

ART READY 2019-2020

A PRINT EXHIBITION
BY NYC PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS

S m a c k M e l l o n



Smack Mellon is a nonprofit arts organization located in DUMBO, Brooklyn. Our mission is to nurture and support emerging, under-recognized mid-career and women artists in the creation and exhibition of new work, by providing exhibition opportunities studio workspace, and access to equipment and technical assistance for the realization of ambitious projects. We see ourselves as a vehicle whereby under-represented artists can create, explore and exhibit their creative ideas outside the concerns of the commercial art world, offering many artists the exposure and recognition they deserve.

Smack Mellon's Art Ready program brings high school aged artists in 10th to 12th grades into the studios of New York City's most innovative and inspiring art makers. The program is open to students attending New York City public high schools.

Art Ready operates during the school year and includes a series of studio visits with emerging and established artists; a series of field trips to museums and galleries; portfolio preparation workshops; and a four-month arts mentorship. Art Ready connects up to twenty-one high school students with seven diverse artists, to gain practical experience working with professionals in a variety of artistic disciplines. There is no fee to participate, and all expenses, including museum admissions, transportation and food, are paid.

Art Ready engages young people in a way no other arts education program does. It pairs students directly with working artists; the students learn firsthand over the course of a school year what it is to be an artist in the artist's studio. Working as mentors, the artists provide professional and creative guidance as the students make decisions about their futures in the arts. Mentor/teaching artists tutor the students in their creative process, introduce them to new ways of working, and engage them in continuous critical reflection.

Smack Mellon's Education Programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, New York City Council Member Stephen Levin, and with support from Select Equity Group Foundation, Exploring The Arts and Smack Mellon's Members. Smack Mellon's programs are also made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor M. Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts, and with generous support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Edward and Sally Van Lier Fund of The New York Community Trust, The Roy and Niuta Titus Foundation, Jerome Foundation, Robert Lehman Foundation, Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation Inc., Iorio Charitable Foundation, and Smack Mellon's Members. Space for Smack Mellon's programs is generously provided by the Walentas Family and Two Trees Management. In-kind donations are provided by Artist & Craftsman Supply, Costco, Fairway, Trader Joe's, and by Materials for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs/NYC Department of Sanitation/NYC Department of Education.



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4-5 | **Julangelin Gamboa**, “These pieces were made by the group photo store, a group of 3 students at Art Ready. Using multiple materials like sand, glue, paint, baby oil, and tools given to us along with creative freedom.”

6-7 | **Miguel Mendoza**, “Factories are one of the main causes of climate change and radioactivity. The factory is the main highlight while the setting is all gray and gloomy. The second piece of art is the tree that is radioactive and glowing in a dark night.”

8-9 | **Ximena Mejia** “Painting is a state of being...self-discovery. Every good artist paints what they are.” Jackson Pollock

Mentor: Florencia Escudero | Pages 10-13

10-11 | **Fanny Liu**, “Certain music reminds me of a heart beating and the awareness of the unknown. I used a plastic bag with droplets of watercolor and pressed down against the paper to make the splashes, took it out, and let the paper dry. I added the lines with silver and gold marker to indicate the waves of the heartbeat.”

12-13 | **Taiwo Odukoya**, “The pillow portrait was supposed to look just like a self-portrait drawing I made. It came out looking like my insecurity. I used fabric with vibrant colors to evoke a sense of peace and happiness. While making the piece, I connected it with my feelings at that moment. Sometimes, colors are better depictions of a person’s feelings. This piece highlights the opposite of my feelings in hopes they get better.”

Mentor: Gina Goico | Pages 14-19

14-15 | **Art Ready Student**, “I took photos and drew what I see through my mind’s eye on top of it. Many of the pictures contain shadow creatures. As a kid I was told of creatures lurking in shadows and feeding off negative energies. Since the quarantine, I feel my negative emotions are a feast for these things. The eye piece is there since especially in the night and early morning I feel like I’m being watched in a sense, just that goosebumpy feeling. The final piece has the Ziz (a creature in Jewish folklore.) It is a giant bird creature whose wingspan can cover the sky and shroud the world in darkness. I imagine it far off with its head in the clouds. It has a sense of calm and regalness, and that’s something I wish to achieve.”

16-17 | **Sarah Romero**, “I collaged different magazine cutouts, and an old Polaroid picture frame with a picture of me holding a skull and a dry rose that was given to me back in February. For the self-portrait, I used thermal filters, a light base with Copic markers and a base of color pencils. The artworks that include myself show that I am confident with my appearance and my artwork. For the last piece, the mushrooms and flowers were done with watercolor. The sky, trees and grass were done digitally on Procreate.”

18-19 | **Nicholas Jenkins**, “I documented my time at home during this pandemic through photography. I captured moments and spaces around my apartment to showcase what I see every day at home or on the roof. The picture you are seeing shows my neighborhood empty and quiet because of this virus. Many people from my community are home having a hard time dealing with the pandemic. However, that might sound bad but I believe that we are all capable of creating a piece of work that shows our feelings and thoughts during these dark times.”

Mentor: Meryl Bennett | Pages 20-25

20-21 | **Ben Snazelle**, “*Garden*, acrylic on canvas, is of a dancing woman surrounded by plants and cherry blossoms. Japanese dolls inspired the clothing of the woman. *Metal Face*, acrylic on cardboard, is a painting of rapper and producer MF DOOM. His music motivates me to be original and make unique art.”

