Mane O Ke Ola
TRANSFORMATIONS
TRANSFORMATIONS

trans·for·ma·tion
/tran(t)sfər/məSH(ə)n/

a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance.
a metamorphosis during the life cycle of an animal.

Mane O Ke Ola 2022
Foreword

Aloha readers,

As we read polished versions of published compositions, we often don’t see the lengthy process that leads to such a creation. The transformation from first draft to final piece reminds us of the metamorphosis a caterpillar undergoes to become a butterfly. The first words we write onto paper are the initial brainstorming thoughts, the caterpillar egg: undeveloped yet brimming with untapped potential. These starting words are shaped by memories of old experiences and new ideas, growing like a young caterpillar as it feeds on leaves. Now tangible, our writing can be revised, refined, and reevaluated, often undergoing many changes as we reflect on the product of our ideas, much like the chrysalis stage. Following the arduous process of revision, we are rewarded with the final product of our hard work, a nuanced and thoughtful piece that is as colorful and magnificent as an adult butterfly. The works in this publication reminded us of metamorphosis not only because of the process the authors and artists took to create their final piece, but also in the contents of their work that reflect each stage of transformation. We hope that as you read the pieces, you will be reminded that each step of the process is significant in developing the final butterfly that we all admire and appreciate.

Sincerely,
The Mane O Ke Ola Editors
# Writing

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Inspiration

Everything magnificent begins as an idea, an inspiration. We are hesitant to start, but we must start somewhere. The pieces in the following section are vulnerable and innocent, yet concrete and true.
A River's Flow
By: Reid Ginoza

A river is alive.
Ever moving
Twisting and turning
Through the forest it flows.

A gentle breeze
Glides over the river
A smooth shiny surface reflecting the dawn.

Fat frogs croak
On the river bank voices raised in song
Bulbous eyes unblinking as the water meanders by.

The bright scarlet sun rises
Glinting off the churning water
Droplets fly up momentarily suspended.

Floating autumn leaves
Tumble past playful fish
Skipping joyfully through the water.

A child splashes with joy
Gleefully wading through the current
Full of life and energy.

A river is alive.
Mā Jiddik
By: Seona Chutaro

This isn’t all I am destined to be— stunted in a central courtyard, in the presence of the passing people who don’t stop to observe.

I will grow wide canopies. My branches will one day reach and make their home in the mejatoto. My limbs will extend from Ralik to Ratak, from Ebon to Enewetak. My fruit will feed communities, the jolet jen Anij, my gifts from God.

My wood will build walap canoes, for the stick chart navigators, for the star voyagers. My arms will be the jungle gym, the playground where children hang rope swings. My roots will create stepping paths to climb up, each knot a foothold. My leaves will be the hand-held fans of tired mothers watching over their young.

This isn’t all I am destined to be— I was born to grow and share. In a world that makes me feel small, I will take up the space I deserve.

Mā Jiddik = little breadfruit
Mejatoto = air (in like open sense, atmosphere, climate)
Ratak = sunrise (eastern islands)
Ralik = sunset (western islands)
Ebon = a southern island
Enewetak = a northern island
Jolet jen Anij = gifts from God (historical name for the islands before western influence)
Ode to the Mulberry Tree
By: Taiyo Williamson ‘22

The concrete desert lies in deathly silence;
We feign ignorance of the dismal future
Forged by our distorted dreams. You, standing
Abandoned in the clamps of our gray hands,
Preserve the unyielding warmth of a hearth
Ablaze in the brisk winter. The berries
Reposed on your rough branches gleam bold,
Pure hues of red, luring our cold spirit in.

You, the nurse of our childish memories,
Endure the crumbling, rotting soil
Beneath you with a motherly visage.
O doting tree, I plead with you to stay strong;
The lackluster landscape is in awe
Of your brilliance. Others may not,
But I, at least, praise your care towards nourishing
The whimsical fantasies of childhood.

Your countless arms provide a shade that protects
Our child selves from the Sun’s searing temper.
You watch with content, as we discover
The burst of flavor emerging from your berries,
As we breathe life into the toy cities
Constructed by your falling limbs,
As we explore the depth of our imagination
With the cardboard shuttle resting on your trunk.

You, the caretaker of Memory, guard
Our connection to the golden past.
For you will I tread lightly on this frail
Bridge, and honor you for eternity.
By: Brigette McKnight-Sur
I Guess I’m Writing a Sonnet
By: Grace Fujii ‘24

I don’t quite know exactly what to say,
So now I stare down at this empty page
And wonder whether this is the right way
To write a sonnet, and to set the stage
For these things that I am about to write.

But I still haven’t figured it out yet –
One could say I have yet to see the light –
But once I do, I promise I’ll be set.

Until then, I’ll keep struggling along,
Closing my eyes and hoping for the best.

Would you look at that! I’m queuing a song
Even though this is due, and I’m quite stressed.

But woah! Look! I think I’m almost done here!
One more last line and - hey! I’m in the clear!
Rushing water ripples over the rocks,
The sound of it seems to echo through the forest as I approach—
A symphony of sounds from a single source:
Bubbling, frothing, gurgling,
Splashing, spraying, cascading down the rock—
Sounding almost like a living thing — but never overwhelming—
The sounds of the water welcome me.

The bark of the trees is rough and ragged,
Scrapping my skin whenever I slide my hand across it;
But the leaves of the trees are dry and fragile,
Crunching to pieces within my hands and beneath my feet.
Sitting on rock by the edge of the creek—slimy and slippery from recent rain,
I run my fingers through the cool water, flowing against my hand;
The feelings of the forest are familiar to me.

