

VOLUME 11. ISSUE 2. SPRING 2022

# PURSUIT



TIO'S TACOS

DIRTY CASUAL:  
PRINTMAKING IS PUNK

MARVELOUS WORLD OF  
COSPLAYING

IN DEFENSE OF...  
PEOPLE WHO THOUGHT  
GETTING AN ART DEGREE  
WAS A GOOD IDEA

# WIZARD of OZ

*California Baptist University's take on the Hollywood Classic*



# featured

Zerenity Lopez explores the possibilities of bringing life to urban living spaces with indoor plants and how having fragments of nature in your house can make you feel more alive. To read more, turn to page 24.



The pursuit of truth:  
To show students the wide range of experiences life has to offer.

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## MOMENTS OF POETRY





Courtesy of Chloe Daniels

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Reader,

I will start off by confessing that I am not the best at writing. When I get to the screen, I might start typing, but eventually those words get erased, and hours later, I am stuck with a blank document once again. If I am being completely honest, this letter is the fifth draft since the original.

One thing I can say with confidence is that I am decently good at photography. Creativity in general is something that I am passionate about, but even on some days, just like writing, I find myself staring at a blank slate with no thoughts behind my eyes. However, something that always helps spark my creativity — my writing too — is inspiration.

That is what I hope this issue of Pursuit will give you. The inspiration to create, whether you are a mechanical engineer in an endeavor to build something new, an architect struggling to design a building layout, a painter staring at a blank canvas or even a business major searching for a new strategy. I want this issue to give you what you need to begin creating your passion.

Humans were made to create. God is the perfect craftsman and we were made in his image. So I encourage you to go through these pages and let them inspire you. Allow them to spark ideas, write all over them, tear them out. Basically, do whatever you need to do in order to find your creativity once again. After all,

our purpose is to  
**CREATE**

Camille Rose Grochowski  
*Editor-in-Chief*

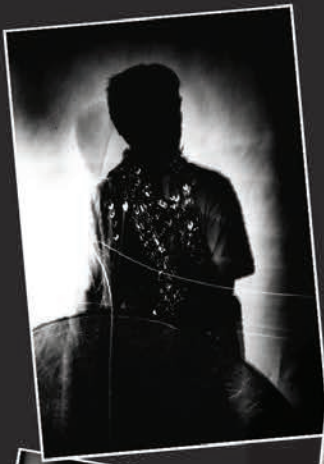
# Mirror Man

Aaron Kooistra

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What shall I say to the mirror  
What words can I speak to that man  
My words have been forgotten  
I don't remember who I am  
The man in the mirror knows  
He reveals to me wisdom divine  
My soul now pulled out from my body  
Stripped of all its lies  
What is a soul without deception, it's secrets and it's dreams  
The mirror man reveals that's it's exactly what it seems  
He reads me all my sins and all that I must now atone  
The mirror man is always near which is why I feel alone  
Tremble and quake, I cannot escape  
His piercing searching gaze  
To look away is to escape, but I stare for endless days  
For he cannot be resisted, the mirror man will boast  
He's the one you cannot bear to see but the one you see the most  
Oh mirror man, of any man, why must you hate me so  
Why does my honest self now become my greatest foe  
I only see my sorrow when I look into your eyes  
I cannot bear my countless sins and even greater lies  
Oh mirror man, do what I can, you strip me of my life  
My own reflection has now become more deadly than the knife







# Folklorico





## Matisse Azul's Journey to Bring Cultural Awareness to TikTok

TikTok has given creators a place for creativity, individuality, and representation for multiple communities. For viewers, it is a wealth of millions of videos from comedy to cultural discovery. Creating and being recognized across platforms, 20-year-old Matisse Azul Reinbolt has become an image of the color and tradition of her roots.

Azul has more than 1 million followers and millions of views on TikTok. Her love for the traditional folklorico dances has brought Mexican culture to millions of people across social media and she has even partnered with recognizable brands like Ralph Lauren, Target, Urban Decay and Nike.

What started in late April 2020 as both fun and casual, became a project that would give Azul a platform for representation and appreciation of folklorico. Many across the world came to know of Azul through her vibrant and captivating TikTok trends, remaking Coco's "Un Poco Loco" and other trending trends, but her beginning in dance dates back to her early childhood, where she picked up the faldeo and steps we have come to love today.

Azul, born and raised in San Bernardino, keeps her Mexican roots alive in honor of her grandparents and her family originally from Chihuahua, Mexico. While her parents worked long hours, Matisse spent hours honing her dance craft and followed it through into college. However, it was not something she cultivated from one day to the next and far less something that naturally fell into her or her family's schedule.

"My mom and dad both worked 12 or 14 hour days," she says. "I would be at school from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on dance days. Because we had dance, my mom would make dinner in the morning and bring it to school since she worked at the school. We would have to eat dinner at school, then change at school, and then rush over to dance practice right away."

For a while Azul became the first in her family to dance folklorico. Later on her family would become as invested as she was in ballet folklorico, all collectively living the journey Azul had started at a fairly early age. Before the exceptional folklorico we see from her today, there was a variety of dance styles for Azul. "I started dancing ballet, tap and jazz... when I was 3, and then when I was 4 I started dancing folklorico in Redlands... I was there for maybe 12 or 13 years."

After her first folklorico group in Redlands, she moved to Riverside and most recently joined a group in Santa Ana where she has since then been dancing. She became invested in her culture and in ballet folklorico, something that she was never forced to participate in, but rather something she loved and chose to do.

At moments through her journey dancing folklorico, Azul had places where the colorful dresses and beginning chords of the traditional music were shut off out of a fear of being alienated by others.

"I've gotten so many comments from people when I've worn a dress, and they have no idea what I'm wearing. It's fine to be curious, but that's why it's so important to share it with the world because everybody should be aware that there's other cultures and we all have traditional clothing."

The key to her passion for judgments and questionable looks from others became the element to educating others, "Definitely hurts to hear it, but that's what pushes me more to show the culture to the world."

Azul never imagined having the amount of attraction to what she does. Initially, she used TikTok as a way to hold herself accountable to practicing through the pandemic. After posting her first few videos, she became one of the most popular Latino creators on the application.

Her most famous encounters or interactions on the application have been recognized creators and celebrities like Leo Gonzalez, Estrada Twins, Mario Lopez, Carlos Vives, Andy Grammer and even Taylor Swift.

But all her successes and the pride of showing her culture to the world have not come without cost. Dancing is a major part of Matisse's life and a major part of her days through the week. "I practice Tuesdays,

Thursdays and Saturdays for three hours and it's an hour and a half away from me," she says. "I dedicate one or two days a

week for videos the night before I prep and plan out videos and post throughout the week."







All: Matisse Azul Reinbolt, first-year counseling psychology graduate student, wears her Sinaloa dress. Sinaloa is a state in Mexico.









**“I think  
it’s really  
important  
that I bring  
the awareness  
to the [Mexican]  
culture and make  
sure that people  
appreciate other  
people’s culture.”**

**- Matisse Azul Reinbolt**  
(graduate student in counseling psychology and folklorico dancer)





Azul's excellence is not just demonstrated through her talented dancing but also her education, as she has always kept her focus on academics. Azul graduated from CBU with two bachelor's degrees in three years. She is not only in a dance group and creating content but is now in a master's program at CBU. She is always on the move whether it is school, practice or creating the content her followers love to see.

Azul's most important commitment through her journey has been sharing and connecting others to her culture and creating conversations on platforms like TikTok. "I think it's really important that I bring the awareness of the [Mexican] culture and making sure that people appreciate other people's culture rather than saying 'Why do you dress like that?' or 'Why are you doing that?' because I've gotten so many comments saying word for word, 'Why do your people dress like that?' We can't have that happening anymore," Azul says.

"I didn't grow up speaking Spanish. I didn't know how to because my great-grandma, when she moved here from Mexico, she was not allowed to speak Spanish because the schools were still segregated. When she was teaching her kids Spanish, they would speak it in school and got hit for it in school, my mom didn't get to learn it. I learned it when I got older from my grandparents because I think it's important, and from dance, too," Azul says.

Azul has continued showing the world the beauty of ballet folklorico and the dances from Mexico as she has always done. "I didn't realize it was like that until I got much older. I didn't realize the impact it was having on people," she says. "I knew that it was making an impact, but I didn't realize what I was doing." Azul never imagined having the amount of attraction to what she does. Initially, she used Tiktok as a form to hold herself accountable to practicing through the pandemic. After posting her first few videos it sent her became one of the most popular Latino creators on the application. Her most famous encounters or interactions on the application? Recognized creators and celebrities like Leo Gonzalez, Estrada Twins, and even Mario Lopez. Or celebrities like Carlos Vives, Andy Grammer and even Taylor Swift.

But all her successes and the pride of showing her culture to the world have not come at such an easy cost dancing is a major part of Matisse's life and a major part of her

days through the week, "I practice Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for three hours and its an hour and a half away from me...I dedicate one or two days a week for videos the night before I prep and plan out videos and post throughout the week," said Azul.

Aside from dancing Matisse's excellence is not just demonstrated through her talented dancing but as well as her education as she has always kept her focus on Azul graduated from CBU with two bachelor's degrees in three years. Azul is not only in a dance group and creating content but is as well now in a master's program at CBU. She is constantly on a roll and always on the move whether it is school, practice, or creating the content her followers love to see.

Matisse Azul's most important commitment through her journey has been sharing and connecting others to her culture and creating conversations on platforms like TikTok. "I think it's really important that I bring the awareness to the culture and make sure that people appreciate other people's culture rather than saying 'why do you dress like that?' or 'why are you doing?'" that because I've gotten so many comments saying word for word 'why do your people dress like that?' and we can't have that happening anymore," said Azul.

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Matisse has continued showing the world the beauty of ballet Folklorico and the beautiful dances from Mexico as she has always done, "I didn't realize it was like that until I got much older. I didn't realize the impact it was having on people. I knew that it was making an impact, but I didn't realize what I was doing," said Azul.v

It took her time to process the fact that many felt connected to her videos and that they brought not only appreciation but happiness to millions on Tiktok and other platforms. ♦

**All:** Azul's Tabasco (top left) and Veracruz (middle) dresses, both representing states in Mexico.

Written by Ignacio Dominguez  
 Designed by Camille Grochowski  
 Photographed by Elijah Hickman and Camille Grochowski





# TIO'S TACOS

DESDE  
1990



Enter any Hispanic home and, sooner or later, you are likely to run into the phrase “Mi Casa es su Casa.” It is not a shock to see the phrase hanging front and center in the living room, on a welcome mat or hanging on the front door. You might even hear it directly from the mouth of the hosts. However the phrase happens to find you, take it as a sign of kindness and generosity. For the uninitiated Spanish speaker, the phrase roughly translates to “My home is your home,” and it is the perfect example of Hispanic hospitality. But you cannot always count on the hospitality of strangers, and if you happen to see the phrase hanging from someone’s door and decide to barge into someone’s home unannounced, do not be surprised if you are chased by an angry grandmother wielding a chancla. There is one home located at 3948 Mission Inn Ave., though, that will always welcome you with open arms — Tio’s Tacos, the restaurant and home of self-taught artist Martin Sanchez.

Tio’s Tacos is a Mexican maximalist haven located in the heart of Downtown Riverside, and Sanchez serves as its owner, art director and groundskeeper. Tio’s Tacos is unique in that it is both a restaurant serving authentic Mexican food, and an artistic shrine to Sanchez’s life and heritage. The location encompasses an entire city block and puts every inch of space it has to good use. Thirty foot tall scrap giants attached to palm trees surround the property like watchful trash guardians, plastic skeletons drive bicycles in between tables and stuffed wild cats hang from tree branches. Tio’s Tacos is a wonderland of the unexpected and surprising. After ordering their food, guests are welcome to go outside and take a stroll through the colorful property’s one-acre of beautiful recycled art.

Tio’s is more than a restaurant. It is a city, and its inhabitants are made of plastic, glass and metal. Tio’s exterior space is populated by plastic skeletons, mariachi bands, greek busts, luchadores, characters from classic movies and TV shows and hundreds of colorful license plates and street signs. Broken sinks serve as pots for plants, lawnmowers and shopping carts sit perpetually on top of a roof and a nearly life-size airplane covers one wall of the Tio’s Tacos property. Tio’s tacos is a fortress of folk art and an homage to Sanchez’s vibrant home of Mexico.

Martin Sanchez grew up in the Mexican

state of Michoacan, in the city of Sahuayo. He had no time for school and no time to play with toys. In an interview with television station KCET, Sanchez recounted his childhood and the difficulties he and his family faced.

“We lacked clothes, toys, even food. At the age of 5 I began working, cleaning shoes, washing cars, and as an errand boy at the supermarket.”

When he was just 16 years old, Martin decided to go to the United States with his future wife in hope of a better life.

“I came here like everyone does, looking for work,” he says. “I didn’t have a job. I didn’t have a home.” His journey brought him to Los Angeles, and like so many other Mexican immigrants before him, he decided to sell food to make a living. Sanchez initially began selling hot dogs out of a cart until he realized that wasn’t very profitable and that there was a much higher demand for tacos among the Hispanic population.

In 1990, Sanchez moved to Riverside and decided to start selling tacos with his wife in Downtown Riverside. The name Tio’s Tacos came from a childhood, when Sanchez was the leader of his group of friends. They called him *tio*, or uncle, out of respect. Sanchez liked the sound of it and christened his new restaurant Tio’s Tacos. While running his taco business, he saw hundreds of taco shops with good food, but he noticed that very few of them used their restaurant space in a particularly creative or engaging way. He saw all the waste that went on around him, broken bottles, old shoes, pieces of plastic and metal, and saw an opportunity to create something beautiful. In his childhood, nothing ever went to waste. Sanchez saw a chance to reuse the old trash that people were throwing away and give it new life in the form of colorful, lively pieces of recycled trash-art.

“The materials that are used are soda bottles and beer cans, the oyster shells and cow bones. Everything that comes in a bottle or a sack is never discarded, but rather recycled...My shoes, when they’re old, I give them to one of my characters.”

Sanchez says his impetus to create is a desire to recapture the childhood he never had. “My wife and I began working in the kitchen. And when I had everything under control, I asked myself, ‘Now what?’ I had money, I had power, I had everything, but I wasn’t happy. So I rewound my tape and I realized that I never had an infancy. I never played, never had toys. So why don’t I have them now? And that’s how I began to create. The stress that I had inside, I took it out on this place.” Sanchez has been at Tio’s Tacos for 22 years and is constantly adding new pieces of art.

“I didn’t know what I was doing at first by collecting the toys, but now after 22 years I now realize I was letting my inner child out.” His art is playful and full of the joy of a child. Sanchez never had any formal training as an artist or engineer but rather cites his talent as coming from both God and life experiences. ▶





Something that sets Tio's apart from other restaurants is how interactive the space is. There isn't just art hanging on walls, there's art interacting with every surface, things hanging off of trees, off of walls and off of roofs. There are entire small buildings for customers to enter, such as a chapel that he made for his wife out of glass bottles or a teepee that acts as the Tio's Tacos museum. You can walk through a small scale replica of a Mexican plaza or a secluded garden with a pond in the center filled with a mix of classic Greek statues and Sanchez's own Frankenstein creations. Nearly every piece of art is interacting with the environment which it inhabits, nothing is static.

One might be tempted to call Sanchez's work installation art, in which the audience is able to experience the art not just as a flat canvas on a wall, but in 3D space. But unlike the art at Tio's Tacos, a lot of installation art lacks the joy and authenticity of folk art like his. Nothing about his art feels pretentious, and you certainly don't need an art degree to understand it. Sanchez's art can be understood purely on the basis of fun. Sanchez's art is humble, childlike and joyful. It wants to do nothing but make people smile. Tio's is crawling with life and Sanchez creates spaces you can walk into, interact with and enjoy. His act of creation is also an act of sharing his life and experience with us, the viewer.

"This project is a portrait of my family, of our life," he says. "If you talk to any of my children or my wife they can tell you something about each toy or scrap used in these sculptures. Because they were born here, they used it and touched it."

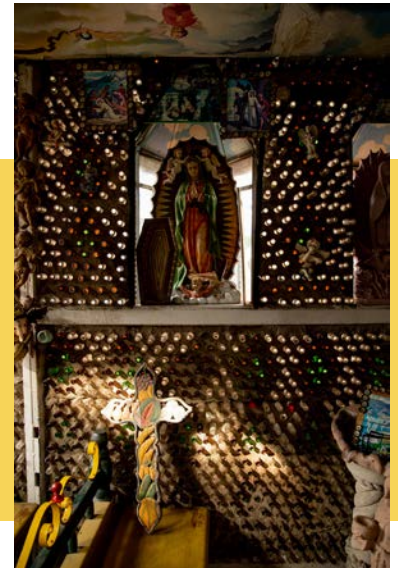
People from all over the world come to see Tio's tacos, but it is far from a tourist trap. It radiates authenticity, passion and honesty. A wall of metal signs welcomes taco fanatics and art enjoyers to Tio's Tacos in multiple different languages. Anyone is welcome to explore the grounds, paying customer or not. Riverside native Joy Moore, who has been coming to Tio's for about 10 years expressed her love for the restaurant.

"I always bring people here because it's so exciting and weird," Moore says. "They're so nice — the people, the servers are nice, everybody's nice here."

While Tio's Tacos might appear to be a tourist trap from the outside, its rich history points tells a different story. Tio's isn't just a quirky restaurant with art on the walls, eating at Tio's is an entire immersive experience.

