

The Monthly Squeak

Issue 5 - Fall '25

Featuring: curator
interviews

Salem travelogue

And animation news!



What has

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Been up to?

The **Crossroad Gallery** collaboration with MassArt is officially underway! The gallery is open from November 3rd through November 14th, with the closing reception being held November 14th at 4pm. All are welcome and invited to attend. The gallery was assembled with the goal of helping artists to meet other artists and to encourage the exchange of ideas. Thank you to everyone who submitted their work to be included in this show, we look forward to seeing you at the reception!

SGA continues to look into research on how our school can increase its efforts to be more **environmentally conscious**. While this is an ongoing effort, we have assembled a list of local resources that students can access should they choose to.

These include:

- Free composting with the town of Beverly, located behind town hall. Details and appropriate forms can be found on the town of Beverly website.
- Bottle returns through local supermarkets or the Beverly Redemption Center. Reduce your waste and get some money back in your pocket! About a 15 minute walk from the school.
- Green Beverly is a local organization that has a collection of ideas about how you can make small changes in your life to be more environmentally conscious with your waste.



GEN-Z avant- garde

An interview with curator *Piero Roque*
By Elliot MacDonald



EM: To start, what is the exhibition about?

PR: I had two intentions with it. The first was to re-examine self portraiture in 2025, and how we depict ourselves within the context of the internet. And the other thesis that came out of it was, how does the next art movement look, and how do I curate a show with young artists properly. Like in their right environment, and with the right audience in mind.

EM: With the title being the gen-z avant garde, what is the avant garde?

PR: I use avant garde because, historically- the literal translation of avant garde means advanced guard, which is obviously in reference to military terms, for the new guard to push forward. It's always been used for new artists or new movements that the art world is seeing becoming or evolving. And I certainly feel that there's something in line with all the works that warrants the title avant garde. So I'm using it to attract people familiar with the term and contemporary artists being like, "Oh, avant garde, really?" It's a very big term to toss around, but I felt confident using it.

EM: What was it like curating a mixed media exhibition, 4D works with paintings?

PR: Honestly, the curating aspect of mixed media didn't

come until really, to the start of the show. Because, as a painter, I was mostly familiar with painters and people working with visual imagery, like digital or painting. So my original show was just a bunch of painters. But I went to the "Room Party," a furry exhibition in Pittsburgh. And that being open to the variety of material there, from videos, sculpture, zines, photography. It was a whole range. And so it made me think, you know, I'm really gonna represent such a broad movement, I have to find other mediums. So that's where Elliott (Moore)'s piece and Lauryn (Tyler)'s piece came in, which are big projections and mixed media. I wanted them to be front and center to have their place in the show and let all the other paintings and digital works breathe.

EM: I thought it was interesting that, among paintings and traditional work, you have direct videos of, like, subcultures and memes, paired next to the art.

PR: It wasn't fully realized, but the show originally was going to have printed pictures of memes and fan art and digital art, pasted next to the artworks, so that they don't feel out of place and they can all sew in together. But in the end, we realized Elliott's piece went through a bunch of videos that already covered the subject. So we thought, instead of polluting the place with pictures, we were just gonna let Elliott's and Lauryn's piece, you know, swap in between videos of Minecraft and Subway Surfers.

EM: Is the like intention of that to position these things as a form of art and self expression, the same way that a painting is?

PR: Yeah, it's trying to validate it and make serious commentary on it. But also, not making it seem too, like, profound. I mean, at the end of the day, we're just talking about a meme, or a fan art. So it was to have fun with it, like how you would naturally engage with the meme in a funny way.

EM: Was this a student run exhibition?

PR: Pretty much. Lynn gave me the prompt of a self-imaged, like a self portrait show, but she pretty much let me curate, find the artists, and put everything in place. Even Madeline (McGann) helped me with that. So it was entirely student run, to find new artists with Ivy's help. But Lynn did help in the aspect of, like, if I had a question, I would run it by Lynn, and Lynn would give me her wise answers.

EM: Is this your first exhibition you curated with the school?

PR: Yeah, officially it is my first, but curating has been something I've been doing for a while, just not physically but more so on the internet

EM: Was it much easier compared to

curating on the internet?

