Artist Statement: During 2020 I made several paintings and drawings inspired by mandala art. I found it very soothing to take imagery that felt chaotic or stressful and put it into a structured, geometric form with lots of repetition and minute details. I was feeling anxious when I made this example and focused on how the emotions physically felt and chose forms and colors inspired by those feelings. The painting is made with watercolor. Overall, creating this painting helped me focus during chaotic times.

Artist: Dana Brownfield, Librarian, University Place Library
Maya:

"Regardless of what type of book you're writing, just throw yourself out there and just start. You don't have to start writing at the beginning of your story. You can start in the middle or the end of your story. I think we always try to find the right time whether that's writing a book or starting a new project but I really think you just have to throw yourself out there and begin. And things will go from there…. Things lead to the next opportunity."

Isabella:

"On the revision process, I would say this thing becomes your baby at some point. It really does. At some point, you read it over and over again. You practically memorize it. And you don't stop looking at it and because of that it looks perfect in your eyes... You could literally get your neighbor, your friend, your teacher, anybody. Print them out a draft and say, "Hey, whenever you have time look through this. And tell me what you think."

The first draft does not need to be perfect. It won't be perfect. By the end of all the revisions, [my book] was radically different than how I started and that's okay. I think that's another message to come out of this too. It's okay to change. The only thing you can hold yourself accountable for is trying your best."

On April 6th the library hosted teen authors Maya and Isabella to talk about their books and advice from the road to publication.

**ON FACING REJECTION**

Isabella: "I got a lot of rejections. It was months of sending out cold emails... until somebody said yes. It only takes one person. Someone believed in me. Someone spent time with me. And I'm so, so incredibly grateful for them...

The worst thing that can happen is people say no. That's literally the worst that can happen."

**ON FINDING TIME**

Maya: "The book wasn't a school assignment. It was something I genuinely wanted to do. It was kind of like my hobby outside of school. I think when you are really passionate about something, you'll find time to do it. And you'll find ways to schedule it in.

Writing the book never felt like a burden to me like it was this big weight I was carrying on my shoulders... That fact that I was able to talk with these women was enough motivation for me to not give up.... So I don't think it was too much to juggle. I just looked at the book as my safe haven. It was what I worked on when I was stressed with everything else."
PHOBIAS PERSONIFIED

PROMPT: DRAW YOUR OWN PHOBIA PERSONIFIED
PROMPT: CREATE THE PASSENGER SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS CARD FOR A TIME-TRAVEL MACHINE
Sometimes I wonder if all the rastness out there...

POCKET ART COLLECTIVE: TEENS MAKE ZINES

PROMPT:
WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOURSELF THIS YEAR?

2020 was a long and painful year, almost all my friends cut me out when we went into quarantine.

My best friend, my grandmother, passed away. After that, I wasn't living, I was just not dying. It was an all time low. I was lost and shattered. Partaking in the furry fandom has helped me find a positive mindset and taught me to love myself. The fandom has been mostly a safe place for me to be myself.

As 2021 started I've decided to make the changes I need to become the best me I can be, and so the **new beginnings** have begun.

- Worra Ribitsch

NEW BEGINNINGS
BY WORRA RIBITSCH, AGE 17
PROMPT:
Make fan art
or design your OC

ART BY @SHIROSHUSBAND AGE 15
ZENA WILLARD
AGE 16

The Context: this is about Shylenn, a girl who's born Albino, with red pupils.

Throughout her childhood she's been bullied for being different. The one who bullied her the most is Vladimir (boy in the drawing).

He starts off bullying her til slowly and slowly he develops feelings for her and while he's learning his mistakes, they sorta turn into a couple.

PROMPT: Rewrite a moment from your past you wish you could change.

MÄDCHEN KIRKHART
AGE 13

PROMPT: Draw what you see when you close your eyes.
Some Rot Wields Wine

If a broken bone produces a hospital visit, then a shattered motivation must give us assistance. To carry the knowledge that each individual holds tragedies, and yet we function with near perfection, holding a disguise that benefits the sinner.

To be aware that we aren’t ourselves, rather fractions of those we have loved for even a heartbeat. And perhaps those we hate have indented us too, for we are impressionable with anything that gives us light. Anything that holds potential of value, we snatch, For we exist to understand what no one has before, And we live to hold what no one has ever possessed.

Moth To A Flame

I see things that aren’t there, not hallucinations, but girls with soft eyes when really there’s only ice.

