

Skipping Stones

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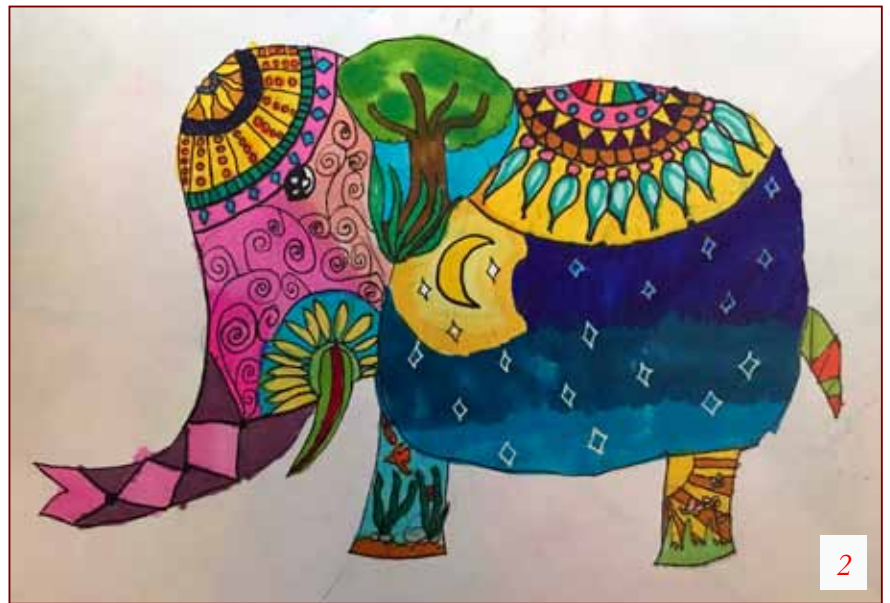
“Strife” by Katherine Han, 17, Texas. See p. 25.

Peace Within, Peace in The World

2022 Youth Awards • Book Awards • Haiku & Tankas



1



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5



3

Art by Tang Li, age 9, gr. 4, Chinese American, Florida.

1. Girl of Serenity. This girl wears a veil with rich color patterns, a golden head lace with a huge jewel pendant in the middle, and earrings that match the head lace. She looks stunning and serene. **2. Harmonious Elephant.** This colorful, peaceful elephant looks content. The details on his body include natural scenes and universal peace. **3. Mount Fiji.** Our emotions can be like Mt. Fiji—a dormant volcano. Drawing Mt. Fiji helped Tang calm down and distract herself from negative emotions. **4. American Robin.** The colors symbolize the robust energy of living beings in Spring.

5. Surreal Peace. In the overlapping landscapes of water and mountain, the sun shines and reflects its shade in the water. A pier seems to extend to infinity. The strong light makes viewers close their eyes and wonder whether this scene is real or not. It indicates that inner peace can be strong and colorful.



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Our world is seemingly becoming increasingly violent, chaotic, and tumultuous. Wars, economic issues, droughts, floods, the pandemic, gun violence, hunger, loneliness, and many other issues have not only had consequences for the people directly affected by these, but they have also affected society as a whole. Seeing tragedies unfold day after day causes many of us to lose our sense of peace. It may feel like our society is falling apart. Despite this, many *Skipping Stones* readers have submitted their articles, poems, and stories on how they have found peace in these chaotic times and on what peace means to them. Some pieces centered on specific ways to find inner peace.

Meditation is a proven way to find inner peace. We may think it is difficult. However, in reality, meditation is simply a way to calm the mind and focus on the present moment. One way to meditate is to sit in a quiet place, close our eyes so we aren't distracted by other things, and just focus on the breath. This can help us be more mindful of our thoughts. It can also help us realize that despite all the chaos in the world, in many cases, we are okay in a given moment. When we think about our immediate surroundings and what we are doing now—things are likely okay in this exact moment. It is often anxiety about the future, or regrets about the past that weigh us down. This applies both to world events and to issues in our own personal lives. In either case, focusing on where we are in the present moment, can help us achieve a sense of peace.

There are many ways to meditate—we can even do it while walking. The point is to try and calm the mind and be mindful of our thoughts. This helps us filter out the noise, stress, and pressures in our everyday life, and focus on centering ourselves. Simply pausing to reflect on our lives and appreciating what we have can help us be more at peace and calm. Being thankful for the things we have—a place to live, food to eat, and people who care for us—helps us achieve inner peace.

Some of us may have a difficult time 'stilling' our mind for very long. Luckily, there are other ways to find inner peace. Being in nature, whether we're walking, biking, or hiking, can also be very calming. Our daily lives are very busy, and we are constantly being bombarded with demands, information, sights, and

sounds. This can cause a sensory overload. However, when we're in nature, things are more peaceful. Instead of honking cars and yelling drivers, we hear the rustle of trees in the wind, the gurgling of a river, or the chirping of birds. The result is that we experience reduced stress levels and a much better overall sense of calm. Furthermore, it helps us focus on what is around us, just as meditation does, so that we can be in the present moment. When we inhale forest air, we expose ourselves to phytoncides—natural chemicals that plants give off—which have proven health benefits. Being in nature lowers blood pressure and, yes, stress.

Engaging in our favorite hobbies can also help us achieve inner peace. Hobbies allow us to relax, focus on the activity we are doing, and take a break from our stressful lives. One hobby that's especially helpful is making art. It helps us focus on the present moment as we engage our creative side. It also helps us express how we're feeling. For example, if we are painting something, we can express calm emotions by gentler paintbrush strokes. Conversely, if we are feeling angry, our paint strokes might be more rigid. Still, the act of painting can help us release our negative feelings, and as we express our creativity, we feel more peaceful.

Helping each other is also a practical way to experience inner peace. When we help people in need, when we share things we have with others, or when we see a smile on someone's face, we get a sense of satisfaction, a sense of belonging and peace.

Even if we alone cannot create peace in the outside world, we can certainly work to achieve peace within ourselves. No matter what methods work for you, be it meditation, being in nature, or engaging in some hobby, making these activities a regular part of your life can help you to center yourself, despite all the chaos around us. Mahatma Gandhi has said: "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

Thank you for sharing your creations, opinions, experiences—your truths! Whether your piece was selected or not, it's always good to keep on writing and being creative. It's yet another way to peace. Since we received many more worthy entries than what we could fit in this issue, we'll publish them in our next issue, and also online. Please do visit the website often.

Skipping Stones

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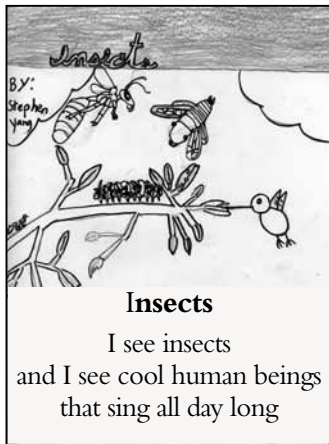
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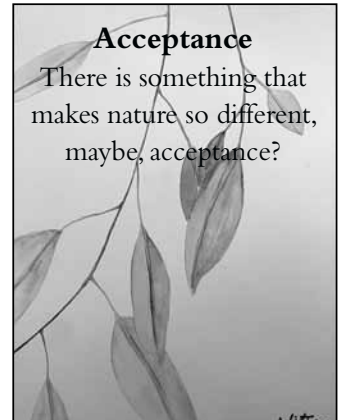
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—*Aditi Nair, 13, Virginia.*



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About *Skipping Stones*:

Skipping Stones is a nonprofit children's magazine that encourages cooperation, creativity, and celebration of cultural and linguistic diversity. We explore stewardship of the ecological and social webs that nurture us. We offer a forum for communication among children from different lands and backgrounds. *Skipping Stones* expands horizons in a playful, creative way. We invite you to send us your creative art and thought-provoking writing.

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Winner of three National Association for Multicultural Education Awards, as well as EdPress Association of America, Writer Magazine, NewsStand Resources, Eugene Ed. Assn., and Parent's Choice Awards.



Move Forward

Broken

Unfixable

But we can move forward

And see a new light

Nothing is broken forever

But it will take time

In that time

We can learn

Learn from experiences

Others had to suffer from

And move forward

The world is breaking

and falling apart

People are drifting away

But if we want peace

We must move forward

To see past the past

And see the future

To look at each other

And realize we are all the same

Suffering

We can come together

and move forward

—Maele Coulter, grade 4, California.

What Peace Is to Me

Peace within is so many different things to each of us.

Peace is being able to sit in the grass reading a good book and not be devoured by insects.

Peace is being able to speak passionately about one's life and not be labeled "angry black woman."

Peace is being able to go to any public place in the U.S. (in the world even) and not have to worry about being treated badly or unfairly because you are from a different race, creed, or religion or because you happen to be a woman.

Peace is having enough time to read a great book, knowing you won't be disturbed.

Peace is knowing all is well with the people you love.

Peace is being able to laugh with others at yourself.

Peace is knowing God's will for your life and walking in it.

—Paulette Ansari, African American educator, Georgia.

2022 Asian Celebration Haiku Entries from I.S.S.H., Tokyo, Japan

Rain splatter splatter
Onto our windows and roof
The beauty of rain
—*Jiwon Baek, age 11.*

Array of colors
Spanning across the skyline
Rainbow pot of gold
—*Kay Yeager, age 11.*

Golden hour
Bursting colors in the sky
Goodnight says the sun
—*Sayuri Lahoti, age 12.*

Gentle blush petals
Falling on every blow
Decorating Spring
—*Ayaka Eddy, age 12.*

Bluebells flourishing
Butterflies sipping honey
Blooming daily
—*Minami Kan, age 10.*

Acorns pelt my head
I look up in the oak tree
At squirrels laughing
—*Michelle Chuma, age 10.*

Spring is beautiful
The cherry blossoms gather
As spring makes its way
—*Karina Murakami, age 11.*

Charming gas giant
Saturn's ice and rocky ring
Completes its orbit
—*Pearl Hara Yamazaki, age 12.*

Beautiful, perfect
Petals of a sakura
Spring is here again
—*Emma Jakobsen, age 12.*

From a little sprout
To a very grand old oak
The tree cycle starts
—*Sophie Lee, age 11.*

Joyful kids playing
Children swinging on the swings
Swinging in the sun
—*Emily Oshita, age 11.*

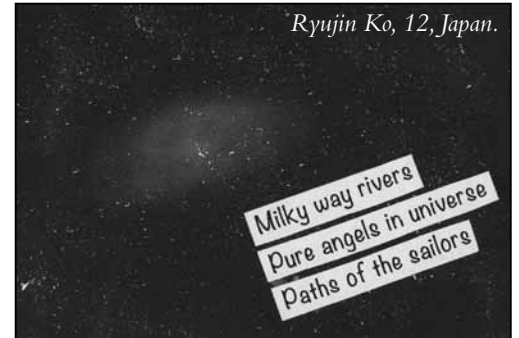
Loudly crashing down
It showers all that are near
Crystal clear blue spray
—*Nyla Deshpande, age 11.*

Pink petals spreading
Telling us spring is coming
But can't stay for long
—*J.J. Zhang, age 11.*

The sun slowly sets
In colors of red and pink
That dance through the sky
—*Ashmi Kumar, age 11.*

I feel the water
And it's chill pristine ripple
Grabbing hold of me
—*Tia Okada, age 12.*

Sakura has bloomed
Filling up the sky with pink
Soft petal dancers
—*Yumeho Ito, age 12.*



Willows enfold woes
Protecting us from danger
Drifting us to sleep
—*Sasha Kim, age 11.*

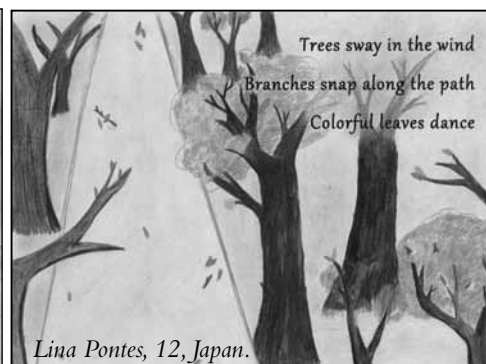
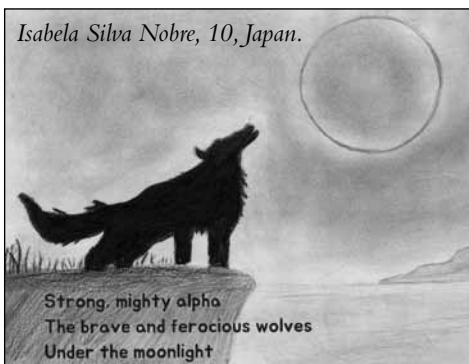
Bright sun relaxes
Time to call the moon and shine
Silent and soothing
—*Jinie Park, age 13.*

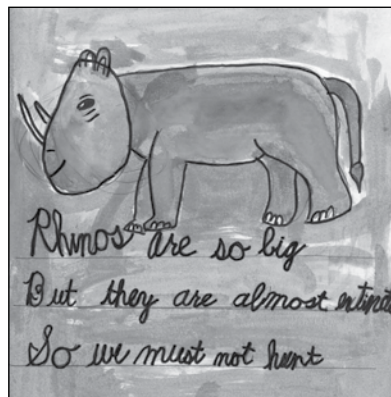
Blow the flower and
Watch a band of dreams and hopes
Scatter to the wind
—*Miki Kagasa, age 12.*

Moss are ancient plants
Growing wildly and sprawling
Nature's green carpet
—*Lina Pontes, age 12.*

Rushing home with rain
As tall trees lean toward me
A shelter is made
—*Jinie Park, age 13.*

Puddles are like lakes
My street is now a river
Hills are waterfalls
—*Araminta "Minty" Raphael, age 12.*





1. Crickets are fast
but, not fast enough
Got-cha!

2. I can see my house
far far away
beautiful view
—Ao-Ra Miki, gr. 5, Japan.

I like the fresh air
I feel the wind on my skin
The wind goes wosh wosh
—Hamida Nikzad, gr. 3, Minnesota.

