Zephyr 2011 is presented to you by

Heidi LaMoreaux
Robin Kearsley-Luke
Stacey Pelton
Jeff Nickel
Lauren Allison
John Neylan
Maggie Ruden
Jennifer Fowles
Melissa Miller
Jaclyn Bianchi
Cristi Mac
Jill Hansell
Lisa Sluss

Cover Art by Ashley Betando
Cambridge in Camouflage

We are not delicately decorated
With insignificant insignias on our lapels.
Instead we carry pins of pride and anti-prejudiced,
Pure and pulling the weight of perseverance.
We wear no uniforms but the universal,
Tales of truth and talons that tear at global terror.
We carry books that help us grow and groom our way of learning.
The bottom lines bleed together at the end of some bothersome days.
But we are the mind molders, the revolutionists bound
for meaningful memories and change that chance has against us.
We are more than the ones who pretend to hold the harvest keys of gold and glitter.
We know the hassles and halos of life,
within the harrowing hacksaws of hardships and heroes.
We are the hailstorm of Hutchins.
-Jenniffer Fowles

- Doreen Best
Time Waits for No Man

It was the top of the hour and the man who had been scouring the town for the perfect shop suddenly heard something that made him pause and listen carefully. Before he knew it, he was following the assortment of bells, music, and chimes that he could hear coming from down the street. Soon he found himself standing in front of an old-fashioned shop, and he only waited a moment before opening the door.

Though the bell rang above the door, announcing the arrival of a customer, no employee appeared. Even after the man called “hello,” no one came and after observing his surroundings he began to weave his way through the daunting collection of clocks that filled the store.

After having taken a few steps into the store he started making his way towards a counter that he could see through a break in the forest of woodwork. He had almost made it when suddenly a beautiful young woman came out of a dark storeroom. As she stepped behind the counter the light that was pouring through a nearby window produced a halo around her head, lighting up stray wisps of hair that framed her face.

“Can I help you?”
“Yes,” the man said, “I’m looking for a clock for my wife.”
“Is it for any special occasion?”
“Yes. It’s for her birthday and she’s been hinting that a clock would look beautiful in our dining room.”

The girl stared at the man for a moment, taking in his graying hair, his business suit and the fedora that he held in his hand. Finally she spoke,

“I think I know what you want. Follow me.”
She led him towards the front of the store, passing up the new watches and clocks for the older styles. They wove their way through grandfather clocks, musical clocks, quartz clocks, and lantern clocks.

When they eventually came to a stop they were standing in front of a delicate mantel clock.
“She still has plenty of time left in her and she’s been treated with care.”
“I’ll take her. She’s beautiful.”
“My grandfather thought so too. He’s the one that took care of her,” she said as she carried the clock back to the counter, her ivory hands standing out against the dark wood.

“Your family owns the store?”
“Yes.”
“So clocks literally run in your family?”
The girl smiled slightly, “You could say that.”

They were almost back to the counter when a clock began to mark the hour.

The girl noticed the man looking puzzled as he glanced at his watch.

“Don’t pay any attention. It’s just the cuckoo clock. It goes off at all of hours of the day. My mom said it reminded her of her sister.”
“Do you work here with your parents?”
“No, they’ve passed on.”
“Oh, I’m sorry.”
“That’s okay. It’s a dying business. We won’t be around much longer.”
“People are always going to be needing clocks. You’ll stay in business.”
“Not if there’s no one left to run it.”
“But you’re young you have plenty of time to marry and teach the family trade.”
“I don’t think so. My time is almost up.”
“You don’t know that.”
“But I do know it. My time is almost up.” She repeated.

The man wasn’t quite sure how to reply to this so he awkwardly said,

“Yes, well, if I ever need another clock I’ll stop by, or if my friends need one I’ll be sure to send them to you.”

She smiled sadly and said
“Thank you. I hope your wife has a good birthday.”
“Thanks. I’ll see you later. Bye.”
“Bye.”

As the man walked towards the door he turned to look back at the young woman who still stood by the counter, her hand plucking at her crescent moon necklace. He started down the street, but didn’t get far before realizing that he had let his fedora on the counter.

