

Spring 2022

SEEDLINGS - 2022

Jim Jones

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**Spring
2022**

Seedlings
Northeastern Illinois University



SEEDS
Seedlings
Spring 2022 Zine Issue

Editor's Note & Ac

The Seedlings (our zine) issue, thanks to the contributions that we have received from members of the NEIU community, should make for some interesting and engaging reading. Our focus was on recovering from (or adjusting to) the pandemic. But the pieces did not necessarily need to adhere to the focus.

Our regular SEEDS edition will be coming out at the end of the semester, and we'll be accepting submissions for it until the middle of March.

Jim Jones, SEEDS Editor-in-chief

Some words from the Managing Editor:

The Zine theme this semester is an ode to the idea of growth and change. The name of the journal was cautiously chosen to refer to the theme: How has life shifted, changed, become new or different from what you were used to in the midst of the Pandemic? What are the lessons you have learned and what are you still searching for? This Zine issue aims to cover the topic of growth and change, for the Pandemic has changed us all greatly even to now, and we are still going through the aftermath. Now it is time for a new beginning.

It's important to acknowledge that we are still in the midst of a global pandemic. This fall was the first time life felt semi-normal. But, there is a new normal. Life has shifted so much and it is a testament to the ever changing nature of

Knowledgegements

growth. This Zine would not have happened if it wasn't for Dennis Sagel the most understanding leader who spearheaded the NEIU Media Board, for Christine Simokaitis our faculty advisor, the Seeds Staff, T.V, Ayushi and Zinna. I am excited for what is to come but I hope that everyone reading can see the seedling being planted to grow a brighter future.



Staff List

Executive Staff:

Jim Jones (*Editor-In-Chief*)

Saarah Junaid (*Managing Editor*)

Visual Arts Design:

Zinnia Nguyen (*Graphic Designer*)

Editors:

Ayushi Kumar (*Poetry Editor*)

Tu-Vinh Nguyen (*Prose Editor*)

Faculty Advisors:

