

# LOTIS MAGAZINE

2020-2021, VOLUME X

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MACAO



Artwork by Bianca Acconci, IB Art



Welcome to a different issue of the LOTIS Magazine. As all of you know, the past 2 years have by no means been normal. Many things have been delayed, including the LOTIS Magazine.

In your hands is the first issue of this magazine since all the way back in June 2019. It also marks LOTIS's tenth anniversary. As such, while it has taken us two years of hard work, we have pulled through and completed an extra-long, bumper issue of the magazine, comprising student work from both the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

As some of the work in this issue was made over two years ago, much of it—especially the pieces from the 2019-20 school year—does not necessarily represent the artists' current abilities\*. Instead, we choose to see this as a reflection on the past two hard years, and a symbol of perseverance; we've made it!

About the layout of the magazine: there are front covers on both sides. One of them is for the 2019-20 magazine, and the other for the 2020-21 magazine. Read either one first, then flip the magazine over and read the other!

Thank you all for patiently waiting for over 2 years for this issue, but we promise, it's a good one! Enjoy!

Stay safe, and best of luck in the year ahead!  
The LOTIS Magazine Team



The TIS Student Arts Council is a proud sponsor of the Literary Magazine

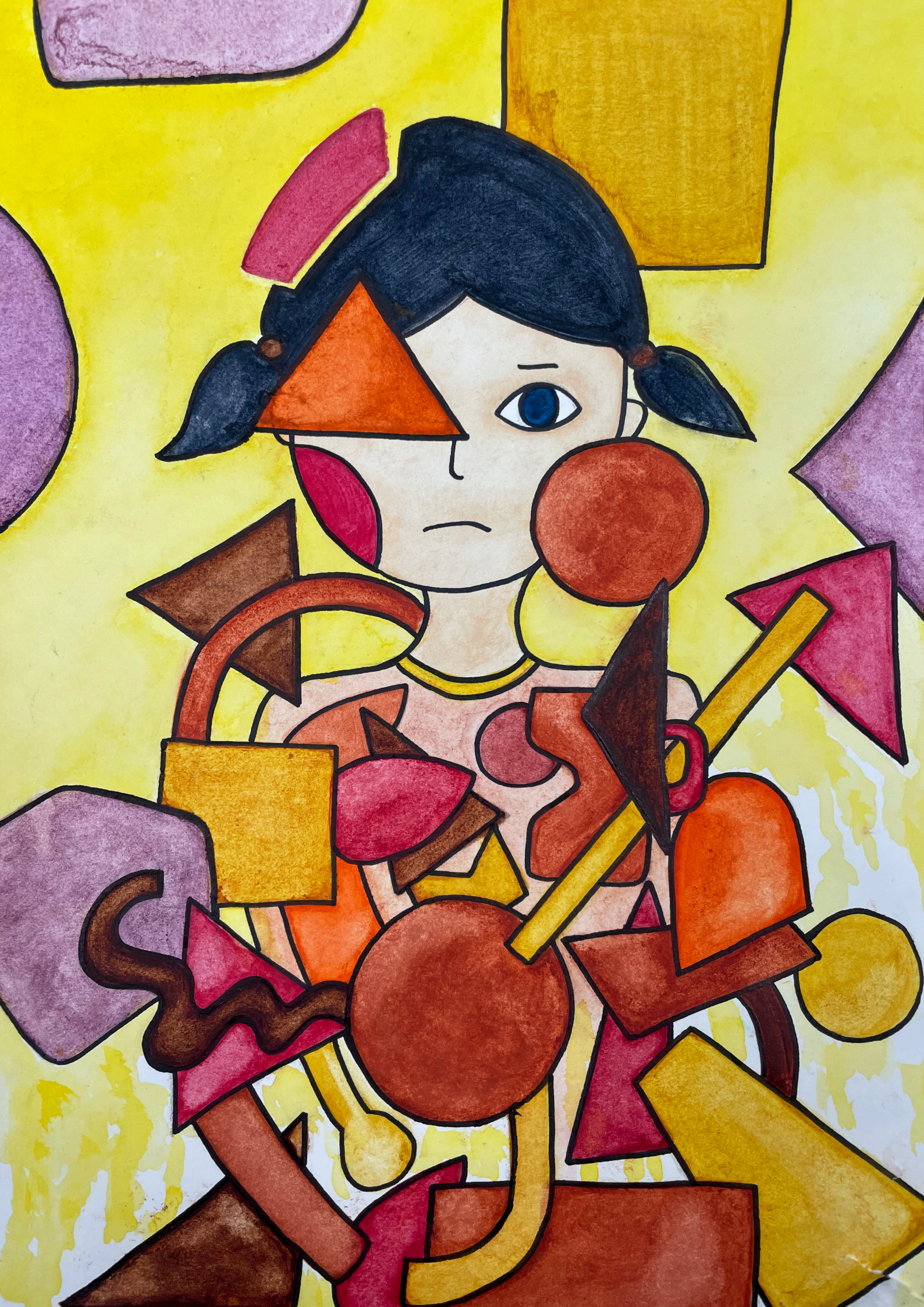
Back row: Ms Doina Tonner, Jennifer Patterson, Lisa Li, Eliana Joaquim Ho (President), Isabella Chong, Julia Patterson

Front row: Daniel Chu, Reeve Lee, Franky Leong-Murphy











The Porcelain Bear  
By Tony Deng, ELA 8

The warm wind gently caressed my skin as it flowed through the open porch door, jingling the wind chimes as it danced by. The chimes rattled in the breeze, emitting a beautiful melody. The hot summer sun glowing hot and bright in the sky sent rays of light shining in through the crystal clear windows. The family pet was snoozing away in a warm corner while I lay awake on the woolen bed sheets, unable to fall asleep. Boredom filled the air like smog, consuming anything and everything that came into contact with it. I was desperate for something to take my mind off this dullness, aching, longing for escape, for something to do when, out of nowhere, I caught a glimpse of a porcelain bear out of the corner of my eye. The bear wore woolen clothing embroidered with glittering beads made out of glass, a brown wool hat resting atop its round, furry head. Behind its snout, a pair of glittering black eyes, stared at me so deep that I felt they could pierce through my soul.

Curious, I stood up and walked to the cabinet where the bear was situated and pulled onto the handle. Nothing. The door didn't budge even one bit. Someone obviously took the precaution of keeping the bear out of curious hands. Not satisfied, I began opening drawers and closets looking for a key. While rummaging through a drawer filled with screws, a golden brass key popped into view. I immediately took it and inserted it into the lock of the cabinet. There was a soft "click" and the doors slowly creaked open. Inside lay my prize, the plaything I was so desperate to try out. I carefully took the bear out of its hiding spot and shook it gently. The sound of loose change clattering filled the room. It was a piggy bank.

Dissatisfied, I went looking for a snack. I had barely walked out the door when my pomeranian came bolting into the room. In an instant, he slipped past my legs, bounced on top of the bed, and in a death-defying move that I never thought was possible, he leaped onto the table crashing into the bear. Time seemed to move in slow motion as the intricately crafted porcelain bear began its descent, crashing onto the floor, sending shards of porcelain and brass coins all over the clear, marble floor. I stood frozen on the spot, my mind trying to comprehend what had just happened until I heard the unmistakable sounds of my grandmother's slippers in the hallway.

Bolting out the door and fumbling down the stairs in a desperate attempt to escape, I crashed into the garden shed and scrambled to bolt the door as a shrill scream pierced the air. I curled up on a crate of poppy seeds. Sounds of yelling, screaming, shattering of glass, and hands being pounded on tables flooded from the house. Feelings of fear and guilt began to pile on top of my damaged emotional burden. My nose became stuffy and large, salty tears began rolling out of my eyes, and it felt like the whole world was watching me in disgust. I felt like an injured rabbit hunted by a pack of ravenous wolves hungry for blood. As the sounds outside increased in volume, I curled up in a ball on the wooden crate, desperately trying to comfort myself.

Hours feel like days when you are curled up in a ball on a crate of poppy seeds inside a dimly lit garden shed. I was in solitary confinement for my crimes against my family. My only companions were the spiders that inhabited the dark, gloomy shed, weaving intricate designs on their silver webs, undisturbed by my presence. My only source of light was a small window that allowed in only a meager beam of light. I began to lose hope of ever leaving my prison until my mother called me for dinner.

Cautiously, I unbolted the door and stepped outside. The sky was now a crimson red with orange streaks cutting through. I slowly stepped up the stone stairs and crept into the house. All lights were off except for the ones in the living room which still emitted a warm, calming glow. The calm before the storm. I slowly walked down the hallway, weighed down by the overwhelming feelings of fear and guilt.

Everyone was sitting at the dinner table, not speaking a word to each other. Their cold glares pierced through my eyes like icicles, cold and sharp. I slowly took my seat on the couch, choosing forever to hold my silence.

Even in the hottest summers that this region has ever experienced, my family's glares made the atmosphere of the room feel like the coldest of winters.









Artwork by Mackennah Dunbar, 9-2

Blank Page  
by Jay Lee, 8-2

I pick the quill up.  
The feather moves elegantly,  
my mind wanders away -  
one stroke, two strokes, three strokes -  
on the rough-textured white page.  
Empty spots now replaced with vibrant colours,  
shapes starting to form  
the white page now changed  
full of possibilities and creativity  
full of chances I can take.  
I ignore the errors  
and move forward.







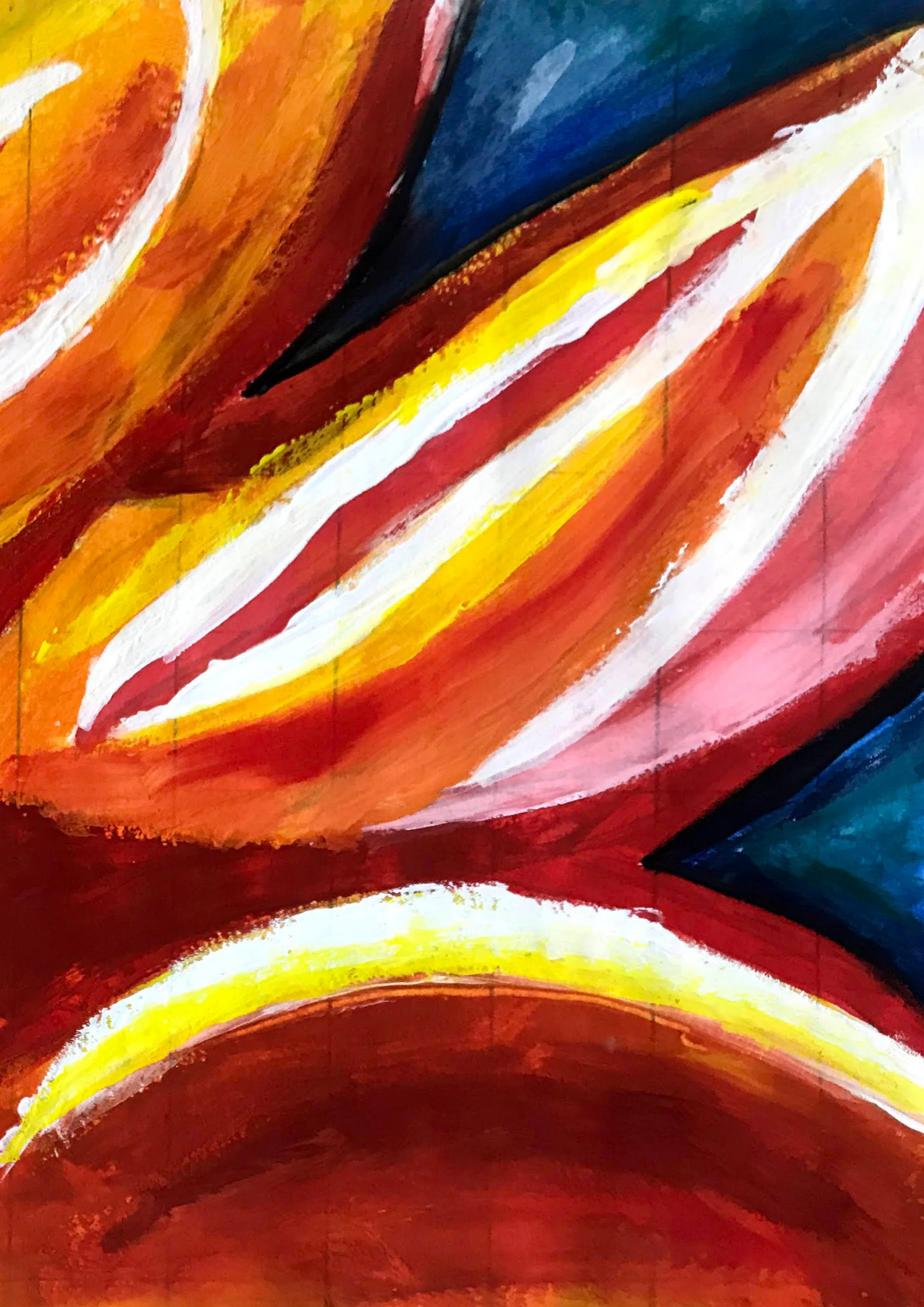






Photo by Jeya Verschuren, 11-4

Meaning of Life  
By Matthew Chu, 8-2

There is no specific definition of life  
Everyone is unique  
Some people might have a good life  
Some people might not.  
It's never the same  
Some people are loved  
Some are wanted,  
Abused and hated.  
But is there meaning to it?  
Is there a meaning to your life?  
Who's to tell?  
  