22-23 | **Emily Shi**, *Free Spirited*, colored pencil on paper

24-25 | **Habiba Akhanji**, pencil and poetry on paper

Mentors: Sam Lee and Abdulgader (AK) Naseer, Sage and Coombe | Pages 26-31

26-27 | **Stephanie Palacios**, *Marshal's comfort* and *Violet Evergarden*, "Quarantine can change people's emotions. What started off as a piece to show my hidden sadness through an innocent video game, turned into an illustration representing an anime called Violet Evergarden. Violet Evergarden made me feel happy and inspired so my idea shifted to representing what I binged-watched during the time we are stuck inside."

28-29 | **Anastasia Powell**, *Covid-19 is it over yet?* "Anger, boredom, confusion, devastation. All four of these emotions are connected to fear. They also serve as the roadmap of my quarantine."

30-31 | **Sidney Cheng**, "The piece *Self-Isolation and Self-Corruption* showcases my experience and the results of my self-quarantine due to the wake of the COVID-19. Self-isolation has resulted in many of us looking to technology and media for entertainment, not realizing that the large amount of time we spend on it is actually harming us as well as the virus outside. The figure happily fusing with technology completely without care of the virus that lurks beyond the screens."

Mentor: Michael Paul Britto | Pages 32-37

32-33 | **Nikola Burnett**, Nikki Burnett Film Collage

34-35 | **Aaliyah Lowe**, "My pictures represent the life of New Yorkers. People try so hard to obtain materialistic things, to achieve 'the American dream.' They forget what's around them, the true value of life. These photos are a reminder that we mustn't focus on what we have on or what we have to put to our name to show success but actually focus on important things around us and our environment to live the best life we can."

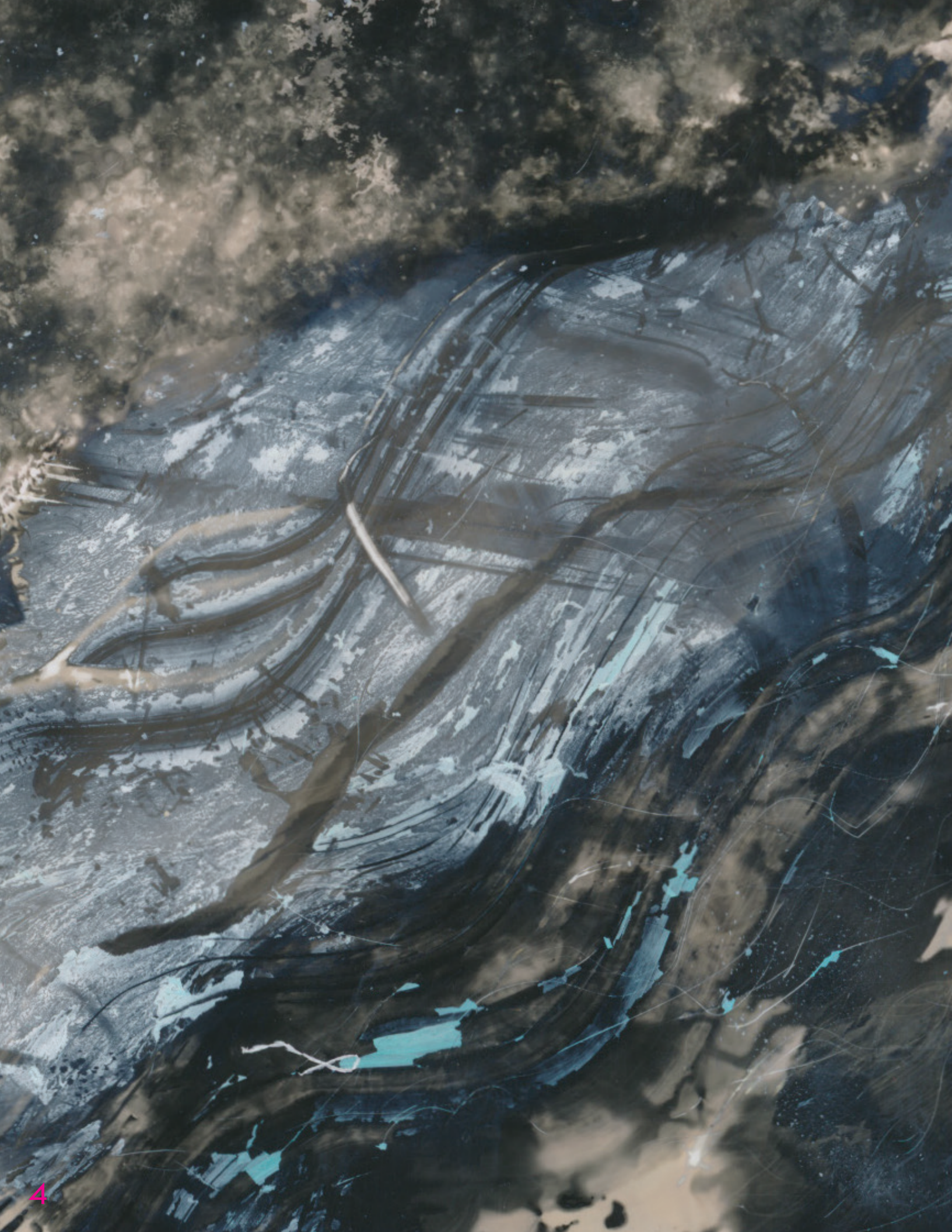
36-37 | **Davonte Fremont**, "The *Heavenly Alien with Spray Paint* is an animated vision of myself as an angelic unidentifiable species that has a dedication to arts that certain people know I possess. Once in this state of dedication, I become a supernatural or extraterrestrial being when focused on completing art in different ways. The Brooklyn piece is a drawing created to pay homage to being born and raised in Bed-Stuy Brooklyn for 10 years, witnessing the positives and negatives of living in what other people view as 'the ghetto', I view as my home forever and always."