Dennis Sagel

Christine Simokaitis



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Visual Arts



Shadow Work

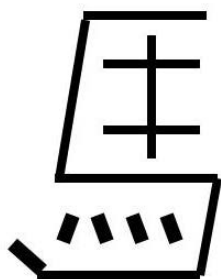
Maribel Cruz



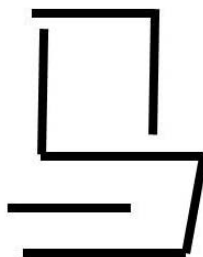
The Word 'Horse' in Chinese

Jim Jones

THE CHINESE CHARACTER RELATED TO THE WORD HORSE



TRADITIONAL



SIMPLIFIED

MA

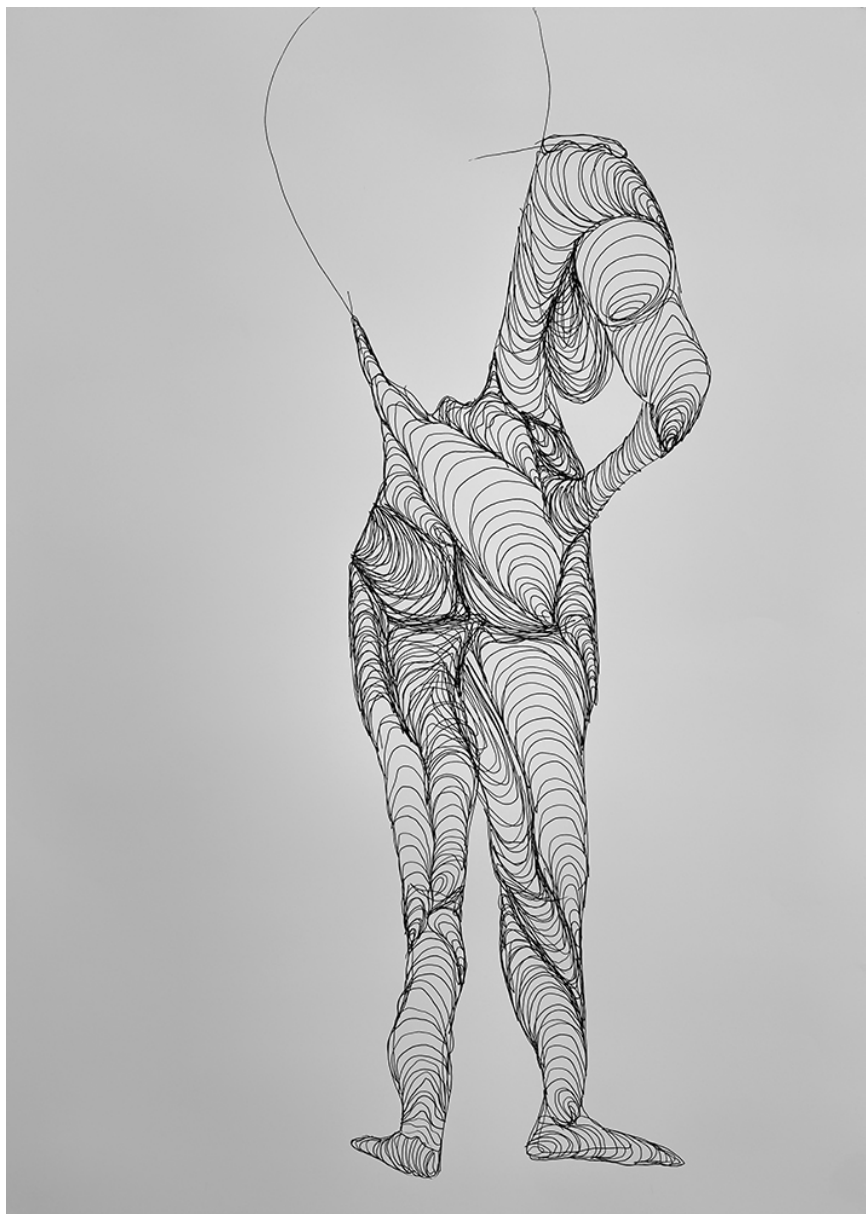
Blinded by The Light

Saarah Junaid



Contour Queen

Annalise Messner



Exhausted af

Zinnia Nguyen



Waiting (for)

