



WELCOME TO THE CELEBRATION OF THE

Art & Poetry



Challenge

JUNE

24

2023

*League of NH
Craftsmen*

49 South Main Street, Suite
100, Concord, NH 03301

HOSTED BY RACIAL UNITY TEAM
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Awards Ceremony Opening Reception Program

WELCOME

Nancy Zajano

INTRODUCTION

Ken Mendis

RECOGNITION OF JUDGES AND SPONSORS

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Poetry: Grade K-2, Grade 3-5, High School, and Adult

Visual Art: Grade K-2, Grade 3-5, Middle School, High School, and Adult

REGOGNITION AWARD

Ken Mendis

INTERVIEWS OF WINNERS

OPENING OF EXHIBIT



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Poetry: Grade K-2

Friend excluded from soccer
because “no girls on our team.”
Girls slick and swift.
Boys lions.
We both butt heads
in a war
just for a field.
Best team boys AND girls together,
blocking, striking, scoring.
We win as one.



1ST PLACE WINNER

Eleanor Slocum, "Excluded"

Poetry: Grade 3-5

I was,
A normal kid,
Until,
I wasn't.
My mother,
Dead.
My father,
Broken.
My father,
Re-married,
To,
My stepmother,
Then regretted it.
I was,
Cinderella,
And,
The monster,
The evil stepmother.

At fifteen,
I was married.
At sixteen,
I had my firstborn
son.
Now,
There are,
Dozens,
Of countries,
That,
Still allow,
Child marriage.
Hopefully,
In the future,
The world,
Will be,
Different.



1ST PLACE WINNER

Kayra Rubini, "Hopefully"

Poetry: High School

So let us uncover the secrets of the past, And embrace them with open hearts.
For only then can we create a future, Where everyone has a part.

The past-

Times have changed, Minds have grown,
But still people think they can own, Things from the past.
Hoping it will last.

Jim Crow Laws created segregation,
Kept people of color separate from whites. Separate but "equal",
Boycott of the Montgomery buses, Happened in 1955.
Many arrests made,
Buses weren't getting paid. Police were looking in the streets,
Couldn't find them after days and days of searching. Martin Luther King Jr. was
the leader along with others, It was a standoff between the buses and his
brothers, They didn't ride on the bus for over a year,

In 1705 Virginia created the slave codes, It banned interracial marriage.
Kept African Americans from holding office,
It also defined anyone with a black grandparent as black.
These laws were used to model countless other states' laws about blacks.

The constitution was created in 1787, While it said all men are "equal",
The southern states took out everything about people of color to keep
segregation in race, Now African Americans are stuck in the same place.
They got rid of words such as negro, slave, slavery to make it harder to ban
slavery through the constitution.



3RD PLACE WINNER

Sean Sweeney, "Unjust Past, Changed Future"

Poetry: High School

My past is hidden
my heritage concealed.
You judge a book by its cover
for it was how you were judged.
I haven't suffered or been denied
(except by you).

My ancestors walked here long before
1492.

I walk the woods they walked.
I hear the owls hoot as they did.
I see the leaves fall.
I feel the snow melt.

You are the ones who tell me I don't
belong.

Last week I had to fill out an online form.

Race was required.

You could only check one box.
I checked white.

I don't disown my Scottish ancestors
who were cleared from their lands.

I don't disown my Welsh ancestors
who were denied their language.

My red hair and blue eyes won't let me
deny my Norse roots.

I didn't check indigenous.

I disowned my grandmother.

You disowned my grandmother.

In this day and age, you can usually check as many
boxes as you want.

I check white.

I check Indigenous.

I don't want to disown part of me.

I celebrate my grandmother.

You disowned my grandmother.

In time, all the boxes on forms will disappear:
sexual orientation, gender, and race.

No, just people sharing stories and life.

Unfortunately, checked box or not
you judge a book by its cover
for it was how you were judged.

I have never suffered the blows of bigotry and
racism.

I know I am privileged.

But

when you disown me,
you disown my grandmother.

You disowned my grandmother.

Our ancestors walked here long before 1492.

I walk the woods they walked.

I hear the owls hoot as they did,

I see leaves fall.

I feel the snow melt.

Celebrate my grandmother.

Tell us we belong.

2ND PLACE WINNER

Hagan Williams, "Boxes"



Poetry: High School



And with a pair of headphones, And two hands
For loving, communicating, flapping,

I load my space ship and pack my belongings for
space.

I live in a one person stratosphere.

With long, long thoughts that circle me like
rings encase Saturn.

