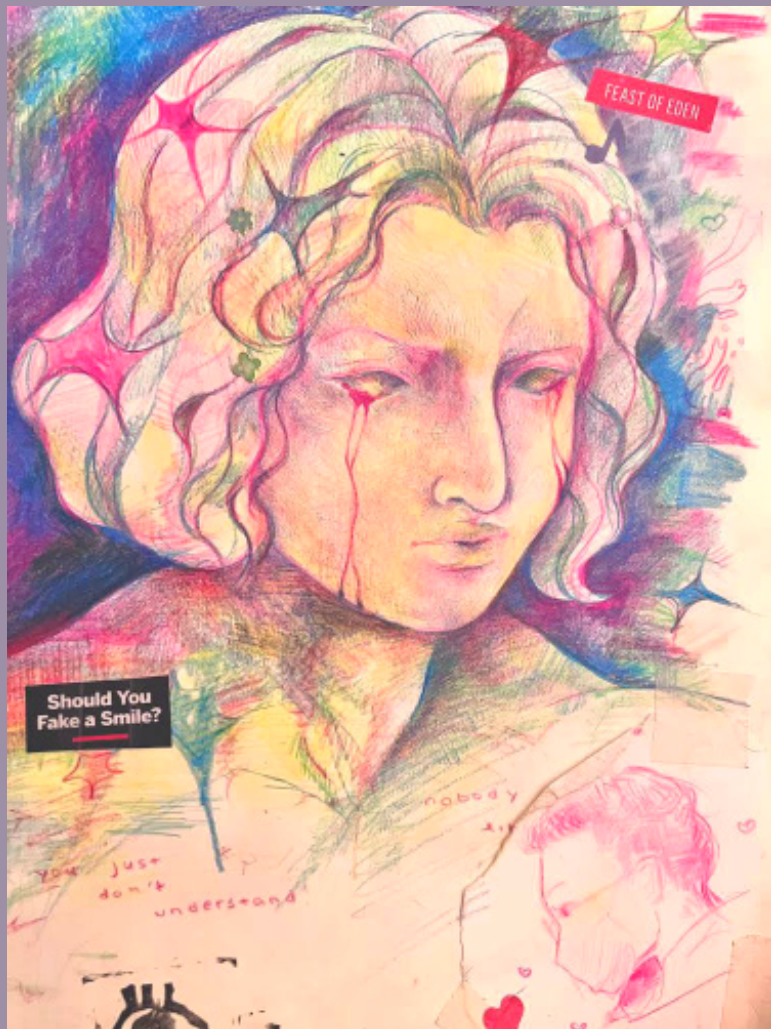


ZENIADA



SUMMER 2023

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.

Cover art: Feast of Eden by Cheo Kojima.

SUMMER 2023

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Shame Study #2

Boy and child –
Dublin-speak for
you and I walking
from Waitrose on an
April afternoon. You
are fresh from some
work retreat, and
later, when I peel
away your yellow shirt
and see Cornwall
spilled sunshine
all over your Irish
back, I will be jealous
of the coworkers
who watched you
boil. I imagine them
thin and LSE
educated, that they
pronounce *Southwark*
beautifully. They
would never beg you
to excavate your
elementary Gaelic
to hear you whisper
Is cailín álainn thú
in the dark.

Boy and child
passing a playground
with brown paper
sacks, soon to be
supper. Maybe it's
the smell of saffron
or the sun on the
citrine slide that
convinces me nothing
could slip the joy
from this moment,

not even the question
I've been cradling since
you left for the coast:
What do your friends
think of you with
an American
university student?
You smile and say
They've made
worse decisions.

