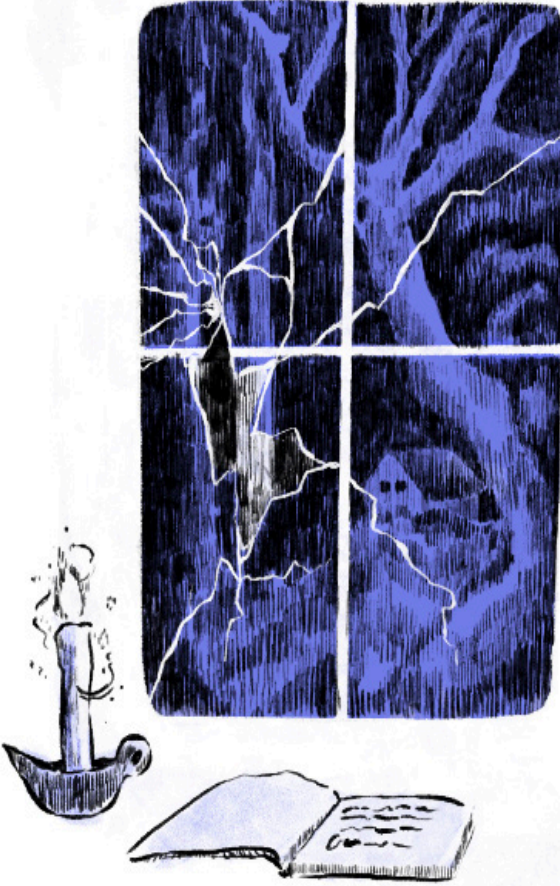


Residuals



The Beacon

Spring Edition 2026

Residuals

A Boston University Beacon Publication

Residuals

Dear Readers,

Memory comes to us in pieces, in reflections that we try to steady. And when those reflections fracture — under the weight of loss, of shifting selves, of conflict — we do not simply break. We redefine ourselves.

What remains is collected here: the residual that lingers, insists and provides us a space where we hold tribute to those that remain after most are gone. As we celebrate The Beacon's 150th anniversary, we turn toward one another. We collect voices, conversations, offerings, as we try to understand who we have been and who we are willing to become. This collection spans temporal and emotional distances, evoking both contemplation and soft nostalgia.

The Beacon is a student-run literary journal created with the intent to create a writer's community that uplifts student voices. A special thank you to everyone who made this edition possible.

Sincerely,
The Beacon

The Boston University Beacon

Table of Contents

*Featuring staff

My Father's Boots, Claire Wu	1
proserpina, Kat Harmon	2
Referee School, Murphy Fisher	3
My Neighbor the Barn Swallow, Claire Wu	4
Dilema Volumétrico/Volumetric Dilemma, Ju Derraik*	5
Cowboy on the Ledge, Max Buonincontro	6
Hurricane Days, Sonia Teodorescu	7
poolside, Jakia Mim	8
Sorry for the Drama, My Country's Bad at Peace, Sonia Teodorescu	9
Fat Tuesday, Catherine Longworth	10
Canine on the Loose, Claire Wu	11
their slanted shoulders from where i stumble, Simran Kaur*	12
June 1st, Sonia Teodorescu	13
Sweet Rot, Daniella Parkinson*	14
Exhale, David Lichen	15
on growing up and growing apart//, Elizabeth Goldberg*	18

*The Beacon is committed to creating and fostering a space that uplifts young voices at Boston University. With that commitment, all contributors, regardless of their position within The Beacon, are subjected to the same anonymous review process. It is of the utmost importance that each piece is selected based on its content rather than the author at large.