Maybe that's what's so special about Sanchez's garden: It's a representation of himself and his country, and he's sharing it with people and allowing them to live within his art and interact with it. Sanchez's generosity is unparalleled. "Mi Casa es Su Casa" can feel like an empty promise in any other home, but it seems like a genuine invitation when it's coming from Sanchez. Tio's is Martin Sanchez's passion project and home, and he is inviting us, the customer, to share in his life and work over the last 22 years. ♦

Written, designed, and photographed by Elijah Martinez

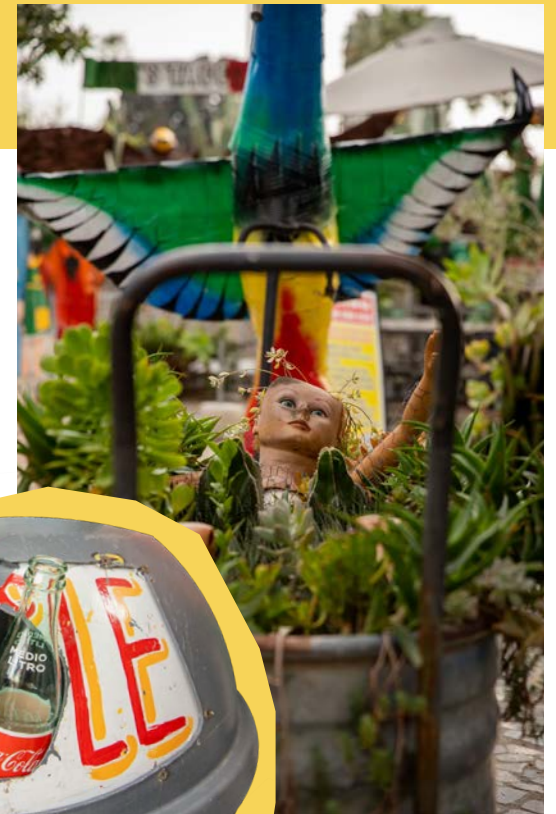


**This project is a portrait of my family, of our life. If you talk to any of my children or my wife they can tell you something about each toy or scrap used in these sculptures. Because they were born here, they used it and touched it.**

**- Martin Sanchez**  
(owner of Tio's Tacos)









THE MARVELOUS WORLD OF

# COSPLAYING





# COSPLAYERS AROUND CAMPUS SHARE THEIR STORIES

If you have dressed up for Halloween, you have cosplayed. Whether it was store-bought, or a homemade costume you made out of that old T-shirt lying in the corner of your closet, if you dressed up as one of your favorite fictional characters, you have cosplayed. Cosplaying is popular among all ages, but there is a large community of teens and adults who take the craft to a higher level.

Cosplay is a word used to define the act of dressing up in costume and makeup that represents characters from video games, anime, television, movies and books. Oftentimes, people also act like the character they are portraying while in costume whether it be on social media or in-person with others. This phenomenon gained popularity in the mid-1980s by the founder of Studio Hard, Nobuyuki Takahashi. He and a few others showed up in costumes at the 1984 World Science Fiction Convention (WorldCon) in Los Angeles, California, and from then on, cosplaying grew into what it is today.

Themed conventions similar to WorldCon such as Anime Expo, D23 Expo and Comic Con are now centered largely around cosplaying. Attendees will show up to these conventions with multiple cosplays and change throughout the day. Cosplay competitions also give people the chance to show off their cosplay creations and get judged by a panel of judges. Awards for competitions like this can range from simple recognition to prize money of as much as \$200. Those who choose not to participate in competitions also have the option of walking around the convention centers to meet and interact with others or even take photos of or with other cosplayers.

Gavin A. Duran, a senior comedic arts and theatre double major, attended his first convention in 2016 at Stan Lee's Comikaze. Now, it is known as LA Comic Con, an annual convention that is hosted at the Los Angeles Convention Center in Downtown.

He explains, "I grew up a comic book fan, so I always saw the heroes and the characters just in comics. I thought they had such cool outfits, cool personas... it would be awesome to try to bring that to life."

At his first convention, Duran dressed up as Batman while his friend dressed up as Joker. After that, he was hooked on cosplaying. Since then, he has attended LA Comic Con three more times including the most recent one in December of 2021. There he dressed up as Spiderman but with his own take on the costume. Instead of the classic red and blue look, Duran's Spiderman is dark blue. He explains that he was inspired by a cosplayer he follows on Instagram who did their own version of Spiderman as well. In fact, this style of changing a character's look is popular in the cosplay community.

Alternate versions of popular characters allow cosplayers to dive deep into their creativity and bring out a unique version of their character. Some cosplayers will even create a gender-swapped version of their favorite characters. From zombified Snow White to Santa Clause wearing the Infinity Gauntlet or a female version of the Joker, the possibilities are endless when it comes to

alternative style cosplays. With the Marvel Cinematic Universe's (MCU) recent dive into the multiverse, alternate Marvel character cosplays are gaining popularity within the community.

Eden Sides, a junior theatre major, has created her own alternate version of the MCU's Winter Soldier, otherwise known as Bucky Barnes. Hers is a female Winter Soldier who is depicted with long, braided brown hair and black lipstick, but the rest of the costume is about the same with his iconic metal arm and all-black attire. "She is very dystopian, kind of like a character from a video game," Sides says.

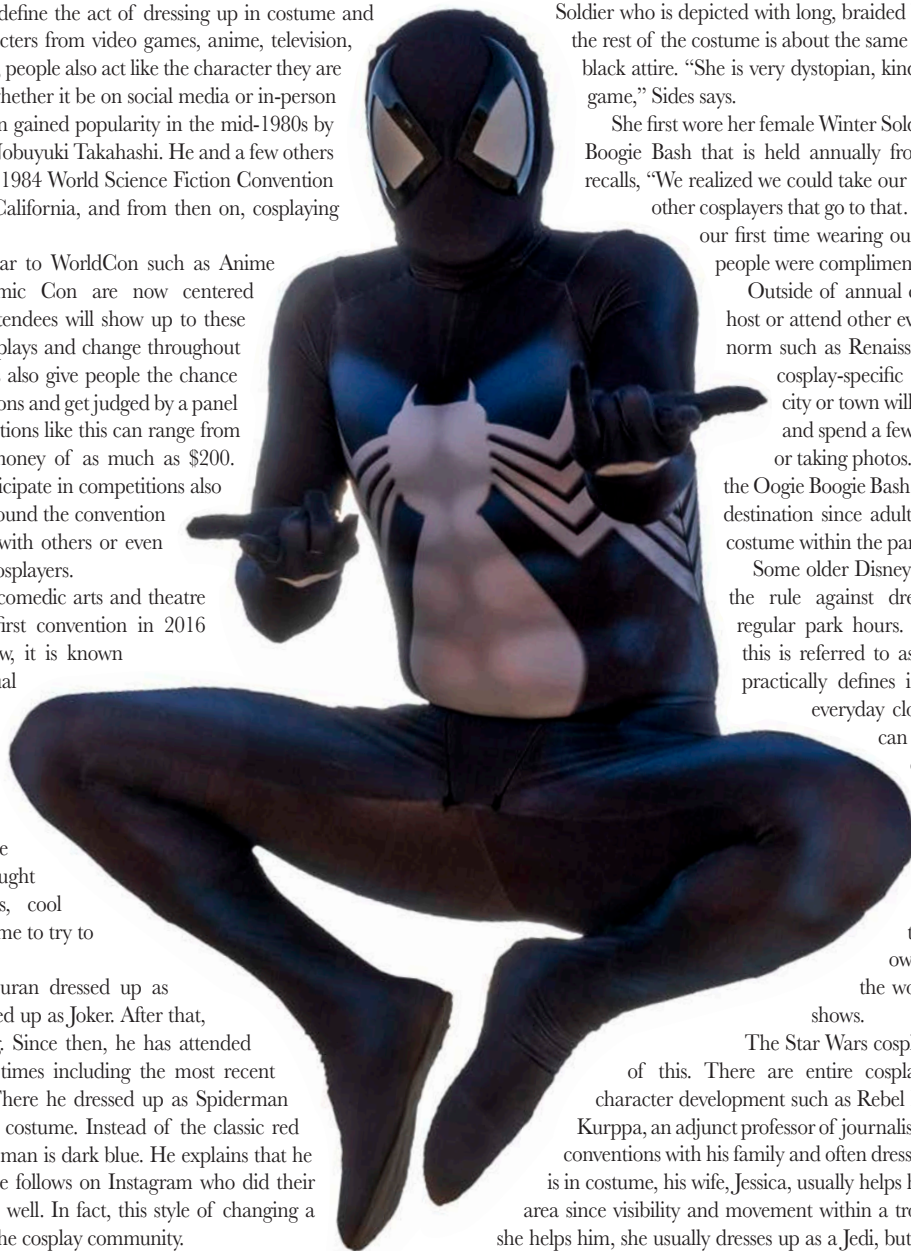
She first wore her female Winter Soldier cosplay to Disneyland's Oogie Boogie Bash that is held annually from September to October. Sides recalls, "We realized we could take our cosplays to that because there are other cosplayers that go to that... that was really fun, and that was our first time wearing our costumes out in public. Lots of people were complimenting us!"

Outside of annual conventions, many cosplayers will host or attend other events where dressing up is also the norm such as Renaissance Faires, Halloween events or cosplay-specific meets where people in the same city or town will gather at one location in costume and spend a few hours getting to know each other or taking photos. For those in Southern California, the Oogie Boogie Bash at Disneyland is a popular cosplay destination since adults are not allowed to dress in full costume within the park during regular hours.

Some older Disney fans do find a way to get around the rule against dressing up at characters during regular park hours. One way that many people do this is referred to as "Closet Cosplaying." The term practically defines itself in which a cosplayer pulls everyday clothing from their closet that they can piece together to represent a character they want to dress up as. A red T-shirt and yellow pants can represent Winnie the Pooh or a vest over a white button down and jeans can represent Han Solo. There are even those dedicated to making their own original characters based on the worlds within movies and television shows.

The Star Wars cosplay community is a good example of this. There are entire cosplay groups dedicated to original character development such as Rebel Legion and Mando Mercs. James Kurppa, an adjunct professor of journalism and new media at CBU, attends conventions with his family and often dresses up as a Stormtrooper. When he is in costume, his wife, Jessica, usually helps him maneuver his way around the area since visibility and movement within a trooper costume are limited. While she helps him, she usually dresses up as a Jedi, but currently Kurppa says that she is working on her own character based on the Mandalorians from the Star Wars galaxy.

Many original character cosplayers will create a backstory for their characters that may or may not intertwine with the main characters of the series they are inspired by. These characters will also have a lot of accessories and their own personalities that help



**Above:** Gavin A Duran, senior comedy arts and theatre major, dressed as an alternative version of Marvel's Spiderman.

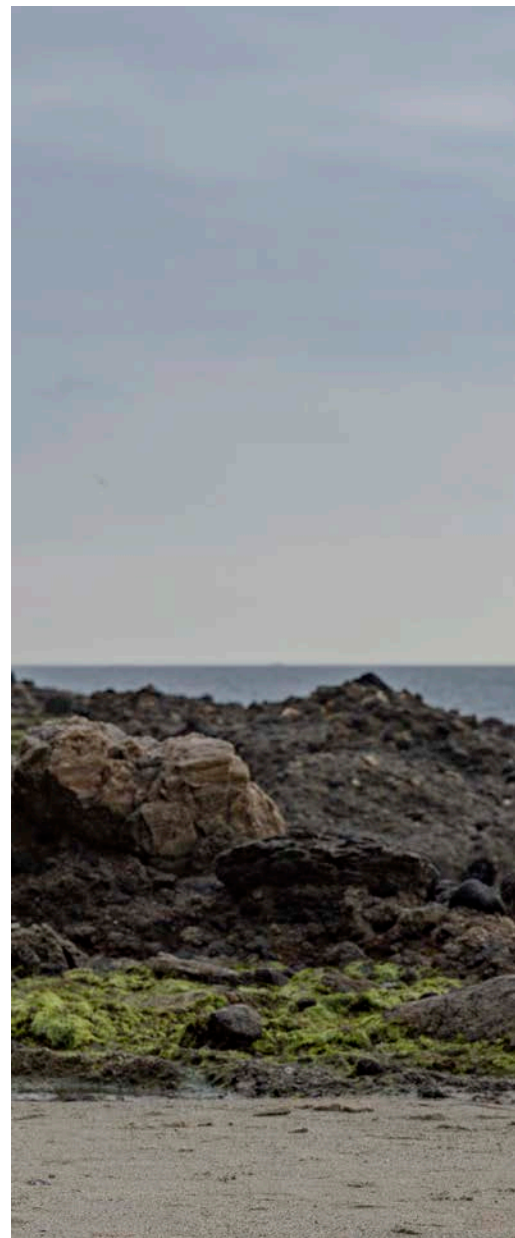
**Left:** Duran dressed as Marvel's Captain America.

Written by Camille Grchowski  
Designed by Camille Grochowski

Photographed by Camille Grochowski and Elijah Hickman

“TO HAVE SOMETHING LIKE [COSPLAYING] BRING JOY TO PEOPLE DURING THOSE HARD TIMES IS REALLY AWESOME.

- Sam Mudry  
(freshman mechanical engineering major)



**Above:** Ashley Fisher, sophomore theatre major, dressed as her original Star Wars character, Soly Pavan.  
**Left:** Sam Mudry, freshman mechanical engineering major, dressed as Hunter from Bad Batch.





them fit into the fictional universe. The opportunities for character design are endless, especially with the wide variety of species.

Ashely Fisher, a sophomore theatre major, created her own original Star Wars character named Soly Pavan; a half human, half Togruta—if you know Ahsoka Tano who is originally from Star Wars: The Clone Wars, she is a Togruta. Fisher even created a short series on her TikTok, @fishen.chips, about Pavan where she talks about her backstory.

A portion of her followers on TikTok followed her for that original character content, “Right after The Rise of Skywalker came out in the spring of 2020... there were so many Star Wars cosplayers at that time... I was one of the many... and quite a few people followed me for [Soly Pavan], and they continued to follow me after that.” Though Fisher has not officially talked about bringing Pavan back to her TikTok account, her followers are still sticking around for her other cosplays such as Milo from Atlantis: The Lost Empire, Giulia from Luca and her own alternate version of Ariel from

The Little Mermaid.

Despite the large portion of the cosplay community that dedicates time to creating their own characters or alternate versions of known favorites, there are also those who dedicate their time creating cosplays that are as accurate to a specific character as possible. There are certain groups that are focused solely on screen accurate costumes, and some of those groups have even been selected to be a part of the actual movies and television shows as a result of their accurate character costumes.

The 501st Legion is one example of a cosplay group that has provided its members with the opportunity to play extras on Star War for recent shows such as The Mandalorian and The Book of Boba Fett. A majority of the storm troopers within those television shows and even a handful within the most recent movies are members of the 501st. Information about their events and how to join the legion can be found on their website: [mandalorianmercs.org](http://mandalorianmercs.org).

Sam Mudry, a freshman mechanical engineering major, was inspired for his first cosplay, Hunter from Bad

Batch, by the 501st. However, as he learned more about the group, his original intentions for cosplaying changed, “These are professional [cosplayers] who love Star Wars like me, and originally I thought that’s what I want to be just so I can costume. But as I looked further into it I realized why I truly want to join the 501st, and that’s because of the work that they do.”

Not only does the 501st Legion attend conventions and parades or participate as extras on sets, but they also host charity events to raise money and visit hospitals to help bring joy to children and their families isolated inside. That is what Mudry strives for when it comes to cosplaying. “I love bringing joy to other people through my cosplays. My mom was an ICU nurse for a very long time; I’ve seen how hard it can be on people to be in a hospital room. To have something like [cosplaying] bring joy to people during those hard times is really awesome,” Mudry says.

In order to join the top ranks of the 501st Legion, however, members must have screen accurate costumes in order to maintain that Star Wars in real life feeling. ➤





Some will buy a full trooper suit online. A decent suit can cost around \$300. A more screen accurate suit can run into the thousands. Others, like Mudry, will build their own from a wide range of different materials. This is usually the cheapest option, but the most time consuming. Mudry has built three of his own cosplays; a Stormtrooper out of cardboard and paper, Hunter's suit from a 3D printer and Boba Fett's suit out of a mix of 3D printed parts and metal sheets.

"[3D] printing can still take a long time." Mudry explains, "My Boba Fett helmet, to print all the parts for that probably took around 50 to 60 hours." However, those long hours of printing still left room for him to work on other things such as schoolwork or attending class since the 3D printer will run on its own. When Mudry needs to connect the pieces and paint, on the other hand, that is where most of his time is dedicated solely to that. When he painted Hunter's suit, it took him two weeks.

Not all characters have complex outfits—especially those outside of the Star Wars universe—and therefore building a costume for them does not take as much time or money. For example, Fisher's cosplay of Giulia from Luca is a beanie, striped T-shirt and jeans. Most people already have those items in their closet. The only thing that most people might not have is a curly red wig or naturally curly red hair. Characters from movies or television shows that wear more realistic clothing—especially compared to Sci-Fi and Fantasy characters with more complex outfits—provide an easy way for new cosplayers to join the community.

