

A STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

Boris Avrumov, Shokhina Badrieva, Melissa Duchan, and Maisha Kamal

THE ART OF THE COVER LETTER

Boris Avrumov, Shokhina Badrieva, Melissa Duchan, and Maisha Kamal
Sometimes you've gotta stick with a theme to the death.

Dear Professor Ugoretz,

Currently, it is 1:44AM on Monday, December 14, 2015. I'm sitting in my living room. On my right is planner and a writer's book I bound myself; on my left is the Macaulay Honors College tote bag I won at the mixer. It's dark, I'm tired, and my eyes are burning from having been open for too long, but as our project has finally been completed after days of toiling, I knew I had to write the cover letter as a means of declaring victory. I'll scream it to the heavens right now: *We did it! We did our seminar one project and it wasn't last minute!* I'll admit it's one of my greatest achievements.

But enough about me. You asked us to write this cover letter to delve into the intricacies of our projects, so here we are. I'll get right to it, and explain how a few simple musings became this book of sorts. It's been my brainchild, and for that I am infinitely proud.

When we started discussing the project in class, Shokhina and I were sitting next to each other. I knew I wanted to do something that involved writing, and she thought the idea of interviewing people would be cool. I proposed a combination: we could study perspective (after all, art is subjective) and compare our views to those of the people we interviewed. Our interpretations would be an array of creative works, while the interviews would just be direct transcripts. We wanted to keep everything very genuine, so I hope we've achieved that.

The act of actual getting the project together wasn't as awful as I thought it could be. We split up the work evenly (for the most part) and got all our content together within a matter of days. The hardest part was formatting—everything else came together pretty easily.

Reflecting on it now, I'm extremely glad all our ideas came to fruition. Over the course of completing this project, we ended up learning a lot, especially through the interviews. They broadened our own perspectives and introduced us to new ideas. As for the creative works, getting to explore a ton of different mediums was exciting. We had so much creative freedom that it was liberating, and, as a result, putting together this book never felt like a task.

Overall, this project was something we definitely enjoyed. It taught us teamwork, compromise, and that one person's view on art is just as important as the next's.

Yours,

Maisha Kamal (on behalf of my group)

THE ART OF REMEMBRANCE



September 11th was a day no one will ever forget.
14 years later, how do we remember?

RABIA MEHMOOD
Macaulay Honors College at Brooklyn College
Class of 2019—Premed
Conducted by Maisha Kamal

MAISHA: Hey! So I'm ready if you are.

RABIA: Ready.

MAISHA: Alright. So, since this year marks the 14-year anniversary since the September 11th attacks, I want to start by asking you: what did you grow up learning about this event?

RABIA: Since elementary school, I have learned that Muslim terrorists were responsible for the 9/11 attacks. At home, I learned how Muslims were discriminated against at this time. Now that I am able to research the information myself, I feel that there is no one specific group we can use as a scapegoat. The government is full of politics, so how do we know that we're getting accurate information?

MAISHA: I see. And do you think this sentiment has affected how the tragedy has been interpreted? Meaning, do you think it has changed how people look back on the attacks?

RABIA: Definitely. People always associate the event with Muslims, and therefore, they have a negative perspective of Muslim men and women.

MAISHA: Right. I agree totally. Similarly, how do you think New York has transformed this past decade in the aftermath?

RABIA: New York is a "diverse" city, the quotations emphasizing the irony that exists. After 9/11, Muslims are continuously made uncomfortable, even elementary kids who are bullied for being terrorists. I think our country needs major changes because even though we have evolved from slavery and legalized gay marriage, we as individuals do not fully accept these changes, if you know what I mean.

MAISHA: That's a strong viewpoint. At the same time though, do you think any of these fears people have, have merit? I think it's understandable that people are worried about Muslims even though that doesn't justify any rude action.

RABIA: I don't think any of these fears have any merit because the action of a few individuals does not define the group as a whole. I could easily be afraid of, mind my language, white people because they may kill my family [or] my younger cousins as they have killed many overseas. But I don't go around judging all white people because a few of them voluntarily kill children.

MAISHA: Completely valid point. I think it's an inherent response that has developed because of how prevalent discrimination still is, but there's also the fact that the terrorists who have committed the acts believed they were doing it in accordance with the Islamic faith. What is your opinion on that?

RABIA: Yes, the terrorists claim to be Muslim and use [that to] explain their actions using jihad. But it is important to note that jihad means to defend oneself when being attacked, and since these terrorists kill thousands of innocents, they have no right to use jihad as their excuse. In Islam, taking the life of even one individual gets you the key to hell. I think it is fair to say that these terrorists are not true Muslims, and their actions should not be used to characterize Muslims.

MAISHA: I feel the same way. For the last question, I want to ask you: How do you remember September 11th? Has the reaction to Muslims subsequent tainted your feelings toward the tragedy?

RABIA*: I don't remember 9/11 because I was a toddler in Pakistan at the time. I only started first grade in the U.S. Honestly, I feel really bad for those who died and their families who suffered, but my world view is that we all have to die one day, some of us earlier than others. I may die today or I may live to be a hundred. We don't know. I see the tragedy as another example of the loss of humanity in our advanced world.

*I strongly disagree with her thoughts here.

ISOLATION
Maisha Kamal

She stands alone.

In a crowd of thousands, in a city of millions, she is irrevocably and undeniably alone.
Among the wreckage, among the sobbing, she is irrevocably and undeniably alone.
Her sense of time has vanished. She remembers nothing and everything all at once.

There were towers. There were two towers that in two hours no longer loomed above her.

There is panic. There is screaming and crying and a haze of a confusion, a muddle of *what's going on's* and the unanswerable *why*.

She can feel it. She can feel her world collapsing around her.

Things changing in an instant, the ground being ripped out from under her feet, the life she built crumbling to rubble—all of it coming down with the towers that are falling.

They fall in front of her eyes.

The sky is polluted with sadness.

She sits at her window watching the madness. Watching the gaping mouths on the streets, the rush of phones being pulled out of pockets. The shaking hands dialing numbers, waiting for voices on the other side.

Some don't get answers.

Some break down into tears.

They cannot handle the not-knowing.

She is irrevocably and undeniably alone.

She has no one here but is still gripped with fear, crippling and unrelenting.

She has seen too much terror already.

She has tried to escape it.

She has tried to be free but the worst demons find a way to stay, latch onto any remaining sanity.

She snaps out of introspection.

There is ash and smoke.

Large clouds in the sky where the towers should be.

Bodies and blood where the sidewalk should be.

Her eyes don't know where to look.

Her mind is racing.

An ocean of blue.

A river of red.

All sprinting to where the chaos began.

As if time itself is slowing, stopping, ending, and they have to get there before it happens.

Some don't make it out.

She stands alone.

In a crowd of thousands, in a city of millions, she is irrevocably and undeniably alone.

But now the city feels it with her.

THE ART OF DEFINITION

Aa

A ¹ /ä/ (also **a**) ² *n.* (pl. **As** or **A's**) **1** the first letter of the alphabet. ■ denoting the first in a set of items, categories, sizes, etc. ■ denoting the first of two or more hypothetical people or things: suppose **A** had killed **B**. ■ the highest class of academic mark. ■ (**a**) Chess denoting the first file from the left, as viewed from white's side of the board. ■ (usu. **a**) the first fixed quantity in an algebraic expression. ■ (**A**) the human blood type (in the ABO system) containing the A agglutinin and lacking the B. **2** a shape like that of a capital A: [in combination] an A-shape. See also **A-FRAME**, **A-LINE**. **3** Music the sixth note of the diatonic scale of C major: ■ a key based on a scale with A as its keynote.

► **PHRASES** □ **from A to B** from one's starting point to one's destination: *most road atlases will get you from A to B*. □ **from A to Z** over the entire range; completely: *make sure you understand the subject from A to Z*.

A ² *abbr.* ■ ace (used in describing play in bridge and other card games): *you cash AK of hearts*. ■ ampere(s). ■ (**A**) angstrom(s). ■ answer: *Q: What's the senator's zodiac sign? A: He's a Leo*. ■ (in personal ads) Asian. ■ a dry cell battery size. ■ *Brit.*, informal A level.

a /ə/ (an before a vowel sound) [called the *indefinite article*] *adj.* **1** used when referring to someone or something for the first time in a text or conversation: *a man came out of the room* | *it has been an honor to have you* | *we need people with a knowledge of languages*. Compare with **THE**. ■ used with units of measurement to mean one such unit: *a hundred* | *a quarter of an hour*. ■ [with negative] one single; any: *I simply haven't a thing to wear*. ■ used when mentioning the name of someone not known to the speaker: *a Mr. Smith telephoned*. ■ someone like (the name specified): *you're no better than a Hitler*. **2** used to indicate membership of a class of people or things: *he is a lawyer* | *this car is a BMW*. **3** used when expressing rates or ratios; in, to, or for each: *per: typing 60 words a minute* | *cost as much as eight dollars a dozen*. ► Middle English: weak form of Old English *an* 'one.'

USAGE **1** The article *a* can be pronounced either /ə/, when stressed ("He gave you a flower?"—that is, only one flower), or /ä/, when unstressed ("He gave you a flower?"—that is, the emphasis is on *flower*, not on the number of flowers). The form *an* is used before words beginning with a vowel sound. **2** On the question of using *a* or *an* before words beginning with *h*, see also usage at **AN**.

a- ¹ *prefix* not; without: *atheistic* | *atypical*. ► from Greek.

a- ² *prefix* to; toward: *aside* | *ashore*. ■ in a specified state or manner: *asleep* | *aloud*. ■ in the process of (an activity): *a-hunting*. ■ on; about. ■ in: *nowadays*. ► Old English, unstressed form of **AW**.

a- ³ *prefix* variant spelling of **AD-** assimilated before *s*, *sp*, and *t* (as in *ascend*, *aspire*, and *atstringent*).

a- ⁴ *prefix* **1** of: *anew* [unstressed form of **OR**]. **2** utterly; *abash*. [from Anglo-Norman French (corresponding to Old French *e*, *es*), from Latin *ex*].

a- ⁵ *suffix* forming: **1** ancient or Latinized modern names of animals and plants: *primula*. **2** names of oxides: *baryta*. **3** geographical names: *Africa*. **4** ancient or Latinized modern feminine forenames: *Lydia*. **5** nouns from Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish: *duenna* | *stanza*. ► representing a Greek, Latin, or Romance feminine singular.

-a- ⁶ *suffix* forming plural nouns: **1** from Greek or Latin neuter plurals corresponding to a singular in *-um* or *-on* (such as *addenda*, *phenomena*). **2** in names (often from modern Latin) of zoological groups: *Protista* | *Insectivora*.

-a- ⁷ *suffix* informal **1** of: *coupla*. **2** have; *mighta*. **3** to: *oughta*. ► representing a casual pronunciation.

A1 ⁸ *adj.* informal very good or well; excellent: *guitar in A1 condition*. ■ *Nautical* (of a vessel) equipped to the highest standard, esp. as certified by a classification society; first-class.

A3 ⁹ *n.* [mass noun] a standard European size of paper, 420 × 297 mm: [as modifier] *A3 poster*. ■ paper of this size: *a prospectus printed on A3*.

A4 ¹⁰ *n.* [mass noun] a standard European size of paper, 210 × 297 mm: [as modifier] *an A4 page*. ■ paper of this size: *several sheets of A4*.

A5 ¹¹ *n.* [mass noun] a standard European size of paper, 210 × 148 mm: [as modifier] *a little A5 booklet*. ■ paper of this size: *printed on A5*.

