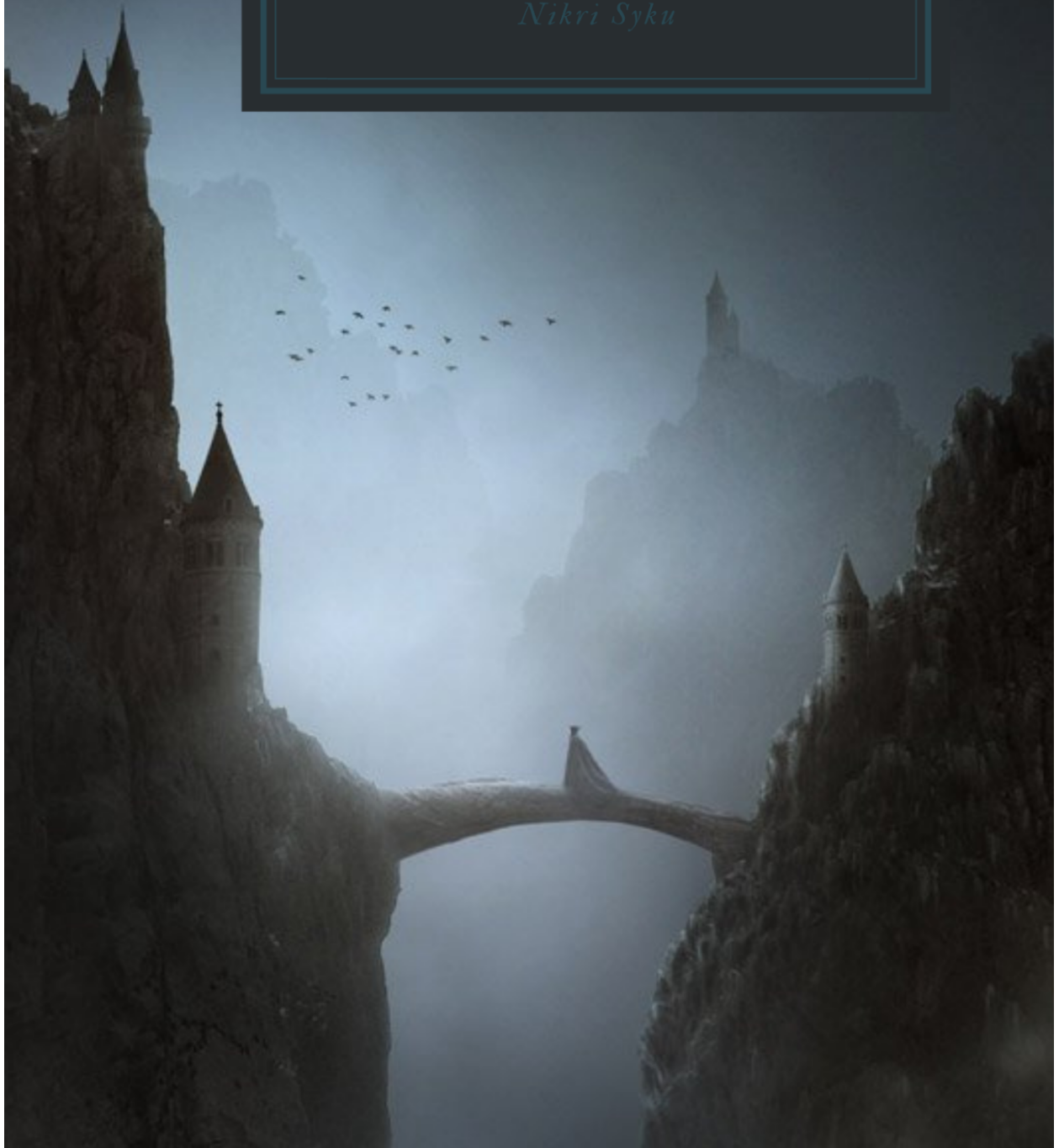


BRIDGE OF THE MIND

Nikri Syku



Final Reflection

Over the course of the semester I've learned many new skills that will stay with me and help me throughout my life, such as that I have high creative ability when it comes to creating unique fiction stories off the cuff but my biggest difficulty when it comes to writing is the planning/setup stage. When I can establish a core idea in my head and for a setting or premise I can write fast and easily as the ideas flow through my head. My main difficulty is if I have to write based on a set framework or medium that restricts due to taking me out of my comfort zone. These challenging mediums or guidelines where I struggled the most at the beginning was when needing to write dialogue, and when writing poems as I was relatively inexperienced with those. The class has helped me understand that I need to establish myself a clear template or baseline idea of how I will organize the writing piece and then I can go through writing easily even if I should struggle with a certain piece. A good example of this would be writing a dialogue assignment, which was something that I hadn't done before in my school life, this was a struggle for me mainly due to trying to make the dialogue sound natural and not robotic as a back and forth conversation. The class taught me to get through this by first setting up a central premise for the dialogue to be taking place in, a premise that can be interesting enough to write multiple lines of back and forth dialogue without making the speaking parties sound repetitive or like they are saying too little. I further learned to make the lines sound natural and non robotic by breaking the speaking sections down into sections, where each section will address an aspect of the overarching topic and be branched together with a natural sounding segways.

