

WAPPOGO

ISSUE 1

WE ARE UNAPOLOGETIC.

UNAPOLOGETIC

Letter From The Editor



Hi!!!

Welcome to UNAPOLOGETIC we're happy to have you here!! So you're probably wondering what this is all about and quite frankly so am I. I started UNAPOLOGETIC because I wanted to showcase the massive amounts of creativity the DePaul community has. I titled the magazine UNAPOLOGETIC because I think it's important to remain unapologetic in your identity. We spend a lot of time apologizing for who we are, for things we can't change, and UNAPOLOGETIC is an attempt to remind you and remind myself that there's no need to apologize for the space you take up in this world.

This issue, rather the whole series, is focused on how creativity gives way to identity and is used as an outlet to form identity. The amazing art, poems, photos, and short stories in the pages following are just a small sample of the creativity that lives within our community, and I'm stupidly excited to share it with y'all.

Yeehaw. ♥

love,
UNAPOLOGETIC



Pride.

*I love how it swells through
my body as I pass you
On the street. I grow twelve feet taller.*

*In my Catholic school,
I was taught to reject pride, told it was sinful.
Now I revel in this impurity
Me, a faggot.*

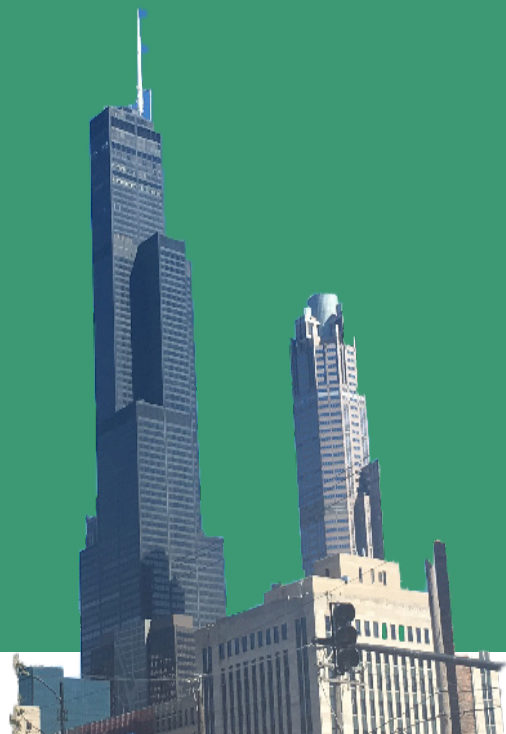
*Purple and scarlet robes shifted around my figure
As I sashayed through my city, my Babylon.
Jewels dripped from my clothes and clinked onto the ground,
announcing my arrival.*

*I saw it in your eyes as soon as they locked with mine
A frigid, ministerial gaze
Like two sharpened crucifixes pointed at my eyes
With the goal of severing my painted lids.*

*The papery flesh around your eyes wrinkled
With disgust
As my proud unholy air invaded your lungs,
Filling them with my apocalyptic energy.*

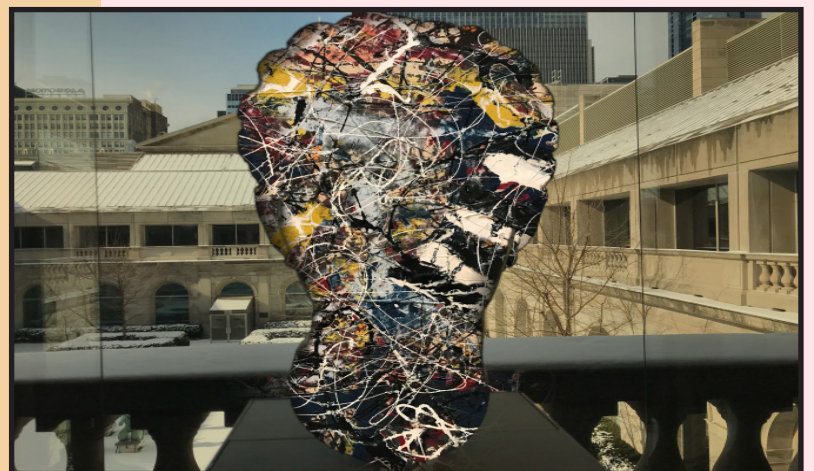
*I hope I haunt your dreams, old man.
I am the beast rising out of the sea
With seven heads and ten horns,
And my name is the name of blasphemy.*

“Revelation”
by: Danny Tarwater





by: *Megan Haslett*



"Eve"

by: *Ashley Ankles*

*The greater force above us works in mysterious ways
Hard times with a promise of better days
Everything happens for a reason
That's the line my Pops was always preachin'*

*I was falling apart over the loss of a man
Now the workings behind it I'm starting to understand
See this man was kind of empty
The type to think only money can make him happy
He looks for validation in the clothing brand
And likes and DMs on the instagram
That materialism allows the insecurity to penetrate
And makes his boys think he's easy to manipulate*

*So, He lets in the venom
Poison of his friends words influence him
Convinced him I'm a woman of many sins
Putting me in the darkest places I've never been*

*Without another word I let him be the mouse wrapped up in the
scales
Because there's one crucial part they left out of the tale
They swear that i've been passed around the crew
But truth is when I chose him, their ego was bruised
Now I'm the forbidden fruit*

