



# Microfiction

A selection of entries and illustrations

2023



In 2023, St. Pius X College students were invited to enter the second edition of the school's Microfiction Competition.

This is a competition that celebrates brevity and brilliance in equal measure. Students were challenged to compose an original story of no more than 100 words, with the inclusion of specified actions and words.

The first round saw over 300 student entries from across every year group. Of these entries, 25 were chosen for the final round, which was a live event held at school.

This is a collection of some of those stories – an anthology of student and teacher writing, complemented by student illustrations commissioned by the Visual Arts Department.

The prompts for each round are below:

First Round

Required Word – “Blossom”

Required Action – “Skipping”

Final Round

Required Word – “Illuminate”

Required Action – “Craft”

## Authors

Year 6	Rory Rapa
Year 7	Jackson Byak
Year 8	Joshua Wang Francesco Mazzaferro
Year 9	Louis Forbes Benji Tan Daniel Carroll John Medalla
Year 10	Anthony Parissis Robert Oner Nicholas Stepanian
Year 11	Cooper Anderson Jack Harrison Daniel Staal Billy Waite Sam Cummins
Teachers	Mr. Ryan Balboa Ms. Stefania Taddio Mr. Pat Rodgers Ms. Frances Doyle

## Illustrators

Year 8	Samuel Bewley
Year 9	James Thomson Reilly Bois John Medalla Thomas Zammitt Will Kevans Keiran Yu
Year 10	George Stewart Neson Elliot John Badger- Rahme

## Judges

Mr Dan Quilty English Coordinator

Year 12 Learning Prefects:

Darcy Keenlyside,  
Xander Buckingham,  
Jamie Leong  
Edward Turner,

## Editors

Mr Dan Quilty English Coordinator

Ms Frances Doyle Visual Arts Coordinator

# Discourse

First Place

Anthony Parissis, Year 10

A feeble mind on a narrow path. Naivety, a stakeholder in his fate. His destination, undetermined. His route, a product of an inability to decipher the cautiously crafted influences he encounters. A decision: a turning point will be the difference between enlightenment and misguidance. An illuminated exit, or a bleak continuation; an embodiment of the choices of those before him. Déjà vu. He's been here before. Led by an absence of clarity, he wanders the path of discourse. Steadily. Innocently. Curiously. Though his endpoint is unknown, he remains sure of his path. He's been here before.



