

The John Carroll Review



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Volume 66 Issue 2

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Editor's Note

Producing art is painstaking work. As an undergraduate who was eagerly into all things English major, I wrote quite a bit of poetry—most of it pretty poor—under the direction of a professor and dear friend whose enthusiasm for the arts is contagious. Clustered in her book-packed office a group of us would compose, read and revise creative writing, sharing our work with one another and offering critique (obliquely and shyly, at first). While I think I initially expected to rattle off elegant, electrifying verse straight from the pages of Chaucer or Yeats, I quickly learned that this was not how it was going to work. I remember generating version after version of the same poem, deliberating carefully over individual words and line breaks, in order to produce something which seemed even halfway as good on paper as it did in my head. Not exactly the free and easy Wordsworthian ideal many have of the poet; the process often felt more like solving an intermediate level Sudoku puzzle than some kaleidoscopic influx of genius. It was enjoyable, but it took some doing.

I'm sure that the artists whose works appear in the following pages can relate to this experience, and would agree that—the occasional fortuitous “aha!” moment aside—creating impactful, meaningful art is a demanding endeavor. And so when sitting down to consider the mountain of submissions we received for this semester's edition of the *John Carroll Review*, I was awed by the amount of creative energy, meticulous editing and plain old elbow grease it represented. My gratitude to all our submitters for giving me and my staff such a fantastic collection of submissions to choose from; it was very difficult for us to cut our selections down to fit on a limited amount of pages.

The volume you hold in your hands represents not only our John Carroll student artists' painstaking work and creative energy, but also showcases the result of that work and energy, something inventive and inviting. There's nothing quite as exciting as experiencing for the first time a poem, story or image which strikes you and stays with you. In this volume, you'll have the chance to discover and have a fresh encounter with creative works. You'll hear familiar voices in the pages that follow, and new voices as well. You'll find works that are playful, some that are thoughtful, and others that are wildly imaginative. I hope you'll shiver, as I did, at the unnerving conclusion to Olga Graves' “Date Night,” do a double-take at the inverted neon contours of Sarah Alessi's “Open,” and imagine peering out through the eyes of an enormous Easter Bunny costume with the devoted, troubled Maybe in Kara Simon's “Problem Solver.”

I know that I greatly enjoyed my own encounter with the works in this collection—I often found the words and images from these pages coming back to me after I had reviewed them, found myself enjoying again the effective line of poetry or the novel perspective presented by a photograph. That is why, despite the many hours spent squinting at a computer screen and a couple of long nights subsisting mainly on coffee and cheese-its, acting as General Editor of the *Review* has been very rewarding. I thank all of the poets, writers, graphic artists and photographers whose work comes together here to create a space which encourages a fresh encounter with artistic compositions from our student body. And I thank you, readers, for engaging in this encounter and for sharing this space as well.

Enjoy!

Ann Visintainer
General Editor

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An electronic version of this issue of *The John Carroll Review* can be found in the online archive at <http://sites.jcu.edu/creativewriting/pages/the-john-carroll-review/>



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*For Kristen, David, Megan, Rachel,
Samantha and all of my fellow
2013 graduates.*

“Except our loves at this noon stay,
We shall new shadows make the other way.”

John Donne
“A Lecture Upon the Shadow”

Poetry Workshop

I have read your poem
And am now thinking of my own
Which is probably sitting, exposed
On your desk.

It may as well be me
Sitting naked in your bedroom,
Wishing for something with which
To cover myself up.

I want so badly
To get that scrawl of gibberish back.
To make it something
Worth your time.

I want to impress you with
Attractive alliteration
And subtle metaphors
That surprise and delight you,

Like the feeling
Of my lips, soft
And unexpected against
The nape of your neck.

Olga Graves

Quixote

For my grandpa, P.H.

Long before the move, you promised me
that I could have two wooden figures
of your literary heroes, iconic Spanish adventurers
captured forever in cool, glazed, hand carved eternity.

But, as time passed, and I visited daily, moving boxes
and dust and moth-eaten memories, you never
mentioned them. And I began to wonder,
as your life was packed away,
if you had forgotten your promise.

Then, one day, as I peeled my flip-flops from your
sunbaked driveway, my body lacquered in a sticky
film of sweat and sunburn, I found you waiting for me
in the laundry room, two figures held up in your
soft, wrinkled hands, a spark in your half-blind eyes
as you finally shared your heroes with me;

The tall, lanky, mad Alonzo,
and much abused Sancho;
and we were lost in a cloud of dust and memories.

Erin Manning



Hank III
Erin O'Connor

Problem Solver

"Aren't you excited?" she asks as she rolls Mara's socks onto her tiny feet. Maybe tucks her hair behind her ear and turns to Milton. "You're going to show your sister how it's done tomorrow morning? She's never looked for a basket before."

Milton responds with a smile.

"Okay, you're exhausted," she laughs as she swings Milton into his big-boy-bed. Then she takes Mara and kisses her on the nose. When she does this, her heart stings.

After sitting for a while, making sure her beautiful children are both asleep, Maybe makes her way down the hall. She kicks a prescription bottle in the dark which bumps into an open door. The closet is open. It's usually locked because it's hers. After a graceful smack of her heel against the wood, she realizes the door won't close because a box is in the way. She knows exactly what it contains – pictures of an eight-year-old Maybe side by side with a chocolate brown horse. His name was Chocolate. They never won anything. Only participation medals, which are there too.

No one was ever proud of the participation medals. Not even Maybe. She always thought she was good at riding, but value comes from others. She leaves the box, pockets the prescription bottle, and walks down the hall, thinking about how she's solved that problem.

She smiles when she opens her bedroom door and locks eyes with that gorgeous, perfect man under the sheets.

They have some fun.

At about three in the morning, her alarm goes off. Maybe pulls herself out of bed, sweeping her hand across her husband's forehead as she does, and pulls on his boxer shorts at the bottom of the bed. She grabs a white undershirt as she quietly pulls the door open.

She navigates through the darkness of their tastefully decorated house. She closes each door behind her. When she gets to the garage, she pulls out the large plastic box, second from the left. The plastic handle pinches her fingers as she slides the weight off the shelf.

The box overflows with white fluff. When she starts to pick it up, there are eyes. And ears. There's a tail. A rabbit's tail.

She made this decision four years ago, after her picture-perfect husband, child, and another on the way weren't good enough. Grandpa wasn't pleased. She was just Mom.

Maybe sighs as she slides her feet into the giant legs of the costume. She reaches her arms back to fit inside, like a snowsuit from when you were little. She's wondering why she does this. But then the Easter Bunny wouldn't come. She loves her children.

When she lifts the seven pound rabbit head onto her own, the eyes barely match up. She's an enormous Easter Bunny complete with giant black netted eyes and a big zipper down her stomach.