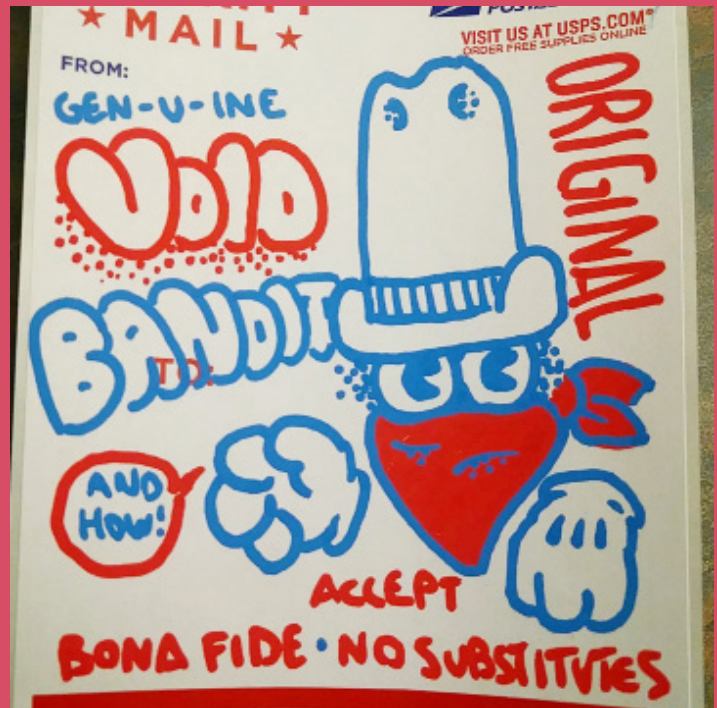
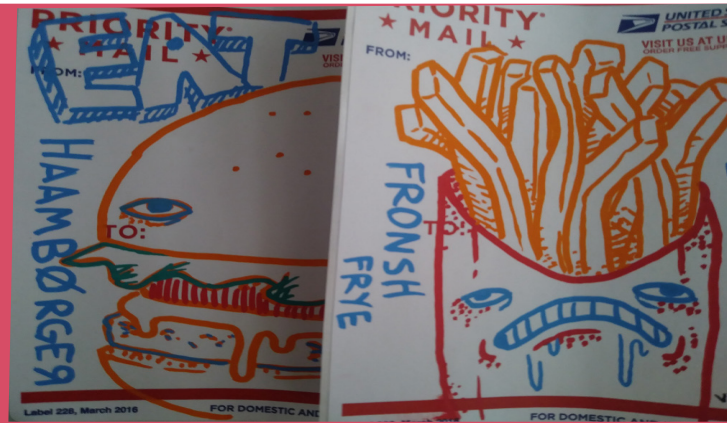
*Your homie that claims he had me in his bed
Is the same pothead, future skinhead
That got behind the wheel intoxicated and almost had you dead
Funny how you all still believe him instead*

*Society always places the blame on eve
Never acknowledging what Adam does behind the scene
One indiscretion and they punish her eternally
What if I told you Adam's the one that stole from the tree?*

*See this was all premeditated
Adam knew, the punishment, he couldn't take it
So he blames the sin on his woman
A trend all the men still seem to be following*

*Eve's heart remains
Forever engraved
With the blood of a scarlet letter
Wherever she goes, she's gotta carry it with her*

*But because of it she breaks out the rib cage
Free to make her own way*



Graffiti by: **Void Bandit**
(pt. 1)

K O D

KING OVERDOSED KIDZ ON DRUGZ KILL OUR DEMONS

GRREAATTT it's 4/20 again.

It's 12 at night; all this pain and anger still lingers on my mind, "why the fuck did you let it happen Nick? This is your fault why he's not here." I'm numb to it since I've gotten used to it. Something's got a hold on me. There's a pink, blue and purple hue that glows on my face while I sit alone, still in my chair, in my cold silent room with a breathing fan blowing on me. My roommate left for the weekend and I'm glad he did because I need time to be alone, especially on this day. I'm not even moving, I'm literally sitting in my mind questioning everything that happened in the past.

∞ 4/20 snatches my soul like Hades did with Hercules. Ever since my sophomore year in high school it's affected me to a point that makes me feel a sadness like there's someone digging dirt out of my stomach.

I'm still sitting when all the sudden I get 5 text messages from friends telling me that J. Cole dropped an album. They told me it was called K O D. All who know me know, I love J. Cole and that he's one of my favorite rappers. But I'm stuck in this mood like a frozen sculpture, that hearing that type of news didn't snap me out of my reality. I was stuck in time, mostly in the past acting like it was my present. I get to a conclusion where I say "ahhh forget it, let me go buy this album". My thumbs find the album sitting in iTunes like a magnet. I buy the album with a simple finger ID scan to see it automatically load in my music catalog. I'm alone in my room so I can play it loud on my phone but something in me says to grab my red "power beats" to listen to it instead. So, I connect them and hop in my bed.

I lay my head down on two pillows that help me focus on the ceiling, like a pro staring contest. "In-

tro" starts playing and all you hear is a static sounds with quick drum taps, blasting trumpets with Coles voice humming the words

"Can someone please turn off my mind?
My thoughts are racing all the time
There is no reason or no rhyme
I'm trapped inside myself"

That's crazy that the first words J. Cole sings are my same exact thoughts I'm feeling and thinking!!! I can't help but laugh and respond to Cole "hahahaha ME TOO COLE!". I hop on my favorite app that pulls the lyrics while the song plays and I read it line for line while the beat and bars flow, trying to keep the same pace as him. "This is gonna be on repeat all night I can merch that". I just let out deep sighs and concentrate on my breathing to keep me relaxed and drift away from thinking everything Cole was thinking too. I just want to think with Cole and lose myself in his music. So I do, I close my eyes calmly with lights changing at such a slow rate. It's a vibbbbee. The next song K O D starts playing and I drift into a peaceful meditation, it's like therapy for me. Just like Cole's, Dollar & a Dream I, myself dream alongside him...

Then I wake up. I'm not in my room anymore...
"Yo, what the hell why am I here???"

I was in my old apartment in my two story bunk bed.

I just look around confused wondering why I was sleeping with my spiderman blanket

I pick it up and throw it
"Yo what the?"

Then I grab it again
"Let me stop playing this blankey is comfier than beans".

Then all the sudden I hear my mom yelling at me "NICHOLAS GET UP, IT'S TIME TO GO TO CAMP!"

I'm like: "Camp? I don't gotta to camp?"
My mom yells again and I jump out of my bed like Zeus

just struck me with a thunderbolt. I'm standing in my room with my blanket draped over my head wondering why she was yelling. She then yells twice, "GET UP! BRUSH YOUR TEETH AND GET DRESSED!". I'm literally **STANDING** and she obviously sees me **STANDING** and continues to tell me to get out of bed like I'm 9 years old again. I look at her in confusion wondering where the hell I was and why she was yelling at me out of my sleep. I walk to the bathroom, turn on the light nonchalantly and bring my head up looking in the mirror and all I see is only the top of my head. I'm freaking out looking in the mirror because I was short. I look in the mirror like I was Zac Efron in the movie "17". Then it dawned on me that I was actually 9 years old again and in my dream. "OHHH that explains the cotton candy skies!". I put water to my face to get out of my dream and nothing works. "Shit I just need to go with this". So after I BRUSH my teeth and GET DRESSED I go down the 15 stairs of my apartment and then head into the front seat of my mom's gray Ford Escape.

