

# THE HOPE JOURNAL

A Companion to *The Fear Journal*



Created by  
KAITLIN RUBY



# Table of Contents

1. Letter from the Creator.....	1
2. Andrea Mercedes Garcia.....	2
3. AZUL.....	7
4. Brandon Pfeltz + Aitan Shachar.....	10
5. Chelsea Dlima.....	14
6. Georgia Caines.....	17
7. Jermaine Keys.....	21
8. Kimberley Wharton.....	23
9. Leigh Heasley.....	26
10. Libby Baumgartner.....	28
11. Marea Haslett.....	32
12. Michael Perrie Jr.....	41
13. Patrycja Adamek-Pysz.....	43
14. Paul Kellogg.....	50
15. S. Rupsha Mitra.....	54
16. Shannon Evans.....	59
17. Simon J.O. Martin.....	67
18. Topaz Amais R.....	70
19. TOTMI.....	78
20. Vivian Krishnan, M Ospina, Taylor Pfenning. Colin Grice, Courtney Anderson Kelly, Remy Saymiknha, Tracee Bear, Hannah Haverkamp.....	85

**[CLICK HERE to Donate to our Artist Fund](#)**



# Letter from the Creator

When we each think of the concept of hope—we probably think of very different things. It's all connected in some way, shape, or form; but ultimately varies from person to person. There is so much complexity and nuance within this one word-- even if it may not seem like it on the surface. It is more than just a sunrise, or a light at the end of the tunnel. It is much deeper and more complex than a mere desire for things to happen the way you want them to, as these artists have so beautifully concluded with their varying interpretations.



What makes one person hopeful for the future may be another person's greatest fear. For an ambitious entrepreneur, achieving exorbitant amounts of wealth may be their biggest hope. Meanwhile, others who have been exploited for wealthy peoples' gain may recoil at that concept. Creating a more equitable society, for those who already have so much, might mean that their excess would be reallocated to those in need. They may not see this as a positive or "hope". However, for those who are struggling, those same resources allocated towards them most likely would give them hope and renewed sense of purpose for their own future.

Understanding the nuances of life and all the varying perspectives we come across, is the key to making sense of the word "hope". Deconstructing and analyzing what hope means to YOU vs. someone else requires incredible amounts of empathy and deep thought. Holding space for all of the nuance is difficult, but necessary.

I created this as not only a follow-up companion to *The Fear Journal*, but as a piece that can stand alone in it's strength and resilience. Finding your definition of hope and what makes you continue on in the face of constant adversity requires thick skin and adaptability. Thick skin is strength in vulnerability, honesty, and an open heart. Thick skin is letting go of the need to be right and bringing in the need to understand. Let this journal be your thick skin. Let this journal take you beyond the light at the end of the tunnel. Let it take you deeper into exploring parts of yourself--whether that may be a wounded inner child or any past traumas that you feel safe revisiting--so that you may begin to heal and let the light in. If you let in the sparks and the reasons for living, others may see that and go-- "I want that"--and start their own process of shedding and growing. If we are to heal as a society, we need to heal ourselves so that we aren't so wrapped up in our own shit that we forget to take care of our community. *Community care is self care.* So how can you be a source of hope not only for yourself, but for the people you meet along the way?

But what is my definition of hope then, you ask?

Hope is not just chasing happiness or perfection. It is embracing the ups and downs-- knowing that you can heal, be vulnerable, be resilient, take care of others, fight for what's right--and ultimately find the joy in all the mess.

-Kaitlin Ruby

[kaitlinruby.com](http://kaitlinruby.com)

[@kaitlinrubyart](https://www.instagram.com/kaitlinrubyart)





# ANDREA MERCEDES GARCIA

**INSTAGRAM:** [@amgs\\_stories](#)

**EMAIL:** [amgs.stories@gmail.com](mailto:amgs.stories@gmail.com)



## **Artist Statement 1:**

*My writing is a reflection of my spiritual, emotional, and physical growth/healing journey. I use my artistic expression as means to heal myself as well as the collective. I am proud to be a voice for Latinx/Indígenx/P.O.C. community. For this particular piece I was inspired by my grandmother. Her name is Esperanza which means Hope in Spanish. She has been a constant inspiration and motivating force in my life. For The Hope Journal, It only felt fitting to include mi vieja (a term my late grandfather used to call my grandmother in a loving way). Hope, La Esperanza, is not only what we need to get by in this crazy world, sometimes it's all we have. My entire life my grandmother has reminded me of her dichos (sayings), one in particular is her famous, "Pray and hope for the best". It is an honor to pay homage to my grandmother and spread La Esperanza to the collective.*

*Disfrutar*



## La Esperanza

Feel the light of the sun shining in  
Brightness of love and light radiate my skin  
Feel the warmth of the sun as i grow  
Feel my soul glow  
From the inside out I feel a change  
Learning to ride life's waves  
My viejas words  
Pray and hope for the best  
Every night I remind myself as i rest  
She is my hope, mi espe  
Mi querida vieja  
All the lessons you've taught me  
Hope Remains  
Even after the heaviest rains  
Life will continue to pour  
Just when we feel we can't take it anymore  
A new day is coming  
Hope always on the horizon  
The sunshine breaks through  
Happiness and love risin  
Feel the warmth  
Promise of a new day  
La Esperanza always finds a way



## **Artist Statement 2:**

*My Dad was recently diagnosed with cancer and threw my life, as well as my families, for a loop to say the least. I began to write this poem before he was diagnosed but when he was already experiencing issues with his health. I had to dig deep but it genuinely was my faith and hope that allowed me to finish this piece. It is my Dad's optimism and strength that allow me to keep on pushing. To anyone who has been affected by cancer in anyway, I am sending you so much love and light. This piece is dedicated to my father with all of my love.*



## Spitshine

My Dad is a strong man  
One of the baddest vatos I know  
Even in adversity his faith grows  
The hope and faith to make it through  
My entire life you taught me to be strong  
As I feel all these feels  
I know your words won't steer me wrong  
I had to ride the waves  
The highs and lows  
Silence the what ifs  
Mute the fear  
Allow myself to release these tears  
We will look back at this time one day with a grateful heart  
It will be the time our family got a new start  
When reconciliation mattered more than petty conversations  
We came together  
Full of hope and love  
Waiting patiently in a hospital parking lot  
Our prayers were answered from above  
You made it  
We survived that scary night  
And all the nights that lie ahead  
Sooner than you think  
You will be back on your feet  
Dancing in the moonlight  
Fresh Spitshined shoes on the waterfront getting into your crane  
Everything's going to be alright  
Coming back for the second half with a new attitude  
We will look back at this time with gratitude  
When our Dad beat the shit out of cancer  
Our family made it through  
Faith and hope were the answer  
Dad you've always been the glue



# AZUL

**INSTAGRAM:** [@azulartplay](#).

**EMAIL:** [azul.flow.art@gmail.com](mailto:azul.flow.art@gmail.com)

**FACEBOOK:** [@azulartplay](#).

**ETSY:** [AZULartplay](#).



## **Artist Statement:**

*Art provides avenues of exploration, a process of the figure escaping into a space beyond. My work emphasizes the imaginative mind, a liminal space that dares us to cross boundaries of physical distance and time. It reveals the psychological process of reclaiming childhood and its limitless possibilities.*

*“Many believe they’ve lost that sense of wonder and curiosity that they once had as a child. As we grow older, we lose our innocence and sense of wonder because we believe we know. We know so there is no more to explore. We know so there’s no use in wondering, no use for the imagination.” I use themes of outer space and the deepest depths of the ocean to take the viewer where no one has yet explored, a place unknown, to trigger and open that space in the viewer’s mind that has long been abandoned, the imagination.*





*Time and time again, 3.75 x 6 inches, AZUL, 2020, Watercolor, ink and graphite on watercolor paper*



