



Favourite Things

An exploration into the meaning of value held
in our most prized possessions

written and curated by Chloe Silver

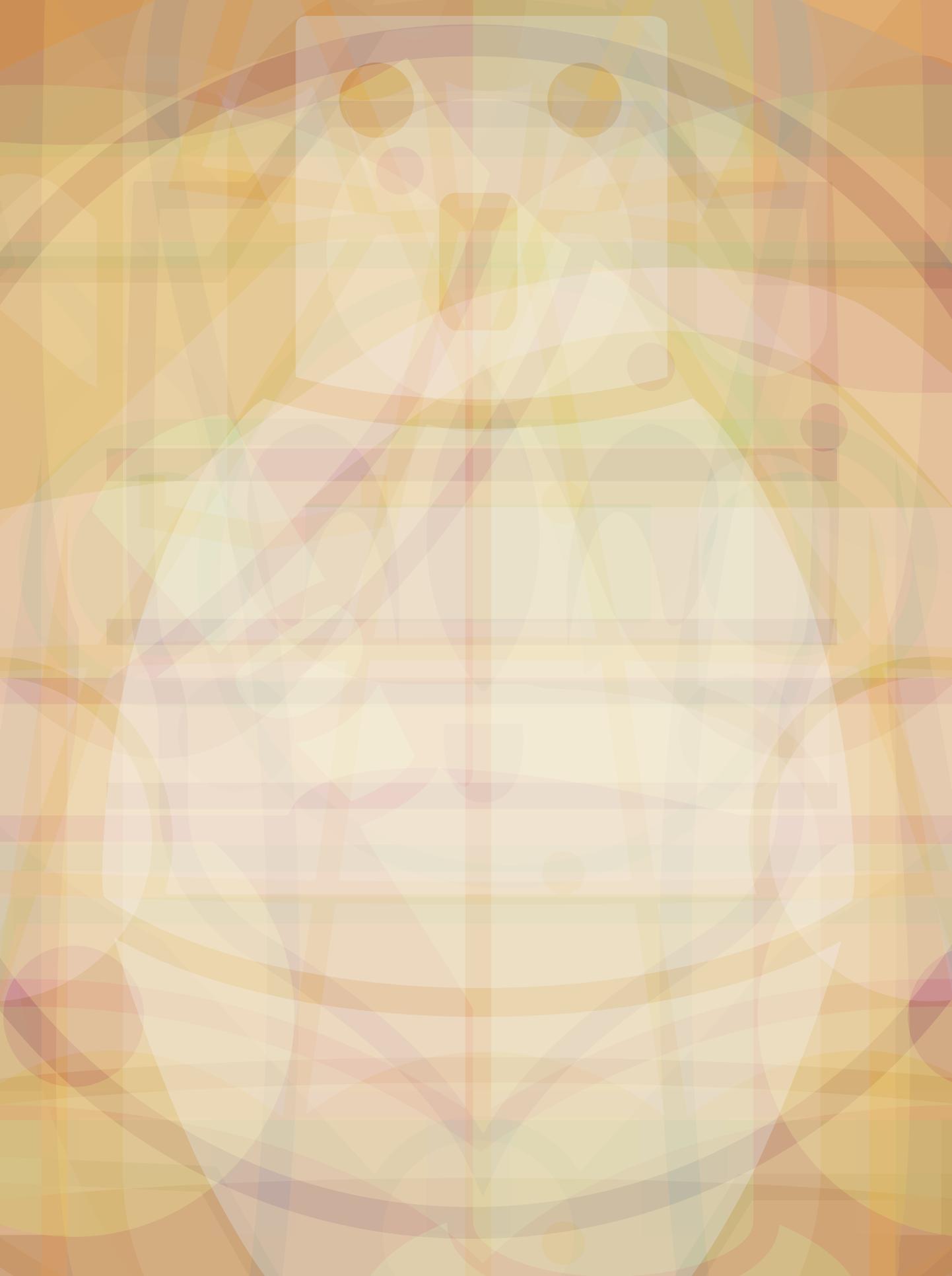


Favourite Things

written and curated by Chloe Silver
between September 2014 and March 2015

a lifelong project, begun but a moment ago





Dear Reader,

Before you begin exploring this catalog, I feel that it would only be fair to warn you about what you're about to read. Like other catalogs, this book in your hands lists and describes a collection of objects. Unlike other catalogs, these objects are not for monetary sale. These objects are not awaiting your decision to buy them; they already have owners.

Like other catalogs, this book offers a collection of things for your perusal. Unlike other catalogs, that collection of things does not exist on a tangible plane. This catalog presents a history of a collection of objects. Its pages hold the stories of where those objects came from, who owned them, and what happened to them throughout their existence.

The objects in this catalog do not carry a value that is discernable at first sight, but as you read the stories behind them, you may come to understand that the obvious value in an object may not be the most meaningful way to describe it.

You may also wish to visit the online sibling of this print catalog. There you will find a different sort of experience of these items that the digital form can offer.

The website provides a more in-depth look at the infographics, which become interactive data visualizations with the aid of coding from the D3.JS library.

You can learn more at:

chloesilver.ca/favouritethings

Regards,

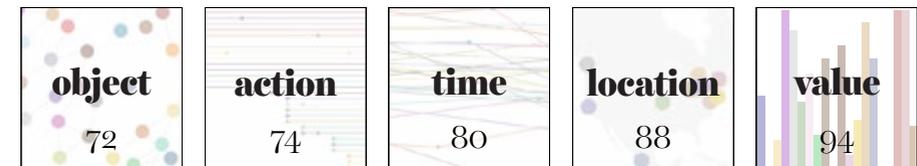
Chloe Silver

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Part One:

Memory &

Abstraction

The following pages contain an assortment of objects and their stories. These objects are not displayed in a straightforward way, but visualized through the memories in which they are contained. The words and imagery presented to you is meant to paint a picture of each object as it is experienced by its owner on a daily basis.

Feel free to read through the section in any order. The pages are cut in half so that you may contrast and compare each story. People see objects in different ways depending on many factors, and you may find that your opinion about these objects may change with the more you read.

You can get a different look at the stories inside the digital companion piece at:

chloesilver.ca/favouritethings#stories



My grandmother brought this lamp back from Mexico in 1977. It is handmade from glass and very breakable, but also very big, so she had to sit it on her lap for the entire flight home. I am sure she thought it was worth it afterwards. She brought it to the home I knew very well, on Roberta Drive. It was hung in the corner of the room above a table with a jar that always had some kind of candy in it. I wonder if that candy was meant for when her grandchildren would come over or if she ever ate any of it herself.

Both my cousin Laura and I always talked about how much we loved the lamp. When my grandmother passed away in 2007, my grandfather moved into a home for the elderly and we had to divest of a lot of their stuff. Of course, the question popped up of who would get the lamp. Both Laura and I wanted it, of course. We played rock-paper-scissors for it, and I won. I still consider it the highest stakes game of rock-paper-scissors that I have ever played.

I keep it in my bedroom now. I don't turn it on much, but I do look at it a lot. I admit that I don't care so much about its style and the bubbled glass panels. I care more about the stories behind the things I choose to keep than where they came from.



