The world is but a canvas to our imagination.

-Henry David Thoreau
I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to the creation of this year's edition of Soundings. The students who submitted their work, the teachers that encouraged them to do so, and our brilliant Soundings staff that worked diligently and for numerous hours to create this beautiful edition. It is a privilege to work with such a talented group of young women and men. I especially want to thank our Editor in Chief, Elizabeth Shen, whose creativity and ability to think outside the box was central to the creation of this year’s stupendous edition. Also, I would like to give a special thanks to our assistant editor, Sasha Alena Desmoineaux, whose hard work and artistic talent also played a significant role in the success of this year’s edition. It is with great pride that we present the 2016-2017 edition of Soundings, Bayside High School’s Literature and Art Magazine.

Ms. Maria Jasmine Ormaechea
English Department

This year’s edition of Soundings Literature and Art Magazine is the result of the great effort of various talented writers and artists that attend Bayside High School. Their eloquent words and exquisite artwork express their imagination and deepest thoughts. The variations of style and themes are a kaleidoscope of brilliant colors. I want to thank everyone who contributed to the creation of this magazine, especially the students who provided their writing and art, the teachers in the English and Art Departments who encouraged students to contribute, and the Soundings members, who worked for many hours in order to create this edition. I would also like to thank our advisor, Ms. Ormaechea, for her hard work and dedication to the Soundings, and her commitment to making this the best edition possible.

Elizabeth Shen
Editor in Chief
Life’s Contradictions
By Sasha Alena Desmoineaux

Good things come to those who wait,
Yet time and tide wait for no man.

The pen is mightier than the sword,
Yet actions speak louder than words.

Wise men think alike,
Yet fools seldom differ.

The best things in life are free,
Yet nothing is free in this world.

Hold fast to the words of your ancestors,
Yet wise men make proverbs and fools repeat them.

Is there a right? To what extent is there a wrong?
To be wrong is to be human, but what is to be wrong?
Wrong differs to each pair of eyes,
What is justice to one is cruel to another.

In this world there is no black and white,
I’m told there will never be a wrong or right.
And yet,
Even that,
Is that true?
Should I believe just because others do?
THE REAL GOODBYE

BY MARVIN BYNOE

I am no stranger to difficult, tender good-byes
Almost always accompanied by seemingly harmless lies
The empty promises to keep in touch
The thing is: I don’t think of old friends much
So to the people whom I will never speak to again
I likely like you a lot, just not enough to pick up a pen
The lack of correspondence is your fault
Could I have just picked up a phone and called?
We could have talked about our “golden years”
Both our eyes would probably sting with tears
We would talk for hours recounting the old times
Nostalgia causing your tears, boredom causing mine
Instead let’s sit down and talk about change
Moving on is hard and often followed by pain
Surely there is time before we part
If you haven’t practiced coping, it’s a good time to start

WOMEN’S RIGHTS

BY REBECCA WATHMANN

They say we’re here for procreation
Best deprived of information
The reason for sin and Satan
Our bodies be weak and faintin’

We wish they had seen the honest matter
Better off if we’re fatter
Blisters after mixing batter
Hard work to have dinner on the platter.

If we’re so evil, prove your statement
See our violence on the pavement
Hear our cries and entertainment
Women’s rights must be instated!
Believe
By Tamara Dalton

Believe in yourself and your abilities
believe that you can go far and break boundaries
don’t be held down by your oppressors
use your own mind, because I sure think you’re clever.

Believe that you are more than a race
that you are more than just the color on your face
maybe one day we can all be equal
and history won’t have to have a sequel.

Believe that you are more than what is in your pants
that no matter your gender, you still have a chance
you can do exactly what they can do
don’t let them control, don’t let them define you.

Believe that you are more than the money you own
money won’t be anything if you’re all alone
they say money can’t buy you happiness,
so why do we let money determine our success.

Believe that you are more than the grades on that paper
that you can change the world because you are a shaper
grades alone do not define the kind of person you are
if you’re meant to shine, you’ll shine brighter than a star.

Believe that you can be the change that the world so badly needs
don’t be afraid to get hurt, don’t be afraid to bleed
They say that one person can cause a chain reaction
so are you going to be the first believer that takes action?

Scars
By Kyara Lomax

Scars are marks that show where you have been, not where you are going
Scars show the struggles you had to endure, not the doors that will be open
Scars remind you of the pain you have experienced,
not the victories you will experience
Scars show the setbacks you had to endure
to prepare you for the comebacks that are in store
Scars give a roadmap to your past, not the destination to your future
People refer to you by your old scars, but there are new scars to be made
Scars create a history you cannot erase, but your future can create a parallel history that
has no remnants of your past.

It Won’t Always Be This Way
By Annie Preston

We’ve all gone through it. Some sort of pain, some sort of remorse.
Life is just one big obstacle course.
God keeps telling me to just stay calm and wait it all out.
But doing so is so difficult, in this world full of doubt.
Am I really the princess of the house, of their lives as they claim me to be?
If that were true, explain all the responsibility.
It’s become so hard to hold it together for the ones I care for.
I blame no one but myself when they walk out the door.
The self loathing comes in, and it all spirals down.
But sometimes you just gotta pick yourself up.
Hey, you’re not hell bound.
Remember who you are, and all you’ve done.
This is just another chapter in your life, never the last one.
Love will get you, yeah the heartache is pain.
But if you don’t ever lose you can’t ever gain.
Friends come and go like the clouds through the day.
So please just trust in yourself, you’re the only one here to stay.
And remember,
It won’t always be this way.
In a world of similarities I stand out like a black lamb,  
Like a minority I'm looked down upon but I'm hard to crack like a clam.  
Humans eating meat clogging their arteries like a traffic jam,  
Not realizing that it's not our purpose or how we have been programmed.

by Mazan Eldewak

My eyes are painted  
with applications,  
and deadlines  
My heart is clouded  
with the shadows in the distance.  
My stomach is stained dark,  
with the coffee I drink to keep me awake.  
My hands feel like they're tied down  
with the weight of my life  
and a BIC pen.

by Emily Gan

By Viktor Blagojevic
Normality
By Shaliny Sahotta

Normality
It’s what I want,
Not what I need.
Something new,
Something different.

