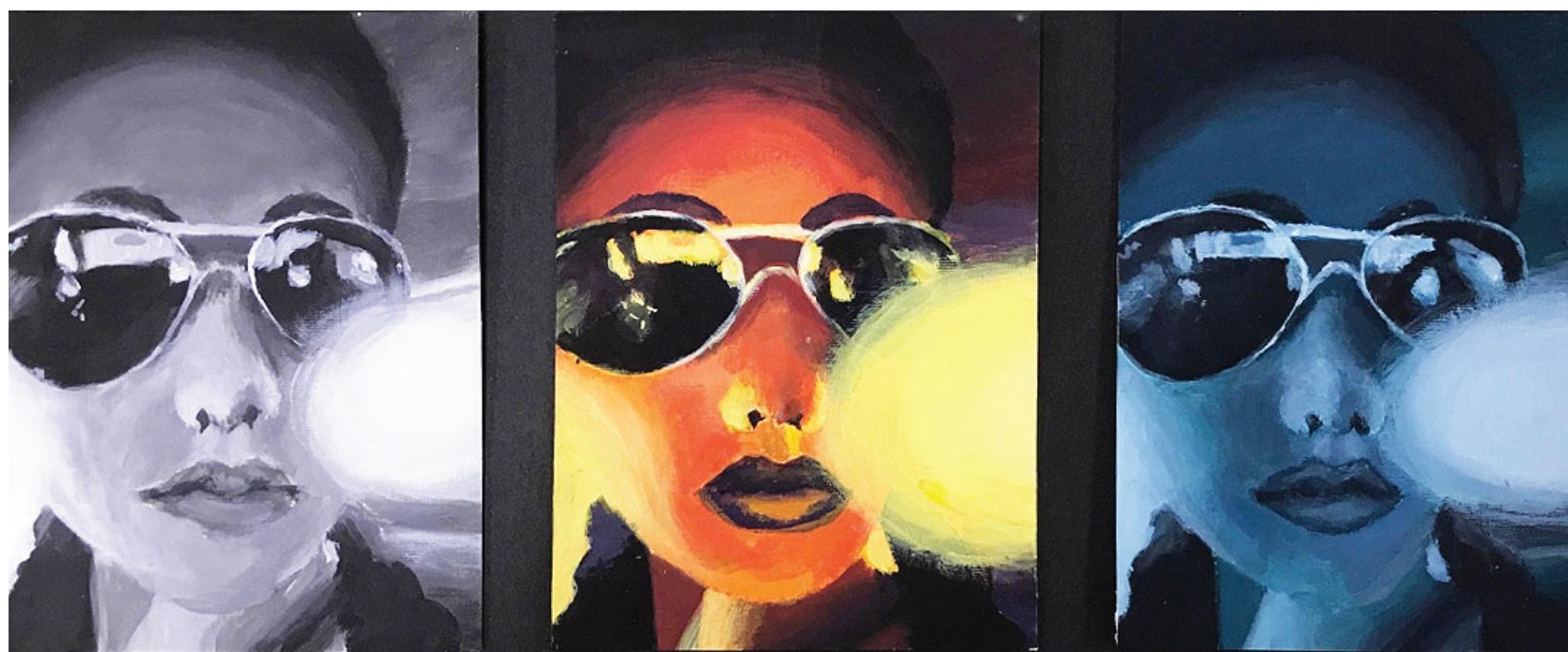


# YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT



"Self-portrait," by Vivien Sorce, 14, Hinesburg



## Climate change

There is more than just you on this Earth  
and there is more than just me.  
There is more than just us on this Earth.  
There is this: There is sky and stars and moon and sun.  
We explore them over and over, hoping to discover their secrets.  
There are trees we've planted, to grow big and real.  
Do we do that for nothing?  
There is more than *then*.  
There is more than *now*.  
There is *after*.  
Next.  
Soon.  
Future.  
What about dreaming?  
What about growing and accomplishing and living?  
What about fighting for something we believe in, standing up for our rights?  
What about us?  
The children of this place, this world, a world we have built?  
What about our future?  
Because you and I, me and you, we have not been around long enough to make this place what it is today.  
None of it is our fault.  
We deserve a future.  
It's going to be our future.  
There is more than just life on this Earth.  
There is more than just blood and breath and bone.  
There is more than you and me, us.  
There is this:  
There is laughter and tears and hope and words, and love and caramel and Rubik's Cubes.  
And what about rain?  
What about sitting through glorious thunderstorms, dancing as the wind whips your hair?  
What about resting in the arms of someone you love, laughing at stupid movies together?  
How about hoodies?  
Winter hats and hot apple cider?  
Won't you miss that?  
Because if we continue going in the direction we are going, there will be no need for any of those.  
There will be no snow, no glimmering colors mingling on rooftops.  
This is the reality of our existence. These are the horrendous parts we have created, that are disguised by the beautiful parts we've created. This is the reality...