She packs Milton's basket first. He gets a caramel chocolate egg, jelly beans, and a new baseball bat. Caramel is his favorite. The bat sticks out awkwardly along the sides of the basket.

Next, Mara gets a chocolate bunny and a windup duck that you put jelly beans in. When the duck walks, the jelly beans fall from its backside. It's supposed to be funny. Maybe knows Mara probably won't get it, but her father thought it was just the most humorous thing ever.

Maybe takes the two Easter baskets to the living room, the colored hay floating out and leaving a delicate path. Milton's is in the fireplace. Mara's is behind the curtain.

The clock says three thirty. The costume needs to come off – Maybe is about to pass out.

She makes her way back to the garage, taking off the rabbit suit and folding it neatly back into place for next year. She can't wait to wake up in the morning and see her children's faces. Wouldn't they all be proud.

Kara Simon



That Winter
Chi Vo

Alive

You are in fact dying.
Screaming into the void,
hoping your voice will echo
and leave a mark in the vast night

Some people are air horns,
futilely screaming themselves hoarse
in this inescapable void
Some people are water eroding stone,
slowly working away at life
until it is shaped to match their will

You are in fact dying
and there is
nothing
you can do

except
be the bumblebee,
to fly even though
aerodynamically
You can't.

You are in fact dying.
In fact we all are.
But through
the screaming, the eroding,
the flying, the dying
we have never been more alive.

Robin Weaver

Carry Me

There was something about your shoulders.
Even after the wetness of your kisses
had been wiped away. That stayed with me even after
the soiled clothes traveled backwards
from bundles on the floor to recover
large nipples, those stretch marks
that gave color around your hip bones, giving
evidence to all those drunken nights and 12 packs
of Bud light lime that you sipped with girls clad
in bikinis, pouring lemon drops, shooting cue balls,
and laughing at the miseries of life.
Those shoulders carrying all the weight you drank away
with no regard for your liver's feelings
bore itself into my brain, even the pain of you inside me
could not tear me from the etchings on your shoulder.
Even as you slept, with phlegm-infested breathing
vibrating through the pillow I made of your chest,
I thought of your shoulders, hoping that those few inches
could carry the weight of all that you hid from.

Barbie Curatolo



The Guardian

Heather Buck



Leading Lady
Kristen Profeta

Date Night

We are sitting at the bar because you didn't want
to wait for a table.

Your plate is pushed to the side
and sits a battleground of mangled
French fries and abandoned crust.

One of your hands rests on my knee,
the other has found a pencil and paper
and is depicting for me
the mechanics of the fiscal cliff,

I think of the time my sister caught a mole
in the backyard of our childhood home.
She filled one of her impossibly small rainboots
with dirt and dropped the wiggling insectivore inside.
She kept that boot under her bed for days
until the thing died and the smell
brought my mother to the little corpse's rescue.

The scratch of your pencil across paper
reminds me of the sound made
by the mole's tiny claws against slick rubber.

Olga Graves

Letter to Another Lady,

I will not wax poetic;
 you're famous and
 I'm not and
 I accept that.

Yet I dislike how you make me
 feel like an inferior poet,
 a word-spitting,
 in-front-of-a-computer sitting
 kid,

because I'm angry
 that you can write a book,
 — an extended letter, really —
 and sell it for \$15.00 in paperback
 (\$18.95 in Canada)
 while I render letters raw, *pay*
 judges to read me, and
 Nothing.

We opened your
Letters and read about nose rings
 and tattoos and
 how you dislike them.
 Been thinking to garnish my nostril.
 Yes, I have been.

“Oh, I loved the chapter on this
 and that, and
 that and this,” they say.
I liked it too: the time you
 strode across the rug, thinking
 you were *It*, when
 It was the place-setting
 you would eat upon,
 A point to point to
 Yes, it is

because Maya Angelou,
 I simultaneously love and
 despise you.
 Signed,
 A Daughter



Strings
Sarah Alessi



Open
Sarah Alessi

The Last Dance of Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams

It began with a bang.

It rang through Ontario street, echoed between the skyscrapers, and funneled itself into the amygdalae of Officers ██████████ and ██████████, sparking a light that sent waves of blue fear through their nervous systems.

“It’s a gun!”

“It must be a gun.”

The ’79 Chevy Malibu sped off into the stars, gathering mass as it gained speed; its gravitational pull drawing every police cruiser on duty into its orbit.

The chase was on. Timothy Russell’s blood coursed through his arteries at lightning pace, the amphetamines thinning his blood into gasoline. He slit his wrist open, stabbed a hole in the floor of the backseat, and let his blood fill the near-empty gas tank.

The Malibu was a virus. The police dropped it into the maze of Cleveland’s city-brain, barricading all exits in an effort of suffocation, trying to see which neurons the city would use to expel the germ from its system.

Somewhere on W.45, Williams, in her androgyny mistaken for a man, put her hands up in surrender, signaling that the driver was a maniac, and that her presence in the vehicle was not by choice.

But Officer ██████████, in the cruiser directly behind the Malibu, was certain... she was waving a gun.

Through the crackle of the police scanner: “That’s not a gun in his hand. That’s a pop can, Sarge.”

And then, as the car circled around the turn onto Clark Avenue, Russell pushed his foot all the way to the floor. Williams crumpled back into her seat, reduced to a skeletal shadow of her former self as the Malibu began to lift off the road, breaking the sound barrier as it separated from the asphalt.

It soared above the city, only a few dozen feet over the street, and Russell threw his head back and piped out a Robert Johnson song, his vocal cords fraying like a weathered rope in the process. Cleveland was, and would always be, his.

The police tried to keep up, but their cars remained earthbound. The Malibu sped on: it leapt over the guardrail on I-90 and aimed for downtown; a vicious beacon of destruction barreling toward the glowing epicenter of the Great Lakes.

The Malibu was cruising with the power of a thousand horses, and like a light-vacuum it sucked all of the energy from the city, which left the skyline illuminated in a ghostly white silhouette.

Russell slingshot the car around Terminal Tower, sending it soaring to the right.

Gracefully, he dipped the Malibu into the banks of Lake Erie, splashing freshwater up over the shoreline. It coated St. Clair-Superior and the Hough neighborhood; a small starlit wave that flooded the neighborhood’s disenfranchised up to their knees.

The Malibu was always out of the police cruisers’ grasp as they pursued by land. Even the helicopters couldn’t arrive on time.

The police scanner crackled again, "Attention all units: end pursuit. I repeat, end pursuit."

Then, turning down St. Clair avenue, Russell flashed a Cheshire smile at Williams. "Baby, we home."

As the car soared over Wade Park avenue, Williams saw her childhood home come into view from down the street. In her old bedroom window was her mother, zombielike, as if drawn to the window like an old widow wishing for her lover to return. Williams' heart throbbed with desire, just to be in her arms once again, safe, her head resting on her mother's breast.