I like new things,
Not having a routine,
Not being a robot,
Yet I crave normality.

Normality
Something that is unattainable.
I don’t want questions about the new,
How is this?
How is that?
I want to stay,
With my memories.

In the past,
Being naive,
Carefree,
Arrogant,
Normality

We spend our time working,
Living as we wish,
As we attempt to achieve normality.

Asleep
by KeAn Gibbons

It’s hard
When you see
Everyone is asleep
Scrolling down pages of nothing
Looking at pictures of nothing
And figuring out how to be better than nothing
It’s hard to see everyone asleep
When you walk through the halls
To hear of likes
And requests
And parties
And short solutions
And words wasted for nothing
It’s hard to be the one waking up
Sniffing the air of reality,
Looking into its face
And being lonely
And lost
When everyone is just asleep

Photograph by Romy Weng
Questions?
By Simran Mohan

I did try really I did, everything I know was easy and fine

We are asked so much yet have such little knowledge, sitting while listening about how the world is in ruin

We just sit and watch and hear it happen, no evasive action is being placed, yet you want us to know the exponential equation? Because that’s going to help us fix it for sure.

How is this going to affect humanity? These are the REAL problems to be solved. Then they wonder why we are behind

Turning our backs on the truth, to focus on books, just because they don’t want to hear what the truth is. Humanity has lost its way but we just keep on driving not towards, not with it, but against it

20,000 dollars is spent for our education, but just one dollar is more precious than a diamond ring for many with nothing

But what these years of stress and work have taught me, if anything, is that you can never run, not ever, the only out is in

Work, graduate, stress, work even more. That’s the cycle of life sadly. Working till we’re 99 to stay alive, what has the world come to?

Only this…

Pressure
By Elizabeth Shen

It is as if the gears and screws are breaking down
And the smoke puffs
And murky water run down the drain
They make screeches along with the clang-clank-clonk
The parts are stuck
The friction slides
Sparks fly
Surface cracks

Yet they decide it’s not enough to finish all its tasks
With force and effort they fix and run applying a little grease
Overlooking minor malfunctions

Soon not even the technicians can fix it

I Don’t Know “Me”
by Jessica Zheng

I don’t know “me”, nor what I’ll become.
Will I fly like a duck in the winter? or will I sink to my death instead?

I don’t know “me”, nor what I’ll become.
Will I get to live the American dream? or will my dreams be unfulfilled?

I don’t know “me”, nor what I’ll become.
Will I be suppressed by the laws of society? or will I rebel?

I don’t know “me”, nor what I’ll become.
Will my death be the death of a salesmen? or will my legacy be amongst the known?

By Xena Weng
I'm a high schooler with the strength of God propelling my dreams, and as long as he is my savior I'm aware he promised big things. I've been gifted with a natural talent and possess love for the literature craft, when I tell them my inspiration for the gift that I have, their initial reaction is to sit back and laugh.

They believe cause I'm an African American who raps in a suburban area that my tendency to like certain figures would be much clearer... flawless results not a single error, and for anybody that's currently lost, let me reply with a couple of my peer's responses.

"Oh you're a rapper from Queens so you obviously love Nas, or Biggie or Tupac Shakur, oh wait maybe that new kid Kendrick Lamar, or maybe when you're not rapping your next action is to go practice ball, so obviously Kobe or even Lebron, I got it, you wanna be just like Mike?" Well sorry, you're not quite right.

The group of people you named are great and all have a great influence, but the people that I'm suggesting now are from a group called the Civil Rights Movement. This group whose legacy reigns supreme and efforts echoes loud, are my biggest influences and I’m truthfully proud. And not to discredit the others mentioned but it's obviously evident, that if it wasn't for these veterans, their presence would be irrelevant.

Veterans like Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou, God rest their souls, who truly can say that the pen is mightier than the sword. Whose impact through paper and pen were equivalent to the ones being made in the streets. Malcolm X, Mr King, Ms Park, Mr. Du Bois, if you're in need of soul then I'd prefer Ms. Nina Simone. I have so many more to name but my time is limited, as long as you're able to see what the bigger picture is.

That you’re able to see and get an idea of the people who I praise; the impact and actions of these characters till this day leaves me amazed. I look up to men who were looked down on for their pigmentation. Colored only signs and jail cells were their invitation. I idolize men who refused to adjust to the false idea of the norm and in return endured blow after blow until sensation of pain was a distant stranger.

Men who were well aware their future wasn't promised, but still took the other option to make sure our rights were ensured. Beating after beating, ridicules and taunts, insults and torture couldn't stop their determination, and in return the only thing they get is a month of celebration. Men who were hosed down, laughed at, brutally beat, who witnessed their brothers and sisters death on display for those to see in the street. The same people who refused to have their future stored on a shelf, and they believed in us more thanw we believe in ourselves.

