Special Thanks

The Faculty Editors wish to thank Student Senate for its continuous funding which supports Pegasus and the students who generously devoted their time to be a part of selecting the works that appear in this volume: Shawna Housefield, Carmen Melillo, Dawn Piscitelli, Jesse Allen, and Hannah Brown. Also, we would like to mention a special thanks to Pattraporn Likhitlerdrat and Pat Rasch for working tirelessly on the layout and design.
Pegasus

A Collection of Poetry, Fiction, Art and Design
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The editors of Pegasus are thrilled to introduce this third edition, which includes an especially diverse selection of poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction, and spectacular art and graphic design by our students during the 2006-2007 year. We are graciously indebted to the support of Student Senate, and to our English faculty and student contributors, for without their volunteer efforts, publication of the journal would not be possible.

Together with English faculty, students Jesse Allen and Hannah Brown helped to select the poetry and prose pieces you will find within this volume. In addition, our talented student, Pattraporn Likhitlerdrat, once again conceived the design and worked on the layout. This is the second volume of the magazine that radiates her brilliant and keen sense of design, and we editors are continually impressed by her eye and ability, and cannot thank her enough for her dedication to this collaborative journey we have again embarked on.

Writing in this issue was submitted mostly by students in a Creative Writing course in Spring 2007 and, while there are a few entries by students outside of this particular course, we cannot stress enough our desire to reach and reflect voices of a broader segment of our student population. We encourage students who write creatively to submit for publication consideration and hope all of our readers will help us in our goal of inspiring enthusiasm in students to share their work.

Finally, as you turn these pages, we hope you feel transported to a place where time drops away and you forget where you are sitting, no longer hearing the sounds around you—that the intense and potent images of the artwork and writing create a new experience in you.
A Perspective Drawing

Andrea Koran

We were drawn together.
Looking into each others' eyes,
no increment of measure could predict the outcome.

Intersecting viewpoints were not enough.
Even though things were on the level,
nothing lined up.

A fleeting twenty-twenty image skewed,
taught me something I knew I knew.

Guidelines for love are faint and few.
Hearts can't be drawn in perspective view.

Two Dimension

Rebecca Oliveras
Two Dimension
Potential

Dawn Piscitelli

You weigh
the possibilities
as though outcome
were a choice.
You listen to
the advice of friends;
shun your family,
knowing
that ultimately
the decision
will be your own.

A child is
limitless
potential

obliging you

Lisa Verdolini
Two Dimension
There in the dimly lit bathroom stood a fragile woman. She peered into the reflection of the glass, unable to recognize her own face. It looked worn and tired, and her once porcelain skin had betrayed her through the years, leaving behind sunspots and wrinkles in its place.

The woman leaned in closer towards the mirror and gazed deep into her own blue eyes as they swelled with tears. In a solitary outburst, she smashed her clenched fists against the reflection and dropped to her knees, weeping, when a young girl entered the room and quickly helped the woman to her bed nearby. The girl, whose eyes sparkled as blue as the woman’s said,

“Mom, why do you do this?”

The woman turned away and sobbed, embarrassed by her foolish actions. The woman’s sobbing subsided to snifflies, and the girl, looking into her mother’s eyes, said, “I love you, mom, we all love you.” With these words, the woman flung her arms around her daughter and held her closer and tighter than she had ever hugged anyone. The girl tucked the woman in and lay beside her on the bed. The woman’s head rested on her daughter’s chest as she swept her mother’s hair from her face. The woman looked up at her daughter and asked her to tell her a story.

The girl told the woman a story of a beautiful queen who had three breath-taking daughters and a handsome king. “The queen was kind and loving to all those who knew her, and they will miss her very much,” the girl said trembling. “Everyone will remember the queen as a beautiful, young maiden who was smart and kind and loving.” The girl’s lips quivered as her words disappeared into the air.

The girl looked down at her mother’s eyes, but they were shut, and the woman was resting peacefully. She carefully slid her arm from beneath the woman’s head and laid it to rest on the soft, white pillow. The girl tip-toed to the edge of the room, pausing for a brief moment in the doorway to glimpse back at her mother slumbering serenely in the white shroud of bed sheets.