# BRANDON PFELTZ + AITAN SHACHAR

***Brandon Pfeltz (BEARLY Music)***

**INSTAGRAM:** @brandinian

**EMAIL:** bpfeltz@gmail.com

**FACEBOOK:** @brandinian

***Aitan Shachar***

**INSTAGRAM:** @tigerhawk88



## **Artist Statement:**

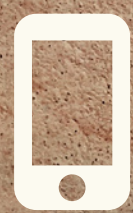
*Brandon Nicholas Pfeltz (BEARLY Music) and Aitan Shachar started as a writing team in 2019 with their movie musical "Skylarkin" based on the album of the same name by acclaimed musician Mic Christopher. They followed this up with the original folk/rock musical "Foxybrier Lane", set to premiere after the global pandemic comes to an end. Hope Journal, based on the title of Kaitlin Ruby's The Hope Journal project, is about rekindling a flame that neither side wants to burn out. It's about the experience of finding something good and beautiful in between the cracks of arguments and breakdowns. Perhaps most importantly, it's about the concept of hope- the feeling of loving someone so thoroughly that you find a light even through the depths of personal darkness. It's about admitting mistakes, apologizing, and realizing that at the end of the day, hope is powerful enough to overcome anything as long as you're willing and able to recognize that it's still there.*



# Hope Journal

*performed by BEARLY music*

*written by Brandon Pfeltz + Aitan Shachar*



SCAN ME

or [click here](#) to listen



## MAYBE

Maybe it'll still be fine  
Though words fail  
I still wanna reach you tonight

There's a break down  
You said I never listen but I tried  
This shakedown  
Has left us bruised and nearly blind

And now I'm reading on the train  
You call but I picked up too late  
I missed your stop stations ago  
And I still don't know

When all we are is all we're meant to be  
I am someone when you're something here with me  
There's a glimmer in the gutter  
Best believe  
I'm coming home  
And I'm keeping hope

It's been a hell of a year in this fight  
Both sides taking swipes  
For the victim's limelight  
Too strict in the wrong and the rights  
And I know know I know

I cut what I said I really cared about  
Took a thing and left it bleeding out  
Another round of this bastard's bad bout  
A heavyweight in letting you down

I call you back but I'm afraid  
Of my mistakes and what you'd say  
You left my house four days ago  
And I still don't know

When all we are is all we're meant to be  
I am someone when you're something here with me  
There's a glimmer in the gutter  
Best believe  
I'm coming home  
And I'm keeping hope

If there's still a life here  
Kill this damn fear and  
Tell me right now  
Say it right now

There's a million little things  
That I've been thinking  
And I don't know how to  
work this out

Now I hit the last stop  
Should I turn around  
Do I ride this high to you  
Downtown

Every time you know I would  
You know cause  
All we are is all we're meant to be  
I am someone when you're something here with me  
There's a glimmer in the gutter  
Best believe  
I'm coming home  
And I'm keeping hope



# CHELSEA DLIMA

**EMAIL:** [csea.dlm@gmail.com](mailto:csea.dlm@gmail.com)



## Artist Statement

*Hope is something that I define as a 'Halo of Perseverance Engaged.' Life has it's mountains and potholes and hope is one shimmering glitter of light that can flip your life one-eighty degrees thereby bringing you happiness, peace and success. But along with hope, your willingness to work endlessly to reach your goal, find your purpose on this earth is important. Perseverance is the light at the end of the tunnel, the more you keep trying, the more you keep digging deeper and one day, you will finally find the sunshine glowing on your face. It will all be worth it.*



## Perseverance Is The Key To Stay

There is no assurance that good times will stay,  
Whether the hard work you did will always pay;  
You're tired, frustrated with what's going on right now,  
And down on the grass you're longing to lay,  
Yes, sometimes you have to learn it the hard way.

Just as the predator catches its prey,  
Just as the night darkens the glow of the day;  
Things are not always easy,  
But perseverance is the substitute to hope;  
Keep trying harder,  
Accept that not all situations are merry.

"Life's not a bed of roses"  
If that's what you say,  
My friend, you're right;  
Sometimes you have to learn it the hard way.

Pain, tears, stress and strain,  
Fights all along the way;  
When hatred pours upon you like rain,  
And when you feel like your efforts have gone in vain;  
Remember that you're surviving,  
For you need guts in the world to sustain;  
Trust me,  
Don't stop working;  
Perseverance is the key to stay.

Keep trying endlessly,  
You are the potter of your life made of clay;  
Try your best to mold it better everyday,  
And hope and happiness will stay;  
Sometimes you have to learn it the hard way,  
Perseverance is the key to stay.

When words cannot express the pain you have in your heart,  
When you don't understand if it is the end or start;  
Rise up and show the world you are stronger,  
Finding for a little sunshine ray;  
Because sometimes you have to learn it the hard way,  
Perseverance is the only key to stay.

When you don't see any other way,  
Nothing except to pray;  
You will realize it's true,  
Sometimes you have to learn it the hard way;  
Perseverance is the beacon of hope to guide your way.



# GEORGIA CAINES

**INSTAGRAM:** [@georgia.caines](https://www.instagram.com/georgia.caines)

**TWITTER:** [@cainesgeorgia](https://twitter.com/cainesgeorgia)

**SOUNDCLOUD:** [musicbygeorgia](https://soundcloud.com/musicbygeorgia)

**YOUTUBE:** [GeorgiaCaines](https://www.youtube.com/GeorgiaCaines)



## **Artist Statement**

*After graduating from high school, I started to write songs about my experiences. Even though I do find myself writing a lot about relationships, I have been attempting to branch out to other topics and trying to play around with different concepts. While it has been difficult lately to feel productive, I listen to music by artists that I look up to, like H.E.R. and Eloise. Since I am now a senior in college, I like looking back on these songs and seeing how much I've evolved.*