"HAHA what do you think you're doing?". My mom said laughing like a hyena

"Ma I'm sitting down in the front seat why are you yelling?!"

"I'm not but you aren't old enough yet".

Then it occurred to me I was my 9 year old self. I think to myself "What the beans is going on!"

"Oh hell no this shit is too damn real!"

The next moment I was at the camp and kids were all around me playing tag and swinging on swings. I look around in confusion and wonder why everything skipped like another chapter in a movie. I'm here sitting on a bench drenching my head and body with ice cold water, just dripping in water at this point. And then my best friend Khalil pops out of nowhere laughing just like my mom.

I pause in awe to think "What the shit???" My mind was racing "I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN YEARS!"

He looks still laughing and then pauses "No Nick seriously what the hell are you doing?"

"Oh my God, I haven't seen you in so long...". I just start crying and try to hug him and his greenish

hazel eyes widen, he laughs "What are you doing Nicolas?". Nicolas is something my mom calls me when she wants something and he started randomly one day calling me Nicolas too.

It was like a smack in the face and for a second I thought I was dead because this dream felt to real SMH. By the time I was gonna respond a whistle from the camp counselor goes off telling us we...

"Oh you gotta be kidding me." Yep you guessed it, my dream skips.

Now Khalil, my other best friend Donovan and I are having a sleepover in my apartment. My mom ordered this 43' inch cheese pizza from Bacci's that can barely fit in our second floor apartment door. Mama Durham always coming in clutch with pop and wings! Khalil and Donovan both say simultaneously "Thank You Mom!". We all had this brotherhood that made sense for them to call my mother their mom. My mom truly made these great friends of mine home and did anything she could do for them including act as their own. But it mostly made sense for Khalil... Khalil's mom and dad weren't really around. They were into heavy drugs when he was a kid and he was forced to move in with his 2 brothers, into his mean grandma's house. I say she's mean because Khalil always said she was and it was true, but she just didn't have the patience for all them. We never talked about it much but that's why he is so mature. "Man I'll never forget how hard it was for him".

As us three kids and my mom are sitting at our circular marble table I stare at Khalil. I just think to myself how he never deserved any card dealt to him. He's beyond smart, funny as all hell and just always knows how to turn a sour day into a sweet one. My mom left and went to lay down in her room while we are having a blast in the kitchen! When Khalil gets tired he gets slap happy just like I do. It's the type of tired where you laugh at anything even if its Khalil acting like the chicken wing was real and flying into his mouth. Khalil, Donovan and I were cry laughing and I was on the ground. Then I got up to snatch a photo of Khalil with the chicken bone in his mouth. "I still have that picture".

That night is one of my favorites. Just no care in the world except each other and being goofy like usual. That night didn't end until 2AM because we were laughing trying not to keep my mom up but eventually someone ended up farting or saying something funny as hell and the hyena's would laugh all night long. But finally we KNOCKED OUT.

Anddddd of course again my dream skips just as the songs in Cole's album. I'm already up this time and all the sudden I hear a knock on my door. I unlock the two locks and open the door to see the 8th grade version of Khalil.

"Oh I remember this".

Khalil just ran to my house because he was running away. He was like "Can I come in?" panting "Hey may I get something to drink". I go to the fridge to get some quality H2O for him and he responds "Hay thank you Nicolas".

"There's never a dull moment with Khalil".

I asked him why he ran away and he told me: "My grandma was being a bitch she started yelling at me for no reason because I was helping her, I literally was helping her Nick, and then she picks up her broom and starts to hit me so since I'm fast and she's not, I run down the stairs and she whips her shoes at me and says 'Khalil get yo ass ova here!' and I was like nope! I'm getting the fuck out of here and then I slammed the door and ran here. So here I am".

I look at him "YOU SAID THAT???"

"Yeah under my breath hahahaha".

Then my mom comes out and asks how Khalil is doing and he responds with:

"Hey Ma, can I move in?"

My mom replies smiling "Sure if you want to".

"You hear that Nick looks like I'm sleeping in the top bunk!"

Khalil would do this from time to time and he would always come to our house because he knew we'd be home and our door was always open for him. My mom always knew what was going on in Khalil's house because he would also vent to her anytime we took him back home. But this one time I wasn't in the car ride

and he had a very mature talk with my mom. I don't have a dad so I somewhat have it tough but he was mature enough to know I had it good...

"Hey mom can I tell you something?"

"Sure what's up honey".

"I feel like Nick doesn't know what he has, I mean he has you who is a great mom, he always has nice clothes on his back, a bunch of shoes he doesn't wear or need, while if I'm lucky enough I can get a new pair of shoes from Walmart. I just wish I had the life Nick has because he has it good and I don't think he knows it".

My mom sat in silence before she answered because what he said was true and it broke her heart to hear him say that.

"You are right Khalil sometimes Nicholas doesn't realize what he has but honey if you need anything you know I'll be there to give anything I can".

LOVE YOURS

My mom came home after and she was silent. And when my mom told me everything he said I felt like I was swimming in Jello. That sat in my mind for a long time.

But once again here I am jumping around to different scenes in my past that goes in the forward motion to the present. "The songs just keep switching huh?"

This time Khalil again came to my house and him & I were in high school. But not the same high school. Khalil went to EP down the street from where I live while I went to school on 79th and Western. We always found the time to maintain our friendship. I love him like a brother but I started to get busy being in my new environment and he was just trying to get away from all the stress he had. He came to my door and said that we needed to talk. I was home alone so the things that seemed to be eating him alive could be let out loosely. And this is was the beginning of me losing him...

"Nick I have to tell you something and you have to promise not to get mad".

