next morning I called Owen's mom asking to visit him in the hospital. "No, not right now," she said. I asked when I would be able to

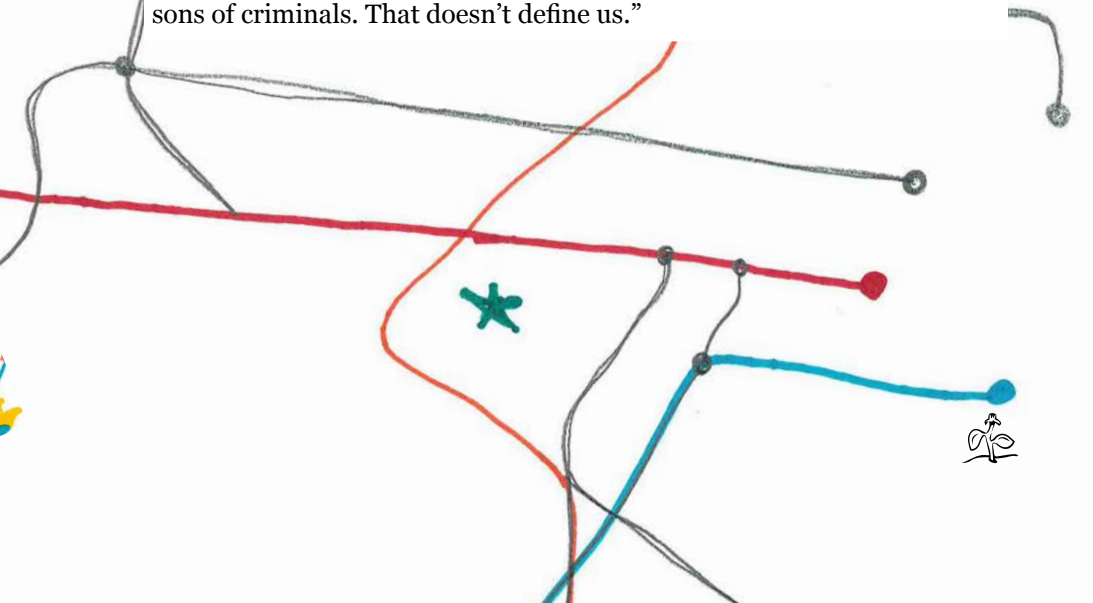


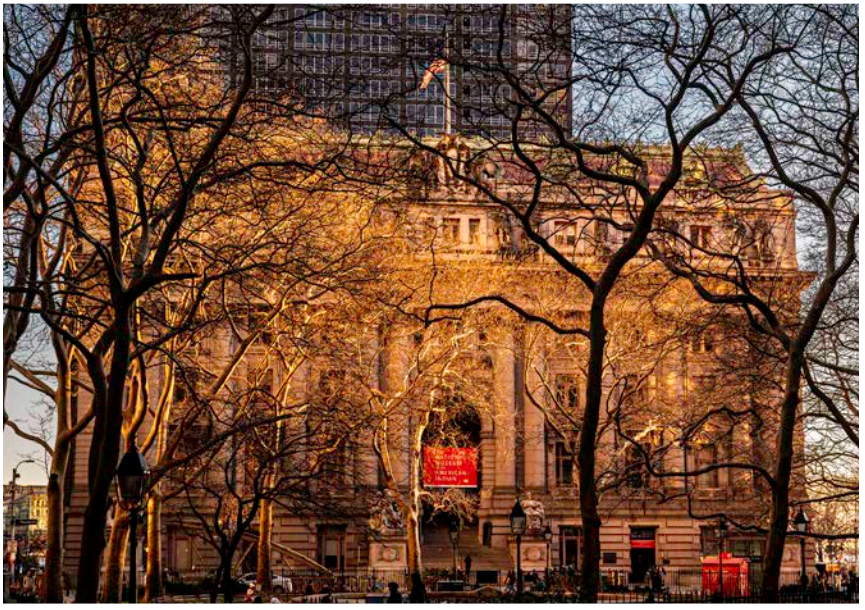
see him and she said the doctors had planned to place him in rehab so at minimum it would be a few weeks. I also asked her how it went, meeting his father for the first time. “[Owen] took one look at him, started crying, and asked to leave. I stayed to speak with him for a minute, but it wasn’t anything special.”

