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7 — Mehmet Darakcioglu  
*Introduction*

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**ALBERT GALLATIN SCHOLARS**  
**JAPAN**

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Introduction
Travel writing and oral stories about newly visited places are some of the oldest literary forms; travelers have long produced and disseminated knowledge about unknown places through travelogues and oral traditions. World wanderers like Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta captured their readers’ imagination through their descriptions of distant lands and sparked their curiosity and a yearning to be in other places.

Unlike our forebears, who went through great difficulty and danger to be able to travel, we have all the conveniences of long-distance travel at our fingertips. Simply by clicking a few buttons, we can arrange for lodging, transportation, and tour guides in a foreign country, book tickets for attractions, make reservations for restaurants, and digitally walk through our itinerary even before starting our trips. One of the most popular travelers and storytellers of our time, Anthony Bourdain, named his TV show *Parts Unknown*, but is there any part of the globe that is unknown or undiscovered anymore? What does travel mean in a world where once-insurmountable distances have shrunk? And how do we tell stories about our travel in this digital age, when the media of expression are so abundant?

Through Scholars groups, select students at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study travel to various corners of the world each year with faculty mentors. These groups invite students to look beneath the surface while traveling and to reflect critically about new places and ideas. They also aim to help students transcend the touristic gaze alongside an overarching intellectual theme that dictates the itinerary and activities for the trip. The students’ resulting artistic, intellectual, visual, and literary reflections are then published in *Mosaic*, allowing students to tell stories about their travels.

In 2019, the Albert Gallatin Scholars visited Japan and studied the theme, “Disaster in/of Modernity.” The Americas Scholars traveled to the Dominican Republic and examined the theme, “Borders and Flows.” The Dean’s Honor Society went to New Zealand. The topic of their explorations was “Home Economics and the Simple Life.” This issue of *Mosaic* will allow you to see Japan, the Dominican Republic, and New Zealand through the lens of students in the form of essays, poetry, photography, drawings, and other artwork.

Mehmet Darakcioglu is the assistant dean for Global Programs and an associate faculty member at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study. He traveled to Japan with the Albert Gallatin Scholars this year and served as the administrative director of the group.
Japan

Disaster in/of Modernity
Examining historic sites of natural and manmade disasters in Japan

Kyoto
Kurashiki
Okayama
Hiroshima

Naoshima Island
Tokyo
Yokohama
Sendai
This acrylic painting, which incorporates pasted maps, strives to encapsulate two types of disasters that have ravaged Japan: tsunamis and atomic bombs. While we now understand that tectonic events are the catalysts for tsunamis, before the tools of modern science were invented, ancient Japanese cultures thought that earthquakes and tsunamis were caused by a large koi fish. The large koi in my painting is meant to represent this legacy of explaining events, and it is painted red to represent how tectonic activity is the true catalyst for the massive wave depicted. The wave was built firstly from maps of Japan, showing how the land and country can disappear when disaster strikes, and how elements of it will remain but likely be broken. The red sun in the sky is too intense in color, as it is supposed to imitate the explosions of the atomic bombs that were dropped on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. By merging classic imagery from Japanese Ukiyo-E art (the wave and a typical fish depiction) with the flag of Japan, these elements take on new meaning when juxtaposed and linked through the common theme of disasters. The duality of life and death is also represented here: water and fire can provide the vital necessities for life, just as they can lead to a destructive end. While this piece is not so emotive, in that it does not show the suffering of the people who experienced these travesties, it gives an iconography and draws comparisons between both natural and manmade disasters during the moment of impact.

*Saigai ga Hassei Shita Toki*  
(“When Disaster Strikes”)

DELANEY BEEM
Poems

ALICE WEN

Most Americans will think of haikus when it comes to Japanese poetry, but there are many variations of Japanese poetry that use a five- or seven-syllable line structure, including traditional poetry, called waka. Two of the most common forms of waka are tanka (short poems with a 5-7-5-7-7-syllable line structure) and chouka (long poems with repeated five-to-seven-syllable phrases, with a final seven-syllable phrase). The most popular form of modern Japanese poetry is tanka, which has become nearly synonymous with the term “waka.”

In these poems, I share moments or places that stood out to me during our Japan trip in January. The spaces between syllables in the transliterations are there to emphasize the five- or seven-syllable structure and to help non-Japanese speakers hear the sounds and rhythms of the lines a bit more easily.

I chose the tanka form for Tokyo because it is the city that represents modern Japan, and for Kyoto because tankas are often used to recount personal stories or intimate moments, which I felt best represented the mood of the quiet and intimate tea ceremony we experienced in the temple there.

The poem for Kurashiki is in the chouka form. I wanted to convey the strangeness of hearing a religious prayer there that broke up words and sentences in unconventional ways and that seemed to continue without a natural flow or pauses. For this reason, I broke up sentences to fit the five-to-seven-syllable line structure of chouka.

I chose to write a haiku for Hiroshima because the narrative of the Hiroshima memorial and museum seemed to be directed towards an international community rather than Japanese people. Haikus also usually contain beautiful imagery of seasons and nature, but I hoped that my haikus about Hiroshima and Sendai would evoke an additional sense of desolation, especially with the contrast of the terrible emptiness of the wasteland we witnessed in Sendai.
KYOTO (TEA CEREMONY)

暖かく
静かに取ると
口向こう
心の傷を
そっとおさまる

A ta ta ka ku
Shi zu ka ni to ru to
Ku chi mu ko u
Ko ko ro no ki zu wo
So tto o sa ma ru

Warmth
Take it softly
Towards your mouth
Bruises of the heart
Gently abated
私たち
の旅がよくつ
づけるよう
に神道のい
のりもらっ
た音が馴染み
のないから
ちょっとおかしか
ったけれど
深い感動
を与えたんだ

Wa ta shi ta chi
No ta bi ga yo ku tu
Zu ke ru yo u
Ni shi n to u no i
No ri mo ra t
Ta o to ga na ji mi
No na i ka ra
Chyo tto o ka shi ka
Tta ke re do
Fu ka i ka n do u
Wo a ta e ta n da

For
Our journey to con-
Tinue smoothly
We received a Shin-
To pray-
Er the sound was unfamil-
iar so
It was a little stra-
Nge but
It left a deep impression
On me
HIROSHIMA (HIROSHIMA MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM)

我救え
この地獄から
ご平和へ

Wa re su ku e
Ko no chi go ku ka ra
Go he i wa he

Save me
From this hell
To Peace
TOKYO (OMOTESANDO)

大騒ぎ
鮮やかな道
どこ見ても
おかしいやつが
集まっていた

O o sa wa gi
A za ya ka na mi chi
Do ko mi te mo
O ka shi i ya tsu ga
A tsu ma tte i ta

Clamor
That vibrant street
Wherever you looked
Peculiar things and people
Were gathered
SENDAI (WASTELAND)

何もない
あんまり見るも
見えないよ

Na ni mo na i
A n ma ri mi ru mo
Mi e na i yo

There's nothing
Even though you look too much
You can't see
Our trip to Japan was a beautiful juxtaposition of modernity and tradition, and of political and social reemergence and renewal. To me, it seems modern Japanese culture is very much engaged in the narrative of disaster and disaster recovery that outsiders, including myself, have the luxury of being unfamiliar with. Nearly a decade after the 2011 earthquake, community development and housing projects drag on in coastal areas as Japan struggles to both rebuild its infrastructure and re-inspire families and traditions that were washed away. In Hiroshima, learning the extraordinary and personal understanding of war held by the city’s residents and presented at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, we as American students wondered if we would ever actually understand peace and loss, considering that, in my opinion, cultural tradition is already a difficult thing for Americans to understand. A relatively young country with more of a conglomerate of cultures than a distinct identity, the United States has experienced loss and rebuilding differently than many other countries. Japan has by necessity (though not completely) evolved into a pacifistic and responsive state.
A section of Tokyo was reduced to ruins after the Operation Meetinghouse bombing on March 10, 1945. It was the most destructive bombing raid in history. Nearly sixteen square miles and 100,000 people were incinerated by Allied bombers. I juxtaposed this image over that of modern-day Tokyo, which I had the privilege of viewing from the fiftieth floor of the Mori Art Museum.
Kamiya Bar in Asakusa, Tokyo, open since 1880, was destroyed in the same series of bombings. Near where it used to be, the iconic Harajuku district of Tokyo now shows light and modernity, an inviting cluster of shops.
In 1944, the building once known as the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall was transformed into government offices. As the war intensified, it necessitated that community spaces be allocated for wartime control rooms. In 1945, the building, 160 meters from the hypocenter of the bomb, burst into flames. Everyone inside was killed, but the steel frame was spared. Renamed the A-Bomb Dome, the building is now a World Heritage Site, a reminder of the manmade disaster that has shaped Hiroshima to this day.
On March 11, 2011, a magnitude 9.0 earthquake and subsequent tsunami shook northeastern Japan, killing nearly 16,000 people and causing an estimated $199 billion dollars (about 16.9 trillion yen) in damage. Coastal areas like Tohoko still struggle to rebuild nearly a decade later, though the first step toward rebuilding—the clearing away of the rubble of homes and community spaces—has been long done.
A final word: the U.S. Army’s brief description of Hiroshima one year after the bombing—a reminder that the United States was one of the international actors whose actions shaped Japan’s national identity. Our tour guide, Ted, insisted that although most Japanese citizens feel little resentment toward Americans today, historical events have very much shaped the pacifistic political stance Japan now takes in international affairs.
Reflections on Hiroshima and Holocaust Museums

MADELINE COHODES

Walking through the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, I tried not to let my emotions overwhelm me as I contemplated the exhibits. I was filled with a deep sense of American guilt as I looked at the photos of heaps of dead and dying civilians. The idea that the nation I claim citizenship to and heritage from was responsible for this made me feel disgusted. However, as I looked at the photos depicting the hospital and medical staff desperately trying to save their patients with few to no supplies, I experienced a sort of emotional numbness. I analyzed the scenes through the lens of a future physician, trying to distinguish the procedures taking place and even thinking about what I would have done in each scenario.

I cannot place what I felt that day into any explicit categories, such as curiosity, disgust, shame, or academic interest. However, I did experience an overwhelming familiarity. As someone who spent many formative years studying the Holocaust and visiting various Holocaust museums, I saw corollaries in almost every aspect of the Hiroshima museum and the story it told. Both the Hiroshima and Holocaust museums focus on the prosperity and general happiness of a population prior to an act of completely senseless annihilation. To help visitors understand this experience from an individual’s perspective, personal trinkets and photographs saved by survivors are showcased. There is the message of “never again.” At the end of the experience, I felt absolute despair tinged with a slight hope for the future.

The museums differ in that the Hiroshima museum had a display devoted to the stigmatization and post-trauma care of the Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors). The equivalent of this is not always the case at
Holocaust museums. Of course, a claim can be made about the differing scales of the crises, that it is much more difficult to examine the medical care, relocation, and stigmatization of 3.5 million people than for 650,000. However, perhaps it has something to do with the reasons these museums were created. The Hiroshima museum is widely regarded as having the purpose of spreading the message of post-war peace and warning about the dangers of nuclear weaponry. Holocaust museums, in contrast, typically focus on the memorialization of victims. Additionally, the Hiroshima museum’s timeline of events progressed for several more decades after the crisis, whereas those at Holocaust museums typically do not. This could be a purposeful strategy to focus patrons’ attention solely on victims. Unfortunately, though, it may also cause them to forget about challenges the survivors faced afterwards.

I also wondered if Holocaust museum curators do not want patrons to think of the implications of the phrase, “never again.” Governments, for the most part, have ended nuclear testing, and nuclear warfare is much less of a threat and a fear-mongering tactic than it was after World War II. However, the world continues to be plagued by genocides, and most people continue to turn a blind eye to such crimes. This may ultimately lead museums to grapple with how to encourage hope in a world still filled with hatred.

The task of crafting a message that does not invalidate victims, while also acknowledging survivors and current genocides, is a difficult one. It is certainly something that necessitates much more thought than two hours in a museum could ever allow.
Preserving Memories

ABRAHAM ONIFADE

We as humans have sought to preserve memories and history across cultures, place, and time, and through various different media. The deliberate restoration of historic sites in Japan was intended to maintain some semblance of their original imaginings while also romanticizing a physical history and national identity. An example is the Golden Pavilion in the Kyoto prefecture, locally known as Kinkaku-ji, which is a World Heritage Site that has been restored on numerous occasions. This trend can be viewed all across contemporary Japan, in locations like the former capital, Kyoto; in coastal cities impacted by natural disasters, like Sendai; in post-industrial towns like Kurashiki; in the hypocenter of the atomic bomb detonation in Hiroshima; and in the modern capital, Tokyo.

On March 11, 2011, a cataclysmic multidimensional catastrophe took place near Japan’s Miyagi prefecture. An earthquake struck off the coast, triggering a massive tsunami that destroyed much of the city of Sendai, along with other towns along the coast. Fires broke out and nuclear power plants erupted due to the flooding. This disaster scarred the psyche of many Japanese citizens living in the area. Yet, the village of Arahama, in Sendai, took measures to preserve their now-iconic elementary school, where villagers sought refuge during the tsunami, and erected the Arahama Memorial Bell and a cenotaph statue on the coast to memorialize those who lost their lives in the disaster.

Despite the overwhelming loss that accompanies disasters, the human trait that causes us to preserve our imagined memories in different forms keeps these thoughts alive in the consciousness of generations to come.
For me, music and experience are intrinsically linked. The first few notes of a song are powerful enough to take me back to another time, another place. The playlist below contains songs about Japan, songs I listened to in Japan, and Japanese songs that resonate with me—a sort of musical timeline of my trip.

**Flying Overseas – Theophilus London (feat. Devonte Hynes and Solange Knowles)** A song for the flight to Japan, the beginning of many international flights marking my next semester (I flew to NYU London eight days after leaving Japan).

**Wide Awake – Parquet Courts** A song for jet lag and for that feeling of the mind racing with the excitement, anticipation, and anxiety that accompanies long-distance travel.

**Welcome to Japan – The Strokes** A fun, upbeat song to get myself excited about arriving in Japan. A song that reflects the earliest hours of the trip, when I remained excited and hopeful for what it would hold, trying not to notice a lingering anxiety about leaving home.

**Arrival in Nara – Alt J** A soft, melodic song for peaceful Kyoto and the stunning beauty of the Golden Temple and Fushimi Inari. A song for the loneliness I felt during this portion of the trip, walking the quiet streets of the city alone.

**Here, There, and Everywhere – The Beatles** A song by the “Beatles Typhoon,” as they are known in Japan. A song that made me think of missing my boyfriend and grappling with the fact that this trip was just the beginning of a long semester of separation.
Nobody – Mitski  A song by a Japanese-American singer-songwriter about her time alone in Singapore, during which she felt extremely isolated. A song with sad lyrics but an upbeat rhythm, for trying to remain positive, or at least seemingly upbeat, to save face and avoid being the group downer. A song I listened to often in Kurashiki.

Nara – Alt J  A song that mirrored the softness and beauty of the old neighborhood in Kurashiki. A song that has been on my “sad” playlists for years. Discussing the song, Alt-J talks about the status of the deer of Nara (not far from Kurashiki), saying, “It’s a nice metaphor for people being left alone to live their lives the way they want to live them, not being told what to do or how to exist, having that freedom.” Thus, a song to remind us that we do not need to be constantly happy when traveling.

Imagine – John Lennon  A song that sings the message of Hiroshima and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum: peace is the ultimate goal.

Across the Sea – Weezer  An upbeat song to match the fun vibe of one of my favorite days of the trip, our visit to Naoshima. A song for the constant feeling of being too far away from the city you love and the person you love.

Bus Bus Train Train – Frankie Cosmos  A song for the constant traveling this trip entailed, and the lack of permanence as well. A song for the bullet train and the long bus rides from city to city. A song for driving through the Japanese countryside, taking in the nature and thinking about the person you love.