PR: It was easier, in the way that I didn't have to think about the materiality, or worry about how we would properly install this. There were very direct 2D painting and drawing works, where you just put a nail on the wall and they were hung up. But the challenge was actually finding the work, because it was so spread out and new that to find the artist meant directly contacting them and directly working out a transport system with them. And it was a little hard at the time, because these people are all juniors, sophomores or seniors. They haven't graduated college yet and this is their first exhibition, so it was me curating for the first time, and them having to send their work for the first time. It was about trying to understand each other.

EM: The topic of a self portrait is interesting in terms of the exhibition because there's not a lot of like images of people in it. So what are you defining as a self portrait?

PR: A self portrait, to me, in 2025, is whatever you feel expresses you, in either the best way or the worst way possible. But it's no longer restricted to literally painting a face. That's not, it's not an old idea, but it's a changing idea. Now a self portrait can encompass your skin on an online game. It can mean your face through a social media filter, or with the use of AI to make the ideal you. It can also be a portrait of your Fursona, or an OC that you have that you feel reflects you better than



Laury Tyler

yourself. That is, I think, unique to this time period.

EM: Do you think part of that comes from the anonymity of the internet?

PR: Oh yeah. You make these characters because you want to be anonymous online. You're able to be something else online, maybe be taken more seriously online, maybe be who you always wanted to be. And even its ability to help you find who you are, like people who are trying to explore their sexuality and their gender, or what they like, what communities they feel welcome in. This is all helped by the aid of a character online.



EM: So do you think that this taking of attitudes on the internet, and art on the internet into the physical world, is how art is going to move in the future?

PR: Yes. I think people should be very careful and critical of the next step in terms of art and the internet. Because the internet isn't perfect. The internet, from the very beginning of its creation, was intended to serve the military industrial complex. So, of course, the internet is being commercialized and surveilled, and it's leaning towards a fascist control. So we should be very careful about what we say about the internet. Because, I feel like the artists in the exhibition have grown up with the internet, and we've had positive moments and we've had negative moments with it, but the internet is now a fact of life. So it's now time to adapt to the internet.

I don't think we should necessarily fight it, or bring it down, just, like, how can we use this for our purposes?

EM: I think there's something interesting, especially with AI, about taking something that references the internet but doing it in a physical medium. Like your painting that is like a screenshot from a video game.

PR: That was my work trying to explain to other Gen Z artists that, yes, we can work on the internet, but let's not confine ourselves to just painting a screenshot. Let's give it our own touch. Let's give it our own taste, our own story. Taking the internet, and then painting the image just exactly as it is- I feel like it says a lot about what you find special in the work, but it can also read as you just being like a printer, you know? You're not really adding anything to it. So, yeah, my painting illustrates that, and Katie (Dobberpuhl)'s piece. There's a poem next to her JD Vance piece, which is a beautiful collage with text that she took from chat GPT and tried to, you know, seem profound. But in the description, it's like, "this is me reclaiming chat GPT's response, because, since I have inputted so much on the internet, isn't it technically my answer too? Chat GPT is just sampling what it knows is out there, so is the answer everybody's? Is the answer our own? So it's claiming that with the internet, as manufactured and artificial as it may seem, we have our own touch in it. Making digital pieces online is what AI is still confined to, so as of right now, we're still able to make physical works, and that be our hand print. So I want to highlight that uniqueness in the works.

