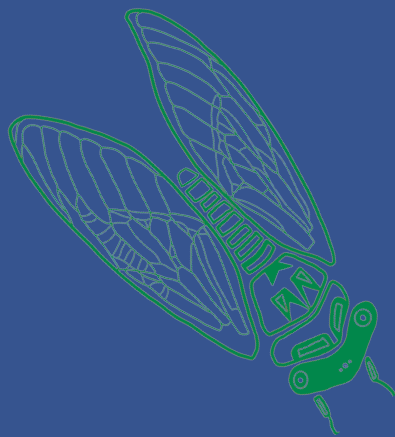
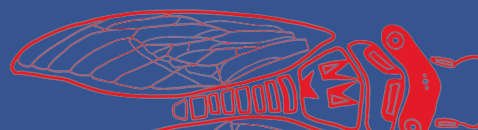
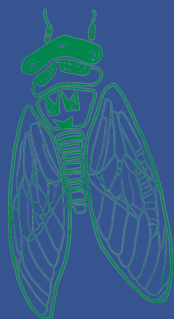
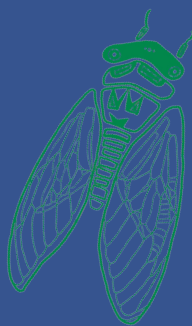
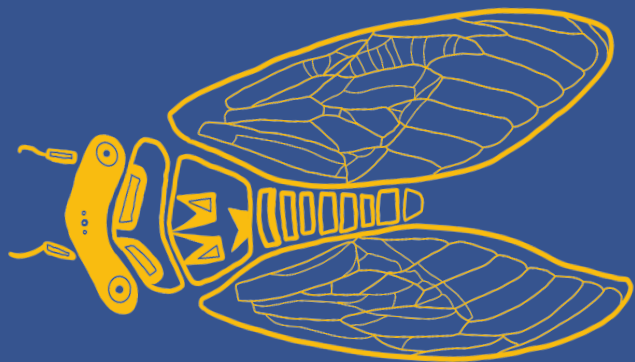
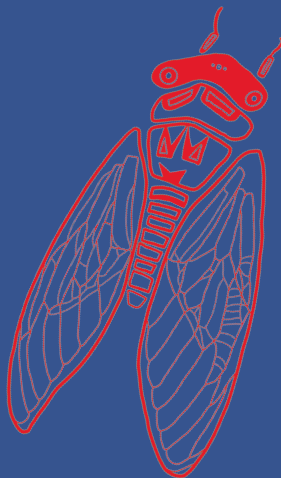
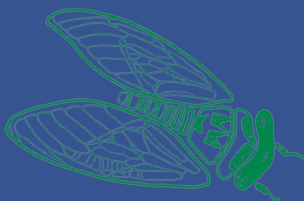
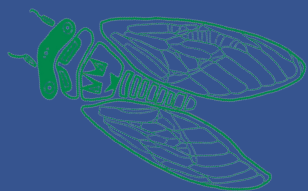


HELLO



I, Chicano

Devin Encinias

I, Chicano, fruit of thy womb, deep roots...
corn crops, brown face, and a painful scar.
The only home I've ever known.
Its wind, from which my breath is cut, the soil in my bones.
Nations, kingdoms, world wonders to behold;
Graces, praises sang to a great spirit, and four grandfathers, in four hundred tongues.

I, El Indio, twenty two generations of weight,
Broken promises, empty words,
Void of fear and shame,
Different plagues with similar symptoms:
"Kill the father, rape the mother, take the child".
Sacred chains of kinship, broken by greed.
The greed of rugged individuals, working toward a common goal.
My home, the home of my father, and his before him... open for sale and settlement by my own image in the
mirror that I still cannot recognize.

Porque I, Mestizo, am a blend,
of stories and ages that move the breath in my lungs and blood in my veins;
Old Mexico, Modern America, New Spain.
Witness the rise and fall of kings and priests alike, so many, all the same.
Fences, walls, carving the skin of my mother, rods of iron and fire, wicked deer with no antlers and skin of
steel.

