

NMB COHORT ANTHOLOGY

spring
2024



ABSTRACTION



N M

Bodecker

Foundation

ABOUT BODECKER COHORTS

We believe that real growth happens over time. That's why we've created an opportunity for students to build relationships with mentors and peers over the course of a school year. We are introducing three cohorts— small groups of dedicated, emerging student artists—that will meet twice monthly to learn, practice, and share. Each group is distinct. Students apply for ONE of the following cohorts:

WORDS - writing with a focus on daily writing practices, poetry, short stories, and publishing.

SOUNDS - music and audio engineering, signal flow equipment setup, tools and terminology, and studio etiquette.

VISUALS - fine art with a focus on drawing techniques, color theory, and portfolio development.

N M Bodecker Foundation's Mission:

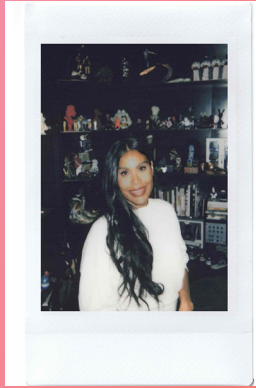


*To spark young people to realize
their creative power through
immersive learning experiences.*

Introduction by Tanya Cerda

At Bodecker Foundation, our mission is to spark young people to realize their creative power through immersive learning experiences and we aim to ignite their artistic capacity by providing a safe and supportive environment where they can thrive and feel a deep connection to their community and themselves. We also believe that fostering a sense of belonging is vital for the growth and flourishing of the next generation and together created our inaugural anthology.

The theme 'Abstraction,' is all about widening your perspective to the beauty around you in unexpected ways. It's about finding what visually, emotionally, and audibly excites you and sparks your imagination. Let it inspire you to explore your own unique style and seek out art and moments that bring you joy and good vibes through words, sound, and visual art.

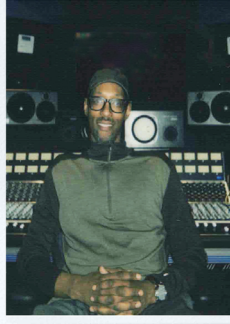


Tanya Cerda, Co-founder, Trustee + Program Director

Tanya Cerda is an interdisciplinary BIPOC artist whose vibrant identity and cultural heritage serve as powerful catalysts for fostering diverse and inclusive environments. A graduate of Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, California, Tanya's academic and professional journey has provided her with a strong foundation in artistic principles and a rich exposure to a wide array of creative expressions. With over 15 years of experience in creative industries such as fashion, entertainment, and advertising, Tanya has developed a keen understanding of the transformative power that art and media play in shaping narratives and driving social change. Motivated by her commitment to effect positive change, Tanya transitioned into arts education and philanthropy recognizing the profound impact she could have by fostering the growth and empowerment of emerging artists. When Tanya is not actively encouraging collaborations and aspiring to create spaces where underrepresented voices can flourish and be celebrated, she is at home listening to KEXP and All Classical Portland.



Jordan Souza, the YouthPrograms Coordinator at The Bodecker Foundation, is also a writer and editor. Her work has been published in Arboreal Magazine, Motherwell, and Apartment Therapy. She serves as prose editor for Cordella Press and co-founded Lilun Magazine, a literary magazine which propelled 15-21 year old writers from around the world. Writing, reading, films, and nature all bring Jordan great joy.



Tony Ozier, the Studio Engineer + Manager, is a multi-instrumentalist, producer, recording engineer, and music educator. He is passionate about bringing music production and studio engineering education to underserved communities and co-founded Beats | Lyrics | Leaders, which has brought workshops throughout the West Coast for over 10 years. He is the co-founder of the Portland Black Music Expo and the bandleader of the Doo Doo Funk All-Stars. He holds a degree in Recording Arts from Full Sail University in Orlando, FL.



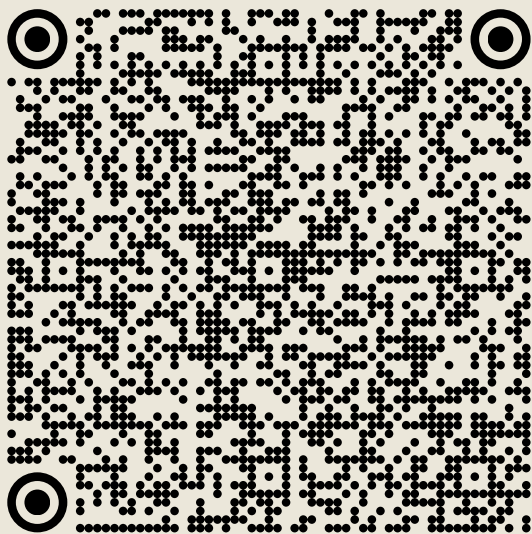
Kyra Watkins, the Visuals Cohort Instructor + Mentor, is a Cincinnati Native, Portland based artist. Kyra started her art practice as a mural apprentice at the age of 15. Witnessing firsthand how access and opportunity levels the playing field for young people, Kyra has been inspired to engage with the youth through art. Youth empowerment has become such a large part of Kyra's practice, it has stepped into the subject of her personal work. Since Kyra's start as an apprentice, Kyra has been in the public art space for 16 years. Kyra now aspires to marry her love for public art and youth engagement by creating a youth public art program and helping her fellow artist get started in their mural making career.