When Owen was admitted to the rehab center, his mom said I’d be able to call him a few times a week. The first chance I got, I called the number she gave me. “I’m so sorry,” I told him before he could even say a word. “It’s not your fault, I’m glad I was able to meet him, and that happened because of you,” he said. “You liked this?” I asked. “I walked into the room, saw him lying there in his prison clothes, and remembered this wasn’t me. It served as a reminder that I’m not who he is and will never be who he is.”

I remember thinking Owen must’ve just gotten out of therapy cause he never spoke that way. “So why’d you try to kill yourself?” He said he was just being stupid. “I didn’t even write a note or anything. I just took a bunch of oxy to try and feel better, thinking if I die, I die.” I told him that’s a terrible mindset to have.

As we were about to end the call, he wanted to tell me one more thing he thought of from this whole experience. “You remember those nature vs. nurture debates we had?” “Yeah of course,” I said. “We’re not criminals, Will. We do stupid things but we’re not criminals. We’re the sons of criminals. That doesn’t define us.”





Historic Facade in the Glow of Dusk

by Nitin Shukla



Sun

by Olivia Parisi

I welcome each day with a sigh of relief
I know that the sun will not fail me.

She will peek out from behind the trees in my backyard,
catapulting herself to the edge of endless blue sky.

Greeted warmly,
she situates herself between the earth and the heavens
a beacon of peace and agreement.

The birds know
she has made her appearance
their notes are sweet and repetitive,
a song that only she understands.

I welcome the day with a breath in
and then out.

I know that the sun will not fail me.



On Grieving Well

by Clinton F. Newton

Each life is a river bound
for the same body
yet, headwaters are never the same

Each bow and bend their own song
throughout the valleys
which cradle their tender rapids

which echo their solemn lull
flow and backflow
at times – stagnation

I have sighed lamentations
during a midsummers drought
when I was near death, barely flowing

When at once, the heavens cried
for some rivers cannot always run
they must die, in time

I found myself in a marsh
wide and wracked with cattail
oriole, willows weeping, lavender bloom

My mother had just lost her son
and there was nothing I could say
to comfort her

A river run dry - and with it the silt - the year's crop - the trout and
bluegill



Not all branches make it to sea
not all limbs can smack God
there are wounds which may not heal

the phantom-pains of you
remind me to love
and not the shallow breath of a creek

The uproarious love of the Delaware
as it wraps around Warren County
and I become a piece of the greater whole



I miss a version of you that never existed.
by Julia Greco

I carry the burden in my heart and beg it not to consume me.
For once, I simply plead
Let me be justified in my grief, not a monster.
For we all, but you, have met the true beast.
I feel it navigate through my bark, searching for an escape;
Maple syrup emotions.
But you've kissed the heart of evil and it consumed you.
I only now realize it's been like this from the very beginning.