I live on a comet, watching, waiting, listening.
For someone. Anyone.

But we don't have to brave space alone. Because
not so far away
There are people with their gps, with their
locators, with their trackers.

Who grab our hands and lead us back to earth.
Who want us on earth.
Because there is *nothing about us without us.*

There are people with gentle voices and soft
hands and slow, calm souls
That stop their space voyage to grab us.
Because they want us.

*Because they may not understand, but they know
above all else We are human.*
They know that we belong on Earth too.

*So with gentle hands and gentle words they pull us
to earth.*
They rescue our headphones from space and
Put them back where they belong. They give us a
seat at the table.

They ask us questions and wait for answers,

*They sit in the deafening silence of the universe,
Of the stars.*

Never forcing us to be anything more than we are.
A quiet being, a quiet presence that reassures
"I want you here."

Because there is no rushing beauty.

There is no rushing the thoughts that fill us up.

The thoughts that form our gentle fingertips and hair and the
stars and moon and the galaxies.

And so they give us a place, a home.

Dig out a section of earth and create a chair with the leftover
wood. They ask us questions and give us space to answer.
Give us galaxies to answer. And when we can't answer -
They give us the letters, the words.

They give us a place to be, instead of a prison of names, of labels.
And we thrive.
Through letter boards and talking boards and word boards and
so many other boards we can craft the secrets to
Creating the stars and moon. And maybe some of us will never
speak,

And maybe some of us will speak too much. And maybe some of
us will change a life, And maybe some of us will change the
world.

But without teachers who brave space, counselors who search
for the recipe to stars, friends who sit on comets with us, and
aids who make space a bit less scary.
Without patience and kindness and quiet

You'll never know how to make stars or the moon.

So next time, Instead of staring with 'freak' 'stupid' 'weird', Why
not lead with "Hey, how are you?"

1ST PLACE WINNER

Maya Clough, "Space Voyager"

Poetry: Adult

We were taken from our land and our people
The only difference was the color of our skin

We were forced to stay in bilges, handcuffed and packed in like sardines
The only difference was the color of our skin

We worked on the same farm but had to live on the far corner of the property
The only difference was the color of our skin

We were treated less than livestock and passed on in wills and bills
The only difference was the color of our skin

We were married all proper but had to do it quietly
The only difference was the color of our skin

We were buried on the land we worked on, but plowshares soon erased us
The only difference was the color of our skin

2ND PLACE WINNER

Todd Warfield, "Belmont Barh...



Poetry: Adult

1

Walking the fine line of a hyphen adolescence
I learned the art of juxtaposition
I grew up in the crooks and crannies of blended affection
Juggling the family dynamics of culture; I know
there is no correct route to protection
And there is no single way to tell a story

My father used his body as a guide to narrate
his journey to America
Cycling through scars of memory,
His hair—a metaphor for the tangles of knotted
power dynamics
His tears form the gorge between his copper
cheekbones and nose
Flowing into the Rio Grande of his escape
I remember the way his fingers framed his
mouth
Twisting the thicket of his mustache as he
searched for the translation of his travel
From him, I learned,
The body offers more words than there are to
hear
Storing a collective consciousness of the past
and the present moment
And carrying sensibility into the future

On the other hand, my mother was not a quiet
woman
I learned to decipher the stillness of her stare
and the slight part in her lips
She returned to our land ancestors when I
completed my seventh year around the sun
And as I continue to dance with the cosmos, her
voice attempts to slip from my conscious
The space of her absence is fulfilled by the lyrics
she sung aloud
Becoming a contemporary oral tradition—she
translated her emotions into the beat of a song
She R&B'd her way into my being

Lifted my feet from the floor to
dance with her spirits
She blended a Tejano melody of
passion, strung with the wisps of her heart
Her mixtape told a story of interbeing
Scratching the surfaces of her soul, she curated a
discography of intimacy

Eventually, when their journeys crossed paths
They wove their love in baskets of beings
My vessel is a manifestation of affection across land
and time
My mother's gypsum form melts into the terracotta
frame of my father's arms
I am the continuation of a frozen moment where
breath seizes to exist—replaced by the language of
passion
The thump, thump, thump, beating
Breaking the ribs into existence
Removing the barriers of settler love based in
possession
My sheer presence defies colonial land claims
In my body,
My father's Aztlan homelands mix with the red clay
mountains of my mother's
Aniyunwiya ancestors

Though they both passed on from the physical
boundaries of the Earth
From their time on the ground
And the harmonizing of their footsteps
They transformed borders into bridges for a
reconstruction of the future
In their own way, they told me the secret to love
How compassion can revive a vision of connection,
existing long before displacement
As I tune into their tale,
I learn to place my feet in the premonition of their
devotion