I wish I could impact the world the way these people, excuse me these legends, did, but thank God that these figures have such an influence on a kid. From the baptist minster from Atlanta to the politician from Chicago, these people taught us that no dream is too far to follow.
Let me introduce myself
Tom Rider
The one and only
Like Kobe in his prime
I'm solely, in time, the star of this great story
From bar to bar into glory
I—wait I'm sorry that was my pride talking I got to set it off
My trophies are like Pokémon because I got to get them all
Honestly I'm a predator with the metaphors
They put me up on a pedestal
As an editor
I was led into battle
With red blue and yellow
That's the flag of Ecuador
Competition faced sabotage, I'm the saboteur
I'm not an amateur
The rhymes are simultaneous, it's my ship so climb aboard
These lines I write, in late night like David Letterman
Words knock so hard, its breaks the hinges off the door
I promise you I've accomplished the phonics of rhythm
My logic is rocketing out my body
My rank is up there no topping it
How could you possibly abolish the apocalypse of my pen stroking the ink that I write with confidence
When my train of thoughts commute there's no stopping it
Despite their rules, I live by my own standards
You wanted change? Well don't tamper
The price of life is $5.25 and you're not getting your quarter BACK (QUARTERBACK), like Cam from The Panthers
They say time is money
The clock ticks, it makes cents (SENSE)
Get it?
Like quarters, pennies, dimes or nickels? It's the same resemblance
It's a race since time's running, it's dancing
But I'm impatient
The HANDS on the clock couldn't GRAB my attention
I bet these words are flying over heads like airplanes
It's driving me crazy
Actually—I'm O.K see? (OKC)
Like the thunder
I'm a WARRIOR who saves at KNICKS of time
But hero's?
No you don't see those in your pack
They say you fly WEST when you're BROKE (Westbrook) when you have nothing but 0 on your back
Westbrook? Oh come on you don't get that?
Well it's getting HOTTER as my FANS decrease
My competition abandoned the game like LEBRON when they couldn't stand (stay in) the HEAT
I love Miami though
My altitude, too high through blue skies, I pilot the plane, as I man the seat
Save me the sentiments, it takes a level of intelligence, to comprehend what I meant
I've been calm so I put my aggression on
These, my friends, are just some words from yours truly, the Professional

By Jasmeen Kaur
I’m scared and cold
Scarf tied up so tight
And body covered from head to toe
It’s cold outside
But I walk alone
Nose red from frost
And tears dried from snow
I sweep the streets
Empty but full of defeat
I sob and scream
And raise my fist
When I realize no one hears a thing
As I walk the path
Of those unknown
I wait for the cavalry
to free my soul
I feel so lost
I feel alone
But take my hand

And guide me home
I’ve been pulled pushed and
Around every corner
Kicked and shoved
Forever forced to feel unloved
Just don’t believe
What those other boys and girls say
But let me tell you now
I’ll make those fears go away
Now I believe
That I’ll never be
What others expect to see
Someday I’ll be
The one to set my soul free
And everyone under the sun will see
Just how wonderful
I can truly be

Under the Sun
Sasha Alena Desmoineaux

By Elizabeth Shen
Different people bring out different parts of me
Alright, you don’t believe me, here’s an example
You have a friend that’ll get you so excited you’ll be ready to jump off a building with the idea that you’ll fly
And that one person who aggravates to the point which you can’t breath from confusion
No?
Well, what about the person that makes you feel both
Unfortunately, I don’t know this person
Given the chance I would want to feel that extreme rage only coming from the feelings that flourished between
us because we care
Given the chance I would want my chest to be ripped open and my heart be squeezed so hard that I could feel
the excruciating pain, but gently enough for me to live
Given the chance I would want to feel myself throwing up butterflies knowing that your thinking of me too
Given the chance I would pick out every star in the sky and bring it to your door step only to show you none of
them are as bright as you
Given the chance I would give these hands, feet and eyes to searching the ends of this earth for you
Given the chance I would make these walls talk about this day, about how I stood here a fool not knowing who
you are and what we’ll be
But then again you’ll know later these words I threw into the air as a Beacon to reach you
Given the chance I would want to know your favorite song or your biggest pet peeve
I would want to know what happened to you today or if you want to be held
But then again some of you are hearing me but not listening as I spit these metaphors at you
Given the chance I would want you to know that person who makes you feel both
I would want to know if this person is thinking the same as me
But most of all, I just wish I knew who I was talking about

I’m sorry; I understand that I have hurt you,
but don’t you think you hurt me too
we both said some hurtful things
but behind those words was no true meaning
I’m trying to make this work, but you don’t care
I’m sorry.

What can I do to help you understand that in rage I became foolish, stupid and dumb
I said things that should have never been said
I regret the words that came out of my mouth, but I cannot take it back
But you played no silent part, your words were even harsher
But I’m the one that’s sorry.

All I have left is a mouthful of sorry
and all you have is lies and a stupid story
I’m left here to deal with my pain alone
because you care more about your stupid phone
my pain and misery from you I must hide
keep all my emotions bottled up inside
but the biggest emotion I feel is guilt
I feel nothing more than sorry.

How many times shall I apologize?
can’t you see the pain behind my big brown eyes?
You can’t accept what I have said to you
so what more do you want me to do
I’m done trying, I’ve made my decision
Now things are all up to you, take your time this choice needs precision
and for the last time I say unto you
I’m sorry for all that I put you through
By Annie Lin

How does it feel when everything you have is gone?
in that corner you stay
he left you there all alone
but you still pray, he does not go away

Only with memories to hold
The only thing you think of is rain
these memories, to you, they are gold
The only thing you take in is pain

Days go by, he is not calling
You think back to the days
Tears from your face, falling
Remember how he used to say

"I will love you forever and always,"
What happened? What happened to forever and always?