I Mejicano, throw a dance in my walk
Practice cumbia in my step, write corridos when I talk.
Smell cebolla on my breath and post up on the calle, next to that outline of chalk.
Hear my Chevy turning over, oldies bumping,
Bien planchado, con cuidado, ready to get into something.
Say my prayers, throw on layers, hit the spot and give saludos.

In the morning laugh it off, limoncito in my
menudo.

I, Latino, mixed blood, bronze skin and Spanglish
tongue.

Having heard songs of spirits, only to forget every
lyric... but that ancient drum pace once set,
still remains.

My long, braided hair, sheared off... yet, slicked back
with a suavevito shine vato.

Golden eagle with light eyes, unable to swallow a
whole pinche serpent of pride;

Despite... being made to march a long way to
nowhere

Only to be buried,

Never hoped to be seen again.

Pero sobre todo;

I, Chicano...

Am a seed.

Made to grow, against the grain.

How to Remember Your Mother

Shanlla Remtulla

Shake grass seeds onto the lawn when it turns yellow/ never wash a cast iron skillet/ do not try to revive what has already died/ mix it with something new instead/ go to the mosque on Fridays/ kneel/ your mother has bad knees/ kneel/ remember that you do not have to pray/ that is for you, not for her/ stop saying sorry/ please/ thank you/ i forgive you/ you do not owe anyone shit/ that is for you/ and for her/ say the word shit several times/ that is her favorite word/ never ever use a measuring cup/ measuring cups are white people shit /don't taste food/ feel it/ lock yourself in a room with all of the lights off/ don't come out until/ you know what you did wrong/ count to three/ count to five/ count to ten/ recite the Quran on the way to school/ the grocery store/ the gay club/ nobody has time for faith anymore/ love women with/ unwavering confidence/ love men with/ cautious optimism/ that is for you/ and for her/ wear shoes that are two/ different colors/ salt the perimeter of your house/ draw a black dot/ behind your ear/ evil is not welcome here/ when you are reborn/ choose to be her/ play like children are supposed to/ do everything she wished she could have/ do not just love your body/ revel in it/ drink and dance from the dip/ in your hips/ our family's women are big-boned/ never yell/ break cycles/ never grit/ your/ teeth/ never flare/ your/ nostrils/ break cycles/ do not smoke/ break cycles/ finish school/ break cycles/ make a name/ for yourself/ break/ cycles/ salt your/ mouth/ break/ cycles/

Evil is not/ welcome/ here.

Can a memory move genetically?

Helena Neufeld

Somewhere in the late 60s:
A German school bus full
of Air-Force brats. My father
hears Sgt. Pepper for the first time
on some other kid's radio.
He's in his own sixties now,
a low lit, cluttered office.
I sit across from him
in quiet attention, there are
only words. But I swear:
I feel the floor of that
school bus at my feet,
a diluted version of
his own recollection. A landscape
that I've never seen:
Green hills, softly rolling.
The seats on the bus, The Beatles
disguising themselves,
I feel his neurons fire, his interest pique.
Our favorite Lonely Hearts Club Band
and we're streaming it
through the decades. Gritty
genius in sharp relief.
A musical gene flow, as if
our blood is more than just matter.

On The Lam

Hannah Pritchard

Driving to Topeka, profession
of love and boredom
settles in irrigation ditches,
words barred in the confines of the plains.

Uncle pours his anger
into the ash cakes buried beneath the embers,
familiar exploration of resentment
and its combustible properties, stirring
coals with cleaver, girlfriend with promise
of breaking out. Toil

chimes up through the smoke,
Uncle unsure whether to buy gas
or Pall Malls, shrugging
oil off his shoulders like a pelican,
beak filled with proclamations
and anti-government agenda.

What are you doing here?
Uncle doesn't ask.

Three days later,
August digs its wheels in the mud—
Uncle's brain is uninsured calculator.
Uncle shuffles cards, shuffles feet.
Uncle, dipped in a river of soot,
digs hands into pockets
and asks for a ride.