Illustration by James Thomson Yr 9



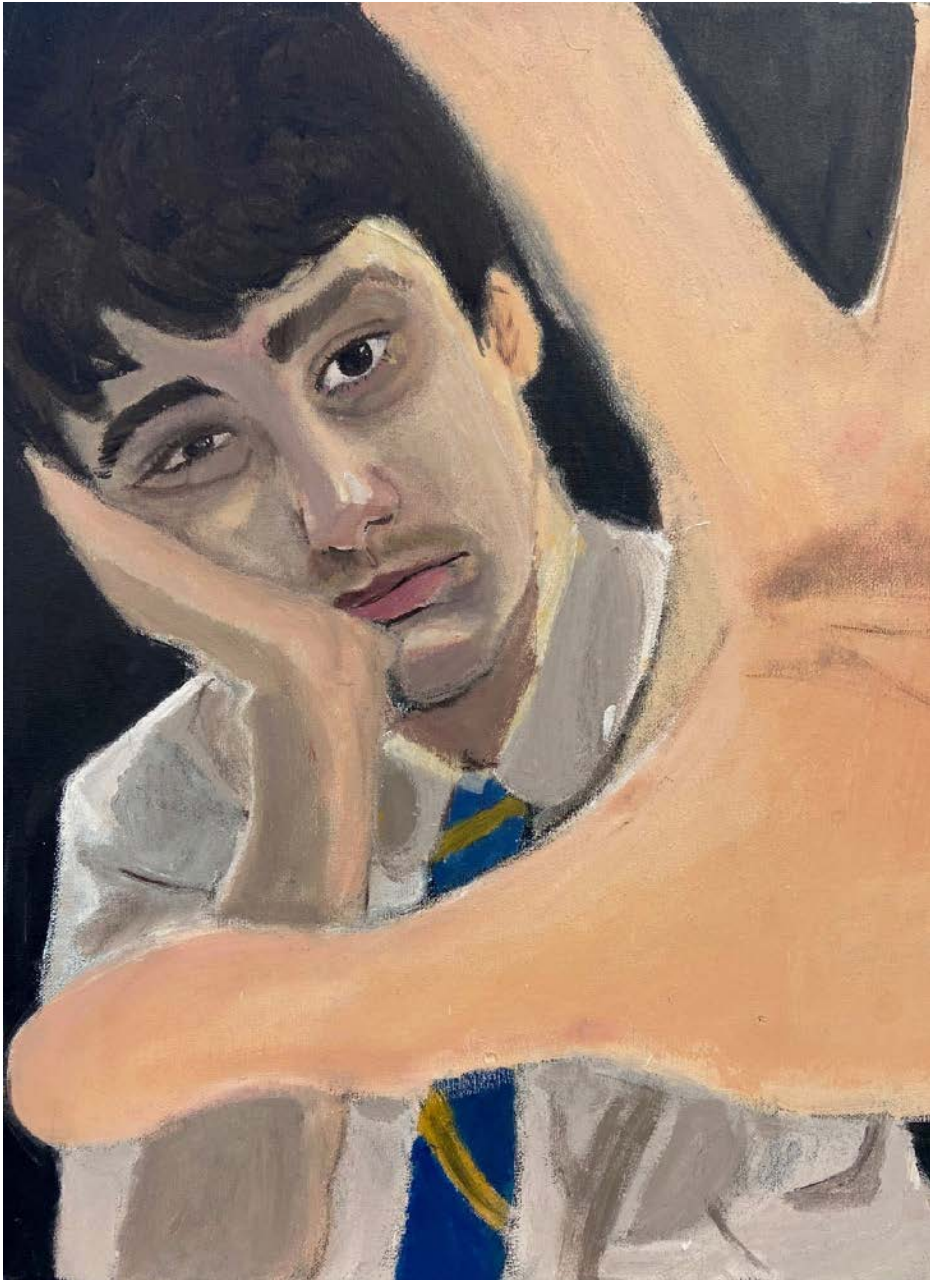


Illustration by John Badger-Rahme Yr 10

# Writer's Block

2nd Place

Cooper Anderson, Year 11

**W**riter's Block. A disease highly infectious among wannabe writers. Symptoms include the impulsive action of pulling one's hair to will their brain to come up with something...anything! It never works. A common sight is to see the desk lamps of infected individuals tauntingly illuminate the empty pages of paper on a writer's desk, taking sadistic joy as the writer tries to craft a story about a failed screenwriter. Ironic. It will soon join the volcano of failed ideas that spews out of the writer's tin can. Please don't witness such a sight. It is the worst disease, the writer's disease.

# Time is Eternally Present

3rd Place

Jack Harrison, Year 11

The glistening nature of life itself illuminated my body like a giant beam of light. Every person meticulously crafting the picture-perfect life full of illumination. If time is eternally present, why does the mind create abstractions of the past, and future? We spend so much time crafting our lives to the tiniest detail that the experiences of life pass us by like a bullet train. We sit proud on our belongings as if they are an extension of our identity allowing materialism and superficialness to consume our bodies whole. When love, is the divine answer to true illumination.