Jasmine Rodriguez



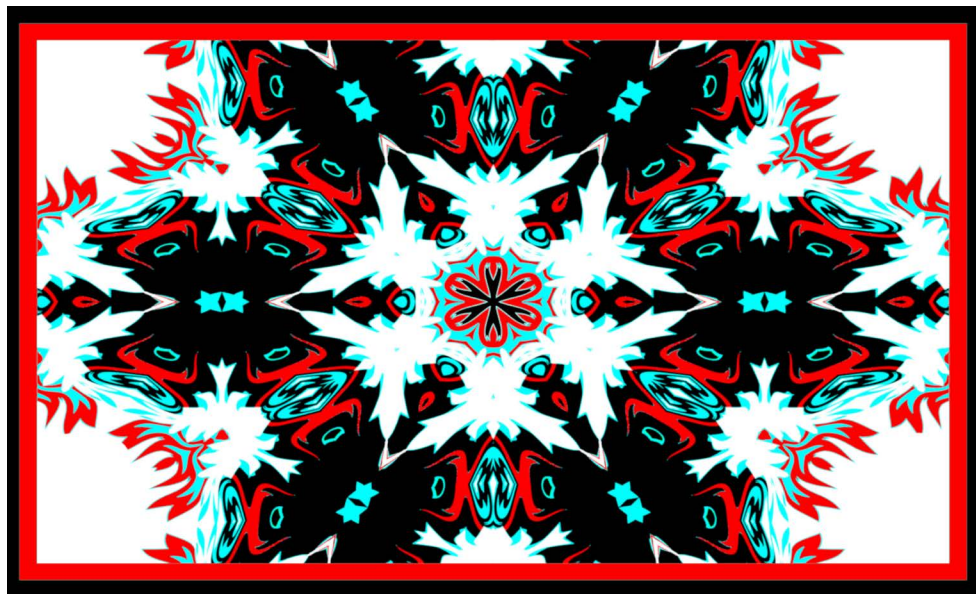
Global Warming

Jennifer Rodriguez



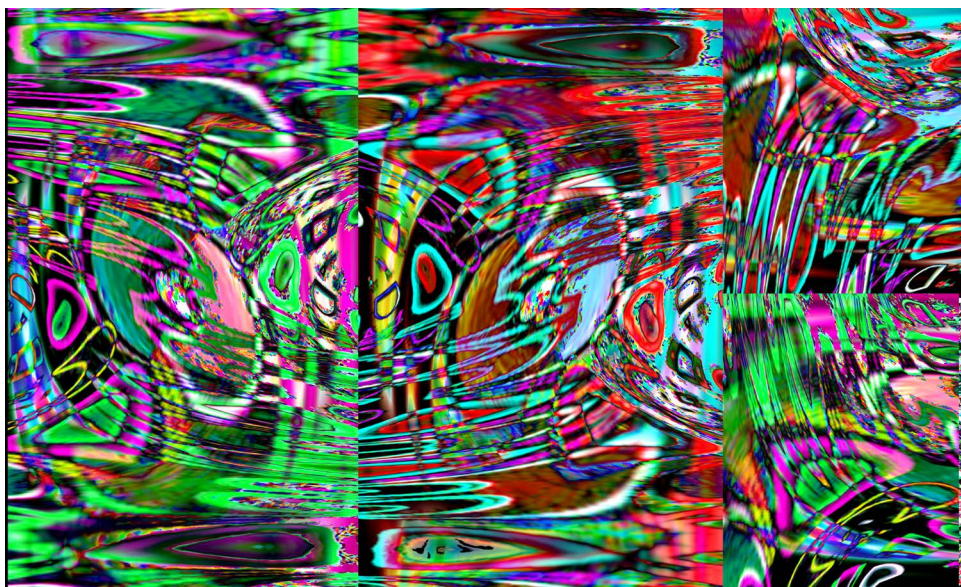
Screaming at Silence

Edward Supranowicz



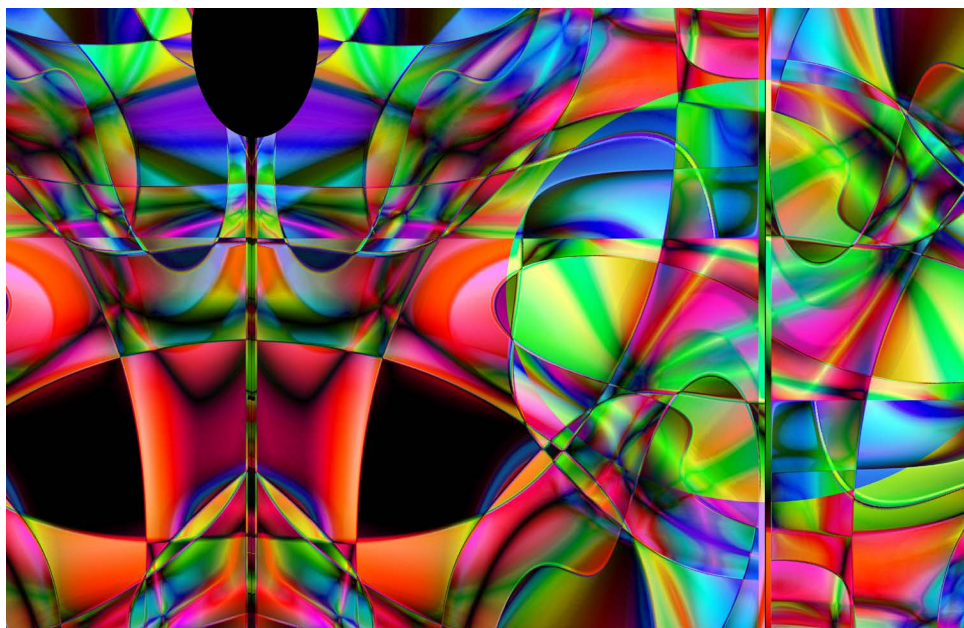
Stretched To The Limit

Edward Supranowicz



The Tortured Human Landscape

Edward Supranowicz



Prose



Photo Album

Gaby Lopriore

It's amazing the way a moment can be captured with a photo. Lives are often so short but the memories are the things that stay long after. Weddings, birthdays, new life. Things that seem meaningless in terms of the universe but are still important nonetheless. Photos capture moments, emotions. It can freeze time itself. Could make a person having a rough time feel better just by looking through photo albums. Can make a person suffering from memory loss have those moments of clarity, even if for a short while. Teach the histories of families, generations who do not know their family's past but can feel connected to some thing bigger. Maybe some photos are bittersweet. Maybe there are some photos that a person never wants to see, because it hurts too much. All of these emotions matter. A photo album is carefully, and lovingly put together. Telling stories of individuals. If being inside for a year has taught me anything, it's to appreciate the little things. The moments that may feel insignificant at the time, but will matter later on. It's taught me to learn from the past. But to not live in it. Take those captured moments and treasure them. That way, you'll know how to make new ones.

Everything Ends, But Everything Begins Again Too

Leslie Lozada

I never thought I would be happy to be out and about.

For people that have met me, they probably wouldn't know it. I am an introvert at heart. I grew up surrounded by books, even written a few (which were really fanfiction, but little me managed to fill up notebooks that way). At first when the pandemic happened and I had to do classes at home, I was up for the challenge. Going to classes in my jammies, just eating what I want, and not having to commute anywhere. Where have you been all my life?

Easier said than done.

Once I started my second semester fully online, and doing online work on top of it, things started to get harder. I have a small space, and I could only stay in one room for so long. I tried to be more active online as a way to connect to people without being in-person, with some success.