Sea air stinging eyes
Waves attacking sandy shore
Spirit of the beach
—Noah Xia, grade 4, New Jersey.

The calm, calm waters
The serenity of it all
The untouched beauty
—Simone Huang, gr. 4, New York.

Cherry Blossoms
Cherry blossoms wave,
Welcoming you into life
Scattered shadows dance
—Kayla Spagnoletti, age 16, S. Africa.

Waves
Rhythmically moving
The waves racing each other
All running to shore
—Emily Shen, grade 7, New York.

The shimmering rays
Of the morning sun give us
A chance to redo!
—Cadence Liu, age 12, California.

Haiku by 4th graders at Laurence School, California

The Most Fluffy Dog

You make it so hard
To do anything but laugh
When I see your face
—Andreas Bastavros.

Bird of Paradise

Blue, orange, yellow
It's the bird of paradise
It dreams of flying
—Mila Lanin.

Mars

Dryer than the desert
Colder than the frigid ice
Deserted and empty
—Truman Peterson.

The Sun

Creates a good morning
Helps us see lush earth around us
Makes us warm in cold times
—Jack Pierce.

Global Warming

The earth is warming
The pollution rises up
The Poles start to melt
—Graydon Trygstad.

Trees of Oxygen

Trees give oxygen
Trees give peace and love to Earth
Trees help with stressing
—Ari Khalatian.

Shelled Turtles

Turtles underwater
Turtles habitat is the shore
Eggs now are babies
—Maxim Dolkart.



The Tree

Seeds, carried by the wind
Near a river grows a tree
Leaves race down the stream
—Ruby Cho.

1. Oceans

Graceful waves go by
Water is a mystery
Great creatures live here

2. Lightning

During a rainstorm
Vibrant electricity
Underneath the clouds
Haiku & art by Mila Brown.

Fish

Small but powerful
Beautiful in its own way
Pretty scales gleaming
—Dashiell Tarr.

Flowers

Swaying in the wind
The yellow flower dances
Rooted in the earth
—Callum Carlin.

Rain

Comes down fast and hard
Relaxing and warm inside
Cold and gray outside
—Finch Tremaine.

Jungle

I grow to support life
Many creatures live in me
I am my own world
—Maddox Ramirez.

Daisy

As spring blossoms fade
A dizziness of daisies
Spins me into summer
—Devin Grud.

Rough Waters

Feelings in my head
Rough waters in the ocean
Tsunami in both
—Jackson Lee.

1. The Candle

As the cold flame dances
Onto the patient wick
Lilies bloom anew

2. A Broken Earth

Slipping on plastic
The earth now grows wires as vines
Straws sprout, what are trees?
—Grace Coleman, gr. 10, California.

Forest

Leaves gracefully dance
Deer drink peacefully in lakes
Sweet berry that melts
~ Ziyu (Sarah) Wang, gr. 7, New York.

Autumn

Cool rushing water
Colorful big bold flowers
Trees lose all their leaves
~ Maelle Coulter, gr. 4, California.

Sunflowers

Shiny as the sun
Sunflowers brighten my heart
Yellow all around
~ Carina Araujo, gr. 4, Maryland.

Cherry blossoms bloom
My eyes swallow the beauty
They dance in the wind
~ Brianna Dalton, gr. 10, W. Virginia.

The rough waves crashing
Salty toes and sun-kissed nose
Where my heart belongs
~ Mia Sappey, gr. 10, West Virginia.

Wind

Gusts of wind howling
Dull, dark leaves spiraling past
Into the deep night
~Isabella M. Rexroad, gr. 10, W. Virginia.

Summer

boiling blistering sun
jumping laughing smiling fun
tomorrow will be
~ Jude Wayne Snyder, gr. 10, W. Virginia.

Unity in one
Light and darkness colliding
Harmonizing grace
Together as one being
Yet two different natural souls
~Mary Ellen Adams, gr. 10, W. Virginia.

Hunting Birds

The fish are leaping,
Birds come, with their sharp talons,
They begin hunting.
Claws pierce the soft flesh of fish,
And carry it back to land.

~Annika Thakrar, gr. 3, Massachusetts.



Charlie Gish, grade 10, Illinois

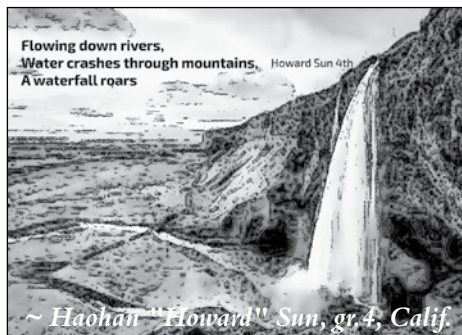
New Year's Day

Wearing her hanbok
pink tulip skirt, green leaf shirt—
a little girl thinks
of a flowery princess.
Tonight, she'll feel her beauty.
~ Grace Yu, grade 12, New York.

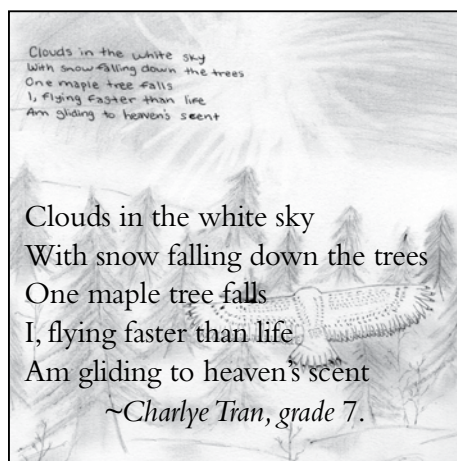
Shiver

The cold winter's day
guides strong gusts of air towards
helpless, quiet leaves.
The swaying of the forest
would make anyone shiver.
~ Horia Dobrean-Urzica, gr. 7, Illinois.

Ma's stew, a winter
Bowl of abalone derides
My foreign tongue. My
Culture is. My culture was.
Ma's stew, sips forth, sails me home.
~ Joel Lee, grade 9, Indonesia.



~ Haohan "Howard" Sun, gr. 4, Calif.



Tankas from Morgan Hill C.S., California

Stress is killing me
Surely pulling me away
Deep breaths become rare
Sleep ends up staying away
It's the side effects of stress
~Kirah Mistry, grade 7.

Redwood Tears

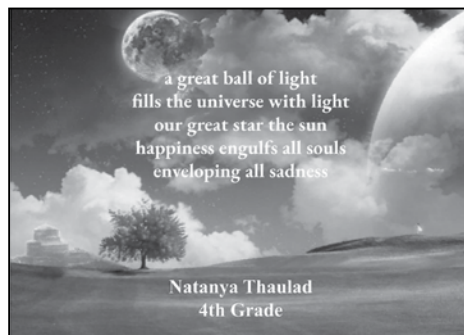
Wind blows through Redwoods
Tall trees reaching for the sun
Spiked grass peircing me
As I watch my tears go on
Blowing away forever
~Emmanuelle Van Crayelynghe, gr. 7.

Beach Day

Waves blue as the sky
Throughout the air, the beach balls fly
People laugh and play
Golden sands to match the sun
Love a beautiful beach day
~Nolan Lyle, grade 7.

Rebirth

Tree's limbs reaching far
Sun trickling through my viens
Flowers blossoming
A new hope, another chance
A fresh start, new beginnings
~Rhea Sandhu, grade 7.



Natanya Thaulad
4th Grade

The Modern Nomads

The part of the map in
my reflection
Blurred—
By my vision.
By the mirror.
The seeds being planted
Away from their birth.
To grow up in the tropics
or amidst the desert.
They adapt.
Survival of the fittest, natural
selection
Was its name.
But at the end of the day,
That is all they knew to do, adapt.

The people I call my own.
Is it the people I spend hours of the
day with?
The people with whom I share
blood?
The people I wish I could relate to?
The people who are compared twice:
The people who fight
To be the best of those around them,
And those who fight
To sit on top of their ancestry tree.
They are misunderstood.
The modern-nomads.

—Sriya Bandyopadhyay, Dubai, United
Arab Emirates. Sriya is a

high school sophomore in Dubai, where she resides now after
Singapore, Mumbai, and Kolkata, India, where she was born.
She is trained in Western Classical Opera, plays on volleyball
teams, kayaks, and expresses her poetry through calligraphy.

Diversity Is A Gift

In a world where peace is so hard to achieve
Daily discriminate wars in casual conversation
Make it practically impossible to ever believe
That humanity will ever change and become one nation

Unspoken comments or condescending looks
For those with skin color they cannot change
All because of what we learn in history books
When the past is past and no one deserves to be blamed

Not for peaceful tradition, nor for harmless religion
Let us judge based on actions, not biological genes
Let us cultivate this idea, raise belief in healthy activism
Let our minds extend beyond the confines of a screen

Let our words become shields we use to protect others
And let us give back the “unity” in our “community”
Let our fists unfurl and reach to hold hands with all colors
And let diversity impact our world, not adversity

We should all raise our voices, speak out together
Let us learn to spread peace instead of hate
For our independence is what makes us better
And our differences are what make us great

—Abigail Elina Handojo, 15, California.

Peace

Promising hope when there is none
Empathy and love for each other
Arousing kindness in hearts of strangers
Connecting people in times of trouble
Each person united as one

—Sydney Rhodes, age 10, Texas.

Sydney was born in Sydney, Australia,
but now her family lives on a homestead
in Texas, where they grow their own food,
and raise animals. She enjoys acting,
painting, writing, and dancing.

Coprinopsis Atramentaria★

Yesterday,
walking in the woods
I saw you. Your soul dripping like watery ink, seeping into
an earthen page.

Now,
you're a shell,
crumbling like dust
into the pages that bore you. Hiding from the plastic
ghosts that gathered around you.

In the
future will your
friends mourn?
All of them attached to the heartbeat of the forest.
All attached to the recorder, the transmitter
of trees. All attached
to us.

Their sharing
of sugars and light. Inspiring.
Not trolling their connections.
Not hoarding from others.
Will we ever obtain so
much wisdom?

★ Inky Cap mushroom

—Raleigh Rhodes, age 13, was born in Sydney, Australia.
His family lives in Texas, where they run an organic homestead.
He enjoys fine arts, performing arts, music, and poetry.

Celebrate America 2022 Creative Writing Contest

We are pleased to present the national winners of the American Immigration Council's Creative Writing Contest for fifth graders. ***Skipping Stones*** is one of the cosponsors of the contest. Visit: www.celebrateamericawritingcontest.org for more information.



Honoring our immigrant past, shaping our immigrant future

First Place Winner: Where I'm From By Elin Joy Seiler, Grade 5, Illinois.

I am from ships sailed. From my mother's quilt, finished with orange, green, and white. I see every one of the strong stitches holding it together. From my other house, where the walls don't keep the heat from getting inside them, like how I can't get that sensation outside of me. I remember the antlers of an elk, the strong trusting bone, as if they were my own. I'm from Máthair, Athair, and Mhamó. My red hair, green eyes and freckles match the others around me. And from, "grá do gach duine", and "déan tú féin sa bhaile". I hope that I will always have a home here.

I am from my favorite red and yellow hijabs. From my great grandmother's quilt decorated with a single moon and star. Each of the stitches remind me of great love. From my dusty, but loving town far away, like how far away my heart feels. I remember the wings of an upupa, the large, warm smile, as if they were my own. I'm from Waleda, Abi, and Jida. My creamy skin, dark eyes, and covered head match the others around me. And from, "تلييض ق دصل" and "عيمي جلا عم أف يطلو أب حم نك". I hope all are loving and kind to me here.

I am from mud roofs over my head. From my sister's quilt draped in red and white. All of the stitches look like a happy tear. From my pretty rock collection, all with mixed patterns and colors, like how mixed up my emotions feel. I remember the stripes of a tiger, the ferocious black streaks as if they were my own. I'm from Okāsan, Bāba, and Nai Nai. My caramel skin, brown hair, and dark eyes match the others around me. And from, "kebahagiaan adalah obat terbaik" and "selalu peduli". I hope that everyone cares for me here.

I am from what used to be beautiful. From my ripped quilt in faded blues and yellows. Each and every one of the stitches gives me more hope. From my wooden box, with my grandfather's wedding ring hidden in it, like how my everything is hidden from

the world. I remember the fur of a mouflon, it's warm, calming fur as if it were my own. I'm from мати, батько, and бабуся. My blonde hair, pale skin, and blue eyes match the others around me. And from, "вас знайдуть" and "надія завжди жива." I hope there will be hope here.

We ARE America.

Second Place Winner: Home

By Josephine Christine Ranaivosoa, gr. 5, Minnesota.

Tanana

Home

Andeha ody

Going home

Tongasoa

Welcome home

Fahafahana

Freedom

Mpandainga

Liar

Manaowna

Hi

I am home

He is not

His home is in Madagascar

My home is here

Here in America

A trip in air halfway across the world

He couldn't speak English well

Andeha ody

He is going home

He is going to America

The Land of Freedom

Where everyone is equal

We still have work to do

The plane has landed

Manaowna

Hello, America

Home ... continued

It took him five years to get his citizenship
Now this is home

She came to visit her sister
She took her youngest daughter with her
She left behind her husband and her other daughter

War
She is trapped
She can not go home
Home to Lebanon
She is trapped
Trapped here
Here in America

Her home is in Lebanon
Her family is in Lebanon
And she
She is here
Here in America

When the war is over she gets three letters
Two from her husband
One from her brother
They could not be delivered to her during the war

The first one from husband says
You have been gone too long
Will you come back
We need your help

The second one from her husband says
There is war
Come back
We are not doing good
People are dying
Come home

The one from her brother says
Your husband is dead
And so is your father
Many of your male relatives have died
Your daughter is staying with another relative
You must make money to bring your daughter to

America
For there is nothing here
Home
Home is Lebanon

There is nothing left in Lebanon for her
and her family
She and her family must make a home here

Here in America
He misses his old home
But he has found one here too
My family tell stories of old homes
Old houses
Old memories
Old friends

If not for immigration my mother and father would
never meet
My mother's ancestors from Lebanon
My father from Madagascar
I would not exist
Many of us would not be here
We are a nation built on immigration
We may be immigrants ourselves
We may be the children, the grandchildren, the great
grandchildren and so on and so forth of immigrants
From Asia, from Europe, from Africa, from the islands

of Polynesia we come
We come to America
The Land of Freedom
Where the people are equal
Where wealth is plentiful

This is not true
We are not all equal
We are not all free
America is flawed
We have a long way to go
But let us have hope

I am here
Here is home
Home is America
America is my home

Tongasoa
To the ones who have yet to arrive
To the ones who have already arrived
To the ones that have fled war, poverty, and hunger
To the ones who are here just by chance
To you
To me
Tongasoa
Welcome home

—Josephine Christine Ranaivosoa, gr. 5, Minn.