Cosplay is not as intimidating as some people make it out to be. The best way to get into the craft is by simply trying. There are thousands of characters to choose from, and not all of them have costumes as complicated as they may appear. If starting a cosplaying hobby complicated is the way to go, Mudry is a good example of someone who took a dive into building a detailed costume on his own. However, Duran, Sides and Fisher bought their first few costumes online. Some beginning advice from Sides: "Just start. Put something together that inspires you and makes you want to look like a character whether it's accurate or not. And if it doesn't look the best first time that's okay. Lots of cosplayers are constantly updating their costumes."

There are also plenty of popular cosplayers that post their costume processes on social media. Duran explains, "It's really helpful to look at other cosplayers because they've already gone through stuff. They have so many tips...and it's so helpful to look up to those cosplayers...it's really encouraging and it's very helpful, so I would say it's very good to be following the community for those reasons."

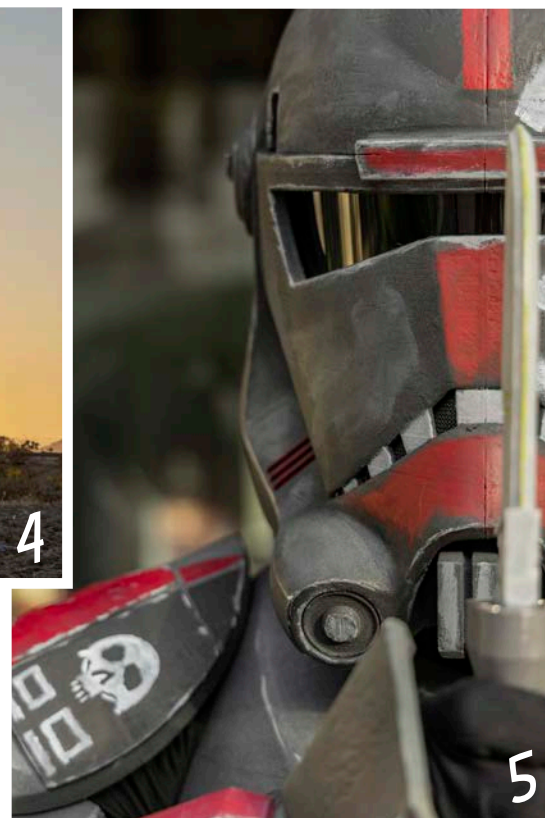
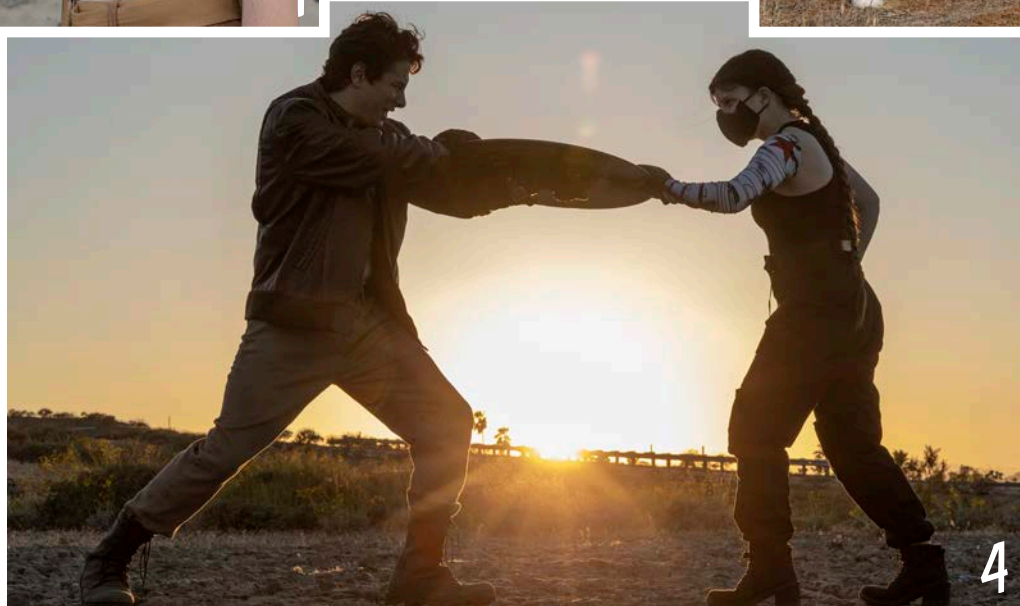
Social media is a great way for cosplayers around the world to connect with each other. Especially during the Covid-19 lockdown, apps such as Instagram and TikTok gave users the opportunity to continue cosplaying and interacting with each other without the need to meet in person at an event or convention. Mudry is constantly posting shoutouts on his Instagram stories to others in community to show his support, Fisher has friends that she has connected with through her cosplaying account on TikTok and Sides has gotten a chance to meet some of her cosplay idols in person by following them on social media and reaching out to them when she attended Oogie Boogie Bash.

In Sides's opinion, one of the best things about the cosplay community is the chance to be around people who share the same interests and are willing to nerd out together. For Duran, a favorite memory of his at the most recent Comic Con convention was when he and four other Spiderman cosplayers danced together in the middle of the convention floor. He looks back on that moment and says, "It's a very fun memory because it was just all of us having a great time and nobody's judging. Nobody's there to put down your creativity. Everybody's there for the same reason. Everybody's there to create."

Cosplaying offers those in the community a wide range of different opportunities. From attending conventions, participating in competitions or even possibly playing an extra in a movie, in the end, the craft is simply a creative outlet that brings people together. Duran summarizes the craft well by saying, "[Cosplaying] is a love letter to comics and to fandoms." ♦

**Left:** Eden Sides, junior theatre major, dressed as an alternate version of the MCU's Winter Soldier.



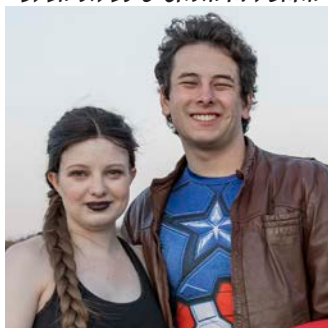


- 1: Fisher dressed as her original Star Wars character, Soly Pavan.
- 2: Fisher dressed as Giulia from Luca.
- 3: Sides dressed as Yelena Belova from the MCU.
- 4: Duran and Sides reacting a fight scene between Captain America and the Winter Soldier from the MCU.
- 5: Mudry dressed as Hunter from Bad Batch.

ASHLEY FISHER



EDEN SIDES & GAVIN A. DURAN



SAM MUDRY







### HARLEM LINE DEPARTURES

STINATION

WHITE PLAINS  
OUTHEAST  
N. WHITE PLAINS  
SOUTHEAST  
N. WHITE PLAINS  
SOUTHEAST

REMARKS

MELROSE - 1ST STOP  
WHITE PLAINS - 1ST STOP  
MELROSE - 1ST STOP  
CONNECTION TO WASSIC  
MELROSE - 1ST STOP  
SCARSDALE - 1ST STOP

3:55  
4:10  
4:16  
4:22  
4:29

SOUTHEAST  
N. WHITE PLAINS  
N. WHITE PLAINS  
SOUTHEAST  
CRESTWOOD  
WHITE PLAINS - 1ST STOP

You go?





# URBAN GARDENING

City apartments, cramped spaces – these living environments can quickly feel dull and lifeless. Despite endless decoration and thoughtful interior design, there's often one missing element: plants.

Urban gardening has not only become the solution to brightening a drab space but is an increasingly popular pastime boasting many psychological and physical health benefits. Multiple studies (do we need to name a study?) have shown the positive effects of a plant-rich environment: mood improvement, fatigue reduction, lowered anxiety and stress, increased pain tolerance and healing and improvement of air quality.

Along with these benefits, urban gardening offers endless creative opportunities. Whether one wants a full herb and vegetable garden or only a few houseplants, this hobby provides creative freedom not only to grow a new skill, but to enliven a space.

There are multiple factors to consider as an urban gardening novice: what plants to pick, optimal location for plant growth and more.



# URBAN gardening



Written by Zerenity Lopez  
Photographed by Kia Harlan & Charissa Graves  
Designed by Kia Harlan



## Pothos:

- water every 1-2 weeks or when top 50% of soil is dry
- likes 50-70% humidity
- likes bright indirect sunlight



Grace Helman, junior nursing major, waters her plants.



## Angel Wing Begonia

- water daily or twice a week during the summer or when top inch of soil is dry
- likes 50% humidity
- likes bright indirect sunlight year-round and will flower unless put in partial shade

## Factors to consider

There are multiple factors to consider as an urban gardening novice: what plants to pick, optimal location for plant growth and more. For successful urban gardening, it's essential to consider the plants' needs and if they can be met: sunlight, water, soil, and ample space to flourish. It's commonly assumed that plants cannot thrive in a small, urban environment, but with the right amount of knowledge and effort a space can easily transform into an urban jungle.

## Prayer plant:

- water every 3-5 days or when top 25% of soil is dry
- likes 60% humidity
- likes moderate indirect sunlight or full shade



## Water

Most of these plants will start their journey in pots and smaller containers, and it's crucial not to overwater them.

- The best approach to monitor plants' hydration is to check if the top of the soil is still moist. If not, that usually means plants are thirsty.
- As far as watering methods, whatever is convenient works well. When watering from above, however, it is essential to soak the soil through to the bottom. Contrary to popular belief, the holes at the bottom of pots and plant containers are not useless, as thoroughly saturated soil will expel unused water through those openings.
- Another method of watering plants is bottom-watering. Placing plants in a shallow bowl of water allows them to soak the needed amount of nutrients and avoids over-watering.



## Fiddle Leaf Fig:

- water once a week or every 10 days
- 3-5 days or when top 250-75% of soil is dry
- likes 30-65% humidity
- likes lots of bright indirect sunlight



## Sunlight

Prioritizing a sunlit location is essential for plants to thrive. A living space's location and lighting will determine how much sunlight plants can effectively absorb. The average amount of light that a flowering plant needs is six to eight hours a day (do we need any sort of credit source for this info?). Balconies and windowsills are a perfect place to keep these plants during the day, while less sun-dependent plants like salad greens and herbs do well in locations with partial sunlight.

## Soil

A plant's soil is responsible for receiving water, oxygen, and other nutrients. Typically, the best soil for urban gardening is well-draining potting soil. Other types of soil can often become too compact in pots, limiting the plant's amount of oxygen and ability for water to flow through easily. Quality soil also prevents any bacteria or disease that may harm plants or affect the space's air quality.

## Urban Gardening Pro-tips

Associate Professor of Environmental Science, Dr. Jacob Lanphere, shares his opinion on the most critical factor to consider when beginning an urban garden.

Lanphere says, "one of the most important factors is the plant that you're going to choose to grow." He also says that location is an essential factor.

As far as the impact that urban gardening has on college students, Lanphere says gardening allows them to appreciate God's handiwork in front of them, and believes that plants act as a source of therapy, helping to reduce stress level.

California Baptist University student, Esther Ana Logan, freshman worship arts and ministry and psychology double major, gives a new meaning to urban gardening with the miniature jungle she's created in her dorm room. Logan says plants have brought joy to her life and impacted her positively.

"She says that plants have taught her to recognize when something is going wrong. Plants signal problems by showing they have an infection in their leaves, requiring rotten leaves to be cut off so that they can regrow healthier.

Logan applies that philosophy to her life as well. "Whenever there starts to be areas of unhealth in your own life, you kind of have to take a step back," Logan says. "And it might take away from the fullness for a little bit, but in the end, it's going to be a lot healthier."

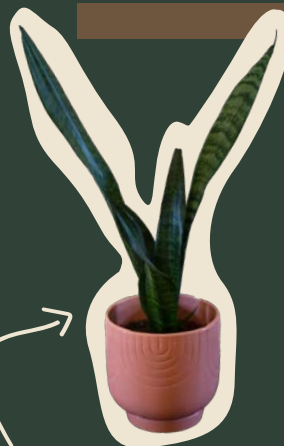
When you're feeling either like you're struggling to grow or you're feeling like you're stunted in your growth, there's something really sweet and simple about getting to watch a small plant grow.

- Esther Ana Logan

(freshman worship arts and ministry and psychology double major)

## Customize Your Urban Garden

Urban gardening is all about bringing life to unexpected places and expanding creativity through plants. After choosing plants for the urban garden, have fun mixing and matching new pots to brighten up the living space. Whether it's buying ceramic pots, DIY-ing terracotta pieces or repurposing household items, plant pots are an added design layer that can help revitalize any space. Repurposing old containers like coffee tins, soup cans and old dishes is not only beneficial for the environment, but is a fun spin to add personality in urban gardening.



**Snake plant:**

- water every 2-3 days or when first inch of soil feels dry and avoid excessive watering in winter
- likes 40% humidity
- likes lots of bright indirect sunlight but can grow in lowlight (however will grow more slowly)



Esther Ana Logan, freshman worship arts and ministry and psychology double major, sits among her numerous plants.





# Colony House

Kia Harlan

---

these 4 walls  
the dusty couch on the porch  
visited, “haunted” they say,  
but *never* lived in.

my dusty shelves stacked with unopened books  
people walk through the recesses of my mind  
walls full of framed memories and broken parts -  
a room of requirements  
people leave their treasures here, and I am the collector  
your secrets are my pills, addicted to a drug -  
living off your memories

but at the end of the day, they always leave  
their footprints leave marks on my heart  
fingerprints leaving evidence on the crime scene of my life  
my body missing in action  
I am still here...  
Why can't anybody see me, and stay?  
I'm just an old house, weary walls, sunken roof, swollen eyes  
shut.

# Creating a Small Business in the Midst of a Pandemic

## The Story of Alyse Yvonne Sticker Co.

It all started with the COVID pandemic. These “unprecedented times” (a phrase I’m sure we’re all tired of hearing), changed college for all of us as fear, confusion and uncertainty shut down California Baptist University (CBU) and sent us home for the spring semester of 2020.

Since then, I’ve been completing my degree online.

This is not the traditional way to complete my degree, and I never thought I would do online school. However, as online school progressed and classes meeting through a screen became a norm, it made more sense for me to stay in my home state, Washington, and save money.

Hard decisions come from hard times, but staying home was not as bad as I thought it might be. I got to branch out, try new things, be closer to my family and friends and start a small business. Alyse Yvonne Sticker Co. was started in May 2020, and it feels more like a fun hobby than a job.

I design stickers, T-shirts, prints, journals, pins and more using ProCreate on my iPad. I started designing in CBU’s own Lancer Arms where I worked as a resident adviser and was placed in charge of managing the housing area’s social media page. Basically, I designed graphics for the account. These jobs pushed my designing and business abilities, and helped me discover a new love for graphic design. After I lost all my campus jobs because of the shutdown, I turned to design as a way to make money.

Since then, I’ve been designing practically nonstop. My Etsy shop is full of various designs inspired by Disney, Marvel, the Office, inspirational quotes, florals and more, providing the business with something for almost anyone. A few stores in my hometown carry my products, and I often sell them at vendor markets and fairs.

A question I hear all the time: Why did I start my small business?

I start by explaining the meaning behind the name. Yvonne is my middle name, but was also the name of my two grandmothers. Family is a big deal to me, and a significant motivation in everything I do in my life. Since I lost my grandfather at age 12, my outlook on life changed drastically. Not only did my faith become my own, but I started to realize how precious life and family truly is. When I was 17, I lost my uncle to a case of bacterial meningitis. Daily, I find myself thinking about my late grandparents and those far away, wondering if they would be proud of how I am living my life today.

Currently, only the grandparents on my mother’s side are alive, and although they live in Chicago, I am very grateful for our close bonds. My grandmother is now living in a care home after she had a stroke, but is still able to understand our communication, although speaking the thoughts in her mind is still a struggle for her. I am so grateful that her personality and flair is still the same that I remember as a child.

The name “Yvonne” is more than a name to me.

It connects me to my family I wish I had more time with. It reminds me of my family and why I want to succeed, to be kind, and to even do the right thing: to make them proud and help their names be remembered, as well.

So as my business bears the great name I also get the pleasure of being called, it also perfectly describes my main mission of my business: to bring people together, encourage others and be a light as my grandparents and family are to me.

Another reason I started my businesses is not as touching, but simply is my passion for photography and designing.

As I also have a photography business, these small businesses I started are more than work for me. Work can be seen as something boring, tiring and frustrating. Although running a business on my own can be these things sometimes, there is so much more good than bad that comes from it.

Running my own business means I get to meet new people, create inspiring things and find ways to bring joy to them. New people asking for custom stickers or customers at farmers markets are the connections I love making, and that makes all this hard work worth it.

Running a business is hard, especially on my own. Managing marketing, designing, scheduling, editing photos, shipping, customer service, social media, accounting and more can be extremely hard, but I love every part of it.

I love accomplishing things and being in charge of my own thing. Even more so, I love creating things that people can be inspired by or gain hope from. Creations that can encourage others or help them express themselves.

That is why I do what I do. The COVID-19 pandemic might have changed my college experience in ways I never saw coming, but it brought out a new side of me that was not afraid to do something that was 100 percent my own.

You can find me on Instagram, Etsy, TikTok and Facebook @alyseyvonnestickerco. Alyse is a section editor for *Pursuit* magazine.

