

• 2022 LITERARY •

KISHWAUKEE COLLEGE

• & ARTS JOURNAL •



• KAMELIAN •



Kishwaukee  
College

# 2022 Kamelian Literary & Arts Journal

Realizing that educational institutions should encourage intellectual inquiry and being cognizant that we live in a pluralistic society, the following disclaimer is given.

The ideas and opinions expressed in Kamelian are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the attitude of the Board of Trustees, the administration, the faculty, or the staff of Kishwaukee College. Material for Kamelian were submitted by students who have been enrolled in courses at Kishwaukee College during one or all of the previous three semesters. Outside jurors with professional credentials and knowledge in the respective fields reviewed all entries. The pieces selected for inclusion in Kamelian and the awards given were based on the jurors' opinions of their aesthetic merits.

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# Mycelium

i think this:

two people asleep in a bed together  
are as mushrooms in the same old  
roots, reaching across the earth  
of these white sheets  
heads swapping thoughts  
arms looped around one another  
communication;  
companionship in the soil  
spores as dreams, airborne  
near the sticky glow-in-the-dark stars  
on the ceiling  
can we grow to love just by sleeping near one another?  
is a root system simply one more language  
a green affection  
steeped in rain and mired in moisture  
hands held too tightly begin to bloom;  
feet in a fungus territory alert the whole forest.

Peter Skaret

First Place  
Poetry





career, the Ushers had no means of continuing their line, and so were doomed to an abrupt end. Rodrick Usher himself harbors “a mind from which darkness...poured forth...in one unceasing radiation of gloom” (“The Fall of the House of Usher” 365), a sentiment which Poe may have taken in some manner from his own mind. Additionally, Rodrick Usher resembles Poe in the way Madeline’s death affects him. His grief is all-encompassing, and his mind appears to in ict every form of guilt upon him for not recognizing that Madeline still lived. Poe also appears to project his own semblance of survivor’s guilt onto the ending scene between the two siblings, wherein Madeline seeks vengeance for her brother’s negligence; this may well be interpreted as an internal lesson to never forget the dead. This is the product of Poe’s own unwillingness to forget and let go of his past.

“The Black Ca

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Aurora Weber  
Percival, The Mimic Knight

First Place  
Three-Dimensional Art

Owen Polichnowski  
Dimebag Darrel

**Second Place**  
Two-Dimensional Art



# The Walls

The walls around my heart are built so high,

I look up at them and all I can do is sigh,

Piece by piece I have built this great keep,

To protect myself and hide my secrets in the deep,

None have seen the wonders held inside,

But the walls defend me from a world so snide,

Years have passed since I have seen the light,

In my castle, only the darkness of the lonely night,

The vast solitude makes me shiver with cold,

The ghosts of my past wonder this stronghold,

The ramparts are unassailable, though some have tried,

They could not break the bricks of pain and pride,

I pray one day that someone will tear down the place,

And with them being the warmth of love and light of grace.

Blaine Gilbert

Honorable Mention

Poetry

Ava Rose Focht  
Outside the Box

Belle Wellman  
Clean Water is a Human Right

First Place  
Two-Dimensional Art





# Atlas

Atlas held the vault of sky,  
Since the beginning of time,  
Punished for his crime,  
Of choosing the tyrant's side.

A new king arose,  
To the Olympian throne,  
And incurred his wrath,  
Upon Atlas' back.

The Titan forever stood,  
In the far western wood,  
Holding the crushing weight,  
Of his immortal fate.

Blaine Gilbert  
Honorable Mention  
Poetry

Emily Koeppen Tischer  
Sentinelle

Third Place  
Photography & New Media

Recent events such as the COVID-19 global pandemic have triggered unprecedented levels of stress, depression, and anxiety – particularly with middle- and working-class people. But even when we are not in the depths of a global pandemic, we all go through hard times and can often feel like we have come to dead ends in our lives. There is, however, always light at the end of the tunnel for those who seek it out. As such, I'd like to share my experiences in hopes of sparking some hope in you and perhaps guiding you down any dark tunnels you may find yourself in now or in the future.

