

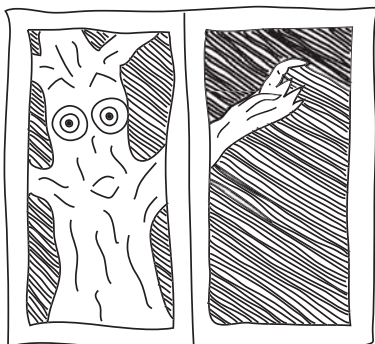
# FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

## At Night

As I lay in bed  
the bodies of shadows  
danced on my wall.  
Lifeless toys slumped  
against the dead-coloured toes of the stuffies.  
The objects under my bed  
called me down  
as the tree's finger drummed on my window.

*by James Turner*

Cremona School (grade seven)  
Cremona, Alberta



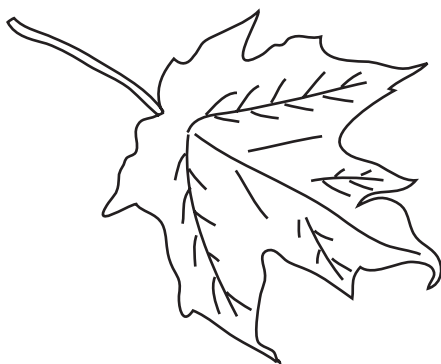
# FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

## Leaves

Leaves fall off the trees and blow away—  
down the hill,  
into the flowing river,  
to a waterfall where the colours fall like an artist's brush.  
They wearily float to the shore and become dried by the sun.  
Crackle, crunch as feet pass by along the trail.  
Pieces separate, flying into the bush for safety.  
Autumn has arrived.

*by Damon Bressette*

Kettle and Stony Point Hillside School (grade eight)  
Forest, Ontario



# FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

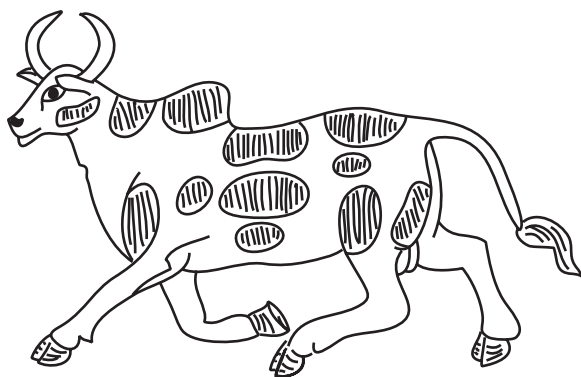
## Parallel Worlds

Take the narrow road that unwinds  
Beyond the cattle grazing in the country field  
Mountains melting to painted strips of pastures  
Along the highway lost and forgotten on the horizon  
Brushed clouds embracing a blazing crimson sky  
Leaves chased by blusters of playful wind  
The beauty of the rain that sprinkles the pond

Take the alley of spinning intersections  
Illuminated by the tittering city lights  
Revealing a labyrinth of abstract confusion  
Glazed structures reflecting a mosaic steel sky  
Among sleepless souls circulating through town  
Drowned by the hustle and bustle of engines rolling  
Trickles of icy rain rushing down the window

*by Emilie Theriault*

Rosemère High School (grade nine)  
Rosemère, Québec



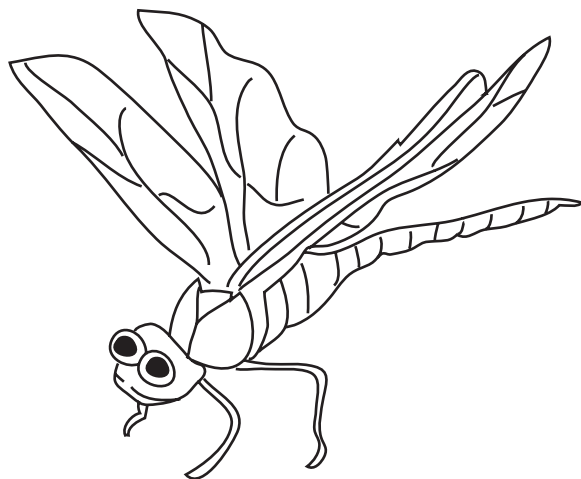
# FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

## june

why can't i pin the days  
down                    by the shore, filling pockets with  
stones, great monuments made in  
China cups at a yard sale, golden dragon  
flies shrieking into the sky, into the sun  
smiling on the  
waves as he says goodbye.  
goodbye                i try to pin  
the hem                of summer days  
down like a precious butterfly,  
but they still  
                         fly away.