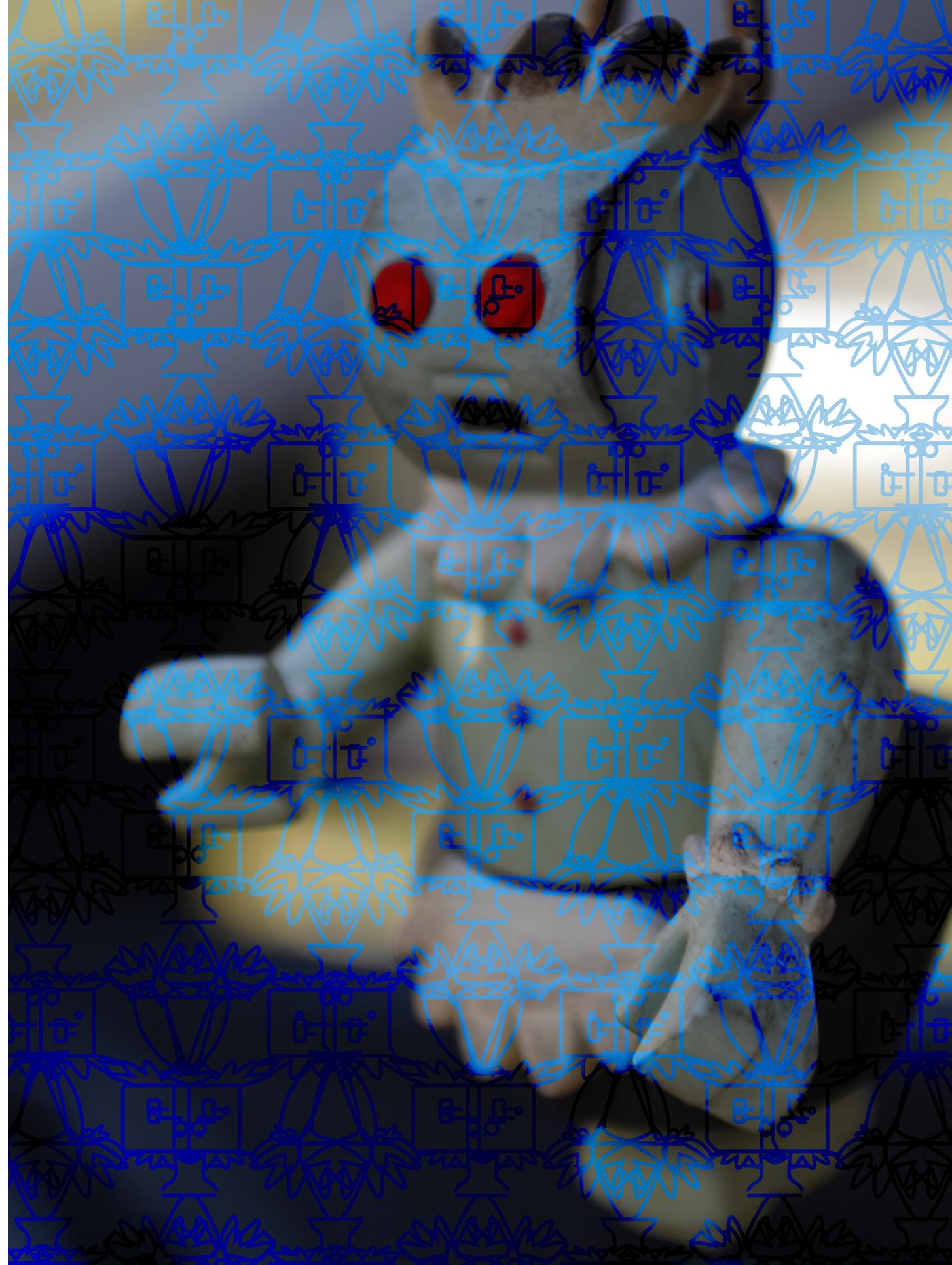


I got this keychain from a treasure box at Swiss Chalet with my daughters. I love those nights when we all go out for dinner as a family, which doesn't happen quite as often anymore. It was really cool to be able to pick a toy that my daughters had as well.

I wasn't a huge fan of the Jetsons as a kid but in hindsight, I think Rosie is my favourite character. The way she emoted in a weird robotic way, like her mouth lighting up or the dials in her eyes turning, was so funny. The way she was dressed like a maid, kind of like Hazel. Rosie was the underling, but she had the snappiest lines in the show.

I keep Rosie hanging from my rear view mirror. She always faces forward and has been my low-budget GPS through four cars and at least twice as many years. I like the way she dances when the car is moving.

Obviously, it's not just the character that the toy symbolizes. My favourite thing about Rosie is that she reminds me of my daughters' childhoods and being together as a family. I like to keep little items as memories of pleasant experiences.



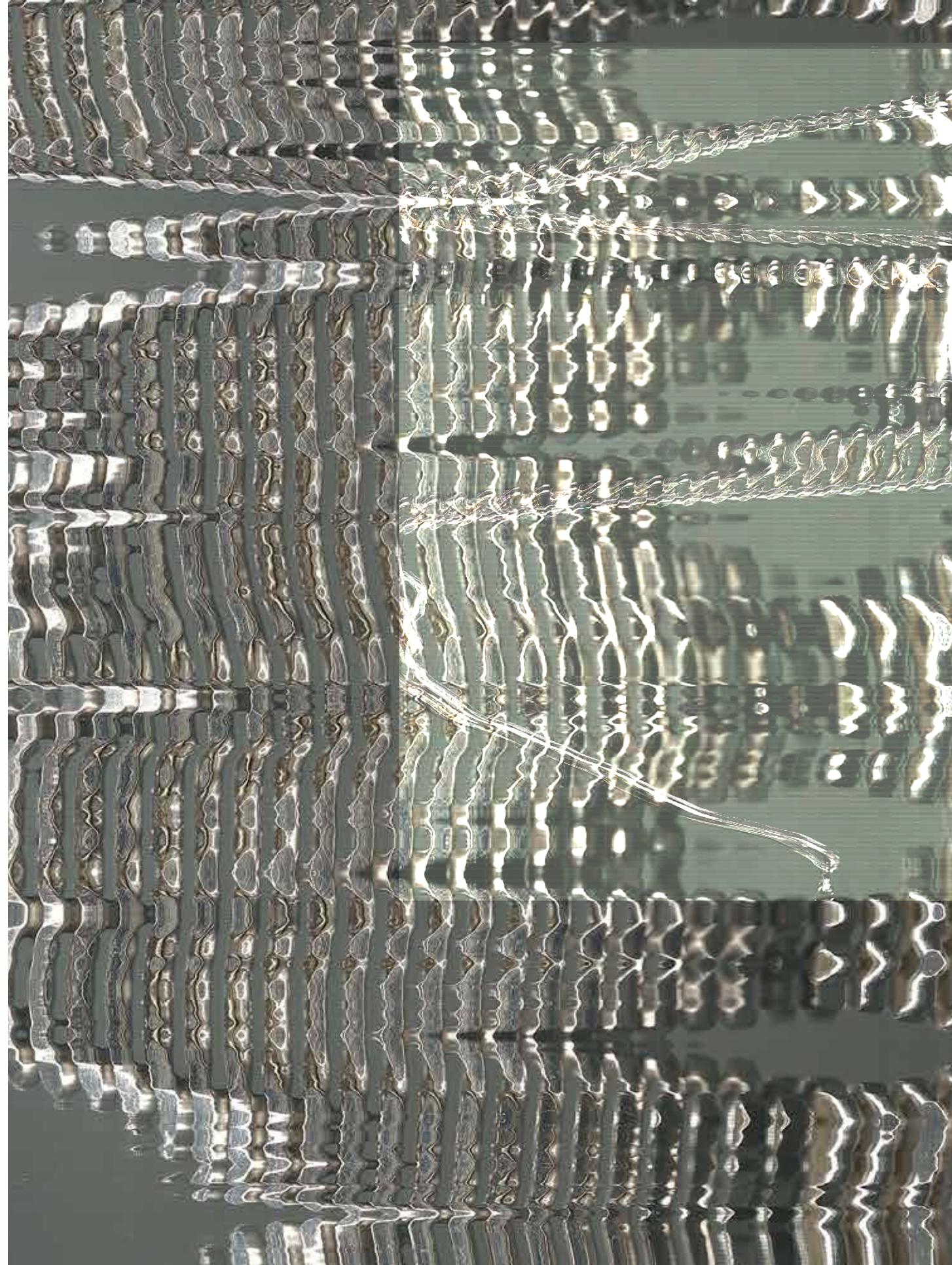


I received this bracelet as a present right before I moved across Canada for university, from my boyfriend at the time. He went through a lot to get it, it was originally a necklace that he had made into two bracelets, one for him and one for me. I wore it literally every single day between when he gave it to me and when we broke up.

I remember walking into my dorm room one day, and getting the clasp of the bracelet caught on the door handle. It bent out of shape and wouldn't stay closed. I can remember looking at the broken clasp and just kind of, losing it a little bit. I was in tears and pretty much became a mess. I would have stayed that way if my awesome roommate didn't calm me down and help me fix it. I guess my friends knew that it wasn't just a bracelet.