Unravel – TK from Ling Tosite Sigure  A dramatic song for the lowest point of the trip for me: the first two days in Tokyo. A song for when the stress of moving away and the feeling of missing someone becomes too much. A song for when you call your mom crying at 1 a.m. Also, the opening song for the popular anime show, Tokyo Ghoul, reflective of the pop culture of Tokyo.

Valerie – Amy Winehouse  A song for karaoke in Tokyo. A song that represents one of my fondest memories and perhaps the first time I did not feel totally disconnected during the trip.
PONPONPON – Kyary Pamyu Pamyu  A song by famous J-POP star Kyary Pamyu Pamyu, for the upbeat, colorful, exciting metropolis that is Tokyo. A song for all things kawaii in Harajuku and Akihabara.

Sprawl II (Mountains Beyond Mountains) – Arcade Fire  A song for leaving Tokyo, and for how seemingly endless the biggest city in the world can feel. A song for when you begin to question if you can ever escape the feeling that a huge city is eating you up. A song for taking the bullet train ride out of Tokyo and watching the sprawling city get swallowed up by the endless mountains of Japan.

Just Like Honey – The Jesus and Mary Chain  Another song for leaving Tokyo, and a reference to the movie, Lost in Translation. A song for when you are really channeling the character Bob Harris, for the otherness that you might feel in a city as foreign as Tokyo.

Leaving Nara – Alt J  A song for the end of our trip and for our time in Fukushima. I think it is difficult to capture the lingering devastation of the 3/11/11 tsunami and earthquake in a song, but the dramatic sound of the first half of this song represents the terror and strength of the disaster, while the silence at the end represents the complete emptiness that still lingers in the area, years after.

Forest Whitaker – Bad Books  A song for me. After my first trip to Japan in 2015, I was determined to return and live there for a few years. This trip showed me that I no longer want to do that. For that reason, I am thankful that this experience went the way it did.

I’ll Take Us Home – Matt and Kim  A song for the return trip. An upbeat song for the excitement I felt about getting back to New York and having a couple of days before leaving the country again. A song to remind us that we can always get back home.
During our trip to Japan, we rarely heard about the zainichi (Japanese-born Koreans) or the burakumin (Japanese “village people”), even though both are marginalized communities that were affected by the events we were learning about. We heard about the zainichi mostly in the context of Yokohama’s mass lynching of Koreans in 1923. Even though the occupation of Korea and active discrimination against the zainichi occurred around World War II, the zainichi are not often mentioned in histories of wartime disasters such as Nagasaki or Hiroshima.

The first distinctive group of nearly two million zainichi emerged before the Korean War: the 1948 Cheju Insurgency. The end of the occupation in 1945 allowed for Koreans to have their own system of government. However, American influence led to South-only elections for the country, which Cheju islanders opposed. Both the American and South Korean militaries tortured and killed suspected communists, sparking a mass flight to Japan.¹

The first generation of zainichi writers included Kim Sa Ryang and Kim Tal Su. Kim Sa Ryang is noted for his 1939 novella, *Into the Light*, in which a young Korean studying in Japan identifies himself by his Japanese name rather than his Korean name. The conflict becomes a question of identity and faith. The Korean man ‘abandons his identity, thus rejecting his background.’² Kim Sa Ryang’s writing is representative of the first-generation-writer themes of “the issues of Japanese colonialism, American imperialism, the Korean War, unification, and recovery of ‘Korean-ness.’”³ The first generation of zainichi writers found an acute connection with Korea, grounding their identity by writing in “their mother tongue [...] , aware that their motherland was Korea.”⁴
The second generation of *zainichi* writers was born in Japan and faced identity issues of questioning whether or not they “belonged to Korea or Japan, or North or South Korea.”⁵ Notable writers include Lee Hoe Sung, Kim Ha Gyong, and Lee Yang Ji. Main themes changed into “poverty, unemployment, and racism in early postwar Japan; domestic violence, the sense of alienation *zainichi* Koreans tend to feel in Japan or Korea and the painful process of self-determination.”⁶

Lee Hoe Sung’s *The Cloth Fuller*, published in 1971, advocates for the protection of the Korean identity amongst *zainichi* by looking towards the first-generation *zainichi* for cultural knowledge. The Cloth Fuller uses multigenerational storytelling to depict the sharing of cultural roots, which serves to protect them, beginning with a grandmother sharing her traditions with her grandson. Lee Hoe Sung focuses on Koreans who came to Japan from Karaguto in the late 1940s. The Cloth Fuller won the Japanese Akutagawa Prize, making Lee Hoe Sung the first Korean writer to achieve a degree of recognition by the public.⁷

In 1947, Japan ordered *zainichi* to list their nationality as *Ch¬¬ōsen* (Korean) on official documents, preventing naturalization as Japanese. The Korean War began shortly after that period, preventing repatriation after the occupation.

Kim Ha Gyong’s novels and essays depict the core disenchantment faced by *zainichi* individuals: many tried to “find solace in nationalist discourse, political activism or even repatriation to North Korea,” but these were all “ineffectual means of escape from existential pain,” only serving to further alienate them.⁸ In 1971, Kim published
Sakumei. The main character is a Korean physicist at Sendai University, experiencing “starvation in the heart [... and unable to] feel at peace, feel settled.” Through his dismissal of political activism, ethnic pride, and repatriation to North Korea, Kim Ha Gyong turns towards existential trauma and the rampant domestic abuse in zainichi communities.

The 1990s saw a renaissance for zainichi writers. Writers continued to be born and raised in Japan as permanent resident aliens. Readership for Korean writers increased because of the growing Marxist critiques of the Japanese colonial system. More recently, there has been renewed interest in zainichi writing after a 2012 recall of the textbook, Wakaru Yokohama, which labeled the 1923 persecution and killing of Koreans as a “massacre.” There were claims that the textbook could cause misunderstandings concerning the treatment of zainichi. Historians submitted a petition to Yokohama to have the decision reversed. In 2018, the zainichi regained a position in Korea through the story of Chong Young-hwan, a third-generation Japanese-born Korean professor at Meiji Gakuin University. Chong Young-hwan was forbidden entry into Korea by Presidents Lee Myung Bak and Park Geun Hye. Under President Moon Jae In, there has been a revitalized effort to “normalize home country visits for overseas Koreans of all nationalities.” The zainichi story is also being popularized in American media, notably through Min Jin Lee’s novel, Pachinko, which was a National Book Award finalist, New York Times Book Review Top Ten of the Year, and Dayton Literary Peace Prize finalist. Min Jin Lee summarizes the plight of zainichi through current times.
When I was in Japan, I was inspired by the constant presence of art and illustration everywhere. There seemed to be a mascot for every product and a drawing for every advertisement on the subway, and overall, the culture seemed very steeped in art, which I appreciated, being an artist myself.

For this final project, I wanted to create an illustration that captured the essence of what I learned and what I understood about Japan by the end of the trip. This piece was inspired by the traditional panel illustrations that Japan is known for. I appreciate how Japanese people use art to tell stories in these specific kinds of illustrations and in manga and anime as well. I wanted to try to tell the “story of Japan”—or at least part of it—as I had absorbed and understood it.

I saw Japan as a country that straddles the fine line between tradition and modernity, so the top panel is meant to represent the “old Japan” or “tradition,” and the bottom panel is meant to represent the “new Japan” or “modernity.” These two ideas sandwich the rest of the story. In the middle, I included scenes of disaster because disaster is a major part of Japanese history, whether the disasters were “natural” or manmade. The disasters illustrated in the middle panels show the transition from the “old, traditional Japan” to the “new, modern Japan.” This is because historically, with each disaster, Japanese people seem to have used destruction as an opportunity to recreate themselves.

Finally, there is a female figure in the middle of the piece, dressed in a kimono with her head bowed and her arms held respectfully in front of her. As an outsider, my opinions about Japan are not fully informed and should not be taken as fact, but from what I observed, Japanese people seem to value tradition, courtesy, and respect. I thought this pose and outfit captured these values. Additionally, this figure does not have a face, because there is a huge emphasis on community over the individual in Japan. With this facelessness, the figure is a representation of the community I encountered, as opposed to individuals I saw.

Overall, the elements of this piece attempt to say something about the “essence of Japan” that I glimpsed when I was there.
The first time it happened, Guy was standing with a pot of coffee in the middle of his office kitchen. One minute, the sun was shining as he poured himself a cup, and the next, he was in front of an exploding volcano, bits of debris shooting up while the lava flowed down the side. It sent plumes of smoke up, covering the sky and making it impossible to tell whether it was even day or night.

He dropped everything and started running, but before he could get very far he was back in his office. The mug and pot were gone and his clothes were covered in soot, but nothing around him had changed. He stood in the middle of the kitchen for several minutes just trying to catch his breath. Eventually, he managed to convince himself that the whole thing wasn’t real. He put the volcano to the back of his mind, where it stayed.

That is, until the next time it happened.

The second time, he was dropped into the middle of a storm where a tornado raged only a mile away. Rain soaked him immediately, and he stood stock-still in pure terror. He could feel the pull of the heaving beast before someone took his arm, dragging him into an underground bunker.

He spent all night with the survivors there. They used card games to keep their minds off the storm wreaking havoc just outside. Once the night was clear, he managed to slip away.

After the tornado, he tried to keep going to work, keep meeting friends and pretending that everything was normal, but he couldn’t help feeling constantly on edge. He could never relax, couldn’t sleep or eat. He was exhausted, running through life on autopilot waiting for the next disaster.
The third time it happened, he was asleep, when suddenly, he got pulled. He woke up coughing, looking around at the hillside he was lying on. Up the hill, just where the tree line ended, was a raging wildfire. It was headed in his direction, the wind propelling the flames, stoking the fire along, and pushing sparks into his face. He ran to the street, where he begged to hitch a ride in someone’s car. A family of four let him in, and he squeezed between the three-year-old and the nine-year-old. He watched as the fire made its way along the hillside, consuming everything in its path, until nothing was left but ash.

It kept happening.

Over and over, Guy would be transported to the middle of a disaster, and he would stay maybe a minute or even a full day before getting transported back to whatever he had been doing. He started trying to keep things on him at all times to be prepared, but he gave up when the backpack he kept everything in weighed him down in the middle of a flood. He had to let it go in order to save himself.

Eventually, he developed a sort of calm about the issue, and as the years passed, he realized he was getting more and more skilled at dealing with whatever the universe could throw at him. In fact, with every disaster, he started to feel more and more defiantly proud of the ways he managed to keep himself alive. During one avalanche, he felt ecstatic enough at narrowly escaping the crush of snow that he screamed, “See that? I’m invincible!” and as the next section of snow fell, he returned to his apartment and continued watering his plants.

While doing the dishes on a lazy Saturday, he looked up to see a valley with emerald-green grass and lush trees and a blue sky stretched for miles. The sun shone on him, but a slight breeze from the bay at the bottom of the valley kept him from feeling hot. This must be paradise, he thought. He could’ve cried. That is, until the earth started to shake. It vibrated on and on for several minutes before it finally stopped. He had experienced earthquakes before, but always in cities where there were threats of buildings about to collapse any second. This was, by far, a calmer event. He decided to head into the town in the valley to see if he could get some food, hoping he’d be there awhile and that maybe he’d get to relax for once.
Sitting down at a restaurant with some food roughly an hour later, he heard an alarm go off. He looked up to see a wall of water making its way across the town. It swept up everything in its path, without mercy and without discrimination. Nothing was left to stand. He climbed to the roof of the restaurant along with the other customers and staff and sat praying this trip would be short-lived, but it wasn’t. He spent all night on that roof, watching the wave and the fires that broke out afterwards. He sat thinking, *This is it, any second and I’ll be back to my dishes*, but his departure never came. There came the helicopter rescue and the night at the high school gym, where they set up the survivors. He was still there a week after, when people started going back outside to look for dead loved ones. He never left. When he died some forty years later, he was still waiting to finish washing his dishes.
Manicured Flora

CAMERON SOPALA

This photography series was inspired by Japanese-style film photography and by Japanese cultural attitudes about nature. Japanese film photography is characterized by high contrast levels and a high ISO, which creates grainy images with a short range of value. Japan, as a whole, champions natural elements in gardens, parks, shrines, and temples. Their gardens differ from American and British styles in that they don’t need to emulate natural landscapes in order to be considered beautiful. I have always been interested in how different cultures interact with the nature around them and how they emulate or evoke it, so I immediately took great interest in this subject matter.

Film photography, 8 x 10 inches, January 2019, shot in Japan and printed in New York
The Remembrance of Hiroshima

CASANDRA DELGADO

On January 14, 2019, after having spent a week traveling around Kyoto, Kurashiki, and Okayama, we arrived in Tokyo, Japan. First on our agenda was a tour and exploration of the Mori Museum of the Roppongi Hills Observatory. At the time, the Mori Museum was presenting an exhibit entitled “Catastrophe and the Power of Art.” By way of description was a label reading, “what art can do in chaotic times where the future is uncertain.” The Albert Gallatin Scholars Japan trip theme encouraged us to explore the relationship between disasters and modernity, and the Mori Museum exhibit was central to my understanding of how disaster is remembered and constructed.

As I walked through the exhibit, marveling at the various pieces and showcases, I felt myself drawn to a little room at the end of the walkway. I found the room to be almost entirely bare, with only a table in the center of the room and a small television on one of the walls, projecting some sort of interview. Strewn across the table were mounds and mounds of books of various languages, colors, thicknesses, and topics. The exhibit related to a collection of talks organized prior to the exhibition entitled “Pre-Discussion Series.” The objective of this series was to explore the relationship between disasters and contemporary art, in order to apply this knowledge to real-life case analyses and discourses. The talks given were entitled “The Possibilities for Art in Disasters,” “Using Photography and Film to Express Catastrophe: Documenting, Artistry, Morals,” “Twenty Some Years after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake: Experiencing and Inheriting,” “Fukushima 2011-2018,” and “Art or Activism?” The video recordings of these talks, which occurred on December 15, 2018, were projected onto the walls and played on the TV.
As I sat down on a little stool next to the table, picking up the books and shuffling through them, I realized it was a collection of various texts related to disaster and catastrophe, from different academic disciplines. Of particular interest to me was an essay entitled “On the Poetics of Explosions” by Norman M. Klein, which discussed the use of disaster in the form of explosions in film. Most intriguing to me was a passage about how memorializing catastrophes through public events generates the need to understand disasters to prevent their recurrence. It related so perfectly, at least in my opinion, to the Hiroshima memorial and museum. There, I found myself rather taken aback by the seemingly scientific approach of its exhibitions. Although the memorial did incorporate more emotional modes of remembrance that I was expecting, like video-recorded accounts from survivors of the bombing, there was largely a historical and scientific analysis of the timeline of the event.

I also found compelling the particular objects that were used in the memorial, and how the stories of these objects acted as an ongoing memorial and message. In particular, there was a tricycle situated in the center of the first floor. In the description for the tricycle, I learned that it was originally kept by a family to remember their child, who was lost during the bombing. In this way, the object primarily served as a private, ongoing memorial. In later years, the tricycle was donated to the museum, and it now serves as a public memorial to the trauma of disaster, as a remembrance of a single life lost that day. It also supports and reaffirms the message of the Hiroshima museum: to remember what happened, in order to understand the severity of nuclear arms. I myself felt compelled to remember the catastrophe in the hopes that it would never happen again.
The Tourist Trap

MICHAEL CHUMPI TA Z

Traveling always seemed like it would remain just a hopeful desire for me, so when I was finally able to travel because of school, it seemed like a fantasy turned reality. Then, to be able to travel to Japan for my first excursion outside of the United States, I could not ask for anything better. I got to see so many things, visit so many places, and indulge in all the ramen I could ever want! Being a tourist was amazing, with so many benefits and few responsibilities.

I missed my family throughout the trip, and it made me think about their experience as immigrants, leaving their home indefinitely. It must have been completely different from mine, as they faced a new world with no idea about what to do or if they’d even be okay. When I travel, it’s to enjoy life, experience new places, and expand my ideas of what the world is like. When my family traveled, it was to survive. With that perspective, my trip seemed selfish, so I decided to compare touristic travel and immigration, with the hope of finding some redemption for my travel.

