Cover Art: Specks of Imperfection, photograph

Artist Statement: As a very self critical person, it is difficult to enter any kind of work into competitions, or in this instance the Zine, especially if it is a self portrait. You scan and pick out every little thing that could be wrong with it until you give up and decide it's not good enough. So I had to think, if I was looking at this from someone else's point of view, would they notice my imperfections? Would they look at this and think of all the details I missed, and what things I might be insecure about? Most likely no, at least I hope.

Artist: Denaya Dyke
I saw this little girl as I was walking on a path. She looked so small compared to the structure around here. I titled this photo “Wonder” because I remember being that little girl, looking up at buildings much bigger than I. The feeling one gets in that moment is so specific, it's hard to describe, but the word "wonder" encapsulates it well. I took this photo not realizing how beautiful the light (from the sunset) would be. I thought this child looked sweet and perhaps it would be a cute picture, but it turned out to be beautiful.

PROMPT:
Rewrite a moment from your past that you wish you could change as a story or a poem.
LITTLE BOX GIRL
BY LIBBY LEITZINGER, AGE 14

Little box girl-
A conversation broke from the start
A single word turned into two
That tiny box there seems more important than the
friendship we hold
Little box girl, it has always been here
It seems to be your “best friend”
You talk to a box, a box!!!
It’s electronic
Useless rubbish that simply knows facts
What does it mean compared to us?
With your face buried in it you say nothing, a zombie of
the future
Little box girl, it was a sad fate
As it lie there in your hand
It has become an extension of you
It has become your life
You are now all alone because it was more important
than us
Your friends and family
Hours, days, weeks, months, years, a life, wasted because
of a box.
Oh little box girl, the sad fate that had to fall on you.
- little box girl
BY ELIJAH JOHNSON, AGE 18

PROMPT: DRAW A REFLECTION
LITTLE MUSHROOM
BY PIPER RHINES, AGE 16

I just want people to know how cool mushrooms are!
And to show a different way of looking at the wonderful creation around us!

PROMPT:
What's something mundane that you wish more people appreciated?

Draw a picture or write a poem about an extraordinary everyday thing.
Beach ties on her wrists
Pooka shells on her neck
Laughter in her voice
Shells scattered around their room
Star charts on the walls
A telescope with the end hanging out the window
Notebook’s scattered around
His name on her hand
They like to go to the beach and sit in the sand
Watch the stars being born
And when everyone else says goodbye
They’re only beginning to say hi
She likes to chase the waves
He follows right behind her
And the when the ocean comes to greet her toes and his
They laugh and play and splash
Just because they can
And then they go back home and cuddle up in bed
They wake up the next morning
And do it all again

I’ve been writing a collection of poems in a doc called *Poetry Scraps* that me and my boyfriend go through whenever I write new things and he writes little comments for me on them. There are about 40 or so in the doc now. With summer coming up [this one] makes me think of the ocean and stars and playing in the water. I’m very much in love with the stars and the moon and its something I talk a lot about in my work. This poem is about me and my boyfriend and what I hope life feels like for us everyday.
Rosemary fills the room with a scent so defined and strong. It attacks and rages through my nose. It sends a headache pounding through my head. My brain searching for the familiarity I feel. Why do I know this, it’s so pretty and vile. The smell is gone. The sterile cold smell of the hospital creeps back. The needles and tubes crisscross my body. The colorful happy paper cranes sit on strings, each one hoping, begging for me to live.
ADORABLE ANIME PETS
BY S'MONE EDGE, AGE 14

PROMPT: Draw your ideal pet
FAN ART

BY ELIJAH JOHNSON, 18
AND FIONA, AGE 19

Share your fan art on Discord.

FANDOMS UNITE
#anime-manga
#books-ya-lit
#cosplay
#comics
#wholesome-content
#horror
#gaming
#music
PROTEST SONG
A LOVE LETTER TO QUEER AND LESBIAN HISTORY AND REPRESENTATION
BY TARA RYAN, AGE 16

make-up is not for your gaze
it's so I can glaze over
harden and weaponize my femininity
to beat my own face until it’s unrecognizable
so I might fall asleep a different person
and dream unrestrained

meagan said I can't live authentically coated in a film
and I countered I might just be a force for change if I was braver
so I go sit on the big rock and think about ancestry

write a love letter to queer female athletes and Black trans artists and Steven Universe and Janelle Monae and sarah paulson's girlfriend and my girlfriend and my little and big cousins

we stand triumphant in you
in the most heartbreaking resilience
chemicals will always rush beautifully behind your eyes
it is resistance to learn the history, to speak the names, to not let the sacrifices be forgot
and you press on for all those they have robbed us of
you make existence bearable
I love you
HER
BY FREEDOM ARIHA, AGE 14

This poem is about someone trying to find love but struggling with self love in the process. And that person (the narrator) is trying to be the perfect person for the girl they are after. At the time, I was just putting down what I was feeling and some of my thoughts. I felt unheard and love deprived in a way. I just wanted someone to hear me, love me and want to know how I felt daily.

I feel as though death is calling me. My anxiety is creeping inside of me. It gets so hard to breathe. School and high expectations add weight on my shoulders as I grow. They say tomorrow is not promised, but what if I don't want to go on. What if COVID takes me out before my crush of 2 years. Can I be happy for once? God saw me when I was down and said "Here, she is here to give you the happiness you deserve." And she's in her room with the door closed.

Ever since then, I got happy. She is my happiness. My forever. Forever is the length of time we will be together. Forever & Always I will love you. Are you mad? Am I annoying you? I just want to make you happy. I want to be the perfect being for you.

Can you hear me? Can you try to hear me? I need you. I want you.

You still love me, right? Including my flaws and insecurities Including my dark past and recent fast I want to be your healing;

I don't even know what I'm feeling. I can't get in my feelings.

Do you want any dealings with me? You want perfect that's what I'm trying to be. But you're still in your room with the door closed.

PROMPT:
Tell yourself what you need to hear.
POCKET ART COLLECTIVE: TEENS MAKE ZINES

CELLO SCROLL BY HENRY, AGE 14

BY EMRYS
INVISIBLE ENEMY
BY HAYLIE RAYNE, AGE 16

a deadly virus spread through the air,
at first, nobody really cared.

all the sudden it started to spread,
people couldn't get this virus out of their head.

families worldwide were in quarantine,
talking to others, but through a screen.

all schools were vacant, no kids in sight.
more jobless people every night.

everyone was buying food in fear,
shortages then started to appear.

wearing masks on a daily basis,
no going on vacation, to our own oasis.

more and more deaths began to emerge.
over two million, it wasn't even the purge!

no matter if you see it or not,
the invisible enemy was there a lot.

There is nothing in the dark
that there is in the light
BY KIKI M, AGE 13

PROMPT:
Write a poem with this first line:
"There is nothing in the dark
that there is in the light"

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POCKET ART COLLECTIVE: TEENS MAKE ZINES

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PORTRAIT OF ALEXANDER KAIDANOVSKY
BY BRIANNA, AGE 15

Artistic depiction of Soviet actor Alexander Kaidanovsky. Created after watching "Stalker" (1979), of which Kaidanovsky plays the role of the main character and titular Stalker.

THE ANGEL
BY MEREDITH M AGE 12

I drew a shaded angel where the light source is behind, and doesn't glow.
2021 Teen Summer Reading Challenge

Sign up

Track Reading

Review Books

Earn These Badges

Feel the Beat
Retro Gaming
Therapeutic Art
Relax with Bob Ross
Your Voice, Your Story
Teens Make Zines
Tabletop RPGs
Soundbites

*Every badge you earn is a chance to win!