

# LITMAG

ORACLE • 2024



Troy Oracle | 2023-2024

# Lit Mag



## lit mag team

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Eileen Um  
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Kaitlyn Zhang

## thank you

The Oracle Staff thanks all contributors for submitting their works of art to this year's Literary Magazine.

Due to the volume of submissions, we were not able to publish all the pieces received.



▲ Reflection Upon Revolution  
Audrie Kim, sophomore

Visit our website for digital mediums and additional artworks.  
[troyoracle.com/2024-litmag](http://troyoracle.com/2024-litmag)

**featured film  
and music →**



cover art by Alicia Yoon

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood  
 Been told all my life that it'd be good  
 To take the one less traveled by  
 Thus I left the fairer one behind

Through the undergrowth I saw why  
 As twigs reached out to stab my eye  
 The path was shunned and had not been tried  
 And dread settled like dust inside

The road was filled with grotesque sights  
 My arms and legs bruised with bloody lines  
 Eroding skulls grimly line the side  
 Of those who failed to make it through the night

At last I emerge into the light  
 Though my soul, dreary, had lost its life  
 In shame I questioned myself with a sigh  
 Why did I take the one less traveled by?

With regret I turned to those who appeared  
 From the easy road many took through the years  
 Their faces light and without a care  
 Suffered no scars, no wear, or tear

No matter how bitter my glare  
 I could not deny the truth in the air  
 That there was no need for my nightmare  
 Had I taken the path which was cleared and shared

# illusion



▲ Yanning Li, sophomore

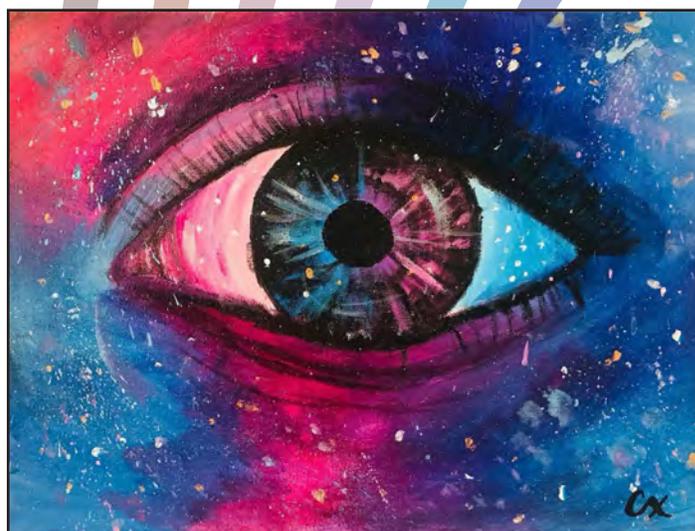
Two Roads Diverged in a  
 ▲ Yellow Road | Cindy Wang, sophomore

LOOK

▼ Okay I See You | Cindy Xie, sophomore



▲ Advika Iyer, sophomore



▼ falling clouds | Chris Zhou, sophomore



▲ Within | Nathan Lim, junior

I tripped ▼ anonymous, junior

I had heard of a comfortable silence  
Filling the air  
As if two who loved let love itself speak

But silence with you was  
Falling.  
Time and light and breath  
Ceasing  
The rushing air with every  
Tremor of my dying heart  
Alone.

On the other side of a phone.

My bones turned to powder at last



▲ Kaitlyn Zhang, junior



▲ The Eyes of the Artist | Joy Cheng, senior

in dreams

## ▼ Out of Sight | Hanh Dinh, junior



## Street Vendor

▼ Shawn Lee, freshman



## Sleeping Beauty



Magic shimmers in the air  
 The air fills with the scent of roses  
 Roses and what smells like blood  
 Blood trickles down my finger  
 My finger seems to rest upon a spindle  
 A spindle with red winding string  
 Strings tie knots and tangle my thoughts  
 Thoughts left spinning on the spinning wheel  
 Wheel-like, the world turns, and I stumble  
 I stumble and I crash onto the floor hard  
 Hard stone tiles hit my back  
 Back home is where I should have gone  
 Gone is all clarity, smothered by magic  
 Magic tugs at my eyes, wanting them to close  
 Close and sleep and sleep and sleep  
 And sleep comes like a wave