I perform confusion, because if art is for decorating a place, I want to decorate a memory, I want to take up a space where I don’t belong.

Just as the universe made wheat but not bread, and stones but not houses, I want to be a human with exceptional flaws.
Bad Habit, It’s A Parasite

I was once told that we miss people like one would miss a bad habit, where a comparison between grief and broken nails was acceptable, and a shattered heart could be understood through sleep deprivation.

But when I look at the examples, of negativity and ruined schedules, I don’t see the face of a lost lover nor a dead mentor, I only see humanities flaws.
You can see a habit in a human, But there is no way to see a human in a habit, In a world where our worst exercises are undesirable. Who’s to say they were wrong?

**PROMPT:** GRAB THE BOOK CLOSEST TO YOU. TURN TO PAGE 31. WHAT IS THE FIRST FULL SENTENCE ON THAT PAGE? ILLUSTRATE THIS SENTENCE OR USE IT AS THE FIRST LINE OF A POEM.
PROMPT: LIST YOUR FAVORITE PLACE...

to be alone.
to be with other people.
that reminds you of home (but isn’t home).
you miss.
you go to think.
you feel safe.
That's the thing about this city; it crawled again and again from the ashes of its own ruins the same way its residents crawled out of their collapsing homelands. It would run you over and over again until you no longer were sun-tanned and melanin, but purple and blue, bruised.

It was a sentiment that nudged gently at Yueyang as he walked past a statue that commemorated the victims of the Nanjing Massacre and pushed open the door to his father’s little noodle shop, delicately grasping onto the part of the doorknob that hadn’t been destroyed. Inside, the shop was in ruins, broken glass dusting the floor in the same way sand covered a beach. Disgust and hatred warred into a threat to throw up the little breakfast in his stomach, but Yueyang stepped over the glass into the kitchen, where all their carefully made and organized sauces and spices had been tossed around onto the floor. The hunks of beef that had been set in the corner to dry-age were dirtied with shoe marks.

He certainly knew which faces he wanted to ruin with his shoe marks.

His father hunched over the broom, meticulously sweeping the scallions up, even in dim lighting, for the ceiling lights had been smashed too, and it was a gloomy day out. For the first time, Yueyang noticed the crow’s feet imprinted near his father’s eyes, the grey hair that grew with his healthy black- there was nary a smile on his face, where the smile lines were supposed to be was a series of frown lines, deep and ingrained. Yueyang had forgotten about the time when his father had rarely smiled, only bent his head, and worked until he could do nothing but sleep at home.

Six-year-old Yueyang seemed so far away- it had been eleven years since. America had been a foreign land he left as a newborn, a foreign land without the bustling of the night markets and shop with aunts and grandmothers that rewards his coins with food. America was tree-lined roads and boxed supermarkets, aisles on aisles of produce but nothing interesting. America was too many people that didn’t look like him and languages that sounded garbled and useless to his ears. America was a foreign, exotic land with funny-looking people with yellow hair and blue eyes- they looked like creatures from his picture books- his teacher had talked about them once, they were not nice. America was something new and frightening, but at least the apartment was bigger.

His father then had used the oven mittens to pull out the questionably cooked chicken- an American recipe, he would exclaim proudly- now, he didn’t even blink when oil spilled out of the frier onto his hands.

“Baba,” Yueyang whispered. Dad. Puberty had hit when he was fourteen, two years of too much acne and voice cracks. He had long left that era of himself behind, nonetheless had somehow returned to age seven, pulling on his father’s sleeve, wanting to play soccer too, just like Jake Smith with his dad or Will Newton with his.

But his father did not know how to play soccer- he is, or was, a graduate of one of the best colleges in China, a man who could’ve been the best chef in his home city. Instead, they were here, in a city where his degree was useless and so was the history he forged with his hands.
That's the thing about this city; it'll wrap you up in the delusions of its grandeur until it was too late, pulled towards its towering skyscrapers and cleaned sidewalks, fluttering leaves, and floating cherry blossom petals. The carved dragons that greeted you with their yawning maws - red and gold with the highlights of purples and blacks, all fit for royalty - into the prefecture built some image of prosperity and link to the ancestors they'd all lost to the hands of western powers, a resentment that had never left their blood, their bones. Those same powers had fed off their hatred of the poor working class, selling the image of pale, beautiful women and injecting the men with drugs that would ruin them, their families, their cities, their villages.

It would make you forget the foundations of this place, a pretty decoration to sway you into forgetting the roots of its industrialized body.