To be honest I thought he was going to tell me had sex, but the words he was about to tell me he couldn't prepare me enough for what he was going to say.

"Nick I was hanging around my cousin over the weekend and he was smoking weed around me and asked me if I wanted to take a hit".

"So what did you do?" I asked keenly

"Well I smoked it, but I only smoked once, he kept asking me to keep smoking but I didn't".

I just sat there in silence for bit. I was disappointed in him. I was so upset but did my best for it not to leak out. But it ended up seeping out my once sealed lips.

"How could you??? Yo I'm disappointed in you why would you do that?"

"Well Nick what was I supposed to do?"

"Not smoke Khalil you know you shouldn't be messing with that stuff, I don't care if he asked you just say no it's simple as that!"

"I knew I shouldn't have told you cause I knew you'd get mad".

"Of course I care Khalil you think I wanna see you end up on the same path as your parents, you think I wanna lose my best fucking friend, my fucking brother to drugs?!"

We got into the worst fight of our friendship. And once he left to go back home, he stopped coming around because I hurt him so bad.

J Coles song FRIENDS plays in my dream. But it's my voice rapping my own lines to Khalil

SOMETHING'S GOT A HOLD ON ME

ME:

i know you know that blowing trees with you're so called family is something you think you need but how the hell you gonna let all your dreams never cross the finish line and stay incomplete

you really wanna be like yo folks beggin' for money on the street?

this home here is for your needs

to sleep,

to eat,

to see clearly,

to give you self belief,

to give you reality,

don't ask me "are you mad at me?"

YES I'm mad at you

look at all the things you ain't gonna do.

how you gonna become a product of your past that you don't even own

you wanna be like your parents and not give your kid a home.

you gonna end up lookin' like a packaged dummy smokin' crack like a fiend

why can't you see,

that's 50 years of therapy,

and you want me to stand here to let it be?

what if this weed leads to you dabbin' in poppin' pills cause of chronic anxiety.

i'll never stop loving you wondering if your new prescription has gotten inked in yo system causin' you to lose yo ambition,

use drugs to run away from yo conditions

cause you think you can't live in somethin' you've been missing,

kinda like Jordan without Pippen,

anytime I talk to you, you get all defensive like the "Bad Boys Era" on the Pistons.

that past of yours is gonna be harder to clean than your grandma's chores

i swear to God if I ever get the news you passed from overdose on the floor.

i'm gonna wonder why I never shut my mouth why I let you live in doubt.

why I let you keep that frown

to live your whole life a druggie clown.

i know you got pain you can't control

that makes you sink like the titanic, so low

how you wonder why you can't find your soul

cause I might've planted the wrong seed that never helped you grow.

ISSUE N°1

because I was was stupid, and all I cared for was being more than a bro

KHALIL:

*Man FUCK YOU, look at what you made me do.
Tell me that you're disappointed to make me feel like
shit
I stopped coming around cause you yelled at me
I'm not your kid.
I'll never forget what you said
But you're right, you planted a seed in me
& it made me feel dead.
Just cause I smoke to blow past the pain
Doesn't mean you should've gotten mad
Cause now our friendship has fallen like rain
What a shame
You think this is a game
Can't believe you thought I'd end up a lame
All that did was ignite the flame.
I'd rather run the streets to escape
From a feeling of hate.
You were my hero
And you got me on ground zero.
Thinking I'm not good enough to catch any faith
Cause I turned sour
Not sweet the opposite of cake
You made me cry for hours
Lost in a cloud of marijuana
Flopping fish outta water.
The smoke kills those who still to wander in their
sorrow
Knowing damn well I might not see tomorrow.*

SOMETHING'S GOT A HOLD ON ME

*He just sat there in silence feeling like he let his
favorite person in the world and his hero down. After
while he got up and we said our goodbyes and I was
still mad after he left. This is where I lose him was at
the exact moment I got upset and let him down. I was
the only person he wanted to tell and knew he could*

*trust me with not being disappointed in him. He never
let me down. I let him down... He was hurt. And that
pain lead him to show up less and less till he never vis-
ited again, moved on to Wisconsin his Senior year with
his parents to become something he isn't.*

*I wake up from my dream, to the lyrics being
said in Cole's cold painful words, then complemented
with a woman's voice, the voice of K O D.*

SOMETHING'S GOT A HOLD ON ME

I CAN'T LET IT GO

OUT OF FEAR I WON'T BE FREE

Life can bring much pain

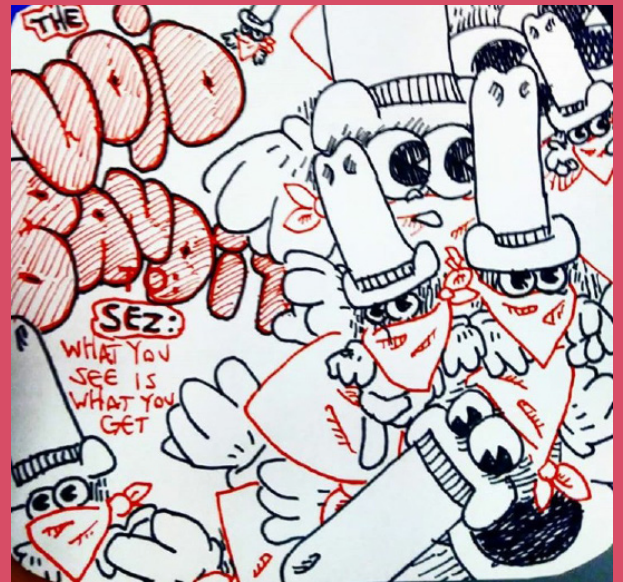
There are many ways to deal with this pain

CHOOSE WISELY

*That morning all I could think of was KHALIL ON
DRUGZ.*

by: **Nicholas (Bull)
Durham**

** Things in the short story are connected
to J.Cole's newest album that released on
4/20 named KOD.**



Graffiti by: **Void Bandit**
(pt. 2)



ZOEY WAGNER

a short interview

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

My name is Zoey and I'm 19! I am a philosophy and peace studies student at DePaul, about to make my switch over to peace studies and music business, and I'm originally from Des Moines, Iowa, which is a historically political area. I grew up surrounded by campaign organizers and politicians, and would often spend days as an intern for campaigns and government organizations before moonlighting as both an avid fan and booker of local diy shows. I am an activist and curator of music and art created by and for femme and queer people. I'm especially passionate about art that pushes forward conversations surrounding queer identity and gender performance, among other vital conversations and important issues, and I draw inspiration from everything from pop stars to local punk groups to the artists and musicians I call my friends.