*by Christine Klippenstein*

Canterbury High School (grade ten)  
Ottawa, Ontario



# FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

## Seasonal Bipolarity

The moisture clings to my hand,  
as a box of memories falls to the ground.  
I'm losing grip on yesterday,  
and the residue bears no sound.

Sitting empty-handed,  
with a puzzled frame of mind,  
I dwell on yesterday's rain,  
and dance in puddles left behind.

The traction on my fingertips  
fades deeper with every stroke.  
Gone in my pores, it has long disappeared;  
my asylum is under an oak.

Glimpses of your shadow  
would erratically appear.  
I try to sketch them back on paper,  
but that was yesteryear.

Willows break free of mercy,  
and diverge from the zephyr's sway.  
I'll pack up my branches and fold up my leaves,  
like a rebellious teenage bouquet.

So, I'll cut this endless rope  
that connects my mind to yours;  
detach myself from all that blossoms,  
and cause all imminent downpours.

I can't even piece this together;  
disregard all I have to say.  
I'll need some time to convalesce  
before my sanity returns in May.

*by Marissa Miller*

Bialik High School (grade eleven)  
Montréal, Québec

# FIRST-PRIZE WINNER

## Left Wanting

Against the milky whiteness of the porcelain bath,  
my skin: the colour of black, thick tea with cream.  
Streaming green water moves around my heels, my bones,  
my limbs. Like the dark bloody veins that look blue beneath the surface.  
Heat surrounds me like the cold sweat only minutes before  
when my heart sucked all the warmth from my shore and huddled  
like a baby  
in the centre of my body.  
I ran to hide in Venus' pearly shell, although I wished not to emerge: born again.

My knees poke up, all knobby and pink like canned strawberries, above the mist  
and there it is.

A deep purple, venomous blotch  
spreading its tiny tentacles like a cold  
poisonous  
slimy sea creature.

An afflicted malice creeping towards my infant heart:

a worry spot.

I am afraid of slipping in the bath and falling under the water  
like hot tears.

I leave the window open so that the icy September air will flow in  
and hold my heart above the sadness.

*by Kate Neil*

Mulgrave School (grade twelve)  
West Vancouver, British Columbia



# SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

## Grandpa

Sitting in his rocking chair,  
eating jellybeans,  
he pushed his hand through grey hair  
knowing what it means.

Tall, slim, and muscular  
is what he used to know.  
Now wrinkled skin and flabby arms  
are all he has to show.

His eyes are like dark rain clouds,  
grey and with no fight.  
His voice is like rough sandpaper,  
getting gruff and tight.

The smell of smoke surrounds him,  
embedding in his clothes,  
making people run away,  
and sticking up their nose.

This man who was loved by all,  
now only by a few,  
wants to start his life again—  
wants to start anew.

*by Megan Berndt*

Sir Mackenzie Bowell School (grade seven)  
Belleville, Ontario



# SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

## **Too Busy to See**

I shine,  
brighter than you think.  
To you,  
I'm just a dot.  
You might have noticed me once—  
just once,  
but, you don't have time to look.  
You're too busy, remember?

You thought nobody would notice.  
That's what you're busy doing ... remember?  
They all told you not to,  
but, of course, you did it,  
thinking nobody would know.  
You forgot about me.

I saw.  
I see every mistake you make.  
I've seen every wrong thing you've ever done.  
Who am I?  
I'm that bright little star in the distance.  
Don't look for me,  
I promise I'm there,  
as you still don't have time.  
You're too busy, remember?