2020 was one of the most challenging years of my life, not only because of COVID but other events that also impacted me

When the police came for me to pick up the money he owed me, I was scared he would argue and say nasty things to me, so I called the police to come with me and, luckily, they agreed. I received the money I was owed and that was the last time we saw each other.

I had been truthful, Dunkin Donuts still wanted to hire me despite the phone call incident. I told my new manager the whole story, and he accepted me as an employee. I learned that you can cross any hurdle that impedes your growth when you have good intentions and are truthful.

Your attitude determines your altitude – Zig Ziglar

From then things went well in my life for a time, until I got a call from my father telling me he needed a place to stay. I agreed to let him stay at the apartment I was renting. I have always been a good son and respectful to my father, even though he had been emotionally abusive and manipulative to my mother.

Shortly after he moved in, I lost my job at Dunkin Donuts due to the pandemic and the cycle of my father's abusive behavior started up again. He called me names, tried to convince me the way he treated my mother was fair and that everyone who knew him was lying. I would not accept his lies because my mother taught me to always speak the truth no matter the consequences. Though I raised my voice or talked back to him, I was crying on the inside and felt like I was emotionally drowning alone in my room.

I was hung

That said, I successfully moved in to the house, and things went well at first because I was so happy to be living in an environment free from my father's toxicity.

Unfortunately, the apartment remained in terrible condition. There were always things like cups of alcohol and even drugs lying around. There were stains on the sinks, tissues on the floor, mountains of dirty dishes, and overflowing garbage cans. I was disgusted and asked my roommates to please clean their mess, but they did not bother.

I decided to be a role model. I reminded myself that at least I was out of the toxic relationship with my father, so I should be grateful, but the apartment was so squalid it felt like I was living with ten people, not just two. I thought maybe I could lead by example, so I cleaned the apartment thoroughly, including scrubbing the floors and washing their dishes. When I was done, everything looked spotless, and it felt so good. I told both my roommates, "Now we just need to maintain this cleanliness." Rather than support my efforts, they just laughed and called me silly before returning to their filthy ways.

Then just like my old gas station manager, one of my roommates decided to attack my religion and home country. He said things like, "People will judge you when they find out you're a Muslim from Pakistan. Why is every Muslim a terrorist? You should be ashamed."

I told him m

One cold morning,





# Facing the Calls

Days like these revert me into past skin  
When I would sit and wonder  
How I pissed off the commoner again  
To ponder at the root of my scalp  
And dig my pride into something that really hurts  
Myself

She became whip-smart with her tongue  
Found new openings to old habits  
Created an entire vocabulary that she burned through her squared off  
Teeth  
curled her claws right into the rhythms of my breaths  
“I am you,” she says  
“What more could you ever ask for?”  
I tell her  
I wish it was tomorrow.

Ava Rose Focht

Honorable Mention  
Poetry

# The Man at the Door

On a cobblestone street in London, just north of Hyde Park, stands a simple, three-story house. It was old and had an English charm, built of brownish-red brick, with a steep slate roof, and a red painted door. Nothing remarkable had ever truly happened there: children were born and moved away, parties were held, arguments resounded, love was made, and mundane events occurred; history carried ever on outside its door. I fell in love with its simplicity and purchased it on a whim. It was the perfect place to live and love and to grow old, to watch my family prosper.

One brisk fall night, with the wind howling at the leaded window panes and the moon glowing softly, the chilling sound of “Knock, knock, knock” resounded through the corridors of the house. I arose from my bed of warmth and comfort, to peer out the window. I saw a man, shrouded in shadows, standing at my red-painted door. I looked about my home, wondering how I was the only inhabitant awakened by the thunderous knock of this imposer. I descended the staircase and ung wide the ancient oak door to look upon the midnight guest.

His face was hidden from view in the darkness of the night. He was tall and slender, wearing a trenchcoat and a homburg hat. He had a strange familiarity about him, though I knew for certain I had never laid eyes upon him before. He spoke to me with kindly civility, though it chilled me to the core, “It is your time... now follow me. A new journey awaits.” As he said these words the street lamps began to dim, the bustle of the city went silent, and all else faded away into the oblivion of the night.

I do not know why, but as he said those words I was filled with inner peace and I decided to go with him. I walked through the aged threshold of that charming house, the place where my family had lived and loved and where I had grown old, to begin a new journey of an altogether different kind. I took one last look at the life I was leaving behind, “Goodbye...” I shut that red-painted door and followed the stranger down the darkening street into the unknown.