How did you get involved in the DIY scene?

I was 15 when I went to my first DIY show in Des Moines. I remember it so vividly. I was really young and impressionable. Went with a guy from my spanish class who later turned out to be a huge jerk, but he had great taste in music and would send me playlists all the time. We went to a local dive bar that doubles as a diy space and functioning venue to see a group of guys from our high school play in an emo band. Despite my feeling a

little weird surrounded by all these dudes-I must have been one of the 2 or 3 girls in the whole room-, I was still intrigued by the idea of something being able to bring people of all ages together. I ended up going to a show at the same venue probably once a week, whether it was a band I knew of or some random cover band, I just wanted to be in the middle of it all. There was something really special about getting lost in a crowd of people, yet finding solidarity in everyone coming together to appreciate art and music. Then I started going to house shows, learning the names of all the people that frequented these events, and read some really angsty, overly dramatic poetry at shows. I also got a job as a door person at the same venue I visited with that asshole guy when I was 15. Needless to say, he is not welcome at shows at that place anymore.

What is Femifest?

FEMifest (like manifest, but without the man) is an inclusive art and music initiative focused on putting women and non-binary people, as well as LGBTQ artists, at the front-whether that be in production, promoting or playing.. We started off as a little DIY festival for feminist artists, with 6 bands and a handful of musicians and volunteer,, and later branched off to do a couple festivals in Des Moines and a nearby college town called Ames before I moved to Chicago. Since relocating, FEMifest has co-hosted a 80's-style, queer inclusive prom night with another



collective in the area called Sematary, before moving on to do our biggest festival yet at a really lovely DIY space in Logan Square called Caliwaukee. It was a total whirlwind, with 12 artists and 14 bands, including a solo set by Harmony Tividad from Girlpool and a really beautiful closing-night set from Infinity Crush, a lo-fi project I've been following since I was 14. That was really special.



Poster for the third annual FEMifest in Chicago, IL
(madilyn brace)

Where did the idea for Femifest come from?

I was frustrated with the idea of a scene with so much potential being a boys club. Marginalized people and communities need the mic now more than ever, and something felt really sacred about the idea of creating an event where artists could come together to just exist and share their talents with the greater community without fear of being tokenized or misunderstood. The same year FEMifest was founded, I helped start up the Young Feminists club at my school with my co-president, Shufe Ibrahim. We were in need of a big project to invest in with the club, so

we all collaborated on the first FEMifest. The whole thing was organized and put on by high school girls, everything from the flyer to the bakesale to running the event itself. We even spray painted the backdrop in my driveway!! While FEMifest has changed for both of me and the club once I graduated- They continue to put it on as a fundraiser festival, while I've branched off with the organization in different mediums- it was really great to kick start the organization with a group of passionate young women and non-binary folks and put on what most would consider to be impossible for a group of 15 and 16 year olds.

Do you have any current projects? (tours, shows, etc.)

Right now i'm booking a 12-date tour with a really great, all-LGBT pop project called Drama Moth! They also happen to be some of my best friends (and the guitarist is my partner of 7 months). Booking 12 different all-femme and LGBTQ bills is tricky, but it's been a great lesson in networking and community and will surely be rewarding. After touring with the band for a month, I'll be focusing on writing grant applications and attaining the resources to further promote equality in arts communities. I'm trying to take a step back and listen to what other underrepresented artists need in their venues, their inner circles, and out in the production and promotion world. In the near future, I'd like FEMifest to maybe find some other projects to back and support both financially and as an organization- That could mean producing a play featuring an all-female/femme crew, directors and writers, or dive into supporting short films, zines or other artistic endeavors. I'm trying to be thoughtful with what I invest in and pick projects I'm super passionate about.

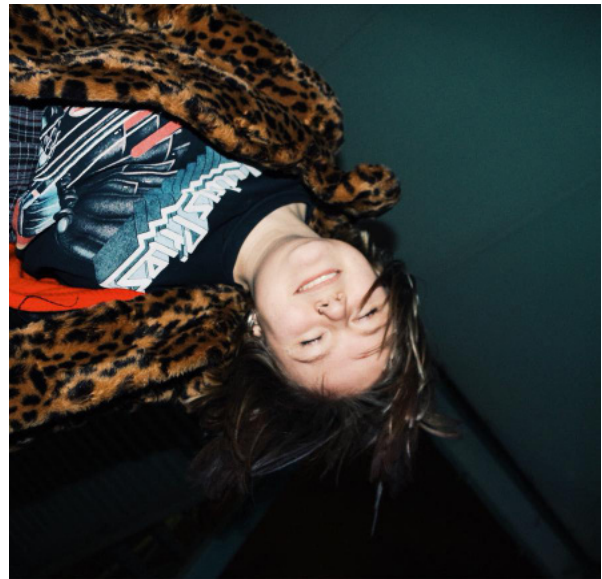
What difficulties have you experienced thus far in your role in the DIY scene?

Male entitlement is very real and frustrating. I've worked with men that might mean well, but will interrupt and undermine



me and speak to me as if I've never booked a show before, let alone 5 festivals and a full tour. They'll explain to me what a backline is, or suggest I make a flyer, or straight up copy and take credit for my ideas. I have male friends that are very dear to me and understanding of my abilities and the way I run my organization, but when people overstep their boundaries it's frustrating, you know? FEMIfest is a project that has been active since I was 15. I have had to put in a lot of work, even until after the last festival we did, to be protective of what FEMIfest is and separate these endeavors from people that want to take advantage of something as sensitive and vulnerable as a feminine-centric, queer project. That being said, I've also had to learn and listen as a person with relative privilege. My queerness is very much there, but my experience as a white, feminine (meaning, i "pass" as what people believe to be a straight cis girl) and able bodied person is very different from those who haven't been handed the same luck as me.

a scary moment or even in a bout of loneliness. These experiences made me realize the value of community in art and caused me to set forth in what I wanted to do- create artistic environments like this for everyone, no matter their walk of life. Art is political, a form of protest, and an act of resilience. We need art now more than ever. All I want is to do my part to make the most vital voices a little louder. ♥



above: Zoey! (photo by chrys coulthard)

below: Zoey and friends watching local band Glitter Moneyyyy (photo by emina husteovic)

Do you think that creativity and creative outlets are an important asset to developing identity?