Shortly after we broke up, I was going to the gym to get it off my mind. The end of the relationship only really sunk in when I took off the bracelet at that moment. We were no longer together, so there was no reason to wear it anymore.

That bracelet represented more than just a piece of metal on my wrist, it was a symbol for the care we had for each other, something I still treasure now. We broke up two years ago, but we both still have these bracelets. Certain items hold more meaning than they may show at first glance.





We moved to Canada from Africa when I was five. Soon after we got settled in, a family friend made handmade toys for my sister and me. For me, she sewed together a stuffed bear, which she named Snowball.

Snowball came with a little handmade storybook that was meant to teach me about the process of moving far from home. I found it somewhat comforting during the transition. I guess that's where the name "Snowball" came from, because one of the major adjustments for me was all the snow and cold weather.

I didn't bring a lot of stuff with me when we moved to Canada, mostly because it was difficult to bring a lot with us. When I received this toy, I knew that I would keep it forever. I guess you could say that I learned something about the value of objects, and the histories they keep. I'll probably keep Snowball for the rest of my life.

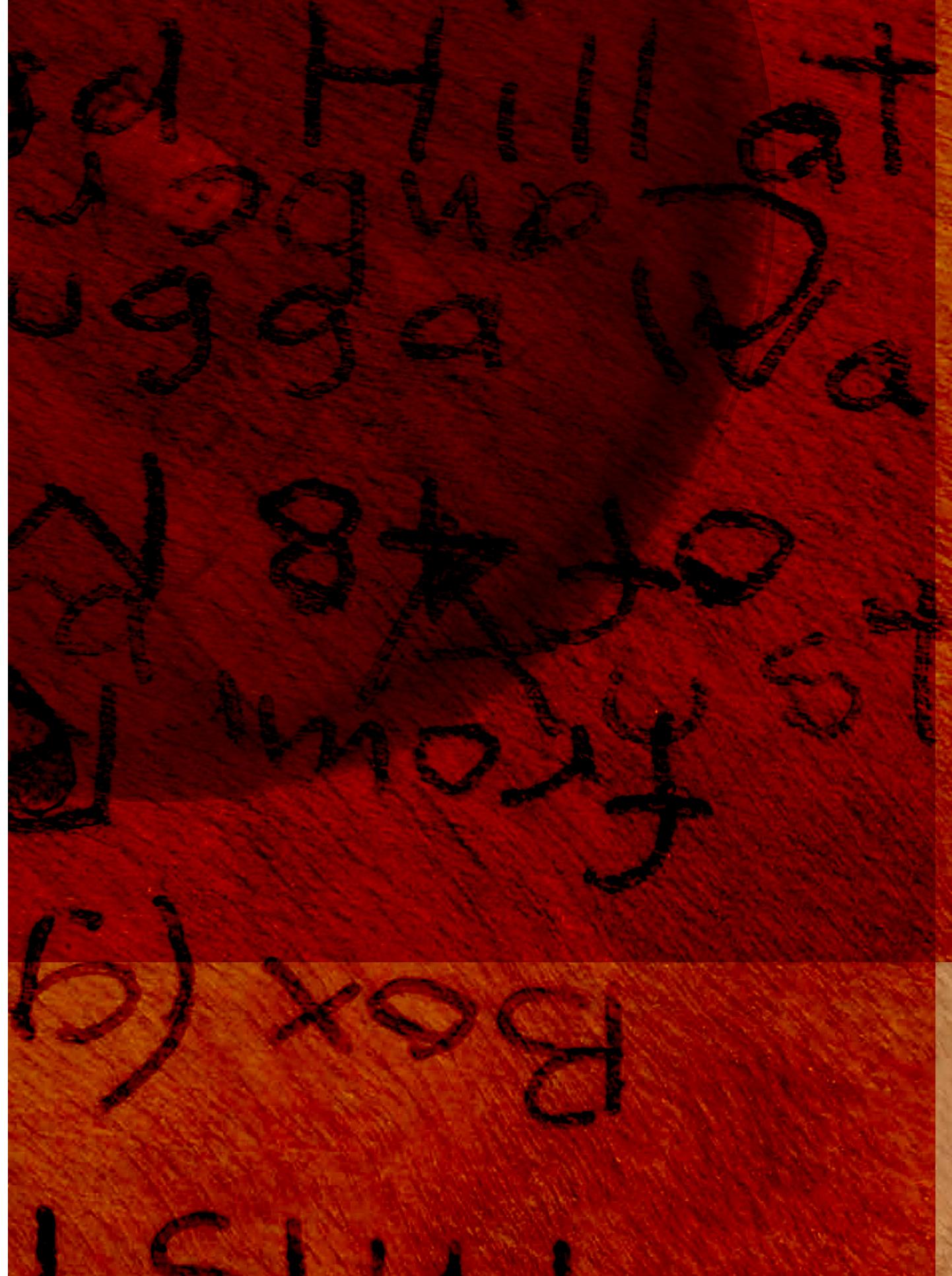




I am a traveler.

I never stay in one place for very long. When I lived in Australia, we had a lovely house. My husband and I were friends with the architect who designed the house; we used to play tennis with him. His name was Richard Lukan. I remember there was a Gum tree in the backyard that we used to look at all the time.

Soon it came time to pick up and move again. We sold our house to the Canadian consulate, and now a Canadian will always live in that house. Some time later, I got a package in the mail from Richard. It was a wooden bowl. The old Gum tree had had to be cut down, and he had carved it from that old tree. It's a nice thing to be able to take a piece of my past with me wherever I go.





When my brother and I were growing up, we didn't really get along. We had very different outlooks, even at such a young age. I took great care of my possessions, while he did not. Being the older brother, I would try to teach him about treating his toys gently so they wouldn't break. But as I stated, we were (and continue to be) very different.

I had a Hot Wheels racecar that I loved dearly. I had others but this one was very special to me. I kept it in a separate place from all my other toys and play with it very carefully. One day, my brother asked me if he could play with it for a while. Knowing how he would treat his own toys led me to decide not to let him touch my precious little car, naturally. Then, as brothers will do, he complained to our mother about that, and of course she forced me to hand the car over to him. He then proceeded to smash the car into a wall and it was broken beyond repair.

That experience taught me a lot about the nature of our relationship as brothers and how we would never really be able to consolidate our differing personalities into a bond of a lasting kind. You can tell a lot about a person by how they treat their possessions.

