Editorial
Kevin Buist

Before going to college I spent a year abroad, during which e-mail became my central link to friends and family back home. I particularly enjoyed exchanging messages with my dad. He began sending me images he was creating by grabbing video stills from digital videotape while it was being scanned, creating distortions to the original image. It got me thinking about how so much of the information we rely on is mediated by technology through a process of digitization.

I stumbled upon a way to distort language in a similar way. You can try it at home: First, select a piece of writing in your native language. I've chosen a poem from this issue by Daniel Lynch, which also appears on page 12:

Holding Hands with El Muerte

She walks
Lonely
Here he comes
Slowly
He puts his arm
Around her neck
Breathing I
Glance
And pray for
His heart attack

Next, go to http://babelfish.altavista.com/, and paste your text into the “Translate a block of text” field. Then select what language it is and what language you want to translate it into. I chose “English to Spanish.” Click the “Translate” button and you get a rather stilted Spanish version, all poetic structure removed:

Llevar a cabo las manos con el EL Muerte
Ella camina solo aquí él viene él pone lentamente su brazo alrededor de su cuello respirando que echo un vistazo y que ruego para su ataque del corazón

Now here's the good part. Copy the Spanish text and translate it again, only this time using “Spanish to English”:

To carry out the hands with the Death She walks single he here comes he slowly puts her arm around her neck breathing that I throw a look and that request for its attack of the heart

The result is essentially a different piece of writing, but nothing was added or removed in a traditional manner, it was simply broken into bits and put back together a few times; it was digitized.

I think about mediation as I lay out Dialogue. When looking at the images in this issue, we’re not truly having a direct experience with the objects the images represent. Large paintings are reduced to mere inches, the physical qualities of burlap, graphite, and latex are only hinted at by ink on a page.

At the same time this mediation is very helpful. For many of us, Dialogue is the only way we see what goes on in the cramped basement that is the Art Department. In this issue we've tried to add another form of positive mediation to our presentation of visual art. We've invited art faculty to write short critical essays about the work of the three students graduating this spring with Bachelor's of Fine Arts degrees. The BFA program is an intense studio art major that requires a portfolio review for admittance and each semester thereafter.

We hope you enjoy these images, mediated as they may be. Also enjoy the writing which (and I imagine Mr. Lynch would thank me for this) is not mediated to the point of distortion.
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Cuddle Up Angel Night
Audrey Befus

Four layers of shirts and I’m ready to go
Gotta go for her heart
Artichoke for her heart
And some chocolate for me
But my wipers make streaks
Blurry red blurry green
“time exists just on your wrist so don’t panic”
And it’s a cuddle up angel night.
I feel like a star in the vague orange light
The street is my set
And maybe I’m not so brilliant
Cuz my tires are slipping
But I gotta get the mayonnaise
So we can watch Marlon Brando
And the world’s sexiest entrance
And her blue eyes will get red
Think of something funny
Make her laugh
Make her laugh
So she won’t start thinking
“all I need is you, I just need you”
Cuz she’s better off with James Dean
And it’s not that cold, just wet and white
And the trucks barrel by cuz they’re missing the point
But “it burns baby burns baby burns”
And sometimes you just have to move slow
Cuz everyone else is getting take out
And she wishes she were too
Cuddled up with her angel
Not broken in two.
And I gotta make her laugh because if I don’t then she’ll cry
And I can’t let her cry cuz her eyes will turn red
Blurry red blurry green
And my hands grip the steering wheel
Cuz I know that I can’t
Can’t stop her from thinking
“I’m never going to get it together again.”
Twilight
Bethany Keeley

In the bathroom of the train station
someone had written
"Kristina loves Twilight."
I wonder if twilight
is a charming nickname
for some rogue lover.
But I prefer to believe
that Kristina was overcome
with her affection for that hour
when the trees become
elegant black silhouettes
against fading blue sky
and when lights glow from windows.
So overcome that she scrawled
her feelings on the stall door
in orange highlighter,
just to let us know.

to (un)weave a fever
Erin Bryant

with every red rotation there’s a twitch
beneath my fingerprints – a feeble cry
sent to still the masses, sew every stitch
up tight. yet some small strand was left behind
and aches as skin is drawn close like velvet
curtains, covering fever buried deep
in blood and brain. then my scars, like scarlet
yarn, knit nightmares i can’t help but believe.

am i the mire? did i plant this pain
that looms inside me? to be threaded by
your fingers seems so holy, so profane –
but blood was balanced, and my nerves pulled tight

when you slipped a healing hand in my wound
unraveling all the poison that you found.
Sunset in Coyotepe, Nicaragua, Janelle M. Terpstra

digital photograph

08 dialogue
#2
A boy wrote me a check. He belonged to some running club, and the check was for $22. When he handed it to me, he quickly left and as I looked down, I noticed there were two checks stuck together. He had already endorsed the back of the check, with my signature. Except, since there were two checks stuck together, he had endorsed the blank one.