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Chipmunks & Dragons
By: Stacey Malone

The day she knew she loved you
Was the day she had to let you go
A feeling so strong, can really stop her heart though
It was never about the lust, mistrust, the boom & the bust
Something special, she called "only about us"

Let the flowers sprout and bloom
Fall til swept with a broom
When they’re gone, you’ll say their unique
Strong once before, just became too weak

Found her torn on the inside
Wanting no more than to run... to hide
You never left, stood right by her side

#TooClose started it all
Was your rise, never your downfall
Since day one you held her down
Shined so bright, when she got the crown
Treated her like a Queen, and just right
Wouldn’t let her go, out of your sight

What’s funny is she wanted to see clearer
The face she saw, was mine in the mirror

You changed her, made her humble
Took a while, yes, she did stumble
As short as she is, she looked up to you
The thoughts in her mind, things you never knew
Afraid to love once again

What would happen to her then?
You came along, eased her worry
Running on the track, in such a hurry
What captured her the most though
Were the times when she thought Oh
My God, look at that smile so bright
Making her want to soar, to take flight
Nothing I say is a moral nor a myth
That girl in the mirror wants to be your Mrs. Smith

But the day she knew she loved you
Was the day she had to let you go
But her feelings for you, is something that will never show
Drown
By Victoria Abreu

I was drowning in my love for you,
And when you let go of my hand,
I got lost in it forever.

Happiness
By Victoria Abreu

I never imagined happiness,
Until I met you.

Favorites
By Victoria Abreu

I never had a favorite fruit,
Until you picked an apple off a nearby tree.
I never had a favorite song,
Until you put yours on repeat.
I never had a favorite smell,
Until I caught a whiff of your shampoo.
I never had a favorite sight,
Until I saw you.

Him
By Chelsea Otu Anakwa

Good God he is perfect.
He probably is the light in the world. My world at least. His smile, his awkward laughter...
His ambitions, goals, aspirations.
He makes me feel whole; even if it’s for a while.

I REGRET
By Tamara Dalton

I know they say that you should live life with no regrets that everything in your past you should just forgive and forget for me that’s the hardest thing to do I could never give up on me and you.

I regret not telling you when I had the chance cause maybe it could have been me and you at that next dance I let my fear get the better of me and now there could never be a chance for we.

I regret not holding you near pulling you close and whispering in your ear not being able to hold you in my arms not letting you feel safe, secure and warm.

I regret falling so hard for you getting stuck and not knowing what to do I feel for someone I had the chance of being with it was all in my head nothing but a stupid myth.

I regret being friend-zoned by you even though you are my best friend and that is true not pulling you close and showing you love not letting you know that you were my angel sent from above.

I regret everything that has happened to us we no longer have faith and we no longer have trust I wish I could change everything, but sadly that I cannot do but one thing I could never regret is saying I love you.
WEB OF SOCIETY
BY REBECCA WAHMANN

Dewdrops line a silky weave
The tears of our race
The spider is the palest thing
Who treads among this place

And each and every silky wrap
Encompasses the rights
Education, information
Which for we must fight.

As the spider sucks it down
We must be the netted swatter
We must stop their racist order
To fulfill the ambitions of our founding fathers.

Down must go the spider
Down must it fall
So that there can finally be
Liberty and
Justice for all!

The Voice for the Voiceless
BY KYARA LOMAX

What are people really saying when they speak?
Are they speaking words of encouragement to help you on your way?
Are they speaking words of discouragement that will lower your confidence?
Are they speaking words that portray inspiration to uplift you?
Are they just speaking words with no meaning, just so they can be heard?
Are they speaking in riddles in which you have to piece the meaning together?

No matter the kind of words that are spoken, the meaning behind the words gives them substance
It is what is expressed through the words that counts
Just because you are voiceless does not mean you do not have a voice
Just because you are voiceless does not mean that you cannot say something powerful with conviction

Sometimes it is not about how many words are spoken- it is about the motivation, as well as, the emotion behind them
People present words or their voice in different ways
A dancer presents his or her words through his or her moves- every thrust- every move
tells something about the person
Having a voice does not always refer to words that are spoken - it could also refer to the message demonstrated through action(s) and sometimes that is the most powerful voice there is
Even a mime has a story to tell
All he or she is doing is putting action to the words already spoken and that demonstrates a voice
Someone who is mute still has a voice as well as a story to tell- it is just in a different form
Instead of vocally speaking the words, the words are spoken through their hands

Sometimes the best words are spoken through a different form
Expressing words verbally is only one way you can voice your opinion
There are so many forms that people can use to evoke emotions that become an outlet for words unspoken
This is what I like to call the voice for the voiceless

Photograph by Theodora Kouloglou
We’ve looked up at the stars and wondered if anyone else was there, hoping and imagining that there is some other species amongst the clouds. Though, what if that other species is doing exactly the same? Looking down upon us, wondering if there’s anyone amongst the hues of blue and green, hoping and imagining that someday our worlds will collide.

If You’re Still Writing
By: Alexandria Dorvil

If you’re still writing about him a day later
It doesn’t feel real
It feels like you’ll turn around and crash into him
And when you don’t, you’ll go back to bed
And talk to him in your subconscious

If you’re still writing about him a month later
It must’ve hurt
When dreamt up conversations weren’t enough,
But reaching for the real thing
Left you burnt like a stove top
Lesson learned the hard way,
You still see him at social events,
And social networks won’t let you forget him
Maybe your pride will help you bury the body

If you’re still writing about him a year later
You loved him
More than forgetting
More than you are comfortable with
More than more than you have ever loved anything
When you can’t explain why a picture of the two of you catches your tongue
Like a cat on its ninth life
And you can’t help but look at it more than once, more than twice
Remembering where it was taken
And how many times
And how cold it was
And how it felt
to have his hand in yours
Cause you were always the one reaching out of bounds
How can you still be so moved by a ghost
One that died so long ago
Even one 365 days behind you
365 passing days made that feel too real to zoom back into
365 missed calls missed texts mistook you for permanent
Even after you left
When you left, you took some extra time with him

If you’re still writing about him while waiting to not write about him, keep writing
Remember why all these poems sound so good
Because the two of you were made for two dimensions
And paper was the only place that you could have a conversation

Even if he isn’t listening
Even if you aren’t saying anything
Sometimes
By Anonymous Author

Sometimes I’m blue.
Sometimes I’m pink.
Sometimes I’m purple.
Sometimes I’m clear.
Sometimes I’m a princess.
Sometimes I’m a knight.
Sometimes I’m day.
Sometimes I’m night.
Sometimes I like girls.
Sometimes I like guys.
Sometimes I like both.
Sometimes I like none.
Sometimes life sucks.
Sometimes life is great.
Sometimes I want to give up.
Sometimes I never want to give in.

