Letter from the Editor

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Erika Rocha
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Signatures Magazine 2013
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Alexandra
Gordon Earle
Poetry

There wasn’t even a slit in the doorway, you were an idea before I found you looking for something in the gaps in the grass.

My absolute, articulate, physical horror, this wondrous whispering heavenly diamond twisting treetops, brown eyes backlit blonde melted glass parachute pressing back against me.

I saw beyond her lungs a glimmering wind that burst from her eyes and smile, wounded waterfall of glitter and glass.

Now I can only see her when I cross my eyes at Christmas lights, or I’m drunk enough to die.

The Sonnets I Couldn’t Write
Alyssa Miller
Poetry

I can count the sonnets I couldn’t write

Hours of percussion from fingers tapping
Drumming until day becomes night

Words are dancing openly on site
But if I join they start snapping
I can count the sonnets I couldn’t write

You want to solve every battle, my knight
I can hear your armor clapping
Drumming until day becomes night

Snow erases sky to white
It’s the canvas I should be mapping
I can count the sonnets I couldn’t write

I paint with your blue eyes, shining bright
Missing you, air hurts my lungs with its slapping
Drumming until day becomes night

Counting days puts thoughts to flight
Your messages are presents I am unwrapping
I can count the sonnets I couldn’t write
Drumming until day becomes night
Alexandra
Gordon Earle
Poetry

Alexandra,
There wasn't even a slit in the doorway,
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He touched you, he told you keep secrets
You kept them, tears fell, holy secrets
Unhinge those secrets, become undone
In small houses that kept your secrets

You never told me all your secrets
My deepest secret was keeping you
After dinner, after hours, after secrets
Untold secrets keep my voice unheard

Unknown voices hold our secrets gagged
Tied up by secrets, captured by fear
Bathrooms and hallways meet at secrets
“shh, there are no real secrets to tell”

You told me secrets of our world
Secrets that are, once upon a time
There was a kingdom with no secrets
Tears could not fall from this secret

I love you more because of secrets
I love you MORE because of secrets
I hear the floodgates of your secrets
Open up, I will heal your secrets

Secrets are the most unknown reason as to
Why little girls become women/laz
-Ter/than/we/could/ever/imagine/
Ever/fathom/even/think/about

You didn’t have to tell me your secrets
Just know that I can keep you like secrets
And hold tight to the secrets untold
Our secret is our power

\~urn
Alex Miller
Poetry
"Dearest...
You never told me all your secrets,
But those goddamn secrets you did say
Were hidden in your secret cupboards
In houses near, "shh, it's a secret"

You never told me all your secrets
Now our secrets will speak for you
They will knock down our secret door
Tear down those secrets we can't part with

They made you yell, "shh, it's a secret"
For times after time after secret
Dolls behind beds and secret closets
Pictures of your secrets, captured tears

You never told me all your secrets
You never read those secret letters
Those letters that you wrote secretly
Those letters that spoke secrets for you

Each time you said, "shh, it's a secret"
I began wondering for secrets
I began seeing secrets not love
I stopped hearing you, secrets were gone

Gone, our new metaFOR secrets
Similes not smiles bring out secrets.
Like cookie, like peaches, like secrets
Like uncle, like father like secrets
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Secrecy dictates
that I should ignore my creative predilection toward the page,
or conversely
burn it, and mock it, and huddle in its lively warmth.
Secrets
Erika Mason
Poetry

Dear sweet...
You never told me all your secrets,
But those goddamn secrets you did say
Were hidden in your secret cupboards
In houses near, "shh, it's a secret"

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Now our secrets will speak for you
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Canastas Reliquary
Byron Conn
Crafts

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Like uncle, like father like secrets
Place
Emily Barresi
Poetry

have a place no one knows
A place between his chin
And his collarbone

A place where his heart beats loud
It hails us to sleep
A warm rhythmic drum

A place where my bend was meant to fit
Cheek beating with breath
Up and down
Up and down until our eyes roll back
And our mouths hang open
And it was the last thing we needed
But the first thing we prayed for because
We all wanted this place