#3
I woke up not knowing where I was, except that I was under my white bedspread and there was a cheetah sleeping next to me. I called out to someone, saying, "I don't like this. I'm not ready for this. I don't feel comfortable." But I guess he wasn't there to hear me, or chose not to listen.

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Seneca
Kricket Hoekstra

fourteen was not so terribly old as it felt. nail files, dull knives, even jewelry given as affirmations perversely used to scrape. scrape. scrape. as if it wasn't punishment enough to be left cold, she felt she deserved more blunt reminders so it might not happen again. she left them on her arms.

red was such a lovely color, so fascinating creeping up. she'd forget to cry. it was nice to be so chilly, and cover up with blankets. sweatshirts. band-aids. she would peek under: horrified but relieved they were still there.

later she learned to cry; uncomfortably warm. her scabs have worn off but in the light her scars shine.
Benny and I
Gabriel J. Kruis

Benny and I lit out on a night dark excursion. We crusaded under the burn marks that the streetlamps made against the rough paper night—the lights possessed an eerie divinity, as halos hovering above the squatting skeletons of darkened homes.

Where we were going had no consequence: it was just time. Time to get out and be free, to feel the cold blister us, to laugh and lick our lips so that our faces might freeze into smiles.

I suppose we were fleeing from the deep bruise-dark thoughts and demons of philosophy, from the delicate blades of education that had broken off and buried themselves under our skin. We had burnt our tongues for months on existential ideas and words like neoclassical economics, feminism, post-modernism, nihilism, neo-Platonism, ismisms, and blah-blah-blah-isms. All very interesting, very engaging, very challenging shit.

Somewhere on the way to nowhere, Benny and I came upon a water tower that possessed a beautiful magic. It stood brazen and naked against the night sky and cast spells on us, causing memories of Vienna to pierce our dusty attic minds. This caused Benny and I to feel pimpled and sweaty inside ourselves as if we were just barely post-pubescent kids. We began to perspire and pull at our sleeves, flirting with the beautiful ghosts of the past. The Spirit of Summer came crawling from the pores of our skin and lit upon our heads in off-kilter coronas and we were brilliantly struck with a kind of hope that can only be seen from the height of a child.

In my childhood the water tower used to say: Welcome to Vienna: Corn Capital! And Benny and I would lay bare-chested under her shade, having filled our shirts with plums from the orchard that lay across the dusty road. We stretched our freckled bodies across the world and stared up at heaven, talking in cartoons about violence and space and science.

In adolescence the water tower came to say: Welcome to Vienna: Porn Capital! According to the whim of some smart-ass teen and his can of paint. On humid summer days the air would fill with the stench of clover and Benny and I would fill our mouths with the buzzing of bees talking about nothing, and talking about love. Telling each other that some day she would be mine, and he would find her, and we would take them out to the water tower on warm summer nights to name stars and pass heaven between our lips.

In teen-hood the water tower again said: Welcome to Vienna: Corn Capital! On account of city council finally getting around to changing it back from Porn. Benny and I found she and her and brought them back to the water tower, wearing summer skins and filling our hearts with lust. We lay under the stars and spoke of the future. We composed poetry about heavenly bodies and wrote them on the legs of the water tower along with our names in hearts; thinking it would last forever (which was just short of how long it would take city council to get to painting her again).

This was the spell that the water tower cast upon us. Yet, as we walked, we heard the padding footsteps of University behind us, trying to sneak up on us. Trying to highjack our freedom. So, we frightened away reason with yawns of barbarism and breathed out the collegiate residue that had been festering in our lungs like chalk-dust.

We were shambling down unfamiliar streets in a museum-model city. A city that, fifty years ago, would have been a perfect symbol of what the future was supposed to look like, a textbook example of white suburbia: enameled teeth and microwaved apple pies. In the houses lights were slowly being turned out as the people inside faded into the specter-colors of television screens.

Our voices changed from deep and hollow—like the thudding of books—to the familiar rhythms and strange accents of adolescence. We dropped words like "bitches" and "hoes," rolling them off our tongues with relish, spitting them into the face of a platonic schoolmarm: black-dressed and black-eyed, at the funeral of our creative minds, her veins throbbing in the symbol of pi, her nose a thin line between pin-prick eyes—the symbol for division tossed on its side, preaching in precise words about the purgatory of long division.

