

The Agathist

SPRING 2021

The Agathist

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SPRING 2021
GERMANTOWN HIGH SCHOOL
409 CALHOUN PARKWAY

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Advisor's Note

MR. DICKSON

Spring is a season of mixed messages, especially in schools.

Think about it for a second. Outside, new life pushes itself upon us, new flower buds force their way through dormant branches, grass blades repopulate the barren fields. The potential is so beautiful that it's almost tormenting. The *sublime* that 19th century European and American writers and artists craved.

But we're also winding things down in the spring. Time to shore up those faulty averages as the end of the year gains on us. Seniors start turning in their last essays and projects, they march their last halftime shows or play their last soccer games. Amongst the blooming azaleas and zinnias, the school year begins to slowly close like a garden flower as autumn descends.

Maybe this isn't tension, though. Maybe it's balance. The burgeoning and dwindling don't cancel each other out like numbers in a math equation; this rising and falling pair together to keep us from drifting to one extreme or another. Sun and shade. Fire and water. Comedy and tragedy.

I feel like this edition of *The Agathist* strikes that balance well. Gardens are destroyed, but we see beauty in the sunrise. Faces are covered and revealed. Flowers are planted while caskets are buried. And all of these things exist in some fragile yet eternal harmony with each other, a dancing couple in which no one holds the lead for too long.

Read, look, and consume this art. Then make some of your own; we've started an Instagram account (@GHSAgathist) that will have weekly writing prompts! Be part of the push and pull, the spring and fall of life.

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Senioritis

JOHN MURRY MCCULLOUGH

I am here, stuck at this light.
The only thing between me and ecstasy
- this red beacon in the dark night.
Behind it are only empty intersections
Encouraging me to go where I've never gone.
I am stuck, waiting for change



"Oh The Places You'll Go"

DELANEY SYKES, MIXED MEDIA

Somber Reflection

TAYLOR HERRON, COLORED PENCIL



Just Sitting on the Bus

TAYLOR HERRON, ACRYLIC

Children

LEAH RAINEY

Feet dusted with the earth
Of their adventures;
Legs striding innocently through all
Of life's evil schemes.
Oblivious to the dirt and filth
On their clothes;
To them, it is a trophy of
Their bravery and curiosity.
Eyes filled with innocent wonder,
Mouths smile wide as their laughter flows
From within.
These are they who will enter
Heaven's glory with ease
These are the ones we must be.