My Father's Boots

Claire Wu

My father's old wading boots are stationed at our porch steps.
Dried mud cakes the soles, the copper scuffed into a pallor
as faded as the pale orange of early light. With no one
to give them weight, the boots lay at ease against the clapboard.



proserpina

Kat Harmon

the twirling trilling thing
the string of cupids bow
to putter and purse and pout
round and shot-through
call me your girl and i'll kill you

spin you pomegranate deer willow tree canary
fawn and flutter and falsetto
the joys of it, the delights, the desire
the pains, but the delicate pains, noble pains
tidy silly-simple fear, rage only as insanity
the right part, gowned and pliant, in three four time
the lady never leads
crossed at the ankles, folded at the knees
get thee to a nightfall
smooth the silhouette, return the rib to sender
misplaced luck, god's gifts aching
they see form in the day
but it's just you in the dark

studies show it's better to wait
prove yourself wrong one day
mothered by the sidewalk
born to the curl behind his ear
affairs with orion and the kitchen shears
call me your girl or i'll kill you

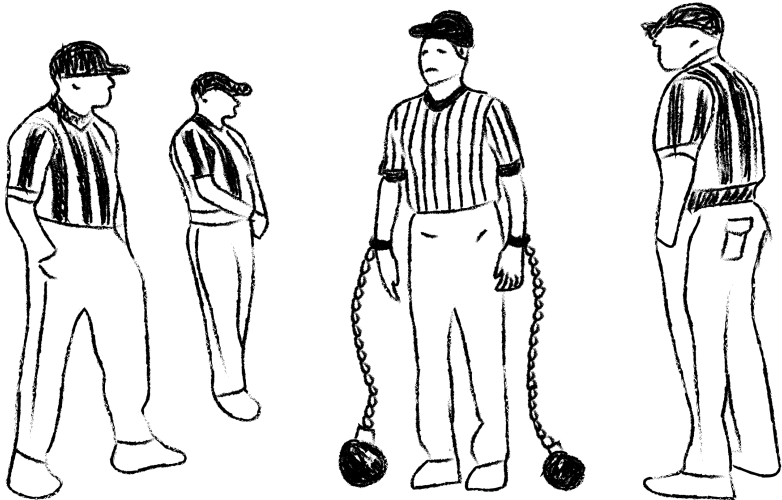


Referee School *Murphy Fisher*

Recess was never any fun at referee school. It took up most of the day, and we were scrutinized like watched pots. We were not expected to play like normal kids, only to fairly and accurately apply the rules of schoolyard games. We did this without traditional measuring instruments, whistles, or clocks. This was before instant replay was even a thing.

Me and my class were sent to Grover Elementary. Interaction with these unpolished, emotional young players was supposed to sharpen our skills for conflict resolution and objectivity. It was called hands-on learning.

None of us '96ers left that program unscathed, egos bruiseless. The difference is I made it till the end. Everybody else left, either worn down physically or unable to keep up with Theory. I don't blame them. The truth is, I sacrificed my childhood. I never played a single game of kickball. My parents saved every penny and they lived on beans and rice. All so that I could don the black and white and receive my diploma from the most prestigious academy in the U.S, and no one could ever ever ask me "hey where did you go to ref school!?"



My Neighbor the Barn Swallow

Claire Wu

Through the splintered cracks in the shutters,
I see a barn swallow toiling in the heat.
His tawny feathers are sparse, his forked tail clipped.

Under the porch rafters,
he makes his home in mine. He eats the
moths and caddisflies that I dare not touch.

By the end of the summer, he sits
atop four freckled eggs. He sings to them
each night, soft and somberly sweet.

But his warbling has roused the ire
of the neighborhood boys. They fill their
slingshots with small, smooth stones and topple the nest.

I chase them away, but a viscous yellow stains
my floorboards. The insects will soon grow into
thick, rasping swarms.



Dilema Volumétrico/Volumetric Dilemma

Ju Derrai

I waxed on about expressional economy.
You wanting to learn portuguese while
we're entwined lakeside, talking through time:
stressed and syllabic.

English is curt. Each word. Onward.
It's rigid like a pair of concrete birds
(Iambic Pentameter).
Shakespeare writes *skull*.