AA ¹² *abbr.* ■ Alcoholics Anonymous. ■ anti-aircraft. ■ administrative assistant. ■ Associate of Arts. ■ a dry cell battery size.

aa /'ä, ä/ ¹³ *n.* *Geology* basaltic lava forming very rough jagged masses with a light frothy texture. Often contrasted with **PAHOEHOE**. ► mid 19th cent.: from Hawaiian *'a'a*.

AAA /trɪpəl 'ä/ ¹⁴ *abbr.* American Automobile Association. ■ Baseball see **TRIPLE A**. ■ a 1.5 volt dry cell battery size.

AAAS ¹⁵ *abbr.* American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Aachen /'ækən/ ¹⁶ *n.* an industrial city and spa in western Germany, on the Rhine-Westphalia; pop. 244,440. French name **Aix-la-Chapelle**.

AAD ¹⁷ *abbr.* analog analog digital, indicating that a musical recording was made and mastered in analog form before being stored digitally.

Aalborg /'dɒl, bɔr(g)/ (also **Ålborg**) ¹⁸ *n.* an industrial city and port in northern Jutland, Denmark; pop. 155,000.

Aalto /'ältö/ (Hugo) Alvar (Henrik) (1898–1976), Finnish architect and designer. He is known as the inventor of bent plywood furniture.

AAM ¹⁹ *abbr.* air-to-air missile.

A&M ²⁰ *abbr.* Agricultural and Mechanical (college): *Texas A&M*.

A&R ²¹ *abbr.* artist(s) and repertoire, used to denote employees of a record company who select and sign new artists.

aardvark /'ärd, värk/ ²² *n.* a nocturnal burrowing mammal with long ears, a tubular snout, and a long extensible tongue, feeding on ants and termites. Aardvarks are native to Africa and have no close relatives. Also called **ANT BEAR**. ■ *Orycteropus afer*, the only living member of the family Orycteropidae and order Tubulidentata. ► late 18th cent.: from South African Dutch, from *aarde* 'earth' + *vark* 'pig.'

aardwolf /'ärd, wölf/ ²³ *n.* (pl. *-wolves*) a nocturnal black-striped African mammal of the hyena family, feeding mainly on termites. ■ *Proteles cristatus*, family Hyaenidae. ► mid 19th cent.: from South African Dutch, from *aarde* 'earth' + *wolf* 'wolf'.

aargh /ä, ärg/ ²⁴ *exclam.* used as an expression of anguish, horror, rage, or other strong emotion, often with humorous intent. ► late 18th cent.: imitative, lengthened form of **AH**, to express a prolonged cry.

Aarhus /'ör, hōs/ (also **Århus**) ²⁵ *n.* a city on the coast of eastern Jutland, Denmark; pop. 261,440.

Aaron ²⁶ /'e(ə)rən; 'ar-/ (in the Bible) brother of Moses and traditional founder of the Jewish priesthood (see Exod. 28:1).

Aaron-2 /'e(ə)rən; 'ar-/ ²⁷ *n.* Hank (1934–), U.S. baseball player; full name *Henry Louis Aaron*. He set the all-time career record for home runs (755) and runs batted in (2,297). Baseball Hall of Fame (1982).

Aaron's beard ²⁸ *n.* a name given to various plants,

esp. the **ROSE OF SHARON** (sense 2). ► early 19th cent.: alluding to **AARON**, whose beard "went down to the skirts of his garments" (Psalms 133:2), because of the prominent hairy stamens or the long runners that some of these plants put out.

Aaron's rod ²⁹ *n.* another term for the great or common mullein. ► mid 18th cent.: alluding to **AARON**, whose staff was said to have flourished (Numbers 17:8).

AARP /ärp; 'ä 'är 'pē/ ³⁰ *abbr.* American Association of Retired Persons.

AAU ³¹ *abbr.* Amateur Athletic Union.

AAUP ³² *abbr.* American Association of University Professors. ■ American Association of University Professors.

AAVE ³³ *abbr.* *Linguistics* African-American Vernacular English.

AB ³⁴ *n.* a human blood type (in the ABO system) containing both the A and B agglutinogens. In blood transfusion, a person with blood of this group is a potential universal recipient.

AB ³⁵ *abbr.* ■ able seaman; able-bodied seaman. [from *able-bodied*]. ■ Bachelor of Arts. [from Latin *Artium Baccalaureus*]. ■ airman basic. ■ Baseball at bat. ■ Alberta (in official postal use).

Ab ³⁶ /äb; äv/ (also **Av**) ³⁷ *n.* (in the Jewish calendar) the eleventh month of the civil year and the fifth month of the religious year, usually coinciding with parts of July and August. ► from Hebrew *āb*.

Ab ³⁸ *abbr.* *Biology* antibody.

ab- (also **abs-**) ³⁹ *prefix* away; from: *abaxial* | *abominate*. ► from Latin.

ABA ⁴⁰ *abbr.* ■ American Bar Association. ■ American Basketball Association. ■ American Bankers Association. ■ American Booksellers Association.

abaca /abə'kə/ ⁴¹ *n.* a large herbaceous Philippine plant of the banana family that yields Manila hemp. ■ *Musa textilis*, family Musaceae. ■ Manila hemp. ► mid 18th cent.: via Spanish from Tagalog *abaka*.

aback /ə'bæk/ ⁴² *adv.* **1** archaic toward or situated to the rear: *the little strip of pasture aback of the house*. **2** Sailing with the sail pressed backward against the mast by a headwind. ► Old English *on bæc*. Long written as two words, the term came to be treated as a single word in nautical use.

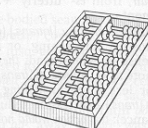
► **PHRASE** □ **take someone aback** shock or surprise someone: *he was taken aback by the sharpness in her voice*.

abacus /'abəkəs/ ⁴³ *n.* (pl. *-cuses*) **1** an oblong frame with rows of wires or grooves along which beads are slid, used for calculating. **2** *Architecture* the flat slab on top of a capital, supporting the architrave. ► late Middle English (denoting a board strewn with sand on which to draw figures): from Latin, from Greek *abax*, *abak* 'slab, drawing board,' of Semitic origin; probably related to Hebrew *ābāq* 'dust.'

Abadan /äbə'dän; äbə'dän/ ⁴⁴ *n.* a major port and oil-refining center on an island of the same name on the Shatt al-Arab waterway in western Iran; pop. 308,000.

Abaddon /ə'bə'dən/ ⁴⁵ *n.* a name for the Devil (Rev. 9:11) or for hell. ► late Middle English: via Greek from

Pronunciation Key *ə* ago; *æ* over; *ä* or *æ*, *ä* up; *ä* or *æ*, *ä* fur; *ä* hat; *ä* rate; *ä* car; *ch* chew; *e* let; *ë* see; *e(ə)* air; *i* fit; *i* by; *i(ə)* ear; *ng* sing; *ö* go; *ö* for; *oi* boy; *oo* good; *oo* goo; *ou* out; *sh* she; *th* thin; *th* then; *(h)w* why; *zh* vision



Abacus

It's a little bit of this and a little bit of that.

THOMAS KEOGH
Director at Lutheran Hospital
Conducted by Shokhina Badrieva

SHOKHINA : Hi Tom! Do you have time for a short interview?

TOM: Hmm...What is this about?

SHOKHINA : The topic is defining art. I want to see what your take is on it!

TOM: Well, I don't really know a lot about art, but sure.

SHOKHINA : That's why I wanted to interview you for this topic! I want to see how people not so familiar with the term "art" define it. So my first question is, when you hear the word "art" what do you think of?

TOM: Okay so when I first hear the word art I automatically think of paintings, drawing, and sketches. If I think about it a little more, I guess many things can be considered art. For example, music is art. So is dancing. So I think art can be shown in a lot of different ways.

SHOKHINA : I agree with you. In my class this semester we talked about a lot of different art forms. We talked about visual art, music, operas, film, plays, photography, and more. Do you think all of these are considered art? And if you do, why?

TOM: Yes, I do. I think they're all a form of art because each involves some creative process. Art is all about creativity and vision and each of the forms of art you just listed require vision and creativity to bring that vision to life. But I still think when people hear the word art they forget a lot of these forms because they regard these forms of art such as film and music as separate categories.

SHOKHINA : So you think they all are related in some way that makes them all art?

TOM: Yes, I do.

SHOKHINA : What do you think the common thread is? What is one thing that all art has to have?

TOM: All art has to depict something in a unique point of view. For example, if I look outside my window and see tree and clouds, it would be silly of me to say that's art. But

if I take a photograph of that view or paint it in a way that I see it, that makes it art. All art is someone showing something through a unique perspective. In music, the lyrics and melody tell a story from someone's point of view. All art should show that perspective because if it doesn't I don't think there is a purpose.

SHOKHINA: That's a really interesting way of looking at it. So how about abstract art? There are some paintings of just blocks of colors put side by side that are very famous. There doesn't seem to be much of a perspective there. Do you think that's art?

TOM: I like to be open minded and I'm not going to say no it definitely isn't art just because it does nothing for me, but I don't think it's as strong as other types of art. Looking at blocks of colors doesn't make me feel the same way as listening to my favorite song. It's totally different.

SHOKHINA: So you say it doesn't make you "feel" the same way. Do you think good art has to make you feel something?

TOM: I would say yes. Good art should make you feel something. If it doesn't, then there is no point in the art. I don't want to watch a movie and just be like "eh." I want to feel something from the film. Whether it is happy, sad...I think a good film should make you feel.

SHOKHINA: Do you think that art is completely subjective, or do you think there are some rules to follow when making art?

TOM: I think a lot of it is subjective, like a whole lot. But I think there are some rules for sure. You can't just scream on top of your lungs and say you're a singer. I would say the same thing about painting blocks of color and saying you're a painter, but that's already been done! So maybe I'm wrong... but I do believe there should be skill involved in the art making. The rest can be subjective.

SHOKHINA: Okay I have one last question for you. If you were to make up your own definition of art to go in the dictionary, what would it be?

TOM: Wow that's a lot of pressure. Alright. Art is a way to express yourself and show your perspective to others in a creative way. How's that?

IS SOME ART BETTER THAN OTHERS?

Shokhina Badrieva

How do we define art? The definition of art is open, subjective, debatable. It is an ambiguous word that gets used to describe a vast array of mediums. The way I define art is something that evokes emotion. Art doesn't necessarily have to evoke positive emotions, although many times beautiful art can. Art can make people feel angry, frustrated, nostalgic, sad. We discussed many forms of art in our class from paintings to sculptures to music to films to plays to operas. All of these forms were drastically different from each other, but they are all somehow labeled under the same umbrella of art. The common thread in all of those mediums was that they intended to make people feel something.

One of the earlier trips we went on was the High Line/gallery trip. This trip exposed us to visual art, but not the conventional paintings we see in museums. The art we saw was abstract and made us think. The first gallery we visited had a sculpture that incorporated pieces from nature and pieces from man-made objects. Although the subject or intention of this work was unclear, the entire class was intrigued by the sculpture. We all wanted to know what the artist meant and we came up with various theories.

Going to these galleries and seeing the unconventional visual art made me think: Is some art better than other art? Are oil paintings from the Renaissance Era somehow more valuable than the sculptures we saw that were merely made out of ready-made objects? And who gets to decide which art is better? These questions are extremely difficult to answer, and maybe an answer doesn't even exist. The way someone defines art is entirely up to them.

To investigate the question, is some art better than other art, or more specifically, is art with a subject better than abstract art, I put two of my own paintings side by side.



