

VOICES

2017



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BEST OF MAGAZINE

Voices 2017 is proud to announce Awards for the Best of Magazine

LITERARY:

Jan Bosman
Brown Paper Bag

VISUAL ART:

Jamie Cabanas
Panda Delight

MUSIC:

Craig Schwartz (August Hotel)
12AM

Voices wishes to acknowledge students for their excellence in literature, music and visual arts.

THE DAN RISCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Dan Risch Memorial Scholarship is awarded to outstanding and promising visual art students. This Scholarship is generously funded by Dan's family and friends in memory of former MCC art student Dan Risch.

The 2017 Dan Risch Memorial Scholarship winners are:

Morgaine Polit
Dominique Sanders

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of *Voices* to recognize and showcase the visual arts, musical and literary talents of McHenry County College students. *Voices* provides a forum for students to practice curation, jurying, editing, and technical production, which enhances the artistic experience and provides real art-world experience.

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Voices publishes work that reflects the literary, visual, and musical points-of-view of contemporary community college students. Although *Voices* does not organize content thematically, the student editors, who are appointed annually by the faculty advisors in each discipline, select work that represents the contemporary zeitgeist of the McHenry County College community.



JAMIE CABANAS
Panda Delight



OIL ON CANVAS, 32" X 32"

JAN BOSMAN

Poetry

BROWN PAPER BAG

Etta Mae's momma groomed her
to marry a rich man,
taught her to dress glamorous—
everything shiny or revealing.

Her momma coached her to talk
like a high-class lady,
laid belt lashes across her back
for dropping her g's on *runnin'* or *eatin'*.

Her momma dragged her
to the First Baptist Church
where the richest and lightest-skinned
negroes came to be worshiped.

When a rich man finally found Etta Mae,
his mother held a brown paper bag
up next to Etta's cheek and judged her
just a smidge lighter than the bag.

"Welcome to the family,"
his mother said.

HALEY CREAGER
Shielded



OIL ON CANVAS, 35" X 40"

women are flowers.

women are flowers. they come in various shapes and sizes,
various colors; they're best when arranged.
they're best when watered 2-3 times daily.
they're best when they're kept in glass vases.
they like sunlight and pearls.
they like boys.
they like pollination.
they're mysteries, the untold secrets of nature, the hidden glance, the shy smile.
they're flowers, bobbing their stamens in the wind.
we pick them up and they die.

women are not flowers.
they are not the leaves you crush beneath your tires.
they are the twisted flesh and bone of any man, the strain of a soul,
the same gnarled teeth and jagged fingers we admire on anyone else.

women are not flowers.

why would you say that?

EMILY KOSTELNY
Wound

OIL ON CANVAS, 24" X 24"



BLOOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED


I can still hear our child-voices as they rang through the neighborhood. Cries of “ghost in the graveyard!” echo through the seductive summer nights, fireflies italicizing the importance of youth. Crisp autumnal evenings bring to mind the kind of trick-or-treating that is now obsolete: roaming from house to house long after the sun went down for the pure joy of pretending to be afraid. With winter came our sleds, brisk air and heady speed rolled into one exalted experience. Spring brought euphoria and the shedding of heavy winter coats as well as an intense gladness to see the soft beginnings of green budding in the trees.

We had acres and acres at our disposal and our imaginations were limitless, effortless. Whether our bikes were fiery and spirited steeds, or we were characters from our favorite book or movie, there was a place for everyone. We were a gang of wide-ranging ages and for the most part, we were harmonious. Though none of us spoke in school, the neighborhood brought our congress back together merely upon entering. As scattered as we were when we were apart, our alliance was fierce and strong when we were together. We were united in the ownership we claimed of all the woods and fields we roamed with wild abandon. It would have been heresy to claim boredom; as a

unit we had a wealth of games in our arsenal to occupy us, and it felt like we had all the time in the world.

Our world was a giant “T”, straight down Hillview with Timber Trail blunting into a cul-de-sac on each end. As long as we never ventured past the stop sign at the entrance to the neighborhood, all was well, and rarely did it occur to us to want to. None of us realized, but as long as our parents could hear our voices they had no reason to interfere or intervene. We were left to our own devices. Involving a parent in a dispute was akin to breaking moral and ethical code; we always fought our own battles and worked things out on our own. The only rule we allowed to be imposed upon us by adults was that we leave no one out, and we didn’t.

We all knew every detail of every acre, as only children can; each yard was as familiar to us as our own. We never would have considered our own parents’ yard as personal property—the entire neighborhood belonged to all of us. Staying indoors was something reserved for inclement weather or illness and in summer we went home for meals only. Those months seemed endless and eternal, and as they wore on we were dirty, tanned, and blissfully happy. By unwritten rule we would meet after break-



fast and the day would inevitably form, taking on a life all its own. It required no conscious effort to decide what would shape our hours.