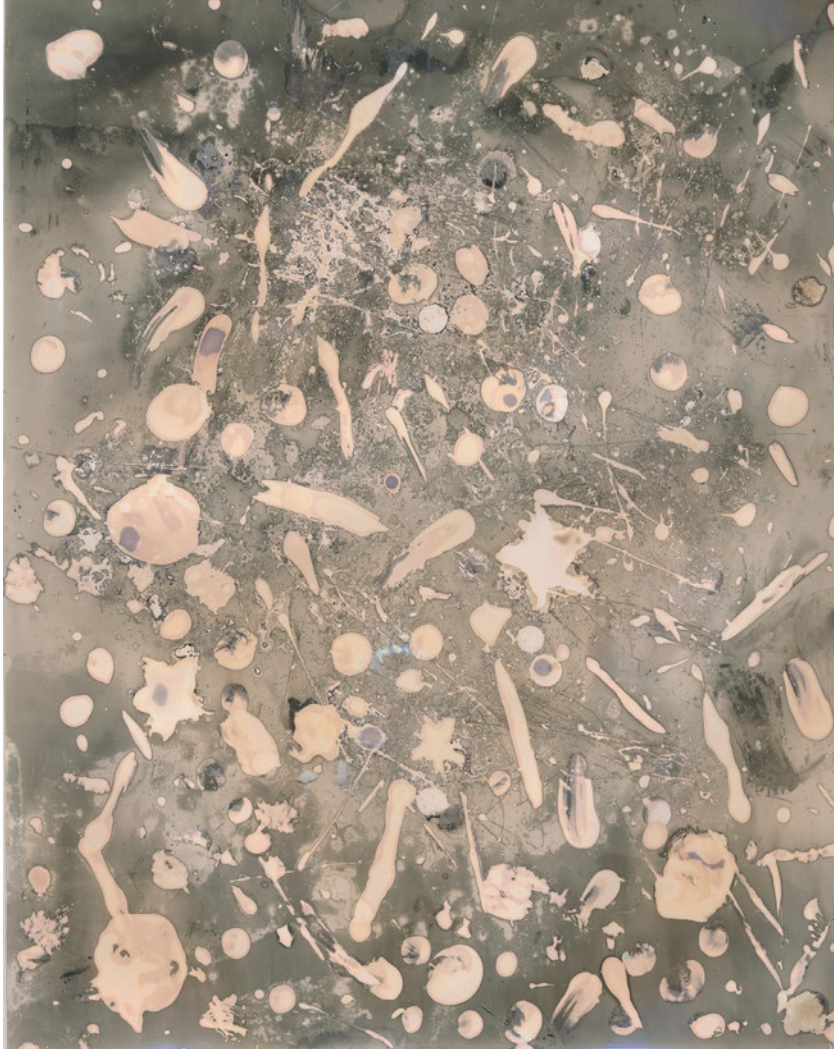
Mentor: Esperanza Cortés | Pages 38-43

38-39 | **Isis Hamilton**, "The sun was always out when we needed it to be like a prop in our own plays, even when the cast isn't on, the sun still keeps the stage warm. During lockdown the sun still shines and we can still feel the rays even off stage."

40-41 | **Abigail Huestipac**, "After experiencing nearly seventeen springs and summers, they have all been beautiful. This one has been no different than those before. This one feels different, especially while being in quarantine. My senior year has been cut short and my mental health has taken a toll. Within these paintings I am displaying my desire to go back outside. Art is the best way to show what I see in those gloomy days of April. While it may be a bit too much to ask to be allowed to go back to the way things were right away, hopefully, slowly we could be able to enjoy this summer the way we know how."

42-43 | **Eric Garcia**, "Quarantine has really affected many of us. Everyone is supposed to be indoors at all times. My painting describes the idea of isolation during the quarantine. Isolation right now is being away from society for the benefit of everyone's health. My painting describes how isolation may look in an everyday circumstance. This painting shows a self-portrait of myself washing my face, this is a daily routine that I partake in every morning and night. The message I want to show through my painting is how although this time is very tough, everyone will get through it. Stick to practicing a daily routine at home, taking care of yourself is key. The state of the world is in the palm of our hands, together we can end this problem so we can live our normal lives again."





