Spectrum Literary Magazine
Renaissance
2023-2024
Since COVID-19, the Spectrum Literary Magazine hasn’t been the same in the sense that it has left many students, especially underclassmen unaware of our club. However, the art we do receive toward the latter end of each year tend to be of amazing quality. But because of certain setbacks perpetuated by COVID, people don’t know that there are opportunities to get published here.

So this year, me and my Co-President, Raida Faiza, have decided to make our theme “Renaissance.” Historically, the Renaissance is a European movement taking place starting in the 14th century, where literature, science, art, and innovation flourished. Many figures that we study in our curriculum today, like William Shakespeare, Leonardo Da Vinci, Galileo Galilei, and many more, dominated this era.

Our intention through this theme is not only to spark imagination and creation from our club members, but to remind the school on the greatness in the amount of pride and satisfaction one gets from submitting to a Art and Literary Magazine. Together, as a school, we represent our creative energy and innovation through these pages. It also documents our school’s values, culture, and history throughout the years for future generations to marvel at.

I hope this inspires many artists, writers, photographers, and many more creative individuals to contribute to the magazine, and to help us create a new Renaissance, here, at Morris Knolls!
Renaissance to me, is a time of all things beautiful. It is not only one of my favorite time periods in all of art history, but it also represents a deeper truth which I wish to embody: how much any person, even those as barbaric as during the Middle Ages, can be transformed with enough effort and innovation. The reason we chose Renaissance to be this year’s theme is because we hoped this year’s issue would mark a new turn for the magazine, transforming it into something even more wondrous than it was before.

There are so many people I want to thank for making this goal some to fruition, namely: Mr. Collinsworth for always keeping us on schedule; Mr. Flake for helping out, no matter how busy he may be; My best friends Rosaanyn, Krisha, Emily, and Christina for making club meetings livelier even on sparse days; Julia, for lending her talent in numerous occasions, ranging from making the coolest posters to helping me pick a font; and all the members of the club, for joining and submitting their amazing artwork. This truly would not have been possible without all of you!
A Formal Invitation to the Renaissance

Dear reader,

Thou hath been cordially invited to a trip back in time. The Year is 1401, marking the start of a new intellectual era known better as the Renaissance.

The time of Elizabethan Era, the time of the titular Queen Elizabeth I, Stabilizing the Church of England and exploring the enigma that was the New World.

When famous writers like William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Miguel de Cervantes expressed their wisdom through words. Who wrote beloved pieces of literature like Romeo and Juliet, The Canterbury Tales, and Don Quixote.

With the boom in literature So came forth the invention of the Gutenberg Printing Press in 1494 Literacy wasn’t a luxury, but an opportunity given to everyone, further passing around the magic of the Renaissance No wonder it lasted centuries!
The flourishing of art, where artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Donatello, Michelangelo
Created their magnum opuses; the Mona Lisa, and David, and Michealngelo's David
Works inspiring future generations, breathing new life into their artworks.

Science too, alongside the queen and creativity, made its great reign;
Copernicus discovered heliocentrism
While Da Vinci' exploded with ideas, his inventions,
Like the ornithopter and his aerial screw
Help us unlock a portal into his cogs.

A world seemingly foreign, but very much the same place.
Connected by simple, four-number strings.
But regardless, there are still different values, customs, people, and environments.
The same things one would find in a world differing from their own.

But, we'd love for you to take a dive
And stay a while...

Now, what is thy response?

- Stacie Hueter
Beautiful World

The universe has blessed us with many wonders of the natural world that all creatures can't help but marvel at:

The grandeur of a tree: from seedling to maturity
They're faithful green guardians assigned by Mother Nature to give us air and shade, both coolness on hot, summer afternoons, and warmth on days with chilly, whirling winds
The trees during winter
Decorated with pasty frosting that creates an ethereal wonderland

The sky: the stage of many entertaining sights
Meteor showers, the Aurora Borealis, and the many gorgeous forms that the sky takes from dusk to dawn
The colors of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet
They make up the very essence of perception and create the intricate tapestries of reality to even enjoy these phenomena

Colorful meadows, especially during the springtime,
They are filled with lovely flowers like lavenders, daisies, asters
Could this be the green goddess’s dress? Oh, how beautiful she would look.