Although I prefer the painting with the subject, someone might prefer the painting that is abstract. It's hard to say what type of art is better, but that's the beauty of art and the reason so many people continue to create it.

THE ART OF DEFINITION: IS THIS ART?

AAKASH KATTELU
Stony Brook University
Class of 2019—Computer Science Major
Conducted by Boris Avrumov

BORIS: Hello Aakash. Let's get right into this, we'll be discussing a couple of artists I've learned about in my seminar class, and whether or not you consider their work an art.

AAKASH: Hey man. Yeah that sounds good I'm ready.

BORIS: Fantastic. So before we started I asked you to familiarize yourself with the works of Dan Flavin and Marcel Duchamp. How do you feel about him capitalizing on objects he didn't make?

AAKASH: I feel that the fact that people think he has talent is very questionable. I don't think his art has any meaning, and honestly people can create meaning out of anything. Ultimately if he's profiting off it then good for him.

BORIS: Do you have a favorite Duchamp?

AAKASH: My favorite piece is *In Advance of the Broken Arm*. It's literally a snow shovel suspended from a ceiling and I actually don't like it at all. I think that's the most direct readymade he's produced, as it's the least manipulated one. With his Bicycle Wheel piece, he does put in the effort of attaching it to a stool. And I feel like that was a missed opportunity for a wheelchair pun. But because the shovel seems like the laziest one, I think it's my favorite. The urinal made me laugh.

BORIS: How about Dan Flavin? His art is made using fluorescent lights, arranged in whichever fashion he pleases. What makes his arrangement artistic?

AAKASH: I think what makes it art is the visual appeal behind them. I believe a lot of work is put into how it looks, because not every arrangement is pleasing to the eye. On first glance it seems kind of unnecessary but the more you look the better it gets. His lights can be bought from any hardware store, but then again so can paint and brushes. The fact that he was the one who selected what goes where is meaningful I think.

BORIS: Fair enough. I sense that you're not too impressed with either of them though.

AAKASH: It's kind of underwhelming to me, but I do appreciate the use 3D space, especially with Flavin. You can walk through his work and get a bunch of different

angles, and the colors are really vibrant. It carries more meaning than a shovel, to me anyway.

BORIS: Now how about Alexander Calder. What do you think about his hanging mobiles?

AAKASH: I personally like the mobiles a lot more; the interactivity plays a big part for me. The fact that it can move, and be seen differently at different points in time as well as different angles, that's a very beautiful thing. With the two previous artists, their work looks the same tomorrow as it did today. A picture of a regular sculpture captures a lot of information, a picture of a mobile carries less. I appreciate that Calder really changed how sculptures can be seen. In 11th grade my Web Development teacher taught us about dynamic web pages, pages that change and adapt on the fly, depending on user interaction. Calder's mobiles are the dynamic Internet sites of the art world; other sculptures are static webpages. The dynamic aspect is what captivates me.

BORIS: I remember that class; dynamic programming was quite fun to learn. Branching off of mobiles though, tell me your thoughts on kinetic sculptures in general.

AAKASH: Well, kinetic sculptures have a lot more depth to them. Not only do they have immediate visual effects, but [also] they have more depth in their mobility. You can analyze what they look like, but also what they're modeled after and how they move. There's more talent in creating them too, because you have to have a viewer derive meaning from more than just appearance.

BORIS: I have a quote here by Alexander Calder: "To an engineer, good enough means perfect. With an artist, there's no such thing as perfect." Do you think this is true or relatable in any way?

AAKASH: That's partially true. I think engineers, software engineers especially, are always trying to add things on or improve something or streamline another feature. That's why many programs have so many releases. Electrical engineers are always rewiring to make room for other components; mechanical engineers have to adhere to specific constraints. Sometimes they will say "eh, that's good enough let's leave it there." I do see his point about artists being pickier people though. But even when an artist doesn't think their work is perfect, they do end up leaving it alone and releasing it at some point.

BORIS: Final question Aakash. Readymades, fluorescent light arrangements, mobiles. Are they art?

AAKASH: It would be unfair for me to say “yes this is art” or “no this isn’t art,” especially with such big recognizable names. There is a difference between me not liking something, and it not being art. And with that I reluctantly admit that all the things you listed are indeed art, and they’ve sparked an interesting discussion.

THE ART OF CODE

Boris Avrumov

Over the course of our seminar, we've discovered that the definition of art can be broad, and even people who don't see themselves as artists can produce art. Whether it is engineers who design grandiose bridges or mathematicians who create formulas with beautiful patterns, we find art in STEM all the time. However, there's a group of people who we might think are inherently unartistic: programmers.

As soon as you read that word, you think about the shut-ins of society hunched over a computer in some poorly lit room or cubicle. Perhaps your mentally constructed programmer is also overweight and has an unsightly beard. Putting stereotypes aside, they are people who work behind the scenes to provide functionality to everyday electronics and online services, like your phone or Facebook. Can they really be considered artists? Or should we continue to sweep them under the rug while silently thanking them for keeping YouTube running smoothly, or making Google more efficient?

Programmers are people who write code which, when executed, performs a series of actions. They are given a task or a list of specifications, and their code must fulfill them. If there is a need to automate something, programmers are the ones who automate them. Sounds fairly boring at first—how could something that sounds like doing electronic chores be considered anywhere near artistic? Well maybe it would help to examine a tiny code snippet.

```
public void sort()
{
    int i, j;
    Course tmp;
    for (i=1; i<size(); i++)
    {
        tmp=getCourse(i);
        j=i;
        while (j>0 && getCourse(j-1).compareTo(tmp)>0)
        {
            getCourses().set(j, getCourse(j-1));
            j--;
        }
        getCourses().set(j,tmp);
    }
}
```

Note all those indentations, the blocky structure, and the cascading pattern that the brackets create. It's almost geometric, making an interesting arrangement. Over the years, coding standards have been implemented to make code more pleasing to the eye and easier to read. Notice that every time you see a semicolon, we jump to another line. This isn't functionally necessary; it is a choice. The same goes for the brackets; they section off certain pieces so that a human can distinguish what part of the program the code belongs to. Each bracket gets its own line because it *looks pretty*. While

certain aspects of each programming language are standardized, stylistic choices depend on the coder. Here is functionally the same code, but written with no regard for visual appeal, readability, or style. Viewer beware.

```
public void sort(){int i, j; Course tmp; for(i=1; i<size(); i++){tmp=getCourse(i);j=i;
while(j>0&&getCourse(j-1).compareTo(tmp)>0) {getCourses().set(j, getCourse(j-1)); j--
;}getCourses().set(j,tmp);}}
```

Gross.

The more exciting artistic expression comes in with text editing programs. Notepad is a very dull application for typing, and Microsoft Word is meant for word processing and formatting papers, not coding. Programmers use a wide variety of other programs that are meant for writing code, and these programs can be customized to make their code look pretty, and more “artsy.”

One such artistic feature is called “syntax highlighting.” Whenever you type in certain reserved keywords (which differ slightly depending on the programming language), that word may be highlighted or changed to a different color. Some of these are common programming words, like “int” or “new” or “function” or “while”. Once again, the machine running the code doesn’t care how it looks. Computers don’t have eyes, they just interpret what’s given and run it. Syntax highlighting is therefore purely aesthetic, but it produces some nice, rainbow-like results. The more code you have onscreen, the prettier it looks, so here’s a longer sample of what a project might look like.

```
int findacct(int acctnum_array[], int num_accts, int account) {
    for (int i=0; i<num_accts; i++)
        if (acctnum_array[i]==account)
            return i;
    return -1;
}

int promptAccountNumber() {
    string a;
    while (a.compare(to_string(atoi(a.c_str())))) { //Forces user to enter integer
        cout<<"Enter an account number please. ";
        getline(cin,a);
        if (a.compare(to_string(atoi(a.c_str()))))
            cout<<"That was not a number."<<endl<<endl;
    }
    return atoi(a.c_str());
}

void withdrawal(int acctnum_array[], double balance_array[], int num_accts) {
    int acctIdx=findacct(acctnum_array,num_accts,promptAccountNumber());
    if (acctIdx== -1) {
        cout<<"Sorry, that account does not exist."<<endl;
        return;
    }
    double old=balance_array[acctIdx];
    string w;
    cout<<"How much money would you like to withdraw? $";
    getline(cin,w);
    if (atof(w.c_str())<0)
        cout<<"You can't withdraw negative money."<<endl;
    else
        if (balance_array[acctIdx]>atof(w.c_str()))
            balance_array[acctIdx]-=atof(w.c_str());
        else
            cout<<"Insufficient funds."<<endl;
    printReciept("Withdrawal",acctnum_array[acctIdx],old,balance_array[acctIdx]);
}
```

To make this more relatable to someone who is completely turned off by the idea of programming, we can compare this to writing in a standardized written language like English. English has rules regarding punctuation, sentence syntax, paragraph indentation, etc. This is reasonable—all languages must have rules, whether it be English, Spanish, Java, or C++. While Microsoft Word doesn't highlight verbs or proper nouns or adjectives for you, this does not stop written English from being an art. To someone who cannot understand English, the art of Mark Twain and Charles Dickens may be lost. To someone who cannot read code, comprehension of its purpose is lost, but at least they can still enjoy the visual beauty. Even if you just don't get Shakespeare, you must still recognize that his works have the power to transport readers and viewers to a different place. At the same time, you can view the source code of any webpage on the internet and not understand a single line, but there is a feeling of marvel that this wall of text is the reason that these websites work across all our devices. The fact that code can be both visually pleasing and functionally important to society means it deserves to be recognized as a legitimate art form.

We did it;
We found art in a [seemingly] artless place.

THE ART OF PURPOSE



To be or not to be?

MICHELLE GORBONOSOV
Macaulay Honors College at Brooklyn College
Class of 2016—Art History and Chemistry Major
Conducted by Boris Avrumov

BORIS: Hey Michelle! Thanks for joining me today on this lovely Friday afternoon. So as I mentioned when I asked for this interview I'm going to be asking you all about the purpose of art. We'll start off with an easy question: have you ever heard of a guy named Jackson Pollock?

MICHELLE: Yes of course, he was one of the frontrunners of abstract expressionist art, which started in the 40s I believe. It's a way of expressing your internal feelings through art; it's a very individualized expression. It was really cool the way he experimented with different painting tools and paints, breaking the expectations of art at the time and producing something new. He did have a lot of critics though; people were used to realism at the time.

BORIS: Well clearly you're someone who knows a lot about art history. And you also know that people who view Pollock's work have mixed reactions. His works kind of polarize people who go to museums to enjoy the art. Why do you think that is?

MICHELLE: It does have to do with the history of art. If you go back to the Renaissance, art was about technique. Abstract expressionism has nothing to do with technique as we knew it. It has nothing to do with geometry; it's all about the canvas surface and the space around you. Artists are elitists. Back then, you would go to art schools, learn the techniques of painting people, settings, and then paint them well. When Pollock painted, it was his feelings on the paper. When you buy a Jackson Pollock, you're literally *buying a Jackson Pollock*. It's him. His feelings. Some people don't like it because it's not traditional, others love it for the same reason. People react to how he feels with feelings of their own. His art is more of reflection of his current state. Raphael had incredible technique, with lighting especially. You can see the sun reflecting off the human bodies he painted. With Pollock it's more about asking *how* did he paint it? Did he do it standing up? Sitting down? Certain people don't appreciate this aspect.

BORIS: You bringing up Raphael and the Renaissance is perfect actually, because it connects to my next question. Michelangelo painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel a little over 500 years ago. His painting is undeniably a work of art, he had a vision and he transferred it over into reality. With this classical definition of art, there are people who don't consider Pollock an artist. Is this fair?