@alyseyvonnestickerco

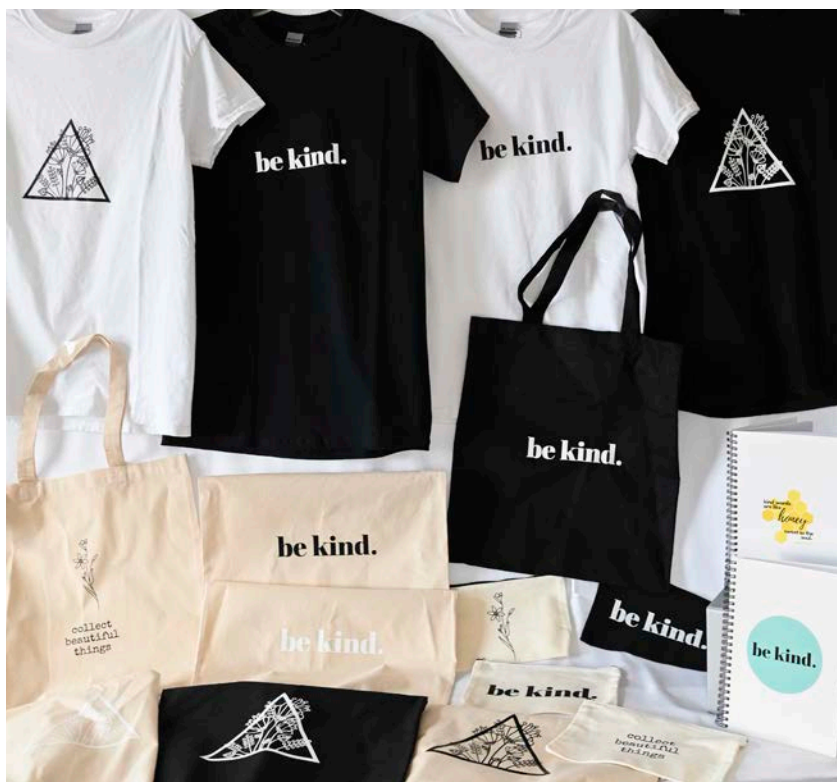


Alyse Messmer



Written by Alyse Messmer  
Photographed by Alyse Messmer  
Designed by Camille Grochowski

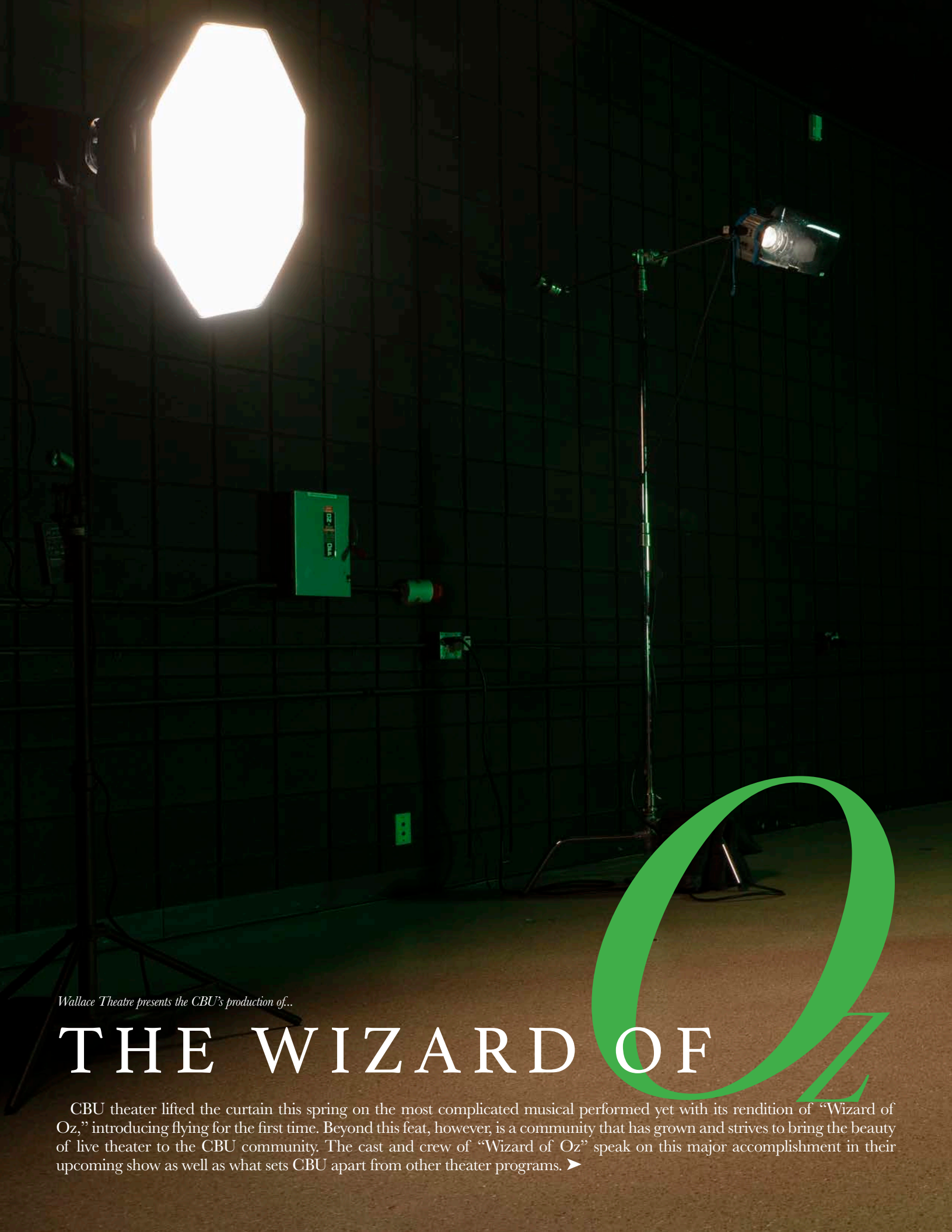




All Photos: Alyse Yvonne Sticker Co. offers a wide range of themed stickers, bags, notebooks and T-shirts.







*Wallace Theatre presents the CBU's production of...*

# THE WIZARD OF

CBU theater lifted the curtain this spring on the most complicated musical performed yet with its rendition of "Wizard of Oz," introducing flying for the first time. Beyond this feat, however, is a community that has grown and strives to bring the beauty of live theater to the CBU community. The cast and crew of "Wizard of Oz" speak on this major accomplishment in their upcoming show as well as what sets CBU apart from other theater programs. ►





*Above: The main cast of CBU theater's production of The Wizard of Oz.*





**S**ofia Oliveri is grateful for the opportunity to fly for this production. Not only is it an empowering feeling for her, but also an experience that can open up opportunities in the future. For her, the aspect of faith integration is what sets CBU apart from other university theater programs.

“The way that the CBU theatre program excels is its desire to make faith-integrated artists,” she says.

While there are similar programs at other schools that could teach about theater, Oliveri says that it is the lessons on identity and worldview within this topic that make CBU special.

The CBU theater program teaches its students how to integrate art in their faith, what it looks like to be in the industry and make art that asks questions without compromising their beliefs and how God desires them to use their gifts.

Seeing CBU theater implement these new techniques and how soon-to-be retiring faculty and staff have encouraged this atmosphere within the theater community, Oliveri looks to the future of CBU theatre as a new era. However, she sees this faith integration as the vision that will stick even after they leave.

In terms of how “Wizard of Oz” will change the future of CBU theatre, Oliveri looks at this show as stretching the limits of what they are capable of. Looking at the small building they are working with she says, “We’ve always overcompensated by a million.”

Oliveri says “Wizard of Oz” has shown them that they do not need to hold back. For the future of CBU theatre, she says,

“If we can hold on to that legacy of inspiring people and making productions that bring light and beauty to the world, I think that’d be awesome.”

**Above:** Sophia Oliveri, senior theater major, flies above stage as the Wicked Witch.





**Above:** Ashley Essex, senior theater major, fixes her crown before stepping on stage.  
**Left:** Essex flashes hand-horns at the camera as she rises above stage.

**F**or Ashley Essex, bringing in the element of flying has been fun. Cast as Glinda, she is the only one flying in a bubble and has been a major part of the process of implementing this new factor in the production. Essex describes it as the biggest production she's been in so far, and the most technically advanced show done at CBU.

"Adding this new technical element is raising the bar and now we're going to be expected to do bigger and better things."

With a small theatre to put on this huge production, Ashley hopes for a bigger space in the future for the growing department.

"If they want us to do bigger and better things, we need a bigger and better theater."

For Essex, the theater program has given her another home and family. She describes the community as one that cares for each other and is close, which is not always found in theatre communities.

“The way that the CBU theatre program excels is its desire to make faith-integrated artists.

(senior theater student, “Wicked Witch” and assistant director)





Above: (Left to right) Joel Fisher, Gavin A. Duran, Justin Magana, Jolene Automo and Alec Abrahams during a dress rehearsal.



Above: (Left to right) Duran, Automo, Abrahams and Fisher during a dress rehearsal.

Alec Abrahams, playing the tin man, was excited to hear that flying was becoming a part of the show.

“Then I realized I am the tin man and that it doesn’t make sense for my character to fly,” he says.

Abrahams began brainstorming ideas of how his character could fly, eventually finding a place to put it in the musical.

After what Abrahams called the biggest, most technically advanced show done here at CBU, he sees the future of CBU theater as a chance to one-up themselves with each new performance.

“I think that we will be definitely taking on more advanced, ‘out there’ productions.”

When thinking about CBU theater, Abrahams spoke to what he believes makes the program special.

“I think as someone who is participating in CBU theater the most special aspect is the community.”

Abrahams points out the chemistry found within the cast and crew of CBU productions, and the lack of rivalry typically found in theater departments. The mutual respect and inclusion present in this community is what sets it apart from other theater programs.

In addition to the community is the faith incorporation that is prevalent in the CBU theater community. Before practice, the group gathers for their weekly Tuesday community nights. This time of worship leads straight into rehearsals, and Abrahams find this time refreshing and uplifting before jumping into rehearsals.





Stacey Willis was given the difficult task of directing “Wizard of Oz” this semester, kicking off her directing career here at CBU. Coming from a background in children’s theatre, Willis came into her role thinking the simpler the production the better. However, Dan Robinson, the technical director, desired to implement flying into the production as a sort of last hurrah since this will be his last show here at CBU. With the implementation of flying, however, she sees the potential for the number of shows that could be brought to the Wallace Theatre in the future as well as the other benefits of accomplishing such a feat.

“There’s a plethora of shows that they could bring in that incorporate flying,” she says. “And it’s an incredible experience for the actors that they can then take with them, out on their resume that they’ve experienced this.”

For Willis, the CBU theater is a place of going big as well as finding community. She spoke on the technical elements that the department incorporates.

“To me, it’s almost like they are going for a Broadway caliber with collegiate students. I think that’s what makes the actors rise to the occasion, and I think that’s what really brings the audience in, too. They can see real quality theater in Riverside.”

The CBU theater strives to bring quality live productions to the CBU community and to Riverside, and by following the lead of Dan Robinson this semester, we may see the doors open to even more complicated shows in the future.

Shannon McMillan echoed what her castmates said about what she believes makes CBU theater special. The community within this program is very different from others, even at CBU, with an even greater connection between students and teachers. In addition to this aspect within the theater community is the focus on faith that sets CBU apart from other schools. McMillan described the weekly community time at the theater when the

# 6 Theater is our act of worship and God has given us these talents to glorify Him and so we want to give that back to Him

- Shannon McMillan  
(senior production design major, prop designer)

group gathers in worship in an act of tithing part of their rehearsal time to God.

“Theater is our act of worship and God has given us these talents to glorify him and so we want to give that back to him,” McMillan says.

Behind the scenes of “Wizard of Oz,” McMillan is a champion of the theatre program and is excited to see where it leads in the future. She encourages students to go see the plays and musicals put on at the Wallace Theater.

“Look out. I’m pretty sure we’re going to top “Beauty and the Beast” with “Wizard of Oz.” And I’m sure we’re just going to keep doing that. I have no doubt that this department is just going to keep going with bigger shows.” ♦

Written by Claire Grimes  
Designed by Caleb Chong  
Illustrated Photographs by Caleb Chong  
Rehearsal Photographs by Camille Grochowski

Below: Madilyn Fleming, freshman theare major, waits in the stage wings for her cue.









We have **Dan Robinson** to thank for many years of being captivated by the beauty of the CBU theater. The closing night of “Wizard of Oz” marked the end of both the show’s run at the Wallace Theatre as well as Robinson’s time here at CBU. We have him to thank for the implementation of flying for CBU’s production of “Wizard of Oz” and for pushing CBU theater to strive to dream big despite the tiny stage Wallace offers. With this, we would like to honor and thank Dan Robinson for the hours he devoted for the sake of so many beautiful productions.



# Cast Portraits

Additional photos shot of the *Wizard of Oz* cast photoshoot for Pursuit Magazine. Here are some of the staff favorites.



Joel Fisher (Zeke/Cowardly Lion)



Alec Abrahams (Hickory/Tinman)



Gavin A. Duran (Hunk/Scarecrow)



Jolene Automo (Dorothy Gale) and  
Chris Colmer (Professor Marvel/Wizard)





*Ashely Essex (Aunt Em/Glinda)*



*Sophia Oliveri (Almira Gluch/Wicked Witch)*











Both: (Left to right) Joel Fisher, Alec Abrahams, Jolene Automo and Gavin A. Duran pose for main cast photos.







# No Place Like Home

*one student's journey back to the stage*

**Below:** Jolene Automo, senior theater major, sings "Somewhere over the Rainbow" during a rehearsal.



As CBU set the stage for its productions this year, the excitement increased with the return of theater with audiences after its pandemic hiatus. Senior theater major Jolene Automo welcomed theatergoers back alongside her fellow castmates with "Silent Sky" in fall 2021, CBU's first production at Wallace Theater since spring of the previous year. After such a long break, Automo was nervous to step back on stage in front of a live audience. However, theater at CBU returned with sold-out shows throughout the fall 2021 semester.

Continuing the return to theatre this spring semester, Automo is closing the school year as the leading lady in "Wizard of Oz," bringing to life the iconic character of Dorothy. For Automo, returning to the stage this spring semester means more than just returning from the impact of COVID. It is also a return to theater after an accident during the fall semester that resulted in an injury that limited movement.

In November, one month after closing Silent Sky, Automo was getting ready to celebrate her 21st birthday. On her way to Newport to meet with friends, she was involved in an accident that ended with her broken wrist. She remembers the event vividly and shares her experience of her recovery and return to the stage this semester.

On the freeway heading to Newport, the car Automo was in hit a van in front of them, unable to slow down quick enough in the traffic. The airbags deployed, and Automo's left wrist was struck, instantly breaking. Jolene instinctively grabbed her wrist and felt that damage as it began to bleed.

Automo had to turn the radio down as her friend phoned 911, answering a question many people have, and one that was circulating TikTok a few months back: does the radio keep playing when you're in an accident? Jolene's answer:

"Yeah, it does. It was literally blasting 'Kiss me More.'" ►

**I strive to feel known by the people around me. When I tell stories, they're extremely detailed because I want someone to understand the experience the way I did. Just like how I want to experience what other people did to the extent that they can describe it to me.**

**- Jolene Automo**  
(senior theater major)

As they waited in their car in the middle of the freeway, Automo's friend kept her calm and grounded until a tow truck came and helped them to the side of the road. Once the ambulance arrived, the EMTs unwrapped her wrist, audibly gasping at the sight of it.

Although she never saw her wrist, the reactions from the EMTs and the doctors at the hospital told her that it was the "gnarliest" they had ever seen.

Through rehab, Automo realized how hard the process would be. She says, "When my hand was in the cast, it was kind of like this hidden thing of, 'Oh yeah, I have a broken hand, but once the cast is off I'll be good.'" However, alongside the removal of the cast, eight weeks later, came the reality that rehabilitation had just begun.

"Once the cast came off and I like saw my hand and saw the scars, and it hurt to move I realized like oh shoot the journey to healing kind of just started."

Not only had her rehab truly just begun, but Automo also felt somewhat alone in this part of her journey. She had gone through this traumatic event with her other friends who were also in the car, but being the only one injured physically, no one else could walk with her or understand this part of her healing journey. To this day, Automo remains the only one dealing with physical repercussions of the accident.

Automo's first day of physical therapy was defeating and frustrating, and she was left scared at the prospect of losing mobility in her left hand.

"I could literally not move my wrist," she says.

She continued with physical therapy, though, and slowly gained mobility in her wrist.

Automo says she saw God through the whole situation.

"I was originally in 'Beauty and the Beast' before COVID, and then after COVID, they put me in 'Silent Sky,' and I'm very thankful. I could just see God's hands all over that. I did 'Silent Sky' and did the entire show, and once I was free, then the accident happened."

Not only did she see divine timing in the occurrence of the accident, but also experienced his comfort throughout her recovery.

"I strive to feel known by the people around me. When I tell stories, they're extremely detailed because I want someone to understand the experience the way I did. Just like how I want to experience what other people did to the extent that they can describe it to me."

As she struggled with feeling alone in her brokenness and rehabilitation, Automo remembered the one who could relate to her:

"Who does know this is God. God is the biggest empathizer, and all that was being out in my head was seeing Jesus on the cross."

Taking communion one day, she visualized seeing Jesus die on the cross and felt God's presence and understanding in her pain. The experience taught her not to seek others' validation and understanding in the same way she had and gave her a new perspective on seeing God's goodness in her circumstances.

"I am just so aware that God didn't do this to me. And so aware that satan warps reality."

"God allows these things to happen for greater reasons."

A few days after the accident, Automo was listening to a podcast from Bridgetown. She shares the words that encouraged her then.

"God who does not will evil wastes nothing to bring beauty to it. He will mock the enemy by making something beautiful out of it."

Automo felt changed by the experience, feeling her faith strengthened in seeing God through her experience and having this new perspective she can encourage others with.