As he entered the shop he called out “I’m back. I forgot my hat.” He made his way towards the back, surprised that she didn’t respond. When he was finally at the counter he stopped short, shocked by the sight before him.

A clock stood where the young woman had been and as the man remained frozen in place his eyes were drawn to the intricate filigree around the face and the familiar ivory color of the hands.

But what truly made his hands turn cold was the pendulum that was swaying back and forth. Marking time, one minute after another. Ticking out eternity in the shape of a crescent moon.

-Allison Hart
Dreams

Hold you in my arms at night
I'll hold you close, and I'll hold you tight
I'll close my eyes and I believe we just might
Leave this bed and out of sight.

We fly out the window, into the sky, on a whim
We land on a cloud, and hold onto its brim.
We're floating and soaring into a world of no worry
There's no room to look down upon the people in a hurry.
They're hustling and bustling and creating a craze
We're too content on our cloud to get caught up in their haze.

I grab your hand and as we jump off
We slide down a rainfall of silk ribbon cloth.
We slide and we ride down this long winding path
Til we finally reach a warm shimmering bath.
Bubbly and sudsy we soak in its heat
A waterfall of champagne trickles from a creek.

There's no one around it's only us in this heaven
We know we've made it and we know we've attained it
We're being lifted up into the orange sunrise above,
Hand in hand, wrapped in one another, never been more in love.

-Madeline Steel

There once was a man
who lived in a land
and he had no hand
and he went like this:
WEEEERRRGGGHHHH!
The man's name was Charles.
His beard reached down to his toes,
which was sometimes a bother when he sewed.
He refused to eat anything but corn,
NPR and PBS were his porn.
He was somewhat of a weird fellow,
but for being misunderstood, he was quite mellow.
One day he decided to travel to India
after watching Slumdog Millionaire.
He met a girl there,
with a bindi on her head and a ring in her nose.
He told her to pose
while he embroidered a portrait of her.
They fell in love of course,
there was no need to use force.
They decided to move to Iceland
where Charles started a Reggae band.
He knitted sweaters with his wife,
and could not have been happier with his life.

-Emily Hanson
"Tell me I can do this," I whisper into the pitiful embarrassing darkness with no intentions in mind, simply the sake of hearing myself speak.

The emptiness of my bedroom lends no comfort to my request; the dull hum of my computer a graceful ambient noise complimenting the silence of my scale while I look down in fear at the number between my feet. It is night and I plan to lose another forty pounds by May. It's got to be the strangest feeling in the world to never have experienced being truly thin, truly beautiful, and then suddenly to be able to shop in any store. It's completely overwhelming at first but then there's this strange wave of sadness as one looks at the front windows of all the 1-3-5 stores and realizes she's not part of that club yet, but could be, with some work. The only thing is, the more weight that comes off, the better I should be feeling about myself; but that sort of confidence that I know is healthy to have seems only farther away now, simply because with each dropped dress size I feel even fatter and three times more unappealing. Each time I step on this scale the number I see, although a lesser one, still isn't good enough. It's like I won't be happy until I'm at that dream number, that number that would put me in the desired size, would make me feel beautiful and turn me into one of those pretentious shoppers with the heels and the designer purses.

The truth is I have always wanted this, and only a few months ago realized how to attain it. I mean, years of hating myself and crying about myself, feeling the disrespect and the hatred of so many people while the insults were thrown like scorching wake-up calls into me and around me; all this and just a few months, mere months, I've changed who I am. The person I see in the bathroom mirror every morning is starting to look like a girl and not a mammoth, like a young adult and not a refrigerator. It is completely impossible to describe the sheer fantastic nature of it all. I mean, I might actually be able to enter college a normal sized person, not known as the fat girl. Of course, I realize I might be dreaming. I should mention the cruel nightmares I've been having, in which I sit down at a gorgeous restaurant and gorge myself on things I haven't eaten in so long that I've forgotten the taste of. In one I sat down to a plate filled with toast, olive bread I think, cut into triangles and smeared with pesto, with melted cheese and sundried tomatoes. And naturally, I ate the entire thing. And the whole time I'm dreaming this, there's that horrifying inescapable sensation that happens in some dreams, where one has the feeling that it's not a dream, it's actually happening and you're gonna get fat all over again. I always wake up the next morning feeling sickened and scared, because my worst fear is eating until I gain it all back. Feeling an urge similar to a recovering crack addict to consume my poison I am terrified of feeling so satisfied that I fall into the same hole all over again. Not eating too much, just eating the wrong things at the wrong times. Let me just say that another of my dreams involved tacos with beef and sour cream (two things I have cut out and will never eat again) with a platter of assorted hand cut salsas. So these dreams mean I'm bound to break at any moment? Or does my subconscious just think that I don't have the resolve? It's funny, each time I wake up I think I actually feel stronger. During the night these stupid food panics happen and during the day I'm back to my raw fruits-and-vegetables lean dairy-and-protein grind, where I realize it's been upwards five months since I've actually drank soda. But in fact it's even more gratifying after one of those stressful nights.