MICHELLE: When you talk about art, you can't have objectivity. I've seen the Sistine Chapel in real life, and it is *beautiful*. Michelangelo was a genius. The amount that he painted, in the time frame he did it in, and given the supplies that he had is truly incredible. People who dismiss Pollock only care about the final product and are ignoring the execution. But I don't think you can discount Pollock's genius. Is that a word?

BORIS: Just for today I'm allowing it to be a word.

MICHELLE: I don't like Pollock personally, but it's for another reason. However Modern art just isn't about technique. It is simply a different type of art. Art has shifted towards the political. You're tackling different issues with Pollock's works, and the great artists of the Renaissance were really not focusing on what today's artists focus on. Pollock started something that allowed art to move in a completely different direction.

BORIS: You mentioned your dislike of Pollock, mind telling me the reason?

MICHELLE: Sure. My problem with Pollock is how expensive he thinks his paintings are. If I'm Pollock and I painted something, should people be paying me a lot of money to buy what I felt in this moment in time? Sometimes you're not buying his art; you're paying for Pollock's name on his art. You're buying it because Jackson Pollock painted it, rather than for its meaning. I believe that art should be accessible to everyone—there shouldn't be such a high price attached to his work.

BORIS: Do we need people like Pollock? Or would the world have been the same, or even better off, without abstract expressionism?

MICHELLE: No, the world would not be the same. It's the same trend with politics. 300 years ago, we had slaves—it was the norm. Well not exactly the norm, but it was acceptable here. Then people questioned and challenged it, and there was a political shift. There is no *one* way to do art. So when people come around to do new art, it makes people question what really is art? People like Pollock create a difference, causing us to think "hey let's explore a whole new field that we've never seen before." Without these transitions, there would be gaps in our expression.

BORIS: I've actually never thought about it that way... That's a completely different perspective, thank you. Okay, final Pollock-y question. People often say—and I'm guilty of this too—a five-year-old could've splattered those paints on a canvas. In their defense, 5 year-olds are walking landmines of emotion, [but] are their scribbles and splatters less valid and less artistic? Is there a difference?

MICHELLE: There is a difference. Think about a professional photographer. Just because anyone can take a photograph, doesn't mean their intentions were the same as the professional. Pollock had his own intentions; 5 year-olds can't understand the world the way Pollock does. The 5-year-old's splatters means something different to them, and Pollock's paintings come from a different place. Both are valid expressions of self. Another difference is that Pollock did it first. In the science world, discoveries are credited to those who discovered them first, and I think the same goes for Pollock. He brought his new form to the world, so even if others replicate it or say it can be done by anyone, Pollock deserves the recognition anyway.

BORIS: Apart from expression of self, let's discuss art as an outlet. Although I admit I only know the name of "Starry Night," Van Gogh is an art genius and I can recognize his style if given a series of paintings. We know that he did have bipolar disorder and suffered from bouts of depression. Why do you think art was able to keep his hallucinations and paranoia at bay? What can we learn from Van Gogh's way of coping?

MICHELLE: Most people don't know this, but Van Gogh sold only one painting in his life. It made him feel inadequate and not good enough, and these things contributed to his deteriorating mental health. I think coping through art works for a lot of people. I'm really interested in the science of art; it's something I enjoy studying. Especially for people with Alzheimer's, art helps them remember. So this is actually my first semester of taking art. I can spend 3 or 4 hours on drawing, and in that time I'm self-reflecting. If you're drawing a bow, you think "When was the last the last time I saw a bow?" and "When was the last time that I gave somebody a gift?" Van Gogh only ever had a brother there for him. His brother was very supportive through his letters, but other than that Van Gogh had no one else to connect with. Art was a way for him to understand the world. If you talk to people with any psychological disorders, what they want most is for other people to understand them and see things the way they do. For Van Gogh it was a great way to really pour out his emotions, especially if you aren't talking about your emotions with anyone. His earlier works are a lot lighter, a symbol of happiness. As he gets older they get darker, and dark colors are always a sign of troubling emotions even when the artist doesn't realize it. If you're doodling while sad, your drawings will be a lot darker and gloomier than if you were cheerful. I think it will work for anyone; art is a way for anyone to come to a conclusion, by exploring yourself and contemplating. I really hope that answers the question!

BORIS: It definitely answered my question and more—that was a beautiful response. You actually answered another question that I was saving, so I guess I'll just jump to the

final one. Do you have any closing comments about the importance of art, and its role in our society? Or even just a general positive “We should all appreciate art!” message you want to throw at the world.

MICHELLE: I think people forget how important art is. Taking art history classes makes you view your science classes differently. Art is a way of seeing the world in a novel way. You can always analyze an artwork and say something like “Monet has a very light stroke, and blends colors,” but with art you need to step back and see the whole picture. *Why is this important to me? Why to the artist?* A lot of art history is also about art theory. Theories are very important; when you look at a painting you think about what the artist intended, what you feel, and what everyone else thinks. You can apply this to anything else. I’m premed, and if you’re treating a patient you need to step back and never forget that they’re a person. You’re not just trying to get rid of an ailment; you’re making another human being feel better. Innovation drives both art *and* science forward. Another thing is that art is great for helping people and healing them like I mentioned before. Art is beautiful and we should all appreciate art!

In the study of art, sometimes *why* is the biggest question.

ON A STARRY NIGHT...

Maisha Kamal

In which Vincent van Gogh contemplates existence.



Lying in his bed, body curled up and pressed to one side of the mattress, all Vincent van Gogh could see was white.

Granted, his eyes were closed so he could technically see nothing at all, but Van Gogh felt the white around him. The walls were cream and his sheets were pure; the light outside was blinding and the curtains were bleached. There were a few stains here and there—a milky red that must have been dried blood, the deep brown of dirt—but otherwise the majority of his surroundings were void of any color. It was true that white was the amalgamation of every frequency—he knew this—but at the moment in time and place, the world seemed pale, drained, and shockingly empty.

This did not sit well with him.

He thrust off the covers and stretched, winced at the brightness of the sun, and glared at the cylindrical bars in place past the windowpane. They were a safety measure; perhaps the people at the Saint-Paul Asylum thought he was capable of breaking the glass in front of it, and as a result put in another “necessary precaution” to prevent him from jumping to his death. It was impossible on both counts; Van Gogh was weak, and even if he’d managed to tackle both obstacles, it wasn’t much of a fall. He was on the second floor; at best, only minimal damage could be done. And even then, he didn’t have much energy to do it.

He didn’t have much energy at all.

It had been a month now since he’d been admitted to the Saint-Paul of his own accord. Following the incident in December¹, following the claims of poisoning that he still believed were valid², following the problems with his yellow house³, and following the multiple hospitalizations, Van Gogh had finally taken a step forward.

He often questioned that step. Finding himself lying awake long after midnight, Van Gogh would wonder what he had done and why he had done it. On some occasions he considered himself even more lost than he had been before; on others he would feel undefeatable.

At his lowest points, the debilitating periods of self-reflection that held him captive, Van Gogh could not paint.

It was the worst of his afflictions. Unable to pick up a brush or a pencil, alone in that pathetic crevice of a room, he felt no connection to a world that was progressing without him if he could not paint. His only link then was the letters, most of which were in the wooden chest nearby. The rest were strewn across the small table across from him.

Van Gogh got up and looked them over. The bulk of them were simple correspondences between him and his brother Theo, but over the course of his life so far he had written many others. In his possession there were lengthy conversations

¹ In which Van Gogh cut off the entirety of his left ear.

² Subsequent to the ear fiasco, Van Gogh spent January of 1889 suffering from delusions that he was being poisoned.

³ By March of 1889, the police closed down Van Gogh’s “Yellow House,” the term used to describe the four rooms he rented in the right wing of Place Lamartine in Arles, France.

between Van Gogh and his friend Emile Bernard; between Van Gogh and the artist Paul Gauguin. There were sporadic messages too: a single letter from French lieutenant Paul Eugène Millet; a back and forth between Van Gogh and the Australian painter John Peter Russell. The most recent was from Joseph Ginoux, dated the 31st of May.

It was the second week of June now. He'd been painting for some time, having succeeded at deflecting the introspection temporarily. On the ground floor of the Saint-Paul was his studio; several new and completed artworks leaned against its walls. There was the night café and the green vineyard, a landscape in a walnut frame and a view of the sky over the Rhone. He'd asked Theo in a letter to wash the canvases to remove the oil and thinner, but he hadn't heard from his brother in a while.⁴

Van Gogh went back to his bed. He awaited his afternoon meal—stale bread and soup, for he would not consume much else—and then received the first of his two weekly two-hour baths. The rest of his day continued to be uneventful. He received permission to leave the grounds and venture into the wheat fields and olive groves, but only upon return before dusk. When the sun set and the sky faded into dark blues, he was back in his room.

The curtains were still pulled back. He gazed out the window, sighed, and ran a hand through his hair. The view outside was the same. The view outside always stayed the same. The only change he had witnessed since his arrival at the Saint-Paul was a large morning star⁵, but otherwise everything was constant. His means of sustenance, his methods of relaxation—nothing could escape the clutches of redundancy. There were merits to that arrangement—for instance, stability⁶—but periodically it would make Van Gogh weary.

⁴ From Van Gogh's letter, written sometime between May 31 and June 6, 1889: *"I think that you would do well to wash the canvases that are quite quite dry with water and a little spirits of wine to remove the oil and the thinner from the impasto. The same for the night café and the green vineyard, and above all for the landscape that was in the walnut frame. The night also (but that one has recent retouchings which might run with the spirits of wine)."*

⁵ In the aforementioned letter: *"This morning I saw the countryside from my window a long time before sunrise with nothing but the morning star, which looked very big."*

⁶ Van Gogh, in reference to staying at the Saint-Paul: *"I feel happier here with my work than I could be outside. By staying here a good long time, I shall have learned regular habits and in the long run the result will be more order in my life."* Historians, however, have noted that his stay was actually not so ideal.

Tonight he was weary. Tonight he was weary and confused, not quite pensive but flooded with thoughts nonetheless. He wanted to hear from his brother. He wanted to talk to someone. He wanted to paint like his colleagues and have his work accepted, marveled at, praised. Didn't every artist want some semblance of admiration, if only for his personal satisfaction? He'd been painting for years but hadn't sold a single one.

Saint-Rémy-de-Provence stared back at him in mockery. Its beauty was frustrating because he could not experience it. Solely from the confines of the asylum could he peer at the rolling hills and dipping valleys, the trees whose branches arched towards the heavens and the meek flowers that burst with color in the gardens. He longed to see all these things.

He longed to be free. Not just from the Saint-Paul, but from his mind. From the moods of indescribable anguish, when the veil of time and fatality of circumstances seemed to be torn apart for an instant.⁷ He longed for Paris and Arles, even the Netherlands of his childhood.

He longed for home, whatever that was.

Outside, the night was calm. A cluster of stars dotted the sky, reminding Van Gogh of the freckles on his face. He turned to look in the mirror; staring back at him was a gaunt frame, made slender by rampant illness. Mental afflictions ravaged the body as much as it did judgment. It would be a long time before someone understood this.

But at least *something* did.

Suddenly overcome with fatigue, Van Gogh glanced at the scene in front of him one more time before retiring to his bed. It was a *beautiful, starry night*.

Tomorrow he would paint it.

