

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA CROOKSTON

Celebrate!

ART JOURNAL



ISSUE 3

CELEBRATE!

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How My Mind Works

Amongst the garbage and forgotten treasures of my mind is a woven basket; ageless, wrought by many hands. I have no idea where it came from or how it happened to get in my disorganized heap. Was it an heirloom or placed here by mistake? I'm curious about it. When I force open the lid I see nothing within, just lonely space; and the sweet, stale smell of whiskey stained cedar. Yet I know it contains something. When I press the rough bark closely to my ear I think I can hear its maker's poetic whispers; sometimes individually, sometimes together in harmony. I recognize the voices but have forgotten the faces. It's comforting to know I can hold the rustic splint to my ear and in the rustle of the braided friction hear those remembered words. If I peek through the rough fibers, and turn the basket just right I think I can see what's trapped inside but then the contents correct themselves with gravity, the plane of existence or some unknown prompting and the glimpse is lost. Sometimes when I shake it hard enough, with the slats creaking and complaining a yarn of indeterminate color will protrude from the basket weaves. Just an inch or so, usually frayed at the end, not enough to do anything with. If I'm in the right mood I will reach out and touch this course thread. Maybe pull gently. Sometimes it leaves the confines of the basket easily. Sometimes it resists or will not come at all. But if it does give I can usually pull, hand over hand and with my clacking needles at the ready knit that strand into something. Most of the time it's a hat so gaudy in color or irregular shaped that I'm embarrassed to wear it out. So I'll just perch it on my head at a jaunty angle and march around the house feeling swell about myself and greater than the sum of my accomplishments. Like a self-conscience muse without an artist. The world encourages the generic and conformal. We should all be brave enough to wear our ugly hats.

by: James Aasen

African Hair

My mind's made up long time ago
No perm or weave - just a natural flow
The benefits should outweigh the cost
Live with the results - it's your lost

Day by day I felt the pain
While combing out these thick thick grains
Recant the decision made long ago
And go back to perm? Oh no no no

Meeting the middle ground with wigs on the head
It's modern and I'm natural - do you agree?
The heat and scratches frustration instead
And the wig aged fast it looked so dead!

From work I rush to get it off my head
Decision time, what's the move? I'm going dread
Naturally in groove, I look who I am
A beautiful African, an intelligent woman

Growing and styling and look pretty young
Beautiful colors, hear the praises of people in the town
"I like your hair, who did for you?"
It's a good feeling because I look not fake but so true

Moral of the poem to sisters out there
Don't compromise for fashion fair
Be who you are and let the world know
A natural African is beautiful, and a good flow!

by: Abigail De Velde

I'm Here to Stay

Standing still from the pressure of the wind
It bends and sways
Still its motto is: "I'm here to stay"
The dirt and water both agreed
We'll root it up, it must concede

Still the tree has stood gently stood its ground
I'm rooted firmly in the ground
Though dirt may leave and water logged
I'll claim my space- This is my spot

"What have I done to all of you?"
Sometimes I wonder if this is true!
'Tis my use you can't compare
My motto is- I'm standing here

The weary birds may take their rest
The lonely traveler may be blest
I give you air so you can breathe
I'll still be here, so please take heed

I must remain to give some food
And let you see how God is good
An attraction to all- both far and near
I'll praise His name that I'm still here

An enemy cane and cut me down
The half of me fell to the ground
I took my pain and grew again
I'm still here - I'm yours to gain

I passed my test and still more came
Still I will climb in my Lord's name
Take heed- when trials come your way
Make this your aim- I'm here to stay

by: Abigail De Velde

Resignation

There was that one beam of light that always managed to make its way past the curtains. It was this very beam of light that woke the young woman from her sleep prematurely. She stirred slightly and resisted the sun that was insistent on her getting up – the night was over and the morning was here. Birdcalls and the rattle of wind against the window finally coaxed her to open her eyes. Begrudgingly she leaned forward and placed her face in her hands and whimpered pitifully in protest to being roused. The night had not treated her well and the wooden rocking chair that she had fallen asleep in was mostly to blame. The crick in her neck complained and her shoulders were knotted horribly.

Last night had been a taste of hell for her and this house. Seeing him in such physical and emotional pain had been, traumatizing. He had acted like an animal stuck in a trap, wounded and scared. She witnessed his world finally crash down on him, in full. Before this loss, he had belittled all of the great damages that he had taken in his life. This had been the last straw and the weight of it had broken him.

