

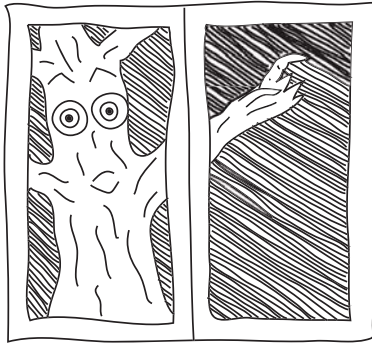
FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

At Night

As I lay in bed
the bodies of shadows
danced on my wall.
Lifeless toys slumped
against the dead-coloured toes of the stuffies.
The objects under my bed
called me down
as the tree's finger drummed on my window.

by James Turner

Cremona School (grade seven)
Cremona, Alberta



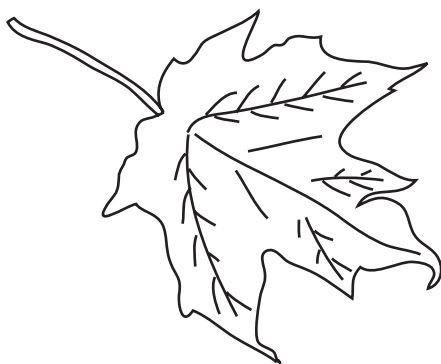
FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

Leaves

Leaves fall off the trees and blow away—
down the hill,
into the flowing river,
to a waterfall where the colours fall like an artist's brush.
They wearily float to the shore and become dried by the sun.
Crackle, crunch as feet pass by along the trail.
Pieces separate, flying into the bush for safety.
Autumn has arrived.

by Damon Bressette

Kettle and Stony Point Hillside School (grade eight)
Forest, Ontario



FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

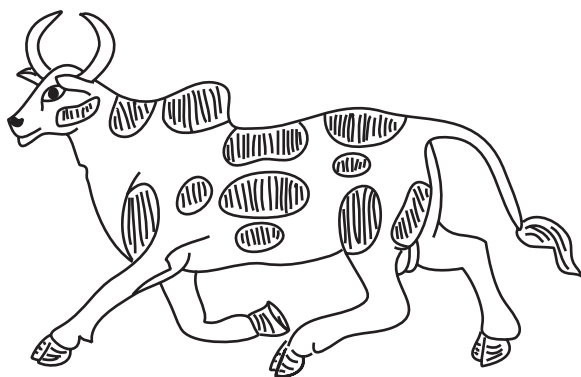
Parallel Worlds

Take the narrow road that unwinds
Beyond the cattle grazing in the country field
Mountains melting to painted strips of pastures
Along the highway lost and forgotten on the horizon
Brushed clouds embracing a blazing crimson sky
Leaves chased by blusters of playful wind
The beauty of the rain that sprinkles the pond

Take the alley of spinning intersections
Illuminated by the tittering city lights
Revealing a labyrinth of abstract confusion
Glazed structures reflecting a mosaic steel sky
Among sleepless souls circulating through town
Drowned by the hustle and bustle of engines rolling
Trickles of icy rain rushing down the window

by Emilie Theriault

Rosemère High School (grade nine)
Rosemère, Québec



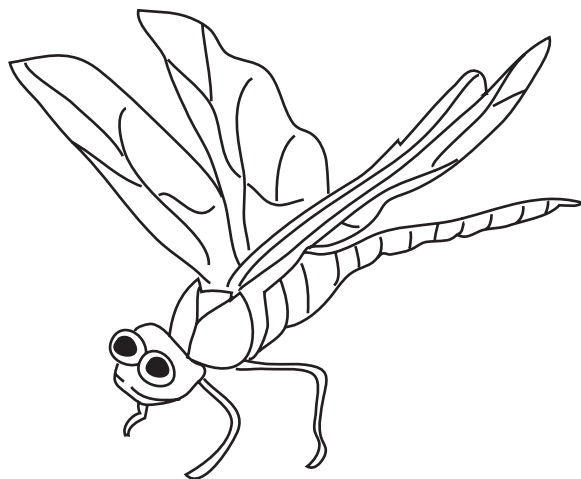
FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

june

why can't i pin the days
down by the shore, filling pockets with
stones, great monuments made in
China cups at a yard sale, golden dragon
flies shrieking into the sky, into the sun
smiling on the
waves as he says goodbye.
goodbye i try to pin
the hem of summer days
down like a precious butterfly,
but they still
 fly away.

by Christine Klippenstein

Canterbury High School (grade ten)
Ottawa, Ontario



FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

Seasonal Bipolarity

The moisture clings to my hand,
as a box of memories falls to the ground.
I'm losing grip on yesterday,
and the residue bears no sound.

Sitting empty-handed,
with a puzzled frame of mind,
I dwell on yesterday's rain,
and dance in puddles left behind.

The traction on my fingertips
fades deeper with every stroke.
Gone in my pores, it has long disappeared;
my asylum is under an oak.