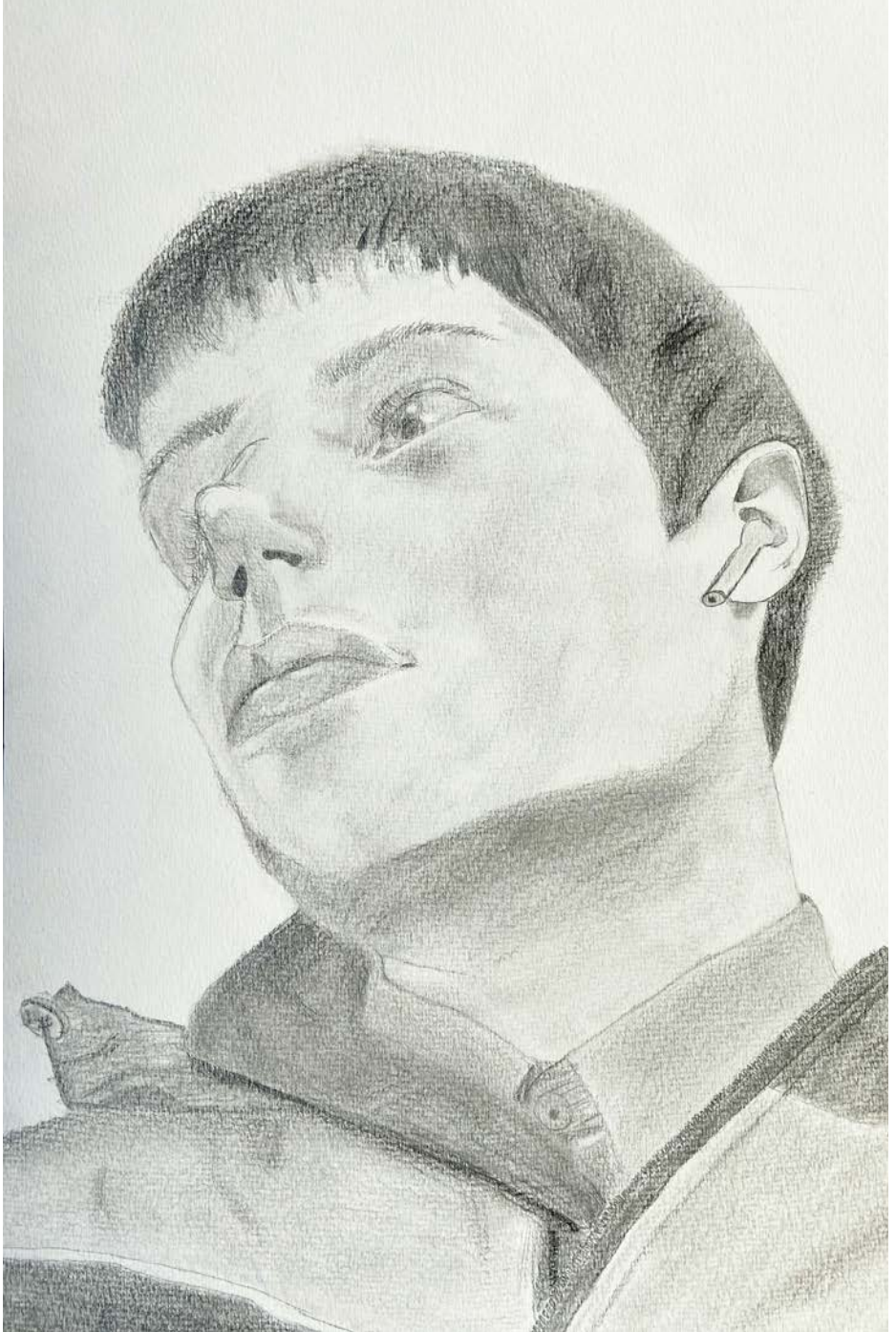


Illustration by Sebastian Blane Yr 10

# One Night

Primary School Winner  
Rory Rapa, Year 6

Only at night do bugs unite, fireflies illuminate the dark. Many with no thought for feeling, just getting their work done. Bees craft their hives, ants eat, build or play. Moths chase the light in the dark. And I say again, do they even think for a rest? Maybe, maybe not. No human will ever know. Some share a special bond, while others bring death's icy grasp upon each other. Caterpillar and butterfly, fly and spider. No one knows who rules the insect kingdom. Wonderful things happen at night, until it's morning again. And humans rule the earth once more.