The first obvious difference between touristic travel and immigration is the length of time. Tourists are like houseguests: they come in and sometimes make a mess of the place, then leave without worrying about the mess they’ve made. Immigrants are like tenants: they can make a mess, but at the end of the day, they’ll still be there, so they’ll need to clean up after themselves. Immigrants are there for the long run, and whatever they do there is going to affect their future. Every dollar spent impacts their tomorrow, and every action they take can either guarantee that they’ll do well in their new home or end up in a worse condition.

Immigrants travel for a variety of reasons, but overall, they have the same desire: to live a better life, whether they are refugees, people escaping persecution, or just victims of poverty. This idea of a better life is the reason why the U.S. has been attractive for immigrants throughout history. It’s the same reason my parents left South America when they were adolescents with very few resources. My father wanted to work in order to send money back home to his family, and my mother wanted her children to grow up somewhere a lot better than where she was raised.
Some tourists, on the other hand, travel for no other reason than to lavish themselves with luxuries. They exclusively spend a large amount of money to give themselves the most luxurious experience they can have before departing and going back to their normal stable life.

Other tourists tend to use the justification that their travels are to gain understanding and a cultural perspective. However, the vast majority of tourists pass through the most commercial of areas without taking a close look at the local culture. If understanding the local culture is the real reason they travel, they must, in my opinion, display it in their actions by diving into the culture that exists beyond tourist traps, which serve solely to exploit the stereotypes that tourists might have about a particular place.

When I was in Japan, I observed an additional aspect of tourists. Visiting a shrine should be a spiritual venture, where somebody can find beauty and mystification in the environment and in the emotion of local residents who come to pray. Yet, all I saw around me at a shrine we visited was a disturbance of the tranquility: people doing photoshoots and yelling all along the silent paths. For the most part, the tourists didn’t seem to care for the culture; they just attempted to satiate their materialistic desires with whatever caught their attention at the moment.

Questions then arose: should I resent traveling as a tourist? Should people in general detest being tourists? Is it really fair to compare touristic travel to immigration? Immigrants are in search of a better state of satisfaction. They want to find a life they can expand on and make their own. They’re in search of that happily-ever-after state that we are all promised as children, except in their case, they must work for it instead of waiting. Some tourists have much shallower goals, such as enjoying life and creating experiences, though there are those tourists who visit places to learn about the culture. Tourism is a short-term finite engagement, which tourists will do often, as long as it keeps them happy. This is quite inconsequential compared to the progress and lasting impact that immigrants create. Nevertheless, in the end, I think we should not feel bad about being tourists when compared to immigrants.
The sun was rising over the horizon and illuminated the hilly landscape surrounding the town. Cats emerged from the second stories of the residential neighborhoods and scurried around the street. Children in their school uniforms traveled in packs with their signature Randoseru bags strapped to their backs. The children trudged along the streets on the way to school with supplies.

Hitomi Eto limped along, her awkwardly-sized backpack making each step a hazard. She came upon some friends—a group of boys and girls who kept each other company in the early mornings—and joined them on the walk to school. One boy was fumbling through his backpack for an assignment and one of the girls was using her camera to take pictures of another boy making silly faces. Hitomi walked in line with the children but kept a safe distance, with her headphones in and scrolling through her Instagram feed.

Hitomi and her peers passed the town’s shopping area. One of her friends suggested meeting at the cat café in the afternoon to work on their math homework. Another suggested going to the river to swim up the channel and hike into the mountains. Hitomi continued to message an online friend about her weekend, sharing funny blog posts with her digital compatriot. When she raised her head at the crosswalk, she found that her group had entered a nearby store to get some food.

It was seven, and school started at eight, but Hitomi was neither hungry or necessarily in the mood for company. She kept her headphones in and carried on up the sidewalk. Perhaps at school, she thought, she could watch the video her friend had sent her or speak with
her science teacher about yesterday’s class. About a half-kilometer up the road, her music was interrupted. Her phone read, “Warning: low battery,” and then shut off. Hitomi kicked a rock on the ground in a rage and subsequently had to take a seat on the curb. Her foot throbbed, but more painful was the idea of not having a functional phone. She wrapped the cord of her headphones around her phone and shoved the bundle into her pack, then pushed down her skirt and started again on the way to school.

Not much later, she found herself walking through a nice neighborhood of family homes. The compact square buildings stacked side by side allowed little breathing room. Hitomi took her time in front of one of the larger houses on the block. This house was different. It had ample space on both sides and had three stories rather than two. She traced the pattern of the roof tiles in her journal and made note of the family’s unique crest on the largest tiles—a beautiful triad of droplets that framed a perfect circle in the middle. She carried on with the design and made a note of the address on the same page.

The school building appeared in the distance above the shingles of the houses. Hitomi reached the end of the residential block and noticed two houses that had broken windows and chipped paint. There was an alleyway between them. The big hand of Hitomi’s watch showed that it was only 7:15. She looked down the dark alley. The stones of the path were overrun with weeds. Nothing was visible under the canopy of trees layering the farther end of the path. Hitomi bent over, tied her shoes, and followed the illegible path.

Not long into her sojourn, the canopy thinned, and the bulky trees were replaced with dense bundles of bamboo. She made a fist and began to knock on the hollow trees, giggling at the harmonic tune. Hitomi
climbed to the top of one of the trees and sat with her legs dangling over a branch. She grabbed a string of leaves to tie around her head and picked up a broken piece of bamboo. With her crown and scepter, she began to oscillate her hand in a gesture of grandeur toward the open forest. This was her kingdom.

Hitomi grabbed her bag and descended from her throne. She went again to the path, this time going downhill toward a shallow river. The water was a translucent light blue, and fish swam in small schools up to the riverbed. There was a man on a small bamboo raft casting a fishing line upstream. Hitomi placed her hands under the water and rubbed them together. She flicked her fingers in front of her face and wiped her cheeks. She looked ahead at a brown lump down the river.

A chimpanzee’s corpse lay on the path. Hitomi reached into her pack and pulled out her phone. She was met with a black screen. She put her phone away, bent down, and inspected the body. One of the eyes had been gouged. The smashed eyeball was connected to the skull by a dark and veiny nerve. A fly crawled out of the chimp’s mouth and started to do a dance on the dried tongue, rubbing its feelers, and walked back through the lips. Crusted blood marked the fur around the chimp’s mouth. There were deep red openings on its face and torso. Portions of its intestines spilled out of its lower abdomen, and its chest cavity was torn open. A casualty of the food chain.

Hitomi pulled her pack in front of her and grabbed her notepad. She drew the chimp with its bloody wounds. Rather than recreate the guts and gore, she drew buildings rising out of the corpse and well-water flowers rising out the pooled blood, a diamond for the missing eye, and a crown on the dented skull. The school bells rang in the distance. Hitomi sat on her pack and continued to draw. She had work to do, and class could wait.
DEAN’S HONOR SOCIETY

New Zealand

Home Economics and the Simple Life
Examining politics and practicalities of modern homesteading/living from the land

Auckland
Rotorua
Kaiwaka
Queenstown
Aoraki
Greta Valley
Christchurch
New Zealand Suite

REN HALSTEAD

“There are far better things ahead than any we leave behind.”
C.S. Lewis

KIA ORA*

They tell us

Welcome to New Zealand. Please explore.
Send us off in pairs, in groups,
Starbursts, wheeling away into the sea.
This is called
Immersion
Is called
Tourism
Is called
Entertain yourselves.
In Auckland, I spend the first morning
Taking coffee in Sierra’s café,
Alone with her ghost.
They tell us
Do not go where I cannot follow.
This is called
Accepting loss.

Make yourselves at home.

* Māori informal greeting, lit., “have life” (“be well,” etc.)
MURIWAI*

Volcanic glass, shale and shade; overcast skies crouched low over steel-capped waves and wind
where the horizon blends and twists and sinks beneath the surf.

Tides shift, hurl themselves across the rocks, break to breathe between monoliths, gaping caverns
where silver bubbles froth and foam.

Slip between outcroppings, prey: the Sea lets you be, for now. Crawl until you can’t see the sun,
where crabs and carvings rise and fall with moon song.

Gannets’ cry, echo from crowded perch, trailing stone and salt and sky,
golden crown aglow.

Carry the scars home.

* Māori for “water’s end”—a coastal community and popular beach in NZ
THERE ARE NO SNAKES IN NEW ZEALAND

Watch out for snakes, my mother warns, tinny voice distorted by time zones and dead zones and cheap headphones. In damp shade beneath the oak I’ve claimed between my shoulder blades barred sunlight slides across the pages of the book I cannot read. I turn off my phone.

Rangitoto° is an hour’s hike to the peak, six hundred years of volcanic dormancy, not yet devoid of life. We crawl though lava tubes: dark, twisting caverns of obsidian slag, aching fingers, and I head home with fresh bruises striking stone.

The alpine grass runs waist high swaying in the swirling dust kicked up when we tumble off the bus, shoot off into the brush; mindless of their depths, the cliff face, the Ram. There are no snakes in New Zealand. And yet, kneeling amongst dry reeds and sharp-bladed pasture grass, I look for them.

° Māori for “sky blood”—Auckland’s largest and youngest volcano
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TRANSIENT

There is a compulsion, in me, to envision the elevator plummeting beneath my feet. Four stories, fourteen, forty.
The crunch of steel, crystalline slivers, and an instant of weightless flight.

The elevator in Auckland looks out to the sea, overlooking the Sky Screamer, a reverse bungy where unwitting tourists can pay $40 to be strapped into a chair and launched, whirling, 160 feet into the air.

In Queenstown, I wander through silent streets, trailing ghosts and gold and brick red clay before I shuffle to the edge of Kawarau* bridge, eye the 140-foot freefall to the water below, and jump.

* Māori for “many shrubs”—the world’s first commercial bungy jumping site, utilized by the AJ Hackett Bungy Company
WAITOMO GLOWWORM CAVES

Our guide tells us
You must step carefully
Quietly
So as not to disturb them.
The glowworms, whose phosphorescence marks the vestal peak of this shadowed cathedral, require that we leave our bodies behind. Even the rhythmic throbbing of my blood is too cumbersome too mortal to take with me into this subterranean cosmos. We are the strangers here.

MT. NICHOLAS

The land was parceled off To the cows, the grapes, China To the sheep, with their dark slit eyes and grinding pad They don’t belong here, either Kong bays, drives them to a beaten shore Where the fields give way to the sea Violet mist descends, obscures We, too, will wash away The lambs told me so.
AORAKI / MOUNT COOK

Our guide, whose name I have forgotten, shepherds us up the mountain trail in twos and threes a daisy-chain of bouncing cameras and muffled swearing as we scramble to the trailhead. The path is ribbon-thin, snaking in and out, in and out as the mountain bobs above us. She says, you must sway to the ledge. Straddle the edge with rubber soles I’m not dressed for this. The path isn’t really a path, isn’t worn smooth, downtrodden by the ebb of touring tennis shoes or timeworn hiking boots. It is a river, a sea of small stones, bones and dust motes swept up, ascending the glacier’s creeping dissolution. The Kea cry and wheel overhead, tuck their wings close. They, too, will be entombed beneath alpine stone and sleep serene amid snow untrod. I imagine, for a moment, falling here.

LAST NIGHT

My suitcase is heavier than I remember, Weeks in spare change, restaurant receipts, An exultant end to my transatlantic travels I’ve bled on these stones, those oysters Stumbled uphill, slipped down the stairs And lied to TSA about the rocks in my pocket It’s still today at home, tomorrow here Where I watch the sun set on yesterday’s dawn.
THEM AND BACK AGAIN

They ask me
*Well, what did you do there?*
But they do not want to listen.
To the afternoon spent beneath willow boughs
because I had to go halfway around the world
to stop and read in the park.
About the blisters that swelled in my shoes
when I traversed pitted dirt paths,
waist-high alpine grass,
for a glance at the horizon.
About the museums, or the coffee shops,
or the strangers who shared my table.
They don’t want to hear
that I didn’t want to come back.
Tell me
Who is telling this story?
AOTEAROA*

go tell it on the mountain
  what we ate
  how we lived
about the bananas
Wolfgang reared in grey water
  and the bathtub on the porch
  because there were no neighbors
  and the dog liked to watch
about the corn
born and roasted in the earth
  the earth-oven
lay your body down
beneath a boiling sky, the spray
  reaching
  marigold silver, the gulls wheel
above, below, indigenous injustice
reexamined, redefined
  how the lambs cried, how the pups called
  from their nesting perch
  how they scared the sheep with their youth
and how we sat on the shore, pineapple juice
slipping down the carotid, the hyoid
  broken
the tot in his squeaking shoes
  mouth pebbles, swallow sand,
  and the popsicle sticks left behind
  to be swept away

* Māori for “Land of the Long White Cloud”
A Simple Life

JACQUELINE TUBBS

As we returned from our trip, I found myself revisiting the photos I took with a wistfulness for our class topic, “The Simple Life.” The sunny and open landscapes of New Zealand provided a short escape from the rush and clutter synonymous with New York. I wanted to explore how I could bring back my experience in a lasting way. This photo series is a representation of my view on the “simple life.” To me, it means creating a meaningful way of living with what you have and what’s available around you. In a conceptual effort, I have recreated here some of my favorite images from New Zealand in New York, which represent different areas of life: the public, the private, and the natural.
In her seminal book, *On Photography*, Susan Sontag writes, “It is a nostalgic time right now, and photographs actively promote nostalgia.” Sontag wrote this in 1977, but it seems her observation holds true now more than ever. Indeed, it is still a nostalgic time, and technological innovations have helped photographs and other visual media perfect the art of evoking nostalgia. Why are we so attracted to old images and past narratives? Perhaps we yearn to relocate misplaced memories to cope with the broken promises of modernity and progress. Perhaps we crave a distant but once familiar intimacy with natural landscapes in the face of ecological crisis and disconnection. Perhaps we desperately seek re-enchantment in an era of disillusionment.

“Still Water” includes still photography shot using 35mm Kodak film as well as a video using the 8mm Vintage Camera app. Borrowing its title and text from Wendell Berry’s quintessential poem, “The Peace of Wild Things,” “Still Water” is a multimedia project that explores the interconnections between expressions of nostalgia and notions of simple living, framed by the enduring majesty of nature. The collection investigates the affective function of old (film) photography and videography while trying to uncover the collective feeling of a generation of youth disenchanted by the present and pining for the past, yet being unwaveringly hopeful about the future, all at once.
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When despair for the world grows in me

and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.

I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light.
For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.
Christchurch, or, How can we be?

JOSEPH WEINGER

christchurch, city of disaster.

when we travelled from the idyllic landscapes of queenstown and lake wakatipu to the ponderous desolation

of christchurch, the immediate feeling was dread.

our trip had nearly concluded and we had internalized much of aotearoa/new zealand’s beauty; why would our final stop be a place pained with the destruction

of an earthquake that stole the lives of 185 people. when i walked around

the town it was as if the earth was letting out a plangent call. of silence.

next to our hotel lay the remains of the christchurch cathedral, untouched

since the land shook and the city collapsed, a lacunae of despair. one

resident we spoke to suggested that the city should leave the building as it

was, rather than rebuild. a symbol of pain. but also, resilience? dreaming

of a new life. and then, on march 15, death.

50+ people were killed in the hands of white supremacy, praying—holy—
in mosques that before then offered refuge and space. to be. how will

christchurch carry on? i am reminded of a passage james baldwin wrote:

“every human being born must find a way to live.” the christchurch i

saw was just finding a way to live after the earth swallowed up life; it was

engaged in an inchoate process of being. that 50 people can never find a

way to live again, is

Devastating....
Reflections

CAIRA WYNN BLACKWELL

I originally wanted to write about accessibility to beautiful, open spaces and how important it is for any individual’s mental health. However, when I was in New Zealand, I woke up at six in the morning every single day to meditate, to take a walk through a scenic park, to breathe in air that wasn’t shared by what seemed like hundreds of other people at the same time. So used to my depression, my anxiety attacks, and my constant feeling of being watched, being in New Zealand gave me a different outlook on life: I didn’t have to live it the way I chose to back in New York.