I would suppose that the word humiliating would best describe what I feel when I look in the mirror every day. I see this person, know this person because naturally it's me, but the features of me, the way my chin looks and the way my hair relentlessly frizzes because I don't have the time in the morning to flat iron the ends, the way my make-up doesn't look right some days because I'm in a hurry and even the way fngers look while I fix my daily morning cup of tea. All this contributes to the word—humiliating. I am humiliated that I have to do this to myself. I have to worry about this, that it's a top priority. I know that half of my problems with depression and anxiety would disappear if I looked how I want to look and this is essentially the reason that I chose to do this in the first place. I can't bear to be unhappy any longer, and logically it just makes sense that I have to do this for myself. But at what expense?

But with any horrifying social misstep that I encounter, the scale waits for me nights, when I pull the blinds in my room and strip to nakedness, since I have a thing about weighing clothing along with myself. It's pathetic, really, my cat will sometimes be sitting on the bed opposite where I stand, and curl up, close his eyes, not even notice me. I stand on the scale and watch my cat, force my hands over the flesh of my upper thighs in disgust, curling my lips, grimacing in the ugliness. My hair hangs down in my face, limp and tussled from hours of homework on a virtually empty stomach. Around eight pm, it is dark everywhere in this room. I am an emo kid for ten minutes every night of every week of every year now, because I stand naked on my scale, presenting myself to its holiness— the counter of pounds and points. The less points one has, the closer she is to her goal. And I let myself stand here and realize that the cat could care less, and learn quickly that people could probably care less either. I am doing this for myself. It is doing this so that maybe, after all these years of insults and humiliation and judgment, I can finally feel like I'm beautiful.

Because if I'm not beautiful I am invisible; and if I'm invisible I might as well be dead.

-Valen Dudley
The River

I took it away, I gave it up.
All for a summer away,
What the fuck?
What the hell did I do?
Since day one I loved you.
I was curious, I was fake.
I was dumb to partake
I was selfish, I was drunk.
I put your heart in a funk,
I threw it out like junk,
And locked it away in a trunk.
But the trunk was too small,
Made noises from down the hall.
Her reality was not a rose,
Like a model practicing her pose,
It was the mirror she chose,
And brought his trust to a close...

But their story, it still goes.
Down a river it flows,
It's bending, it's turning
But the river keeps on flowing
And it won't stop from growing.
There is no dam in sight
Though it's bends seem to ignite
A part of his soul where he hides fright,
Yet they both see a light.
She holds it in her palm.
They know it brings calm.
I'll wear it on my sleeve
I always meant it to show
You gave me your love
And I want it to grow
I won't let it go under
That river's depth that you fear
The floods of the past will never reappear.

-Madeline Steel

To my dearest Clint Eastwood:

I love you so much.
Every character you play,
Whether it be Walt or Harry,
Makes my heart melt.
My one complaint,
The one thing that makes me sad,
Is the fact that you could be my dad's dad.
Your age, Clint,
It's far too high.
I know you cannot help it,
But neither can I!
But I am willing to look past it
In order to complete our love.
Let's run away together,
To sit on a porch and smoke.
That life is my dream.
Only you, Clint, can make me complete.