A few hours later, the woman awoke to a gentle nudge and the familiar voice of the live-in nurse whispering, “Rebecca, wake up, it’s time for your chemotherapy.” The woman sat up in bed, smiled at her nurse and said, “My daughter thinks of me as a beautiful queen, and that is all that truly matters.”
her words
weightlessly march
through
the air
from tongue tip
to ear drum
with long winded cadence

a contrasting pair
of cupid's elite drums

the one two three beat

and the mismarching team
walked right left right
stopping
and going
to the onerhythmsound

metered by the tempo
of her hollow words
one heart skipped
to the one two three beat

while the other defected
to a world of simpler measure

where cupid's cherub-band remains
lonely and silent
and the pulse of our affection
no longer flutters
with the one two three beat
I am a three-dimensional container, with nothing inside but what you fill me with; sometimes I am full and strong, other times pushed to the point of collapse.

I started off healthy and happy, but over time I became too trusting of you; you never understood my part in your life, you used me to help you get your fix.

I am the acquaintance of the swell of smoke, now a dark shade of black; achromatic and toxic, with dreams of being benign, an old country road paved over with hot tar.
The Cask of Mrs. Plath
Shawna Housefield

Oh, Mrs. Plath,
How hard it must have been,
Expressing that seed,
Then the drops
To make it grow.

Oh, Mrs. Plath,
How heavy your parcel,
How tired you seemed,
Carrying your expanding purse
And the contents therein?

Oh, Mrs. Plath,
The fresh new bud
Drinks greedily
From the earth,
Warping the terrain as it grows.

Oh, Mrs. Plath,
Your clay is
Now a vessel,
A cask for wine,
A sunny place for bread to rise.

Oh, Mrs. Plath,
Was this your intention,
Or a scar
From a careless evening,
As a water stain on the fine table?
A Love of Nature

Spencer Hepburn

Morning dew graces your branches,
Wet and pallid.
Warm sun reflects from your eyes,
Glazed and twisted.
A gentle breeze rustles your canopy,
Wild and unkempt.
The scars on your trunk are covered with insects,
Tumid and rotten.
You cannot grow, you cannot flourish
I watered you too much.
Now you are dead, like all the others
In my backyard.
Comes in like a tornado, 
violent and destructive, 
metastasizing from the cloud above, 
destroying objects in its path.

Abnormal, irregular, odd, 
like a funhouse mirror, 
the deformed and blight version 
of the image that it sees.

Never-ending war 
breaking down a castle, 
capturing people from their homes 
to cage them like prisoners.

Conclusion of life 
is the only way to escape; 
otherwise, it is like a hydra 
whose legs keep growing back.

Equal opportunist, 
an attacker of any age, 
creeps around the corner 
waiting for the weak to go by,

Ruining lives—
taking victims—
stealing family—
plaguing the body—
the stagnant diagnosis.
**Jammin’ Wit’ Langston**  
*Carmen Mellilo*

We’re jammin’ wit’ Langston  
Hearin’ Harlem play the blues  
Off of rooftops the caterwauls  
Echo through the alley  
Night  
After night  
Comin’ from that little jazz joint on the corner  
Y’all know the one  
Where Fats and Louis and ‘Retha have sung  
And Dizzy once played and Miles just stood  
And a boy named Charlie Parker grew up in the hood  
Where Glenn Miller perfected his sound  
And people, they would come from all around  
Just to hear that jazz music, feel it in their souls  
But that little joint it ain’t open no more  
They’re closing it down; it’s a damn shame  
But I guess there ain’t nobody to blame  
Kids just ain’t got jazz in they ears no more  
No swing in they steps, no bop in they drawers  
No solos, no blues, no VII-flat-V’s  
No more cool cats or daddy-o’s  
The Jazz men are sayin’ good-bye  
But we can still toast them  
It’s not too late yet  
We can still hear them  
They play in our heads  
Feel that? The bass riff

It crawls up the spine  
It’s bumpin’ and it’s thumpin’  
We’re ready to rhyme  
Next bring in the piano  
Let’s band on those keys  
Let’s lay down the scales, Do So Do Mi,  
Let’s see what the horn player sees  
He’s sittin’ up now, his eyes on the drums  
The drummer nods to him,  
This number’s begun  
The piano starts playing,  
The bass riff it rags,  
The drummer starts rolling  
Then gives in with a CRASH  
Go cymbals, bring on the Toms and the Kick!  
Let’s keep that snare going, 2/4, double quick!  
Now look at that horn blower, he’s smilin’, it’s good  
He looks just like Wynton, his trumpet rests by his side  
He’s a jazz city cowboy, he can draw anytime  
His trumpet’s his six shooter  
And he’s taking none alive  
The horn goes to his lips,  
He’s about to start playin’  
The number’s gotten rollin’,  
It feels so Alive!  
Here we’re jammin’ wit’ Langston  
All are welcome, come inside.
Being Puerto Rican

Christina Suarez

There was no time in my childhood when I felt more Spanish than when I was making pasteles with my grandmother. In grade school, while my non-Hispanic classmates dreamt of eating ham or turkey for the holidays, I dreamt of spending hours grinding, simmering, wrapping, and boiling the pastels, anticipating the first bite.