"Facilitating the Words cohort has given me an immense sense of hope for our future. Each student brought wisdom, empathy, and self-reflection into our circle. I especially loved seeing students celebrate each other's work, giving feedback in a compassionate way. The friendships formed by our rag-tag group of writers is unique and, I hope, long-lasting. I will never forget our time together."

-Jordan Souza
Words Cohort Instructor + Mentor

Sounds
Cohort

To hear sound recordings
and files produced and
engineered by our Sounds
Cohort, follow the QR
code below.



Link to our SoundCloud!

2023/24 Sounds Cohort

Lucy Brewster is the guitarist and songwriter of her band, Petrichor, an all girl band playing out of NE Portland. When she's not writing songs you can find her painting, writing for her school's magazine, or blasting obnoxiously loud music while driving through neighborhood streets.

Hello my name is Claudine Itangishaka, my artist name is CLO. I am a singer, songwriter, and music producer. My hobbies consist of drawing and playing guitar.

Malachi Lui is an aspiring audio engineer, music obsessive, film enthusiast, avid record collector, and cultural observer. In audio production, he focuses on mixing and mastering, attempting to at least somewhat capture the analog "spirit" in the digital domain. He also writes about music for the online audiophile publication Tracking Angle.

Pablo Navarro, I play guitar sometimes. I like feedback.

I'm Owen Schafer, and I'm a musician planning to go into audio engineering as a career. I also play bass in my band, The Black Ice Machine.

Lakshmi Shore: Audio Engineer, Voice Actor, and Podcast Creator.




“About six months into the program, there was a moment when I looked around the studio and saw all the Sounds students working on an assignment with confidence. I was able to just sit back on the couch and watch them work. In that instance, I realized that they had come a long way in their audio engineering skills.”

- Tony Ozier

Sounds Cohort Instructor + Mentor

Liliana Castaneda





Liliana is a Portland-based artist who is majorly self-taught. Their primary subject is abstraction with an emphasis on portraiture and anatomy. Aanika works with several mediums including paper, canvas, and clothing.

Marlo Dabareiner

Misery Loves Company

The promise of dawn brings the blissful — yet gradual — return of light. The city is united into an organism thrumming with one singular heartbeat. People cluster on street corners in giant hoards and spill out onto pavement with reckless abandon. The inhabitants pay no mind to the city's perfume of disgust and resentment. They close in on themselves and go about their routines as if they've been practicing the art of being unaware their entire lives. They don't notice the observers sitting high in apartments watching them fight and love and break up and dance and die. I used to believe I was different — not quite better, but more alive than everyone else. Now I want to reach out into the crowd and force all of them to wake up.

Stop with your meddling, Mina. There's no one left that you can let win at board games — you never thought I noticed. I paid more attention than you gave me credit for. Let them figure it out on their own for once. Alice's voice ringing in my ears is a living breathing parasite — pulsing in a deathly quiet rhythm reminding me that she's gone and she's never coming back.

Sometimes when the light beams reverberate off the windows just so I can see flashes of her slightly translucent skin glowing under the soft lamp light and hear her dead heart pumping full of intangible feelings. She smells like familiar summers filled with carefree romping alongside a newer, darker rotting stench. The presence next to me hangs thick with memories woven into worn friendship bracelets. In the blink of an eye, her life is erased and I am left to live with her presence twisting my heartstrings into a knot. You're wasting your life away all cooped up waiting for me to come back. You need to go out and live, Mina. You have to give me up. No, I deserve to remind myself every day of the life that could've been. I can't let her slip too far out of my reach.

I take comfort in the constant presence of Ms. Elliot across the way. With wild white hair and reading glasses perched low on her nose used more for crocheting than for reading, she gives the impression of being effortlessly dependable.