Oblivion

by Amanda Jones

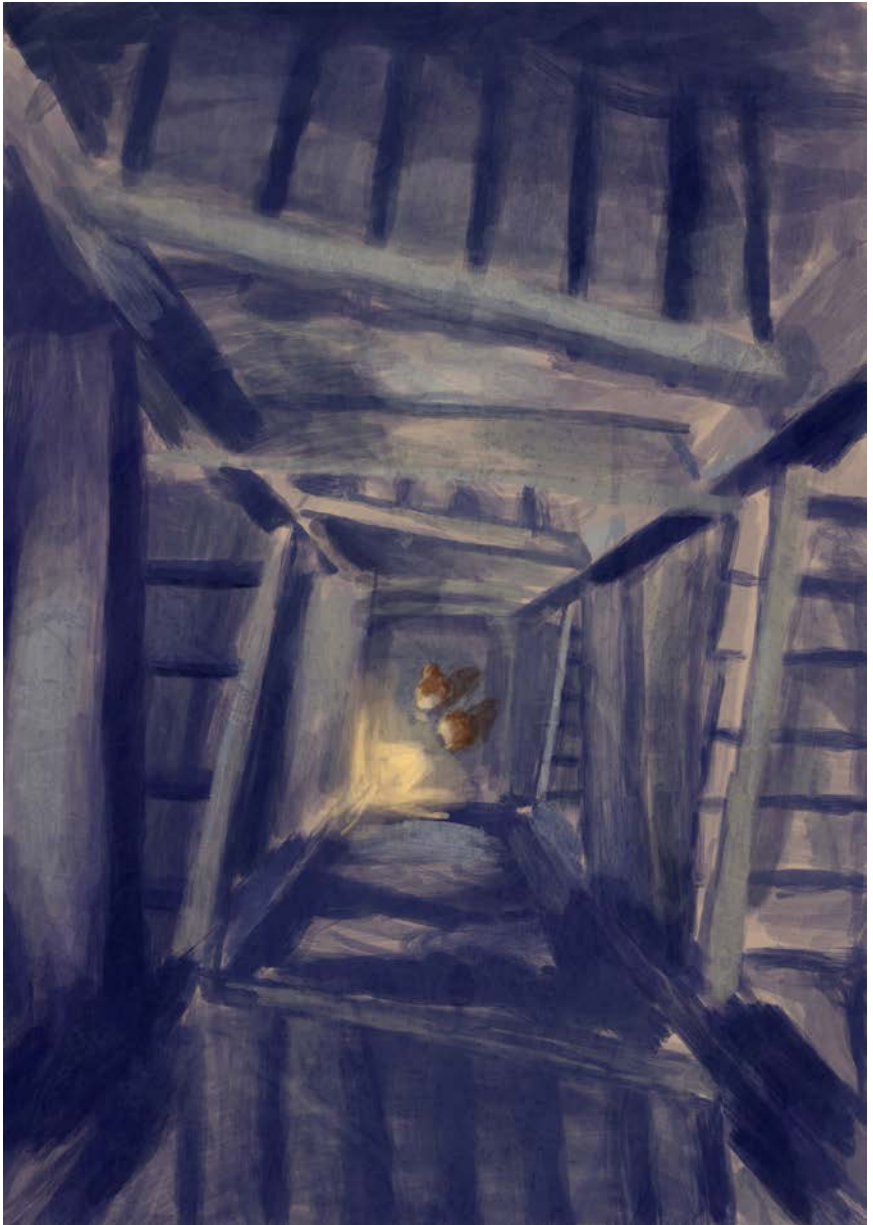


You stab me in the back
And I sleep on my side
As to not disturb the knife.

Tomorrow I will search
The arctic, cold yet optimistic,
The wound in my back
Seeping through my gown
And leaving splotches in the snow.
I pray you will follow the trail.



I climb a tree in the forest,
Shouting your name as pine
Needles dig into my palms
And leave me cut and aching,
As you dig your toes into
The sand and bask in her light.



Spiral Stairs

by Geninah Intoy



Third Grade Problems

by Lauren Altman

It is 6:00 PM on a Tuesday and I want to go home.
The cheerleaders need the gym for practice,
so now we are waiting in the hallway.
My brother's small frame,
backpack heavier than he is,
is standing beside me against the wall.
Antsy as I bounce on the toes of my sketchers.
The bag of sun chips and packet of fruit snacks
have not done much to hold me over.

Brian, who hates his job,
paces back and forth in front of us.
As if it's our fault
our mother is late,
again.
Brian doesn't like working
at the after school program,
and I don't like Brian,
or the after school program.
My elementary school purgatory.

What I will later come to understand
is what it means to never stop working.
Just as I will grow out
of my peace-sign backpack
and my little purple glasses.
And into long hours,
when I finally go to bed
later than my mom.



But for now
I simply grab her hand
and ask her what's for dinner.

I haven't grown into my neurosis yet.



no pockets

by Danielle Braune

I have no pockets on my pants.
None to loop my fingers through,
None to help me carry the weight
Or help take some off my shoulders
Or from in between my now-crooked fingers
As I manage to hold everything at once.

I worry that it's only a matter of time before
I drop something,
And everything tumbles down with it.



Dear Logan: An Elegy

by Jules-Arden Bernard

Dear Logan,

It's been five months and still, you find me again when I see leftover dog hair on my coat. This time a year ago, we still had snow on the ground. I could bet you were rolling around in it - you always thrived in winter. It was a stark contrast to my disdain for the colder months and to be fair, I needed it.

You'd love today's weather too, by the way. The frost on the ground matches the silver that peppered your face before you went to sleep.

Dear Logan,

The painting my friend made of you still hangs above my bed because while no pets are allowed in the dorm, I wanted you to finish college with me.

I don't pray often, but when I do, it's towards you. You were the hardest part of college, by the way; I was two hours away and had a feeling the traffic would be heavy or my shift would run late the day I knew I'd need to come home for you. I was right. I hope you know I was on the way.