Then in a sudden impulse, Williams smashed the passenger-side window and leapt, hoping the velocity of her thrust would send her crashing through her bedroom window. But as she fell through the sky, she felt her leg being ripped out of her body. Russell had wrapped the seatbelt around her ankle, and all she could do was dangle from the side of the car like an infant.

As the Malibu passed above her old home, she made an effort to grab onto the chimney. But being in a state of advanced decay, the chimney crumbled in her arms, blackening her face with soot. Tears spurted from her eyes like translucent blood.

Amidst her sobs, Russell pulled her back into the vehicle and raped her moist mouth with his hard tongue.

"Baby... we in it now. We in the express... Express elevator to Hell. Going down."

The Malibu was sputtering. The flight had taken its toll, and it was just a short distance down Euclid until he could steer the car down Lee. Lee Rd. was freedom. If the car made it, he could sail away all the way down and out of the city. The virus would have infected the brain.

But Russell turned too soon.

The churning tires crunched to a stall and the car plummeted into the pavement. Williams screamed, as the fall petrified her bones. The car crashed in the parking lot of Heritage Middle School. The officers were waiting.

It happened so slowly. Williams turned around to look behind her. The lights kept flashing, getting brighter and brighter. Russell put his hand on the car door, but it wouldn't open.

Officer [REDACTED] raised his gun like a baton, and started the Waltz with the second bang of the night.

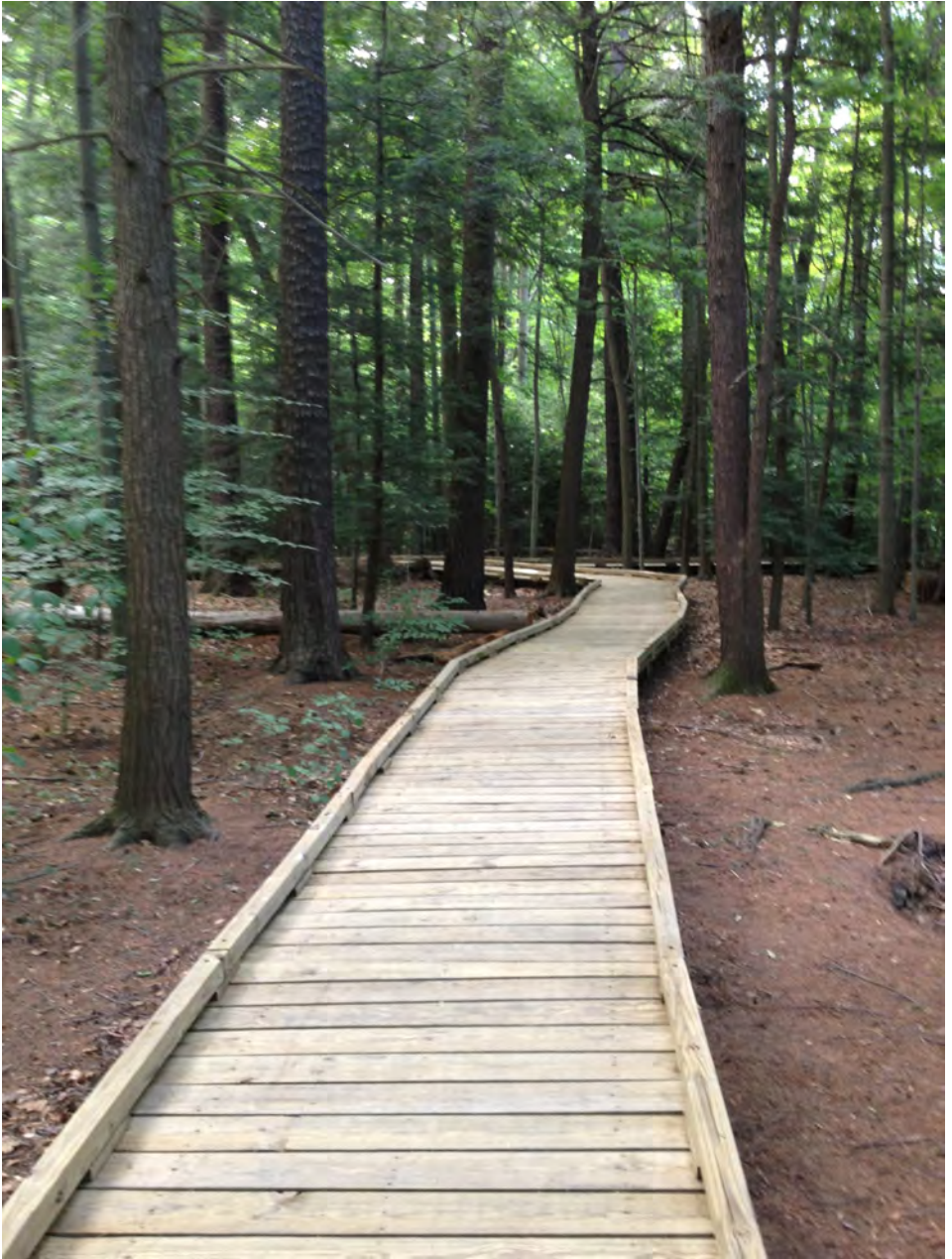
Then, the Cleveland Police Department, back by special demand for a 30-second only limited performance, began their masterpiece... the Death Valzer.

Officer [REDACTED] to the right on handgun. Officer [REDACTED] to the left with shotgun. But it was Officer [REDACTED] who stole the show. He composed ruthlessly, even taking time for a few dramatic pauses.

The sonorous, shocking bursts of noise exalted Williams and Russell, and bullets shredded their arteries, sending streamers of blood spraying into the cold night air, still steaming from the drop in temperature after being ejected from their human aqueducts. Officer [REDACTED]'s blast specifically sent confetti brain matter raining down from the East Cleveland skies, and the Officers drank it in like vampires. It surged through their digestive systems and into their own muscles, forcing their symphony even louder.

Russell and Williams withered and twisted, contorted and whirled, their limbs stretching and growing the lifetime of a thousand-year-old redwood, all within 30 seconds. They closed with the most loving and simple of gestures: Williams' lifeless head resting upon Russell's lifeless shoulder. There was a grand mastery to it, and even the great legends of ballet sat up in their beds that night to pray to some higher force drawing them inexplicably to face Cleveland's shore.

Carson Parish



Nature's Way
Kristen Profeta

The Mixtape

My car's whining engine feebly ignites
A Pavlovian response in the fitted disc player
that whirs to life and my mind sparks too.
With hushed breath I await the songs you handpicked
on *KP1*, crafted with care albeit titled with disregard.
Music you want me to know,
the girl you're getting to know.