Together we heal each other through early mornings spent people watching or chatting on the phone or simply sitting in quiet company. She began this hobby years ago and I had been too wrapped up in my own life to notice her. We are happy spectators to the world that flies by before us. The business man in the apartment next to Ms. Elliot is so scatterbrained and clumsy that one morning I witnessed him spill coffee on four separate ties. The vein in his forehead pulsed wildly as if the company rulebook itself was swatting him on the back of his head. Today, the sweaty businessman rushes out, slamming the front door behind him with a resounding thwack. In the apartment below the harried single mother feeds her son breakfast and swings his backpack over her shoulder. The morning operates like the comforting tick of the clock knocked slightly off time by her absence. Ms. Elliot doesn't appear at her window. She was supposed to be here almost an hour ago – it's so unlike her to be late.

I pick up the phone and shakily dial her number. I am reminded that I've never truly met her in person — not really. Still, I feel like I know her. Every single morning I see her sitting in her apartment, rocking back and forth slowly on an old rocking chair with a scratchy knitted throw blanket over her lap. We were – are – alone together. Still I stand stupidly, waiting for her to pick up the phone or better yet hobble down the hall and gently lower herself into her own chair to join me. The incessant sounds of screaming alarms pierces through the normalcy of the bustling neighborhood. An ambulance pulls up in front of her building and the paramedics rush in carrying stretchers and various monitors. Pressed against the window my fingernails create red moon shaped divots in my slick palms and agitation creeps up my throat. The paramedics burst into her apartment and a few minutes later they leave with her limp body. The pictures wash away, the lines of time become less defined in my mind, and suddenly it's Alice wrapping me in emaciated arms one last time.

I wake up alone. I drag myself to the window at five or seven or ten in the morning – what's the point? I watch the man in the suit spill coffee on his tie. The woman makes her kid blueberry pancakes with a hastily added birthday candle stuck on top. Somebody else moves into Ms. Elliot's old apartment. She is erased. Alice tethers me to reality and snaps me out of my

Misery Loves Company (continued)

panicked nightmares. What if she's alone, Mina? She's probably accepted the fact that nobody will come to visit her and she'll be proven right because you're stuck here. Ms. Elliot will go into battle alone when the balding doctor walks in with his thick bundle of bad news papers. You held my hand when I started crying. Who will hold hers? The memories distort and my mind slips into her arms – Alice's arms.


I'm in the hospital. You grip my slick palm and tell me to breathe. You tell me that it'll be okay. It isn't. The clock ticks — reminding me that precious seconds of our lives are slipping away into the wind. "Any new people you might've come into contact with Alice? You know it's a risk," the doctor says. I carefully retreat from the window as if it's a live bomb. "I mean, I guess we took a different train? It's hard to tell..." I sit in the chair next to her – gripped with fear and shame. I notice a couple of your traitorous tears dripping onto our clasped hands. If I leave her long enough, the memories will gnaw away at me until there's nothing left. Remember what you made me promise? I could never hate you Mina, We're gonna live together forever. "You couldn't pry me away from you even if you tried." Promise to come visit each other in the afterlife? We link our sticky pinky fingers, binding our fates to time. Now I stand by the window

— paralyzed by indecision, and unwilling to accept the fate ultimately hurtling toward me. She needs you Mina. Am I ready to leave my safety net? Do I have to be?

Marlo is a writer born and raised in Portland, Oregon. She is most inspired by the world around her, the books she reads, and the community she has created. She is heavily involved in the tech theater world, and she sees it as another expression of her passion for storytelling.

Nora Dixon





I'm an artist that specializes in painting and drawing, specifically and heavily portraits of myself. I love to capture my own experiences and feelings through art and to share that with others. I've been doing art for as long as I remember and I plan on continuing that for as long as possible.

Dakarai Dove

Ian Curtis Wishlist

I want to know you. Flightless bird, I was meant to run. Head buried in the places no one hears the screams. I wish...that's it, I wish. One of many, soldier of a legion. Lowly field mouse, dreaming of great scaled beasts, soaring through the air. In love with who I can't be, what I can't have. I'm no dragon, spirit of dangerous beauty, ferocity like no other.

Are you up there? Dark blue canvas, milk drop moon. I scurry about, soles binded to the ground, mind afloat in the clouds. Witness of your big gleaming fangs, tapestry of fire smeared across a painting. Wings, carrying up and up, farther and farther. My feet, rooted to the planet. Earth, my mother, my sister, my daughter, my maker. Weary rodent, broken bird, hollow man, there's a hole in my wings.

I can't run forever. I want to be a killer I want to be a mourner I want to be a servant. I wish I wish I wish! Bring ruin on, and make me blossom. Premature as the red serpent drowned by another's abstractions. Restless, awake at the bottom of a lake of rage. Remembering is like being shot between the eyes. Realizing is like being stabbed in the stomach.


Patchwork creature, homely soul, the wicked rest all too much. Ghost of desire over my right shoulder, sin of greed perverting my heart. Enamored, disgusted, with myself, muddled. Selflessness, an unknown virtue. It all hurts, all too familiarly, twist of the knife.