Mica
Emily Barresi
Poetry

ike rock she stood rigid
Remained still
But chipped away
When the wind came

I Would
Jocelyn Lui
Poetry

ick my thumb
press it down and
smudge the lines
between our states
tear paper towels
lay them down and
soak up the puddle
between our continents
then I would
use glue to bring them together
and thread to keep them there
if I could

sick of letters stamped: rete
send me something, anything
saltwater
from the Pacific
songs
you're listening to lately
or maybe just
3 lines:
I am
dying fine
I am
doing well
I am
missing you
(I wish I knew
where you were)
I Blame You, San Diego

Joelyn Lui
Poetry

he cursor keeps blinking
perfect rhythm
to the song that ended
4 minutes

14 seconds ago

30 seconds of hesitation
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4 minutes
14 seconds ago
30 seconds of hesitation
meeting you the last
1
4ths of the way
4 summers since we ran into each other bodies pass
singing briefly
a passing downpour
lukewarm coffee and
sun shapes
Swimming in Each Other's Minds
Ellina Chetverikova
Oil Painting

I've followed the tracks of neither tractor nor man,
Listened to the wind blow the combs from winter wheat
Still as the stone statue overlooking
The pond I swam in,
The bridge I jumped off,
And the fish I caught,
This is my home.

Not the boarded up decaying skeleton,
With its rusty playground leftovers;
Or the stumps of the tree once infested with bees that chased me from its limbs
Round dirty faces look at me through the bleak windows of the house
It's fading paint barely covering up its scars,
Puzzled eyes full of judgment and reserve
For the stranger wandering about some forbidden land
Thus alien concrete where our bikes once roamed
Where now only puddles and beer cans collect beneath canopy holes.

With batteries, flashlights and backpack excuses,
We all went searching once,
For this thing called heaven,
The way it was when we were small and the day was new
The water whiter, and the barn fresh red
When lollipops that stuck up from the ground like flowers on Easter Sunday,
Remember all the snakes we caught
Before Eve ate the apple,
And my sister stole the grapes.
**The Bird Flu South**
Mercedes Castro
Poetry

The bird flew south in search of food.
Wings sweep around at a high altitude.
Swaying of trees awakens the cloud.
The bird flew south in search of food.
The feathers falling seemed so crude.
Soft, innocent touch, yet dirty and proud.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.
All was death, decay and solitude.
All was bloody feathers and a crowd.
The bird flew south in search of food.
Disease moves farther, more confused.
Birds dying, tweets loud.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.
People infected, increased magnitude.
You call this influenza, everyone gets plowed.
The bird flew south in search of food.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.

**Eden**
Kristen Salerno
Poetry

Within seven lonely garden disguised cemeteries,
I creep,
Here I was planted and it was here that I grew,
Trying so hard to escape the soil that lived and died around me,
Fears of its toxic unrelenting grip,
Finally broke free from the vines and leapt into another life,
Another potter,
Though a dozen or so line the only path I've ever known,
This is home,
No fences were needed,
The land had a way of leasing its young
Til they worked and worked and scraped and broke
Their young to take the helm,
And steer and plot and work until their own wheels broke,
And their engines ceased.
A promise of paradise to visitors
And a curse to those who remain,
We are never as free
As the freedom we knew when we were here
Once I too made that same promise
Now long broken and betrayed,
Yet I am the only one who knows her secrets,
Rooted in the footholds of the hills beneath the escarpment,
There is no path you can hide from me
The bridge has been discovered in a place I won't forget,
The bones of horses stick out with roots
And thorns reaching for ankles.
Swimming in Each Other's Minds
Ellina Chetverikova
Oil Painting

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Listened to the wind blow the combs from winter wheat
Still as the stone statue overlooking
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When lollipops that stuck up from the ground like flowers on Easter
Sunday,
Remember all the snakes we caught
Before Eve ate the apple,
And my sister stole the grapes.