Track 1.

Some hipster song I've never heard,
A reminder ringing tinny through the speakers
Of how much cooler you are,
How much more cultured,
How much *life* you have on me.

I search for hidden meaning in tracks 2-4,
Wondering, hoping, reading into the words sung
By guys who take longer on their hair than me
And girls who know how to layer scarves over dresses, skirts over boots.
I imagine you're trying to tell me
something you can't quite say yet—
When you picked the songs tinged with infatuation
oozing sex appeal
and reeking of reckless abandon,
were you thinking of me?

A bump in the road jars track 5,
And I'm glad you're not here to hear
how my shitty driving disrupts your lesson.
But you've seen how I drive,
and you keep making mixtapes anyway.

Kathleen Patton

Lake Erie

As I flush the toilet, water gushes out from up top
Reminding me about the water current roaming
At Lake Erie where I could no longer hear the water splashing
Against the collection of rocks and stones,
And wonder how many more flushes I can use
Before the lake runs out of water.

Chi Vo

In 10 years,

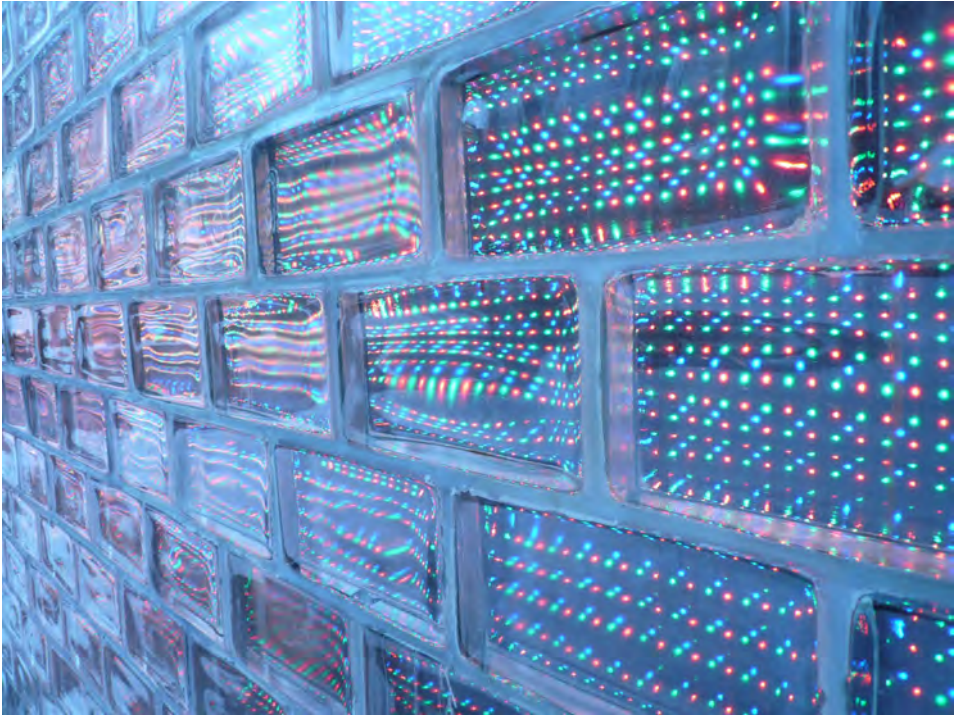
your memories of swinging your 60s skirt
will be long gone
and your days of drippy popsicles
and sticky hands
will have passed.

When they say you're not smart enough
to go to college,
you'll remind them
that you know the ABCs in English.

They'll say
you and that boy aren't just friends
and you might begin to believe them
and fall in love,
break up,
call your step-mom
a fucking bitch,
and get back together with him
when taking your shirt off
will mean more
than just
it's hot outside.

And maybe
you'll look back on November 2012
in Manaus, Brazil,
throwing yellow frisbees
at people's faces,
and you'll remember the woman
from Ohio
who called you a monkey
when you did Spiderman tricks
in your mom's car.

Rebecca Ferlotti



Thinking of Christmas

Barbie Curatolo

Billy Collins Hit on My Girlfriend

And as I approached him at a bar
the name of which he couldn't remember,
he said to me, "And who are you?"
I replied "Carson,"
to which he said, "No you're not.
You're just the guy
with the pretty blonde girlfriend."
And he drew her in close.

Little does Billy know,
that I would most likely prefer
to wake up to him the next morning,
as opposed to my girlfriend.

And although I've never been one
to go after Baby Boomers,
I suppose there are always exceptions
for Poet Laureates.

Carson Parish

Dibs

She collected trinkets like a squirrel collects nuts,
And wanted me to have them.

When I told her I would choose next time,
She would give me a paper and pen.
She would tell me to claim them while I could,
That I needed to call “dibs.”

I wanted to put my name on my memories,
The wispy memories with the faces blurred out.
The memories where the audio has gone bad
And you can’t make out what they’re saying.

I can’t remember her voice,
But I can remember the noise the machines made.
I can’t remember what her garden in West Virginia smelled like,
But I can remember the stale air of the retirement home.

I can’t remember the color of her hair before it turned white,
But I can remember the white walls of the hospital.
I can’t remember her warmth,
But I can remember the cold hands.

The hands I held when I tried to say goodbye.

If I had put my name on her sweater,
Would God have respected my “dibs?”

Andrew Ettinger



Antwerpen: Musician on Wheels

Rebecca Ferlotti

Lost in Amsterdam

The pilot's drone-like voice over the intercom cut short my sleep. I adjusted myself from the awkward sleeping position I had been in. It hadn't been a particularly smooth ride. However, the pilot's familiar voice had been reassuring throughout.

"Folks, we have begun our descent to Amsterdam Airport Schiphol. The current weather is 70⁰F and wow...what a lovely day it is. Don't miss out on the wonderful sunshine, folks. Please fasten your seat belts and make sure your trays are clear and in an upright position...Thank you for flying KLM."

The pilot went on to recite the same thing in German and then Dutch. *Just how many languages do these people speak!?*

I looked at the lady sitting next to me, reading Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*. I studied her face intently. She must have been in her mid-twenties. Her hair was a rich shade of mahogany—with locks that curtained her rather oval face. A face with a golden-light complexion sprinkled with a few freckles here and there. She was calm as her sky-blue eyes, framed by long lashes, followed the text in the novel—one line after the other, one page to the next. She noticed me staring and smiled. *Such a gorgeous smile!* I smiled back, slightly embarrassed. I had enjoyed my flight!

A sudden bump indicated to me the release of the landing gear, and I jumped slightly at the sound. Feeling my ears pop, I opened my mouth and tried to force a yawn in an effort to release the pressure—it was a ritual I performed every other time I flew.