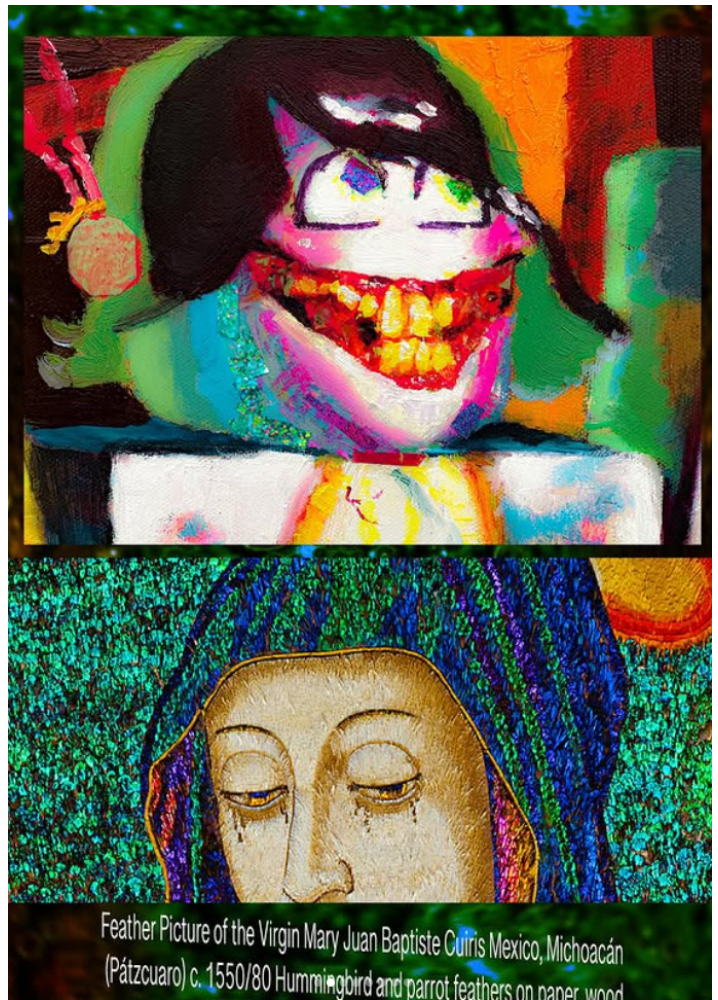
EM: There's also a lot of found media from the internet put into physical form in the exhibition.

PR: I mean, it isn't a surprise, a lot of artists in our generation are influenced by the 70s and 80s movement of using found materials and collaging them together. And the internet is no different. Like, what is the equivalent of finding cardboard or trash on the street on the internet? I think that would be memes, or really low brow stuff, stuff that you see so commonly. Right now a modern example would be, like, a crappy AI picture you find on Google images. That's trash. It's worthless, it's nothing. It could also be a meme, like, I don't know, a simple wowjack or a troll face you see so many times.

It's trash. I mean, it may be special to some, but it's so common out there that it is found material. So using it and remixing it, I argue, would be the same thing as assembling recycled material.

EM: How much influence did other people have? You said you weren't initially planning on using this much multimedia.

PR: I just kind of had to make it up myself, because there weren't a lot of exhibitions that I could bounce off of with the specific idea that I wanted to put on. But, I keep mentioning it because it's such a huge inspiration, Room Party: Furry art at the beginning of the world, was so eye opening for me. It did so many things to me personally, it was just something you don't see every day. I took a lot of it home with me, even keeping communication with the curators and actually speaking to the artists who exhibited at that show, to take some of the work with me to Montserrat to keep this flame going. So that inspired me to do the show. There's something really special happening, and I have the rare



chance to like input the next show immediately after.

EM: I know people in the college were excited about it, but how did people outside of the art youth react to it?

PR: When we showed this exhibition to the pre-college and the Bridge Program, which is the younger artists coming in here, I remember one of them said it was like talking to a friend. It was like, someone gets it, someone gets the sort of Gen Z language that we have. I did get other comments from people who were very worried about it. Worried that the internet shouldn't be brought into the real world, like this is something we should just just keep online. I don't know, seeing a wojack in public, I feel like, elicit some sort of visceral reaction. But overall, it was pretty positive from not just Gen Z artists, but Gen Z in general.

EM: I feel like the internet is already in the real world.

PR: Yeah, people just don't want to confront it.



EM: So the general thesis is not that anything is necessarily good or bad?

PR: It's just a fact of life. It just is.

EM: How do you think this is going to affect your personal work going forward?