RAEGAN ALLEN

Leda

I. Munching on chester's hot fries with the kind of zeal
shrinks call flow state in positive psychology she licks
thumb and forefinger so hard she could strike bone and
just keep eating til' there's no marrow left to speak of

puff no.4 red and blood mingling deep and neon
around her mouth crazy looking like a god revs his
maws for the next stroke of flesh to luck by his gum
trap and snap up whole spirit and soul inside it

Daybreak unlocks its jaws in a phlegm of tumbleweed
Wreathing round her and in a different light her hair
might be gold but here it's the dull of raw leather
pleating a face as smooth and solid as lacquered pine

But she's wilder than wood she's the vultures circling
Clawed and ready for whatever creature comes her way

II. Clawed and ready for whatever creature comes her way
something wormy her way does come through the trees
and over the distant vista like a flight-bound mole blind
naked bird-like thing wings balking at air and a neck

like a pipe cleaner bending home to her whetted mouth it
buckles at her feet folded in dust beakless head bowed
like a kfc chicken mutated defunct thigh meat loosed and torn
at the joint ready-made meal dragged by helpless feet and

she's poised like a slaughterhouse guillotine like a bolt
of lightning like the brute rush of body on body between
the flash

and teeth, knowing, hot white bones tearing its heart
into hers

MAEVE WOLTRING



CHEO KOJIMA, APOLOGY

in the operating room

if I pressed on your palm
& twisted left, & took your hand off
like the cap on a prescription
would you be the cap or the container
& would I, therefore, take Yourhand off of you
or you off of Yourhand?

or does your hand come off with a sharp pull
& attach with prongs that fit snugly into holes
likes an electronic socket, & if so, does Yourhand
come away with the prongs or the holes
& is Yourhand therefore, the man
or the woman, the top, or the bottom
& by subtraction, which are you?

if, to detach your hand, I need to cut the flesh away from the bone
& pull, which side keeps the wishbone
& therefore, gets the wish, & the luck
& which do you hope gets the wish
you or Yourhand?

& if I pull Yourhand off of you
& you are the man, & the top,
& the wisher, & the lucky, will you be glad
or will you want your hand back?

A. S. HALLAM



CHEO KOJIMA, SAYING GOODBYE

When Confronting a Snake

-after Dylan Thomas

"... when the evening is spread out against the sky like a patient etherized upon a table." T.S. Eliot

When confronting a snake, here's what to do:
watch for its dance, whether deadly or not
whether fetching like wind with pines, then go
spinning like a Sufi, your breath gentle.
For you must challenge it, lure it into
the singing of a song you know so that
it sums you up as the master: a good,
fair show of faith and trust. But when the night
is spread against the sky – emptied of rage –
like a patient etherized flat, rage. Rage
without remorse like a mother against
the passing of her son. Strike swift when the
snake's head presents itself to you. Dying
there, lying still like a fat rope. Then of
course you must bury it deep down where the
good ones and bad ones alike see no light.

JAMES KALUNA

Canned Mackerel

after Eileen Myles's *Peanut Butter*

*I am always hungry
& wanting to have
nothing to do with my body.*

*This is a fact:
when you get
down to it
the canned mackerel
from Kim's
is a specific
pleasure that
involves meticulous
care & is nothing
like that bad *new
Peanut Butter* that
you must get
from the *biggest
Supermarket*
*You know.**

In defiance you should
use your fingers
like ice picks
and the mackerel
like a climbing
wall into the
pleasure of
your body
working through
the delicate
puzzle of
mackerel bones. *And
I am an enemy of change,*
as you should've known
when I found the sister
of sardines
in the new skin

of my old world
here: I still eat
them on a saltine
but I take the time
to walk there and
buy the saltines in
their premium packaging
because *all*
the things I
embrace as new
are in
fact old things;
walking in the fall,
my fall the same
temperate, damp &
soft intrusion of body.
Fall as a time to do
no work and think about
life after this
as I live in the afterwards
of hoping before.
Television shows
that came out
recently but still
talk about
being sexy, young,
infallible, *dirty*,
usually rich & prayerless.
I will never do
my work and
I will always have no
space for things
outside of my work,
particularly memories
of you and memories
of other lovers
who are one
and the same
as you;
replicated against
cleaner walls

in the more eastern
stretch of
my life repeating itself.
 I didn't accidentally *read all the*
 works of Proust
but I am pastiching
right now and
did read ½
of the Idiot
and plan to
reference it
soon so that
when I die
they will know
I read the Idiot.
 and I'm not saying
 that I write into the
 afterlife but that
 I write now to prove
 to you many things that
 you will never get &
 that you maybe still
won't even after I
 Body and Thought
 Am compost