Memories from last night still plagued her and she knew that they wouldn't go away but perhaps cleaning the house would ease them. The mess was his doing. In his blind rage he had torn the house apart. Lamps, curtains, pictures, and even chairs were no match for his raw strength. Very few things remained untouched by his hand and she knew, very well, that it was his sadness that had driven him to anger. She could hear it in his voice as he yelled and in his eyes as tears soaked his face. He was an open book and she could read him clearly for the first time since she had met him. It was the first story in a long time that frightened her. Not because he was scary, even in his rage she had not felt threatened, but because of the sorrow she saw in him. She had never witnessed a hurt so deep in someone that her body physically ached at the thought. In all her years of journalism this was the first time she felt a true sense of remorse, for someone that was not her kin.

Felicity reached up and untied her hair, straightened it, and pulled it back again. She knew she needed to clean up the destruction that he been left in the wake of his despair. Before Creedon's rage the surfaces of the small living room had once held up a lamp and some odd knickknacks. She had salvaged what she could of them but the young man was strong and the fragile pieces did not stand a chance against the walls and floor.

The morning slipped away and soon noon had come and gone and evening settled in. Creedon slept fitfully and woke only once to blindly take his medication. She knew she needed to change the dressing on his eye. It was well overdue and in his anger from the night before had strained his stitches and made them weep. However, she would not push the matter if he didn't want them to be messed with. His wound was a touchy subject despite the time that had passed since he had sustained it. Creedon had a knack for shutting down when confronted with his own health.

His health wasn't something that was easy for him to discuss and it made him feel uncomfortable when others expressed their concern, even if it was minimal.

The sound of the bathroom door closing jarred Felicity out of her thoughts and she jerked her attention back to the dish she had removed from the oven. She moved it to the table and sat it down on a hot pad as she waited for Creedon to join her for dinner.

However, as two minutes turned to five and five eventually into ten, she began to worry. Walking to the bathroom door she gave it a knock, "Creedon?" she called. No answer. "Are you alright in there?" she asked and knocked again. This time she heard the sink turn on and then off before the door began to open. She stepped back and waited for him to open the door all the way. When he didn't, she pressed against it and peered in. What she saw made her frown and her gut twist with worry. Creedon stood braced against the sink; his breathing slightly labored and his face tinted with the sick hue of nausea. He reached up and ran a hand through his messy blond hair before his body heaved with the violent spasms meant to expel something that was unwanted. But, there was nothing to be gotten rid of and his convulsions only served to exhaust him.

"Medication," he finally managed to voice as he turned to look at her peeking in the doorway.

"I know," she said and opened the door more. "I think if you eat something you'll feel better," she said. He shook his head.

"No, I'm not hungry," he said as he ran cool water to wash his face with.

"You should eat," she protested, and his only response was silence filled his hands with water, submerged his features, and drowned out any more of her objections.

"I'm going back to sleep," Creedon said as he emerged from the bathroom walked toward her a few paces.

"Not before you shower and I change your bandages," she said and Creedon eyed her for a moment. She felt a bit unnerved by his singular, unwavering, gaze. "You'll feel better," she said as she glanced briefly at him. She could hear him lumber toward the bathroom, a slight limp to his gait. "I'll wrap your ribs for you again when you're done," she said knowing that he was watching her and she wondered what he might be thinking.

"Alright," was his simple response as he disappeared into the restroom again. Felicity sighed and slumped her shoulders for a moment before she meandered toward the only bedroom in the house. There she changed the sheets of the bed so that Creedon could have a decent place to sleep.

When Creedon finally emerged from the bathroom his hair had been brushed back, he was dressed comfortably, and the bandages from his eye were completely removed. However, he kept a hand over it as he approached Felicity. She stood up from her perch on the stool at the kitchen's small island. "It's a bit gruesome," he said and paused before her.

"I saw it right after it happened. I think I can handle it cleaned up, Creedon," she said and Creedon lowered his hand and exposed his eye. The stitches were a little worn but they would hold for tonight. "You're going to have to go back to the doctor to get those stitches looked at," she said and he groaned loudly. "Go lay down on the sofa and I'll bandage it again. Then you can sleep again. I changed the sheets and made up the bed for you. I think a proper night's sleep will do you some good," she said as she followed him back into the living room.