Cruelty - that was what was buried under the cobblestone of the International District. The shiny new things covered the bloody prints of beaten elderly and the harassment of their women. Phantom fences of internment camps and remnants of newspapers - the wind had carried the cries of "go back to your country!" away from the children who peeked their head over the counters of boba stores and merchandise shops.

It was a false sense of grandiose that makes this city feel like a haven for them - everywhere that Yueyang - Freddie, the white kids wanted to call him. Grandmother would be rolling in his grave if he heard the painful butchers of his name they managed - turned, touches of Asian American heritage dotted his vision. It's in the market signs - most of which were in languages he couldn't understand. They all blurred together into a mesh of languages that pulled and changed from each other, but everything was also solved with the art of pointing at things. Yueyang had done so for all of his life here, pointing at the choices packed onto a single board the aunty down the street had made her daughter write, in English then Bengali. Without fail, Yueyang would get her mihidana at least once a month, twice, if he was feeling a bit rebellious.

But even as beautiful as the city was, with its sidewalks lined with the clamoring scents of food made by hand and jabbering in languages Yueyang knew all the swear words of, the city burned.

It burned once a month - whether it was the haughty white people coming to remind them of the delicate balance they held between the terribly impoverished or the well educated and the ignored in-between. Where their most vulnerable huddled, they took down their secret hideouts, exposing their hides to the ruthless frigidity and run off again, cawing like some murder of crows who'd just torn apart an eagle for food.

They weren't even worthy of crows.

Sometimes, the city burned itself down, the weak infrastructure toppling upon itself until an entire block of homes vanished into ashes and the city's non-profit would have to swoop in again to rebuild the city with materials the government certainly wouldn't think twice about keeping away from them.

They would replace rotten limbs with new ones, drape new skin where the flesh had been burned, apply a salve that would soothe the city to sleep with slogans and repetitive chants. The city was a patch of
the new and the old, which all things considered, was well-suited for a city that was built on old bones to honor old traditions with a new generation of Asian American kids who were muzzled before kindergarten and had the keys to the very muzzle their mother put on them hidden under their skin, forged from the fires of their ancestral trauma.

“Help me pick up the meat, Yang-er,” his dad said, quiet and calm. “Maybe we can save some of it for the stray dogs, then it won’t all be wasted.” His father’s back was a sloping hill, hunched as he picked up the ruined pieces of his identity. Yueyang swallowed his words with the tide of an ocean that lapped at a country far away, a place he barely remembered.

It was unfair, Yueyang thought. Unfair that they had to live in a country they were hated. Unfair that the country of his ancestors was once marauded and ruined by the same people who hated them. Unfair that whether he lived in the oh-so-righteous, not-so United States of America or the lands of his ancestors, the white ones, with their mocking accents and color-changing white skin would spit on him nonetheless- if it wasn’t chink, then it was communist. If it wasn’t “go back to your own country” then it was “those Chinese people are ruining our country”. He wished they would hurry up and create a culture of their own, so they wouldn’t steal his.

That’s the thing about this city; it housed too many people with delusions of their own majesty and superiority complexes yet not enough psych wards. Yueyang counted that as a hate crime too.

In the end, the beef and chicken meat were for the stray dogs that begged at their door. Yueyang ate his complaints as he taped tarp over the broken windows, yet the spider web cobbing over the remains like ripples became so deeply prominent. Every part of the shop had been tossed around like children’s toys, ripped apart and ruined. He knew in the black trash bags behind the store, there were splinter chair legs sticking out, stuffed into as little space as they could muster.

Yueyang stood in front of the store, too late on a school night, and stared at the ruined sign hanging from one lone nail. What was supposed to be ⼀⽊⼩⾯条- Old Mu’s Little Noodles, was nothing but spray painted over with slurs and graffiti. His fingers curled into fists, thumb over clenched fingers, just like his Shaolin instructor had told him. He’d passed away a few months ago, and Yueyang hadn’t stepped foot into that studio since- it hurt to see someone who wasn’t his Shifu, his master, teach classes. Briefly, he wondered if Shifu knew this thought running through his head if he would shake his head and gently reprimand him for his fears and then launch into lectures about leaving the past where it was. He wondered what Shifu would say about this, this outrageous hatred and mockery that someone, some ignorant brainless animal dared to commit. Wondered if just this once, Shifu would allow him to use the staff and beat them with everything he had, to hear bones crack accurately underneath the polished wood of his favorite bo staff.