Sometimes I feel safe.
Sometimes I feel like a freak.
Sometimes I go a week.
Sometimes not even a day.

Sometimes I feel pretty.
Sometimes I feel horrid.
Sometimes I feel amazing.
Sometimes I feel ignored.

Sometimes I know who I am.
Sometimes I have no clue.
Sometimes I think I’m alright.
Sometimes I think no one cares.

Sometimes I’m this.
Sometimes I’m that.
Sometimes I’m good.
Sometimes I’m bad.

I try and try to figure it out.
What am I?
The answer keeps changing.
This happens every single time.

Maybe this is fine.
Maybe it’s okay to be confused.
Maybe I’m wrong.
Maybe I’ve known all along.

Maybe I can; sometimes be blue.
Maybe I can; sometimes be pink.
Maybe I can; sometimes be purple.
Maybe I can; sometimes be clear.

Maybe I can; sometimes like girls.
Maybe I can; sometimes like guys.
Maybe I can; sometimes like both.
Maybe I can; sometimes like none.

Maybe I’m in the middle.
Maybe I’m a mix.
Maybe I love all.
Maybe I just don’t care.

Maybe I’ve always known.
Maybe I just tried to lie.
Maybe they told me no.
Maybe they were wrong.

Maybe it’s fine.
Maybe there’s no label.
Maybe...

Maybe I’m just me.

By Elizabeth Shen

The Wind
The rascal swift by with such a force
that the grasses flew with him
And my straw hat, lifted up
along with my tangled hair
Yet amongst the playful acts
there came a faint-heart sound:
A whisper of chill
An ambient warmth

Evelyn
She stood like a doe
eyes of wonder in the sky
And her hair, soft as hay
slipped past my empty hands
I’d love a wild chase
with her hat carried past the clouds
But looking down, I saw her face
a gush placid wake

Songs of the Prairie
By Elizabeth Shen
My head was pounding as I stood in the 40-degree weather. There was a clear sky, and we were surrounded by bulks of pure white and pure black snow. The snow was lined up as if it was a fort, attempting to shield us from danger. The car in front of me had a broken door so I had to walk around it to get inside. I stepped in and buckled my seat belt. The seat's position made me uncomfortable. I asked him how to recline it. There was a button on the side, but I couldn't find it. He stepped out and fixed it for me. Quietly thanking him I stared down at my distraction. The screen lit up as my door closed. The car started just as the small talk had started. Minutes passed as the smell of cheap cologne and nicotine soon became unbearable. I tucked my nose into the collar of my jacket and continued to play on my distraction. Seconds passed and she opened the window. The slight sense of fresh air was almost imperceptible. When he said there was no reason to open the window, he proceeded to close it. He never realized his problem. He never seemed to think he was wrong. She didn't argue back this time. She was tired of the same argument with the same person. I also figured she didn't want to infect the air with negativity or in this case add on to it. My silent relief had turned back into a silent plea. I counted the minutes to freedom as the computerized voice controlled us, telling us where to go. I thought we would soon reach our destination, but it was just hope getting the best of me. I should've been used to it, but I like to say I'm an optimist. Putting my distraction away I looked out the window. The birds were soaring, probably even migrating. They were the lucky ones. They could just get up and leave. They could stay lost, but I had to stay found. Instead, here I was, stuck in a car with the smell of dead cigarettes in the air. Suddenly the car halted; we had reached it. Not listening or speaking I stepped out the car. I took a breath of air. I don't know why I did this, but I began to over exaggerate my breathing to a point where I sounded as if I was heaving. Alas I had escaped, or so I thought. He had heard me. "Do you have a breathing problem?" he said. Was he serious? This was unbelievable. Apparently I was the one with the problem. My sarcasm took over. Especially since I stood there with clean lungs and he stood behind me with blackened lungs. I didn't answer him as I turned around to look at him. I couldn't make out his face since I didn't have my glasses on. Soon I turned back around and stepped into the building. For a little while my head wouldn't ache and I would be free like the birds. However, I knew I would be back. I would stand on the pavement, surrounded by snow forts as my brain continued to pound like a hammer in my head.

Photo and story by Shaliny Sahotta
You blew your feelings towards me with a kiss and I accidentally caught them
Not realizing the fist I had made it seemed as if I crushed them
I want the salvation of your words running off your lips like rain falling
Your actions confuse me so beautifully
Why am I so down when I don’t see you
Why is it that every breath I take drags me down when I am not blessed with your soothing voice
Have I pushed you away
I am a fan for your presence
But I am not sure if you are even entertained by mine
Unable to caress your face I feel closer to the words we shared
These words bring such relief to a gloomy day
I just want you to smile even if it’s without me
I’ll do it
I’ll throw these memories on my back and my legs will keep going on even under the burning rays of my depression
With the only acid refreshment being my tears
And slowly under these Rays these memories melt through my back causing me the feels
The feels
this ocean of forced acceptance that I’m drowning in
That I was dropped in looking for you
Then my body is motionless slowly sinking to the bottom
But the Rays shine through the water and grab my eye
And I would rather swim for those Rays of depression than sink into acceptance
I’m not saying I’m letting go
I’m not saying I want you
I think I need you
Is that corny to say

