



ISSUE ONE



Editor's Welcome

Hi Everyone!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of The Inkwell Journal @SERC. We have an array of superb pieces from our talented past and present students: Artwork, Photography, Poetry, Prose and Lyrics— all original works from our very own.

We are incredibly passionate about this project, and we hope you are as well!

From November, The Inkwell Journal will also publish a monthly newsletter: An online version and limited printed copies will be available in Bangor campus.

Submissions to it will open soon for your creative pieces and achievements, no matter the medium. With a focus on our students and their endeavours outside of education we strive to inspire and support our current and past students of all ages.

If you have an interest in submitting your work or being on our esteemed team of editors—which is growing, please speak to myself (Leah) or Amy. The journal is primarily run by A Level students, but we welcome assistance from others within the SERC family.

Enjoy!

Leah Roxanne (McMordie)

Editor-in-Chief

This Issue's Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief: *Leah Roxanne (McMordie)*

Proofreaders/ Editors: *Reece Erwin, Carrie Stripp, Aimee Clarke*

Admin/ Layout/ Promotion: *Amy Louise Wyatt (Rafferty), Louise Macartney*

Cover Artist: *Darcey Bew: Artwork from the tryptic 'Wynorrific'*

Contents

Pages 5-6	Blackout poetry	Emma Tate
Page 7	Collagraph	Alice Wyatt
Page 8	Hybrid	Hannah Reid- O'Donnell
Pages 9-10	Prose	Hannah Reid -O'Donnell
Page 11	Photography	Mark Brashier
Page 12	Food Art	Louis McClelland
Page 13	Cearmics	Siúbán Regan
Page 14	Poetry	Siúbán Regan
Pages 15-16	Photography	Katie Allen
Page 17	Poetry	Leah Roxanne
Pages 18-19	Mixed Media	Darcey Bew
Page 20	Graphite Drawing	Rovert Hynes
Page 21	Prose Poetry	Nakita Boal
Pages 22-23	Photography	Niamh Sargeant
Page 24	Poetry	Aimee Clarke
Pages 25-26	Photgraphy	Adam Clarke
Page 27	Poetry	Faith Flynn
Page 28	Graphic Art	Wiktoria Borkowoska
Pages 29-30	Photography	Erin Tretheway
Page 31	Poetry	Louise Macartney
Page 32	Acrylic Painting	Louise Macartney
Page 33	Collage	Rudi Czerwoniak
Page 34	Prose	Katie O'Connor
Page 35	Ceramic Mixed Media	Maryellen Byrne

Contents

Page 36	Poetry	Hannah Willis
Pages 37-38	Photography	Ben Campbell
Page 39	Photography	Laura Martin
Page 40	Poetry	Amy Louise Wyatt
Page 41	Ceramic and Glass	Amy Louise Wyatt
Pages 42-43	Photography	Joshua Madden
Page 44	Poetry	Fi Bracken
Page 45	Mixed Media	Fi Bracken
Page 46	Photography	Callum Mayes
Page 47	Poetry	Rosa Rennie
Page 48	Photography	Lauren-Lucy Tully
Page 49	Poetry	Vikki Pinkerton
Pages 50-51	Photography	Leah Kerr
Page 52	Acrylic Painting	Marie-Thérèse Davis
Page 53	Poetry	Marie-Thérèse Davis
Page 54	Photography	Holly Martin
Page 55	Textile and Ceramics	Zoe McGrath
Page 56	Poetry	Zoe McGrath
Pages 57-58	Photography	Erin Thompson
Page 59	Photography	Luke Chapman
Pages 60-61	Prose	Georgia Pickford
Pages 62-63	Photography	Caitlin Crossley
Page 64	Sketches	John Rubery
Pages 65-66	Ceramics	John Rubery
Page 67	Song Lyrics	Donna Kernan

Vampire Diaries

VAMPIRE DIARIES

He kept telling himself this as he sat, the droning voice of the teacher pouring over him unheard. But he could smell a subtle hint of some perfume – violets, he thought. And her slender white neck was bowed over her book, the fair hair falling on either side of it.

In anger and frustration he recognised the seductive feeling in his teeth – something more than an ache. It was hunger, a specific hunger. And not one he was about to indulge.

The teacher was pacing about the room like a ferret, asking questions, and Stefan deliberately fixed his attention on the man. At first he was puzzled, for although none of the student's answers, the questions kept coming. Then he realised that that was the man's purpose. To shame them with what they didn't know.

Just now he'd found another victim, a small girl with clusters of red curls and a heart-shaped face. Stefan watched in distaste as the teacher badgered her with questions. She looked wretched as he turned away from her to address the entire class.

"You see what I mean? You think you're pretty hot stuff, you're seniors now, ready to graduate. Well, let me tell you, some of you aren't ready to graduate. Like this!" He gestured toward the red-haired girl. "No idea about the French Revolution. Thinks Marie Antoinette was a silent film star."

Students all around Stefan were shifting uncomfortably. He could feel the resentment and the humiliation. And the fear. They were all afraid of this thin little man with eyes like a snake.

"All right, let's try another era." The teacher swung back to the same girl he'd been questioning. "During the

THE AWAKENING

Their knock on the shining oak door was answered by Mrs Flowers. She was a wrinkled little gnome of a woman with surprisingly bright black eyes.

"You must be Elena," she said. "I saw you and Stefan go out last night, and he told me your name when he came back."

"You saw us?" said Elena, startled. "I didn't see you."

"No, no you didn't," said Mrs Flowers, and added, "What a pretty girl you are, my dear," she added, "very pretty girl." She patted Elena's cheek.

"Uh, thank you," said Elena uneasily. She felt like the way those birdlike eyes were fixed on her. She looked past Mrs Flowers to the stairs. "Is Stefan home?"

"He must be, unless he's flown off the roof!" said Mrs Flowers, and chuckled again. Elena laughed politely.

"We'll stay down here with Mrs Flowers," said Meredith to Elena, while Bonnie rolled her eyes in martyrdom. Hiding a grin, Elena nodded and mounted the stairs.

Such a strange old house, she thought again as she located the second stairway in the bedroom. The voices below were very faint from here, and as she went up the steps they faded entirely. She was wrapped in silence, and as she reached the dimly lit door at the top, she had the feeling she had entered some other world.

Here, shocking so many very times, "Stefan?"

She could hear nothing from inside, but suddenly the door swung open. Everyone had looked pale and tired today, thought Elena, and then she was in his arms.

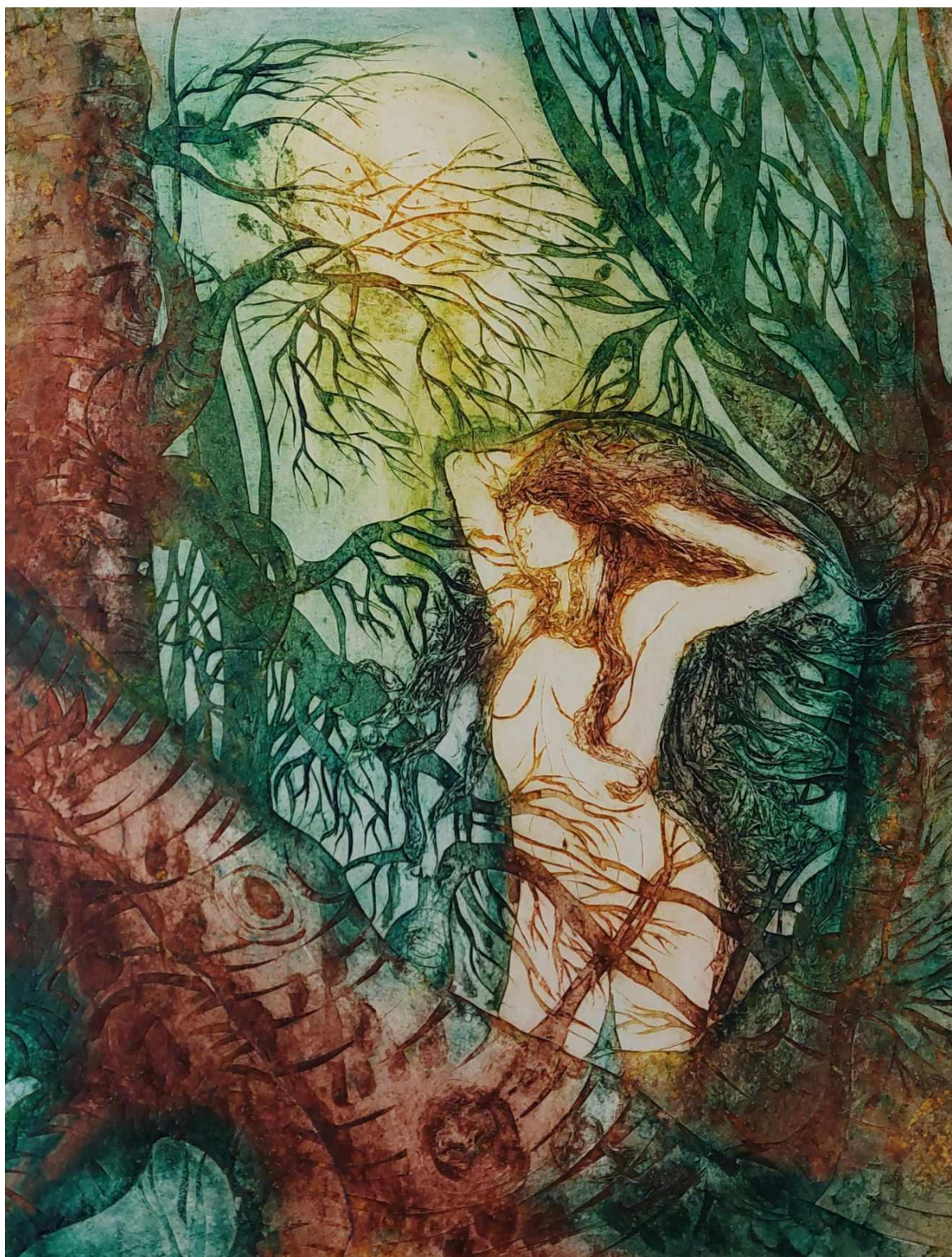
Those arms tightened about her convulsively. "Elena. Oh, Elena . . ."

