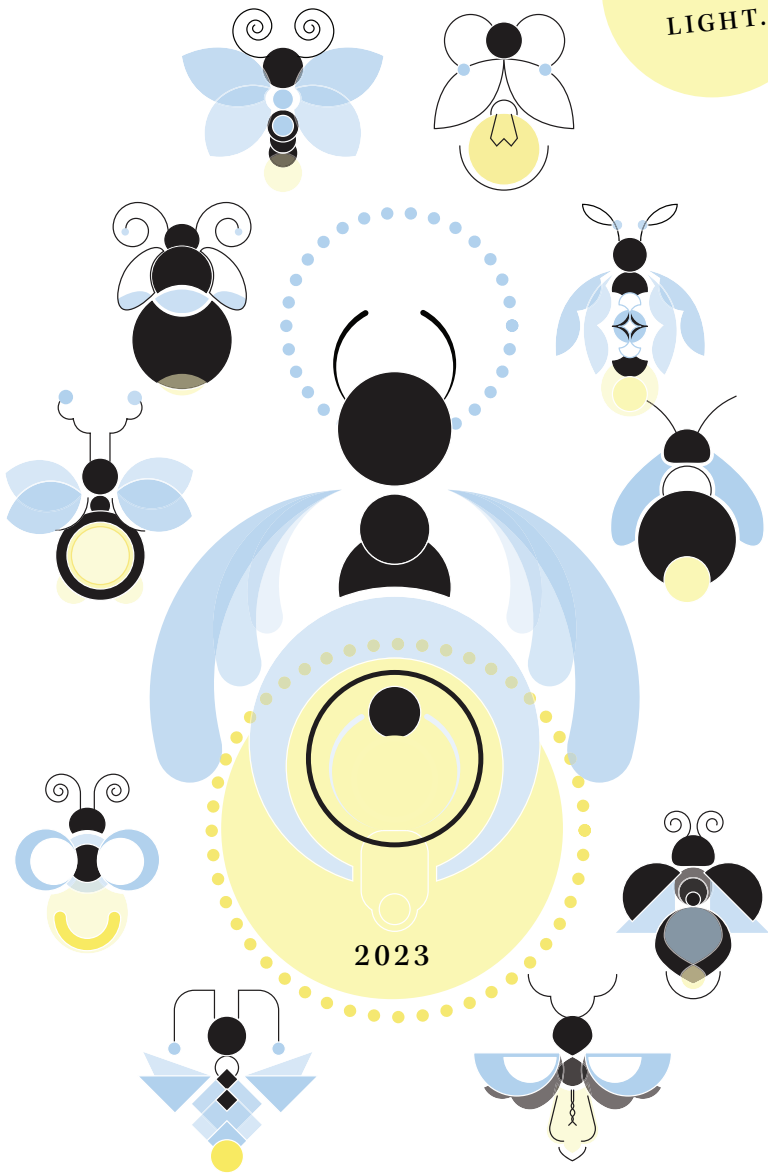