Running after ideas, gorgeous fantasy, I ache. I never liked you. I liked the concept of you, I liked the concept of us. In love with who I can't be, and what I can't have, I will chase. Beautiful dragon, gliding through the skies. Measly field mouse, scuttling about in the cold bramble.

**My name is Dakarai, I like making things
sometimes.**

Sophia Spencer






Sophia Spencer is a painter and visual artist focusing on surrealist and expressionist work. Sophia was born in Santa Fe, NM and raised in Portland, OR, and her work is inspired by the the Pacific Northwest and Southwestern landscapes and cultures. She hopes to go to college for art and continue to make art professionally and personally.

Tallulah Guilfoyle





Tallulah Guilfoyle is a Seneca artist based in Portland, Oregon. Her work ranges from digital art to physical mixed media pieces. Tallulah is inspired to create art that showcases the cute, the colorful, and the macabre.

Eleanor Haugo

Amma's Memoir

It's nighttime and the sky and snow are blue. The cabin in front of her and the whistling wind are the only other beings on the expansive open tundra between her and a imperious dark line of trees in the distance. The frosty windows of the cabin glow kindly with orange light, illuminating bits of snow as they dance in the wind. The house bends and beckons to welcome her and she moves through the snow toward the door. She knows she will not return to the world she fell asleep to. When the heavy wooden door creaks open, she is met with warm air stinging her cheeks, intertwined with the distinct smell of her grandmother cooking. She breathes in the scent and feels the tingling youthful familiarity wash away her wrinkles and soothe her painful joints. Her grandmother's presence is here in this house as if the wooden beams are reaching to envelop her in her firm hug. A desire to sit and eat with her Amma twists in her stomach like hunger. The smell drifts from a small kitchen through the arched doorway etched with her mother's writing that marks her growing height.

She sits down in a worn blue armchair where Amma once read her bedtime stories, now nestled in the corner of the room between a window and a grand wooden bookshelf. Sinking into the chair, she opens a photo album that has been resting against its stubby legs. When she turns the pages she sees memories captured from her own eyes; framed under a seal, binding them to the gold edges of a warmly colored cover. She sees the newborn face of her child. Her kids are old now, but she distinctly recalled the moment they had only just been granted their lives and futures. In the album she watches their family grow up, photos of them asleep resting against her chest and of their faces wet and muddy leaving a soccer game. A tear stained picture of a half empty teacup cradled by her hands commemorates those nights when she fought with her son who was growing and burdened with purpose. They had

spit hate and sadness that strangled each other like snakes until anger prickled and pooled in their eyes and there was silence. How beautiful they are, the way they hold the marks of life, scars on their shins and wrinkles on their forehead. How beautiful are their selfish motives and failures. Her children, creatures of the country they were born to, who had once looked upon her as the sun and then again as an inconvenient relic of the past. Despite their lost wonder, they gave her new small hands, unburdened eyes and curious voices that called her their Amma.

But on the next stiff page the photos were not taken from the eyes of a mother. Her fingers touch the page and she hears the sound of commotion and feels the presence of women beside her on a dirty sidewalk crowded with people babbling in a language her tongue has forgotten how to speak. A language that never graced her children's ears. But now she remembers. She rubs the quilted fabric draped over the arm of her chair and pinpricks of pain return to her fingers and shoulders from working tireless hours over sewing machines. A glint created by the hunger of youth returns to her eye. When she was younger, shedding the skin of being her mother's daughter she had yearned to create herself of all the undeniable brilliance on this earth. Each story heard and dirty quarter earned had only made her more ravenous for the next milestone.

The tired pair of leather boots bought with her first paycheck, worn out by traversing the city, sat slumped, retired beside the door. A painting hangs on the same wall in brilliant vibrant strokes immortalizing a meadow splattered with the color of reaching wildflowers dappled with the first light of the sun shining through the tangled branches of an oak tree grove at the very edge of the field. In that beautiful moment hiking with the man she would marry, him just a little further down the path, her heart had beat in rhythm with the world. In one deep breath of crystal morning air she belonged to everyone she loved, every person to leave fingerprints on her soul. At the same time she belonged to no one

Amma's Memoir (continued)


but the earth and sky. By the edge of the painting's frame peeking into her view is a bouquet of flowers in a glass on the table. It holds the dashing carnations soaked in color she grasped on her wedding day, overflowing with life, in awe of being weaved to the fabric of another's person's existence. Beside them are the gentle pale lilies she held at her mother's funeral when she lost the very core of her soul. Even before her mother's death, the woman who gave her life had been diminished by the accumulation of time. She had been like the first block of wood in the fireplace that is turned to coal and buried in the hearth. The fire is burning low in this cabin crafted from all of her sentiments, thoughts and magnificent dreams and desires. To feel its heat she reaches out and touches the sharply cold window that remains between her and the endless night. Her hand drifts to the cabin wall and the rough texture feels like words are etched in the wood. Running her hand across the panel, divots and grooves form the voices of her kids' and grandkids' questions, her teary vows from her wedding day and Amma's bedtime stories.