Third Place Winner: The Sapling by Lily Pham, gr. 5, Oregon.

I am a small Asian pear sapling. I live in the smallest, driest patch of land with very little soil and nutrients. I seek the sunlight, but the large trees above me take it all—there is not much light to share here. I am slowly wilting while watching others thrive. I wish I could grow somewhere with lots of light and fertile soil.

When I am finally about to die away, I feel someone gently lifting me up by my small roots and planting me into a small pot. There is new soil with minerals that revive me. I am then watered and left in the warm sunlight, where I begin to grow a little stronger. I am carried onto a boat and left to sail across the Pacific Ocean into the unknown.

Many days and nights, I sailed only hearing the waves crashing against the boat and feeling the salty sea air. I was lonely and afraid, but there was sunlight and rain to keep me alive. I knew this journey meant I would be travelling far away from my old life and be given new opportunities in a new home. Soon, our boat found land, and we docked at a harbor.

This new place looked different. Everything here was a lush green with flowers on every branch. I was carried off the boat and I looked around. The sky was a hopeful blue, the flowers were a brilliant red, and the drifting clouds were pure white. I was taken from my tiny pot and replanted in this vast new land. The land of America.

The Earth itself welcomed me with soft fertile soil that I've never felt. The sky welcomed me with plenty of refreshing rains when I was thirsty and warm sunny days when I was cold. Everything around me helped me to grow stronger than ever. I was happy, but it was hard for me to feel accepted here. I felt so different. Luckily, the trees around me taught me to adapt and learn about my new home. They moved aside their branches so that I, too, might reach the sun and grow. Eventually, I blossomed and bore sweet, crisp fruit that someone took to eat. I offered all I had to those who had helped me so I might help others in return.

Many years later, a new small sapling was planted beside me. We welcomed the new plant and watched it grow up. The sapling then shared with us the tale of how wilted it used to be, how it was put into a pot, and journeyed across the great sea. I smiled. The sapling was not alone. We were with it, and we would help care for it and welcome it in our home in America. ★

Climate Change

Climbing temperatures scorching earth.

Land once fertile turns to wasteland.

I and the rest of humanity need to halt the world-wide bickering and stop this plague upon the earth.

Maybe time is already gone.

After the industrial revolution, the world has 'heated up.'

The world is dying.

Every human will fall when it does.

Change was to be good.

Happening now, in modern times, it may not be.

After this is over, we may live in peace with nature, or we will die.

Never has this happened.

Green forests are lost forever.

Everybody must cooperate to see good times once again.

—Hanjun Wang, age 9, grade 4, Washington.

The P_Word

Do I dare expose a group

Of first time friends to

The p_word

Knowing they did not ride

The school bus with me

But I suppose the simplicity

Of my identity

Displays enough of the stuff

They despise

When I try to hide

The holes in my hoodie

Whenever they gaze in my

Direction

My silent voice proclaims

P_O_O_R to them

Even though I am polite

In spite of their bragging

I am able still to pledge

Allegiance to the

Slum I come from

And stand tall among

Them

—maggie d., African American poet, Washington.



The 2022 Skipping Stones Honor Awards

We are pleased to recommend the following outstanding books—in Multicultural, Nature, and Teaching Resources categories—as our 2022 award winners. These picture books, chapter books, novels and nonfiction works promote an understanding of cultures, cultivate cooperation and/or encourage a deeper awareness of nature, ecology, and diversity. They foster deep respect for multiple viewpoints and closer relationships within human societies. The honored titles offer various perspectives, and help us understand our diverse cultures, societies and their histories, as well as why people migrate. Hearty congratulations to the creators of these excellent books!

Please visit our website, www.SkippingStones.org, for the book reviews.

Multicultural & International Books

Dumpling Day by Meera Sriram; art: Inés de Antuñano; recipes: Laurel P. Jackson. *Barefoot Books*. Ages 4–9.

Spirit of the Cheetah: A Somali Tale by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed; Illustr. Julia Cairns. *Wisdom Tales*. Ages 4–9.

My Sister, Daisy by Adria Karlsson; Illustr. Linus Curci. *Capstone Editions*. Ages 5–8.

The Proudest Color by Sheila Modir and Jeffrey Kashou; Illustr. Monica Mikai. *Familius.com*. Ages 5–8.

I Am Hava: A Song's Story of Love, Hope & Joy by Freda Lewkowicz; illustr. Siona Benjamin. *Intergalactic Afikoman*. Ages 6–10.

The Clothesline Code: The Story of Civil War Spies Lucy Ann and Dabney Walker by Janet Halfmann; Illustr. Trisha Mason. *BrandyLane Publishers*. Ages 6–11.

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Real-Life Tales of Black Girl Magic edited by Lilly Workneh. www.RebelGirls.com. Ages 6 +.

Walking For Water: How One Boy Stood Up for Gender Equality by Susan Hughes; Illustr. Nicole Miles. *Kids Can Press*. Ages 7–10.

Classified: The Secret Career of Mary Golda Ross, Cherokee Aerospace Engineer by Traci Sorell; Illustr. Natasha Donovan. *Millbrook Press*; www.lernerbooks.com. Ages 7–11.

Peaceful Warriors by Mita Pandya-Sandil. *Fulton Books* (Available on Amazon & Kindle). Ages 8–12.

Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre by Carole Boston Weatherford; Illustr. Floyd Cooper. *Carolrhoda Books*; www.Lernerbooks.com. Ages 8–12.

Carry On: Poetry by Young Immigrants, Editor: Simon Boulerice. Illustr. Rogé. *Owlkids Books*. Ages 9–12.

Un Coqui de Boriquén Canta Aquí y Allá También (in Spanish) by Lara Mercado and Armando Valdés. Illustr. Nívea Ortiz. www.AdoptaUnCoqui.com. Ages 6–10.

Hear My Voice/Escucha Mi Voz (Spanish/English): The Testimonies of Children Detained at the Southern Border of the U.S. Compiled by Warren Binford for Project Amplify. *Workman Publishing*. Ages 8–12.

What If Soldiers Fought With Pillows: True Stories of Imagination and Courage by Heather Camlot; Illustr. Serge Bloch. Owlkidsbooks.com. Ages 8–12.

Everything Together: A Second Dad Wedding by Benjamin Klas. *One Elm Books*. Ages 9–13.

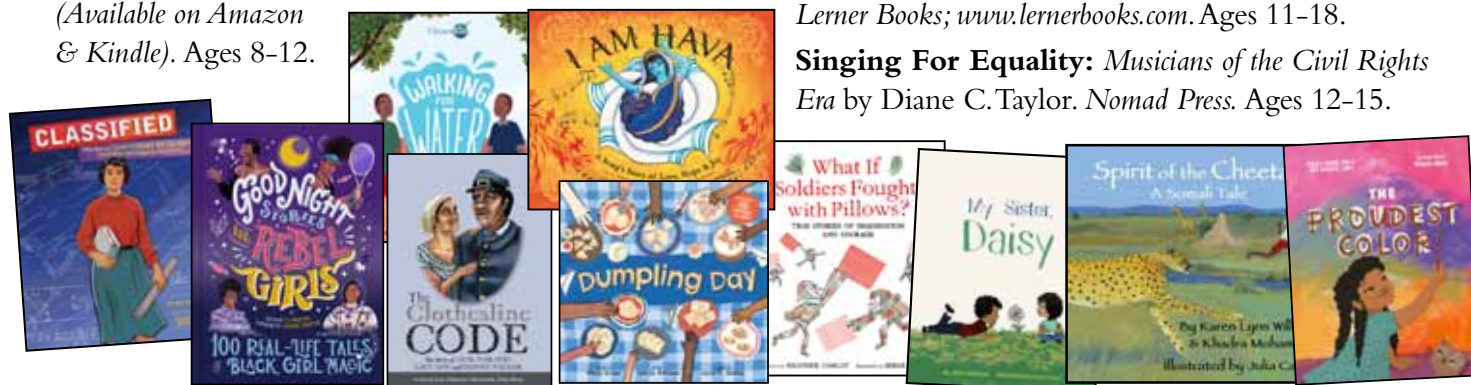
Small Mercies by Bridget Krone; Illustr. Karen Vermeulen. Catalystpress.com. Ages 10–14.

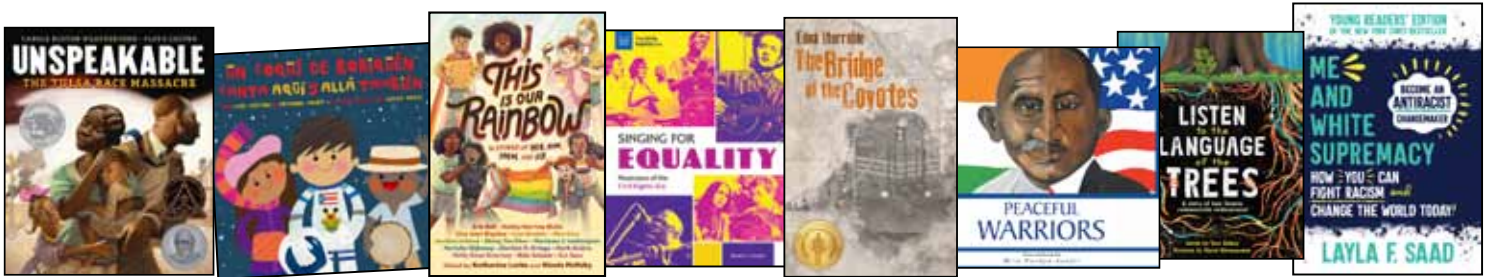
Me and White Supremacy: How You Can Fight Racism and Change the World Today! (Young Readers' Edition) by Layla F. Saad. *Sourcebooks*. Ages 10–17.

Voices of Diversity by Vanessa Caraveo. Available from Amazon. Ages 10–18.

Where I Belong By Marcia Argueta Mickelson. *Lerner Books*; www.lernerbooks.com. Ages 11–18.

Singing For Equality: Musicians of the Civil Rights Era by Diane C. Taylor. *Nomad Press*. Ages 12–15.





This Is Our Rainbow. Katherine Locke and Nicole Melleby, eds. *A.A. Knopf Books for Young Readers*. Ages 8-12.

Encounter: *When Religions Become Classmates—from Oregon to India and Back* by Kathy Beckwith. www.2wonders.com. Ages 13-18.

Reservations Required by Estela Bernal. *Piñata Books/Arte Público*. Ages 13-18.

Black Was The Ink by Michelle Coles; Illustr. Justin Johnson. *Tu Books*. Ages 13-18.

The Bridge of the Coyotes, a novel by Edna Iturralde; Trans.: Bruce Kernan. Available on Amazon. Ages 15-17.



Who Needs a Forest Fire? by Paula Henson; Illustr. Sue Todd and Emily Underwood. *Terra Bella Books*. Ages 8-11.

Awesome Chesapeake: *A Kid's Guide to the Bay, 2nd edition*, by David Owen Bell; Illustr. Marcy Dunn Ramsey. *Schiffer Kids*. Ages 8-13.

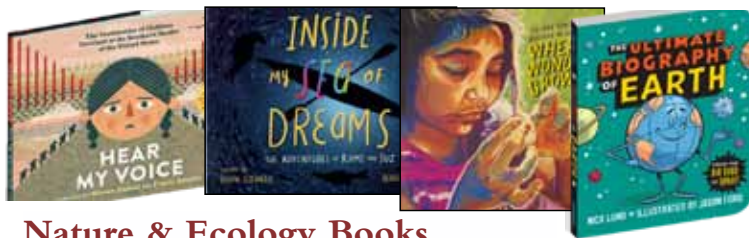
Orca Rescue! *The True Story of an Orphaned Orca Named Springer* by Donna Sandstrom; Illustr. Sarah Burwash. *Kids Can Press*. Ages 8-12.

Planet Ocean: *Why We All Need A Healthy Ocean* by Patricia Newman; Photos: Annie Crawley. *Millbrook Press*; www.lernerbooks.com. Ages 9-14.

The Ultimate Biography of Earth: *From the Big Bang to Today!* by Nick Lund; Illustr. Jason Ford. *Workman*. Ages 9-14.

The Minamata Story: *An Eco Tragedy* by Seán Michael Wilson & Akiko Shimojima. *Stone Bridge Press*. Ages 12-18.

The Dreamcatcher Codes by Barbara Newman. www.greenwriterspress.com. Ages 12-19.



Nature & Ecology Books

A Tree Is A Home by Pamela Hickman; Illustr. Zafouko Yamamoto. *Kids Can Press*. Ages 5-8.

Listen to the Language of the Trees: *A story of how forests communicate underground* by Tera Kelley; Illustr. Marie Hermansson. *Dawn Publications/Sourcebooks*. Ages 5-9.

Where Wonder Grows by Xelena González; Illustr. Adriana M. Garcia. *Cinco Puntos Press*. Ages 5-9.