Cicada

Hannah Pritchard

Heart spread out like fragile wings—
cicada, paper lantern, bone porcelain.
Is that what I am now? Gentle pencil
traces of a moth pinned down.
I am frozen in time, I am mosquito,
trapped in amber syrup, I am unchanged
since last time I saw my mother.

Heat and stick remind me of L'Estaque in summer,
braid my hair with smoke of lit up Gauloises—
not suddenly, I am back to thin-bodied thirteen
sitting with feet dipped in familiar stream,
feeling rocks in my palms and tossing them
to become smooth in the brine.

Goldfish

Hannah Pritchard

Shadows breaking away, I bide
time, hold tongue to cheek,
keep breath from leaving. Left
palm touching glass, right
fingers grasping air, nothing but
dust stirred whirling, windowbeam
casting molds of a room turned
colorless with light. Fleeting

and understood,
missed in midair
as my promises often are; words
said as whispers turn stony,
sink to tank bottom, disturb goldfish.

I do not rip out my heart, but pull
at it tenderly, so as not to break
the bulb. Uprooted,
I try not to be frightened
by the emptiness under my feet.

Altitude takes pressure with it,
pulls apart tin cans and lifts paper
from the table, steals my words
and draws water out of my chest.

I hold tongue to cheek, press
quiet into my palms like
pieces of bread, try not to let
my eyes close too heavy, keep
vision from leaving in the dust,
bind sound to sense, set
future down on red stovetop,
break beat with hard-trained jaw.

Spoke

Hannah Pritchard

Prefrontal cortex painted aubergine —
binding me in perpetual uncertainty,
the poetry in June comes out all wrong.

Invention coming hard and fast
through the window, fastened
to my shoulders, releasing me
from the cage.

Imagine my dismay in being.

Of fragile wing,
this falcon has either found its tame
or had it shown.
Do not fly far from here, do not
perch yourself on any rough branches—
you were meant to be bridled,
coaxed and loved.
Situating yourself among the heathers.
Let them feed you from a leather glove.

Do not ask for what is not given.
Do not be unloved.

We are bound with string.
We are given freedom in exchange
for thoughts of being free.
In violent shadows of nostalgic dream,
we put playing cards in the spokes of our wheels
and let ourselves go.

Ballad of the Barrens

Harrison Potts

Some men wear a face of apathy
As they mill about the land.
Their eyes stay fixated on the ground
Or on the phone in their hand.

The real world remains unobserved
And in effect unaltered.
The days are short and the nights are long;
The sun seems to have faltered.

I saw a group of young men walk by;
They laughed at me as I passed.
I don't know what it was all about,
But I felt like an outcast.

Some men wear a fake and phony smile
As they mill about the land.
They act happy, polite, and friendly,
But they're sinking in quicksand.

Everything in this place has perished
Except the vultures and snakes.
The dirt beneath us has turned to sand
While we mill about like apes.

Houses and daycares are abandoned,
They are now dust and ashes.
"Who will save us? Who will save us now??"
The people scream in masses.

Some men seem now to have found shelter
In a haze of fantasy;
Lost in the folds of fleeting pleasure,
Distant from reality.

I stare out into this stark landscape
Every day without blinking
While people pretend to ignore it
And keep fucking and drinking.

*In the room the women talk and snipe
Of margaritas and Tinder swipes.*

The only shelter that they have now
Comes from drinks and dopamine.
“Endless swipes! Endless pleasure for all!”
Screams the distraction machine.

Some men, as they mill about the land,
Wear a look of apathy.
They’ve been numbed by their indulgences
And stripped of humanity.

Some men, as they mill about the land,
Grin wide with a phony smile.
They feel large and oh-so-important
As they update their profile.

The Earth’s fertile soil that once grew life
Has now become barren sand.
The world’s full of voluntary slaves,
Servants to pleasure’s command.

Some men wear a cross around their neck
And think it grants protection.
But it’s just another clever ploy,
Another misdirection.

Temples fill to the brim with people
Wanting gravely to be saved.
Hoping salvation will be granted
If silent and well-behaved.

Neither faith nor pleasure can spare men
From death by dehydration.
Our mouths are dry, our lips crack open,
Awaiting our extinction.