PR: This topic has always been something I've been fixated on. I didn't find a mounting pressure to do it until early this year, when we all felt we had to rethink about art. On a personal scale, the exhibition and the research around it has made me more comfortable with realizing a furry identity that I've always wanted to be more public about. And, work wise, it's allowed me to be a lot more comfortable in what I've always been interested in, like fandoms and media that I've always adored. I can finally, comfortably incorporate them into my work, because now I've set a precedent that this is okay. Hopefully my work will encourage people to not be so grave and serious. It's okay to talk about these personal interests.

EM: People say don't put fanart or personal art in your portfolio, I feel like it's very looked down upon.

PR: I put fandom art when I was first applying for college and I got rejected by a lot of colleges. And it was only until, like, high school years that I realized I have to be serious. And the only way I could be serious was to squeeze out my indigenous identity. It was a wild contrast. I mean, when I uploaded my sonic fan art, on portfolio day at your high school, the representatives would be like, "this doesn't mean anything. We would prefer something much more serious." I'll never forget that. And, I guess, from that is where I attribute a lot of my discipline in the arts. Because I was like, I want to really be an artist, but it seems like I can't be because they're looking for something else. The painting last year [in sophomore studio] was sort of the culmination of me trying to be something and trying to sell out my identity to be taken seriously. But now I'm reflecting on my journey, specifically in art school, and how this has sort of been a barrier for artists who were like me and didn't have the motivation to keep going, because a no was just a no.

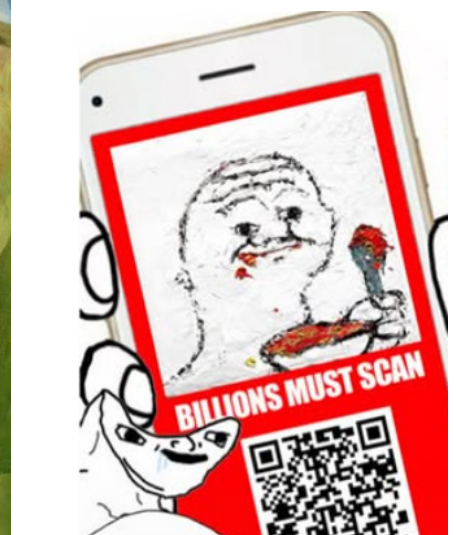
EM: Yeah, I found that the artwork

people really liked of mine that was inspired by something got so far removed from the original source it became this nebulous thing.

PR: Yeah but that's beautiful. You gave it your own taste and flair to it. You can call it fandom, and it's not your original character or media, but your interpretation of it is definitely something worth talking about.

EM: Do you have any closing words?

PR: With this show existing and then going away, it's not going anywhere. I'm going to try and make a permanent online place for it to exist, and not let it dwindle out.



Madeline McGann

Katie Dobberpuhl

Indie Animation Obscura

Spooky Month



Spooky Speed Round

By R.G. Bunny

Since we've officially entered the season of fall, we find ourselves eager to embrace the season by eating pumpkin spiced everything and watching seasonal media like *Over The Garden Wall* and *Hocus Pocus*. Indie animation is no stranger to seasonal classics, at least when it comes to autumn. In this issue's edition of Indie Animation Obscura, we'll look at both old classics and recent hits that are perfect to watch this Fall.

I would be a fool if I neglected to bring up Sr Pelo's *Spooky Month* cartoons. What started off as a silly, self contained Halloween short back in 2018 has since evolved into a dark comedy web series that releases a new installment roughly once a year. The series follows multiple intersecting plotlines, but the main characters are two Halloween-obsessed little boys named Skid and Pump, who are always either blissfully unaware of, or genuinely unbothered by, all the danger they put themselves in. While the boys continue to celebrate Halloween year-round, they manage to remain

at the epicenter of a conspiracy involving eldritch horrors, cannibalistic serial killers, and throwaway jokes you completely forgot about. With 6 episodes and 2 canonical shorts, and no evidence that the series is close to being done, it's safe to say we haven't seen the last of these crazy kids. If you enjoy shows like *Gravity Falls* and *Smiling Friends*, then *Spooky Month* is totally worth checking out.

A soundtrack can amplify the impact of an animation, but have you ever seen an animation amplify the impact of its soundtrack? That's exactly what projects like *Mystery Skulls Animated* (by Ben Mangum) and *Vampair* (by Daria Cohen) do by telling stories through fan animated music videos.