Inside my Sea of Dreams: *The Adventures of Kami and Suz* by Susan Conrad; Illustr. Rebecca Rothman. *Driftwood Publishing*. Ages 3-9.

The World of Coral Reefs by Erin Spencer; Illustr. Alexandria Neonakis. *Storey Publishing*. Ages 7-10.

Teaching Resources

Reconstruction: *The Rebuilding of the United States After the Civil War* by Judy Dodge Cummings; Illustr. Micah Rauch. *Nomad Press*. Ages 12-15.

Explore Your Environment: *K-8 Activity Guide* by Project Learning Tree; www.plt.org. Grades K-8.

Voices of Newcomers: *Experiences of Multilingual Learners* by Denise Ammeraal Furlong, Ed.D. *Edumatch Publishing*. For all teachers and educators.



2022 Skipping Stones Honor Award Winners

★★ **Ariatna G. Claudio**, age 7, Maryland, & **Tang Li**, age 9, Florida.

★★ **Lilian Wang**, age 10, Washington, & **Mila Brown**, grade 4, California.

★★ **Nikita Paas**, age 11, New York, & **Avishi Gurnani**, age 11, Singapore.

★★ **Emily Tang**, age 13, North Carolina, & **Jaslene Kwack**, age 12, Illinois.

★★ **Teresa Zhang**, age 16, New York, & **James Wan**, age 14, Pennsylvania.

★★ **Kirin Mohile**, age 16, New York, & **Danielle Lee**, age 16, New Jersey.

★★ **Rebecca Park**, h.s. junior, Michigan, & **Shannon Ma**, age 16, California.

★ **Katherine Han**, age 17, Texas.

★ **Camille Campbell**, age 17, Arizona.

★★ **Students of Share Ground Project** in Seoul, South Korea.

Hearty Congratulations to all our winners! Joint winners are indicated by ★★. We received many outstanding entries for the awards and we simply could not publish them all in this issue. We plan to publish more pieces by the award winners along with other Noteworthy Entries in the next issue as well as on our website.

—Editors.

Colors of Ukraine

With images flashing in my mind,

I lay out the billowing silk
and begin to paint.

I trace the lines of my ancestry,
each brushstroke forming a branch
on my family's ancestral tree.

With golden gutta, I outline my identity,
ready to color between the lines.

I splash on the colors of Ukraine—
the teal darkness of Odessa's Black Sea,
the sun-lit golden domes of Kyiv,
the crimson autumn of Sofiyivka Gardens,
the flaxen fields of sunflowers.

I dream of living within the painting,
strolling and dancing in the silken world.

The kaleidoscope of hues connects me
to my mother's Land of Color.

—Camille Campbell, age 17, Arizona.

“For years, silk painting has captivated me. My mother, who moved from Ukraine to the United States, fondly talked of the colorful silk paintings made by artistic communities in Ukraine. Disappointed that this technique was not practiced much in the United States, I decided to change that, one brushstroke at a time. As I learned the intricate and complex process, each painting felt like a tribute to my mother's country.

When art gallery owners expressed interest in my silk paintings, I assembled a collection of my work and was fortunate enough to receive representation by Derubeis Fine Art Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona. With my silk paintings, I positively impacted my community by donating a few of them to the Make A Wish Foundation to raise money at their silent auctions.

When I'm doing a live art event, I always love to answer people's questions about the process of silk painting and how it ties to my Ukrainian heritage.

Along with my poem “Colors of Ukraine,” I have included four of my silk paintings: The Kaleidoscope of Dreams, the Vase of Joy, Flickers of Autumn and Serenity. *(Please see the back cover).*

You can see more art at: www.artistcamillecampbell.com.”

*Camille Campbell has also published a children's book, **Her Poems: Women Poets Who Changed the World**. It introduces six inspiring women poets who unleashed their magic to fill our world with courage, beauty, music, hope and peace. But it does not stop there. Camille then takes you—the young reader—on a journey to awaken your own inner poet. With easy to follow instructions and helpful tips, she encourages you to write six different styles of poems—from haiku to inaugural poems—guiding you through every step of the writing process, to make you a more confident, empowered poet. The book is being used by teachers to teach poetry and thus to inspire young poets in their classroom. (Also see p. 34).*

—Editors.

Cranbrook Cosmopolitan by Rebbecca Park, h.s. junior, Michigan.

Wherever I opened my crayon box in elementary school, the light orange color was labeled “skin.” Growing up in Korea’s homogeneous population, I didn’t think much of it. The crayon color represented me.

But when I came to America, my skin was no longer the color “skin.” It was strange to be in a society where skin color was starkly defined as “yellow,” “black” or “white.” Quickly, I saw that categorizing of colors created social barriers among different races, separating them into their own factions. This separation of racial groups manifested itself in many elements of American society, ranging from violent hate crimes to subtle discrimination in the workplace.

Then, something glorious happened. I went to a Sephora and saw so many shades of foundation, none declaring themselves to be a dominant skin color. The hundreds of foundation shades remind me that skin color is a spectrum, not a clear-cut category where one color is superior to the rest.

This subtle change highlights that we are slowly tearing down racial boundaries to create a more inclusive society. Some people might think that make-up is superficial, and in our efforts to attain equality, there is far more important work to be done.

But we cannot pretend that we don’t see the color of someone’s skin and make personal choices, intentional or not, as a result. In fact, I am not innocent in this matter. As a boarding school student in America, I initially felt more comfortable talking to Asian kids who looked like me than students from other races. My friend group mostly consisted of Korean, Chinese, and Japanese students.

I’m not alone in this self-segregation. Walking into the dining hall, the lunch tables are divided by skin color. My school proudly highlights the diversity of our community, pointing to our many cultural clubs: Indian Club, Chinese Club, and African American Club, but students mostly spend time in their own bubbles. When I witness this division in my dining hall, I recognize it as a microcosm of our greater American society. America, the melting pot of race and culture, has a long history of segregation that still continues today. Such discrepancies tell me that it’s not enough to be diverse; society must be inclusive. This is not to say that

it is wrong to connect with people who share a similar background or feel pride in one’s heritage. However, this phenomenon in my lunch period proves the existence of unconscious walls we build against each other. In contrast to the ombre of different foundations I witnessed in Sephora, the lunch tables strictly divided us into different color palettes.

It’s easy enough to recognize a problem; it’s harder to solve it. How could I transpose what I saw and felt at Sephora into my school’s community? I didn’t turn to makeup tutorials. Instead, I turned to prose and founded a cultural magazine, *Cranbrook Cosmopolitan*, with a few of my friends. Each issue we publish pushes me to evolve my worldview, helping me engage in stories past my small racial bubble. Reading the stories of my peers from completely different racial and ethnic backgrounds made me see our commonality. Through each exchange I’m one step closer to understanding my peers on a deeper level. I’m not just learning about someone’s favorite color or the sport they play, but how their identity informs their everyday life.

At first, I thought maybe I alone was experiencing this expansion of self. Then, I came across a group of students meticulously analyzing the back page of our magazine that featured fun facts about different cultures. That particular issue had a chart that listed the personality traits of each blood type, a personality test for Koreans. The blood type discussion became a conversation starter for different cultural groups to merge. Students from America and other cultures that use astrology for this purpose started comparing the ways various cultures attempt to analyze the formation of one’s personality, resulting in a fascinating transcultural discussion. Previously, the culture clubs in my school only operated within their members, hosting meetings and activities only for their club. Even though it was a small crossover, I felt that little by little we were moving past our bubbles.

When people flip through the pages of our magazine, I hope they experience the feeling I felt the first time I walked into that Sephora and saw all the shades of humankind on display. We can all be different, but still together. The binding holding together the stories of our publication proves that. But it’s up to us to turn each page and discover each other’s stories. ★★★



peace

we can't measure it, but we all know when it is there.

it might be a smile between neighbors

it might be a handshake between leaders

it might be someone offering a helping hand

it might make a difference in only one life or change the whole world

back in elementary school, "peace" seemed easy.

why can't people get along with others

why can't people choose kindness above all else

why can't people exchange their scowls for smiles

why can't people realize that violence and conflict are never solutions?

looking back, oh how foolish we were.

in reality, people see power gained through conflict

in reality, people believe that they are just "better"

in reality, people enjoy setting artificial boundaries

in reality, people like to hide from truths and see others as "the enemy"

so how, in this world, can we strive for peace?

perhaps, we can start by putting down our deadly weapons

perhaps, we can face the truth that we all aren't that different

perhaps, we can realize that power and conflict don't trump peace

perhaps, we can all start by using peace to define our own mindsets and lifestyle

and maybe, elementary students weren't wrong.

we can achieve peace, as long as we put our minds to it

we can achieve peace, even if it takes beyond this lifetime

we can achieve peace, one person at a time

we can achieve peace, and let you and me be the start. Let us start right now.

We The People

Have we forgotten

freedom doesn't come

from the hands of one

A strong seed

found by many

planted by many

Can't be watered by one

Poison is coming,

towards ground zero

ridding our roots

Foundations we hold so close

what'll happen to

justice, equality,

"We the People of the United States" When it's *We The People*

We the people

must remember

the importance of we

Because your bones are mine too

we share sweat and blood

we share laughs and joy

We share a home, we share a pride

Although at times

we divide, we disagree, we argue

and we might bicker with no end in sight

But we must always remember

at the end of the day

victory only happens

When it's *We The People*

Impressions of India

Bharat—India

ancient country of Sanskrit

with 28 states

beautiful temples

farms, gardens, and mosquitos

very rich culture

Ganga and Sindhu

Yamuna and Narmada—

old holy rivers

nearly all Hindu

some Buddhist, some Muslim too

land of ancient faiths

the three supreme gods

Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva

we respect them all

The cow - Gautama

gentleness, nonviolence

sacred and selfless

colorful Holi

goodness wins over evil—

major festival

festival of lights

cleaning, *Diyas*, *rangoli*

Christmas for Hindus

Bikes, trains, and rickshaws

Cities are populated

traffic and honking

festive occasions

colorful decorations

Indian weddings

women's silk *saris*

young girls in pretty *lehengas*

veils teasing, tempting

men in *sherwanis*

boys in *kurta pajamas*

looking elegant

spicy, diverse food—

Biryani and samosas

with lots of hot rice

jump, twist, up and down

lively Bollywood dancing

squat, clap, up and down

concept of zero

arithmetic, algebra

All from India =>

WIP: A Work in Peace

“You’re a peaceful person.”
“You have a calming presence.”

I’m glad that other people can view me like that on the outside. I’m glad they can see me as someone who is relieving to be around. I’m glad that I can be seen as a problem-solver who wants to maintain the peace.

I just wish I could have that inside.

Peace is a state of tranquility. Maintaining it externally does not guarantee it can flourish inside.

Running, running, running—for months and years, it seems, I’ve been trying to escape something that appears in its various forms: Worry. Sometimes, it’ll manifest as a looming deadline, an approaching assignment, a haunting fragment of the past, or any other way it can keep me fearfully on my toes.

It always manages to watch me and pull me back. I’ve tried to look for any kind of distraction I can to discard it, but even when I can lose it temporarily, I can always feel its presence. Without it, something feels empty. Missing.

I try to distract myself in any kind of way that I can, hoping I can forget about Worry lurking in the shadows, but it’s always watching, turning simple due dates into daunting obstacles.

Despite the shapeshifter that it is, I know who it really is. Worry is just a fragment of me—a discarded shard that once served to keep me grounded, now my biggest doubter, stalking me like a shadow.

Even with the way it plagues me, I always hold hope that its latest form can be vanquished—that it can be diluted into a tagalong that reminds me of what’s important instead of being a burden.

In the escape from Worry, I want to try to run towards Peace, the distant, glimmering light at the end

of the tunnel. But for as fast as I try to run from Worry, Peace seems to run from me at twice the speed.

“I’m tired of you following me,” I say. “Stop pestering me.”

“How can I leave you when I am you?” Worry says.

“Peace,” I call out, “How can I get you?”

Peace waves at me without saying anything.

“Worry, I’m asking you to go away,” I say again. “Aren’t you responsible for keeping me from Peace?”

Worry laughs. “Yes, but if I’m you, then aren’t you responsible too?”

I guess that’s true. There is no throwing Worry off of me by trying to avoid it. It only comes back stronger, its cast shadow growing darker and larger each time.

On the never-ending road to Peace, I find a note left for me.

“Start a daily journal,” it reads.

The famous daily journal. Something I tried long ago, managing to record two days before it escaped my mind. Something that isn’t going to work out...

For writing practice. I need to do it to practice writing.

Days, weeks, and months in, I manage to continue to write, but over time, it increasingly becomes a reflection of my recollections, channeling my honest feelings into text form to be memorialized.

“Worry, I write about you here sometimes,” I tell it.

“Me?”

“I think it helps,” I reply.

Still, Worry continues to gnaw at me, making me fret over small occurrences and always whispering to me, reminding me that it’s still there.

“You don’t need to always remind me of your existence,” I say. “You know, there’s a time and place for you. It’s pretty distracting to have to listen to you.”

“But isn’t that what you made me for?” Worry asks. “To have someone remind you of when you have to think about things.”

“You’re right, but just... not now.”

I look in the distance to see Peace beckoning me,

Impressions of India... *continued from p. 17*

first to mine diamonds
holds the oldest religion
India—the great!

—Reeya Chundury, gr. 6, Nebraska. India celebrated 75 years of independence from the British Rule on August 15.

A Work in Peace, *continued...*

seemingly wanting me to catch up but still continuing to flee.

Worry gives me a lot to think about, even the events and decisions that aren't immediately relevant. I'm just always reminded that they're coming at some point. Maybe not today or tomorrow, but take several more todays and tomorrows, and soon, it'll be yesterday.

"Can't you make your insights easier to keep track of?" I request.

"Sorry, just whatever comes to mind."