Capturing of the Fantasyland
Eunoh Hur
Oil Painting

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The bridge I jumped off,
And the fish I caught,
This is my home.
Not the boarded up decaying skeleton,
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The Bird Flu South
Mercedes Castro
Poetry

Wings swoop around at a high altitude.
Swaying of trees awakens the cloud.
The bird flew south in search of food.
The feathers falling seemed so crude.
Soft, innocent touch, yet dirty and proud.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.

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Disease moves farther, more confused.
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I creep.
Here I was planted and it was here that I grew,
Trying so hard to escape the soil that lived and died around me,

Fears of its toxic unrelenting grip,
Finally broke free from the vines and leapt into another life,
Another potter,
Though a dozen or so line the only path I've ever known,
This is home,

No fences were needed,
The land had a way of leashing its young
'Til they worked and worked and scraped and broke
Their young to take the helm,
And steer and plot and work until their own wheels broke,
And their engines ceased.

A promise of paradise to visitors
And a curse to those who remain,
No fences were needed,
The land had a way of leashing its young
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And their engines ceased.

The State of Signatures
Nicolas Eckerson
Poetry

I know I have some brothers in arms
in front of those shelves reaching from this state
for a step and a beer and a seat and a hand from some other one
than Whitman's book of a hand or into Langston's river
sediment or a calling Kerouac buddy.

I feel it like first songs from an album overhead between radios
coming over like songs as a morning alarm.
Complaints on and off and all down the line about the state of art
this generation getting boot on under the old arms
under the frames of Woody Guthrie guitars
under the hokie clutter of restaurants from American roads and photos
from the public eye of Miller and Williams stills of families in chorus
under postwear parents post-parents along the same growth into
job, schedule,
work go on, yadda yadda to many of us as buffalo roaming
across a history textbook yadda yadda bring out Bukowski already,
cut the Huck Finn and show me Sharon Olds,
no Little Women where's Anne Sexton; sighs I hear wimpy as fruit
thrown onstage
when the stage is in a screen, a mess each one,
come on— if the deer are going to learn how to cross the street
we are going to run— Not to Be, hitch on what rock n roll didn't leave.
to sweep up after— We've got presence signature presence unlike
framed degrees.
We have our frame—we're dipping it in, we're blowing bubbles
through and we're going fishing!
Catch and release—we're changing our own oil and new wipers
and never wearing jeans.

The Bridge

Within seven lonely garden disguised cemeteries,
I creep.
Here I was planted and it was here that I grew,
Trying so hard to escape the soil that lived and died around me,
Fears of its toxic unrelenting grip,
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Another potter,
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Their young to take the helm,
And steer and plot and work until their own wheels broke,
And their engines ceased.
A promise of paradise to visitors
And a curse to those who remain,
We are never as free
As the freedom we know when we were here
Once I too made that same promise
Now long broken and betrayed,
Yet I am the only one who knows her secrets,
Rooted in the footholds of the hills beneath the escarpment,
There is no path you can hide from me
The bridge has been discovered in a place I won't forget,
Lying in low ravines and shallow creek beds
The bones of horses stick out with roots
And thorns reaching for ankles.
Swimming in Each Other’s Minds

Ellina Chetverikova

Still as the stone statue overlooking
The pond I swam in,
The bridge I jumped off,
And the fish I caught,
This is my home.

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With its rusty playground leftovers,
Or the stumps of the tree once infested with bees that chased me from its limbs
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Remember all the snakes we caught
Before Eve ate the apple,
And my sister stole the grapes.
The Bird Flu South
Mercedes Castro
Poetry

The bird flew south in search of food.
Wind blew hard, cold and loud.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.

Wings swoop around at a high altitude.
Swaying of trees awakens the cloud.
The bird flew south in search of food.
The feathers falling seemed so crude.
Soft, innocent touch, yet dirty and proud.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.

All was death, decay and solitude.
All was bloody feathers and a crowd.
The bird flew south in search of food.