Ben Mangum uses the music of Luis Dubuc (aka Mystery Skulls) to accompany a group of paranormal investigators as the ghosts of each member's past come back to haunt, hunt, and help them. The high stakes and quick pacing of the videos perfectly reflects the fast tempos and rise/drop nature of electronic dance music. It makes for a story so engaging that, after more than 10 years since the first video released on YouTube, a dormant fanbase eagerly awaits for the next installment, which is supposedly releasing this calendar year. If you're a fan of *Scooby Doo*, or have a taste in



and the enormous impact it has made on the animation industry. The feature-length film follows a black cat trying to get to higher ground as the world completely floods over. This film made history earlier this year when it became the first indie film to win the Academy Award for best animated feature (marking the third consecutive year the award has not gone to a Disney or Pixar film). The film was made in a free 3D program called Blender, which is taught here at Montserrat. My personal favorite thing about the movie is that it has no dialogue, and is able to successfully tell a compelling story with zero language barriers. For those of you who enjoy having their favorite movies in disc format, *Flow* is available to purchase on DVD, Blu-ray, and 4K resolution Blu-ray through Criterion's website. Their film collection is pricier but provides the highest quality resolution, and might make a good holiday gift for fans of groundbreaking animation (I know I know, it's too early to think about winter break).

“Toon” in next month, where I'll be discussing my own experiences in making an independently animated pilot. Get ready to dive into the production process of an indie cartoon that'll premiere right here on campus.

Mystery Skulls Animated

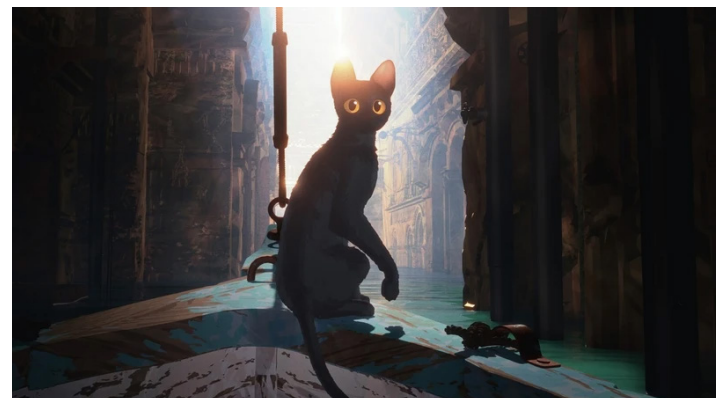


music that overlaps with songs used in 2010s animation memes, I highly suggest taking 20-30 minutes out of your day to catch up before the next video comes out.

Vampair is an animated music video series that follows Missi and Duke, a couple of vampires who want nothing more than to be rid of each other, but always seem to be stuck together. When Daria Cohen was working on her college thesis film, she reached out to composer/songwriter Aurelio Voltaire, asking for permission to use his song “The Night” for her film. He gladly agreed, and was in awe when he finally got to see the finished film when it was uploaded to YouTube in July of 2016. After the success of the video, Cohen continued to make music videos following the pair, and frequently used more of Voltaire's songs. Earlier this year, she launched a kickstarter to turn the story into an official animated pilot. The campaign ended, but the goal was surpassed and the pilot consequently greenlit. Having had his macabre music and vocals represent Duke for over nine years now, it only makes sense that Aurelio Voltaire has been officially cast for the role.

Though it's not exactly enhanced by the season, I feel the need to once again discuss the 2024 film *Flow*,

Flow



Field Mouse Salem



Elliot MacDonald

For October and November, we decided that I should cover Salem, in preparation for the influx of tourists. Salem can be, in my opinion, a bit much, and I'd like to give students a small impression on what they'll be getting into next year if they haven't yet attended. Last year, over one million people visited Salem during October. I'm usually not one for all of the touristy Halloween stuff, but in hearing from other, spookier students, and exploring the city a little bit, I've found plenty of places that I like exploring.