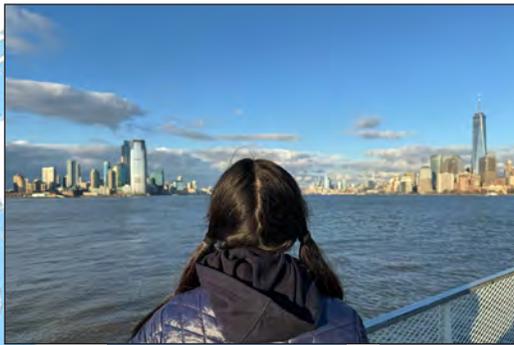
▼ Julie Liu, junior



## Winter at the Beach

▲ Celin Chong, sophomore

# Uncertain Future



▲ Kelsey Yu, sophomore

▼ Mai Ishikawa, junior

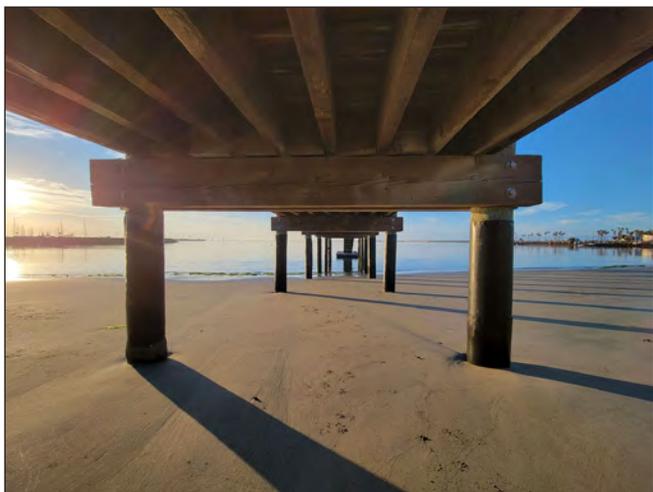
Feel of the cool breeze on my skin,  
As the ocean pulls at my feet.  
Hair a mess, my face a grin  
As excitement bubbles; I'm complete.

The sharp smell of waves fill my nose,  
I can taste the salt on my tongue,  
Clumps of sand clinging to my toes,  
Fun under the sun; just begun.

Closing my eyes I'm whisked away  
My troubles ceasing to exist  
Desire to forever stay  
Listening to the ocean mist.

Glittering like a thousand stars,  
The place where the sky meets the sea.  
In this moment everything is ours  
In this moment I feel free.