The rehab process was not just a walk in the park, though. Even though Automo saw God's work in her circumstances and found that greater faith through it, she still had moments when she struggled. During the first few days back at home, Automo lay in bed, unable to do anything but feel miserable and defeated. However, in those moments of defeat, her faith held strong.

"I just had such a strong relationship with God leading up to this that even though in that moment of defeat I never put my anger towards God. I was just so aware that this feeling of pain was temporary, and I was just angry that I was in it even though I knew the feeling was going to pass."

During this time and amidst the days of frustration and pain contrasting with her revelations of faith, Automo was encouraged by friends around her. Opportunities that she was afraid she had lost due to the accident remained as the friends she was working with agreed to wait until she was ready, and others encouraged her to write songs.

"I can just take this moment to rest," Automo says.

Before the accident, Automo had rehearsals, shows, music videos, photoshoots and other projects planned. The accident changed these set plans into questions. However, she was encouraged to truly rest during this

time and trust God's timing in the opportunities.

The brief hiatus Automo was able to take resulted in her writing many songs she is now producing as she simultaneously looks to get back into the other projects put on pause during her recovery.

Today, Automo is preparing for her role as Dorothy in CBU's production of "Wizard of Oz." Encouraged by and working with the other cast members, managers and directors, Automo is able to play the role with slight modifications to dance numbers and movements in her leading role.

"That rest period was good because I'm in the 'go, go, go' season now, and I don't feel overworked or tired. I feel really excited and joyful to be able to just be back with my friends, back with two somewhat mobile hands."

The leading lady in "Wizard of Oz," Automo is closing both the 2021-2022 theater season as well as her time here at CBU with a classic character.

"I started my theatre major with the dream to pursue musical theatre. So it's really awesome to get to finish my senior year doing a musical and being the lead in the musical, and it's a show that everyone's heard of. Everyone's seen this movie, everyone knows who Dorothy is, which is also nerve-racking."

"Singing somewhere over the rainbow, the lines are just so weirdly relevant," Automo says.

Connecting with the last lines — "and the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true" — Automo sees her last show as capturing the essence of her past dreams as she looks to the future and strives for them.

Further identifying with her character, Automo's life also parallels that of Dorothy as she returns home from her adventures in Oz. As Dorothy bids her new dear friends goodbye, so does she.

"I just know I'm going to be balling through that last night," she says.

Automo sees this opportunity as a gift from God in being able to share this moment with the audience.

"There's something very beautiful about live theater. To be able to watch a piece of art breathing in front of you... to watch something telling a story that is moving."

Automo expresses the importance of the theatre and the connection between the audience and the actors, the act of both audience member and actor sharing the same air.

Part of her love for theatre is the community surrounding it. What others look at and see as weird and crazy, she loves. She spends copious amounts of time with her fellow cast members and gets to know them on a deeper level, eventually seeing them as friends and family.

Automo also sees the functioning of theater productions as a picture of heaven. With all of its moving parts, she sees them parallel of the theatre with the call for people in the church to different work.

"There's so many different moving parts, and we're coming together to create something that is greater than ourselves, and we can only do it with each other. I think that's a touch of heaven."

Automo continues to heal today. Although she has come far since the accident, regaining movement in her hand and even returning to a leading role in this semester's musical, she has not fully regained movement in her left wrist and continues physical therapy once a week. "I feel like I'm still in the middle of this journey," she says. "I'm not quite at the end yet." ♦

Written by Claire Grimes  
Designed by Caleb Chong







## DIRTY CASUAL'S GUIDE TO

## PRINT MAKING

SUPPORT A GOOD CAUSE:  
MY BANK ACCOUNTVENMO ME @ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~  
projected by LMG

## So, Printmaking.

The first words you think of when you hear printmaking probably aren't revolution, rebellion or punk. What you probably are thinking about some old man quietly whittling away a traditional scene into a wood block, as he refuses to succumb to the digital age. This stereotype isn't completely unwarranted, as printmaking has a long and traditional history. The rudimentary process of engraving images into the surfaces and then imprinting those images have been around for centuries. But it really wasn't until the 15th to the 16th century that this process was utilized to its greatest potential. Renaissance men like Albrecht Dürer used printmaking to create incredibly vivid images that would lay down the foundation for graphic arts. Because a single engraving can produce a plethora of prints, the general public had more accessibility to art. The printing press, a more innovative form of printmaking that emphasized on type, helped the proliferation of information, which would eventually lead to the increase in education and reading. The advent of the printing press would also lead to the Protestant Reformation, as more people would have access to Bibles. This act of carving an image into a block is responsible for bringing down corrupt institutions, the democratization of information and the creation of entirely new artforms.

Doesn't that sound **PUNK** to you?

I mean, think about it: Printmaking and punk ideals have always gone hand in hand. It's only because of printmaking that so many revolutionaries were able to spread their ideals; ultimately bringing down oppressive governments. Powerful print images like the Join, or Die helped spark a passion to bring down tyranny despite the insufferable odds. The connection to revolutions, along with the grungy hands-on aesthetic of printmaking could be seen as a predecessor to the anti-establishment sentiments of the loud and messy punk style. H\*\*\*, even Albrecht Dürer, the classic master of printmaking, had some pretty punk pieces like the Knight, Devil and Death.

In this sad excuse of a guide, we're going to take a quick glimpse as to how you can go about block printmaking. Because even in our incredibly digitized world, where you can generate an image or a poster in a matter of seconds, perhaps there is value in carving that image yourself. Perhaps there is something to shaping meaning into physical materials with your own hands. We are, after all, physical beings in a material world, and for that reason, we find more authenticity in the physical creation of things. Plus, you get to use a knife to constantly stab at a block. Talk about good stress relief.

So take out your own printmaking supplies and start your own small revolution. It's about time we had another one.



↑ **KNIGHT, DEATH, AND THE DEVIL (1513)**  
-Albrecht Dürer

## GROCERY LIST

Printing block – the material to stamp stuff with. Start with a linoleum block as those are easier to handle and carve. When you start to get better you can use harder materials like wood and even metal. My favorite printing block material is a potato.

Knife (chisel or gouger) – Usually has a v-shaped tip to better cut into the surface layer of the block. This is for carving out your image onto the printing block. A lot of the newer knives come with interchangeable tips for a variety of deeper or shallow cuts.

Ink – an ink pad is good for small stuff. But for our more intermediate printmakers, I suggest getting water-based printing ink for higher quality results. Usually in a tube.

Brayer – for applying the ink onto the printing block.

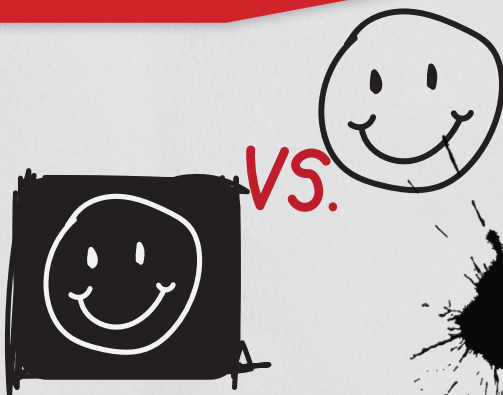
Spoon – not super essential, but good for pressing against the printing block in order to even apply the print onto a piece of paper.

Paper – something to stamp on. If you want to get all fancy, printmaking paper is nice and durable.



# 1. DRAW

The first step to fighting the tyranny – I mean, printmaking – is to decide what it is you want to print. This could range anywhere from a small star to an entire detailed landscape. You probably want to start with something simple, symbols like hearts, crosses or smiley faces. And even for more advanced prints, it's good to choose images that have distinct lines and shapes. Also note which parts of the image you want to be inked and what parts you want to be blank; because you are carving an image into the block, the raised surfaces will be inked and the carved out surfaces will just be negative space. When you've decided what image you want to use, you can either directly draw on the block, or draw that image onto a piece of tracing paper and then apply it onto the block.



# 2. CARVE

When you begin to carve, you generally want to start with the outline of the image or images you have on the block. After you've done the outline, you can then delve into the details inside or outside of the image. Generally you can save cutting the large negative spaces for the last, but if you feel the need to cut out the negative spaces in the middle of the carving process, go ahead. Remember, you don't have to cut very deep during this process. When you're carving out very fine and small details, a small knick should suffice. If you really want to make sure if the cut is deep enough (which, again, doesn't have to be deep), simply apply and light layer of ink with a brayer to see if the shape looks the way you want it to.

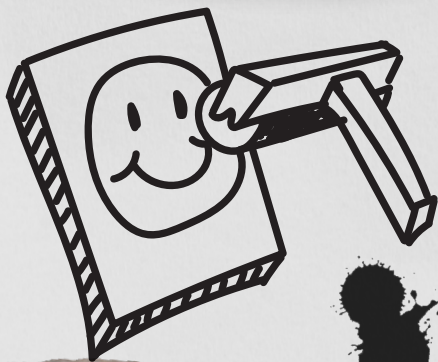




**Always carve *AWAY* from yourself.  
Watch out for your fingers too.**

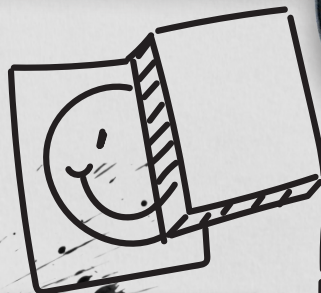
# 3. INK

If the printing block you've created is smaller, you can always just use a stamp pad. But if the printing block is even somewhat big, you are probably going to want to invest in some printing ink and a rubber brayer. When buying printing ink, look for a water-based ink in a tube, as it will be easy to clean and handle. When you're ready, squeeze some ink onto an even surface, preferably on a piece of glass. Using a painting knife (or a spoon, fork or a chopstick), roughly spread the ink across the surface. You then want to evenly coat the brayer with ink by rolling it. Then roll the brayer across your printing block. At this point, you can try stamping your block onto a scratch piece of paper to see if there are any details you need to refine in the carving process. Also try your best to note how much ink you should be applying and whether you are evenly coating the block.



# 4. STAMP

Once you've done a few test stamps and are ready to make your final prints, it's time to bring out the nice paper. This can be anything from A4 white paper, cardstock or printmaking paper. After you've applied the ink, gently place the stamp onto the paper. Make sure that the printing block doesn't shift around so that you smudge your image. Then even apply pressure across the back of the printing block with your hand or a large wooden spoon so that the ink is evenly applied throughout the print. Feel free to peel the print half way to check if the ink has been evenly applied. When you think it's ready, carefully peel away the block and boom – there's your first piece of anti-government propaganda.



For a more detailed explanation of the process, here's a YouTube playlist that will be useful when attempting to do your block print. Good luck on your printmaking journey, and don't forget – never underestimate the change you can make with just your hands. - CC

# Lady Creativity

Amberly Rose Garcia

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Every form she lingered upon, she filled with fantasy.  
Color fluttered from her fingertips  
as painted outside the lines.  
With vigor, she would break down the boxes of convention  
that threatened to hinder my expression.

Each time I attempted to map the elaborate,  
or manifest the infinite, or extract the sublime,  
I prayed that she would come,  
If only to sprinkle down on me  
just a bit of inspiration  
or zest in some innovation.  
I would be gleeful with the smallest of sums.

But Lady Creativity is fickle at best.  
Madame Habit is better. She has no quarrels,  
no fits of feverish anticipation.  
When I'm with her, Lady Creativity is sometimes lured in.  
Madame Habit is stable.  
Upon her, I am dependent.

For where would I be when Lady Creativity abandoned me?  
Madame Habit is not as glamorous, but neither is she as lofty.  
When I rely on her, possibility comes streaming out of my pen.

Correction:  
"Displaced Presense" by Garcia was incorrectly  
credited in the last issue of *Pursuit*, vol. II issue I.  
We apologize for our mistake.

*Design by Lauren Brooks*





# IKIGAI

- Speaking to Yourself -

Written and designed by Koichi FUSUSAWA

Have you ever considered finding what you truly want to do in the future? Does your decision about what to do in your life really make your life happy? Why don't you stop a bit and think about your true "Ikigai?"

"Ikigai" is the word that means "reason of being" in Japanese. (The word itself literally has a meaning of "shells of life," as shells were seen as the valuable resources in the eight century.) It also became familiar here in the 21st century because of Dan Buettner, an American explorer and author who discovered Blue Zones Theory. Buettner defines this term as the region where people live much longer than average. Japan, where the author of this story came from, is known as its longest life expectancy. Its average life span is 84.69 years old, which ranks at the top of the world. Buettner expected that Ikigai contributes to its longevity.

So what is Ikigai? The official definition is "a reason of being." It can be expressed using a Venn diagram consisting of four circles. "What you are good at," "What you love," "What the world needs," and "What you can be paid for." ►



First circle is about “what you love,” which means the things you really like from your heart. You can continue doing this stuff without being paid, however long you do it. You don’t have to make up what you love, don’t think seriously. For example, I, the writer of this article, love watching drama. When I am hooked on a certain drama, I would invest all of my time into it. You can find what you love by asking yourself “what is a life saver in your life?” Cooking, manga, novels, games, the outdoors — you are sure to have at least one thing you love.

The second circle is about “what you are good at.” In other words, where your talents lie. It doesn’t have to be major things: sports, musical instruments, studying. You also don’t have to make a significant killing by doing that. I personally think that the thing I am good at is to make the complex understandable using figurative designs, like here (I hope you feel easy to understand it). If you are not able to find, ask yourself following questions: “What are the things you could do with less effort than other people?” “When and how do you feel satisfied in your life?” No worries — every person has talent on their own.

## IKIGAI

The next thing is “what the world needs.” The definition of the word “world” means any forms of social communities. While some people think that it is already sufficient if you work for yourself, no one actually helps you unless you try to contribute to the world. In light of the meaning of work, you should think about whether the current work is demanded and useful for the world. For example, helping homeless people, establishing infrastructure and entertaining people are applicable elements the world needs. The crucial stuff in this section is that you have to feel you are doing good for society. This feeling will last until you die.

Decent jobs have their markets that generate money and get people paid. The third circle is about “what you can be paid for.” It means that if you try doing, you can make money regardless your interest. If what you love to do is going travel, you basically cannot be paid. Vice versa, you must be paid from telephone appointment work that you started for living (not the thing you like). To find Ikigai, specifying this element is inevitable.



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## Passion

As the next step, let's see the place where we can see overlap between two circles. The first overlap is Passion. This consists of "What you love" and "What you are good at." In other words, "things that you are suited to." Under Passion, people can keep what they are doing with fewer difficulties. However, it is not enough to seek only these elements. Although you can keep doing it and do well, sometimes it is a stretch to earn money by fulfilling demands all over the world. For example, the applicable thing to Passion is a YouTuber who is posting videos of himself and self-branding. This element is unsatisfying because it's not always making money. It is inevitable to avoid thinking about external environments.



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## Mission

The Mission appears if we combine "What You Love" and "What the World Needs." If you have a problem in your job, thinking "am I doing the right thing for my life?" or "why can't I do well in this job?", you would have Mission. This feeling comes from the things you are thinking you have to do because you love them and the world needs them. People who are liable to take care of others tend to stick to this concept. For example, a person, who works at a video production company because he loves drama would face the wall of Mission, as he is not skillful in editing and cannot earn a sufficient amount of money. Although people with Mission have a resolute reason for doing the job, they face difficulties to keep themselves motivated.



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## Vocation

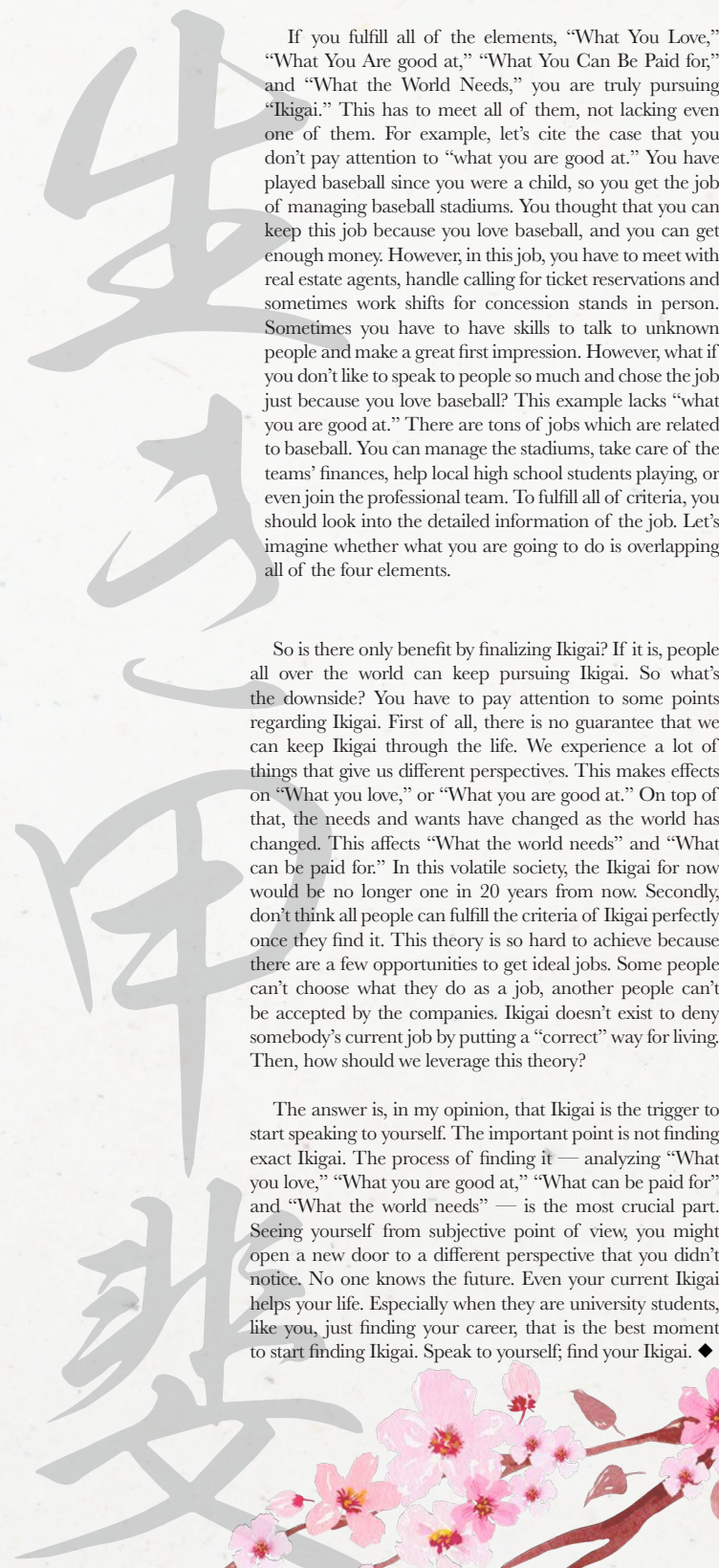
We can easily imagine this element the most out of all these elements. Many people apply to this range. Overlapping between "What You Can Be Paid for" and "What the World Needs" decides your Vocation. In Japan, there is the term "salaryman," which means a businessman who is generalized as a normal worker. For instance, if you are working at the office of a game company typing excel to pile what all of the employees spend money for, which is not a thing you want to do, you are doing it as just a Vocation. You might enter that company to plan a new game, or do character designs. Although you are satisfied by earning money and fulfilling the world's demands, things that you do are not related to your favorites or strength.