The main streets are right near the train station, with Essex Street, where many of the witch and horror-related shops are, being a block away. The area in general has the most foot traffic, with places like Artists Row nearby, which has professional printmaking and glass schools, and the many streets off of Washington that hold artistic shops. The Peabody Essex Museum is also on that street, though if you want to get around the worst of the crowds you can get there via the side streets.

The Peabody Essex Museum, or the PEM, lets students in for free with their Montserrat IDs, so popping in to check in the seasonal exhibitions is easy. One of our teachers, Jiyeon Kim, is the curator of Korean Arts, and has a photography room that just went up this summer. I remembered some of the exhibitions from last year and not others, though the museum's so

big and covers so many topics that I'm not sure what I've seen before. They have exhibitions for every major, including fashion and design, which can be rare for art museums. Their current special exhibition, for example, is on international designer Andrew Gn. The exhibition is in a large circular series of rooms with clothing pieces presented like they're in a shop on the runway, along with information on the designer's life and quotes from him. They also seem to have expanded their glass collection, for the sculpture students.

There are benefits to tourism, of course. If you're interested in witchcraft, paganism, or anything esoteric or non-Christian, you'll be able to find things in Salem you won't be able to in Beverly, or most towns in general. Which specific shops, books, or objects feel touristy and which feel authentic is not something that I can recommend for you. You'll have to feel the vibe out for yourself. But if you have even a passing interest in those subjects, this area is the one to take a peek at. If you're going to try and use the object-specific shops in Salem to your advantage, I would recommend knowing what you want before going so you don't get



Andrew Gn Exhibit



PEM Photography Exhibit

overwhelmed. If you find it difficult to find esoteric books in your budget, both the school's library and Beverly's library have books on the topic, the relatively accepting views on witchcraft possibly bleeding over from Massachusetts's folk history and Salem's modern influence.

There's also a lot of events in Salem, all the time. There's a large cinema and various music performances, even "haunted magicians" if that's more your speed. I even saw a flyer for the local Satanic Temple's comedy night, so there's shows you won't get anywhere else. With a large population comes festivals, so I would keep an eye out throughout the year. There are also a lot of smaller museums outside of the PEM on history and horror, along with the historic block and cemetery, and the ghost tours. Maggie (of SGA and the newspaper club) recommended Die With Your Boots On, a clothing store with more alternative and goth clothing, along with Thistle Piercings and a crafted goods store called Hive and Forge. She also mentioned the Night Faire, a large event in Salem that happened a few weeks ago, which I attended. It includes over 50 vendors, along with spooky actors giving out runes and cards, storytelling campfires, and general Halloween things.

I think it's useful to keep Salem on your radar for work, more than anything. There are a lot of reputable tattoo places, for example, and Montserrat students have interned at places like Black Veil. There's also seasonal jobs via the haunted houses and tours, and the PEM opens up internships applications every semester, the head of which is an ex-Montserrat teacher. There is more work there for artists compared to Beverly, from what I've seen, especially if you work with mediums

like printing and design or minors like art history. If you're not a fan of big crowds and want to hang away from the main streets, the town, in general, is a very pretty place to walk around. The harbor has a beautiful lighthouse that you can walk out to, and the cobblestone neighborhoods have charming old houses you can explore in relative silence. The churches are aesthetically pleasing, and farther from the train station there are city parks. Food is a bit more expensive there compared to Beverly, from what I've seen, and in October the waiting lines get long.

Salem is an interesting place, and people come from all over to explore its unique shops and events, while we live right next door. If you get anxious amongst strangers you might consider skipping October or going through Salem away from the main street, but if not, then I'd recommend keeping tabs on the city.

Night Faire



Kelly Chan's Salem 2025
(Bastah.com)



Exploring Beverly

by R.G. Bunny

1 *Marias*: Pizza, subs, etc. Offers a student discount.

2 *Copper Dog Bookstore*: Locally run. Does best to have MCA's assigned reading.

3 *Paper Asylum Comics*: Locally run. Offers internships for MCA students.

4 *Dane Street Beach*: Great place to brainstorm/ think uninterrupted. View for watching sunrise

5 *Little Italy*: Pizza only. Sauce is sweeter. Closest school building is 301 Cabot.