A lifetime has passed since she heard those tales. She became something for the very first time in this cabin nestled in the warm arms of her Amma in her grandmothers' homeland. Before she herself was a grandmother, she was a mother and before that a wife and before that a daughter and before that she was nothing. She had crossed oceans and eras and lived with meaning and died with peace and now it was time for her to return home and be nothing again. In the night her story is a small light, remembered by few in their lives and dim in the glory of history. Inside she leans back in the blue chair and closes her eyes to her very first memory, the soft warmth of the cabin and the sound of her Amma's gentle voice. The glowing embers in the fireplace cool and no more smoke rises into the wind. On the tundra the house of memories blows away, and the dancing snow washes the evidence of its existence, leaving only the solitude of the night sky.

Ele is a sophomore who loves to write short stories and fiction while contemplating the world through painting, drawing and all kinds of creative expression. They also spend their time playing sports, being outside, and with their friends and family. They hope to always pursue art alongside becoming an architect one day.

Ursula Evans






Ursula Evens is a visual Artist based in Portland who works mostly with mixed media and digital art. She primarily focuses on illustration of original narratives and characters.

Kennedy Tanner






Kennedy Tanner is a visual artist focused in realism, located in Portland, Oregon. She values her artwork by learning about her surroundings. While being passionate about realism using charcoal, pastel and paints.

Biancastella Bleiler






Biancastella Bleiler is a Portland artist. Their artwork strives to invoke feelings of one's growth. Focusing on how that has impacted their identity.

Scarlett Rendon






Scarlett Rendon is a 16 year old artist from Portland, Oregon, with a focus on pencil, ink drawing and oil painting. Ever since she could pick up a pencil, she would spend hours drawing or coloring. She is inspired by cultural expression, architecture and women empowerment and driven to express that through her art.

Samson Kleiner






My name is Samson Kleiner, I am an 18-year-old artist from Portland Oregon. I have been painting and drawing my entire life, creating art wherever I can find it. My work almost always includes elements of our natural environment—plants, animals, and other creatures that represent the abundance of life. I work in many mediums, currently my most commonly used are acrylic, charcoals, pen, and pencil. I am eternally committed to the practice, growth, and revision of my art.

Elizabeth Larrison





Elizabeth Larrison is a Portland-born illustrator and multi-media artist. Her primary focus is figurative and enjoys taking inspiration from art history. She goes to Benson Polytechnic Highschool and is interested in radio broadcast.

Beatrice Liebrecht

faith and credence

Up the busy street of Masonic Avenue sits a church, across from the Whitney Young, a preschool in the heart of the Haight.

St. Agnes Catholic Church, “the right place for everyone” held a diverse crowd and wonderful choir, who happened to draw in my young mind.

Elegant, mature, USF girls who lived in dorms just blocks from our apartment would arrive around 6:00 a.m. As my Mama headed to work on those cold 2012 mornings, I was accompanied by various babysitters on the trek to Whitney.

I knew I wanted to be just like those girls.

On Easter Sunday, 2011, we sat in the pews and listened. This was the first time I *heard*.

My chosen sister, or as my Papa would call her, “pretty little Lydia” and her family had begun their religious journey at the quaker meeting house in downtown San Francisco when we were around nine years old.

I arrived with the intention to help at the food bank, to give back to my community, I knew the friends of the meeting house were very welcoming. Soon, routine formed. Lydia and I would spend the time during worship, which we were unable to sit through silently, playing with the young children in the nursery. When worship concluded, I found myself floating in the library, hoping to read any book about quakers, their beliefs, practices, rituals.

I never considered myself one, merely a spectator.

One summer night, I’d been falling in love, my first love.

My stepfather had not taken our intervention lightly. Changing his habits from inside our home to random bars which littered our neighborhood.

We’d left San Francisco three years prior, and behind me I felt I left my soul as well.

The dusk had turned to desolate darkness, he should’ve been home hours ago, yet I sat on the phone with my first love and we both heard my mother’s piercing scream. Immediately I knew it was him, and so did the boy on the other end of the line.

Merely a block away from our home my stepfather lay on the ground, bike in the bushes and head gushing blood, this time, I *saw*:

Had he not been so drunk, he’d have died.


Had he not been so drunk, we wouldn’t have had to leave.

I had started my first job, as a caregiver, and I began to really *think*.

Spending many of my shifts on the family’s couch, I fell into introspection, self-reflection, and ultimately self-improvement. I found myself back at a religious crossroads.