You are the one to decide.



If You Find a Mirror Rock  
by Ella Chen, WRA 8

This was the day.

Ann picked up her red marker from the little mountain built by the colour markers and the pencil crayons, then walked through the messy room to the calendar on the wall and slightly pressed the marker to the date of September 10th, which has been marked as “the last day,” crossing it off with the almost dried colour, crossing off her life.

Such a great day, she thought. The rain was pouring down over the city, pouring the bitterness of the sky onto the land, beating the trees and crying about its sadness; the clouds were coming together, covering the blue sky like hands covering its face, not showing its vulnerability.

A smile started to form at the corner of Ann’s mouth as she sat at her dresser putting on her makeup, her face bright under the yellow light. She chose a long, silky, milk-white dress, an antidote to the grey outside her window. Putting on her night-black shoes, Ann tiptoed out of her house quietly closing the door, and gently walked into the foggy-grey.

The rain was still pouring down and the sky was rumbling. Ann marched spinning, like a tiny, white rose blooming in the blue-grey world, like a splash of warmth in the chilling breeze. Ann was drenched from head to toe, her long, dark hair sticking to her pale face, and her dress, too, was soaking wet, yet still fluttering in the wind.

The pressure, the isolation, and the words from her parents and everyone were like sharp blades, constantly cutting deep into her heart like unstoppable waves, bringing her down every time she stood up, neverending. Her hope was like an unsolved jigsaw puzzle, scattered and confusing, devoured by the abyss of despair.

She had never thought that she would be that weak, yet she had to accept that she had lost in the game against despair. The bargaining chip was her hope for life.

“The end,” she whispered to herself.

This was the solution, the perfect gift she had prepared for herself and for her tiresome and hopeless life.

The wind pushed the waves toward the gilded seashore, scouring the rocks lying around. Ann took off her shoes and in her bare feet, step by step, she trudged on the smooth sand reaching the ocean. “The Great Blue Yonder”

“Ouch!” Something hard cut into Ann’s toe.

She stopped, bowed down, and picked up the sharp thing. It was a rock, a triangular-shaped, greyish tiny rock with tiny holes in it and rough edges.

Ha, such a plain rock, Ann thought.

She sat down on the sand playing with the rock in her hands.

The sun rose from the ocean and the rain stopped. Dawn dispelled the clouds and cast its aura onto the sea lighting up the bay. Seagulls were hovering over the sea, their feathers dyed bright orange by the flaming sun.

The golden crystals on the rock glimmered in that first light. And just like that, something else began to shimmer too, the sparkling light of hope inside the tears sliding down the girl’s cheek.

Both plain and tiny, yet shining.



# The Door Nook

written and illustrated by Avery/10m



But the door nook  
I do not no who  
"it's sam buday"  
I said Ohhh who



One day I was  
"Playing with my sister"

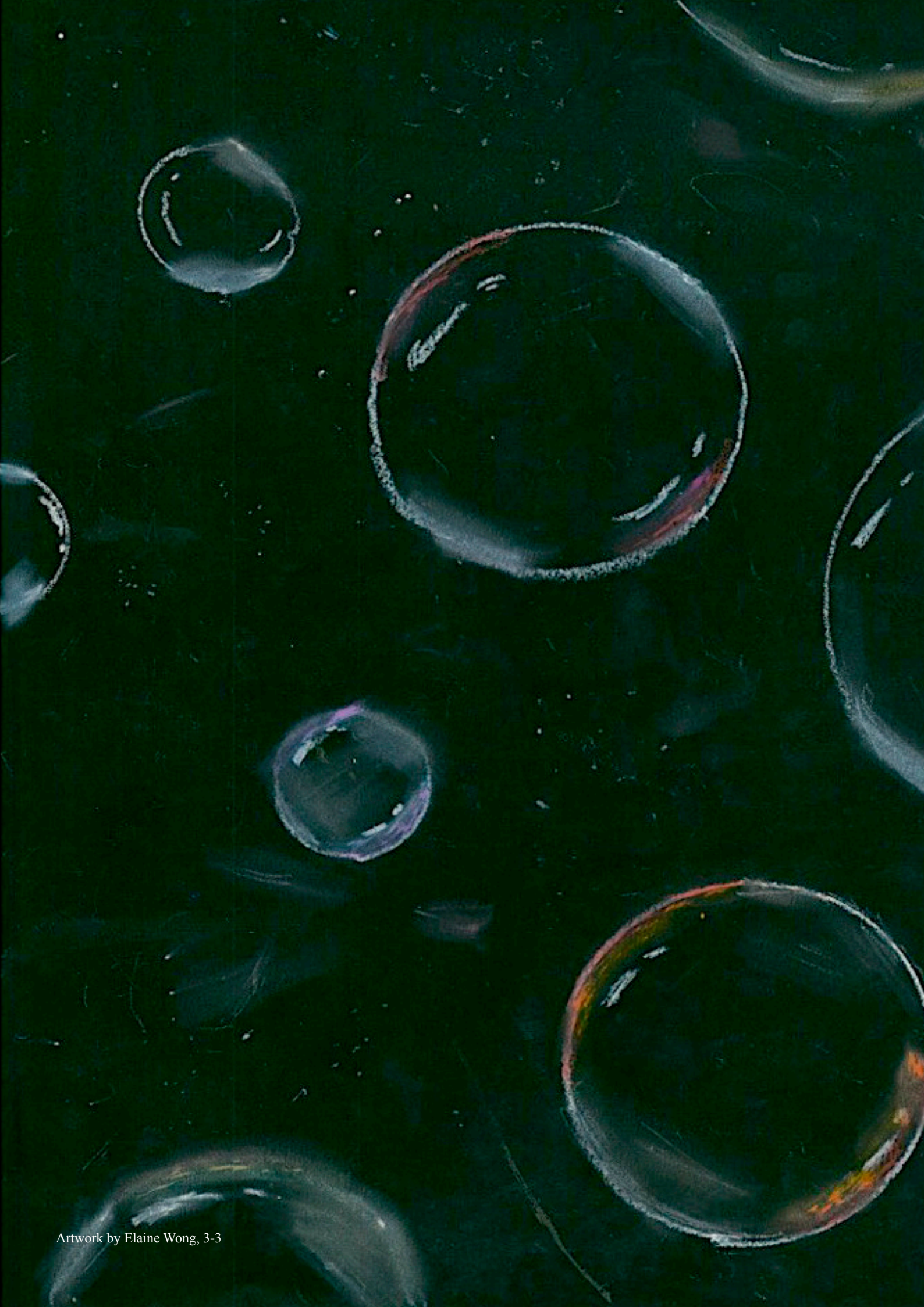
We are Playing  
So Mach to my

my mommy is  
"With us. I'm so happy isaid."



I open the door. I am happy  
is also. I "said cum in"  
Elsa cum in and play  
with her. We play  
with elsa







The Other Side  
by Ella Chen, 8-2

I run,  
I jump,  
I struggle  
trying  
to get over the cliff.

Even though  
I fall, badly bruised,

I still believe  
on the other side there  
will be the warm twilight  
waiting for me to arrive.

A Different Shade of Green  
by Geoffrey Chan, 8-3

I have  
eaten  
the apple  
that you  
offered me  
for a snack.  
It looked  
beautiful,  
green and  
fresh.

So sad  
to discover

it was  
rotten  
on the inside.











The Piano Practice  
by Miranda Hua, ELA 8

I stroll confidently onto the stage and bow to the audience in front of me. All the spotlights shine directly on me. I carry my head high like an Olympic athlete proudly wearing a gold medal. I have just won first place again like it was nothing. I feel like I could win every time, I am that good.

“You have to practice piano now!” Dad says when I’m right in the middle of a very heated argument with my brother.

“But I don’t want to!” I snap at him, then continue to explain to my brother why the younger sibling should listen to the older one instead of the other way around.

“You do know that your piano competition is only two days away, right?” Dad reminds me in a solemn tone.

“Yeah, yeah. But even if I don’t practice, I’ll still win.” I shoot back.

“Well, let me tell you that’s not how it works.”

“Yeah, idiot!” My brother jumps in with his annoying and bossy tone.

“You’re only nine years old and you’re already this arrogant! Go practice your piano now.” Dad’s starting to get pretty impatient from what I could tell, so I decide to go along with what he says.

“Okay! Fine. I’ll go,” I grumble walking towards my piano and begin to play, though anyone listening could tell that I am not trying at all. Dad sighs.

On the day of the competition, I am calm, waiting for my turn to play. The place where the finals are being held is magnificent which makes me feel even less nervous. I am one hundred and one percent sure that I am going to win this.

“Next up, Hua Yue Lin.”

“This is my time to shine!” I think to myself walking up to the stage. I can already imagine myself standing in the middle of the stage, the crowd cheering as the gold medal is placed around my neck. And when I am back home, everyone is going to congratulate me.

As I sit on the bench and face the piano, my mind starts automatically going through the music piece, remembering which part I have to play gently or which part I have to play slowly. Finally, I lift my hands and place them on the keys. I start playing. Everything is great. I manage to remember which part I need to be more aware of, and the piece is going smoothly. Suddenly, I feel my hands freeze on the keys. What? I haven’t finished yet! My mind stops working and I can’t remember how to play the next part. My heart stops. Everything is quiet. I feel eyes staring at me. It feels like hours and I still can’t remember how to play. Then, I hear a bell ringing. My time is up. If only I had practiced longer. I stand up and quickly bow to the audience. No one claps. I bite my lip and hastily scuttle off the stage.

Back home, Dad, Mom, my brother, and I are sitting at the dinner table. None of us is speaking. My arrogance led to the loss and I ended up getting fifth place instead of the gold medal I expected to have.

“Do better next time. You’ve learned your lesson,” Dad finally says.

“I will. I promise,” I reassure him.

He nods and walks into his room closing the door behind him. I feel guilty, wishing that I could go back in time to change what has happened, but I can only wish.

Well, I guess I shouldn’t think that I can win even without practicing. I have learned my lesson, and I won’t rewrite this in the future ever again.