MAEVE WOLTRING

The Last Supper

we sit down again for the first time in what seems like a while
an aroma of familiarity caresses our souls, rests our minds
its soft touch hammers time into place, a prisoner for now
we have been here before

eating our words so that they do not consume us,
again our wandering thoughts marble on a blank canvas set up for three
an aftertaste of desire evokes something only known to what
buds at the tip of my tongue it

l i n g e r s like the shades of a sunset
just above a tired date tree i call home
Dinner Table:
keeper of all that tiptoes between its wooden legs

Her stillness silos time, captivating She
evades left-ear whispers of a sacred past we leave
we leave our mouth-watered words here

RAHMA ELSHEIKH



CHEO KOJIMA, *BIRDSONG*

The Idea of Absence

Finding out your grandpa had a stroke is like the beautician ripping the wax on two, or feeling someone grab your thigh on the train, like hearing a loud buzzing close and turning to see a killer wasp. Learning that Oberlin is in Ohio, not Germany, is like trying to put on a face mask, then blindfolding yourself, which is sort of like making a memorial post online and having a sex bot reply or buying vitamins to later find them expired or the way morticians are cheerful, like vines that grew through drywall. Like checking the weather app every day in SoCal is like re-reading the phone book, which is like the idea of staying up so that tomorrow does not come, or hearing the rooster crow the next day after his funeral.

MELODIE QIAN

-218°C

after Morgan Lucas Schuldt's journals

"Oxygen did not exist until 1774."

I. what did people huff
in times of purely bubbles
amphibian heart

II. gulping

Maybe you were one of the hybrids. Techno-cyborg creation that got caught in the
sandfinger wisp-lash.

(adaptation)² / how happy people lived when they believed gods killed them.
People smoke cigarettes the way you need air. Desperate, clawing, throat-singe-ing
wheeze. Pry-opsy the vocal cord flesh and watch:

little pink lies prancing over the patchwork tube.

III. I come to the lab to visit you. As always, the doctors have stuck gills to your back like a label. Even on blood days, when inhaling feels frozen, you still blow up balloons for my birthday party.

You emerge. Sputtering,
saline lining the undereye,
a piece of your lung flailing inside the latex.

“living up to its promise
dying up to its promise”

KAITLYN CHENG

After Being Asked to Toast

I wave a flute of berry
juice and lime, disregard
the host and turn back
to a group of friends.

I am busy explaining, sighing
over the absence of my sister,
the *teen-mom*. She had five
kids by twenty-three, I brag,
whining that their dad (well –
the first one) went to prison
and the second took a rope and
tied it 'round his neck and the
third, institutionalized.

Heroin, I make sure to say.

It's the most important detail
'cause it implies my sister
does it too. Which she did.

I want them to know, want
their eyes to go narrow with
wanting, the way I am
needy and hungry for a story
that suits my side. Wait –

were we here to celebrate?

Right. I'm four years sober.

I still say *addict* more than *sister*.

Sister more than [].