I absolutely do. I think creative outlets provide an opportunity for self discovery that is sometimes lost in communities without safe, healthy opportunities to explore identity and emotion- the "tough stuff"- through art.

How has your role in the DIY scene, and your own art helped you develop your own identity?

It was supportive, community-driven spaces that gave me a greater sense of community and taught me how to stand up for myself, be deliberate and allowed me a sense of independence. I could show up to a show by myself and stand in GA alone for 3 hours, lost in my own thoughts. It was therapeutic, and I always went home that night with a new idea or some sort of revelation. I don't know if I would have been able to do that in a venue that didn't have female patrons and staff that I knew I could reach out to in

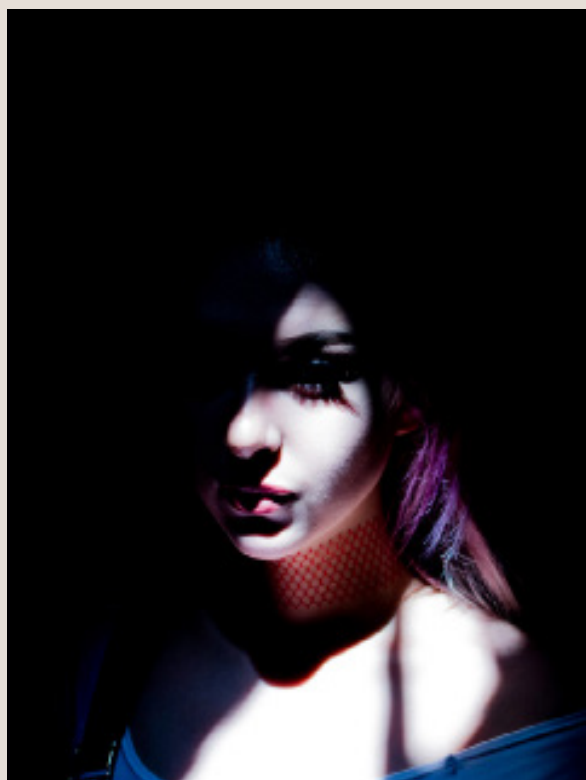




by: *Anonymous*

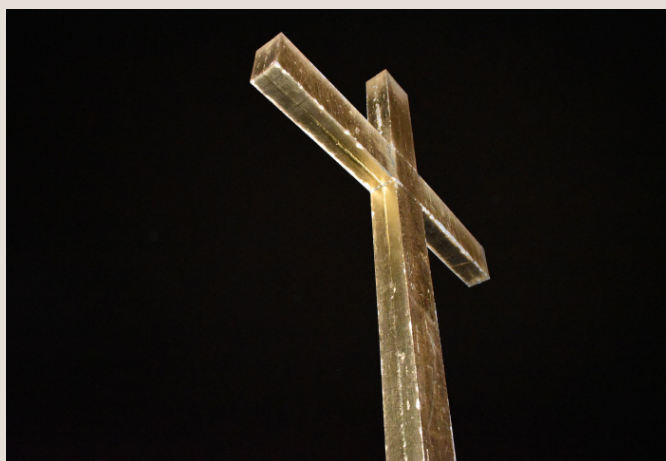
*If I ever have a child
the first thing I will teach
them is that they can say
whatever they are thinking
whatever is on their mind
whatever they want
because
it is so important
to say what you are feeling*

*don't hold things
in don't worry about others
only worry about
yourself*





photos by: **Jack Angell**



"Loop"
by: *Hana Anwar*

*I do not know what I am becoming.
I begin to ignore beggars, apostrophes curled on asphalt
I am preoccupied with shadowy canyons of wealth and secrets
They are erected from the concrete in grand, grey headstones*

*I drag my heavy limbs beneath the beating sky
Everyone is sweating, swelling, shedding layers like snakeskin
Slithering out into the thick afternoon
My lips are salt.*

*I am sick of being the selfish observer, cold imposter
Witness to the cracked woman in cardboard shoes
Hard hatted men buried deep in the bowels of gravel
Rasping cries from lunatics
All of the sad human noise.*

*There are many tombs here.
Below the slitted eyes of Chicago Correctional Center
A man naps quietly, girls gossip about sex, I am freely laughing
Who am I to be free?*

*I walk, immune to the sprawling, dirty view
Thin arms outstretched makeshift styrofoam offering plates
Cigarettes dangle from each self absorbed pair of lips
Everyone is vulnerable in smoky chaos.*

*I return, swallowed into the same fluorescent grave
The commuters have yellowed armpits and empty eye sockets
We press into contact, brush arms, share hot air
The strangest, loneliest part of our day.*

*I ride the train to school so that I may someday ride it to work
Vacant eyes sore feet, millions of cubicles
The ignorant, grey commuter dream
I do not know what I am becoming.*



Cyborg Manifesto



Untitled



Summer Camp

by: *Megan Phillips*

XAVIER MORRIS

a short interview

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I'm a 19-year-old African-American male; pronouns are he/him/his. I'm from the suburbs of Chicago. I'm double majoring in Game Programming and Japanese Studies.

How did you start doing cosplay?

I first started cosplaying 5 years ago (my freshman year of high school). I was introduced to this anime convention in Rosemont, IL called "Anime Central," or "ACEN" for short. That's what really brought me into the cosplay community. I thought it was so fascinating that people could actually dress up as a character they loved. That year, I bought my first costume and planned to do a lot of body paint and craft a sword, but those expectations were too high, haha, and it ended up looking really bad.

What is cosplay?