Dear Logan,

It's gotten easier, somehow. There's a tinge of anger when I see people walking their dogs still calling the precious time they have with their friends a chore, and seeing Saint Bernard decorations at Christmas felt insulting. But it doesn't hurt as much. I see videos of people losing their dogs suddenly, medically, horribly - I'm happy you were comfortable. In mom's arms. Loved to the end.

Dear Logan,

I cross a handful of bridges on the way back home.

I hope yours had a lot less traffic.

forever in my heart

by Daynah Stockwell



Colors

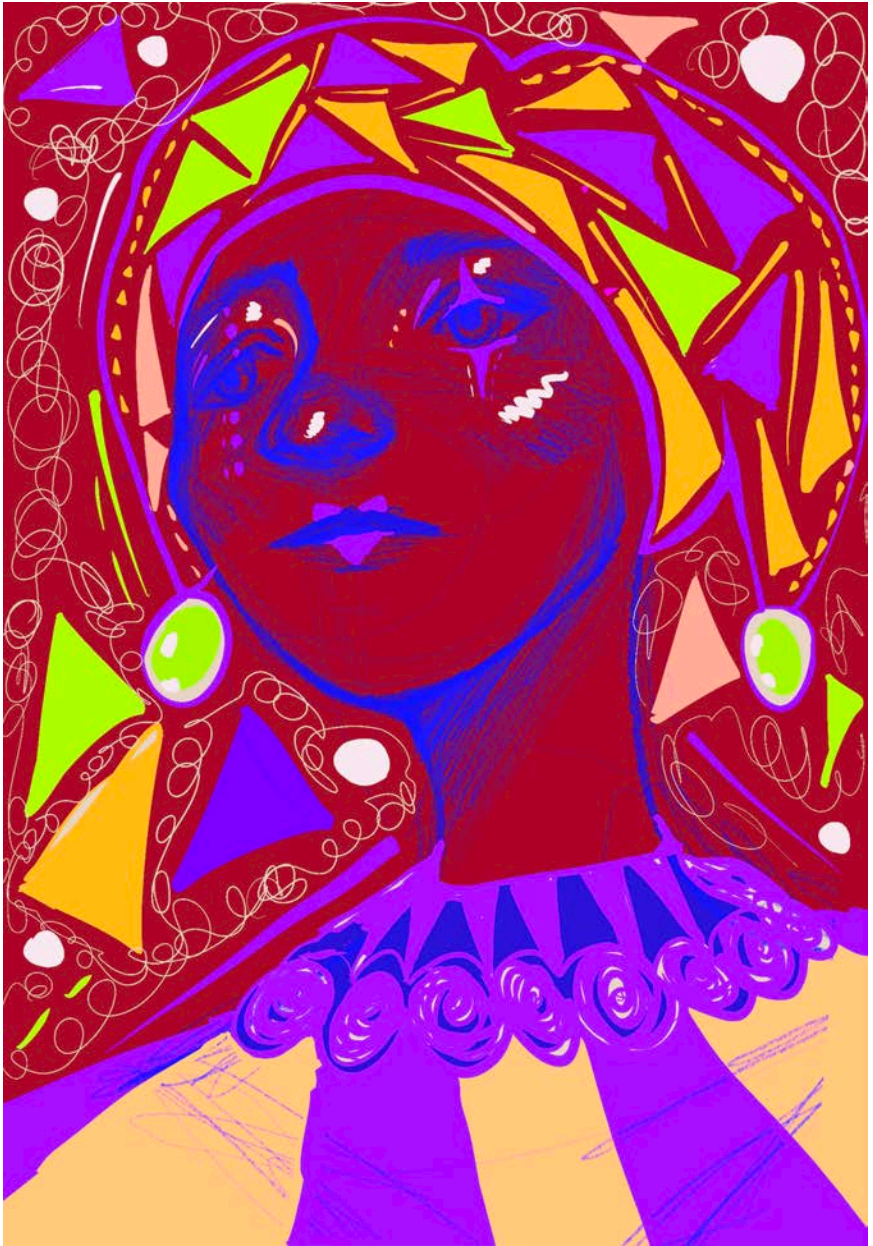
by Astrid Navarro

The closet was wide open, a blurry mess of bright colors everywhere. Beautiful thick scarves were thrown about. Glittering dresses placed on their hangers. There were high heels on the other side of the closet in all the wrong pairs. An assortment of brightly colored lipsticks, brushes, eyeliners, rolled about in a flash of fury enlaced with pain.