As the plane gradually slowed down, simultaneous clicks of unlocking seat belts filled the cabin as restless passengers stood up and grabbed their carry-on luggage—tired, and some frustrated, from the 8-hour long flight from Nairobi, Kenya.

Amsterdam was my first stop en route to the USA. I was thrilled. Of course, I had to be thrilled. Anyone coming to America for the first time would have been excited. My younger sister had been far more ecstatic than I was. One would think she was the one coming to study here. She had told me a dozen times to change my name to Mike.

"Why?" I was curious.

"Everyone in America is called Mike," she quipped with a certain air of confidence and arrogance, as if accusing me of being a dummy. "Mike Tyson, Michael Jackson, Michael Jordan, Michael Johnson, Michael Phelps, Michael..." She rattled out a list of five other celebrity Michaels. *Google... please tell me she's making that up...nope!*

Trying to outsmart her, I had rattled off my own list of American celebrities called Stephen.

"Steve Jobs...!" was all I could come up with—a one-man list! *What the hell Steve!*

The Schiphol Airport was huge. Well, I haven't been to the likes of Heathrow or Beijing, but it was far bigger than Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi—which easily makes the top ten largest airports in Africa. Throngs of passengers hurried up and down the airport corridors, while others sprinted on the moving sidewalks—which I now call horizontalators—trying to catch flights. Confused and dazzled by the number of white folks—I had never seen so many white people—I watched as travelers listened to their iPods and kids played video games. Businessper-

sons were busy on their laptops. Couples strolled from shop to shop, looking for souvenirs to take back home. I heard people chatting in Chinese, and German, and Dutch, and English. I did catch some of the German words—*willkommen* and *auf wiedersehen*. I recognized the lady who had been sitting next to me in the plane. We exchanged smiles (I might have waved too...just a slight Queen-Elizabeth-like wave); making me feel as though I had known her for years. *Bye*.

The smell of fading perfumes that women were wearing—the men’s weren’t remotely interesting—clashed repeatedly with the smell of popcorn and sandwiches. It was ten o’clock in the morning.

I went down the flight of escalators to the Arrivals section. I had to get my entire luggage and check in for my next flight to Atlanta, GA. Nairobi to Amsterdam, Amsterdam to Atlanta, and Atlanta to Cleveland. That was my travel itinerary; estimated to take about 24 hours. *Eight down, infinite more to go*.

“Have your bags with you always,” my mum had advised before I left home. She had then proceeded to tell me how one international student had been tricked into carrying another passenger’s bag. Little did the college freshman know that the bag was packed with some hard drugs. Long story short, the kid is now a 42-year-old man languishing in a Chinese prison. The moral of the story, evidently, was for me not to do favors for other passengers, have my bags in sight always and to trust no one—including myself. Oh, and I was meant to pray every 10 minutes; something that had led to *Hail Mary* being engraved in my head—continuously reciting itself subconsciously. *Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you...* “Next!” called out the Immigration Officer at the International Visitors booth. I stepped forward. I placed my documents on the counter. I then went on to count the number of surveillance cameras I could see. *1, 2, 3...8...9. I bet there are more disguised as normal objects. Maybe the light bulb isn’t a light bulb after all. And that pen...just look at it...that pen definitely has a drug detector in it, plus a camcorder*. My wild imagination wandered from one item to another and I struggled to come up with perfect conclusions to the function of every single object. Coming from the developing world into a completely new universe full of the latest technology, I found it difficult to accept things literally.

“Stephen?” the Immigration Officer interrupted my line of thought. *So you can talk...almost thought you were a robot for a second*.

“I can’t see your visa...,” he said in a thick Dutch accent. I flipped through the pages of my passport and showed it to him.

“Yes, I understand you have the American visa...but we need to see the Netherlands visa...otherwise we cannot let you past the gates.”

What? No one had told me a thing about needing a Netherlands visa. The thought of not getting past the gates got the word *deportation* ringing in my queasy brain. I saw my recently acquired American dream melt away like butter on a hot stove. I nervously started a frantic explanation as to how I was meant to get my luggage; and went on and on about how I had to stay in Amsterdam for about five hours before catching my next flight to America. I was taut, and more confused than a chameleon in a bag of skittles.

I could feel threads of sweat trickling down my back as the officer went to consult with his supervisor—a tall muscular blonde with broad square shoulders and a pistol hooked to his belt. His cold, inscrutable, stone-faced expression as he walked towards me indicated that he saw me as a waste of time—a nuisance. I instantly

forced a tear or two to get my emotional game going. If I were to get through him, then some pathos would definitely help...perhaps. I held on tight. Tight to my pants. Because *anything* could happen...to my pants. I would have given anything for a Netherlands visa to appear in my passport at that moment.

In a small office, the supervisor scrutinized all of my documents multiple times.

I reckon most of us would understand how I felt at that instant. Customs officials have a way of making travelers uneasy—most of them. I had that feeling. You know that feeling you get when you look in the rear view mirror, and a truck is bearing down on you? And you can't get out of the way? Yes, that one. Only there was no truck.

"Show me your plane ticket." He asked me with a tone of finality. I fumbled as my shaky sweaty palms handed over the slightly wet pieces of paper. He immediately shook his head and a slight smile formed at the left corner of his mouth. *Is that a good sign?* It was. *Phew!* He explained everything and directed me to the waiting lounge.

"Passengers boarding flight TO-135 to Tokyo are advised to be at Gate G37 with their boarding passes..." the voice of a middle-aged woman speaking fluent English sounded over the airport intercom. As I sat in the rather uncomfortable blue chairs, clinging to my carry-on bag, boredom set in. I contemplated flicking through the pages already twice read in the paper I had purchased. *Boring lullaby!* I took a deep breath and looked around once more, my eyes passing the luminous signs with their nicotine-colored writing and wide screen TVs that were silent, but with endless News. *That doesn't even make sense.* I collapsed into sleep, waking up just in time to catch my flight.

The engines roared and I got pushed back against my seat. Trees and buildings whizzed by as the aircraft made a dash on the runway. The mild rumbling of the tires against the tarmac ended as the plane ascended steadily into the air. Slowly, the small cars heading down long highways, and the map-like ground below went out of view. I put on my earphones and started going through the list of movies in the screen in front of me. As the flight attendants passed out peanuts and mango juice, I thought of my destination ahead—Atlanta, GA. I knew I was landing in America smarter than I left Kenya; because next time I will be wise enough to know how to connect flights.

Stephen Wanyamawi



Delphes: Greece
Aude-Marine Danede

Purple Flowers

You know the purple flowers that grow along
The roadside where plastic bottles containing urine lie?
They grow on the devil strip
Where de-icer trucks salt the roads every winter
I saw them across from the Cleveland Hopkins Airport
Growing into the grooves and ridges of the hill,
Competing with dandelions and wild flowers
To be weeded out by gardeners.
But they will survive
They did in the past when
Pursuers brought them from Mexico
To New England
as ornaments in wealthy people's botanical gardens.
They were prized, they were cared for, they wilted
But along the salty unwelcomed soil they thrive.