The process of making pastels is a long one, which requires many ingredients that could not be found in my predominantly black neighborhood in South Philly. A few weeks before Christmas, my mother would send me to the Spanish market in el barrio in North Philly, a trip I always regarded with apprehension. Riding the bus from my rundown neighborhood to the even more rundown neighborhood of North Philly took me through the high class section of Center City. Gone were the abandoned buildings covered in graffiti. In their place, huge colonial style houses decorated the newly paved streets. People in Armani suits hurried down the streets, ignoring the homeless people that flocked to them in hopes of scoring some change.

My elementary school was located in this primarily white neighborhood. My classmates were the sons and daughters of lawyers, doctors, and politicians. They lived in massive condos and vacationed in Greece and Italy. In school, I was an outsider. In my older brother’s hand-me-downs and ten dollar sneakers, I could never belong. However, I felt more at ease here than in North Philly. Here, no one would doubt that I was Puerto Rican. Here, I would wow my classmates in Spanish class, rolling my r’s perfectly. Here, among all the white faces, I could pretend I was not only half Puerto Rican.

Through the bus windows, I could see the city change as I left the upper-crust neighborhood and rode into el barrio. The beautiful architecture of Center City was replaced by nondescript row homes, liquor stores, and little tiendas. I searched the mostly Spanish store signs for familiar words. I had learned to navigate the streets relying on the colors and pictures of the store signs instead of my poor Spanish skills. On my way to the Spanish market, I would pass men in long trench coats to who if you paid the slightest attention would pull you into the alley and try to sell you stolen gold watches, purses, and necklaces. Keeping my head down, I would turn the corner, and head towards the Spanish market. Salsa music would blare from the open doors, and I would have to pass by the old men sitting on the stairs, smoking cigars and playing dominos. I would make sure not to look them either.
Making my way down the narrow aisles, I would produce a list of ingredients that my grandmother had scribbled, half in English and half in Spanish. Relying on memory, I would collect the brightly colored packages I needed and make my way to the front of the store. An eighteen year-old Puerto Rican girl worked behind the cash register. Her long black hair hung to her waist, accentuating her dark eyes and olive skin. Compared to her, I barely looked half Puerto Rican. As I spilled my ethnic ingredients onto the counter, the girl would smack her gum loudly, “Making Pasteles?” in Spanish. I would answer yes, in English, hoping that she wouldn’t continue to speak in Spanish. But she always did. Once I had paid for my groceries, I would make my journey home, clutching the heavy bags.

As was tradition, exactly one week before Christmas, my grandmother would decide it was time to make pastels. My grandmother, mother, aunt, and I would crowd into our tiny kitchen and take our places. My mother and aunt were in charge of simmering the meat. My grandmother and I would grind countless plantains and yucca roots into masa. After an hour of grinding, my back ached and my fingertips were raw and scratched. My grandmother would play an old cassette tape of Spanish music. Guttural Island music would fill the kitchen as we began to form an assembly line. First, my mother would lay out a sheet of cooking paper; she would place a dollop of red oil onto the paper and slide it to my aunt who would then put a spoonful of the masa onto the oil. Next, I would place a spoonful of the meat, olives and chilies onto the masa and my grandmother would take the paper and fold it carefully into a perfect bundle. Then she would tie it up with string and place it to the side. We continued like this for hours, creating a hundred tiny bundles of pasteles.

Bits of Spanish conversation would float around me, mingling with the Island music. Every once in a while, the music would slow down enough for me to catch some of the lyrics, “My island calls to me...this is where I belong.” My grandmother would tell us stories of “La Isla del Encanta,” the enchanted island. Her eyes would twinkle as she spoke of climbing coconut trees, catching coqui frogs in the rainforest and drinking guayaba nectar at the beach. My grandmother’s stories made me long for Puerto Rico, for the world that was half mine. Being half Puerto Rican made me feel like part of my identity was stolen from me. I depaired at the thought of being around other Spanish people, when I should feel most at home with my own raza. But every Christmas, while listening to the island music and biting into the pasteles that I helped to make, I felt an overwhelming sense of belonging. I truly felt Puerto Rican.
La Guitar

Rebecca Gilbert

I am an hour glass.
My body finely tuned
and polished,
my curves seduce
he who wants to play me.
The warm glow of my golden wood
entices his touch,
and my neck tingles
as his hands glide
delicately across my nape.
His hands and I
tangle as one,
producing an erotic melody.
My strings tremble,
as I moan a pulsing tune,
and they drip
with each stroke
of his sweaty fingers.
Faster and harder he plays,
until my strings release
and his hands gently
set me down.
Used.