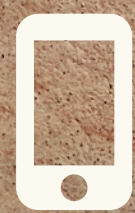
# Never Loved Lonely



SCAN ME  
or [click here](#) to listen



# It Follows Me



SCAN ME

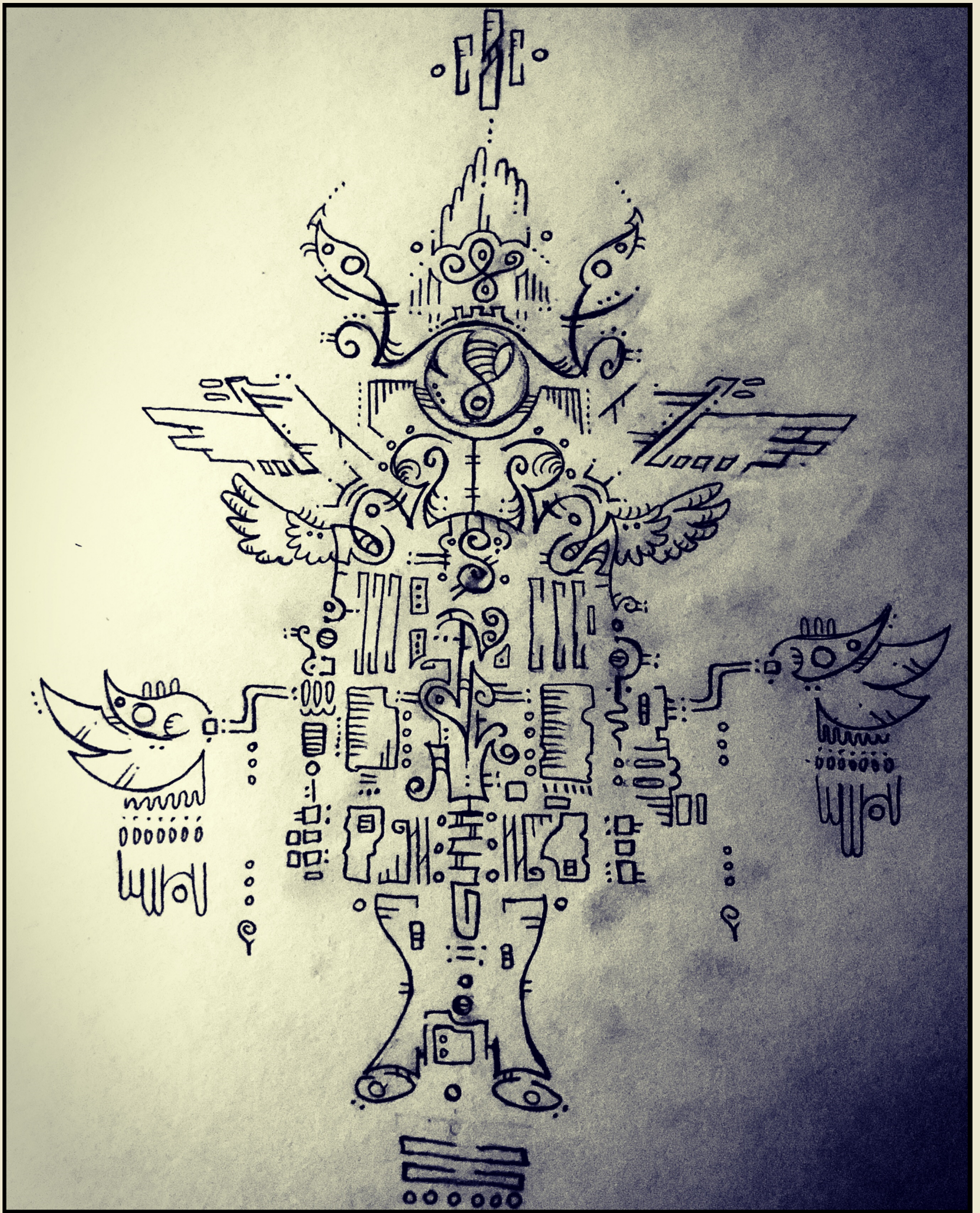
or [click here](#) to listen



# JERMAINE KEYS

**INSTAGRAM:** [@jermainekeys](https://www.instagram.com/jermainekeys)





*"Gaurdian", 2020, Jermaine Keys*





# KIMBERLEY WHARTON

**INSTAGRAM:** [@kimberleywhartonart](#)

**FACEBOOK:** [@kimberleywhartonstudios](#)



## **Artist Statement**

*This painting was inspired by my experience with seasonal depression. It was created with apprehension for the winter months that lay ahead but with the hope that the Darkness would not engulf me entirely.*





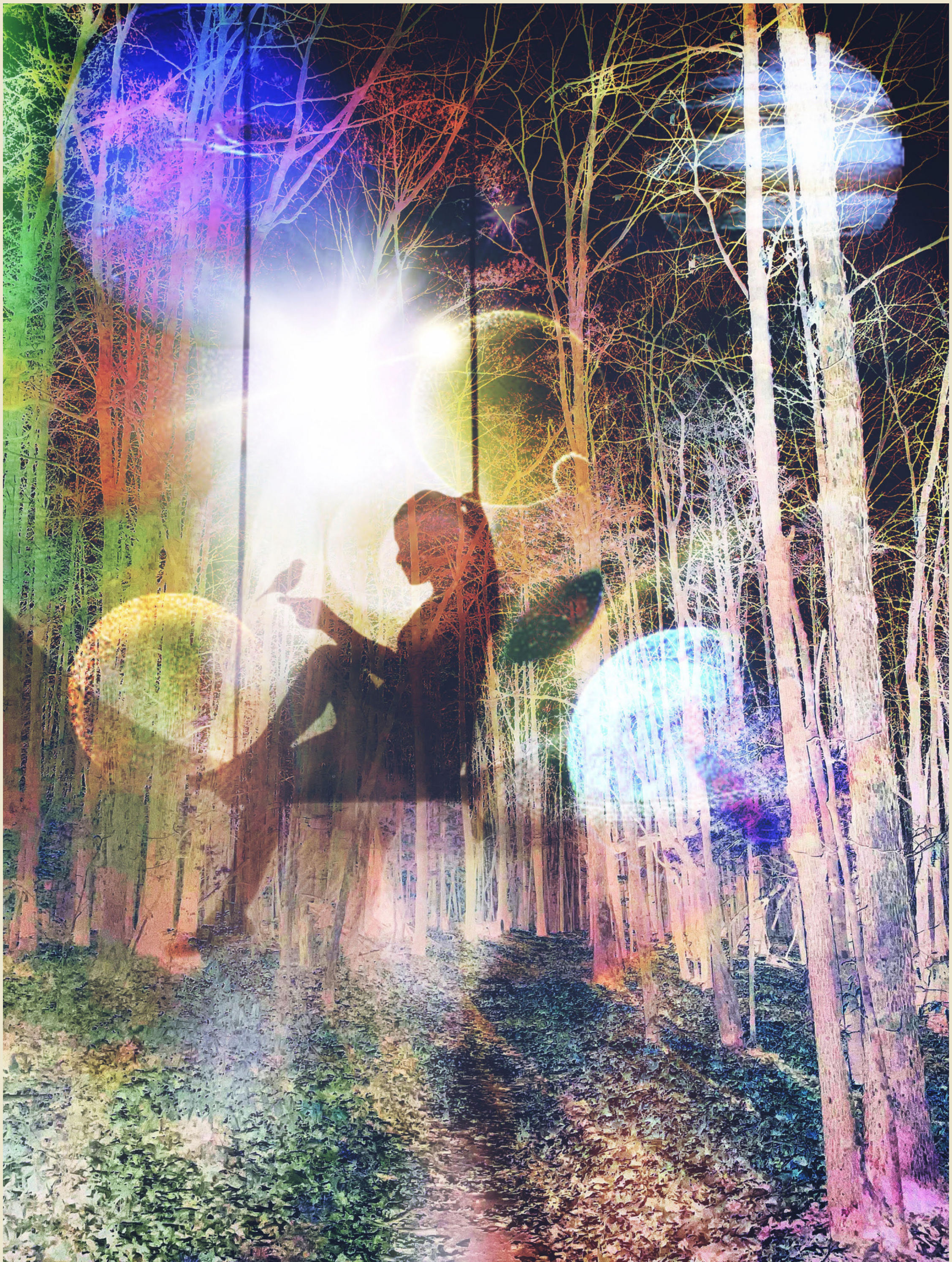
*Artwork name: The Darkness Seeps In., Size: 100cm x 80cm, Year: 2020, Medium: Acrylic*



# LEIGH HEASLEY


**WEBSITE:** <https://lei629.wixsite.com/empower>





*Untitled, 2020, Leigh Heasley, Digital Art*





# LIBBY BAUMGARTNER

**INSTAGRAM:** [@LibbyBaumgartner](https://www.instagram.com/LibbyBaumgartner)



## Artist Statement

*I've found myself reflecting on the fact that we have all been feeling so alone lately. But we are fighting through this time in the world together. Whether we like it or not, humanity has always suffered together. The ocean reminds me of that unity, which is why I've included the pictures I took at the beach.*



## **SKIES ALWAYS CLEAR**

The world holds its breath

Hold on - we will take in fresh air once again

We are one

Collectively masked faces

That give away anxious eyes

Eyes that prove we are not alone

My feet carry me down Santa Monica Avenue

Lucky enough to live a walk away from the sea

It doesn't sparkle as brightly lately

The sun seems reluctant to make an appearance

Not until she's sure she can stay for a while

And be welcomed back with open arms

But today

As the sand rolls beneath my feet

The fog seems ready at last

To break away

And the sun - she is ready to shine

On resilience

On love

On the wonderful things we have found and shared with each other to keep ourselves sane