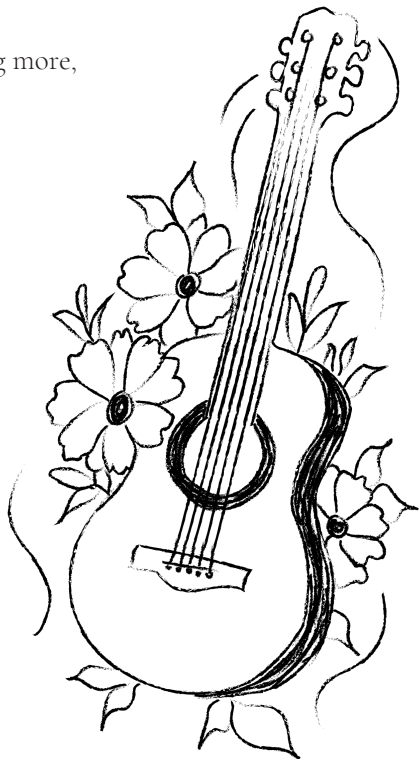
Portuguese strums, sliding open
billowing sounds, humming rounding
vowels languishing, liltling:
I sing to you *ca-vei-ra*.

Translators meet this dilemma:
how to mean less when you're saying more,
to betray your own music for
music.

That sweet sorr-ow you've parted
is my *tri-ste-za tão do-çe*
and as the words spill out of me
time accents your leaving

end-stopped.
Here the revelation:
that writhing
dissonance stems

from my having said more
to you, my having meant less.
My *tra-ge-di-a* lasts
a beat longer than yours.



Cowboy on the Ledge

Max Buonincontro

Fuck you, you bastard bitch of brains!
And the sun bled unto the sky,
And my whole world turned violently red,

Even the carpets growled deep like wolves,
As I squinted down at the sidewalk.

When I was young my father took,
With hands my hands to the shed,
Where whimpering sat the dying dog-I
Wept hard-seeing this he said,
Sometimes we must kill what we love,
And unloaded a round into its head.

I drank you like a tick drinks,
And I loved you like the morning,
This city is full of mutilated creatures,
And now you are one of them.
Look at the cars gorge tubbily by,
And in the forum of decorated idiots,

I am a nuisance, a dying thing,
A bug, worm, or leach or parasite,
Why not stomp me into the ground?



Hurricane Days

Sonia Teodorescu

You cannot tell me you don't know it because you were there too, right from the beginning from before when there was nothing so don't come saying you won't remember how they put Jesus's name in the sky and spread fire baking black pavement all on the ground: killing the trees and broke the ladybugs aphids and eyes in the grass tore a page of a page and put us in the library for nothing don't say you forgot the teacher who taught only about birth and sex sex and birth called a uterus a sack of nothing or the one who wouldn't say *intertextual* because it's a dirty word and the fields and strawberries where they buried our pride and we went looking and had to come back with nothing don't tell me you didn't have to hide behind the chairs and lie against a cold and muddy floor while she prayed over us because we thought it was one of those kids with guns but it just turned out to be nothing don't say you forgot how you dropped me let me bleed out before I could even reach the door just like Winston Smith, life seeping out my eyes and leaking onto the walls when you looked right through me, because for you all of it was nothing at all.



poolside

Jakia Mim

i was once like you
glass half empty
glass half full
i wore jeans as i stepped into the pool
my flare soaked in the water
i believed it was just as radiant.
it wasn't.

you wear bootcut
sometimes you dip your toes in
but you didn't feel the need to drench your pants
so you didn't
while i resisted the impulse to jump in.
we'd never swam.

you handed me a safety jacket
not needing one yourself.
you gave me my glass half full
and smiled as i wringed the denim into it
pouring in as much as i could
but you kept your glass half empty
as those were the rules of the pool.

you said i wasn't unnatural
so what am i for defying the red ink on the wall
and what are you?



Residuals

Sorry for the Drama, My Country's Bad at Peace *Sonia Teodorescu*

I don't know, man, I just think it's funny
your leaflets, my pizza boxes, how about we walk home
talk about nice things like your high school flowers
and where you wanna go in five years,
invite me over to your place and then we'll stop
and kiss outdoors in the cold because neither of us
are allowed a home here anymore.



Fat Tuesday

Catherine Longworth

Today is Ash Wednesday, and I haven't seen the sun in months. Last night, my roommate and I rode the green line down to the North End, taking our turns onto Hanover and Salem, breathing in sharp air and expelling with thick puff puff puffs. We gorged on chicken parmesan and cannolis until oils stained our lips, cheeks, and hems. A woman walked by, took one look at us, and asked if she needed to get us paper towels. On the other side of the street a homeless man begged for respite. We walked on, still.