Disease moves farther, more confused.
Birds dying, tweets loud.
Twittering spoke just like an attitude.

People infected, increased magnitude.
You call this influenza, everyone gets plowed.
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The bird flew south in search of food.

Twittering spoke just like an attitude.

Eden
Kristen Salerno
Poetry

Within seven lonely garden disguised cemeteries,
I creep,
Here I was planted and it was here that I grew,
Trying so hard to escape the soil that lived and died
around me,
Fears of its toxic unremitting grip.
Finally broke free from the vines and leapt into another life,
Another potter,
Though a dozen or so time the only path I've ever known,
This is home.
No fences were needed,
The land had a way of leashing its young
'Til they worked and worked and scraped and broke
Their young to take the helm,
And their engines roved.
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come on— if the deer are going to learn how to cross the street
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leave
to sweep up after— We've got presence signature presence unlike
framed degrees.
We have our frame—we're dipping it in, we're blowing bubbles
through and we're going fishing!
Catch and release—we're changing our own oil and new wipers
and never wearing jeans.
with rips in em that aren’t from working again, we’re not students or
profiles or whatever qualifies.

The brothers in arms like books and books and volumes
and multitudes and destiny manifest in our pure steam up from this
planet
the thermostat is set for us, states are set to light you up now.
I hold my shorts and run out on a long letter,
I run you this feeling spirit to spirit to the states getting carried away
and not stopping chance spinning the heads of the coins and capitals
and out-spinning
the highest definition of Poet by a sit down with Emerson’s first call
in the proud shape of our signatures.

Ergonomic Utensils
Rebecca Merriman
Crafts

Mechanized Spacefarer
Carl Ricke
Digital Illustration
The words in my mouth are syrup,
coming out half stuck together and sappy.
I don't know if I'm sunny side up or down today.
I like your hair and your milky skin-the way you are in the morning,
your foot always touching my chair-the urge to pat your knee.
Still air between us ripening
I want to drink it down,
for the times we burn and crumble
like bread left in the toaster too long.
with rips in em that aren’t from working again, we’re not students or profiles or whatever qualifies.
The brothers in arms like books and books and volumes
and multitudes and destiny manifest in our pure steam up from this planet
the thermostat is set for us, states are set to light you up now.
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in the proud shape of our signatures.
The words in my mouth are syrup, coming out half stuck together and sappy.
I don't know if I'm sunny side up or down today.
I like your hair and your milky skin—
the way you are in the morning,
all cinnamon coated kisses,
your foot always touching my chair—
the urge to pat your knee.
Still air between us ripening
I want to drink it down,
for the times we burn and crumble
like bread left in the toaster too long.
with rips in em that aren't from working again, we're not students or profiles or whatever qualifies.

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the closest I could get to touching sky.

Why then must I live so complacently under a roof?

Behind walls and windows
that seal out the fresh air,
that awakens my stiff lungs,
sets into heaving motion my shallow breath.
I run hastily outside without shoes on
to be greeted by scraping pavement, tearing at my soles.

How is my soul lit without sun
when painted over in winter?
It sometimes ebbs in my core
and stares out wearily
through my rib cage rims,
forced to the pit of my stomach
where I hunger infinitely.

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How easily I throw around the word "infinite",
as if my swollen human mind could even touch the
surface of such an immortal concept.

How uncomfortable I am
with mortality.
Drone Discomfort
Sara Tiberio
Poetry

How easily I sit cross-legged, plucking leaves of grass unconscious to each small, sun-devouring life.
How easily I step on small insects, probably hundreds.
If I wept for every fly splattered to oblivion on my car windshield I would grow weary, and so sunken with every star lost, every light put out.
So how then can we honor all life as equal?