Wind rushes past and a chill up my spine, outside it is cold
You must be too as your hand grabs mine, a smile and I’m sold
As we sit I place my arm around you and recline, I’m feeling bold
Tonight I’ll kiss you if you give me a sign, and my resolve holds
I stare into your eyes so beautiful and fine, amazing to behold
And I know that to you myself I consign, until I die from being old
Just before the moment when our lips combine, the world unfolds
I lay in my bed awoken from cloud nine, my pain, remold
Remembering how our hearts were entwined, I miss you twofold
I hope that with enough time my heart will be consoled
Love is BEAUTIFUL, love is painful
Love is a passion cherished by one another, it has power over one's soul
Love is helpless, love is kind, love can sometimes bring you hard times
Love is among all who are strong but can make someone dumb
It can kill, like venom ATTACKING a human
It can also bring life like a blooming flower
Love can bring jealousy that can't be shared with others,
it's one's unique gift
It can't be bought, can't be seen, can't be heard but can be felt

Two souls, two different worlds, two separate lives but one common love
Destiny desires love for two souls; It's up to destiny to decide for eternity…
It can't be broken by bricks or stones; It's unique but also dangerous that's the kind of love that is courageous
True love makes you who you are, not less
Love makes one laugh, smile and cherish each day
Love can motivate and EMBRACE
A hug is a hug unless it's with the person you love
I feel that passion deep inside and thoughts in my mind about you across each time
The deepest part of my heart
A place where nothing stood before
There is love
Dreams come true and that's why I met you.
A fire burns, deep deep within
At the center of the flames
A beat
it’s embers course through
The veins
But the fire cannot burn free
It’s burdened by a mist the world throws
On every spirit
It encircles and constricts
The flame never burns as high
As it can
But at times
When the world needs a star
As a guide
A flame breathes life
And it rises to not to stay alive
But to thrive
By Gerardo Mateo

Shadows
By Kyara Lomax
They appear when the sun is at its peak
They disappear when the sun is descending
But how long will they be gone?
How long will they stay hidden?
How long will the false appearance display itself as the truth?
How long will the true appearance be suppressed by the façade?
How long will the truth be ignored due to the illusions as well as fantasies people want to portray?
A shadow should not provoke fear
The truth shouldn’t evoke a sense of panic
Your truth should be something that you walk in as well as live in
Why should you run from your reflection?
Something that can never be surrendered from oneself but can be suppressed or avoided
But for how long can it be denied?
For how long can you suppress your true self?
How long can you deny its existence?
Denying oneself is denying one’s truth
Denying oneself is not erasing its existence permanently
It is just a temporary fix that will manifest itself again

Books are great for conversations.
Each page, line, and illustration.

By Michelle Grieco
Yesterday has faded to dawn,
Yet regrets are still to be gone.

Can I be the only one,
Who regrets things they’ve done.

I could be so much more,
Flying in the sky,
Not laying on the floor.

Is it only me,
Afraid of the reflection I see,
My past won’t let my heel,
I hide and run,
I need someone to help me unconceal.

The tears roll down my face,
If only I could turn back time,
Never would I end up in that place.

I have been rotting in that hell before,
And I refuse to be there anymore.

Yes regrets are yet to be gone,
But now I look forward to the coming dawn.

Secret Love
By Andy Galarza

I heard “a little love is better than none” so I guess it’s ok, now that we’re done. Don’t know how I should take it, be sad or feel free. Eso si que es and that’s how it shall be. There’s no going back now, it’ll only make things worse. No need to take it over, no reason to converse. Before I sound cliche and wish you nothing but the best. There is just one thing that I’d like to confess. I’ve loved you since the day I met you, and even though that was never expressed- infatuated with your beauty-- I’ve always been impressed.
READ TO DISCOVER,
IT IS OKAY TO GET LOST
BOOKS ARE AN ESCAPE

BY LINA LIN

MANIPULATING EROS (SONNET)
BY VICTORIA ABREU

NEVER FINDING SOLITUDE IN LONELINESS,
YOUR POISONOUS WORDS OF AFFECTION,
BLEEDING PESTILENCE IN MY NAIVE EARS,
HOLDING ME CAPTIVE, WITHIN YOUR CAGED DECEPTION;
REPARTING MY WORDED GOODBYES,
NEVER WANTING TO LET YOU GO,
PROMISING YOUR DEPARTURE FROM MY THOUGHTS.
SEEMINGLY, I REMAIN, CRAVING YOUR RETURN.
INFLECTED LIES, SWELLING MY BURNING VEINS,
FALSE, FEIGN’D FACADE OF PERCEIVED LOVE,
MISCHIEVOUS EROS’ SHARPEN’D ARROW TARGET’D ME,
SAVE THY EYE, WITH A DULL-BLADE, DECEIVING ONE.
MY PLEADING THOUGH HAS NO “MATTER”,
THOU ART TRULY “IAGO” IN DISGUISE.
Mockingbird
by Elizabeth Shen

Mockingbird!
Say, Mockingbird!
Who are you calling to?
You swoop down, to a chimney
Wings flutter light as sheets
And notes, ever changing
from high shriek pitches
to soft round tunes
to hoarse call sounds
to skip beat notes
Yet, the Cardinals are listening
The Blue Jays noticed
The Starlings saw
Who are you?
Who are you to call to?
Mockingbird, Mockingbird
Mystery and wonder
You whisper to the wind, and never return
You sing for the trees, the oaks embrace you
You live for no one,
None but for your spirit.