I took some steps in heading out more, just taking time away from my household. As many people have had their moment during the middle of the pandemic, staying in one place with the same people long enough, you tend to be on each others' toes. We all were in my household. I've actually had to step away as it was getting harder to not

be affected by things. I can recall spending more time with my family that I hadn't had a chance to connect with after a few months. I've had friends who wanted to spend time together outside of online.

I've had prior experience, unfortunately, with staying inside my home for long periods of time in order to help someone else. And it was hard. It just was.

I have done this before the pandemic, but I always try to just experience life as it is. Just seeing people moving about, and laughing and joy. I knew from past experiences that it really is a gift to see things this way.

Just recently, I had to take a reroute getting home from work, which was a bit of a nuisance, given that I wanted to get toilet paper for my household (The more things change, am I right?). It just so happens that I ended up in the middle of a parade on State Street. So many people were there, all dressed up, having fun, dancing, just being themselves.

I think I found more people to connect to, being on a campus for the first time in a long while. But I have room for more.

I have found my voice again, after feeling trapped for a long while.

I found renewal.

Blissful Detainment

Karina Sanchez

During the last three years, my routine has remained a silent repetition—an interminable practice. This practice has subdued my mind's small enjoyments of life along with my mental, emotional, and physical state. The dread of climbing from my bed, changing into "presentable" clothing, plastering my performance, and making my way out the door only to arrive an hour before opening.

While I sit, I contemplate the reasoning for why we came back to in-person—we are in a pandemic after all, and there are little-to-no people to assist. A car parks next to me, and a woman steps out; she works in the same office area. We exchange a smile with a nod, but I remain in the car.