April Chateauneuf
Oil
Paul J. Hardy

I am
I was.
I enhance
I detract.

I am the pillar of what is
I am the rubble of what isn't.

I am growth
I am stagnation.

I am lessons learned
I am chances lost.

I am the warmth of memories
I am the chill of spite.

I am gratitude
I am regret.

I am an ally
I am an enemy.

I am hope
I am defeat.

I am a life complete
I am a doorway to death.

I give
I take.

You choose what I offer
I offer you no choice.
What Color, Enmity?

Dawn Piscitelli

Whiteness is a slap in the face, smacking of unripe things. Like green gooseberries plump with juicy sweet promise, or caterpillars squished beneath uncaring feet. Still there is a sinister allure in the newness, the purity, the alabaster inaccessibility, taunting my tenuous resolve, defying me to compose, summoning with sirens’ song, inviting me to ruin on the rocks. Your ivory tower has no door. But to defile that nievous innocence, to indelibly mar, scar, enter, its’ cunning sterility brings to fruition the ruination of what was once virginal yet loathsome to me.
Poetry Forced Upon Me
Shawna Housefield

"Poetry!
You tightly wrapped box.
You stifle my vision,
Confine my thoughts.
May this paper catch fire,
Or the ink dry up.
You, the lavatory of a great mansion,
You are a broom closet,
When all I want is to stretch my legs.
Oh, give me pages and pages
To write prose,
Not a single leaf
I could use to blow my nose.
I can't breathe with you:
For lack of space.
I must edit and revise
And edit again,"
You, poet,
Who must ramble on,
Perhaps give it a try,
And see what can be done.
Succinct, concise,
I say I am,
Each line holds meaning,
As if words were dollars
And you were poor.

Dribble Drabble,
"As he walked into the room . . ."
Use them carefully
They'll say much more.
Perhaps you have something, I said.
But complicates things.
There's not much margin for error,
Or space to build up a theme.
Poetry replied,
"Do you write to create,
To manipulate words with skill,
Or to fill up your time
Or have something to see?
Practice poetry to enhance
Meaning in your words,
Make cheese from the milk;
Writing otherwise is absurd."
And with that,
Poetry opened my mind.
Daughter of the Night

Christina Suarez

Sweet Millay, daughter of the night,
In fury you came, and left the same,
You lived and loved in great plight,
With pen in hand, you led the fight.

Unwilling to live the expected life,
Queen of the dishpan, protected wife,
You freed yourself from the chains,
And lived a life against the grain.

The feminine movement should not forget
The bright flame that would not let
The fierce oppressor extinguish the light,
Which rebelled against the day
And lived in the night.
Dictator’s Affection

Amber Parr

He is a captain running a tight ship. He marches onward, barking orders: do this, do that. We are his crewmen, waiting to serve him. We line up together to listen, and rapidly take action. We don’t want to hear his coarse roar.

He is a chief with authority over us. He defends his scars with words of wisdom. As his tribe, we let the tales fall upon our hears. His determined voice jolts us into perfection.

He imposes high standards, to ensure we will endure a versatile walk through life. He is loyal and firm. He is our father, whose love shines throughout the boat and among the village.
Turmoil
Sara Maietta

There’s a storm in my brain today; the wind is blowing my thoughts everywhere. One is in a pond of frustration, another stuck in a tree of forgetfulness. The rain is flooding my streets of motivation. My inspiration drowning with every drop of rain. My confidence soaked, too weighed down to move. The weather makes me angry and tired; I’m too burdened to go jumping in any puddles. I’m anxious for the sun, but it has been too long.
A Cart-Pusher in the Parking Lot

Holden Palmieri

Three hours until a break,
no relief or rest in sight until then;
no resting here,
and this worker, freshly showered, groomed hair
gelled, warmed up and ready,
in a large—pavement, yellow vest—death trap
of noisy and metal shopping carts.
The pushing: like death, pain, like blades.
Among cars, on plastic, beside the big steel rails,
the words: Please Return Your Carts Here
Thank You And Have A Wonderful Day.
A long day, enough pain, for a kid.
Victim
Christina Suarez

O lovely oak tree,
How you have blossomed.
The seeds of change
Have sprouted once more.
Your lovely branches
Sway in the gentle breeze;
Like outstretched arms,
You dance with the wind
So gracefully.

