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This issue has been an especially inspirational process. As the new editors, we Zoomed over the summer to talk about life in lockdown, art, style inspirations and finally...what we would do with V Magazine? The lockdown, the uncertain state of US domesticity, the end of the runway, of galleries, museums...of culture it seemed. Here we were, throwing out ideas and big plans into the midsts of uncertainty and we didn't even know if we would be able to get an issue done, let alone try out new things.

So when we say this process has been an inspirational one, we truly mean it. Flick through the magazine and it is obvious that this has been a work of love and determination, by us and our contributors. The commitment and energy from our community to create and collaborate on projects despite everything going on has been near overwhelming. It makes sense now, that in the void, people would look inwards to create and it felt especially important to provide a place for those creations.

V Mag, at its best, has always been about being a space for creative people to get...creative. V Mag always aspires to fulfill that need for expressive spaces. This issue is no different, only both in staff and content we have been conscious of ensuring the magazine makes more efforts to be inclusive and broad-reaching. It's an effort that should only grow stronger as our community expands, as we hope it will. We are also keeping up efforts to expand the boundaries of our magazine through social media, regularly showcasing our featured artists and contributors in an effort to recognize the people behind the work. We intend to keep growing the magazine as a platform for connecting possible collaborators, as with Claire's alluring fashion films and our new student music playlist- Which is to say, there will be plenty more exciting things ahead.

As always, we are grateful to the amazing creatives who put in their time and effort to keep this beautiful project alive. We're proud to showcase the incredible artists in our community and grateful for their trust in us. We're so excited for you to read it!

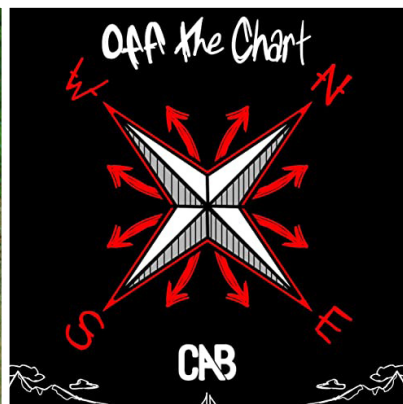
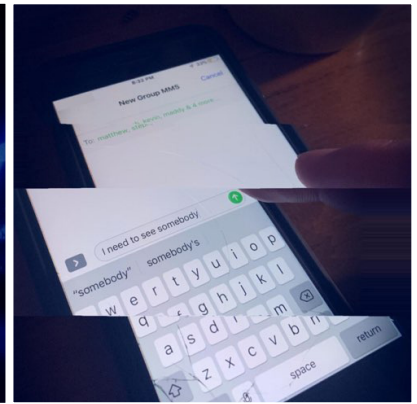
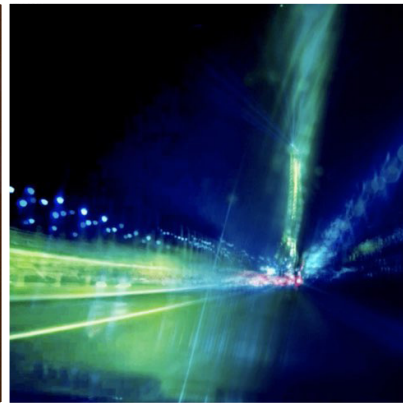
For everyone involved, this will hopefully be a bright spot on 2020. Here's looking forward to an even brighter year.

Christina Hara & Andre Hirschler

Handwritten signatures of Christina Hara and Andre Hirschler in black ink. Christina's signature is on the left and Andre's is on the right.

FROM THE
A LETTER *EDITORS*

SELECTED AND COMPILED BY OUR FRIENDS AT WXTJ. IN THE ABSENCE OF LIVE MUSIC, PLEASE KICK BACK AND SURROUND YOURSELVES WITH THE SOUNDS OF UP AND COMING TALENTS (MAYBE EVEN FRIENDS) AS YOU FLICK THROUGH OUR PAGES. HOPEFULLY, THIS COCOON OF CREATIVITY CAN FEED YOUR SOUL A BIT. WE KNOW IT DID OURS.



THE PLAYLIST: VMAG X WXTJ

DEBAJO CETERUS

CANARY COURTNEY JACOBS

ICONS KARYNN

QUARANTINEMUZIK VOL 4 VREDE

CLARITY ARNAV

I NEED TO SEE SOMEBODY HUNTER CARLTON

MISTAKE AGAIN PETER WELLMAN

SAIL CAB

HEAT OF THE SUN JOHNNY GRANT



poetry

prayer, love, and & other displays of devotion

Jayla Hart

I often feel the need to pray when I'm with You
not sure for what
or to whom
but always thinking of You

hands clasped over my heart
I say a prayer every time it skips a beat,
sweeping me off my feet - You did

and I wish I could say that I learned how to pray
as a child
but I didn't,
but I still wanna learn

You make me wanna learn how to pray
at the end of each day,
we kneel, knee to knee with our heads bowed
eyes closed
blushing under the silence of uncertainty

why can I hear my heart shouting to the heavens?
why does this feel like heaven?

I don't know but I'm still trying to pray
a freckled, flustered fool who never went to bible
school
mimicking You without noticing

counting my breaths like it's spare change to drop
in a collection plate
I'd drop my heart in your lap just for You to hear
how loudly it palpitates

I wonder if I'm praying correctly
weary that this may look like sacrilege
but any space with You in it is sacred

I can't help but call your arms my sanctuary
keeping me safe without making a sound
I wonder if You can hear my prayers

slipping between gaps in my sweaty palms
worship weathering away as my mind wanders

praying makes me anxious
sends me searching for questions with no answers
You make me anxious
send me searching for answers to no questions

lost in the thoughts hanging over my head
I'm asking the angels for guidance,
blessed be the Lovers who find their way back to each
other
they say,

while we're still sitting here in silence
heads bowed, knee to knee
soaking up all this sanctified uncertainty

perhaps I'm awaiting on divine intervention
certain this relationship is a miracle-in-the-making
trying to transcend all the trials in front of us

mercy finding its way to my lips
tells me to be patient,
reminds me that prayer is no different than love -
it only gets better with practice
that's why we have to do it every day

today, our hearts beat to the same hymn
our souls dancing to a song only we know
its melody makes my heart skip a beat

so I stop to say another prayer
and this time, I'm sure You heard it





WHEN I WAS SEVEN I WANTED TO BE A PRINCESS, TOO

SO MY MOTHER CREATED PRINCESS MOBUTU

BY: OLIVIA KEENAN

**pre-princess-tiana girls / gen-z-carol's-daughter girls / disney-forgotten-millennium-cusp-born girls / 9/11-baby-and-still-no-dark-barbie-dolls girls / only-sassy-Black-women-on-nickelodean girls / I gotchu

call me mobutu / means whatever you need it to / these girls don't have a mother language / your mother made me up to make up for a motherland and lack thereof / I am from where you are from

none of this sleeping beauty-type shit / I have been awake for 1000 years / none of this snow-white-type shit / I am coated in cocoa beans / none of this cinderella-type shit / I dance fucking barefoot