Then he drew back. It was just the way it had been last night; Elena could feel the chasm opening between them. She saw that cold, correct look gather in his eyes.

Collagraph

Alice Wyatt

Wood Nymph



I studied the Foundation Diploma in Art and Design at SERC Bangor Campus. I am a printmaker and painter, and a member of Seacourt Print Workshop.

EXCELSIOR

A TRAVELER FROM ON YONDER SAW A STAR FALL
FROM THE SKY, AND CURIOSITY BADE HIM TO CROSS
THE LANDS TO SEE IT'S TREASURE. HE FOUND IT BY A
RIVER, IN A GREEN MEADOW BENEATH AN ALIEN SUN.
FROM THE ROCKY CARCASS HE LURED OUT A METAL
UNLIKE ANY SEEN BEFORE, THAT GLOWED OF THEIR
OWN SPLENDID POWER, AND FROM THAT HE FORGED
TWIN SABERS; THAT MAGNIFICENT EXCELSIOR AND
HER SHINING SISTER NAMED HELATRA.



FOR MANY A YEAR THE WEAPONS DID HIM WELL, AND
FOR HIS SKILL WITH THEM HE WAS DUBBED GALAHAD
THE GLORIOUS, FINEST WARRIOR OF ALL. WHEN AT
LAST HE BECAME AN OLD RICH MAN, HE BESTOWED
THEM AS DYING GIFTS TO HIS DAUGHTERS. TO THE
PROUD ELDER HE GAVE EXCELSIOR, FOR NONE WAS AS
BEAUTIFUL OR INTELLIGENT AS SHE. TO THE YOUNGER
WENT HELATRA, FOR HIS LITTLE GIRL'S SMILE
ALWAYS MADE THE DAY ALL THE BRIGHTER.

HELATRA

Unto Us A Child Is Born

Inspired by Marc Simonetti's 'The Tragedy at Summerhall'

Jessica's son is born while her family dies in agony.

Beyond the sanctuary of the solemn garden, the palace burns in a dancing frenzy of orange and yellow and such a terrible shade of red, black shadows stretching against the grassy lawn in their wake. Between the howling of the wind, she can hear the dying's forlorn wails, like nothing human.

She's surprised when the midwife settles an infant at her breast. "A boy," the midwife mouthed; Jessica cannot hear over the ringing in her ears. A boy, a boy, a boy—she looked at his little pink face, swaddled in cream silk. He was silent; she had to press her ear to his face to hear if he was breathing. What a solemn expression he wore as well, for a child so young and pure. Darkened by a day of death such as this. Can you hear them too? She wanted to ask the nameless baby at her chest. Do you hear death?

"Jessie! Where's—Jessie! Where's my wife! JESSICA—" Her husband's voice garbled together with the echoing of screams, and she did not see him until he fell down at her feet, cradling her and their son to his chest. She could feel Rhodric talking; warm puffs of breath against her temple, but she couldn't hear him. She couldn't hear anything...besides the screams.

"She's in shock," said a doctor. "It'll be best if we move her away..." but whenever they tried, Jessica refused to move. Not even Rhodric could move her. Nor would she allow them to take the baby away from her.

"Jessica," Rhodric murmured gently. "This isn't good for you."

It was strange to hear him but unable to understand. Why did he want her to leave their family? It did not make any sense to her. Ever gently, Rhodric tried again, but Jessica shook her off of him, and walked closer and closer to the burning pyre of a summer palace, blood and gore dripping down her thighs. She sat on a bench, feeling ash falling from the sky onto her face like snow that stained. "I want to watch," she stated, loudly and clearly, in a tone that brokered no argument.

She watched until the sun rose, turning the sky a soft pale blue, when the singing of the birds replaced the screams of the dying. It was a beautiful and horrible thing to behold; life and death hand-in-hand, joy and sorrow dancing on a grave.

For all that time, her son watched her too.

He had her eyes.

Strange Neighbours

I don't know most of my neighbours, but I know a few.

There is Lola to the left—my left, your (probable) right—whose late husband wasn't very nice at all, and one son followed him, whom I've thankfully never met; another son whose everything his brother and father or not; and a daughter Sadie who recently had babies (I was very surprised to learn this).

Then we have Bernadette to my right. She has the nicest garden one could have in a space as small as it is, with an ever-vigilant Buddha keeping...um, headless watch, over the vines and greenery. Bernadette keeps to herself, and as far as I'm aware, she lives alone. I think my mum feels sorry for her, in that odd way where you also don't really like them either.

While I haven't been using any of their real names in this, it's mostly because of this neighbour that I think that was a good idea, for Sylvia is the closest thing on this earth that I fear. It is not the usual fear. This is what you feel towards gods. Sylvia is that omnipotent nosy neighbour; if we lived in America, she'd establish a neighbourhood watch in order to keep an even closer eye. She somehow knows my mother's eldest sister (much to mummy's eternal horror), who lives in a completely different village.

Finally we have cousins.

My dad's nephew Caleb, with his loveless wife, and their twin sons: the living and the ghost they stay together for. I sometimes see Cousin Caleb leaving to go to the local bar, in the early afternoon on weekdays. Their living son is a frat boy in the making. And the ghost...who can say who he would've been?

Mercifully my mother's nephew is actually normal. My mum's always been the "fun" aunt to her nieces and nephews (much to my horror), and Luke is the youngest child of her favourite sister. To me, Luke's more of a cool uncle than a cousin, since he's almost twenty years my senior. Luke's dog Wesley is a sweetheart, despite his unusually large size for what's supposed to be a small dog.

This is all to say: neighbours are a part of a strange ecosystem. I know them in the sense I know the sun is a star and the moon controls the tides, but like those things, I do not know the science behind them, what gears turn them; their wants and desires are a mystery to me—just as they should be.

My name is Hannah and I study A Levels at SERC Bangor Campus.

Photography

Mark Brashier

Traveling Far



The Defending Team



I am Mark Brashier, a Second Year Student in Uniform Protective Services and I enjoy taking pictures.

Food Art

Louis McClelland

Four Creations



My name is Louis and I study at SERC. These are some of the food art/ dishes I have created.

Wee Biddy and Night Terror



Search Of Souls that Walk Beside Us

I searched for the familiar,
In face and voice, they were not there.
Abandoned, I drifted,
A dusty husk on the breeze of this life,
Questioning its very existence.

Yet there was a paradoxical parallelism,
They spoke of souls.
Souls that do walk beside us in converse of curiosity.

Only, when moving through dreams
You journey forth to anchor me, overwhelming
My heart with intense love.