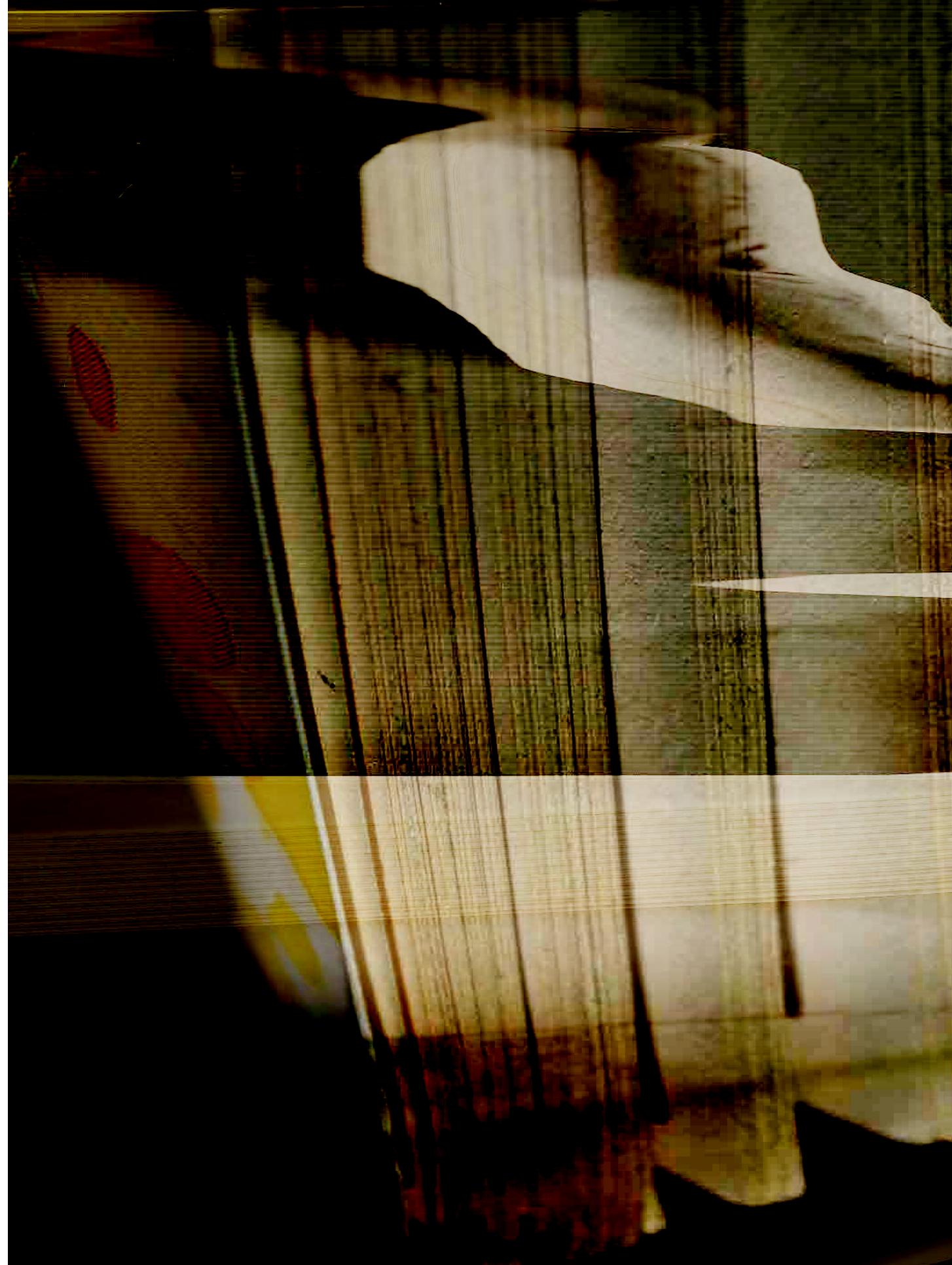




I bought this book in grade three at my school's Scholastic book fair. It was the first thing I ever bought with my own money. I feel like books are such a rewarding thing to own because they provide instant gratification so easily.

I have read this book countless times. I remember taking it with me to my great aunt's funeral, the first one I ever attended. I have vivid memories of hiding my face behind the book during times when I didn't feel well. The book isn't in perfect condition anymore, but I have kept it pretty well. There are indentations on the cover and pages from using it as a tracing guide, and the pages are really soft from wear.

It feels like any other book but when I hold it in my hands, it comforts me because it reminds me of all the times I have had it with me over the years.





I received this jacket as a birthday present from my first boyfriend when I turned 17. I had mentioned previously that I wanted a jean jacket, I remember they were very trendy that year.

I wore it quite a lot in the first six months that I had it. After that, I started to lose interest in it for different reasons. Fashion can be so disposable and the summer months didn't really necessitate a jacket. Soon after that, I broke up with my boyfriend. I knew that my friends expected me to get rid of all of the stuff that he gave me or that reminded me of him, as you're supposed to do with items that are attached to negative memories.

In spite of all that, I decided that none of those items had lost their value through the breakup. They were still the same items I used every so often before the breakup, so why not still keep them and continue to use them? This is one of those items. Admittedly, I don't wear it that often, but I do wear it from time to time. The jacket carries no special meaning for me, and that's why I like it.



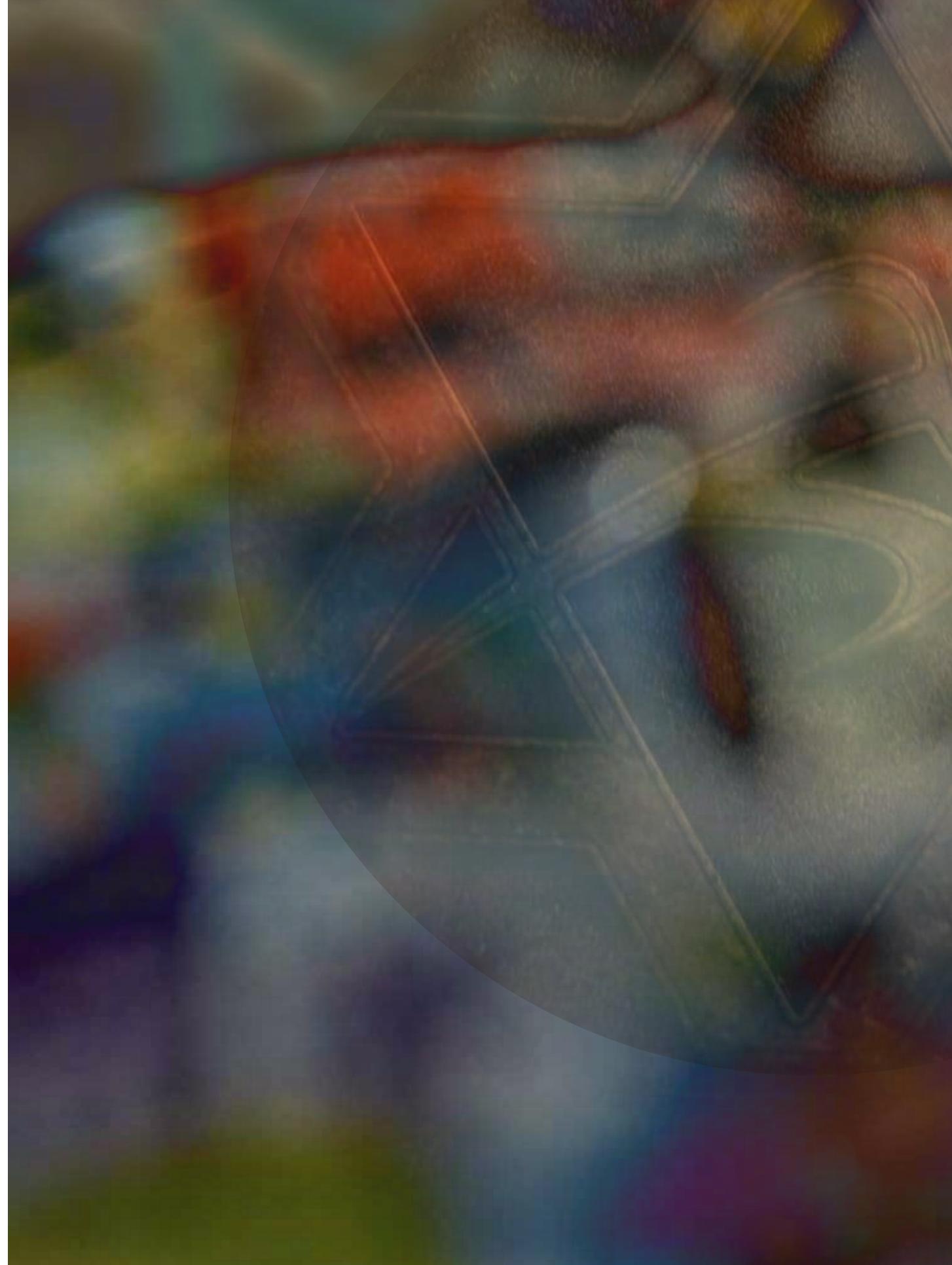
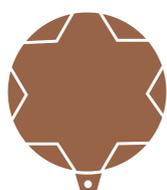


I have always loved sports. They are one of the things I know I am really good at. My favourite time of the year was always when our regional team would pack our bags to head to the Maccabi Games, an annual soccer tournament of teams from all over North America. We saw it as the Jewish Olympics Games, complete with its own opening ceremony. We would walk down the aisle with the rest of the Canadians, proud to belong to something so large.

During the social gatherings of the tournament, we were encouraged to exchange pins from our regions as a token of friendship and good sportsmanship. I still have all of the pins I collected from both 2009 and 2010.