So she will







# MAREA HASLETT

**WEBSITE:** [www.mareahaslett.com](http://www.mareahaslett.com)

**EMAIL:** [mehaslett@gmail.com](mailto:mehaslett@gmail.com)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@mareahaslett](https://www.instagram.com/mareahaslett)



## **Biography**

*Marea Haslett was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and grew up in the Atlanta area and California. She enjoys the mental process of painting, sculpting, and writing. She graduated from the Savannah College of Art and Design with an MFA in Painting in 2016 and has been teaching art for over 20 years. As an art educator, she develops and runs a successful art program and assists in all aspects of helping art students find personal success. She also develops curriculum, writes grants and promotional materials while providing art leadership in her school, district, and state. Her artwork is in several private collections nationwide, at The University of North Georgia, and in various shows in the Atlanta area. She shares her journey with her husband and their two sons.*

## **Statement**

*In her paintings, the forms become narratives of personal and societal events and the process of painting brings clarity which solidifies a sense of empathy. The compositions trace emotional language in the goal towards balance.*





***Breathe, 48 x 48 in., Marea Haslett, 2016, Acrylic on Canvas***

After a particularly stressful time, this painting came I took time to just breathe. The breath came as a presence of support resting at my side while I worked through the stress. This is the constant reminder that we have to ability to find the calm, hold it in our heart, and breathe into and out of it's presence as needed.





***Exhale, 48 x 48 in, Marea Haslett, 2018, Acrylic on Canvas***

A deep exhale was needed to make room for the new.





*Release, 48 x 48 in, Marea Haslett, 2016, Acrylic on Canvas*





***Remnants, 48 x 48, Marea Haslett, 2016, Acrylic on Canvas***

Letting go of the last bits of anguish is necessary to move towards rebuilding.





***Distant Support, 48 x 48 in, 2016, Marea Haslett, Acrylic on Canvas***

Support can pass through an ocean of distance and still share love.





*Navigating the Maze, 48 x 48 in, 2016, Marea Haslett, Acrylic on Canvas*





***Separated But Not Disconnected, 60 x 120 in. (diptych), 2018, Marea Haslett, Acrylic on Canvas***

This painting speaks to the invisible connection we have with the people we love. It was originally a direct response to the family separations happening at the border. However, it speaks to how so many hearts are tethered despite physical distance. Our love connects us. As long as we can fuel our love that we have for each other, then the connections are not lost.



# MICHAEL PERRIE JR.

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.michaelperriejr.com>

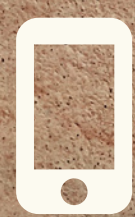
**INSTAGRAM:** [@mikeperriejr](#)

**SOUNDCLOUD:** [mikeperrie](#)

**EMAIL:** [mikeperriejr@gmail.com](mailto:mikeperriejr@gmail.com)



Try (or, Anthem for a 90's Baby)



SCAN ME

or [click here](#) to listen



### LYRICS:

I can't ever seem to find anything good to watch  
Got 5000 shows or so, movies, and YouTube, and Oh my gosh  
I should probably get off my ass and do a workout or two  
But I just can't find the energy to know what I'm supposed to do  
Well maybe I should sit around and think about it-

Hey you  
You in the mirror  
Why do you waste my time?  
Hey you  
Don't know if it's true  
But I think you've crossed a line

So get up and go, baby let's do it  
Put your best foot forward but first you gotta shoe it  
Take a deep breath, cause the rest of the worlds outside.

I know what you're thinking, what happens if  
Something bad goes down just for giving a shit  
Probably won't happen by why take the risk and die?  
like Yoda once said  
Do or do not, there's no try.

The train never seems to arrive when I'm already late  
And sure I could just get a ride but at this time the rates inflate  
I wish I could just turn around and go home and be through  
But I've made up my mind, I'm going out, I'm looking up, and I'm pulling through  
Well maybe I could find a way to quit or-

Hey you  
You in the window  
Look at you on your way  
Hey you  
Got out of bed  
And I think that's pretty great...

Now get up and go, baby let's do it  
Put your best foot forward but first you gotta shoe it  
Take a deep breath, cause the rest of the worlds outside.

I know what you're thinking, what happens if  
Something bad goes down just for giving a shit  
Probably won't happen by why take the risk and die?  
like Yoda once said  
Do or do not, there's no try....





# PATRYCJA ADAMEK-PYSZ

**WEBSITE:** <https://patrycja-adamek-pysz.art/>

**INSTAGRAM:** [@patriciannart](https://www.instagram.com/patriciannart)



## **Artist Statement**

*I'm an artist from Poland who mostly creates paintings of humans and monsters. I choose my subject matter from connecting the fantasy world with psychology. I'm a person that views the world through emotions and it's beauty. The most important thing for me is creating, I love to create, no matter what it is. With my art I'd like to show, that world doesn't have only two dimensions, but more. I want people to see the world from different angles.*





*"Flow", 40x50cm, 15.7x19.6in, Patrycja Adamek-Pysz, 2020, acrylic on panel*





*"Insomnia", 60x80cm, 23.6x31.5in, Patrycja Adamek-Pysz, 2020, acrylic on canvas*





***“Dreamland”, 50x70cm, 19.6x27.5in, Patrycja Adamek-Pysz, 2020, acrylic on canvas***





***"Kiss", 40x50cm, 15.7x19.6in, Patrycja Adamek-Pysz, 2020, acrylic on panel***



# PAUL KELLOGG

INSTAGRAM: [@paulkellogg](#)



## **Artist Statement**

*Sometimes there's just that one person you can't  
get off your mind. Every sign says go, every flag  
is green, yet you still can't say for sure if it's right.  
Sometimes you let that drive you crazy.  
Sometimes you write a song about it.*



# Maybe I Belong With You



SCAN ME

or [click here](#) to listen



## Lyrics:

Two drops of water will not fill the ocean  
But darling you know that it must count for something  
And though there are millions of drops in the sea  
One out of them has been calling to me

I've been thinking maybe I should try again  
I've been thinking we could be much more than friends

Maybe I belong with you

Two drops of water might not make an ocean  
But two hearts as one make an ocean of love  
And though there's no wisdom in trusting emotion  
I can't shake this feeling you're who I have dreamed of

I've been thinking maybe I should try again  
I've been thinking we could be much more than friends

Maybe I belong with you

Too long I have waited to find out if this is right  
All my life I have been dying to be shown that love is true  
I'm not saying that will happen, but I do think that it might  
With you

Maybe I belong with you





# S. RUPSHA MITRA



## **Artist Statement**

*I am a psychology student from India with a deep penchant for poetry. I try to portray idea of positive psychology in my poems and often write about emotions and motivations.*



## What I have known during lockdown

Lying supine, face upwards to an old dusty ceiling holding us together for years—  
Looking through this clumsiness yet simplicity of  
A life that moves in a pace of undecided sameness, a paused topology.  
Grandma says there is newness in a languid liminality ,  
She expresses her awe for the word Lock down,  
She is a devoted reader of the daily newspaper but never  
Heard this word before, this word daubed with the rasa adbhutam for her,  
Her confession – so innocent  
The first time I realize there is more to us than being bloodlines,  
Keeping the generational gyves of distance between us unraised,  
The tainted gaze of her hazel like eyes more serene now,  
My empathy envisions itself through wider, coloured glasses  
And there is more to this time – how grateful my veins have become –  
Not nerving myself anymore  
When Father asks for tea, or narrates a family history  
Of sires and czars and admirers.  
Like a Tangerine skin the sky colours itself,  
When the honey twilight like a blade chisels it asunder and  
I gape at the vertigo within — a churning of every tense neuron, and uncanny  
visceral ways —  
Morphing into something more soothing, a salving like an ocean there within my  
cage  
And my God's more enchanting now,  
When I enter my grandma's grand temple door,  
The little god smarming seems to ask me to find mine inside, in the parchment of  
the four,  
Or in between my uplifted brows, and I hope I would soon open the doors.