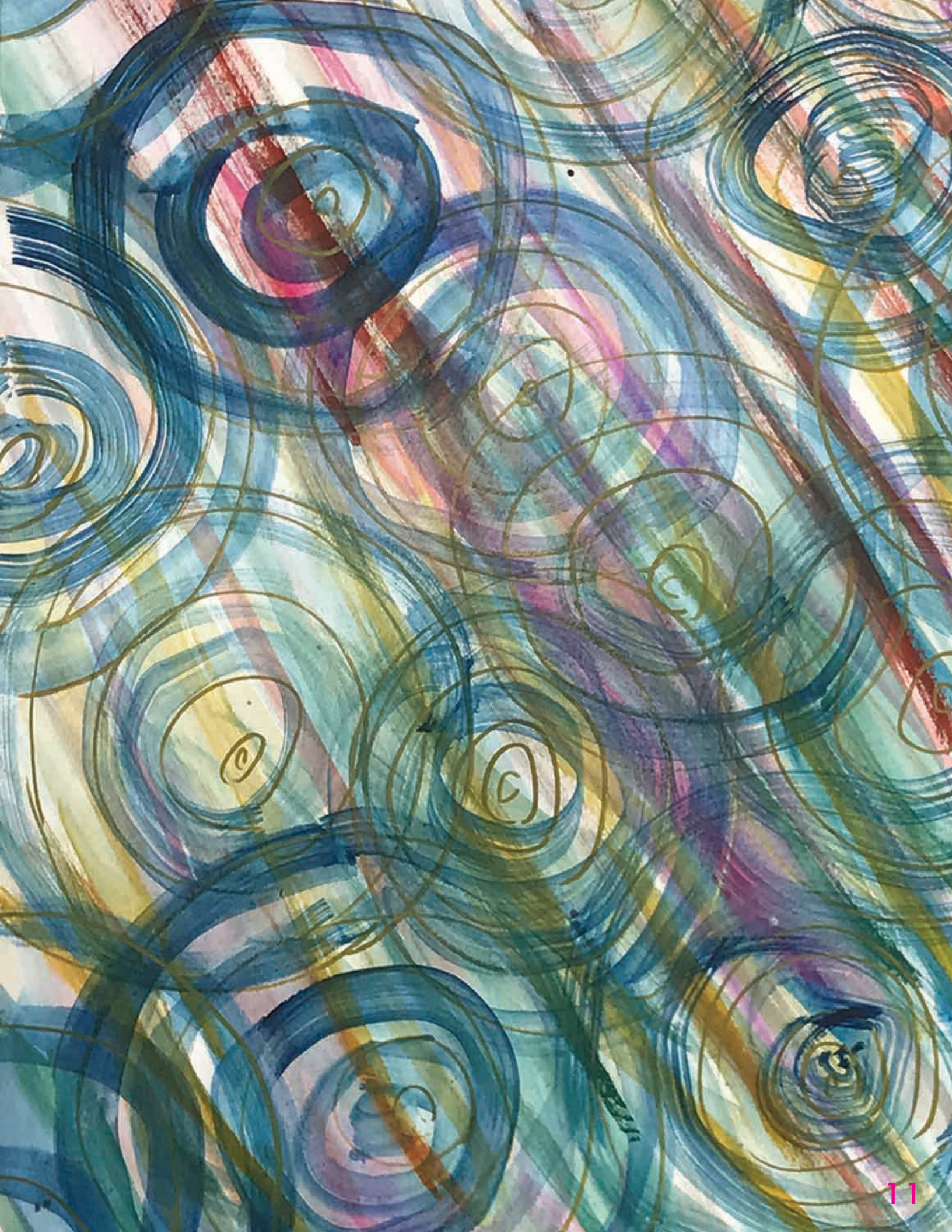




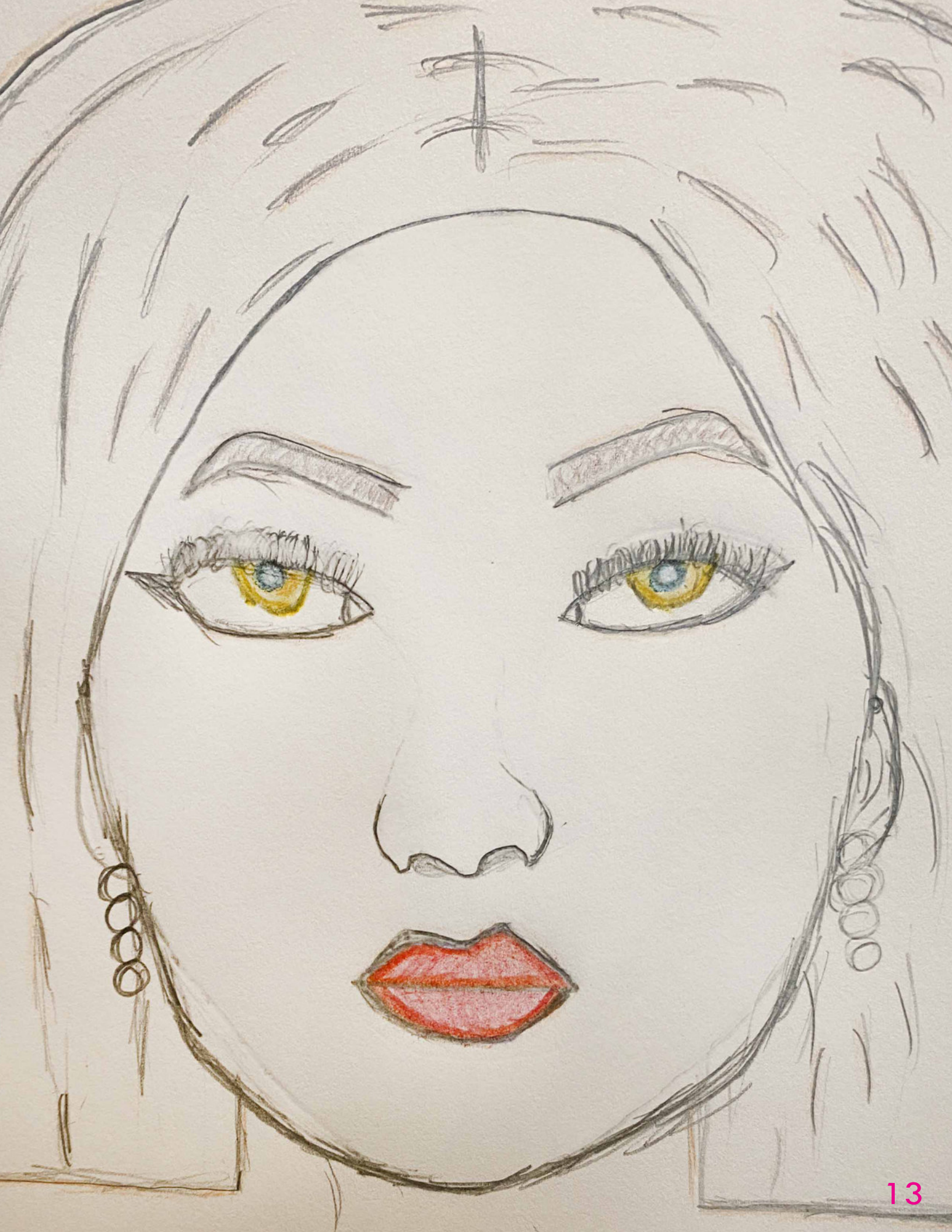


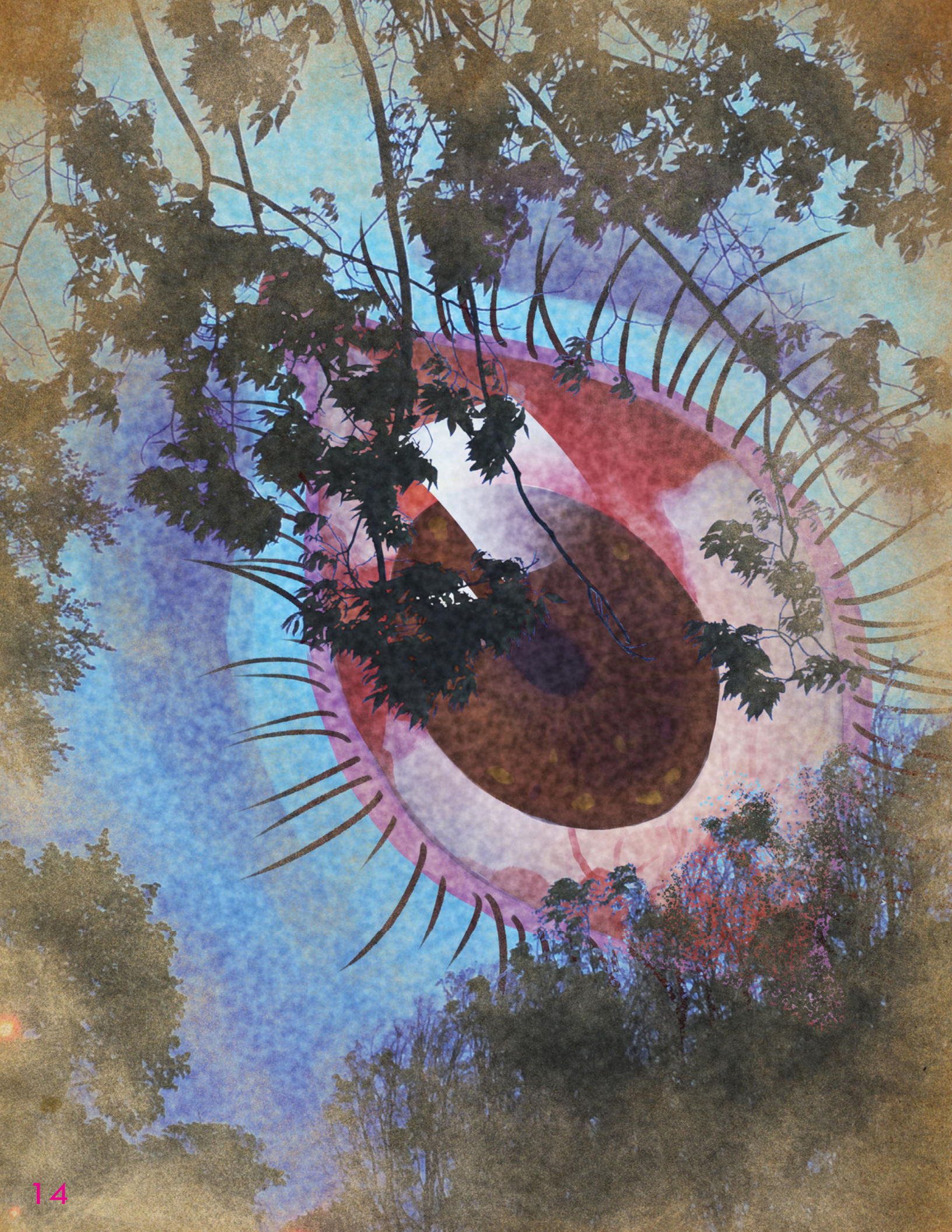