Illustration by John Medalla Yr 9

# A Canvas

Principal's Award for Highly Commended  
Daniel Staal, Year 11

He morosely stared at the blank page. A canvas of white abyss. A desolate fortitude, it gloomed with the absence of ink. The paper observed his mouth ajar, and his eyes journeying into a realm of thoughtlessness. The overwhelming thought of choice; "Should I use a metaphor here? Should I put 'morosely' there?" He pondered. His mind abruptly illuminated. Words crawled and splattered into each other. Some danced together under the rain of his imagination. Some covered in the dark corners of the paper, deprived of harmony. The divine creator of the page, he crafted life out of emptiness.









# Warship

Special Merit Award  
Jackson Byak, Year 7

The ship grew closer, piercing fear into the hearts of the townspeople. The sky, an ominous grey, weeping raindrops and blowing turbulent winds from offshore. The people began crafting conundrums of what the warship would bring: thieves, pirates, perhaps the fate of this town. The once full streets now remained barren and deserted, a singular lamp attempted to illuminate the town, cowering in shadows and hiding in fear. The ship neared the docks as people caught their breath. It came ashore and blasted a malicious horn. A man appeared from the towering ship and a gunshot rang out.

Illustration by Neslon Elliot Yr 10

# Illuminator

Special Merit Award

Joshua Wang, Year 8

**I**t was dark, he must move quickly. Lightning illuminated the dark sky in short bursts. he moved swiftly, his hands moving in a graceful and practised motion, crafting his weapon, preparing himself for the battle ahead. Danger approached. He finishes his sword, ready for battle. He treks into the wilderness, trudging along the footpath, making his way to Duchun-Loo. As he progressed, his subconscious tells him that his enemies were too. He raced on, the glint of his sword sparkling in the now clear moonlight. As he arrives at Duchun-Loo, he senses his enemy, ready to fight.



# Hope

Special Merit Award  
Louis Forbes, Year 9

**H**ope, the essence of our survival. Each day we're woken by the sound of violence hoping it will all go away. We sit at the end of our large table crafting letters we hope will be received. Waiting in our home, which feels as empty as the hearts of the opposing soldiers, illuminated only by the flickering of kerosine candles. Rooms left untouched waiting for them to come home. They will, I know, I hope.



Illustration by Reilly Bois Yr 9



## At Heaven's Door

Finalist

Billy Waite, Year 11

**T**o live is to destroy. To feel is to hurt. You could live your life blissfully ignorant, or agonizingly aware; it matters not. The fierce clutches of passion will infiltrate your guard regardless. Its jagged talons will claw, expose, strip you of whatever you armour yourself with. There you will lie, naked and afraid, salient as if illuminated for all to see, for all to judge. Wear whichever mask you wish, whatever cloak gown or garment; even the most meticulously crafted camouflage will wither away at heaven's door. And on this day of judgement, the true 'you' will be born.

Illustration by Sebastian Blane Yr 10

# The Meaning of Life

Finalist

Daniel Carroll, Year 9

The Earth is young. An empty shell that holds so much promise. The lush green veil of nature spreads across the barren landscape. The cries of a storm of birds create a deafening soundscape. Stampedes of animals create the beating heart of the earth. The very core of our planet is being crafted through love and soul. The specks of light that decorate the plain, dark sky bring warmth to the seemingly eternal darkness. Over the horizon, a calming presence begins to rise. A symbol of peace and prosperity that illuminates the earth and begins a new era.

# Green and Gold

Finalist

Francesco Mazzaferro, Year 8

Silence. The green and gold entered the field likewise with their opponents. The stadium illuminated as lights flashed and cameras shone brightly above the players. The crowd erupted, the atmosphere unbearable for young ears. Both anthems crafted for years, sung passionately. Tears of emotion shed across many faces. The whistle blew. Both teams, all players fighting for the win, for their countries, for their brothers who they played alongside. All fighting for one another. The desperation for the ball, to push through immense fatigue. The whistle blew. Green and gold jerseys fell... Only to get back up stronger.