The neighborhood was our Camelot, our Narnia, our Middle Earth. It was an enchanted world, it was a territory of hidden corners and vast space. And it was ours. There were no such things as play dates, smart phones, tablets. I doubt they would have piqued our interest much if there had been. We much preferred the intoxicating draw of the outdoors and games that came out of our heads instead of out of a box. We were not interested in anything that would confine us or organize us overmuch. Those things would only have limited us, made our world smaller and less mysterious. I cannot help but grieve a little at their conception. I think what children today have missed and I would not have traded what we had for my future iPhone if my life depended on it.

The magic that was both the neighborhood itself and period in time had everything to do with freedom and imagination. It had to do with softball in the Mingotti's yard, capture the flag in the McCarthy's, night games in ours. It had to do with lying on our backs on the Heil's hill to watch the stars come out while discussing the concept of eternity. It

had to do with climbing trees and building forts, and it especially had to do with being completely and wholeheartedly ourselves in every moment. We were in Neverland; we could not see ourselves as ever growing up or changing and definitely not ever drifting apart. But time is linear and passes, and those days remain the shining jewels in our collective memory.

I always felt that my present self owed my past its security and stability. I had the great fortune that my neighborhood held a host of secondary mothers whom I loved nearly as much as my own. And following the tragic and untimely death of our beloved neighbor across the street, my husband and I agreed to begin forming our own, grown up memories by buying her house. In doing so, not only am I paying homage to her, but also to the neighborhood that formed the kind of adult I was to become. It is still an enchanted place, though the only child-voices I hear are now in my recollections, in my consciousness. It is not a place devoid of children, but they are children upon whom such a place is wasted. I sometimes wonder during the crepuscular moments of a summer evening if they ever sense the ghosts of our former selves as they whisper through the trees. I know I do.



MORGAINE POLIT
After Party



ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 30" X 48"

TAYLOR JENSEN
Forest Party



OIL ON CANVAS, 48" X 32"

ON ELEPHANTS, RIVERS, AND SMILING MORE

Have you ever had an elephant sit on your chest? Silly question, I know, because anyone who has had an elephant sit on their chest wouldn't be alive to answer this question in the affirmative. Elephants can weigh upwards of 15,000 pounds. That's about four cars stacked on top of you, if you prefer.

I've had an elephant sit on my chest. Imagine an adult African elephant trotting right over to you while you're lying in bed, and plop itself down right on your sternum. It's heavy, it doesn't let you breathe, it *hurts*. And it just sits there, maybe giving you one of those cute elephant smiles. It doesn't seem to understand the problem; it doesn't realize that you can't handle an elephant being on your chest.

But many people have never had an elephant sit on their chest, and they don't know what it's like. They'll say, "Why don't you just get the elephant off your chest?" or, "You just need to smile more, and the elephant will go away." Sometimes, after the elephant's been sitting on your chest for a while, someone will try to relate to you. "You know, I felt like an elephant was leaning against me back in college. But I ate better and exercised and it went away!" The difference there is that they never *actually* had an elephant on their chest, but had an elephant *resting against them*. It's not as bad, and that elephant eventually goes away.

Have you ever been swept away by a raging river? It's too deep for you to get a foothold, it's too wide for you to get to the banks, and the water just keeps throwing you around.

I've been swept away by a raging river. There were people walking along the banks, telling me to, "Just get out of the water," but didn't offer a hand, just looked at me

disapprovingly, disappointed. I couldn't control my movement; I was pushed along, and it exhausted me. I kept getting my head dunked under the water, and even though I fought to get another breath of air, I had to keep asking why I did. Why bother, when I know I'm just going to get pushed under again? It's hard to continue looking at the sun, shining down on the water above you, and reach for it, when it's so much easier to give up and sink down into the water.

In truth, I've never had an elephant sit on my chest, nor have I been swept away by a raging river. However, I have dealt with depression my entire life, and it's not all that different when you put it on paper. No, I've never risked having my ribs snapped like matches and my organs smashed into pudding like having an elephant sitting on my chest would. No, I've never been battered and drowned by an unrelenting current of water.

But I have experienced the inability to stand up, or breathe, like an elephant sitting on my chest. I have had people say to me, "Why don't you just be happy?" or, "You just need to smile more, and the depression will go away." I've had people tell me they were depressed in college, but exercise and healthier eating magically made them no longer exhausted at every second, no longer hate themselves, and no longer want nothing more than to crawl in bed and lie there until the sun explodes.