Cosplay is the hobby of wearing costumes to represent a character typically from anime, cartoons, comics, TV series, movies, video games, books or even as a celebrity. It differs from Halloween because cosplay is usually more intricate, self-crafted, significantly more expensive and happens more than once a year.

Where did you learn to make costumes, design, etc.?

I really just learned from YouTube tutorial videos and some of my friends who do a

lot of costume designing already. Throughout high school, I received tips from friends and went to their houses to watch what they did, and then tried to replicate that in my own work, or I would follow along with a tutorial video.

How does the design process usually go?

For sewing, the process usually starts with "can I even sew this?" If not, then the other option would be to make it out of craft foam (which goes into more armor making). But once you decide that, it's a lot of planning and measuring yourself to see how much fabric you should buy. Finding the correct color to match the costume is very difficult as well. After that, if you know how to sew, it's just the matter of taking the time to sew it (which can be a lengthy process depending on the outfit). For craft foam, worbla (super expensive material) and other crafting materials, it's also about planning your steps. The benefits of these materials are that they're malleable and some are thermoplastic, therefore, you can bend them, heat them, and shape them over and over again until you get the look you desire. The negatives are that they usually cost a lot more money, can easily burn (referring to worbla) and are more difficult to learn how to utilize.

Do you think there's any misconceptions people have about cosplay?

I think the biggest misconception is that people think cosplayers are nerds. This



is completely false. It just a large community of diverse people who enjoy wearing costumes. Many of these people are actual fashion designers, costume artists, magazine models or just normal people with jobs at the end of the day. For example, Robert Downey Jr. cosplays as Iron Man in the movies, but he does it because he enjoys acting and has a passion for it, not necessarily because he's a nerd. Cosplay is like that as well.



Xavier in one of his costumes at a local convention

How do you think your role in cosplay has helped you develop your own personal identity?

Cosplay has become an aspect of my life that I think about every day. Being around other cosplayers allows me to express my creativity and interests without being judged for what I love to do. Cosplay has also introduced me to so many of the friends I have now and is something that will always make me happy until I die.

Do you think creativity and creative outlets play a large role in identity?

I do think that creativity and creative outlets play a large role in identity. Creativity is literally what shapes someone's identity. It's what differentiates one person from the next.

It allows people to express themselves, their ideas, their aspirations and plans in life. However, without creative outlets, I don't think creativity would help anybody. In order to express your creativity, there has to be someplace to do it, or else you'll just get shut down. For example, ACEN has given cosplayers a place to exhibit and share their creativity, but without these types of events, cosplayers would not do this in public because they would just come off as weird. ♥



above & below: both are pictures of Xavier at local conventions in cosplay he designed himself





Ruin You



The Girl Next Door



Don't Get Too Close



*A simple detective, a city full of crimes, and
a drink on the rocks. Caro is a simple bear
who takes life slow, but when crime strikes,
he'll be on the case when least expected:
while drunk! Coming never to an [Adult
Swim] channel near you!
by: **Space Whale***

I. Do Not Let Your Parents Get Divorced in College

*My face still hurts
From clenching up and exhaling
Over and over again*

*Hours later and my head continues to ache.
Thoughts and feelings fill the walls on my skull
Clouding the possibility of any logic.*

*“Even though I know you don’t want me and
you don’t need me, I’m going to stay here”.
By here, he meant Michigan.
Cowan Road and the home I had grown up in.
“I plan to stay
For the next couple of years,
At least until you graduate”.*

*I remember him saying this last night,
Beer satiated breath and an assertive tone that
sought appraisal and begged for forgiveness.
He paused, looking up at me.*

*“I’d rather be four hours away from you, then
twenty, just in case you needed me”.
What he really meant was,
“I’d rather continue to this cycle, than make
my life any
Better”*

*Maybe this was a guilt-inducing recruitment slogan
for Team Dad.
Maybe he was being honest
Maybe the alcohol was.*

*Then again, maybe he was stuck with the
house
And his pride.*

*“I just want to know where you’re going for
Thanksgiving”.
Trying to find a neutral location for break.*

*Neutral location: somewhere I don’t have to
declare a side or a decision. Somewhere that
isn’t his turf or hers, I can still pretend this isn’t
a result, yet at least. I posed the question to
forego my holiday ticket on the sad, angry,
lonely, Alcoholic dad emotional rollercoaster.*

*The same dad who hugs me when I cry but is
my reason for crying.*

*“I’ll go for you to go to Maine, or wherever you
want to go, just let me know what it costs”. His
paternal and patriarchal instincts told him*

this.is.how.he.loves.you.

*This time you don’t believe him.
This time he does not believe himself.*

*As a symbol of his sacrifice and prevailing
fatherhood, he says he could find a way to
make it work:
For you he utters.*

*Palms sweat.
Clench fists increase their moisture.
Eyes scan the room for where to run.
All instincts are fought as legs remain in place.*

*There is a Vice article that I have read a
thousand times by a man who loves a woman.
When talking about her he says, “She smiles
when she talks on the phone with her moth-
er. She doesn’t smile when she talks to her
father, because she doesn’t talk to her father.
Her father is no good and she came from that
no good.” Standing here, in the basement
beneath my childhood memories, these words
ring in my brain.*

*“I’ll be working. That’s all I am ever good for
anyways.”
He says it.*

*There is no word for his tone. But it says, rather
convincingly, “poor me”.*

II. Do Not Let Your Father Die

*“Are you sitting down?”
I had already put my Trader Joe’s grocery bags
down.
I had already eaten the dip and the bread.
I had already stopped returning my father’s
phone calls.*

*My mom asked me “are you sitting down”.
I was already sitting down and she said rather calmly
It is dad.*

It is always dad.

*It is dad and
I asked if he was homeless and she said no
and she said dad is dead.
Dad is dead, he hung himself.
I stand up. I scream.*

The world spins and I see bright colors.