As we walked we noticed a snowman some distance off, naked except for his smile and starring
at us with a frosty coal-eyed gaze. With the compulsion and whimsy of children we invaded the yard and decapitated the sculpture, grinning grins as broad and perfect as the snowman’s. After our violent act we fled the yard, nervous with irrational fears.

We let our imaginations go to the impossibility of shotgun-anger from the residents of the house. We conceived a brood of angry rednecks half drunk with yellow stains on their wife-beaters and in their eyes. We saw them charging for us screaming swearwords, cursing the violence that we had committed against their winter-white brother. We saw the arm of adulthood and authority reaching toward us, trying to reel us in. And we saw us, just out of reach.

Benny and I sprinting down the street, smiling at each other, laughing at the stars, our breaths spurting silver exhaust at the moon as our blood boiled beneath our skin, our feet beating a tattoo against the asphalt, running like we’re thirteen, years molting off of us like the skins of snakes.

Somewhere in the middle of town, in middle America, we ended up at a corner store. It was not the corner store of back home, but a big corporate-whore-of-a-corner-store with sliding glass doors, and facsimile smiles pasted on the faces of its underpaid, under-appreciated workers.

We didn’t really know what we were there for, and an adolescent cynicism of half-serious look-at-me politics crept momentarily into my thoughts, so I say to Benny, “Hey Benny, it’s like we couldn’t help but come to this store to consume cuz’ we’re Americans and we didn’t have anything better to do, huh Benny?”

And Benny laughed, half agreeing with me, and me half agreeing with myself, but still looking for something to buy.


Cigarettes? Maybe. No, probably not. (see above)

Water? No, water doesn’t quite do it.

Candy, chips, pretzels, juice.

No. No. No. And no!

Eventually we ended up in the ice cream aisle and began to look at the hundred fat free ice creams and thousand low-fat, low carb, low sugar varieties. None of this is appetizing. Ben and Jerry’s, Brahms, Hagen-Daz. Coffee, Mocha, Pralines and Creams? Too adult. Again a thousand resounding no’s.

But the water tower’s spell still warmed our minds and habit lent us his nimble hands, so we began reminiscing:

Benny says to me, “Remember that summer, when we went on that widow-maker hike, and then when we got back to town we bought that whole box of Flintstones pushups and ate all nine of them in one sitting?”

I furrow my brow in sarcastic consternation and tell him, “No, let me think, did I do that with you? I don’t think so... hey wait, maybe. Yeah! Yeah, maybe I remember that—I only spent that whole summer with you!”

“Shut up dude!” Benny chuckles back at me.

“But Benny-man it’s the middle of the winter, you serious? You wanna hit that whole box?” I ask, pulling on the “o” in whole, making it long and painful.

“Yeah man, why not? You scared?” he says, but he squeaks the end of the sentence into an accent making it say skeerd.

“Alright Benjimite,” I drawl back, “You know I tain’t skeerdl Le’s do her up!”

We brought the box to the machine with red lipstick and dragon’s-breath orange fingernails. She rung us up with the most deadpan bubblegum-popping look you ever saw in a worker, even this late at night. As we left the store she told us to have a good night in a drone like the grinding breaks of a dream coming to a complete stop.

Outside we sat against the aggregate pebble walls of the store and opened our prize, talking about how all the Flintstones flavors are all the same: Fruity pebbles, vitamins, and pushups. Talking about home and how all the fools we knew were getting married, about how everyone’s too young, about how it probably isn’t even really love, and then about how jealous we are, and then about how they probably are in love, and then about how everyone’s not young enough.

Benny still has the same haircut as he did in seventh grade, in fourth grade, in pre-school—in
the womb? But what about me? I find myself in front of the mirror at nights looking for myself beneath a pile of adult skins and a patchy beard. I look for myself in glass doors, in windows and the reflections of puddles. I find that I am suddenly an adult, alien to myself, I find myself wondering who I am, because I know who I used to be.

I was once a golden-god. I was once whistling lips. I was once nothing but love and romance, ice cream from Scoops and bubble gum from the corner store. I was a whirlwind of fresh-cut grass and sawdust smells from a treehouse heaven-high in the deep blue sky. Oh, God! I was once sweat-dripping, naked-swimming worship! I was once the frenzy of an anthill stirred lazily by summer-picnic toes! I was once a sunbeam! Once all energy, the bubbling, jumping carbonation from the downtown soda fountain on Main Street—

The Main Street where I stubbed my toe running barefoot toward adulthood.

The treehouse where she and I shared our first kiss.

The picnics with potato-chip-salt and woodland-adventures. Adventures of elves, and monsters, secret passages and constant magic.