# The Weary

First Round Entry  
Robert Oner, Year 10

The crows skip from body to body, no honour for the dead. Those still yet to die huddle together in their trenches, the cold mud would kill them just as readily as the enemy. This place is death itself for all things, and yet grief can blossom like no other. Edwards holds his rifle close to his thin figure, and he thinks of the life he left: the warm fires, the hearty meals, the love of his family. But he feels only defeat and loss now. The enemy has retreated but there are no victors here. Johnny wasn't a victor.



Illustration by Samuel Bewley Yr 8



## The Blossoming Violets

First Round Entry  
Benji Tan, Year 9

She made her way through the fields, her hand brushing against the tall grass. The air filled with the scent of violets. He always loved violets. Each step heavy with emotion. Memories of skipping through these fields flooded her mind, the wind in her hair and laughter echoing. She smiled. He was gone, that ever-present sadness wasn't leaving. Yet, she found solace in the beauty of the violets around her. Their petals reminded her of her father's gentle smile. As she stood above his grave, tears streaming down her face, she knew, his memory would continue to blossom within her.

Illustration by Samuel Bewley Yr 8



# Trapped

First Round Entry

Sam Cummins, Year 11

A harrowing absence of light encompassed them, yet they hadn't known any greater. All their acquaintances, if you could describe them so exuberantly, had been freed from the impregnable barrier that trapped them, yet they remained. For what they truly were and where they were was a mystery, particularly for them. Not trapped just physically, but in the sense of abandonment that followed them in their stationary existence. To be freed at last could be a possibility, if only the sun seized skipping over them. In an utter reversal of environment, light surrounded them, and they bloomed at last.



# Blurred Memories

First Round Entry  
John Medalla, Year 9

The petals twist and turn. The trees, one after the other, turn to a warm burgundy colour, like a rock skipping on water, rippling out as if watching a hibiscus blossom in autumn. A delicate beauty. Its aroma fills the nose like a fireplace fills a home with warmth. Home. The TV turns to static, reality blurs into memories. A train of thought reaches its final destination. Years passed and the once burgundy trees turned to grey ash. Once pristine oceans now a dark oil swamp. I miss the world of my blurred memories.





## Tree by the River

First Round Entry

Nicholas Stepanian, Year 10

Against the cold, sharp chill in the air, my back felt warm against the rough, firm trunk of wood. What remained of the setting sun left its comforting heat streaking across my face. The cherry blossom occasionally dropped a hot pink flower, smooth as silk, that floated towards the ground, as if to remind me that it was going to be okay. As if I could remove my worries from my pocket and send them far down the calm, rippling stream of crystal-clear water. I skipped the stones as far away from myself as I could.



## The Oath

Teacher Winner  
Mr. Ryan Balboa

The sampaguita's floral undertones provided a momentary respite. Sofia trembled. She grasped tightly at the lifeless petals, now bruised amidst her palms. She let out a knowing sigh – “the irony”, she thought. The very same hands that crushed these blossoms were the very same ones carried a generation's hopes and expectations. A single teardrop fell, nourishing the arid earth below. With a trembling breath, she released her grip, watching the fragile fragments drift into the abyss, surrendering to the unknown. In that moment, she embraced the fragility of her own existence, her heart skipping with newfound courage.

Illustration by Will Kevans Yr 9

# The Opening Line

Teacher Entry

Mr. Pat Rodgers

“Hello blossoms,” she says to the mirror, having adjusted the glasses and wig. The head wobble and the crooked smile were working but something wasn’t quite right. How could it all start with something that lacked the necessary oomph? Anyway, flowers already had their moment at the end of the show. What was something quintessentially Australian? Then the right word came to him as it always did. So, the next night, skipping on to the stage in a wonderful frock, he looked at the full house and began. “Hello possums!” And immediately, Dame Edna knew it was pitch perfect.