I've been here for roughly three years; how did I get swallowed into the industry. A book and journal reside on my passenger side; how did I let it get this far? Without my knowledge, my feet had dragged my lifeless body towards the entrance of the office. It can be as easy as walking back to my car, pretending I never showed up. It can be as easy as driving somewhere else rather than being here.

Nothing I could do now, at least; I clocked in, greeted my director and colleagues. My day, without a doubt, remains repetitive: disable the security system, open my work session, write in deposit dates, check our mail, and wait while customers come in. But they don't come; it's summer; why would anyone be here, especially now during the pandemic. So, again, why are we here?

Choose Wisely

Anokyewaa Oppong

If it does not serve you, it will likely hurt you. Choose wisely.

Growth

Rebeca Ruiz

It's easy to believe that you eventually stop growing. All our school lives we hear about how tall we've grown, how many teeth we've grown, how long our hairs have grown, and how our knowledge has grown. Eventually we reach our maximum height, our teeth stop falling out and stop getting replaced, we start to choose when we get haircuts or if we ever want to get one again, and the world becomes mundane.

It's easy to get into a constant cycle with life. I think what was shocking about the pandemic was how it was going to impact our everyday life. Imagining everyone getting sick, or dying, is hard when you're not actively seeing it. Being forced to get out of your routine, getting to stay home, not having to interact with strangers anymore, having to learn how to cook, or trying Tik Tok trends to keep us entertained. It's like we created a wall to block us from what was happening out there.

Life went from boring to entertaining. In massive numbers we were all watching the same show or learning the same thirty second dance. Some of us got dogs, some of us got more than one.

We were forced to change our life and create new habits. Lockdown forced us to deal with ourselves in a way that a lot of us have not done in a very long time, or if at all. We were forced to adapt, and to really analyze our life.

Are you happy?

I think the answer for a lot of us was no.

I don't think there's anything wrong with that. Hell, I quit my job of six years, I learned I had friends that were not actually my friends and dropped them, and I finished half of my education that I had long ago abandoned. That was all in a matter of a year, some of these things were determined to be unattainable by me years ago. Yet here I was, doing it.

The pandemic became an opportunity for me. Was I going to let another six years pass by and let myself be unhappy? No.

Are you going to let yourself stay unhappy?

Poetry



Michelle

Anonymous

I remember looking at you, thinking you'd be a bully
I remember looking back being correct, but indirectly
I remember how you would always kick a door open
I remember sitting next to you, yet we both remained
unspoken

I remember you making me a bingo card
I remember getting high inside a parking lot
I remember watching you skate, not knowing the rules
I remember working with you every night after school

I remember eating zones, you telling me to zip it
I remember watching sitcoms while you just tried to knit
I remember barely getting up and walking around
I remember us both slowly putting our walls down

I remember how you told me about your heartache
I remember telling you how my relationship was fake
I remember inviting you to play games once a week
I remember seeing your name on my phone made my
smile peak

I remember us driving, making me listen to music
I remember making soup jokes when you were sick
I remember every time you hated being at home
I remember you coming over so I wouldn't be alone

I remember when you bought yourself jeans full of pockets
I remember when you cried and hugged me,
I won't ever forget it
I remember watching movies and dumb shows for hours
I remember saying "that's what's up", little jokes became ours

I remember every joke, the sarcasm in your voice
I remember us both struggling with simple choices
I remember you awkwardly jumping, calling it dancing
I remember hoping you didn't catch me lovingly glancing

I remember remembering your favorite were sunflowers
I remember wanting to say this feeling but feeling like a
coward I remember putting your hand on mine as a joke
I remember how much I didn't want you to let it go

Tourism

Diana Bahena

I wish to be you
Set free and far

I wish to know you
But I sit here from afar

Your experience seems livid, yet I
Can not live through it. You see, my
Papers they don't agree to it.

Let me go

They hold me here, far away from
You.

I wish to be you
Set free and far

I wish to know you
But I sit here from afar

Let me be

As I grow older, my heart sinks down
While you will always be out there
And I'll be here patiently waiting for you
My call.