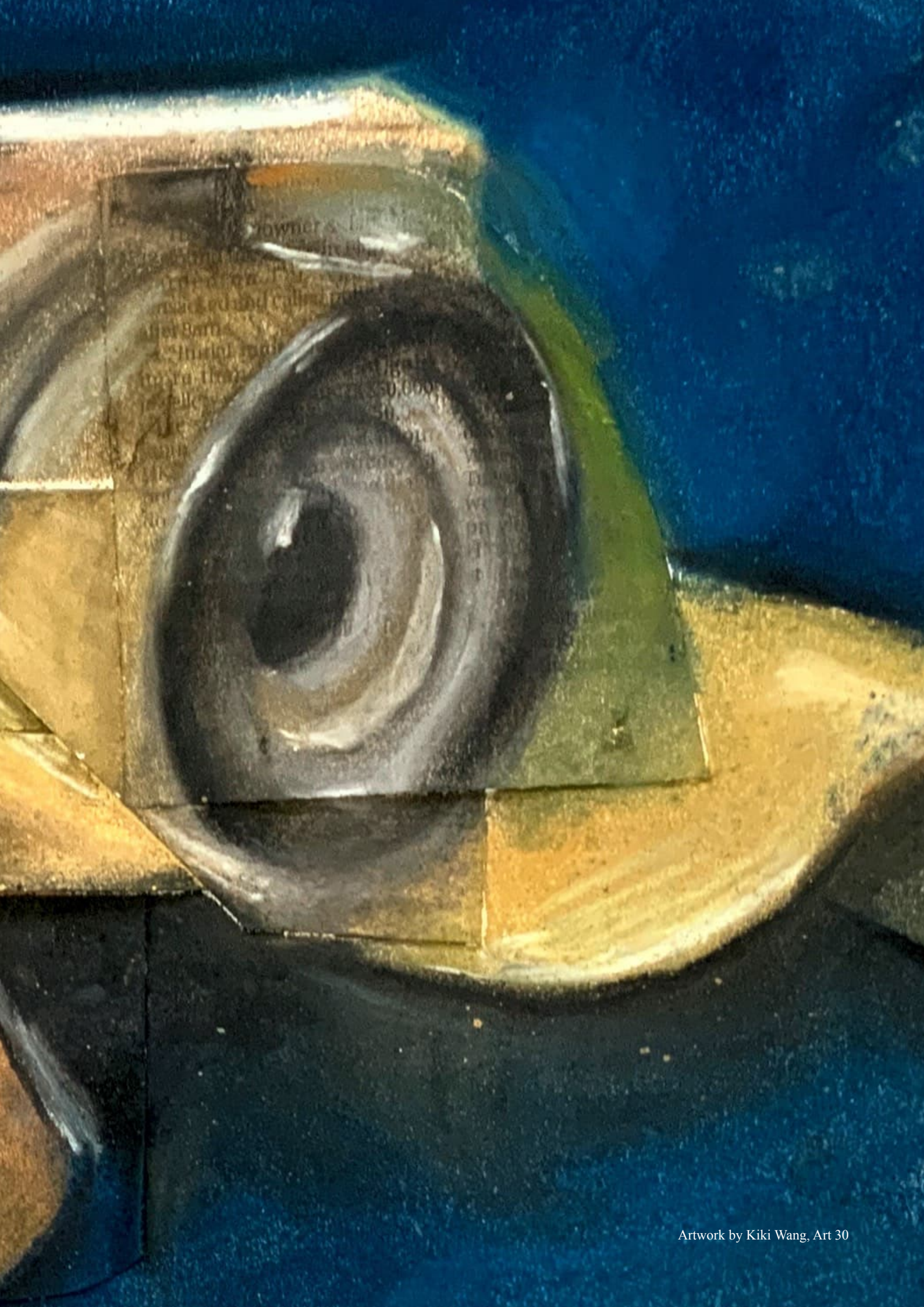
Three months later, I enter another piano competition, but that’s a whole other story.





SALUTE  
KWAN  
KUNING







The Music Box  
by Nicole dos Santos Pedro, 8-4

As I slowly  
Turn the crank  
Of the music box,  
The melody  
Overpowers  
The darkness in the room.

Alas,  
The broken light  
Is still burning hot.

Calamity  
by Miranda Hua, 8-4

Humans created the cities.  
As soon as bullets flew through the air,  
people instantly fell into great despair.  
Some ran,  
some killed,  
some rose.  
Trust me, it wasn't that great of a show,  
the land destroyed by their own hands.  
What a pity -  
We can't drown demons,  
they know how to swim  
as they wander the world in search of  
the perfect prey.







Irony  
by Tony Deng, 8-2

I throw a rubber ball  
at the concrete wall  
in rage  
and with uncontrollable strength.

It flies  
with unstoppable speed  
and bounces back,  
hitting me in the cheek  
with the same force I threw it.

I feel a burning sensation  
on the spot  
where it touched me.









德  
張曉  
通  
合

功德  
李秀蓮  
李金寶  
通合

功德  
李俊毅  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
李金寶  
通合

功德  
李金寶  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合

功德  
通合



Goodbye  
by Cloris Yan, 7-4

The hospital room was filled with the continuous beeping of the heart monitor and the loud wheezing of my grandma's breath. Her pale face was framed by her silky silver hair, her hands laid on top of the bedsheet, making her look like a sleeping angel. I walked and sat on a chair next to the bed, looking at her wrinkled and tiny body, and as I touched her hand, I felt her defiance of wanting to live. Her body was fighting pancreatic cancer and she could not hold on anymore. I could feel her slipping away.

I soundlessly took my grandma's hand, trying to look and feel strong. Her eyes opened a slit, revealing a dim, gray set of eyes. It was hard to believe that this was my grandma, the same person who, only a year ago used to sing and dance whenever she was happy, the same person who snuck candies into our home for me when my mom did not allow me to have sweets. Her eyes used to be like a little bird's, shining with curiosity and intelligence and full of wonder like a little child's.

It was painful to see how much grandma had changed in the year that had passed since I had last seen her.

Despite the pain she was feeling, I heard her wheezing soften, and I noticed she was trying to say something. Her wheezing became louder again, and her lips seemed to move, but all that came out were painful moans of helplessness.

She stopped struggling, then tilted her head a little bit, and with the remaining strength that she had, squeezed my hand back.

We stayed like that for a while, looking into each other's eyes, trying to communicate things that were far deeper than words could say. It was noon, we could hear the sound of children playing in the courtyard below, but we were enveloped in a world of silence where words were not needed.

Suddenly, her heart rate started dropping, the spiked waves on the heart monitor getting lower and lower as her grip on my hand loosened.

98, 97, 96, 95, 94, dropping all the way down.

Her wheezing softened until it was nothing but a whisper, and my heart seemed to stop with hers too.

Her eyes turned blank, and she slowly slumped into the bed, leaving me sitting alone, still holding her hand. I sat there for a while, listening to the birds outside chirping, watching the sunlight stream through the windows to cast a golden aura on grandma's face. I gently closed her eyes, and my mind went blank. I couldn't comprehend the fact that she was gone.

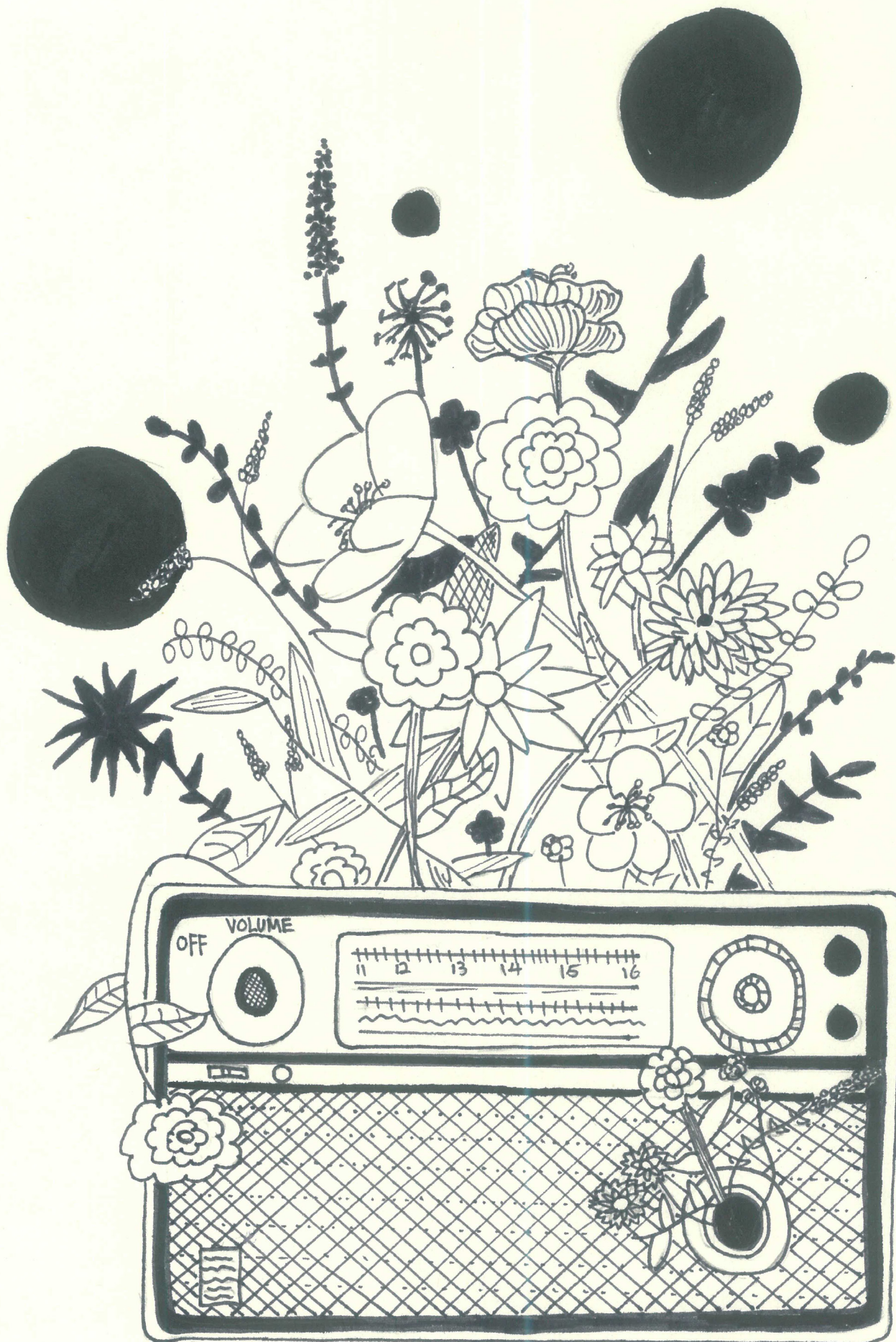
Gone forever.

I didn't realise I was crying until my mom came and took me away. A piece of me remained with grandma, never wanting to come back.

I wonder what she's doing now.















Freedom  
by Johnny Yang, 8-2

A bird  
in the cage  
trying to escape  
and meet the outside world  
squeezes  
his way out  
of his prison  
chirping with excitement  
unaware that without  
the cage's protection,  
new danger  
awaits.









### Thirst

by Franky Leong-Murphy, 8-4

#### Water

I see water  
in the distance,  
my saviour  
from disaster.  
Flowing through  
the sands of  
the desert, as  
I flow through  
the sands of time,  
but it is all  
a mirage.







The New World  
by Ruby Glendon Jones, 5-4

Kate woke up in a box-like white room. It looked like there was an entrance at the top. She looked behind her and saw a typewriter. She accidentally leaned on it and an "E" appeared on the paper. A large brick stuck out of the wall. She was so amazed that she nearly fainted and tried to think of words that started with E.

"I know!" she shouted. "Elephant"

She questioned herself when an elephant dog toy appeared out of nowhere. She thought, That was odd, but cool. She tried again, "Electricity!" Out of the blue, the lights became so bright, they almost blinded her, then simply stopped. Her vision was blurry for a couple of minutes. Kate thought to herself, "What other words start with an e?"

"I have to escape," Kate said to herself.

"Escape... ESCAPE!" she shouted with excitement.