But, as I kept thinking about this idea, another thought burned a hole through the entire concept: many, many indigenous people had to pay a price for me to enjoy that free, open space. I was meditating on stolen land.

My original idea thrown out the window, I let my mind spiral down that pathway. Stolen land—that was a familiar issue in many places around the world, most importantly, my own home. New Zealand wasn’t so different from New York after all.

It’s sometimes so hard to put into words how the Māori and their relationship with their land, with their colonized country, reflected my own: fighting to create space where people like me, like us, would not otherwise be allowed any.

The task was made easier by the photos I took throughout my trip. They say the things my words never could. The first thing my camera captured: the sheer beauty of New Zealand. I could never fully describe that. The second thing, I hope, is the conflicted relationship I started to develop with this beautiful land through my lens.

A crucial part of picture-taking is understanding that not even a fraction of reality will make it into the frame of a shot. So a photographer has to choose what to focus on. Consciously or not,
I saw contrast and conflict in each and every shot: the polarity between the silhouettes of small people walking towards enormous mountains, the light foregrounds against dark backgrounds, and vice versa.

The best way I can express how I feel about New Zealand is through a combination of my words and my photos. The trip went far beyond connecting with my healthy self. More so, it was a trip where I realized that colonized minds are trying to unlearn, all around the world. To demand space where it isn’t given. It’s all about unlearning, about focusing on the things that don’t sit right.

My camera helped me in this process, providing the shutters for my eyes to see what was really there. I want other people to see these things, too.

It still remains a fact that certain people are specifically barred from accessing spaces that affect their health positively. But I feel it is more important to point out that people are being denied their right to simply live, not to mention live well and happily. Self-actualization is the last tier in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs; what does it say when entire civilizations refuse to give certain people access to the most foundational human needs: food, shelter, and a sense of safety? We, as a human race, have a lot of unlearning to do.
Mama,

Do you remember when you began to decolonize my mind? From the very beginning. The schools in our predominantly white neighborhood couldn’t touch it. I remember you used to tell me: “Anyone who tries to teach you the Native Americans were celebrating with the Pilgrims for Thanksgiving is either a liar or doesn’t know their real history.”

I haven’t forgotten. Now, I ask New Zealand the same question: are you a liar, or did you just forget your history?

You’ve never been to New Zealand before. It’s a privilege, I know. A privilege you worked hard for me to have, and I’m grateful.

I’ll tell you what my privilege allowed for me to witness: mountains capped with snow and ice. Dead volcanoes topped with commercial buildings and trees alike. A beach covered in volcanic black sands, stretching for miles and miles. The sun, burning me through the hole in the ozone layer in the atmosphere. Sheep…so many sheep. Walking clouds.
My privilege also allowed me to reflect, to see my reflection. *Our reflection.* Did you ever realize that New Zealand is colonized land? I know it’s all foreign regardless, foreign because it’s the land of the upside-down; a land we have forgotten in our lives as Black women because we’re still lost in our lives as Black women on the land we inhabit. But this foreign place should have remained foreign to the people who took it over.

I had forgotten that, even though you tried to teach me, back home. Home, as if we could stitch our centuries-old refugee flag into that dirt and feel any more welcome.

Could the Māori? Could they have possibly found some semblance of home, whether it be in routine, or non-routine, or performative art in active spaces, that we have not yet found on American ground?

On their land, the literal burning grounds of Rotorua, something was lifted from me, possibly brought closer inside. A realization of multiple possible futures. Into and out. The geothermal energy expelling from the earth personified the mental fog. Living clouds.
What did he say?
“We are proud.”
That’s all it took for me to be convinced.
How many times have you said that to me? Plenty, plentiful, plenty.
Sometimes, you call me late at night, because you’re scared that I might not know it, how proud you are. You call me at ungodly hours, when I’m half-asleep, but I press the phone right up to my ear so it feels like your words are going directly into me. Into and unto, you are proud.

He said they’re proud, too. The Māori people had their slice of land. They got their reparations, no matter how small, and that was something to be recognized. They deserve the whole world, but that doesn’t mean they can’t celebrate the little piece they fought for.

This is what I mean when I say multiple possible futures. Multiplicity is the dream I aspire to, now.

I’ve seen that things don’t have to be the same around the world. I’ve been taught that things don’t have to be the same in one house. In one home. In one place. Time and space are constructs we live in based on our individual realities. Why subscribe a people to one future?

My life is not your life is not our lives.
We were taken to look at art in Christchurch. Maybe the accurate way to put it is: we walked through Christchurch, and there was art in our path. There was one massive piece that twisted and turned into itself at some points, and exploded out at others. I walked into it, feeling surrounded by some expressionism I couldn’t yet grasp.

I’m sure Christchurch bears an entirely different connotation to you now—the place your daughter could have died.

“You may have dodged a bullet,” you messaged me.

Fifty people did not.

Christchurch decided on its own, distinct future. After one deadly, horrible mass shooting, they changed. Gun reform laws put into place. People reckoning with some part of their collective troubles. There’s more to be dealt with there, but it’s a reckoning regardless.

I could have died here, at home. When twenty children were murdered in their classrooms, we did nothing. When forty-nine were killed in a nightclub, we did nothing. When fifty-eight were gunned down in Vegas, we did nothing.

All this nothingness, you’d think “home” was black matter, inexplicably anchored to Earth.

When the shooters in Christchurch killed fifty people in 2019, Māori members of the Black Power movement in New Zealand performed the haka at the memorial site.
The Black Panther Party in the US was persecuted and erased with the murder of Huey Newton in 1989. There are no more soldiers against white supremacy left to memorialize those we’ve lost on our own soil. Standing in solidarity in the most literal sense, I am left bereft in the ugly face of my own country.

So are you.
I don’t know what else to tell you about, except maybe the leaving. We marched like ants through the hills, through the buildings, through the airports. Moving through one space drastically different than the next in a matter of hours.

I was warped through time hole after time hole, through blackened caves, through mundane morning conversations, through half-packed bars riddled with British card games. I smiled at all of it; travel didn’t corrupt my sense of humor, though it maybe shifted my sense of self. I am young, after all.
My journey didn’t end when my feet stepped off the plane after that thirty-hour flight back to New York. It didn’t end when all of us hugged goodbye and packed ourselves into groups of four into cabs, when one by one, we slipped away at the red light closest to our cross-streets. My journey ended when I trekked up the six flights of stairs to my apartment door, when I put key to lock, saw threshold agape and raw, and you weren’t there. My home hasn’t been yours for a while now.

I left you four years ago. I wanted to make you proud.

Love,
Caira
Consuming Commodified Landscapes
Adventure Tourism in Queenstown, New Zealand

GRACE EASTERLY AND ARIELLE HERSH

Queenstown, New Zealand, markets itself as the “adventure capital of the world” in a country known for its adventure tourism, hosting an array of activities like bungee jumping, whitewater rafting, and paragliding to entice foreign tourists to live the “100% pure New Zealand” adventure. This is a market that relies on the commodification and sale of Queenstown’s hallmark landscape, nestled between soaring mountains and crystal clear blue lakes. What this landscape hides is the city’s history of violent dispossession through settler colonialism, which is predicated on the taking and settling of land. By complicating this narrative, we can attempt to open up Queenstown’s adventure tourism to analysis that accounts for these violent histories and reclaims agencies for the native Māori people of the area.

To think about the commodification of landscapes, we must first begin with the commodification of land. In Unsettling the City, geographer Nicholas Blomley queries the meaning of property in socialized life and pushes the reader to complicate that understanding beyond what he calls the “standard ownership model.” In this schema, ownership is assumed to be for individual private property and always backed by the force of the state, which makes real estate real. Furthermore, while land may have contested ownership, all land is assumed to be owned by someone. Indigenous groups like the Māori in New Zealand and the Salish of British Columbia, however, tend to understand land as a living entity subject to collective care instead of ownership. Under colonialism, settlers in places like Canada and New Zealand rationalized the seizure of indigenous lands by coding them as “empty,” refusing to accept native claims to land, which differed from the “settled” nature of Western ideas about property. As urban areas developed under settler
colonialism, the erasure of native peoples became necessary for settler societies to naturalize their land claims. This history contained a violent and intentional dispossession of land, and cities like Vancouver and Queenstown have carried those legacies.

The South Island of New Zealand is a particularly fascinating location for this study because of the country's recent engagement in Waitangi Treaty proceedings to cede land back to Māori people. While this transfer of land is mostly symbolic, it also comes with monetary reparations, which Ngāi Tahu—the island's largest iwi, or tribe—have used to take control of the tourism industry. Thus, while the history of tourist capitals like Queenstown are predicated on the violent dispossession of settler colonialism, they take on a dual identity as locations for Māori to pose counterclaims to land and New Zealand's burgeoning tourist economy.

According to the Queenstown website, the city's adventurous atmosphere has a centuries-long history. Queenstown's trails, which were “previously traversed by wagons, packhorses and feet,” are now “exhilarating backcountry 4-wheel drive and mountain biking adventures,” and while the “intrepid energy of the daring adventurers and entrepreneurs who have passed through over the centuries” remains, it is “still palpable wherever you go in Queenstown.” By explicitly connecting Queenstown's adventure tourism to the city's and the country's colonial past, this language of “entrepreneurs” and “adventurers” blurs the line between adventurer and colonizer, tourist and pioneer.

Queenstown's variety of adventure activities have become an important economic sector in the city and a key way for both Queenstown and the country as a whole to market itself as an intrepid, “edge of the world” destination, whether or not tourists coming to New Zealand actually take part in adventure tourism. While only about 10 percent of tourists actually took part in adventure tourism in 2007, marketing adventure tourism opportunities helps to produce New Zealand's adventurous reputation.
by mountains of staggering beauty (although, we overheard tourists-as-
consumers saying things like, “I don’t like this landscape as much as the
North Island,” or “This isn’t the prettiest landscape I’ve ever seen”), a
tourist can find new ways to interact with landscapes—for a price.

Adventure tourism is meant to produce a thrill, an adrenaline rush, an escape. Instead of passively viewing a landscape, adventure tourists consume landscapes by jumping, leaping, driving, swimming, and sailing across territory in order to feel something different from everyday experiences. Consuming landscapes thus becomes another way for the consumers to feel fulfilment after purchasing something. In this case, the commodity to be consumed is the landscape itself. This creates a particular relationship with land, different from other tourist activities like sightseeing or photographing, or un-touristic forms of consumption, like living on the land.

“How Queenstown Became the Adventure Capital of the World,” an article on the Queenstown city website, connects these adventure tourism possibilities to the colonial past. The language of colonial nostalgia on the website produces a continuous narrative between past and present. Using that language, the continuities reveal themselves: the colonial project commodified the land, and adventure tourists now consume this land. This narrative is complicated by the fact that many of the South Island’s tourist companies are owned by Ngāi Tahu, the island’s largest Māori tribe. These tourist companies market the experience of “100% pure New Zealand,” selling the purity and beauty of the natural landscape. This landscape, however, is settled land. Adventure tourism reproduces particular colonial relationships because this land is predicated on commodification and dispossession. And yet, Māori ownership of tourist companies present a counterclaim to legacies of land dispossession and colonial violence. Examining adventure tourism through this lens allows us to ask: Who is adventure tourism for and who does it benefit? Queenstown and New Zealand as a whole promises to be an “adventure,” but an adventure for whom?
In eating my way through New Zealand, I began to wonder what the “native” cuisine was there. Most of the food I ate, I could find elsewhere in the world, so I asked myself if I was missing some essential experience of traditional Kiwi cuisine. My initial conception of what a “traditional” cuisine meant in this country was anything native to the Māori people and the land itself, before colonization, and did not include food from beyond New Zealand, like Indian samosas. What I came to realize is that my viewpoint that a country’s native cuisine can only be defined by dishes and ingredients native to the country is reductionist. This viewpoint implies that cultures cannot change, adapt, or evolve. Modern New Zealand cuisine is of course comprised of Māori culinary traditions but is also a wonderful combination of food brought by immigrants from all over the world. These photos illustrate some of the food I had on our trip, and as a whole, I hope they represent a continuously evolving national cuisine that doesn’t need to be solely defined by a country’s ancient history.
From Cookies to Hemp
New Zealand’s Campaign for Drinkable Rivers

JONATHAN JI

While exploring the beautiful landscapes of New Zealand, I could not help but notice the small, individually-wrapped cookies that invaded every supermarket, corner store, cafe, information center, and tourist shop we visited. CookieTime cookies, with the iconic red Cookie Muncher on every wrapper, can be found everywhere in New Zealand. From the moment I first tasted the cookies, I became obsessed with the company and followed it religiously in every city we visited. In Auckland, I tried the Cookie Time McFlurry. On our flight from the North to the South Island, I received a CookieTime cookie as an in-flight snack. In Queenstown, we visited the CookieTime office and CookieTime Bar, where my friends surprised me with a Cookie Muncher doll. Finally, in Christchurch, we saw the CookieTime factory.

CookieTime is known as New Zealand’s favorite cookie.¹ The company was founded in February 1988 in Christchurch, when Michael Mayell hand-delivered 70 jars of the original Cookie Time Chocolate Chunk cookies to 70 local stores.² The company’s growth has since escalated, with over ten different cookies sold in every supermarket in New Zealand. Due to the success of his cookie company, Mayell created several other companies, including One Square Meal (OSM) in 2005 and Nutrient Rescue in 2007.³

Mayell’s passion is to rejuvenate Kiwis’ (New Zealanders) health through their diets. He states that 63% of Kiwis are missing out on vital nutrients due to processed meals and busy schedules.⁴ The mission of both OSM and Nutrient Rescue is to help Kiwis move away from the “harmful western diet of heavily processed food” towards a “‘five a day’ of fruit and vegetables eating habits.”⁵ Both companies offer plant-based bars and powders that provide a balanced source of nutrients including “energy, protein, carbohydrates, fats, fiber, vitamins, and minerals.”⁶ To
Mayell, Kiwis’ diets are intimately tied to the restoration of New Zealand’s natural resources. While this idea may seem strange for a man who owns a cookie factory, Mayell’s life mission is to make New Zealand the first zero-carbon first-world country. This is manifested through his campaign to make New Zealand’s rivers drinkable. And the way to make the rivers drinkable is simple: replace New Zealand’s dairy industry with hemp.

When I first learned of this campaign, I was not convinced. I decided to interview the man himself to learn the theory behind his Drinkable Rivers campaign, with the motivation of also learning more about CookieTime. When I Skyped with Mayell for an interview, I found him wearing sunglasses, shirtless, and fiddling with his jade necklace. I jotted down, “true Kiwi.” After brief introductions, the first question I asked was how he saw CookieTime playing a role in his sustainable mission. He reluctantly told me that his brother, Guy Mayell, took over the company many years ago and that he has been pushing him to take on sustainable practices and also create a CookieTime hemp cookie. This question helped him segue into speaking about his passion for hemp.

Hemp is cannabis plant that differs from marijuana in that it contains a very low level of tetrahydrocannabinol (.03% or less, whereas marijuana contains 15% to 44%). Mayell believes that hemp is the key to making New Zealand carbon-negative because of its many functions. In our interview, he showed me a diagram of the many byproducts of hemp, including paper, building material, food, industrial products, textiles, oils, and medicine, demonstrating how it is the “world’s most versatile vegetable.” Mayell is also interested in hemp’s agricultural benefits. He believes that transitioning farms from dairy to hemp will save New Zealand because hemp is edible (it was legalized for consumption in New Zealand on April 28, 2017), provides new jobs (especially with the rise of recreational marijuana users), and creates less waste.
Moreover, Mayell believes that New Zealand no longer needs dairy farms, as “Chinese companies control them to send powdered milk back to China.”\textsuperscript{11} This statement was reiterated many times by local Kiwis while traveling around the country. To Mayell, dairy farming is dangerous because it mistreats cattle, sends resources abroad, and dumps its wastes into New Zealand’s rivers. Hence, replacing dairy with hemp will not only cut back on farms’ “environmental impact, human health costs, and animal suffering,” but also will promote a plant-based diet using hemp as a source of food.\textsuperscript{12}

Today, 62% of New Zealand’s rivers are not swimmable.\textsuperscript{13} Mayell demands not just swimmable rivers, but rivers that are drinkable. Hemp is the obvious solution because it will not only promote plant-based diets but also will help contribute to New Zealand’s negative-carbon impact. While replacing New Zealand’s cow industry with hemp in order to create drinkable rivers may sound insane, as someone who is frightened by climate change and the abuse of natural resources, I understand Mayell’s campaign as a first step towards solving a more significant problem. While there are numerous problems with Mayell’s proposition, such as its lack of intersectionality, there is truth in his belief that the inhabitants of this earth need to start living regenerative lifestyles to heal the land in which we inhabit.