Illustration by Nelson Elliot Yr 10



# Whispers of Rebellion

Teacher Entry

Ms. Stefania Taddio

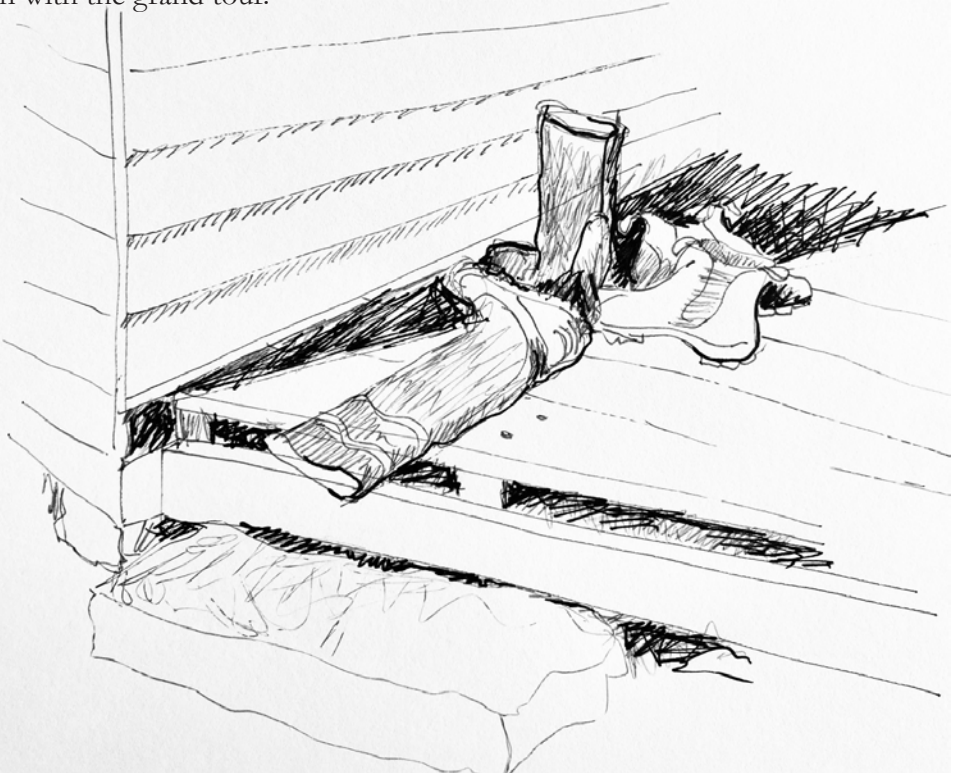
Audrey navigated through the grim city, her steps cautious and deliberate. Shadows whispered of a forgotten past, where freedom was palpable. As she explored the desolate streets, memories flickered like dying embers. But Audrey clung to hope, a rebellious ember that refused to extinguish. Skipping over debris and avoiding surveillance, she stumbled upon an abandoned building. Inside, she discovered a hidden room, a haven for resistance. Within those walls, Audrey found a community of dreamers, fighting against oppression. In that moment, her spirit blossomed, intertwining with theirs, as they ignited the spark of revolution against a tyrannical regime.

# Gumboots and Herringbone

Teacher Entry

Ms. Frances Doyle

**G**umboots of all different sizes and a loudly barking dog welcomed me into the hallway of the old weatherboard. The walls covered in photographs, every surface occupied by knickknacks, piles of books, projects on the go, the lifetime of a curious and scientific mind. And there on an enclosed verandah amongst the clutter, illuminated by century old windows, the most unexpected sight. Hanging from a large loom a piece of fabric, a delicate herringbone pattern of cream silk and linen, exquisitely crafted. “I work on that when I have time” he said and shuffled on with the grand tour.





# Human Sentinel

Teacher Entry

Mr. Steve Quilty

Philip knew it was time. The sun had slipped past the horizon, darkness creeping its way across the village. The finely crafted torches were ready to illuminate the walls once again. They always did, having done so for countless decades. Philip and the guards carried the hopes of the surviving villagers. After all, it was written that the cosmic wanderers would one day return to this arid earth. Little would they know that these few survivors carried the guilt of humankind. Self-destruction had led to this. The nightly vigilance was both hope and dread. A story to be told.



Front cover artwork: George Stewart Yr 10  
Back cover artwork: Sebastian Blane Yr 10



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