## Profession

Lastly, “What You Are good at” and “What You Can Be Paid for” consist of the Profession. In this theory, people can make money because they are good at doing it. While some people aim to be professionals, it is not perfect itself. For example, I worked at the call center to sell the electric battery to elderly people just to make a profit (of course it was not a fraud). I could make a good amount of money because I am good at talking to people, feeling empathy and understanding others’ feelings. However, I didn’t feel it was worthy because I didn’t particularly like to talk to people over the phone and didn’t feel I was doing it for society. You never feel satisfied unless you realize the other two elements.



If you fulfill all of the elements, “What You Love,” “What You Are good at,” “What You Can Be Paid for,” and “What the World Needs,” you are truly pursuing “Ikigai.” This has to meet all of them, not lacking even one of them. For example, let’s cite the case that you don’t pay attention to “what you are good at.” You have played baseball since you were a child, so you get the job of managing baseball stadiums. You thought that you can keep this job because you love baseball, and you can get enough money. However, in this job, you have to meet with real estate agents, handle calling for ticket reservations and sometimes work shifts for concession stands in person. Sometimes you have to have skills to talk to unknown people and make a great first impression. However, what if you don’t like to speak to people so much and chose the job just because you love baseball? This example lacks “what you are good at.” There are tons of jobs which are related to baseball. You can manage the stadiums, take care of the teams’ finances, help local high school students playing, or even join the professional team. To fulfill all of criteria, you should look into the detailed information of the job. Let’s imagine whether what you are going to do is overlapping all of the four elements.

So is there only benefit by finalizing Ikigai? If it is, people all over the world can keep pursuing Ikigai. So what’s the downside? You have to pay attention to some points regarding Ikigai. First of all, there is no guarantee that we can keep Ikigai through the life. We experience a lot of things that give us different perspectives. This makes effects on “What you love,” or “What you are good at.” On top of that, the needs and wants have changed as the world has changed. This affects “What the world needs” and “What can be paid for.” In this volatile society, the Ikigai for now would be no longer one in 20 years from now. Secondly, don’t think all people can fulfill the criteria of Ikigai perfectly once they find it. This theory is so hard to achieve because there are a few opportunities to get ideal jobs. Some people can’t choose what they do as a job, another people can’t be accepted by the companies. Ikigai doesn’t exist to deny somebody’s current job by putting a “correct” way for living. Then, how should we leverage this theory?

The answer is, in my opinion, that Ikigai is the trigger to start speaking to yourself. The important point is not finding exact Ikigai. The process of finding it — analyzing “What you love,” “What you are good at,” “What can be paid for” and “What the world needs” — is the most crucial part. Seeing yourself from subjective point of view, you might open a new door to a different perspective that you didn’t notice. No one knows the future. Even your current Ikigai helps your life. Especially when they are university students, like you, just finding your career, that is the best moment to start finding Ikigai. Speak to yourself; find your Ikigai. ♦



# “A Sweet Proposition”

*a fictional short story by Josiah Murphy*



**R**ing by spring is a concept indoctrinated into the heart of every student at California Baptist University at their most adolescent and vulnerable: during Welcome Weekend their freshman year. It is in these moments that the incoming student learns the liturgical nature and notion of a ring-by-spring at a so-called Christian university. The clock starts ticking on the concept by senior year, first semester — what was thought to be a mere ideology becomes a religion, and the race is on for a male student to find a female student (or vice versa) worthy of not only a bachelor’s degree, but her MRS degree, as well. Everything you are about to read is true.



The pressure is on to get married before graduating. And that is where ring-by-spring comes into effect. Due to the shifting numbers, and growth of the university, the pandemic of ring-by-spring is in its endemic phase now. Back in 2014, men were proposing to the women, who outnumbered them three to one at CBU back then, left and right. Now, in the present, it is considered a joke (depending on who is asked). Guys talking a certain way to a girl they had just started speaking to could be considered very “ring-by-springy.” It’s a mindset. A creed. A religion all on its own. Some are so desperate to check out with not just their bachelor’s, but the rest of their life paved. Or at least some of it. Ring-by-spring is not beheld just to CBU. It’s universal across most Christian colleges in the nation. However, life moves very fast at CBU, and romance is no exception to this rule. Within the span of a week relationships can go full “Romeo and Juliet” or, worse, “Titanic.” An innocuous walk around the campus could end in a make-out session or a marriage proposal. The only in between is utter rejection. Typically, via text. There are no innocent relationships. Ring-by-spring pervades the mindset of pretty much every student at CBU at one point or another in their academic career.

Chelsea Thrapp, senior marketing major with a minor in psychology, found her ring by spring, Alex Brenton, who graduated in December with his master’s in Architecture, during their FOCUS class. “We met in FOCUS, the year before it was renamed FYE... and I never really talked to any other guys. We became fast friends, and one day it just sort of became its own thing.” Their friendship became romantic on a late-night Cane’s run, where they started talking on a deeper level than they ever had before and “before you know it,” Chelsea admits with her cheeks reddening to a wholesome blush, “we kissed.” The notion of ring-by-spring was always in the back of their mind and getting married before graduating just seemed natural to them.

Harold Moretti, junior Marketing major, proposed in November to his freshman year girlfriend. “You know [...] it was just one of those things [where] it’s like, ‘We made it this far. We like it each. Why not?’ There wasn’t much questioning. Sure, we’re umbrellaed under the ring-by-spring, thing, but I don’t really care because it was more about spending the rest of my life with this person than anything else.” Why not wait until after graduating college? “That’s the kind of question only someone who hasn’t found the one would be asking. When you know, you know, and you want the rest of it to start right away.”

Not every student finds their one, and some proceed through college with only their degree on their mind. CBU’s problem is the indoctrination period is when the students do not know any better than what they are shown at the present time. Transfer students have a little bit of better luck because they’re migrating from somewhere else.

One disillusioned student, Jolene Haddish, senior Kinesiology major, finds herself wondering what the big deal is about ring by spring quite often. “It sets you up as a student to believe that you are less than the others because, well, maybe you just want to focus on studying. On earning a degree. Sure, romance is nice, but I came here to learn. If I find love... which I didn’t... that’s great.”

Hayley Brewer has a ring-by-spring, but not her freshman year boyfriend. Her freshman year she entered CBU as an Engineering major, quickly pivoting to Architecture. Amid the conclusion of sophomore year, she broke up with her long-time boyfriend, from Welcome Weekend, after all the academic pivoting. Now, with about a year to go, she’s engaged to her boyfriend

of about six months. “It just sort of worked out in this hectic way,” she said. “It’ll be a fun story to tell my kids someday.”

Lindsey Harlowe, BAT-major in his junior year, has some gripes with the concept of ring-by-spring from a Christian perspective. He views it from a biblical perspective that he thinks might be controversial: “But I don’t care. Really. Here it goes: Does God really care who we marry? That’s an interesting question. The Bible has all sorts of perspective on the concept of prayer and how it works. Your article isn’t about thawt, and I don’t feel like explaining myself. So, I’ll say this... God probably doesn’t care who you marry. For Christians, that’s a scary thought. And that is why ring-by-spring is so propagated and populous within Christian-college cultures and contexts. Deep down, we know there’s no spiritual backing for who to marry... God made Eve for Adam after all. That all being said, the love of my life is Hannah Lawler, and I have a sweet proposition for your article. Hannah Lawler, will you marry me?”

The consensus of CBU’s student populous and their opinions of ring-by-spring is varied. Popular Instagram accounts like @cbu.confessions, or its many offspring, find themselves in the grips of polls with conflicting results. On one day, ring by spring is mocked endlessly as something that works out for a minority, but a majority are in the same field as Ms. Haddish. However, sometimes it works out the other way and everyone thinks that is fine and the way to go. Sometimes the students that get posted reveal that everyone should do what works best for them. The vast array of opinions from students regarding ring by spring can be whiplash inducing.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about ring-by-spring within the context of California Baptist University is its history within the university, and the ramifications it contains for the university in the present day. The table-setting for the event is very simple. It’s 1955 and California Baptist College (the school wouldn’t become accredited as a university until 1998), had just moved from its previous campus in El Monte, California to Riverside, where it has resided ever since. The only building that CBC had to its name was the James Building. Inside were all the departments, women’s dorms, a hair-salon, and the Staples Room — then as-yet-unnamed — was where commencement and chapel were held, much like the Event Center today. However, the class sizes way-back-when were molecular compared to what they look like now. Braeden Johnson, one of the very first graduating students from CBC on the Riverside campus, said of it: “There was nothing like it. We had our own space, places to go, and people to meet. I came back for Homecoming weekend this semester and hardly recognized the place.” When asked about the culture of ring-by-spring, Mr. Johnson was very jesting. “You see, back in that day it was pretty [...] easy to get married. You looked at a woman a certain way and that was practically it, really.” According to Mr. Johnson, the “very first proposal I can remember was Ron Ellis. You might recognize the name; he’s doing well now. All things considered.”

Learning that the current president of CBU was not impervious to the sensation of ring-by-spring was a fun fact to learn, but hardly surprising. Life moves very fast at CBU, and relationships, when put into this environment, move even faster. Information goes so fast, it’s easy to get stuck-up in what’s happening in personal bubbles than what is going on past the gates surrounding campus. The knowledge about President Ellis is hardly surprising because most students will either not care or feel as though they already knew that. Because of this speed, and resources like CBU Confessions, it is now easier than

ever to get caught up in the traditions of campus like ring-by-spring. Love is in the air for everyone.

Except, it often feels, for you...

Something struck me at this point in writing the article. It was the ethical consideration of including Lindsey Harlowe’s interview and proposal to his girlfriend Hannah Lawler gave me pause. After our chat, he told me that I did not have to include the last bit, but it would be a “sweet proposition” for my editor at Pursuit Magazine. “People would finally read the magazine if they knew that was in there, wouldn’t they?” My considerations went further than readers: would it be possible to remain ambivalent in my own personal views about ring-by-spring if the article I wrote propelled one to fruition? I decided to interview Hannah Lawler to see what she would say to the quote for the article.

As any collegiate journalist would, I turned to Instagram in search of Lindsey Harlowe’s girlfriend. My search results yielded no results in either of their names. Lancer Media Group, which hosts Pursuit Magazine, has always been a great way to find students. Writers for Angelos know lots of people, so do the folks at the Banner. It’s a great labyrinth of interconnectedness, perfect for finding sources. At one of the LMG meetings, I decided to try my luck and made an announcement regarding Harlowe and Lawler.

One of the photographers for Pursuit came up to me after the meeting. They asked to remain anonymous solely because of what my article was about. “Nobody named Hannah Lawler goes to this school,” they said. “You got tricked.” I asked if they would help me find Lindsey Harlowe — whose real name I now realized I did not know. Some commuter student looking to have some fun had probably pulled a fast one on me. I had assumed that was on me for going up to a random person in Wanda’s and just seeing if they would like to talk about ring-by-spring. You get what you give. “Talk to Ashley Gresham,” the photographer told me. “She’s good at finding people.”

Ashley Gresham was willing to meet because the photographer was a friend of hers from freshman year. A senior criminal justice major, she was skeptical of my article topic. “Good luck with that. It works for some, doesn’t for others. I thought I had found mine, but I think I’ve narrowly avoided it now. And I just realized that’s not why we’re meeting.” She then told me that our mutual friend was correct, that neither Hannah Lawler nor Lindsey Harlowe attend CBU. “I will say that there is somebody named Lindsey Harlowe, but I don’t think he’s who you’re looking for.” A picture revealed that they were not one and the same. Interesting. “A better topic for your article would be about the ghost in the Wallace Theatre. Ask one of the theatre majors about it, when they’re not busy having sex with each other. Even the history of Woo Fest would be better than doing something ring by spring. It’s been done to death. Try not to get pranked anymore,” she said with a smile.

Back to less than square one, and for some reason? I just could not focus on what the article’s original intent had been. I had plenty of sources, plenty of things to complete it for Pursuit. Instead, I went for a night walk. Not an uncommon occurrence for many writers. We get stuck. The cogs stop turning. Rust breaks things down. And the words stop flowing, the story get stuck. We go and try to find something, anything, to unjam it. Being perfectly honest, the interactions for the article were also beginning to take on weight within me. When I pitched the article to my editor, I had been happily in the throes of a relationship. As the semester progressed, as these ►

things go, my relationship ended, and I no longer feel like writing about love.

So, I put my earbuds in, put on some sad songs, and went for a walk through the campus at night. The chill in the air helped keep my pace. It was cold, but not unbearable. It was late enough to see students exiting the theatre, I didn't bother checking my watch. It was now probably past ten-thirty. I was under the trees, between the Wallace Theatre and the Library. I looked up at one of the windows and saw a girl thumping her head up and down on the desk. Relatable. As I was looking back toward the archway that leads out to the road toward Village, walking along the backside of James, I saw a familiar face and it almost made me stop walking. Then I remembered where I was, sort of shrouded in darkness, and that the figure couldn't see me, but I could see them. I started walking a little faster. I was walking toward them, they were walking curved, heading toward James.

There was no mistaking it. The closer I got and when the few lights caught their features alight, I knew. It was "Lindsey Harlowe." Lindsey bounded up the stairs and opened the door and took a quick left, bounding down the stairs to the depths of James's basement. The door never closed because I gripped it and stepped inside the murky warmth of the James Building. I looked to my left and stepped down the stairwell into the basement.

I peered around the corner and saw Lindsey Harlowe standing before the door that says DO NOT ENTER. The one that goes into the catacombs beneath the main campus. The door opened and he went through. I leapt down the remaining stairs and ran to the door and tried the handle. Nothing. I smacked the door, backed away, and returned to my apartment.

I ran into Ashley at the Caf by chance the next day and told her, briefly, what happened. "There's nothing in the catacombs except for old file cabinets from admissions and academic advising. If you wanna know what some Joe Schmoe got on his research paper in 1981, that's your place. Other than that, nothing's in there."

Then why would Lindsey Harlowe be going into the catacombs, what does a student have business being down there for?

"That's the thing," Ashley said, "he might not be a student. He might not be anybody. Just forget about it, OK? Finish your boring article and move on with your life. You got pranked. No need to make anything more out of it than what it really is."

And what was it really?

"Nothing."

But for me, it was slowly becoming not nothing. The article had evolved, and when your muse evolves that does not mean you suddenly stop following your muse.

And mine was now no longer some philosophical idea, or some debated topic on campus that I could expunge upon. Make some readers happy, others angry, knowing most would glance at the cover of the magazine and move on with their life. But someone was going to read the words I wrote. These words, I guess.

So, I went looking for my muse — and I found him, eventually, and followed him right back to where I knew he would go.

The James Building

Back in the basement.

Just out of sight.

The door opened, and this time I was ready.

Lindsey Harlowe, or whoever he was, dipped into

the darkness beyond the doorframe and before the door could completely swing closed— I poked the tip of my shoed toe in the way. It banged against the sole, and it throbbed a little.

Wrapping my fingers around the door, I pushed it opened and submerged myself in the darkness of the catacombs of California Baptist University.

All that surrounded me was complete darkness. The kind that takes your breath away. Everyone who says, "I'm not afraid of the dark," when put in the cavernous darkness like that of the catacombs will feel the pangs of utter fear strike their heart's chord and play them like a finely tuned guitar. The air was thick with chill, the goosebumps on my arms physically hurt to bear, and the overwhelming smell of maple syrup filled my nostrils. I backed into the door and reached behind myself, grasping for purchase of some sort of door handle.

There was none.