I have had people stare at me disapprovingly as I was swept along by my depression, a prisoner and victim of my own brain deciding that it wasn't good enough. I have had people think it's an easy thing to shrug off, and just be happy.

Most children in 4th grade should be learning multiplication and division, reading

(continued on page 16)

ON ELEPHANTS... (CONT.)

Touching Spirit Bear, and looking forward to the day when they *finally* get to graduate on to middle school. Me? I was learning multiple names of antidepressants (Zoloft, Paxil, and Celexa were choice), reading *How to Deal With Depression As An Adult* pamphlets, and looking forward to the day that I *finally* got to understand what it was like to be happy, or at least not uninterested in life.

See, that's one thing I don't think people without depression understand about those with it. Having depression usually doesn't mean you're sad and crying all the time. It might mean that, but more often than not, people with depression are just exhausted, bored, and uninterested in everyday life.

From when I was diagnosed with clinical depression in 4th grade, until my sophomore year of high school, I truly could not find something to interest me or keep my attention. Day in and day out, I got up from my bed with a grey cloud around my head, went to school with glazed-over eyes, and could only think about crawling back in bed and not needing to speak to anyone or feign interest.

That's not to say I've never felt interest. In my sophomore year of high school, I began to act in my school plays, and *that* was something I enjoyed doing. I actually looked forward to something other than lying in bed in the fetal position. Looking back on it now, acting was probably so attractive because, even if for a little while, I got to pretend to be someone other than myself.

But, of course, those were fleeting, lasting only a few weeks, before I was back to doing little other than sleeping.

And there are people: family, friends, romantic interests. Much like acting, they get me excited, but are fleeting; family moves away, friends lose interest, romantic interests turn you down. And that's their choice, I'm not

trying to make them sound like the bad guy; it just doesn't do me any good.

Daily, people suggest different ways to correct this chemical imbalance in my brain I've had for over a decade. Smiling more? Makes me feel like I'm lying. Exercise? Tires me out and just encourages me to go back to bed. Medication? I love being a slave to pills as much as the next guy, but I've yet to find one that actually works.

Every case of depression is different, so those things may work for other people, but not for me. Do you want to know what I think is the only cure for my specific case?

Time.

I need time to get out of that sticky puddle of black tar and enjoy seeing the sun. I need time to recover after spending time with family and friends, even if I truly enjoyed seeing them. I need time to find people and activities that I actually want to get out of bed to do.

I need time to make me realize that everything that came before yesterday wasn't good, but that's not my forever. And that, tomorrow, the sun will rise and I get to try again to make my life a good one.

It's a tough thing to accept, that things may get better. There are certainly days that I don't think they will, that my life will eternally be grey, like an elephant, or out of my control, like a raging river. But sometimes, I'll remember that, tomorrow, I might eat ice cream, or get to pet a dog, or kiss that woman who I love more than anything in my miserable existence.

In the end, it's the promise that the future will be exciting and happy that keeps me going. It's what makes me stack another log onto the dam to stop the river. It's what makes me find a chair for the elephant to sit down on. Because I know that elephant is always going to want to sit on my chest. But maybe, with enough effort and time, it'll eventually decide that somewhere else is more comfortable.

DOMINIQUE SANDERS
Ebullient Turmoil



OIL ON CANVAS, 42" X 34"

HOLLY FRIDAY
Turtle, Turtle, Turtle

CERAMIC, 14" X 6" X 2"



ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 11" X 17"



MAXWELL STAPLETON
Drive



MARK ZOLETA

Poetry

SHE CAN'T SEE THE MOON

Hotboxed highs and wandering eyes
Hands along thighs and heavy sighs, she says she can't see the Moon

Heavy set days and transparent chests
Cloud covered night, she says she can't see the Moon

At sea with my head against waxed oak
Polished in the ocean winds, she says she can't see the Moon

I am the lighthouse that breaks fog
Yet still, she says she can't see the Moon

Waves against craggy rocks, seafarers be wary
Move into me, because she says she can't see the Moon

Is she the ship of Theseus
Will she be one when she says she can't see the Moon

Night can only last for so long
Even when the Sun breaks, still she says she can't see the Moon



OIL ON CANVAS, 30" X 24"

MICHELLE CLESCERI

Just let us Party



OIL ON CANVAS, 36" X 36"

CHRIS LOZIER
Opening the Kiln



CERAMIC, 17" X 6" X 5"

MARYAN PELLAND

Ego + Super Ego



STONEWARE & PORCELAIN CERAMIC, 8" X 2.25" X 3.125"