I begin to write it down. If I listen to what Worry has to say, maybe it won't be as confusing or scary to keep stuck in my head.

Though I begin to control Worry, Peace still seems so far ahead. And in some situations, Worry still tries to take hold of me, jittering and shaking, bombarding me with questions and hypotheticals that become more and more ridiculous but somehow still fathomable.

As much as I wish to get rid of it, I cannot destroy what is fundamentally part of me—especially something that can have a helpful purpose when controlled. To be with Peace, I have to walk alongside Worry, not run away from it. With each little step I take, I can rein it in.

Peace is still ahead of me. It might take a while to catch up to it, and even if I reach it, I would still have to maintain it inside me. It seems to wave at me with a smile, knowing we can unite for longer someday and coexist with Worry, reducing it down to a helpful rush of adrenaline instead of a weigh on my head.

This journey has been and will continue to be a WIP: a work in peace, never-ending but always going somewhere.

—James Wan, 14, Pennsylvania. James adds:

"I enjoy writing, drawing, and playing violin. I wrote my submission about my own feelings about reaching inner peace and how it can differ from external peace. I often find myself worrying too much about things that have happened or will happen, even if they are relatively inconsequential, but I've been trying to dispel that feeling. Being anxious can be helpful in short bursts, but when it occurs too often, it becomes more of a problem, and I think that reducing it is important on the path to peace."



Tilted tranquility (see p. 20.)
—Stephanie Shi, age 16, Canada.

Life Is A Maze

Life is a maze
There is only one way in,
And only one way out.

Your frustration,
growing each time,
you reach a dead end.

You can't seem to understand
Why do I keep heading towards the wrong path?
I've walked this way a million times,
Why can't I get it right?

There is no time to stop and think
I am running out of time,
faster than my legs can take me.
Dead end.

I rush in a different direction
Nothing has changed.
Dead end.

Stop.
Take a deep breath.
Think.
Take your time.

I stop.
I retrace my steps,
from the beginning.
I think all my choices through.
I enjoy the ride.

The walls look the same,
Yet my head is held higher than before.

My eyes focus straight ahead,
As an unfamiliar light approaches.
The end.

—Iyanna Stephens, h.s. junior, Pennsylvania.
Iyanna adds: "They currently are an aspiring poet, exploring their creativity through poetry."

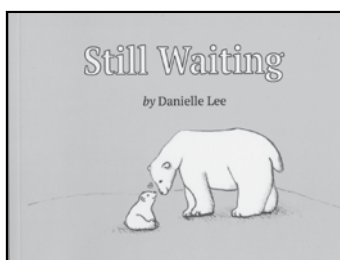
Peace Within, Peace in Our World

Imagine sitting down in a park with luscious, green grass, a nice clear blue sky, laughter among your friends, and smiles upon everybody's faces. Now that's true peace. Nowadays, we don't get to see this treasure. Instead, we see people in abhor, and cities, states, and countries fighting and arguing. In my perspective, all of these events cause a frown on everybody's faces, and sometimes death to precious, loved people. Nobody would like to have such dejection. That is why, if there is even a tiny bit of peace somewhere in this world, may the whole planet or the whole universe be blessed with such tranquility.

To be able to achieve this corresponding peace doesn't require much, even though it's very valuable. The only thing you have to do is be kind, be grateful, love yourself, and don't let the feeling of greed overcome you. For example, one person's persuasion and greed can lead to a few people or an entire country into turmoil for their own gain, like the war between Russia and Ukraine. You might think small actions won't change anything. The thing is, even if you don't think it might impact others or yourself, it *will* in many ways. By helping a homeless person, giving them advice, a helping hand, or even just listening to their problems could be very useful in their lives.

In brief, along with all I said, peace is very valuable and can be achieved easily. Now, never let greed overtake you! Just have fun and love!

—Yinleng Jim, age 10, Florida.



Still Waiting, a Book on Climate Change

by Danielle Lee, 16, New Jersey.

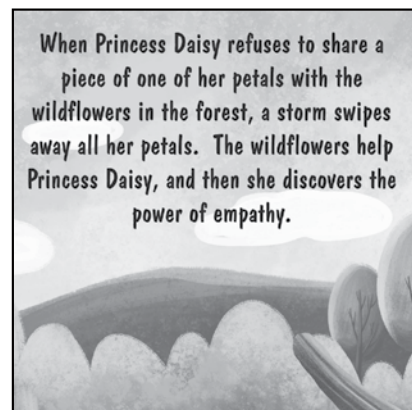
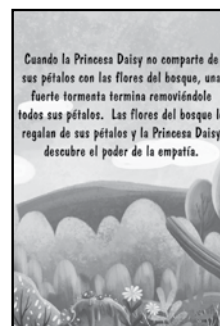
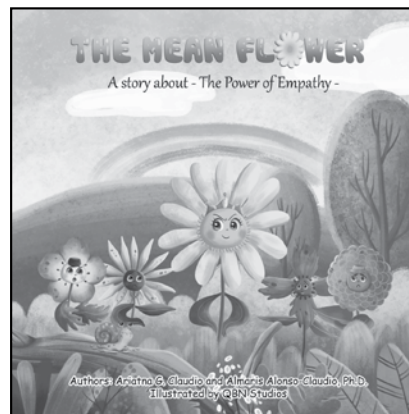
While there are many children's non-fiction books about nature, Danielle's book is one of the few story books on this topic. She hopes it inspires

and encourages young readers to grow a passion for the environment. She wrote it in both English and Spanish to help ELL students. **Still Waiting** has been well-received, especially in New Jersey, the first state to mandate climate education in their K-12 curriculum. The book has also been recommended by the state's social studies council. Several school districts are using it in their curriculum. Its message has been shared through local library programs, book donations, and children's museum, with more than 1,500 children. Great job, Danielle!

For more information, please visit: www.daniellelee.org/my-books

Ariatna G. Claudio, age 7, Maryland

Seven year-old Ariatna entered her picturebook that she co-authored (with her mom, Almaris Alonso-Claudio). **The Mean Flower—La Flor Rebelde** is available as both English and Spanish editions. Illustrated by QBN Studios, it is available on Amazon. It's a story about the power of empathy. When we practice kindness, friendship and empathy, we help promote and spread peace in the world. Hearty Congratulations, Ariatna!



Tilted Tranquility (see p. 19)

"Time slows down while you wander in your mind, allowing you to enjoy the present moment. In a fast-paced world like ours, finding internal peace is difficult, and we often get lost on the sidelines. The baby in my painting is a symbol of peace. The jigsaw pieces are the various aspects of our lives that contribute to positive thoughts, emotions, and outcomes. As more of the darkness is covered, the flower petals become brighter and more alive, reflecting the true beauty of peace, something everyone strives for."

—Stephanie Shi, 16, Vancouver, Canada.

Language Diversity and Why It Matters

Imagine a person who is the last living speaker of their native tongue. They work persistently to save their language, but a prevailing, more popular language is pushing their language to extinction. When they die, their language will also die and with it, thousands and thousands of years of history, culture, traditions, and stories. We live in a world where linguistic diversity, just like biodiversity, is considerably in danger. Out of the thousands of languages spoken in the world today, only around 200 are spoken by more than a million people. Over 80% of languages are spoken by native peoples who comprise 10% of world population and there are 15% fewer languages today than there were in 1500 AD. Of all languages, 40% are in danger of extinction, and one language dies every two weeks.

The western world has accumulated a negative view of linguistic diversity. In the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, descendants of Noah attempted to build a tower leading to heaven. In response, God sabotaged the common language that enabled them to communicate. This story has convinced many that linguistic diversity is not beneficial to society. As the world becomes more globalized, does the world still need so many languages? The world does need language diversity because languages are specifically adapted to its speakers and environment, language preserves the cultures and traditions of peoples, and a multitude of languages provide different insights and perspectives of the world.

Languages are fine-tuned to their speakers and environment. Languages have different perceptions of color to fit their daily lifestyle. The Welsh language, for example, does not make a distinction between green and blue, which means that those colors are seen the same in real life. Because the human body can be perceived differently, languages also have different ways to name body parts. For example, in West Africa, languages signify the hand as covering the whole arm and in Melanesia, dogs are said to have four arms rather than four legs. Likewise, languages have words that do not exist in other languages due to different perspectives and ideas. In Polynesian languages, there are no words for “sadness” or “depression,” conveying the absence of these feelings. Linguistic diversity allows people to apply the most appropriate ideas and words needed to communicate—ideas and words best suited for their culture, traditions, and environment.

Language diversity also preserves the cultures. Fekitamoelea ‘Utoikamanu, the ambassador of the linguistically diverse country of Tonga to the United Nations and the minister of Tonga’s foreign affairs, believes “language and culture are intricately related and dependent on each other, shaping personalities and serving as repositories of knowledge. They contribute to how we see ourselves and can determine with what groups we identify.” Language is the primary way to convey a culture’s songs, stories, and poems; Languages are homes to millions of oral stories passed down through generations. Many of these stories are not written down, and thus preserving linguistic diversity saves these important stories from extinction.

Languages also have different ways to view reality, which reinforces cultural practices. In many indigenous languages, basic activities like farming, fishing, and hunting, are directly connected to spirits and mythic beings whose stories are the basis of these people’s cultures and languages. If their languages were lost, they would lose this vital connection to their culture and ideology in their daily lives.

America has a vast range of linguistic diversity due to large scale immigration (and also as a home to the diverse “First Peoples,” the Native Americans), but is often seen as a zone of language extinction because immigrants’ tongues die out and are replaced by English. Countries like India and Switzerland host a wide variety of languages, but they are bound together by a strong national identity. America should not be threatened by language diversity because like India and Switzerland, America has strong patriotism and nationalism that unites the country.

There have been various efforts to preserve language diversity and save endangered languages throughout the world. Linguists are scrambling to document disappearing languages through making dictionaries, translating oral stories, and recording traditions. Bilingual education has become more prominent and new technologies have allowed indigenous people in Mexico, South America, and Asia, to type and read in their native languages. Several countries around the world are making efforts to preserve the cultures and languages of their people. For example, Bolivia is making strides to combat this threat to language diversity by valuing indigenous culture and languages. With

strong indigenous heritage, Bolivia has had success in preserving its indigenous cultures, knowledge, and history; 36 of Bolivia's indigenous languages are now considered official languages. Likewise, in Botswana, where the only languages taught in schools were previously Setswana and English, the government is now implementing the instruction of 11 new languages. This is aimed to preserve indigenous cultures in Botswana and help protect the endangered languages of native speakers. Mark Turin, anthropologist and linguist at the University of British Columbia, believes that while globalization has been blamed for destroying languages, it is helping some languages stay alive. Speakers of oral tongues are turning to the internet as a virtual space for languages to live and cultures to thrive. Globalization can therefore help support indigenous communities in documenting their linguistic heritage.

Language is the basis of human culture. Learning languages connects us to different cultures and gives us new perspectives and ways to see the world. We should learn from nations like Bolivia and Botswana and work toward valuing our own endangered languages to preserve our world's diverse traditions, cultures, and stories. In the U.S., indigenous languages are increasingly prone to death. Before colonialism, there were 300 indigenous languages spoken across the country. It is estimated that only 20 will remain by 2050. Therefore, it is crucial that we protect our valuable languages to help preserve cultures and societies in America and across the world.

—Kirin Mohile, 16, *h. s. junior, New York.*
"I am a language activist and blogger. I love to blog about different ethnic foods around my hometown and how these foods can protect languages around the world. In my community, peace is a place where languages and cultures are welcome. Languages help preserve cultures."

To find peace with the world is to find peace within myself. This world is noisy and I feel like I am stuck in a tornado of din, debris getting thrown around violently and all I can do is hide my head behind my arms and hope for the best. I wish I could make it all stop; the noise, the flying debris, and the cuts it makes on my arms as I protect my head, but I cannot. The fact of the matter is that this world is a terrible place filled with malice, spite, and greed. I can only hope to make it out minimally scathed.

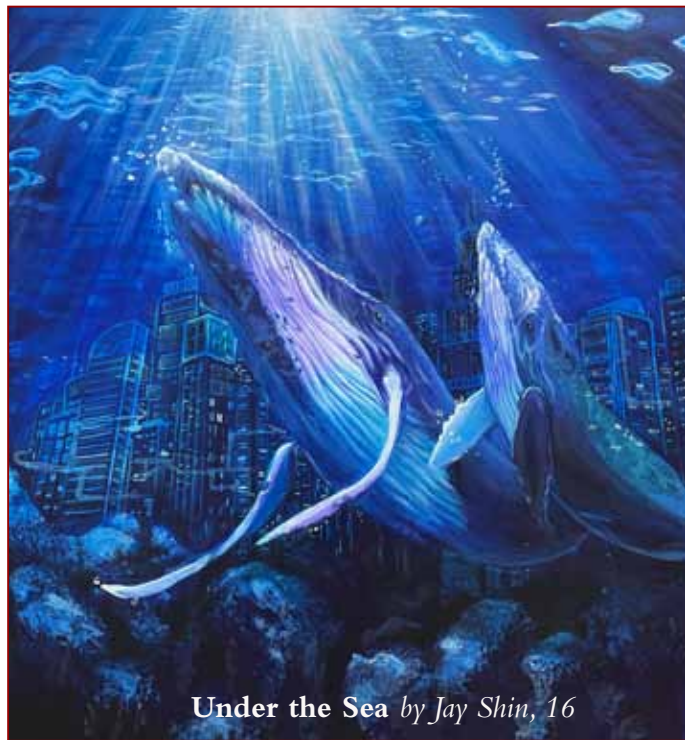
So, if I cannot find peace with the world, I must find it with myself. Sometimes, this simple task seems as difficult as finding peace with the entire world. I am constantly on the edge of a cliff with my legs dangling over the ledge and my hands tussled in the grass beneath me. I can see miles and miles out into the horizon, and if I were to look down, I would see the cracks in the ground hundreds of feet below me. I get a fluttering shock of adrenaline as I play Russian roulette with my life—just one strong gust of wind and I could fall. There is no peace in adrenaline.