-Emily Hanson
And like God loved me for the first time that night, he parked in the small dark corner.
He sighed, opened his mouth like he was going to say something, then sighed again.
"You know, I'm going off to school in a week or two."
There is no God.
"That's too bad."
I had left my hand lying on the space next to the stick shift and he grabbed it quickly.
"I said that's too bad."
I repeated myself only because I wasn't sure he had heard me. I stared into him while he squeezed my hand, waiting patiently for an answer, for any utterance.
"Have you ever..."
It was so dark that his words seemed almost disembodied so I strained my eyes to make out his face. Somehow I knew instantly what he was going to say and while trying to calculate the level of his sheer audacity I found him leaning in; at first I was hoping he was going to kiss me but instead I heard him whisper, "Had sex?"
Being a teenager is perhaps the most humiliating experience of a person's life.
"I wanted to," I began but couldn't finish. How much information is too much to tell a boy? Especially in regard to the matters of sexual experience? Do they even deserve to know at all? "I wanted to, but I told you she never loved me."
"You might never know what you really want until you try it."
In a strange way, like a sort of contortionist, he began moving closer, arching his body over the stick shift.
"You might just need to be loved to feel love."
He was so incredibly warm; his arm thrown around my shoulder, his hands falling across my back. I fell speechless because he had already taken the opportunity to kiss me; with nothing to say or do anymore I had no care at all as to what happened. I wonder what it felt like for him to kiss a presumed lesbian.
"We should have sex," he said, quietly.
I had pulled away, my hand on the back of his neck.
"We should have sex right now."
And there wasn't anything left to say because I found myself undoing his dress pants, feeling filthy and spontaneous. I kept telling myself I would only be young once. How many times can one do this with the frivolity and carelessness that comes with youth? With the flexibility and ease of young muscles?
"I barely know you."
He moved on top of me, pulling open my left leg, hiking up my dress.
"That's the fun of it," he whispered. "I can be whoever you want me to be."
"I would imagine but my thigh is being crushed into the stick shift."
Laughing, we climbed over the seats to the back, where he laid me down like a trophy; and for the first time I was the one without any answer. Youth hit me like a tidal wave while he struggled with my underwear, my heart beating quickly while I concentrated on stifling the mild panic coursing through my body. I kicked them off anyway while I tore at his clothes, swearing to myself I would only let this happen once, promising that I would cling to modesty in the future.
"If anything happens you won't be able to contact me," his voice was so close to my ear I swear I could feel the vibrations of his tongue against his teeth. "I can't be here if you need me."
“I won’t allow myself to need you.”

My words were simply ripped movie lines. I find myself still possessing the habit of quoting scripts when under terrible stress.

He fit himself in; and it occurred to me that this experience should be the tie-breaker of my entire future lifestyle so I took notes: the feeling of his hands all over me, his breathing, my breathing, not being able to hate it, trying to deny how good it felt.

It took me a minute to get my bearings. It took me longer to fathom the shedding of the child I once had been. He plowed me in every sense of the word and it wanted to hurt but never once was it terrible.

Perhaps there was something meaningful about someone wanting me, in any way, maybe just for a farewell fucking of a hometown girl, but something, anyway; of the sheer desire to split me open like this.

I then realized something about the previous love of my life and that something is that she would never, ever, have a penis. Or hands larger than mine, or a low voice to whisper putrid things to me with; or any aspect of a man, my own opposite sex.

Comprehending this, I was overcome with the dogged relief of liberation and an orgasm.

He held my hips down, firing, without really knowing what was going on I just wanted him out, it felt like he shouldn’t be there; like I should’ve been alone experiencing this for myself.

Out of breath and exhausted, he laughed at my breathing, and when he leaned in to kiss me, I turned so he caught my neck.

To this day I have no idea why I would dodge a kiss. I have no idea why I was in that dark parking place at 7-11 in a formal dress and heels; I can just remember myself trembling, so tired but with no idea why.

He sat me up against him like a toy that’s fallen off the shelf; propping my head on his chest with our legs knotting like some sort of screwed up pose from some sappy chick flick.

“Does that make things any clearer?”

“You’re very insensitive.”

“I just like to help people.”

“You’re not exactly a guardian angel though.”