*by Bridget George*

Kettle and Stony Point Hillside School (grade eight)  
Forest, Ontario



# SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

## Pieces

See that scar?  
Remember?  
You told me not to climb.  
“Stay,” you said.  
I didn’t.  
You held me after the fall.  
I miss you.

And this bite?  
You said, “Don’t pet it.”  
“It’s dangerous,” you said.  
I did.  
You chased it away.  
I miss you.

This scratch?  
“Leave the ball in the bush,” you said.  
“You can get another one.”  
I didn’t.  
You got me the ball.  
I miss you.

These bruises?  
“Don’t stand so close to the edge,” you said.  
“You’ll fall.”  
I fell.  
You almost caught me.  
I miss you.

This aching pain, in my heart?  
“Don’t try to save me,” you said.  
I tried.  
But I couldn’t.  
You’re not coming back.  
I miss you.

Scars, cuts, bites—pieces of me that are gone will always be  
pieces of you, still with me.

*by Jordyn Wear*

Lake Cowichan Secondary School (grade nine)  
Lake Cowichan, British Columbia

# SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

## height of summer

cool signs of water  
tickle my shell, bathed  
with feverish air and sunscreen.  
sand grits (alluring crystals  
of the barren earth)  
scrawl and tear  
at my blistered      crippled  
shell (inside—my anguished heart,  
lusting                      for more).

and beyond—  
the sun,  
a glorious  
immortal sphere,  
resurrects above  
crisp water; its rays of  
euphoria reaching into  
my inner strife,  
comforting my heartache—    like  
    the final spears of the envenomed nails  
    that slit his stainless skin—  
carrying me to a peace  
so serene  
so still.

*by Sara Thurlbeck*

Westwood Collegiate (grade ten)  
Winnipeg, Manitoba



# SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

## Paint the Walls with Nostalgia

Paint the walls with nostalgia.  
Here's the can of swirling memories;  
cover this barren landscape.  
In this space, the air is cold and empty,  
everything breathes apathy.  
The warm fire of last year  
is reduced to a delicate flame.  
Let disorientation rear its ugly head.  
Undeniable similarities to that long while ago—  
instruction, location, companions.  
A cheap imitation of the timeless past.  
Those memories cannot be resurrected.  
There are differences within resemblance—  
decoration, unknown individuals,  
an hourglass a few years fuller,  
the loophole in perfection.  
But let's pretend, let's run.  
Time, equally feared as death and change.  
Please, slow it down, comfort me with deception.  
Use the paintbrush dipped in the frozen.  
Make those old memories regain  
something akin to the life they had.  
Try to cover up this reality I don't want to face.  
Attempt the revival of my past selves;  
the present one lies in saddened slumber.

Paint the walls with nostalgia ...

*by Natalie Kurdyla*

Rosemère High School (grade eleven)  
Rosemère, Québec



# SECOND-PRIZE WINNER

## Watching My Mother

I watch her hold her father  
as she wipes the sweat  
from his face.  
He lies exhausted in bed  
from the struggle  
with his walker.  
She changes him  
as I smooth the blue cotton blanket  
and his false teeth hang  
suspended.

He shows us  
the marks  
on his back and chest,  
but refuses to get out of bed.  
*Come on, Dad,* she says.  
*You can't get stronger*  
*lying here. You have to*  
*move.*

Here in this room  
where my mother has to yell,  
we cringe.  
Later, I lie beside her  
on our couch, her eyes  
wet, glassy.

Still,  
I can smell him on her.  
As if when he kissed her  
that last time,  
his breath on her skin said,  
*My good girl.*

***by Jennifer Klauninger***

Canterbury High School (grade twelve)  
Ottawa, Ontario



# THIRD-PRIZE WINNERS

## The North

The northern lights in the sky,  
the shimmering snowflakes as they fly,  
the midnight moon, the morning sun,  
the sunset when the day is done,  
the buds on the trees as they grow,  
a glistening untouched coat of snow,  
the little starlings in the night,  
the pearly skies in their soft light,  
the sights in the air, the sights on the ground, the sights under the sea ...  
This land is a land of beauty, at least that's what it is to me.