Thrilled by your presence we tread
The torrent river reaching
Home of fluid rooms, you provoke hidden
Inspiration, creativity.

When reality imposes, you consolidate this present,
This past, this future:
In a constant embrace of amplified binding.

Awakened, you elude me
For a time. Then I become forgetful with
Impose of this actuality.

I studied ceramics at SERC Bangor. I am a painter, ceramicist and poet who has exhibited my work widely.

Portraits No 1, 2& 3





I am Katie Allen and I am currently studying Level 3 Photography at SERC Bangor Campus. The three portraits in this series were shot on Sony A7iii.

alibi for the foreign

the practice of love makes my stomach turn,
the softness is foreign

as the weight of my emotions can be measured by the ink
i spend on the subject, my art is my excuse

i will rarely discuss any positive impact you may have on me,
but i will immortalise that feeling through my work

a projection of my emotional insecurity,
or a dedication to my work, it is not yet known

it's uncharted territory to feel things at this calibre and not possess the skill
to verbalise it, laughable really

my writing serves as my alibi to this foreign language.

me and the preacher

my dedication to you is only understood by a preacher,

we follow with blind faith believing the pedestals we made hold the only one truth

lives both ruled by worship, we pledge ourselves to the cause.
one raw emotion, all consuming and all powerful, yet so different in execution

me and the preacher,

we walk parallel lines

and as he will never meet his deity,

i will not hold mine.

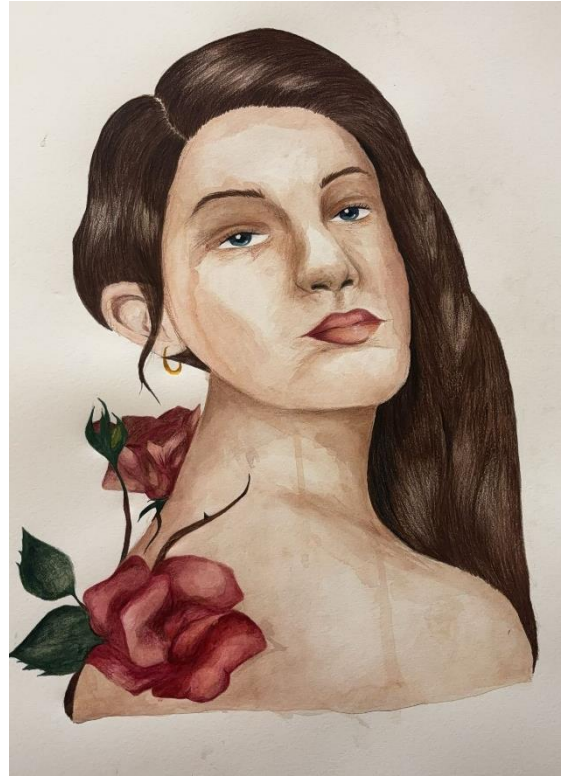
I study A Levels at SERC Bangor campus and am the Editor in Chief of The Inkwell Journal @SERC.

Mixed Media Tryptic

Darcey Bew

Wynorrific





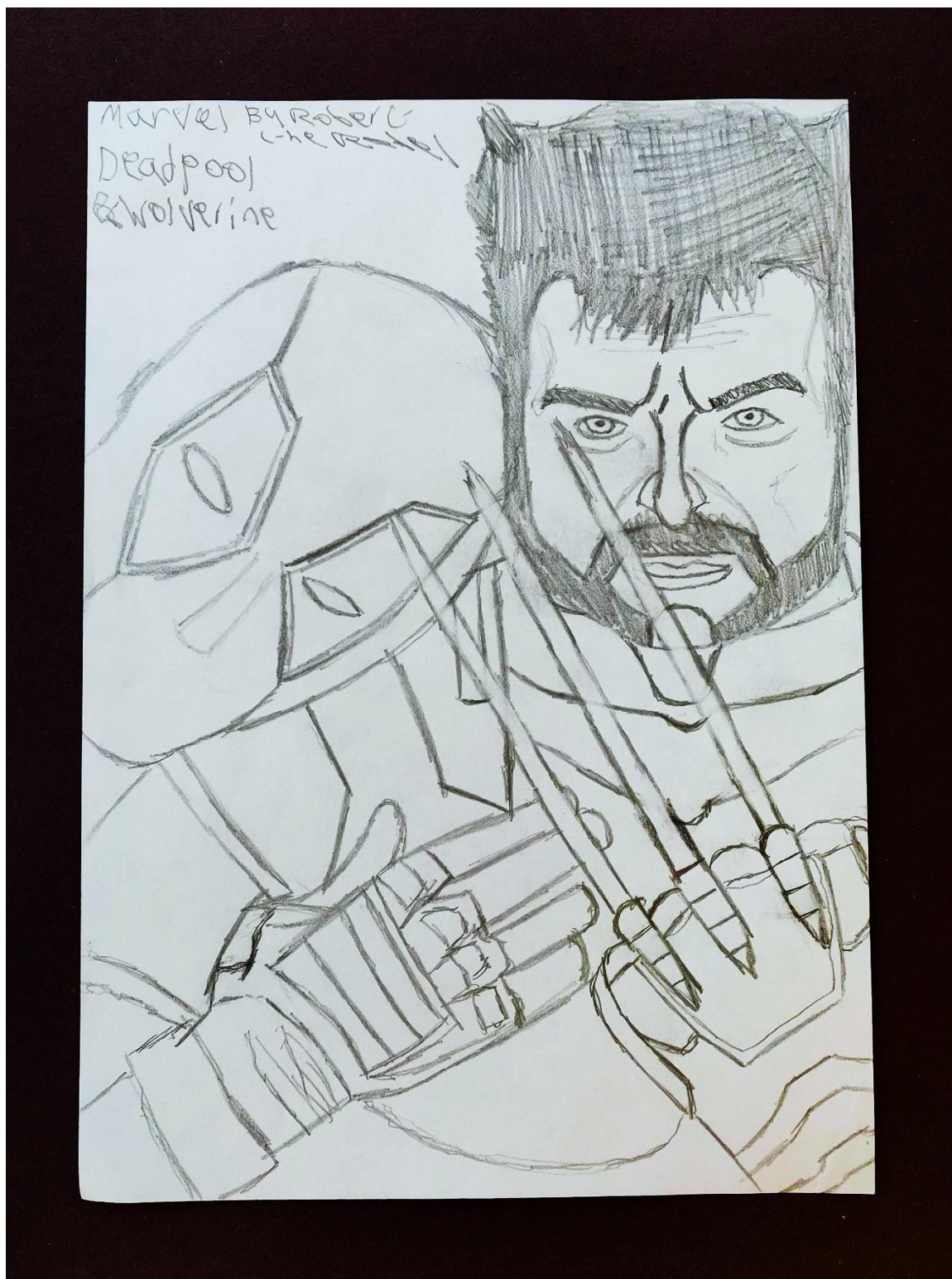
I'm Darcey! I love painting/art as I feel it is a form of escapism and allows anyone to express themselves, their views or ideas without being judged or pushed into a box. Art allows people to be themselves and even turn negatives into something beautiful

My three pieces represent women from three different countries- China, Nigeria and the UK. I did research into how woman all around the world still face sexism and misogyny everyday no matter how 'well off' a country is.

The flowers on each of the pieces are the countries' national flower. The rose is the UK's national flower and represents that in many respects men in power have control over women, hence why they are growing over the shoulder, around their neck and back etc; to remind them of their loss of autonomy. No country has reached 100% equality and it's 2024.

The pieces together are called 'Wynorrific', when something is so visually beautiful (the women), but you are scared of the very thing (being a woman and the misogyny we face). I used a range of water colours and colouring pencil!

Deadpool and Wolverine



I follow Marvel illustrators, like Stan Lee, Steve Ditko, Jack Kirby, John Bryan and Norman Reynolds. I like to create my own drawings of the characters as a way to relax after college. I usually colour my drawings too. I'll probably colour this one later.

Prose Poetry Sequence

Nakita Boal

Being at peace

Love isn't just big grand gestures. It is also little things, like sending notes, holding hands, cuddling to watch a movie or just basking in each other's company. This is a more low-key type of love, that in some ways is more meaningful and intimate than big grand gestures that only draw attention. Instead, small gestures show that love isn't just loud and passionate, it is also kind and gentle, which makes your love more peaceful.