People wonder why I show love the way I do. Their hearts lacked the capacity to understand it. They want to know my motives but refuse to see them. I can't seem to tell anyone what I have going on in my mind really.

Always hidden in a bright smile. But they don't know. They don't care to understand and sometimes I wonder if the time will ever come. I then find myself thinking of them. The only true friend I've ever had. They understand why I love the way I do. The thoughts I have in my head. They understand the smile I put on my face because they do it too.

They see me in all my colors as I am. And I see them in all of theirs.



Red Clown

by Geninah Intoy



If I didn't need to sleep

by Lauren Altman

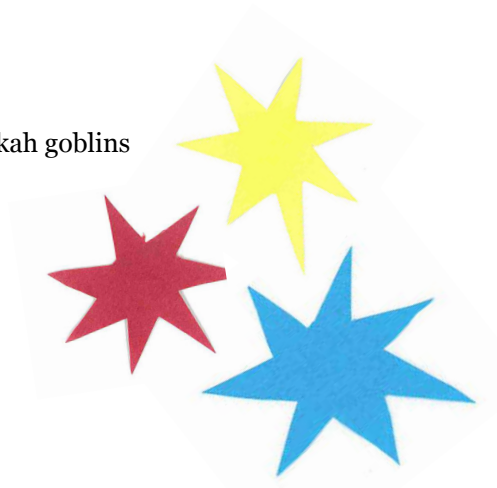
I would have seven extra hours a day to Braille shit

My fingers would be fucking jacked
At the thought of my literacy

I would transcribe all the quirky calendars
And holiday cards
I could finally have braille holiday cards
That aren't Christmas related
Just because I'm blind
Doesn't mean I'm Christian
Maybe I'm too greedy for thinking I'm entitled
To both of my identities at the same time

I can finally look at
"2024 sprinkle sarcasm like confetti holiday planner"
Without wanting
To sprinkle my organs
All over the floor of Barnes and Nobles
She believed she could , so she fucking did
Would be in reference to me

I would Braille all the Jewish books
For all the Jewish children
So they could read Hertzl and the Hanukkah goblins
Until they can recite it like torah
And they can have all the word searches
And the crossword puzzles
And the regular puzzles
I want so much Braille



That people will start thinking
That we're entitled to equality

They'll be so confused
Because all the cute shit
Will finally be accessible

And I will finally know colors
again
Because I will hear them
We will have conversations



You are the Light

by Ashley Martucci





**we left this page blank for you,
add your personal touch.**

Editors' notes

William Cagle: As a new Professor just finding my footing at Ramapo, it has been my incredible honor to advise the staff of Trillium for both the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 editions. The students I've had the opportunity to work with have been passionate, dedicated, always willing to adapt, discuss, debate, and collaborate. I've watched them refine their tastes and develop their skills. Even with busy schedules meaning we couldn't all always be in the same room together, each one of the staff has brought their voice and their particular talents to the process of bringing the magazine to life. The talent and dedication of all the students involved, both Contributors and Editors, gives me great hope that even in our era of upheaval (of disinformation, of abuses of power, of climate collapse, of profit privileged above the dignity of human life) art remains perhaps our greatest tool for connection, for discussion, for thinking and feeling our way toward a better tomorrow.

Nicole Dipre: I'm a sophomore Visual Arts major, and this is my second semester working on the outreach/layout team. I also had the honor of contributing my poem "Puppet Master." Reading through the poetry and prose, viewing the visual art, and working with the innovative and kind Trillium staff was a privilege. Thank you to everyone who submitted, organized, and put in the effort to make this edition happen! To our readers, thank you, stay tuned, and stay creative!

Lidiya Kelyman: I am a sophomore English and Literary Studies major with a concentration in Secondary Education and a Psychology minor. I loved working on the Trillium and getting to read so many amazing submissions. To anyone who feels moved or connected to the pieces know that your voice matters. Each word has the power to shape the world around you so pick up the pen and start your writing journey.

Rebecca Gathercole: I'm a senior Contemporary Arts Contract major with a Creative Writing minor. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the team, reading submissions, and designing the edition this semester!

Jessica Hammer: I'm a junior Communication Arts major with a concentration in journalism and writing with a minor in English and literary studies. I have loved working on Trillium, I'm super proud of all the contributors and the team who came together to make this publication possible. Lots of love was put into this edition, I hope you enjoy it!