We took the bronze medal in a very close game against the eventual champions of the tournament. We had beaten them in practice just a few days before, but that's just the way things went. Beyond our medal, I managed to score the position of top scorer in the tournament, which is the memory that I associate with the medal. Even though we only made it to third place, I knew that I had played the best I possibly could.

I don't play much soccer anymore because my knees can't take it like they used to, but also because I treasure the memories of the people I met and the accomplishments I achieved at that time. Every time I feel down, the medal reminds me of the positive things in life.



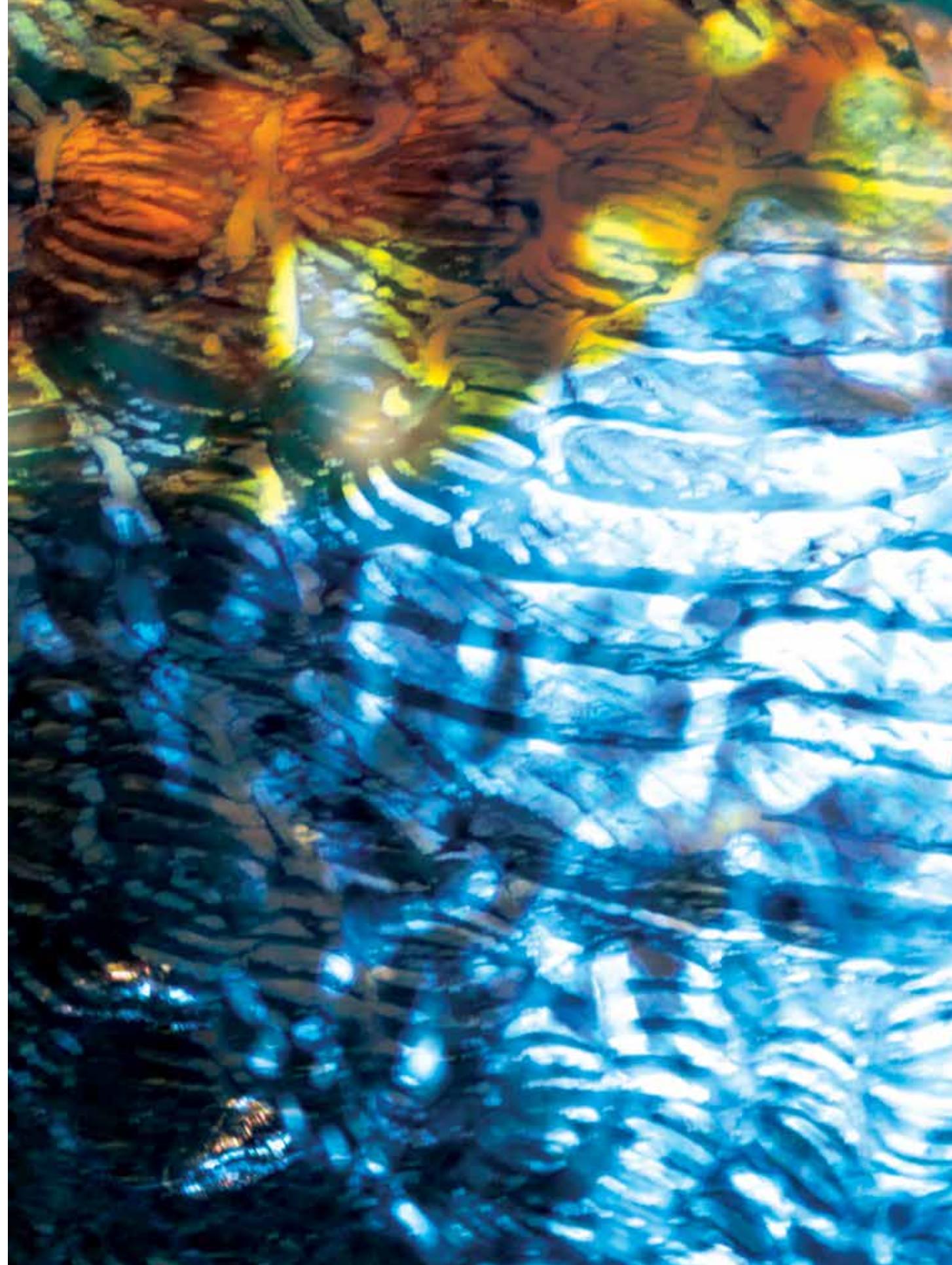


Last summer, I went to meet a prospective internship employer at his home in my hometown, St. Thomas, Ontario. I noticed right away from looking around his house that we had very similar styles. One item in particular caught my eye, a little silver bird perched on his mantle. He mentioned that he got it at a craft market in northern Ontario five years before. I commented on how cute it was, and we left it at that.

The internship went very well; I learned a lot from his experience in the industry over the summer. A few months later, I went back home for winter holidays. My boss invited me over one day for lunch and to catch up and the bird was still there, staring down at me from the mantle. I really wanted it.

I mentioned it again in the hopes that he would get the hint, and of course he offered for me to take it home. It took no time for me to agree, and the bird was mine. When I want something, I go for it.

It feels like a 'me' object, it matches my aesthetic. Not to mention, that day I learned how to 'politely' steal something.





When I was born, my parents bought me a plastic toy bell. When you pull the string, it plays “A Small World After All” on a little music box hidden inside. It was hung above my crib for pretty much all of my formative years. When I grew old enough not to need it anymore, I still wanted to keep it as a memory of my babyhood.

When I was four, we moved from Egypt to Canada. My parents didn’t know anyone in Canada, so they were forced to sell off all of our belongings to make money to support us until they found work. My mother had to sell all of my baby toys, but she didn’t sell that little bell.

I asked my mother why she never sold that bell, expecting some kind of meaningful answer. Her answer was that she didn’t really know why. Maybe it just escaped her vision when she was looking for things to sell. Or maybe she really did want to save it, but didn’t want to tell me. I guess I’ll never know.

Somehow, the bell survived our subsequent moves from Canada to Switzerland and back to Canada again. In retrospect, I guess the song fits the item pretty well.

I still keep the bell hanging from my bedpost. I’m honestly not really sure why I haven’t gotten rid of it. It’s really ugly and a little scary, not to mention that it’s so old that it’s different colours in places where the sun hasn’t touched it. But I’ve had it for so long that to get rid of it would take more work than to keep it. So I guess I’ll keep it a while longer.