I am not a slave / I repeat / I am not a slave / I am not a slave story / I am not enslaved to a story / my name in all the fairy tales / my garb in all the Halloween stores / I got constellations across the whole sky

I know how to cure generational self loathing / all my pages are black / all my words are black / no white shit dictates this book / every Black woman's name is written in the acknowledgments / how can you hate yourself now?

you get a princess in me! / you get a story in me! / you don't have to circle the whole continent when asked where you are from / you don't have to say "I'm sorry" when you can't answer where you are from

this is not english / you want a language? / my name syllabic / new speech / I speak in charismatic tongues / mobutu / moon bloom tune / bumotu / bloom moon tune / tumobu / tune moon bloom / you know what I mean, pre-princess tiana girl / the moon a black woman who sings when she rises / the tune a singing woman who rises from black moon/ the bloom! the bloom a moon woman rising to black songs

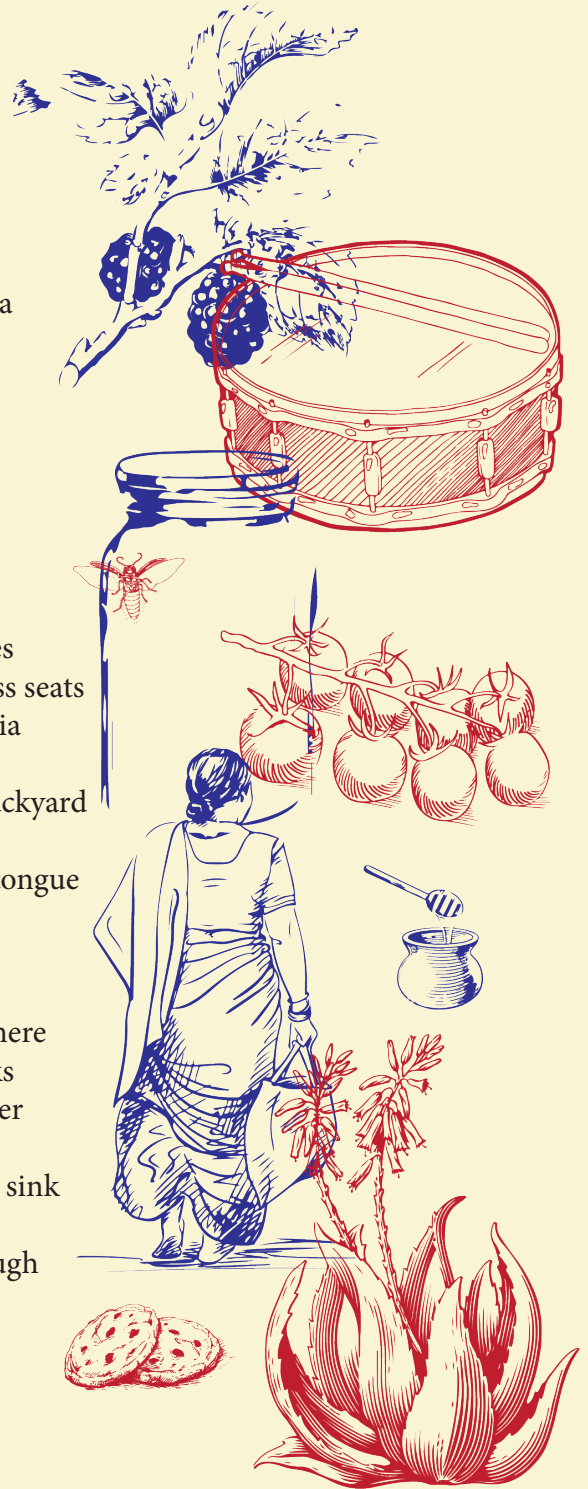
what I'm saying is / I gotchu / you come from somewhere / you are a descendant of royalty just like the other girls with stories / you are an ascendant of soul music and sixteenth notes and enslavery and sunday sabbath and goddamn. wait 'til they make a movie about us! / PRINCESS MOBUTU(S!) / you! get a story too**

MOTHERLAND

By: *Sonia Chandra*

Where are you from?
 asks the blonde-haired blue-eyed boy-man
'Northern Virginia, near DC.'
No, but where are you really from?
 And in that moment I wish to
 strike his premise, a reticulated cobra
 To kill it with venom and swallow it whole,
leave him only a dense remnant.
Yet, I simmer down all that brown woman rage
into Southern Hospitality.
He leaves before my mouth shapes a reply.

But to answer your question now:
I am from my elementary school's mulberry trees
 from football-game marching band melodies
 from bus rides with ear buds stretched across seats
I am from sunset syrup dripping down over suburbia
 from fireflies kept in mason jars
 from sun-ripened cherry tomatoes in the backyard
I am from stumbling over my sari at weddings
 from tongue-tied tripping over my mother tongue
 from not having a mother tongue
I am from my mother, borne here
 from her mother, born elsewhere
 from mitochondrial Eves' dropping everywhere
I am from some supernova scattering strange quarks
 from interstellar stardust snowballed together
 from fundamental forces forged
I am from galaxy hair dye swirling in the bathroom sink
 from scraped knees and homegrown aloe
 from gentle hands and too much cookie dough
I am from resilience.
I am from hope.
I am from love.
Do you even know where you are from?



three kids in a trench coat pretending to be one adult

“Ye of little faith!
I, too, am like you
An adult!
A whole real person!
Look at me in my
Adult sized trench coat
And my briefcase
What more proof
Do you need of adulthood
Than matching the buttons
To their respective holes
And a briefcase?”

Now please sir, let me walk
Through security without
Taking off my coat
I need to catch a flight home
I don't have time
To take my coat off
Do you know how long
These buttons took?