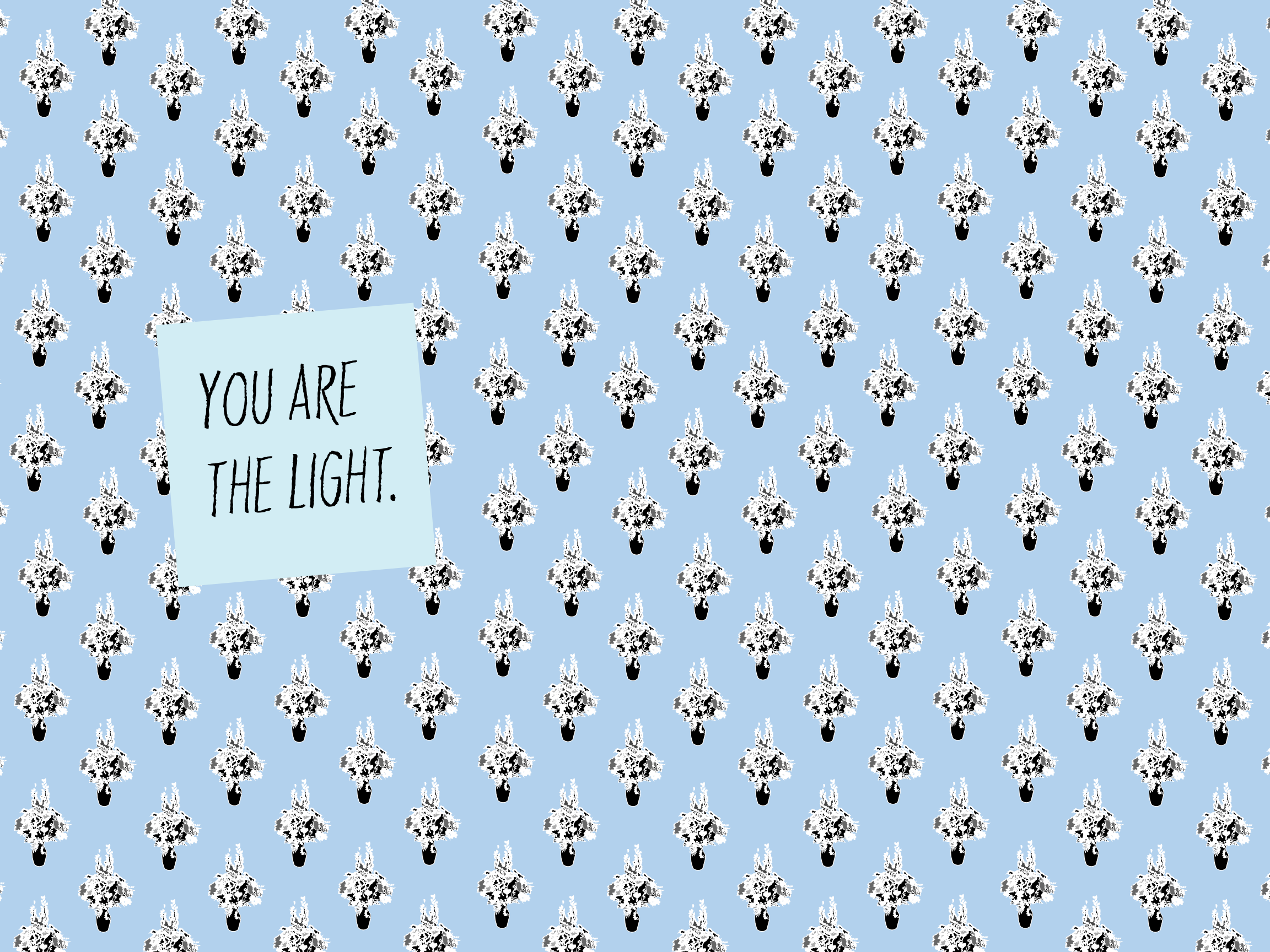