⁷ Adapted from the original quote: "*Sometimes moods of indescribable anguish, sometimes moments when the veil of time and fatality of circumstances seemed to be torn apart for an instant.*" It was written shortly before Van Gogh relocated to the Saint-Paul.

VINCENT VAN GOGH'S *STARRY NIGHT*.
PAINTED IN MID-JUNE OF 1889 AT THE SAINT-PAUL ASYLUM



In a letter to his brother Theo dated June 18, 1889, Van Gogh referenced, albeit briefly, what would become one of his most famous works:

"At last I have a landscape with olive trees and also a new study of a starry sky."

THE ART OF PERFORMANCE



Hips Don't Lie.

DANIELLE "FLOPPY" DUCHAN
Yeshiva of Flatbush High School
Class of 2018—aspiring psychiatrist
Conducted by Melissa Duchan

MELISSA: Hey Floppy can I interview you?

DANIELLE: Okay cool! For what?

MELISSA: For my Macaulay seminar project. We're investigating people's perspectives on different themes in art.

DANIELLE: Sure.

MELISSA: Do you see ballet and other forms of performance as art?

DANIELLE: Yeah, because I feel like art is anything that shows some form of beauty through effort and work.

MELISSA: What do you think about the fact that ballet follows a preset script? Does that diminish the artistic value?

DANIELLE: Lots of art forms follow a preset format—like poetry has specific forms like the sonnet. I don't believe it diminishes the artistic value because it helps categorize the different forms of art.

MELISSA: Why do you think something as ambiguous and amorphous as art needs to be categorized?

DANIELLE: I don't think it's necessary for it to be categorized. As you said, art is very amorphous but as humans we need to have certain concrete concepts so I feel that categorization helps with that.

MELISSA: Do you think that art that does not follow a preset format elicits more of an emotional response?

DANIELLE: It doesn't necessarily evoke a more emotional response but it definitely makes art more personal if it isn't preset because it feels like it's happening for you right now.

MELISSA: What was one time where art really elicited an emotional reaction for you?

DANIELLE: You're gonna make fun of me for my response. I was at an All Time Low concert last month and the band played a song that I remember listening to when I was having a hard time and it struck a chord with me. It was a very sad, slow emotional song just lyrically and also put that together with the memories that are associated with it and it really struck a chord with me.

MELISSA: One commonality I'm getting from all the young people I'm interviewing is that they find music most inspiring. Does dance have the ability to elicit that kind of emotional reaction from you? Why or why not?

DANIELLE: I don't think so because I'm not as familiar with dance. Music is more readily available and prevalent especially in the digital age. And I find that especially as an avid music listener that because I have the ability to be constantly plugged into my music that I begin to associate memories with that music and that is what makes music a very powerful form of art.

MELISSA: What subjects do you think are best portrayed through dance?

DANIELLE: I think tragedy is best portrayed through dance because there are a lot of really evocative things people can do with their bodies to portray tragedy and sadness.

MELISSA: You mentioned that you found a concert very powerful. Considering that concerts also follow a preset script, that is they have to perform songs from released albums, what makes a concert or performance special as compared to listening or watching a video at home?

DANIELLE: The band is immediately there, so seeing them in front of you and being able to interact with them and other people who enjoy the same music is a very powerful experience.

MELISSA: What about more formal venues like Lincoln Center where interaction is typically considered taboo during performances? Does that change the value of seeing a show in person for you?

DANIELLE: To some extent, yes, because in general I'm not interested in the type of music that is performed at Lincoln Center so I wouldn't be that excited to see a show there. And also because I feel like part of the inherent value of going to a concert is interacting with the performers and people around you.

MELISSA: Thanks Floppy. I appreciate your time.

DANIELLE: I feel so important, thanks for interviewing me!

“The Green Table” was arguably one of the most powerful pieces we watched at the ballet. Captivated by masks, stomping, and a painful reality, we saw in dance the horrors of battle. More importantly, however, we saw the consequences.

TO CORDELIA, WITH LOVE

Maisha Kamal

In which a suffering soldier attempts to conquer his demons.

The first three months were the hardest. They consisted of late nights at the pub drowned in alcoholic concoctions and his own personal sorrow, battling depression with so tight a grip that he had a difficult time remembering his name, forgot where he was and who he'd spent the evening with. Mornings were a blur; he went through the motions until midday, when the October sun hit its highest point and the blinding light would stream in through his windows. He would groan then, snapping the curtains shut and retreating back to his couch at the corner of the room, sinking back into his seat for a couple of hours.

After witnessing this pattern for quite some time, his flatmate Joseph took it upon himself to pull the hopeless chap out of his rut, thrusting a bottle of ink and fountain pen at him, unrolling a piece of parchment and placing it on the wooden table that was home to an array of spirits and his daily rum.

“Write to someone,” Joseph demanded, hauling him towards the escape he longed for. “The world is at war, and for that reason you should write to someone.”

At that, his eyebrows furrowed and he blinked rapidly, remarking, “What good will that do?” He poured himself a sip's worth of the absinthe in front of him and stifled a yawn, knowing his demeanor would further upset Joseph. “And how does that make any sense, anyway?”

“Give it a shot, mate,” Joseph encouraged with a sad smile. “Anything is better than this.”

So, if only to please his comrade, that's exactly what he did. Joseph left him then and he remained still for a while, unsure of who to address the letter to and what to say. He racked his brain for possibilities. There were few people he spoke to these days, and even they seemed to tire of him. His best option was Cordelia, and, pleased with this decision, he dipped the pen in ink and furiously scrawled away.

Dear Cordelia,

It's been ages since I left the house, but the last time I did so I passed by your favorite bookstore. I know you haven't visited for long—in fact, you'd be surprised to hear the place is all boarded up now. There's a sign on the door that reads Closed Indefinitely; the owner happens to be a part of the Navy. The entire street is rather gloomy, really. The quaint shops you loved so much are no longer in business, and outdated newspapers lie on the sidewalks bearing headlines I'd never paid much attention to. After returning from my service I've decided it's not in my best interest to keep up, but I know the war has taken its toll on England. With that I'm reminded of what you once told me over dinner—how the war was pointless, no one would truly win in the end. To think that was three years ago...right when the war had begun; we were sent off like parcels, unaware of the peril we were about to face. Looking back, I should have agreed with you, as the words you spoke are even a metaphor for existence; we fight those who oppose us adamantly, but all that prevails is the shattered remnant of a life you've no way to bring back. And that is solely what the war did to me, I suppose—eradicate all that I had.

Best,

T.

He stopped there and clenched his fists, a headache creeping into his skull. The sweet dullness that habitually followed the ingestion of liquor was fading, replaced by an intense throbbing pain—a pounding in intervals. He muttered to himself angrily and threw the pen across the room, folding up the blasted letter and tucking it into his pocket. That was enough for now. He had done what Joseph had asked of him, though it provided no relief. Instead, he was overcome with more torment than before.

When Joseph appeared again, he had dozed off, woken by a light creaking of the floor that synchronized with pattering footsteps. He prayed Joseph would not approach him, not wanting to be bothered by unwarranted optimism. Joseph could continue to believe there was hope to be found in him, but he was weary of its subsistence. Hope, like much else in his world, was fleeting.

His prayers were not answered.

"I'm back," Joseph whispered, shaggy blond hair standing up in all directions. A strong wind blew through the room and the door slammed shut. "How did it go?"

He opened one eye, squinting at the sight of his companion. Pulling out the letter, he said, "I tried."

"I'm glad," Joseph grinned, quite pleased.

He chuckled darkly, satisfied his lackluster attempt had amounted to something.

At the start, he had no intentions of following through with Joseph's proposition. But then it was December, and finding himself alone again in the chilly old house, nearly drained of whiskey, he realized there was nothing else to do. Unnerved by the silence, he turned on the radio; as he sat back in his chair with a pen and paper, it was a hum in the background that aided his wandering thoughts.

Dear Cordelia,

Sitting here in a home that is not my own, I gaze at walls that are carved with history—the cryptic stories of those who inhabited this place decades ago. I wonder what their concerns were, their dreams, what they loved and perhaps whom they loved. Or if they ever loved at all.

People are intriguing; no two persons are the same. Take Joseph and me as examples. He is diligent, I am indolent. He has purpose and I am without a cause. He is to marry soon and I am lost, immobilized in an unreachable past. He also prefers to socialize, and I never have—not for a while.

We had guests the week prior, and Joseph referred to my presence as miraculous. His sister joined us for dinner, as did her sons and husband. Her children, named Barrett and Draven, struck me as rather similar to me and my own brother, both in manner and expression. They bickered at the table and whispered jokes, pushing food around their plates. Retiring to the den brought them joy: they had games to play and adults to elude. The boys were fascinated at Joseph's library of creased novels, poring over them though it was obvious they hadn't been taught how to read. It was as if I had been gaping at a mirror, younger versions of my dear brother and I stuck in the reflection. It would be disastrous, however, if the children turned out to be like us. I wish that on no one.

See you soon,

T.

The room was still cold when he had finished, but a lingering content warmed him. Joseph would be proud, but more importantly, he had been distracted, forgetting for a few moments about the suffering that was his plague. The couch beckoned to him again, and he gladly slipped out of consciousness; it was a victory he was deserving of.

Joseph arrived back from the factory drenched in perspiration, noticing the letter that poked out from underneath the blankets that cocooned him.

“Have you written something?” Joseph asked. He offered no response but a weak nod. “To whom?”

He beamed at the question, speaking slowly. “Cordelia.” His lips turned up in what was somewhat a sullen smile.

Joseph hesitated, wary in wording. “Don’t you think that...defeats the purpose?”

He shook his head. “Does it?”

The next three months were obscure and slightly out of focus. He aimed to regain his strength, but there were occasions when he would abruptly go mute, engrossed in fond recollections. The kind of grief he was enduring was the death of a limb, a binding detachment from reality he wanted to conquer but was unable to. Worse, alcohol didn’t solve the problem anymore; his tolerance for the substance was so heightened that it took more than a bottle to hasten the numbing process.

It was during these weeks that he resorted to the letters, victimized by blinding anger and vexation. He was cross and erratic, desperate to chase out the demons that had been gnawing at him. And so, on one particular late night in a drunken stupor he retrieved his pen and paper, convinced there was nothing else he could do—not anymore. They were rushed scribbles at best, but in the hours he struggled to find himself, the letters served as candles in the overbearing darkness.

Dear Cordelia,

With the coming of the new year, I promised I would pull myself out of the depths of desolation. But as with most of my promises, the aspiration fell through. Furthermore, I’ve learned it’s in my best interests to not make promises at all—not to myself, and especially not to anyone else, unless they are keen on being disheartened. I have

deduced that if you dishearten the right amount of people, they distance themselves from you, and that may be the case for me. The truth is this: friendship is the thinnest of threads, held together by commonalities. Regardless, with all friendships, there comes a time when that thread is so irrevocably strained that friendship morphs into reliance, and reliance translates into encumbrance. That is the turning point. The thread breaks, and all chances at compensation are destroyed. After that, similarities hold no substantial meaning. The oldest of friends become bitter strangers, shoving aside any glimmer of recognition.

So, in short, if I were to forcibly make a promise, it would be this: I will not be a burden.

Because I cannot and will not lose anybody else.

T.

His letters, much like his actions, were rash and impulsive, amorphous and outstanding in their peculiarity. They were vague yet revealing, blunt and uncompromising, prying into the intimacies of his internal conflicts. Speckled with melancholy and doused with indignation, the letters were a manifestation of his hatred for himself, delving into the intricacies of what could only be dubbed a troubled man.