Yueyang wondered if the white media knew that he could spill his arson-induced hatred too, for their imperialistic ideals and intolerance on a land that wasn’t theirs.

As he stood there, contemplating the teachings of his late Shifu, his father came out of the front door, turning for the doorknob as if to lock it- then remembered there was no longer a lock to secure. He stopped reaching for his pocket, then gestured listlessly for his son to follow him home. Yueyang opened the flashlight on his phone- just in case.
“Baba, do we have money to keep the shop? If we don't, I'll pick up a part-time job, the grocery store-” Yueyang began in a series of hurried Mandarin, so fast he tripped over sounds, but his father shook his head.

“You should focus on your schoolwork, Yueyang. Your schooling is more important- it is the key to your future.”

“But-”

“No. Your mom and I will take care of it.”

Yueyang bit his lip, a desperate thought in his head- regardless of my success, I am still nothing to them in the end. He followed his father home in silence, but looking at the damage done, they would have to replace everything in the shop- they definitely couldn’t afford it by themselves with buying into loans, but his parents wouldn’t ever be able to accept crowdfunding. They were too proud, too stubborn to ask for the help of outsiders, it would seem like an act of shaming them instead.

He followed his father back into the apartment that laid on top of the shatter noodle shop, where his mother waited for them with bowls of warm porridge. Only the kitchen lights were on, lonely and still in the perpetual darkness of everything else. There was a stack of pure white bills thrown into a woven basket on the kitchen counter. He knew that his mother’s hospital bills were still haunting them, a direct result of her being hit with a beer can from the behind by some overgrown manchild of a man.

The only comfort Yueyang had from that experience was the bo staff in his hand that had come down quick and ruthless, cracking over that man’s knuckles and aiming for his temple without hesitation. When the scowling police had come in their annoying loud police cars, Yueyang excused his weapon for the fact he had been coming back from martial arts practice- it wasn’t a crime to hold a wooden stick in the open.

Yueyang hoped that man stayed far, far away- his mother had muzzled him young, hushing his cries to reassure the strange white people when they passed them by. She’d told him to never make trouble, to never give them a reason to hate them. They did anyway, and Yueyang was just breathing. His sewn mouth never got him far, so he learned to punch them too, for the eyes and for the throat.

Her words still rung in his ears sometimes- bow your head. Don’t give them a reason to spit on you. You are not inferior, but you must pretend to be so. Survive, so you may succeed. His mother had not taught him to love his ancestry, had not taught him to unlock his muzzle- those he learned like secrets hoarded, found in the dirt of the school bathroom, where he hid from the white boys and the way they pulled up their eyes at him. He’d found it in the monuments for his community- not Christopher Columbus and his inept sailing, but in the statue to remember the victims of war, the women and children who helped behind the scenes of carnage. In silent honor and representation, blood, tears, sweat.

But that was the thing about this city; if he wanted to bloom, he had to crawl, bloody by bloody inch up from where they dared to bury him, bruised and tossed about, but never destroyed, an automatic second choice to a white man’s first.
INTERVIEW
WITH OUR TEEN DISCORD MODS
EMRYS AND HUTCH

TELL US ABOUT BEING A DISCORD MOD

**Hutch:** "It’s honestly just a thing I like to do. It’s fun and it feels like I’m making a difference somehow. It’s also a connection with the people that I absolutely adore more than anything in the world."

**Emrys:** "I think what attracted me the most as a mod was the technical side of things. I’m not the best person for bonding with others, so where I thrive is in the backstages of everything, wringing out issues. I view my role as an assistant to one big master computer, to keep it running as smoothly as possible where needed."

WHAT DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT THE PCL TEEN LIBRARY DISCORD?

**Hutch:** "We’re a really great community that tries its best to foster fun and friendship between its members. We’re also pretty geeky and talk about cute animals a lot."

**Emrys:** "I think that the discord server bodes well for introverts who don’t have a taste for super active, loud servers, especially for those who find it hard to be in condensed spaces with a large number of people. Personally, I really enjoy that it’s all about all the arts related with the occasional snippet of school related work discussions."

IF YOU COULD TELL YOUR YOUNGER SELF ANY ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

**Hutch:** "You got this! Also study for your chemistry tests more. F’s are bad."

**Emrys:** "That as much as tradition is important, don’t let it obstruct who you are. Your sexuality and your gender is valid, even without familial approval. Even more, don’t let imperialism and cis white men dictate who you should be, they are, at the end of the day, useless. Your culture, tradition and self identity can and will coexist without conflicting each other."