

# My musical paintings

Songs are colors splashing together in my mind – watercolors thrown together in splotches of pure instinct. The melodies are motifs that swirl and curl across the wide canvas of my mind. I will never cease to enjoy the deep, velvety blues and shining golds that pirouette from Beethoven's symphonies, or the rouge coils that spike and twist off the paper from harsh rock lyrics.

It is my perfect art: never finished, yet always there. I wish that I could delineate the untainted paintings from my head for all to see. I wish that all people could hear the colors as I do and see the songs as I do. Sight and sound are forever blurring into one elegant, always-incomplete masterpiece that I will never be able to live without. Songs are colors splashing together in my mind.

– VERI LAYLAN, 13, STOWE

# When the sky falls

When the sky falls,  
I'll catch it on my shoulders.  
When the sky falls,  
it won't weigh me down.  
When the sky falls,  
I will raise up my chin  
and await the clouds  
to float to the ground.  
But in reality,  
I'm not strong enough  
to hold the sky up when it falls.  
In reality,  
it will crush me  
into the shape of a pancake.  
And in reality,  
the sky probably won't even fall.  
But I still like to think that it will be me  
who saves it if it does.

– TAYLOR McCAFFREY, 13, BURLINGTON

# She was art

She lay beautifully,  
her long blonde hair  
cascading down her back  
in a way like no other,  
and that long silk robe  
covering more flesh than not.  
She was art.  
But not the type of art  
you see in museums,  
where you say, "Wow," and move on.  
No, she was the art  
that made you feel something,  
like that odd sensation in your chest  
that makes you think  
you're going to explode.  
So your breath hitches  
and your face heats up  
and your palms start to sweat –  
until your mind goes blank,  
like it's the end of the world.  
She was art.  
But I'm sure that was only to me.

– BEKKAH LAMBERT, 17, WINOOSKI

# Tiny write

I am building my character, I am  
earning my name. In the end, I'll swim in  
my own pool of fame. Be your own muse.

– JOCEYLYN SYSLING, 17, RICHMOND

# YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT

Young Writers Project receives hundreds of submissions on [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) from students across Vermont, the U.S. and beyond. Each week we select the best work for publication in this newspaper, and in *The Voice*, on [vpr.net](http://vpr.net), [vtdigger.org](http://vtdigger.org) and more. This week, we present responses to the challenges, *Synesthesia: Write about someone who tastes words, sees music and voices, and/or hears colors*; and *General Writing*.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Young Writers Project is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them improve and connects them with authentic audiences in newspapers, before live audiences and online. YWP also publishes an annual anthology and *The Voice*, a digital magazine with YWP's best writing, images and features. More info: [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) or contact YWP at (802) 324-9538.

## THANKS FROM YWP

YWP is supported by the generosity of foundations, businesses and individuals who recognize the power and value of writing.

If you would like to contribute, please go to [youngwritersproject.org/support](http://youngwritersproject.org/support), or mail your donation to YWP, 47 Maple St., Suite 216, Burlington, VT 05401.

Special thanks this week to  
**VERMONT STUDENT  
ASSISTANCE CORP.**

## PHOTO OF THE WEEK



SOPHIE DAUERMAN, SHELBURNE

## Would people listen?

They say write about something  
that makes you angry.  
They say write about something  
that makes you mad.  
But if I did,  
would people listen?  
Say I tried to make a difference,  
tried to make a change –  
would people listen?  
Say I was debating against a panel  
and had a great argument –  
would people listen?  
They say write about something  
that makes you angry.  
They say right about something  
that makes you mad.  
But if I did,  
would people listen?  
Would people listen,  
even if I were just a girl, a woman,  
who wanted her full equality?  
They say write about something  
that makes you angry.  
They say write about something  
that makes you mad.  
I did.  
Will people listen?

– MAISIE SCHNEE, 13, STOWE

## A peaceful place

Away in the wood,  
there is a place –  
a peaceful, calm place –  
where I sit.  
I sit and breathe calm, cool breaths  
under the crabapple tree.  
It's a place I can escape to  
when I want quiet,  
and peace, and tranquility.  
I listen to the birds  
and the nature around me.  
I like its calm stillness  
as I breathe in  
soft, meditational breaths.  
I go there to calm down,  
relax, and be listened to...  
by the animals,  
the world,  
and eventually my parents  
after they calm down as well.  
My dad knows about it,  
I know about it,  
Mother Nature knows about it.  
But no other living soul will know  
unless someone tells.  
And then I shall go back  
to calm down  
once more.

– DAGNE PIPPENGER, 11,  
SOUTH DUXBURY

# It's about time

What is time?

Most people will think of a clock when they hear the word. Others might think of space. When I hear "time," I think of how old I am.

Time is everywhere; time is in everything. Time is in a wall and the number of days that wall has been. Time is in your food and the hours in which that food was cooked or made. Time is even in you and your age.

There's a saying that time waits for no man – but I think that time is a friend. You grow up with time, and it is with you from the beginning to the end. Sometimes time can be a pain that people are stressed by, in its absence when they're finishing their homework or trying to get to work. But sometimes people need time, like time away from other people, or time to go home and see their families.

Do you like time? Or do you think that your time isn't very useful? Do you think you're wasting your time reading this?

Look at something near you: a wall, a table, a pencil. Then think of how time affects it. How old do you think it is? How long until it's not there?

After you notice that, look at someone you know and think about how their time affects them – how it might help them or hurt them. Go on, don't worry. I've got plenty of time.

Some people work with time, and some people don't even realize that time is all around them... or that without time, there would be nothing: no Earth, no Big Bang, no human evolution, no phones!

Now it's time for me to go. But first, what do you think when you think of time? Or how could your time affect you?

– MACIE STEINER, 12, BURLINGTON

# Make-up

I smile, my cracked lips stretching wide at my reflection in the mirror. A scarlet sheen glimmers faintly across the fissured, dry surface of my lips. Behind them, my teeth seem to hover uncertainly in the dark crevice of my mouth.

The girl in the mirror seems to echo my movements and her large blue eyes catch mine. A shimmering peacock-blue shadow dusts my eyelids and my lashes flutter about in the air like spiders' legs. I had thought it would make my eyes look enchanting and mysterious, but now it just feels stupid. My mouth contorts into a frown and the girl's face grimaces right back at me.

*Stupid, stupid little girl.*

An inexplicable grief settles in my stomach, and I reach for the makeup remover wipes on the counter. Tugging one out of the plastic container, a medicinal, artificial smell clogs up the bathroom. The wet napkin seems to bleed into my skin as I scrub it across my face. When I am done, the wipe is blotted with tints of glossy ruby-red and greenish-blue, and streaks of black. My face stings delicately, with red splotches marring it up.

Glancing back up into the mirror, my eyelashes are stubby and my eyes are back to their muddy blue. My lips are nearly grey and covered in large craters. I sigh and turn away, not noticing that the girl in the mirror is still staring wide-eyed at me as if she is stuck in time.

– EMILIE RAEGAN, 13, STOWE