I have to remind myself that not everything has to be complicated. Silence, to me, is peace. When I feel like my ears can see yards ahead and I feel absolutely no presence around me, I feel what I think is peace. I bask in my room with a vanilla candle lit, the warm and sweet smells of it wafting through the air. Maybe once I submerge myself in the quiet, I'll indulge in music. There are many nights that I try to drown out the loudness of life with loud rock music, sharp guitars and thumping basses triumphing through the outward noise. But I prefer the softness of certain music, the kind that puts a soft hum in your rib cage; I feel as if I can only truly enjoy music when it cuts through silence.

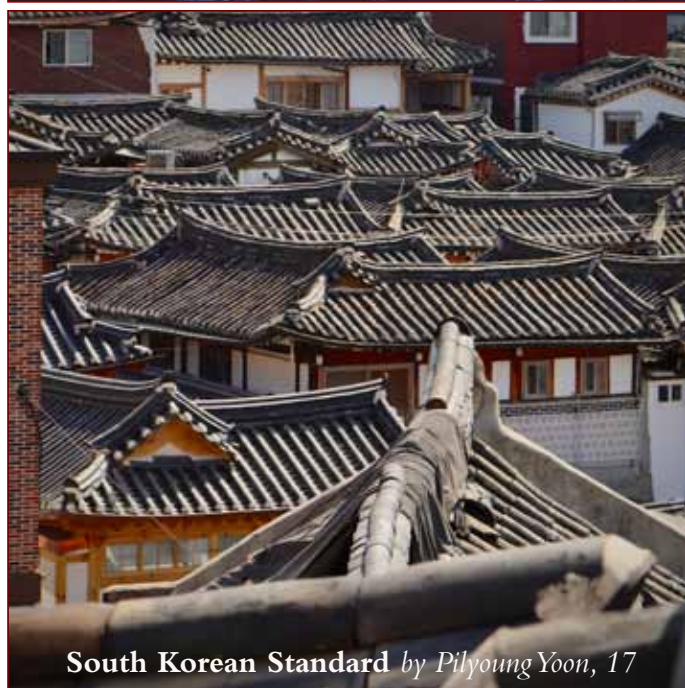
I think true peace is the candles, and the soft music, and the warmth of it all—but I've also accustomed myself to artificial peace. Sometimes when true peace is too far out of reach, when I'm very stressed, I like to take baths in hot water that burns my legs as I wade in and turns the heels of my feet red. I throw in lavender scented salts and listen to grunge music until I can feel the blood pumping between the thin layer of skin on my forehead and my skull. It is like sitting on that cliff—the thrill of not knowing is almost pleasurable.

When the world bangs you around and life feels like sinking in the deep end of the pool, when the water blinds your eyes and the lack of air causes your head to pound, peace is brought by the small things. The world runs too quickly with too many grievances to count, and thinking about it all only distorts the minimal sense of peace I have. Peace is moments in time in which the world seems to slow. It is when everything moves in short frames and each one moves on to the next before you can fully grasp what the previous entailed. I suppose I crave nothingness, and it is that in which I find peace.

—Cara Cantwell, age 17, *Maryland.*



Under the Sea by Jay Shin, 16



South Korean Standard by Pilyoung Yoon, 17



Rainy Season in S. Korea by Andrew Park, 17



Self Portrait by Seohyun Oh, 16



Structured Chaos by Suyeon Bae, 17



Lost in the Wilderness by Taejun Anh, 17

Artwork and Photographs by Students of Share Ground Project in South Korea, p. 23-24

Art & Photos by Students of Share Ground Project in Seoul, South Korea

Twenty-six students studying with the **Share Ground Project** entered their art, photos and writing for the awards. Pages 23 and 24 show their artistic abilities. We plan to share some of their writing in our next issue (as we ran out of space for everything we wanted to include in this issue).
—Editors.

Structured Chaos, p. 23, by Suyeon Bae, 17.

Acrylic on paper, but the tourists in the background were individually drawn, photographed and digitally transferred to the painting. I was inspired by Sphinx, the Greek mythological creature.

In this self portrait, I have deliberately morphed my head into a sphinx, to portray a mentality of resilience and strength. Internalizing my own insecurities of being “weak” and externalizing my need to be portrayed as “strong,” this sphinx is a mode of intentional coverage. It is the epitome of my very own mask—my underlying fragility disguised under a guise of dominance.

Intentionally, the sphinx is well-built, muscular to a point of superfluity. It also stands magnified, tall and in focus, yet alone. While there are admirers scattered through the desert, substantial distance remains between them and the sphinx. There is also disconnect between the sphinx and its surroundings: the “misplaced” wings and London’s Tower Bridge are an example of such a discord. Both convey a sense of oddity amidst such a classical statue— an expression of my attempt to stand out rather than conform and a subtle homage to a city where I spent most of my childhood.

To convey an air of integration amidst the structured chaos, it serves to mention that all elements have been aggrandized to portray a misguided first impression: an impression most have upon an initial introduction of me, and what most fail to see as the underlying qualities in a person. There is more that meets the eye to each existence, so long as we give it enough time to surface.



Southern Island, South Korea by Jangheyok Oh, 16



Mirror Like Nature by Louis Chang, 16



Dongdaemun Design Plaza

Photo by Raymond Jean, 13

Art by Katherine Han, age 17, Texas

As an artist, I explore the relationship between the emotional aspects of being human and the realistic material world. My submissions (*Also see her front cover art.*) express how an individual can find peace with themselves and their own identity in modern society as it is today.

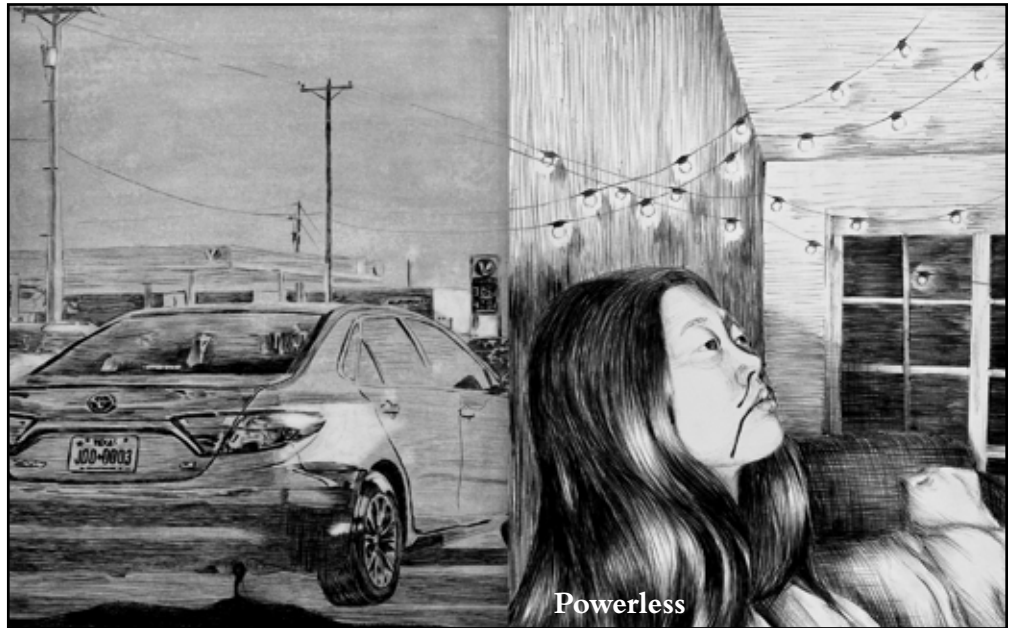
Powerless is a diptych which showcases the connection between the increasing societal reliance on industry and technology and the decreasing overall societal mental health. This piece addresses the overlooked issue of how innovation and development has mentally affected the people who grow up in the modern environment.

Strife (*front cover*): For my oil painting, I used bright colors and a palette knife to create an abstract face that physically depicts an inner conflict. Strife discusses how inner conflicts are the worst to face because the opponent is a reflection of ourselves.

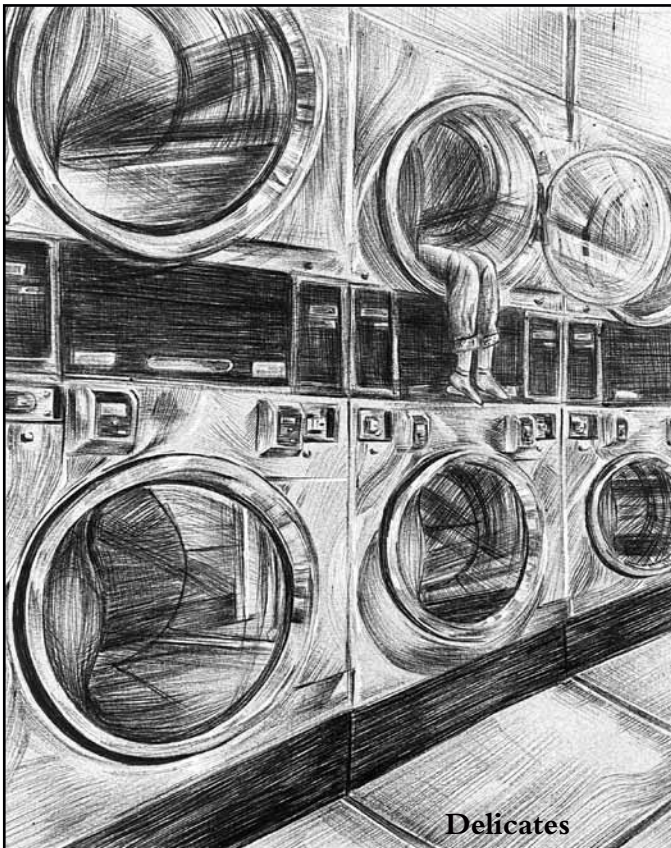
Hiraeth (*bottom right*), My photograph, depicts my mother's cultural connection to her home in China. While embracing her new American

identity, the photograph shows how she desperately holds on to the traditions of her homeland in order to achieve peace between both her cultural identities.

Delicates (*bottom left*) is a piece that discusses a loss of individuality in a world of mass media and mass consumerism. The multitude of washing machines represent how people have been compartmentalized and forced into units that are nearly identical to one another.



Powerless



Delicates



Hiraeth

A Love Letter to Music

“As an avid violinist and dancer since age three, music has been a central aspect of my life for over a decade. My submission is a love letter to Music to not only convey my own appreciation for music, but to also inspire our community to recognize that we shouldn’t take something that seems easily accessible to us today for granted. I hope everyone can find something that gives them the deep-rooted peace and cathartic release that music provides for me. I hope you enjoy.”

Dear Music,

I stepped into my orchestra class this morning to hear the words of my conductor falling like stones one by one down into the pit of my stomach: “Unfortunately, our music department’s long-awaited summer Europe tour was canceled due to the pandemic.”

The hope of golden concert halls and massive audiences and the vision of strolling down the streets of Austria with my friends, with our instruments carried on our backs... Gone, gone, and gone. These glimpses of a future that I would never have taunted me now.

Nevertheless, as we gathered to practice, you wrapped your arms around me, soothing the clamor in my mind and washing every trace of tension from my body. That’s when the warm, grand sound of the string instruments, their calm amber tones eliciting images of clouds clearing on a sunny day, reassured me that everything would be okay.

It’s selfish of me, but all I can think of is how much I want to hold you close and never let you go. I am worried you might get replaced by technology. Computers threaten to substitute you with digital sounds, in which synthetic instruments replicate real instruments through electronic devices. It wouldn’t be the same! Just imagine: When Richard Wagner’s long-awaited new opera production of the Ring was about to debut, music fans like myself buzzed in anticipation until we heard that the “orchestra” would consist of sampled instruments played through a computer. Not a CD, not even a pre-recorded studio recording by living musicians—a computer. The emotional summons of “Ride of the Valkyries” with its vibrating strings and rousing horns can’t inspire an army if they are replaced by an algorithmic alternative.

What if people do not want or need live musicians like myself anymore, or worse, eradicate you? I need you! I love you!

You are an unrivaled storyteller. Even as the Titanic was sinking in 1912, the band continued to play “Nearer my God to Thee” until the very end, when the ship slipped below the surface. Passengers who were still on board could hold onto tranquility amid chaos because of you. There may be a million distractions, there may be a millionth of a second until the end, but you give people peace.

Even if someone has dementia or Alzheimer’s disease and forgets everything from how to tie their shoes to what their daughter’s name is, they can still remember you. Their ears will perk up and the light in their eyes will briefly return in recognition of a tune from you. Your voice transports them to a world of familiarity, where all that was once lost is not lost after all. As they navigate a world of thick fog, you are the soothing hand placed on their shoulder. You are the warm blanket wrapped around their shoulders on an icy winter day. That is the power you have.

Music, you’ve been a huge part of my life for the past 13 years, ever since I gripped my little violin tightly in my hands and caressed you, clueless yet curious. I have string imprints on my fingertips from my time with you. It’s okay, I love you all the same. You are the one I can fall back on and still feel safe. My first staccato attempts at age five may have sounded like fragmented burps, my first pizzicato like birds pecking on wood. But you stayed with me until my spiccato imitated the whimsical flight of a hummingbird, and until my plucking of strings in a pizzicato resembled a water droplet spreading ripples in a crystal-clear pond. You created a space where I know I can’t be harmed, where the ticking of a clock, the jangle of an iPhone can’t tear my focus away from you. Music, you invented heaven, one note at a time.

Thousands of years ago, when humans lived in caves and huts, you were there, mimicking communal heartbeats through the reverberations of drums. You were always there, the hidden harmony in nature, waiting to be discovered by humans. We listened to the rhythm of waves, the sound of wind in the trees and birds, and heard you. We danced and used our voices and sang because of you. We invented instruments for you.