Researching spiritual enlightenment, falling into a rabbit hole filled with Hinduism, and a new practice, mindfulness and meditation. I *heard* those same choir voices, I *saw* the beauty of all.

It is hard to understand, now, if I am becoming a better person or if I am becoming more self aware of my flaws, without any discernment on how to fix them.



My name is Beatrice Liebrecht, I'm an aspiring writer and journalist. Coming from a family full of creatives, writing became my second nature, and now I hope to write something I feel proud of completely. I was born and raised in San Francisco, California, and I love film, Donnie Darko and Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, being my favorites.

Maliyah Miller





Maliyah Miller, an artist based in Portland, Oregon is all about spreading joy through art. Growing up, creating art with her parents ignited a lifelong passion for creativity and opened countless opportunities for her to grow and learn from others. Maliyah wants her artwork to bring happiness and inclusivity to her communities through painting, drawing, and even sculpture. Her mission is to inspire future generations of artists and youth to embrace their creativity and make their mark on the world. Fun Fact, Maliyah's artist name is Orca.

Sureika Shore

c'est pas une personne

Striate this page with perfect grammar, punctuation, and spelling;

touch me with your human voice—

Perfect your abstractions, clarify your abstractions



She watched the flowers in bloom, tulips and marigolds, and saw a pair of gossamer-winged bees circle each other—once, twice— then come to some conclusion and settle



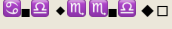
“The Treachery of Images”— A warning — -

asked,



How is one to abstract, even in a language that can represent 我 and 你 , 一和二和三 , the concepts of 思想和理想, ideas and ideals, the human mind? What do those stacking lines so neatly representing one, two, and three, do when they get to 4? Thousands of little lines, perhaps, all in a row— or 千。

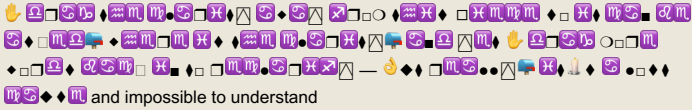
“At that time, the character had already lost its original meaning.”
yet now i am desperately asking, let's go heart to heart, me to you, and unclarify our suppositions—

complexity necessitates abstraction ; words beget abstraction, 



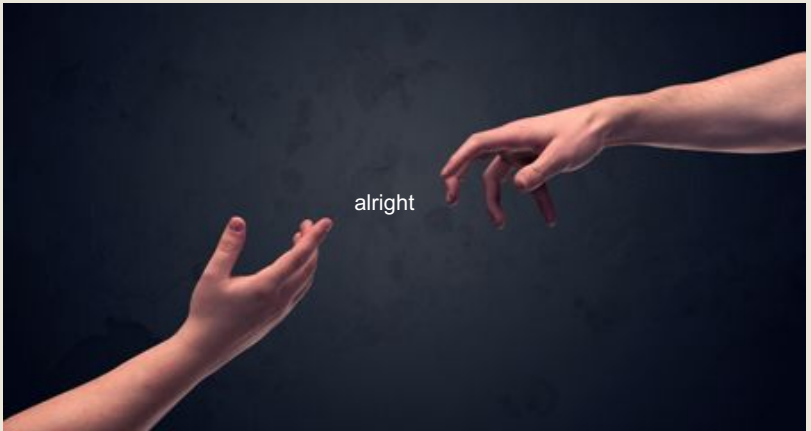
English alphabet is perhaps drained of meaning. おそらくすべてのアルファベット?

The bonds of a thousand tiny atoms brush up against each other—
and I can close my eyes against anything I wish—



And in our quests for understanding we understand less— four is an unlucky
number— Вавилонская башня рушится into little bits and pieces all around us all across our
alienation as our connections to each other collapse and our throats clog up, as I reach for your
hand and ask desperately—

should we take each other's palm skin finger finger finger finger thumb and desimplify?



Sureka is a junior attending McDaniel High School. You can usually find him with a book in one hand (nonfiction, fiction, manga...) and ideally, a packet of watermelon flavored Craisins in the other. He likes dance, art, and theater, and his goal is to become a professional author.

Sarafina Stoltz

Comparatives

Hard hearted woman

She studies evil all the time

He wished for one thing, for his life to be more interesting. He worked a nine-to-five job in a silly cubicle. When he returned home from work with back pain from sitting all day he felt that his pain was wasted on something so ordinary and boring. Just like his life is meaningful only because he'll die, pleasure is only meaningful because he knows pain. Maybe if he felt more meaningful pain in his life pleasure would follow. He would actually enjoy cold glasses of water, going out with friends, days with extreme weather, and would enjoy watching people walk by him without thinking that their lives must be much better than his, knowing that their lives were not better and he was just, well, a wimp.