Please let me go
I don't remember which flight
I'm taking I need to see
Which way I'm headed”

Ye of little arms
Ye of little legs, fingers, nose, toes,
everything in between
Ye of cradle-sized torso
I hope you got what you were looking for
I hope you figured out where home starts
What memories it resembles
Who's waiting up for you with the porch light on

Ye of adult sized heart
My mom used to tell me stories of how when she feels small
She imagines herself standing on the shoulders of her mother and her grandmother
Who was under your trench coat?

Did it work?

By: Isabella Salcedo



WHAT IF

By Zoey Fox

TW: mention of self-harm

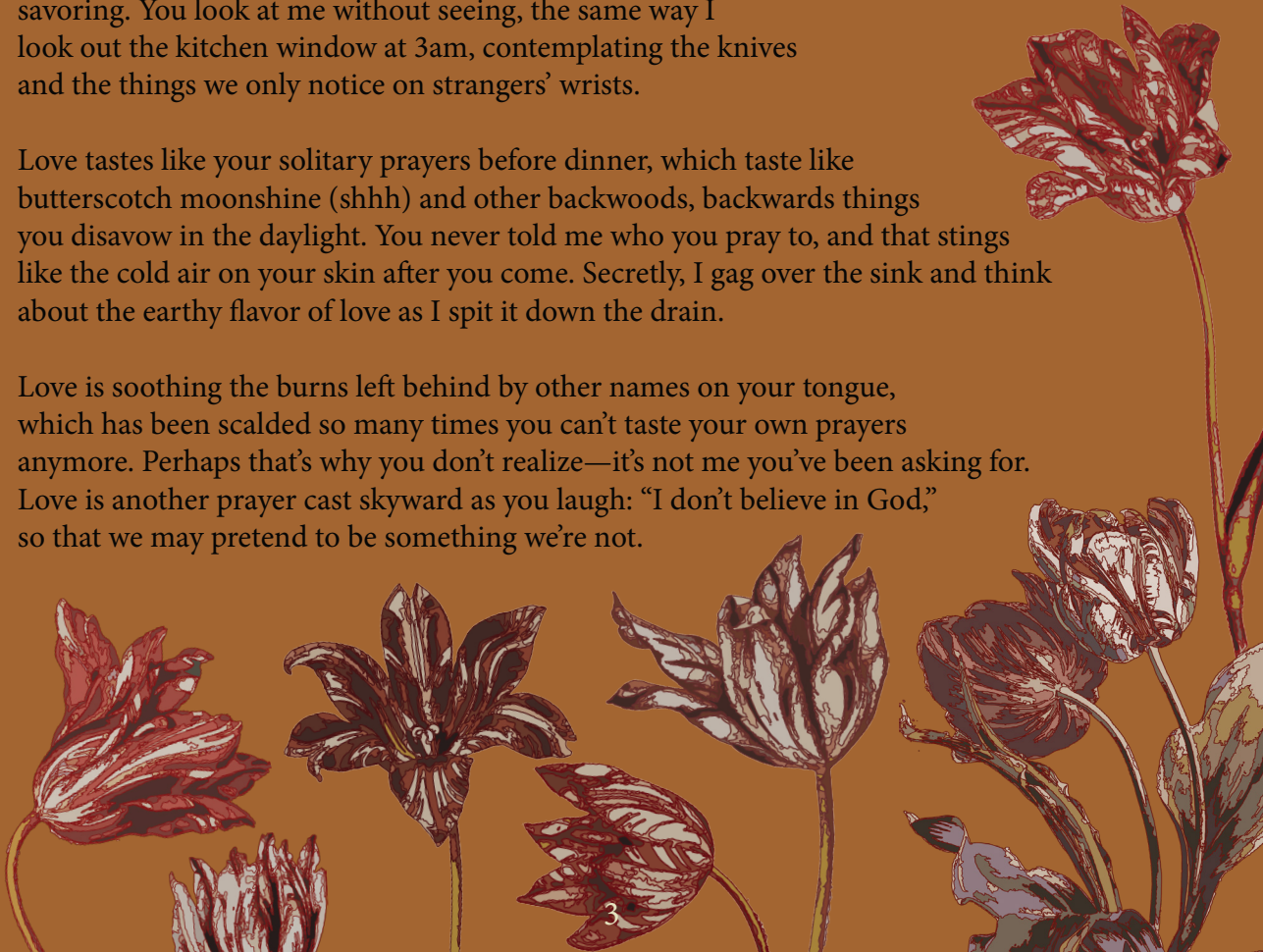
Love looks like twin rocking chairs on the porch you always wanted, overlooking our suburb of my unfollowed dreams, where we manicure the lawn: ravage the dandelion roots and raze the wild strawberry plants. You mistook my azaleas for weeds and ripped them out of the garden so I hung a still-life in the kitchen. Pink petals peer over my shoulder as I make breakfast.

Love sounds like the daily recitation of your shiny new grudges against drivers who don't use their signals to change lanes. You collect them—make, model, sin—on the morning commute; you take them out and polish them in the day's peaceful moments. When you deliver them to me nightly, your anger is like my flowers on the wall—always fresh.

Love feels like your blind kisses tickling my fingers, my wrists. Your lips seek the next scrap of my exposed skin without pausing, without savoring. You look at me without seeing, the same way I look out the kitchen window at 3am, contemplating the knives and the things we only notice on strangers' wrists.

Love tastes like your solitary prayers before dinner, which taste like butterscotch moonshine (shhh) and other backwoods, backwards things you disavow in the daylight. You never told me who you pray to, and that stings like the cold air on your skin after you come. Secretly, I gag over the sink and think about the earthy flavor of love as I spit it down the drain.

Love is soothing the burns left behind by other names on your tongue, which has been scalded so many times you can't taste your own prayers anymore. Perhaps that's why you don't realize—it's not me you've been asking for. Love is another prayer cast skyward as you laugh: "I don't believe in God," so that we may pretend to be something we're not.





CREATIVE WRITING

falling INTO holes

by Grace Breiner

Holes are Forgetting

I can't remember my first kiss. I remember the boy and the room. I remember he was older than me, but we were both children. I remember the bed I was sitting on and the blue comforter and that there was a door in his room that he said led to some kind of attic. I remember being curious about this secret place, and even though he didn't let me open the door, I touched the knob anyways. I remember before and after but everything in between is blank. I don't think it was particularly traumatic; it's just missing.

I think about the fact that this information is missing occasionally but really only when I kiss someone and it feels like trying to remember something I've forgotten.

Holes are Breaking Up

I've only ever dated men and been uncomfortable in relationships. I'm not sure the two are correlated. My parents are separated, my grandparents are all divorced, so it might just be hereditary—or maybe, we're all gay; now that would be something.