Then she typed the word on the typewriter and more bricks came out of the wall, one after another like stairs. She climbed them slowly while thinking that she could have shouted stairs, but anyway, now she was at the top. She opened the hatch on the ceiling of the room and there was a forest above her.

It was dark and there were lots of dried leaves on the ground. She heard a faint howl coming from somewhere nearby. It got louder and louder as if it was rushing towards her. It sounded like wolves. Then a silhouette of a pack of wolves appeared. She ran until she came to a tall fence.

"Ladder!...LADDER!!!" she shouted while trying to climb over the fence.

Pop! On the fence. She climbed it really fast. On the other side of the fence there was a shed. Inside it looked like an old lab. There was paper scattered all over the floor. Old computers that she didn't know how to use sat on tables waiting.

Kate found a brown shoulder bag hanging on the door. She rummaged through the contents and found a map with nothing on it except the forest and the old lab, a box of matches that still worked, an animal first aid kit and a flashlight that flickered on and off.

She heard the wolves scratching at the fence. Frightened, she took the shoulder bag and ran out of the lab. The wolves were digging under the fence to get to her. She found the ladder and carried it to the other side of the enclosure, away from the wolves.

Just as she climbed over the gate, the wolves entered the lab looking for her. She ran and ran until she came out of the forest. It was starting to get dark, so she set up a campfire with the matches and slept next to it.

The next day, Kate woke up lying on the shoulder bag like a pillow. The campfire was out cold.

"No fire embers?" she said to herself, "that's kind of strange."

She started walking North. At least that's where she thought she was going. She walked for about two solid hours. The weather became considerably colder.

"A new place," she whispered in a delighted tone.

Behind her was autumn, but where she was standing was winter and then a huge gust of wind nearly pushed her over. Inside the shoulder bag, the map was shaking struggling to get out. She chased after it. When she finally caught it, she noticed a dungeon and zoo popping up west of the forest. She looked up and there they were. She shoved the map back inside the shoulder bag. She was really glad that she had a box of matches. It was snowing and cold.

"I'm going to freeze to death with my t-shirt and shorts," she thought. The shoulder bag puffed up. She opened it and there was a big fluffy fur coat that fit her like a glove. Kate was tired so she decided to carve a cave into the snow! She had learned how to make one in Scouts. She could remember her scout leader Miss Jones saying, "To make a snow cave you must dig a vertical tunnel in the snow. Make the tunnel as long as you would like and wide enough for your body to lie down. Dig a little notch right in front of where you're going to sleep to keep out the cold air."

She didn't make a fire in her snow cave because her shelter would have melted, but it was warm enough without a fire .



When she woke up, Kate climbed out of the snow cave and went inside the abandoned zoo. There were empty cages everywhere. Someone either broke the locks or the animals did. She walked a bit further in when she saw a white fox with pink stripes on her back laying on the ground sobbing.

Kate said, "Poor thing. Are you all right?"

"No, I'm not alright, my back right leg is broken!" the fox said with a whimper.

"Oh, I can take care of that. I have an animal's first aid kit."

"All right, but be careful with my leg."

"Will do," Kate nodded. And with that, Kate started bandaging the fox's leg. Afterwards, she gave the fox some painkillers.

"Why, thank you" said the fox.

"By the way name's Kate."

"Kate if you don't mind me asking, you can understand me?" said the fox.

"Aren't you a talking fox?" asked Kate.

"No," said the fox.

"That means I can speak your language, right?" said Kate.

"I guess so," said the fox.

"What's your name?" said Kate.

"I don't have one," said the fox.

"Can I name you?" asked Kate.

"Why not?" said the fox.

"How about Charlie or...Saffron?" said Kate.

"No no," said the fox.

"How about Zoo-Zoo? Because I found you in a zoo." said Kate.

"Yes I would like that," said Zoo-Zoo.

And so the two went on a little adventure.

As Kate and Zoo-Zoo walked towards the gate, Kate's fur coat keep getting caught on the cages. Once a stray wire nearly ripped a hole in her sleeve. They managed to get out all right though, and walked until the sun set, so they decided to set up camp. Zoo-Zoo collected some dried leaves to help insulate the snow cave and Kate made a snow cave big enough for both of them and they went to bed. Kate used the shoulder bag as a pillow. When they woke up, they climbed out of the snow cave. Once again, a huge gust of wind took the map out of the shoulder bag. They both ran as fast as they could to catch it. A bit farther ahead, Kate noticed a beach. Where there were standing was winter, but over there it was summer. As soon as Kate touched the sand with her foot she felt boiling hot and when she put it back in the snow it was cold, so she ditched the fur coat and went in the sand with Zoo-Zoo. As soon as Zoo-Zoo jumped on the sand her white fur changed into a warm orange, so now she was an orange fox with pink stripes on her back. They enjoyed the beach for a while making sand castles and playing in the ocean. Kate knew they were going to be best friends forever together.

Zoo-Zoo found a very beautiful color changing shell. Kate thought it was very pretty as well.

"That's a gorgeous shell," said Zoo-Zoo.

"It is beautiful," said Kate.

"Can you make me a collar?" asked Zoo-Zoo.

"Sure. I will use the shell," replied Kate.

Kate started making the collar. First, she scratched the name Zoo-Zoo into the shell using a sharp rock. She made a hole at the top of the shell, then she found some vines and braided them with the shell. She tied it around Zoo-Zoo's neck.

"It's perfect!" said Zoo-Zoo. Just after Zoo-Zoo spoke, they heard the shell ringing, "RIINNNGGG! ... RIINNNGGG!"

It sounded like a phone alarm.

"RIINNNGGG! ... RIINNNGGG!"

Everything started to get fuzzy. She grabbed Zoo-Zoo and hugged her.





Artwork by Renita Tou, 4-4

Her vision was clear again but she wasn't at the beach. She was still hugging Zoo-Zoo, but she was in her bedroom. She was confused.

"Was it a dream?" Kate said.

"Hi Kate. I think it was a dream."

"At least you didn't change."

She got out of bed, put on her bunny slippers, and went downstairs for breakfast.

"Hi honey, did you get a good night sleep, birthday girl?" Kate's mum asked.

"Oh yeah it's my birthday and, yes, I did, Mum," said Kate.

"Homemade pancakes for breakfast. And why do you have a necklace that says Zoo-Zoo?" said Kate's mum.

Kate touched her neck. "Zoo-Zoo's collar!"

Kate ran to her room. She untied the collar off of her and tied it on to Zoo-Zoo. She carried Zoo-Zoo to the kitchen.

"I see you met your birthday present," said Kate's mum.

"Birthday present?" said Kate.

"Yeah, Dad and I went and got her at a pet shop. She's called Zoo-Zoo," said Kate's Mum.

Kate spent the rest of her birthday with Zoo-Zoo. To this day, she still wonders if that was a dream or not.







Epitaph  
by Jacob San Juan, 8-3

Rain pouring all around,  
gray clouds covering the skies,  
the whole world mourning  
the death of a great person.  
A sea of people dressed in black  
crying an ocean of tears.

The silence crumbled  
as a friend went up to the front  
The man's last words,  
he said as the clouds opened up  
and the sunlight leaked through,  
had been,  
"Don't cry when I'm gone  
Be happy because I lived."

The Notebook  
by Chenxiao Zhou, 8-4

The blank  
notebook  
sitting  
on the table  
unused.

So empty  
so wasteful.

For what  
has been done,  
there is no turning back,  
So flip on  
And start a new page.



Look Up At the Sky  
by Hilda Chan, ELA 8

I believe in the colors of the sky. Many of us don't realize this, but the events and emotions we go through everyday do affect the color of the sky. Although many would find this silly, when I think of some of the hardest and happiest moments in my life, I realize the colors of the sky always reflected my emotions.

A few weeks ago, I was sitting in a dimly lit classroom, waiting for the release of our scores of the test we took. I could hear the soft pitter-patter of the rain outside, moistening the field. I was drowsy and wanted to just close my eyes for just a bit, but the anticipation in my head kept me awake. I just know that the long hours of study would pay off, like they always did. I closed my eyes and tried to revive the birthday candles and presents from yesterday. I couldn't believe that just yesterday, I was still a kid. Today, I am finally a teenager. Crossing my fingers, I prayed that my birthday luck from yesterday would promise me an excellent grade.

Whispers from across the room told me that our scores were already posted on our markbooks. Slowly, I opened up my markbook, and tentatively scrolled to the bottom of the page. I got a low score. My arms stiffened, and my heart dropped to my stomach, and the ringing in my ear drowned everything out. I have never gotten such a low score before. I couldn't breathe. I didn't even hear my friend asking me something until she waved her hands in front of my face. She asked me if I was alright. I didn't even notice the big fat droplets of tears forming in my eyes. I shook my head and quickly left the room.

Staring at myself in the bathroom mirror, I loathed the girl looking back at me. She was vulnerable, weak. I tried to find that thirteen year old in her, but no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't. I closed my eyes and breathed in and out. Slowly but surely, my head cleared a bit, and I was able to think. However, the only question that I could think of was: what am I going to do next? Before I could answer that question, the door opened and in came my friend, Melissa, holding my water bottle.

"What happened?" she asked with a worried look on her face. I broke down and told her everything. I told her how I expected myself to do better, and how I have never experienced receiving such a low score, that this was all new to me. We talked, I cried, she comforted me, we hugged. Most importantly, I decided to start thinking like a thirteen year old would. A thirteen year old would be brave and confront their problems. I decided to speak with my teacher after school. Of course, the thoughtful friend that she is, Melissa stayed with me for the whole time. She waited outside while I talked to my teacher, asked me how it went afterwards seeing my tear-stained face, and waited in the bathroom for me to clean myself up. I was such a mess at that time. There was snot in my mask, my eyes were red and puffy from crying. But through all that, I was only thinking of something my teacher said to me. My teacher explained that I could always take a retest if I wanted to. It would be like a "second chance" for me. But, as I was waiting for my mom to come pick me up, I realized that no, I didn't want to take the retest. I understood that my grades don't have to be perfect. Most importantly, I wanted to have that low mark in my markbook so that I would learn from my mistakes, and do better next time. It's okay to fail sometimes. We just have to take advantage of our failures and do better in the future. Looking up, I realized that it had stopped raining. The trees were swaying gently with the soft breeze, the leaves were shimmering like diamonds and reflecting off the beautiful hues the sky was painted. It was a mixture of pink, orange, yellow, red, and a soft rainbow stretched across the sky. I smiled. I'm not afraid to fail anymore. I know that there are people there to catch me when I fall. With them, I know that I am safe.

Some people may say that it's just the way you look at the sky that affects the color. Some people may even say that it's all just a coincidence. But I believe that the colors of the sky are there to warn you, to reassure you, or maybe even to carry you.







# LOTIS Magazine Staff

## 2020-2021



Hi, I'm Daniel Chu. I belong to 8-4 and am thirteen years old. I am dedicated to doing what I enjoy, which includes working on the LOTIS Magazine. But my effort is nothing compared to what my fellow TIS students put into their work. Despite the 2019-2020 school year being cut short, we still amassed a significant number of pages of artwork and writing from that year alone—combined with this year's pieces, we've made this issue the longest yet. It couldn't be more fitting for LOTIS' 10th anniversary.



Hello readers! I'm Franky, and I'm in 8-4 this year. This is my 2nd year on the LOTIS team, and it's been a busy one! I joined the magazine team because I've had lots of work published in previous years, and I was very interested to see the making process and experience it first-hand; little did I know how unusual a year it would be! Other than making the LOTIS Magazine, I also enjoy making music.



Hello! My name (at least for the time being) is Tony Deng. The magazine has finally come out. Most of the time was spent wrestling supplies from the store-room, more of a dungeon if you ask me. Fewer and fewer children have been sacrificed to it in the present day and it is HUNGRY. We've lost more than a few people while trying to get a few pieces of art (We miss you, Will) and fought tooth and nail over THUMBTRACKS. So you better enjoy this magazine, or I'll personally see to it that you will receive an all expenses paid trip to the store-room. Good luck, and get me a paperclip on the way.