Blaine Gilbert

Second Place  
Short Fiction

Belle Wellman  
A Portal to whERE!!!

Third Place  
Two-Dimensional Art

Dale Giebel  
Goldenrod  
Honorable Mention  
Photography & New Media

# Who to Be?

Who to be? Who to be?

So many options, just for me.

I could be a drummer, Boom, Boom, Booming down the street,

Or I could be a volunteer, helping everyone I meet.

With so many choices, how can I pick?

And what if my choice just doesn't stick?

I could be a singer, making people move,

Or I could be a painter, featured in the Louvre.

I do not know what job I like,

It's like I'm a mime at an open mic.

I'd like to try them all, I would.

But what if I'm just not any good?

Who to be? Who to be?

So many options, just for me.

I am a seed, my life is a tree,

So for now, I'll just be me!

Dale Giebel

Third Place  
Poetry

The synchronized roar of classic rock music muffled under gleeful hollering, a sense of community and brotherhood. All of these things about biking are missed by my motorcycle-deprived dad. Though he hasn't been a part of the biker cult since it became too expensive to ride, he can still remember those times when he was a rebel without a cause. Since the 1940s, there has been a culture surrounding those who choose to ride on two wheels rather than four. Considering my father started at 15 years old, I was intrigued by the experience he had among this group of leather-wearing men and women.

My sixty-year-old dad has a hard exterior, fine-tuned by the years of wrinkles carved across his forehead and brow. Since I was a little girl, his hair has always been covered by a baseball cap of the Milwaukee Brewers or the Packers. An unchanging quirk that has left him with many gifted hats for birthdays and Christmases. I faintly remember riding on the back of his bike when I was definitely too young to be doing so. Watching the wind pull off his cap to his irritation and my laughter. He always took it seriously, but his childish sense of humor showed a different side to him. One of a boy who had not grown up.

Despite his demeanor, however, the brief sentences he spoke to me beforehand on the phone showed me another side of my dad. The side of him that had not had an interview in the past 13 years. So, on the day of our interview, I sat him down at his favorite sports bar with a beer to calm his nerves. The location was loud, with TVs blaring, and people yelling over each other, but my dad's shoulders relaxed. A bar was a biker's second home after all.

"Opa had a motorcycle," my dad began speaking to me from across the bar stools "He drove it from Detroit to Chicago on the weekends to get to work."

My dad was born in Detroit in '61 and got his first motorcycle in '76. In the 70s, having a bike meant you were part of an "in" club and laws weren't as strict on who could ride. His first bike was a boxer-upper 1967 BSA Victor, and as he explained, he drove without a license. Driving his bike through alleys in Lincolnwood, a suburb of Chicago. Cops didn't bother him and he could "Take them (the cops) all the way to Michigan."

After we ordered food, I pried further on these rides he used to take. Motorcycle runs can span miles, cover as fast as 181.18w3mi8 (howem95dspried furbicywho eetspried furd )3d (y trail).

At these motorcycle enthusiasts' rallies, you make friends. And on a somber note, I asked my dad if he had had any of his fellow bikers pass from a motorcycle-related accident. Since that's all you hear about on the news. It was an uncomfortable question for me to ask, but he didn't seem bothered by it on the surface. His true emotions were unclear to me as they have always been, hidden within the alcohol he drank to cope.

"Well Ricky (my dad's sister) lost her son, and her former husband" He mumbled, taking a sip from the half-drunk beer in front of him. The food hadn't been served to us yet. This was probably a good thing considering my stomach sunk in "Ray went off the road and lost control. My nephew had a hit and run or something."

My dad stated this event didn't deter him from riding.

"You can't let it affect you. You feel a little bit smarter, but you can't drag on it otherwise it would make the riding less fun" he said with a sigh as his expression stayed unchanged. I understood what he was saying, but personally, the constant danger is what keeps me from driving a motorcycle myself. A biker is rarely the cause of an accident, with them being the victims of drunk drivers or texting teens every day. If it was up to my dad, he would make biker etiquette taught more thoroughly to people getting their regular license.