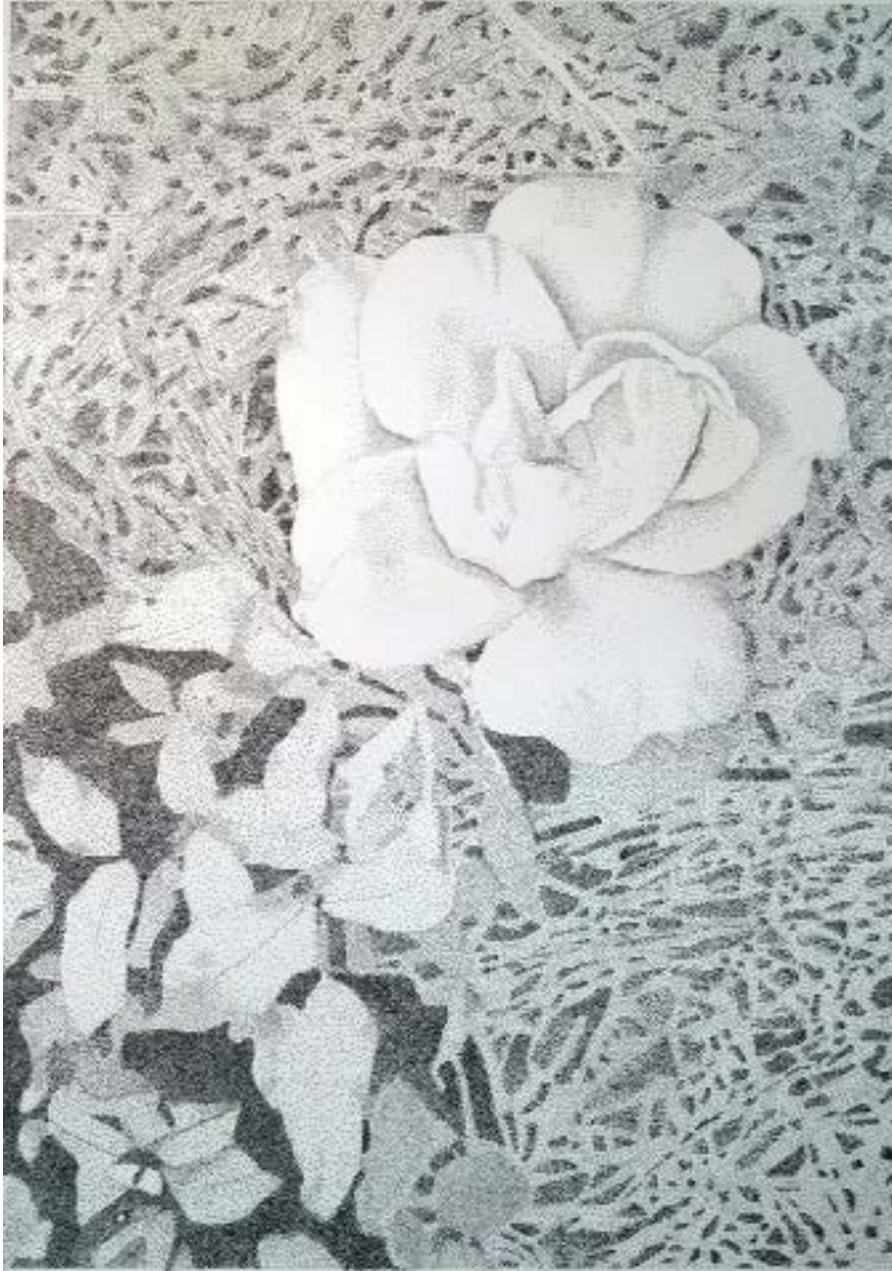


Hitch Up

BONNIE HUDSPETH, ACRYLIC

A Sign of Life

HARRISON PARTRIDGE, PEN & INK



Dahlia

ZOE OSWALT

Their green stems soaking up the water in a clear vase
When someone receives flowers the brightly colored
petals and sharp smells clouds their hearts with joy.
The promise of life is in their hands.

They put the various colored flowers into a long vase
and admire them longingly. After a while they start
to wilt one by one, the petals losing their grip from
the stem while they fall onto a marble counter.

Colors drain from the petals which returns
the petal to the color of the earth

I hate flowers

I hate the way that they die after a couple of days
Even when you tend to them they end up wilting
and your joy away with it. I hate flowers.

The smell that exudes from the tall
roses or the yellow sunflowers. It reminds me of
a room full of bouquets set up to be pleasing
to the eye and comforting. The various smells
waft around the room. The room full of solemn faces.
Stray tears. And in the middle lays a rectangular box
Around it shows pictures of a life before

Flowers surround the box trying to make it more appealing
All I see when I look are dead flowers and nauseating scents

The last time I saw him all I can remember
is the smell of flowers suffocating me.

11 Steps of Archery

BRADY PERMENTER

1. Stance

*feel the tension in your feet
brace yourself
breathe*

2. Nock Arrow

*the anxiety is building
focus that energy
empty yourself*

3. Draw Hand Set

*no thoughts
head empty
focus*

4. Bow Hand Set

*form is everything
form and focus
remember the steps*

5. Pre-Draw

*feel the tension in your back
brace yourself
the easy part is over*

6. Draw

*the anxiety is coming again
ignore it
now you're thinking about it*

7. Anchor

*focus
no
not on the anxiety*

8. Aim

*focus on what you're doing
not where you're aiming
remember the steps*

9. Shot Set Up

*you're almost there
just breathe
you always skip this step*

10. Release

11. Follow-Through and Reflect

*ignore the score
how did you do?
how do you do better?*

Big Rip

DAWN MUNRO

(n.) - a hypothetical cosmological event in which all matter in the universe loses cohesion; possible fate if the outward acceleration of matter continues