The vibrant leaves drift down from the trees
As the autumn wind blows through the woods;
The trees tower high above me, so far out of reach—
Save for the wildly growing vines that conquer them with ease;
Beyond the trees, dark rocks are strewn along the creek’s sandy bank,
Some overgrown by moss, or surrounded by ferns — everything so vividly alive—
The sights I see are my sanctuary.

I run through the woods with reckless abandon,
And leap between rocks to cross the creek;
I map out a new world with names of my invention,
And spin stories of the people within it.
My forest, my creek—
My place to escape
From the realities of the world outside,
And disappear into a world of my own creation.

A paradise of imagination and wonder,
Wholly known and claimed by me—
The creek, my creek — this child’s sanctuary.
Metamorphosis

In metamorphosis, the young caterpillar constantly feeds and grows; in the creative process, we put words on the page and more thoroughly explore our own ideas. We push through the mistakes and continue on our journeys. The pieces here explore growth, imagination, and identity.
Humans think the gods created the world—that we sculpted each mountain with careful hands, that we know all its unfathomable secrets, have heard all the stories it has to tell. They are wrong. In truth, we were born into this world in much the same way as them - innocent, unknowing, and most of all, mortal. With time, we discovered many of the secrets our world holds - eternal life, unimaginable power. Love. But such abilities come so often with unthinkable costs - endless death, smothering weakness. Grief.

I have been the goddess of many things in my eons of life. Of war and of peace, of darkness and of light, of famine and of fortune. Many consider me a cruel, fickle goddess. But perhaps my true domain is life itself - for what could possibly be more cruel or fickle than life? I, too, was once as naïve as mortals. I was carefree, happy, hopeful. I had love in my heart once, the kind that fills the heart and mind and makes it hard to breathe. Her name was Manta, and she was powerful. That was what first caught my attention. She was a mortal, an adventurer who had made it her mission to discover the secrets of the world, as the gods once had. But she was different. She chose her goal not because of hubris or greed, but because she had an insatiable curiosity about everything - how things worked, why they stopped working, how they came to be.

When I first saw her, I very nearly smote her where she stood. She was trespassing in my home, on the small island I had transformed into my workshop. I had emerged from my cave at the disturbance, annoyed at the mortals who had interfered in my work, and saw her, kneeling in the pale sand, examining a small crab I had made ages ago. She had been startled when she looked up and saw me, but her face morphed into a smile in seconds as she scooped up the crab to show me.

“This crab is incredible! I’ve never seen one with such colorful markings before,” she had said. She placed it carefully back onto the sand, then whipped out a worn journal and sketched the crab with incredible speed and detail.
That night, I had taken her to the top of the mountain to show her the heavens, naming each constellation and telling her the stories of the stars. I had looked over at her and seen the pure wonder in her star-filled eyes. That was when I knew.

As the years passed, Manta came and went from the island. She never lost that sense of wonder about the world, so she continued in her travels, documenting each new place and creature she discovered. But she always came home to me, to tell me about her adventures and show me her sketches. And each time she returned, I studied those sketches and brought them to life in the stars. She named each creature - Scorpio, Pegasus, Leo, Draco, Cygnus. The stories I had told her on our first night together became the stories that she told me in the countless nights that followed.

In those times, I was the goddess of love, of joy, of Manta. But humans are mortal, and death follows close behind their short, glorious lives. Mortals rise and fall in bright but impermanent strokes, like the stars that streak across the night sky. And soon came the time for Manta to die. I had loved before, in the eternity that had come before her, but I knew that she was to be my final and greatest love. On that last night with her, I carried her to the top of the mountain and we laid there in the same way we had that first night. She pointed to an empty spot in the starry sky and asked what the constellation’s name was.

“Manta. Her name is Manta.” I told her softly. Her eyes never did lose their sparkle, even in her dying breaths. As she exhaled for the final time, I exhaled with her, sending her soul into the night sky to take shape. Manta was the last constellation I ever made.

In those days, I was the goddess of rage, of grief, of pain. I left the island, vowing never to return. I traveled the world alone, bringing death and suffering to the villages and towns I passed through. Mortals learned to close their doors and shutter their windows when they saw me, cloaked in darkness. For many years I wandered through the world, mourning, until my journey brought me back to the island. But as I turned away from the place that had brought me so much joy and so much pain, I saw a little crab with colorful markings scuttling across the sand. I saw that day I had
Now first met Manta, I saw that sparkle in her eyes, and I saw that undying curiosity.

I am the goddess of adventurers, of discovery, of love. Of indomitable spirit, of restless wanderers, of Manta. Though lives may end, their legacy lives on in the stars. In me. Though Manta was the last constellation I ever made, the sky grows a little brighter each night with each star I add to its rich tapestry. And who is to say if mortals decide there is a shape in those stars?
A witch, a witch, witch is she—
Burn her! Drown her! Hang her!
For she deserves no mercy.
Or suffer as the brave men who faced Circe.

Her truth shall unleash the Furies of the underworld.
For is it not contagious—her insolent impurity?
Nothing is more monstrous, more fearful to behold,
Than to see a woman stand without her cloak of pure demurity.

What dark magic does she wield?
What evil has she done?
Her power? She is given none—
But she dares to speak with an untamed tongue.