Dear Cordelia,

I know not the number of men I have killed, but I remember the first—1914 at a battle in Mons. Though it was inevitable that the Germans would succeed, we put up a powerful fight, inflicting many casualties on the opposing side. The morning was wet and the air softened with mist as we took our positions along the canal. I recall the field marshal shouting commands; as much as we men didn't want to listen, we had to, firing away into the void. The Germans were strategically superior but sporadically clumsy; it was during one of these missteps that a German patrol stumbled onto enemy lines. There were three of them, their deaths simply an addition to the everlasting list of fatalities. They were soldiers who may have had families or children, mothers and fathers. But that wasn't a matter—it couldn't be. I killed a man that day, watching as he convulsed on the ground, life snatched away from him, future demolished. I stared in shock at the paling corpse that was submerged in a thick, scarlet blood, having robbed him of his prospects as a bullet pierced his heart. I never knew his name, barely saw his face. All I was sure of was that he was dead, and it was my fault. But I had to keep going.

Three years later when we traveled to Arras, I was still afraid of holding the rifle that I had been given—the calamity of Mons continued to beset me. This clash was

disastrous and lengthy but demise was our profession; people were numbers and bodies were worthless. The trenches were our homes, and we went to sleep in dingy tents, not sure who would survive. It was in Arras that the fates caught up with me, compelling me to murder an old acquaintance. I had no choice, Cordelia, and images of his gory remains have engraved themselves in my haphazard thoughts. Notwithstanding, my old friend was able to punish me in defense, firing at my shoulder before his collapse. It rendered me useless for the rest of the war, and I was sent to an infirmary to heal.

I am certain you would tire of war tales, but I want someone to know that I'm not a monster—that I never meant to be, at least. I just did what I was told.

Sincerely,

T.

It was true; the war had scarred him beyond repair. The passing of time merely worsened his situation, the letters providing minimal solace as February rolled around. He feared he was going mad, wholly engulfed by a sorrow that threatened to ruin him. His clothes were ragged, his hair unkempt; he seldom left his bedroom, which in itself was a source of chaos. Battered books lay in a heap on top of his mattress and wine flasks were tossed in every direction, cracked glass a mosaic on the floor. The more he dug into his past the more it broke him, but he couldn't stop. Numbness left him seeking for a feeling—any feeling—and if dejection was the only one available, he latched on tight, yearning to let his paralysis go.

Dear Cordelia,

What do I miss? I asked myself this some days ago, when the weather was easing into the serenity of spring. As a man of twenty I would have said not much, but now twenty-five my answers are extensive.

I miss sounds: the voices in hearty conversation that pause to sip their tea, talking madly about their passions. I miss sight: being able to see more than muddled spots in a necessary torpor, squinting at the brightness of the sun. I miss smells and tastes: apples in ciders and custards and creams, lounging in gluttony and genuine hunger, not one suppressed by intoxication. I miss feeling, but then again, I fear I feel too much.

I miss the whispers of adolescence, innocence and discovery. I miss human contact, but only from the ones I love. I miss phone calls and correspondence—a desire for

them, too. I miss happiness, which is a lot more than what I once believed. And foremost I miss the value of life, because for me there no longer is one.

Among others,

T.

When March made its grand entrance, approximately fifteen letters had been written, many torn at the edges in his fits of rage and misery. On the ides the count was twenty, and at half past three when the joints in his right hand tightened from overexertion, he reclined in his seat, reaching for the alcohol that rested on a ledge. The liquor swished at the bottom of the magnum, a murky red that provided a burst of color in his otherwise somber bedroom. He fiddled for a glass, and then, ogling at the liquid for some moments, set it back down. He glared at the wall clock, cringing at its incessant noise. Tick, tock. Tick, tock. The alcohol suddenly repulsed him.

Dear Cordelia,

It is with remorse that I admit I am a catastrophe, a bomb on the verge of detonation. Conceivably, there are more pleasant terms that would address my condition, but who would that be fooling?

A few days ago I abandoned drinking out of tedium, and it is safe to say that withdrawal is much more harrowing than inebriation. The neuralgia is sickening, violent and persistent. Survival is a ruse, or so it seems. I am earnestly trying to better myself, slowly inching towards recovery, but such efforts are futile. And for a long while I have been pretending—locking away any traces of emotion and embracing incapacity—but now I am sinking, slipping further into a greedy obscurity. The hours merge into an endless day, clouded by confusion. Something must be fixed, and I know it. The real question is, how? And is it worth it at all?

In reverie,

T.

The subsequent three months were a renewal. The letters started to collect in a drawer, a pile of sentiment smudged in the heat of an approaching summer. Each paragraph was an exchange, encapsulating despair for fulfilling jubilation. A recluse no more, he ventured outside and into the arms of those he had spent months evading, those who

had worried boundlessly about him. Then in the evening he would come back home and become a scribe again. The letters varied in length but never lacked detail, his innermost contemplations in the form of wrinkled pages. He told Cordelia everything in great depth; it was what he should have always done, he fathomed. It was the only way.

Dear Cordelia,

Some ages ago, time was at a miserable standstill. It neither progressed nor receded, stuck in a loop that practiced ruthless authority. I was a different man then. The sentence is trite but sincere. It is the whole truth, as the tables have turned and the situation has become something else—a solution has been found. My hope is that this is how it stays; that would be fortunate, and though I have not been in luck's good graces, I pray there is an exception now.

In your debt,

T.

At the end of June, flowers bloomed audaciously, flaunting their splendor in the rays of a glorified sun. He was overwhelmed by a newfound joy and brightness, basking in the magnificence of trees that danced without partners, birds that chirped at dawn, the fragrance of fresh pastries. Nevertheless, he was heedful. It wouldn't take much to utterly devastate him in his rebirth. He was still raw and vulnerable, his elation a façade that had to be attended to, built up slowly as to prevent unexpected destruction.

Joseph, understandably suspicious, questioned him on an uncharacteristically cloudy afternoon. It was shortly after their lunch at an old diner, when they had finished smoking cigarettes and were strolling aimlessly down the street. He laughed at the query, and explained that, though hard to achieve, his exuberance had always been attainable—a gem that had been buried under layers of lamentation. At this, the men continued walking in quiet, until he gathered the courage to reveal to Joseph an idea he had been toying with.

"I think," he began, "I might move elsewhere. Search for a job. Give myself some time to figure things out once and for all." He wrung his hands and stretched, uneasy movements that Joseph always recognized as nervous anticipation.

"What for?" was all Joseph asked.

“Something new,” he sighed. “I need something new.” They crossed the road in swift steps.

Joseph nodded, compliant without protest. “All right then.” He let out a heavy breath of relief, letting the tension evaporate as his friend continued to speak. “But, as your most faithful ally,” Joseph added dramatically with a chortle, “I shall remind you: come what may, you are welcome here.”

The men shook hands. “Thank you for everything,” he said. He didn’t want to admit it out loud, but he owed a lot to Joseph. Friendship may have been simple all along. And to Joseph, a firm grip was enough reassurance of all his appreciation.

There was not a three-month period after that. He got everything in order the early weeks of July; there was a cheap flat for sale in Kent, and he was due to settle there by August. In his nine months post discharge he had learned much: seclusion was ineffectual, people will fret, and the taste of seared cod was far more appealing than brandy.

On his final night in Joseph’s home, he gathered his ink and parchment again, glanced at the untouched cider still shelved—haunted by those first few months. Closing the door, he leaned back against his desk chair, writing for what would be the last occasion.

Dear Cordelia,

I will be okay.

Yours,

T.

The walls of his room were bare now, no longer covered with photographs and the painting he had commissioned back when he had money of his own. The wooden floors gleamed, polished and rid of the dust that had accumulated throughout his despondency. Save for the mattress, the entire space was empty. Or so he presumed.

He glimpsed at the windowsill, the faint sparkle of something gold catching his eye. How had he missed it before? Curious as to what the object was, he scooped it up in his hands. As it dangled in front of him there was a striking familiarity he couldn’t place. It was a round locket and chain, tarnished and worn. He assumed it was an heirloom from

decades before—that would explain the scratches. But upon closer inspection, he knew he was wrong.

In fact, he knew whom it belonged to.

He opened the locket regardless.

It was the frayed profile of a beautiful girl whose blonde hair fell in perfect curls far below her shoulders. With porcelain skin and a teasing smile, she was so unbelievably radiant he was astounded. He felt a pang of longing for the girl, and then suddenly the memories came rushing back, jabbing stabs at the corners of his heart. A flash of white teeth, serene green eyes. Secret rendezvous and picnics in the park, countless conversations he had tried so hard to forget. But how could he?

His breaths grew shallow, her name on the edge of his lips. Cordelia. The only woman he had ever loved, the only one he would ever love for all the years to come. The woman he had let slip away with his recklessness, who he had strived to let go. But looking at her portrait...Seeing the fine lines of her face and the mischief in her gaze submerged him in guilt, a hard push into the October he thought he had vanquished.

What had he done to deserve this?

Body shaking uncontrollably, he fetched the letters from a bag, crumpled papers that bled with agony.

It was time to send them.

The cemetery was damp and dark, saturated with London drizzle. He trudged up the cobblestone path and recalled his last visit. Ten months ago—not a day since. The letters were in an envelope, sealed shut and concealed under his arm. Dewy grass brushed against the sole of his shoe, an eerie silence giving him no consolation.

The tombstone was already cracking. He sat beside it, clutching a bottle of ale to his chest. He could hear Cordelia's disappointed tone scolding him: Didn't you abandon that wretched habit?

Without a second thought, he put the envelope in front of the grave.

To Cordelia, with Love

He took a swig of the alcohol, swallowing the burning sensation that ran down his throat. The skies burst open and rain poured. Vengeful droplets collided hard against him, dimming the vehemence of his sorrow. There he remained, the vermouth stripping his nerves of their purpose. Day faded into night, and the moon in the sky mocked him with its brightness.

Oblivion was near.

Thomas could feel it.

**HUMANS OF
NEW YORK**

BRANDON STANTON

A picture's worth a thousand words... or something like that.

MICHAEL KOYF
Kingsborough Community College
Class of 2017—Accounting Major
Conducted by Melissa Duchan

MELISSA: Hey Koyf is it okay if I interview you today around 4? I have this project I'm doing for my Macaulay seminar.

MICHAEL: Okay cool. I hope my answers will be good.

MELISSA: Don't worry, it's very informal. Actually how about we start now? Do you think photography is art? If so, what makes it art?

MICHAEL: Of course photography is art. It's a perspective. The photographer takes the picture according to his or her preference and perspective. Even if it is the same thing you are taking pictures of, it will be taken two different ways by two different people.

MELISSA: What is your experience with photography?

MICHAEL: I enjoy taking scenic pics of new and existing New York City geography and landmarks but I particularly enjoy photographing the NYC transit system

MELISSA: What do you think makes a good photo?

MICHAEL: I think obviously the content is important. Other factors include the time of day, the type of device you use to capture it as well.

MELISSA: What do you consider good content?

MICHAEL: As in having a scene you don't see every day, something most people don't see on their commutes or on a daily basis.

MELISSA: Who is your favorite photographer?

MICHAEL: I'd like to think I am because even though I don't have fancy equipment I tend to find amazing shots.

MELISSA: Do you follow photo blogs like Humans of New York? If so, what appeals to you about these blogs?

MICHAEL: I enjoy reading about the Humans of New York. It gives me such great insights to individual New Yorkers' way of life. Some are silly, some are sad, but most of all, each one paints a small picture of someone's life.

MELISSA: Do you think this blog would be the same without the photography involved?