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Lit Mag



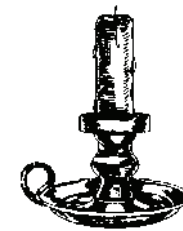


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LITMAG
OF
UMSL

2023



LIGHT YOUR OWN CANDLE.



DEAR READER,

Welcome to the 2022-23 edition of *Litmag*. I am so excited for you to dive into the work submitted by our 47 talented contributors. Some have already shown their work to the world before, while others are publishing for the first time—either way, I congratulate all of them for their incredible pieces. I also must praise the hard work of all the editors and art students alike who put their heart and soul into assembling *Litmag* this year. Witnessing their passion for this project has truly been one of the greatest pleasures of my adult life.

Last year's editors of *Litmag* aimed to embrace the middle ground between “pandemic times” and “back to normal.” This year, our editors collectively acknowledged that things may never fully be “back to normal,” but we agreed that our readers deserve a little peace—something to enjoy even when times are uncertain. For many of us, literature continues to be an escape from the harsh realities of the world around us, giving us hope, relief, and the belief that everything's going to be okay.

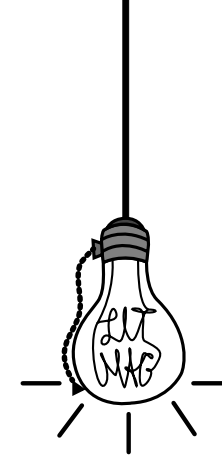
The stories that were shared with us this year made us laugh, think, and connect with one another. We read our favorites over and over. We took notes and sent texts about the lines we loved. We debated over the meaning of metaphors. But most of all we reveled in the comfort of escaping into someone else's perspective.

We tried to recreate that feeling in this edition. Whether you're a lover of science fiction, romance, thrillers, political satire, humor, even prose about winning the lottery (a niche genre, but one nonetheless), there's something in this book for you. And we encourage you, reader, to make this edition of *Litmag* your own.

So, get comfortable and dive in: read, take notes, doodle, highlight, write your own poetry in the margins, loan it to a friend, crease its corners, flag your favorites, or tape them up to your wall — make this book your escape for a while, and love it to death. It'll love you right back.

REBECCA HANNEKEN
— **Editor-in-Chief**

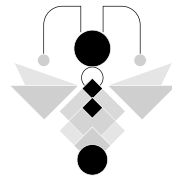
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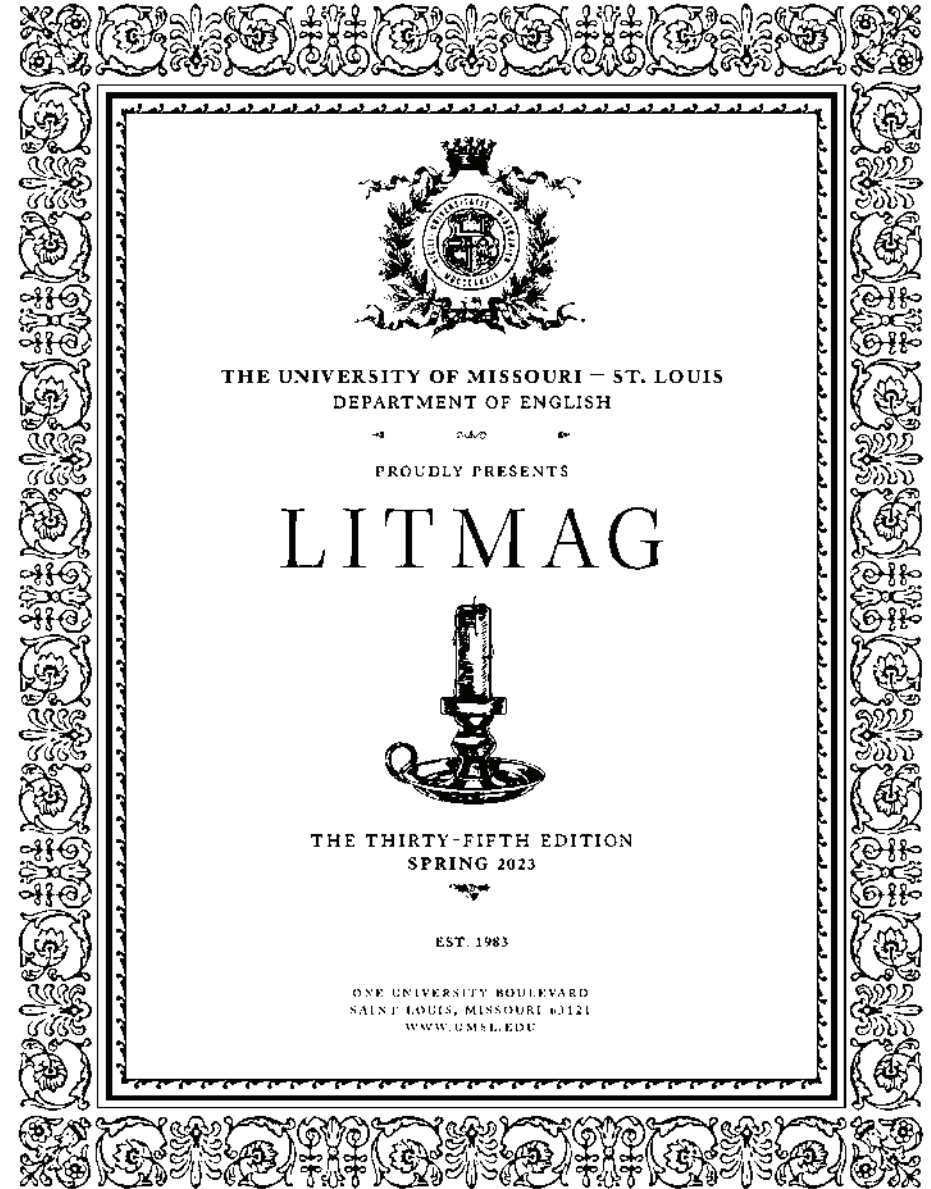
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PLEASE TAKE THE TIME
TO READ THIS IN A WAY
THAT MAKES YOU GLOW