THAT IS WHAT NIGHT IS

Shivering atop a ridge, bitter hits
Silent phone on a frozen throne, that is what night is

Throwing honed absent any skipping stones
Amiss a body of water I thought I'd know—that is what night is

Cast over the bow, Sirens claw at my fibers
My neck's bent towards zenith, don't let me go—that is what night is

Hold my hand and don't let me fall
The chains that keep me hostage ache and groan—that is what night is

Whatever still holds me against the ship
When Ursa Major meets Minor, I wish upon the Stars that they didn't tend to fairytale—that is what night is

When Gabriel comes, refuse your captain's orders
He's only a messenger and they left you on the floor—that is what night is

And when you go, because you will, what of the mundane
Will it turn its side and become nostalgic? That is what night is

Will the past times had glower at your sight
Sullen memories that rise only when night does—that is what night is

What of the spaces you left, how about all the pieces you kept
Wreckless and abandoned, you took pictures to a hatchet—That is what night is

The hardest picture to capture
Is that the broken glass could never compare to the loss—That is what night is

LOU JENSEN

Self-portrait with Mannequins



COLORED PENCIL ON PAPER, 25.5" X 20"

CRISTINA LICHAY
Thursday



OIL ON CANVAS, 34" X 32"

PADDLE

Every one in a while, the planets align just right; God has an itch, and humans with smaller humans do something incredibly stupid. This is a story about one of those times. This is the story of the contemporary Captain Bligh and his poor crew. This is the day we took a leisurely trip down the Nippersink Creek. A day that was supposed to go down in the annals of our family history as one of the most enjoyable times we have ever had as a family: together-time with friends, reveling in the great outdoors, communing with nature, and realizing that I have so much more restraint than I ever thought possible.

It started out as a beautiful summer day. We had been planning the trip with our friends for a few weeks. We had everything ready, and just couldn't wait for it to start. But the first clue was that we got out of the house early and to the launching site with time to spare. We never got anywhere on time, not with four kids. It just didn't happen. We all donned our life preservers, got into our canoe and launched into the beginning of a four-hour trip into the underworld. My usually gregarious husband, the father of my four precious children, had been possessed by Lucifer, the fallen angel, the morning star, the devil—whatever name you used it had him. He was now a man who could only utter two phrases, and we all watched as we waited to see his head do a complete 360.

We had just pushed off from shore, when he started to speak: "Paddle, paddle, paddle," and we all raised our paddles and paddled for all we were worth, only to have him yell, "Don't paddle. Don't paddle, don't paddle." The kids and I looked at each other, wondering what we had done wrong. Hadn't he just told us to paddle?

No sooner had we stopped paddling than he started again: "Paddle, paddle, paddle!"

So there we were, paddling our hearts out...again. But no sooner had we started paddling, than he started frothing and yelling, "DON'T PADDLE, DON'T PADDLE, DON'T PADDLE!"

He perched in the back of the canoe like a prehistoric raptor, waiting to pounce. My children had a look of confused terror on their faces. What had I done to them? Who was this maniac, sitting behind us bellowing orders?


"Sweetheart, what is it you want us to do?" I asked.

"Just paddle when I tell you to and stop when I tell you to, that's all," he replied.

That's all, I thought? If he keeps yelling at us, he may have an unfortunate paddling accident. I looked over at my friends and saw them, paddling gently, laughing, smiling, and looking like they were ready to break out in song. My friend Gemette looked over at me and waved.

"Having fun?" she called.

"Loads," I lied through my teeth.



We had been doing the paddle-don't-paddle thing for almost two hours, when we all decided to stop and have lunch. As the kids were getting out they tipped our canoe, and all of our lunch went right into the Nippersink. I looked at my husband, and he looked at me. He was about to say something when he got a look of sheer terror on his face. I didn't know what could possibly have frightened him so, as I got into my "bottom of the ninth, two outs and the winning run is on base" stance with the six-foot paddle as my bat.

Gemette came up to me and whispered, "Your kids, Kathie, your kids." So I put the paddle down and tried to salvage the rest of our lunch. I rang out the PB&Js, looked at the kids, and thought, "haven't they been through enough?" So we had soggy potato chips and warm soda. Thank God, no one complained.

Our friends, on the other hand, had the forethought to put all their food in a cooler that would float if it had the misfortune to fall into the creek. They had nice dry sandwiches, potato salad, cold soda, napkins, and, more importantly, they were eating while wearing dry clothes. Bully for them!

We finally finished our lunch and everyone got back into the canoe. For the next two hours we sat in soggy clothes, itching and pulling and just generally miserable, all the while

paddling to the cadence of PADDLE, PADDLE, PADDLE, DON'T PADDLE, DON'T PADDLE, DON'T PADDLE.