In this world of darkness, I felt completely, hopelessly, alone. Not being able to feel or find or grab something to ground me to reality shook my entire body. The chilly air of the catacombs filled my lungs and made my legs tremble. I let out what I felt was a soft moan, but might have been a quick yell of alarm, of worry, of total agnostic fear.

And then it ended. White light exploded into my vision, dots bulleting my eyes, shafts of light obliterating the dark world I had become accustomed to—

I ran.

When you run in utter darkness, it is without speed because the assurance of sight guarantees reaching a destination. Without sight, there are no destinations, and the body repels itself from inching further into the desolate unknown. I ran until my legs ached... to where?

I don't know, but I found a wall and edged along it when a door handle scraped my palm. I gripped it tight and tore it open— it slid — and then I slammed it shut behind himself, rested against the door and slowly fell to the ground, sliding on it.

I heard several sets of footsteps, and voices talking on radios, and out loud to one another, on the other side of the door. Running farther away. I was alone.

"Hello?"

Or not.

I stood up, turning my fists to fingers. The smell in the room was so familiar, and it smelled the most like maple syrup. How much it did was overwhelming, and it took my breath away, almost like too good a smell had turned to a stench.

"There's a light switch on the wall."

I coasted along the wall and eventually found some light switches. Flick. Flick. Flick. The lights flicked on to reveal a rectangular room, almost like an emergency room, but filled with oblong tubes standing straight out of the ground with singular windows into them fogged eternally. Before me was a table. To my right was the door, no window. All along it, to the rightmost of the room, was more metallic tubes the width of an average person.

Each were labeled on the top, right in the middle with the letter "R" or "J." I looked slowly back to where the voice had come from and saw the table.

On the table was maple syrup.

And Caf waffles. The old kind, with CBU imprinted from the waffle iron. It wasn't just a singular waffle, but stacks upon stacks. My eyes slowly traveled to the head of the table. Just behind the person at the head of the table was an open door. Lindsey Harlowe stood in the doorway, he saw me, very clearly, but did not look alarmed.

He said into a radio, "I located the subject, over."

The person at the head of the table in front of Lindsey

Harlowe, or whoever he was, looked from him to me and smiled in that way he always does during the State of the University or start of a Commencement Ceremony.

President Ronald Ellis cut off a bite of his waffle, stirred it in syrup, and took a bite. I asked what was going on. President Ellis jabbed the air with his fork, gesticulating to the tubes all around me. I walked towards the one right before me. The cold emanating from it was arctic.

"Don't touch it," he said.

I balled up my sleeve into my palm and rubbed the window of the cryo-tube and winced from how cold it was.

Ronald Ellis said, "Why does he get to see this? Does Dacus know?"

Lindsey Harlowe said, "Ronald Ellis knows."

That really confused me, and I looked from the content of the tube to the man who had called himself Lindsey Harlowe and then to the President of CBU who was currently chowing down on a whole new waffle.

"Aren't you Ronald Ellis?"

"In training."

I looked at Lindsey Harlowe who said, "Think about it." And so, I looked back into the cryo-tube, and it started to make sense. But not really.

"You see Ronald Ellis has a beard now?" Ronald Ellis said to me. "It's like he knows his time is almost up, so he's trying to change the look. But people won't ask questions, they never do."

I looked at them after peering into the cryo-tube for a long time. "So, you cloned yourself?"

"We're a university dedicated to the Core Four," Ronald Ellis said, "for forever. We've experience exceptional growth under my leadership. What better way for the school to grow than for it to never end."

Ronald Ellis shoveled a fork filled with waffle into his mouth and closed his eyes and nodded his head as the maple syrup hit his system. Then he swallowed and steeped his hands together before him. Looking just like he did in the State of the University videos from every fall semester.

"And we've noticed how exceptional you are, academically, spiritually, and deductively in your detective skills. So, we orchestrated this whole event to get you here, now."

The door I entered from opened. Ashley Gresham stood there with Leon Phillips holding her tight with handcuffs. "I told you to leave it alone!"

"I'm wishing I had listened," I said.

Ronald Ellis stood and picked up a waffle and started munching on it like toast. He came over to my side of the table and sat on the edge of it.

"Today, you will become a part of the Lancer Nation in a way you've never dreamed before."

The Safety Services officers holding onto Ashley dragged her over to the tubes, opened one up, she yelled out, but they dragged her like she was nothing. I stood there in shock. The cryo-tube enclosed around her. One of the officers slapped a button on the side and Ashley began to shiver and jolt as though she were being electrocuted. Then a bright light flashed out of the window, and it all went dark in the tube. After a moment, there was a loud ding! and the tube was opened. Fog rolled out slowly from the tube, and then cleared away...

And standing where Ashley Gresham once was, was Jane Ellis. I looked over at Ronald Ellis. "What did you do?!"

"Don't worry, your time is coming," Ronald Ellis said. "Every Jane needs her Ron." I looked at Ronald Ellis and then the safety services officers as they approached me. Finally, my eyes reached James, and I saw they were the color of Ashley's eyes.



I managed to outrun them. I don't know how. I hope none of this gets edited out and makes it into Pursuit Magazine. They're breaking the door down as I type this, so I don't have much time left. They clone Ronald Ellis and always give him a Jane, and they use the students to do it.

And I'm next. ♦

# ART THERAPY

The sticky clay clings to the wax paper on a tray, featuring unfinished, almost uncanny valley-esque figures in various positions. Wet clay viscously slides off the figures as they dry, making them almost look alive.

Placed next to the figures on a glaze-stained shelf is a ceramics project of something resembling a half-cracked egg, with dainty ballet shoes in the middle, where the yolk would be. Upon first glance at the projects, one would assume they were made by an art student with an abstract mind for empathy—someone with a personality made for loving people in all forms.

Colors represent emotion. The brushstrokes of brightly tinted paint sit on the canvas in a slew of different textures, representing the rippling fiery chaos of intoxicating feeling. A collage of hopes for the upcoming year sits next to it, along with a mirror smacked with numerous sticky notes of kind words for a weary body.

Light dances through windows, shining down on soft neutrals. The people in the distinct art pieces all have a sort of glow with massive eyes open for the defined emotions portrayed in the works.

Art therapy students made these pieces of art. Students in this program have a unique calling to help people through creation, each having an individual style and preferred medium of work.

Art Therapy was established three years ago as an official major at California Baptist University. Students enrolled in the major take a mixture of psychology

and fine arts courses, as well as two art therapy specific courses. Kristie Lippire, associate professor of fine arts and one of the specific art therapy courses, said that art therapy is different from a typical fine arts program because it provides a visual means for others to represent trauma and feelings. She further contrasted it with fine arts by saying that the latter typically focuses on self-expression of the “spirit of the times.”

“CBU’s Art Therapy students learn how different materials can provide information in unpacking what a person is trying to communicate in a clinical session, how to use visual information to inspire dialogue and discussion and how to create art directives that help an individual open up for the first time to strangers.”

Mikayla Morehead, junior art therapy major, has been in this program since her freshman year. Through the unique mixture of art and psychology, she’s learned how to assign different art mediums to help with various disorders. Through creating art, she’s discovered herself and processed her own trauma through her pieces, extending her ability and love to help others process and heal the same way.

“I learned a lot about hope and the hope that art can give,” Morehead said. “It really helped me process my trauma and renew it into a good thing—not that it’s a good thing, but to help people. I think it was good for me to experience healing, cathartic-like growth through an art piece so I can help other people do the same.”

One of Morehead’s learned techniques is never to interpret an art piece created by someone else, only to help them make the piece in their own self-expressive way.

She gave the example of a person drawing a red figure. While one may assume it represents anger, it could be as simple as the person enjoying the color red.

“A piece can mean something different to different people, but specifically within art therapy, if you’re working with people, you want to understand what it means to them,” Morehead said. “So self-expression and helping people are kind of married because you’re trying to understand what they’re expressing about themselves.”

She became especially drawn to ceramics in particular during her art therapy journey. A piece she created last semester to symbolize vulnerability and sadness exploded in the kiln, leaving it half-ruined. Rather than trashing the work, she saw it as an opportunity, that her self-imposed barriers were meant to come down, and that through God, she was open to the world and its beauty.

She also is currently in Ceramics III and spoke about seeing it through an art therapy kaleidoscopic lens. The class is currently working with recycled clay, which she saw as a possibility in this art form being start to finish. Morehead said this is an example of a technique that she’d use from an art class to mix with therapy—to have the clay be a symbol.

“As the clay is going through a journey, maybe they are too,” Morehead said.

Ceramics is an approach to art therapy sought after due to its usage of bilateral movement, which is proven to help victims of bodily trauma. After graduation, she wants to apply her knowledge and passion to working with victims of sex trafficking, in which ceramics have proven effective in healing and processing.

“Being an art therapy major, I’ve realized that I love to make art, but that’s secondary to helping people,” Morehead said.

Art therapy is a calling to creatives who enjoy helping people and attract people who genuinely care about the field. Jordin Bella, junior art therapy major, is a prime example. She transferred into the program from community college, previously majoring in kinesiology.

Bella noticed her unhappiness in the health science field and found art therapy as she was on the verge of dropping out.

Bella had been in a severe car accident about a year ago, her healing journey lined up with art therapy. By going through things herself, she’s used the program to process in order to help others. She acknowledged that many people don’t make it out from rock bottom and wants to help others in that mindset.

“Because I’m a person who needed help,” Bella said. “I’m in that transition phase, I don’t feel like I have enough to give people, but I also feel like I’ve been through an amount of trauma and life that I can actually give a lot to people.”

Like Morehead, Bella has a calling to help people due to her past experiences with trauma. Art therapy and the process of creating taught her a lot about herself, including her found love for painting. Bella used painting as a method to pour out her emotions and heal from the trauma of the past few years. She pulled out a photo of a piece that mimicked abstract fire, painted in the aftermath of taking her own spiritual power back from someone who thought it was theirs.

“I think painting with textures playing with colors for moods is something that I’ve fallen in love with,” Bella said. “I don’t know what you feel when you look at this, but for me, it was chaos. There’s this centerpiece where all that is escaping from; I’m just coated in it at this point. Then I played with blue because I was really sad and red because I felt passionate about putting that person back in their place.”

As Bella continues in her art therapy journey, her hopes lie in continuing to grow to be able to help people further. After graduation, she desires to create a safe place for others to make and destroy their work, which she views as a cathartic form of healing.

Chloe Hoopes, senior art therapy major, is graduating with this major at the end of the Spring 2022 semester. Hoopes specializes in digital art and sketching, which stemmed from her beginning her time at CBU as an illustration major. She switched to art therapy after seeing the competitiveness of the major and wanting something to incorporate her love of psychology.

“It’s a gentler way to approach psychology and art,” Hoopes said. “You have one foot in psychology, one foot in art. It’s all the things I love in one thing.”

Hoopes focuses on digital art in particular

“I like digital art because you have layers and can go back and edit. It’s not limited by making a mistake, smudge, or smear.

While art therapy hosts a myriad of students with a large spectrum of life experiences—it can all be boiled down to the principle of helping and uniquely healing others. These students see art as more than a vehicle for self-expression but as an outlet to assist others in doing the same. ♦



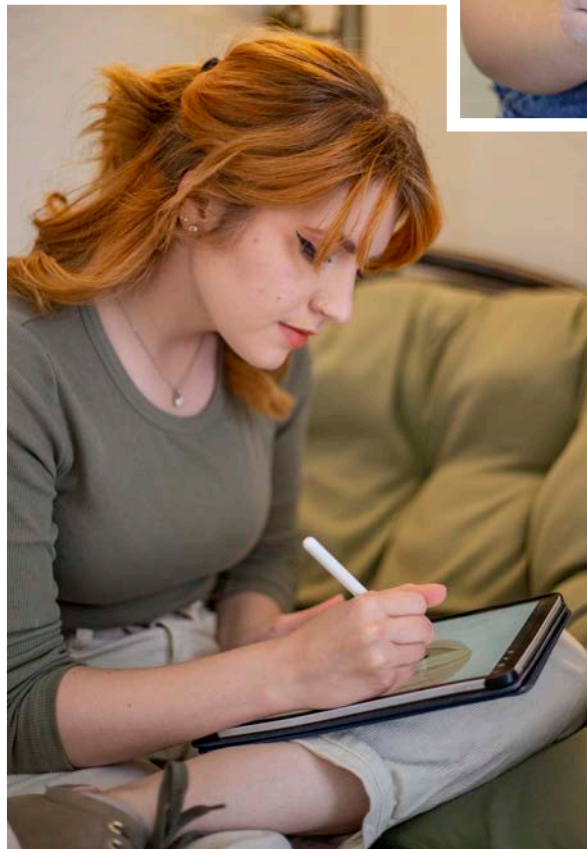




**Above:** Jordin Bella, junior art therapy major, flips through her sketch book in order to start a new project.



**Above:** Mikayla Morehead, senior art therapy major displays one of her favorite pieces of art.



**Left:** Chloe Hoopes, senior art therapy major, creates digital art, which she hopes to continue creating as part of her art therapy career.

**Left:** A ceramic art piece made by Mikayla Morehead.

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Written by Lauren Brooks  
Photographed by Kia Harlan  
Designed by Camille Grochowski



*Above: Kristie Lippire, associate professor of visual art, discusses the importance of art majors getting a degree.*



IN THE DEFENSE OF  
**PEOPLE WHO  
THOUGHT GETTING  
AN ART  
DEGREE WAS A  
GOOD  
IDEA**

*“An arts degree is like a diploma in origami. And about as much use” - J.G. Ballard*

**I**pity the fool who has to defend anyone’s reasoning behind pursuing an art degree. Now to be clear, the term “art degree” is used quite liberally in the sense that it is used to describe any major remotely related to the creative field. And although there is a stark distinction between fine arts and graphic design, it doesn’t stop the fact that people in both majors are going to be asked, “Oh...What do you want to do with that?” There seems to be a shudder down the spine every time a creative degree is mentioned. Even from the very people that have committed their education to the arts. Theater students grunt and sweat under pressure as they become overly defensive when somebody asks them how exactly they are going to use their degree to launch themselves into the job market. Why does this fear exist? Why can’t an art student explain that they are simply pursuing an art degree because they enjoy it? Why must they resort to coming up with a pseudo-pragmatic five year plan as to how exactly they are going to obtain a “real job” to justify the degree? Why do art students make self-deprecating jokes about being unemployed and living in their mothers’ basements? ►



One aspect of the answer can be attributed to the fact that many creative individuals live in a pool of insecurity and self-criticism. And why would they not be? When one makes a creative piece of media, it is as if they are imparting a piece of themselves into that work. This makes any form of rejection or criticism not just a rejection of the work, but a rejection of the artist. For that reason, it would make sense that the type of people who would pursue an art degree would also be extremely insecure about how people see their decision. But what exactly is it about peoples' perceptions of creative degrees that art majors have to be so insecure about? The perception of having a creative degree can be significantly attributed to the misconceptions art, along with artists, has in our pragmatic society. Many parents of creative majors are worried that their children will adhere to the starving artist stereotype, due to the fact that they may not be good enough for a highly competitive, small market. It also scares them that there seems to not be a traditional route to being a successful creative professional, like there is for many medical or STEM fields. On top of that, art, along with any sort of creative media, is seen as nothing but pretty remnants of our culture that may spark joy, but at the end of the day is not essential to our survival. So to many, pursuing an expensive degree is viewed as not only hard, but ultimately useless.

Although one does not technically need art or aesthetic pleasures to live, it is hard to imagine a life without any beauty. I mean, imagine a world without music, movies, paintings or even just pretty clothes. These are all things that don't just make our lives brighter and more colorful, but these are things that humans require in order to thrive. Human's have an inherent need for beauty and aesthetics, which is why we do simple things like set the table, dress nice, and eat tasty food. Not all of these are necessarily practical or necessary to our survival, but because they spark even the smallest sense of joy because they are aesthetically pleasing. Makato Fujimura, in his 2014 book "Culture Care," describes this phenomena as beauty, along with art, being "food for the soul." Food is a good metaphor to describe this aesthetic need because if one does not

**“[Art] is an entrepreneurial degree...you shouldn't do art thinking you can just slack off, because there [are] no 'fine art jobs' to apply to afterwards. You have to take your skill base and apply to a bunch of potentially different options**

**- Kristi Lippire**  
(associate professor of fine arts)

fulfill this need regularly, they tend to deteriorate into an emotionally and mentally unhealthy state. And it is the role of art and all other creative media that helps fulfill human's need for beauty in our everyday lives. With this line of thought, it is safe to conclude that artists and creative professionals aren't just important, but they are needed for our survival.

Because of the importance art and media has in our society, there are more than enough jobs to go around for artists and creative professionals. According to the National Endowment of the Arts, in their research publication titled "Artist and Other Cultural Workers: A Statistical Portrait," art and cultural industries employ over 5 million people as wage-and-salary workers (as of April 2019). The same report shows that artists are also experiencing unemployment rates that are similar to all United States workers, making the starving artist stereotype somewhat obsolete. And according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the projected annual average job openings from 2020 to 2030 in "Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations" is around 319,500. To put this number under some context, the projected annual average job openings for "Healthcare Practitioners" it is 621,100. For "Community and Social Service Occupations" it is 327,500. "Engineers" is 125,400, and for "Legal Occupations" it is 103,600. So although it is not the most, there are still plenty of jobs in the creative industry to go around. On top of this, the annual mean wage of "Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations" is \$66,100 (as of May 2021). This is still higher than the annual mean wage of all occupations (\$58,260). With the popularity and stronger emphasis on films, social media and other visual media in our society today, it would be hard to argue why any of these numbers would not go up.