"Will you go home tonight?" he asked as he sat on the couch. Felicity paused at his question and looked down at him, slightly taken aback at his question.

"I was planning on it," she said and noticed his features slacken a bit. "Why?" she asked but Creedon didn't answer and, instead, shifted to lie down. With a sigh she knelt down at his head with the small kit in hand. She placed a glove on her hand and started the task of treating his wound with ointment. It was a grisly reminder of what had happened a little less than two weeks ago. Plane crashes had ended far worse than his had but that did not make his trauma any less

harrowing. Felicity knew that both of them had been blessed to have, at the very least, survived the incident. Creedon, however, had voiced that he considered it only a blessing for her. The fate of his career, his life, and his freedom, now hung in the balance. If his eye did not heal like it should, then it was likely he'd never fly again.

"John told me that you overcorrected and that you did it on purpose," she finally spoke as she finished her task. Creedon sat up slowly before he got to his feet. Felicity stood as well, "Did you?"

"Yes," audible silence hung in the air as the young woman studied his face, unsure of what she should speak again.

"Why?" the question made Creedon stop breathing and the pause in action didn't go unnoticed. His blue eye caught hers and Felicity felt her skin catch fire. Her nerves made her stomach twist in knots as she waited for his answer with rapt attention.

"I – if" he stammered then sighed heavily and ran a hand through his still damp hair. Creedon turned from her and walked across the living room. He leaned his head back and sighed before he spoke, his words directed upward rather than the woman he was addressing. He approach her again, opened his mouth to say something, but kept quiet. There was a distinct look of confusion and worry that marred his features and the intensity of his singular gaze made Felicity's shiver. A tremor wracked her legs and she buckled them to keep from falling. Her knees were weak and she battled with herself against what she was feeling. It was a whirlwind of emotions she had felt once before and feeling them again frightened her. They had once hurt her.

Her heart skipped as she became aware of Creedon's hand. She had never seen so much uncertainty and hesitation in someone before. His muscles jumped and jerked with caution as he moved. It was as if he feared touching her and when his fingertips brushed her cheek he withdrew his hand as if she were ablaze. "I – I can't," he said and immediately backed up. Felicity blinked in surprise and for a moment she wondered if he would fly into a rage again.

"Creedon," she whispered and he shook his head.

"You, you know why I overcorrected," he said and Felicity bit her lip. She did know why or, at least, now she did. The notion had plagued her for weeks since the accident and now she had her answer. His hesitation and the crack of a placeless emotion in his voice told her all

she needed to know. Yet, it did not relieve her of the burden of curiosity. Rather, the weight of her curiosity shifted to her heart and was multiplied thrice over. She felt tears flood the dam of her throat and she choked them back from her eyes.

“Creedon I, I’m sor-,” his hand halted her.

“No, don’t apologize, just don’t,” he said and he placed a hand atop his head before he knotted his fingers into his own hair. “I, I can’t do this anymore. . . there’s so much going on. Now, in the midst of it all, this happens. . . I’m done, Felicity. I’m done,” he said and allowed his hand to fall to his side. She swallowed the knot in her throat. “Do you regret what you did the night of the crash?” she asked and failed to suppress what tears she could not bite back. Creedon frowned and limped toward the doorway that led to the kitchen and then, ultimately, to the bedroom.

“Don’t ask dumb questions,” he stated and then stopped once he was at the threshold and looked ahead. “No,” he said before he hobbled to the bedroom. Felicity heard the door click shut before she turned and looked his direction. Tears streaked her cheeks and she drew in a labored breath as she turned to leave. It didn’t feel right staying in his house any longer. He was a loner and Felicity should have remained aware of that. It was something she should have never forgotten and she hated that she had, if even just for a moment.

by: Stephanie Lane

Ending Fight, Fading Light

I'm obsessed with this?
Yes? No? Maybe?

I guess! You're neither the first nor the last
The first to smile of joy, the last to cry secretly
Time has passed. My memory has betrayed me

And yet the sound of her voice still resonates.
And yet the sound of her voice resounds,
weaker now, but still

I know! She is neither the first nor the last
The first to hang on, the last to release the string
Her voice weakened slowly in the corridor

Many others are extinguished before she
And some others after her
How does it feel? When all strenghts gradually abandon;
When lungs progressively unleash.
Her eyes found mine. Her look pierced my soul.
She could have been Cynthia, my lovely best friend
IT COULD HAVE BEEN MOTHER!