Hey, I am Eliana Joaquim Ho, and it was a real pleasure to have been part of the LOTIS Magazine's creation, despite COVID-19 pushing back our publishing plans for the past year or so. On the bright side, it allowed for the emergence of this special dual-sided issue you now see, which is quite cool. Hope you enjoy the amazing art and writing from your fellow schoolmates, they are all pretty awesome :)



Hallo zusammen! I'm Ethan and I'm in grade 8-4 this year. I have been working on the LOTIS team for two years already. I wanted to work on my writing skills and also my editing skills, so this is why I joined the LOTIS Magazine Club. In fact, once I start reading a book, I can never put it down! If I have any free time I like to read and explore different places in Macau. I hope that you like this double issue that we have created for you.



Hello! I am Timothy Chu and I'm in grade 8-4. I am 13 years old. I've been in TIS since 2010! I've always wondered how people made these magazines, so what better way to find out than to join the Literary Magazine Club? I like reading books. Because of the COVID pandemic, the magazine has been delayed for two years. It's been a long experience finishing this, but we finally did it.



# Artist of the Month

## 2020-2021

This school year saw a new initiative by the Student Arts Council. Artist of the Month was a competition aiming to showcase art by TIS students by offering a monthly theme to be executed in a specific medium and rewarding one of the entries with a certificate of recognition and a monetary award. Here are some of the winners. Not pictured: Samantha Leong, 8-2, and Millie Goldsworthy, 8-2, who won the award for Photography.



Lisa Li, 8-1



Inktober: Radio



Eliana Joaquim Ho, 9-1



Young Love



Reever Lee, 7-1



Reveries



Matthew Chu, 8-2



Traditions



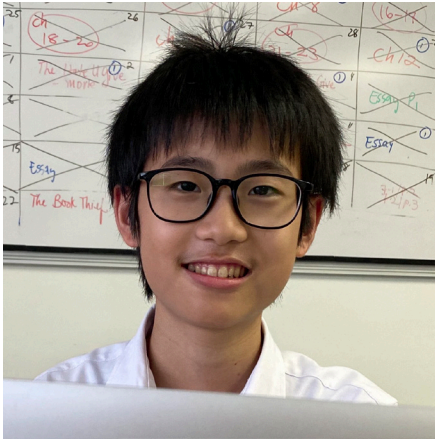




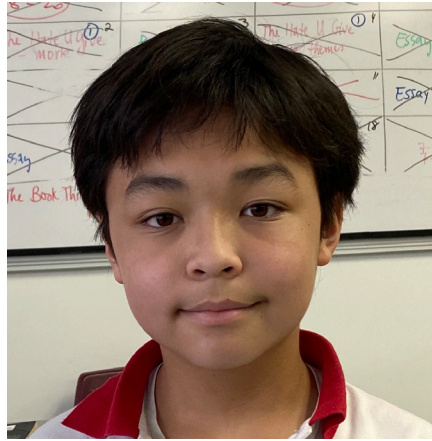




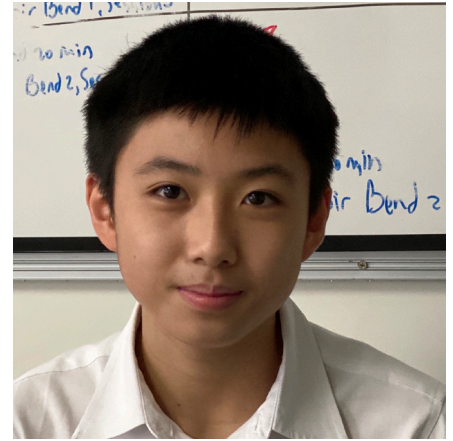
# LOTIS Magazine Staff 2019-2020



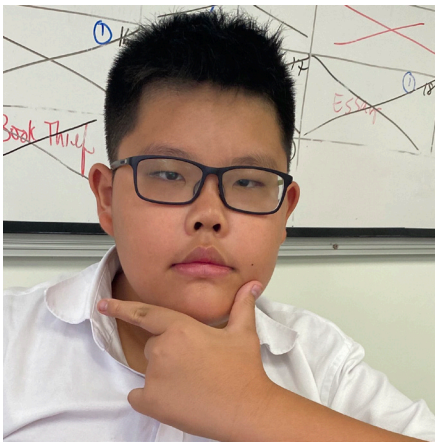
Daniel Chu, 7-2



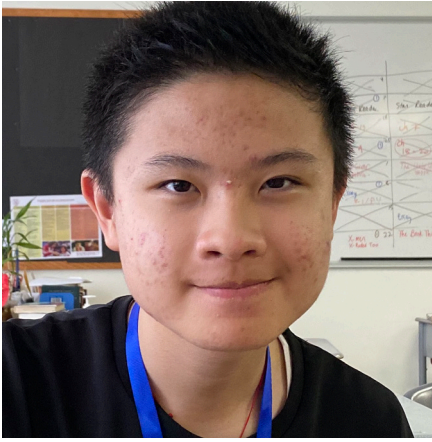
Franky Leong-Murphy, 7-3



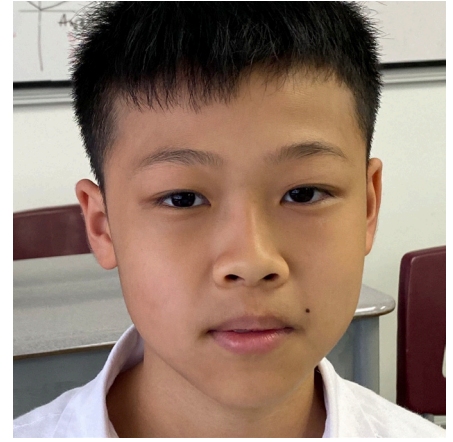
Ethan Yau, 7-3



Tony Deng, 7-1



Yufei Tsao, 8-3



Timothy Chu, 7-2

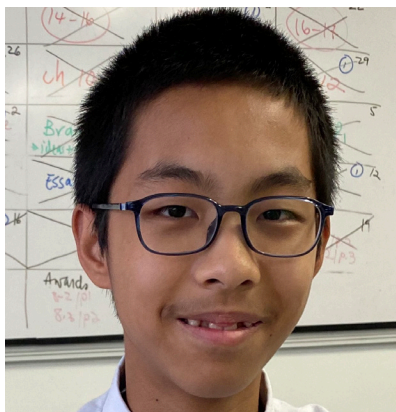
The 2019-2020 TIS Student Arts Council is a proud sponsor of the Literary Magazine

Back row: Owen Ung, Amy Xu, Lydia Tou, Prince Chu, Ms Doina Tonner

Front row: Adinda Sebrinatavia, Annette Tang, Eliana Joaquim Ho, Kuan Wong, Josephina Liu, Natalie Au







Kun Kei Xiao, 8-1

“Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.”

My name is Kun Kei and I am in Grade 9. I have had a long relationship with the Lotis Magazine throughout my TIS career. Like many of the editors here, I have read most of the Lotis Magazines published with great interest and have been eager to take part in showcasing a collage of art and literature pieces created by our talented students. Every word and stroke of paint illustrates a story or emotion that conveys different feelings to different people with different experiences. Being able to connect our personal experiences with art and literature is what makes it so meaningful. Throughout the editing and collecting process, being able to discover and explore these pieces with my peers has been one of my favorite components of this club.

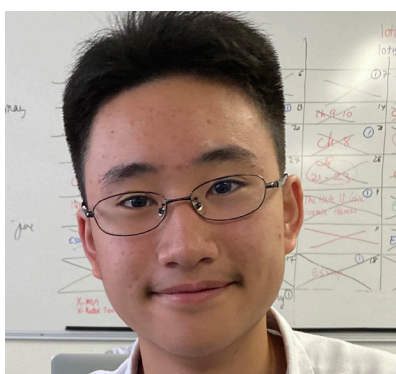
I have been most fortunate to work with a fantastic team. I would first like to thank Ms. Tonner, the editor-in-chief of our magazine, who provided constant support and guided us in the details of publication while giving us complete freedom of decision throughout the process. Her experience in this field greatly enhanced ours. Secondly, I would like to thank my peers. Although we have been affected by the COVID pandemic, we are still committed and always finding ways to improve the magazine. This positive mindset has been essential to our success. Lastly, I would like to thank the teachers and students who participated in the art and literature submission process and the avid readers of our magazine. Our magazine would not be possible without you. Thank you!

I would like to end with the following quote, “What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?” Let our creativity shine through any adversity we face!



Emma Tan, 8-3

Hi, I'm Emma Tan from 8-3. I'm from Beijing and I just came to TIS 3 years ago. I've been interested in writing Chinese Poetry since I was 7 and after I came to TIS, I realized that English creative writing is just as much fun. The LOTIS magazine is full of incredible artworks and literature created by TIS students. It is a great way to share students' talents in writing and art. This magazine is fun to read because it is written by the people we go to school with every day. Come celebrate with us the joy of seeing their work in our magazine.



William Chan, 8-1

Greetings! I am William Chan from 8-1. Becoming part of the LOTIS team was a decision I made completely on a whim, though I would not say it was a foolish one. In fact, participating in the LOTIS Magazine team really brought me into the reality of what it takes to create a polished product that could be distributed to the public. Aside from contributing to LOTIS, I enjoy dabbling in digital art at home while exercising occasionally. With these newfound experiences, I intend to expand my horizons while taking advantage of my time at TIS and and opportunities it offers.



Am I Enough?  
by Maigaew Braga, 6-4

Am I enough?  
Getting an 80 on a test  
Is that enough?  
Is it enough to make my parents proud?  
Even when I give it my all,  
Is it enough?  
I am enough! We all are!

It's enough  
Your all is enough  
You are enough.

They will be proud.

Am I enough?  
Do I need to wear makeup to look pretty?  
NO!  
Makeup is a filter that covers your face  
You don't need to look nice for people to like you  
Your inside is beautiful  
They should like you for who you are

Am I enough?  
Do I need to wear nice clothes  
To look pretty?  
Even when they're  
Sooooooooo uncomfortable!  
NO!

I can wear whatever I want,  
Nice clothes or comfy clothes,  
I don't need anyone to tell me differently  
All that matters is that I'm happy with what I'm wearing.

Am I enough?  
I'm insecure,  
With how I look  
I'm too short, too tall,  
Too skinny, too fat  
STOP!  
That's ENOUGH!

You are beautiful  
You are you,  
No one can be you  
Like you can't be them.  
You are enough.

I am enough,  
And that's a fact.





**Title:** "The Bright Side"  
**Medium:** Acrylic Paint on Canvas  
**Name:** Kellie Cheong  
**Grade:** 10



Difficult  
by Hilda Chan, ELA 7

I was staring at a piece of well-written essay and glancing at the clock, watching the seconds slowly tick by, almost as if they were carrying weights on their back. Stifling a yawn, I laid my head on my desk and tried to pretend I was reading. Drumming my fingertips, I let my eyes wander around my surroundings. Familiar faces blended in the background, pencils scribbled across papers, and finally, as always, the back of the room. The girls at the back were tossing notes to each other, whispering and giggling. I saw how carefree their expressions were, and how they could make decisions without having to check behind their backs.

The bell rang and class was over. I flung my backpack over my shoulders and stood up to leave the classroom. I walked down the hallway as slowly as possible. Since I really had no one to sit with at lunch, except for the new girl, Teresa, I wanted to make the lunch hour as short as possible. I ended up sitting at the edge of “their” table, since a few of them weren’t in school. I kept my eyes on my lunch and nibbled at my sandwich. Though I was sitting right next to them, I felt as if “they” were all on one side of the table, and I was all alone. I didn’t belong. After what felt like ages of burning with embarrassment and awkwardness, I was about to leave to get ready for class.