Mayell is promoting his “Drinkable Rivers” campaign for Kiwis to experience the crisp, beautiful rivers he knew as a child. As I traveled through New Zealand’s stunning landscapes, I grew to understand why Mayell is so passionately motivated to preserve and rejuvenate this land. While I am uncertain of his tactics to create a rejuvenated zero-carbon New Zealand, Mayell empowered me to think more critically about my daily choices and about how I can think creatively about solutions to our global climate crisis. So, as I opened up my final individually-wrapped CookieTime cookie, the guilt that I felt from being wasteful was tinged with hope for the country of New Zealand.
Reading the Landscapes of Aotearoa/New Zealand

BENJAMIN WEINGER

Ka Ngapu te Whenua
Ka haere nga tangata Kihea?
E Ruaimoko
Purutia tawhia, Ki aita.

Like a creeping thing, the Land is moving,
When gone, where shall man find a dwelling?
Oh, Ruaimoko
Hold it fast, retain it firmly in thy grasp, and bid it stay.

In this Māori chant, recorded by English reverend Thomas Buddle during the 1860 Taranaki War against the installment of imperial government, Māori beseech Ruaimoko atua, or the god of volcanoes and earthquakes, to grasp their land and never let it go. European encroachment and expropriation of lands stewarded and guarded by Māori for centuries had the profound and pervasive force of an earthquake or volcano, abruptly rattling and dispossessing the natives of their sacred habitat.

Driving through the countryside during our trip in Aotearoa (Māori name for New Zealand), I read the landscapes as palimpsests of history—as multidimensional expressions of time materialized as sediment, of violent dispossessions, of slow and insidious extirpations, and of the inauguration into global capitalism. While Earth’s topography has been dynamically evolving for eons through erosion, tectonics, and glaciation, the terrestrial surface has been radically transformed in mere centuries through anthropogenic perturbations, amplified
with the settlement of Europeans. Passing through farmland that now comprises more than fifty percent of Aotearoa's land, I questioned the origins of this rather commercial terrain and cautiously turned to Alfred Crosby’s *Ecological Imperialism* for a critical perspective and microhistory on the ecological consequences of European encroachment and invasion and the transformative capacity of settler-colonialism to redefine human ecologies.¹

When Māori first arrived to Aotearoa about seven hundred years ago, the majority of land was covered in dense evergreen forest.² Kauri, Rimu, Matai, and Miro, four of the most iconic endemic flora, blanketed the landscape in a rich entanglement of biodiversity, isolated from destructive European ideologies of extraction, cultivation, and domestication.³ Since then, about seventy-five percent of Aotearoa’s forest cover has been burned and chopped, and much of it was converted into economically productive pastureland.⁴ While Māori hunter-gatherers altered landscapes and introduced invasive species, European settlers were primarily responsible for the radical topographical changes with the introduction of ruminants like sheep and cattle, insects like bees, and invasive flora like wheat and grass.⁵ Europeans drastically denuded the endemic landscape and altered local hydrological systems to set the terrain on a trajectory towards global capitalism.

On a mission to “Europeanize” the land, settlers “were like giant viruses fastening to the sides of a gigantic bacterium and injecting into it their DNA, usurping its internal processes for their own purposes.”⁶ Over two centuries, following a wave of proselytizing English missionaries, thousands of Māori people converted to and embraced ideologies of Christianity. The New Zealand Company, a royal English charter, established settlements in Auckland, Wellington, Nelson, and Christchurch, among other places, bringing thousands of Pākehā (Europeans) to transform Aotearoa, and imposing political, economic, and cultural ideologies on Māori.⁷ Invasive flora enabled European livestock and thus Pākehā lifestyles to thrive but simultaneously made many Māori feel less at home.⁸ As invasives superseded and expropriated the original possessors of soil and land, the Pākehā
population began to exponentially multiply. Meanwhile, the long-isolated Māori population began to rapidly collapse due to European pathogens and venereal disease and their lack of epidemiological defense and immunity. While various agencies and modes of resistance marked the period of Europeanization and colonization, by the late nineteenth century, Pākehā outnumbered Māori and had established a Neo-Europe.

During our trip, I read the landscapes of Aotearoa/New Zealand with this micro-history in mind. Present landscape arrangements emerged with the imposition of European agricultural systems, the dispossession of lands, the introduction of invasive species, and other deleterious effects of ecological imperialism and Europe's biological expansion. While critiquing the present landscape is arduous and complex, surely the Māori history in which defender so desperately plead their atua to hold onto the land conjures suspicion that the present landscape and "100% Pure New Zealand Clean Green Image" lack a complete historical narrative. The conversion of Aotearoa landscapes into intensive, productive pastureland marked New Zealand's entry into the global market. Yet, this transformation engendered a host of social, political, and environmental externalities: polluting watersheds, depleting resources, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.

As I continue to grapple with the significance of irreversibly altered landscapes, especially in a time of climate change, I turn to the struggle of nineteenth-century Pākehā farmer William Guthrie-Smith, who recognized the impacts of his ecological colonization. Rather than present my nascent position, I will conclude with his words, which imagine what it means for a people to lose their sacred landscape: "A virgin countryside cannot be restocked; the vicissitudes of its pioneers cannot be re-enacted; its invasion by alien plants, animals and birds cannot be repeated; its ancient vegetation cannot be resuscitated—the words terra incognita have been expunged from the map of little New Zealand."
Horror Vacui!

DANIEL TAN

“I will be the gladdest thing under the sun! I will touch a hundred flowers and not pick one.”

“Afternoon on a Hill,” Edna St. Vincent Millay

I embarked on our trip to New Zealand timorously armed with a few rolls of color film and about three disposable cameras. I don’t travel much, so my praxis was this: if I were to enter and shoot predominantly with analog cameras, I’d treasure each moment and be discriminating with each costly frame. That—in my head—would make my role as a tourist-flâneur more meaningful: I’d be forced to take seriously the moment and, in my mind, somehow critically engage with it.

During the trip, I recall being filled with a kind of horror vacui. I dreaded the empty frame and wished it to be replete with color, shape, and movement. I remember I had this impulse to fill, fill, fill out every single film frame. I had preconceived sweeping vistas and beautifully articulated compositions of streetscapes, and I wouldn’t be satisfied until they were realized and manifested on film. I needed to churn out postcard-like templates tidily mapping each special moment, and I felt beholden to capture, contain, and cram (a colonizing impulse, maybe?) the moment into a flattened image.

The nature of analog taught me a lesson in control. For all my laborious posturing and anatomizing of scenes, control was not mine to have. I forgot that I wasn’t the sole dictator of the image. I was undergoing a frictive process, grappling with light, movement, and the stillness of my own hands. In one shot, a burst of reflected sunlight bounced back at my screen, blotting out Karangahape Road. I discovered after developing one roll of film that I’d somehow exposed the latter half of the roll to light, eradicating or wholly distorting it.
Many frames contained the shadows of my fingers unintentionally encroaching upon my composition. Countless grainy black blocks were returned to me—a failure on my part to account for lack of light. As much as the images framed in doorways and the meticulously-triangular compositions capture landscapes with a romanticized glaze, they capture no sense of redolence for me; all I remember from those moments is being in my head, trying to think how best to capture each scene. And try as I did to pin the moments down, they escaped.

I’m finding these blank images now to be the most evocative and least foreign. They un-isolate me from the bubble of my photographic methods and make me reckon with a flood of experiences that no photographic summation can tidily hold. When I see the dark and barely discernible faces of the haka performers in my shoddy disposable capture, for instance, I am forced to fill in the blanks. I enliven the scene with what could only be viscerally felt and personally held: the swell of emotion prompted by the rising trill of that duet song; the anticipatory dread of knowing I was going to have to publicly learn that haka dance; and the ensuing contentedness of lying against warm rocks with friends after a hospitable meal.

I’m unlearning that sense of scarcity, of the anxiety of unfilled frames and the sure lack of fulfillment of an isolated, desperately controlling mode. I’m trying to practice abundance, in not fixating on what is lacking, being attendant to where I am when I am with others, and revisiting what has been with me all along.
Reframing Documentation

JOEL LEE

We were kayaking casually in Auckland’s bay when it had happened: my phone broke from water damage. I felt cheated. We were in the middle of our trip and I was looking forward to so many opportunities to snap photos of myself, my friends, and the lush landscapes of New Zealand. It seemed tragic at the time.

How was I going to remember it all—the big and small moments, the picturesque views, and memories that are so tied to a place I may not return to ever in my life? I had no other choice but to reframe how I moved throughout New Zealand and how I defined what was important for me to remember.

It was hard to go to places like Aoraki/Mt. Cook, Queenstown, and Christchurch without reeling in the fact that I couldn’t snap photos. I love to sift through old photos on my phone and reminisce about past trips and experiences. Even photos I take that are seemingly boring or unimportant serve as a vehicle for nostalgia, so it was difficult to process the idea that I wouldn’t have those photos to reflect.

It came to my attention that there is an immediate connection when I look back on photos and remember the exact moment I took them: I am transported to that moment. I realized that I wasn’t going to be able to have that experience the rest of my time in New Zealand. The lack of a phone at times also left me feeling dependent on others for communication, stressed, and disappointed for the things I could not capture. I had to ask my friends and classmates to take photos for me of the landscapes, the social moments, and of me.
At some point, Professor Meredith Theeman and the group discussed our ability to connect with nature and what happens when we commodify a landscape with a picture and value it for its commodifiable beauty. We were tourists in a foreign country, and our position in context to New Zealand was, in a certain way, extractive. If our existence in New Zealand was extractive, I thought, how could I engage in the notion of “the simple life,” our trip theme, in my consumption (or lack thereof) of the country through photos? Granted, my inability to take photos wasn’t an act of “voluntary simplicity,” as Richard B. Gregg notes in his book, *The Value of Voluntary Simplicity*. In my case, I was in a privileged position of being able to visit New Zealand and experience a foreign country with high-tech devices to document it all. I recognized the luxury of my circumstances.

Without a working phone, small things about how I moved through the world changed naturally. I wasn’t able to check the time and simultaneously look at new notifications. I couldn’t loiter around, scrolling through Instagram. I freaked out the first few times without my phone perfectly placed in my left pants pocket when the group was out in public. Sifting through my day pack, I noticed how many of the items inside were accessories for my phone: phone charger cord, portable charger pack, earphones, iPhone adapter, outlet adapter. They became an excess weight that I chose to leave behind.

Additionally, without the means to communicate with everyone instantly, I had to intentionally make plans to explore with my classmates in order to take advantage of my time. Exploring on my own
became more daunting yet liberating, since I defined my experience not through what I could capture but through what I could learn and retain.

Slowly, the anxiety of not being capture everything I was experiencing and not being constantly being updated on the news and social media dissolved. I still struggled with the inconvenience of not having a phone to communicate immediately with my classmates, but the fear of missing out did not affect me as I initially thought it would.

I made a list of my favorite moments: laughing beside the lake in Queenstown at sunset, talking with locals about the rapid changes in Christchurch over the past decade, grocery shopping for essentials and snacks. Most of these moments aren’t camera-worthy, and to define them only by their ability to receive likes or evoke nostalgia does not do my memories justice. As we were critically engaging with our investigation of the simple life in New Zealand, I found that I would not only remember New Zealand and the research we did but also the in-between spontaneous moments that were too quick and too intangible to capture.

At the end of the trip at our closing dinner, a group of us went around and shared “a rose, a thorn, and a bud” of the trip, as in a high, a low, and something to look forward to. I described my “high” easily, but I sat and mulled over my “low.” My friend, in confusion, exclaimed, “You broke your phone!” I audibly laughed in surprise; I’d forgotten that it happened!

Now, having fixed my phone and having to use it to do schoolwork, I am reminded that my necessity to tune in to everything my phone offers is not a necessity at all but rather a choice and a lens through which to see the world, and I am now conscious that it is not the only way to see the world.
It’s common for us to feel small as humans when looking up at the night sky and seeing how many stars there are, but actually conceptualizing how small we are occurs when we are confronted with vast natural displays of time and scale. There were many such experiences during the trip in New Zealand, from the mountains to the ocean to the constantly evolving volcanic rock and islands, but one stood out in particular: our trip to Queenstown, the site of Lake Wakatipu.

Lake Wakatipu, the third largest lake in New Zealand, is a glacial lake that was carved out more than 15,000 years ago. Glacial lakes are formed through the erosion of soil and earth by the slow movement of glaciers; when the glaciers retreat, that eroded space is filled with glacial meltwater. This takes place over thousands of years, and many glacial lakes in our current world, including Lake Wakatipu, date back to the end of the last Ice Age, more than 10,000 years ago. Lake Wakatipu is connected to multiple rivers, including the Dart and Rees Rivers, which flow into the northern end of the lake, and the Kawarau River, which flows out of the lake. It is therefore in a process in motion, the water coming from the glaciers to the lake and flowing in and out to and from the rivers.

Since our theme for the trip was “The Simple Life,” we spent a lot of time reflecting on and speaking about what it means to slow down within a fast neoliberal and capitalist society. We talked about “slow food” and slow ways of living, but the landscape and places like Lake Wakatipu provided another way to speak about it: “slow time.” What does it mean to live within a large timescale where natural processes move so slowly? How can we see ourselves and our lives as small pieces of these large timescales, and how does that change how we see the world and our purpose in life?
Elaine Gan, Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, and Nils Bubandt take up some of these questions within their volume, *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*. They write in their introduction:

Some kinds of lives stretch beyond our ken, and for us, they also offer a ghostly radiance. [...] The ghosts of multispecies landscapes disturb our conventional sense of time where we measure and manage one thing leading to another. [...] These temporal feats alert us that the time of modernity is not the only kind of time, and that our metronomic synchrony is not the only time that matters.”4

This point of view is extremely helpful for theorizing new ways that we, as humans, within a natural world and a past that is much bigger than us, can relate to our everyday conception of time. The “ghostly radiance,” the sense of the past living on in the present and the future, is an experience that restructures what it means to exist within the natural world. It then becomes a transcendent experience, one that helps us to feel connected to the natural world across space and time.

An understanding of what David Christian calls a “modern creation myth” can also help us to make sense of these experiences. Christian writes: “Creation stories [...] arise from a relationship between particular human communities and the universe as these communities imagine it.” His book, *Maps of Time*, deals with the scientific response to a request for a creation story, putting forward “the creation myth of modern human beings, educated in the scientific traditions of the modern world.”5 Therefore, a scientific understanding of the formation of places like glacial lakes can tie us as humans to long histories of natural spaces that show us where we have come from, in both a physical and a mythical sense.