*First published in eShe Magazine*



## **Silence will triumph**

Aunt searches for prognosticators, she rummages through books of prediction for talismans.

My sister wants to fly like ‘Una Paloma Blanca ’ as she listens to the song of a serenading free bird.

I say ‘times are tough, you must mutter up..’

The pallor of gloom that she carries in her heavy heart, I understand.

The monotony continues almost like a grinding machine,

The horrors haunt – the abhorrence of news,

While pyrrhic politics continues.

In our homes, yet like in dungeons we stay,

Midst anomaly and uncertainty.

Misted like a fog, as darkened as sable storms, the future ahead, feels uncanny,

Yet we stay awake with lanterns of hope.

We celebrate the bonds that strengthen, we treasure the concurring concinnity of togetherness

And empathise, for one and all –

In this silence, we will win!

*First Published in Indian Periodical*



## Home

And now like a splash of water laughing through  
Brown chasms  
Aqua fresh, emerald blue  
There is a mild breeze blowing here inside-  
Come to this land midst silence that is more than  
State – hushed, paused, lone but  
That which flows through the air –  
Melodious, musical, swaying in a calmness-  
The butter light of Dusk misted in lemon pink  
Lacquers love everywhere  
And the world breathes with a newness -  
And this place, this home  
Suddenly becomes too comfortingly – own  
The iridescent lamp glows in the shadowy alcove –  
Much away, away from the rushing smudges of  
The grinding day  
Filled in saffron silver security  
Hope spreads,  
Disseminates – wider, expansive like a swarm of bees –  
Buzzing buzzing , sweetened honey like  
Mellow.



# SHANNON EVANS

**INSTAGRAM:** [@shannon.evans.art](https://www.instagram.com/shannon.evans.art)

**WEBSITE:** [shannonevansart.com](https://shannonevansart.com)

**ETSY:** [shannonevansart](https://www.etsy.com/shop/shannonevansart)

**FACEBOOK:** [@shannon.evans.art](https://www.facebook.com/shannon.evans.art)

**TWITTER:** [@shannonevansart](https://twitter.com/shannonevansart)

**TIKTOK:** [@shannonevansart](https://www.tiktok.com/@shannonevansart)



## **Artist Statement:**

*Abstraction allows me, as an artist, to interpret the world around me and place myself within the work. Using oil paint, I explore expressive, gestural mark making with references to the natural landscape. These references are broken down and abstracted to leave behind the feeling of nature, bringing the brushwork to the forefront of the painting. The expressive, bold and sometimes frantic character of these marks creates a captivating sense of movement that draws one into the piece.*

*Color and paint are used expressively to create a multitude of hues that layer and build to create spatial relationships.*

*These colors are an intuitive combination of chromic neutrals and highly saturated hues, either conforming to natural light logic or breaking it. The juxtaposing and layering of advancing and receding positive and negative expressive brushwork form an abstracted landscape: a sense of place, a moment in time. By building up these multiple layers, the work transforms into a mosaic record of my life: feelings, memories, emotions. The painting becomes, in its purest form, an extension of myself. I can look at a painting and remember all of the stages it went through and what I was going through at the time. It's a release; it's a true catharsis.*





*number seventy-two, 36x36 inches, Shannon Evans, 2020, Oil on canvas*





*number seventy-five, 36x36 inches, Shannon Evans, 2020, Oil on canvas*





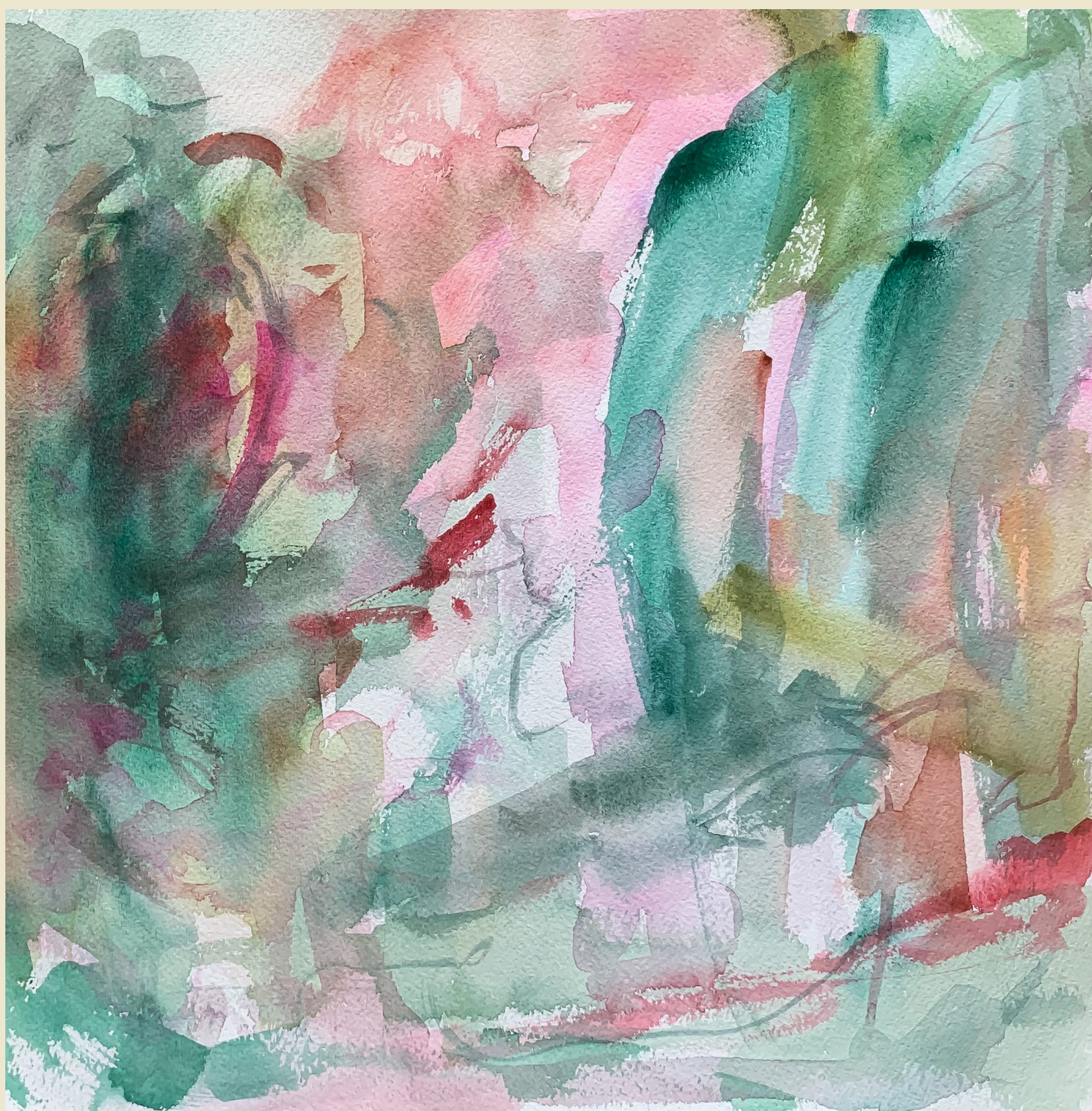
*untitled, 12x12 inches, Shannon Evans, 2020, Watercolor and gouache on paper*