I could give these men what they wanted, but they could not do the same. They tried—hard. They asked—what do you want? What the fuck, I thought, I don't know. Stop asking me! I can't take you seriously when your hand is in my pants, and you're looking at me with this kind of confused, helpless expression. It's horribly comedic, this image in my head: a man's head hovering over mine, insistent and earnest, his hand lost below the zip of my jeans.

I broke up with them. For a lot of different reasons that add up to, I don't know how to tell you that when you touch me my skin doesn't feel like mine. Golden men, my terrible trophies. I wonder if they'll ever know.

(Un)identical Twin

ZOE PHAM

They say I had a twin.

They said she was identical, but we're anything but. I shouldn't know that, because she's dead, but I do.

I know because I still see her—in the corner of my eye, staring back from the mirror, stalking my every move. She wants to reclaim her life, the one I stole from her.

I'd call her a ghost but ghosts can't hurt you.

She'd be everything I wasn't. Long hair, soft smiles, dressed in skirts, dresses, whatever my mother wanted her to be, proud of her femininity. She'd be the perfect girl, my mother croons. I don't say anything because it's true.

I would know, because I sure as hell am not one. A girl, that is. Instead, I'm a ticking time bomb in baggy clothes, years of confusion and resentment and doing my own thing, damn the consequences.

My twin haunts me with her unfulfilled legacy of womanhood.

She's my gender ghost.

Sometimes I fantasize that I'm an only child. "But you are one," people laugh. I beg to differ. My twin is living (undead?) proof of my blood ties.

She torments me, the way I present myself, the way I reject femininity like it's suffocating me (because it is).

It gets so bad sometimes, I wish I was the one who killed her when I had the chance. Eaten her in the womb. Can hate blossom before one is conscious? Before I even had teeth?



She tried to choke me in my sleep, once.

I woke up sweating, panting for air in twisted bedsheets, fingerprints bruised and branded into my neck. I woke up to her laugh.

The sensation haunted me. Her fingers were so gentle as they pressed down, down, down against my neck. So gentle that I was lucky to wake up at all.

I'm afraid she'll try again. Until I die, or let her take over from where I left off. Live her life as the perfect girl in my body. I'll be damned if I ever let her.

I'm armed, this time.

I hold my breath and the kitchen knife in my hand, waiting for her.

She never comes.

She hasn't tried to kill me again, as far as I know.

She only haunts.

Sometimes I still see her as I look away from my reflection. Admiring a blouse in the 'women's section' of clothing. On a date through a cafe window.

Sometimes I still dream of bloody nails and painted lips, the sensation of fingers wrapping around my neck, gentle and full of malice.

But only sometimes.

I'm still afraid of her.

But it won't stop me from living.

From being me.



Blowing Smoke

by Margaret Weinhold

Wisps of smoke rhythmically puffed out of the steel-gray chimney, catching in the wind and swirling into little tornadoes. The air was hot and thick, heightened by the inexhaustible production of the steel pipes. The heavy smoke, mingling with the clouds, left the sky void of color. Below the puffing chimneys, the streets and building were barren, melting and molding into the buildings as if they were conjoined. Lines were blurred, edges softened.

Upon a closer look, one woman sat with her back against the lumpen mass – perhaps a lopsided skyscraper – dangling a rolled piece of paper between two slender fingers. The edge of the paper burned a deep red as she lifted the cigarette to her pale lips and inhaled. As the smoke left her mouth, it followed the currents of the wind, joining the clouds and further poisoning the sky.

The woman leaned lazily back, allowing the colorless edges of the bricks to straighten the curve in her spine. Methodically, she lifted the cigarette to her lips every thirty seconds or so. Her eyes remained closed. Her sweater and pants hung limply from her limbs, swallowing her. The air, saturated with smoke and heat, made it hard to breathe.

Finishing her cigarette, she flicked the last ashes onto the pavement and steadied her feet beneath her. Rising up, she swayed. The tornadoes of smoke circled around her, yet she hardly seemed to notice. Her attention was stolen by the little girl in the window with yellow pigtails. She smiled. The girl smiled back.

The woman hadn't noticed another human on the street, and she hadn't expected to. Especially not today – not in this weather. The little girl motioned to the woman, inviting her in. "But where is the door?" she thought to herself. Surely there must be a door. Frantic to reach the girl in the window, the woman wound her way around the building – one, two, four times. Every time she turned the corner, she returned to the side she had started on.

Perhaps in an attempt for reassurance, the woman placed her hand on the ashy brick, feeling the smooth grooves of its surface. She frowned. The building was hot to the touch and when she removed her hand, a gray residue left traces on her palm. She turned toward the window and frowned. The little girl stared back at her, eyes open, mouth turned down on the edges in worried concentration.

Mechanically, the woman dug her hands in the back pocket of her pants, searching for another cigarette. Putting the paper tip to her lips, she took a long, thoughtful drag and slowly released the smoke, letting it linger in the air in front of her face. With each puff the smoke curled around the window frame,

blurring out the face of the girl in the window. The world grew fuzzy and began to melt away before the woman's eyes.

When she looked back, the girl in the window was gone. Even the window was no longer there. The street returned to a barren gray smokiness. The woman scrubbed her eyes with her free hand, wishing she could wash away the haze that had settled around her. Once more, she placed her hand against the gray brick building, yearning to steady herself. Her hand reached out, but came up empty. She extended her arm, grabbing for anything solid, but her hand touched air and nothing more.

She pulled another cigarette from her pocket, lifting it to her lips with a hungry desire. The air grew thicker. Layers of ash descended on the woman's clothing, scattered on the fabric like dirty snowflakes. The window was gone. The girl was gone. The building was gone.

The woman stood in a world of gray nothingness and continued to blow smoke.



Inverted Domesticity

PHOTOGRAPHER: LEO ZHANG
MODELS: MORGAN NEGRON, VICTORIA OLALEMI, LEVI SCHULT
STYLISTS: VANI AGARWAL, LYLA WARD

During lockdown, we all got a lot more familiar with our domestic spaces and chores, whether we wanted to or not. This photoshoot is a playful observation of how we lived and worked around domesticity, then how we might try to reinterpret and elevate our experience of that.



