O precious oak tree,
How you have changed.
The violent winds have ravaged
Your fragile limbs.
Your emerald leaves
Abandon your branches;
One by one they fall
Until your beauty is no more.
Silently you endure
This great betrayal.

O mighty oak tree,
How you have fallen.
Where is the warmth
You once possessed?
You once danced
In the shimmering sun;
Now your body is cold,
Your spirit broken.
What you were
You are no more.
Ballad of 9/11
Rebecca Gilbert

“Daddy, please, may I go with you
To work in New York City
And ride the train to hail a cab
Among skyscrapers tall and pretty?”

“Fine, pumpkin, fine, we’ll spend some time,
For we haven’t in a while
And I’ll say, ‘This is my daughter, Abby,’
I know they will all smile.”

“Oh, Daddy, thanks, you won’t regret it.
Today is a day to be proud,
We’ll walk the streets of New York City,
Like ants in a marching crowd.”

“Now Abby, dear, you listen here,
Hold daddy’s hand real tight
And look both ways before you cross;
Look left and then look right.”

She recited her mother’s warning
Before crossing every street,
She looked left, then right, then left again;
These words she did repeat.

Her mother would be proud to see
Her baby listened well,
But her baby never made it home
When both the towers fell.

Her mother never found her baby girl.
Forever she’ll wonder why
She told her to look left and right,
But never towards the sky.
Mad HaTer’s Tea Party

Morgan

I’ll sit at your table,
Sipping the tea laced with government resentment.
Give them another riddle, Mad Hatter,
Another bone to drool over.

Wonderland is prey to the beasts,
Though we’re in the looking glass, assuming that lie.
Shout out loud! Reform ideals!
Beyond that liberty for only those who afford it.

The cut strings of the marionettes,
Porcelain faces covered in filth,
Struggling against the political gravity,
They’ll tie themselves to your fingers.

We’ll carry your banner,
Bathed in the red ink of opposition.
Lead us into that numbered face.
Hiyaku! We’re more of yours each day.

Riddle me this, a dictator’s circus,
Riddle me that, a variant bud.

Riddle me this, customized landscape.
Riddle me that, a deformed bud.

Dance now, look towards the exit,
I’m in step by your side.
Hold your katana close to hand.
We trust you to get us through this grime.
Dance now, look towards tomorrow.
Rebuild the model of freedom.

Dance now, look towards the exit.
The grass can’t get greener buried in mud.
Dance now, look towards the future.
Sayonara Sayonara.
Look, and I’m in step by your side.
Wilderness Walks

Chris Brechlin

Brilliant wilderness, red with life, boldly blinding apperception. I cannot take but small steps in the dark, for sight lends nothing to the rhythm of the heart, and I foolishly follow you deep into the ray-less cavern, watching our desires and dreams decompose under the powerful breath of rapture.

Together we glide, never touching the ground, while eternity lights the road we have found. The words collide on the tip of my tongue, like the sound of a lyric lost in a song.

A perfect world would not bear witness to the fading red and yellow leaves. Time and gravity have plucked our sylvan souls from the sky, planting us securely among the diminishing flora.

The air did not delude when we entered the wood. The secrets of passion we buried deep within inspired the wilting petals of our sentiment.
Soul Kitchen
Michael Collins

I remember the crowd was waiting for grandma in her kitchen. Muted footsteps and riled laughter scared me away, but the warm, sweet smells of southern food (corn bread, sweet potato pie and the like) seduced me up. My little body bounced off legs and thighs until I reached her sweet potato pie, like a mouse reaching the end of the maze. I ate around the dry and deprived crust until I was eventually caught.

Digital Illustration

Joe Robison
Digital Illustration

Noel Something
Digital Illustration
Listen to Better Music

*Holden Palmieri*

The same pulsating bass line.
The same hi-hats and snare hits.
The same thing we’ve heard before in a slightly different package.

Tell us about how you sell drugs.
Tell us about how you treat women.
Tell us how many people you’ve killed, we’ll buy you a mansion and a new car.

Keep on selling this to kids.
Make more money than doctors.
Keep on shooting each other, then hope they stitch you back together.

There’s nothing new on the radio.
Submission Guidelines

Writing will be accepted through Spring semester.

Poetry: three poems or two pages.
Fiction: maximum five pages (double-spaced).
Creative non-fiction: maximum five pages (double-spaced).

Format:
Work must be typed and submitted both electronically and on paper copy. Cover sheet with writer’s name, address, telephone number and e-mail should be attached to submission. For more information, contact Christine Ruggiero at cruggiero@mxcc.commnet.edu