On a fine torrential downpour morning he met a woman. He jumped over a puddle, which of course landed him in a much worse puddle, and she appeared from behind her front door, puzzled as to why he couldn't possibly have managed to get around such a looming pond-in-training.

"And I'm gonna have wet socks for the rest of the day." He self-deprecatingly smiled at her.

"Do you want me to lend you a pair of socks, well not lend, you can just keep them." Usually he would say no to any form of help because he's an idiot, but he wanted to be smart today. And honestly, he really didn't want to walk home later with an aching back and wet feet.

"If it's not too much trouble." He entered her house. It was nice: wooden floors, high roof, old finishing, and decorated with complementary colors. The paintings on the walls seemed too extravagant, maybe a little wannabe.

Hard hearted woman

She studies evil all the time

He pulled her hot pink socks up his calves. He saw that she had plenty of neutral colored socks. It was better than wet feet.

"Do you want to put your shoes by the radiator? Just for a minute, I'm sure you have plans." He really did have to get to work, but the way she said it didn't feel like a suggestion. He placed his shoes neatly under the heater, careful not to touch his hand to the hot metal. The action felt like obedience. His stomach curdled.

She violently shoved his head into the radiator. His knees buckled and his ears rang. Oddly enough, he was more shocked than horrified. Seeming eight feet tall, she dangerously stood over him. He was surprised her dainty hands could emit so much strength. His crumpled body felt so much smaller than hers. "Do you want me to continue?" Yes.

"Yes." He really did want her to hurt him. What concerned him more wasn't that

he let her beat him, but that he was scared of being hurt for such a short amount of time. She kicked him with unearthly power. He felt bruises form and scratches sting. Pain was gifted with glorious permanence. He knew his body would carry scars for years. She had limits, he was sure. Nothing cracked, nothing stained his alabaster skin that could not be hidden by clothes. Nothing showed besides the burned line on his forehead. Even that could be hidden by his hair, like she planned it that way, like she had done this a million times before.

Well she must have been mistreated
To have evil on her mind

The next day he woke up surprised to be alive and in his own home, still wearing the pink socks. The pain that coursed through him at the slightest movement warned him. He got dressed, observing the marks she left on his body in the reflection of his dusty mirror. When he left his home he looked at his surroundings: the grass greener, the sky bluer, the air fresher, and the happy looking people less hurtful to see. This is what he needed. When he got home from work the pain in his back didn't bother him, it gave him an excuse to relax, fully relax, a feeling he hadn't felt in years. He was finally happy, content.

Weeks later his pale skin had rid itself of the dark purple speckles, nothing but yellow hues left. As bruises faded and cuts healed his elated film over the world evaporated. Summer boiled in, but not even the laughing children in the streets nor the ample excuses for ice cream could cheer his mood. He thought about the woman. She had left her number on his arm like a cheap date.

Well if you be my baby
I tell you what I would do
I would work hard for ya' darlin'
And bring my dough to you

"Hello?" the woman asked.

"Can I come over now? How much?"

"Three hundred. It'll be more next time. Come in an hour." She hung up.

This time he awoke on her couch.

"Sorry, I did not have my men to move you to your apartment." He sat up and groaned. Hot tea sat on a side table. "That is for you. Drink up." He didn't like tea, but anything tasted good right now. His throat felt thick with mucus and blood. She stood by her dining room table counting stacks of money. It must have been thousands.

Oh she is a hard hearted woman
Who studies evil all the time

"Good business lately," she said, like she could see his eyes watching her with curiosity.

"You do this to others?" She let out a chuckle.

"Of course."

Comparatives (continued)

“Why?”

“High demand, and I certainly have plenty of supply.” She chuckled again.

“This makes no sense.” He ran his hands through his hair, cringing in pain.

“It is simple. If the only thing you had ever experienced was goodness, how would you even know it was good? Some people, people more extreme than you, need me to be the one who gives them an understanding of pain. They can be happy that way, and maybe they will have more empathy towards those who experience pain all on their own.”

“No they won’t,” he said. Her eyes met his. “Is it not even more luxurious to pay for a comparison than to just recognize the hurt, different kinds of hurt, that most of the world endures? If they could have any empathy then they would have it without you.”

“You are an exception, then. Most of my clients have an influential amount of money and they do nothing with it. They can not see the world the way we see it. Trust me, I tried.”

“You are excusing them.”

“Let them be excused if it means they are at least useful. I do better things with their money. And never mind the hypocritical position you have put yourself in.”

“I won’t be coming back.”

“Know that you will not be any better for it.”

“Are you any better than you were before all this?”

“No, but I’m rich, and having moral needs is easier than having physical ones. Unrighteousness is the price of being seen by the people you despise for being unrighteous, and in my opinion it is so much better than being ignored.” She refused to look at him, glued to counting the cash in her hand. When he left, the people strolling by didn’t seem as happy as they usually did.