It’s funny to think that the universe has provided the perfect circumstances for all of humanity to be able to live and have the capacity to see everything,
Yet, we don’t take the time to appreciate the beauty of this world we’re blessed with.

Now, dear readers, explore nature in as much depth that a person is humanly capable of.
And let us strive to see every exhibit of this wondrous museum called “Earth.”
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The grandeur of a tree: from seedling to maturity. They're faithful green guardians assigned by Mother Nature to give us air and shade, both coolness on hot, summer afternoons, and warmth on days with chilly, whirling winds.

The trees during winter are decorated with pasty frosting that creates an ethereal wonderland.

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In halls where time stands still, you find yourself drawn in,
To a painting of the past, now worn out yet still in its glory
Each brushstroke tells a tale untold
In colors so gentle to the eye and touching to the soul
In the sacred realm of canvas divine,
Religious figures in robes entwine,
Their faces were full of might and purpose,
Their celestial presence bringing the paint to mortal life

These godly individuals present themselves in their truest form
Bare to the bone with little skin to hide or be ashamed of
Embodying the bodies given to them by their Creator
Clouds, like wisps of spun cotton, cradle the divine figures in a soft embrace
Dancing over the landscape in a heavenly arrangement
The light blue sky casts itself through, reminding
Angelic forms hang across the page watching over you,
With wings that span both time and space
Their existence lingers with whispers of grace
With every brushstroke, a trace of heaven on earth
Above them, the doors of heaven are open wide
Where clouds and beams of sunlight beam through
Feelings of vulnerability and humanness form a bond
One absorbs all of its beauty and delicate nature

You catch yourself in a moment of paradise,
Illustrations of heavenly scenes encompassing your mind
The pastel shades across the page sealed in never to escape
The canvas again, yet in some ways it does
Moods of realism and raw human emotion linger in the painting
Into our bodies, a new sense of meaning is established
The life of the once-dead painting is rejuvenated as First-time viewers ignite the spark needed
To bring the painting back to life
Echoes of Education
By: Rosanny Camilo

In one of the pillars of society, we see fault
Education is suffering in its foundation, cracks seeping from crevasses
hidden to the human eye, yet felt by students from all over
In halls of learning, where minds should soar
A race is taking place, one that is becoming hard to contain
One for exceptional grades, a thirst for more

Competition is breeding as a relentless tide, wrestling with the
developing mindset of adolescent beings
School has become a place where learning’s joy is denied
Access to expression and passion are warded off by bright yellow caution tape
In the pursuit of scores, we have lost sight,
Of the true purpose, fading from the light
For the essence of education should not lie in ranks,
But rather in the nurturing of minds and the filling in of blanks

Our system of education is closing the imagination of young people
Leaving them blank of individual thoughts like a closed book
Memorization has established its overpowering importance
In our lives as the absorbing of information leaves us with
Little to no reflection nor application in the real world
No longer shall we measure our worth by the letter on a page
Or a certain percentage

Let us embrace and revive the idea of learning
Not just of new facts and information, but learning how to learn
Education should serve as a guiding torch, a beacon of hope,
A step to work towards and way of learning more about oneself
It should ignite minds rather than rattle them on their stance
For in this rebirth, we will rediscover,
The excitement of learning and the thrilling feeling
Of what it means to wonder because
Curiosity should be the purpose that echoes through education.
Katherine Udud
Fish in the Fish Bowl  
By: Madilyn Ryan Schlesinger

My brother’s faced gleamed with pure joy when my father handed him the plastic bag, He squealed and lifted the bag to his eyes.  
“He’s blue, Daddy! He’s blue!”  
Mom made eye contact with Dad and gave the look of, That fish will die in the next two weeks.