— SIRI DUNN, 15, MORRISTOWN

## ABOUT YWP



Young Writers Project is a creative online community of writers and visual artists, based in Burlington since 2006. This page features highlights of the writing, photos, and art submitted each week to YWP's website. We invite all youth, ages 13-18, to sign up for a free account on [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org). Youth who are 12 may also join with a parental permission form found on the site. Teachers of younger students are encouraged to open accounts and submit work on behalf of their students. Join us and experience the YWP community: Create and connect with other young writers and artists, be inspired, and get published!

## No bows

I want to pull the ribbon of my emotions, my thoughts and feelings, out through my mouth, and tie it in a beautiful bow. But each time I reach into that well between my chin and collarbone, all I pull out is tangled string that is unruly and thin. It's the kind of string you can't tie bows with, and I am infuriated that my tongue stumbles over the knotted syllables and fumbles blindly with the mangled social skills. I wish to tie a bow with the words that I want to flow from my mouth, but all I have is a heap of intertwined threads that lie at my feet, mocking me instead.

— CALLYX O'DONNELL, 15, HINESBURG

## Just write

Start raw writing – from the soles of your feet, not the heart. For the love of god, ease off your delete button and unclick your undo. Close the thesaurus and the dictionary and the coffeepot lid. Let your mind go feral. If you are dark and cobwebs and fresh lacquer on coffins, tell me how hearts taste when pickled and sliced. If you are crystals and tarot and women with big, gray curls, write about how the waning of the moon reminds you of mortality. If you are swirled marble and Ionic columns and outdoor dining, praise Apollo until Greek choirs come down from the heavens. Rhyme or meter or tempo yourself with metronomes or meteors falling. Swallow lozenges so the words bubble up smooth and easy. All you have to do is begin.

— ZOE BERNSTEIN, 16, JERICHO

## The winter months

Stark trees extend their bare branches into November skies of steel, full of tempestuous clouds hiding buckets of flakes. Falling leaves become falling snow until branches are no longer bare, weighed down by this blanket in a perfect white balance that seems ready to shatter at any moment. Bright light radiates through my window when I wake up, whispering to me of the adventures to be had in this silent pine woodland. My skis carry me through the woods, frigid air filling my lungs to the brim, my breath painting pictures in the air as I venture into my white world.

The northern lakes are frozen in time, seeming to disappear when I am far. Islands wait, stagnant in the frigid blue depths, impatient to be filled again with tents and campfires and laughter. Windswept pine trees are frozen soldiers, their loose boughs no longer bobbing in the breeze, and it seems it will forever be this way, until the snow melts away in late May.

There is a hidden world under the ice, alive, constantly stirring, disguised by the snow and silence (or by my imagination), until I return many months later, navigating my red canoe through the green-canopied islands. The silence blankets the lake, seldom disturbed – maybe by the low hoot of an owl or a rabbit scampering across the ice. How lonely they must be, the solitude reaching far beyond the rocky shores, for I can feel it all these miles away. The yellow moonlight bathes the ice, lighting up a glittery blanket that follows me everywhere I go. It smells like it has been here from the beginning of time, yet surprises us, fresh and new, full of adventures, every year.

— ELLA CISZ, 14, WATERBURY

## The brothers nine

Once upon a sordid time, there lived the brothers nine in a castle, ivy-vined. Each did walk a deadly line. The first of them was power-wrought, through blood and war had he been taught. The second showed his colors true, rose one day and bid adieu. The third was a slippery fellow, hands of thieves and hair of yellow. The fourth spent his time in books, cunning for quiet is often mistook. The fifth had a heart of gold, mind of strength and eyes of old. The sixth lived all alone, striving, striving to atone. The seventh chose a life of luxe, with selfish heart and vain looks. The eighth had a dreamer's soul til' life's trials did take their toll. The ninth was hungry, to his bones, sought nothing less than power of throne. For these brothers, numbered nine, fate had come to break their ties. Blood is useless, does not bind, when only one can survive.

— HANNA GUSTAFSON, 17, SOUTH BURLINGTON

## Universe at its best

Giant orb in the sky, tiny flames burn in the night. A whisper from the open, golden moon shines. Stars sparkle in the dark, the universe at its best. Staring into the sky, a world too big to comprehend, a mystery too big to unravel.

— MIRAH LUTSKY, 11, WAITSFIELD

## HOW TO SUPPORT YWP

Young Writers Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that relies solely on grants and donations for support.

If you enjoy this weekly feature, please consider donating online at [youngwritersproject.org/support](http://youngwritersproject.org/support).

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## SPECIAL THANKS THIS WEEK



The Agnes M. Lindsay Trust