The worship that both God and I found most pleasing, dripping and naked forgetting myself in nature’s womb.

We, Benny and I, remember the truth, the innocence of blond summers eating plums and shooting imaginary guns. We know that childhood is the summer of your life, where when you learn, it’s not about addition and subtraction or Myles Standish, but instead it is about being. It was never about transcending, it was about rescinding, falling back into innocence and truth and love and the virtue of learning how to be human.

When we finished our pushups, we stuck out our split-tongues to see them died red, orange and purple with the cough syrup Flintstones flavors. Then we crawled back into our skins and back to academia.

When we were on campus again, we turned around to look into suburbia, Benny and I, and we wondered: where have all the real people gone? What machines have replaced our flesh? What electricity has replaced our thoughts with static? What zeroes and ones have so easily replaced our manhood with blueprints that will some day become our children?

But then, we breathed these thoughts away in silver clouds of summer hopes, making frosty windows in the air to insulate ourselves against the brittle world.

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### Holding Hands with El Muerte
Daniel Lynch

She walks
Lonely
Here he comes
Slowly
He puts his arm
Around her neck
Breathing I
Glance
And pray for
His heart attack
Collectors, Sarah Wenger
digital collage, 11"X15"
dialogue 13
road scholar, come
annreilly

snuggled in the dense afghan of cold
forgetting how the faucet turns
watching the unstoked embers throb

forget me not these long nights
my impermanence like first snow
new england beckons the road scholar

do not watch my twilight leaving
nor wait for the midday sun to rise
new year snow erases me

i fade into the blizzard
world's edge or fail
new england beckons the road scholar

Mitsy
Maria Rose Post

The woman I am like
(she lives beneath my eyes;
she’s webbed within my bones
and skulks inside my skull,
a fox chasing its tail)
is roped about my wrist
(circled infinity
interred eternity).
I speak aloud her name,
chiseled cold in marble,
"I shall save your pieces;
when eternity ends
you can return to me.
I’ll reassemble you
and hope the dress still fits;
I’ll rope the fox bracelet
back ‘round your tiny wrist.
We can say Hail Mary’s
(your rosary’s in its pouch)
and smile your radiant smile
back at one another,
spanning the years gone by,
the lifetime without you
finally,
finally,
fixed.”
They turn their back on the land
Leslie Harkema

two blues meet as rose strokes a cloud.

Superior
vaulting bowl of royal pales at the rim where glaze thins
the sly interminable why
of children and chicken little
cosmic eggshell coating our worldly yolk with riddles.

Infinite symmetry stretches disparity
in an arc on the head of God's drum.
Indigo frequency reverberates in the hollow.

flat glassy forest of dunes
has water for sand. the home of the blank whale is a surly leviathan.
he rumbles up from cracks in our core, tectonic fissures
the death-end of all rivers
Inferior.

two blues slide along each other at twilight.

they appear to rub
but do not touch.

phantom friction of unknown chafing on

unknown.
In the current art world climate, many artists/producers have been working with the technological, time-bound, and global concerns of the present. Yet a recent return to gestural, expressive drawings and paintings has claimed a place for an artistic approach that references the Abstract Expressionism of half a century ago, or even 19th century Romanticism. The internalized narratives, distorted shapes, and fluid, layered surfaces of Juan Garcia’s images fall in with this trend.

The historical legacy to which these images appeal implies that meaning begins and ends with the emotions of the artist. My question for individuals working in this expressionist mode is whether the claim to authority by the male artist seems outmoded in an age that privileges the anonymous, high-tech, global vision of the current scene.

Such abstraction can also be viewed in light of traditions outside of Western art history however. Abstract drawings and paintings can be seen as filled with the artist’s own emotional content, or emptied of it, left open, unfinished. In the tradition of Zen Buddhism, such an approach to painting was a means for followers to subtract individual consciousness. The paintings thus opened intellectual and spiritual possibilities to viewers as well as artists. Recent abstraction may be interpreted in light of both traditions, communicating the self-consciousness of the artist, or enabling our exploration as viewers of incompleteness and the ambiguities of the historical moment in which we live.

Elizabeth Van Arragon
Professor of Art History, Calvin College
“A garment can magically transform the person, but the person also transforms the garment and is expressed through it.” This quote by Ann Roselind Jones from her book *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, summarizes one of the primary concerns that Shannon Gales investigates through her works revealed in MADE, the 2005 Calvin College Art Department BFA exhibition. Presented in a dynamic gallery display are Shannon’s one-of-a-kind garments, designed to be worn by specific individuals. Viewers are invited to respond to the results of a collaboration between artist and users.