Broken love

You've hurt me so many times and yet I keep letting you back into my heart, despite the pain you have caused me. Why do I do this to myself? You'll never stop hurting me because it is the only thing you know how to do, and you keep doing it because you know I'll always let you back in. You bring me pain, but also such profound happiness, which is probably why I never let you go, despite me wanting to. My love for you is a curse, but it will never leave me broken.

Being free

Confidence is shown in different ways. Most people expect it to be bold and loud, unafraid to speak your mind, which makes people miss the more subtle forms of confidence. The quiet confidence in many ways is more secure and inspiring. Quiet doesn't mean being weak. It just means you have a different way of expressing yourself and whilst it may go unnoticed, those who truly see you will know it is there and know how truly strong you are.

Letting go

Crying is supposedly a weakness. But that isn't true. Crying is a way of letting out and expressing the emotions that you have contained inside for so long. It starts with only one tear, then it becomes an ocean of heartfelt sadness. You feel weak for letting them fall, but in truth, you are brave for finally letting yourself break down. Not crying is weaker than crying all the time. It means you are too scared to face how you truly feel and to see how potent your emotions really are. Crying grants you a sense of peace for finally letting everything you have contained—out.

My name is Nakita Boal, I enjoy writing and reading different types of poetry. I'm a past student of SERC Bangor Campus where I studied A Level Religious Studies, Criminology and Psychology. I got into my first choice at University of Ulster to study Social Policy with Criminology.

Teenage Rock Bands - The Future of Music





I am currently studying A Levels at SERC. My relationship with music has always been a strong one, especially when it comes to indie rock, Brit pop and newer bands like 'Fontaines DC' or 'Wunderhorse'. The music industry is worldwide, artistic and soul wrenching. However, we highly associate rock with the 80s and 90s and it isn't seen as big anymore. Teenage bands are bringing this back and making it their own. My favourite teen band is Belfast's Madam's Last Discovery'—a psychedelic rock band of four 18/19 year old boys with gigs at pubs, bars and clubs all over Belfast, including one in 'Voodoo' and a gig down in Dublin's bar 'SIN É'. This is a series of photographs that I took at their gigs.

Human Nature

The darkness entices the mammals who feel threatened by the strike of metaphorical thunder.
It welcomes them, hands outstretched, whilst eye sockets remain unfilled.
Its gentle calling lures them from the burrow of complex sorrow
into the flow-free atmosphere.

However, as the sun charges awake the cruel-minded creatures of the day, the mammals cower,
their stomachs once more acidic, their hunger of freedom prolonged.
They seek extravagant winds to flee the warm grasp of the harsh star.
Await the self-imposed storm that lurks for them at the familiar destination,
marking the end of their journey.

To a lake of midnight musk, their heads drowned, their cruel cortex suffers
at the hands of their swim. The only ripple, the soon to be submerged persona of the mammal.
For the world so wide, yet so narrow-minded, drew a corner for the mammal—
reduced it, banished it.

As the water glides free, it takes the mammal wherever it would like to be.

At last.

I'm Aimee. I am currently studying a-levels at SERC. I would like to go on to study English Literature or Creative Writing at university.

Home





My name is Adam. I am an aspiring fashion and portrait photographer based in Lisburn. I am currently studying an Access to higher education course at Lisburn SERC with the aim of studying photography at university.

The name of this photo series is called 'Home' and features people I know or have met while trying to explore my home in Northern Ireland.

Persephone's Pomegranate

She is handed a half crescent of Pomegranate filled up of his crimson treasures;
she takes an offering of six red ruby pulp seeds.
The juice of the fruit seeps into her floral dress, like blood, staining it permanently.
The sweet tangy fresh aroma builds up,
masking the putrid smell of iniquity.
She has truly descended with him
into the dark, lonely crack which he came from.
The rich red fruit is the only lively thing around, she compellingly tastes it.
Its initially bitter, but grows sweeter by the sixth.
Persephone's mother weeps as Pluto snatches the glossy fruit from her.
His divine touch is tainted red by his act, which has reduced Demeter's daughter
to bloom half as much as she did before.
The fruit thuds onto the floor like a bouquet and they enter
a half-life together that Romans repeat,
brides wearing pomegranates in their wedding wreaths.

Shine Your Light



I'm Wiktoria! I'm currently studying Politics, Criminology and English Literature. I am enjoying reading, writing and drawing and I hope to one day go into law or therapy!

The Total Lunar Eclipse (Red Moon)



When The Sky Touches the Earth (Aurora) *Erin Tretheway*



My name is Erin - I'm a third-year student studying at SERC College in Bangor. I'm an astrophysicist geek, and an avid lover of deep-sea exploration and mysteries that humans have only captured through the lens of a camera. During my first two years I studied Politics, English Literature and Criminology; now returning for my third year, I aim to pursue a diploma in Animal Management at Level 3. I want to keep my options and my future bright; from an author to a photographer, or a marine forensic scientist to a professor of English as a foreign language to non-native speakers - there's a lot I want to accomplish in my future.

Apart

There it is.
At precisely the moment when the Night takes Day softly by her throat,
The sharp familiar pain.

Day and Night, asunder,
The Rain acclaiming their impossible affray.

My feet will ring on these paving stones down the hill
As dark deepens,
Night on night,
I hear the echo.

And I know with unshakable, doleful certainty that you will go on loving me 'til the very last breath
of your life

Expurgation

Rapidly rapping fingertips on black glass,
I punch
Biting textual incisions into traceable rectangular information slices;
I'm exorcising my vitriol in minimal monochrome.

Head red with passionate disgust,
I soothe my seethe in expressive, righteous word sculpting,
Worry my pique into eloquent derision,
'Til the subsiding wave leaves me flopped,

Irk out,

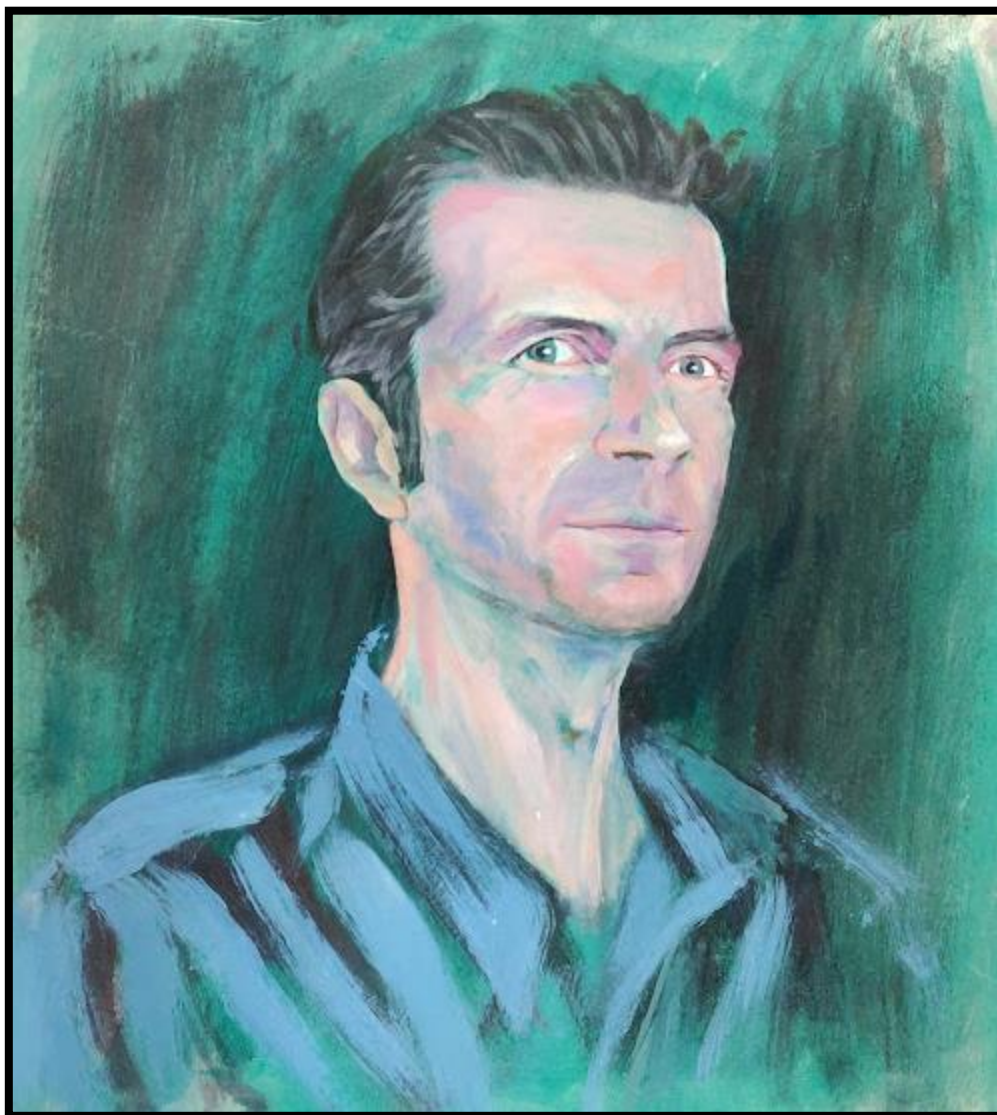
Rage wrecked on the shallows of social expectations

And, sheepish,
I seek the delete button.

