

The Mirror



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Foreword from the Editor-in-Chief

My vivid memory is a gift I use constantly, but I fear that I do not always appreciate it well enough. Memories are powerful and so essential to the human experience. They are something I greatly cherish yet they are not always a priority of mine. It is ridiculously easy to get caught up in acting according to obligations of the day and to forget about living and experiencing everything presented to us. We may say that time flies fast, but I think Time watches us and says we pass by too quickly.

Time is a confusing concept to me, and I still don't know what to believe about it. Sometimes, I think all of time is occurring at once. Other times, I feel its circular motion and fear I am getting overwhelmed by the undertow. I do, however, believe with certainty that we have the power to control time. We have memories. The memories bring everything that has passed back to life, and I find comfort in knowing I will never lose those feelings as long as I allow them to live. Each memory is a sacred gift because everything we feel is what makes us human and alive.

I think the reason I am drawn to creative expression is because creativity emphasizes how you can

make people feel. Coming to the end of things here at *The Mirror* and St. Francis, I may not always remember the specificities and nuances of conversations and events, but I still remember how each and every second made me feel. In fact, when I see a particular picture or listen to a special song, I feel every emotion just as freshly as the first time. That is why memory is vital. It lets moments live forever. We must never stop remembering, and we must never stop feeling.

~Eliana Kontokanis and Kate Fernandez

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Summer Strawberries

Melanie Gustafson

Memories of summer days
linger in my mind.

Those days when I would sway
gently in that rickety knit hammock,
basking in the sun.

The taste of sweet strawberries
still lingers on my lips,
the faint phantom of a Salsa dance
clinging to my hips.

The bubbles of carefree cackles,
in harmony with a friend.

Oh, how I long for those
sweet summer strawberries
to touch my lips again.



“A Memory of Freedom”

Kat Yo



“Swings”
Kate Fernandez



“Euphoria”
Kat Yo

Blurry

Emily Bartylla

Though the present may be vivid
or distracting,
Blur the past details
or dramatics.
Remember the feelings
Your emotions.
Never let them guilt you.
Let their memory shape and guide you.



“Blurry”
Emily Bartylla

Matter of Time

Melanie Gustafson

all the time in the world
would let us do great Things
that we can only imagine
with the time we have now.

Things like hope for the future,
love for the present,
health for our mothers,
and justice for our brothers.

we could mend our broken pasts
and heal the wounds we create.
fix our sights on the horizon
rid our hearts of this hate for each other.

we could pull ourselves free
from these black holes of despair.\
hit the off switch for destruction,
flip the on switch for peace.

we could do all these Things and more.
the only problem is,
we've already been given
all the time in the world.



“Concrete Jungle”
Grace Conlin

Off the Beaten Path

Sarah Larson

You see,

 We are all traveling.
Broadening the horizon
 And carving paths,
Following in footsteps,
 Or ricocheting
Towards the Moon.

I hope I find it soon-

 Where I'm going that is.
Over many hills and valleys I roam,
 Charting constellations
And catching lifts.

Sometimes I trip,

 Off the road and into a ravine.
I lay there submerged,
 Pondering where I should go next...

My hair dreads in sects,

 Woven with cattails.

I push myself out of the ravine,

 My toes gripping the offshore clay.
Eyes Up. I seize the day.



“Ode to Oxford”
Sarah Larson

Luster

Maya Solis

I remember
The times when I found myself
Or parts of it, at least
Fog
Haze
Smog
Created by the pollution of Generation X
Antepenultimate letter
Never makes me feel better
But sometimes
There are rhymes
That rise me out of the haze
The inevitable daze
That comes back every time.

In those moments we recall
When we didn't feel so small
From the lights that broke through
Oh wait--was it you?

Thank you.



“Pretty Colors”
Ana Verschoor

Moments

Haley Silva

Moments

In all things great

When we remember these

Happy birds fly in the depths of the mind

Amaze

Every Moment

Anneke Zegers

Every ache is a gift of work,
Every bruise is a trial endured,
Every wrinkle is a year well spent,
Every drop of sweat from a sunny day,
Every death a loved one you once met,
Every failure one step closer to victory,
And Every moment, one more to rejoice!



“Wisdom”
Mia Stephens

Connection

Paloma Freitas

“Hello.”

He was about two years younger than I was.

To be fair I looked two years younger than I was.

“Hi.”

“What’s your name?”

I told him.

He scanned the table of key chains before pointing to one.

He repeated my name.

I enjoyed its sound as he spoke it tentatively.

It was strange to have someone recognize my name.