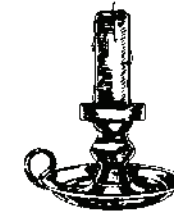
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LITMAG



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We extend additional appreciation for the support from Dr. Suellynn Duffey, English Department Chair, Chris Schott with the UMSL Writing Center, Scott Gericke in the Department of Art and Design, Blaine Milligan, Phillip Voglewede and Simon Axley in the English Department office, and James Karslake in the Lucas/Clark Work Center.

We'd also like to show our appreciation for the help provided by the first ever pre-production *Litmag* class from the Fall 2022 semester. Advised by Jeanne Allison, professor and writing certificate program coordinator of the English department, staffed by Winter '22 graduates Kiana Bates, Martha Corbalis, and Sean Zimmer, undergraduates Bella Cortese, Tyler Hayes, Elio Hollenbeck, Zara Konstapel, and Alyssa Mitchell, and graduate student Taylor Weintrop.

A huge shout-out to *Litmag's* staff photo photographer, Aaron Anderson, an honors student majoring in information systems. Check out his photography business: "ronthevideographer."

Extra special thanks to Elizabeth Buchta, *Litmag's* Graphic Designer/Layout Editor and Assistant Teaching Professor of Art in Graphic Design here at UMSL.

And last but most certainly not least, a huge thank you to all the authors and artists who contributed to this publication, as well as readers like you!

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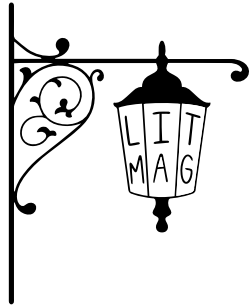
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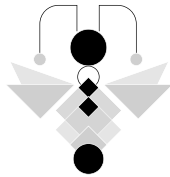
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GRACE TO SHINE