The class has also helped my writing skills when it comes to different types of pieces, as I would previously have most experience writing standard essay structured stories. One of the mediums I had the least experience with was poetry, I have always had trouble writing or analyzing poems mainly due to the relative lengths of poems. The poems always seemed too short to be able to write and portray an effective theme or story when I have been tasked with writing poems, and when analyzing them I ran into the problem of feeling like many poems are too vague due to their size. I have learned to write effective poetry by thinking of a wider idea and trying to compartmentalize it down to a poem format, plus I have learned that I don't necessarily have to make a point blatantly clear in a poem, and that they allow for a vagueness. The beauty of poems is that they can be so short yet still leave the reader pondering about what is being said and to extrapolate that into a much larger discussion.

The class has also helped me understand how to properly handle my writing time and write effective pieces in styles that normally wouldn't be my strong point. I can use this in the future in school and potentially work when asked to write something that would be out of my comfort zone such as a nonfiction story or writing convincing dialogue.

Challenging yourself is an important point in furthering your writing prowess and becoming a better writer to the point that you can feel satisfied with a medium that you would have been adverse to in the past.

Memoir

The first time I got introduced to playing musical instruments was during middle school in music class. In the class we were taught how to play acoustic guitar with beginner lessons like memorizing chords, holding picks, and basic strumming. The first song we learned to play as a class was "All Along the Watchtower " by Jimi Hendrix. As I moved past middle school I kept a desire to continue learning how to play guitar and get more advanced as a hobby. Through the years my musical taste shifted and I started to enjoy metal, specifically power metal and metalcore, which are more fast paced, and less heavy sounding compared to other metal subgenres. With my new interest I bought myself an electric guitar and amp, but I still had a high learning curve despite knowing how to play acoustic guitar. The electric guitar appealed to me more than an acoustic because it allows for a much more advanced and varying sound range that can be achieved thanks to the amp. These added ranges especially apply when trying to get more aggressive high speed tunes that could be heard in rock and metal as opposed to a softer slower pace that an acoustic guitar would be used for in genres such as pop and country. My biggest difficulty trying to play electric guitar was learning to switch between chords at a faster rate to keep a song's natural flow and having to memorize chords as I was trying to play more advanced songs than I did in the past. The first song I set out to learn was "Don't Fear The Reaper", I chose it as it was relatively simple with repeating chords but also it would provide a challenge for me to memorize chords and speed up my strumming as the beginning of the song has the longest riff so if I could successfully learn to play the beginning, then i'd be able to master the rest of the song. The process of learning it was mainly just trial and error of playing and failing then repeating, also listening to the song separately helps you where at some points you are able to know what chords should be playing next without really thinking about it, so somewhat of a muscle memory develops. learning how to play electric guitar reinvigorated my interest in music as It feels as if I have so much more I can improve upon and look forward to my progression

Short Story

The walking conditions were getting peskier as I trudged my way through some bumps and holes in the freshly soaked grass. My vision of the surrounding directions was impeded by thick trees and the moonlight's density. My ears were sharp and focused to any potential rumbling or shake of grass as I began to worry that I might encounter some rabid animal in these woods, but I doubt animal control would allow any dangerous dogs or others to roam so near to the city, especially considering there doesn't seem to be any wildlife they could feed off of in this terrain. I had simply turned a corner from the street pavement, vaulting over some bushes and navigating past an almost connected wall of trees to get here, hoping I could take a shortcut and cut some time, now I simply have to trudge straight forward, it shouldn't be long until I reach the other side. I shimmied down some more bumps and grass piles coming upon to my surprise a stream of water, except it wasn't running, simply a still stream calmly tucked away in this secret area of the woods, now I'd have to get my sneakers wet as I pass through it, I began pulling my jeans up to not get soaked as something strange came to my mind. The sun had already fully gone down and it had to be nearing almost midnight, but it's not pitch black out here, it's not like I'm walking in the middle of the city where no matter what time it'd be there would be plenty of light sources to provide illumination. It reminds me of growing up on my family's farm during night hours, even with the strongest moonlight there shouldn't be this much visibility, you'd be engulfed in an endless shroud of darkness. The wilds aren't like suburbia or urban living, it's supposed to be pure natural encapsulation with all of its downsides and worries. I pulled out my phone hoping to check on the time and see if I had wasted too much time, but to my surprise it won't turn on no matter how much I try pressing or holding the home button, I took the battery out and reinserted it but still the phone stays off. I know that the battery should be fully charged since I had it charging when I had just left home not even twenty minutes ago, but now my head wanders to another location as I try and think where I was going. I know I left the house, and took this shortcut to get somewhere as I was running late, but my mind cannot recall where I was going. I shuffle thoughts in my head, was I going to work? No that can't be it's already past midnight, but how true can that be considering that there is still so much visibility as if it's clear daytime. Maybe I was going to work, but now I wonder where I worked, and what my job is. I start breathing heavily and a thousand thoughts race through my mind as I try to piece together what is happening, one thought worries me the most, what is my name? John? Jacob? Michael? Steven? I can't think straight, my mind is pacing back and forth trying to piece together any kind of coherent history. I move close to the stream to splash some water in my face, trying to reinvigorate and calm myself down. As I lower my hands into the stream to grasp some clear refreshing water I look at my own reflection, as clear as a mirror. My own image seems to be the only thing I can still recognize. I raise my body feeling calmer, my thoughts now cleared and I look towards