I was so used to people questioning it.

I smiled and nodded.

“My name is-”

I have forgotten his name.

I have forgotten his name.

But I remember his accent and broken English.

I have forgotten his face.

But I remember a bright yellow shirt against darkly tanned skin.

I play the memory again and again in my mind.

I try to retain every moment I can.

I fear I will soon forget it all.

And I wonder if he at all remembers.

“Recollections of you”

Simran Soman

A while ago
Too long to know
I had hit my head
When you pushed me from bed

Now I don't much remember
What had happened that December
But your face blends in
I can see ghostly goosebumps on your skin

You left me all alone
I remember the smell of your cologne
It comes back in pieces
Before it vanishes and ceases

They tell me it has been three years
I am beginning to fear
It's like I can hear your war cries
I can't seem to find an answer in the skies

I am cleaning my room just like any other day
All of my feelings have long gone away
I find your baseball cap and other items that have fallen near the bed,
These are the recollections of you, that I keep under my bedspread.

If
Melanie Gustafson

If I were a tree, you would cut me down to build
beautiful furniture
But I would make sure to wedge the splinter deep in
your fingers

If I were a bird, you would cage me up and hold me
hostage
But I would scream from dusk till dawn

If I were a bee, you would swat at me
But I would sting you exactly where it hurts

If I were anything but a girl, when you tear me down
I would take you apart piece by piece

But I am just a girl, you will break my heart
And I will let you

Long Exposure

Cecilia Walsh

Every ten seconds there was a tick. Every nineteen ticks, Diego, unbeknownst to himself, plucked another piece of grass up from the green sea he sat on. Rocking on the unmoving waves he sat with his back pressed up to his cold cement port. The port, more commonly known as a light post, propped his body up lazily as the night continued to tick away. Diego felt none of it, seeing only how the still forming dew drops started to reflect the lamp light, transforming his ocean into a field of broken emerald glass. Midnight continued to sink further into the very essence of the town, making it apparent that the harbor where he docked was not, in fact, a harbor at all. Instead it was an altar where Diego returned religiously to worship the night. Sometime before the 130th tick, Diego reached into the bag that until then remain undisturbed on his lap. He produced a slightly worn looking camera and brought it up to his charcoal colored eyes, peering through the telescopic lens to find the image he sought. A sharp click broke the overwhelming tide of ticks, now at 134. Diego snapped a shot of

the emerald glass as its dew had started to rip through his jeans. He couldn't help but frown slightly as the combination of dew drops and cold ground settled into his bones. Replacing the camera into its shrine, he rose. Sliding up the cement he had been leaning on and began to walk away from the light, into the night where he could roam free. Only his impression was left behind in the harsh white wash on the sea, but even that began to disappear as he distanced himself from the island in the park.

His feet carried him away from the sea and onto the streets of the town that he knew by heart. His feet carrying him while his mind tasted the series of notes fed to him through his headphones. A continuous beat that matched the shiver in his bones. It was all a part of the normal night schedule: wait for the night to set in at the park and catch a few pictures if possible; once Diego was satisfied with his work at the park, he headed into the town. Seeking any figure that caught the light in just the right way. Usually, he would wander the town for hours seeking any change the night had brought down; each night was so different than the one before it. Diego had exactly 54 pictures of the same sign "You are now entering Spring-

field, welcome!” Of course, no one apart from Diego could tell the difference. There was the one with a full moon duly lighting up the reflective green metal, the night it had stormed and the clouds blocked out all light so nothing could be seen but the glowing white lettering, or his favorite the one where the sign stood solemnly as the red tail lights of a car departed in the distance. Leaving was one thing that while Diego dreamed about, he was never sure he could do.

Tonight was different for Diego, though. As the music carried him further away from the park, he was mindful making sure his feet led him to the bar on 16th and Burns street. Each step filled him with anticipation and the shiver in his bones turned into shaking. The tremors were small but plainly present. Diego feared if he shook any harder it would soon cause fractures in his bones. He paused in the middle of the street, collecting himself and forcing himself to take a deep breath. He expanded his ribs until it felt as if his lungs would explode until finally letting out a shaky breath. As soon as the breath hit the cold night’s air it turned into condensation. The plumes of smoky haze framed by the background of a forgotten town imme-

diately caused Diego to reach for the camera draped over his neck but by the time he brought it up to his eye the plume had disappeared. He carefully lowered the camera back down, clutching it for a second before letting it rest against his chest, and continued on.

