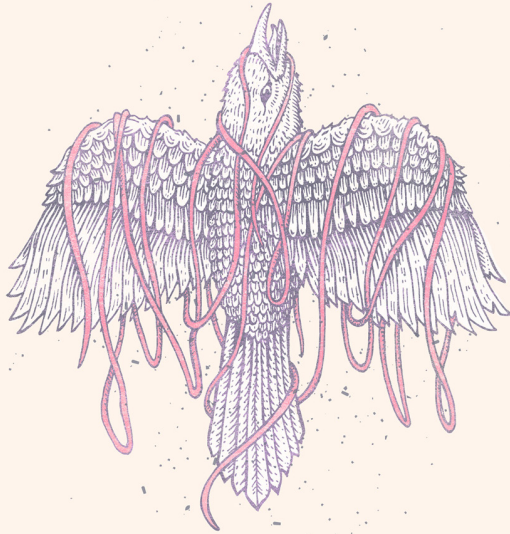


# ZENIADA

FALL 2017





# ZENIADA

POETRY & ART MAGAZINE

Johns Hopkins University

**ZENIADA** seeks poetry that TALKS HARD and art that CURLS  
the floorboards like smoke billowing from the mouth of a small  
god and SMACKS like 5 gum and a mean girl's SLAP.

*FALL 2017. Cover art by Travis Pietsch.*

# FALL 2017

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# Centrifuge

Then he showed us the machine  
that could separate, by density, the good oil  
from the other parts that had made their way into the mix  
somewhere along the thick knit of pipe  
that traced its way through the onshore refinery.  
It was unlike the other machines, smaller  
yet heavy in its construction, years of rust  
built up on the exterior, the carbon-steel chamber  
completely sealed from the outside.  
It looked like a slow cooker  
but the mechanic knew better, and with a clamp  
and a switch he sent the contents spinning  
with measured, careful force. He let us step around it,  
so we did, and we thought maybe from this angle  
we could catch some of its secrets: the dark,  
chemical kind that would tell us something  
about ourselves, how we could mingle at times  
yet also fly apart. But through  
the whole process, the machine kept  
shut, just like it was supposed to, its hum  
increasing with steady intensity until it found  
the right pitch, somehow revealing nothing  
about the in-between, though I can always  
imagine: a slurry of slick fluid, thrown  
against the walls of the hollow cylinder like children  
at the carnival, strapped vertically into the slots  
of the Gravitron, spinning, all facing inward—  
like the earth, with its people  
only at the edges, revolving around  
a predetermined center, comfortable this way,  
where, because of some invisible pull,  
we are all held neatly into place.

JESSICA HARSONO







GABBY GONZALEZ CARPIO

## in enemy (vulnerable) territory: reflections on intimacy

beauty is in the neurosis of the beholder  
honey is in the palm of the bee holder  
honey, you've got me in the palm of your hand

I love our wet drum  
with its many parts:

slaps like cymbals  
snarls like snare

rolling sighs  
between my thighs

what's that, demise?  
in your *selva* eyes

thick current of love power  
surges through my node-joints and wire-nerves  
up into my rod-bones and satellite-dish-skull

signals swirl, echo  
ring like wine in a glass

my love power comes from the bounce that lives  
in the balls of my greek feet, second toe longest

what do you do when you're all alone in the world?  
and what do you do when you're leaning to the right on your own  
left shoulder crying in the shower, one big wet knot?  
and what do you do when you've let the wrong person live  
inside of you for too long?

It wasn't you who taught me how to dance of course.  
this has lived in me since I arrived here,  
sometimes I forget I existed before you

first you drink ten loaves of bread worth of beer with your fellow  
heartbrokens, because you hate beer, because you want to feel  
gross of your own accord, because you don't care about yourself.  
you just realized you haven't cared for yourself in a long time.

i deleted twitter but i still compose tweets in my head

i pulled you out of me but you're still there when i need you  
have you even left yet, or did you just become quiet suddenly?  
like someone who's been caught?