▼ Underneath a Bridge | Matthew Liang, sophomore

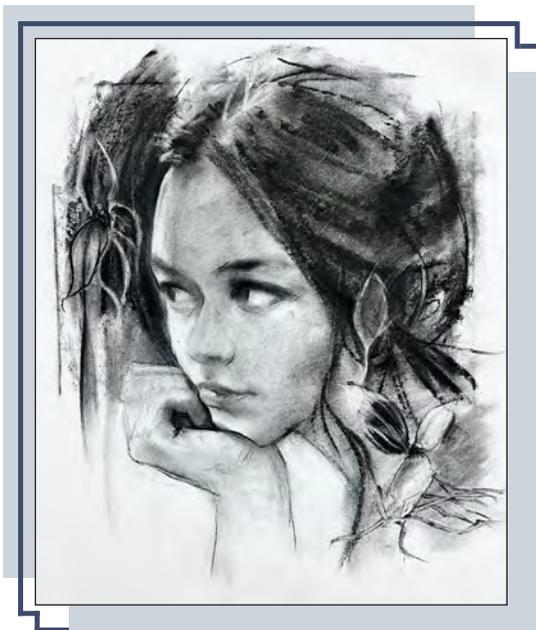


## State of Grace



## Lunar New Year

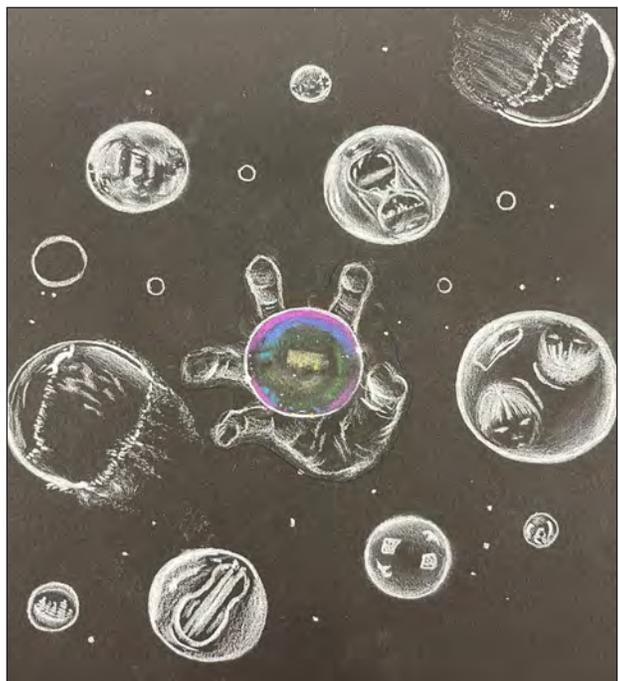
▼ Baixuan Chen, sophomore



▲ Yanning Li, sophomore

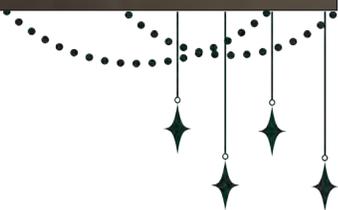


## Glance



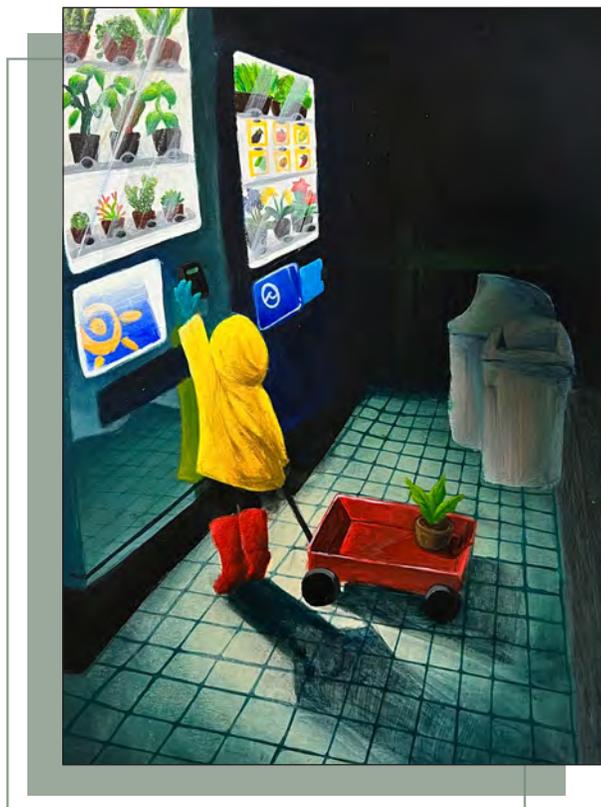
Emily Sun, junior ▲

# Pop



# Vending Vegetation

▼ Zoey Bahng, junior



# Mystical Stars



▼ Matthew Liang, sophomore

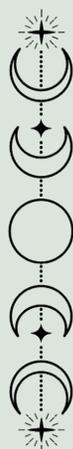
# Goodnight

Sometimes I just want to go home  
I'm sitting there in front of my screen  
The glaring yellow lamp in my eyes

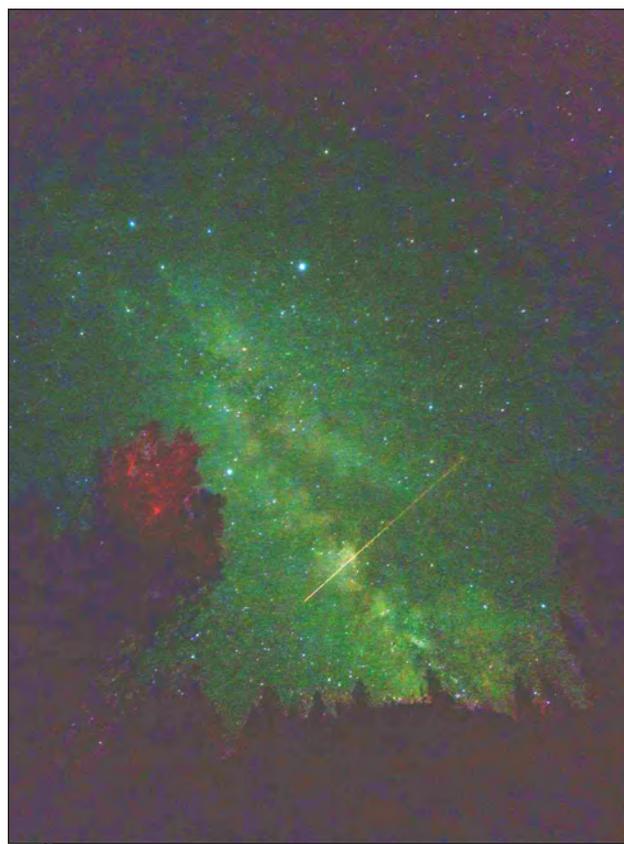
It's heavy sometimes  
My eyelids and my shoulders  
I don't see a burden  
Or maybe there is, I wouldn't know.