In my own life, feeling connected to things and spaces outside of myself as well as time outside of myself is extremely powerful. It can be brought into any space: the promise to walk slower, or to acknowledge a tree that has been rooted on the corner of your block for longer than you have existed. And with that understanding comes true respect and responsibility for the natural world, a recognition that we are only brief visitors within a larger glacial and earthly time.
Dominican Republic

Borders and Flows
Examining music and racial politics, with a focus on African-derived music and religious traditions and the fraught relations and border between the DR and Haiti

Santiago La Vega Dajabón Salcedo
Sosúa San Cristóbal Santo Domingo
Borders and Flows

Examining music and racial politics, with a focus on African-derived music and religious traditions and the fraught relations and border between the DR and Haiti.
Island Music (I–III)

JULIA TORRES

I. SANTIAGO

How can I say this so we can stay in this car together?
If I spoke his language, I would tell the cab driver to keep
his foot off the brakes, let us roll past the hotel, round
the corner, keep driving until the camera zooms out and
the audience sees our cab swimming in the stream of
those Santiago nightstreets. Fade to black, credits roll.
In the audience’s imagination we never left the backseat.
So what music would best befit the end credits? Mila would say
bachata, or merengue—something to match the turquoise
of the city’s breath and the orange memory of bodies swinging in time,
but selfishly, I would want something to which I could sing along
comfortably. Curse my clumsy tongue for rejecting our mother language for
I fear there are too many words in my head already I fear I’ll never be able
to find the place for new ones. Selfishly, I’d want the classic rock that
my father would play on his car radio on sweltering Midwestern
summer days, the songs of my childhood thighs sticking to the backseat.
I’d want that. But here in Santiago my thighs are always covered,
and I don’t sing. I want to tell you how I was writing our elegy song
that night our bus fought its way up the mountain. It would be
a sinisterly humorous news headline: dying on our second night of the trip.
Our bus losing the battle with gravity, sending us speeding backwards
blindly weighed down by our collective mass, our pasts.
I should think my spirit would have loved inhabiting Santiago
until the end of time. Until the end of time,
we would melt into the street under shadows of tree branches and
tourist silhouettes, would watch every sunset at the Monument with
every stray dog, would haunt the jazz halls, steal rum from behind the bar, learn the words to every song ever written. Even the songs in Spanish. Especially the songs in Spanish. I’d want that. Then my spirit would hail a ghost cab and I’d tell the ghost cab driver to slow to a cruise, roll the windows down, let us swim in this scene on loop. Stay here with me. There’s nowhere left for us to go.

II. INTERLUDE

Conquistadors, your fledgling descendant is rising fast above Puerto Plata in a cable car this morning. Behold the birds of the heaven, she thinks, who see always the Spanish architecture from this altitude. When she meets her ancestors in the afterlife she will ask to return as a black buzzard but knows she is meant to be a mourning dove, meant to return to her land with an olive branch in tow, a message of deliverance. Redemption, conquistadors, means that when your fledgling descendant sees her first Hispaniola beach her eyes will dive straight for the ocean, will not forfeit a single glance to your Spanish fort erect, a needle pricking the coastline. Conquistadors, watch now when she sees the island in its naked entirety from heaven, how she shakes the cable car on its wire, not from fear but from fertile desire to sew herself to the horizon, to be the beckoner of greenery, the sunlight. The promise of boundless blue. Conquistadors, consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, after so long spent in the dirt, how they rise against an alabaster sky.
In my next life I will know everything I don’t in this one. I will speak perfect Spanish, will be able to move my body like that, like the other brown girls. I am not a snake but how I’d love to have a voice and figure with such grace. I am not a snake but the sun reminds me that my brown skin is not immune to her rays, so she sloughs off what is left of my past life. I am not a snake but I am gliding through the undercurrents of this
city night, this concert hall, these heated bodies moving in time. I am inhaling the blue tones of your violet exhales. I am seeing red for my ancestors, their daughter throwing shadow puppets against the walls of Spanish architecture, fingers making beasts making serpent fangs to quell the hunger for reclamation. I’m thinking I was born out of the same death that paved these brick streets, strung strings of light rooftop to rooftop, painted every building an Easter pastel.

I am seeing green on the balcony on the backs of young lovers embracing. I am seeing silver of moonrays on the backs of my friends, of strangers, their bodies of water being pushed and pulled by the moon in time with the music. I’m thinking why can’t I move my body like that? I have a few things I’d like to say to the moon. I want to tell you that you have always felt yourself to be full but have never witnessed your own light. I want to tell you everything I have learned about this world, write you sacred textbooks on everything I have seen, on these city dwellings, on holy sounds reverberating, on lentil soup, on swallowing pills, on blistered ankles, on mango trees, on lime in plastic cups, on mint in plastic cups, on Coolmado, on stray cats and stray dogs, on rum, on Mila, on our fathers, on our fathers’ fingers, on ivory and nickel, on sweet plantains, on tricks of the light, on shadow puppets, on hunger. On balconies, in silence, my mind swaying with the music, I’m thinking where does the ocean end and the sky begin? I’m thinking when does the morning bus leave? I’m thinking how much for one more drink? I’m thinking what is happiness? What does it mean to be content? In my next life I will speak perfect Spanish and have the answers to all of your questions. For now I can learn to love the shy grace of clumsy footing, of language barriers, of crowded clubs. We can waste time while there’s still time to waste, hold onto the night’s hand, stay for one more song—it might turn out to be our favorite.
Black in the Land of Dominicanidad

JAKIYAH BRADLEY

Mood: “Four Women” by Nina Simone

My skin is black
My arms are long
My hair is wooly
My back is strong
Strong enough to take the pain
Inflicted again and again

Nina Simone

One of the first pieces of literature that I read to understand the bounds of hair Dominicanidad was “Black Women Are Confusing, but the Hair Lets You Know” from Black Behind the Ears: Dominican Radical Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops, by Ginetta E. B. Candelario. The thesis of this chapter is that the boundaries of Dominican women’s hair are influenced by many things—social norms, models, etc. Hair, in essence, is a physical signifier of race. Compared to other physical features, hair can be changed rather easily. If just the right amount of heat and styling products are applied, someone’s hair texture can be taken from curly and “unmanageable” to straight and “workable.” It is for this reason that hair can serve as a racial code and marker for social contexts: it can give an indication of how a person wants to be perceived racially. In her piece, Candelario acknowledges the emerging acceptance and visibility of Black Dominicans while also giving credence to the fact
that the Eurocentric mentality is at the basis of many conversations about race-making on the island. Dominicidad is so widespread that Blackness has space within its boundaries, but it is also policed and criticized in many ways, one of which is hair.

Before arriving on the island, I knew that my topic of interest would be hair politics. Since moving to New York City three years ago, I have frequented a Dominican hair salon around the corner from my African braiding salon. Their close proximity at first led me to believe that both places would be a safe haven for me for my hair needs. However, while my kinky hair was expected and accepted at the African braiding salon, it seemed to be condemned at the Dominican hair salon. There were times when I was charged more for a wash and blow dry at the Dominican salon, compared to clients who are not Black. There were other times when I heard the hairdresser mutter, “Un pajón,” to her fellow hairdresser about my hair, unaware that I knew just enough Spanish to understand: “a mop.”

When I walk through grocery stores in the United States, one of last things I would expect to see in the front of the store is hair products. However, when I walked through the aisle of a large supermarket in Moca, Dominican Republic, the first thing on my immediate right was a wall of hair products. I was greeted by a sign that read: “¿Rizado o lacio? Lo que necesitas está aquí.” This translates to “Curly or straight? What you need is here.” While I do not question that some products would work on some curly hair, the faces on many of the hair product boxes were White, and their hair was straight. I was left to wonder what is available for curly-haired women in the Dominican Republic.

Miss Rizos Salón has everything: a café, hair products such as Eco styling gel and silk caps for sale, and t-shirts that allow you to pronounce how much you love your pajón. As the first and only curly/natural hair salon in the Dominican Republic, Miss Rizos is defining beauty standards by creating an afro-curly safe haven in a land that has historically erased Afro-descent people. Their services reflected those that I would request for my hair when I want a natural style. Flat twists, box braids, and flexi rods are just a small sampling of their offerings. Along the work stations of the hair dressers, I saw them proudly displaying the products they use on their clients’ hair, none of which had straight-haired White women on the boxes.
Thankfully, this space will be expanded beyond the island of Hispaniola. As of the end of April 2019, Miss Rizos’ campaign has raised nearly $17,000 USD from over 200 supporters to open a salon in New York City. According to those working at Miss Rizos, the logic behind this came from observing that a large number of clients come from New York City. When the opportunity came around, Miss Rizos’ founder, Carolina Contreras, did not hesitate.

I found this space to be powerful, since my visit there happened three days after our group’s trip to Dajabón, a city on the Dominican–Haitian border. While leaving the market in Dajabón, I was stopped by one the military personnel, who questioned my ethnicity. I was with a group of six or seven other Americas Scholars students, but I, for some reason, stuck out enough to be physically grabbed and questioned. I thought it could be the fact that I’m Black, but I ruled that out because I was not the only Black person in my group. Could it have been the fact that I looked lost? That was not likely either, since two other Scholars were in front of me and I was close behind. Was it, perhaps, my box braids? If hair is a signifier of race, my box braids aligned me more with Haitians than Dominicans. That would explain why I was asked if I was Haitian. Dajabón was the first place where I saw people with hair like mine during the trip, and it was the first place where I was given a taste of what being Black in the land of Dominicanidad may feel like.
Puerto Plata is quiet today. I’m sitting on a bench in the Plaza Independencia and staring at pigeons—big, fat, Dominican pigeons. It’s strange; I’m always quietly amazed to see these birds outside of New York, as if my native city has staked a claim on them and their presence anywhere else is nothing short of a miracle. I stare at one male marching in a mating dance, puffing his purple-plumed chest out for attention. He has a kind of flair I don’t think I’ve ever seen before. He’s doing it just for me, it seems, as if to say, “Yes, even I’m different here. Are you?”

I gulp. Everything here, from the mundane to the fantastic, seems to confront me with that question. I want to laugh this one off—it’s only a pigeon! Yet this bloated bird is just one figure in a series of encounters that have made me wonder if I can claim to know anything about dominicanidad at all. Mangoes, which I usually hate, are so ripe here that now I love them. Arroz con gandules looks the way Dad makes it, but something about the yellow rice is sweeter on this island. Spanish sounds different than in the North—Santiaguenses speak even faster than Mami’s coworkers from the Heights. And me—my curls brightening, my skin already turning a deeper brown from three days of sun—here, I’m just another American.

In the Bronx, Dominican stoop boys nod as I pass, mutter their “Qué lo que?”, and wait for my Spanglish response: “Lo mismo as always, you know?” In Hunts Point, my Nuyorican bodega guy speaks to me in his marble-mouthed accent and doesn’t stop when he hears me respond in English. He knows I understand him, just like he knows I’m Boricua, too. It’s a silent ya tu sabes, where every other Dominican- and Puerto Rican-descended New Yorker seems to know my identity without me ever having to bring it up myself.
Here in my father’s motherland, though, I’m about as foreign as a group of German tourists wearing salmon-colored capris and floppy sunhats. At lunch, a woman behind the counter giggles after I ask her where the restroom is. “Qué acento raro,” she says, cocking her head as she points downstairs. *What a strange accent.* I want to tell her that I understand her; that we are not so different. Then again, I guess we are.

It’s uncanny, this feeling of familiar difference: I know this island, and yet, I don’t know this island. Dad, who half-grew up here, warned me this would happen. “It will be beautiful,” he told me on a phone call before the flight, “but it won’t be what you expected.” Beautiful like cobblestone roads and brightly painted patios, but yes, unexpected, like a pigeon cooing louder and parading prouder than you ever would have guessed. I look around at my tour buddies, all of us different shades of sunburnt or brown, and wonder if anyone else is noticing this. Am I the only loca getting caught up in pigeons and mangoes and accents, this unending thread of banalities? Maybe.

And maybe that doesn’t make me crazy, and maybe that’s the point of a trip like this: to mine for the minutiae.

I am reminded here of my father again. He notices the smallest things: pennies on sidewalks, cracks on tree trunks, stickers on light posts. More than once, Dad has told me the story of the first time he ate chicken for dinner in *el campo*, the countryside: he was seven, a New York City transplant only two years removed from the island, and the fried meat in front of him felt foreign. He poked at the crisped skin, fixating on a small petrified feather still attached at the limb. *A feather!* It was mesmerizing. See, his new life in America offered chicken that had
no avian resemblance: chicken nuggets, popcorn chicken, and the like. So while he’d seen feathers before, he beheld *this* fried feather like one does a towering monument or pristine museum painting—with awe. I wonder if that’s the look on my face right now, staring at this silly Puerto Plata pigeon.

Of all the things to take a photo of in this plaza, I choose this bird. I stoop close to the ground and scamper over, snapping a blurry picture of its gray feathers. I decide to send the picture to my father. “Did you ever notice the pigeons here?” I text him, attaching the photo. Dad responds almost immediately: “They R really fat. Yes.” I chuckle to myself. I was half-expecting something more profound from him, a kind of meditation on Dominican pigeonhood or such.

I am about to tuck my phone into my pocket when I feel it buzz again. This time, a block of text, and there, finally, is his introspection: “I recognize that pavement. R u in Puerto Plata? I used to feed the pigeons there with abuela. She was one of those park pigeon ladies. That’s probably why it likes you—maybe you smell like the Burgos family.”

I smile, not at the supreme dad humor, but rather at all this noticing. Dad noticed the pavement and thus noted the pigeon, and thereafter remembered Abuela, who noticed pigeons once, too. It is too simple a thing, and most certainly a phantom reach into the past, to suggest that I feel wholly understood in this moment. But then I see a man over in the gazebo, grazing the ground with rice grains, letting pigeons flock about his feet, and I think, perhaps for the first time on this trip, that the things I see here are not so different from my own father’s memories. This, surely, is a kind of belonging.
Todos Somos Mariposas

MARIVI MADIEDO

“Todos Somos Mariposas” integrates images that stuck out to me throughout our trip to the Dominican Republic. The clay bowl that the woman is balancing on the top of her head is representative of the women we saw walking the beach with bowls and baskets of the items they were selling balanced on their heads. The face of the woman is loosely based off of a portrait of Maria Teresa Mirabal—a nod to one of my favorite moments of the trip, La Casa Museo Hermanas Mirabal. The nudity was simply an opportunity for me to paint the female form, a shape I am infinitely mesmerized by. The long billowing skirt is covered in flowers embroidered to imitate the flowered tiles on the ground of the dining area at Rancho Ecológico El Campeche.
Sexscapes and Spring Breaks
One American’s Reflection on Sosúa

ROMAISSAA BENZIZOUNE

A travel site article entitled “Avoiding Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic” reads as follows: “Don’t let sex tourism put you off experiencing the beautiful coast and mountainous landscapes of the Dominican Republic. The country is generally safe, with locals who are chilled, peaceful and hospitable. Here’s how to avoid being harassed while traveling around this Caribbean nation” (Sylvester 2019).

If you’ve ever taken a relevant Gallatin class, you’ll know how to unpack this quote. Of course, the first line is the most damning. The idea that you, as a tourist, are entitled to a paradise where you should be shielded from the realities that might penetrate your vacation at all costs is absurd. The way that Dominicans are otherized in this paragraph is also notable (after all, you did read some, if not all, of Edward Said). The people interrupting your paradise are “generally” safe. The implication is that you, as a conceivably Western tourist, should still be on the offensive. That you should read an Internet article with instructions on how to avoid being harassed.

Before you submit your online blogpost for this hypothetical Gallatin class (you pick this reading because it’s the shortest), you might read it over. You might edit it to include the term, “global imaginary,” maybe find a little place where you can insert Foucault’s notion of power. You’re so good at this.

What I’m trying to get at is this: it’s certainly one thing to critique those tourists from afar, using the academic monocle that conveniently appears for such purposes, and another to be one of them. Guilt permeates all of the academic trips that take me abroad on NYU’s dime, and my recent trip to the Dominican Republic was of no exception. In the back of my mind, I asked myself constantly: How do I position myself
and my presence in this place, and how do I justify it? What does it mean to represent NYU here? What does it mean to represent NYU as a woman of color here? I do not know the answers today, I did not know the answers during my trip, and my internal battle reached a climax when I found myself in the resort town of Sosúa.

A group of us decided to take a nighttime walk around Sosúa, and to leave our resort paradise in the process. (The paradise was somewhat compromised by a group of white high school kids singing karaoke by the pool all night, but still.) Suddenly we were confronted by a whole other type of tourist. Seeing the old white men sitting curbside in dodgy cafes and looking at the young black female sex workers like they wanted to chew on their flesh, was shocking. (This, despite a warning on the bus ride over that Sosúa was one of the biggest prostitution spots in the Caribbean.)