A detailed architectural blueprint or floor plan serves as the background for the entire page. It features various lines, circles, and alphanumeric labels such as '102', '103', '104', '105', '106', '107', '108', '109', '110', '111', '112', '113', '114', '115', '116', '117', '118', '119', '120', '121', '122', '123', '124', '125', '126', '127', '128', '129', '130', '131', '132', '133', '134', '135', '136', '137', '138', '139', '140', '141', '142', '143', '144', '145', '146', '147', '148', '149', '150', '151', '152', '153', '154', '155', '156', '157', '158', '159', '160', '161', '162', '163', '164', '165', '166', '167', '168', '169', '170', '171', '172', '173', '174', '175', '176', '177', '178', '179', '180', '181', '182', '183', '184', '185', '186', '187', '188', '189', '190', '191', '192', '193', '194', '195', '196', '197', '198', '199', '200'.

HOW VIRGIL ABLOH

DISRUPTED

THE FASHION WORLD



BY MALIKA MALIK

Virgil Abloh's rise in the fashion world is unique and unlike any other fashion designer. Abloh is a gamechanger in the increasingly mainstream fashion circles. Abloh has no formal fashion education but uses his background as an architect and engineer to create a truly unique design ethos. Abloh's design ethos uses quotation marks and construction as an aesthetic, paying homage to his architectural background. Through his success, Abloh has made a lasting impression in an industry dominated by White designers. As a Black designer, Abloh is making history and helping set up the industry to welcome more diverse designers.

Abloh's rise is partially attributed to Kanye West who discovered Abloh in his hometown, Chicago. Virgil began his career designing album covers for Kanye. In 2012, Abloh founded his first company, Pyrex Vision, but quickly shut this project down after falling under criticism for taking Ralph Lauren flannel tops and printing "Pyrex 23" on them and reselling them for hundreds of dollars. He then rebranded and created Off-White, which Abloh defines as «the grey area between black and white as the color off-white.»

Off-White, sells everything from shoes, hoodies, and even home goods. Originally thought of as a brand for hypebeasts exclusively, Off-White expanded their ready-to-wear line and even designed wedding gowns, including one worn by Hailey Bieber. The company is based in Milan, Italy and many of the products are manufactured in Italy to reflect that the brand is innovating high-end, luxury fashion. Off-White is synonymous with its construction design elements. You can spot an Off-White product on the street with the trademark arrows, quotation marks, and red tags on many Off-White sneakers. Abloh's brand converges hype elements with classic clothing pieces such as purses and bags by adding an Off-White twist. Some of Off-White's bags feature straps with their iconic yellow strap with the Off-White logo, mimicking construction straps.

In addition, Off-White's highly coveted collaboration with Nike further pivoted Abloh to notoriety. The collection was named "The Ten" by Abloh. He redesigned ten of Nike's

most iconic sneakers, including the Air Force 1 and Nike Blazer sneakers, maintaining almost all of the original design elements of each sneaker whilst adding his signature Off-White design characteristics. Sneakerheads have flocked at every Nike x Off-White shoe release. The sneakers in the collection all come with the red tag and feature "air" in quotation marks, both are signature elements of Off-White sneakers, minus the Nike AIR. This unique design approach to maintain the original aesthetic of a shoe while adding Abloh's own elements differentiates him.

Through Abloh's designs, which bridge streetwear with luxury, high-end fashion, changes are occurring in the industry. Dior recently collaborated with Air Jordan, which is something no one would have predicted previously. More classic brands are embracing streetwear in their designs to satisfy younger customers in their market segment. This is a new trend that can be traced back to designers such as Virgil Abloh.

Once again, Louis Vuitton selecting Abloh as the men's Artistic Director points to a new shakeup in fashion. Iconic brands are no longer afraid to embrace hype design elements with their traditional design ethos. Abloh now adds his flair to the Louis Vuitton brand and the results are astronomical. Louis Vuitton's sales are soaring under his leadership. Abloh's designs provide a new, fresh reorientation to classic Louis Vuitton items such as their men's duffle bags and handbags.

Virgil Abloh defines Off-White as a resume for his creative pursuits. His designs for his own brand and other brands outside of his own exemplify this. Abloh is not concerned with fitting the traditional design model. However, Abloh's designs have not been met without criticism; he has been accused of plagiarism and having pieces that at times are very trivial. With that being said, Abloh told the New York Times in a 2017 interview that he "thrives off of no one." Perhaps, because of his determination to change what streetwear is defined as, Abloh has changed the perception of fashion. Abloh does not let failure stop him from redefining fashion in the contemporary era.



한 BY JUSTIN DAEHO KIM

A brew of emotions so strong, so conflicting, that it is thought to hold the power to convert the natural into the supernatural. Feeling too much of it could turn a person into a ghost. A grudge. Equal parts anger and sadness shackled together with an overarching sense of hopelessness and uncertainty. A specter that torments but rarely shows itself, preferring to lurk just out of view and threaten action at any given moment.

My uncle explained that this is the way that traditional Korean folklore characterizes the term **한** (Han), a word that is often argued to not translate directly into English. The shamanistic practices of ancient Korea and indirect expression of Han in modern times have left much open for artistic interpretation. Korean folk music, such as the oft-quoted Arirang, and contemporary music alike are tinged with a shadow of melancholy. My mother introduced me to one of the most representative examples of Han in art – the traditional dance of Salpuri. In it, a single dancer engages with a lengthy, white piece of cloth – the manifestation of Han. The act is hauntingly beautiful, depicting the dancer undergoing the many conflicting emotions that Han brings. While at times battling and attempting to disengage with it, the dancer cannot stand being separated from the cloth. By the end, they return back to the spot at which the act began. The matter of untying oneself from Han is depicted as fruitless.

My mother and father corroborated that the feeling of Han is a concoction of resentment and grief within one's general existence that is seldom acted upon but is instead internalized. While fairly succinct, these rough detailings do not do justice to the dizzying manner in which my family members arrived at a definition for Han. Each spoke as if it had been some time since they intentionally confronted the idea of the feeling, much less put it into words. From each of the parties, several qualifications were made along the way. Resentment but not revenge, sadness but not depression. For the outline of this haunting spirit to take shape, it required active retracing and reconsideration. Though certain shared descriptors support the idea of Han being a universal feeling, the diversity in responses are indicative of how the definition becomes infused by personal experience.