DEDICATION

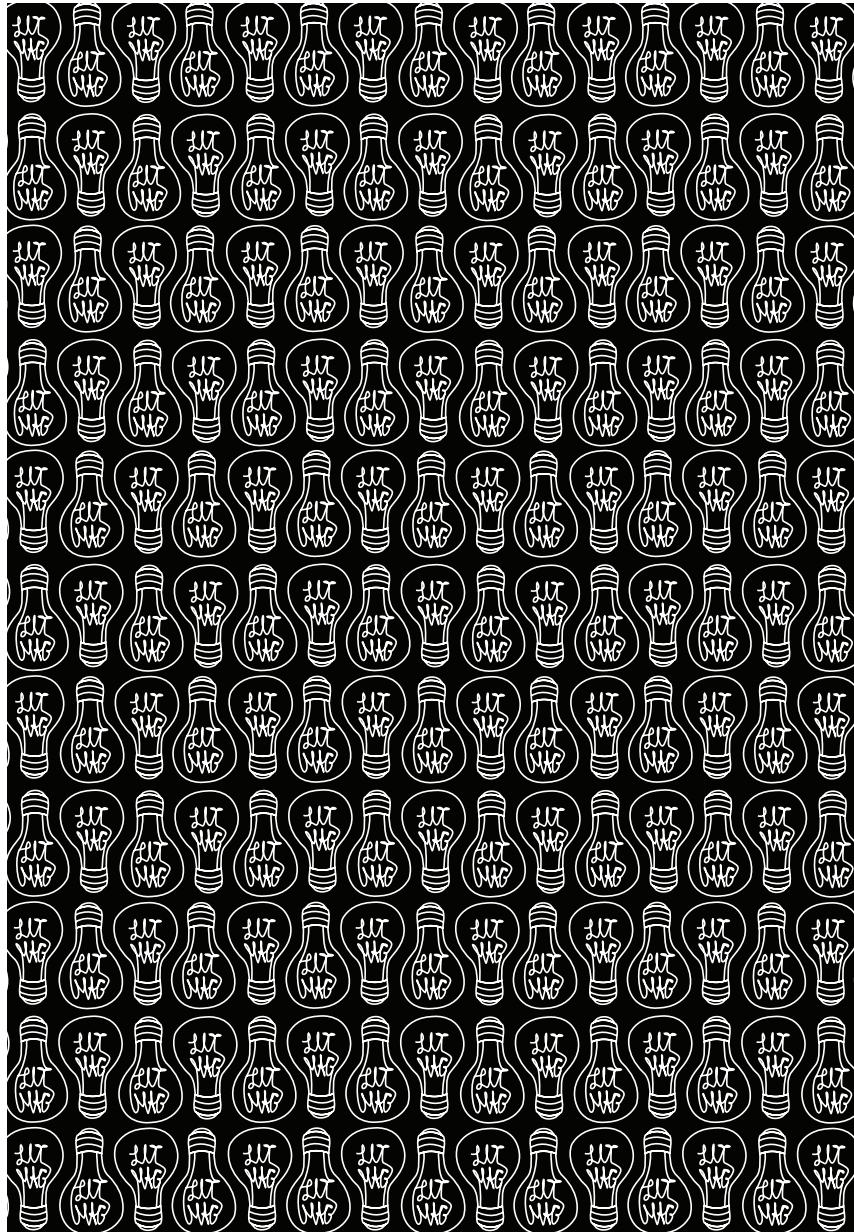
Litmag 2023 is dedicated to Professor Elizabeth Buchta, the Graphic Designer who, along with her design students, took in so many different ideas and suggestions and brought them to life. She invested so much of her time, interest, and effort to help us articulate our varied styles, themes, and goals. Thank you for your beautiful perspectives and ideas, thank you for helping us create something we all are proud of! Thank you, from all of us.

This year's *Litmag* is also dedicated to Professor Kate Watt, the Faculty Advisor for *Litmag* for 10 years running! She has fearlessly carried us through all that comes with producing an award-winning literary journal as she has lent us her knowledge, suggestions, and support. Thank you for all the valuable lessons. Thank you for keeping us on task when it was so easy to get off-topic. Thank you for lending us an ear when we had big ideas and a hand when we needed guidance. Thank you for encouraging us and telling us that our wild visions were attainable, even when we suggested inviting Paul Rudd to our launch party. (We haven't heard back yet, but there's still time!) From all of us, thank you for being you!

STAFF OF *LITMAG*.

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PATTERN BY LINDSAY WOLTERING

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NOTE ON CONTESTS

Litmag sponsors five individual contests for best poetry, best fiction, best creative nonfiction, best multilingual writing and best artwork. Winners for the categories of poetry, fiction, nonfiction and art were determined by the lead editors using editorial staff voting scores. The multilingual winner was determined by the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies faculty.