Whitman says "all goes
onward and outward,
nothing collapses"
But I can feel my lungs
collapsing
It is hard to breathe
The cold stings
delicate skin

I am losing pieces of me
A childhood memory
Left out in the rain
My voice has been stolen
I am drowning in words

I am folding in on myself
Like an origami bird
I will fly
Far
Far
away from this place
on paper thin wings
Paper thin dreams

Maybe one of these days
I will spontaneously combust
A supernova
Rain down pinpoint star tears
Upon the earth
Or rip apart like the universe

When I have lost all connections
Or maybe I will simply
sink back into the ground
I came from

Maybe that's what Emerson meant
When he said "we all return to nature"



Nothing But a Clown

TAYLOR HERRON, COLORED PENCIL

I Hear Them

SARAH MAGDALENE NIERVA

It was late that night
But still I heard
I heard the sounds of screams
Loud enough for me to wake
I heard the angry voices
I tried to drown them out
But I couldn't go back to sleep

My eyes weren't dry
My mind wasn't clear
My heart kept hurting
With every minute that passed
I could feel myself breaking
Tomorrow, I can feel it
Everything would stay the same

It happened not once
Not twice, nor three times
It was a recurring cycle
A never-ending war
Nowhere felt like home
As if I didn't have one
Because the voices stole mine

I'm trapped here
With the words I listen to
I'm locked inside
In a cage that knows nothing else
I am stuck here
In a place where the walls speak
No one outside can hear them
It's only me

Cookie Crumbs

MARIAM BHATTI

she could feel
the world slowly crumbling
growing smaller
as she took a piece
and kept it safe
in her palms



Modern Culture

TYLER JONES, PENCIL

The Garden Scythe

RYAN HARPER

I walk through the Garden every day. It's the only purpose I have. I tend to the flowers, soil, and weeds as they learn to stand and grow. From the moment their seed was planted into the ground, they have been growing. They have fought through my rich soil, their roots taking a strong hold to the base of their life. Then they sprout and start to take form. They grow a stem, leaves, and they blossom into their lives decided for them by their seed.

The Red Roses sprout from their bush. They are the lovers, destined to intertwine and grow together. They are designed to lure you in in every way, from their bold color, their beautiful formation, their floral fragrance. But hiding under the depths of their beauty lies their deadly thorns. As the lover's thorns grow, their thorns destroy those who dare to touch them—including each other. They rip through each other's delicate red façade to reveal the sharp monsters beneath, leaving the other broken and the worst version of themselves. However, still destined to stay together for their lives on their bush, the Roses fight each other for the healing sunlight.

The Black Dahlia rises from the dark depths of the soil all on her own. As she rises and grows, she builds layers upon layers, losing the original petals in herself. But from the shadows of herself, she finds small rays of light. She finds the beauty in the weeds suffocating her from beneath, attacking her roots. She finds beauty in her imminent death. She finds beauty in the dark of the shadows of herself and the nightmarish world around her. The Black Dahlia bows to no other flower but Death.

The Dandelion is the real killer of the Garden. He is the weeds that strangle the beauties of the garden behind a genie charade. He offers the Garden their biggest wishes for the simple exchange of casting his fragile petals to be blown into the wind. But he doesn't tell the wishers that he will take root again, to deceive and kill again. He lies and spreads his consuming poison to the whole Garden. He lurks in the depths of the soil and takes the life from the flowers

when they are not looking for him in the shadows.

All flowers hide the ugliest parts of themselves beneath the soil, in their roots, as an oak will hide bits of its history in its rings. Their roots hide under the soil, searching for the forbidden things they crave where no one can see what they do underground, hidden from all the light in the world.

No matter how far apart I keep these flowers, they find a way to tear the Garden apart. No matter how perfectly I tend to their needs, they always bow to me, trembling in the wind too strong for their wilted spines. No matter how much sun and water they receive, they will always die, one day. Nothing lasts forever. But nothing is beautiful because it lasts forever, the Black Dahlia would say. It's beautiful because it works so hard to stay alive, it kills to stay alive, only to die.

A thing is beautiful because in the end, everything wilts and dies. In the end, the whole Garden will bow. All the Roses, Dahlias, and Weeds, no matter what life they lived or how hard they fought to live, will bow down to Me.