Take Me
by Stacey Malone

Take me to Central Park
Among the trees and the leaves
Let me lay down in the dark
And hope that the wind moves me
Take me to Central Park
To be in the Garden of Eden
Allow me to pick from the fruit
And suffer the destruction
Take me to Central Park
So I can be alone and breathe
So the polluted air can kiss my lips
And poison me
Take me to Central Park
Bathe me in the rain that drips
From the crying skies
Make me become renewed
And soar to new highs
Take me to Central Park
Leave me beneath the stars
Let me close my eyes
Hearing the loud screeching cars
When I awake I’ll know the world is ours.
How many children need to die?
How many tears do mothers have to shed for the loss of their sons?
Stereotypes have been placed on instinct and reasonable judgment has receded
The color of one's skin has become one of the determining factors in the treatment
displayed toward African American males
The color of one's skin automatically puts an African American in a category associated with the stereotypes that follow
The result of this kind of treatment is an unjust verdict that is pushed under the rug by the judicial system but pulled into
the light by analytical thinkers
History will continue to repeat itself, because we continue to repeat the same actions that will render the same result
The change has to start within so it can manifest on the outside
The reason for internal familiarity is because racism is taught
Your mindset has to change before your body can follow
Change has no time and no place
Change brings the unknown but immutability brings familiarity
Change is latent when people are comfortable
Change happens when one person is uncomfortable

Across the Delta River
To set our nation free
However, as the fog sets in
It becomes hard to see
A large boatload of former slaves
Won't be able to lead
When everything is just too thick
clogged by society.
WHO AM I?
BY LOGAN VAZQUEZ

I am Logan Vazquez
Who am I?
But what is a name
I am male
But not a man
I am straight
But what defines that
I am Hispanic
But that is not what people see
I am religious
But I don’t practice
I am American
But I do not take pride in that
I am human
But I am more than that
I am none of these things
But what I am
I am shy
I am brave
I am smart
Yet naive
I am kind
I am mean
I am interesting
Yet naive
I am cold
I am happy
I am sad
I am night
I am day
I am friend
I am foe
I am predator
I am prey
I am everything
Yet I am nothing
But the one thing I know for sure is
That I. Am. Alive.

JUST BREATHE (DONE)
BY JOHN PRITCHETT

Chorus
Just Breathe, slow, relax your mind and let go.
(I said inhale)

Slow it down, listen to these words that I'm bout to speak, I got a couple words that I need to preach. Lemme uplift while you Bob to the beat. Turn on my TV the days getting worsen, cops kill citizens also vise versa, pray that my savior help us from these curses so is my granny sitting in her room quoting Bible verses. That's what she works with but things don't change. Know my people sick of seeing it remain. Migraines on a daily, negative thoughts on your mind driving crazy, but maybe if we don't let it affect us, focus on the things that were meant to protect us, don't let it stress us and we'll prevail, just inhale exhale get away from this hell!

All that pain you need to reject, whenever we see stress, being calm should be in our reflex, just reflect on life and unwind, just respect you’re blessed and take your time. Ain't able to live here forever, gotta make it all count so withstand the bad weather. I swear it gets better at the end of the yellow brick road. Even Dorothy found her way home. You gonna face some issues, like comic subscriptions. It seems like the days ain't sunny like Liston, but just listen now... ain't the time to back out the mission, if you tired of how you livin, then change your position, peace and love is the religion I'm spittin. Never being different, we gotta make a difference, gotta start now, how you gonna get up if you're always down?

So here's the moral of my thesis, I know that life's hard being screwed by police and, school ain't making it more pleasant, trials tribulations situations in your presence. Life ain't easy nothings gonna be handed on a silver platter, gonna fall a couple times climbing up ladders. But what matters is your sanity, control your destiny, take the advantage we, can’t let bad times now affect our selves later, your future's gonna get greater. Gotta have patience like a waiter, serve bad vibes and avoid those haters. Who cares if they hate us. As long as you got yourself a piece of mind, I got a piece of mine and there's peace in mine, so say peace to crimes and decease bad times and increase your vibe.
Photos by
THEODORA KOULOGLOU
By Crystal Pires

On that opaque day, in the falling of the drizzle, I taunted you by calling you weak and you denied it vigorously. I defined you as fragile, soft, or tender and again you rapidly dismissed any association. I could see your denial. You were weak and you knew it, but the world, the people, had led you to believe that strength is a necessity. And they weren’t wrong, it is. We were raised to be strong, as if no civility existed and a transformation back to our primitive state was required to resolve our dilemmas with the swings of clenched fist. You conformed to the world as you denied. Your weakness you could not let anyone see. “I am strong,” you kept repeating with a voice that diminished in projection each time you responded to my taunt. You were weak and I wanted you to admit it. You were weak and I proved it in your presence. I threw my sword that landed by your feet and with my words alone I forced you to pick it up. You clenched it in your hand as hard as you could. It was becoming rusty, yet your reflection it still showed and its sharpness maintained.

My taunts did not stop. I so desired to push you to your limit and with that sword, either kill me to prove your strength or simply wound me and prove your weakness. Shaky became your hands, then your whole body. The knot in your throat had become too big and it barely let you breath. Your eyes were watery wastelands, but with all your might you relentlessly refused to let a single tear slide down your face. I saw the crux of your limit near so I did not stop. I continued to call you weak, “it’s your nature,” I said and soon after you burst rushing towards me. I had foreseen the barrier break, and it did. Your tears slithered down your cheeks in a narrow stream and dropped from your chin. The sword, you elevated high above your shoulders and slammed down in my direction. There was doubt in neither my mind, nor yours, nor anyone else witnessing this. I was stronger and more agile. As a warrior you could never pass. Your skill was low; your handling of the weapon implied it. I could have easily avoided the blade, but I did not and instead took the full forceful impact on the side of my chest. No sound I let out, not a scream, nor cry, not even a soft moan. With confidence you opened your eyes with the thought that I had blocked your blow using the logs stacked behind me.