Which was true, but my brother sure made use of that two weeks, Glen, (that was the fish’s name), went everywhere with him for the fifteen days of that July.  
Maybe since I was a lot older than my brother, Glen didn’t amuse me as much as it did to the family,  
But I knew that my brother fell in love with Glen, and that he was attached.  

Unfortunately, on 19th of July, everyone woke up from the sound of my brother screaming at 5:18 in the morning, Glen was dead.
“I didn’t know Glen could float” My brother had said, “But he isn’t moving, Daddy.”
My brother had received one of the most famous conversations that will happen in adolescence.

Sure, he was pretty upset, but he was six, and moved on quickly that summer,  
I had thought Glen wouldn’t be talked about at the dinner table again, but Glen was yet again discussed.
“Do you think Glen liked his life? His fish bowl?” My brother asked,  
My parents reassured him and they forgot about the topic, but I didn't.
I remember asking myself while thinking about the blue betta fish swimming at different paces, My brother never really knew how to take care of things, actually, he didn’t know how to take care of anything. Not even his own pets, He was disorganized and always lost. Never aware of his surroundings.

But what I remember the most about that childhood fish, is how the fish must have felt, It’s almost like I related to that fish itself. Circling, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, A cycle that doesn’t stop till death. Passing the same rocks and same water Glen swam the day before and before, The pebbles would stay the same everyday, the obsidian rock next to the stone and the stone next to the teal.

Nothing changed for that fish, Only one thing it may have looked forward to, is the sprinkings of protein and even maybe its own death. Someone should have helped that fish to swim, jump or end the life of a fish in a fish bowl, For its life deserved to be carefree in the ocean. With its fish family and fish friends.

For I do remember the fish in the fish bowl, I remember exactly how the fish felt during that summer, Because I was, I felt, and I still am, The fish in the fish bowl.
“Twin Flame”

Mejia
“Resurrection’s Embrace”
“As the world coming to a chilling stand-still, winter takes a grasp
At all the delicacies of life, both green and growing
The air is crisp, creating puffs of clouds with every breath
A blanket of snow, pristine and white, Transforms the landscape into a scenery of pure beauty
We are enveloped in flakes of crystallized snow
In a precious, dreamlike winter wonderland,
Captured so magically within a snowglobe”

- Rosanny Camilo

Photo Taken By: Anonymous
“As winter rears its end, the frost gives way to the thawing earth
Nature awakens in a tapestry of gold rays
Flowers start to bloom and birds take flight,
The days grow in length as the sun takes its time in the sky
Inviting people to join in its warm embrace
Rain washes over the land as a mark of a new beginning”

- Rosanny Camilo
“Seasons of Renewal”

Photo Taken by: Emily Wagner
“Summer reigns with its golden hue, The heat of the season melts away one’s worries
A sweet mood hangs in the air
The taste of ice cream, melting in your hands,
Brings a moment of delight, where time feels everlasting
Each second feels richer and full of anticipation
A time when we savor the simplicity of life”

- Rosanny Camilo, “Seasons of Renewal”

Photo Taken by: Max Minervini
“Fall swoops in from underneath our feet, 
Leaves trickling down tree trunks on their way elsewhere 
Shades of crimson, yellow, and brown all scattered 
Across the ground with warm delight 
Autumn is the mood that stirs intrigue in the soul 
And encourages people to wander outside and appreciate all that Earth has to offer”

- Rosanny Camilo  
“Seasons of Renewal”

Photo Taken by: Emily Wagner
"In the changing of seasons, we find the purity
Of rebirth’s dance and self-reflection
Though the cycle may seem predictable and planned
Our perceptions evoke and refine with the passage of time
Traditions we used to hold dear shift and morph
before our own eyes
As the renaissance of each season unfolds, it serves as a testament to the beauty of life and evolution"

- Rosanny Camilo
“Seasons of Renewal”

Photo Taken by: Mackenzie Loder
Giustino Pisani was known for his exquisite art pieces. Oftentimes when people gazed upon his artwork they called him “The Medusa” for his artwork looked too realistic to be fake. His work, which was painted to resemble the many works that were used during the age of rebirth, was used with what he claimed to be oil pastel. He painted people of all ages and colors. Some with blemishes and some with skin so flawless it looked like they were angels trapped in a canvas.