Tiny microorganisms we cannot see are performing micro-cosmic miracles behind our eyelids.
The ephemeral world is mirrored by anthills-the continuous static march.
The morphing from caterpillar to butterfly as the highest metaphor for eternal life.
We die not, but transform.
I'm uncomfortable with death, natural cycle.
I'm uncomfortable that I'm uncomfortable writing with pen on paper.
My fingers are so used to plink-planking on computer keys.
Now my hand cramps up and I'm only on the third stanza.
I curse technology where you once rejoiced it.

Displacement
Krista Carpenetti
Digital Photography

How easily I take for granted this piece of paper, once woodchips beaten to a pulp.
Tamed, white, smooth.
How easily I take cover beneath an eave or branch when it begins to rain.
Forgetting the sacred showers that would dress my skin in cloud resin.
the closest I could get to touching sky.
Why then must I live so complacently under a roof?
Behind walls and windows
that seal out the fresh air,
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Silky smoke dragons
Whispering inky breath
Swirl and intertwine
Nervous shadows quiver
Behind timber fortresses
Eternally hunted by flame
A charcoaled witness
Kicks glowing embers
Adding stars to the midnight
In the magnificent confusion
A spiteful cloud advanced
And swallowed the moon
Droning Discomfort
Sara Tiberio
Poetry

How easily I sit cross-legged, plucking leaves of grass unconscious to each small, sun-devouring life.
How easily I step on small insects, probably hundreds.
If I wept for every fly splattered to oblivion on my car windshield I would grow weary, and so sunken with every star lost, every light put out.
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Poetry

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How easily I take for granted this piece of paper, once woodchips beaten to a pulp. Tamed, white, smooth—How easily I take cover beneath an eave or branch when it begins to rain. Forgetting the sacred showers that would dress my skin in cloud resin—
Catching Air
Aaron Jackendoff
Digital Photography

Inside the Human Minde
Ryan Koevar
Colored Pencil

Long Day at the Space Corps
Carl Ricke
Digital Painting
Attered and torn newspapers, 
Magazine subscriptions and overdue bills, 
The same old stories shared at bedtime, 
From poverty to the promise land, 
From the safety of the city, 
Onward to the great wide open, 
The farmlands of family values, 
Day laborers, steel workers, 
Union men, housewives, and orphans, 
The abused and unwanted, 
All in search of the American Dream, 
Watched with attic window wishes, 
The little girl who craved little girl sleepovers, 
Hopscotch and family game night, 
A life free from fear and want, 
A life she promised her daughters would never know, 
Mistakes in youth while California Dreamin', 
Catholic Charities and cemetery secrets, 
Mitochondrial DNA classified information, 
A pinpoint in the middle of nowhere on a map stretched far too thin, 
The little speck of nothing between the poorest city in America, 
And a seventh wonder of the world, 
Puddles of toxic waste between canals of Love and Erie, 
Mounds of garbage disguised as landscape, 
Busy business smokestacks and abandoned ashtray beaches, 
Rapids of rushing water and power authorities, 
Hydroelectric dams, waste treatment plants, and call it progress, 
Memories of unbridled wilderness, 
The raw strength and fight, and spirit, 
Captured in tapestries of tigers and black panther blankets, 
Fears set free and exploited in bonfire myths,
Catching Air
Aaron Jackendoff
Digital Photography

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Captured in tapestries of tigers and black panther blankets, 
Fears set free and exploited in bonfire myths,
Conspiracies and cover-ups
A family sense of responsibility
Care forsaken by lies, secrets, betrayals and smashed dinner plates,
Broken beer bottles and crushed cans,
Traded in for store credit, food stamps, and a six-pack
Echoes of the fire sirens that wail through the night,
The static on the radio and hidden in the hills,
Where cobblestone hideouts and fossilized Cadillacs rest,
Disappearing acts, empty safes, and phone taps,
The fields ran through barefoot at night,
The gardens still wet with dew where we played hide and seek,
Boxes of puppies and hay bales that hid kittens
The lonely sign along the side of the road,
"Free to a good home."
Prayers that went largely unanswered,
In lost and found faith,
Innocence and forgotten nightmares,
Reality remembered in the scars that remain,
In makeshift graveyards,
For pets and machinery,
Shopping carts, and household appliances,
Pieces too big to be hauled away.
Old Man of the Hill
Ryan Kovar
Colored Pencil