MICHAEL: Of course not. Many people need visuals to enhance the story behind a person or even put a face to a story. The picture provides a certain new perspective that accompanies the story listed on the blog.

MELISSA: Do you follow other street photography pages where the subjects do not know they are being photographed?

MICHAEL: No. Unless it is shared by other friends on Facebook, I don't really follow or like those pages.

MELISSA: So you prefer HONY-style photography. What do you see as the distinction between candid street photography where the subject does not know that they are being photographed and styles like HONY where the photographer actually approaches the subjects?

MICHAEL: I feel like HONY style captures the people as if they are posing or not in their natural or normal state. If you capture the image spontaneously then you are actually giving us an insight into their daily lives in a sense as opposed to having them posing for a pic[ture] which does distort the way we look at and perceive them.

HELLO FROM THE OTHER SIDE (OF THE CAMERA)

Maisha Kamal

When we discussed photography in class, we came up with several different reasons as to why people take pictures in the first place. Here's a refresher:

- To capture a moment
- To support a narrative
- To remind one of a memory
- To give a timeline
- For entertainment
- To illustrate a point
- To inspire emotion
- To depict imperfection



There never was one right answer. As a matter of fact, the purpose of photography is just as subjective as all the other forms of art we've been discussing. The attributes of a "great" photo differ from person to person. Even the technical stuff—how to take a photo, what settings to use—can be debated endlessly.

To highlight this, I asked our group to send me what they thought was their best photograph (above). Which one do *you* think is the best? Are any of them really the best? And can you figure out who took each one?

Answer Key:

- Winter Garden Atrium: Shokhina
- Freedom Tower and Tribeca Bridge: Maisha, naturally
- G Train: Melissa
- Monaco harbor: Boris

THE ART OF EMOTION



Hit me right in the feels.

VAUGHN TITUS*

Macaulay Honors at Brooklyn College

Class of 2019—Actuarial Mathematics Major (anticipated) with a minor in Music

Conducted by Maisha Kamal

MAISHA: Alright. So we're gonna talk about music. So first I wanna ask you: how did you get started in music? I know you went to LaGuardia so I'm sure it's something you're really interested in.

VAUGHN: Ever since I was young, my mom was a fan of people like Bob Marley and John Coltrane and Nat King Cole. I wanted to sound like them. I couldn't sing well but I could sing the pitches. Since I wasn't very good, I wanted to convey the pitches I heard. So when I was in 3rd grade, we got recorders and I practiced my heart out like a loser at recorder and got pretty good. When I got to middle school, I was in the band there where I got into classical music, band music, and jazz music. I was doing it all not just to be good, but to sound like what I could hear and reciprocate what I heard from others. Also, I wanted to take my own thoughts and ideas and play them back. After that, music was my cocaine.

MAISHA: Solid solid. Those are some pretty influential artists, and it seems like music has been a part of your life for a while now. How have your tastes developed over that time? Do you still listen to the same musicians and prefer the same styles?

VAUGHN: I do fucks with Bob Marley heavy. But I'd say hip-hop, R&B, jazz, and Disney music have been my biggest inspirations and are what I listen to the most. I think over a period of time, I focused less on just "oh this sounds good" but "oh what does this mean?" I loved hip-hop and jazz and music that could paint a story. I listen to Immortal Technique and Kendrick Lamar and MF Doom. These guys paint these incredible lines that I pay attention to. Same can be conveyed in any style, but in those four, I see the best. Disney music also inspires my jazz compositions, one that I hope to play somehow next Thursday.

MAISHA: Do you think meaning is the most important aspect of music then? Because if you look at music now, there are a lot of artists who bank more on beat and such instead of powerful lyrics.

VAUGHN: It was expected to come. People would listen to a beat and a repetitive hook/flow over some really deep music. It's the "Drake" formula and I think he's talented for finding that out and utilizing it and I like his music and the music of other rappers of that style but... Meaning is important. The aesthetics of a piece of music are one thing

and how you color it but why not give something that conveys a strong message in your music when you can? We are all opinionated and view things in different ways, get upset over things, but we all have a view of things. Why not convey it in our music? We all view things differently and see things differently. Why not talk about how we view things in our music? That is appealing and it adds to your artistry. How you convey it and make it appealing. That isn't the most important aspect to music but I think it's one of the most important aspects to a great musician and great music.

MAISHA: I agree, but it's usually a balance of the two for me. I jam pretty hard to some meaningless shit but also will sit and cry about an obscure song about heartbreak. Anyways. I mentioned before that a lot of current music has drifted away from a focus on lyrics, and you said that it was expected. How else do you think music is/has been changing?

VAUGHN: I think it depends on the genre of music. For example, in jazz music, people are trying to sound more modern by having more synthesizers instead of actual musicians to have a more modern, electronic feel to it which sounds cool, I admit. Also, people are again trying to be more virtuosic and play fast and loud instead of being my favorite jazz sax player Lester Young and just CHILLING! In hip hop, it's more about the beat and everyone, including Kendrick Lamar, is selling out. Example: How can one drop the most influential rap album of the year, possibly decade, then make "Bad Blood" with Taylor Swift? That's more than a hypocrite. But in general, I see a lot more people doing it for the money. I may never make a dollar off music in my life, yet I am still studying it because I love it. I'll never be the best but I love it and I love my music. and I suck. But I still love it.

MAISHA: Yeah I totally agree. A lot of the arts is becoming more profit oriented which kind of detracts from the original purpose of it. But also, I guess that purpose is subjective. Do you think music has any specific purpose when it's made?

VAUGHN: I mean, [it's] on the artist. Like some just make it because it's their career. It's the way they make money to pay bills. Others make because they want to inspire people. Others make it because they just love music. [It's] hard to distinguish nowadays. But I think music is made to please an audience or to get a point across.

MAISHA: What about your music specifically?

VAUGHN: Oh. Well, the other day, I was looking at stars at like 12:30 AM, and I was just sad for no reason, looking at stars, and this melody came across my mind as I was staring at them, and it made me realize... I make my music to touch a heart or a soul.

Because I can't sing and I need a singer so I have one for my piece. But like....the lyrics make it obvious, but if I just play it with conviction.... I want to touch someone with how beautiful I can make it. I want to touch someone with my music and evoke a reaction. Whether good or bad, I want to see how others feel about my ideas because they have meaning and mean a lot to me.

MAISHA: Oh man I totally understand that feeling though. Like, I'm the exact same way with writing. So basically I relate on a spiritual level. But yeah, that's a touching perspective. I think that's pretty much it on my end; anything else you want to add?

VAUGHN: I just love music. I love how it makes me feel to know I did something well and I hate to fail. I don't play as often anymore but music is always around me. Music changed my life. So I am the way I am because some random white guy said I played recorder pretty well and told me to play clarinet. Oh well.

*Some profanity present.

Hit Songs Through the Decades

1920s

Swanee- Al Jolson
West End Blues- Louis Armstrong
Blue Yodel No 1 (T For Texas)- Jimmie Rodgers
Rhapsody In Blue- George Gershwin
The Prisoner's Song- Vernon Dalhart

1930s

Puttin' on the Ritz- Harry Richman
You're Driving Me Crazy! - Guy Lombardo
When It's Springtime in the Rockies- Ben Selvin
Three Little Words- Duke Ellington
Body and Soul- Paul Whiteman

1940s

In the Mood- Glenn Miller
White Christmas- Bing Crosby
I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire- The Ink Spots
Five Minutes More- Frank Sinatra
Besame Mucho- Jimmy Dorsey

1950s

Jailhouse Rock- Elvis Presley
Rock Around the Clock- Bill Haley & his Comets
Learnin' the Blues- Frank Sinatra
Que sera sera (Whatever will be will be)- Doris Day
Mister Sandman- The Chordettes

1960s

Hey Jude- The Beatles
Purple Haze- Jimi Hendrix
(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction The Rolling Stones
Are You Lonesome Tonight?- Elvis Presley
Like a Rolling Stone- Bob Dylan

1970s

Let it Be- The Beatles
Stayin' Alive- Bee Gees
My Sweet Lord- George Harrison
Dancing Queen- Abba
Bohemian Rhapsody- Queen
YMCA- The Village People

1980s

Another Brick in the Wall (part 2)- Pink Floyd
Billie Jean- Michael Jackson
I Just Called to Say I Love You- George Michael
Eye of the Tiger- Survivor
Take On Me- A-Ha
Livin' On a Prayer- Bon Jovi

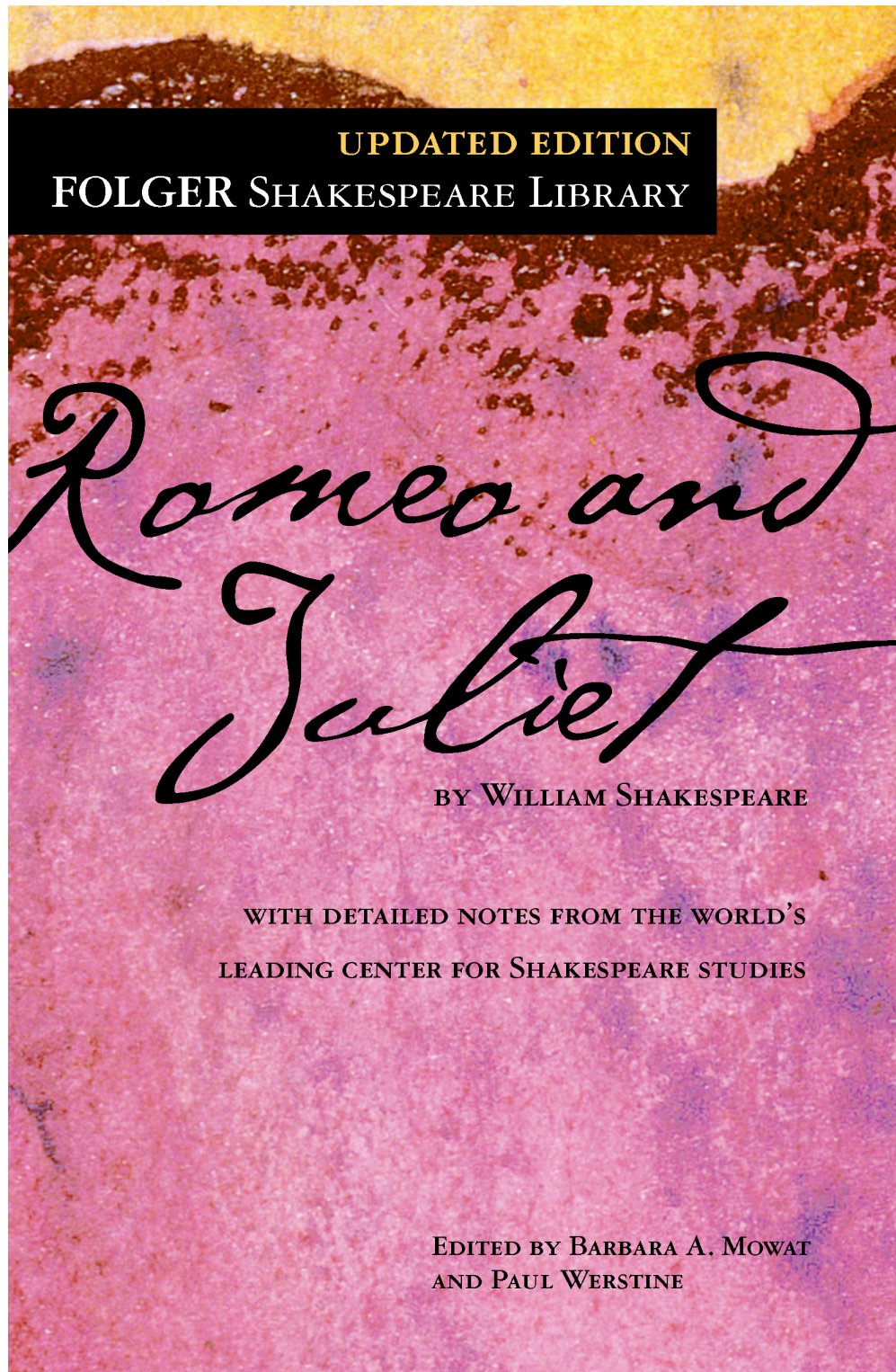
1990s

Smells Like Teen Spirit- Nirvana
Gangsta's Paradise- Coolio
Baby One More Time- Britney Spears
Livin' La Vida Loca- Ricky Martin
Zombie- The Cranberries

2000s

Lose Yourself- Eminem
Poker Face- Lady Gaga
I Gotta Feeling- the Black Eyed Peas
In Da Club- 50 Cent
In the End- Linkin Park
All the Things She Said- t.A.T.u.
Sexyback- Justin Timberlake

THE ART OF INTERPRETATION



I say to-mato, you say to-ma-to.