Chris Flug: I'm an American Studies major, and although I'm technically a sophomore, this is my first full semester here at Ramapo.

Helping with the Trillium publication has been my first involvement in an extracurricular activity, and it has been an all-around great experience. It was awesome to see the variety of literature and art produced by the student population, and truly fascinating to see all the processes and organizational tasks that go into putting together a magazine like Trillium.

Gabriel O’Farrill: I’ve loved working for this magazine. It has really given me a peek into what working in the publishing industry could look like as an editor/copy editor. Determining the work we want to showcase in our publication, discussing what edits could be made to them with authors and artists, and then getting to tell them that we will be publishing their work has been a really great experience.

Denisse Gonzalez Ramirez: I am a senior Communication Arts major with a concentration in Digital Journalism and Writing getting ready to graduate! I first heard about Trillium from Professor James Hoch, and immediately took interest in the magazine. I’m wrapping up the year with a great team of individuals who dedicated their time to the magic of the literary magazine. I genuinely enjoyed reading the work submitted and really capturing the theme for this year’s print version! I can’t wait to see how it comes to life!

James LaForge: I’m thrilled to have had the privilege of working on Trillium’s staff this year! The work from our contributors have been some of the most creative and inspiring work I’ve ever seen, and I’m incredibly grateful to have been a small part of bringing these submissions to life. Thank you to all of our contributors and staff who have made this magazine possible!

Mike Finn: I’m a junior majoring in marketing and a contributor to Trillium. This semester, I’ve had the pleasure of joining the Trillium team for the first time. My role involves peer review of both literature and visual art, editing, and assisting with event planning. Working on Trillium has been an insightful experience. Reviewing submissions and collaborating with the team to curate each issue has deepened my appreciation for literature and visual art. Planning our launch event has also been rewarding, showcasing the culmination of our efforts. I’m committed to promoting emerging voices and fostering creativity within our community. As we continue our journey, I look forward to sharing more captivating works with our readers.

Camilo Guerrero: I’m an English major, creative writing concentration, with a digital filmmaking minor. My experience working on Trillium has been so great, everyone is so passionate and committed, and we really work together as a team to bring this magazine to life.

Contributors' notes

Lauren Altman (she/her) is a second year student pursuing a degree in Psychology and Special Education Studies.

"I wrote this poem while on the train down to visit some friends in Virginia as truly what else would one do while sitting on a train at 4:00 AM? Although my relationship with mass transit is sometimes turbulent, it was an unexpected moment that was too beautiful not to capture." - Amtrak Lullaby

"It's funny how certain things stick out in your memory. It's funny to think about the person you were when you were eight. It's even funnier to realize that no matter how much you change, in some ways you are still the same person." - Third Grade Problems

"I wrote this poem when I was shopping for holiday cards this year, but the feeling stays throughout the seasons. Finding Braille versions of print materials is often a DIY project. I'm tired of having to pioneer everything." - If I didn't need to sleep

Jules-Arden Bernard (they/he) is a Visual arts major with a concentration in Electronic arts and Animation and a Creative Writing minor.

"This piece was inspired by the loss of a childhood pet, and was meant to explore how grief isn't always linear, nor does it appear in the same way every time. By writing a sort of "letter" to a passed pet, I wanted this poem to almost act as a form of personal closure as well. Much of my creative work focuses on how individuals interact with one another, as well as how they respond to themselves and their own mental health or personal struggles. Allowing myself to be a subject in a piece regarding experiences with grief only fitting fitting."

Peyton Bortner (she/her) is an English and Literary Studies major with a minor in Creative Writing, as well as the President of the Literature Club, the Omega Omega chapter of the English International Honor Society Sigma Tau Delta, and the Arts & Entertainment Section Editor of The Ramapo News. She loves writing fantasy, playing her way through the Legend of Zelda series, and taking care of/talking about her various animals (especially her hamster, Laszlo).

"A Dream of Japan is actually not so much a dream as it is a foretelling of what's to come. My partner, Dante, and I are leaving for a two week journey through Japan on May 17th, and I have been obsessing over it. I have always wanted to go to Japan, so the opportunity to visit with the love of my life is a gift. One of the many things we have planned is visiting

shrines wherever we stay, so I wanted to draw us with a torii, a gate that marks the entrance to the shrine. However, there is a mistake in this drawing-- when you visit a shrine, you are not supposed to walk in the middle of the path as that is where the Kami, the deities of Shinto, are walking. So, that's just a fun fact for you."