I've carried this scythe since the first breath of life, since the first heartbeat. From the moment anything was created, it was doomed to end. But my purpose as Death was never to kill. I was never the one drawing out your last breath. I was never the one holding your heart still. I am the one who leads you to your afterlife. I tend to the garden, and when the time comes to pluck the rot from the soil, I take you away. I carry the scythe so that when your time comes, I can cut you from the Garden and lay you to rest.

But I am not the end. When I lay you to rest, you go on to help the living live. You enrich the soil and become the thing you relied on in life. Where your spirit goes, I don't know. And I never will know, for I am not living in life, and I have not died in Death. My eternal purpose is to tend to my Garden, and make sure the living can do what they were born for:

Die.



Duke's Creek

SOPHIA GUERIERI, PHOTOGRAPHY

Sea Eyes

OLIVIA ADAMS

Blue like the sky
Crisp like morning air
Cutting through the trees
As yellow bleeds through the trees
Glowing on your beautiful hair.



Busy

SOPHIA GUERIERI, PHOTOGRAPHY

What Could Have Been

LANGSTON DILLON

And on that day,
I had you so close to my arms,
Within touching distance - you stood,
And yet not a move was made,
You looked into my eyes, so dark,
And I bore to you my soul,
And in your gaze, I held,
Daring - and challenging,
Wishing for a move to be made.

But I was, scared,
So, sight - I broke,
Yet, alluring as you are,
The spell was not broken for long,
And back, into your eyes,
So light, and so bright,
I went.

Falling,
Even though I didn't know it at the time,
Falling,
For someone I might never be able to have,
Falling,
Without a care, and with abandon,
Falling,
While not even knowing, if your arms,
Warm - and caring,
Could catch someone like me,
I fell.



Infinite Galaxy

TAYLOR HERRON, OIL

Apotheosis

BRYN CHAPPELL

The whole garden will bow
Once I tell it how.

Beetles show their bellies
At the touch of sour, lethal spray.
Multiflora roses, English ivy, and beach vitexes sprout
If I plant it that way.

The whole garden will bow,
Watching me saw the insignificant cedar's bough.

Electric barbed wire and orange flags
Will ward off intruders and thieves.
A sprinkle of tiny white spheres
Encourages larger, healthier leaves.

The whole garden will bow
As I choose what I allow.



Midnight Madness

ARISA WASHINGTON, ACRYLIC

Blue

LINDSEY BUIE

I never really liked the color blue
It was always too sad for me
Here I was sitting among a vast blue thing
My Mom called it the ocean
I called it a nightmare
She wanted me to at least place my feet into the cold blue
She said it would feel nice
So I did

Blue isn't so bad
Blue can be a cool thing too
Until all I saw was blue blue blue

Blue filled my ears and mouth
I couldn't breathe as white crashed into the blue along with me
Blue
Blue
Blu
Blu

Blue can be deceiving
When you don't know
How dark its color scheme can get
Filling your brain and your thoughts
Until all you can see is nothing

Bonds Untamed

HARSIKA DILLIBABU

A youth untamed we once lived in lands
Of clouds and dreams of grace as winds sang east.
Three thousand disciplines lined each man's hands.
Rules, order, customs: I cared for the least.
Two souls compassionately crisscross blades
Under the waxing, watchful blue moonlight.
An undying bond formed under pale shades
As sweet rain-dripped loquats kissed the calm night.
Your guqin melody whispered like fate
Even when lotus lakes and soft clouds cried.
Even when I turned thrice death incarnate,
Beating glass shut away by callous tide.
In a world bathed in blood fury and war,
I long for your pure melody once more.



Growth

SOPHIA GUERIERI,
PHOTOGRAPHY

The Dream

KATHRYN LAND

I feel the wind in my hair.
Salt coats my lips,
I can taste freedom.

I am everywhere,
And nowhere.
I am wholly me,
I am the earth,
The sea,
The sky.

My heart beats with the crashing waves,
I let them take me away.