Shannon’s skillfully constructed designs are not intrinsically anti-fashion, despite the use of non-traditional and recycled materials. Instead Shannon explores issues outside of traditional, commercial fashion design as well as non-traditional venues for the display of such design. One rarely considers burlap bags, which originally functioned as coffee bean containers for international trade, as material for the creation of a wedding gown or bathing suit. Burlap adorned with tulle, and formed with the user’s character in mind, becomes the material and subject of Shannon’s work. Garments, not necessarily associated with high fashion, suggest ideas that subvert the consumer context of the fashion industry.

Unique and engaging, these textile works raise questions about the form and function of apparel on the human body, the nature of materials from which garments are made, how we adorn ourselves with cloth, and the transformations of identity that occur based on what one wears.

Anna Greidanus Probes
Professor of Art, Calvin College
Found Poetry
Gabriel J. Kruis

Besides the beauty and hope that comes from compassion and truth
There is a subtle paradox that exists in all good things
Which is the violence of their absence when they cannot be found
And the pain of necessity to act when they are present

Looking Glass
Krista Brobst

The lights fade
But I stay
Standing in front of you
All that I am
All that I’m not
All that I ever forgot
And your eyes are blank
And I try to smile
But the sadness comes through
Even though I fight it
I try to be content
I try to be
You stare
But not at me
And I search your eyes
Your heart
Your soul
For anything that remains
From the way we used to be
I’m screaming on the inside
The fire escapes through my eyes
But I remain calm
You're empty on the inside
You're nothing
You're numb
So this is what you've become
A shell of what you used to be
So this is what I've become
An imitation of who I used to be
So this is what we've become
When the lights fade
The Summer of the Lobster
Peter VanderWal

Falling sun casts flames on the foaming surf.
Vernal breezes give hope to the gulls
on the horizon, beyond the beach’s sand,
gliding overhead the whitewashed boats,
returning to shore their seasoned fishermen;
they say: “this is the summer of the lobster”,

while in fact, they hope for lobster,
for unlike the coming and going of the surf,
his attendance goes unconfirmed to the fishermen.
They lack the vision of the cawing gulls
who circle above the sails of returning boats,
waiting to reclaim the waste of today’s catch from the sand.

On shore, the children play, building castles in the sand,
interrupted briefly by maternal calls for lunch – lobster:
today’s meal; for this day, weighted boats
trudge through the (white) afternoon’s surf.
A triumphal return, serenaded by chanting gulls,
reserves a boastful feast for the returning fishermen.

The sun is a moon now, and the fishermen
prepare for tomorrow, cleaning the sand
from their traps, tossing tonight’s leftovers to tomorrow’s gulls,
and finally, slipping into sleep while the lobster
wallows to shore by the midnight surf,
undisturbed for a short time, with the waiting boats.

Sun falls one last time on the boats,
summer’s last catch reminds humble fishermen
of life’s richness on salt-water and sand.
Harbor is quiet, the migration of the gulls
leaves a season of solitude for the lobster,
deep at sea, far from the icy winter surf.

Two months pass, boats sail again under cawing gulls,
fishermen boast: “this is the summer of the lobster,”
which, at dusk, treks from the damp sand, into the morning surf.
In recent prints, Raleigh Chadderdon addresses issues of semiotics, popular culture (rock music, film, graphics), cultural mores, linguistics, and art history. His work in relief printmaking is particularly effective in its adoption of a specific and historical language, connecting these images, in process, to the first prints of Guttenberg, or those of Dürer, or Bruce Nauman. Notice, we say images and not phrases or sentences. I believe Mr. Chadderdon is interested in this very relationship, and how the viewer identifies and decodes these signifiers. Do we sometimes say, “read an image?” Is the translation accurate? How do we understand? Adam Wolpa, Professor of Art, Calvin College
Google Walk
Ben Schaafsma

Editor's note: This submission is unique in that it is not a traditional piece of writing, but directions for an interactive activity. Enjoy!

This walk will be designed by Google Maps and your ability to come up with words spontaneously. In order to create this walk, you will need access to the internet. Go to http://www.google.com. Google will be your access to the world-wide web, to help you better understand your local neighborhood.

The instructions for this walk.google.com will just be an example. The same process can be applied to any neighborhood in any city. The example I will use will be the Eastown neighborhood in Grand Rapids, MI.

After accessing http://www.google.com, enter “49506” + “Grand Rapids” in the search box. “49506” is the zip code that covers the Eastown neighborhood of Grand Rapids.