Chi Vo



Before the Storm

Katie Warner

ADHD

Charcoal to white a fire cracker lights my head starts to spin in a motionless swirl faster faster faster the thought of #1 still trapped in my mind fit fit fit the sound of classmates passing me sends a jolt of restless energy down my right side my leg shakes 86 times in the first minute I counted I look to my right she's on #9 already what was her name again she just told me for the second time this week Nora or was it Sara we sat next to each other in RL 101 with Dr. Pinephrine was it freshman year I remember the thermostat is set to 70° but it's 68° whoooooosh the sound of virgin air swims through my ears stealing every last drop of attention give it back that's not yours I shout silently to no one but you take you always do I raise my hand Dr. Pamine where'd he go I run 18 miles just to find him he's here at last I return to my seat to find him gone again

Brendan Hancock

Shippingport Street

The cooling towers of Beaver P.A.
ominously over-powered the road
he drove with me at his side on our way
past Shippingport hill. The mountainous load
of coal sat as backdrop to the steaming
stacks, and I turned pondering their place
against Ohio's River and turning
leaves sending trees into lonely spaces.
They seemed cozy and settled in nature
at home, but I thought if they break and fall
we'd perish in the nuclear danger
of it all—There, the slow chaos, an earth
ruined scene. It'd be the last of our feats
and of me, driving past Shippingport street.

Christina Mihalic



The Rabbit Hole
Carson Parish

On Paper

Found a letter
and with every word
it slit far (enough)
into her
and I together.

The only time we're ever together.

And with this letter
there were letters
of words
slicing far (enough)
into her vows
and my future ones together.

The only time we could be together.

Nothing I hadn't seen
nor heard
Yet on paper
made these letters
of the words
of the letter
real.

Alex Cavasini

Beauty

I hate the puke green walls that border this building
where my mom sits behind yellow curtains.
A nurse with a bouffant says hello, and I smile
but not with my eyes.

The black eyes of death create a smell
across the linoleum halls.
The hum of large white machines
beside me are pounding in my ears,
“Dr. Flenderson, Dr. Flenderson” is said on the scratchy intercom.

My mother woke up early today
to bake cookies for a friend
who is sick in the Clinic
before she went in herself.
A nurse holds an elderly man
as he jokes about his time in the war. Not sure what war,
but after a while they all become
“the war.”

As I sit in self-pity,
I hear the faint sound of a baby’s cry
and a soft lullaby played on the intercom,
a new flower flourishing
in the decaying soil.

Hospitals are a casserole of emotion.
I have never seen such beauty.

Michael G. Baker

Apple Pie

Flour streaked our hair, as we rolled the dough
On my grandma's wooden kitchen table,
While polka music blared in the background.
My little fingers shakily measured out the vanilla,
Trying my best not to spill.
As my sister and I fought over who got to pour
The thinly-sliced Macintosh apples into the delicate crust,
My grandma repeated to us, "You can't have a good pie without patience."
After twenty-three minutes in my grandma's old-fashioned oven,
Our delectable masterpiece emerged,
And filled every corner of my grandma's house
With the sweet, mouth-watering aroma of cinnamon.
As though it was Christmas morning, my sister and I
Flew down the stairs as fast as we could when we heard the timer "ding!"

But now the heavenly smell of baking apples is gone.
Baking is too much for my grandma, whose fragile,
Delicate bones can no longer stand
And dance the polka while kneading dough for the perfect pie.
But every once in a while my sister and I make her famous apple pie,
And even though we still fight over who can pour the apples into the crust,
I still hear her voice whispering,
"You can't have a good pie without patience."

Katie Kiliany

Tiny Soldiers

The early morning mist settled heavily around the wooden fortress. The earth sighed in the stillness of the moment, ruffling the flags flying brightly against the bloody sky.

The sharp hiss of the blade pulled from its sheath cut the silence as rapidly as it would cut flesh in a few short moments. However, for a single moment the lone blade rested in the heavy morning air. The sun shimmered off the weapon, its beauty as undeniable as its lethality. It seemed to quiver with excitement and its desire for blood quickly became too much for the lanky young man wielding the weapon.

His quick, bright eyes gleamed with excitement as he dropped the sword. The answering hiss of his army drawing their weapons brought the dead morning to life. Three clear blasts on a clarion brought his army to attention, and with one more staccato note the men sprung forward as one, their force a deadly snake weaving in and out of their foes.

The young man reveled in the battle surrounding him. It seemed like a dance to his untested eye. There was an ebb and flow to each soldier's movement and the clashing swords and screams created a macabre music to underscore the gruesome cavort.

As the music came to a head, the bright-eyed young man stood on edge. His guard was raised, waiting with grim anticipation for the appearance of his dearest foe. With the crack of a branch, bright eyes met smoldering ones. Each young man looked into the face of his most hated enemy for a long silent moment before attacking as one, each with a vigor and strength the other did not expect. The field of battle was quiet but for the crash of metal upon metal, all of the soldiers entranced by their leaders' battle.

The bright-eyed young man fought with a fiery passion, his attacks quick and hard and unyielding. The smoldering-eyed young man fought with a reserved force, only making contact when it was necessary. All those watching would have sworn that the bright-eyed young man would carry the day, but his passion came with a price. Long before his foe, the bright-eyed young man tired and made a mistake.

Just one. One fatal mistake.

The smoldering-eyed young man saw his chance and disarmed the bright-eyed young man, forcing him to the ground.

"Yield," he growled.

But before he could answer, another voice rang clear and true across the field of battle.

"Anthony, David, lunch!"

The smoldering-eyed boy helped the bright-eyed boy up, both chattering excitedly about the sandwiches they would be eating shortly. Their teddy bears and tin soldiers lay strewn about the yard; their limp forms the only testament to the great battle that had occurred.



Sentinel
Katie Warner

What is Cleveland?

Once a man of steel,
cuckolded by foreigners,
made to bear a rusty belt
and belch hapless smoke in shame.

Once a spiderweb of commerce—
now a conglomerate of strangers,
united by dementia-ridden streets
frayed and cracked by Erie's buffets—
but the breakwall soldiers still hold the line.

As do the masses, when they can stand
the agony of Sundays as crying sots,
drenching the gutters in saltwater
beers, burying the despair behind
frozen, grim, angry brows.

On they fight, under the evergaze
of endlessly winking red guardians
who still believe.