This wicked woman wielding witchcraft—
whose mouth spoke more than praise to God and Men.
In Salem she was burned before another spell cast
Today she is still condemned—
For being bossy, messy, just a little bit too much.
Overlooking the Stream
By: Scott Watanuki

Soaring through the white sheet, soaring through the gusty cold;  
Passing through the seemingly limitless white,  
passing through the remarkable nature of vapor;  
On and off,  
the feathers dust off.  
A large blue fin above the surface of the white. At an acute angle:  
I dive. Abrupt and sharp:  
I miss. Abrupt and sharp:  
I return.  
The tide looks back;  
I can see the frown through the rough spiral motion of the waves.  
Zooming through the blue, I wonder where I can go. I seek an opportunity — to seize.  
I look at myself.  
Yellow and white, reflecting the nature of me.  
Overlooking the blue sheet,  
overlooking the glimmering bright rays;  
Shifting through the ocean,  
shifting seamlessly through time;  
On and off,  
the feathers dust off.  
A small red fin above the surface of the white. At an acute angle:  
I dive. More abrupt and sharp:  
I catch. More abrupt and sharp:  
I return.  
The tide looks back;  
I can see the grin through the soft stream of the waves.  
Zooming through the blue, I wonder when my next meal will be. I seek an opportunity — to seize.  
Ka manu ka’upu halo ‘alo o ka moana (1479). “The albatross that observes the ocean.” A careful observer.
Suspension

Amidst the frenzy that is our world and nature, we seek to reflect and take breaks; we realize that every good thing requires patience. In this section, writers and artists depict the uncertainty, waiting, and changes we undergo as we are suspended.
Subject(s) of My Desire
Anonymous

In school a harem of my favorite subjects
Caresses ev’ry crevice of my mind.
Their letters, textbooks, symbols, and equations,
Solicit from me sensual explosion
Of neurons shooting off inside my brain.

How sad it is that when my schooling ends,
One subject I must pick to love forever
While I leave all the rest unsatisfied.

Shall I enjoy electric nights with Physics?
He presses me against his muscled body
With force more powerful than gravity.
Together we both learn projectile motion
By firing loaded cannons in the air.
But Physics’ energy is overwhelming!
My will cannot match his velocity.

So shall I lie in bed with sweetest English?
He alternates between beats hard and soft
As he spills sticky ink all over me.
This love foreshadows future happiness...
If only he could shut up now and then!
He narrates ev’ry portion of our night
Including rising action and his climax.

The only man for me is Government:
He’s toxic and manipulates his lovers,
But when he pounds his gavel, he’s supreme.
Though in the day our arguments are fierce,
It makes our night’s discourse so passionate.
And other subjects can’t compare when he
shoves long bills through my legislative process.
Winter’s bite tempts a group of hedgehogs to huddle together
One spine digs into another’s flesh, and another, and another.
The bitter cold against their nervous quills forces them apart,
but the gentle promise of warmth brings them together once more.

The fear of being alone, my own kind of chilly weather.
The closer we get, the more we hurt each other.
My lungs seize at the thought of showing you my heart,
yet still I crave that closeness forevermore.
Supernova

By: Mara Goldstein

I took the night flight over your city—
The glittering lights looked like comets.
We had made the night world ours—
the black and blue sky,
the washed out but ever-present stars,
and the mysterious pull of the moon—
during those late hours on the phone,
three am in my city and ten pm in yours.

Surrounded by the familiar sight of Altair and Vega,
I can only think of our private stargazing sessions,
when the stars were small and revolved around us.

“I’d like to be a star,” you told me once,
“Because they die such dramatic deaths.”

I wanted to tell you that
If you were a star,
I’d find any way to throw myself into you
and let the fire burn my skin and bones
just to feel all of you near me,
until eventually you explode
and I disappear, unknown
within your dying breath,
and your name will be written in the news
as the loss of a single star
that destroyed everything that came near.
So much paper.
For the fourth time this week, an avalanche of white paper spilled out of Mr. Ogane’s office and knocked him onto the floor. Dazed but unharmed, he sat up and brushed the paper slips off of his suit. Employees working nearby rushed over to help their boss, but Mr. Ogane told them not to worry. After all, it came out of his office, and he hated making others clean up his messes. Nonetheless, four of his subordinates insisted on moving the paper for him, and, as a compromise, Mr. Ogane spent the next few hours cleaning his office with them.

Not for the first time, Mr. Ogane considered why someone would fill his office with paper. Ryokami Paper and Printing, the business his great-grandfather started over a century ago, had opened its largest retail store and new headquarters in Kyoto almost a year ago. His employees could not have been unhappy with the move; the company was thriving in the city. Sales increased by nearly two hundred percent within the first week, and his only competition at the time was an old washi shop run by a withered old man. Plus, his employees volunteered to help him clean the paper out of his office. His customers could not have been dissatisfied with him either; when Mr. Ogane visited the retail store, he always made sure his customers walked out of the store smiling. They were always pleasantly surprised to see the CEO working alongside part-time college students on the sales floor. Mr. Ogane was proud of his company, and as far as he knew, he and his company had done nothing wrong.