I look up from the t-stop, now, dead on this gray winter day. An old man on his way to Government Center bears his cross. Mass has let out. Father. Son. Holy Spirit. Ash decorates the foreheads of almost every passerby. They walk in gaggles and dig their elbows into each other's sides. They dodge the slush and salt. One pulls another away from the ice. I look on in surprise. I thought faith was something we all pretended to rebuke, something that came gripping in the quiet blanket of the night or a cold walk home. I didn't know it could be worn so proudly. The thought becomes so forceful I can't help but laugh. The old man on my cart looks at me cross. I look through him and imagine its Jesus is on the train. The girl next to me bears a cross too, a thick black smudge that cuts across her face, making sections, almost angry. She rests her head against the glass, eyes closed, soft smile. I wonder if she's praying. I wonder if she's thinking about what she ate for lunch.

On the train ride home from our fill my roommate asked me what I'm giving up for Lent. I didn't know that's what Fat Tuesday was for; a final act of excess before fast. I tell her we don't need to be so Catholic about it. I tell her I don't measure my pleasure in feats of guilt and penance. Sometimes pleasure is pleasure, and only that. She laughs, and when I get home I stand in the mirror and pinch my hips. I try not to eat. Instead I dance, and convince myself that it's liberation. For my final act of excess, I call my friend Izzy and pretend she's God.



Residuals

Canine on the Loose

Claire Wu

My brother reaches over and wraps a pudgy finger
around one of mine. Strings of spittle stretch between
our hands. Wordlessly, my mother hands me a tissue.
I forget to say 'thank you' until my father chides.
Behind his back, I stick out my tongue. It slips
through the overbite of my front teeth and jabs
a loose canine tethered by a filament of gum.
I cry out at the sharp sting, the sudden taste of thick,
warm metal. I want to scream and berate my father,
because all my problems are because of him,
because I'm six and prone to tantrums,
because I'm mad at more than just a lost tooth,
because I can feel the raw pulp in the crater left behind,
because I can't find that stupid tooth. Will the tooth fairy still visit
me tonight? Can I post 'Missing' Posters around the neighborhood
like the Johnson's did for their shrill Chihuahua that no one
missed but them? If I wail loud enough, will my father give me a dollar
just to shut me up?



their slanted shoulders from where i stumble

Simran Kaur

"If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants."

the eternity of the Giants binds them to the gods,
where my odds of blind worship earns their shoulders: a simple certainty.

the scales of *their* knowledge, past and beyond, merge
and a surge of movement from the Giants leaves implausible tales.

my place on their shoulders as a forever learner
scorns warners who whisper my fate:

even the Giants replace those who no longer remain upon slanted shoulders.

the rhythmic stomps halt as the Giants glance at their collarbone.
only my head stays lifted, begging to continue the march towards a new era.

my promised discipline lies only a step ahead,
but the Giants sense my hesitancy: will my footprints be washed from their shoulders for
another?

they rock back and forth—
my stance breaks as the clavicle beneath unsteadily shifts;
my body endures each curve of their shoulders, etched in memory to suppress the fall.

now i stand upon the ground, sensing the tremors of their steps
and no longer the lifted voices among Giants.

as the Giants advance their walk, i stand at their heels,
tracing the contours of their feet
as they hoist another towards truth.



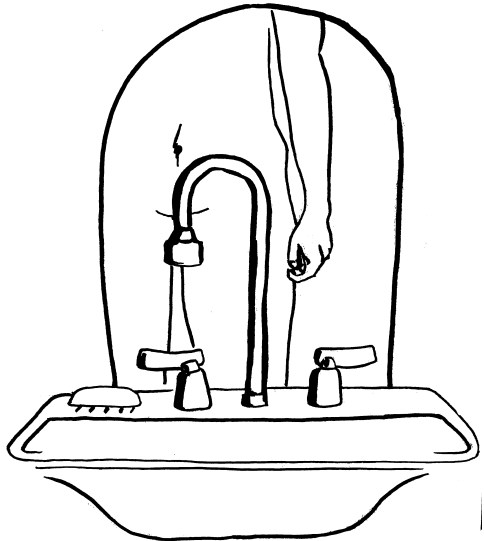
June 1st

Sonia Teodorescu

My hip got hurt sometime last week
out in the cold or through sleep or
something, and I went to the doctors
and they said it was nothing