Glimpses of your shadow
would erratically appear.
I try to sketch them back on paper,
but that was yesteryear.

Willows break free of mercy,
and diverge from the zephyr's sway.
I'll pack up my branches and fold up my leaves,
like a rebellious teenage bouquet.

So, I'll cut this endless rope
that connects my mind to yours;
detach myself from all that blossoms,
and cause all imminent downpours.

I can't even piece this together;
disregard all I have to say.
I'll need some time to convalesce
before my sanity returns in May.

by Marissa Miller

Bialik High School (grade eleven)
Montréal, Québec

FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

Left Wanting

Against the milky whiteness of the porcelain bath,
my skin: the colour of black, thick tea with cream.
Streaming green water moves around my heels, my bones,
my limbs. Like the dark bloody veins that look blue beneath the surface.
Heat surrounds me like the cold sweat only minutes before
when my heart sucked all the warmth from my shore and huddled
like a baby
in the centre of my body.
I ran to hide in Venus' pearly shell, although I wished not to emerge: born again.

My knees poke up, all knobby and pink like canned strawberries, above the mist
and there it is.

A deep purple, venomous blotch
spreading its tiny tentacles like a cold
poisonous
slimy sea creature.

An afflicted malice creeping towards my infant heart:

a worry spot.

I am afraid of slipping in the bath and falling under the water
like hot tears.

I leave the window open so that the icy September air will flow in
and hold my heart above the sadness.

by Kate Neil

Mulgrave School (grade twelve)
West Vancouver, British Columbia



SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

Grandpa

Sitting in his rocking chair,
eating jellybeans,
he pushed his hand through grey hair
knowing what it means.

Tall, slim, and muscular
is what he used to know.
Now wrinkled skin and flabby arms
are all he has to show.

His eyes are like dark rain clouds,
grey and with no fight.
His voice is like rough sandpaper,
getting gruff and tight.

The smell of smoke surrounds him,
embedding in his clothes,
making people run away,
and sticking up their nose.

This man who was loved by all,
now only by a few,
wants to start his life again—
wants to start anew.

by Megan Berndt

Sir Mackenzie Bowell School (grade seven)
Belleville, Ontario



SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

Too Busy to See

I shine,
brighter than you think.
To you,
I'm just a dot.
You might have noticed me once—
just once,
but, you don't have time to look.
You're too busy, remember?

You thought nobody would notice.
That's what you're busy doing ... remember?
They all told you not to,
but, of course, you did it,
thinking nobody would know.
You forgot about me.

I saw.
I see every mistake you make.
I've seen every wrong thing you've ever done.
Who am I?
I'm that bright little star in the distance.
Don't look for me,
I promise I'm there,
as you still don't have time.
You're too busy, remember?

by Bridget George

Kettle and Stony Point Hillside School (grade eight)
Forest, Ontario



SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

Pieces

See that scar?
Remember?
You told me not to climb.
“Stay,” you said.
I didn’t.
You held me after the fall.
I miss you.

And this bite?
You said, “Don’t pet it.”
“It’s dangerous,” you said.
I did.
You chased it away.
I miss you.

This scratch?
“Leave the ball in the bush,” you said.
“You can get another one.”
I didn’t.
You got me the ball.
I miss you.

These bruises?
“Don’t stand so close to the edge,” you said.
“You’ll fall.”
I fell.
You almost caught me.
I miss you.

This aching pain, in my heart?
“Don’t try to save me,” you said.
I tried.
But I couldn’t.
You’re not coming back.
I miss you.

Scars, cuts, bites—pieces of me that are gone will always be
pieces of you, still with me.

by Jordyn Wear

Lake Cowichan Secondary School (grade nine)
Lake Cowichan, British Columbia

SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

height of summer

cool signs of water
tickle my shell, bathed
with feverish air and sunscreen.
sand grits (alluring crystals
of the barren earth)
scrawl and tear
at my blistered crippled
shell (inside—my anguished heart,
lusting for more).

and beyond—
the sun,
a glorious
immortal sphere,
resurrects above
crisp water; its rays of
euphoria reaching into
my inner strife,
comforting my heartache— like
 the final spears of the envenomed nails
 that slit his stainless skin—
carrying me to a peace
so serene
so still.

by Sara Thurlbeck

Westwood Collegiate (grade ten)
Winnipeg, Manitoba



SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

Paint the Walls with Nostalgia

Paint the walls with nostalgia.
Here's the can of swirling memories;
cover this barren landscape.
In this space, the air is cold and empty,
everything breathes apathy.
The warm fire of last year
is reduced to a delicate flame.
Let disorientation rear its ugly head.
Undeniable similarities to that long while ago—
instruction, location, companions.
A cheap imitation of the timeless past.
Those memories cannot be resurrected.
There are differences within resemblance—
decoration, unknown individuals,
an hourglass a few years fuller,
the loophole in perfection.
But let's pretend, let's run.
Time, equally feared as death and change.
Please, slow it down, comfort me with deception.
Use the paintbrush dipped in the frozen.
Make those old memories regain
something akin to the life they had.
Try to cover up this reality I don't want to face.
Attempt the revival of my past selves;
the present one lies in saddened slumber.