For now, I'll tour my room and
Walk outside I'll see the sunrise
And close my eyes
The warmth will guide me from
A far that deep down, I'm a
Tourist by heart.

The Embrace of Oneself

Michael Cainghug

Oh how the loss of sin has brought us to kneel
How each day without the moon within my grasp
Slight whispers keep me up at night.
Tension, up against the corridors of nature
Watching children play, echo innocence

Adulthood is not so far away in a blink of an eye
Youth taken from us.

Immerse yourself in gentle strokes of innocence
It's over once the loneliness settles in
May our endeavors forever caress the wisdom you seek
And if ever our beloved shall pass, cut them into little stars,

a constellation (bone by bone)

The impact,

The pain and sorrow

The embrace,

It's scary!

I'm The Coyote Poem

Maribel Cruz

I'm the coyote,

I'm not the lion nor the tiger that counters the Robin hoods
of the night, even in their causal fright.

I'm not the leopard nor the jaguar that yanks you from
perdition into witty salvation.

I'm not the puma nor the panther that freely breathes
healing into the thirsty gents,
not even to make amends.

I'm the coyote that stealths
in the quiet rain and provokes a spark between prayers.
The one that laughs at the sight of death because she has
an immaculate sense of humor too.
One that hypnotizes with his soft song just enough to
prove you wrong.

When I Write You in My Poems

I Do So in Tears

Jaritza Delgado

When I write about you in my poems I do so in tears
The pain from my heart,
Seeps down my arms
Out my finger tips.
I write about you,
Cuz no one I love
Has nailed my heart
to the wall for spectators
to watch it bleed out.
I write about you,
I lay on the floor
a pool of my tears.
Wishing you'd chosen
To be a better man.
The hugs you gave me,
Now a distant memory.
Back when you still had
that spark in your eye.
You weren't afraid of
showing me your heart.
Perhaps you're the one

Dimmed Lights

Kayla

I stutter in spite
But not to my delight
They call me very bright
So don't dim out my light
I can sputter and I can sing
Ramble about some things
Call it my inner ding
I know how to think
I know when some people are out of sight
They develop the capacity to bite
It may bring you frightttt
You may question if you'll be alright
But keep on moving tonight
Grooving to your own beat
Keep living your life
Seek whats to be sought
And when you find it
Don't let it be forgot

Life in Pandemic

Ayushi Kumar

And here we go
Everyone's life has a sudden change.
Everyone stayed up at home.
They did what they liked.
Read books
Listen to music
Played video games
Made painting
Wrote in their journals
Danced to music
Prayed
Meditated
Exercised

And learned new ways to live again
Some overcame their fears
Some listened more often
Some became more confident
Some came closer to others like they never did before
Some became truly aware of themselves
While others just took this time to heal.

And when life changed
Everyone begins to live their everyday life.
People began to come together
Accepting each other
People came again to celebrate each other
They grieved together
They made new decisions

'Growth'

Saarah Junaid

One day, you wake up and life is new
There are changes that affect both me and you
Our daily lives that were once intertwined
Now space apart ages and time
And as time slips father and farther
My sense of self turns brighter, darker and all over
Who are you? I ask myself some days
Who am I? I whisper in the frays
Who I was changes from before
What I love, What I read, and who I want to be
Life is limitless, so many possibilities
Now, we part in two different paths
Two different people with unrecognizable laughs
But, now here I stay
Endless ideas, endless directions
Time changed for the best
Life is a series of endless test
Be new, be brave, be _____
Growth is the only goal.

Chicago's Night Time Air

Maseera Ahmed

Chicago's Night Time Air

Maseera Ahmed

Inhale

Exhale

Ahh, pollution.

Nothing's better than Chicago's night time air.

Crisp

When the sky's at its rarest shade of dark blue.

When the full moon shines at it's finest

and

The stars lighting up the night sky.

Isn't that convincing enough for you to take a sniff of Chicago's night time air?