I don't want to die. I can't die.
The sound of her voice resounds,
Weaker and weaker now, but echoing still

I shall rise. I shall rise.
I refuse to sleep. I'm afraid.
I'm afraid I'll never wake up again.
There are six souls waiting,
six waiting on me to raise them,
Expecting me to see them grow.
I haven't said goodbye.

It is midnight, the yelling voice extinguished.
No more echo in the corridor.

by: Afi Delali Degbey

The Wedding

Anticipation,
Bride - captivating!
Devoted, enraptured Father
Groom - hopeful, ill-at-ease, jubilant!
Kisses, Laughter, Merriment,
Nuptials observed, proclaimed,
Quintessential remembrance,
Speeches, toasts,
Unity vowed,
Well-wishers x-pressing youthful zealously
Anticipations begets culmination!

by: Lynne Mickelson

CALM

Calm, it's the way we live.

Caring is a way to impact other people's lives. It is the way we demonstrate our interest and concern that allows people to open the door to new opportunities.

Appreciate all that is given to you in life. Cherish what you have and seek nothing more. Those who are content will understand true happiness.

Listen to those who have something to say. Listening is key to having the ability to understand. With understanding, you will be able to appreciate what others have to offer.

Motivate the ones around you. Motivation is the reason why people are successful at what they do. It is the reason people strive to be the best that they can be.

Calm, it's the way we should live.

by: Joanie Melichar

Tears of an Angel

by: Stephanie O'Connell



Pink Hue

by: Stephanie O'Connell



Summertime Spud

by: Jamie Fagerholt



Florence

by: Jamie Fagerholt



Leaf

by: Rowenna Fillmore



Dun Clydesdale

by: Nicole Heskin



drawing in colored pencil

Importance of People's Attitude Toward Sustainability

I started my first official job as a sustainability assistant at the center of sustainability in the University of Minnesota Crookston. It amazed me how many people, mostly students, did not understand my job position/title. There was no single international student that understood what "Sustainability Assistant" meant. Perhaps it is not the job title that most people did not understand; it is the term "Sustainability" that people did not understand. Out of many, few have a sense of what sustainability means but not enough to actually understand the concept of sustainability. When people do not have a good in-depth understanding about sustainability, their attitude towards sustainability is different than it should be.

Sustainability, in recent days, has been the hot topic of discussion because of increasing energy scarcity, critical and numerous problems related to environment such as drastic global climate change, water contamination, air pollution, food security, etc. The primary reason however, is the fact that our planet is turning to be a very disturbed and dangerous place to live and people have realized the importance of sustainability. People have come to realize that our planet is at a verge of great destruction and lost. Despite, there are lots to be done to educate people about sustainability and it is importance to redeem our planet to a better, cleaner, and greener state. Before educating about any particular subject it is immensely important to understand people's attitudes towards that respective subject.

The number of people who have good understanding about the concept of sustainability are completely outnumbered by those who do not. Out of many differences, the prime difference between those people is their attitude towards sustainability. The attitude of an individual plays a very important role in defining the personality or lifestyle of that particular individual. The number of students who thinks sustainability is limited to only natural resources and environment is humongous. On the other hand, the number of students who think sustainability is only about recycling, solar energy, and driving small cars are not less either. The truth is sustainability is just like sky: it covers everything and there is no limit. Sustainability is applicable to all the majors that possibly exist and is even more applicable in our daily lives from the moment we open our eyes in the morning to the moment we close our eyes before we sleep at night. This is what people need to be educated about and they can change their attitude towards sustainability.

Sustainability by definition is not hard to understand at all. It is just as simple as it can be. There are many angles to it and one can define it in many ways depending on their perception but the core gist remains same. According to the Brundtland Commission, sustainability is fulfilling the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There is no simpler and straight to the point wording than this. Yes, it is that simple. However, we tend to be so ignorant and do things that are only beneficial to the present generation putting our future generation to huge piles of problems by consuming all the natural resources and leaving a very precarious and risky environment for them.