Without water, men will go insane
And scream, plead, and beg for salt.
Their corpses lay out in the open
Like roadkill on the asphalt.

*The desperate laying on of hands
Cannot bring water to the badlands.*

A dreadful fool cries in the distance,
“I am happy! I know joy!”
But his face still shows a pained grimace
As though he’s a spanked schoolboy.

He keeps screaming, tears run down his face
As people walk right on by.
They are naive, they believe his words,
But can’t look him in the eye.

Beneath his mask of tears, snot, and screams
There’s something deeply hidden.
The face far under his well-worn mask
Is plain, hurt, and grief-stricken.

The fool does not believe his own words,
But his face is, too, a lie.
There’s no true emotion left at all,
He’s simply waiting to die.

Some men are eager to trade their pain
For something to make them numb.
“Eat, sleep, work, drink, fuck, binge, binge, repeat”
Routines are a common one.

Love will perish with our grandparents
And will turn into a myth;
A story spoken around campfires
And put children to bed with.

One cannot feel love without water
And we’ve got nothing but dust.
Love is not pleasure, nor is it mute,
So it’s been replaced with lust.

Love here is like constructing a well
At the peak of a sand dune
And hoping that it will gush with life
While believing “someday soon”.

*In the room people talk about love,
Not really knowing what they speak of.*

Glass

Riya Bhalwal

Time and time again my heart shatters
At every such instance
He who wields the hammer steals a piece
I repair her without noticing she is not whole
And give her to someone else
With a shiny mallet in his pocket
One day I shall not have a heart to give at all

Notes from April

Helena Neufeld

We ought to wade out into the sea, you and I—
solve this like sickly Victorian women.

Last week, as I was among friends and sinking into hazy revelry,
it was word from you that took me by the upper arm
and hauled me up to the realm of thought.

I want the freezing water to swallow us, spit back us out.
I want the salt to scrub this stuff from our skin.

“You do not always know what I am feeling”
Words tumble over themselves in my mind,
pebbles buffed out slowly in a swift stream.

Do you hate this chasm like I do?

Because even in the clean mountain air, my wildest thoughts
are stifled as I try to fit them into someone who is not you.

The sea is unforgiving. We’d emerge pink and clean,
forged anew and friends again.

Funny how anniversaries can live in our joints. And anger’s
shelf life is nothing to love’s and I want us in
 wet hair, skirts billowed up in waist-high water.
I want it over; I want it now.

Wildfire

Katt Brown

I tried so hard to hate you.

Poured gasoline over everything that reminded me of you.
Set fire to my hair and clothes,
because they are filled with your smoke.
But now I think maybe I should try to give you all
the love in my heart.

Through my cremation,
I learned that fighting fire just feeds the flame.

Maybe love can turn this to smoldering amber,
and erase the raging forest fire that resides within me.
Maybe I can turn back the clock.
Rise again from my own ashes.
Replant my forests.
Unsing my foliage.
Maybe I can grow flowers from my wounds,
leaves from my pores.
Invite life back into me.
Reintroduce myself to growth.

Thank you for setting me alight.
Teaching me how to reanimate myself,
from decimated ruins.
Germinate from torched seeds.
Thrive from destruction.
Live again despite your wicked touch.

After You

Katt Brown

I wash the worry out of my hair
I scrub the shame off of my skin
I cauterize the cowardice that lives here
I purge myself of parasites

I plant passion in my pores
I deposit devotion in my eyes
I lodge lust for life between my teeth
I sow my own seeds

I secure myself to ecstasy.

Second to Last Supper

Dylan Carpenter

Divinity is a shepherd,
On a hill, blazing toward that
Sweet chapel ripe with poinsettia
Atop the altar of Sunday
And stained glass — a mosaic to
The obelus in all of us,
As the dust settles and stirs so
Entrenched in solid oak-shaped pews,

My body is the children's
Choir and the organ has become
My own mortification now—
A mutilation morendo
Of not yet He / not yet all Hymn;
The service begins, whispers die,
Yet the daybreak bell chimes on high:
O'er hilltops o'er glory, it's over.

Mezzaluna

Dylan Carpenter



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