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## Letter from the Editor

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## Letter from the Editor

Working on the publication of the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Laureate* has been a notable highlight of my undergraduate studies. I owe a tremendous thank you to the contributors of this manuscript, both for their efforts on creating a body of work worthy of pride and for inviting us all to experience them as singular pieces and a cohesive entity.

The included poems, stories, and photographs create a fervent, united body connected inextricably by each piece's demand for expression and the urge to be heard. Bound within these pages is a transformative expedition where the reader will encounter genesis and decay, romantic tenderness and confrontations with existential crises, togetherness and solitude. There is anger, meditation, and exaltation. There is darkness and there is light, and in the ambivalent equilibrium between the bountiful polarities, the works on an individual level—and as a whole—ask the question, “Does art, love, and the desire to celebrate or express the human condition satiate the emptiness within us?” Consistently throughout this work, the answer to that question is a resounding, implacable yes.

As much as I'd like to take all the credit for this project for myself, that would be a massive exaggeration which no person should ever believe. This experience has given me a hint about the complicated and demanding publishing process, which requires dogged determination, concentration, and communication. Luckily for me, the assistant editors (and my wonderful friends) Mary Maroste, Maura Sands, and Kaylie Hanson were there to supply these necessities. This experience would not have been half as enjoyable, let alone possible, without their eager contributions.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Design Center for their collaborative efforts and experience. The Lee Honors College's very own Jane Baas was a consistent pillar of support. Furthermore, I'll rejoice in sharing my mountainous appreciation for Becky Cooper, who was not only there for every aspect of this collection's well being, but also my own. Thank you, Becky. I couldn't be more pleased with this collection. As an experience, I've learned as a writer and an editor, and my passion for the creative arts has flourished. I'm greatly indebted to everyone who has been a part of this process. I continue to enjoy this collection, and I hope you find the same satisfaction.

Nick Altì  
Editor in Chief