In the search box, you will have entered “49506” + “Grand Rapids,” now enter a third word. Here is an example: “49506” + “Grand Rapids” + “bike”. After you have entered a third word into the equation, hit “Google search”. The search will result in a page of Internet sites that reference the equation you have searched. For each equation find a location within your search results that is located in the neighborhood you are concentrating on, based on the location’s zip code. Record the address.

Do this ten times, each time changing the third word in the equation.

After recording ten different addresses, use the Internet to access http://maps.google.com. Upon accessing this page, click on the “directions” tab. The site will ask for a starting point address [i.e. Starting Point: 1333 Wealthy St SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506] and also an ending point [i.e. 1607 Robinson Rd SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506]. This process will give you directions from the first address on your list to the second address. Right down the directions and then repeat the same process for the second and third addresses on your list and so on and so forth.

After this process, you will have a walk mapped out through your neighborhood. Walk.
The tram rattles through vistas now familiar to me, leaving my eyes free to survey the other passengers. I must frequently remind myself that this Eastern European country does not welcome prying eyes. No one admits interest in anybody else’s business. But I, like a three-year-old, watch the people around me with wide eyes, careless that my curiosity paints me as a stranger.

I see that these Latin people wear their pride on their lapels and stiletto heels. I know their one hundred Euros a month barely get them through each day, but if I didn’t know, their aplomb might fool me. Their pride is keeping their lives carefully balanced and private; it’s emblazoning a European heritage on their faces and in their clothes. They hold their heads high and never leave the house less than ready to face the day, even when in their minds they calculate pennies and slices of bread. Tenacity has pulled them through a tribulatory history. Tenacity pulls them from day to day.

When I first moved here I always glued my eyes to the tram window. If I missed my stop I would be lost in the unknown city... I feared losing myself in the crowds of disinterested, polished faces. Now I know my stop well and let the heat of the tram car lull me into lazily watching the faces around me. I discover with my time here that they are not disinterested at all, just masked. Their thoughts race on plans and concerns and lives they do not share.

Meanwhile my mind races, thinking of the children. Three rooms have become my life—the wing behind the right-hand door on the second floor of the hospital, the forty children who no longer cry for attention. Like the people of their country, these babies learn young that crying gets them nothing. I wish they would cry. Forty silent babies, forty pairs of dark eyes watching me, wondering if I too will abandon them like their mothers, forty diapers to change.

Nothing entices her to heed me. Her soft muscles lie prone on the bed and refuse to support her, refuse to grow.

Little Sorinel wants nothing from me but to hold him. I could hold him all day, inhale his sour brown hair, and cradle his pudgy brown hand. Another boy’s bottomless blue eyes watch me carry Sorinel. The eyes tell me he wants my attention. They all want my attention. I can barely spread my time between them. At the end of the day I wonder: what have I really done for them?

The overhead lights in the tram flicker on to announce the early winter evening. The tram empties block by block. My stop approaches near the end of the line.

I shake thoughts of the babies out of my head. I cannot fathom that these are not true orphans, but orphaned by careless parents who prefer their children raised in institutions. Not everyone in this country has enough pride to keep their children. Street girls flaunt in my face the number of children they abort and the number of children they do not see for years. These women have no families; how can they support another mouth? Who can blame them for the decisions they make? They find a new sort of pride in carelessness. They wear what pride they can scrounge after everything else is gone.

The tram lurches at my stop. The doors spring open and my eyes adjust to the cold blue evening. I pull my coat close around my ears as other passengers sweep by. My feet ache from the day’s work and carry me quickly toward home.

Something out of place along the sidewalk halts my hurrying boots. The evening light is gray around me, so I crunch my knees and bring my head closer to the pavement to inspect, again broadcasting that I do not belong in this country. Only the gypsies raid trashcans on the street for abandoned treasures or other pickings. Anyone with an ounce of European pride admits no interest in street scrapings on the street for abandoned treasures or other pickings. Anyone with an ounce of European pride admits no interest in street scrapings, but my American curiosity has to see what lays there.

It looks like seashells dropped on the road between the beach and home: pink, tan, smooth but misshapen, abandoned in lieu of some other treasure. As my eyes focus on the pinkish blobs on
the sidewalk, my body snaps upright from recognition, then bends even lower to inspect once more. I rock on my toes and stare at the half-formed bodies of newborn mice. Three bodies—bodies so fine I can see red veins through the skin—lay on a torn corner of cardboard. A fourth body lies a few inches away rolled in dirt. I nearly put out my hand to touch the tiny paws and stubs of fingers. These pink-lidded eyes never opened to see day. Their cloud of birth subsided into a cloud of death.