By the time Mr. Ogane and his employees finished cleaning, most of the staff was on lunch break. To thank his subordinates for their help, Mr. Ogane offered to buy each of them lunch. The four employees politely refused, saying they were simply happy to help. While they returned to their work, Mr. Ogane shook his head and smiled. Before going to the staff cafeteria, he emailed the cafeteria manager, asking him not to charge the four employees the next time they ordered lunch.
On his way to buy lunch, Mr. Ogane realized he was, to some extent, grateful to the mysterious prankster. Although cleaning his office was a daily hassle, the thick, off-white sheets were unmarked, save for a few dark impurities, making them easy to reform into larger sheets. In spite of the paper’s ominous human shape and wrinkled-skin texture, it was the perfect material for the product design team’s best idea yet: recycled washi paper. The ingredients were abundant and only cost a few hours of Mr. Ogane’s time, perhaps less if he hired people to help. With the recent closure of the old washi shop, customers would be excited to buy washi paper again at a lower price than before. When Mr. Ogane and the product design team voted on whether or not to implement the product, only one person, whose coarse hands reminded Mr. Ogane of a cut kōzo tree, voted against it. The washi paper, which went on sale yesterday, was already immensely popular.

The staff cafeteria was filled with people and their conversations. Black and dark gray blazers occupied clean white tables in the center of the room. The perimeter, however, was almost empty; most people had already ordered their lunch, and the cafeteria workers were busy cleaning their stalls. Mr. Ogane ordered lunch from a worker who had not started cleaning yet. While he waited for his food, Mr. Ogane overheard someone say, “Did you hear about the new washi paper? Supposedly, bad things have been happening to people who buy it . . . almost like it’s cursed or something.”

Mr. Ogane looked at a nearby table, where three interns were chatting over lunch. He knew the three of them quite well; they were hard workers who, in spite of their inexperience, sometimes produced higher quality work than their superiors. The one who spoke was Reiko, an expressive young woman who was a master of attracting attention. With her attention to detail, marketing degree, and successful ideas for Ryokami advertisements, Reiko seemed like the perfect candidate for a promotion. However, she had the self-control and scheming mind of an elementary school problem child. When mischief or yokai were the subject of a conversation, Reiko was usually involved. Next to her, Jack, a stocky, golden-haired man, shook his head and laughed.
Out of the three interns, he was the most sensible. If his foreign upbringing and translation work had not introduced him to the world of yokai, Reiko certainly had. Regardless, Jack always seemed relaxed, never flustered by deadlines or his friends’ ghost stories.

“Reiko, those are just rumors,” replied Jack, laughing. “There’s no way it’s true.”

“No, I’m serious!” Reiko exclaimed. “The other day, my mom bought some, and she lost her wallet on the train ride home!”

Noronobu, a scrawny man with glasses, gasped. His thoroughness and punctuality in accounting were only matched by his knowledge—and fear—of yokai. His deeply anxious expression seemed permanently etched into his skull.

“It must be because it’s made from all those katashiro that’ve been appearing in the boss’s office,” mused Noronobu. His right leg bounced anxiously underneath the table. “Paper made out of yokai. Of course it’s cursed!”

“Relax,” Jack reassured his friend, “it’s probably just a bunch of coincidences. Those weird paper dolls in Mr. Ogane’s office are probably just a certain someone’s latest prank . . . “

“I never said I was the one who did it!” Reiko’s eyes lit up and a mischievous smile crept onto her lips.

Mr. Ogane huffed loudly and started toward the table, catching the interns’ attention. Their friendly banter turned into hushed words and side-long glances at their boss. While he walked to their table, the three slowly began cleaning up their lunches.

“Reiko,” Mr. Ogane sternly said, “I don’t enjoy opening my office door to thousands of paper dolls every morning.”

“No, no, sir, I promise, it wasn’t me!” Reiko’s eyes glittered and she was unable to completely wipe the smirk off her face. “It was the yokai! I’m telling you, there’s a yokai in this building!”

Mr. Ogane sighed, exasperated. Despite his suspicions and her behavior, it was unfair to discipline Reiko without proof. “Alright, but please stop playing pranks in the office,” he warned. “You might think they’re funny, but the rest of the staff doesn’t appreciate it.”
“Alright, alright, I’m sorry,” Reiko quickly apologized. “I’ll keep the pranks at home next time.” She turned to her friends and started to leave. “Anyway! Are you guys still up for camping at Yomaki this weekend?”

“Can’t we go somewhere more normal?” Noronobu whined as the three interns walked away. “You know, like somewhere that isn’t abandoned?”

“They called in sick this morning. I thought you knew.”

A staff member was talking to Mr. Ogane. Reiko, Jack, and Noronobu had not come to work this morning and had not contacted their boss. Earlier, Mr. Ogane opened his office door and, miraculously, saw windows, bookshelves, and his computer. Not a single paper doll was in sight—until he reached his desk. There lay three personalized paper dolls, on which someone had written names, birthdates, and street addresses. The first, labeled “Meigi Noronobu,” had feathery stubs instead of limbs. Next to it was a crumpled, soggy doll that felt warm when Mr. Ogane touched it. The ink on the doll had spread due to the moisture, but the name on it was still legible: “Jack Zedd.” A strip of something that looked like tree bark was tied tightly around the last doll’s neck. It read, “Mori Reiko” in messy kanji characters. Mr. Ogane felt his stomach drop. Hands trembling, Mr. Ogane moved the paper dolls. The ink had bled onto his desk, staining it with the interns’ information. He checked his computer. He was sure the three interns had not checked in that morning.

“Strange,” mused Mr. Ogane. “I didn’t get an email from any of them.”

“Try checking again, sir,” the employee suggested.

Mr. Ogane whipped out his smartphone and logged into his email. The staff member looked confused by his haste, and Mr. Ogane’s face turned red. Hands still trembling, he refreshed his inbox.