PAIGE PASSANTINO



EDWARD SUPRANOWICZ, nausea

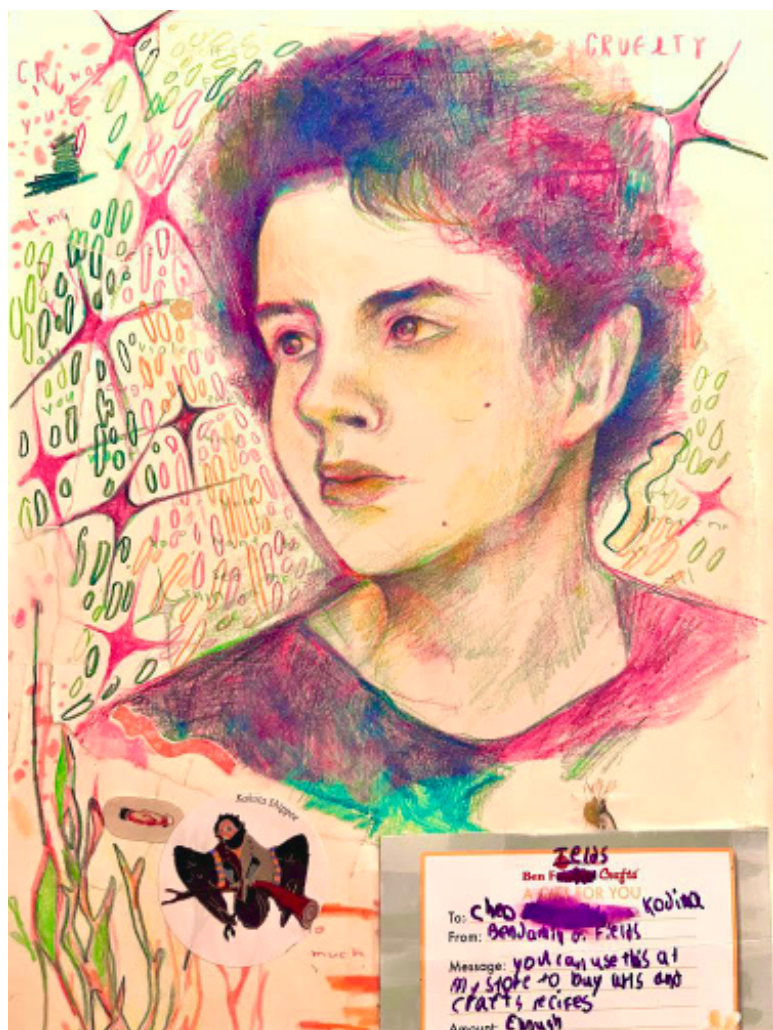
Early signs

My grandfather lies under covers the color of raw peaches. I am awake and candle-lighting and sunrise-soaking and he is detached. In the afternoons, he makes coffee for a stranger using the same cup he lets me drink from.

I am left underneath, picking up
the pieces-
lost keys, his friend's name, the red park bench,
ends of sentences. Searching
the sky for the same smell
I found him in ten winters ago.

And perhaps it's the way I live in mirrors with him.
White waves, submerged bodies through cycles
of the moon. He was lured towards the best
imitation of himself. Mirror maze
swallows the both of us.

KAITLYN CHENG



CHEO KOJIMA, ACCISMUS

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RAEGAN ALLEN studies Creative Writing and Classics at Emory University. She enjoys loitering in secondhand bookshops, going to bed at 9:30 PM, and creating new recipes for oatmeal. After graduation, she is moving to England to work in the London publishing industry.

KAITLYN CHENG is a Chinese-American poet who grew up in Northern Virginia. She is currently a fourth-year undergraduate at the University of Virginia studying Cognitive Science and Poetry. Her most recent work centers around the act of trying to preserve people and things, and the lengths one would go to in order hold memory in its purest, untarnished form. When she is not reading or journaling, she enjoys visiting museums, cycling, and finding her next favorite coffee order at the local café.

RAHMA ELSHEIKH is a second-year at Princeton University studying Mathematics and African-American studies. She is an indigenous Sudanese-American from Iowa who aims to explore the complexities of language, its beauty, barriers, and its impact on identity.

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MELODIE QIAN (they/them) is a junior studying Behavioral Biology at Johns Hopkins. They love birds and looter shooter video games.

EDWARD MICHAEL SUPRANOWICZ is the grandson of Irish and Russian/Ukrainian immigrants. He grew up on a small farm in Appalachia. He has a grad background in painting and printmaking. Some of his artwork has recently or will soon appear in Fish Food, Streetlight, Another Chicago Magazine, The Door Is A Jar, The Phoenix, and The Harvard Advocate. Edward is also a published poet who has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize multiple times.

MAEVE WOLTRING is a recent graduate of Oberlin College with a BA in Creative Writing and minors in Art History and English. She was the recipient of Oberlin's 2021 William Battrick Fellowship for poetry writing, and she loves to create work that talks back to major poems and artworks.

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