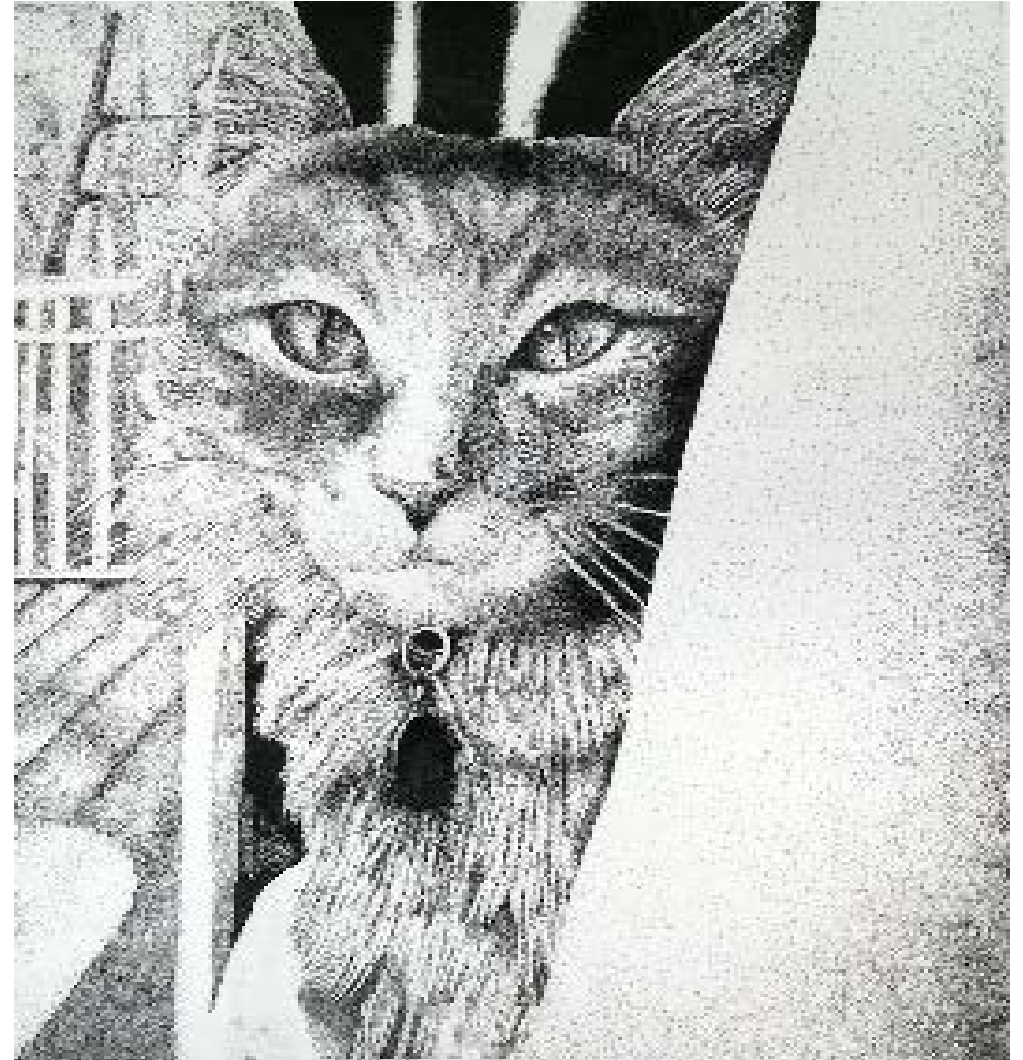
The honey grass is soft;
I lay my cares down
And seep into the dirt.

I am strong,
I am soft.
I am salt,
I am honey.

I braid strands of sun around my fingers,
Fashioning rings of warmth,
More precious than gold.

I rest my head on the flanks of bears,
They do not fear me.
Their bronze eyes know me,
I get lost in their forests.

Butterflies tickle my nose,
They carry me up
In clouds of wispy color.
I dance among the stars.



Rosie

EMMA COLLEY, PEN & INK

The Snowflake's Journey

ERIK HERRING

A lone snowflake falls,
Slowly falling to its end -
Oops, it's gone again.



Gliding

SOPHIA GUERIERI, PHOTOGRAPHY