His artwork, like most people of the time of the rebirth and the beginning of new times and ideas, caught the attention of the public, and in particular, one young woman named Lady Antoinette Bernard. Although she could not paint, she often found herself dumbstruck by his works which she found being sold at the market or at other nobles' homes. She loved looking into the soft eyes of his paintings and seeing the agony or the fear of the people in them.

Whether it was smart or not, she thought it best to interrogate Lord Pisani and try her best to gather and write about him because not much was known about his whereabouts or where he came from. So, when she heard about his presence in Grosseto, Italy, and how he was painting the walls of a long forgotten cathedral, she quickly gathered her things and traveled from France to Italy to find him.

As soon as she came across artwork that littered the streets of Grosseto, she smiled with glee. She found him only mere minutes after walking the streets of Grosseto, working on the wall of the cathedral, using some sort of liquid to paint another face. Although as she gazed at his working hand she realized that it almost seemed that the liquid moved by itself, somehow molding a painting without the hand of an artist.

“Lord Pisani?” she began, speaking hesitantly.

Lord Pisani, who was busy looking at his painting with indecisiveness, looked up at her, his brown eyes almost seeming to debate whether she would be a great painting or not.

“Um.. I was wondering if I could talk to you. I’m writing an article about your works and I feel it would be wonderful if you could say a few words about yourself.”

He seemed to ponder the question before he flashed her a quick smile and spoke.

“Oh of course, Lady...” he paused.

“Lady Antoinette Bernard sir,” she bowed as politely as could

“Lady Bernard, please come right this way. I would like it if we could talk in more of a private setting, for I fear what others may think.”

Now, I would love to say our Lady Bernard became a little nervous when he led her into a small side room in the cathedral alone, but as I have brought up before, she was a great fan of Lord Pisani’s works. And sometimes when obsession gathers, you forget to have a clear mind.

Anyways, as our Lady Bernard was led into this far room she found nothing much but a few couches, a sole drawer and blank canvas on a pedestal, almost aching to be painted on. Yet... Lady Bernard was confused, for there were no paints near the base and there were no paintbrushes. When she dared to ask about this, all he said was, “There are many ways to paint without paint and paintbrushes m’dear”. Oh, how true he was.

She walked to one of the sofas on the side of the room and sat in it. She admired how this sofa seemed to be in a lot of the paintings. Some people declared it creepy how he incorporated his furniture into his own works, but it was one of the great things she admired about the man; the simple fact that he drew what he saw on a day to day basis.
"Tell me, why did you go into painting, Lord Pisani? " she asked, pulling her notepad from her purse. He smiled and sat on the sofa across from her, which was also seen in a few of his paintings. "Well, I have to say Lady Bernard, it was most likely when I was older in life, around the age of twenty-five, after I had found a cave in one of the mountain tops I was traveling in." His words were very sweet and articulate, almost as though he had planned them out.

"What about this cave made you interested in paintings like Leonardo di vinci or Michelangelo?" Lord Pisani stared out the window then said, "Well, Lady Bernard, when I was young I truly had no care for the arts, or for anything that would evoke emotion in a person at all. Some might call me a “barbaric man from the middle-ages”. Although, as I traveled into this cave without a care for anything at all, I stumbled across something. Something that helped me realize that art not only captures the emotions of a person, but it's very soul.”

Lady Bernard leaned in intrigued, “Oh, and what may that be?”

Lord Pisani just laughed and looked at her, “Well that’s the secret that’s kept me famous isn’t it?” He got up from his chair and opened a drawer, where there lay a flask filled with some sort of liquid, “Would you like a drink m'lady? It is from the far east of Africa in an area so far no one can find it.”