He held me roughly, and I became sensitive, somewhat sore, completely pissed off but painfully ecstatic.

“Then what am I?”

“You’re a tie-breaker.”

Leaning back into him with more force; his hands traveled to my waist.

“A tie-breaker?”

“If I liked this, would you assume I was in love with you?”

My back was killing me and his hands were traveling farther and farther down my body, but I didn’t care enough to reach down to move them.

“I would assume you weren’t gay.”

“That’s where this tie-breaker comes in.”

Time passed and I let him feel me. I imagined I was dreaming; like I’d find myself waking up forever cursed as the borderline dowdy lesbian teen writer, with the long hair and the soft voice. It’s like I shed something; something dirty and terrible that needed to die and this spontaneous sex somehow wiped it away.

“Would you call what we did a raunchy fuck, or making love?”

“Somewhere in the middle.”

His fingers were inside of me and I plucked them out; suddenly feeling in control.

“You know if we do anything else I’ll love you too much.”

“We’re alike, you know. We have a lot of shit in our lives this might have sorted out.”

“Or just fucked up even more.”

A car came into the parking lot; I remember; the one car that came in the whole time. Its headlights shone like a searchlight into the back window; I glanced down and saw the liquid reminder of our teenaged wretchedness. Protection, I thought. We weren’t using any protection.

“Don’t say that,” he said. “Don’t go around thinking you have to be something you’re not.”

“My mother wants to believe I’m gay. I liked this. I loved her, too. I’m telling you, I’ve lost friends over this bullshit.”

“You should never care about what other people think.”

“We need to go back.”

Instead of climbing through the front seats I was opening doors, too afraid to move more than I had to; fixing my dress and retrieving my underwear from somewhere stuffed behind a seat. Picking up the pieces of something that in most people’s minds should never be allowed to happen; he found his keys and we left, silent as the dead.

It’s strange how sex just comes upon you like some sort of bacteria gnawing out its escape, like some sort of dormant virus that becomes inflamed, infected the minute someone stimulates it.

It remains unknown exactly how I literally grew up in one night; inner knowledge and empowerment emerging in my tired mind, metaphorically attaching itself to the stream of nebulous light from the buzzing 7-11 sale sign clawing through the car window. It’s strange how time passes and I can relay these events back to anyone who wants to listen; handing out exaggerated snippets like bits of candy, something to bite on, to savor.

Not every day do people get the chance that I did. A make or break situation with no ties, simply an “if you try it, then buy it” instance.

The funny thing is that I expected an answer to come swirling in front of me, knocking me on the head; something that would let me know who I was and who I loved. After all these years I still don’t like the word “bisexual.” I suppose I love who I can, and have sex when I want to. The two things are separate and intensely malleable objects, able to combine and rip apart at the possessor’s will, sometimes fusing together in magnificent unison, sometimes flitting with each other at a distance, glue dripping from the sides, waiting to be stuck together. I learned this concept that night, while we emerged from inside the car into my darkened driveway, my insides feeling tender and foreign; my ankles hurting from my heels.

I suppose I should be grateful now for the memory. I suppose I should be grateful for the two dollars I still had in my pocket from a Slushie that never was.

-Valen Dudley
Dearest Gina,

Put that magazine down. Turn the TV off. Don't take that movie so literally. Don't you dare pay attention to these fallacies until you understand that these images you are seeing are not worth you having low self-esteem; nothing and nobody is worth that. You are perfect the way you are. I know you think other girls have an easier time living in their own skin, but it's not true. All your friends and, unbelievably I'm sure, your family, are dealing with the same pressure you are to look skinny and flawless, but nobody will win. Nobody can win because these images are fabricated to sell unimportant products that you will go on to buy over and over because you think it will make you more desirable, but do your best to resist. Don't head down this road of looking in the mirror and wanting to scream, cry or run away. Don't stand back in a crowd because you think the skinny girl next to you is more deserving of attention than you. Gina, you shine just the way you are. Down the road, females and males are going to make you feel bad and undeserving of love because you are overweight, but I need you to be strong and ignore the painful words. I need you to trust that this is not how all people will feel, and you don't ever need to believe any kind of message that tells you that you should be different than you are. You are also eventually going to see terrible shows on television in which young girls drink too much, dress too revealing and give their bodies to too many different men in order to find value in themselves. These shows will you tell you it's reality, but I need you to know it's nothing even close to the real world. Never take your clothes off simply to feel special. You don't need to flaunt your chest or behind to fit in, and don't ever let a guy treat you like an object. Don't be touched until you're ready. The only person you belong to is you, Gina. That body is yours only, and it's beautiful and perfect in every possible way. You are capable of so many things in life, and letting society's impossible vision of a real woman stand in your way of thinking will be devastating, so do your best to avoid this.