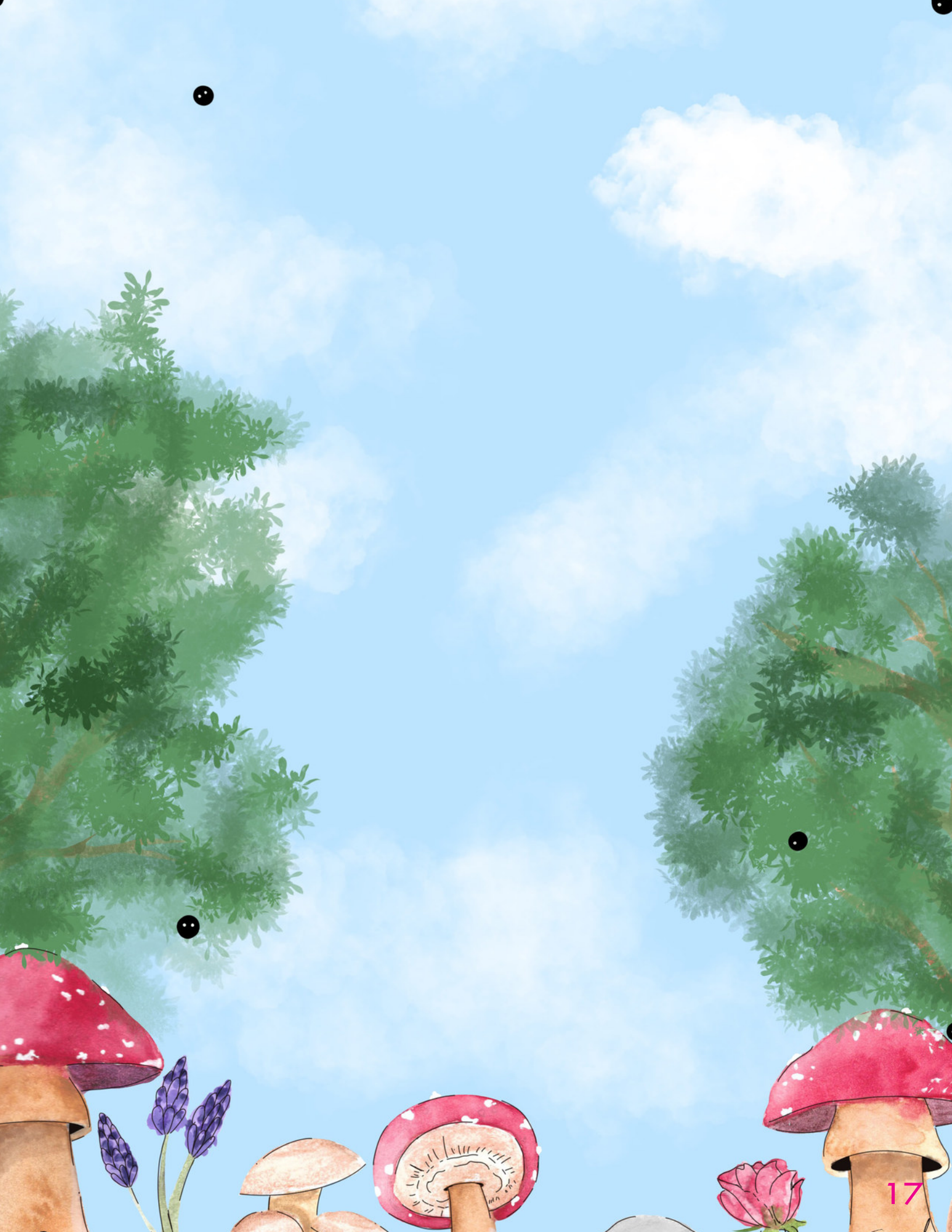
























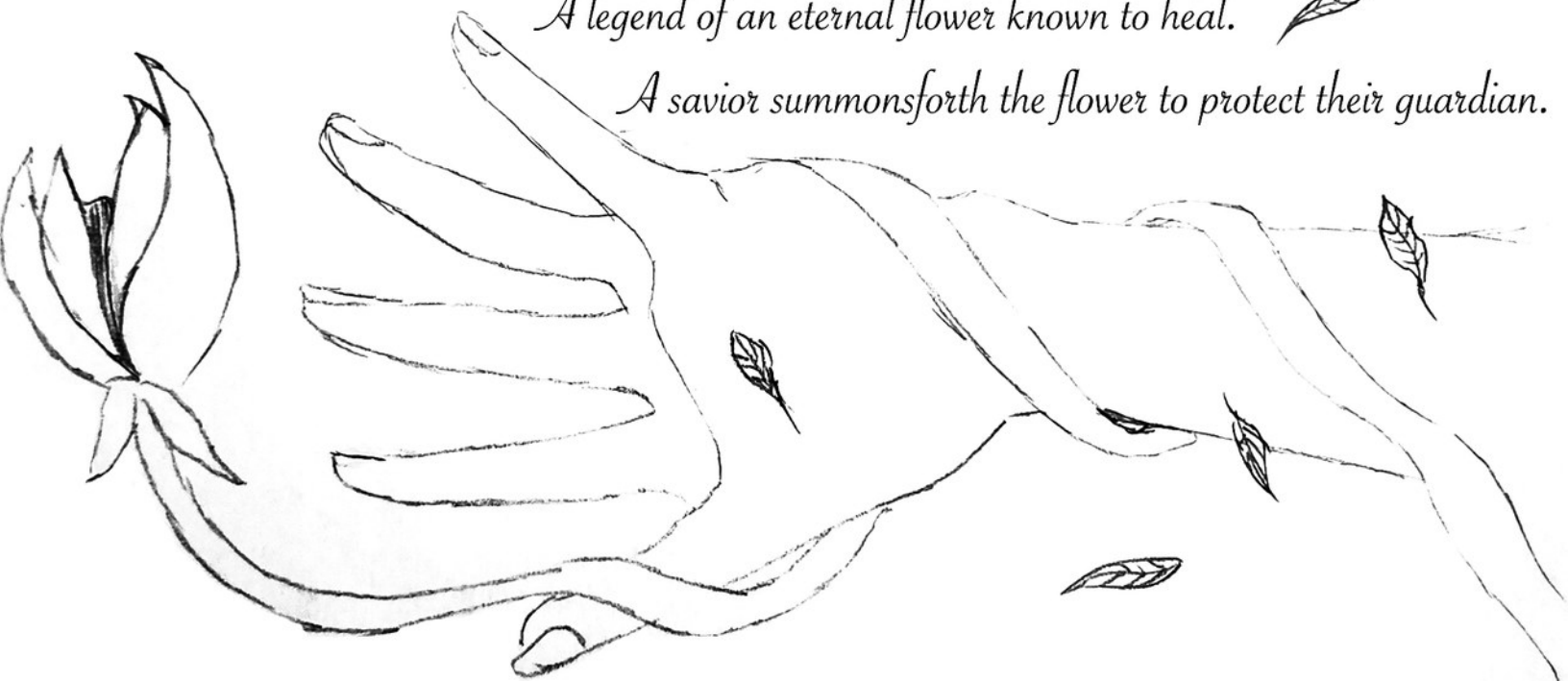