Paint the walls with nostalgia ...

by Natalie Kurdyla

Rosemère High School (grade eleven)
Rosemère, Québec



SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

Watching My Mother

I watch her hold her father
as she wipes the sweat
from his face.
He lies exhausted in bed
from the struggle
with his walker.
She changes him
as I smooth the blue cotton blanket
and his false teeth hang
suspended.

He shows us
the marks
on his back and chest,
but refuses to get out of bed.
Come on, Dad, she says.
You can't get stronger
lying here. You have to
move.

Here in this room
where my mother has to yell,
we cringe.
Later, I lie beside her
on our couch, her eyes
wet, glassy.

Still,
I can smell him on her.
As if when he kissed her
that last time,
his breath on her skin said,
My good girl.

by Jennifer Klauninger

Canterbury High School (grade twelve)
Ottawa, Ontario



THIRD-PRIZE WINNERS

The North

The northern lights in the sky,
the shimmering snowflakes as they fly,
the midnight moon, the morning sun,
the sunset when the day is done,
the buds on the trees as they grow,
a glistening untouched coat of snow,
the little starlings in the night,
the pearly skies in their soft light,
the sights in the air, the sights on the ground, the sights under the sea ...
This land is a land of beauty, at least that's what it is to me.

by Johanna Stewart

École William McDonald Middle School (grade seven)
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories



Beware

This crude figure begins his chase,
after the sun sets,
swinging his inky mace.

Lurking in shadowy corners,
prowling the streets,
stalking his prey, in the insane eclipse.

Creeping, with prying eyes,
unseen like a serial killer,
all his stories are filled with lies.

He soon becomes vain,
not realizing he is being hunted;
his nemesis will bring him pain.

The sun banishes him with light,
returning him to his sooty realm,
shackling him until tomorrow's night.

by Rieanne Gushulak

Ste. Rose Collegiate (grade eight)
Ste. Rose du Lac, Manitoba

THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

Who We Are

We become who we are by where we've been
By what we've done and what we've seen
By who we've met and what we've said
By deciding which path we are to tread

By meditating on a thought
By what we've received and what we've brought
By thinking about events of the day
By being ready for tomorrow, come what may

By thinking twice before we act
By digging up some unknown fact
By loving more than yesterday
By forcing our fears to go away

By loving less than we will tomorrow
By hoping there shall come no great sorrow
By what we've touched and what we've tasted
By hoping our future will not be wasted

With each thing that happens we become more defined
We may live longer if we are kind
With each word we think to speak
We become, assuredly, more unique

by Mackenzie Wall

Partners in Education Program (grade nine)
Powell River, British Columbia



THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

The Sea Foam

The sea foam comes and goes,
crested waves in curling froth,
then disappearing way down low
to appear on another green glass arch.
A loss is a gain—a gain is a loss,
but, oh, to watch the two
be able to dance like that.
Like the foam upon the sea,
we surf the wave of life.

The desert skin is sewn with gold,
with rustled crown
and sandy feet.
She cries—each tear a garnet falling down,
to stop and shimmer
in dawn's first glimmer,
waiting for the morning's smile.

by Michelle Parry

Vancouver Waldorf School (grade ten)
North Vancouver, British Columbia



THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

For the Alligator

Hey, come on, try me.

The alligator was standing intrepid,
deep inside the jungle,
hidden from the world, prepared to ambush,
waiting to see the back of my head, flat like a stone.

In the muddy, gooey swamp, swimming in bog water,
the alligator often soars up to the sky.
It opens its mouth dreadfully,
only to bite once.

Any man in this jungle
cannot tame him.
In the dawn, he dreams weak leaves
touch him smoothly.
White and soft, his stomach
shall be revealed slightly.

Some days, with sounds of gunfire,
hunters build up a fire for the victory,
and soak their mustaches in the beer.
Then, they will say the name fearfully.

You, the infamous animal.
After death, you will be changed to precious leather,
still boasting your disobedience,
The great name is alligator.

by Sunghun Lee

Collège Prep International (grade eleven)
Montréal, Québec



THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

Oblivion

I am drowning in the sea of blindness.
My aspirations descend deep into the sea,
yet the sea is my heart.
My existence lingers in this eternal glow of darkness.
So peaceful and delicate is its power,
that I know not how to gain my freedom—
it is a prison I willingly take refuge in,
a place where dreams are safely kept,
yet never will they see the spark of light.
What is the price of my timid solitude?
A shadow ashamed of light
that earns the taste of life, long forgotten,
which struggles with its stubbornness.
There are no tears to be shed,
nor memories to be revived.
A choice has to be made:
whether to impel the invisible into apparent
or to endure the hollow emptiness

by Mihaela Ichizli

St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School (grade twelve)
Hamilton, Ontario