No matter what the genre—folk music, classical,

Overcoming Adversity

opera, jazz, hip-hop, country, or K-pop—you are in every beat and rest. You are the bridging of communities, the unifier across the globe. People of the past and present know you deep in their unconscious.

When I visit cities, I hear the jazzy glissando of a saxophone wedged under the shadow of a giant skyscraper; the rhythmic beats from a drummer in the subway station make me feel like I am in my own world as I bounce along. You give yourself away, freely. I want you to be there in the strum of guitar chords mixed with a raspy, heart-felt singer's voice filling my imagination under the blue sky and baking sun at the Farmers' Market. In my quiet, lonely moments, you speak to me. No, I cannot bear to lose you to a synth.

In our future days together, I want children learning and loving how to play you as you play in them. Solos, duos, quartets, bands, ensembles, symphonies, orchestras, world music reflected in every culture. No one is more diverse than you, yet you are able to create harmony.

From schools to street corners to coffee houses to the grandest concert halls, everywhere I go, I want to have you in my life.

Sometimes, when I am alone in my room playing my violin, having a conversation with the black printed notes on the page, my fingers flying and my bow gliding across the strings, I forget myself in you, and you flow through me like water. Time stops. That gives me peace.

Love,

—Shannon Ma, age 16, California.

More Haiku! (See p. 6-8)

Trees devoid of flowers
Look towards the spring
To be covered in petals

—Maya Yagi Koreth, gr. 9, Massachusetts.

Sounds of mother tongue
Echo in the foreign lands
Stolen from her lips

—Sophia Kim, gr. 11, California.

We've all heard of the Black Lives Matter protest. It was and still is a dark time. People aren't being treated fairly. And, I mean all people around the world. Different cultures are being discriminated against from many different countries and religions. Many people like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and others. But we must be heroes as well. No one has to be super famous to change the world. A little kind deed can go a long way. All you need to be is brave and determined.

Many people lost their lives and sacrificed many things so that the world would be safer. Bobby Hutton is an example. He was a member of the Black Panthers in New York. This group was made up of many people, mostly African American. When he was a very young boy, Bobby Hutton was part of that troop. One day the police decided to put an end to the Black Panthers. They all ran into a house for shelter. Little Bobby ran outside and took off all his clothes to show he was unarmed. The police still shot him many times. This was proof of police brutality, racism, and unfair treatment.

To me, different means unique and different personalities. But to some people, different means bad, and they see it as something that must change immediately. Being unique is something that you should never have to hide. You must be proud of who you are and what you do as a human being. Whether it's the way you look, or your hobbies. Always be proud and never hide it. I myself have been doubted many, many times because of my skin color. I am biracial—my dad is African American and my mom is LatinX. People have said that I couldn't wear certain things because of my skin tone. This particular kind of thing impacts a lot of people all around the world. I would really like to someday change the world and end this unfair treatment. But, as I am still young, I focus on small things like smiling and picking up trash. I hope you can, too.

—Mila Brown, age 10, grade 4, California.

This Is the Song the World Needs Now

Esta★ es la canción the world needs now
Una canción that sounds like esperanza
Una canción that teaches fuerza
Una canción that makes you feel felicidad
Una canción that smells like salud
Una canción that holds you like amabilidad
Una canción that makes you move like agua
Esta es la canción the world needs now. . .
Una canción que consuela

—Nova Macknik-Conde, age 10, New York.

★Spanish: Esta es la canción: This is the song • Una canción: A song • esperanza: hope • fuerza: strength • felicidad: joy • salud: health • amabilidad: kindness • agua: water • Que consuela: That comforts/brings comfort

The Treasure Hunt

I saw a package. Something exciting was going to happen! I yelled, “Look! A package!” Bob, my older brother, snorted. “So?”

I stared. “Don’t you get it? We could open it!” Bob shrugged. “I’m uninterested.” I was surprised. He *should* be willing to see what was inside the package! It was human nature. But I didn’t really mind.

With my hands trembling with haste and excitement, I opened the package up. A letter tumbled into my grasp, along with a few gold coins. I realized that they were coins from about a few decades ago. How did they get here? I opened the letter.

To whom it may concern,

I see you have found the package. Follow the instructions for the treasure hunt.

First, the first garage you see will be the spot where the next letter shall be. I know, putting a treasure hunt letter in a garage, but it will be there. Look under a marshmallow. If anyone sees you holding any of these treasure hunt letters, never, EVER show it to them. Do whatever you can to hide this letter.

Anonymous

I was excited. I didn’t want to skip around the house, singing, “la, la, la”, and do nothing but eat and sleep. I wanted to earn money for my family.

The first garage I saw was my family’s garage. The letter said to look for another letter under a marshmallow...

After a while of thinking, I had it. The letter wasn’t talking about a marshmallow. They were usually white, and my family’s car was also white. I was proud of myself for solving that. I peeked under the car to see another letter. I unfolded it with tender hands.

Well done. The next letter will be found under the first plant you see. You must go under the feet for this one.

I didn’t understand what the letter meant by “under the feet”. I looked around, and the first plant I saw was my mom’s little apple tree. Technically it was my apple tree because it was my idea to plant it and to help it grow, but Mom bought the seeds for it. So, I guess it counts as her apple tree. Except I still think it’s mine because I took care of it.

“Friendship is powerful.”

I rushed to the tree and looked under it. There was nothing there. I remembered the words, “under the feet.” Maybe the letter meant that I had to dig under the tree! This treasure hunt was getting better and better.

I grabbed a shovel and dug under the tree. I hoped Mom didn’t notice me. As I continued to dig, I saw yet another piece of white paper. I picked it up and unfolded it.

Ask Bob any one question. The answer to the question will lead you to where the final letter is. That question must repair a ship.

I was confused. What question should I ask Bob? Also, I haven’t even seen a real ship, let alone repair one. And how would Bob, of all people, know where the final letter was? He wasn’t even interested. I had to sit down and think.

Think, think, think.

After an hour of thinking, I still didn’t have an answer. An idea suddenly popped into my head. The letter never said anything about directly showing the letter to someone! It only said that if others saw the letter by accident, I had to hide it. But if *I* was the one who decided that they could see it...maybe it would work! I walked to Bob’s room and turned the knob. It was too late to turn back now. I took a deep breath, and walked in.

“Whaddya want?” Bob grunted. He was on his computer.

I unfolded the letters and showed them to him. It took no time for Bob to finish reading and stare. It was an awkward silence. “So...it told me to ask you a question.”

Bob shrugged. “I’m not sure, but this hunt sounds fun. You went through the entire thing without any help and without Mom yelling at you? And you didn’t tell me?”

“You said you weren’t interested.”

“Well, it’s not too late to look for it. I could imagine Mom swimming in a pool of money.”

I smiled. “Yeah, me too. So...should we find this treasure together now that you’re in?”

Suddenly, I realized that I had asked Bob a question. And that question did not have to do anything with a ship.

The Treasure Hunt, ...continued

A piece of paper suddenly slid out of nowhere. I picked it up and recognized the handwriting as the person who had been writing to me and making this treasure hunt increasingly exciting. I wondered, could this be it? I picked up the letter and unfolded it.

To the one who has followed my instructions for the treasure hunt,

I would like to congratulate you. I'm glad that you followed my treasure hunt. The treasure at the end is more worth it.

You have repaired a ship—friendship—building more trust with your brother. Isn't that just wonderful?

True love is when you can't face war without fighting for someone you care about; you can't stand up to anyone unless you're doing it for a person you care about...friendship is powerful. Now, you have repaired a ship, friendship, and that is what has caused you to find this letter that you are reading right now. Remember that you will look out for those you love.

Excellent job. Friendship is the prize of this hunt. But I didn't give you it. You built it along with your brother. It cannot be built when one wants to befriend another, but the other does not want to befriend the first person. Friendship can only be built when both sides are working to build it, and that is called collaboration.

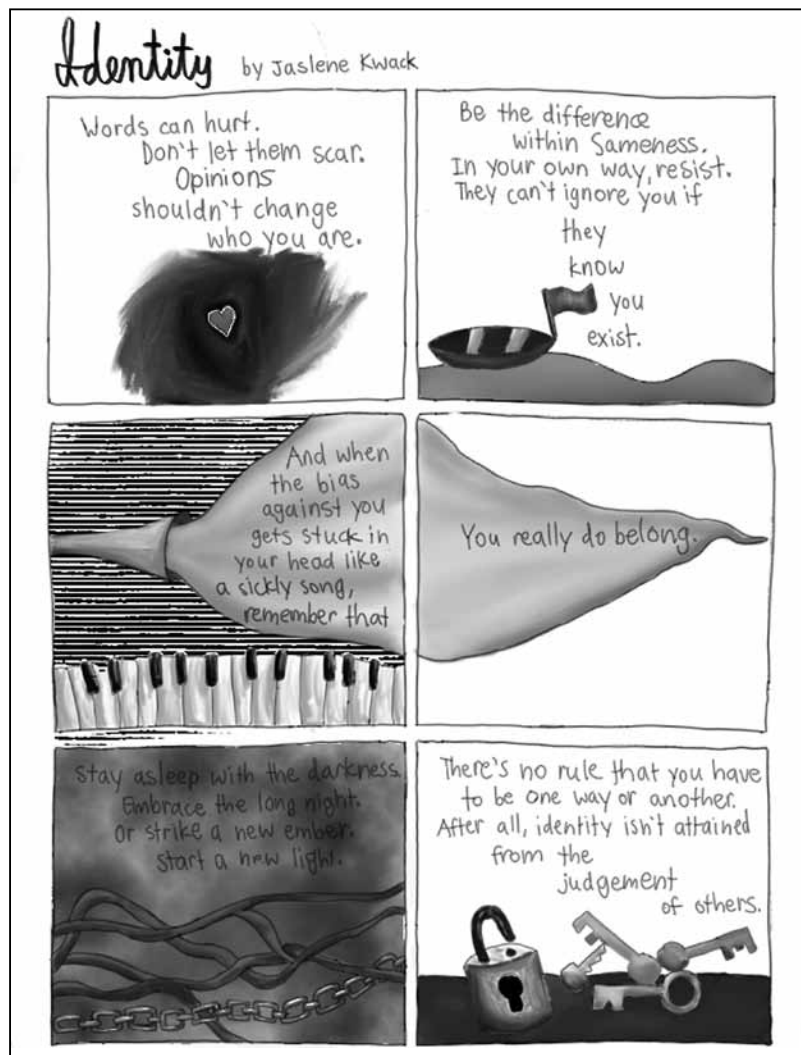
Anonymous

I had to admit, I was kind of disappointed. But the writer was right. Friendship was powerful.

—Lilian Wang, age 10, Washington.

Our 34th Year Sale on Back Issues

To celebrate our 34th year, we are offering 10 back issues for \$34 (or 34 back issues for \$100), including postage within the U.S. To order, e-mail: info@skippingstones.org, or by snail mail: 166 W. 12th Ave, Eugene OR 97401 USA (E-mail us for overseas postage).



“I created this cartoon based on the topic of diversity and tolerance. Essentially, identity is just who you are to yourself. You are a different person to any other individual. The only thing that remains true is what you think you are. Even though the life that surrounds you can be chaotic, you have to be true to your real self and you can't forget or be swayed because of the difficult events going on. A powerful gift to have is to be able to hold on to that confidence in yourself. Even though being accepted by others is important, you can't let that become your only priority in life. Other people could influence your decisions or make you feel one way or another. They could even make an impact on your life. However, what is most important is that you find peace with the way you are, and despite the complaints of other people, you should always believe in yourself. The changes that you can make are a talent, not some disability that you have to hide and be ashamed of in public. Your quirks are what make you a person, and no stranger should be able to change that.”

Art and writing by Jaslene Kwack, age 12, Illinois.

all the emails read, marked as “important”
all spam revived into conversations that spread across
the blue carpet of my living room
maybe I do want that Prussian blue customized Jack Harlow T-shirt
maybe I’ll wear it to the park or to the shopping centre
maybe I’ll wear it to the library, give a smile or two to the front desk,
have a little chat, ask her to come to my home in the after-hours for Earl Grey tea
like they did in the olden times
when the 49th state wasn’t called the 49th state and they sat outside
on their lawns in the evenings; exchanged books, not numbers;
poetry, not cell; names, not Instagram
when I say “hello” to another “hello”
the hellos don’t obsolete themselves
when I go to the farmer’s market
jump up from my Sunday bed with thoughts of kittens in my head
when I eat apricots and cherries all by myself
on the shore of the Connecticut River
and the chaos of the white mountains
pale snow, treacherous reserves
narrated by agony, gives me peace
that’s the kind of world I want to live in

—Harsimran Kaur, age 17, is a high school student from India.



Cadence Liu, 12, from Taiwan, lives in California.

An Eternal State

Butterflies flit at daylight this Spring,
Enfolded beneath trees and ferns:
Part of nature’s undersurface.
Hand-in-hand, we stroll down
The time-worn wooden switchbacks
Under the leaves that veil a host
Of tiny, ethereal butterflies.

Summertime holds a unique lushness in spirit:
The air grows humid at its peak, then crisp.
Autumn’s red and gold fade to brown-like
A watered-down pigment that grows paler and weaker.

When we face a fork in the wild we turn to our companions
If alone, it’s easy to turn away.
At times we’ll all part ways, only to reunite again.

In the seasonal cycle, all is anew:
Flowers wither and wilt yet the genus still goes on:
Each day new blossoms are born,
The most remote of roads may still cross paths.

There is so much more “eternal” than “finite” in this world;
So often we interpret new beginnings as endings of the former.
It is only when we take a step back
That we see the full picture:

An eternity of peace may be punctuated by moments of distress
But it is peaceful, nonetheless.

—Ellis Yang, age 12, grade 7, California. Ellis is passionate about reading, and writing fiction and poetry. She plays music with her friends and enjoys art in her free time.