but I've got all this poetry
spilling out from my hands and
my mouth and my eyes
flooding out over the floor and
damn well it did anything for my hip
just about as much as snake oil will do

so when I got out of the shower,
mirror steaming over and poetry,
I grabbed that leg and yanked it
and it creaked and it shrilled
and snapped back into place,
seething and loose at the
hinges, but walking good as
ever.



Sweet Rot

Daniella Parkinson

Think of my decay
as a peach Softened with sweet
fuzz and overripe; Press firmly to that
which is purpled and yielding and unlovely,
and still stain me into spiral fingerpads
and bury your molars deep into candied
marrow My rot is the mealy pulp beneath
summer-leathered skin, bruised and plump
with sap and pallborne by buzzing fruit flies that
lap voraciously at syrupy flesh (*regard me
posthumously as perpetually edible*)
When you recall me, do so with sticky
fingers and bared teeth strung with
The honeyed meat of me
or do not recall me
at all



Residuals

Exhale

David Lichen

Was this meant to be?

I search his face for something a mirror won't show without unfolding a paper crane or explaining the definition of flight by whatever we can't feel creasing bands of muscles in our backs.

People only ever speak in somniloquy: we all make art out of the pockets of life no other hands can reach into; we made a whole world on top of something we can't trust anyone else is seeing but we'd spend a fortune to hear reiterated, promised that they were there with us when it happened.

Was I supposed to go digging and turn up my own corpse where I thought would be treasure or should I have curled next to him and waited till meadow grasses tapped my teeth, fetching what they could of my smile to spread before the sun again?

Walking by hyacinths, I smell the frailty in everything we attach meaning to, a perfume in the remembrance of so many names for something that comes back again and again.

Handsome eyes might see me blind and soon enough I'll be reciting the names of dead pets, trying to count how many inhalations I took between moments when I felt safe and knew I was standing in one place at one time.

I never know when I'm not tessellating myself like a head of Romanesco, so many cataclysms making meanings out of an obsession with growth even unto breaking outstretched boughs with too many blossoms and no plan to support the fruit.

How could you, as a ghost in an internet where gravity is only a guideline and the concept of wings is still too derivative, lame yourself—think your form only makes sense when it is balanced on a chariot of twigs?

The Boston University Beacon

How long will you let the concept of motion chase you?

There is a word in the thunder, a name in the storm, but, horny as you are, you wonder why everyday cannot be a tempest, running in all directions for the bolt that would bring you to life.

Would you balk if you found a lightning rod cocked above you now?

Will you wait until your fickleness is pointed out thrice and the hollow of your hand is filled by a Hologram?

You won't escape yourself and you don't know what makes a good hug, so your worst nightmares are mundane scenes, times when you must ask whether you yourself are friend or Foe.

The toads are chirping under the skin of reality, but you ignore them, thinking that their bedtime prayers are something not meant for you to hear.

It's time to stop, smash the alarm, salt the west, and let the sun foam dead at the horizon, gather your clouds and your stars and pretend their outlines mean nothing too, that the drag queens mouthing their prophesies are only parroting the words and not the fate of your nation, the death and rebirth and scheduled slaughter of every person bold enough to stitch parenthetical phrases into the next hot fashion.

Yes, you want to know, you want the walls to crawl over you till you too are mortar and brick and whatever needs shelter comes meek to your door as the wrath of life and the bereft of every generation imagines your windows are gazing at their little lives, that your halls lead labyrinthine to locked chambers, and that you demand sentience, personhood, and rights to open them.

The dead are calling to you: scores of raised voices tell the intimate news of floating masks and the cartoon outlines of women and children, all the unwilling of war to speak first, all the grandparents and the hatreds they would not see die with them, all the nameless who regret forgetting themselves and those who wish they would be left to slumber.

Residuals

Isn't it beautiful to decay and become what you always were?