Mr. Ogane did not realize he was holding his breath until he saw three unread emails. “Ah!” he exclaimed. “Yes, I see their emails now. Thank you!”

“You’re welcome, sir.” The employee pushed up his jacket sleeve and checked his watch.
“If you’ll excuse me, sir,” he said, “I believe I should get going . . .”
“Oh, right,” replied Mr. Ogane, “I’m sure you’re quite busy, as we all are. Thank you again for telling me about the interns, er . . .”
“Kiyo,” the employee replied, holding out his hand. “Office management. It was a pleasure to meet you, sir.”

Kiyo’s hands were rather coarse for that of an office worker. Mr. Ogane smiled, confused by the awkward handshake. He was certain he had greeted everyone who worked for him at least once. However, Mr. Ogane soon realized he could not remember seeing Kiyo’s face in the office before today. Perhaps Mr. Ogane had simply forgotten about him. Ryokami was a large company, and Mr. Ogane did not regularly talk to all of his employees.

Still, it was rather strange for the three interns to call in sick. Once, Mr. Ogane found Noronobu sniffling and sneezing while working at his desk. Determined to work in spite of his illness, Noronobu had only agreed to take the week off because the CEO told him to go home and rest. Jack knew better than to take a sick day for a prank. In fact, he always told Reiko when her pranks went too far, and refused to take part when they did. Furthermore, Reiko never missed a day of work for a prank. Instead, she often worked overtime so she could set them up when the office was empty. Although it could have all been an elaborate practical joke, Mr. Ogane could not help but think something was wrong. The macabre paper dolls only made his suspicions worse.

“Are you guys still up for camping at Yomaki this weekend?” Reiko’s words echoed in Mr. Ogane’s head, bringing him back to reality. Perhaps the interns were still there. Perhaps the paper dolls really were just a convoluted prank. Perhaps the whole situation would be over if Mr. Ogane paid a visit to the abandoned store. At best, he would find the interns, confirm their safety, and stop finding paper dolls in his office. At worst, he would find nothing. If those were the two possible outcomes, why not look for the interns tonight?

Feeling calmer, Mr. Ogane returned to his office. The paper dolls were gone.
The building that once housed Yomaki Paper Goods looked surprisingly well-maintained from a distance. Once Mr. Ogane approached the building, however, the signs of abandonment were clear. Many of the roof tiles were cracked and dry rot had gouged holes in the wooden walls. The shoji doors were broken; pieces of their frames were folded over and the paper windows were riddled with holes. The tattered curtain in the doorway looked as if it might crumble to dust if someone touched it. It did not, and Mr. Ogane carefully slid open the door behind it. Inside, the scuffed wooden floors creaked under his weight. Flashlight in hand, Mr. Ogane saw rolls of faded washi paper lining the walls. A scroll with messy calligraphy hung behind the counter, which was covered in a thick film of dust. Torn lanterns were suspended from the ceiling like burned-out suns. The three interns were nowhere to be seen.

“Reiko?” Mr. Ogane called. “Jack? Noronobu? Are you here?” The wind howled back at him, stirring chaos in the room. The lanterns swayed overhead, threatening to fall on Mr. Ogane. The tears across the paper rattled like blinking eyes while loose paper flew onto the floor. After the wind stopped, Mr. Ogane examined the fallen papers. He noticed one was cut into a familiar shape. So was another one nearby. A third was stuck under a shoji door. Mr. Ogane heard hushed voices behind it.

“I know you’re in here, you three,” Mr. Ogane huffed. He slid open the door. “You can’t call in sick for a prank—”

But no one was in the next room. Heart pounding, Mr. Ogane stepped over the shoji door track. The air seemed colder here than in the last room. More torn lanterns swayed above a pile of paper dolls in the center of the room. A bundle of paper umbrellas leaned against the opposite wall. Their thick, uneven handles reminded Mr. Ogane of human legs. There could not have been many more rooms in which the interns could hide. It was better to go home than keep searching for them.

Suddenly, the shoji door slammed shut. Mr. Ogane dropped his flashlight and pulled the door as hard as he could, but it remained closed. He nearly threw himself into the door in an attempt to break it. What stopped him were the pairs of glowing yellow eyes that appeared on
the shoji door’s paper. Startled, Mr. Ogane jumped back, slipped on a paper doll, and crashed into the bundle of umbrellas.

They opened, trapping Mr. Ogane in one half of the room. Each umbrella stared at him with a single unblinking eye, and he slowly backed away from them. The room had no windows and all the doors were closed, yet the paper dolls flurried around the room when the wind howled outside. Mr. Ogane felt something cold, wet, and fleshy brush against his back. Shuddering, he turned around to see a torn lantern with a long tongue and single eye staring back at him. He fell backward, surprised, and a ghostly blue light filled the room. The sentient lantern transformed into the spirit of a withered old man. Its white kimono hung loosely around its body and its wrinkled, paper-thin skin was stretched over its spindly skeleton. The ghost’s coarse, muscular hands looked fat compared to the rest of its body, and its gaunt face and sunken eyes held an expression of pure malice.

“Murderer!” roared the ghost. The entire building seemed to shudder with rage. “M-m-m-murderer?” Mr. Ogane stammered. He could barely breathe as his heart pounded against his rib cage. “Wh-what do you mean? I’ve never killed anyone!”

“Lies!” the ghost barked. The ominous blue light glowed brighter. “You and your cursed company have prospered from my pain!”

“What? Mr. Ogane squeaked. “What is going on right now? Who are—”

“You killed me!” the ghost shrieked. “You’re to blame!”