I tilt my head toward the apartment building above me and wonder which window tossed them out or whether perhaps they rode down the stairs in a dustbin. Either way, someone discarded these lives onto the street. Who can blame them? Although these babies look like little gems to me, even frozen and broken as they are, no one wants them as guests. No one can support one more creature. Throw them out on the street and pretend they will fend for themselves. They can’t even crawl, but somehow they will fend for themselves.

A yellow dog lopes over to discover why I am crouching. I shoo him away, unwilling to let his greedy mouth investigate my mice. With a stick I carefully roll the fourth pink body onto the cardboard and toss all four breathless beings into a blackened bush. I have done them no real good, but now they at least have some dignity. The dog watches me from across the street, head cocked. Perhaps after I leave he will go dig them up and mangle them further in his toothy mouth, but I do what I can.

The winter night closed in on me while I dallied, reminding me to hurry home. I eagerly reach my apartment and lock the door behind me. Warm light overtakes me and my feet enjoy the freedom when I take off my boots.

The Broken Covenant
Robert Zandstra

Before China became Christian and America Islamic,
Before Europe drowned in the decadence of despair,
Before fundamentalists closeted their fake Calvinism,
Before we forgot “to believe in” is an action verb,
Before sacrifice meant scapegoat instead of responsibility,
Before we resigned ourselves to being well on the outside,
When they closed their transparent, brick-proof doors,
turning away deeper into their walled selves
till their distant footsteps barely echoed,
A final butterfly chaotically shook its easter wings.
Before, we sat on the curb in what shade left wasn’t artificial
on the periphery of the land where we had defended,
our stomachs churning with the cake they’d let us eat.
Buoys
Adam Fleming Petty

Poems are buoys thrown from off a ship, whispering, sighing, and displacing the caesura of the ocean. Water is always holding its breath.

There are no echoes, no peaks or valleys to localize the sound. Malleable, the sea is grooved with concentric circles of verse, till every wave heaves with poetry.

This is not a poem. There is no homing signal or tracking device, nothing that would render it of service to imposing form on what has no form.

This is a message in a bottle, meant for no one in particular. If it goes unread, so much the better. I want this message, this note, this scribble to knock into a buoy, and shatter. I want it to sink into the ocean and be lost beneath the waves. Then it will mean something. Then it will matter.
Untitled, Craig Hoeksema
oil, charcoal, and graphite on canvas, 2’X4’ each

dialogue 25
Looking for Mother Mary in Mexico
Hendrik Johan de Zoete

They say that you're from Mexico,
and I've never been to Mexico,
but I love the way you smile,
and I've walked every mile
down to Mexico,
just to see you.

In the rainforests of Chiapas,
where there are Zapatistas,
I think about you reading a tattered copy
of Graham Greene's The Power and the Glory,
as I wander like a priest from place to place to place,
thumbing a crucifix and mumbling rosaries to you.

If I dream in broken Spanish,
will my thoughts echo off the trees
and fly out to twinkling southern stars poking through
clouds that have rolled in over the mountains?

But the way you walk could tame the wild wilderness,
and your sweet smile could shine down to Las Cruces
and your bright eyes could ride like Zapata's ghost
all over Mexico.
Motionless
simon c. kittok

I sit in the hammock
Stare up through a patchwork of hues of green and small brown twigs
The sky accentuating blue hues like the breath of a pastel flower
My foot reaches to the firm earth below
A deceptive firmness it is,
For when I push off the entire world rocks
My hammock remains motionless but all of creation sways back and forth to my amazed eyes
Surely, a deceptive firmness this earth seemingly holds I laugh at the silly sight.

Sting
Annalise Venhuizen

Death is deprived of sting.
Or is it?
Perhaps death is an ally, In accord
With our deepest desire For dying –
To sting the devil’s dream,
Dying dream,
The dead dream.
Who thought to sting with death:
By death stung.
Who sought triumph with graves:
Overcome.
Depraved in mind, in deed:
Death, devil’s aid.
Delivered in body, in soul:
Death, God’s agent.
Yes, death still dons its sting.
Devils dread it.
Lux Print Dress, $39.95, Pow Navarro
water-based oil & latex on canvas, 6' x 3'

28 dialogue
Barcodes, Ada Slofstra
acrylic on masonite, 8"X10" each
dialogue 29
Contributors

Anne Carlton Prins [04]
This piece is part of a greater collection which looks at the relationship between form, function and human use of an architectural space. Shown in this painting of Bob and Andrea cooking, the kitchen does not only function to meet human need but also as a community space. Using food for community is a universal idea and one that should be factored into design.

Kel Lynch [05]

Audrey Befus [06]
This is actually a pretty logical poem. I was driving in a snow storm to Meijer to get artichokes for my best friend who had just broken up with her boyfriend. Also I was listening to Travis, which is where the quotes come from.

