Imago Dei #1 BY ANTOINE WILLIAMS
A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

On behalf of the editorial and advising team, I am pleased to present the twenty-fifth annual edition of Creative License, an award-winning literary and visual arts publication created to celebrate the artistic achievement of Perimeter College students at Georgia State University. Print copies are available at all Perimeter campus libraries and Student Life offices, and a PDF of each issue dating back to 2013 can be located at the University’s Student Media page: http://studentmedia.gsu.edu/pc/.

Each issue of Creative License reflects not only the creativity and diversity of our talented Perimeter students, but also the dedication and collaborative efforts of the magazine’s student editors and faculty advisors. Student editors are actively engaged in each phrase of the magazine’s publication cycle: soliciting artwork submissions from their peers, reviewing and recommending campus submissions, voting on college-wide selections and winners of the Rosemary Cox Awards, and distributing the new issue. We look forward to the process with excitement every year and are proud to present this collection of student literary and visual art.

I would like to extend a warm thanks to Deborah Byrd for graciously staying on as Consulting Editor this year and for being so generous with her time. As Editor, Deborah led us with such energy, expertise, and good humor for so many years that it’s difficult to imagine having the next meeting without her. We will miss you, Deb!

Many thanks to all who contribute to the success of our students and to this publication.

Sincerely,

Tracienne Ravita
Faculty Editor
September 20, 1944. Paul felt the impact before he heard it. The silence around him erupted into a roar and he was surrounded by white, hot light. He knew he had to move, but it was as if everything were frozen. The radio. He needed the radio. But where was it? The smoke was making him dizzy. It was then that he realized he was falling, spinning out of control, unable to stop himself.

Suddenly, he was cold. Cold and wet. It all came rushing back. Water. He was underwater. He had to get up, had to get air. He needed to get back to Vicky. He held his breath, as they had practiced in training, and used his knife to sever the rough straps confining him to his seat. He searched the murky water for a way out. There had to be a hole from where the missile struck. There! He pulled his body through the opening, fought to the surface, and came up sputtering. He couldn’t move his legs, couldn’t feel anything for that matter. He’d heard the horror stories and seen the men in the hospital back on base, missing arms and legs. No. He couldn’t think about that. Not now.

He had to find something to hold onto to stay afloat. He

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could hear the captain’s warning repeating in his head: “Your top priority is to get yourself out of the water, away from the sharks.” Just then, he spotted one of the wings, about twenty yards away, bobbing on the waves. If he could just get there, he would be safe, at least for now. He gritted his teeth and used his arms to pull himself forward through the water, inch by inch, until he could hoist himself up onto the hard, metal surface of the plane’s wing. What little adrenaline he had left disappeared and exhaustion took over. His body collapsed into pain and fatigue.

The night was cold and the perfect silence was haunting. Even after two years of flying a single-man fighter jet, shooting down enemy planes, he still wasn’t accustomed to being alone. He let his mind drift.

He was back home in Newtown, in the coal mines where he used to work. He breathed in the dusty smell and smiled when Old Man Williams walked by, complaining as always about how they were all going to die from lung disease. He cried out with joy when he looked down and saw his hands coated in the chalky black soot he used to despise. He worked all day, happy to be making money he could use to buy Vicky the wedding ring she deserved.

For three days, Paul continued drifting in and out of dreams, memories, and hallucinations, unable to differentiate them from the reality in which he was living. He replayed that fateful day when he opened his draft card and saw that he was being shipped out to the Philippines by the week’s end. He had
nightmares about watching his fellow pilots planes getting shot down by the Japs and couldn’t stop picturing his name at the bottom of the list of Americans lost at sea. He heard planes overhead, saw ships in the distance, and believed that they were bringing him home. However, right before pulling him out of the water, they always disappeared back into his imagination, bringing the pain and terror of being stranded in the middle of the Pacific crashing back. But on the fourth day, Paul’s pain began to fade.

He dreamt wonderful dreams, picturing a beautiful wedding, an old wooden house with a white picket fence, and a blonde-haired little boy playing in a great big front yard. Paul could walk and run, his back no longer broken. And Vicky was there, with her bright blue eyes and long hair blowing in the wind.

It was the sound of her voice that made him force open his eyes, sticky with salt from the sea. The light was blinding, and he squinted to see the chopper overhead. He could barely hear the deafening whine of the helicopter blades but could hear Vicky call out to him from above, as clear as if she were next to him on the wing of the plane.

It was then that he saw her figure in the door above, beckoning to him. Overcome with peace, he allowed himself to close his eyes once more, knowing that he was finally going home.
The Constant Stream of Impossible Thoughts in a Modern World

BY DEDRA MORRIS
Be quiet and listen.

I did not ask you a question.
I speak in the tongues of Egyptian queens
and square suffragettes; I sing of feminism so fluently
The men can’t hear themselves think.

Fix your legs.

That isn’t lady-like.
Opening doors cinched under moral lock and key,
inviting debauchery and embracing
hushed anatomical landmarks.
Men prefer us brand new.

Go shave.

It isn’t hygienic.
Baring the skins of cavewomen in my pits,
my awakening kindles flames in patriarchy.
The men – they won’t like that.
In Numbers

BY CHINEDU NWAKUDU
Just Little Five Points BY DIEGO ARMANDO AJIACO BARRAGAN
Sandy Brown

by Mariah S.

Spirals and coils,
frizz and volume,

You are the bane of my existence.

Your reflection of blonde in the sun,
the knots of curls tangled together
like a thousand headphones,

You are my biggest headache.