Terrified and confused, Mr. Ogane felt his head sway. “B-but I don’t even—"

Silence!” At the ghost’s command, the paper dolls began swirling around the room as if caught in a hurricane. Mr. Ogane felt a tremor in his pocket and watchpaper dolls made from ten-thousand-yen bills fly out. They covered Mr. Ogane’s body, pinning him to the floor. The ghost floated closer, bathing Mr. Ogane in its freezing aura. He squirmed and struggled against the paper bills, but could not free himself. A scream rose in his throat, but more dolls made from yen covered his mouth. The ghost
held out a single paper doll decorated with a blood-red pentagram. Written on its torso were a birthdate, street address, and the words “Ogane Musabo.”

The last thing he remembered was a pair of coarse hands reaching for his neck.

“Former Ryokami CEO Dies At 108.”

Deep in thought, Akechi Taro put down his newspaper. He remembered being called to the scene when Ogane Musabo was found unconscious under a pile of paper and money in what used to be Yomaki Paper Goods. When Mr. Ogane woke up, he panicked and bolted toward the nearest door. He nearly hit his head on the floor after slipping on a piece of paper. The police had to bring Mr. Ogane outside to calm him. For some unknown reason, the CEO of Ryokami Paper and Printing had suddenly developed an intense fear of paper. Akechi could not use the notebook he bought at Ryokami while questioning Mr. Ogane, who would refuse to take his eyes off of the notepaper and became too nervous to speak.

Instead, Akechi recorded their conversation on his smartphone. Unfortunately, the CEO did not remember much about the night before; he simply kept repeating something about coarse hands. When asked about the three Ryokami employees who had gone missing two nights ago, Mr. Ogane insisted they called in sick and that an employee named Kiyo could confirm his claim. However, Akechi found no record of an employee named Kiyo in Ryokami’s payroll system. The next day, Mr. Ogane announced he was shutting down Ryokami Paper and Printing after four generations of service. Amazingly, he survived on the streets for the next sixty-six years, outliving all his other family members without touching another yen bill or government document.

The whole case was rather odd. The police closed it on the basis of Mr. Ogane’s sudden insanity, but as a detective, Akechi suspected there was something missing. Insanity does not develop overnight. What could drive a wealthy businessman to shut down his family’s successful company and fear paper for the rest of his life? What had happened to Mori Reiko, Jack Zedd, and Meigi Noronobu the night before? The superstitious
part of the neighborhood claimed Yomaki Paper Goods was haunted by a powerful onryo who wanted revenge on the Ryokami company. However, in Akechi’s experience, living people committed crimes, not ghosts, and Mr. Yomaki could not have been the culprit: he had starved to death several months before the incident.

After a while, even Akechi dismissed the case. He was a detective, not a philosopher, and the lack of solid evidence allowed for too many possibilities. He had better things to think about, like the human-shaped piece of paper that somehow lodged itself in his notebook.
Finally! Filled with pride, joy, and a renewed sense of independence, we now are free to create our own evolving futures and decide our own fate. These final pieces represent the transformation in both artist and creation as well as writer and written word.
In the blue and purple light of dawn, I walked out to my garden, excited to check on my new plants. The buttons on my shirt were still crooked as I had yet to fix them. Running ahead, my dog had a trick of barking at the patch of soft soil that I worked tirelessly on. When I arrived, I counted ten flies, five more than yesterday, and the corner of my lips lifted into a smirk. Looking up into my prepossessing garden view with a warm cup of Americano in my two bony hands, I admired the seventeen patches of soft soil ahead of me as I sighed deeply with pride. Although I knew where each and every one of the patches were placed mentally with exact measurements calculated, not even a single soul could guess where my art was displayed, and that was the beauty of it.

I pranced on each patch gracefully as I ended up in the one that struck my nose with bewilderment. The scent attacked my nose as I inhaled the bombshell of the soft substance that consisted of muscle and fat. My heightened sense of smell kicked in with the mixture of dirt and fatty tissues. But dead fatty tissues.

My morning routine made my mind come into ease as I glanced at my watch. 7:14:36 am. I dawdled around my garden for twenty four more seconds until I re-entered my house to get ready for my second job. 7:29:55 am. I got in my car and applied hand sanitizer for five seconds. In my office, I laboriously undressed the skeleton in front of my eyes and dramatically placed my white lab coat that had the sweet staleness of tobacco around myself. I grabbed the arms of my soft-cushioned chair and made myself at home as my lovely assistant came in to go over my schedule for the day.

“Good morning Doc,” she whispered with her seductive, thin voice. “To day, you have two surgeries in the morning and in the afternoon… both of them will be a total breeze for you,” she paused, checking for my reaction. “The one in the morning is a Knee Arthroscopy and the one in the afternoon is a Shoulder Replacement Surgery.”
“Yes, I know. You told me two weeks ago, so I know what’s coming up,” I peacefully replied while admiring the outer structure of her body that was outlined by her fine, constructed bones. I visualized my assistant’s potential contribution to my combination of masterpieces as they would perfectly fit in my art collection.

“That’s great to hear… uhhh… I will be waiting for you outside the Operation Room in an hour then Doc,” she was on her way out of my room when she instantaneously turned around and mentioned, “did you get a new skeleton?”

“Isn’t it just so appealing?” I responded with contentment filling my eyes. “My previous one started to break apart, so I just got another one for better study.”

“Great to hear Doc,” she gave me her glorious smile with all her thirty-two teeth facing my pupils as she exited my room.