Christopher Kane

Never Forget

9/11 was kind of a big deal
for two reasons

(1) because by junior high I was
playing hookie for slurpees and watched live
(2) because the school cancelled our DC weekend
packed busses and drove us around
Ohio instead—Cleveland to Cincinnati
stopping at every notable
waffle house on the way

I'll never forget that day
on the KY branded river boat—
dusk, the whole class on deck
watching the skyline light up,
Marie telling me she liked my body
spray and sucking my face in the ballroom

David Vodolazkiy



Like Father Like Son
Andrew Ettinger

A Funeral in Parma

When I stand in that fluorescent funeral parlor,
I can only think about the putrid ichor
that has been pumped into his veins,
and how the mother stares into his tucked eyelids,
half-praying, half-talking in wounded sobs and squelched eyes, I can only think
about the embalming process, and the wrinkled carcass
casually tossed onto a frozen table, mouth agape like an opera singer,
arm propped and hand curled in true Roman rigor,
and how the body will not decompose in that cement grave,

I can only think about the body of that bootleg son
dressed in some black velvet suit he never liked to wear,
and how there won't be any violins, just a cacophony
of slamming car doors like a firing squad,
speeding off to a reception of marinated meats and salted pastas
to try and cope with the fact that he is gone, forever.

And when I drop an ice cream cone, I'm like "Oh, shit!"
and I become extremely sad.

Max Harcsar

Bride with Bird

(Portrait of Catherine Gray, Lady Manners by Thomas Lawrence)

She does not stand erect
in her wedding dress
like a proud bride,
but rather leans on a cold,
grey slab of rock, bearing
the weight of her broken heart
on her shoulders.
And as the pink rose withers
away, with its head
hanging low, the melancholy
from the ornamented blue bird flows
into the heavy, white
dress that drapes over her body
attempting to veil the
disappointment in her eyes.

The dark, ashy
clouds make an effort to part,
exposing a glimpse of
light, however, not enough
to illuminate her sunken face.
As the moist earth
surrounds her feet,
she is held prisoner
as a bride.

Brittany Bockanic

Inked

Everyone seems to have a problem
with identity. That ultimate I am,
a common problem for *Homo sapiens*.
Homo of the earth and earthly.
as natural as death so the dead
language naturally speaks true.
Homo born. Born a *Homo*.
In this word my entire being.

He was sitting across from me in the cafeteria,
the yang to my yin. He confessed his hatred
for having friends who didn't know him. I countered
for common knowledge of myself left me unpopular.
I laughed at our mutual opposite loneliness.
We each choose our own punishment I guess.

This word *Homo*. Greek to me.
Equal? Most definitely not.
Wedding bells only in Vermont
or the like. *Homo. Homo*.
It's the same. Same to me.
It is who I am, who I like.
who I am always going to be.

I remember as I held your tattooed skin
close to mine, as if your rainbow ink would transfer over,
over the language barrier that separated us.
You didn't like definitions,
and I was searching for mine.
Everything to me was *Homo*.
Or maybe it was just
me.

Barbie Curatolo

Kimchi

The tile floor numbered each of my small toes
As I stood watch over
The deep sea of jars that were laid at my feet,
Waiting to be filled with the
Ginger
Radish
Cabbage
That my father was dutifully dicing
On the counter above.

We filled the jars together.
He layered the vibrant vegetables.
I filled the remaining space with
Brine
Sugar
Shrimp sauce
Then we twisted the metal tops on,
Tight,
Letting the flavors soak
And moil
And become delicious.

We waited.

Today
Is the first time I have seen my
Father in months.
I reach down and lift the heavy box that lies at my feet.
It is wrapped in glossy green and red paper,
A feeble tag dangles to the side

From Dad

The paper falls away and I am holding a
Festering jar of fermented cabbage.

Olga Graves



Abiquiú
Erin O'Connor

Cheetos

I never realized
how they look
like the bones

of a tiny old man
with Maltodextrin arms
bright Yellow 6 hair
a glowing Enriched
Corn Meal heart
and Ferrous Sulfate feet

dancing to Tom Waits,
barking orders at me.

He tells me to suck
my salty fingertips
until they're sticky.

He tells me to cover
that girl's yoga pants
with orange handprints.

But mostly he just tells me
to eat more Cheetos

and I can't
fucking
stop.

Danny Caine

The Diary I Never Wrote: An Excerpt

Mike's mom told me about how she did cocaine and ran around naked in a field and then showed me his sisters' decapitated doll collection. She kept them locked in a glass case. Her company made boxes for jewelry companies, but she wasn't opposed to creating her own businesses – incense, makeup, weed. Anti-Prohibitionist and spin-ach lover.

Mike and I were making out when she screamed, so we stopped and put our shirts back on right before she walked in to ask us how we were doing and if we had started making grandchildren yet. And when she left, he started tickling me. She walked in again when I had him pinned. I defended myself by saying I was just tickling him back; she replied with It's healthy for 20-year-olds to have sex. And shut the door.

Rebecca Ferlotti



Outside of an Expensive Dominican Restaurant

Rebecca Ferlotti

Untitled

I don't want to be a national treasure,
to be taken from the dusty realms of somebody's closet
and put on display at an opening ceremony.
I'd rather be the third place trophy,
inserted between two frames filled with gap-toothed children
and a Sunday barbeque.

I don't care to be the pièce de résistance.
The flambé, ignited to demonstrate a false sense of grandeur.
I don't want to leave pocket books weeping,
hearts desperately searching for a piece of life's puzzle
within the glass of a pompous red wine.

I'm a frozen patty.
Grilled on a greasy stove in a sleazy diner
clogging arteries and inducing heart attacks,
to be chugged down by brewed beer,
and leaving satisfied stomachs satisfied
and check books in check.

I don't aspire to be the first time.
The important one.
Not the first class business woman with a fresh pressed peplum skirt,
French dressed salad
and a case full of important documents.

Instead I'm standing in a very long line, hair undone
toast, saturated in butter, hanging from my mouth,
A notebook in my hand, eager for poems about romance.
There I stood, hoping to purchase my ticket
and make the next train to work.

Ashley Campbell

Author Biographies

Sarah Alessi is a junior at JCU who is studying the psychology of communication through graphic media, a major she designed herself within the Tim Russert Department of Communication & Theatre Arts. She has always loved photography, but only just started taking more formal classes this past semester. She is planning on pursuing a job within the design field.

Michael G. Baker was raised in Louisville, Ohio and attended his first year of college at Loyola University Chicago. He is currently a senior at John Carroll University majoring in economics. Michael is a member of Delta Tau Delta Fraternity at John Carroll and has taught mathematics to children in Chicago and Cleveland. He plans to pursue a career in business and economics.

Brittany Bockanic is a senior with a double major in biology and Spanish. Her poem "Bride with Bird" is a product of her Intro to Poetry Workshop class at JCU. After graduation, she will attend veterinary school at Mississippi State University.