“Oh, my girlies! Let’s go to the cinema tonight and watch the Mean Girls sequel,” suggested a strawberry blonde girl. “I bought tickets for 13 girls, so we can all go!” Somehow, I already knew that I was not included when she said “we”. Despite this realization, I still sat there as the other girls started to buzz with excitement. They checked their schedules looking for a time when everybody was available and talked about what they were going to wear. Of course, they didn’t bother with me. I was feeling smaller and smaller by the minute. In every comment and every question, there was no mention of “Kristina” at all. It was as if an invisible barrier had just formed between me and the girls and the distance between us was becoming more and more visible. Eventually, I tuned out their voices. Suddenly, the chatter stopped and that’s when I realized that the girls were all turning their heads towards me, the outsider.

“Umm ... Kristina. You don’t have to if you don’t want to, but there is one spare ticket and I was wondering if you would be interested in going to the movies with us tonight.”

I could tell by her facial expressions that the strawberry blonde girl was uncertain of her decision. She glanced at her friends and they all shrugged and waited for my reply.

But my heart ... my heart leapt with happiness, not believing what I had just heard. I tried to stop my lips from curling up, but they were just uncontrollable. My heart was reaching out at the only opportunity to spend a whole night giggling and enjoying myself having fun with friends. No more studying for me! Normally I would’ve laughed at myself for thinking such impossible thoughts. However, right now, I felt as if I finally had a chance to spend some time doing what I really wanted to experience at least once. I uttered a quiet “yes” as my mind trying to process everything. The rest of the day was a blur. As I bounced from class to class I was replaying the scene over and over again in my head.

Rachel told me that her mum was going to pick us all up in her car and that we were to be ready by seven. I tried on outfit after outfit, searching my wardrobe. In the end, I picked a short black skirt with sequins, and a simple, but cute, top. Since I didn’t have any heels or cute footwear to match my outfit, I had to borrow some of my mum’s slippers. Without a care in the world, I carefully untied the rubberband in my hair, grabbed my phone and headed towards the door.

“Kristina! What on earth are you wearing, and where do you think you’re going on the night before the final exams?” my mum’s voice resounded behind me. That’s when something in my mind clicked. Firstly, I had been so busy dressing up and texting Rachel, that I hadn’t even bothered to tell my mom about this. Secondly, I was so overwhelmed by all this, that I had forgotten about the final exams. My eyes fell on the watch around my wrist. Rachel and the girls could be here any minute!

“Mom, please? I’ll be back before ten, I promise. It’s not like I go out all the time!” I pleaded. “I really, really want to go tonight, I-I-I’ll do anything, anything! Do the chores, cook dinner-”

“No. Absolutely not. You have your most important exams of the year tomorrow and you’re asking if you can go and hang out with your friends or whomever until ten? And whoever told you that you are allowed to wear these short dresses at the age of thirteen is someone you shouldn’t be friends with,”

*(continued on the next page)*



(part 2) She stretched her hand towards me, "Give me that phone of yours. It keeps buzzing, such a distraction! You are not getting it back until after the exams."

I don't know if it was because of her attitude or because of the anger that had been building up inside of me for all these years, but suddenly, I was just red all over, and started accusing her of narrowmindedness, and of having such high expectations of a thirteen year old, and how that has affected my confidence at school. I spat out how I wished that I could have a parent that would allow me to live my life as I wished and encourage education in a much more positive way. At one point, tears started to stream down both our faces.

Mum is a single parent. Dad had left us when I was still very young because she was still a teenager when she gave birth to me. Her parents were against it, but she was determined to bring me into this world no matter what the people around her believed she should do. From then on, she expected me to be perfect. Every time I had an exam coming up, I was expected to do nothing but study. Whenever I had some free time, I was meant to read or do extra practice.

Tears were pouring down my face. Without thinking, I blurted out that it was not my fault that Dad had left us and that maybe she should be reflecting on her own behavior rather than being judgmental and criticizing mine. I immediately regretted it and wished I could take back my words. I covered my mouth with my hands, afraid that I would say something stupid and hurtful again.

"I'm going. And there's nothing you can do about it." That was the last thing I said before I left the house without looking back.

Outside, the air was freezing. Realizing that I'd forgotten my sweater upstairs, I shivered as I waited for Rachel and the girls to pick me up. After what seemed like forever, a silver Volvo pulled up onto our driveway.

The inside of the car was heated and comfortable. The girls were all dressed up in their fancy vintage dresses and bold makeup, giggling and whispering to each other. I sighed and looked out the window, seeing my house disappear further and further into the night.

The car came to a stop and we all got out. We were making our way towards the cinema, when I noticed a small boy sitting on the street, holding up a container. My instinct was to drop a few coins in his box, but the girls just walked past him without even acknowledging his presence. For a brief moment it felt like time had slowed down and I got a chance to look into his eyes. They were an incredible shade of blue, so bright and full of life. As his eyes met mine, I was touched by a moment of empathy. My hand was heading towards my purse when I heard Rachel and the girls calling for me. I looked at the boy, but somehow I knew that this wasn't the last time we would see each other, and quickly followed the girls' calls.

I tried to enjoy the movie. I actually did try, but my mind kept recalling those beautiful blue eyes. It was like an old recording playing again and again. I really wanted to help him. I knew that he deserved more than what he had. He was like ... me. I didn't deserve to spend my childhood getting screamed at for the slightest mistakes. I deserved to have opportunities to make friends and to spend time doing what I loved to do. At this point, I couldn't stand it any longer. I softly nudged Rachel's arms and told her that I had to go to the bathroom. She smiled and I sprang up the stairs and pushed open the doors. My legs were carrying me to where I wanted to go, and for once, that was allowed. I crossed streets, ran past shops, and there, in the distance, I could see those blue eyes meeting mine. I dug into my purse and gave him all the money I had on me. He seemed shocked. His beautiful blue eyes filled to the brim with tears, and he whispered, "Thank you."

I smiled and hurried back, as I remembered that Rachel thought that I had gone to the bathroom.

When at the end of the movie, we slowly exited the cinema with the crowd of people, they were discussing which movie was better, which actor more handsome, what they knew about their private lives, but I was just happy that I got to help an orphaned child who was trying to fend for himself.

"Actually, it's still very early. There's this new shopping mall nearby, do you girls want to check it out?" asked Rachel, "I hear they have these cute accessories and outfits that I can't wait to try on!"

The girls looked at each other and agreed almost immediately. I could tell that they were up for anything that allowed them to avoid going home. I smiled to myself. Maybe I might enjoy shopping just as much as they do. I unzipped my bag, and pulled out my purse. That's when I remembered that I had given all the money I had to that boy in the street. Of course, I wasn't going to go and ask him for my money back for shopping, but I also didn't want them to think that I didn't have enough money to go shopping with them.



(part 3) “I...umm. I don’t think I can go shopping with you guys tonight, because my mom expects me to be home before eight, and I am also not feeling that great either, must’ve eaten something bad,” I explained. The girls were looking at each other and raising eyebrows.

“Well, do you have a ride home? Or do you want me to text my mum to come and pick you up?” asked Rachel. I didn’t want to inconvenience Rachel’s mum and have her think I was annoying or something, which might prompt her to stop Rachel from inviting me out again, but on the other hand, I actually didn’t have a ride home and I was absolutely not asking my mum to come pick me up, considering what had happened earlier.

“Yes, I’m fine. There’s no need to call your mom this early, I can get home by myself,” I assured her, “Thanks for inviting me tonight, my girlies!”

My girlies?! Now I’m saying that, too?! Anyway, I tried to smile at them and look as thankful as possible until they turned around and I immediately wiped the smile from my face. I looked for a bench nearby, and sat down. After a few minutes, I realized that I was going to spend my night in the street if I didn’t ask my mum to come pick me up. But I didn’t have the heart to do that, after I’d hurt her so much. I was going to walk around the streets with no one but my phone, which was starting to run out of battery. I was going to experience what it was like to be that boy I had met earlier. However, now, I knew the difference between us. He had no parents although he had done nothing wrong. But me? I sighed.

I guess I deserved to spend a night alone on the streets reflecting on my behavior.

THE END







Artwork by Mavis Kuai, 7-1



Sonnet X: Incomparable  
by Natasha Ho, ELA 10-1

His portraits are incomparable to his looks  
In reality, his face is much less angelic  
His face would never be described in books  
For enhancement will be needed with prosthetic  
Hints of golden curls protrude out of his mop  
If honey is golden brown, his eyes are wilted flowers  
He is an eyesore with all of his ripped tops  
Especially when he speaks as he towers  
Speaking to my dog is more delightful  
Than the sandpaper of a tune he usually carries  
Kissing him can be frightful  
When his lips are beaks of canaries  
Despite his flaws our love is rare  
No 'ships are able to compare

Sonnet 130 Parody  
by Lina Tseng, ELA 10-1

My mister's eyes are not as blue as the sea  
Rather they are more like half mowed grass  
When he enters the room, others want to flee  
His voice is not angelic, it sounds like brass  
His scent is not similar to a flower,  
He smells more like an athlete  
But he gives of a feeling of protection and power,  
And my heart melts when our eyes meet  
When I look at him I don't see a prince  
He looks are really not the best  
When I tell people he's the one, they need help to convince  
In fact, they say he is a bit of a pest  
However, all that really matters is  
He's perfect to me, and my heart will forever be his



Sonnet 130 Parody  
by Silvianna Choi, ELA 10-1

When I look at my mister's eyes, I do not see stars;  
But on his honey toned skin, there are visible scars.  
Even in the summer light, his skin does not glow;  
And at the times of emergency, his actions are slow.  
He is not afraid of being himself, even if it's unattractive;  
And sometimes, I mentally judge his motive.  
He's proud of his dad jokes, as well as his unmelodic laugh;  
Even the ones he got from his friends through the telegraph.  
I saw you look at my direction;  
I smiled when I felt the connection.  
I don't love you because of your look;  
Definitely not because you're a cook.  
But because of your kind heart & soul;  
Therefore I'll give you full credit to live in my heart that you stole.



Artwork by Jessica Littlely, IB Art



Test Scores  
By Daniel Chu, 7-2

“What did you get on the test?” My friend Alex asked me. Right after finishing a lengthy math test, we were given the results of last week’s history test.

“I’ll tell you tomorrow,” I said. Even though we never said it out loud, we both knew that each of us hoped that the other person had gotten a lower score, so we could feel better about ourselves. This wasn’t the case last year, but now, in middle school, things had changed. We were only together in two of the five classes each day, and because of the amount of homework we received, we weren’t getting any chances to do the things that we did as friends in primary school.

“See you later,” Alex said. He entered his classroom.

I pulled out the test sheet from my backpack. Gripping the paper, I stared intently into the test score written in crimson ink. I blinked hard and stared harder into the paper, feeling the red ink sear into my eyes. I ran my fingers over the score, feeling the indents made by my teacher’s pen.

I had only managed a score of sixty-one percent on the test that counted for a quarter of my history grade.

I was so absorbed in self-pity that I wasn’t looking where I was going. I walked right into a student who was looking down at a piece of paper, smiling. I lost my footing and fell to the cold, hard floor. The other student also fell, the stack of papers and textbooks he was holding scattering everywhere. I groaned and started to get up. A crowd was starting to form, mostly made up of people trying to see what had happened or trying to navigate around the mess we had made.

I tried to help the student up, but I stepped on a piece of paper, which slid across the smooth floor. I fell yet again, nearly pushing the student over. He got up and started retrieving his things.

“Sorry,” I mumbled, but he didn’t hear me. He quickly disappeared into the crowd.

I got up and noticed a piece of paper on the ground. I picked it up. It was the same test that I had gotten a low score on. A name was written in neat handwriting on it: Alexsander K. It was the new student whom Alex disliked because their names were too similar, and teachers sometimes mixed them up. I looked to the top right of the page, hoping for a split second that his score was lower than mine. The score was one hundred percent. He got fifty-five correct answers out of fifty-five. I shoved the paper into my backpack and trudged off to my next class.