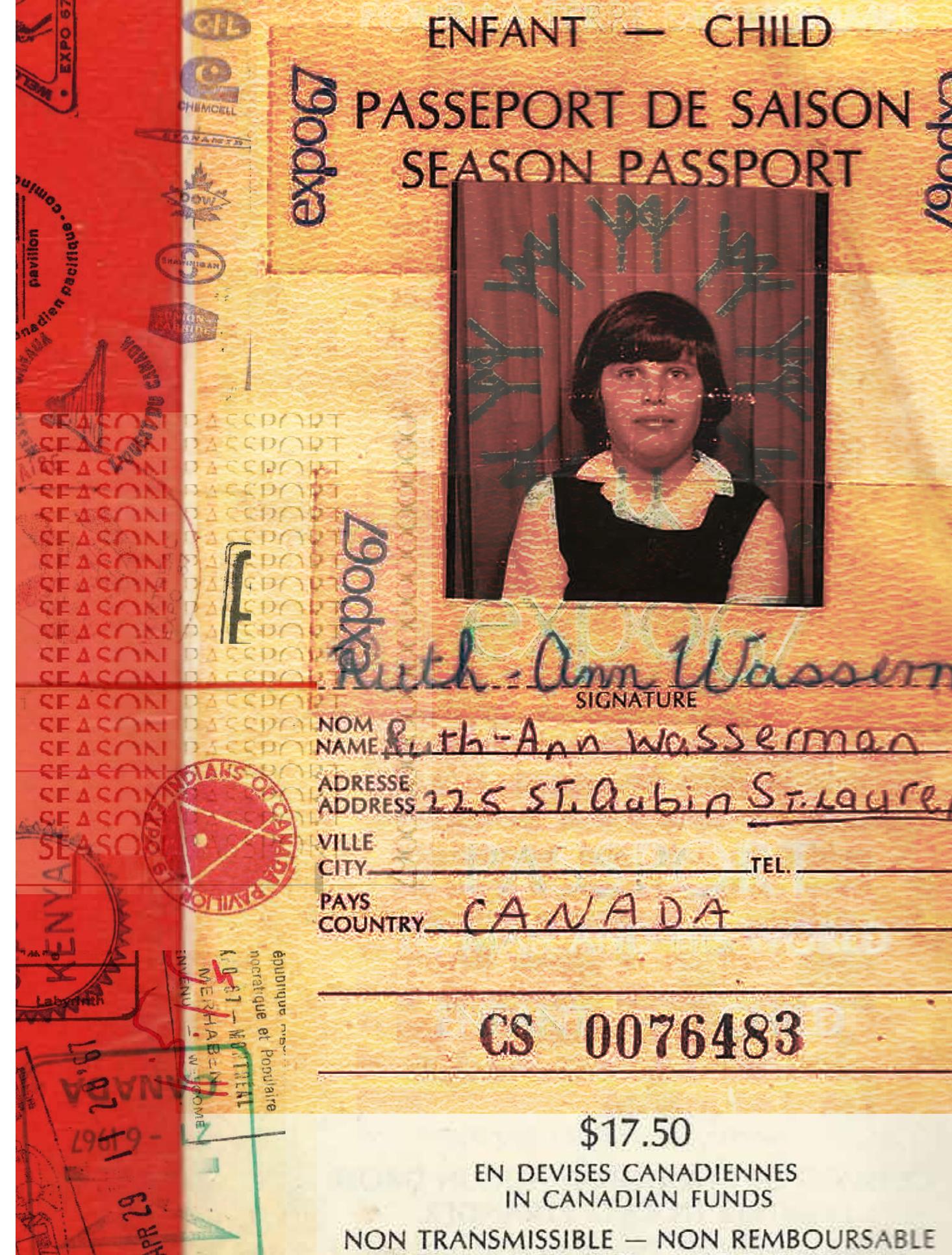


I lived in Montreal for most of my childhood. I still remember the 1967 Montreal Expo like it was yesterday. I had never seen so many people come together for one event, it was like everyone in the whole province had come to celebrate the world in one place.

Everyone in my family got a passport for the Expo. The passport acted as an entry pass, and was good for as many visits as you could fit into the six months in which it ran. My whole family all bought passports. Since we didn't really travel much, and one didn't need a passport to travel into the United States at that time, these were the first passports any of us ever had.

We had a wonderful time filling in all the stamps on the pages. Counting them now, I managed 53 stamps. Some of them have dates that range between April 29 - September 17, almost the entire range of the Expo. I probably visited the grounds about 30 - 40 different times.

I love to look at the passport from time to time and remember everything I saw, learned and experienced at the Expo. My children loved to look through it when they were kids as well. I don't keep a lot of sentimental items, but this one has made it through the cut of seven different moves.





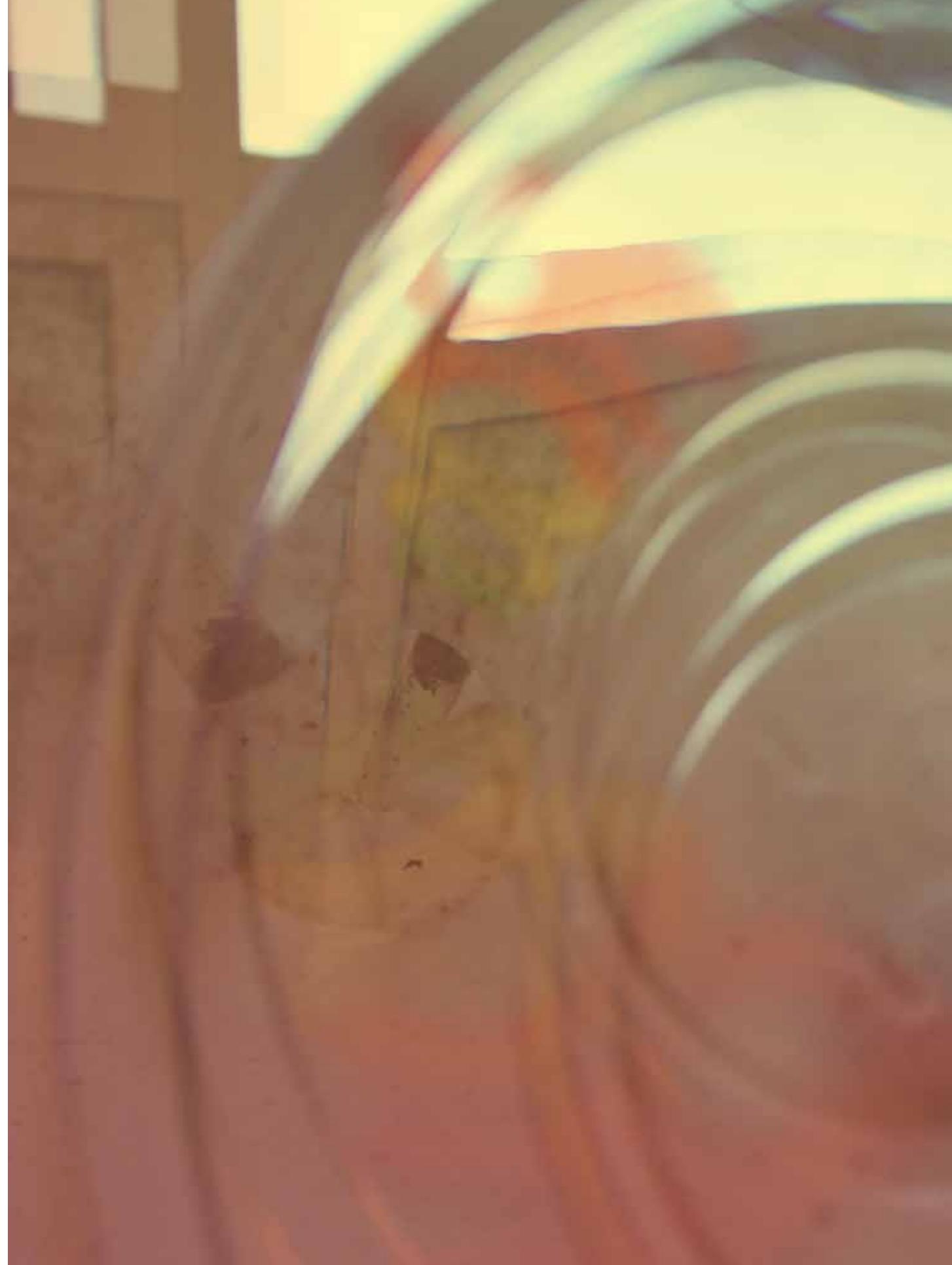
I name all of my decorative vases. I got this one, Phoenix, about a year ago. I usually name my vases after superheros with telekinesis or mind powers, because these kinds of vases can mess with your mind.

I got Phoenix at a Hasty Market in Mississauga. I had accidentally broken the last two vases I had in the span of two weeks, and I needed a new one again. I bargained the store owner to give it to me for half the price of the 30-dollar sticker, and I was ready to go.

I broke my last two vases in the exact same way. I'd always keep a vase in my work locker room at Square One. I would sit on the floor in the murky little room, open my laptop and watch TV while I used the vase and drank beer. I coined this room "The Heart," not only because it was at the heart of all the action of the mall, but also because it was technically at the heart of all important places in Mississauga: my home, the arena, and my high school. My friends and I hung out in The Heart for about five years.

One day in The Heart, I had had a few too many tallies, and didn't realize that my vase was beside me. I turned my body and accidentally knocked over my precious Jean Grey. Tears were shed. The next week, I found myself in the exact same situation. I put the vase on my other side to avoid hitting it as I had last time. I moved, and to my dismay I did the exact same thing to this vase, on the opposite side. This one didn't shatter completely, but one part cracked so much that it was rendered useless. I swore to myself that I would not let it happen again, and I got Phoenix the next day.

