

EXHIBITION PROGRAM

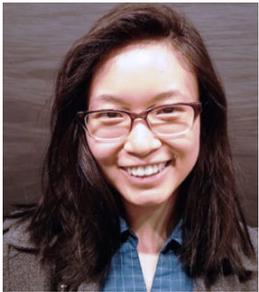
ART SAVES LIVES

An exhibit by those who have experience with mental health challenges.

The Arts Center and Oregon State University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) teamed up to seek artwork directed at furthering the dialogue on mental health. A portion of the proceeds of art sales will go to the charity organization Art With Impact (AWI).

May 22-26, 2018

**Reception Wednesday,
May 23rd from 6:00-8:00 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

“Manic Depressive” by Shoshana McClarence



voidburst of ultraviolet spectrums redribbon flames arcing
over starglint backcloth is how ecstasy is birthed
the explosion looks like an eye
wrecked with wonder or maybe the eye is an explosion to see is to
supernova to breathe is to be cosmocarrying lightray blue
and orangeyellow gases expand
into everything known but burn
enough molecules rip away
enough veils of hydrogen and coldness will seep in.

the collapse will accelerate into its dark heart.
heavy, acrid space-time oubliette
will eat the light and the light
will not return.



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“Broken” by Rhonda Thomson



Someone told me the healthiest part of the egg is the shell, calcium crumbling between teeth, dissolving in bloodstream, armoring our bones. The shell is the egg's skeleton, the egg's single, all-enveloping bone.

The eggshell tapers at one end to roll in curves, away from nest-edges, safer from shatter-falls, one crooked line at a time. The eggshell breathes through semipermeable crystal membrane, porous.

When you break at the touch of a finger, remember you still evolved to survive. When the exterior is crushed to fragments, do not forget the coating on an eggshell that keeps out pathogens is named the

bloom.



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“Unravelled” by Hayden Ton

If life's a book, I cannot turn the page.
If life's a ride, my wheels are mired in mud.
I hang all day within this golden cage.

I'm wrapped in tangled strings of off-white rage,
then doubt, like scissors, comes and cuts me up –
my fraying hands can't grasp to turn the page.

Avert my eyes – the clock will taunt my age,
the minutes spin to years as I stay stuck,
suspended day by day inside this cage.

A man of wisdom once said life's a stage.
The players have their parts. I'm just a prop
that gathers dust, stays static on the page.

The rocks beneath my feet are tired beige,
the moss is wilting, thirsting for a flood.
Vermilion rust exhausts my tarnished cage.

The outcome of this risk I cannot gauge
But I'll embrace my knots and find the good.
Stretch the yarn of fingers, lift the page,
deconstruct this false and gilded cage.



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“Undetermined”

by Rhonda Thomson

On bad days I become the wall
behind me, bedding myself

in brick and concrete
and numbness, pulling

the plaster back over the hole
like a sheet over my face

until I can excavate myself
into a brighter room.

Now I see a woman melting
into the floorboards, almost

gone. Only her hands and breasts
remain, fading artifacts.

I didn't even get her name.
I wonder how deep she will sink.

This must be how it feels when
someone sees me disappearing.

But maybe the woman is
emerging, not evanescent,

the floor a chrysalis splitting
open in the shape of a body

and all the dimensions it traversed
to arrive here in a room full

of curious eyes and soft breaths.
Maybe soon we will see her whole.

Maybe soon: the toes, the limbs, the face:
eyes blinking in remembered light.



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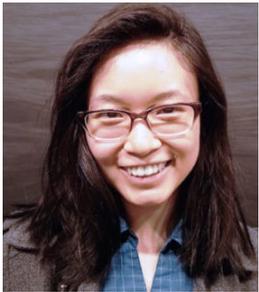
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THE SHAPE OF POETRY

“Psychosis”

by Shoshana McClarence

The chair grows wild.
The chair grows id.
The chair grows death,

crystallizing black column,
metal and duct tape,
metastatic tower of what

they never said reality
could be: objects un-
raveling into chaos,

spores of the void latching
like mold on open surfaces,
fostering a dark colony.

An object is not real
until you see it become
something impossible;

see with your own eyes
how the chair is
outside your mind, yet

a product of it. How
the chair emits solid smoke,
a fire, a friction between

life and psyche. The chair
grows life, grows question,
grows testimony. You know

it was never just a chair.



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