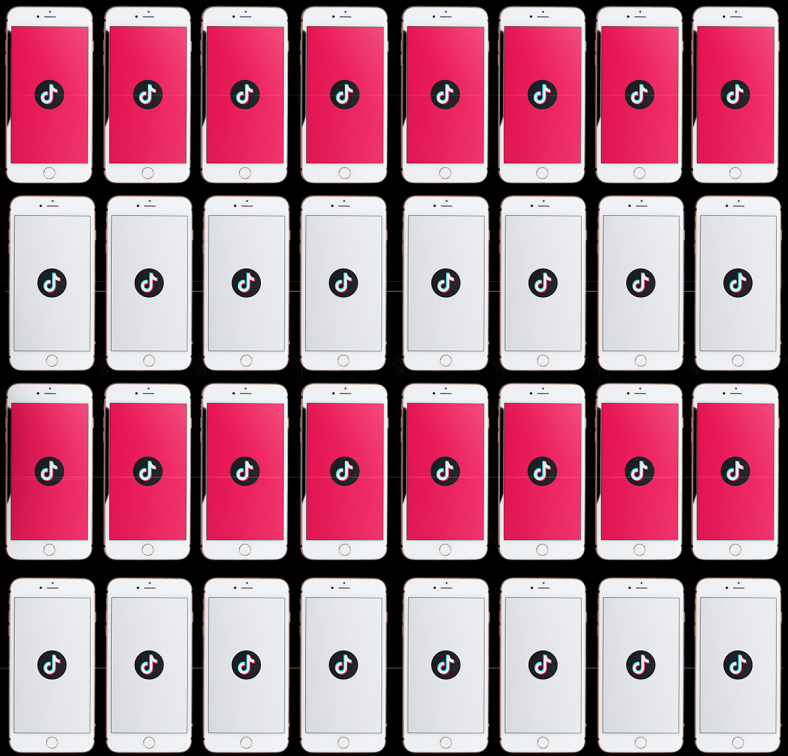
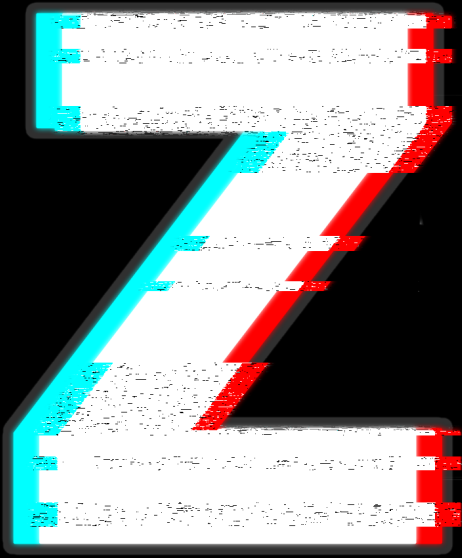
I find that the reason Han eludes simple translation is not because it is singularly felt by Koreans or because it attempts to bring a crowded number

of emotions under one umbrella, but because it is a matter that is rarely put into conscious thought. As my uncle put it, "Han is not expressed through active grumbling." The feeling is seldom worn on the sleeves of Koreans. While a tinge of it might be detectable in another's tone of voice or manner of carrying his or herself, it quickly slips out of grasp for the outside observer. In the same way, those experiencing Han appear unlikely to register its presence into their stream of conscious thought. It becomes a part of existence that escapes confinement in the wide meadows of the unconscious psyche. It fades in and out of reality. A ghost. My father acknowledges the feeling of Han as similar to emotions experienced by enslaved people in the United States. Their feelings of hopelessness and frustration were forcibly repressed, causing their discomfort to materialize in ways that could not be directly vocalized. Just as Han seeps into Korean culture through music, enslaved people created a rich system of communication utilizing spiritual hymns as a way of sharing plans and releasing feelings of frustration surrounding their treatment. With this in mind, it appears that the idea of Han is not one tied intrinsically to cultural background but more so to external circumstance. Yet, it must be acknowledged that the idea is seated in the Korean identity prominently enough for it to come forward when beckoned for questioning.

When a spirit acts in tangible ways that shape relationships and interactions, it is no longer a mere ghost but a demon. There is an idea that Han has the ability to be transferred through generations, that it creeps from parent to child simply through the former's mannerisms and way of carrying themselves.

Reckoning with Han has caused me to look over my shoulder with apprehension. Had a spirit been haunting me as I traversed through life without my knowledge? Has every feeling of anger, hopelessness, and grief been caressed by the invisible touch of Han? The stipulations of Han go deeper than I had initially perceived. There is much to grapple with but little to physically grasp onto. But knowing a demon's name and its ways of working is the first step in ameliorating the curses and burdens it brings. The name is now etched into the basal level of my personal identity. Presently, I know not whether that gives it more or less power over me.





United in Individuality

GenZ's Spin on the Age Old American Dream

WRITTEN BY LYDIA "LU" MACKENZIE

The snappy words "Live Free or Die" ring just as loudly in the ears of today's zealous Americans as they did in those of the Yankee soldiers. But the free-spirited phrase is also stuck in the heads of an unlikely group - GenZ youth. Our unwavering obsession with individualism manifests itself most plainly in the illusive idea of the American Dream, preaching that if you work hard enough and trust in the nature of a market economy, you will supposedly reap success unimaginable anywhere else. The key is that it is up to you. No one else can help or hurt your pursuit of happiness. But in all actuality, and considering America's tireless linkage to its own birth story, there is truly nothing more conformist than to be an individual.

With fervor or without, Americans subscribe themselves to a system that universalizes singularity. Being unique, following an unfollowed path, claiming autonomy -- it all feeds into the status quo of individualist Western society. As time has brought about new voices, however, the patriotism behind this concept has lost its appeal.

One of the fiercest adversaries to a traditionalist notion of individuality, Gen Z tends to reject the infatuation with the classic American ideals so rampant among its preceding generations. They take to social media to rebel: scorning capitalism as hopeless and unfulfilling, expressing concern for the fate of the country, and manifesting a future where anxiety

escapes them. Yet in doing so, they fail to recognize one ironic similarity that links them to their predecessors: a collective attraction to individualism at its core.

With the rise of meme-culture and the recent development of TikTok, young people have found value in producing and consuming media that appeals specifically to their generation. Anyone can become a creator, and many find success in pursuit of the instant, relatively attainable fame that comes with posting comedic content. A fifteen second clip can yield millions of views and thousands of likes. Though not out of the ordinary to know someone who has reached that number or to

have done so yourself, it produces no less of a rush to receive such notable validation. The process of becoming “TikTok famous” is in essence a modern embodiment of the American Dream. And just as is the case for individuality in the context of America, individuality in the context of social media feeds into conformity.