Well you must have been mistreated

To have the same thing on your mind

Sarafina enjoys being creative and it has drawn her to write and pursue other artistic hobbies. Some things she likes to do are dancing, painting, and playing piano.

Joaquin Swanson

Pilots

The mind is a many-faceted thing. Thousands and thousands of neurons, sparking and sending information, confined within a grey fleshy lump, confined within a big fleshy body, making up the abstract idea of the "self." What is the "self?" Is it the body, the brain, or the concept? The suit? The pilot? Or the idea of the pilot?

Maybe, there are multiple pilots, each with a different idea. A pilot who remembers. A pilot who decides. A pilot who feels. And maybe, in the very back, a pilot who breathes, and eats, and sleeps, and who the other pilots were born of over the course of millions of years. And perhaps those pilots are made of other pilots? A pilot for your friends, one for your family, one for your gender, one for your philosophies. So what are those pilots made of?

Perhaps your pilots are uncoordinated. They cannot focus on one solid idea, or they cannot give something up once they are latched onto it. Perhaps your pilots are sick, or sleepy, and they cannot carry out their jobs to the best of their ability. Perhaps your pilots are angry, angry at the unfairness of their existence and their imprisonment within this failure of a monkey suit. Perhaps your pilots fight.

So what, exactly, are you? You are all of the pilots. You contain multitudes, millions upon billions, of individual thoughts metaphorically running about inside your skull. How did they get there? Where will they go, once the suit has taken too much of life to continue further? Do the pilots go on a vacation? Do they go find another suit? Or do they all go down with the ship?

The pilots have a society, that much can be certain. The largest and most influential city is what you would associate as you, of course, but what about the anarchists hiding in the back of your mind? The dissenting group, the pilots that say, no, you

should feed yourself and do terrible things, nobody can stop you. That's the thing, of course. You are, in fact, the first line of defense against stopping you, or at least part of you. If you give up, the darkness will eat your other pilots alive, and the other suits walking about will abandon you. For after all, two teams of pilots will never truly meet. They just send ambassadors in the form of words and actions.

Joaquin Lastnamehere is a human being that has decided to spend a largish portion of their limited time on this mortal earth writing about philosophy and humorous things. Their eventual goal is to figure out how to write something that's pretty good and might actually, by some sheer coincidence, be marketable and have creative value. They also might someday figure out how to write a creative and snappy author bio that isn't rambling or uses too many words.

Janiya M. Thompson

My People and My Love

My People and My Love

To have the feeling of being so oppressed
but uplifted
being so centered
but shifted feel
a sense of love and
a place where there is no hope
Lost beyond my scope

I've always been surrounded by my people
but they have never felt like my people
these people may never have seen me as their
equal
Equally, I feel it is not their fault
They perm their hair
Bleach there skin
Show adversity to melanin
I never found a home with those people
Who were my people

In isolation, I pondered my pity
There was sickness within and all around
Yet somehow I found faith

A glimmering beam of love untouched
A love you dont desire but require
A love too foundation that comes from within
A kind of love that loves with your sins

The love I found sat perched upon a window
Looking out onto my smogged days
She sang an encouraging song
Slowing removing my clouded ways

I never noticed my hatred
The sabotage I contained
Resulting from my pain
But when I mirrored my expression
My joy would fade
But with my love
With her smile so pure
She said, "What's not love?"
And I feared no more

Through continued an issue, a possessive strain
And oppression to her glorious reign
My people contained that sabotage I quit
Even though there were strays I still was hit

Janiya Thompson is a young, black, female, writer. She enjoys poetry and writing in an imaginative and descriptive way. For Janiya, creativity, writing, art, theater, singing, and dancing are ways to express complex and convoluted emotions and morals in an abstract approach.

2023/24 NM Bodecker Cohort Program Participants

**Liliana Castaneda
Beatrice Liebrecht
Biancastella Bleiler
Claudine Itangishaka
Dakarai Dove
Eleanor Haugo
Elizabeth Larrison
Janiya M. Thompson
Joaquin Swanson
Kennedy Tanner
Lakshmi Shore
Lucy Brewster
Malachi Lui
Maliyah Miller
Marlo Dabareiner
Norah Dixon
Owen Schafer
Pablo Navarro
Samson Kleiner
Sarafina Stoltz
Scarlett Rendon
Sophia Spencer
Sureika Shore
Tallulah Guilfoyle
Ursula Evans**

**This book was made possible by The NM Bodecker
Creative Foundation.**

Organized and edited by Jodie Cavalier.

All rights reserved.

**No part of this book may be reproduced or transmit-
ted in any form, without written permission from the
artists and authors.**

**ISBN:
9798881187651**

Portland, OR