The Sibling War

Once, on a peaceful day
the unmistakable sound of a slamming door was heard
that was the start of the sibling war
it all began with a crash and a bang
one misleading conversation
led to another
causing chaos
among allies
fire and anger
burned down all the bonding they had done
and a final explosion ripped up the last of the threads
the loud clatter of broken feelings startled them both
they wondered what the sound was
realizing what had happened
they are brought back to their senses
slowly growing regretful
efforts to make up for the loss
sewing back the strings of care
a sign that the war was done was shown
no one had won this time
it always ends quietly
in a sibling war

—Benjamin Kwack, age 10, Illinois.

Legacies Through Peace

“My submission is about the violence in the world, and how it gets out of control. The main character, under the influence of her parental figure, decided to stand up and fight against injustice and violence.”

Books are miniature universes contained inside leather-bound paper. Fantasy, historical fiction, realistic fiction... everything can be experienced.

The differences between the worlds in the book and reality is astronomical. No wonder my pastime is delving in between the magical lines weaved between stories.

In the many stories, there is no fighting and violence. Those that do, however, have people willing to stand up and advocate for peace.

In real life, we see horrific acts of violence, with fruitless to no attempts of stopping it. How many times have I had a loved one pass away because of weapons and revenge?

Many people might roll their eyes at me with that simple, innocent question. They might pat my head and tell me that I am too young. They might laugh at the foolishness of that question.

The splatters of blood on my doorstep tell a different story.

Why is it that the best people die?

How often is it that I see people getting shunned because of their skin, their looks, their ethnicity, their ability? Just a few times too many.

How many people suffer from the very atrocities that others turn a blind eye to?

And those that use their eyes always hurt for their goodwill.

So much conflict surrounds this world. Wars being waged, fights breaking out, the world being choked by a fist of conflict.

The wars waged are taking innocent lives. Involving nuclear weapons would end in even more suffering and destruction. For what is this needed?

I've known one person that has fought against these wrongs her entire life. Her dedication inspires and has formed many of my own opinions. Her impact on me is so blatantly clear.

My dream is to follow and continue in her footsteps. She took me on as an apprentice, teaching me how to block out insults and how to hold gratitude by the hand.

She opened my closed eyes and pointed out all the unfairness plaguing this world. She wasn't bitter about it, not once. I was a teaching opportunity for her.

And I gradually saw the sharp points of hurtful words, the prejudice and cruelty...

I will forever keep her in my heart. It's so silly how much we don't know about the world. It frightens me in a way that never frightened my mentor.

Her boldness and courage led to her downfall. One person too many didn't agree with her principles, so they turned on her.

That dreadful night, when I walked inside, I saw her lying there. Red was pooling on the floor where she lay. Numerous bullet holes penetrated the walls of the house.

I now know what my job is.

I will do this in your name, Mother. Since no one else will, I thank you for your work. Let me help now.

—Emily Tang, age 13, grade 7, North Carolina. She adds: “...one of my favorite hobbies is reading and writing stories. My favorite color is dark teal, and my favorite animal is the hawk.”



Finding My Inner Peace

I paced around the room, angry at my brother for taking the last bite of chicken.

"I got it first, deal with it," my brother Leo said.

I knew it was stupid, but I couldn't control my temper.

"You already had second helpings, I get to have it," I screamed.

My tattletale brother knew he was losing the fight, so he used the only tactic that he knew would save him.

"MOM!" he yelled. I growled and stormed out of the room before my mom could come down.

I hated losing my temper because I knew that I would have to apologize to Leo later and I didn't like apologizing. I wanted something that could make me calm in a situation like this. The next day at school I asked my teacher what calms her down. "Sometimes sitting in a quiet environment helps me calm down," she said. Later that night I went on my computer and typed in "how to calm yourself down."

605 million results popped up. I scrolled through various websites until I found one I liked.

I read the website multiple times to make sure I didn't mess up.

Step 1: Sit down cross-legged on a comfortable surface.

Step 2: Make sure your surroundings are quiet.

Step 3: Close your eyes and repeat your mantra over in your head, getting quieter each time until you can't hear yourself.

Tip: Playing soft classical music in the background may help calm yourself down.

I went to my room and closed the door, blocking out the sound. Then I turned on some soft classical music in the background. I sat down cross-legged on my bed just as the website had instructed. Then I thought of a mantra, I am calm. I repeated, "I am calm" over and over again in my head and each time I repeated it, I repeated it softer.

Suddenly my brother burst into my room. "Why are you sitting on the floor like that? You look like you're praying." He said, jumping onto my bed. I could feel my temper rising. Why was my brother always so annoying? Can he learn to knock before he enters?

"Get off-" I began, but then remembered what the website had said. "Even if there is noise around you,

you must keep your focus on meditating." I forced myself to calm down and focus on what I was doing. I put my hands on my knees, closed my eyes, and recited my mantra over and over again in my head.

I am calm...I am calm...I am calm...I am calm...I am calm

I began to start drifting in and out of consciousness. That was the first time I truly meditated and went into the twilight state.

A year later, my mood had changed drastically. I could focus better, control my temper, sleep better, and even think more clearly. I noticed that meditation gives me a sense of peace and calm and slows down my breathing. I asked my teacher one time what she thought of meditation.

"It's like a refreshing shower to wash away all the bad vibes from the day." I completely agreed.

"You act so much calmer." That is what I hear from my friends nowadays. When they ask what I did, I simply tell them how I discovered meditation and what it did for me.

"Meditation takes too much time." That is what they usually reply with, or "It's too hard."

Yes, meditation does take time, and it might not come easy to you at first, but I found that the results are very rewarding.

When I meditate, I am able to tune out all the noise around me and focus on my breathing and my thoughts, which is especially helpful when I have a rough day. When I meditate, I feel a strong sense of peace and serenity. It can only be achieved if you practice meditation. My head feels less crowded with thoughts, my breathing is more measured, and my mood is improved. Peaceful is how I would describe my feeling when I meditate if I had to put it into one word.

When I came home from school that day, my family and I sat down for dinner.

"Mom, she stole my chicken last time, it's my turn to have extra," whined my brother. It wasn't true, he said it partly because he wanted extra chicken, but more likely because he wanted to annoy me. But after meditating, I learned not to take the bait. I breathed in, closed my eyes, and quickly repeated the mantra over in my head.

...continued on p. 33

Sunflowers

I had a dream,
In the body of a
Snow-gray sparrow.
Flitting in a war-torn country.

When the world has lost its melody,
And only ominous sirens sound.
Crimson blossoms soldiers' chests,
Spider lilies, cardinal red.

Buildings crumbling,
Like dried petals,
Fragmented, shattered,
Falling to the ground.
Like shards of dreams,
Long forgotten.

The stark branches of trees stretch to the sky
Like a person who lost their way
Calling for help
That will not come.

The sweet lullaby of larks
Drowned by the roar of explosions,
Like spring thunder,
Rolling across the fallen concrete.

When the rose-red face of children
Is replaced with frozen fright
Of snow-white flakes.
Tears like spring rain,
Splattered on concrete,
A place where flowers
Will not bloom.

The sparrow swoops down
And whispers in their ears
Somewhere in this world,
There's a place where
Sunflowers still bloom against a blue sky.

—Jingtong Yu, age 12, Chinese American, Oregon.
"I'm very invested in music, and I currently play piano
and flute. I am also on a competitive swim team."

Finding My Inner Peace ... continued from p. 32

"You can have some of mine." I passed my plate of chicken across the table to my brother.

—Nikita Paas, age 11, New York. "I love playing the piano (been playing since I was 3), drawing and cycling. I am also on my school's debate team (for the last two years)."

Nature's Alchemists

Wondering what they whisper away
When they talk, what do they say?
A tranquil sanctuary for all to stay
Purifying air every moment of every day.

Providing food and fodder in rife, if used well
Anchoring the Earth and lives on it that dwell.
Salving, soothing, sheltering with a spell
Unheeded, everything will fail; hear the warning bell.

"Be selfish, we don't mind.

But if you cut us down,

No more of us you'll find.

Help us survive and we'll both revive."

—Avishi Gurnani, age 11, Singapore. Avishi was born in India. She is passionate about art and writing, and she feels a deep urge to express her emotions through her writing and convey her ideas. She has already published a couple of poetry books. She enjoys playing tennis as well as her piano.

Avishi entered three poems with several of her drawings for this contest. We look forward to publishing her other entries in our next issue.

Ways of the World

Day must always fall into navy night;
Consistency is unknown to the tide.

Ivy starts small but can climb to great heights;
Creatures play in spring, come winter they hide.
Leaves cannot seem to stay healthy and green;
O why must they always dry out and fall?

And then they grow back, large, lucious, and keen;

So why, I ask, why must they fall at all?

The stars neither mind when the sun rises,

Nor the soil when absent is the rain.

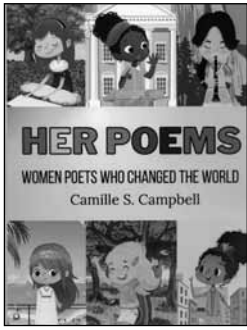
When a rose wilts, a bee compromises,

And eroded canyons show no disdain.

So why am I just unable to change?

I live on this Earth too; is that not strange?

—Kayla Osborn, age 15, California. "I love poetry because it allows people to convey their feelings in a beautiful and artistic way. When I feel really excited or upset about something, I write about it. It helps me realize who I am and why I feel different emotions at different times. One day, I was frustrated with my dislike for change in my life. So, I wrote...this a sonnet describing how nature is always evolving and changing even when some people feel as if they're unable to do the same."



2022 Young Poet Contest

One of our contributors, Camille Campbell (see p. 17 for more about her), organized a poetry contest for young poets early this year in collaboration with us. We share three poems by the two winners.

Winter in My Bed

Glittering white powder covers my home like a frosted cake
The silent fall of snow lulls me to sleep
Icicles lining the roof
The chance of snowmen when I wake up

Cold harsh weather surrounds my home
But it cannot penetrate the warm soft blankets that cover me
Like a hatchling in her nest

Winter in my bed
A full moon glows lighting up my face
My family sleeping warm
Through the frosty night

Me, listening to the sounds of night and family
Slowly drifting to sleep
In my snuggly, lovely, cuddly bed

By Nova Macknik-Conde, grade 5, New York.

Writer's Block

My pen lingers over the page,
Cobalt ink waiting in the depths,
I imagine, and I ponder, and I muse.

But still the thief steals my well of words,
Cheats me of my cascading thoughts,
And takes my waterfalls of compositions.

The vague scent of ink on a fresh sheet of paper,
The articulation of inspiration,
The quiet bliss of the flowing verse.

The thief deprives me of the joy of invention,
The dexterity of novels, poems, and short stories,
And the rushing streams of world building.

So idea-less

That the only method of elusion

Is to pen
The meaningless things that enter my mind,
Or write about my writer's block alone.

By Nova Macknik-Conde, grade 5, New York.



—Carina Araujo, grade 4, Maryland.

My Love for My Mom

My love for you is bigger than the sky
You and me in this beautiful warm night
Staring at the moonlight

Together, you and me
Looking at the big blue bright sky
There are infinite stars above us
Shining in the sky

Holding hands together we stand
Peace all around
In our land

By Carina Araujo, grade 4, Maryland.

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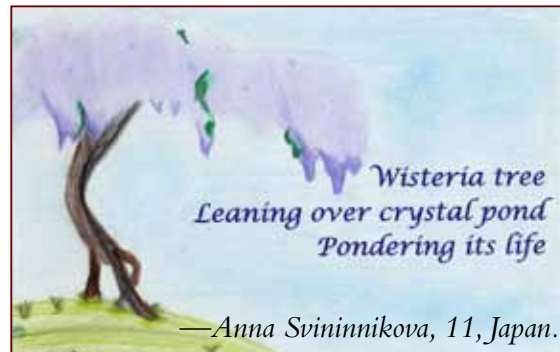
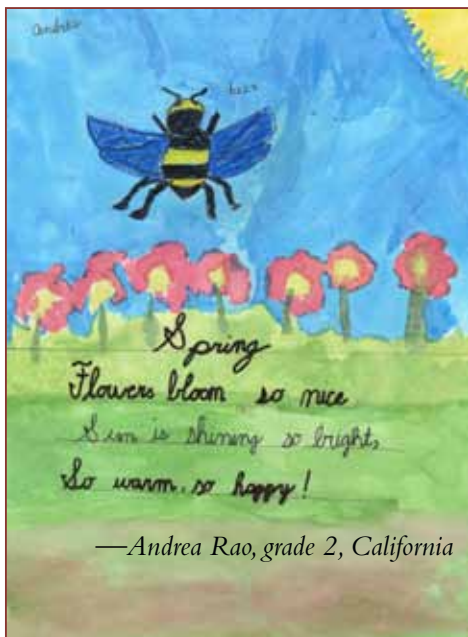
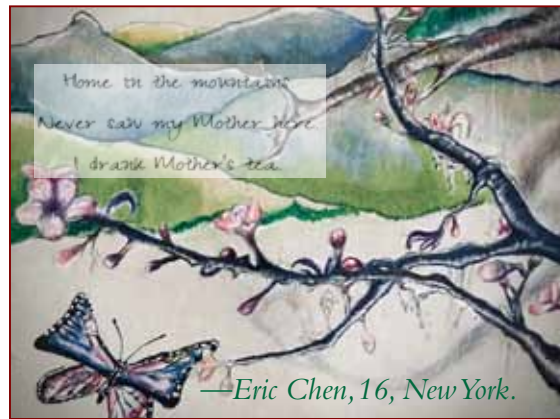
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—Arun N. Toké, Editor & Publisher

Haiku, Tanka & Art Entries



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Silk Paintings by Camille Campbell, age 17, Arizona.
(clockwise, from top left): **The Kaleidoscope of Dreams • The Vase of Joy • Flickers of Autumn • Serenity** (See p.15).