Lady Bernard could barely hold back her excitement as she jumped up and went for the flask. “Oh, yes of course! Oh, how I love to travel!”

He cast her another one of his peculiar grins before he poured it into a second glass, also in his drawer for some reason.

“Now tell me this at least,” Lady Bernard began, “Why do all your paintings have furniture from this room?”

Lord Pisani handed her the glass and sat down. “Darling, I paint furniture from all over the world, these are just a few of the ones I have painted.”

Lady Bernard drank the Liquid as she listened. “You see, the place where I mainly live is Rome, Italy, where the age of rebirth period began.”

Lady Bernard stopped drinking, why was her stomach feeling gloopy? “Actually it's right near the cave that began my interest in painting!" Lord Pisani began, ignoring her. Lady Bernard stared down at her hands, she fancied that her eyes must be playing tricks on her, for some reason, they were looking droopy, as though they were melting into a swirl of different colors.

“You see the secret about my paintings aren't in the paintings, but in the simple fact that I don't know how to paint at all.”

He walked towards her and she now realized the glass he was holding was empty, she looked around the room as it swirled in different colors. Lady Bernard gazed at her dress, which was also now molding together with her legs into a pile of mush. "What?" she mustered before her body began deforming into a pile of gloop.

Lord Pisani let out a cold hollow chuckle before he said, “I never painted those canvases, Lady Bernard.”

Lady Bernard’s eyes widened as she realized what was going on. “What I found in the cave was a drink that turned a person’s body or essence as you would say, into a painting, preferably realistic oil paintings, because they are quite loved nowadays, and they would become the most well-known paintings of all time.”

Slowly he started opening the cup and she felt her body dripping into it. “Why me?” she finally asked, her voice being suffocated by the gurgling of the liquid. “Because," he smiled, “you would be perfect for my newest painting that’ll be on the cathedral wall.”
The Sound of Music
By: Rosanny Camilo

Music is an extraordinary gift to the world
Wrapped up in sturdy paper of safety and a shiny ribbon of hope
It seeps its way into our lives each note at a time
The melody and lyrics staying with us long
after the song comes to an end

Musical sound acts as a language of emotions
Sorrow and regret all written in the lyrics
Excitement and moments of happiness weaved into the voices of
those who chose to put their hearts on the line
With each chord stuck and each line sung,
A wave of soothing, yet intense feelings stir, in every tongue,
A universal way of understanding both young and old

In tune with ourselves, our senses awake
As if to say hello, our souls partake
Through the soul as if to say hello
Each chord a thread, each sound surging a light,
In concert venues, where we dare to dream,
A renaissance has been born, a timeless scheme,
Where your mind wonders off and life’s reflections brightly gleam
Through music, we leave ourselves behind, discarded along with
the person we once were

Music opens up wounds that we dare not face
Yet soothes our pain, with gentle touch and grace
It gives us the time of day to think, accept, embrace, consume
It builds us up from whatever is holding us back
Acting as a guiding hand to what is truly out there

A rebirth of the mind’s own flight
In music, we are igniting our sight
Through the blank canvas of life, we use music to paint our truth
Expression boundless and uncaged
In music, we are igniting our sight
The Aeroscrew

Andrew Popkin
"On Paper We Briefly Bleed to Death"

By: Jeanette Young

There was an artist who filled pages with ink, and air with music.

By day, she stayed out in the city, boarding trains to nowhere and walking through parks. Empty museums with faded pictures and old inscriptions on walls, and by night, she returned home to her lover, singing to him. She would bare her heart, asking anxiously, silently, for kind words.

Then, he left her. And Huỳnh's heart scattered into lines of ink on paper, freely into the wind.

"It doesn't matter that she left me," Huỳnh had said simply, and was met with doubt.

"For all the emotion you portray"- They told her, “it seems as if you never feel it yourself.”