Despite there being more than enough jobs in the creative industry, one of the biggest fears that still remains is that there is not really a traditional route to being a successful creative professional. And yes, this is somewhat true: There is not a clear series of steps laid out for you to follow to become successful. This is especially the case if one wants to pursue a job in fine arts or the entertainment industry. Kristi Lippire, associate professor of visual art, explains the kind of hard work one must put in to be successful in the fine arts industry. "[Art] is an entrepreneurial degree...you shouldn't do art thinking you can just slack off, because there [are] no 'fine art jobs' to apply to afterwards. You have to take your skill base and apply to a bunch of potentially different options."

Although there is not a clear path for those pursuing a creative degree, Lippire still encourages students by explaining that with consistent hard work, success is not as out of reach as many believe. "All of our art students that I have kept in touch with are all employed. I don't know anybody that has a hard time. Because that's part of the teaching. If you want this, you [have] to work really hard because there isn't just, somewhere that has a list of how to be your own artist." Lippire emphasizes that art students need to be aware that they will have to put in a lot of hard work, and something will always arise. "It's crazy. We have a ceramics student and she was listening to a podcast, a ceramics podcast, and the artist on there was like yeah if anybody needs an internship job over the summer, I'm in Brooklyn, give me a call. She called her, got the job, moved to Brooklyn." She then elaborates as to how that student got into contact with the ceramics community there and was able to find more opportunities. "She came back for senior year, [and] she



will be leaving and moving to Brooklyn for a full time job with one of those artists...There's no footprint for that. If you want it, you listen to the things, listen for the little openings and you take it."

But Lippire also acknowledges that it is the same way with any other job. No jobs are guaranteed just because you have a certain degree, it's just that certain jobs sound better to parents if there are more distinct steps. If your excuse to not pursue a career in something creative is because it's too hard, well, aren't all good things in life hard to get? Isn't that partially what makes them so special?

Jim Carrey, world renowned comedian and actor, tells a story during the 2014 commencement address at Maharishi International University graduation about how his father had incredible comedic talent, and could've had a great career in it. But Carrey's father didn't believe that for himself, so instead chose to become an accountant because it was "safe." When Carrey was 12, his father was let go from that job and Carrey's family went through harsh times. This unfortunate circumstance happened despite Carrey's dad having chosen a "safe job." As Jim Carrey so eloquently puts it, "I learned many great lessons from my father — not the least of which is that you can fail at what you don't want, so you might as well take a chance on doing what you love."

Many argue that traditional college has become less and less attractive in recent years. This is not without good reason; skyrocketing academic tuition, unrelenting student loans and dubious admissions have understandably made young adults weary. On top of this, the accessibility of information and plethora of opportunities in the twenty-first century has opened up many avenues in which one can be extremely successful without a degree. Many students are starting to question why they should tackle crippling loans just to obtain a set of skills that they can get elsewhere. What makes having a college degree so special if everyone has one? According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, around 40 percent of college graduates are working jobs that don't require a degree, while roughly 7 percent of college graduates are stuck in low wage jobs. Considering these facts, it makes sense that if one is going to make a huge investment in a college education, they are likely going to consider a field that is deemed "useful" to society, guaranteeing a job.

But what if that isn't the point of a college education? Dr. Sam Welbaum, assistant professor of philosophy and director of the Honors Program at CBU, explains what is wrong with the current perception of a college program. "College's job is to not prepare yourself for a career. That is what we can consider an accidental part of it, but not the essential part of it. College's job is to educate you." University was initially created for people who simply wanted to learn a wide variety of subjects through a higher education: areas of study ranging from engineering to music theory. These subjects weren't taught to help individuals excel in the job market, but to teach them how to think critically and to become a more well-rounded person. This principle dictates the way a lot of universities run today, training well-rounded scholars to be able to think critically. Why else do you think university institutions have a wide variety of departments, ranging from arts to science? Why do you think students are required to take general education classes that are outside of their field? Why do you think there's such an emphasis on community, bringing people of different

majors together? Although general education classes are tedious, if one is complaining about how they feel that their money is being wasted because they are forced to take general education classes, they might not exactly know what they paid for in the first place. As Welbaum puts it, "People levy an argument against college because they think college is something different than it is. So, if I expect college to be a trade school, and if college is not a trade school, then I could object to college not being a trade school." A university isn't a trade school that teaches you a specific set of skills for the job market. In fact, it's quite the opposite: it's an institution that tries to diversify your knowledge and experiences so that you can be a better thinker and, hopefully, a better person.

So why should one study art in a college setting? For Welbaum, the value comes from the fact that it "brings together all of these disciplines that are otherwise hyper segmented." Many of the world's most influential artists had interests in various fields of study. The word "Renaissance Men" was used to describe many of the Renaissance artists, such as Leonardo Da Vinci and Michaelangelo, who were not only masters of their artistic craft, but were also experts in other areas like science, and philosophy. These people's backgrounds were rich with diverse knowledge, and because of that, their art was also rich with meaning and thought. Michelangelo would not have been able to make David if he only knew how to sculpt; his knowledge on human anatomy allowed him to render a human figure that looked real to the eye. This idea of using other areas of study to enhance your art is still quite prevalent today. The success of *Interstellar* (2014) is not only because it is a masterclass in filmmaking, but also because it makes use of accurate science to complement the plot. All the greatest pieces of art and literature have a holistic perspective and knowledge in the world, and they are that way because the people who created those pieces were also holistic.

Although it isn't the only way to do so, college is definitely one way to become more diverse in knowledge and background. You are put in a smaller space where you can not only meet people that are like-minded, but also share conversations with people that have different perspectives, which can strengthen your own values. You are forced to take general education classes that are outside of your field so that you can expose yourself to subjects that you would not usually come into contact with. College doesn't just teach you your specific field, but it teaches you how to think, communicate, learn, and most importantly, live life. At the end of the day, college is an investment for yourself. It is an investment where you will hopefully become a more holistic person with a passion and awareness for various fields. So yes, an art diploma alone may be useless, but so are all diplomas of any field. A college degree is simply a byproduct of one completing a university curriculum. What you get out of a college education is the things you learned, the people you met, the memories you made, and trials that you faced. And it is from that diverse range of experiences and knowledge that art is born.

Obviously, everyone's circumstances and situations are different. Attending university is an expensive privilege that shouldn't be taken lightly. And, of course, there are a plethora of ways to be successful without a university education. And there are certainly people who feel that getting an art degree was a mistake and has brought them more trouble than they wanted. At the end of the day, the purpose of this writing is not to advocate the pursuit of an art degree, but simply defend those who

have already done so. I can not tell you whether or not getting an art degree is the right or wrong choice, but the same goes for any important decision in life. For those of you who are art majors: Lift your chin up, stand tall and walk the earth with a little more courage. Your hard work and desire to make the world a more beautiful place does not go unrecognized. ♦

Written by Caleb Chong  
Photographed by Elijah Martinez  
Designed by Caleb Chong

**Below:** Dr. Sam Welbaum, assistant professor of philosophy and director of the Honors Program explains the importance of a university education why it is important for an aspiring artist.





# SAVING JOSHUA TREE

## Professor Brashear's Photographic Work for the Natural Environment

Written by Anyssa Gonzalez  
Photographed and Designed by Camille Grochowski

Focusing on the relationships between humanity and the natural environment, the interest of the natural imbalance between both worlds sparks the creativity of a photo-based artist. Entering its seventh year of documenting, recording and creating art around the Joshua tree species, one project's development over time has continued to influence the Mojave endemic terrain and its impact on future generations.

California Baptist University's Fred Brashear, adjunct professor of photography, has been working on one of his most notable series collections: photos of the Joshua Tree habitat. The heart of his inspiration in becoming a photographer began during his career as a Wildland Firefighter.

"While fighting fires throughout the western United States I would often photograph the fires we fought with a disposable camera," Brashear says. "After my career as a firefighter ended, I entered a photo contest for the Daily Press in Victorville and won first place for the nature category, and from there I gained an internship with the newspaper as a photographer, before ever having any formal training in the medium."

After his internship, Brashear decided that going back to school to further his education in photography would impact the rest of his life while contributing his love for the natural environment. As the desire for these two things amplified Brashear's career path, he revisited the cathartic process of being among nature and that connection it provided to his family.

Brashear recalls, "It has always been a desire of mine to explore these wild places. As a child, I remember going on trips to Nevada and seeing these weird places from the car and so [I] wanted to see them up close. When my mother passed away...being in nature became my way of reconciling with that loss."

While originally focusing on the Joshua Tree series, he wanted to show the importance of these places in order to preserve them and reconnect with something







**Above:** A dead Joshua Tree lays in a grove located near Quail Springs Picnic Area in Joshua Tree National Park.

spiritual and visceral. However, through research and development, Brashear’s understanding of this eminent habitat began to expand.

“Quite often I would go for walks in the desert surrounding my home, and during these walks, I started to notice large swaths of land being developed with all vegetation removed, including Joshua trees,” Brashear says.

As he started to investigate changing landscapes for these new developments, he noticed a master plan for the community of Hesperia. It was moving toward the Joshua Tree habitat. Brashear began documenting, but soon his purpose for the project changed. “As my project evolved and I started to do more research, it became more about the survival of the species rather than the

documenting of the reduction of Joshua tree landscape.”

From his original focus on construction sites throughout the High Desert community of Hesperia, Brashear’s work turned to the preservation of the remaining Joshua Tree woodlands. With the recent attention on climate change, scientific predictions have been made for western Joshua tree extinction. As an environmental photographer, his documenting became fixated on representing, “what is here now and to show to future generations what has been lost.”

In an effort to create more impactful work, Brashear came up with the idea to use a Joshua tree to make his own paper.

While going on one of my walks in the desert back in 2015, I noticed that a construction crew was removing

Joshua trees for a new development. I asked one of the crew members if I could have some of the material and after some debate, they said yes.”

After this approval, Brashear quickly left to get his truck and came back to pick up the material before it was gone.

After months of trial and error, he was faced a lack of inspiration. Eventually, the idea to use the Joshua tree material to make paper resparked Brashear’s series. Once he created the paper, his next step was figuring out what to do with it.

His first thought: printing photos onto the paper. Like the paper creation process, the printing process took time. Finally, Brashear settled on using a lift transfer to attach image to paper. With this process, the significance of his images shifted once again to the bigger picture of preserving the landscape. To get that message across, Brashear chose to only print photos he took of the untouched landscape onto the Joshua tree paper.

With preservation laws changing in the recent years, the material that Brashear uses for his paper has not been available to him since the first time he got it. Though this may place a pause in his notable series, he acknowledges that once the material is all collected, the project will be done.

Fortunate enough to have been given the opportunity to use those materials years ago, Brashear continues his attempts to collect Joshua trees from construction sites, but he has been denied every time. Still, the opportunities to share his story serve his purpose of sharing the plight of the western Joshua tree due to climate change and human development in the Mojave Desert.

“My work is part of the conversation and collaboration to have the Joshua tree federally listed as an endangered species,” Brashear says. “When this project ends, hopefully Joshua trees will be protected from . . . the threats they face.” ♦







Courtesy of Fred Brashear



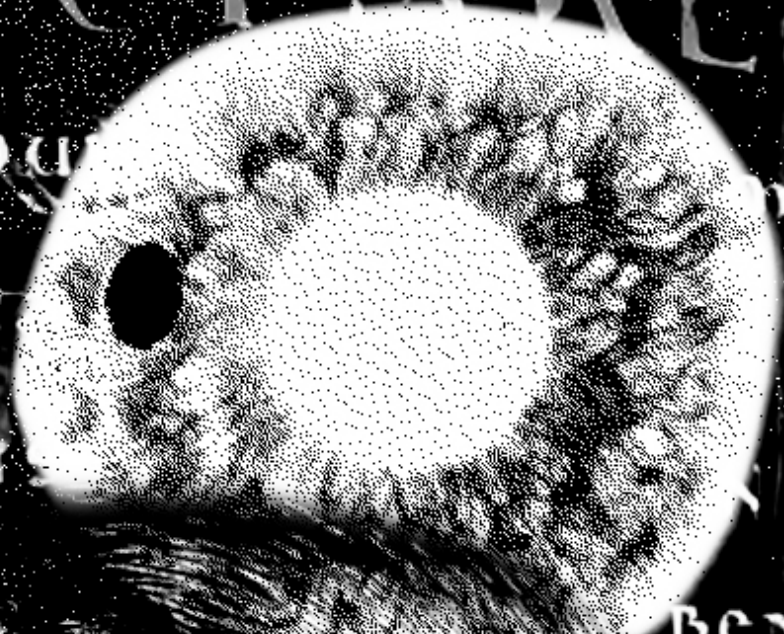


Professor Brashear's work can be viewed on his website  
<https://www.fredbrashear.com>

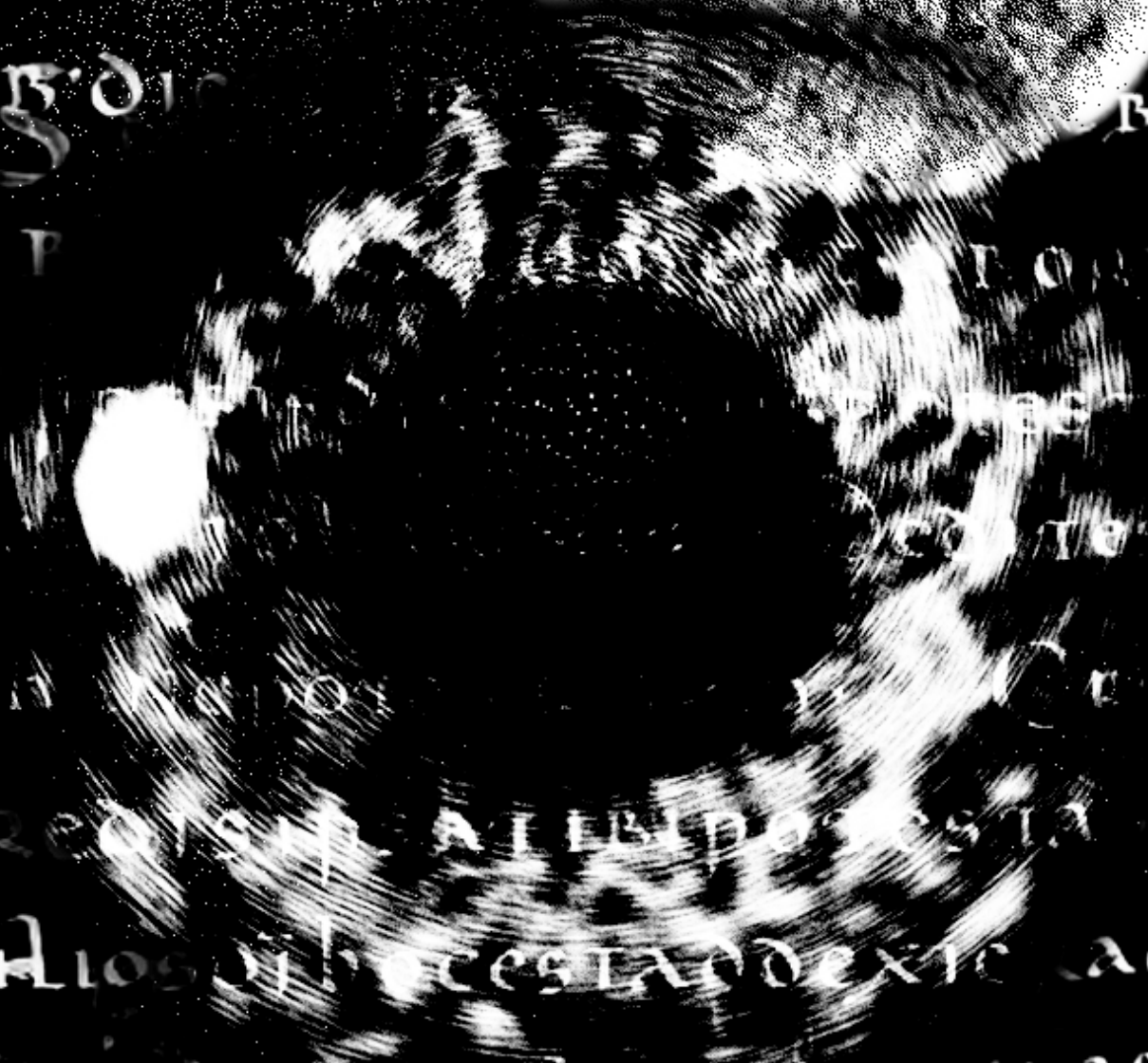


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Design by Elijah Martinez

# Abditory Saudade

Zéa Faulker

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etched, effaced, and entangled  
are the elegies trapped in these walls.  
the memories that lied down to rest are corroded,  
yet still tangible.  
rust punctured are these crevices, creeping around  
and up, this  
room is trying to breathe. these  
drubbed doors, clinging to their once  
stalwart hinges, unveil their shrieks  
with eldritch -  
leaky light from the eroded  
roofing makes an offering of  
deliverance from the darkness.  
love between two kindred  
souls used to flourish and grow  
between these moss walls. now,  
spring seeds are scattered -  
a sense of paeon adrift on these loose, aloof pages.  
planted for the sake of new beginnings.  
  
a palmipsest left for all unbeknownst of looking.

*presented by Moments of Poetry*

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Managing Editor and Design Editor  
Elijah Martinez  
Assistant Design Editor



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"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." -Pablo Picasso



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