Gina, please know that you are exactly what you need to be. Stay strong, and always strive to be an independent thinker. And when your honesty tends to get you in trouble, always remember that at the end of the day, you stayed true to yourself, and that's all that matters. So continue to choose to see what's genuine in this world, and don't ever let a fictitious image give you the desire to change anything about your perfect little self.

Un abrazo,
Gina Goodman
She

There is a famous song that says there she goes.
I see that girl in my mind as she lives her life
Despite having foes
She has such compassion, a big heart for all
Even those who split themselves from her and tear her soul apart.
She has dreams of one day turning those weird glares and nasty looks
Into inspiration for journal entries or maybe even a book.
She dreams of flying away or escaping her past
Because her future is going to be nothing short of beautiful and vast.
Her mom used to say life is to be grasped and enjoyed fully every day
You are in control despite people making you feel gray.
She is my inner voice and is in every step
Guiding me through the crowds and trivial things
Since she knows that through the dark clouds, there is always the sun.
So with the hard work comes the fun
Because no one said life would be easy, but it will be worth it one day.
You are not meant to obey, you are meant to live and cease.
For she is me, she is you, she is us all
Holding on to a future that promises us that even though we are small, we are in control.
This world may seem like a black hole but seize it, because all we have is now.

-Jordan O'Halloran

Excuse me world,
But can you stop like that more often?
Can you let us be free?
Can you let us go out on a whim?
Let us feel as though nothing can stop us.
No time can age us.
No worries make us fearful of the future.
Dear world,
Can you let us share with others our experiences?
Can you let us feel the cold sand shift under us?
Let us control where we place our feet?
Let us run wild upon your ever steady back?
Oh world,
Can you let us go?
Can you hold us close?
Can you cure us of pain?
World,
Please.
Let us love the lives we live.
Let us make a choice to make choices with out thinking.
Let us think things unthinkable.
Thank you world,
For granting us this opportunity.
This opportunity to simply live.
To love.
And to be happy.

-Rebecca "Robin" Lintz

-Madeline Steel
Unworthy

I'm supposed to write about issues of racism and perception
But my blonde hair and blue eyes have never caused me discrimination
I've never had to worry about my body and spirit being sold
So what do I know about all the pain you must hold?

My wrists have never been chained; my back's never been slashed
"Mommy, why am I treated different?" is a question my kids will never ask
I can go anywhere confidently, and walk through any door
Knowing there's no glares and whispers that I'll have to ignore

"But we've come so far," they say; well no, not actually
We've just lost our focus because there's no more captivity
Separation, stereotyping and misunderstandings still exist
If I was recognized for only 28 days a year, I'd surely be pissed

So how do I tackle this if I can never be in your shoes?
Sometimes I think if we all just went blind, then nobody would lose

-Gina Goodman

Why Not

We teach our kids to read and write
We teach arithmetic
We push upon them all three "R"s
And try to make them stick

We teach kids to be quiet and to
Sit still while in class,
To double check their answers
If they ever want to pass

We teach them all the 50 names
Of these United States
We teach them names of presidents
And some important dates

We fill our kids with data and we
We fill them full of facts
We teach them that their answers
Must be proper and exact

We teach our kids to spell and count
And how to multiply
but we never seem to teach our kids
to JUST ASK WHY

WHY – is the sky so blue and
WHY – do we catch the flu and
WHY – is the Grass so Green and
WHY – do the birds all sing?
WHY – is there so much fear?
WHY – am I here?

- Rick Barton
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