Acrylic Painting

Louise Macartney

David Bunting, Photographer, Boom Studios



I was born in Belfast and now live in Bangor, after a few valued years in Scotland. I can't make up my mind what to do when I grow up, so I've been working in libraries, where I spend my time putting interesting words together and sometimes drawing, while I try to work it out.

Welcome to the 21st Century



My name is Rudi and I am 52 years old, I come from Poland and I am the father of a crazy teenager. I have lived in Northern Ireland for about 18 years. 3 years ago I decided to fulfil my youthful dreams and started studying at SERC. This year I'm in Foundation and if I manage to finish this year, I will try to get into Ulster University. It was very difficult for me because of the language barrier and computers. At SERC I received very good support from teachers and students and today I am doing quite well with English and computers. I like painting and I am in love with the Renaissance and Baroque.

Beyond

Darkness breathed into the garden, dipping and whispering behind the bricked wall. Sometimes, the siblings listened to it, reaching out and try to touch what they couldn't see. The air was thicker in November, dense with fragrances they could not recognise, like a perfume concocted by the moon. The siblings would wait, noses up to the mirthless rain, curious of everything, such as the shadows that lurked beyond the wall, and why there never seemed to be stars when the looked for them purposely.

They prodded the darkness with sticks, peering at what their eyes were not supposed to see. There was so much out there, waiting for them, yet so much they'd never experience. They knew that neither of them would live to see a new millennium or see their Daddy give up smoking rollups; but they held their hopes like round pebbles in their hands and spoke using side way glances and goose bumped shoulders rubbing, under frayed school jumpers.

They were growing, stretching up like weeds, and soon not even the garden wall or the looming darkness would deter them. Erin was scared, but Jude looked smug in the knowledge that he was older.

Erin stretched out her hand. It wavered in front of their faces. Without seeing every individual finger or the pinkness of her flat palm, they both knew it was a hand, even when the darkness did everything in its power to hide their humanness.

Erin spoke, at last,

"I want to catch the darkness and take it with me."

"Why would you want to do that?" Jude said.

"Because I want to understand it better."

The light rain began to dry, making the darkness gasp, the air damp. It was getting late, and they had school in the morning. They took one last look at the sky and went back inside to say goodnight to their Mammy.

I studied A Levels at SERC and am currently completing an English and Creative Writing degree at Queen's University with the ambitions of writing a book.

The Swallow's Nest



My name is Maryellen Byrne and I am a mature student. I am currently on my second year of the part time Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Ceramics at Bangor campus.. Before that I completed the Level 2 Certificate in Creative Techniques in Ceramics also in Bangor. From Sep 2021 - June 2024 I attended Leisure ceramics at the Lisburn campus. The piece is a ceramic wall hanging made during Year 1 of my foundation diploma. It is called The Swallow's Nest and is ceramic, mixed media.

The Secrets of Luna

She was born 4.53 billion years ago
The more I think of her the more my curiosity begins to grow

How many secrets has she been told?
Does it hurt to see her people growing old?

How many forbidden love stories has she intruded upon?
Does she cry as she is forever destined to stay withdrawn?

Luna is an observer of the beginning of the human race
I can't help but wonder if she remembers my face

She is who we consult when we feel alone
She is the best friend we have ever known

It's a shame we have reserved the night for sleep
For there is nobody left to listen to Luna weep

It seems to me she has much to say
But cannot help being concealed by the day

I previously completed my A levels at SERC which is where I learned to love poetry from my teacher Amy. I studied Religious Studies, Psychology, History and Criminology .

Atlantic Meets Pacific



Drops of Morning Dew

Ben Campbell



I currently study photography at Bangor SERC and aim to be a professional photographer once I finish my course. My name is Ben Campbell and my photos are a digital medium taken at the walled garden, Bangor.

Punk Bands Series



I'm Laura Martin and I photograph punk bands in Belfast and currently study Creative Media Practice.

My Granny's Budgies

I remember the bites more than the birds.
Those hooked beaks.

Birds caged so long
they didn't understand their wings.

They couldn't fly.
They wouldn't sing.

Rigid bodies like angry missiles.

I wonder at the purpose
of keeping birds that never fly.

Essence trapped in feathers
of downy dead-still wings.

If I, a budgie in a cage,
sensed the air through bars,
and saw this space

and felt desire to fly –
to topple heights,
to be a flash of colour in the sky –

I too would thrust the only part of me
that fits through those thin shafts

to rip and hook and bite the flesh
from anything

that moves in the expanse.

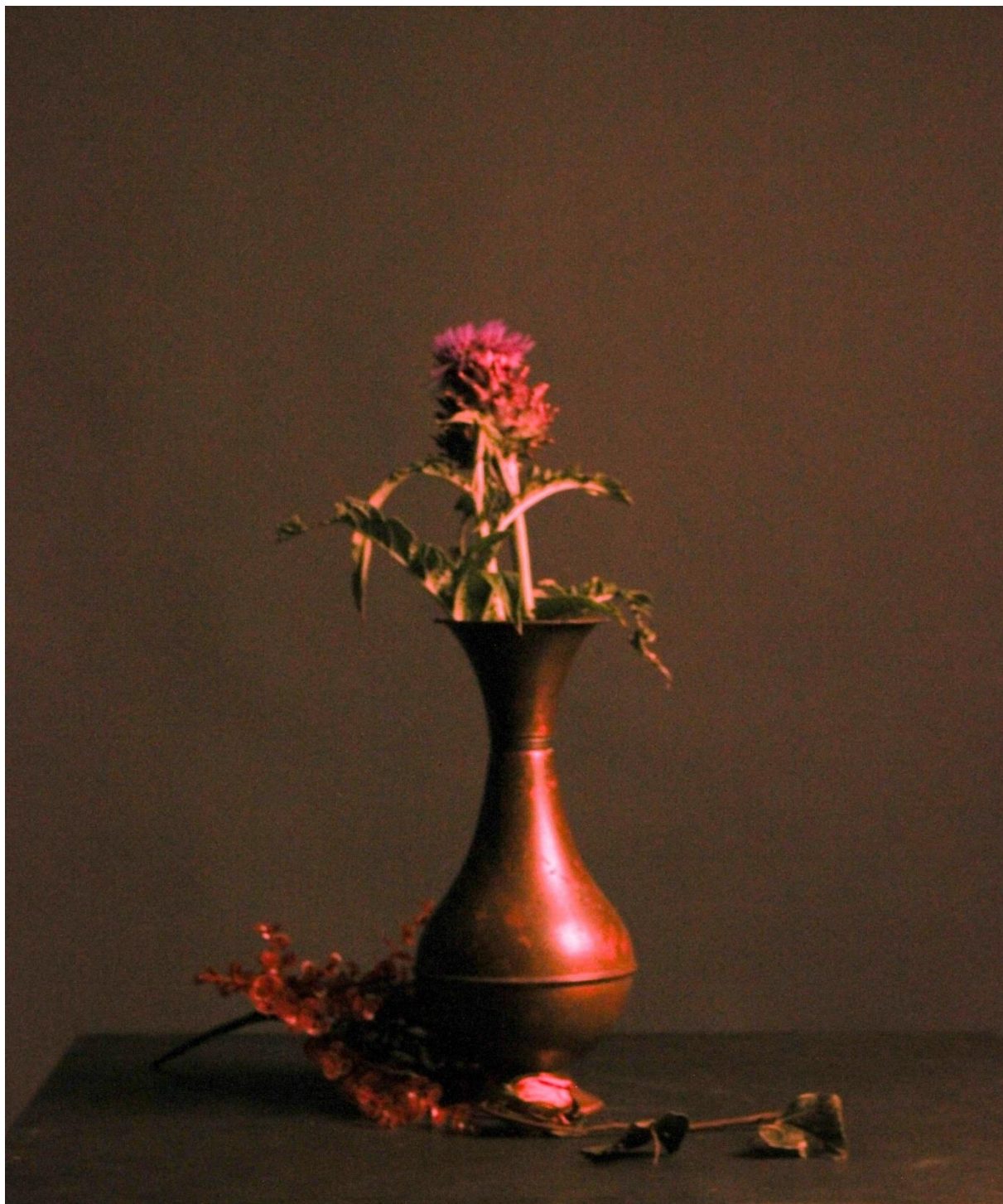
Delia's Garden



'My Granny's Budgies' was first published in CAP Anthology and later in 'A Language I Understand', Indigo Dreams.