*People come: they bring wine, marijuana and
pizza.
None increase my appetite.*

*I call people and people call. I explain to them
what little I know.
I don’t sleep.
I lay in the dark and picture his body. His body
hanging there.*

*I go home.
The next day I go home on a flight that my
cousins pay for.
I go home and my brother picks me up at the
airport and we hug and he has water and coffee
and vodka.
I drink.*

*A funeral, conversations, pictures, funeral outfits,
foods and no sleep later, I am at his house.
Our house. Cowan Road.
I open the fridge to see what food he will never
finish.
I pick up receipts to understand his last days.
I pick up his shirt hanging on the kitchen chair
because he never will.
[NG9] I hold it in my hands and let the starchy
fabric scrape my face.
It is blue and smells like cigarettes and cheap
cologne.*

*I walk down the steps.
I find a pan in his suitcase.
I talk to his suitcase.
“Why is there a pan in your suitcase.”*

*There is no word for my tone.
But it says
Rather convincingly
“Poor Me”.*

***“She Doesn’t Smile When She
Speaks To Her Father”***

by: Allis Carvalho

“Sailor Man”

by: **Tim Cundy**

Crusty eyelids from too much wine. Orange sunlight through a four-pane window. Those rays of light pin pricked his pupils. The sailor awoke forgetting what time it was that he went to bed last night. He forgot most nights, losing track of memory somewhere around sundown and drifting far away into the nebulous of mean drunkenness until the morning birds began chirping outside his window in a high-pitched yelling tone, screaming at him like cackling old women.

On the boat—this was years ago—the sailor had been bronzed by the morning sun. His shirt always used to be off, hanging over one shoulder as he approached the dock. His teeth bright with a white glow, his feet bare, sandals in one hand, a bucket of supplies in the other. He’d arrive in the early purple-colored hours of dawn, just before the sun showed its face over the horizon, and the sailor would be there as if he had just slept for an eternity; his whole body hardened to a crisp from efficient years of fishing on this glorious navy-blue sea in front of him.

This was when he was on the boat. He no longer goes out to the boat. It floats in the harbor collecting mussels. Today was the Lord’s day, which meant going into town, something he hates doing, but that’s where God placed the church so that’s where he would go. A splash of lukewarm water from the filled sink to each side of his face making the smell of booze change into something almost as sinister, like a frightening mix of week old mashed potatoes and dirty noodle water. A shirt and tie hung on the edge of his bedroom door. Gently his shaking hands wrapped the attire around his neck, this took a few moments. He walked past his dusty mirror to the toilet. The yellow-brown stream splashed the bowl and he couldn’t help but think again of the boat.

Going out there that day with a sharpened spear and a fresh spool of line was as easy as any other. Fellow fishermen with their hats low over their tired eyes called out jokes, but these just bounced off the sailor’s chest as if he were made of shining steel. That day on the boat, out there alone without any clear sight of land (just

the way he liked it), the sailor caught a big, fatty tuna, lugging it up onto the side of his small fishing boat. He ate a sandwich with the sun on his back, not realizing the storm on the horizon, not paying attention to the sudden cool air, forgetting, only for a brief moment, that he was not in fact the son of God.

The surface that was once as comforting as a lover’s bed became a flying madness of waves. After he was over the side and swallowed a mouthful of salty water into his lungs, he felt betrayed by mother-nature’s wickedness and her sudden desire to see him drowned. Yards under the surface, growing inside him, was an acute fear of it all, of the power of the thunder, the crackling of the lightning, and the absolute lack of mercy that the storm exhibited upon him. All his beauty and charm became a practical joke, and there, in those sad waters, the sailor just begged for life and salvation. The storm ignored his pleas, answering only with another layer of waves over top of him. His arms digging through to get him back to the black surface, he screamed out through the water to God, asking as a final request to give him a chance, and he swore, on everything that was holy in this world, that he would see to it that he’d be in His aisle for the rest of his Sunday’s on this planet. The water cycled around his fingers and all of it, the sea salt, the shaking boat, the sounds of the wind, the openness of the sea, it all became like a sudden stranger; a woman who you loved so dearly once before becoming just another face in a crowd surrounded by meaningless flesh.

The walk to the church in town was two miles along a dirt road past Ron Henderson’s dentist office. Always on Sunday’s the sailor would see Ron’s young boy on the front porch twiddling a piece of wood with his father’s hunting knife. The sailor would always wave and the boy would always wave back, his young eyes holding onto the sailor for a long time. The sailor would keep walking towards the church until he became a small dot on the side of the road and the young boy would run inside to ask his father what he knew about the old drunkard who lived up the road, and Ron Henderson would always reply, “He’s just an old sailor who got afraid of the water is all.”

resource spotlight

DePaul has a variety of on campus resources that center around identity, creativity, and how the two coexist. The Office of Multicultural Student Success has multiple centers within the university that focus on identity. The Black Cultural Center, Latinx Cultural Center, Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Cultural Center, and the LGBTQA+ Resource Center are all located on the third floor of the O'Connell building at the Lincoln Park campus. Each of these centers provides a safe space for members of each community to meet, study, work, or simply hang out; the larger community of the resource centers provide melting pot for people of different backgrounds to come together in support of each other and their individual identities. The University Writing Center is another hotspot of identity and creativity working together hand in hand. Most people know the writing center as simply an academic resource on the second floor of the SAC. While it very much is that, it is so much. The larger office of the University Center for Writing-based Learning provides a community of supports in all your creative endeavors. Jen Finstrom, of the UCWbL's outreach team, states

“In addition to the the variety of appointments where members of the DePaul community can collaborate one-on-one with peer writing tutors on any type of writing, the University Center for Writing-based Learning (UCWbL) also hosts writing groups. One of these, Writers Guild, focuses on creative writing, and group attendees bring their poems, stories, creative nonfiction, and other genres to share in a supportive community environment. Writers Guild is open to current students, alumni, faculty, and staff and also hosts a quarterly open mic.”

Resources like this, that support your creativity while providing you with community that helps support your identity are essential the University environment, but especially the DePaul community.



RESOURCE LOCATIONS:

Writing Center: *Schmitt Academic Center 212*

Office of Multicultural Student Success: *Student Center 105*

Black Cultural Center, Latinx Cultural Center, Pacific Islander Desi American Cultural Center, and LGBTQA+ Resource Center: *O'Connell third floor*

(Special thanks to the Writing Center-Monika, Erin, Jen , and the whole EDGE team- this would not be possible without your constant support)



WE WILL ALWAYS BE UNAPOLOGETIC.