At the crux of memes, and more relevantly TikTok, is relatability. We are coming to realize that our lives are more alike than they are different, that we all watched the same shows growing up and that we all breakdown when our workload feels unbearable. But this relatability has a counterbalance. The conventionally mainstream persona is now being dragged as “basic” while labels like “indie” and “alternative”, traits that by definition imply a severance from the normal crowd, have sparked popularity on all internet platforms. This phenomenon is propelled by the TikTok algorithm, which is designed to cater the content that viewers receive to what they have already liked. Many would say that it is not a redeeming quality to be on the “side” of the app that dispenses videos of Addison Rae lipsyncing or Noah Beck dancing. Both figures are immensely popular, but they exude a superficial

The process of becoming “TikTok famous” is in essence a modern embodiment of the American Dream.

impression in the eyes of a kid who rejects conventionality. Yet this becomes counterintuitive given that as more and more people take the “non-conformist” stance, it becomes on-trend to be different.

This concept comes into even sharper focus when considering the main character complex so widely-adopted by Gen Z on TikTok. Everyone wants to be the protagonist of their own coming-of-age story, emphasis on everyone. Thus, not only does the essence of the American Dream appear in the context of fame on social media, it also becomes relevant every time you stare out of your window wistfully just in case a camera is filming you. No matter the circumstance, individualism is a tricky, often paradoxical, principle that we can critique to our hearts’ desire but also cling to as a way to feel important in a world where it is more natural to relate.

So though “Yankee Doodle” may be playing on loop in the heads of American patriots while today’s youth shuffle Lana del Rey in an attempt to romanticize life on the walk to class, both songs carry a similar meaning. We all like to think of ourselves as different from the rest.




Clothing wields the power to speak and be heard. The clothes we wear are an homage to our lived experiences. To many people, fashion is the only instrument they have to share their emotions and tell their stories with full autonomy. Fashion is liberating because it empowers people to be loud and fully embrace their identities. Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) use fashion to carve out their own authentic spaces in a culture that continuously permits exploitation, misrepresentation, and erasure by non-BIPOC.

Fashion has been a medium of expression in movements throughout time. Clothing serves as iconography of

the causes that underrepresented communities are fighting for. The power of the protestors' uniforms makes their message more memorable and distinct. From the Black Panther activists who wore turtlenecks and berets in the 1960s to the marchers who wore brightly colored suits and elegant dresses for Black Lives Matter in 2020, clothing choices can echo the resilience and strength of the people while inspiring us to continue mobilizing for the future. This year is an example of how BIPOC fashion designers, mainly Black creators, have been at the forefront of the fashion industry because their art is a reflection of how powerful self-representation can be in creating culture.

FASHION WEEK FROM HOME


WRITTEN BY ADINA MOBIN



Harlem's Fashion Row (HFR) held a virtual event for New York Fashion Week in September that highlighted Black talent in fashion through pre-recorded videos and pre-produced runway scenarios. HFR leveraged the setbacks of COVID-19 and created a masterful celebration of Black excellence. The event's theme was "Black is the New Black," drawing attention to underrepresented or unacknowledged creators who have been significant influences for decades. This fashion show was a culmination of the artists' life experiences and raw creativity. This past May, Hanifa launched a collection on Instagram Live with no models, only the garments draped over walking 3D figures. This digital show was unprecedented and visionary because of how innovative its delivery was. The designer, Anifa Mvuemba, says that she uses Instagram to promote her business. The Hanifa Instagram is a beautiful mosaic of Black and Brown women in Mvuemba's luxury clothing. Mvuemba explains that when she started designing clothes, she was designing for herself. Now, she continues to design for women of color and for body types that are underrepresented in the fashion industry. Similarly, Rihanna's clothing brand Savage X Fenty sent waves throughout the fashion industry because of how groundbreaking

its most recent fashion show was in both its clothing and its models. The fashion show was released on Amazon Prime in October and featured a diverse array of models. The show has enjoyed a significant amount of praise because BIPOC models were equally represented, not tokenized. A wide range of body types were included as well. Rihanna's show is an important step forward in the future of fashion and proves that the world of fashion can no longer be tolerant of homogeneity.

The increasing visibility of marginalized populations in the fashion industry is a testament to the power of their original and creative art. Clothing is the vehicle for genuine self-expression, and BIPOC have utilized fashion to amplify their voices. BIPOC have redefined the boundaries of fashion in an evolving world while revolutionizing the way we imagine clothing and the way we perceive culture.