*untitled, 12x12 inches, Shannon Evans, 2020, Oil on canvas*





*untitled, 12x12 inches, Shannon Evans, 2020, Watercolor and gouache on paper*





*untitled, 12x12 inches, Shannon Evans, 2020, Watercolor and gouache on paper*



# SIMON J.O. MARTIN

**INSTAGRAM:** [@simon.jo.martin](#)

**TWITTER:** [@simonnmmartin](#)

**TIKTOK:** [@simonnmmartin](#)



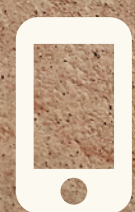
### **Artist's Statement:**

*During most of this year, my mind either races endlessly or sits idly in a foggy haze. There's too much to process, there's not enough to do, there's so much needless suffering in the world. This piece was created in reflection and as a result of that. How do we come together against the forces of power that needlessly cause suffering? I've always found it to be interpersonal connection of any kind and the practicing of radical empathy. To understand that so much is burbling inside of all of us and allowing others to reach out and take the lid off of that pot is a strong, vulnerable, and important act of love and self-care. This piece is also anti-landlord! Enjoy!*



# LORD

*by Simon J.O. Martin*



SCAN ME

or [click here](#) to read



# TOPAZ AMAIS R.

**INSTAGRAM:** [@belovedambergem](#)

**TUMBLR:** [@beloved-amber-gem](#)

**ARCHIVEOFOUROWN.ORG:** [Honeygemtrashbag](#)



### **Artist Statement:**

*This collection of poems were inspired by not only the given prompt of hope but also individuals, films, myths, and philosophies that have given me hope or the basis of which to start the processing in beginning to hope again. As well as what to do to begin nurturing and preserving the action of hope as well.*



## ***1. “What, to you, is the light at the end of the tunnel?”***

“It flickers, it fades at times, or would leave outright when I would seek it intentionally.

It would tease me if I began to look towards the tunnel’s nooks,  
And it would sometimes even begin to find me if I had begun to deny it.

It would be the last thing I saw before my eyes give into the void,  
And it’ll leave when i awake, but it is like faith-

Where you must submit, but never kneel into it’s being.

It is our nature- which is why it may be as bright as a lighthouse  
Or the size of a lighting bug.

It is what we made society for.

It is love.

Yes, I know how simple, and how like a poet, to write verses of love.

But, many a doctor who studied our beginnings spoke of civilization  
being started with a  
healed femur.

It was an act of love in the face of indifference.

The indifference of the world, ever imposing, ever swallowing-  
Was halted for a moment through the act of humans helping each  
other to survive.

That is our nature- loving each other to live,

To struggle, to accept the indifference of the universe

And continue to live because of that love.

It is the light of the tunnel that I am awakened to/too in everything we  
do b/c of it.

It is the one thing that cannot be commodified nor tainted by the  
whims of those in  
power.

It is the one universal part of humanity I can revel in, and seek others  
to find in  
themselves.”



## 2. *For Jae-*

It began with hearing your laugh as we walked in midtown, amongst the  
crowds,  
Pints of ice cream, and the fact you towered over me.  
Cynical cues of comedic clashes in community college,  
And the consent to exist in your space.  
It was sustained when the world had swallowed me in it's indifference  
Being shown through actions/ inactions of being denied peace,  
And yet you were there.  
Staying with patience,  
Concern.  
A common understanding of being othered and yet still having to keep it  
moving.  
It started becoming something more through the moments where i felt as if  
you were  
being swallowed by the indifference of the universe, and the human nature  
in me wanted  
to show that i was there. That it may get dark, it may swallow us whole but  
my hands, or  
my voice, or the simple lean of my body on your shoulder would never be  
away unless  
you said the word.  
It was too late to stop it when I realized that I couldn't be without you.  
It was in the way i could get at least one laugh-  
It was the hope of us surviving and continuing to try again  
And again,  
And again.  
As much as i needed to breathe  
Did I need to see you smile at least once.  
If/when you see this know that you were and still are my hope to be better,  
love better,  
and understand better.  
You are the guardian in my heart of hearts  
And for you:  
I will go on, and plant seeds of hope and agency in every step I take.



### 3. Absence

Sometimes the only way to let something begin to leave.  
To turn with both feet, and look forward.  
And in the space of what you left behind you hope that they will grow.  
Or be able to see what they've done.  
Sometimes the only way to nurture hope is to nurture yourself.  
If you must leave go with grace  
If you must look away do so with haste.  
It is enough to say that it was not your place.  
It is enough to let the space you fill speak,  
Even if it will go unheard.  
It is always okay to let go.

### 4. For Elliot-

"I wish for us to be the type of human lovers- whose love is forever woven into human  
tongues, passed through each set of teeth in reverence.  
A prayer that forgives us like the darkness of the night.  
I wish for us to be like all of the gay lovers who knew that one day they'd be remembered  
and hailed.  
I wish for us to be remembered not because of the way we broke our ribs and made  
ourselves  
But because of the way we were able to love, be loved, and forgiven.  
For every moment that you bare i keep to add onto incantations that i sew into starlight  
Hoping that it reaches you.  
I wish for you to know that for every laugh,  
Every i love you  
Every moment of sorrys unneeded  
That a forest of moon flowers grows inside of my being  
And I am forced to allow myself to allow your love to live inside of me.  
You came into the apartment of my body and made it into a condo  
The rent stopped being impossible, and the moon came back into the sky.  
Thank you for all that you do."



## 5. Venus

"Venus- goddess of beloved lovers torn apart by human intentions, the lovers  
unborn, or  
undead, the lovers forever woven into human tongues, passed through each set  
of teeth in  
reverence, the word of your grace coming from the mouths of children in both  
damnation  
and succession-  
have you lived through us without regard?  
have you revealed in the absence you've taken on us that we are nothing without  
your  
guidance?  
do you forgive us for what we do in your name  
for what we bare in your name  
for what we turn into by your name twisted in the mouths of silver spooned  
children?  
are we still worthy of your gaze if we have been marred, desecrated, and  
abandoned by  
your followers,  
and can your blessing reach the emptiness in the bodies of those who have  
survived in the  
way you've forsaken those who thought themselves worthy of our love?  
do the children born into broken pieces of lovers both forced and wronged by  
each other  
become whole with your words?  
Do families found in darkness, or in the after-winds traveled by Mercury find  
solace in  
the eruption of your rage?  
Does Mars in turn cower from your rage when provoked?  
is the reason we continue to walk the lands of our earth because you have given  
us your  
heart,  
and will forgiveness ever not be hard in the name of love?  
is yearning our closest way of loving like you,  
and do you know how the heart sings even if it believes it's forgotten music in  
totality?  
are we worthy of holding you in our hearts in which you in turn gave us?  
and will it ever be enough to be a room, and not a home not yet ready for it's  
hearth.  
love in totality is our nature,  
it is no wonder you have said nothing  
and in turn said everything once before. "



## **6. *Shades of Green-***

hands held close in confined spaces,  
the broad smile of a man that knows more than he says,  
the escape and it's envious brother wit,  
the ability to be small,  
the way he looks at you when you've run out of things to say,  
the ability to think,  
the ability to see beyond  
but never see forward,  
the repetition  
the rebirth and  
the release of clasped hands  
that fall slowly back to their waysides,  
accompanied by footsteps that fail in seeming aloof.

## **7. *You Can Exhale Now-***

Is something that I don't think I'll hear from anyone besides the poetic voice of Jennifer Gardner  
in Love, Simon, where a mother who's there comforts her gay son,  
And he is able to be fully himself, and loved by family both kin and blood,  
And the flood that erupted from me,  
Not being able to exhale,  
Not being fully myself-  
Created a hole in my heart.  
How do you breathe in a place that takes your air for granted?  
I'm asking because when you've kept choosing to breathe for someone else's baited breath,  
You grow dizzy from the decay in your chest,  
And how do you keep on breathing when you've already exhaled; and you're fully yourself,  
But you're loved for the ghost you're not.  
I'm asking because even though I've hyperventilated myself into where I am,  
I still am not the version of me that is loved by my family.  
I don't think I'll ever have anyone tell me I can breathe again,  
Other than the hopes I've gained from watching someone not like me,  
Be accepted into a life not like mine,  
Where he is loved for who he is, by families of blood and kin.