6 *Whats Brewin*: Coffee & breakfast foods. Offers student discount. Cheaper prices & shorter wait time than Atomic Cafe.

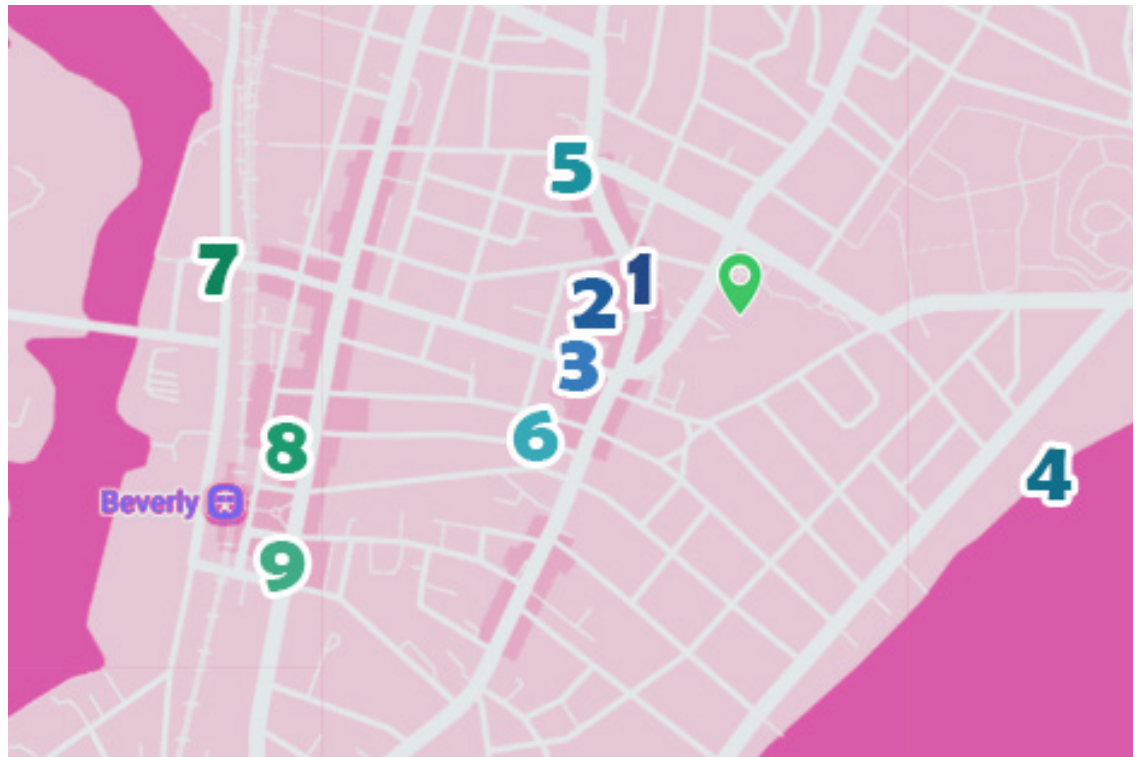
7 *Legal graffiti wall*: Entrances at the end of West Dane St, and Joe's On A Roll (walk straight down Federal St).

8 *Beverly Bootstraps Thrift*: Casual & formal clothes. Wide variety of genres/formats of physical media.

9 *Harbor sweets*: Candy & ice cream shop local to North Shore area. Original location in Salem



* There is also a farmer's market every Monday afternoon in front of the train stations!



The Monthly Squeak

Issue 5
Fall '25

Note from
the Editor



Journalist:
R.G. Bunny



Editor and SGA:
Maggie Barrett



Editor-in-Chief:
Elliot MacDonald

You may have noticed that the newspaper missed a month for the first time. Unfortunately, my laptop died with last month's issue on it, and I needed a month to re-do it. But we're back in business in time for the last issue of the semester in December! It's going to be a good one. It will also be your last chance to submit to the newspaper before winter break. I hope everyone had a good Halloween (I watched the Conjuring 2 with friends and enjoyed it- no word yet on the Conjuring 1), and I hope that you've all adjusted to the new grade year.



Submissions



Discord