I steered through a crowd of students and caught a glimpse of the student I had bumped into. He was going into the same class I was going to. I hurried after him.

“Hey!” I yelled as he walked into the doorway. “Hey, you!” Several students turned. I ignored them and entered the classroom, which was crowded with students. Standing on my tiptoes, I craned my neck and looked around. As people started to leave for their next class, I saw the student standing with a teacher. I made my way toward them.

“... performance on the test was outstanding! We have never had a student who has achieved full marks on this test.”

“Thank you. It’s because the way I practice fits my learning style.” He was rifling through a stack of papers.

“Where is your test?” The teacher asked.

“Here!” I gasped. They looked up.

“Your na- You’re Alexsander, aren’t you?” I asked.

“You’re the person who ran into me earlier,” He noted.

“I’m Ezra,” I said. “I have your-”

“My test,” he finished, taking it from me. “How did you get hold of it?”

“I tripped on it,” I replied. “No—I mean you left it behind after... I bumped into you.”

“Thank you for returning Alexsander’s test,” The teacher—Mrs. Invysson, I remembered—said. Her gaze dropped to my test sheet, which I held with my 61% mark clearly visible. I quickly turned the sheet around, displaying a page covered with red Xs.

Blushing, I turned to leave. “Um, bye.”

“What was that?” asked Mrs. Invysson.

“Bye!!!” I yelled, sounding annoyed even to myself. *Too annoyed*, I reflected.

During the history class, I couldn’t stop my mind from drifting off. The warm air made me sleepy. I was called on twice and didn’t know the answer. After what seemed like forever, the bell rang, and students started to leave their desks with relieved expressions on their faces, glad to go home. As I left the classroom, Alexsander saw me coming in his general direction. He tensed and crouched slightly, looking like he was getting ready to dodge.

*Great*, I thought. *Every time I get near to him, he’s gonna think I’m about to crash into him.*

When it became clear that I wasn’t going to walk into him, he relaxed, and actually came over to me.

*(continued on the next page)*



“What did you get on the test?” It seemed more of a demand than a question.

“It’s none of your business,” I muttered. Unfortunately, I was once again exposing the mark on my test paper.

“Sixty-one percent,” he said with a hint of disappointment in his tone. “So you only have thirty-four correct answers out of fifty-five.”

And all of the pent-up frustration and anger that had built up in me over the last week came pouring out like a torrent of water breaking through a rock wall.

“Do you have to know every single person’s test score?” I exploded. “You want to be better than everyone in every way, don’t you?” For the second time in a day, everyone in the hallway was staring at me and Alexander. He was looking coldly at me and his expression was one that you might have when looking at an insect. That made me even angrier.

I saw Mrs. Invysson coming our way, so I left into a stairwell.

When I got home, I worked on homework for a few hours until I heard the tinkling of keys from the front door. The door swung open, and my mother entered the apartment.

“Ezra!” She was back from work. She took her shoes off and put her bag on the table. “Are you almost done with your homework?”

“Of course not,” I replied.

She frowned. “You really need to get more sleep. You’ve been sleeping less than seven hours the entire week. Did you get your test score back yet?”

I was hoping she would forget that. “Sixty-one percent.” I turned back to my homework.

She walked over and opened my backpack. She pulled out my test sheet and looked it over.

“It doesn’t matter. You shouldn’t stress yourself too much,” she said, trying to smile. I looked back at her. No matter how hard she tried to hide it, I could see the disappointment and worry in her face. She wasn’t disappointed in me, but in herself. I was her son, and my failures were her failures. She wanted me to succeed, but didn’t want to stress or pressure me.

“Wait, was the test hard for everyone else? Did everyone else get a lower score than you?”

“No. At least one person got a much higher score than me.”

After that day, I became determined to do better on my tests, and get higher marks than Alexander.

“Wrong.”

“Ask me another question,” I said wearily.

“Maybe you should read the textbook again. I don’t think you’re familiar enough with it,” Alex said. “Anyway, let’s leave now.”

“Why? This is a good place to practice.”

“He’s here,” Alex glared behind him.

I looked over my shoulder. Alexander had set down his bag on the table behind us, typing on his computer with a smirk on his face. A sheet of paper was on the table, the 100% mark clearly visible on it. Over the last month, Alexander’s test scores always seemed to find their way to me, while mine always got to him without me knowing. I always admired him for the creative ways he allowed me to learn his scores, and I hated myself for admiring him.

“You’re right. Let’s go.” We got up and started walking away.

After school, I got tired of doing my math homework and went on my mom’s computer. Someone in the Grade 7 group chat had posted a picture of today’s math word problems with the stories edited. One was turned from *The original price of an item is \$19.99. There is a 25% discount on all items today. What is the amount of discounted money?* to *Because you were his enemy in a war several years ago, someone has raised the price of what they’re selling by 25%. How much extra money do you have to pay?* The person had edited all the other word problems in crazier ways.

I did my math homework using the edited word problems and I finished it much faster than my other homework. I then edited the word problems differently, and sent it to the person. A few minutes later, the person came on the chat, and texted me things like *Incredible! Very Amusing!* and *I wish I had thought of that.*

About a month later, Alex and I weren’t friends anymore. We didn’t have an argument or anything like that, but we slowly grew apart. It’s probably because he didn’t like my new friend, Alexander who helped me get my grades up by editing homework questions. I can still never get a higher score than him, but my mother and I are fine with that now.





# 努力為電影宣傳

接近年尾，Suho透露下年暫未  
繼劇《笑的男子》演出，希望大家  
今次是第一次一個人來到

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門

澳門，希望未來能有機會  
繼續為電影宣傳澳門



The First Rule of a Tree  
by Joyce Chen, 6-1

Nobody knows that I speak.  
Not that they would listen.  
Of course, I converse with the birds,  
And squirrels, and owls, and raccoons.

But the first rule of a tree  
-although unspoken- is to never ever  
Talk in the presence of humans.  
Never.

And so I don't. I used to ask, why?  
Why can't we talk to people?  
Why must we stand still and silent  
Whenever they pass by?

To this day, I still wonder.  
But I don't speak.  
After all, the first rule of a tree is still  
'Never talk to humans'.  
Never.





Pain of Mother Nature  
by Martina Ma, 6-1

Green is everywhere  
or there once was.  
The fire and machines  
replaced it with grey dust.

I never agreed with you  
to replace my appearance,  
but did you really listen?  
You continued destruction!

Every piece of wood  
plays a dangerous part in life.  
Your vicious blazing fires  
burned down everything it spies.

The water I once had,  
shining blue and clear colors.  
Now they replaced that  
with yucky sticky oil.

Habitats destroyed,  
animals were harmed.  
But did you stop your work?  
You continued deforestation!

Not just my forests, oceans, and animals  
Suffered from humans.  
The air was once smelling of flowers,  
Scented sweet and innocent plants.

The clouds used to be white  
like cotton candy treats,  
but now it's either gone  
or slowly turning black.

What have you done?















## A Christmas Rebellion

Anonymous

*Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me.*

“Whoever said that must have never been outside. Words hurt more than either sticks or stones, And when you’re in school, what proof could you possibly have that you’ve been insulted by other kids? Words leave no bruises, no cuts, only emotional pain.

It’s a wonder I ever got through school without breaking into tears at least once, but at this point, I’m used to it, the insults, the yelling and how the teachers don’t do anything. A person can be many things, so why’d I have to be abnormal? It’s a question I ask constantly, yet never have answers for.” I close my notebook and lie down on my bed. *Tomorrow is a new day, time to put all my work to good use*, I think to myself as I drift to sleep.

The alarm clock rings at 8AM. I get up and head to the kitchen where I prepare myself some cereal to eat. It’s been the same tired motions for the past 6 months, wake up, eat, go to school, repeat. I’ve been able to find happiness in games, however. Games of strategy and imagination, things that have been beaten out of me for quite a while. Creaking comes from upstairs. *Ah, that must be dad... well, I can live without breakfast*, I whisper to myself as I leave the house, the bowl of cereal still on the table.

I reach the school after a ten-minute walk, standard, but tiring now that it’s December. A week until Christmas break. *After I reach that mark, I’ll be free from the torment of school till January*, I tell myself. It’s a lie and I know it, but does it really matter? I’ve decided a long time ago it doesn’t. I don’t fit in and I’ll be made fun of before or after Christmas break.

As always, a group of kids makes small jokes about me the moment I walk into my class, their voices soft enough that the teacher doesn’t hear, but loud enough for me to be mildly offended. I sit down and tune out the teacher’s lecture. I already know the material, after all, I went through the entire textbook in the first month because I had nothing better to do. I begin to doodle on a sheet of blank paper, but the doodle turns out terribly and I toss it into the trash.

*Sorry trees, I’m in a bad mood and I frankly don’t care enough to save you all*, I declare. Words and actions define a person and if that’s the case, I am defined as “Abnormal.” I don’t do the same things as everyone else, I am an atheist when everyone else is Christian, and I don’t sink as much time into learning as most people. So I might as well lie low to keep everyone from noticing my abnormalities again ...

I endure an endless stream of insults from the students and, once again, teachers turn a blind eye. Don’t they know it’s bad to kick a man who’s already on the ground? But it doesn’t matter, nothing does. One of the kids decides to throw a punch. I stumble back. Nobody has ever crossed that line before and it catches me unaware. I thought one of the teachers would notice, but ... Nobody. Nobody cares, nobody pays any attention.

“You are weird, loser. Go home and cry yourself to sleep!” the boy yells. I’ve had enough.

In my childhood, I lived off of the rich history of people like Ned Kelly or Admiral Yi, people who fought odds that were against them and came out on top. Kelly helped the poor, a Robin Hood of his age. Yi saved Korea from the Japanese threat. Yet both were at severe disadvantage, a reputation forced upon them by others, people shifting the blame. I relate to these historical heroes. So when that boy throws his punch, that is it. I’ve had enough. I won’t allow the kids to hit me. I won’t let the teachers continue to ignore this.

There must be others just like me, so I am going to do something for all of us. I am going to fight back, not with fists, but with words and careful planning

I wake up with the memory of the dream in my head. It wasn’t a dream, more of a reenactment of something that happened. I find my phone, the object of importance. I smile, knowing everything has been prepared.

*Everything is going according to plan, and it’s time to step up and fight back*, I whisper to myself as I get up off my bed. *I’m not about to let them continue on like this for another year, no... I’m going to make a statement. Enough of the anti-bullying stuff nobody cares enough about, it’s time to set the world on fire*. As I step out of the house, I’m silently laughing to myself, knowing that after today, things will change.

As I step into the school, I can already feel the tension. People are silent, yet throwing daggers at each other. It seems that at any moment, things could go south. What happened to create this situation? Simple. I hired a few students to hold up signs saying “*Retribution is nigh, repent for what you’ve done!*” I can’t help but snicker to himself.



This was rather easy to set up... Considering everyone has bullied someone before, this year more so than the last few, it's easy to understand what these signs are talking about.

As soon as class starts and people sit down, they find that all the things they left on their desks before recess are glued to the desk. I enjoy my handiwork. It might not be huge, but being able to cause some tension is... fun, to say the least. Everyone panics for a bit before finally realising it is only glue. Small, minor pranks will help build up the end result of my plan adding to the tension that is already here.

At lunch, the cafeteria is filled with chatter about what is happening, theories and random thoughts. There is one thing everyone agrees on, and that they get right. "Whoever is doing this must be extremely mad at us," they all agree. I almost laugh at how hilarious this is.

*The same people who have treated me like I don't belong, are now being afraid of what I'll do next?*  
*Hilarious.* I chuckle to myself. This isn't going to be a small event, oh I'm not going to let them off the hook, am I?

The class is still wondering about what is going on at the end of the day when somebody decides to pay me a visit. I'm not stupid. I know that what I am doing is frankly suicidal, but it will help get the message across. I left my barely known trademark, an A with wings, on two things. One of the bullies knows me well enough to be able to tell it's my trademark. I'm banking on it. What I don't expect is being pinned down as soon as the bully reaches me. But it doesn't matter as all he does is help my plan.