i did just find you out, after all.  
you were right under my nose, resting on the hairs of my upper lip

you know, the dark ones you tease me about.  
the ones you tug at with your teeth  
the ones you tickle when i'm asleep

here, i have made my home in this terrible no-man's land  
in enemy (vulnerable) territory—  
stuck past the verge of tears—  
i am no soldier, just a lost gun  
cold and wet

then you put your nice heels on and your sexy green shirt over  
that handedown bra that's too big because sometimes it's fun  
to dress up like a girl. and when people get scared by that radiant  
aura you just can't turn off no matter how hard you try, you take a  
long walk through dark alleys with those heels because everyone's  
always told you not to. you don't care about yourself, you haven't  
cared for yourself in a long time. but don't worry about what will  
happen. you'll start caring about yourself again soon. you'll run  
into some kitties and some lonely restaurant owners, that's all. and  
you'll get your sexy green shirt sweaty for nothing, that's all.

Your presence does to me what wine does to my mother. It makes me grin and tell stories I'm too scared to remember around anyone else.

Sometimes I face my bare feet toward the clouds just so I can feel the blood rush into my toes when I rise,

when I rise  
do  
not  
fear

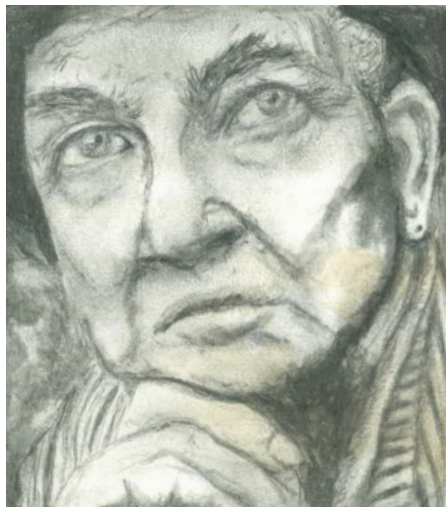
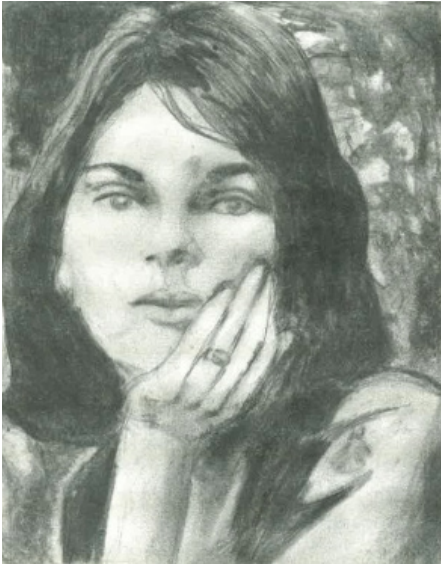
write a poem for every round that's in your chamber.

it's not your fault. *say it again.*  
it's not our fault they turned us into guns.

WE ALL MISS FIRE

MX. FIRE, ME

KATERINA PAVLIDIS



MECCA MCDONALD

## All of the flowers are dead now

All of the flowers are dead now  
Mama said.

Lavender buds;  
the dried purple rises in its flesh, crack  
as the heads, crushed, in my fingers wait,  
throb for water.

I like my sandpaper hands,  
when the breeze hides in the trees—

so you see, so you see  
I'm okay. The headache— headaches,  
just won't go away.

That's the reason for five, six, seven days off school  
I say to my friends

All of the flowers are dead.

*ABBEE GREEN*





## Fine

And besides I always think better  
when crickets make that sound  
and this time I  
thought better about Lucas  
so I wasn't thinking about any of that other stuff  
I just thought  
about football and how  
good he used to be  
at football  
and about this catch he made in the quarterfinals  
and how his left arm extended over that safety's right  
shoulder  
and how he looked  
like a superhero or something  
like the best we'd ever seen  
but then I had to take a piss  
so I stood up  
and brushed the dirt off my clothes  
and walked behind this one tree because  
it was the ugliest or something  
and I unzipped my jeans  
and the piss came out fast  
which is how it normally comes out  
when you drink  
and I could see the ants  
climbing up the bark  
and I pretended I was God making it rain on them.

*BRIAN GINSBERG*





# CONTRIBUTORS

GABBY GONZALEZ CARPIO is a freshman at Occidental College. She was born and raised in New York City.

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