When I got back to the United States, the picture of Sosúa did not leave my mind. Especially the way that the sex workers walked—strides more deliberate than any catwalk model’s I’ve ever seen—did not leave my mind. Perhaps these were hints into the complex dynamics I was witnessing, and I resolved to research them at least a little bit. So I’m going to approach this in the academic, Gallatin way I know.

An article that Denise Brennan wrote for Anthropological Quarterly in 2004 provides some of the answers to my questions. Brennan’s piece focuses on the influence of sex tourism on the gender dynamics and interpersonal relationships of Dominican couples, specifically through the lens of community gossip, but her article also provides useful background information for this endeavor. Most of the white men at Sosúa, for example, are German (Brennan 2004, 707). The black women, who are significantly darker than average Dominicans, are Afro-Dominican or Afro-Haitian migrants (Brennan 2004, 707). Sosúa proves to be a “transnational sexual meeting ground” (Brennan 2004, 708) defined by migration and dreams of escape—the international migration of white men to a place where their racialized sexual fantasies can come true, and the local migration of black women to a place where their dreams of economic advancement and external migration are within reach. For sex workers in Sosúa, the ultimate goal is often a visa, and the performance of a pretend love that can land them one (Brennan
The exploitation works both ways, but also, it doesn’t: “white male sex tourists are better positioned than Afro-Caribbean female sex workers to leave Sosúa satisfied with their experiences there” (Brennan 2004, 713). Brennan navigates this realization with grace as she critiques the global capitalist system.

Additionally, Brennan resists the lumping of all female sex workers together (to say nothing of sex workers of other genders) in a paragraph worthy of quoting in its entirety:

In Sosúa there are Dominican and Haitian sex workers; women who work with foreign or Dominican clients; women who receive money wires from European and Canadian clients; women who receive financial help from local Dominican clientes fijos (regular clients); women who live with or separated from their children; women who have AIDS, and/or have been raped and/or battered in the sex trade; and, the focus of this article, women who give money to Dominican boyfriends and women who are careful to not give any money to any men. These differences are crucial to shaping a woman’s capacity for choice and control in Sosúa’s sex trade (Brennan 2004, 711).

Brennan, an anthropology professor at Georgetown University, has written extensively on this topic. Her other works explore—among other relevant subjects—how German sex tourists and Dominican sex workers imagine each other across national boundaries, and the significance of Sosúa’s long history as a transnational and imperial space (during WWII, the resort town was a settlement for Jewish refugees; before that, it was a banana plantation for the United Fruit Company). She’s worth a read.

On the walk back to paradise—where the aforementioned white high schools were doubtlessly ruining another classic, likely Flo Rida’s “Low”—we talked about what we had seen. (One of the many things I’m grateful for in regards to this trip was the heady way that issues were confronted, and the open way that everyone was willing to learn.) It wasn’t a conversation, though, as much as a hurling of questions into the void. During the mostly silent walk I could tell that the others, without speaking, were also struggling to situate themselves. This process is one that is ongoing, reliant on self-education, and well worth it.
Nos repartieron
Nos dividieron
Mezclando lenguas que no se entendieron
Creating borders that somehow se mantuvieron
Países que luego invadieron

I come from water
Rivers
And seas
And oceans
Rivers that turn into seas that turn into oceans
Bloody rivers
Massacre River
Oceans of bones

I come from genocide
And pain

My aunt used to say seawater could heal anything
Any cut, any open wounds
Seawater saved my ancestors
I dig my feet into the sand
And let the blue, clear water crash against my legs
Healing waters of the Caribbean Sea
Heal my wounds
Heal me too
Fix me too
Trauma is inherited
Trauma I inherited
Heal that too

I come from butterflies
Valientes
Fuertes
Nos defendieron hasta la muerte
Minerva, Patria, Maria Teresa
Ode to you

Tragedies create beauty
Create tragedies
Love
Pain
Love

Partir, c'est mourir un peu
But to leave is to be born again.
This day at the Haitian/Dominican Border was intense, and I’m still struggling to unpack everything I saw and felt. This river, known as Massacre River, has haunted me since I read Edwidge Danticat’s *The Farming of Bones*. In my studies, I seek out the untold stories—the silenced voices, the erased. The Parsley Massacre, a genocide enacted by the Dominican government on Haitians living in the DR, hits close to home. This river represents a site of terror and violence, as it tells the stories of thousands who died at the hands of Dominican hatred, a history I’ve struggled to digest for years. Being here, seeing this river, though nearly dried out, firsthand allowed me reflect, grieve, reconcile, and, most importantly, heal.
Las Hermanas Mirabal, Las Mariposas, or butterflies, were the women of the revolution. They were at the forefront of a liberation movement, relentless and unafraid. Homes are intimate spaces. To be invited in is to witness the most vulnerable parts of people. Being able to get a view into the personal lives of these sisters allowed me to not only admire them even more than I already did but also to pay tribute to the work that they did for our people. An ode to you, butterflies.
Rivers, oceans, water, as I describe in my poem, are sites of buried bones and death but also sites of healing and rebirth.
On a cross, standing above water—once-flowing, now-trepidatious—we stood on the bridge in Dajabón. Surrounded by the unequal flow of hundreds right above the river that divides Haiti and DR, we observed this cross-point. From the unoccupied sidewalk along this bridge, our group of travelers paused in silence, taking in the scene and the history that was embedded in this border’s construction. A steady flow of people and their goods passed over the bridge this Monday, when the binational market located on the Dominican side of the border was open for commerce. Buyers and sellers crossed back and forth over this border-bridge. Many were returning home after a long day of work. Below the bridge, guiding my eyes North like stars, were people treading in the water. I could hardly register that body of water as a river. The earth was so visible, it was as though it was gasping for air against the piles of rubbish pressed into it. If it were not for the second great axis that lay above, I might not have registered it as a feat to cross.

As someone who was not directly participating in these exchanges, I was a mere voyeur absorbing the scene.

I spotted a Styrofoam carry-out container teetering on the edge of the bridge’s railing, taunting me with its possibility of flying into the water below. Despite the movement around me on the bridge and below me in the water, my eyes fixed on that piece of trash rudely teasing me with its incessant shivering in the wind. Staring at it, I considered how its fall into the water below would be a drop in the bucket; picking it up and carrying it to a trash receptacle would have accomplished next to nothing. I felt defeated by a tiny piece of Styrofoam that was sure to outlive me. I imagined it eventually being fossilized in the ground below.

Suddenly, my eyes tracked to a swan dive into the water, which had seemed so shallow. A man, foot pointed toward the sky, had immersed himself in the water, which reached his abdomen. I looked away from
him and the others around him who were also bathing or washing clothes, feeling like a sticker thoughtlessly slapped on this spot. Does this man have a right to not have my tourist-self gazing at this private activity? I thought. I did not feel I had the right to walk in this space. My feelings stemmed from a Western mentality of privacy, but I felt my place: out of place. I looked back at the Styrofoam. From this position on this unoccupied sidewalk along this bridge, it felt easier to step out of the way of others’ paths and gaze. However, the reality for residents of Haiti and the DR is far more complex than my snapshots of this scene at Dajabón.

Padre Regino, an activist and Jesuit Church leader in the area, contextualized and historicized this site just after our visit. On October 2, 1937, the brutal Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo ordered the mass murder of thousands of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent along this border. The killing, which went on for five to eight days, is known as the Parsley Massacre, for it is said that Dominican military personnel probed the area, asking people for their pronunciation of the Spanish word for parsley: perejil. If they pronounced the “r” with a French accent, they were determined to be Haitian and were killed on the spot. Although Trujillo was eventually pressured into paying an indemnity to the Haitian government, he claimed no responsibility for the massacre. Instead, he claimed that this violent spree resulted from an uprising of Dominican farmers who sought revenge on Haitians for stealing their cattle. Mass graves remain undiscovered, a fact that both feeds into the myth that the massacre never took place and that allows this atrocity to remain outside of public discourse. It was only after Trujillo was assassinated that the Parsley Massacre was investigated, and estimates on the number of fatalities broadly range between 1,000 and 30,000. This lack of determinacy is proof that the Parsley Massacre needs further research, discussion, and public address.\(^1\)
Prior to that violent attack, the border, although fraught with tension, had been relatively easy to cross. Today, Haitians have a far more difficult time crossing over. Often, they must either face the scrutiny of Dominican government and border officials or pay fines to border patrollers who illegally and informally guide individuals across the water. These officials, who primarily work for the Dominican government, not only control the flow of people and resources across this imagined boundary but also interrupt the steady, sacred flow of the river below. I say “sacred” because this river, referred to as the Dajabón or Massacre River (so named after another massacre that occurred well before the Parsley Massacre of 1937), exists above them and outside of their capacity, and I say “flow” because it continues without one’s command or slim ability to move surroundings (let alone oneself). There are so many ways to obstruct a flow; in this case, the government’s border patrol utilizes intimidation tactics and commercial regulations to control the movements across the bridge.

What is lost, and, if anything, gained, when such interceptive boundaries are constructed? Is there an inevitability of loss, and if so, can a new flow—of people, of geography, or of materials—ever be restored or created anew? Along this synthetic border between Haiti and DR lie deep, internalized divisions from fracturing acts of violence—particularly those the DR has carried out against Haiti—and mutual stereotypes and prejudices are thrown in both directions. Finally, without essentializing the conflicts of the divided island of Hispaniola, what lessons can be learned from this fragmentation and obstruction of flow? From this brief trip to the DR, I was left considering the collective and individual power to overcome the “inevitable” inheritance of generations of divisions that are so often regurgitated through preconceptions. Community members like Padre Regino demonstrate the power of dispelling myths and disposing of prejudices to build coalition and create a more harmonious climate along the border line between Haiti and DR and beyond.
AL BORDE

yo sudaba mucho y es que hacía calor tanto calor que sudaba yo calor en octubre sudor y calor y agua
yo iba camino a trabajar yo iba al campo a mi campo y a la caña y yo caminaba por el río y en el río tanta agua húmeda de sangre y de sudor
él me vio al borde del río
a mí de cuerpo pequeño y de piel oscura y yo sudaba y sudaba y el sol me quemaba y ni las nubes me ayudaban ni siquiera me podían ver ellas estaban volteadas o dormidas porque no querían ver no quisieron ver y por siete días nadie quiso ver al borde del río él me vio y se me acercó sin pistola y sin un ojo o tal vez con el ojo cerrado en una mano tenía un palo y él y el palo me miraban él el cuerpo y el palo la piel solos nosotros y ambos me miraban fijamente con una mercenaria mirada tan húmeda de sangre y de sudor
oye tú ven acércate dime tú qué tengo aquí qué es esto entonces levantó la otra mano y de esa mano colgaba un verde claro claro y tergiversado y grotesco del verde salían sonidos y olores y moscas y hojitas podridas por el calor en octubre podridas ellas en el agua hojitas húmedas de sangre y de sudor

yo no sabía nada a mí nadie me había dicho nada y a ellos otros tampoco les dijeron pero yo ya sabía muy pero muy dentro yo ya sabía lo que sucedía él dijo que iba a cortar a remediar a solucionar a blanquear él se despertaba y se lavaba la cara esa cara tan lejos de clara y con polvo se cubría esa cara y con palabras se cubría esa desgracia y le decía a la juventud que recordara que juntos se acordaran que duarte dijo y les dijo alguna vez palabras sacrosantas dios, patria y libertad y que hoy él les decía con su cara tan recubierta de polvo y su desgracia tan recubierta de mentiras y su madre y su abuela y su tatarabuela tan recubiertas de nada de nada de nada que se acordaran y que recordaran en otras palabras palab[ř]as que cortaran que mediaran que soluciaran que blanquearan le escucharon y le obedecieron y así comenzaron sin pistola y sin un ojo o tal vez con un ojo cerrado con sus palos y filos y con su blanco tan recubierto de matanza de sangre y de sudor

y yo dije perejil re re re r r r pe[ř]ejil
así como un verde o un duarte
así también un perejil
él me vio una vez más
al borde del río me vio una vez más y me dijo que me fuera lejos y que no volviera más a
dajabón que me fuera y que no volviera y que no viera nada así como las nubes o como su
ojo perdido o tal vez cerrado
pero su ojo ese me vio
sólo a mí me vio y sentí miedo y es que en ese ojo me vi a mí de cuerpo pequeño y de piel oscura
mas yo ya no parecía yo
parecía un perejil o un verde o un duarte o un palo o un río o un calor en octubre
entonces caminé y me alejé de él pero yo ya no era yo y mi ojo quería desaparecerse o cerrarse
pero no lo dejé
y entonces el ojo se me llenó de sangre y de sudor
seguí caminando y escuché el agua húmeda que se ondeaba y daba paso al siguiente cuerpo y a la
siguiente cara y a la siguiente alma y entonces él lo vio y se le acercó a él de cuerpo pequeño
y de piel oscura y le dijo oye tú ven acércate dime tú qué tengo aquí qué es esto y él dijo pe
pehgh
gh gh gh
ʁ ʁ ʁ
peʁsil
un verde grotesco y unas hojitas podridas
un río y unas tierras igual podridas de ahogadas
ahoʁadas
de sangre y de sudor

yo ahí escuché todo porque yo abrí bien los ojos y aunque yo ya no era yo siempre me quedé
dentro de mí y escuché la piel oscura y escuché el palo ese palo
que a mí me miró con la misma mirada
así escuché la piel y el palo una y otra vez hasta que esa piel ya no era piel y yo ya no era yo hasta que yo ya no escuchaba nada porque los ojos cerré tan fuerte los cerré que dentro de mí yo escuché lo que nunca había podido escuchar escuché la tierra la caña el batey el cuerpo el caribe el dolor tanto dolor y tanta música tuve mucho miedo pero dentro de mí escuchaba esa música de caña y de tierra y de dolor y entonces ese miedo no se iba pero me movía con esa música y ese miedo y con ese cuerpo pequeño y esa piel oscura abrí los ojos muy abiertos y vi el total silencio él y su palo ya no estaban pero en el agua en el río yo lo vi a él a ese otro de cuerpo pequeño y de piel oscura y la música dentro de mí no dejaba de sonar y mi vista se nublaba de sangre y de sudor pero a la música nada la nubló ni el verde ni el duarte ni el perejil ni nada ni nadie la nubló y entre más me acercaba yo al río y al cuerpo pequeño y a la piel oscura más fuerte sonaba la música dentro de mí entonces justo ahí yo que sudaba mucho por el calor en octubre al borde del río así yo lo vi un otro otro de mí tan pero tan mío de mí
i was sweating plenty and it is just that it was hot the heat was such that
sweating i was heat in
    october sweat and heat and water
i was on my way to work i was going to the fields to my fields and to the
sugarcane and i was
    walking by the river and in the river
so much water
humid
with sweat and with blood

he looked at me
at the river’s edge
me of a small frame and of a dark skin and i was sweating and sweating
and the sun was burning
    me and not even the clouds could help me they couldn’t even
see me they were facing away
    or asleep because they didn’t want to see and for seven days
nobody wanted to see
at the river’s edge he saw me and he came close to me without a gun and
without one eye or
    perhaps with a closed eye
in one hand he held a stick and he and the stick stared at me
he at my body and the stick at my skin
us alone and both stared at me steadily
with a mercenary look so very humid
with sweat and with blood

hey you come here come closer tell me what do i have here what’s this
then he raised his other hand and from that hand hung a light green
light and distorted and grotesque
of the green came sounds and scents and flies and little rotten leaves
from the heat in october
rotten in the water
little humid leaves
with sweat and with blood

i didn’t know anything no one told me anything and they didn’t tell them
either but i already knew deep deep inside i already knew what was happening
he said he was going to cut to fix to resolve to whiten
he woke up and washed his face that face so far from clear and with
powder he covered that face

and with words he covered that disgrace and he said to the youth
to remember
to together remember
that duarte once said and to them he said
sacrosanct words
dios, patria y libertad
and that today he said unto them
with his face so concealed with powder and his disgrace so concealed
with lies and his mother