But why do you weep in the small victories, sing lullabies at midday, and promise the moon you will love her better only to spend your anniversary cuddling the hand mirror and the rolled bill?

Who told you success was why desert stones sign their names in dust?

Or that anyone should admire the mantis for not just chasing the rush of sex with a cigarette?

Do you think you're the only one who wonders what magmas dye each planet a new color?

Is there a point to any of it?

Hello?

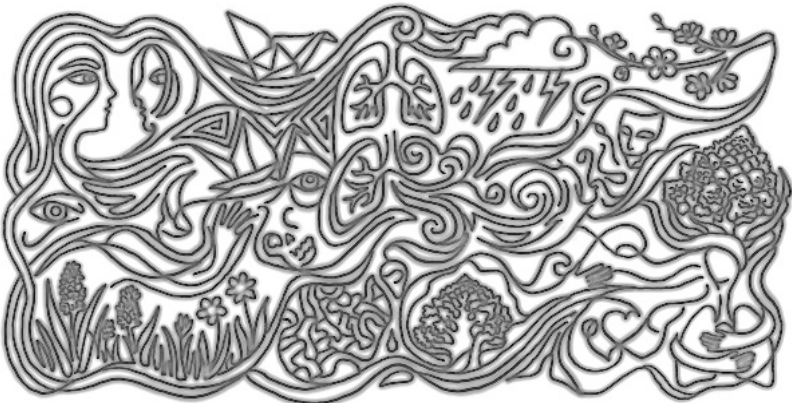
Take a breath.

Hold it until you can count your heartbeats.

Let it go.

Breathe in slowly.

Let it go.



on growing up and growing apart//
Elizabeth Goldberg

when losing feels like victory
and development parallels decay,
 (forever racing//escaping collision)
this is what growing up feels like.

and at last i finally understand
the aches of my parents who lay in separate beds forever.
 (one in the bedroom//the other in a box)
we may all grow up and grow apart.

i think, now, i know that i am not broken.
there is no misfiring electrical signal in my brain to blame for who i am.
 (i am wary//not trusting whatever *this* is)
it is okay to be authentic, even in isolation.

i am no longer cursing my mirror
for showing me someone that i hate.
 (with the might of all my individual cells//existing dialectically)
i can learn to love my directional differences.

my older sister-in-law reminds me that some people grow at different paces,
and that the faces you know best may change places;
 it is okay to move on from someone else's standstill.

missing you forever hurts less than knowing you for a moment longer.



Residuals



Beacon Staff
1948

Celebrating 150 years of
The Beacon
C. 1876



Beacon Staff
Spring 2026

The Boston University Beacon

Executive Officers

President –

George Brown is a Junior studying English and Genocide Studies. He writes prose and poetry, with a special affection for the lyrical essay. Rilke, Borges, and Tennyson are some of his favorite authors.

Vice President –

Simran Kaur is a Senior studying Biomedical Engineering with a concentration in Machine Learning. Outside of decoding the genetic code, she enjoys writing poetry across a wide range of topics and styles.

(Credit graphics on pg. 8,12,17)

Treasurer –

Kamya Parekh is a Senior studying Psychology, Economics and Mathematics. She is passionate about writing that focuses on the mundane and the emotional architecture of everyday life. Her favorite authors include Ocean Vuong and Jhumpa Lahiri.

Publicist –

Kiara Rojas is a Senior studying Film/Television and Visual Arts. Her goals include using the arts to advocate for the social justice issues most important to her. Some of her favorite authors are Langston Hughes, Elizabeth Acevedo, and Sylvia Plath.

(Credit graphics on pg. 3,5,6,10)

Secretary –

Hannah Baptiste is a Senior studying English. She performs spoken word poetry throughout Massachusetts and enjoys making jewelry in her free time.

Residuals

Editorial Team

Tyler Altman is a Senior with a major in English as well as minors in Math and German. He hopes to go to Germany after graduating.

Alice El-Ouazzane is a Senior studying Philosophy, Psychology, and English literature. They love to write prose poetry and find great inspiration from modernist writers. You can always find her reading Elizabeth Bishop's One Art (fav poem) and reading some classic literature.