Huỳnh clenched her fists as disappointment washed over her. Don’t cry, she remembered. So she went home, and as she walked, the streets were darkening. The rush of people never ceased, but it was calmer. Lights flickered over old signs, some a fresh, neon color. The occasional group passed by her, laughing loudly, drinks in hand and skin glistening with sweat and makeup and Huỳnh could imagine the sticky feeling of clothes from body heat, yet she was sure of the clean and floral scent of their perfume.

Coming home, she passed through the doorway and kept her gaze away from the empty corner of the room.

The blinds were down, so she pulled them open. The night sky was empty of stars, the moon nearly full. Skyscrapers lit themselves up and the ground was dotted by lights blurring together into a mess of yellow and white.

Huỳnh strained against the lever for a moment before the window opened with a loud creak, letting cold air strike her abruptly. Moving away from the window, she turned off the thermostat and sat down, pulling out her notebook again.
She peered through the crack, dark as it was, and whispered as loud as she dared “Where are you, where are you?”

But there was no reply as she desperately waited, her thoughts an endless stream-

‘-it’s cold here-’ ‘-I am not good enough-’ ‘-tell me your dreams and thoughts-’
‘-let me spin them into something you can touch and see-’

‘-Be my muse for a little while. Let me show you the proof of my devotion.’

Huỳnh woke with a start, shivering for a moment before straightening in her seat. It had been but a couple of hours since she had come home.

The window was still open, and she exhaled at the sight of leaked ink from her fountain pen staining the desk. Her notebook still lay open with half littered thoughts and incomplete lines.

She closed the window and, lost, went to do what she always did. Huỳnh stepped towards the door to leave again, then turned.

Seems as if you never feel it yourself

And looked at the empty corner where he used to be.

Suddenly she remembered her, a rush of memories where they were laughing together, their hardships, their sadness, their happiness. Her mouth went dry as she stared at the void where her lover had been. Countless nights of staying up and writing, pages and pages that had been filled from just a month’s worth of knowing each other.

Then, she thought of the tragedies that had been written countless times.

She left the apartment. Running down the steps, the moon rose ever higher in the sky as Huỳnh brushed past people and walked through street after street. She turned a corner, and there a mulberry tree in some forgotten corner of the city.

She stood in front of the tree. The memories and emotions came back slowly, then rushing in all at once.

With shaking hands, she fumbled with her pen and flipped to a new page. Unwritten music flowed through her head, and Huỳnh felt the warm embrace of devotion as it wrapped around her with the feeling of cold steel.

And alas, the artist began to bleed onto paper, pouring her heart out until pages were stained with blood instead of ink.
Whimsical Ripples Into Reality
By: Rosanny Camilo

Whether it were told by a parent or teacher, they carry on a
Faint yet everlasting whisper of the past
Presented to you in the form of a dreamy tale
Filled with dark and eerie themes that would have made
You wished you had never asked
Timeless stories capturing the essence of a particular region
With underlying morals of life that come together
showing a sense of cohesion
As a listener, the silly and whimsical characters draw you in
But don’t be fooled by the trickery and sin that lies within
With a simple flip of a page
You become nothing but engaged
A girl who’s fantasy must end at the strike of a bell
At the bite of a savory apple, another fell under an enchanting spell
The sly and cunning wolf lured the girl hooded in red
All while another lied beautifully for an eternal sleep on her lavish bed
A mysterious gnome-like figure willing to spin straw to gold
A house of candy galore owned by a witch both deceitful and old
One who sacrificed her ability to sing for a pair of legs
A brave boy made his way up the neverending beanstalk
With a mission to capture an assortment of golden eggs
Ultimate access to free porridge and a place to rest
An innocent daughter taken hostage with the invite of a beastly
Creature to be his guest
The prompt of one girl to let down her luxurious, lengthy hair
Despite all odds, the tortoise breezed past the hare with visible air
A boy whose last cry held onto notes of sincerity and truth
The third pig’s intelligent plan allowing them all to live past their youth
In these layers of folk tales, truths are spun and told
Lessons hidden within each story, both ageless and old