When your eyelids raised and you saw the sword deep into my flesh, you released the sword and fell on your bottom. Frightful eyes you displayed as you watched the outpouring of my blood from the wound, spreading all over my tunic. You were paralyzed in that moment with your eyes fully distended and the soft, repetitive, mumbling of, “blood, blood.” I removed the sword from my chest and let it fall to the ground. Then I ripped my tunic to allow the viewing of your strength’s magnitude. It wasn’t abundant and I told you so. “You? Strong?”, I asked, “I think not. The sword cut me, cut me deep, but you; you did not have the strength, the power, to conclude my life. You’re weak, no doubt. Now just admit it!” How long did it take you to respond? I don’t remember, I couldn’t tell the time of day for it was bleak and the morning was just like the afternoon. Although I do remember that it was a very long time.

The uncontrollable sentiment of shame made you shiver and cry nonstop. You cried and cried, like a baby who misses warmth that only a mother can provide. I waited patiently, until your tears had ceased to fall or dried on your face to then be washed away by the gentle drizzle. At last you had become calm. Your face was empty, with no expression to show, as if dead. You stood up, stared at the ground, and then at me. We stopped the world with our stares. We made it hold its breath as it waited for your mind to put words into a cohesive sentence. “You have won,” you said, “I am weak. I have been my whole life and it’s absurd to think that I will someday become strong. You’ve won, now what? How will you put me out of my misery?” There was no hope in your voice. Did you think your
admission was the end? You did. I grew a smirk that turned to a full smile and I began to laugh hysterically which made you look at the ground again in the brink of another barrier break. But that time you contained it and prevented it from happening. You wanted to uphold your dignity despite seeing your end. My hysteria continued for a bit before it began to fade and finally end in a sigh. You had politely waited for me; there was no rush. When I did, you bent down to grab the sword, handed it to me, and I took it. Then you turned your back to me and closed your eyes waiting for the sword to rip through, profoundly deep into your flesh, like you could not do to me. It was the law of our land; you had to die. In our world of war, we had no use for a weak being like you. What use would you be when most of our time was spent in battle, mercilessly fighting against our enemies. Fighting over every single aspect of our lives, we never regretted fighting because we thought that we were right, that our lives were the correct norms to live by. We were correcting those who lived “wrong”, those who believed “wrong”, and those who acted “wrong”. In our society, if you could not kill, you could be nothing more than a burden.

“In our world of war, we had no use for a weak being like you.”

It was the duty of the strong to dispose of the dead weight that hindered our advancement. You had it clear; you were the dead weight and I the strong. I did raise the sword and I did swing it down, but it never touched you. I left the weapon planted on the ground, unsteadily, and I walked away. My footsteps fading you heard it and your curiosity forced you to turn to figure my intentions. Soon, as you saw me getting further and further distance, you realized that I was not coming back and that I was letting the dead weight stay. Questions surged in your mind that made you ponder and afterwards feel uneasy when you could not form a satisfactory answer. “I’m dead weight,” you told yourself, “weak and useless. Why have you let me live?” You ran after me because it bothered you not knowing. I had much to lose if I didn’t rid of our world of you. If I didn’t kill you, I could be damned to be called weak as well. And if I was weak I was to lose everything: my family, my home, and my life. You knew that; it was the reason why you imitated a strong man.

You went ahead of me and stood in my path, but I took a step to my side and walked right past. There were numerous questions that you wanted to ask, but you couldn't ask them all at once. It was all compiled into a simple, “Why?” I stopped and we stood, back to back, our focus on the opposite yet similar side of our world. I didn't know what to tell you. I soon did but perhaps, did not make much sense. I would love to tell you again. I know you understood, for on that day my loyal, life companion you became. It was simple, my friend Dead-weight. You kept on living because you accepted who you actually were: a weak man. When you were weeping on the ground, despite having knowledge of the consequences, you stopped the farce, trying to be a person that you would never be. I had many encounters with dead weights like you, but not one ever had the courage to stand up tall and admit like you did. They all died in a pool of their own blood and tears, trying to convince me that they were strong. No one stood up like you, my friend. No one had the courage to say who he actually was.

There was more to my reasoning. In my younger mind, the weak had no purpose in this world. But as I grew into my strong state, being used by the kings to resolve their needs that I finally comprehended were being driven by greed, I realized that the world was bad. It was in desperate need for change, and the weak held the key to that new place. As I grew in the dusty battlefields, becoming weary of acting like death, I finally knew. To get to that new world, the weak had to rule. It made sense. The weak had never ruled, but I could imagine how the world would be through my observation of how it was when the strong reigned supreme. The strong should have never ruled because instead of protecting those who can’t protect themselves, they protect themselves alone. They fight, but not for a good cause. Their desires and feelings of superiority are dangerous. They kill for them. They always say that it is for the best of all, when he in reality, they only think of themselves. They kill because they can. I am one of them. And on that day, I envied you because you could not kill and I could, I had and I was tired. The weak cannot kill, Dead-weight. You know it. Imagine if everyone was weak. What paradise this world? This idea might be idiotic, and in an obscure time, idiocy can be seen as ideal. That was all, my friend. You lived because I saw you as the key to a better future. I was glad you followed me. After I explained myself, you gave me the chance to become like you. I tried, I tried my hardest, but I could not be something I never was, and like you, I accepted it. Today, I leave to challenge all the strong and make of them no more. I will defeat all of them and when I finish, I will defeat myself. The weak will stay to make the paradise that I imagined, perhaps foolishly imagined, but it is worth a try. And you my friend make sure that what was said to us when we walked out of our kingdom’s gate, “A dead weight and a strong, one will die by the other’s hand” is never said again.

By Melody Clarke
Autographs

By Jenny Lu
Creativity is intelligence having fun.

- Albert Einstein
BAYSIDEx HIGH SCHOOL