## **8. Matthew 19:26 -**

The only thing i would ever give to Abrahamic gods is the ability to say that we as humans can never truly be alone in everything we do. Smart and yet extremely stupid all at once. They said that Jesus said: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Which is why i thank his elusive creator that he gave us wheat but we made bread, he allowed nature, and we made science and food, we made use of the brains and bones he allowed us to happen which is why- When God's servants on earth call me a demon i fight the urge to laugh Did he not speak through humans of loving one another in the darkness of sin? If their god saw us be able to make things better as he promises when we die Why did he not stop us while we kept moving? Why smite the minds that allowed you to find him? Why punish the faithful for finding ways to continue? Did he mean to tell Matthew that with man's habit of dissuading from what they've discovered, they could never truly find God, But allowing God's method of being elusive and ever creative would all things with the teamwork of their combined efforts would they find him waiting with a sense of pride? Who knows, but it gives me hope to think that maybe, just maybe, it takes two to tango in all things, even if one is an elusive creator, and the other a creation asking why they were made to die.



# TOTMI

**POETRY INSTAGRAM:** @\_totmi

**PERSONAL INSTAGRAM:** @the one that made it



*My work is a compilation of poems that speak on racism, inequality, childhood trauma, sexism and betrayal. Most of my poetry is inspired by actual events that have happened in my life but also events that have happened to people I've had the privilege to share conversations with.*

*Some poems are written through their perspectives and some through mine. In the end, what I hope you as the reader get from reading my work is a new understanding not just of the people your reading about, not just on the topic of the piece but also about yourself and the world. My only wish is that my work inspires you to ask questions about the world, to question things your taught and to also believe in your dreams. We dream for a reason, you minus well make sure you live it!*



## **“Hope for me is”**

Hope for me is the black mother across the street who I have yet to speak to

A woman who,

to me,

defines the word bulletproof

Today, for the 12th day in a row,

I've watched as you've once again taken a step

Today, you have once again shown me what patience means,

and I am curious about how you do it

How each step you seem to take gives more life to the world in front of you

How each breath and each smile you create creates music that cannot be seen by evil eyes

Hope for me is my neighbor Jackson who glides and grooves on the Arizona bottle filled street in which we walk

A man who seems not to understand the word stop

A man who lives by his own rules

....

Hope for me is my mother, who still finds the courage to love after losing her lover

Hope for me is my brother, who still finds the stamina to smile even when there is nothing to smile about

Hope for me is my sister, who still finds the strength to laugh even in the moments where laughter is more painful than breathing

Hope for me is you, the reader

You give life to creatives like me to birth ideas from thought to paper

You give life to creatives like me to continue writing not just for ourselves but for you as well

You give life to creatives like me to inspire you and in us inspiring you, we are inspiring ourselves

Hope for me is a world where people still smile even when we don't know what tomorrow will bring

Hope for me is hoping that you will one day see that the light you feel you so desperately need is in you already



## **“Intro for Men”**

*(A piece inspired by Kehlani’s “Intro” poem for women)*

My apologies to anyone who has ever misunderstood me  
And,  
to anyone who became confused as they took a part of me  
Or,  
to anyone who ever felt they wasted their time with me

I'm sorry for your misunderstanding  
I'm sorry you couldn't see the King in me  
And I'm sorry you missed the truth  
I'm sorry you were too blind to see how great I could be

I'm sorry  
Sorry, you didn't stay around long enough to see that I was not just a tree  
But a tree with flowers that have yet to blossom

See,  
I'm a story that you are too young to read  
A level you've yet to evolve to  
I know what it's like to change water to wine without ever needing to ask for anything in return  
I've shown so much patience to the most impatient and given so many chances to flowers that we were dead before my arrival that I've forgotten how to say no  
And I'm afraid  
Afraid you have somehow taken my kindness for weakness  
But I thought you knew better

The truth is,  
I'm a superman  
And some days I'm an angry man  
And some days I'm a crazy man  
For still waiting,  
for still loving you even if it hurts  
For still trusting that you are always worth it  
For still searching for her  
in you



## **“If a boy tells you he loves you”**

If a boy tells you he loves you,  
Let him speak  
But do not let his words take you away like a bag in the wind  
Do not take him serious, yet  
He is just a boy  
A sad sad boy

If a boy tells you he loves you  
Pay attention,  
Not to what he is saying,  
Even politicians lie if it means they will get what it is they want  
Pay attention to what is not being said

To the moments where his eyes linger  
When his hands touch stretch marks more beautiful than anything he will ever see in his life  
He will tell you are the most beautiful woman he has ever seen  
And you will spot his bullshit  
But will not tell him that you know he has said this before  
You will smile  
And you will look at him and say  
"Thank you"

He will ask you to come over  
Do not  
You are not a game to be played with  
Not a jar that needs to be opened  
or a drowning swimmer in need to be saved  
You are not the controller and him the player  
You are everything he could never imagine and much more

If a boy tells you he loves you,  
Things are about to change  
You will feel happy  
Excited to now know how he truly feels  
but please remember,  
He is just a boy  
A sad sad boy

He will leave you messages  
Good morning texts and flirtatious texts  
He will have you smiling to the point where it hurts



He will leave you messages  
Good morning texts and flirtatious texts  
He will have you smiling to the point where it hurts  
You will feel butterfly's  
Wonder where he has been your entire life  
You will fall for him  
And he will ask you again  
"Will you come over?"  
and you will say,  
"yes  
why not?  
He loves me, right?"

You will arrive at his door  
And it will be perfect  
His smile will welcome you like the scent of freshly picked flowers  
He will make you feel comfortable  
Ask you if you would like anything to drink  
and you will say no,  
because you don't quite know why it is you came in the first place  
but you stay,  
because he loves you

He will leave and come back  
with the water you did not ask for  
This will become a pattern,  
Him doing things you did not give him permission to do  
To touch  
You will say  
"thank you, that is very nice of you"  
and he will smile  
but, this time  
It no longer reminds you of freshly picked flowers  
This time you are not reminded of anything

You two will sit on his bed  
and he will ask you if you are comfortable  
and you will not tell the truth,  
You will not say that you want to leave and that this decision was a poor one but you will  
stay and tell him  
"I am"  
and he will pick a movie,  
One that he will make sure you feel included in picking but one,  
that will be interesting enough not to watch

He will look at you  
with the same gaze that he had the first day he said I love you  
and he will touch you  
touch the same stretch marks but this time,



it is a touch you do not remember  
it is different  
He,  
is different

He will kiss you,  
And you will kiss him  
and he will grab you  
and you will not grab back  
and he will continue  
and you will push back  
and ask him what he is doing  
and he will say "I love you, I just want to show you how much, if you want me to stop, I will"  
and he will continue  
and you will let him,  
We all want to feel wanted, so we let them

He will enter your canyon  
Lick your bandages  
Grab your abuse  
Kiss your childhood trauma  
and you will lay there at the end of a decision you did not want to make and wonder,  
"Does he still love me?"