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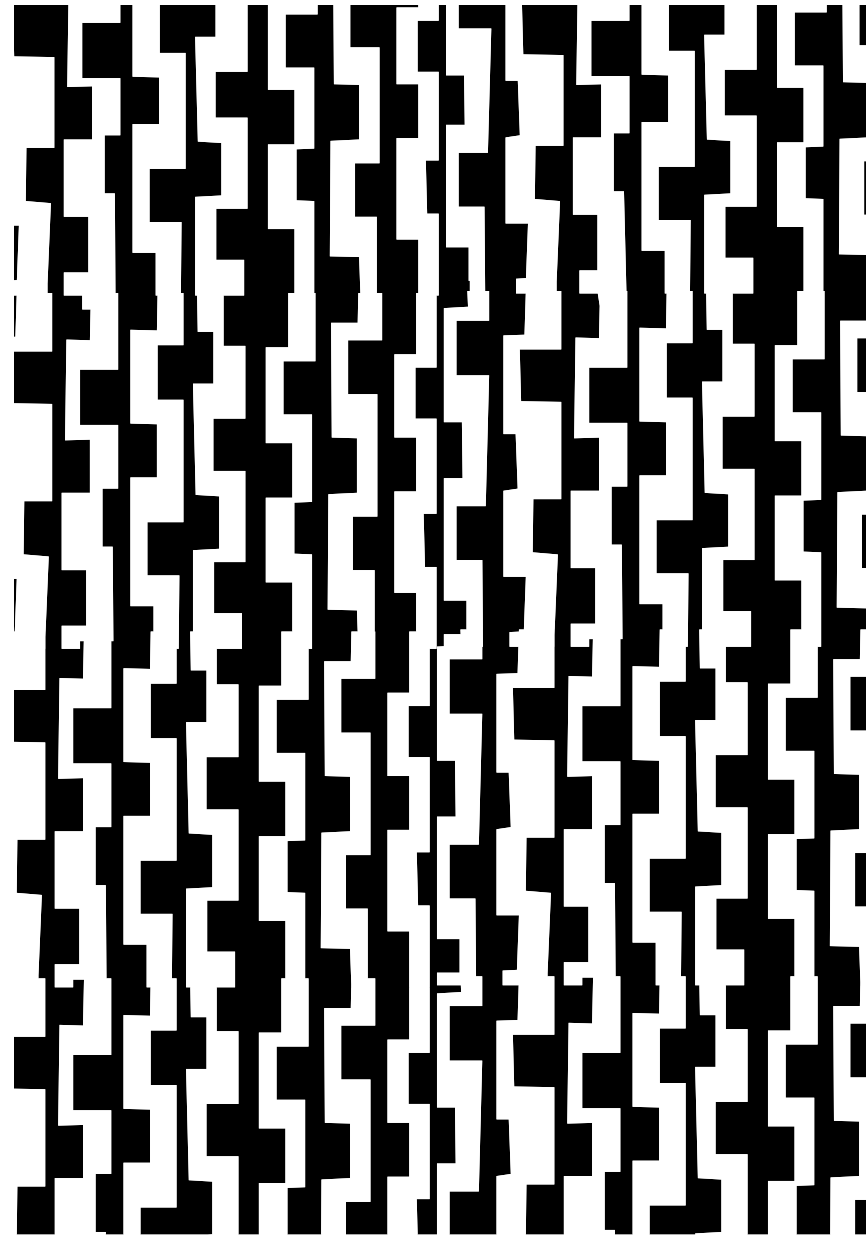
Submissions are open to all UMSL students, faculty, staff and alumni. All submissions are reviewed anonymously, and selections are determined after thorough discussion by the editorial staff and faculty advisor.

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Creative work solely reflects the views of the author and not necessarily those of UMSL or the English Department.



PATTERN BY TINA HYDE

I.
HOPE IN UNCERTAINTY

poetry by Zachary Pratt

And so the day turns over

Another dawn

Another dusk

In the night sky,

The stars seem a little bit dimmer

As of late

The sunrise

Just a little cloudier,

With just a little more rain

The people, too,

With their eyes on the ground,

Seem a little gloomier

No news is good news,

But there have been non-stop headlines,

Today is no exception