Inhale

Exhale

Ah, it's pollution, but it's quite refreshing.

Dear Seedling

Abena Motaboli

Your soul is so so wise,
So old, but yet so young.
Your small but giant nature, wrapped up in one,
Soon to be someone unknown.

Your growth is so quiet
But present and persistent.
And as we grapple with time,
I think of all the things that were,
The things that are
And the things that will be -
And how, amidst all of these changes of growth,
You will still be here - To witness the changing seasons

I am still learning about you,
And by learning about you I mean,
Learning about me.

I take a breath in,
Realizing that Winter is coming soon.
I look out of my window, and the yellow leaves fall, As the
sun dapples my cheeks with a somewhat different light.

How To Love Someone

Diego Roman

How to Love Someone:

Fall head over heels for someone amazing
(her not knowing you is always a plus),
think about her until you feel crazy
(while she gives someone else all her love).

Wait out your days until they break things up
(be a good friend through all of their fights),
when she cries, get a towel, clean up her makeup
(until she settles for you one night).

Be a good partner for five or more years
(despite how they treat you each day)
exchange all her negative thoughts for your cheers
(hope your pain from her words fade away).

Don't be upset she won't bring you around
(you're annoying, embarrassing, sloppy)
cry in your car, let your feelings breakdown
(never forget what she said about your body)

Hear her say "I love somebody else more"
(think long and hard about what You've done),
finish therapy, ignore all your breakthroughs
("she's not the problem, she must be the one").

Waste two more years, numb and alone
(who else can you talk to about her),
put on a face, lie deep in your bones
(but know there's other guys she'd prefer).

Finally shatter, pick up your pieces
tell her that you have to go,
After the high, serotonin decreases
hate yourself for missing her so.

Put yourself back together again,
this one will take quite a while.
Distract yourself until you heal from pain
love yourself in your exile.

Goodbyes

Rebeca Ruiz

Your heart squeezes at the thought of saying goodbye. You're sure it's going to your throat, where you're bound to throw it up, but it doesn't, it just paralyzes your ability to speak what you're feeling. Tears appear when you blink a little too hard, and you try to get rid of them by blinking faster. You hold your breath slightly, so they're unable to tell your breathing is uneven, in through your nose, out through your mouth. Your leg is tapping beyond your control, and your eyes are averted towards the floor. You can't even touch them, for fear you might break, the room starts to spin, so you clench your fists, why do goodbyes get harder? You tried to protect yourself, avoid connections with those around you. You force yourself to think about happy things, in hopes that your eyes stop stinging. Hugs are harder now, with the pandemic, you shouldn't be touching others unnecessarily. Except, because of the pandemic, you never know, so you hug them harder because you never know when or if you'll get another hug from them.

Grow

Pasqua Ruggiero

Once upon a time
Four words. Unattainable. Numb
I snatch a passing dandelion seed
In the drifts known as my thoughts

Remember when you were a child,
And they told you that you can be whatever you want?
Make a wish on a puff
Watch the seeds scatter in the wind

I seek the peace known as
What is {Tranquility?}
I don't know what I seek.
I don't know how I feel.
I don't know what to say
Or who to turn to
To make all of these scary ideas go away.

Life. Laughter.
The pursuit of happiness.
Everyone deserves it
Everyone but...
me.

You'll be strong one day, they tell me.
You'll be rid of this one day, they encourage me.

When is that day?
When will I be free? Because it's definitely not today.
Those lies.

I'm doing well. How about you?
I pick up my viola of fluctuating light
I glide my bow across and sing the melody Known as un-
wanted time.

Pain.
Suffering.
Sadness.
Tick tock tick tock.
Stubbing my toe on that rock.
The rock of isolation.

As the notes lead me towards reflection Make me lean in
and truly understand who I am. What I need.
What is this shell whose contents have decreased
To be the size of me.