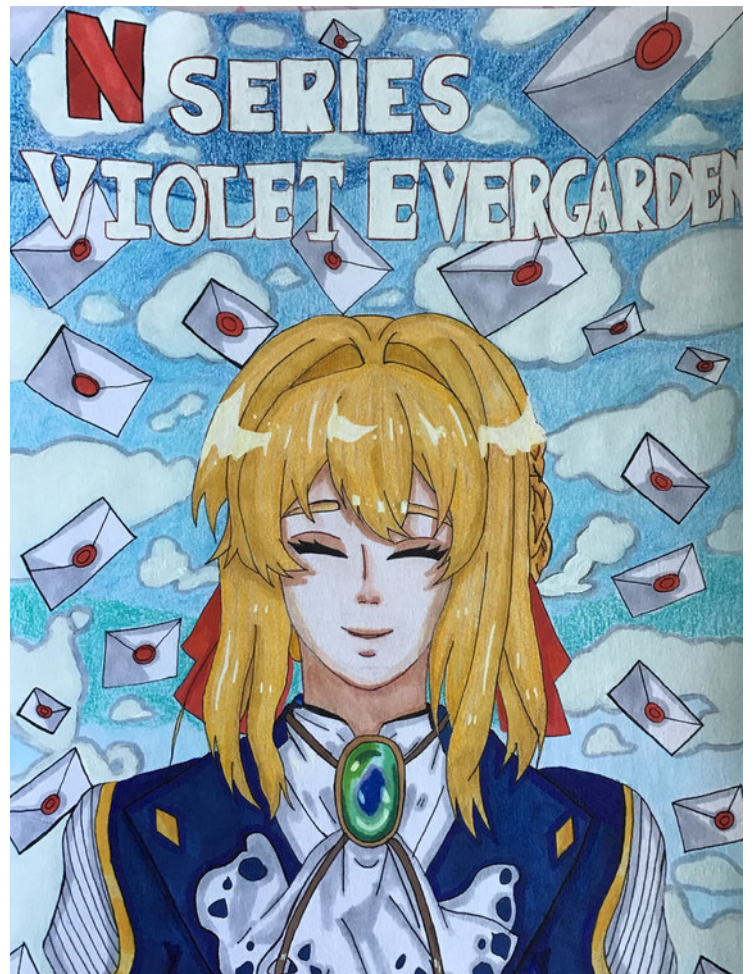
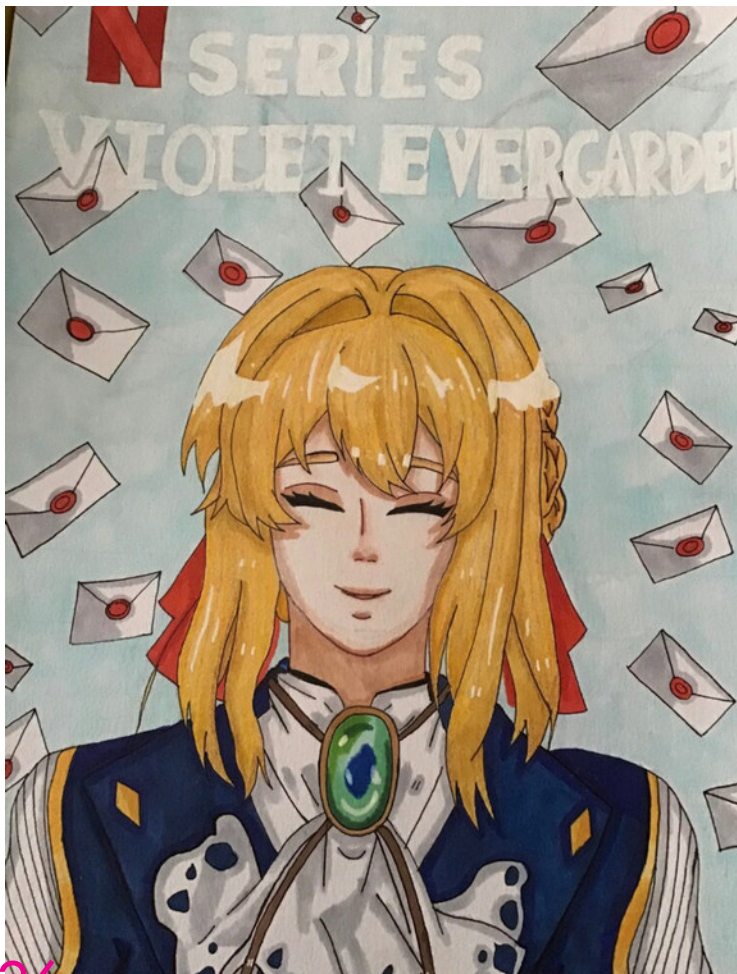
*Their Guardian Tree begins to crack from the middle and
lose all of its leaves.*

Their Protector is slowly starting to wither away.