He will be normal  
for a while  
But then things will change  
He is still present but just distant  
But by then,  
you will understand all along that he was just a boy  
A sad sad boy



# VIVIAN KRISHNAN

With M Ospina, Taylor Pfenning. Colin Grice, Courtney Anderson Kelly, Remy Saymiknha, Tracee Bear, and Hannah Haverkamp

*Vivian Krishnan*

**WEBSITE:** [viviankrishnan.com](http://viviankrishnan.com)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@\\_v\\_krishnan](https://www.instagram.com/_v_krishnan)

*Colin Grice*

**WEBSITE:** [colingrice.com](http://colingrice.com)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@colingrice](https://www.instagram.com/_colingrice)

*Taylor Pfenning*

**WEBSITE:** [TaylorPfenning.com](http://TaylorPfenning.com)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@taylorann\\_designs](https://www.instagram.com/_taylorann_designs)

*Remy Saymiknha*

**INSTAGRAM:** [@Remysaymiknha](https://www.instagram.com/_Remysaymiknha)

*M Ospina*

**WEBSITE:** [click here](#)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@m\\_d\\_maleante](https://www.instagram.com/_m_d_maleante)

*Hannah Haverkamp*

**WEBSITE:** [Hjhaverkamp.com](http://Hjhaverkamp.com)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@haverkamphannah](https://www.instagram.com/_haverkamphannah)

*Courtney Anderson Kelly*

**WEBSITE:** [courtneyabrown.com](http://courtneyabrown.com)

**INSTAGRAM:** [@courtneyabrown933](https://www.instagram.com/_courtneyabrown933)



## CHORUS GOILS

*2020 was a whirlwind of changes, heartbreaks, adjustments, and challenges. However, for a group of Costume Design and Technology students at the University of Illinois @ Champaign-Urbana, the buzzword for 2020 became INNOVATION. Lead by Costume Designer, Vivian Krishnan, they have paved the way by taking a distressing change and creating their own art. After working over the course of two academic semesters on the theatrical retelling of Lysistrata, the production team received the crushing news that the show was cancelled with no plans on rescheduling. Also dealing with this blow was a core group of students in Rose Kczmarowki's Draping 1 class, who took Krishnan's unique designs and created individual futuristic costumes for each of the chorus members from the show. It looked as if everything would be tragically lost to the abyss that the past year carved into the arts industry.*

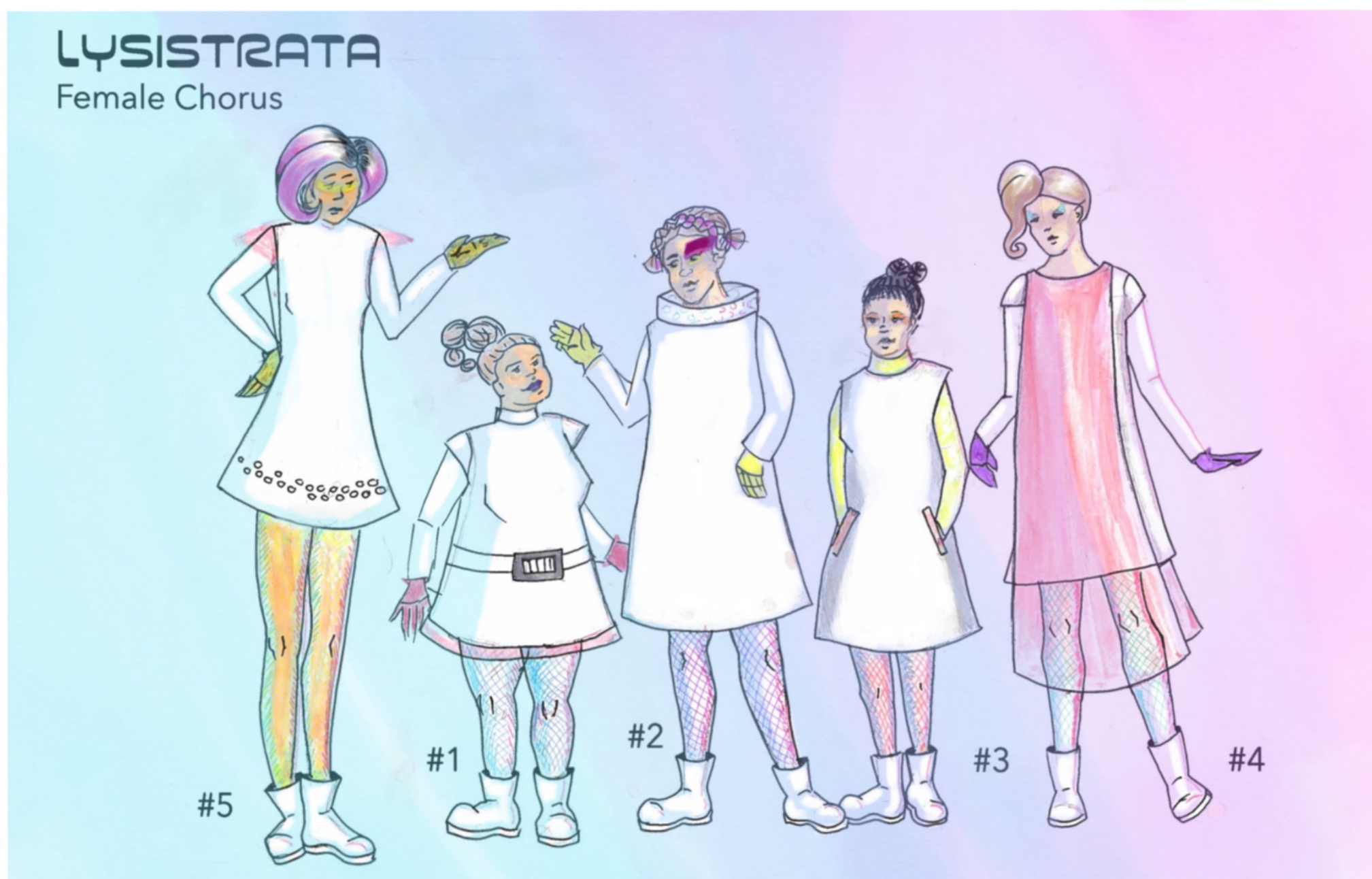
*In spite of the chaos of a COVID school year, Krishnan coordinated a hope for the lost design of Lysistrata. Students at the University of Illinois had the unique opportunity to get tested for the virus multiple times, weekly. With the help of the other costume students and media student M. Ospina as photographer, they scouted out a futuristic landscape at Allerton Park. Nearly all the costume pieces were sewn and modeled by individual students in the shoot as well as the realized Hair and Make-up designs. What had been an idle rendering on paper, was finally brought to life as the team banded together to create the Lysistrata chorus through a series of these editorial photographs.*

*"There was so much art that still needed to be seen, but this is what we were able to salvage."*

*-Vivian Krishnan*

Costume Design by Vivian Krishnan, Photography by M Ospina, Taylor Pfenning (Draper & Model), Colin Grice (Draper & Model), Courtney Anderson Kelly (Draper & Model), Remy Saymiknha (Draper & Model), Tracee Bear (Draper), Hannah Haverkamp (Model)





Original costume rendering for Female Chorus cast members.



Costume Design students of UIUC modeling the realized costumes.  
 From left to right: Remy Saymiknha, Colin Grice, Taylor Pfenning,  
 Courtney Anderson Kelly, and Hannah Haverkamp.





Taylor, flashing her iridescent vinyl cap sleeves.



Remy's look defying gravity.





A mother and her child.



Baby Vern.





Orange gloves are a girl's best friend (Courtney).



Soft ivory turtleneck paired with a heavy silver cuff (Hannah).





Layered chunky necklaces (Taylor).



Luscious ivory neoprene absorbing surrounding color and light (Remy).

Fabric swatches



Double knit honeycomb mesh neoprene, geometric lace, & poly lining.



Iridescent vinyl, organza, & gauze.





High boatneck collar made with geometric lace and iridescent underlay (Colin).





Neon fishnets and tall Go- Go boots (Taylor).





Angled pockets with iridescent welts (Hannah and Colin).





So...

what, to you, is the light at  
the end of the tunnel?

*Like what you saw?  
Support the artists!*

CLICK HERE  
to Donate