

EXHIBITION PROGRAM

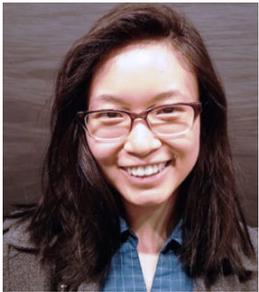
WHO AM I? YOUNG ARTISTS SHOW

'Who I Am' is an exhibit focusing on personal expressions of cultural identity: Who are we? What makes us who we are?

The exhibit showcases artwork from individual young artists in our community.

May 1-19, 2018

**Reception Thursday, May 17th
from 5:30-7:30 pm**



Sheila Dong is fulfilling a special writers internship for The Arts Center's 2018 Exhibition Program. Sheila writes essays, short stories and poems to share her impressions about exhibits. Currently, she is a MFA student in poetry, as well as an instructor of rhetoric and composition, at Oregon State University.

THE SHAPE OF POETRY

Mary's Peak Sunset by Fiona

We climb to the top of the mountain, which means the earth ends and turns into the sky. The sun sets, which means the sky reddens into a body: a slapped cheek, a burnt tongue, a blushing ear. There is one flower left in the field, which means soon we won't feel well. Soon we'll grow up. But for a minute more, let us have this light.

You said the sky begins after the topmost layer of the earth's crust, which means we are always walking in the sky. We just forget. The earth turns into the sky. The sky turns into our bodies. Our bodies turn into a single flower, each orange petal the core of a sun a billion years in the future. Each living cell made possible by a million hands holding.



Soon we will head down.
Into the earth. Into the sky.
Sunset like a harsh cry
opens our skins into gardens of warmth.
There is one flower left in the field, burning like an eye,
which means we love each other,
which means the light fades and takes the flower with it,
which means the flower is now anywhere we say it is.



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THE SHAPE OF POETRY Bright Sky by Chloe Dunaway



The sky is hot pink. Barbie-scream pink. Stinging-jellyfish-bloom pink. The world is ending! someone shouts from the hills. Or beginning! someone else shouts back. Maybe the UFO's will sail in any minute. Maybe our bodies will start to hover. Up to this point, we'd lived our whole lives in the dark volcanic hills. Their basalt absorbed all the light and left none for us. Until we woke this morning and the sky was pink. Valentine-with-volume-screwed-to-11 pink. So pink we can feel a pressure on our skin. I'm so pink I'm gonna die! someone laughs. Give us a sign! someone else yells, and a glimmer appears. Faint gold in the corners of the sky. We wave our arms at the glimmer. The pink lays over us like dresses, like quilts. We don't know if it's the apocalypse or just another day. We don't know the difference anymore.



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THE SHAPE OF POETRY Untitled by Iris

Like trees, delicate branches divide, questing tendrils coil at air. Like cells, the nucleus thrums at the core, cycling fuel, circulating food. Like birds, the silhouettes of beaks point skyward. Like vases, breathed-in bodies are glazed with dots and spirals. Like alien lifeforms, they wave with curling fingers, nimble hands: Hello.



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Yellow Bird by Lisa

I am a yellow bird. I am hiding my face and wings, but that doesn't
make me less of a bird.

Sometimes I don't want to fly, because it's nicer to walk. I can feel the
grains

of dirt beneath my feet. I can see up close how some of them shine

like sun-dust. I can count each blade of grass and give them

names. But sometimes I don't want to see. Sometimes,

I'll make my face disappear inside my head, where

it's safe and feathery warm. My thoughts sound

different this way. Clearer. And more

like music. And when I'm ready,

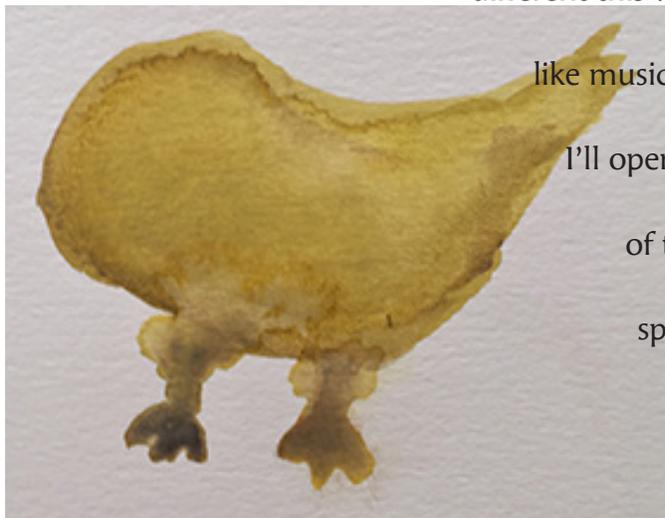
I'll open my door and be part

of the world again. I'll re-

sprout my wings and fly.

But not before

I'm ready.



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