"I know what you did, why did you do it?" the bully yells although he knows the answer perfectly well.

"To make sure none of you are a thorn in anyone's side anymore, isn't it obvious?" I reply smugly. It's almost hilarious how much someone can do when their hand is forced.

"A thorn in anyone else's side..? What are you talking about?" The bully asks, curious, but afraid of the answer. He knows. He knows what the answer is, he is just too scared to accept it.

"I can't be the only person you've been bullying. Everyone else here probably bullies all the other abnormal people here. It's not hard to connect the dots. Besides... You've already helped me reach my goal," I answer, fully aware that this will raise some questions. That's what I want, anyways, an opening so I can get up. Predictably, the bully gets up, a confused look on his face. I reach into my locker and pull out my phone. The phone which has recorded the entire interaction up till this point.

Rule number one is assume all enemies are stupid. Rule number two is confuse the enemy until the realization hits them. The bully, and by proxy, the entire crowd realises what I did. And the bully breaks into a sweat.

"The entire thing has been recorded, along with you pinning me down. Unfortunately for you, I never egged you on, so you can't blame me." I tell him very happy with myself.

"B-but you set up all those pranks! Those signs!" the bully forces himself to get out, he knows he's in a corner. He drives himself into a corner.

"Except pranks aren't really a suitable reason to pin someone down. I only glued a few things down. And those signs? Well, I never intended to do anything," I admit, aware that now, everything will be much more fun.

"...WHAT?!" The bully yells. Now he has caught on. He's realised that not only has he driven himself into a corner, he has sprung the trap too. He's been outplayed.

"Checkmate, my friend. This entire interaction has been recorded. If you thought I was going to stand around and not do anything, you're sorely mistaken. I'll be sending this to your parents. You can't outrun karma forever," I announce not just to the bully, but to all the students who have gathered around.

By doing this, I'm showing one important thing. Not everyone will sit around and take punches. Treat people as your equal, or else karma will catch up with you. All the bullies have caught on. Everyone has caught on. The other outcasts root for me. They understand why I'm doing what I'm doing, and they support me. The entire hallway takes a one-eighty. Silence. Pure silence. The crowd knows they've been outplayed, the bullies know they've been outplayed.

"When I said retribution is nigh, I was serious. But then again, I did warn you all. Repent for what you have done. If any of you had just taken a hint and decided to be a better person, perhaps we wouldn't be in this situation." I finish. The plan has all come to this, the fruit of my labor.

With that, I leave the hallway and the school and a stunned crowd behind. As soon as I get out, a crowd of outcasts come and congratulate me. It feels great. I stood up for myself and them. And even if a few of them might continue to be complete jerks, a new year starts next month. But it's more than that. It's a new beginning for all the outcasts, and I just can't help but smile at the thought as I leave the school.

THE END

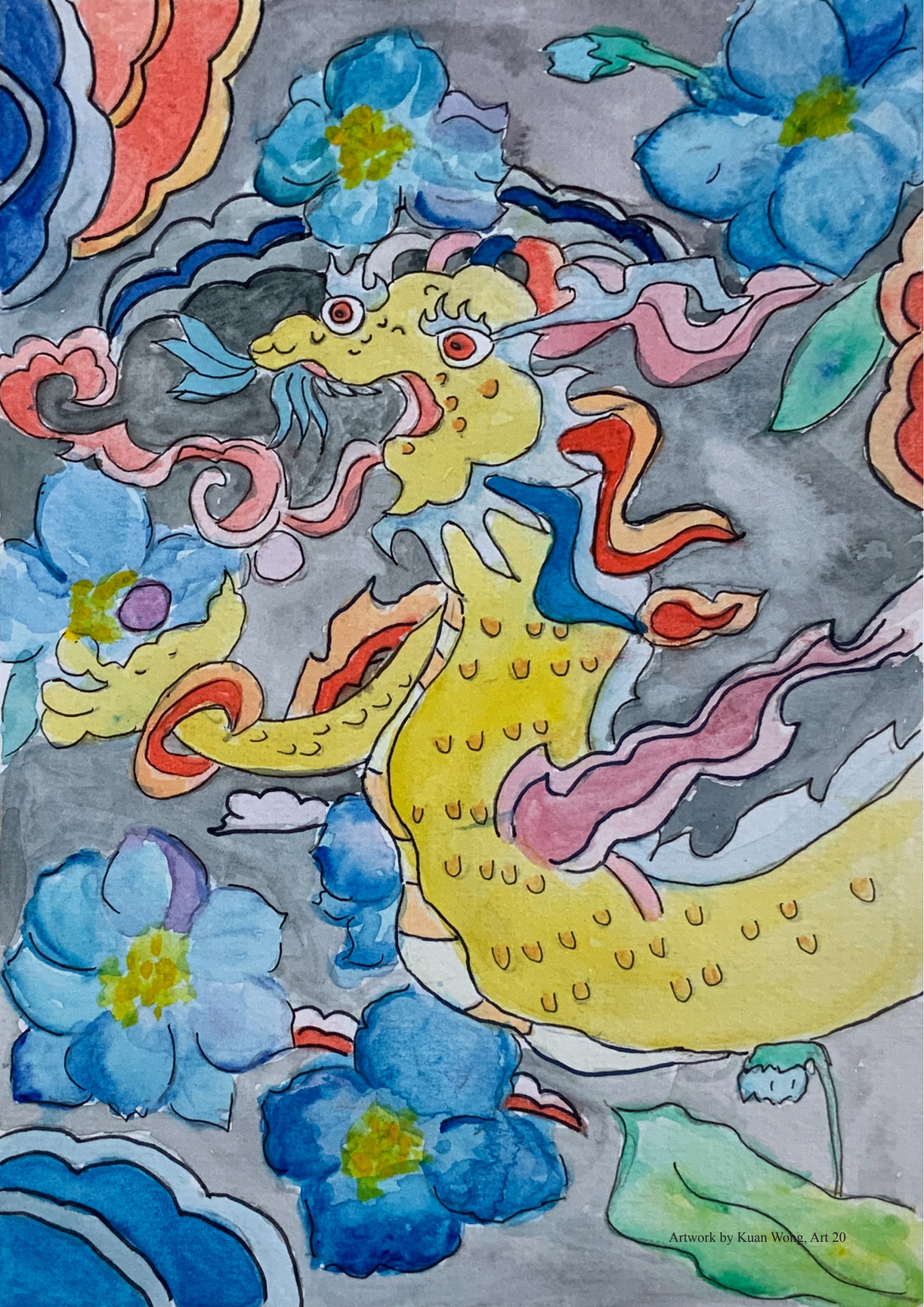














Books  
by Ines Ao Ieong Geraldles, 6-1

A magical land  
overflowing with wonders.  
Not always exciting,  
Sometimes devastating.  
The magical gateway  
draws you in.  
Descriptive language  
prancing,  
dancing.  
laughing,  
crying.  
Before you know it,  
The roller coaster ends  
Leaving you craving for more.

Writing a Book  
by Donald Lao, 6-1

An author closes his eyes.  
Words and stories swim inside his head. He reaches for one  
gently putting it on the paper,  
Writing, writing and more writing,  
Then he stops.  
Writes again.  
Stops.  
Writes.  
Stops.  
The cycle is continuous,  
Drafting  
Redrafting,  
Revising,  
Editing.  
A new book is published.



Where I'm From  
by Kun Kei Xiao, 8-1

I am from the scattered corners of the universe,  
from misunderstood personalities.  
I am from flames of conflict,  
and setbacks.  
I am from hard to recover fear,  
I am from a truth too bitter to be real,  
I am from a reality too sweet to be tasted,  
I am from the violin out of tune,  
and dreams, faded out of track.  
I am the shadow neglected by the sun,  
the darkness helpless in the light.  
I am from those moments in the scattered universe  
that could never be healed.

Where I'm From  
by I Ning Chen, 8-1

I am from unmistakably crispy country air  
from figs that drip with honey.  
I am from the pain that is not lived with, it is endured  
and the chaotic shabbiness of the surroundings.  
I am from a place with things too pretty to eat  
whose smells make you hungry.  
I am from corners that remain unexplored  
and roads with no end.  
I am from the moments that are seared in your brain.

Where I'm From  
by William Chan, 8-1

I am from a crazy assortment of logs and boards and thick twine,  
From the unknown, that would fill in my picture to a truly complete memory.  
I am from a burst of bitterness spreading through one's chest,  
And a shivering cold felt miles away while looking at the distorted universe.  
I am from something fragmented out there that feels familiar,  
Where the pieces of a puzzle had been finally put together.  
I am from the recognition of others, giving me life,  
When eyes widen and breathing stops for a long moment.  
I am from a vast silenced courtyard and an opening that can never be  
crossed,  
And from the void, surrounded by endless space.  
I am from the darkness covered by thick ivy,  
From a storm of emotions wrenching the gut,  
And from all disappearing sizes and races  
Which feel like being faded away,  
I am from those moments where I've never been seen as myself,  
only as the shadow of others.











## 建築是凝固的音樂 蕭貫祺, 8-1

音樂和建築根本性的區別是各自的媒介。音樂是以時間為單位而建築是以空間為單位。我們將探索建築和音樂的數學比例，架構，和層次的相似之處來發現為何建築是凝固的音樂。

那相聯音樂和建築的橋樑是什麼呢？數學的比例。音樂中兩個音的頻率是某些數字關係時才悅耳。常用的比例有1:2, 2:3, 3:4, 8:9和16:27。古羅馬時期的建築師就開始在建築物的布局中使用了這些比例，這些比例沿用至今。在音樂中計算副歌總秒數與第一段落處總秒數的比值，平均等於0.618，和建築中的黃金分割相等。如此可見，我們對時間和空間藝術的觀賞都和數學的比例有關係。

我們將以蘇州園林為例，觀察一下與音樂和建築中在的結構中的相同之處。音樂裡有前奏、主歌、橋段和副歌，一环扣一环。而蘇州園林也有相應的起、承、轉、合。起，是空間序列營造之始。承，園林裡的中軸景觀層層遞進的空間韻味。轉，開始產生“移步異景”變化。合，回歸到園林開始的主題。蘇州園林的“前奏、主歌、橋段、副歌”加起來就好像一首凝固的《梅花三弄》。這種結構使我們在每一個角度觀賞時都好像走進了新一篇“如在圖畫中”的奏章。

音樂裡裝飾著主旋律的裝飾音就像蘇州園林隔而不隔，界而未界的牆壁和廊子。牆壁上的各式圖案並不是為防盜而設，廊子也並沒有完全隔開園林，他們都是為了園林裡的美感添加一點層次。音樂中的裝飾音也沒有支撐起旋律的目的，而是為了增加主旋律的層次。他們存在的實際作用都是為了增加“隔而不隔，界而未界”的意境。

我們從數學比例，結構和層次上發現了音樂與建築的關係。或許建築就是音樂的另一種表達方式。可以說的當然不止這些，這裡不再多寫了。



You Know The Time  
by Grace Zhang, 6-1

You know the time-

When you've just left the house  
Forgetting a task,  
Everyone looks at you,  
"Wait, where's my mask?"

When you try to greet your friends  
With a pat on the back  
Handshakes or hugs,  
"Wait, you can't interact?"

When you've just washed your hands  
And you're ready for lunch,  
Accidentally touch something,  
This time wash with a sponge.

When you've finally gotten your lunch,  
But forgot another task,  
Shove it in your mouth,  
"Wait, I'm wearing a mask?"

When it's time for recess  
And you gather with your friends,  
You hear your teacher say,  
"Social Distancing." That's how it ends.

You know the time-  
It's 2020. It's COVID-19.









Artwork by Abigail Griffiths, Art 10

# LOTIS MAGAZINE

2019-2020, VOLUME X

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MACAO