I wish
You weren't here.
My corrupted
Obtrusive
Inconsistent
Melancholy mind.
This moment I could be happy.
Singing in the sunshine

Catching snowflakes on my tongue.
But I'm not.
That's not who I want me to be.
So today,
As I look outside at the mix of faces
Eyes lighting up
Behind the masks over their nose and mouth
I think of the mask in my mind.
The thoughts that keep me from going outside. To join in the
infectious joy.
And force me to wallow in the internal silence and destruction
That just continues
To
Grow.

Fútil quimera

Kelvin Trejo

¿Cómo será?
¿Cómo serán sus Calles?
Nunca imaginé convertirte en
una fútil quimera.
¿Cómo será tu gente? ¡Mi gente!
A veces te veo.
Me desprendo de mi cuerpo y viajo por las noches.
Subo a las alturas y te imagino.
Atravieso mares y grandes montañas.
Peleó con monstruas gigantes para llegar a ti.
Me paseo por todos tus rincones con gran emoción.
En silencio te disfruto, a la luz de la inmensa luna. Me siento como un niño arrullado en su cuna.
Te veo alegre, colorida luchando, más fuerte que nunca.
Luchando con fuerzas prestadas.
Me recibes con brazos abiertos, y petulante sonrisa.
Sollozas de felicidad al verme de nuevo.
Me dices que me extrañas, que estás orgullosa de mis logros.
Me pides que regrese, que NO te abandone más.
¡Si supieras cuanto he sufrido el infinito Adiós!
¡Si supieras cuanto te extraño!
Cuanta añoranza. ¡Que hermosa esta!
Te veo próspera, feliz. Sonriendo con sonrisa fingida.

¡Cuánto has cambiado!
¿Cuándo caminaré por tus suelos benditos de nuevo?
Quizá nunca... solo Dios sabrá.
No sé cuál será el epílogo de esta historia.
Pero en mis recuerdos siempre vivirás, como esa quimera
inalcanzable.
Te tengo tan presente como el día de la funesta partida.
Quizá hoy soy extranjero para ti. Quizá no me recuerdes
más.
Quizá un día te olvides por completo de mí.
Pero te aseguro que yo nunca me olvidaré de ti.
Olvidarme de ti, sería olvidarme de qué vientre nací.
No hay un solo día de Dios, que no recuerde todo lo que
vivimos juntos.
Siempre te amare y luchare por poner tu nombre en alto.
¡Honduras patria mía...Quimera mía!

Still Love For You

Ankush Yyas

*Forbidding myself to tell her the truth,
To keep her away from hurt,
I'm still for you.
Wondering,
How long will it take for the crisis to pass;
She's gazing at the skies;
I'm caught up in a firestorm,
In fervor and cries.
I'm keeping it calm.
With flumes running down my frame;
I wish I could hold her once,
To ease my pain.
Although,
It will have to wait,
Until the danger fades away;
I'm still for you,
I'm still for your love.*

Transmutation

Ginna Watson

Spark that ignites in the darkest place
Heat that warms her at a steady pace

Fire that burns the deepest ends of her soul
If she is not careful her heart will turn coal

But this intense flame makes her feel alive
In the coldest winters will help her survive

For she could not see the world's real shades
When she loses her north, her light slowly fades

These burning embers have helped her see the way
She can see the rainbow, instead of dull gray

Every time her dreams start wearing thin
She knows her fire will come save her from within

She knows that when dreams start wearing thin
This blazing fire will save her from within.

Unprecedented

Angela Ybarra

I never thought I'd be here wondering how the hell I got here. Life is unbelievably different without you.

I'm struggling to remember your voice.

T-shirt whitish, v-neck that smells like fresh laundry straight out of the dryer

When was the last time I saw you?

Alive

An unprecedented number of people dead

Stories untold

Stories never finished

But....

I only think of you

Is it selfish?

Do I give a flying fuck?

Yes, it is and no I don't

Sibling bond broken lost due to

Death

No time for tears

Forget the fear

Step to the side

Unprecedented



Seedlings

2022