*by Johanna Stewart*

École William McDonald Middle School (grade seven)  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories



## Beware

This crude figure begins his chase,  
after the sun sets,  
swinging his inky mace.

Lurking in shadowy corners,  
prowling the streets,  
stalking his prey, in the insane eclipse.

Creeping, with prying eyes,  
unseen like a serial killer,  
all his stories are filled with lies.

He soon becomes vain,  
not realizing he is being hunted;  
his nemesis will bring him pain.

The sun banishes him with light,  
returning him to his sooty realm,  
shackling him until tomorrow's night.

*by Rieanne Gushulak*

Ste. Rose Collegiate (grade eight)  
Ste. Rose du Lac, Manitoba

# THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

## Who We Are

We become who we are by where we've been  
By what we've done and what we've seen  
By who we've met and what we've said  
By deciding which path we are to tread

By meditating on a thought  
By what we've received and what we've brought  
By thinking about events of the day  
By being ready for tomorrow, come what may

By thinking twice before we act  
By digging up some unknown fact  
By loving more than yesterday  
By forcing our fears to go away

By loving less than we will tomorrow  
By hoping there shall come no great sorrow  
By what we've touched and what we've tasted  
By hoping our future will not be wasted

With each thing that happens we become more defined  
We may live longer if we are kind  
With each word we think to speak  
We become, assuredly, more unique

*by Mackenzie Wall*

Partners in Education Program (grade nine)  
Powell River, British Columbia



# THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

## The Sea Foam

The sea foam comes and goes,  
cresting waves in curling froth,  
then disappearing way down low  
to appear on another green glass arch.  
A loss is a gain—a gain is a loss,  
but, oh, to watch the two  
be able to dance like that.  
Like the foam upon the sea,  
we surf the wave of life.

The desert skin is sewn with gold,  
with rustled crown  
and sandy feet.  
She cries—each tear a garnet falling down,  
to stop and shimmer  
in dawn's first glimmer,  
waiting for the morning's smile.

*by Michelle Parry*

Vancouver Waldorf School (grade ten)  
North Vancouver, British Columbia



# THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

## For the Alligator

*Hey, come on, try me.*

The alligator was standing intrepid,  
deep inside the jungle,  
hidden from the world, prepared to ambush,  
waiting to see the back of my head, flat like a stone.

In the muddy, gooey swamp, swimming in bog water,  
the alligator often soars up to the sky.  
It opens its mouth dreadfully,  
only to bite once.

Any man in this jungle  
cannot tame him.  
In the dawn, he dreams weak leaves  
touch him smoothly.  
White and soft, his stomach  
shall be revealed slightly.

Some days, with sounds of gunfire,  
hunters build up a fire for the victory,  
and soak their mustaches in the beer.  
Then, they will say the name fearfully.

You, the infamous animal.  
After death, you will be changed to precious leather,  
still boasting your disobedience,  
*The great name is alligator.*

**by Sunghun Lee**

Collège Prep International (grade eleven)  
Montréal, Québec



# THIRD-PRIZE WINNER

## Oblivion

I am drowning in the sea of blindness.  
My aspirations descend deep into the sea,  
yet the sea is my heart.  
My existence lingers in this eternal glow of darkness.  
So peaceful and delicate is its power,  
that I know not how to gain my freedom—  
it is a prison I willingly take refuge in,  
a place where dreams are safely kept,  
yet never will they see the spark of light.  
What is the price of my timid solitude?  
A shadow ashamed of light  
that earns the taste of life, long forgotten,  
which struggles with its stubbornness.  
There are no tears to be shed,  
nor memories to be revived.  
A choice has to be made:  
whether to impel the invisible into apparent  
or to endure the hollow emptiness

*by Mihaela Ichizli*

St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School (grade twelve)  
Hamilton, Ontario