The incorruptible air restrained in speech as I sucked in the lingering fragrance of a fresh-cut flower that my assistant left behind for me. My eyelids covered my sight as I pictured all of my friends who were waiting for me at my house under my garden, reminding myself how I am surrounded with the company of the assembled bones in which I visit to feel reassured and safe. As one masterpiece increases every month, the comfort in my heart grew softer and the barricade of ribs around it grew stronger, being able to listen to my own bones rattle with consolation and easement.

Before heading out the door with confidence, I approached the fresh skeleton next to my desk as I bent forward to give her a kiss on her cold and rigid knee cap. I whispered into her auditory ossicle that I will be back very soon, still being able to smell her live, vivid flesh attached to her cute bones.
When Chickens Crossed the Road . . .
By: Kyle Ching ‘22

A mother chicken struts across the street
With baby chickens waddling close behind.
Their tiny beaks squeak out in noisy peeps
And form a lively, bois’trous melody.
These fluffy fiends! They stumble, bumble, crash
Into each other, tripping till they fall
In piles of golden puffs on blackened pavement.

I watch these birds from my slow moving car,
And let a saddened squawk escape my mouth.
As I drive closer to this feath’ry fam’ly
I weep and sob for my so empty nest,
For silent seats devoid of any chirps.
I dream of leading my own band of toddlers
Just like this mother hen leads her ‘lil chicks
O how I’d love them—NO I’VE RUN THEM OVER!!!!

A cloud of yellow feathers fills the air
While bitter croaks escape from flattened throats.
I sprint out from my car, and see the blood
Of baby birds all o’er my rubber wheels,
And on the ground, their beaks, their guts, their gore!
And when I look up, I meet rageful eyes
Of mother hen who blames me for their deaths.
The guilt in me wounds all my former dreams
of parenthood; I’ve slaughtered little children!
Will He Bee Mine?
By: Anonymous

To satiate my burning,throbbing thirst
I scour for flowing fluids I might find.
And when this dearth of moisture’s at its worst
I spot the honeyed hive that is his mind.
As amber beads drip from his buzzing brain
I long for sticky liquid of his love.
If from combed thoughts that nectar I could gain I’d gulp it like ambrosia from above.
But in approach to suck on his sweet honey
I pause, and tremble at that raging hive.
If I draw closer, will rejection sting me?
And if it does, will stingers I survive?
Still t’ward his swarm I sprint, t’ward quicker death
Than letting drought of love steal my last breath.
The Moths
By: Lauren Okimoto

On the day of my elder sister’s funeral, I watched a wisp of smoke drift toward the sky, as delicate as a strand of hair. I was not yet used to the way its sweetness sank heavy in my lungs and clung to my clothes. Mama had once told me that dying was the end of a chapter in an infinitely-long book. In the time it takes to flip to a new chapter, the dead are given a chance to say their last goodbyes and return to their family in the form of a moth. She would tell me stories of her popo’s grandmother, who descended as a moth the night of her own funeral banquet and landed feather-light on each of her children’s foreheads, then vanished into the stars.

At the funeral, I tugged on mama’s sleeve and asked if jie would come back as a moth too. Mama smiled, and the corners of her eyes turned downwards as she shook her head. “Oh, Jade,” she said. “Our family hasn’t been able to return as moths for many generations. It’s been a very long time since one has visited.”

“That’s not fair,” protested March, only seven years old at the time. Mama tucked a lock of hair behind his ear gently.

“But I’m sure your jie will find her way back somehow. She loved you two that much.”

As usual, my mother was right. Jie’s spirit rode the smoke down from the afterlife, intertwining with the white wisps in the air above the crumbling end of an incense stick. Her spirit twisted and looped around March and I when nobody was watching, at the funeral, at the temple, in front of our family altar at home. The three of us ran together laughing in the fields behind the house and waded in the shallow riverbank. Wherever we went, jie was with us.

The day the man with the bowler hat appeared, it was the anniversary of our gung-gung’s death. I was nine, and March had just turned fourteen. I chased jie through the house on bare feet, sliding on the wooden floors with March on my heels, hollering for us to stop, wait up. Jie fluttered out to the edge of the front porch, then disappeared into the hazy afternoon.
The fog was dense and gray for miles. I squinted into it, looking for jie’s familiar light. Instead, there was a man in a black bowler hat, posture straight like an iron rod. His eyes struck me like a blow and I was paralyzed, ice running down my spine. There is something crushed in his fist, and I shiver. Just as suddenly as he appeared, he turned and vanished past the river. In the place where he stood, jie’s spirit flickered once, beckoning, then vanished after him.

My heart thumped. My blood was frozen in my veins until March slammed into me from behind, and we both tumbled to the ground with an oof. March blinked at the sky and groaned, but I stumbled to my feet, tripping over them to get to the place where the man with the hat and jie had been.

“Jade,” March called. “Jade! What are you doing? Where’s jie?” My nerves hummed. I was so close to where they were; where had they gone? “She’s following the man with the hat!” I yelled at March without looking. The riverbank was under me, and I leaped. I sailed over the water and struck at the shallows with my feet, but instead of hitting solid ground, I plunged into salty waves. The last thing I heard was March, panicked and shouting.

I broke the surface gasping for air. March surfaced next to me moments later—he had followed me after all. March grabbed for my arm, and we struggled toward the riverbank together.

The river that used to be thin thread winding through the grass was now an ocean, the horizon concealed by a wall of clouds. The bank around us was thick with mud, discarded objects sinking in the sludge. Along the shore, there was a gate that flickered, in and out of view.