Danielle Braune (she/her) is an English & Literary Studies major on the Teacher Education Tract with a Creative Writing concentration.

"'no pockets' is simultaneously a literal description of the lack of pockets on women's pants and a metaphor for the patriarchy (the system) that makes things like that occur. A lot of my works originate from my experience as a woman, as is evident here."

Evan Cedeno is currently a junior pursuing a degree in Electronic Art and Animation at Ramapo College. They originally wanted to be a marine biologist but became an artist instead. They are now an amateur game developer who hopes to publish an indie game based on their work in the near future!

"A three part series I did for my narrative art class during fall 2023. It's meant to be a 9 panel (in total) comic that doesn't use language or dialogue to tell a story". - Benthic Buccaneer

Nicole Dipre (she/they) is a sophomore Visual Arts major with minors in Creative Writing and Art History.

"Puppet Master expresses unrequited love through image-heavy metaphors of admiring from afar. The speaker goes through the motions of infatuation and putting their crush on a pedestal, ending on a quiet, celestial, and bitter note."

Julia Greco (she/her) is a current sophomore Social Work major. Along with writing poetry, she also loves to paint and create collages in her free time.

"Realizing that you are trapped in a toxic relationship can spark a variety of emotions. This poem explores feelings of guilt, isolation, disillusionment, and betrayal that may arise when you finally stop pretending everything is okay and accept the harsh truth about someone."

Amalie Hindash (she/her) is an International Studies major.

"Dueling was taken during a cultural performance I photographed. The women in the photo were performing a traditional Chinese ribbon dance and it was amazing to watch. The dance evoked power in motion." - Dueling

"It took me a while to name my photo In the New York Minute as I couldn't pick anything to reflect what I captured. I was in the subway in

New York City with a family friend when I saw the mosaic on the wall. I felt the combination of the mosaic and the movement of the hands reflects life in the city.” - In the New York Minute

“This photo was something I captured in competition with my dad. When I was framing my picture, I wanted to try and capture how uneven they looked as the steps led to the church. I feel my perspective helped make the photo a bit more eerie fitting to its historic location.” - Crooked Steps

Geninah Intoy (she/her) is a junior majoring in Visual Arts with a concentration in Drawing and Painting, as well as being a part of the Teacher Education program. As an artist, she strives to create pieces that bring back the fun that drew her to pursue art.

“Having primarily worked with gouache and colored pencil, ‘Spiral Stairs’ is one of Geninah’s first pieces made with digital media.” - Spiral Stairs

“Having primarily worked with gouache and colored pencil, ‘Red Clown’ is one of Geninah’s first attempts of working with digital media.” - Red Clown

William Jackson (He/Him) is a Communication Arts major with a journalism concentration

“My relationship with my father was something I’ve thought about for my entire life. Knowing that there is this guy out there taking active steps to avoid you, but also knowing this is your father, is something that can mess with your head. I’ve always been conflicted thinking about how a father is someone who is supposed to be there for you, but knowing my father is taking active steps to avoid that. Getting to know Owen and forming a bond over something so unique was a major step for me in my life and our relationship shaped a lot of who I am today. Talking to him and going through what we went through provided perspective on what is and is not important in life and made me reevaluate how I feel about my father. I hope other people can find some sort of relatability to Criminal Sons, whether that’s through the lens of bonding with a friend over some unique trait, or maybe looking at what should take priority in your own life. That’s mainly what prompted me to submit to Trillium.”

Amanda Jones likes reading, kalamata olives, and dogs.

“‘Dinner for a growing boy’ is about the feeling of falling in love and giving your all to someone. I wanted it to feel raw, pun intended.” - Dinner for a growing boy

“‘Oblivion’ is how I see a relationship in which one person cheats and the other is aware of it, but refuses to believe that it’s over.” - Oblivion

Dana Livelli is a student at Ramapo College.

Bella Marques (she/her) is a global communication and media major with a minor in photography.

“The story behind this piece was that I was sitting atop of my friends roof top in New York City and was reminiscing on a time I thought it would be me. I thought I’d be one of the people walking on the crosswalk living in the city. My life took a turn and I wasn’t able to do so and it crushed me because it was the one place where I thought I belonged. My friend and I were talking about it that day, and though it was still very possible, it was hard to imagine my life there. ‘look from above’ symbolizes how I used to and still do, people watch. When you’re in your own headspace completing your mundane tasks routinely you don’t think of looking up too often, but there’s always someone or something looking down on you, wishing they were you.”