Control
Sze Nga Cheng
Digital Illustration

The Duel
Justin Holt
3D Model / Render
Conspiracies and cover-ups
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Disappearing acts, empty safes, and phone taps,
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The gardens still wet with dew where we played hide and seek,
Boxes of puppies and hay bales that hid kittens
The lonely sign along the side of the road,
“Free to a good home.”
Prayers that went largely unanswered,
In lost and found faith,
Innocence and forgotten nightmares,
Reality remembered in the scars that remain,
In makeshift graveyards
For pets and machinery,
Shopping carts, and household appliances,
Pieces too big to be hauled away,
Old Man of the Hill
Ryan Kovar
Colored Pencil

Control
Sze Nga Cheng
Digital Illustration

The Duel
Justin Holt
3D Model / Render
Conspiracies and cover-ups
A family sense of responsibility
Care forsaken by lies, secrets, betrayals and smashed dinner plates,
Broken beer bottles and crushed cans,
Traded in for store credit, food stamps, and a six-pack,
Echoes of the fire sirens that wail through the night,
The static on the radio and hidden in the hills,
Where cobblestone hideouts and fossilized Cadillacs rest,
Disappearing acts, empty safes, and phone taps,
The fields ran through barefoot at night,
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Control
Sze Nga Cheng
Digital Illustration

The Duel
Justin Holt
3D Model / Render
Indian Rhinoceros
Ben Miller
Digital Sculpture

straight on
and on
the empty road
and when the sun
replaced the moon
it seemed as though
we were in a dream
so we cracked the window
and let the frost settle
on our skin
to be sure that
all of it was real
remember?
it has been
a particularly
cold and
lonesome
winter
as it tends to be
up north
and I spend the nights
under orange lights
trying to convince myself
that Boston
isn't so far
and remind myself
of exactly what you
would say to me:
drive on
and on
To W.D.M.
Meghan Boilard
Poetry

Remember driving to Canada and it took a whole night of driving straight on and on an empty road under orange light and once we crossed the border in the early morning Matt and Hillary were leaning against each other makeshift pillows asleep and the rest of the world seemed to be asleep too except for you behind the wheel and me in the passenger seat and the French music that I couldn’t quite understand (you have always been better at deciphering strange words that I can’t quite understand) quietly drifting from the speakers of the car you inherited as we drove

Fishing
Michele Brown
Poetry

Three AM I am quietly nursing my son when this horse of beauty tramples my senses words uncompromising flow past and into my head heart beating each syllable out and I am holding a chain of gold out to them begging them to stay long enough for me to nurse my child long enough for me to write them down before they are lost forever

Colophon

Layout was created using Adobe® InDesign. Design elements, such as the cover, carpet pages and custom illuminated initials were created in Adobe® Illustrator and Adobe® Photoshop.

Signatures Magazine Illuminated Manuscript Edition printed 5,000 copies at Monroe Litho on a six-color Heidelberg press.
This magazine was printed on McCoy Matte paper, 100# cover and 100# text, perfect bound with gold foil stamping.

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Bestiary carpet page art and color scheme by Trinh Le.

Original illuminated initial typeface: Signatures Romanesque, created by Rebecca Merriman.

Layout accomplished by Signatures Magazine design staff: Erika Rocha, Trinh Le, Rebecca Merriman and Alyssa Miller.
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Signatures Magazine has been privileged enough to receive help from many within the RIT community. Without all the help and support, we would not have the resources to put together what we hope will be an amazing magazine. Utmost thanks and praise to Israel Brown, Director of Financial Planning and College Operations in COLA, for your patience with all our billing firsts and Pam Harley, Sr. Account Executive, Monroe Litho, for all your help, patience and guidance.

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And to all of our contributors, thank you for making this year’s magazine possible. We sincerely thank each and every one of you.
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