I studied ceramics, print-making and life drawing at SERC, Bangor Campus. I am now very lucky to teach A level courses in Religious Studies and Social Sciences to fabulous students at SERC Bangor Campus.

Blooming Vase





All images were taken by me on a Canon DSLR Camera. I love taking photographs in my free time. Whenever I am outdoors with my friends, I feel like I can often easily spot photography opportunities. At SERC I am currently studying Level 3 Technical Diplomat in Art and Design (Photography).

Autumn

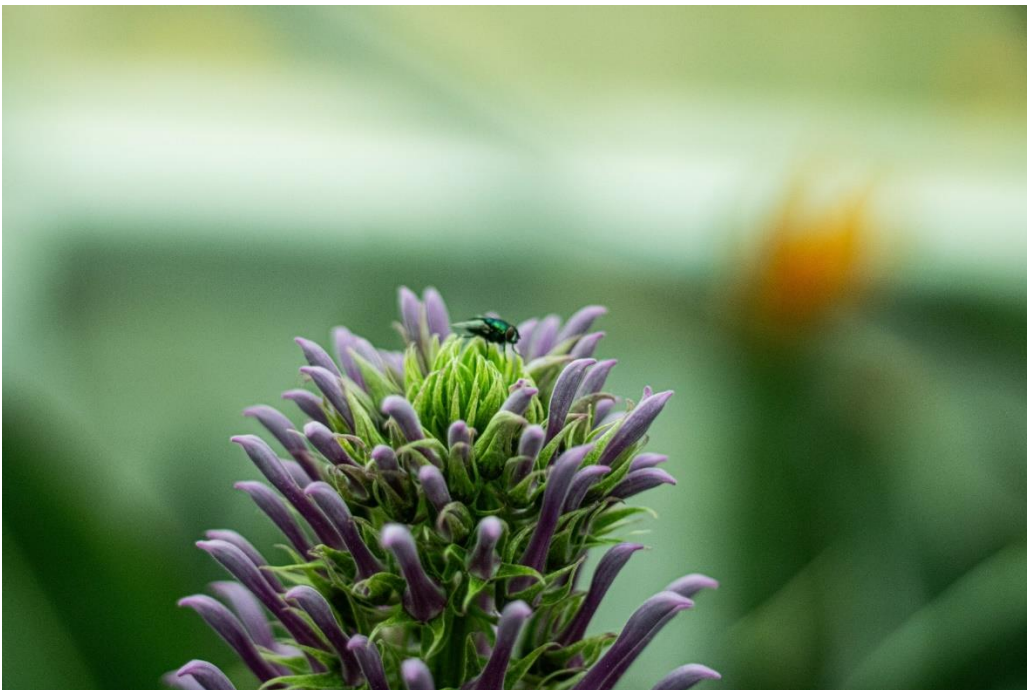
In Autumn the trees let go of their summer beauty
The green, the live sap
That forces its way through root and branch
And quivering leaf,
The soft, damp newness.
They let go of these sultry gifts.
They exhale, and turn to face a new season.
They curl and colour in flaming bursts, their leaves
Daubed at random with
Yellow and golden
Russet red, and crimson
Hanging gently on the branch
Until the tenderest breeze can pluck them away.
But the trees don't grieve.
They bend and sway and give up their bright attire
To the winds and rain,
And they stand stark and silent
In calm winter ease,
Quietly waiting, resting
In the knowledge that spring will reawaken them
Newness fresh on their tender shoots
Soft with early dew
They will be reborn.
Taller, more vigorous, alive with sweet new breath.
And nor do they cling to these new buds.
Just as year upon year, they did not cling.
They let go,
Over and over and over
They surrender to the season
In some dim memory of the reincarnation that is taking place.

Impact from Left



I'm a student at SERC and a working artist and find poetry a powerful source to inform my work. With both poetry and images, I extend the work into a new space. My practice is large scale and generally mixes media. 'Impact from Left' is painted in acrylic and pastel.

Untitled



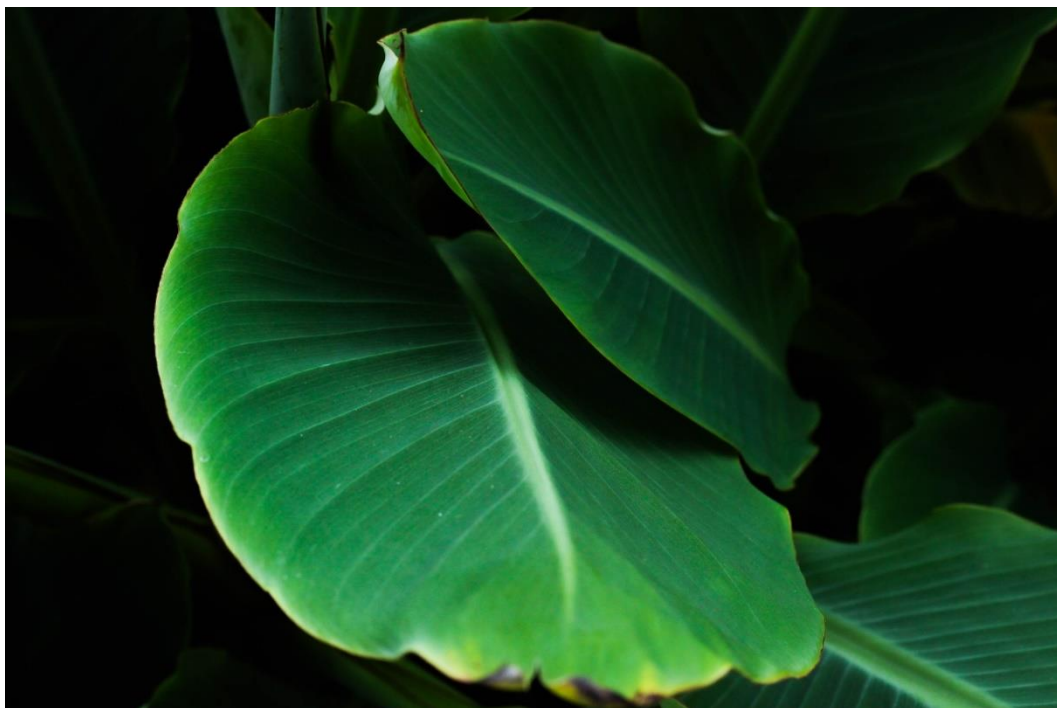
These photos are currently untitled. I am a first year A level photography student at Bangor SERC and I wish to pursue a career in photography around music. These photos are taken by me from the Walled Gardens in Bangor to test out my skills in photography at the start of this course.

nights of ice walls

nights of ice walls
sat, creased,
strings speak for me
through the fuzz.
to be heard by just myself
beyond any hour.
clutching, digging
pang, crack, crash,
waiting,
the fireworks don't end.
remembering prison days
only makes one shiver

I'm Rosa and I'm currently studying my A-Levels at SERC Bangor Campus, and hope to go on to study History, although I'm not sure yet where.

Leaf & Fountain



I am Lauren-Lucy Tully and I study photography at SERC.

Curled up in an Armchair

She is surrounded,
cocooned even in a bubble of comfort,
enclosed in a safe place with
her present thoughts;
protected by her past as a loved child;
encouraged by the memory of
a loving grandfather
to be gentle in the world.

First published in FROM HER OTHER LANGUAGE: NORTHERN IRISH WOMEN WRITERS ADDRESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE, ARLEN HOUSE (2020) AND TRUMPET: ISSUE 9, POETRY IRELAND (2020).