1ST PLACE WINNER

Rosa Lopez, "Storytelling"

Visual Art: Grade K-2



1ST PLACE WINNER

Aria Simpson



Visual Art: Grade 3-5



2ND PLACE WINNER

Vanessa Hurley



Visual Art: Grade 3-5



1ST PLACE WINNER

Clara Curwen



Visual Art: Middle School



3RD PLACE WINNER

Helen Glazer



Visual Art: Middle School



2ND PLACE WINNER

Torah William



Visual Art: Middle School

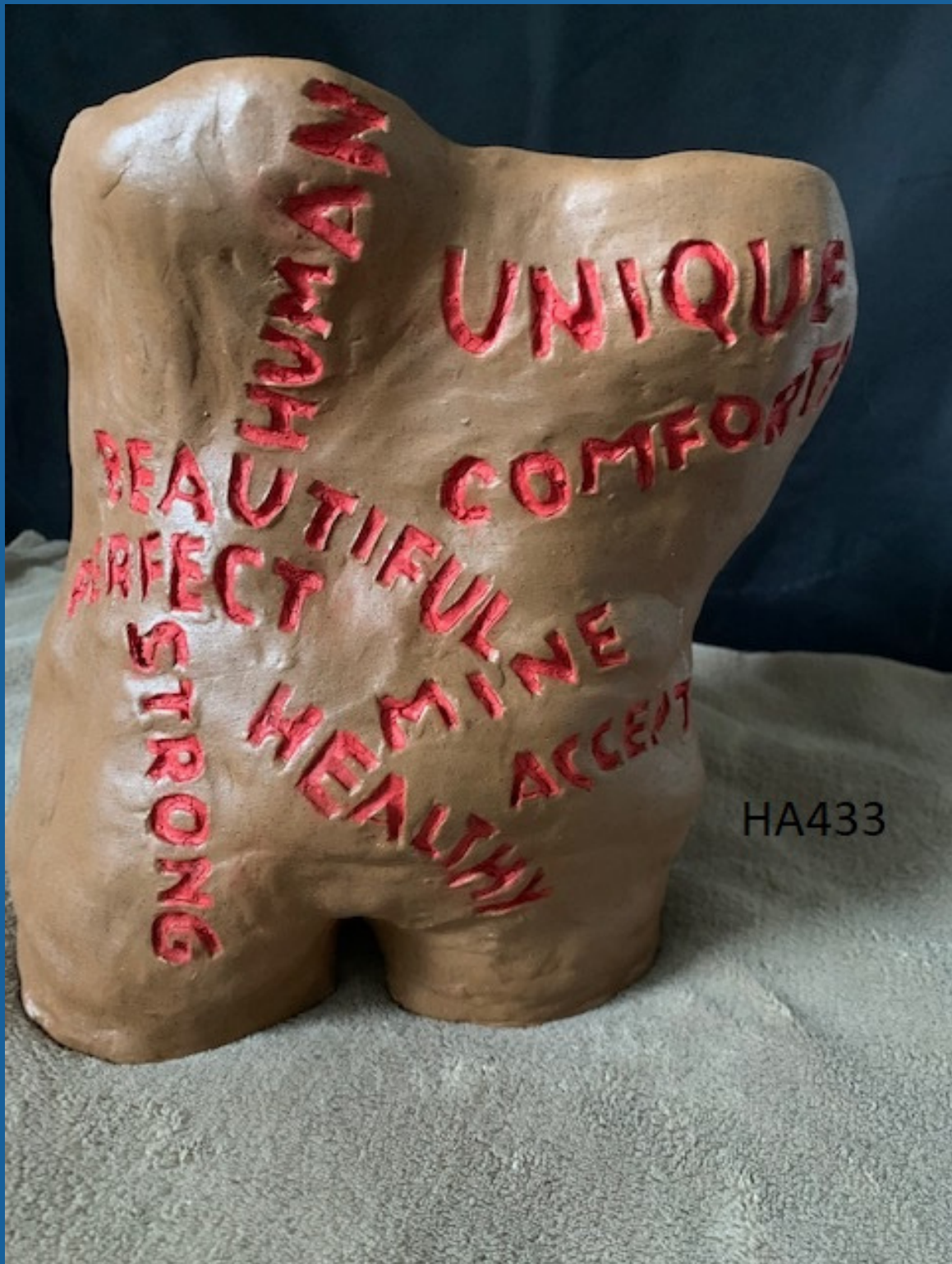


1ST PLACE WINNER

Alexxia Miku