Another page written another problem solved  
Marked as completed and submitted  
But it's never done, over.

2 am and I'm alone  
One lone yellow lamp in the darkness of my room  
The clock ticking past  
At the speed of my caffeinated heart.



▼ Eileen Um, junior



# Media Consumption

▼ Audrie Kim, sophomore

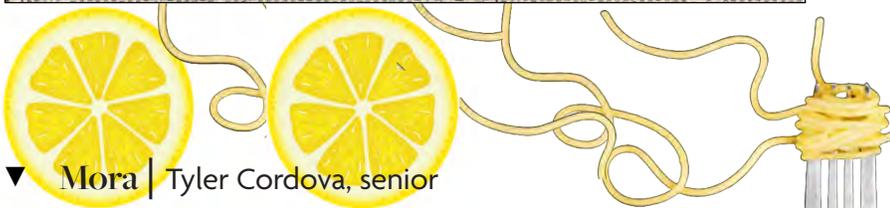


▼ anonymous junior

# Hotteok

I gleefully hop down and drag the footstool across the floor to the stove where sizzles are erupting and the scrumptious sparkling noises of bubbling oil and batter are chattering. When my mother flips a pancake with the spatula to put on a special just show just for me, I clap wildly and ask for an encore which I grievously mispronounce but she still obliges and flips another to catch it on a plate.

Sitting down by the window to gaze at the fall foliage dampened yet revitalized by the rain, I take a sniff at the toffee tinted pancake with pure sweetness oozing out of the buttery covering. And with the first bite, I make sure to cherish every subtle flavor of the crunchy exterior, fluffy interior, warm comforting filling; every fleeting moment of appreciation for the beauties of the world including the people around us; every wonderful spark of curiosity and innocent intrigue that can make the seamless journey of new experiences and subsequent memories that is a life, full of mirth and love.

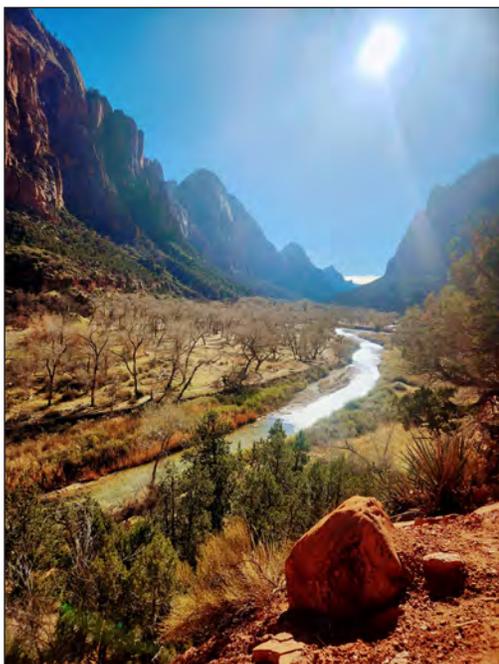


▼ Mora | Tyler Cordova, senior



2+0+2+4  
▼ Ellie Huang & Grace Shin, seniors





▲ Golden | Prachi Dhoot, sophomore



▲ fireworks | Kyle Pak, senior

▼ Anna Wu, senior

# EIDOLON

What is that  
 eidolon in the mire?  
 Holds high her head in the lurid gold light  
 and waves sweet farewell to the languorous night  
 Who wore a daisy coronet  
 and suit of incunabula  
 now replaced in lodestone,  
 And the skin of a marionette  
 where away, inside, Dionysus plays  
 and Damocles refuses to yield.  
 Who braves its  
 mask, who dares gaze into the cage?  
 Who chants its  
 name, who dares see beyond the stage?  
 I am unsaved,  
 I am born anew,  
 scream the blossoming serpent's eyes  
 What is that  
 eidolon in the mire?  
 Looks long behind in the lurid gold light  
 and sings cruel farewell to the abyssal night