Bethany Keeley [07]
Sometimes I think weird things and write them down.

Erin Bryant [07]
Some things (crossword puzzles, sonnets, mix tapes, college, etc.) are worth insomnia. And: you should read books on tape. As a career. Seriously.

Janelle M. Terpstra [08]
This picture helped redeem Coyotepe in my mind after touring the underground torture chambers from the Samoza reign in Nicaragua. I walked back upstairs and outside after barely being able to stand it anymore in the darkness hearing the horrible stories and seeing the evidence still there from thousands of brutal political executions and I saw this beautiful sunset and Mitch and Brandon sitting on the wall of the fortress and Katherine and Erin singing into the pit a beautiful hymn. Then I realized God was still there, even through all the ugly things that had happened there. There is beauty even in the ugly.

Jackie Klamer [09]

Kricket Hoekstra [09]
Read "Paradise" by Toni Morrison.

Gabriel J. Kruis [10, 18]
It is impossible to retrieve these pills that I have choked upon, they are setting heavy in my stomach, quietly rotting at my veins. If not for them, I would not be the man I am today, sadness would only be the residue of a breath of a thought of a dream, and sleep would be my common pose.

Daniel Lynch [12]
Jealousy.

Sarah Wenger [13]
This image became a sort of metamorphasis for me. I began with the very simple situation of these two people being placed in a very odd setting. They become removed from the background standing out awkwardly. They seem so preoccupied with the viewer that they don't even notice that they are collecting these moths that float around them. This image was created in Photoshop by scanning old photographs with found images.

anneReilly [14]
Gary Schiint, Nancy Hull, and Lew Klatt- Thank you.

Maria Rose Post [14]
My maternal grandmother died tragically in the early 1960s. I have always felt her death acutely even though I never knew her. Many of her belongings have disappeared over the decades, but a few things remain, including her jewelry box, which I discovered over Easter weekend. The box's leather exterior is cracked and peeling, but all her treasures are nestled inside: a gold compact, fair powder still tightly pressed in its corners; screw-back enamel earrings; a Girl Scout pin; a strand of plastic pearls. This piece is about one of her bracelets which I have started wearing. I thought sharing her things would deaden the pain of her passing, but it has only served to amplify the hurt; she haunts me still.

Leslie Harkema [15]
The people along the sand All turn and look one way. They turn their back on the land They look at the sea all day. They cannot look out far.
They cannot look in deep.
But when was that ever a bar
To any watch they keep?
-Robert Frost, Neither Out Far Nor In Deep

Juan Garcia [16]

Raleigh Chadderdon [17]

Krista Brobst [18]
This is a poem about a couple in a bad relationship who are trying to pretend that everything is how it used to be.

Peter VanderWal [19]
A modified sestina.

Shannon Gales [20]

Ben Schaafsma [21]

Elizabeth Oliver [22]
“Potentiality without act is imperfect.” -Aquinas.
We do what we can, even when our attempts are imperfect and the goal is unknown. Sometimes all we can do is write.

Robert Zandstra [23]

Adam Fleming Petty [24]
I love the sea for its complexity, which I can only perceive as simplicity.

Craig Hoeksema [25]

Hendrik Johan de Zoete [26]

simon c. kittok [27]
Try it. Swing, laugh, remain motionless.

Annalise Venhuizen [27]
I Corinthians 15:55 says “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” This poem offers a new spin on this verse. Yes, the sting of death and the victory of the grave have no bearing on us as God’s elect. But perhaps the sting of death is not vanished. When Christ breathed his last breath on the cross, the devil thought he had won. But through the promise given to Adam, and the fulfillment of it in Christ’s death and victory over the grave, Satan was stung. God holds precious the death of his saints (Ps. 116:15), and so should we, for the deaths of the elect make the devil wince. (We have the victory!)

Pow Navarro [28]
I’m interested in the apathetic nature of youth culture, and I wanted to depict that through a flat, superficial style of painting. I’m also interested in the idea of fashion ads which to most people function only to sell the featured clothing or item—not as works of art in themselves. Maybe by painting an ad, I could change that function and somewhat reveal the “hidden” art behind these fashion ads, just like the hidden emotions that lie beneath every teenager’s face.

Editors note: It’s interesting to consider that the origin of Pow’s painting was a magazine ad. After being transformed into a large, one-of-a-kind painting, it appears here similar to its original form: a small, mass-produced image in a magazine.

Dialogue is a quarterly student-run arts and literary journal that publishes faculty and student work. The editors and staff of Dialogue wish to nurture artistic growth at Calvin, as well as engage contemporary culture through images and words.