Visual Art: High School



HONORABLE MENTION

Eve Libby

Visual Art: High School



3RD PLACE WINNER

Lilla Bozek

Visual Art: High School



2ND PLACE WINNER

Jameson



Visual Art: High School



1ST PLACE WINNER

Anelle Van der Merwe



Visual Art: Adult



3RD PLACE WINNER

Ann Sobel



Visual Art: Adult

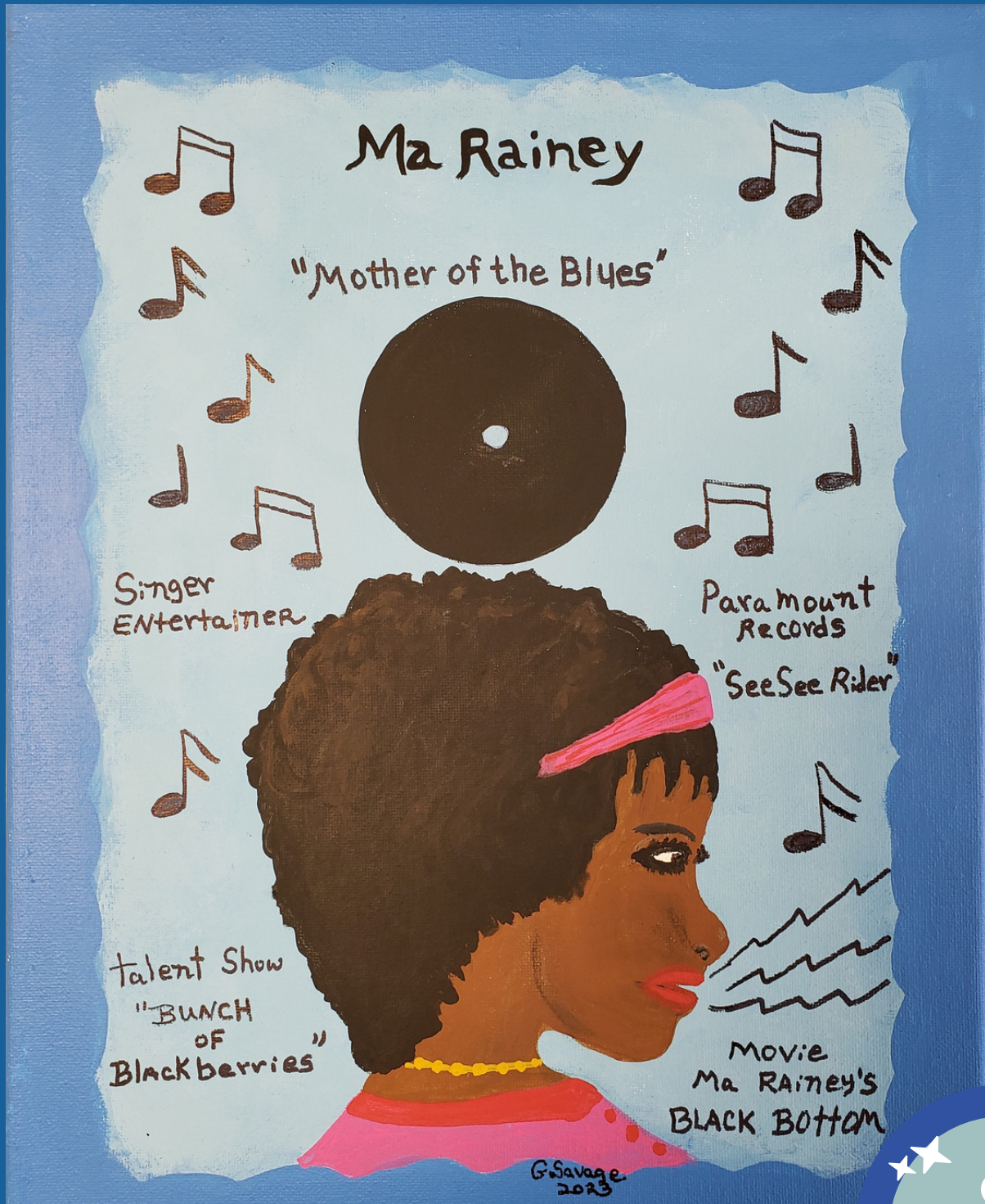


2ND PLACE WINNER

James Gleich



Visual Art: Adult



1ST PLACE WINNER

Gertrude Savage