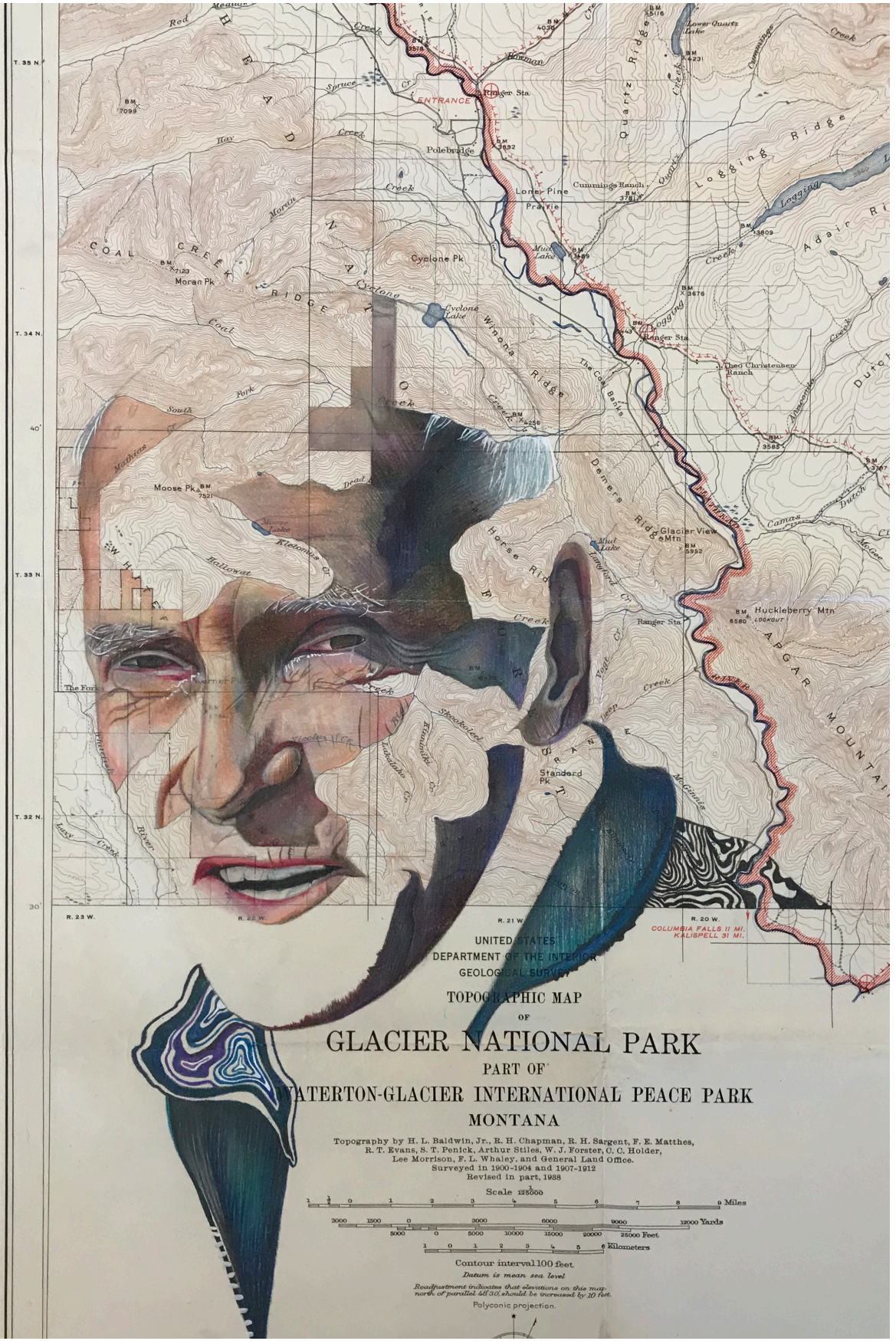




CELIA KELTY

SECOND YEAR

The series featured in this issue is a selection from my more expansive collection of portraiture. The concept that I addressed in this specific venture was the relationship between my family members and the locations in their lives... and how that interaction has affected me personally. This concentration constitutes ten portraits in total: my mother, father, sister, two brothers, four grandparents, and myself. Each of these people was composed in either colored pencil, graphite, ink, string art, or collage, & involved a geographical map. The sample shown here consists of a colored pencil drawing of my maternal grandfather over Glacier National Park, Montana, where he worked and scaled mountains for many years of his life. As my vision evolved, I created a micron pen piece of my younger brother in an abstract topographical form, symbolizing how, in his youth, he has not yet found “his place”, and is forming his own map. Lastly, the finishing piece to my series was a self portrait, which I created by combining aspects from all the previous nine pieces, demonstrating how I am the combination of all those who have come before me, and the places that shaped them.



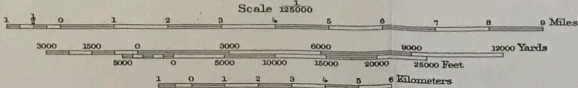
T. 35 N.
T. 34 N.
40'
T. 33 N.
T. 32 N.
30'

R. 23 W. R. 22 W. R. 21 W. R. 20 W.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
OF
GLACIER NATIONAL PARK
PART OF
ATERTON-GLACIER INTERNATIONAL PEACE PARK
MONTANA

Topography by H. L. Baldwin, Jr., R. H. Chapman, R. H. Sargent, F. E. Matthes,
R. T. Evans, S. T. Penick, Arthur Stiles, W. J. Forster, O. C. Holder,
Lee Morrison, F. L. Whaley, and General Land Office.
Surveyed in 1900-1904 and 1907-1912
Revised in part, 1988



Contour interval 100 feet

Datum is mean sea level
Roadstapment indicates that elevations on this map
north of parallel 42°30' should be increased by 10 feet.

Polyconic projection



Self

Neither Up or Down





Cluster

ABREALE HOPKINS

THIRD YEAR

My name is Abreale Hopkins, a third year Studio Art and African American Studies major. As a Black woman and African American Studies major, my work is created in the context of Blackness in America. To a certain degree, each piece I make is a self-portrait. Painting is the way in which I process emotions, as well as the manifestation of how I process the world. Each piece is connected to my identities in a multitude of ways. Though they are “self-portraits,” I’m more interested in emotion than the subject. My goal is to always evoke some kind of feeling or thought in any viewer that comes across my work. These range from passion, to anger, to melancholy, to revolution, and so much more. I would also like to add that art, specifically painting, has a history of elitence and exclusivity. I do not want my art to be viewed in that light. I want everyone who comes across it to think whatever they choose to think; to feel whatever they may feel. To say my art needs to be analyzed in a scholarly way is simply inaccessible. My desire to be an artist is not built upon a goal of being exclusive. I want to be an artist to work against the institutions that say Black art is low. I want to spread joy, care, and imagination through each piece I paint.

The paintings included: *Cluster*, *Neither Up or Down*, and *Self* are all pieces created under my exploration of “the gaze.” Each piece should be interpreted with the questions of: Who is looking, and what is looking back? What baggage do these two gazes come with? What do you decide to project onto the subject of the paintings? I have my answers to these questions, but in all honesty, it does not matter. What matters is what it does for you. Giving a long spiel about my interpretations of the paintings would limit the audience’s bounds of imagination. I want people to sit with emotions, baggage, and imagination when they see my paintings. This is just the beginning of my career as an artist. My work will evolve as my politics change, as I learn and unlearn, age, and grow. There is no telling what lies ahead of me. Though there is uncertainty, I am extremely thankful to be able to document my life through this medium.



What grew from the clearing

SOPHIE SCOTT

SECOND YEAR

My art is inspired by memory and personal identity, in that it seeks to preserve scenes from my past to keep them for the future; I want to say, “Sophie was here!” Because memories become blurred and dream-like over time, I reference surrealism in a lot of my paintings, and I like to juxtapose what’s more clear or real, and what’s “fake” or simply undefinable. You can see more of my paintings via [@somisc](#) on Instagram.



Ernie M.S.

Fairies lay eggs

SELF - IMP

Self-impressions is our capturing and combining the different self-impressions of our stylists, sometimes elusive, often striking and always playful. We invited our models to style themselves in their favourite outfits that they felt best represented different sides of them. The idea was to have a single model represent totally different aspects of themselves, stylistically, really expressing how style affects self-representation.



RESESSIONS

PHOTOGRAPHER: GRAHAM BARBOUR
MODELS: SADIA AHMADI, JALEN RASHAD, JENNY KIM

















THE ARBOY
LEGEND OF THE FALL



2017 WORLD TOUR