Our future generation are our successors and they are the ones who have to deal with the all the mess we have caused today. We need to be little more noble than we are now and think seriously about what kind of planet we want to have for our next generations and many generations to come. Apparently, our actions will define and shape the fortune of a planet that we leave for our future generation. The only way to leave a cleaner, greener, and resilient planet to our future generations is being sustainable right at this moment. However, we need to change our attitude towards sustainability first. We need to understand that the natural resources we take for granted are limited. Hence, we ought to learn how to use the natural resources in a sustainable way so we fulfill our needs and still leave plenty for our future generation.

We, the people are solely responsible for fate of our planet in years to come. We should control our greediness and think very seriously about the fate of our planet. This is possible when we do not take any natural resources for granted but instead take as our personal assets which we want to hand over to our children and continue the legacy. It is not fair for our future generation to deal with the mess we leave for them. Our future generations should not suffer from our consequences but instead expect a better planet. That is why we need to understand the importance of sustainability and change our attitude towards sustainability right this second.

by: Tashi Wongdi Gurung

Loading

We would get up really early before school to go out and do it; the sun would just be coming up on that flat northern Minnesota horizon. I would put on blue and white striped overalls, an old sweatshirt from Disney World, and a pair of the smelliest footwear you can imagine, standard attire for this task. Oh, and I never forgot my pair of worn-out leather gloves; if I cut my hand on a rusty panel, Mom would make me go to the clinic in town and get a tetanus booster because she dramatically claimed that “I would get lockjaw” if I didn’t.

We’d go out to the old red granary, and everything would be in it’s proper place, ready to go. We had to get up so early before school because you never knew if this job was gonna take two minutes or two hours. Dad had had to write me a note before to give to the secretary at school so that I could get excused for missing my 11th grade sociology class.

We would all get into position, my brother, Dad, and me. Usually my brother was in charge of swinging the door shut at just the right moment. Dad and I would take hold of a heavy, rusty panel and use it to herd the beast, although they were never beasts to me; I had raised them since they were newborns, they were my babies, and a part of me was always sad to see them go. Dad would lift the gate to the pen, and we would move the 400 pounder into the tiniest corner near the trailer possible by coming up behind her with the panel. I would then hold that heavy, rusty panel by myself in place while Dad got in the new enclosure with the slippery, coarse animal, hoping to get her to give into the claustrophobia and enter the trailer. If she got herself turned around, however, that was bad news for all of us; she would throw her body into the panel, knock me on my rear with hardly any effort, and we would be back at square one – only this time, we’d have one riled-up, ticked-off sow. If it happened once, we were pretty calm; if it happened twice, we were scowling and making clouds with our breath out of our nostrils and into the cold air; if it happened a third time, we were inventing new curse words.

Dad tried coaxing her in with her feeder and a little corn, but she was too smart for that. He waited so long to do this because the butcher preferred for them to not be fed. After several failed events, Dad finally told my brother to get the five gallon pail. I always hated when it got to this point; there was no guarantee that you’d have hearing for the rest of the day.

He was gonna nose her. Again, he got her into place, but he had her turned around so that her rear was to the trailer and her schnoz was facing him. He told me to hold tight to the panel and he told my brother to get ready. Then, in one swift movement, he shoved the pail over her nose and pushed her backwards with all his might. She screamed bloody murder, squealing from the deepest part of her lungs and her being, her hooves scrambling in the dirt and the manure and the straw, trying desperately to thrash her mighty neck left and right, anything to escape the blindness of that pail. Dad gave one final heave and she went soaring into the trailer, pail and all. My brother shut the door, and Dad threw all his weight into it and secured the latch.

He'd turn around then and lean comfortably against the trailer, catching his breath, his hands on the knees of his overalls, and we'd listen to her calmly snort around in her delivery cart, locker plant-bound. Then he'd wipe his brow and say what he always said: "This one'll taste good. You kids go get ready for school. I'll give you a ride."

by: Kalli Peterson

Editor's Note

It is a privilege to have taken part in the publication of this journal. With this opportunity, I would like to express gratitude to the following: to the Academic Success Center, thank you for the enthusiastic panel members, editors, and for your financial support; to Linnea Schluessler, thank you for your passion in art, and vision for this journal; most of all, to the contributors who work so diligently in their studies and professions, yet find time to appreciate and share the art in their lives. It's a beautiful thing that the cold North should foster such a warm community.

by: Jed Shanley

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