I spent the next hour trying to figure out how to get rid of Captain Bligh. I looked around, but there was no long boat on which to drop off Mr. Wonderful. We were stuck with him.

Our friends had paddled away from us by now, and were blithely enjoying the wonders of the Nippersink while I sat and looked at my children and thought "If I explain to the judge what was happening, she would have mercy and probably only give me time served. I could probably get a way with it." (I never actually mentioned the M-word, so it wasn't premeditated.)

We finally reached Spring Grove and the end of our incredibly long journey. We could see freedom and Captain Bligh was still telling us to PADDLE, DON'T PADDLE, as we glided into the dock. People had gathered, having heard about the maniac who was bellowing orders, scaring wildlife, and making small children cry. We squish-squish-squished out of the canoe, I fell to my knees, and I thanked God for letting me let my husband live another day. All four of my children looked at us and said, "That was fun, can we do it again?"

SUSAN CLOUGH

Pisces



CERAMICS, 5" X 3" X 3"

ELAINE KADAKIA
She who must be Obeyed



CERAMICS, 8" X 8"

CHEYENNE PATINO
Ice and Embers



OIL ON CANVAS, 30" X 30"

poem. thanks.

metaphor.
metaphorrrrr
i'm writing a poem

fuck.

apparently, things are indescribable.

i'm frustrated. can i say that? can a poem say that? i'm
frustrated. i'm.

i'm having trouble. i'm not really having trouble; but i'm. having troubles. that's it! i've got troubles, i've
got the blues, i've got

goddammit! what the hell am i doing? i'm writing a poem. do it. write the damn poem.

my heart is a bleeding tree,
leaking sadness like sap,
trailing tears of maple down my sides.
my
the

i don't feel that way at all.

JACYLN WALTER
Untitled



GRAPHITE, 18" X 24"

JOSIE ROCHELL
Black & White Bowl



CERAMICS, 5.5" X 9.5" X 5"





ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 11" X 16.5"

t.g.
*A Title Might Be Too On
The Nose (Vape Monkey)*

GLORIA STEWART

Birds of a Feather



OIL ON CANVAS, 20" X 24"

VOICES

MC HENRY COUNTY COLLEGE
LITERARY/ARTS JOURNAL 2017

Voices 2017 is produced by McHenry County College to recognize and showcase the visual arts, musical, and literary talents of McHenry County College students.

The ideas and the opinions expressed in *Voices 2017* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the attitude of the Board of Trustees, the administration, the faculty, or the staff of McHenry County College. Materials for *Voices 2017* were submitted by students who have been enrolled in courses at McHenry County College during one or all of the previous three semesters. The pieces selected for inclusion in *Voices 2017* were based on the student editors' opinion of their aesthetic merit. It is the policy of McHenry County College not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, national origin, or handicapped status in its educational programs, as required by Federal regulations. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to Angelina Castillo, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources.

McHenry County College
8900 U.S Highway 14
Crystal Lake, Illinois 60012-2761
815.455.3700 • <http://www.mchenry.edu>

COLOPHON

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VOICES 2017 COMMITTEE

STUDENT ART EDITORS:

Dominique Sanders
Cristina Lichay

STUDENT LITERARY EDITORS:

Peter Atterberg
Mark Zoleta
Lisa Wos

STUDENT MUSIC EDITORS:

Tiffany Mazur
Polina Poznyak

FACULTY ADVISORS:

Matt Irie • mirie@mchenry.edu
Amy Ortiz • aortiz@mchenry.edu
Laura Power • lpower@mchenry.edu
Paige Lush • plush@mchenry.edu
Justin Schmitz • jschmitz@mchenry.edu

ART PHOTOGRAPHER/ADVISOR:

Justin Schmitz (assisted by Matt Irie)

DESIGNER/ADVISOR:

Ryan Duggan

PRINTED BY:

Fountainhead Graphics

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MUSIC

- 1 **JOHN SERGEL (BEYOND THRESHOLD)** *Subsick*
- 2 **CRAIG SCHWARTZ (AUGUST HOTEL)** *12AM*
- 3 **TYLER RIBARCHIK (¥AHWE¥)** *The Cryptid*
- 4 **JACOB KARKOWSKI** *What is Right is Not So Easily Won*
- 5 **JOHN SERGEL (BEYOND THRESHOLD)** *Live to Fight*
- 6 **TYLER RIBARCHIK (PÖÖKY)** *Tardrive*
- 7 **LUCAS HESS** *Sunday Session*



VOICES

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE
LITERARY/ARTS JOURNAL