▼ Zhuoran Zhao, junior

## Golden Hour



Childhood

Childhood is the moment of learning  
The moment that we're all yearning  
The memories of yesterdays  
All form up to create todays

The first slide  
To smiling wide

The first trip to Disney  
To riding the carousel 'til we go dizzy

The first drawing with crayons  
To coloring in the lines in concentration

The first drawings on sidewalks  
To seeing the rain wash away the chalk

The first bike ride of all  
To skinning knees from the fall

The first taste of vegetables  
To screaming "NOOO" in decibels

The first toy we get  
To losing it and feeling regret

Childhood is the moment of experiencing  
The moment where life is molding  
The emotions of every moment  
All form up as an important component  
Of growing up

▲ Joy Lee, sophomore

# Self Suffocate



▲ Zoey Bahng, junior



▲ Rachel Han, junior

# Childhood Collectibles



▲ Kelsey Yu, junior

# First Snow

What's the efficacy of us?  
 We, who are nothing to the world  
 Our strange, inviolate nearly-trust,  
 Breaching that of an almost-girl

Two persons who do not look twice  
 In hallways; huddling, brushing skin  
 Here, in these walls of tactful vice  
 Pleasantries whispered in the din

To witness such a silent crime  
 But almost perpetrate as well  
 Was not, has not been, my design  
 The drizzle is not mine to quell

▲ anonymous, junior



▲ Yanning Li, sophomore

## A Beach Read



▲ Kyle Pak, senior

## It's All About Perspective

▼ Joy Cheng, senior



▼ Thumbprints | Bhavna Malladi, junior

thumbprints  
 i want to get to know you,  
 to fully, and deeply, notice  
 every inch of you.  
 to run my hands along yours,  
 memorizing the crooks of your palms  
 softly tracing whorls along your finger pads.  
 brushing the swoops of your thumb prints.  
 so if the moon were to one day  
 run far, far away from the earth  
 leaving a spill of thick black ink across the sky  
 i could still find you in the dark  
 by sense alone

you ask why i gaze into your eyes for so long,  
 so deeply.  
 it is because i endeavor-  
 if i look hard and long enough,  
 maybe i, too will see:  
 every sunrise you've woken up for,  
 every road you've driven on  
 maybe, even trace out constellations  
 between every star you have laid eyes on.

maybe, i will see all of this enamoring beauty  
 in the reflections of your pupils.  
 please just give me  
 a couple more seconds to search.

The Tall Boy's Teacup

Touchings

# siren song

hear me, hear me  
please don't fear me  
cross my heart  
i'm not that scary

stories, stories  
not the real me  
listen and i know  
you will see

singing, singing  
siren singing  
monsters? no, no  
we're not killing

smiling, smiling  
we are nice, see?  
you're the one  
who's coming to me

▼ Julie Liu, Junior

# Dream On

▼ Julianna Bacolod, sophomore



# grayscale

▼ Untitled | Emily Sun, junior



▲ still | Yanning Li, sophomore

Tonight there is a watcher in the glass sky.  
In compassionate star-pastures he lies camouflaged.  
Would that I could watch him with my eyes.

Many questions climb ashore at night, sighing  
The hollow terror of the Delphic sea. But even here it is said:  
Tonight there is a watcher in the glass sky.

When Time erodes the most timeless of labors  
And when monotony erodes Time, still the watcher lives.  
Would that I could watch him with my eyes.

Now it is the morning of change-faced cries.  
Abandoned, I watch the troupe take flight. I must not forget:  
Tonight there is a watcher in the glass sky.

When mankind's ephemeral blot fades into the skies  
the watcher will remain. The watcher will not forget.  
Would that I could watch him with my eyes.

And if he forgets, and if we are alone  
In star-pastures full of light and devoid of life,  
We will make our watcher in the glass sky.  
Would that he could watch us with his eyes.



▲ Paraolympics pt.2 | Vanessa Yang, senior

▼ Ray Toro | Katelynn Wilson, senior

▲ Tidal Wave | Anna Wu, senior

▼ Sky's Spring | Evelyn Le, freshman



# The Moon

I have seen the moon today,  
So round and so bright.  
The man who stares from the boat  
Whispers sweet nothings  
To his love.