"Hey, you're sharing the road with these vehicles. You don't wanna follow them," He raised his voice a bit as he was getting a little heated "Give them their space".

The bartender came to fill our glasses and told us it would be a couple of minutes before food was out, which gave me a time limit of when to end this interview. My dad seemed to be either enjoying it or somewhat withstanding it at the moment, so I began to pull together the bigger idea of what biker culture was. When he was just a young 20-something in the 80s, the culture was not as big. In my dad's words "People looked at it like it was a bad boys type of club. But then it became more popular, to where there was a business in selling bikes. It was not a bad boys club anymore, it was an anyone's club."

That being said, infamous biker gangs like the Hells Angels and the Bandidos still keep the dangerous image of the biker alive. And to the question of if their relevance keeps the reputation of motorcyclists a negative one, my dad told me with unincising words that they are what they are—gangs.

"They usually don't bother public citizens. If there's gonna be a gang fight it's gang vs. gang. Yeah, a lot of people back in the day associated all bikers with people like that. But now everyone's buying bikes so it isn't like that no more" he said sternly.

~~Times have changed, and at the turn of the club in 90s times have changed, and at the turn of the club in 80s~~







Kyla Rachas  
Laci

# Scarecrow:

A dark shadow loomed on the hilltop,  
Relishing in the quiet macabre,  
Waiting as the time stumbled along,  
Waiting 'till all the daylight was gone,  
Frozen in a cold that even the sun couldn't thaw.

The birds were a sure omen of death,  
The sovereign scavengers of the End,  
The scourge of all of those wretched men,  
Who made the accursed marionette,  
But those shining obsidian things were scared of it.

A child full of curiosity,  
Always chasing phantasmic sunbeams,  
And trying to pull their ghostly strings,  
Wanted the sentinel to be freed,  
Freed from its host, free to cast its shadow from its feet.

So when the light inside was burning low,  
The little one crawled out of her window,  
Anon began her sojourn up the knoll:  
Running amok and climbing alone, and,  
Were it not for the crickets, with her footsteps unknown.

Climbing so high that the air was thinning,  
Stare into the night, her eyes were brimming,  
Look up at the sky, the stars were spinning;

Calls carried to the man in the moon found him quivering,  
And the birds tried to warn her, but she was persisting,  
When she reached the peak to see, though her mind was slipping:

There was some poor puppet tied to a post,  
A worn burlap body riddled with holes,  
With those hollowed-out eyes gilded in kohl,  
And that jagged mouth sewn onto the cloth,  
Smiling down at the precious thing that's sure to be lost.

A ick of her wrist had its binds undone,  
A sweep of her arms and it no longer hung;  
She sketched a bow and laid it down on the earth,  
She bent her knees to get a closer look,

And then the scarecrow blinked.

Sarah E. Scarpace

Honorable Mention

Poetry

# Typhoeus

He rose forth from the darkness of the Pit, to claim the heavenly throne for himself. He was the destructive force that battered mankind and the bane of the gods that ruled them. None dared to stand before his dreadful frame or earn the ire of his gaze. He shook the earth, and disrupted the seas, the skies began to fall. Disaster befell the mortal men and the gods cowered in dreadful fear. He called to arms the monsters of the deep, preparing for the endless war; soon began the siege of the mountain of the gods.

The gods of men had fled away, casting down

Amelia McCoy  
The Playing Field  
  
Honorable Mention  
Two-Dimensional Art

Michael Biebel  
American Alcoholism

Honorable Mention  
Two-Dimensional Art

# Monster

I'm so terrifying  
So uninviting  
Perchance I feel the one crying  
In my weighted palms  
Slipped through fingers like silk  
Obscure motivation locked in from  
Trying to conning

I can filter the screams  
Of the holy victims to discover  
I cast heavy shadows  
At the tips of their noses

Building glass structures around  
My frail demons  
Ticked time bombs  
How much more can I consume  
Pleads tired from my bleeding knees  
Can't you see me?  
Tears fuel flames  
Chipped bones, under the chest  
I'm going to lose control

Ava Rose Focht  
Honorable Mention  
Poetry

Ava Rose Focht  
Tangled

Honorable Mention  
Two-Dimensional Art





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