FARA BADRIEVA
High School Art Teacher
Conducted by Shokhina Badrieva

SHOKHINA: Hey sis, can I interview you? It won't take too long!

FARA: Sure, what about?

SHOKHINA: Well before I interview you I want you to look at these two clips. The first is of Baz Luhrmann's 1996 version of *Romeo and Juliet* and the second one is of Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 version of *Romeo and Juliet*. I'll show you the same scene, but two different versions.

FARA: Okay, cool.

SHOKHINA: So what is your initial impression of the two works and what do you think is the biggest difference?

FARA: Well I love the Baz Luhrmann version, so I'm a little biased. I think the Luhrmann version is creative and colorful. It takes one of Shakespeare's most famous works and makes it feel so modern. The Zeffirelli clip is definitely a more traditional take on Shakespeare and I appreciate how it stays true to the way Shakespeare intended the play to be. The costumes and music are also traditional. The reason I prefer the Luhrmann version is because Shakespeare has been around for so long, and creative liberty should be taken when making new versions of one story. The story should still be respected and the execution should be to the level that all Shakespearean work deserves, and I think the Luhrmann version does just that.

SHOKHINA: I agree, I like the Luhrmann version better. Do you think that the films are the best way to tell the story of Romeo and Juliet? This story has been r created hundreds of times through literature, film, plays, paintings. Do you think one medium is better than another when telling this story?

FARA: I think each medium does a different thing, some mediums are stronger to highlight different aspects of the story. For example, in film, the camera angles, lighting, and the director's vision all tell the story from the director's point of view. We can clearly see everything the way it is meant to be seen by the director. For example, in a play our eyes can move around and choose the focus of attention, but in a film, the camera shots choose what we look at. A play, I feel like, is more of an intimate and dramatic

medium. The actors can be overly-expressive and it doesn't come off as too much. A painting captures a moment of the story and can really show the feelings of Romeo and Juliet in that scene that is painted. Literature allows you to create your own characters, costumes, backgrounds. It gives more freedom to the reader. I don't prefer one medium to any other. I think each one serves a different purpose and all can be really strong works of art.

SHOKHINA: In general, is there a medium of art you gravitate towards?

FARA: It depends. If you mean what kind of art I like to make most it would be visual art or music. I love painting and I love creating beats. But if you're asking what art I enjoy the most, it really varies. I enjoy listening to music, watching movies, going to museums, going to shows. I think all art is really great and enriches our lives, so I try to see as much of it as possible with an open mind.

SHOKHINA: Do you think there are multiple ways to interpret the same piece of art?

FARA: Of course! Different people grasp onto different parts of the work of art. Art has to do with emotions and different emotions come out for different people. So yes, one piece can have hundreds of interpretations, and I don't think any one interpretation is right. They're all right!

BEAUTY BEHIND THE MADNESS

Shokhina Badrieva

The beauty of art lies in its mystique
Telling or writing what we see or feel
Expressing art has always been unique
From plays to films, intentions are concealed
Films capture a viewpoint of one maker
Play actors use drama to self express
Kings to gangs to stories of a baker
The choice of story only artists do possess
But, no matter the intention of the artist's voice
The viewers will bring their own context in
For the beauty of art lies strictly in the choice
And art affects each differently within
Whether we like paintings or songs or plays
Art's beauty is around us in all forms and ways

THE ART OF TIME AND PLACE



Back to the Future with a cartographer sidekick.

SANDY MUI
Macaulay Honors College at Brooklyn College
Class of 2019—Journalism Major (anticipated)
Conducted by Melissa Duchan

MELISSA: Hey Sandy, while we're on the topic of the seminar project do you mind if I interview you?

SANDY: Um sure what's the topic?

MELISSA: We're writing about different themes of art and interviewing people to learn their perspectives.

SANDY: Shoot me a question.

MELISSA: Do you think art is something that can reach across cultural boundaries? If so, name one work that you feel does this.

SANDY: I think art is something that can reach across cultural boundaries because an artist can be exposed to many different cultures that can be reflected in the artist's work. Music is a type of art that does this because music from different cultures can be used and combined into a single piece.

MELISSA: Do you think art can reach across time boundaries? Meaning, do you think art like primitive cave paintings or art from other eras can still have appeal in contemporary times?

SANDY: I think art can reach across time boundaries because many people are interested in history and artifacts from past eras. Not all paintings and other types of artwork from other eras would appeal in contemporary times, but the idea as a whole would.

MELISSA: What is one artwork or art form from your culture or from another that really speaks to you?

SANDY: I don't think this art form is necessarily in my culture that speaks to me, but music speaks to me the most. It's the art form that affects my emotions the most. I listen to music that either reflects my mood or to cheer me up.

MELISSA: What music do you prefer and from what culture or time period?

SANDY : I prefer pop/rock; I don't really listen to old music and I don't keep up with current music that much (I'd find out about songs five years late). I don't have music from a particular culture or time period that I prefer either, just whatever appeals to me.

MELISSA : Do you personally prefer abstract or representative art? Which one do you feel has more universal appeal?

SANDY : I prefer representative art because it has more meaning than abstract art. Representative art also has more universal appeal because many people would not consider it art since it appears that little thought is put into creating abstract art, whereas representative art actually has meaning and appears to be much more difficult to create.

MELISSA : Do you personally make art? If so, do you think the art you make has universal appeal?

SANDY : Unfortunately, I am artistically challenged so I don't personally make art.

MELISSA : Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed.

SANDY : No problem.

ART: THE QUINTESSENTIAL WORLD TRAVEL

Melissa Duchan

A candle flickering in a dark room somewhere in England
A playwright puts pen to paper
Detailing the saga of a monarch named Henry IV
Four centuries ago

A dim prison-esque warehouse in Brooklyn
A guard barks instructions, actors march around
Detailing the saga of a monarch named Henry IV
Four weeks ago

A pagoda in rural Japan
An artisan fills six panels with battling figures
Detailing the saga of Hogen and Heiji
Three hundred years ago

A grand museum in uptown Manhattan
A tourist fills a phone with six photos of Japanese panels
Detailing the saga of Hogen and Heiji
Three days ago

A studio in Putin's Russia
A dissident artist covers a canvas with polemics
Detailing the saga of Crimea
Five months ago

A gallery in the village
A dissenting canvas is stretched across a wall
Detailing the saga of Crimea
Five thousand miles away

A student in a living room in Brooklyn
Puts fingers to keyboard
Detailing the saga of art
Through time and space

THE EVOLUTION OF ART



In a span of two millennia, art has gone from Egyptian hieroglyphics to simple squares, from Greek and Roman sculpture to Warhol's chicken noodle soup reproduction. It has developed, progressed, regressed, rebelled, and transformed the way we look at the world. So maybe it might be safe to think we've seen it all...but have we?

In any case, here's the lowdown of some of the most famous art movements and their origins. It makes me wonder—where will the next movement sprout up?

18TH CENTURY

- **Neo-Classicism:** inspired by the Age of Enlightenment all throughout Europe
 - Known for reinventing classical themes and styles

19TH CENTURY

- **Romanticism:** European movement emphasizing an expression of feeling, strong emotions, etc.
- **Realism:** wanted to show the world for what it was, as opposed to **Romanticism**
- **Impressionism:** very visible brushstrokes that were quick and small, wanted to capture light
- **Neo-impressionism:** an attempt to drive “harmonious” vision from modern science, anarchist theory, and late 19th-century debate around the value of academic art
- **Hudson River School:** American group landscape painters inspired by **Romanticism**

20TH-21ST CENTURY

- **Art Deco:** combination of craft motifs with Machine Age imagery and materials; rich color, bold geometric shapes, lavish ornamentation
- **Cubism:** subject would be broken up and reassembled in an abstract form
- **Expressionism:** distortion to evoke moods or ideas
 - Inspired by Edvard Munch’s *The Scream*
- **Dadaism:** anti-war, anti-bourgeois; sparked the development of Futurism
- **Fauvism:** as opposed to **Impressionism**, focused on “strong colors and painterly qualities”
- **Surrealism:** aim was to “resolve the previously contradictory conditions of dream and reality”
- **Minimalism:** used pared-down design elements
- **Op Art:** use of optical illusions
- **Pop Art:** employs aspects of mass culture
- **Video Art:** relies on movie pictures and data
- **Digital Art:** an artistic work or practice that uses digital technology as an essential part of the creative or presentation process
- **Installation Art:** genre of three-dimensional works
- **Graffiti:** writing or drawings that have been scribbled, scratched, or painted illicitly on a wall or other surface

GALLERY OF EXAMPLE ARTWORKS
IN ORDER OF MOVEMENT (BASED ON THE LIST)

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

FIRST BLOCK

- Angelica Kauffman, *Venus Induces Helen to Fall in Love with Paris*, 1790
- Ingres, *Oedipus and the Sphinx*, 1808
- Francisco Goya, *The Third of May 1808*, 1814
- Gustave Courbet, *After Dinner at Ornans*, 1849
- Édouard Manet, *Breakfast in the Studio (the Black Jacket)*, 1868
- Edgar Degas, *Dancers at The Bar*, 1888
- Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1904
- Georges Seurat, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884
- Robert Delaunay, *Portrait de Metzinger*, 1906
- Thomas Cole, *Course of Empire*, 1833-1836 (five-part series)
- William Van Alen, *Spire of the Chrysler building*, 1928-1930
- Pablo Picasso, *Girl with a Mandolin (Fanny Tellier)*, 1910

SECOND BLOCK

- Paul Cézanne, *Quarry Bibémus*, 1898-1900
- August Macke, *Lady in a Green Jacket*, 1913
- Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain*, 1917
- Hannah Höch, *Cut with the Dada Kitchen Knife through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany*, 1919
- Henri Matisse, *Woman with a Hat*, 1905
- Salvador Dalí, *The Persistence of Memory*, 1931
- René Magritte's "This is not a pipe." *The Treachery of Images* 1928–29
- Yves Klein, *IKB 191*, 1962
- Bridget Riley, *Movement in Squares*, 1961
- Francis Picabia, *Optophone I*, 1921-1922
- Richard Hamilton *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?*, 1956
- Andy Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962
- Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, 1995
- Pascal Dombis, *Irrationnal Geometrics*, 2008
- Rachel Whiteread, *Embankment*
- Densely-tagged parking area in Århus, Denmark