Ashley Martucci (she/her) is a transfer student completing her undergraduate studies at Ramapo College. She is a Literature Major on track to complete her Masters in Library Sciences. Ashley frequents WRPR, Literature Club, and the Women’s Center. She is a member of Sigma Tau Delta. Her favorite author has been Adrienne Rich since she began studying poetry.

“I wrote ‘the well off Meads and Bullock’ based on the drives I used to frequent in the neighborhood I grew up in– before I lost my ability to drive. There was a well around one bend that often visits me on the nights I can’t seem to close my eyes. It’s written in the strange place between the waking and the dreaming.” - the well off Meads and Bullock

“Doodle based on The Teeth’s Ball of the Dead Rat” - nihilistic cynicism

“Piece based on the Pavement song ‘You Are The Light’ - ‘I hear they live in crematoriums and smoke your remains’” - You are the Light

Jacqueline McGarry (she/her/hers) is a marketing major.

“During my senior year of high school, I had a creative writing teacher who had us participate in activities that allowed us to gain ideas for pieces we were assigned to write. One of these activities included going online to find a random word generator and filtering through different words until we found one that inspired us. That is exactly what I did for ‘Century,’ as the title of this poem was one of the first words that popped onto my computer screen. From there, I was able to complete the poem. My creative writing teacher in high school changed my life in many positive ways, as he allowed me to think freely and express myself in ways I never thought possible. I thank him for making this poem possible.”

Astrid Navarro (she/her) is a Visual Communication Design major.

“Colors is a short story partially inspired by the song, Paracetamol written by Declan McKenna. There were themes of friendship and acceptance understanding hidden pain, and acceptance of oneself and the world resonated with me at that point in my life and was my inspiration for this short story.” - Colors

“Being a part of the creative process for Trillium was an exciting opportunity. As a graphic designer, it was important for me to visually express the vision that the Trillium staff had for the literary magazine. Their dedication to this edition inspired me to produce work that would attract readers not only to the content but to the cover design as well. Art can be produced in many forms whether it is poetry, short stories, photographs, or art pieces. They all go through a process that involves thoughtful creativity. I believe the vision that Trillium had resonates with the work in progress of everyone who collaborated in creating this edition.”

Clinton F. Newton is a student at Ramapo College.

Amanda Oliver (she/her) is a communications major with a concentration in creative writing.

“I wrote this poem from the point of view of someone else— someone I have never been. I took a familiar feeling, smelling something you used to know at a different time, and made it sad. It’s kinda fun making things sad.”

Olivia Parisi (she/they) is an English and Literary Studies major.

“I wrote this piece as an appreciation of things that often get overlooked, like the Sun. I think that many times we take such beautiful things for granted even when they are sometimes the most consistent things in our life. I really love writing poetry that incorporates elements of nature, I think there is something so wonderful about the world around us.”

Emi Pastor (they/them) studies contemporary arts at Ramapo College.

“I recently began taking photos after falling in love with photography last semester, and since then I have been really into unique types of photography and fashion photography. This piece is really special to me because I do not put myself in front of the camera a lot due to insecurity with how I look, but for this one it felt right to have myself be the center of the photo along with my partner.”

Jade Sampson (she/her) is a sophomore Psychology major, minoring in Substance Use Disorders, English & Literary Studies, and Creative Writing.

“I wrote this poem after driving one of my friends home from a day trip to Vernon.” - 94 to Home

“I wrote this poem because one of my best friends is an older man and sometimes I don't know what to do with that.” - pretend this is for Rob

“I wrote this because my favourite things about being a minority in this country (she says without a hint of sarcasm) is this expectation placed on us to not complain about our circumstance, lest we make the white folk uncomfortable.” - Good Little Girl

Nitin Shukla is a student at Ramapo College.

Daynah Stockwell (she/her) is a junior Communication Arts major with a concentration in Digital Filmmaking and is a tutor at the Center for Reading and Writing.

“This photo was taken with my late cat Bella who unfortunately passed away in January after being by my side for 15 years. I wanted to commemorate Bella, who was previously featured in Trillium's Fall edition of this year, to show how despite her no longer being around me in the physical world, Bella will always be beside me in spirit and in my heart. I am honored that Bella's photo will be eternalized in Trillium once again for all to enjoy.”