Before he knew it Diego had faced the music and now faced the town bar. He opened the thick wooden door to the bar and entered, immediately hit by the stale warm air that had been up until then suppressed in the dark small tavern. Diego instantly made his way towards the counter, keeping his head down and hoping to avoid trouble. There weren't many people left in the bar apart from the usual folk. James the town drunk who frequented the bar all too often, a few college kids who were home for the holidays and had one drink too many to make it on home for the night, and of course the one constant in the bar, the girl behind the counter. Murph, the girl with the sea blue hair, leaned with her back against the counter methodically cleaning glasses. He hesitated to call her his best friend if only for the fact that some part of him feared she did not see him the same way.

Murph and Diego had met one night almost a

two years ago, when Diego had stumbled into the alley that ran behind the bar. Covered in bruises Diego had shied away from the light that had come spilling into the alley when Murph opened the backdoor to take out the trash. Five minutes earlier or five minutes later and the two would have never met, but fate had other plans. Murph had ushered Diego into the bar, sitting the hesitant fifteen year old onto the counter before grabbing an ice pack and handing it over to the dazed kid. Diego didn't say anything, but Murph never pressed. Instead, she casually leaned against the counter poking fun at the boy's wildly curly hair and lopsided grin until the grin broke into a full on smile. It wasn't until much later that Diego confessed his father, having too much to drink that night and too long of a day, came home and decided to take out his pent up frustration on his son. His father had later apologized, but their relationship had never been the same. After that night Murph had invited Diego to come back if he ever needed a place to stay. He was hesitant at first, but gradually Diego would filter into the bar sometime after midnight. Sometimes just talking to Murph, sometimes just editing photos on his

laptop, or occasionally the duo would play pranks on the unfortunate souls that had passed out for the night. The two quickly fell into a familiar routine that had stuck till this day. Funny, Diego thought, how alcoholism had caused him to end up in the alley all those nights ago, and here he was seeking refuge in the very place that had stoked his pain.

“Hey, Dynamite. You still in there? Earth to Diego?” Diego looked up now, realizing he had been standing awkwardly in the middle of the room staring at the scratched counter.

Diego cleared his throat and took out his ear-phones before taking a seat at the bar, “Hey Murph, sorry got lost in thought.”

“You act like that’s not the usual for you. I wouldn’t be surprised if you missed the end of the world because you started to debate the meaning of life.”

“Haha, very funny. Like I haven’t heard that one before,” Diego swung his bag up onto the counter before gently removing the camera from his neck and setting it next to the bag. He drummed his fingers on the counter quietly before Murph interrupted.

“So, you’re back early. I take it that means you have something special to work on?”

“Maybe... I won’t know until I edit it,” Diego kept his excitement hidden, but in reality he could only hope this was as special as he felt it was. The photographer had spent the past months composing a very special project that he had only finished the day before. It consisted of portraits of everyone in the town, but what made it special was that the photos were taken when each person was at their most vulnerable. Diego had put special attention into ensuring each subject’s portrait showed their true self. The side that no one during the day truly saw, except in that split second where they let their guard down. That was why Diego liked the night. While everyone wrapped themselves in blankets and stayed in their homes building up the walls, the night tore down those left in the world, bathing them in shoddy lamp light and highlighting their perfect imperfections. Diego saw it all during the night and he captured it with his camera, but now he had brought that light to the day. Capturing the people’s vulnerabilities in that one image, Diego was the night.



“Blurred”
Yukta Gutta
33

young love (a letter to my friends)

Eliana Kontokanis

i was never a fan of young love. perhaps the boy meets girl story always bothered me, seemed artificial, shallow. i never wanted to be told how to feel.

what i've found is so much more than that story of years past and heart covered diaries. it is the sun showering my skin with visible constellations. it is the earth moving to the melodies of our shouted contemplations. it is the trees whispering what they love about our smiles and their imitations. it is everything.

i used to believe love would hit me like a storm. bright, fast, leaving collateral damage. this love guides me, lifts me up, brings me close enough to taste the stars on my tongue. this love is breathless, underwater adventures in comfort. this love doesn't leave me behind.

every moment is free of time. an uninhibited flip-book of happiness and hope and home. pastel painted streets portray these pictures of peace. the quaint

neighborings of memories and future plans are in the palms of our hands.

thank you for pushing me this far and letting me fly. i will scream my gratitudes from the tops of skyscrapers until everyone tires of this not so singsong voice and my throat cracks. what we have built is everlasting. carvings in caves perish as our story continues on and on, past the meteor showers and bonfires and sacrifices of tomorrow. this is now. this is forever. and i will never forget it.