Olivia Huynh is a Freshman studying Art History and Education. She enjoys writing short stories and prose poetry, with influences from authors Lahiri, Siken, and O'Hara. In her free time, she plays guitar and writes her own music.

Sarah Hegg is a Junior studying Neuroscience and Psychology. She writes mainly prose with the occasional exploration into more structured lyrical poetry. She hopes to pursue a career in Clinical Neuropsychology, working with children who have learning disabilities. She mainly uses writing as a creative avenue to express the more emotional side of herself.

Ela Nil is a Sophomore majoring in English. She likes to write poetry and short fiction and enjoys trying different forms or genres.

Ju Derraik is a senior studying sociology. She is inspired by Dorothy Allison, Clarice Lispector, jazz music, and the Atlantic Ocean. Besides writing, she enjoys ignoring recipes and watching horror movies through her fingers.

Elizabeth Ju is a Freshman studying Public Relations. She most enjoys writing narrative nonfiction. A few of her hobbies include reading classics, journaling, and discovering CCM's hidden gems.

Avery Leahy is an acting major in the School of Theatre class of '29. She enjoys writing poetry, prose, and plays!

The Boston University Beacon

Camille Morocco is a senior dual degree student studying psychology and public relations at Boston University. She is passionate about extending her voice outward into the world through storytelling and has expanded her skills through various experiences, ranging from social media and media relations to journalism, creative writing, and poetry. She is drawn toward entertainment and enjoys working as a DJ on BU's radio station, WTBU, and reviewing local musical acts.

Elizabeth Goldberg is a graduate student studying English and American Literature. She is a soon-to-be double terrier, having previously double majored in both English and Classical Civilization. Ellie's academic interests include mental health and disability studies in literature, poetics, and aesthetics, alongside her more creative pursuits in poetry and memoir writing.

Noah Xique is a Junior studying biology, classics, and Religion. With a taste for the arts and a fan of the esoteric, he hopes to understand the role of symbol and myth in the world.

Anum Kotecha is a sophomore studying Biomedical Engineering on the Pre-Med Track. He has always found a home in the comfort of literary works, from prose to poetry to essays. His literary interests focus on the natural world, the human body, and the intersection between these constituents: self, mind, and world.

Zain Kanji is a first-year student studying CS and Econ. He decided to join the Beacon as an editor out of a desire to take initiative in spreading art through literature at BU.

Owen Steck is a senior studying CS and Linguistics. Semantic representation has always interested him, and he derives his inspiration from the écriture plate styles of authors like Ernaux and Camus, as well as from Japanese Shasei Poetry, all of which use a concise and objective style to relate their relationship to their environment.

Danielle Parkinson is a Junior majoring in Business with a voice minor.

Residuals

Maria Gil is a Junior studying English and Psychology. She loves poetry and novels, and is currently making her way through the Sally Rooney and Marcel Proust universe.

Sarah Cohen is a Senior studying English. She is president of the Songwriters circle, and you should check out her music at Sarahlilliancohen on Spotify.

Amélie Tonoyan is a Junior studying English and Philosophy, with a minor in core.

The Boston University Beacon

Graphic Design Team

Brynn Campbell is a sophomore studying Political Science and Visual Arts. She loves to walk around Boston and use the people she meets as inspiration for her next piece.

(Credit graphics on pg. 1,8,9,13)

Mrinallee Reddy is a Senior studying Environmental Science and Psychology. She'll read anything—from science fiction to gothic horror to autofiction. She writes poetry, prose, and plays (and occasionally does art).

(Credit graphics on pg. 2,7,18)

Hannah Yu is a Junior studying Graphic Design. She is a multidisciplinary designer who loves playful visual systems, and has loved literature her entire life. Her favorite authors are Sally Rooney and Joy Harjo.

(Credit cover graphic)

Giovanna Sapiz is a Senior and longstanding contributor to The Beacon.

(Credit graphics on pg. 4,11,14)



The Boston University Beacon

The Beacon is a student run literary journal created with the intent to create a writer's community that uplifts student voices.

Website: Thebostonuniversitybeacon.com

Instagram: [@thebeaconbu](https://www.instagram.com/thebeaconbu)