A legend of an eternal flower known to heal.

A savior summons forth the flower to protect their guardian.







N SERIES

VIOLET EVERGARDEN



















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Meryl Bennett

Meryl Bennett is a sculptor based in Queens, NY. Meryl has explored many mediums and techniques including foundry work, wood, textiles, mold making and carving. She takes a multidisciplinary approach to her sculptures, often combining several sculptural techniques into a single piece. Her current body of work depicts insects, reptiles and crustaceans. Interested in their alien-like anatomy and bizarre behaviors, Meryl has chosen these creatures as the subject of a body of work that explores human relationships and experience. Through these cryptic and mysterious creatures Meryl explores the mystery that exists within even our most intimate bonds and the unknowable depths of others' emotional lives. www.merylbennett.com



Esperanza Cortés

Smack Mellon Exhibiting Artist (2019)

Esperanza Cortés is a Colombian born multidisciplinary artist based in New York City. Esperanza has exhibited nationally in museums and galleries including The Neuberger Museum of Art, Bronx Museum of Art, Queens Museum, El Museo Del Barrio, Smack Mellon Gallery, The Mexi-Arte Museum and The Cleveland Art Museum. Internationally, Cortes has also exhibited in Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Japan, Mexico, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Spain and Greece. Esperanza is a recipient of awards including, The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, BRIC Media Arts Fellowship, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Grant, Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant. www.esperanzacortes.com



Michael Paul Britto

Michael Paul Britto's work addresses the misconceptions and assumptions surrounding people of color in the United States. It ranges from videos to digital photography, sculpture, and performance. He has had residencies at the New Museum in New York as well as Smack Mellon, The Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Michael has been featured in shows at El Museo del Barrio, The Studio Museum of Harlem, The Zacheta National Gallery in Warsaw, The Kitchen, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in England. Michael graduated with a BA from the City College of New York. He has experience working with young adults in his positions as a high school media teacher, and as an instructor at DCTV. www.brittofied.com



Gina Goico

Smack Mellon Studio Artist in Residence (2019-2020)

Gina Goico navigates her identity and the spaces where she exists in the Dominican Republic and the United States. She creates work that ranges from collage to installations, ink drawings and performance. Her work tends to share bright magentas, patterns, fabric and imagery that connects to the Caribbean. Currently her largest body of work is *Imagined Identities*, part of the #ATABEY project which explores Dominican women's desire, survival, aggressions and rebellions through participatory research, creating new artistic and academic narratives about the lived experiences of women in the Dominican Republic and its diasporas. www.ginagoico.com

Florencia Escudero

Florencia Escudero was born in Singapore in 1987 and grew up in Mendoza, Argentina. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Florencia received an MFA in Sculpture from the Yale University School of Art in 2012. Her works have been exhibited at Kristen Lorello, New York, NY, Instituto Cervantes, New York, NY, and The Steuben Gallery, Pratt Institute, New York, NY, among other venues. She was a 2016 year-long Artist in Residence at the Loisaida Center, New York, NY, and has also completed residencies at Art Farm, Marquette, NE, and Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle, WA. Works by Florencia have been discussed in *Editorial Magazine*, *Aether Magazine*, *The Art Newspaper*, *Hyperallergic*, and *The American Reader*. She is an editor and founder of *Precog Magazine*.
www.florenciaescudero.com



Felicita “Felli” Maynard

Felicita “Felli” Maynard is a New York based interdisciplinary artist, and educator. As a 1st generation Afro-Latinx American, their work uses photography to investigate and explore identity, gender, history and the black body. Their work bridges a darkroom process, alternative methods of photography, and digital technologies focusing on revealing medium and subject. Their eye captures and explores topics of black female spirituality, tenderness, and strength while dealing with gentrification that adversely affects communities of color. Felli’s work focuses on dismantling historical romances that continue to exploit the identity and representation of black bodies by non-black protagonists.
www.photofelli.com



Sage and Coombe Architects approaches every project with insight, intelligence, humor, patience and flexibility. Since 1995, the office has designed and managed construction of public spaces, buildings, renovations, and installations. During that time the office has cultivated a team of complementary professionals devoted to building great architecture within the constraints of practical realities.
www.sageandcoombe.com

Abdulgader (AK) Naseer

Abdulgader (AK) Naseer was born and raised in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He joined Sage and Coombe Architects in 2016 after studying architecture at the University of Miami and Yale University. Through his travels, AK developed a firm conviction in the importance of providing architectural solutions for underprivileged populations, affordability, and sustainability. During his time at Sage and Coombe, AK has worked on a variety of projects including a 4-acre transformative urban park in Newark, NJ, a new library in Maplewood, NJ, and several NYC Department of Parks and Recreation facilities throughout New York City.



Sam Lee

A graduate of Yale College with a degree in graphic design, Sam Lee joined Sage and Coombe in 2017 after a career as a touring musician. At Sage and Coombe, he has worked on a wide range of projects, from the firm’s new website to exhibit design at a Nature Center in Inwood Hill Park. He manages the firm’s marketing and communications efforts, including new business proposals, presentations, and social media.