and his grandmother and his great-grandmother so concealed
with absolutely nothing nothing
nothing
that they had to remember and to remember
in other words
wo[r]ds
to cut to fix to resolve to whiten
they heard him and they obeyed him and like that they began without a
gun and without one eye

or perhaps with a closed eye
with their sticks and blades and with their white so concealed with
slaughter
with sweat and with blood

and i said *perejil*
re re re re
ɾ r r
*pelɾeɾjil*
like a verde or like a duarte
too a *perejil*
he looked at me once more
at the river's edge he looked at me once more and he told me to go far away and to never come
  back to dajabón and to leave and not to return and not to see
anything just like the clouds or
  his lost or perhaps closed eye
but that eye of his looked at me
just at me and it saw me and i felt fear and it’s just that in that eye i saw
myself of a small frame
  and of a dark skin but i didn’t look like myself anymore
i looked like a *perejil* or a green or a duarte or a stick or a river or a heat in october
then i left and i walked away from him but i wasn’t myself anymore and my eye wanted to
  disappear or to close but i did not let it
so my eye became filled
with sweat and with blood

i kept walking and i heard the humid water that moved and made way for the next body and the
  next face and the next soul and then he saw him and he came close to him of a small frame
  and of a dark skin and he said to him
hey you come here come close tell me what do i have here what’s this and he said pehgh
gh gh gh
ṣ ṣ ṣ
*pelṣṣil*
a grotesque green and some little rotten leaves
a river and some fields just as rotten from drowning
d[§]owning

with sweat and with blood

there i heard everything because i opened my eyes very wide and even though i wasn’t myself anymore i stayed inside of me and i heard the dark skin and i heard the stick that stick that stared at me with that same look just like that i heard the skin and the stick over and over again until that skin wasn’t skin anymore and i wasn’t myself anymore until i couldn’t hear anything anymore because i closed my eyes so tightly i closed my eyes that inside of me i heard what i’d never been able to hear before i heard the earth the sugarcane the batey the body the caribbean the pain
so much pain and so much music
i was so afraid but inside of me i heard that music of sugarcane and of
land and of pain and then
that fear wouldn't leave but it moved me
and with that music and that fear and with that small frame and that
dark skin i opened my eyes
wide open and i saw the total silence
he and his stick were no more but in the water in the river i saw him that
other one of a small
frame and of a dark skin and the music inside of me wouldn't
stop playing and my vision
clouded
with sweat and with blood

but nothing clouded the music
not the green nor the duarte nor the perejil nor anything nor anybody
clouded it and the closer i
got to the river and to the small frame and to the dark skin the
louder it played inside of me
and then
right there
i who was sweating plenty because of the heat in october
at the river’s edge
so i saw him
an other
another of me
so very so
mine of me
This is my diary entry from the day I went to Dajabón, Dominican Republic. These entries contain completely raw and unfiltered emotions from my experience of the site.

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2019

Cock-a-doodle-doo!

A rooster crowing in the morning as the bright tropical sunlight illuminates the skyline and evergreen island of Quisqueya. As I woke up, I knew that today would be a difficult and eerie journey to our destination, Dajabón. Dajabón is a city in the Dominican Republic, which plays as a border separating both Haiti and the Dominican Republic. I knew very little going to Dajabón, but I knew I would expect some very disturbing realities...

After a long 3-hour bus ride, we made it to Dajabón. As I got off the bus, I immediately noticed the crowds of both Haitians and Dominicans flooding the streets with automobiles, wheelbarrows, baskets over their heads, the chorus of fast-paced Spanish and Creole, and police officers with their AK-47s out in the open. With so much going on, my emotions and energies were everywhere from joyful to confused to disturbed. From then on, my group of friends, Niki, Iris, Jakiyah, and Kaitlyn, and I went inside the large, famous market where both Haitians and Dominicans sell various products from used clothes and shoes, housewares, and food. I absolutely loved it; the market reminded so much of my own neighborhood, Washington Heights, where on the weekends, many low-income and working-class Latinx individuals (mostly Dominicans), would set up rows of their goods on the street to sell to people walking by. While both the Heights and Dajabón deal with deeply internalized and systemic racial, economic, and societal issues, I
still felt a sense of community as individuals interacted with one another. This community was not only seen through commercial exchanges, but also through laughing, language, children playing, and eating alongside one another.

While it was warm to see kinship, I became disgusted and angry over the overt policing done by law enforcement. This policing reminded me of how the New York City Police Department gives tickets to vendors in the Heights, and re-zoning laws [that] prevent street sales. State violence is amplified in Dajabón, with law enforcement pointing AK-47s and tasers towards people approaching the entrance. At one point, one guard almost tased Iris. There came another moment where a guard forcefully grabbed Jakiyah by the arm. And, most of all, many female Haitian vendors were not allowed inside the market, and if they resisted, police officers would direct their weapons towards them. These moments illustrate the ongoing forms of gender violence, and how law enforcement employs these acts of violence to police the bodies of black females.

The policing of black female bodies on the island is a concept that originates from colonizers coming to Quisqueya and physical and sexually assaulting Taino women. This violent concept evolved under the dictatorship of Trujillo, when many Haitian and dark-skinned Dominican women were tortured, raped, and killed. State violence is meant not only to subjugate and dominate certain groups, but also to enforce processes of dehumanization, in which black and indigenous femme-identifying individuals are otherized, oppressed, and ultimately erased from society. It’s not just a matter of addressing state violence, but most importantly, addressing how state violence has continuously enforced gender violence.

As my group and I exited the market with a sour taste in our mouths, we approached the infamous river of Dajabón. I could see both Haitians crossing the river, bathing in it, and setting up cooking sites. This river
was the same river where the French colonizers massacred thousands of Haitians. This was the same river where Trujillo ordered the genocide of thousands of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent. The sun was beaming down upon me and the brown river; however, I felt cold, and all I could see was a red river—a river filled with blood, tears, and most importantly, an erased history. A history that does not take into account the amount of lives lost, or the ongoing trenches of colonialism, white supremacy, patriarchy, anti-blackness, anti-indigeneity, and anti-Haitianism. Some might see this border river as a form of economic unity and successful capitalism, as both nations are working alongside each other. I, in fact, do see capitalism since there is a subjugation of racial groups and classes. One nation is hated, oppressed, and has limited access to economic opportunities in the market, while the other has employed colonial ideals to oppress the other nation.

Is this what a border is meant for? What safety is being created? What peace is being ensured?

As my group and I were walking back to the bus, Kaitlyn told me that she saw a prison nearby on the way to Dajabón. That’s beyond alarming! Borders and carceral spaces are not meant to keep us safe; instead, they create fantasies and illusions about people on the other side, which only preserves the oppressive ideologies. The fantasy that is created is the idea that Haitians are less than human. This is how governments justify acts of state violence—by creating this fear of the other, therefore pushing for more policing, discriminatory practices, and physical borders to separate identities.

It was time to go back on the bus after a very emotionally draining day. Today, these events only reaffirmed the global nature of anti-blackness, but also reaffirmed how carceral spaces and borders are forms to persevere anti-blackness between Haiti and Dominican Republic.
Listen to two musicians, a young girl and a professor, performing their craft.
First listen to a sponsored Dominican cultural group, then listen to the sounds of a Haitian celebration. Both tracks are performed by people born in the DR, but only one group is treated as citizens.
Just miles away from the Binational Market, where Haitians must show their papers to be allowed to come trade with Dominicans, young students learn music.
To quote Tony Vicioso, “It’s not a slick lick; it’s survival music.”
Wilderness is someone's home, too.
When engaging in educational tourism in the Dominican Republic, the subject of slavery and its legacy is near-impossible to avoid. Discussions of the brutal working conditions, violent punishments, and racial oppression enslaved people faced are, rightfully, held in all sorts of spaces. What is often left out of these conversations, however, is a discussion of the ways in which enslaved men and women were able to resist these conditions against near-insurmountable odds. By looking more closely at two forms that this resistance took, maroonage and cultural retention, we can gain a more complete understanding of Dominican slavery and the experiences of those held in bondage.

Slavery in the Caribbean, under Spanish rule, was an incredibly brutal institution. Throughout the 16th and early 17th century, it was often cheaper for Spanish planters to import slaves and work them to death rather than provide the material provisions necessary to sustain them. Accordingly, the death rate among enslaved people in places like the Dominican Republic was extremely high. Enslaved people in the Spanish Caribbean were also subjected to a process known as “seasoning,” during which time planters attempted to break the wills of enslaved people to resist their conditions.¹ Slaves were subjected to brutal punishments and were given a new name and religion as a means of stripping them of their pre-existing cultural identity; all of this was done for the purpose of making enslaved people more coercible as laborers. Considering the tyrannical conditions that defined slavery
in the Dominican Republic, the degree to which enslaved Africans were able to carve out spaces of autonomy and retain aspects of their traditional culture against the wishes of their captors is important to consider in order to move past an often one-sided account of history.

Perhaps the most radical form that this autonomy took was the formation of maroon communities. Enslaved men and women across the Americas occasionally fled from their places of bondage, usually as a means of relief from backbreaking labor or settling an individual dispute with a planter. However, sometimes this flight was an explicit attempt to seize freedom. In a place with no “free soil” to escape to, such as colonial Hispañola, fleeing slaves were forced to create their own free societies in remote locations like mountain ranges or swamps. Maroon communities in the Dominican Republic tended to be small in size, usually comprised of between five and one hundred inhabitants. These men and women were able to survive through foraging, small-scale agriculture, and trade, especially with native populations. The ability of maroons to sustain their communities is remarkable in and of itself, but more remarkable still is the revolutionary potential that each maroon colony represented. Maroons rejected the exploitative, violent conditions that characterized enslavement in the Dominican Republic and not only demanded but also put into practice more equitable and free arrangements in their own societies.

Resistance was also a common feature in the lives of enslaved people who remained in their places of enslavement. These men and women were often able to resist the seasoning process in ways that allowed them to retain their African cultural identities. While planters
sought to break enslaved Africans of their cultural identities, and often believed themselves successful in doing so, enslaved men and women in the Dominican Republic held on to distinctly African forms of art, language, and religion. For the most part, they did so by blending or disguising aspects of their culture with that of their European captors. Perhaps the most enduring tradition can be found in Dominican music. Decidedly African instruments, including various types of drums, were suppressed during the colonial era. However, enslaved Africans continued to craft and play these instruments in secret. Because of their efforts, instruments like the tambora drum have become an integral part of Dominican music, specifically merengue. Without the subversive efforts of enslaved Africans, these instruments might have died out in the Western world; however, today, they remain an indispensable part of Dominican culture.³

It is difficult to imagine the degree of exploitation enslaved Africans faced in the Dominican Republic during Spanish rule. Not only was their labor appropriated wholesale, but these men and women were also subjected to violent forms of coercion and punishment and attempts to separate them entirely from their own cultures. Understanding the ways in which enslaved men and women resisted their conditions is just as important as learning about the brutality of those who enslaved them. Maroon colonies and cultural retentions represented rejections of the violent system in which thousands were ensnared; the actions these men and women took in the face of unspeakable oppression deserve to be celebrated.
Out?

KAITLYN MCNAB

Fuera los Haitianos
Graffitied onto a wall in the middle of a town
As normal as a stop sign
Red like danger
Out Haitians, get out
A demand
A reminder
A threat.
Out? Out of what?
Quisqueya, Hispaniola... what are we calling it today?
The two names catch on the tongue
Stuck between teeth and speech
One makes its way through the wall of whiteness
The other stranded in the darkness of the mouth
Forever in limbo of being spoken into existence
Unexplainable, unusual, unnatural, unsafe, uninhabitable, unimaginable.
Out Haitians, get out
Out? Out of this rock we have split in the middle of the sea?
Out? Off of your side, the line in the sand guarded by machine guns?
Out? Is it too crowded? Do you not like when our shoulders rub?
Do you confuse your skin for mine?
Does that scare you?
Haiti is boogeyman, after all.
The darkest water.
The longest shadow in the field.
The thing that was not supposed to be but is.
The memory that makes air bubbles, face pressed up against the surface of your mind
Eyes bloodshot like Massacre River
Nose wide like your mother’s
Forehead wrinkled like 1937
Lips moving against the current
Whispering of a trauma that we forever share
*Out Haitians, get out*
Out? And go where?
The motherland?
Whose?
The one you came from or the one who colonized you?
Bloody water.
Umbilical cords ripped since the Trade
Shorn once we arrived on shore
And still, we gave birth
Whether you liked it or not
Our cradle rocks, Black pride in the Americas crying for the teat of revolution
You distance yourself from history
As if it won’t catch up to you
As if it isn’t always right behind you
As if it isn’t within you
Your heartbeat, heart beat like drum, Black hands on tambora, Black drumbeat from Africa,
Black you
Black you
Black you.
*Out Haitians, get out*
Out?
As if you would ever let me in.
Imagine that.
Remember that?
*Out Haitians, get out*
Out?
Are you coming, too?
Carnival Vegano Mask

ELIANA KOVACS

After going to the La Vega Carnival museum, I was inspired by the intricate masks with their grandiose décor. This is a painting of a mask I created inspired by elements of masks I saw at the museum.
WHAT WE LEARN FROM GROUPS UNSEEN BY YEJIN CHANG


STILL WATER BY SAM CHENG


CHRISTCHURCH, OR, HOW CAN WE BE? BY JOSEPH WEINGER

CONSUMING COMMODIFIED LANDSCAPES BY GRACE EASTERLY AND ARIELLE HERSH


FROM COOKIES TO HEMP BY JONATHAN JI


2 Ibid.


7 Mayell, Michael. Interview with the author, 2019.


READING THE LANDSCAPES OF AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND
BY BENJAMIN WEINGER


4Crosby, Ecological Imperialism, 222.

5It is important to note that the Māori had agency—albeit complex and under coercive circumstances—in this process. Crosby’s microhistory erroneously assigns all agency to Europeans.


SLOW TIME BY RACHEL STERN


SEXSCAPES AND SPRING BREAKS BY ROMAISSAA BENZIZOUNE


AXES OF EXCHANGE AND FLOW BY VEDA KAMRA


AUTONOMY IN BONDAGE BY FRANK MCSHANE


Scholars Group Participants

ALBERT GALLATIN SCHOLARS, JANUARY 2019
JAPAN

Faculty Mentor: Jacob Remes
Administrative Director: Mehmet Darakcioglu

Student Travelers: Bryanna Alvarez, Amira Baloney, Delaney Beem, Mariah Bell, Maame Boatemaa, Riley Burger, Yejin Chang, Michael Chumpitaz, Madeline Cohodes, Tabatha Cortes, Casandra Delgado, Claire Friel, Christina Gayton, Aaron Kang, Maya Kotomori, Nina Medernach, Abraham Onifade, Cade Richmond, Nyelah Sawyer, Cameron Sopala, Kai Thompson, Valerie Tu, Alice Wen

DEAN’S HONOR SOCIETY, JANUARY 2019
NEW ZEALAND

Faculty Mentor: Kimberly DaCosta
Administrative Director: Meredith Theeman

Student Travelers: Caira Blackwell, Samantha Cheng, Grace Easterly, Ayaka Fujii, Lauren Halstead, Sophia Hampton, Arielle Hersh, Jonathan Ji, Fatima Julien, Tiger Kneller, Joel Lee, Jun Lei Lee, Judy Luo, Sami Melcher, Lila Rimalovski, Rachel Stern, Daniel Tan, Jacqueline Tubbs, Benjamin Weinger, Joseph Weinger

AMERICAS SCHOLARS, MARCH 2019
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Faculty Mentor: Kwami Coleman
Administrative Director: Kim Foote

Student Travelers: Romaissaa Benzizoune, Jakiyah Bradley, Jenzia Burgos, Iris Carbonel, Joey Charbonneau, Camila Chavarria Duarte, Lily Hitelman, Veda Kamra, Eliana Kovacs, MariVi Madiedo, Kaitlyn McNab, Frank McShane, Ben Neily, Lexi Riesenberg, Brian Ruiz, Niki Tejwani, Julia Torres, Sabrina Treacy