the left where the stream flows down and the forest continues seemingly endlessly. I decide to follow the water, it makes me feel comfort in all this loneliness. I'm sure if I follow it there will be something or someone I come upon. I've continued the stroll for what seems like an endless parade. Now I cant even see a point where i wasnt following the stream, where it will take me i don't know, or if it will even let me debark at all.

Poem

Finally i gazed upon my mountains of pleasure

All i aimed for finally in my grasp

Lips frozen in a grinning contour

All below in my domain

All creation in my belonging, what has ever been and what will ever be

Still my Mind wandering, what have i not done, what have I forgone

Palms gilded but a subconscious hollow

All can be mine yet still feel missing

All things below the sky yet still a longing

A vault of wonders seems but a distraction waiting to lose its effect

Past memories reveal regrets and missed chances, none able to be obtained

All can be had except true want

Dialogue

Jeffrey: Bro you were supposed to tell her I was with you

Michael: what?

Jeffrey: Stephanie is pissed off with what you tell her?

Michael: I picked up my phone and saw she was texting me non stop asking where you were and if you were with me. I told her nah i don't know where you were. What happened?

Jeffrey: bro i told you to say i was with you

Michael: what are you talking about no you didn't

Jeffrey: yes i did bro when we left the track field i said if she asks or something just say im hanging out with you

Micael: Bro how was i supposed to remember that out of the blue since you told me like two days ago. I was at the studyhall anyway so it doesn't matter because she would have passed right by and seen you weren't with me

Jeffrey: Stop with the excuses dude now I look like a jackass

Michael: bro just tell me what happened

Jeffrey: I was at the house party. I didn't want her to know that's why i turned off my phone to just say the battery died. But now she knows i was nowhere usual and she found out i was there

Michael: bro thats so dumb why does she even care

Jeffrey: Because she found out from whoever she asked that I was making out with a girl at the party too, now she's not getting back to me and everyone is treating me like I'm a monster.

Michael: Bro how'd you think you were gonna get away with that you're insane

Jeffrey: no bro i didn't even think about it, it just happened in the moment. I saw her and was talking to her nothing planned, then later in the night i just went for it

Michael: wow you really make it sound easy lol, what are you gonna do now

Jeffrey: I don't even know, hopefully she texts me back or something but even her friends won't talk to me.

Journal 1

My closest friendship started off in freshman year of high school, going into high school I hadn't known anyone as none of my friends from middle school went to the same school. So I had to start off from step one of making new friends, which was always a difficulty of mine as I had trouble connecting with new people. I actually ended up meeting my best friend because he was a friend of a friend. At first I misjudged him and didn't think I'd get along with him. But after continuing to talk to each other and sit next to each other in classes it was a lot of fun, we'd always make each other laugh during the whole class and the time would go by fast. We met each other because of a shared friend and ended up getting along with each other, we shared the same classes, played basketball extremely competitively against each other regularly, and drove around. Even after we finished high school and went to different colleges, we still regularly get together and hang out.

Journal 7

The experience of writing poetry for me was somewhat intimidating because I've always struggled to understand poems or write them in an effective manner. The main reason due to their relatively short lengths making me feel like I can't write down what I'm imagining in a concise, effective manner, and when I read them I end up feeling they are vague and leaving me not understanding their premise. The assignment helped me to work through my struggles and see how to convey a wider story that I have in my head onto the short format of a poem. It helped me to think of how I can portray the same idea without having to write the usual hefty amount and in a different format. In the end I feel I was able to write a poem I was satisfied with and that challenged my writing blocks..