I love writing poetry with a message of hope. I am currently studying a Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Art and Design and Media Practice at SERC Bangor Campus and am hoping to progress onto an HNC in Fine Art at SERC.

Untitled



Photography

Leah Kerr

Untitled



I am Leah Kerr and I study photography at SERC.

Lester Seal pops up to say Hello



Swimmer passing the yacht club on a blustery summer afternoon.



Poetry

Marie-Thérèse Davis

Dinner!

Poised, unflinching
beneath the coniferous branches.
Swathed in long, forgotten
winter sunshine
waiting for
an unguarded moment
when the prey emerges
unaware.
My neighbour's feline friends
clothed variously
in virginial white,
sticky marmalade
and sooty black,
stalk our suburban patch
with menace.
Delineating. Searching.
Observing...
Dinner!

Barca Farewell

Suspended
 above the mist
 and clouds
which shroud
 sun-soaked valleys
 of the Pyrenees
Crunching gears

Narrow road
 winding far,
 snaking mountain passes
 closed during the snow
Stop
 Breathe
 crisp, fresh and thin mountain air

Looking back

Farewell...Barcelona

I was a language student at SERC, studying Advanced French Conversation and GCSE Spanish from 2012/13 - 2019/20. I am a musician, artist and poet who has exhibited and performed widely.

Pink Flower



Horse



My name is Holly Martin, I am currently studying Photography at Bangor SERC. I really enjoy taking photographs especially of nature and the natural world around us.

Esmeralda Badger



I am water...

Green depths of darkness stir stillness amidst my moonlit tides.
A compass, I dance to the sea's sombre ripples—
Unknown to my mind where she may lead.
Elements dispersing vast space beneath blankets of salty wash.
Ragged edges smack with groans against rocks—
Splashes from tumbling seals who seek their mermaid masters.

I am water...

I clamber to high ground encased in droplets—
Then descend mountain trails, rivers and creeks.
Water is mostly me!
Sadness reels me to the hook of the calm mineral well
Of Bangor Bay's peaceful water's deep.

Water becomes me...

'I am Water' was first published by the Bangor Literary Journal in the Aspects Festival publication 'I am Water' in conjunction with SupHub NI.

I am Zoe McGrath and I studied Caring Services Higher National Diploma for 2 years at SERC after school in Bangor Girls High. I work as an additional special educational needs classroom assistant in Mitchell House School East Belfast. I also work in the Mae Murray Foundation helping all abilities to make a difference to people and communities. I'm an earthy soul who is creative and loves nature and living by the sea. I have widely exhibited my artwork and have had several poems published.

Elephant at Lunch



Rainy Day Poppy

Erin Thompson

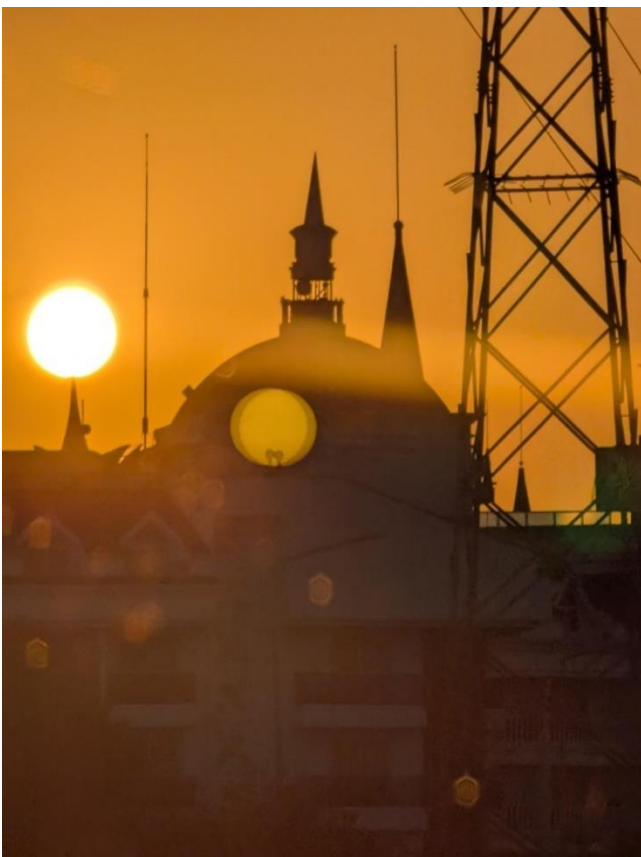


My name is Erin Thompson and I'm a photography student studying at Bangor SERC. I started doing photography for my GCSEs and A levels. I enjoy taking photographs of still life and landscapes. I hope this photography career will help lead me into the future with my marketing and advertising career.

Photography

Luke Chapman

Turkey Series



I am Luke Chapman and I study A Levels at SERC Bangor Campus.

Tribute to an Author: Franz Kafka (1883-1924)

Franz Kafka was born in 1883 in Prague to wealthy Jewish parents. He completed a Doctorate in Law at the German University, Prague in 1906 and worked in the civil service for one year, writing insurance reports. He truly hated this field of work and he declared all of his extra time to his literary work to cope with his misery.

His upbringing greatly impacted his later writings too—his father, Hiermann Kafka was a dispassionate and aggressive man who oppressed Kafka throughout his whole life. He proved to be a great influence of Kafka's work. This is seen through many of his stories: Samsa and his father's unloving and unsympathetic relationship in 'The Metamorphosis' is a reflection of Kafka's real-life relationship with his father; the oppression of 'The Trial' was also directly influenced by his father.

His upbringing also influenced his psyche later into life, he was constantly isolated and anxious, as seen through his work too, focusing on themes of existentialism, guilt, shame and the absurd. Kafka constantly doubted himself due to extreme low self-esteem and sensitivity, this resulted in self hatred and Kafka destroyed 90% of his manuscripts before his death in 1924.

Kafka was diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1917 and suffered until his death in 1924, aged 40. In his lifetime he had mainly published articles and short stories in periodicals, his writing was not widely received during his lifetime and he lived in relative obscurity. Kafka spent his life between love affairs, but he was truly alone. He was briefly engaged twice to some woman, but it ended due to his illness and she married another man. He was in a relationship with Milena Jesenska, they corresponded through deeply passionate love letters that were published after his death.

Nearing Kafka's early death in 1924, he named his friend Max Brod as his literary executor. Instructions were left to Brod to burn and destroy all of Kafka's manuscripts, letters, stories, novels and drawings. Brod disregarded Kafka's dying wishes, publishing and editing his life's work. Now the world has access to Kafka's greatest work and masterpieces through his novels. This has made him one of the most well-known and beloved writers of the 20th century in Europe. His work was especially influential after the 1960s, well after his death, making him especially well-known among existentialists and absurdists around the world.