A few days later, I christened Phoenix with a friend in The Heart of Mississauga. It's been a year and I haven't broken her yet.

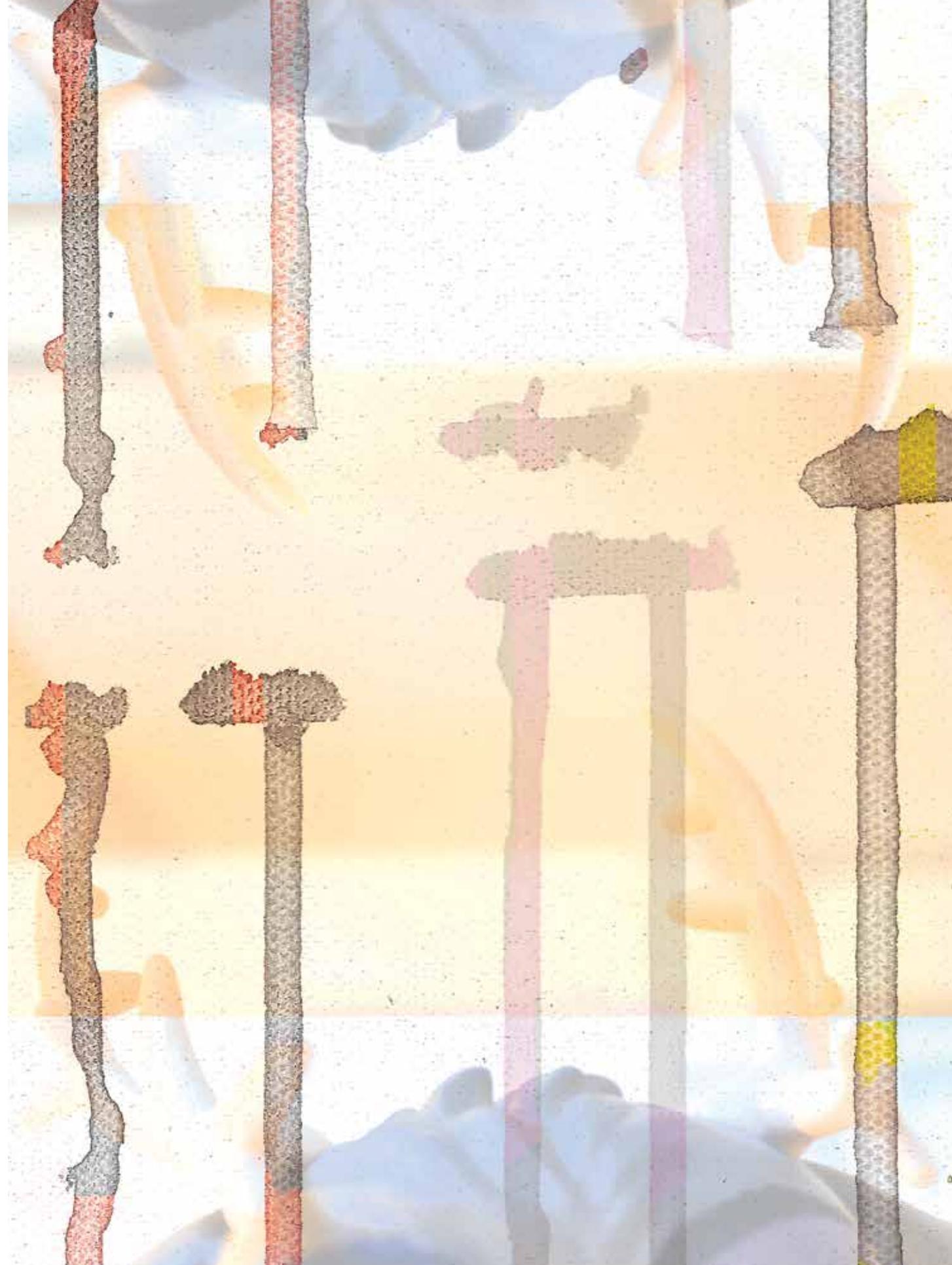




I received this figurine on the last day of a summer internship I worked at in 2014. It was symbolic for me because the giving of these figurines is a tradition among the people who work in the studio. When you get a figurine, you're part of the collective. Not to mention, of all the interns working there that summer, I was the only one to receive a figurine.

I'm not obsessed with Frozen. I may have blasted Let It Go and sung all the words out loud, but that's normal! If I had to venture a guess, I'd say they chose the reindeer because almost everyone was under the impression that reindeer are a Canadian thing. Which is funny because they're called caribou here. So really nothing to do with Canada at all.

I also kept the figurine as a memento of the friends I made during my short time in New York. I was a little nervous to be on my own for a considerably long amount of time in a big city, but I found it pretty easy to make friends and get along with others, both during and after work.



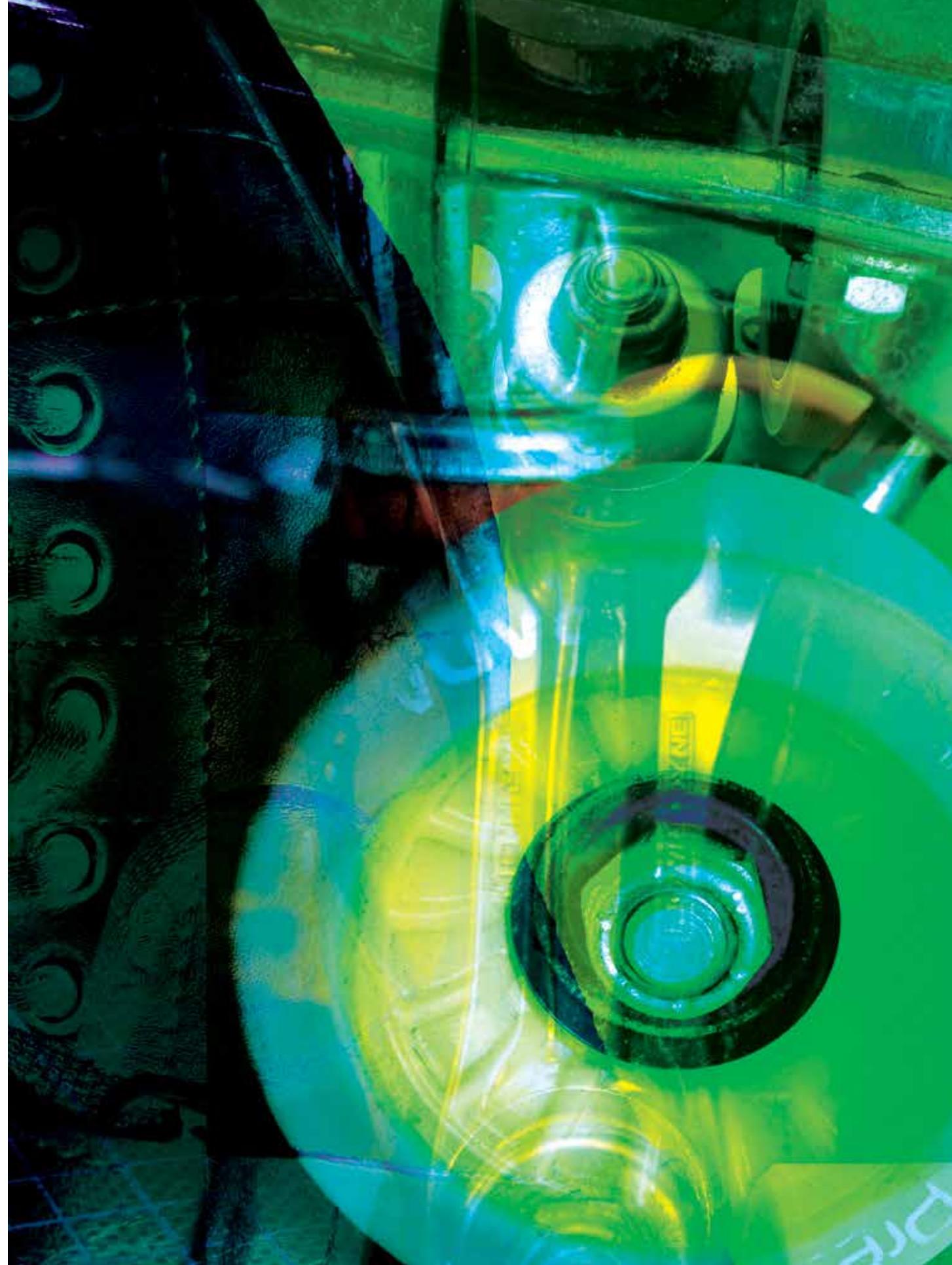


One day, I was listening to the radio and I heard an ad for a roller derby meet-up happening in Toronto. I have always had a mild interest in roller derby; I love the way women can feel so empowered and really get aggressive on the track. And they look good doing it, too.