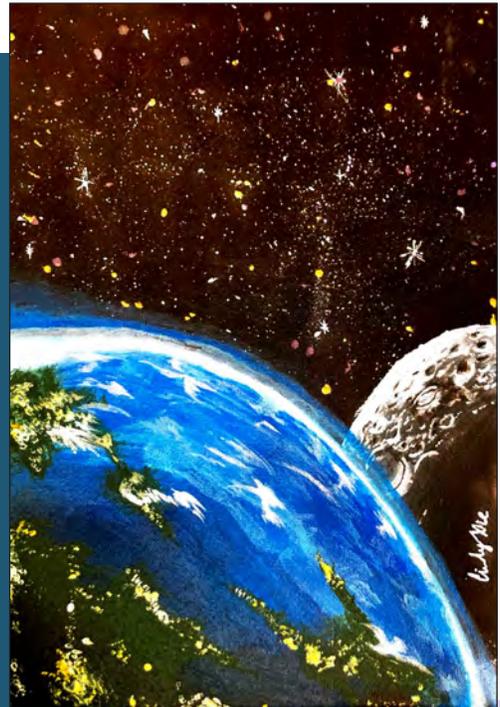
He is from afar, a man  
Who never calls one place home.  
But his beau calls him  
Hundreds of miles away, night after  
night.  
And so he sails, traverses the seas,  
Not a single ounce of fear in his  
bones.

The moon, oh sweet,  
Sings lullabies in his name.  
Entrance, in a daze,  
The world hears her serenade and in  
turn,  
Vies for her attention.  
New competitors chase after her  
affection,  
But none are quite  
As ambitious as the man who tamed  
the volatile waters.

Oh moon of mine,  
I, who am closest to you, cries.

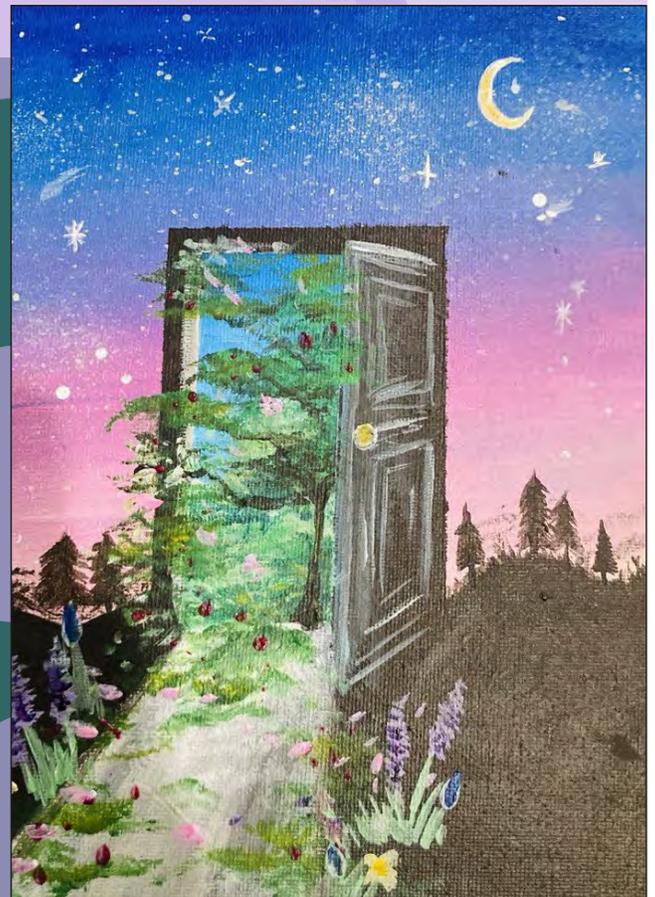
continued on our website

▼ Ashlyn Yi, sophomore



▼ Pls give me some space | Cindy Xie, sophomore

# Doorway to Somewhere



▼ Cindy Xie, sophomore

▼ My Star | Harper Cabrera, junior



# Neon Path

▼ Minjae Jeon, sophomore



▲ catcatcat | Kyle Pak, senior

## Untitled

▼ Min Seong Park, senior

Sometimes we embellish things as what they are not. So were those twinkling lights in the sky. They were from artificial satellites in space, yet someone across the globe would be admiring them as stars. So was my love. She made me happy just from the imagination, but I hadn't interacted with her much in reality. I realized that I was not in love with her but with my image of her. It was an act of narcissism: romanticizing, loving an image I produced, and imposing it on somebody else. As we gaze at the stars, we are forced to come to a decision. Are we ready to love the floating body of metal?



▼ Starry Night City | Rohan Konchigeri, sophomore





COVER BY: ALICIA YOON