The way you bounce with every step,
the way you flow in the breeze,
the way you coil when wet,

You are my daily struggle.

From your curly roots
down to your damaged ends,

You are beautiful,

even though
I like you straight sometimes, too.
Summer Symphony
by Jesus Hernandez

The season reborn
A thousand flowers blooming
For new memories

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Seven fireflies
Swirl under the painted sky
A radiant dance

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Chittering crickets
Bristling beats of birdsong
Summer symphony
A Haiku
by Elizabeth Bracken
Birdseed tumbles down
when blue jays arrive to eat.
My broom stands ready.
Photographing the Abandoned Art House

BY CRYSTAL TURNBLOM
Lush Nouveau

BY DEDRA MORRIS
Globala Mandala at Unity North

BY CRYSTAL TURNBLOM

Bus Stop

BY DIEGO ARMANDO AJIACO BARRAGAN
Flamin' Hula Hoop Dancer

BY DIEGO ARMANDO AJIACO BARRAGAN
The concrete was rough, with ripples and bubbles where the workers had attempted to smooth it. The weeds that broke through the foundation sprawled along the slabs of artificial rock, creating a river of foliage for the ants to roam. The air was damp, with the morning fog just creeping in from the sky. The sky was dimly dark, with the morning sun lifting up from the abyss of space. The building that opened up to the concrete below held an elegant glass door, harboring restless early workers inside its chic hollow. Such people handled papers and coffee with care, while passing such an elegant entrance without a second glance. Even as the dying girl fell from the heights of the modern utopia, they would not even blink.

The girl hardly wore makeup, only a slip of sharp red lipstick.
across her mouth, for her face was already beautiful. Her hair could have been compared to the rays of the morning sun lifting from the fog, as they were flowing with wisps of gold across her dying beauty. With her strikingly blue eyes, she looked up at the sky with the fear of death evident in the pupils. Her hands were outstretched, one reaching for the life she could not grasp, the other clutching the source of her death, a bright pendant of fiery amber. Her clothes, a simple red dress with a thin hood on the back, waved across the weightless air as she soon fell to the rough concrete below, sending spots of blood onto the glass door, signifying her swift end.

Her body, crumpled on the ground, was strewn across the concrete with a strange sense of elegance, as if she were only asleep with a restless dream playing in her mind. Her red dress only grew in vibrancy, glowing faintly red in the dawning fog. The spots of her blood gleamed as intricate art on the glass door, reflecting slivers of light across the poor girl’s body. The fog stuck around the body, collecting into dots of water across her pretty, pale face. The ants of the urban foliage began to explore the

“...as if she were only asleep with a restless dream playing in her mind...”
body in a mass inspection, only to move away from the sound of screams occurring from the doorway.

“It was obviously another suicide,” one said from the office building responsible for her demise. “With the times we live in,” they said, “surely anyone would want to jump.” Another suggested a situation of foul play, seeing how she fell on her back. “How could you fall like that without being pushed from such height?” they assessed, but this conversation was eventually hushed due to the arriving press, who often loves such mysterious gossip and myth. One person, who stuck out from the busybodies of the elegant office building, knelt to the fallen girl, seemingly solemn. One would suggest he was paying his respects to the dead angel, as he stroked her face gently with gloved fingers. Another would assume that the man wearing the concealing face mask was being a clean freak as he carefully lifted the girl’s head to wipe the blood that had pooled through the concrete canals. However, if any were attentive, they would see that this was a delicate procedure of scandal, as he softly removed the amber pendant from her final grasp, replacing the girl’s necklace with a bloody note signed with the words, “Farewell, Aurora.”
His First Bath

by Elizabeth Bracken

He had never drawn one breath.

His eyes had never opened.

His cry had never been heard.

He needed to be bathed.

I carried him to the basin.

I held his cold body carefully.

I sponged this beautiful child.

He needed to be bathed.

His mother’s eyes were weeping.

His father’s eyes were tired with grief.

His stillborn eyes were closed to this world.

He had been bathed and his mother held him for her first and last time.
Stuck on the Fence

BY HARRISON GRANT
Hanami (Flower Viewing)

by Tatyana Page

I watch from the top of a hill
that watches over my home
the cherry blossom trees surrounding the hillside.
As the moon illuminates the sky,
the pink and white cherry blossoms glow softly in its wake.
The first petal falls as the gentle breeze whispers
into the night through the leaves of the trees.
The cool night air carries with it a bed of
millions of flower petals that begin to fall,
following the wind’s path,
drifting softly down to my home below,
scattering and coloring the small village,
while moonlit beams keep the dark at bay.
In this moment there is nothing
but tranquility and peace,
for tonight I am alone and it is soothing.
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by Tatyana Page

The Barber in Downtown Atlanta
BY DIEGO ARMANDO AJIACO BARRAGAN
Colossal

BY HARRISON GRANT
Be quiet and listen
I did not ask you a question.
I speak in the tongues of Egyptian queens
and square suffragettes, I sing of feminism so fluently.
The men can’t hear themselves think.
For your legs.
That isn’t lady-like.
Opening doors cinched under moral lock and key,
inviting debauchery and embracing
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Men prefer us brand new.
Go shave.
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For The Men
by Kaylin Kirk

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that glimmered with glints of sunlight reflected off the dishes of hills in the sky
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The Fall of Aurora
by Shane Blalock

"Gilbert Smilin'," by Dedra Morris

"For The Men," by Kaylin Kirk
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"Instellar Eye Candy," by Dedra Morris
front cover

"The Fall of Aurora," by Shane Blalock
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"Gilbert Smilin'," by Dedra Morris
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