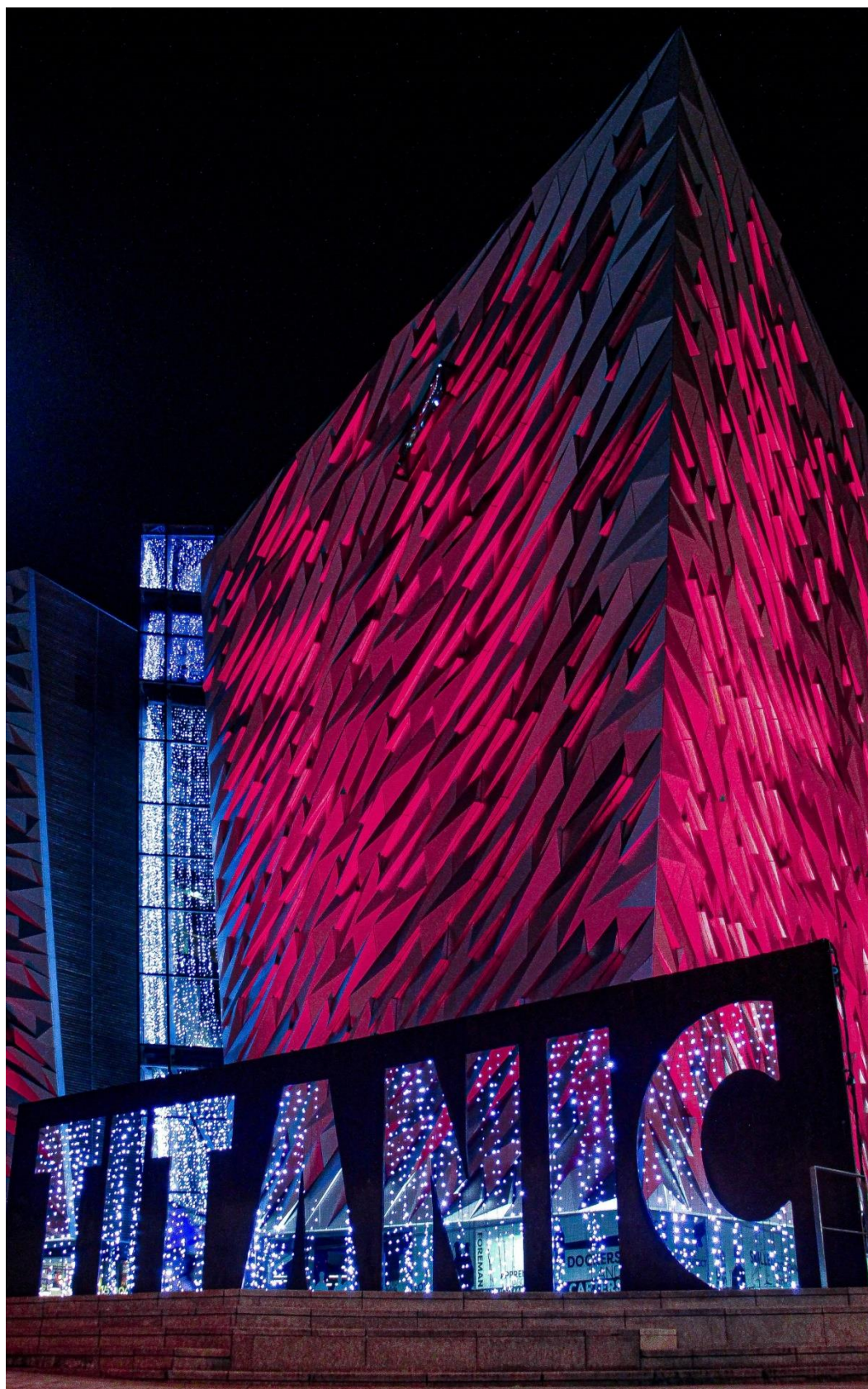
Many debate the morality of Brod for publishing all of Kafka's work after his death. Although it let the world get to know his brilliant mind and writing, it can also be seen as an invasion of Kafka's mind and personal life through the publication of his letters and diaries. The volumes of letters to friends, lovers and family members does provide good insight into Kafka's personal life, but it also is a great intrusion upon his life, and his dying wishes were dismissed by Brod.

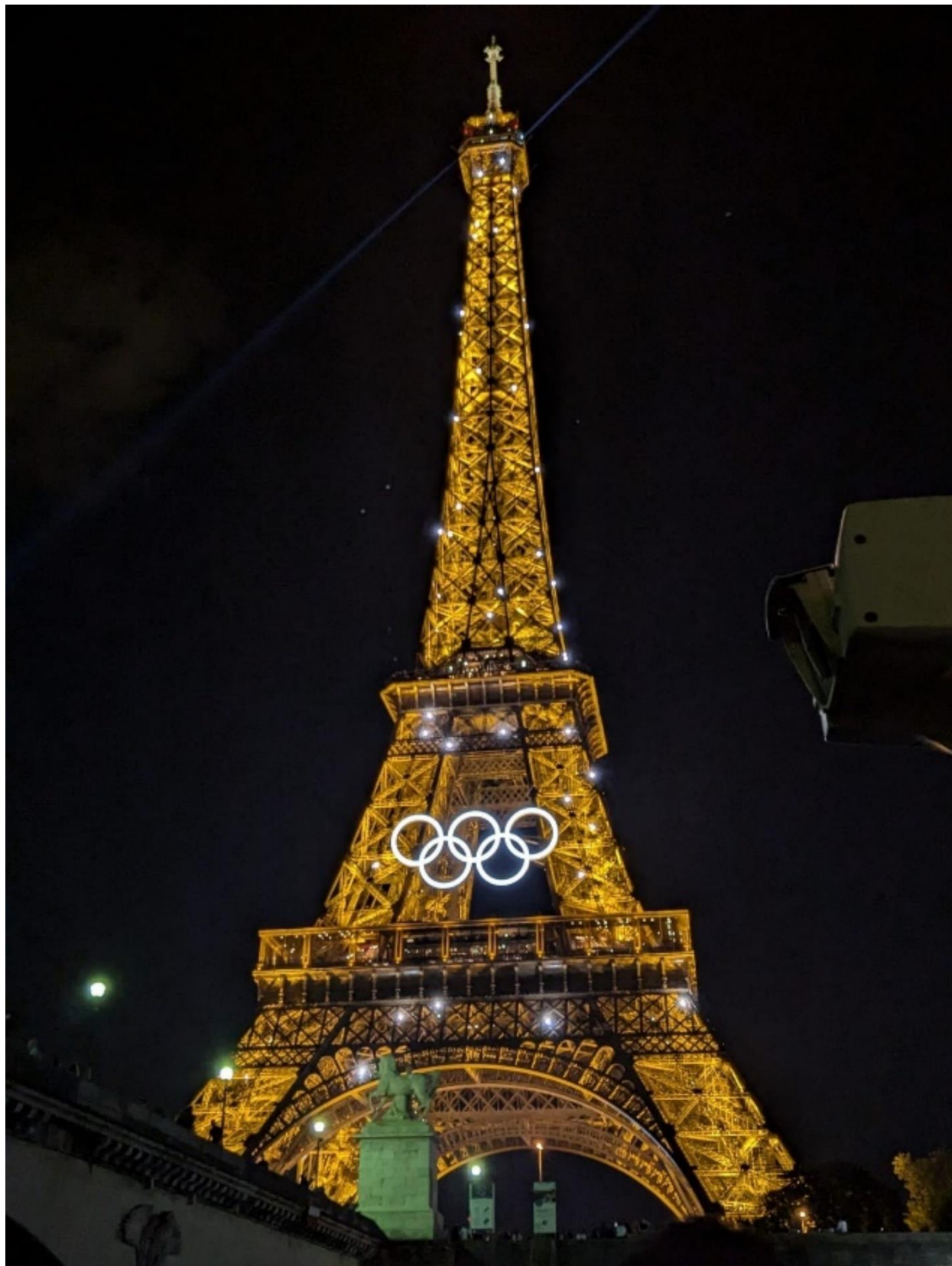
In his 1919 letter to his father, there are discussions of his troubled and intense relationships and his personal sensitivities. This was never intended by Kafka to be read by the public, even his unloving father returned the letter without reading it. The publication of this letter—known as 'Dearest Father'—and other personal writings, were published against Kafka's will and I believe the publications of his manuscripts and letters should have never happened. Brod editing and releasing Kafka's novels was already a invasion, the addition of all of his personal writing and correspondence insulted the wishes and legacy of Kafka, who did not want the world to know or see him for what he was.

He died alone and unknown, and left specific instructions for his legacy to be kept that way.

I am Georgia and I study A Level Religious Studies, History and English Literature at SERC Bangor Campus.

Titanic





I'm Caitlin and I study Photography at SERC.

IKEA



SERC Bangor Canteen



The Story of Daniel in Babylon





I'm John and while studying art at SERC, I created this large ceramic piece (100 kilos). It has never been shown in public as it was made during lockdown and takes a while to assemble. It is the story of Daniel in Babylon. The two sketches are in situ: Ikea and SERC Bangor Canteen.

Song Lyrics

Donna Kernan

Cailte san fharraige

Cailte san fharraige
Cailte san fharraige

I see you in the reflections on the water
I hear you in each breath I take
I feel you in the sand beneath my feet
Your smile remains in the memory of you

Memories of you
Memories of two
We will never walk hand in hand

Memories of you
Memories of two
Our shadows walk across this land

The green, the dark, the blue, we sleep
Falling, falling, falling down deep
Hands clasped tight and waves
Our lock broken, then lost
Down, down, down, falling deep

Memories of you
Memories of two
Your voice still haunts me to this day

Memories of you
Memories of two
My love for you will never ever fade away

Cailte san fharraige
Cailte san fharraige

My name is Donna Kernan and I am currently studying Level 3 Counselling at Newtownards SERC. I am a singer- songwriter, actor and jewellery designer and have worked in film and taught drama for over 40 years now. I love poetry, spoken word and song. I wrote both the melody and the lyrics for 'Cailte san fharraige'. The lyrics are based on The Titanic, with a string instrumental following it.