I rubbed my eyes, but it blurred with the clouds then refocused, blurred and focused in different shapes and colors.

Jie materialized once again in a waft of sweet woodsmoke. As she flitted forward on the wind, March and I met eyes and nodded silently. He pulled a rusting knife from the mud as I picked up a heavy stone, polished smooth and shiny in the water. I could feel March’s tense back as jie led us toward the flickering gate. As we approached, it looked exactly like our
temple at home. The next second, it was a Japanese torii gate; the next, it was a grand white cathedral.

Jie drifted in the gateway expectantly, hovering above a tiny, broken figure. It was a black moth with velvet wings crushed by some hand and thrown away at the door. I heard my Chinese name whispered in a familiar way, carried on some light wind. “Oh,” I breathed, kneeling before the moth.

March sucked in a breath. “Gung-gung,” he said.

I stood and looked up. My eyes were watering. “It was the man with the bowler hat. He was holding gung-gung’s moth by the river.”

“So what do we do?” March asked. Jie floated before us for an instant once more, then rode the wind through the gate. With one last look at the broken body of the moth, we plunged into darkness once more.

The shore illuminated itself in floating lanterns, red light cascading over the marketplace materializing before our eyes. The pale forms wandering the stalls were translucent, and jie flew straight through their bodies. March wrapped a protective arm around my shoulders, and together we ran through the crowd after jie, shuddering each time we passed through a ghostly figure.

At the end of the street of vendors stood a single black tent shrouded with heavy curtains. As we neared, a figure in front of the tent turned. I was struck again by the ice when the cold blue eyes under the bowler hat landed upon me, but the warm scent of jie’s incense wrapped around me, thawed out my feet and carried them forward.

“Welcome, Jade,” the man rasped, smiling with only half of his mouth. “Interested in buying a few lucky charms?” He drew back the tent’s curtain. March’s grip on both me and his knife tightened, and I inhaled sharply.

Displayed inside was a single board sealed in glass. Under the glare of dancing red and white light were the bodies of my ancestors, limbs pinned to cork. Purple brocade wings, wings navy as ocean depths, wings like fresh-turned soil pushed up weakly. Jie had found our family—we had found our family. I spread my fingers over the glass and turned my stone over in my palm.
The man leered next to my ear. “Chinese moth spirits,” he said, tapping on the glass. “Genuine oriental talismans for the afterlife. What about you, son?”

March snarled. “How dare you!” He crossed the room in a single stride, the arc of his blade leaving a blood-red stain in the air—but that wasn’t what jie brought us here to do.

I raised my arm and smashed my stone into the glass. Amidst the gleaming shards and glittering dust, the moths beat their wings free of pins and ice from the bowler hat man’s eyes. For a moment, the air was a swirl of night-blue wings and glass-like stars suspended in midair. Then the moths hurtled past me, knocking down March’s knife in their wave of color, and burst into the night.

As I stood in the ring of shattered glass, Jie’s wisp of smoke curled around my fingers. The tendrils of smoke took the shape of dark gray wings, and with one last loop around March and I, jie joined our ancestors. The moths rose in the wind and steadily, beating like a heart, crossed the wall of clouds toward the horizon.
The Photographer
By: Nathalie Hosten

I shot a portrait with my gun shaped like a camera
And my subject didn’t flinch when it flashed
I made sure her pose was elegant and glamorous
And her smile radiated, unabashed

My film is filled with models handsomer than Hollywood
But I can’t help but think it’s all a sham
Sometimes their waists are shaped like nobody’s body should
I say I’m not influenced but I am

I started out by photographing people that I loved
But then my career got in the way
Now I’m a master at manipulation, I’ve succumbed
My old friends all think I’ve gone astray

The truth is more humiliating than you can imagine
I just followed my increasing salary
I was focused on my work, I didn’t see it happen
Now fantasy is my reality

These thoughts have got me searching for forgotten inspiration
Just something to release me from my mind
I’m done with airbrush promises, this is my declaration
I can’t believe that I became so blind

I’ve packed up my tripod and my gun shaped like a camera
I’ve got to leave while I’m still young
My new goal is to glorify all that’s unglamorous
I’ve had this power all along
Staff Bios

Ms. Palmer: is honored and blessed to have played a small part in the creation of this magazine. Chloe and Clara led the team with grace, and all of the club members, teachers, writers, and artists played equally important roles in bringing this year’s magazine to life. Congratulations to all!

Clara: is so grateful to Ms. Palmer for her guidance, to Skye for intelligent creativity in designing this edition, to the Mane members for their thoughtful perspectives, to the artists and writers who contributed to this issue of Mane O Ke Ola, and most of all, to her dear friend Chloe Kanemaru, who is the brains and the driving force behind Mane.

Chloe: wants to thank Clara for being her other half in working on this magazine, working so hard, and most of all, for being an incredible friend. She is so blessed to have Clara in her life, and she couldn’t have asked to work alongside a more talented, kind hearted, and patient editor this year.

Erin: wants to thank Miu for signing up with her and is grateful for all of the wonderful submissions students have made.

Miu: wants to thank Erin for attending meetings with her and is inspired by all the creative submissions this year. Follow @mane.keola on Instagram!

Charlie: many thanks to all the club members and every author who submitted their works!

Skye: is incredibly grateful for every contributor to the magazine… designing it was an amazing experience, and I enjoyed collaborating with Clara and Chloe to make it happen.