Heather Buck is a freshman biology major from New York. I enjoy making art, dancing, listening to music (The Front Bottoms are my latest addiction), sleeping, and watching Tim Burton films. Above all, I'm most passionate about drawing. I prefer to use only pencil, draw on larger surfaces, and to recreate photographs of people I know. "The Guardian" is a re-creation of a photo I took of my Grandpa and little cousin, who happened to be sick at the time.

Danny Caine is a Graduate Assistant who currently resides in Lakewood. He dedicates "Cheetos" to Dr. George Bilgere.

Ashley Campbell is a sophomore Creative Writing major. Her hobby has always been reading and she's never had much of a desire for anything else; however, she gained a passion for vampires and fiction writing after reading *Twilight* in eighth grade. Though she long since fell out of her *Twilight* phase, she still continues to write and not just about vampires. Her shelves are filled with years' worth of unfinished stories and character bios. While attending her Creative Writing class, she was forced to write poetry. And even though she's never been a fan, she writes it anyway because it's easier to finish.

Alex Cavasini is slightly awkward and a tad bit hyperactive. I often find myself questioning the very things that come out of my mouth. I have a passion for both music and psychology and someday I hope I can find a balance between the two. If I could have it my way, I'd be barefoot and outdoors with no plans but whatever it is I feel like doing at that moment. Poetry is a great outlet and I've found that some of my most personal thoughts come at 4 AM. If you're reading this, find me. I'd love to chat.

Barbie Curatolo will be graduating this semester, and she hopes that this means she will not have to serve Blooming Onions for the rest of her life.

Aude-Marine Danede is an international student from France. She enjoys pez, making crepes, and drinking from her Thor cup.

Andrew Ettinger is the man behind the beard. He began his career as a writer at his elementary school's newspaper where he was editor, but was removed after calling the teacher in charge "The Man." His career has only gone up from there. Having changed his life goals from journalism to screen writing, he plans on leaving for Tinsel Town as soon as he graduates.

Rebecca Ferlotti loves the pen smudges on her hands from sliding them across college-ruled paper, poetry's sarcastic finger snaps, and embarrassing herself in public places.

Olga Graves is a junior majoring in economics at John Carroll University. She is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, though she has recently begun to refer to Cleveland as "home." She spends the majority of her time daydreaming about what breed of dog she will get when she has the money and the time.

Brendan Hancock is a senior communications major here at Carroll and is both looking forward to and scared sh***s to graduate in May. While at Carroll he was heavily involved in theatre; some of his previous roles include the Dentist in "Little Shop of Horrors," the Leading Player in "Pippin," and Andrew in "I Hate Hamlet." During his junior year, Brendan spent his fall semester "abroad" at The Second City in Chicago, where he studied comedy and improvisation. After graduation he plans to move to Chicago and pursue his dream of becoming an actor. Brendan is excited to have his poem "ADHD" admitted into this semester's edition of the *Carroll Review*, and hopes it provides those who read it with a glimpse inside the mind of a person with ADHD. Enjoy!

Max Harcsar is a senior communications major and an aspiring velociraptor. A collector of vinyl records and a self-proclaimed soda connoisseur, he enjoys sleeping all day and jumping on people at concerts at night. His favorite band is the Wonder Years. He hates sour cream and peanut butter. Max also loves Yankee Candles and frequently makes purchases with \$2 bills.

Christopher Kane is a graduate student at John Carroll University studying Early Modern European history. He graduated as a double major in English and history at JCU last spring, and still writes poetry and short stories whenever he can.

Katie Kiliany is a junior here at John Carroll, majoring in middle childhood education with concentrations in math and English. A native Pittsburgher, Katie loves peanut-butter and strawberry-jelly sandwiches, takes delight in elevator rides, and enjoys the number 456. Her biggest aspiration in life is to one day learn how to drive in the snow.

Erin Manning is a senior English major and classical studies minor. This past semester, she read James Joyce's masterpiece *Finnegans Wake* cover to cover and understood every word.

Christina Mihalic is a first year graduate student at JCU. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English at Mercyhurst University in 2012 and is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in English.

Erin O'Connor is a non-traditional art history student who's worked in oils, glass, encaustic and watercolor. Her favorite way to work is letting a piece flow and evolve during the creative process. After an enjoyable business career, she turned toward

studies in the studio arts. Her pieces are informed and inspired by a variety of life experiences from living in the Midwest, Downeast, Rockies, Prairielands, and from travels. After moving to Ohio last year, she joined the Medina and Peninsula Art Leagues. She is an advocate of the power, joy and connectivity of creativity.

Carson Parish is incredibly grateful for the wonderful people that he's had the privilege to know in the past four years. He's had the greatest, most inspirational professors that a student could ever ask for, and his friends and peers have been the substance in his life. He'd like to personally thank every single one. As a placeholder, he sends this message: You're all fantastic. Thank you so much. "...And in case I don't see ya'!... good afternoon, good evening, and good night." (Waves)

Kathleen Patton is a senior psychology major from the west (best) side of Cleveland, with minors in creative writing and statistics. She enjoys being on John Carroll's Rowing Team and sleeping, which sadly preclude one another. This fall she will begin graduate school in pursuance of her Ph.D. in social psychology and will attend The Ohio State University, chosen for the program's prestigious reputation and more importantly, its proximity to Chipotle.

Kristen Profeta is a senior biology major with a minor in Spanish. She is also captain of the Women's Soccer team at John Carroll. Photography is one of her favorite hobbies and she enjoys depicting images of nature.

Kara Simon is a junior creative writing major with minors in professional writing and entrepreneurship (for now). She prefers not to think about the future because it stresses her out. And so does this bio.

Samantha Syracuse reads *The Onion* for fair and balanced news and watches *30 Rock* for instruction in workplace etiquette.

Chi Vo is a senior biology major. The origin of my interest in photography begins with my interest in pretty things like flowers. But those things die and the best way to keep them alive is by capturing them in photos.

David Vodolazkiy is originally from the Soviet Union, but is now an Eastside Cleveland wild boy. His poetry has appeared in *Midwestern Gothic*, and his fiction in the *John Carroll Review*. He tweets—@dvodolaz—and you would do well to follow him.

Stephen Wanyamawi is a freshman and an international student from Kenya. Like all Kenyans (since 2009), I am a distant relative of Obama. Can I run? No, but bring a spider into the equation and Usain Bolt would have nothing on me! I might never get used to the cold but that does not stop me from writing about my experiences in America. Looking forward to getting that all-important American accent in the next 3 years!

Katie Warner hails from Buffalo, New York. She is a senior communications major with a political science minor. Among her eclectic interests she enjoys photography, writing, being a woman for others, traveling and a cup of darn hot coffee from Einstein's.

Robin Weaver is a sophomore English and communications major. She enjoys working on John Carroll theatre productions and being a member of the Pep Band.

Notes:



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