

THE CATALYST

CONTEMPORARY LITERARY ARTS MAGAZINE

ISSUE X

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COVER PHOTO //
CHRISTOPHER CHEN

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

The Catalyst has come a long way since my initial encounter with it back in Fall of 2013. I joined as a freshman when the first issue was in its creation stages and saw it come to life through the hands and hard work of the editorial team. What started as a revival movement of the original literary arts magazine became so much more within the period of one year. It wasn't just a magazine that got published every quarter; it became something that encouraged individuals to explore their creative intellects and collaborate with one another from varying disciplines to produce works uniquely theirs.

I lost touch with the movement soon after freshman year— only to find my way back two years later. It had a new and just as passionate group of editors upholding The Catalyst's mission of providing a creative outlet for the UCSB and Isla Vista communities. Seeing these souls continue to provide amazing work inspired the current editors and myself to become part of the 2016-2017 team. Coming into our first quarter working together we had little experience, constantly asking and answering the question of, "What would the previous editors do?" Now in our second quarter, we continue to stick close to the roots of the magazine, completing our second issue (and tenth issue overall) as a team. It has been four years since The Catalyst has been revitalized and this is just the beginning.

We would like to take this opportunity to send our heartfelt thanks to our previous editors-in-chief, Natalie O'Brien and Madeline Lockhart, who along with their editorial support teams, provided us with the model for collaborative creation in word, image, and design that we will continue to build on through The Catalyst in the issues and years to come.

We invite you to celebrate The Catalyst's Tenth Issue with us. If it weren't for you— the artist, the writer, the reader—we wouldn't be here.

Best,

Hannah Pham, Managing Editor

CORONARY SILHOUETTE

BY RICKY BARRAJAS

I have spent so much time
Staring down at the edge of the void,
That I, somehow,
Have made its acquaintance.

I look into this abyss—
Carved by shame
and filled with doubt,
And realize I am looking at my reflection.

My demons seem so much
less than now.
I no longer fear that
Which I do not know.

I can not see in the dark, no,
But I do not need my eyes to see the truth:
The brightest lights cast the darkest shadows.

This darkness is as much a part of me as my love.
This darkness is as much a part of me as my light.

My shadow laughs when I do.
It is there with me
when I dance
while no one is watching.

BAPTIZED BY FIRE

BY RICHY BARAJAS

I am made of love and light.
My purpose is to share these with the world,
A lone candle flame against a gale—
Destined to set the world ablaze.

I am the guardian in the sky.
The stars of my
constellations burn
To map your sky.

A beacon in the dark,
I project what I receive;
And I know that
I am loved.

My heart pumps a mixture of blood and gasoline,
Ready to ignite
At any given moment.

My fire burns to expose the monsters hiding in the dark.
My fire burns to fight them off.

I am the defender of the hearth.
I cordially invite you
To come bask
In my warmth.

ART // DANIEL BLANCO



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