I decided that instead of just thinking about it, this time I was going to get into the rink myself. The event was ten days away and I didn't even own any skates, much less know how to use them. I tried in vain to find a retailer in Toronto; there really aren't any. A lot of the equipment had to be purchased online, and with an expensive rush on the order.

Even after all that, I still had to find the right skates. I decided to look on Kijiji on a whim. Wouldn't you know, there was a woman in Toronto selling a pair of skates in my size! I went to meet her at a Starbucks, and they were mine. She told me that she was happy to be able to pass them on to a newbie to the sport, and she wished me luck.

Derby is where I can be as aggressive as I want to be, and show it to everyone. After a ton of practice, I'll be playing my first game soon. I'm ready to roll.



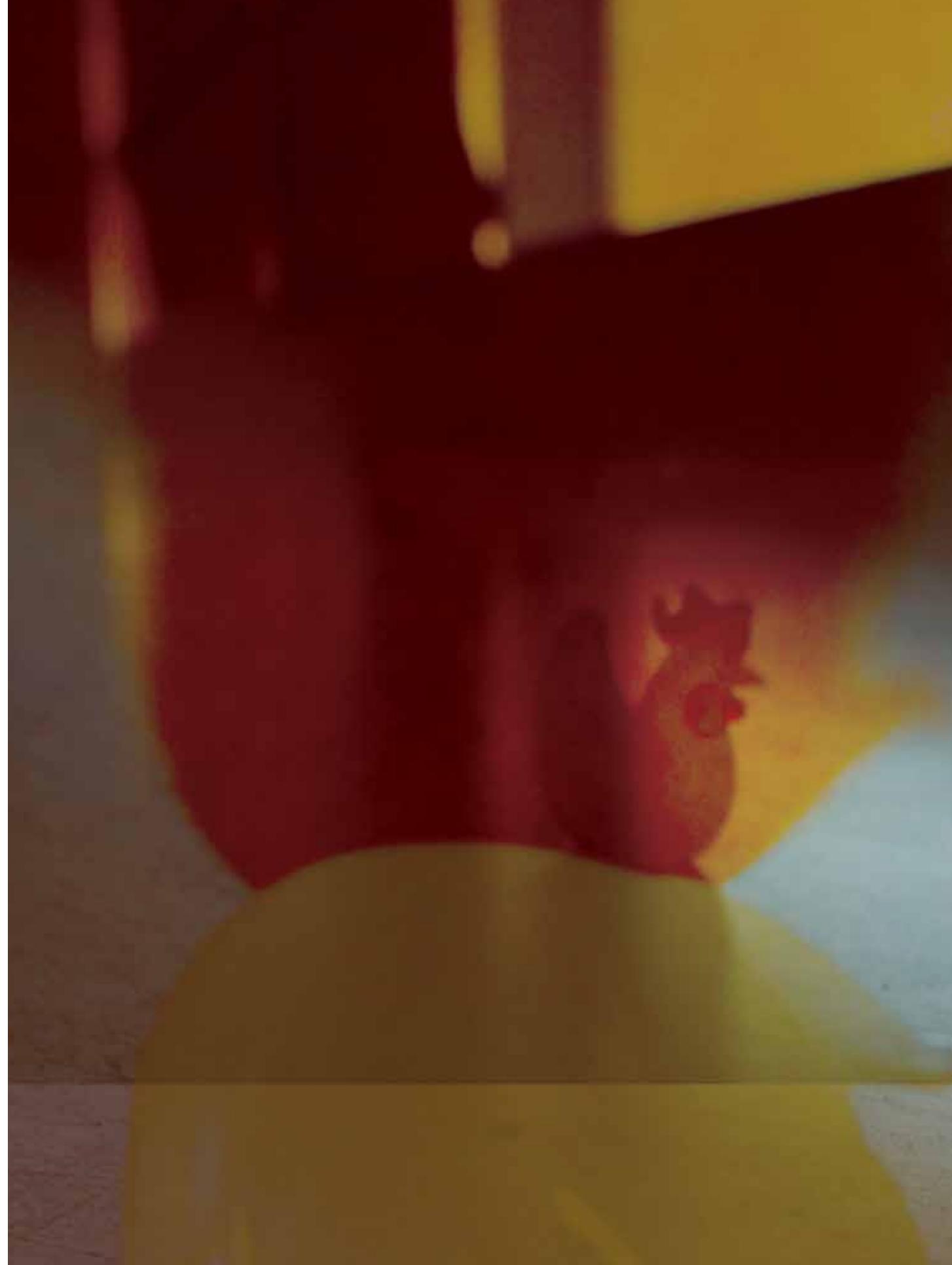


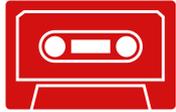
I was born in South Korea. When I was 5, my parents, my sister and I moved to Canada. We left behind pretty much all of our family, but I was so young that I didn't really feel the impact of leaving so much behind.

I always felt a pull to go back and reconnect with them, but this wasn't realized until I turned 9. My parents took my sister and me back to South Korea to visit with our family and to re-immense us in the culture. Unfortunately, the trip was only ten days long. Most of my memories involved rushed visits with family I didn't remember from my younger days, and being jetlagged.

I do have one clear memory though – going to a mall with my mother and sister. We were in a glass shop and there were little glass toys everywhere. My mother bought us both a little glass animal representing our Chinese Zodiac: a rooster for me and a sheep for my sister. Because we were still quite young, I know she didn't expect us to keep such fragile items for very long.

To this day, both my sister and I have kept our little animals in pristine condition. I view mine as a frequent reminder that I will someday return to South Korea and make a proper visit with my relatives. Because we had been out of touch for so long, they felt more like strangers during that visit. I want to make a better connection, and also wander through the country on my own terms. Someday soon.



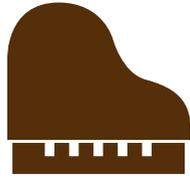


My family is originally from Ecuador. We don't make the trip back to our family there often, but we have done it a few times over the years. The first time we went back to visit was in 1988. My siblings and I were still quite young and my father wanted to give us something to keep us occupied for the long journey. He decided that a tape player would be the perfect way to do this, and bought all of us our own walkman to listen to during the long plane ride.

I still have it for a number of reasons. It did keep me company on that trip and subsequent long trips afterwards, and it was my most treasured possession for a long time. I used it throughout the 1990s and well into high school. I also have vivid memories of using it during the 2003 blackout and the 2014 ice storm. I suppose you might say it is an item of comfort during bad times, at least in terms of weather.

Funny enough, I never bought music tapes for it. I only ever bought blank tapes and copied off of other tapes or from the radio. All of my tapes were made of random mixes of the top hits for that time.

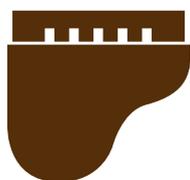




My mother liked tchotchkes. She never spent money frivolously, but she did indulge herself in an inexpensive little knick-knack from Steinman's once in a while. I remember this little piano music box being around the house for my whole childhood. I never really played with it; it was more her item than mine. She kept it on the end of an old-style stereo in our mid-fifties modern living room, where it did not match anything else.

The box contains a secret compartment where my mother kept some photographs and a vintage dollar bill, all of which I still keep inside the compartment. There is a picture of her in a beautiful pink dress she had custom-made for a wedding, which I still keep as well.

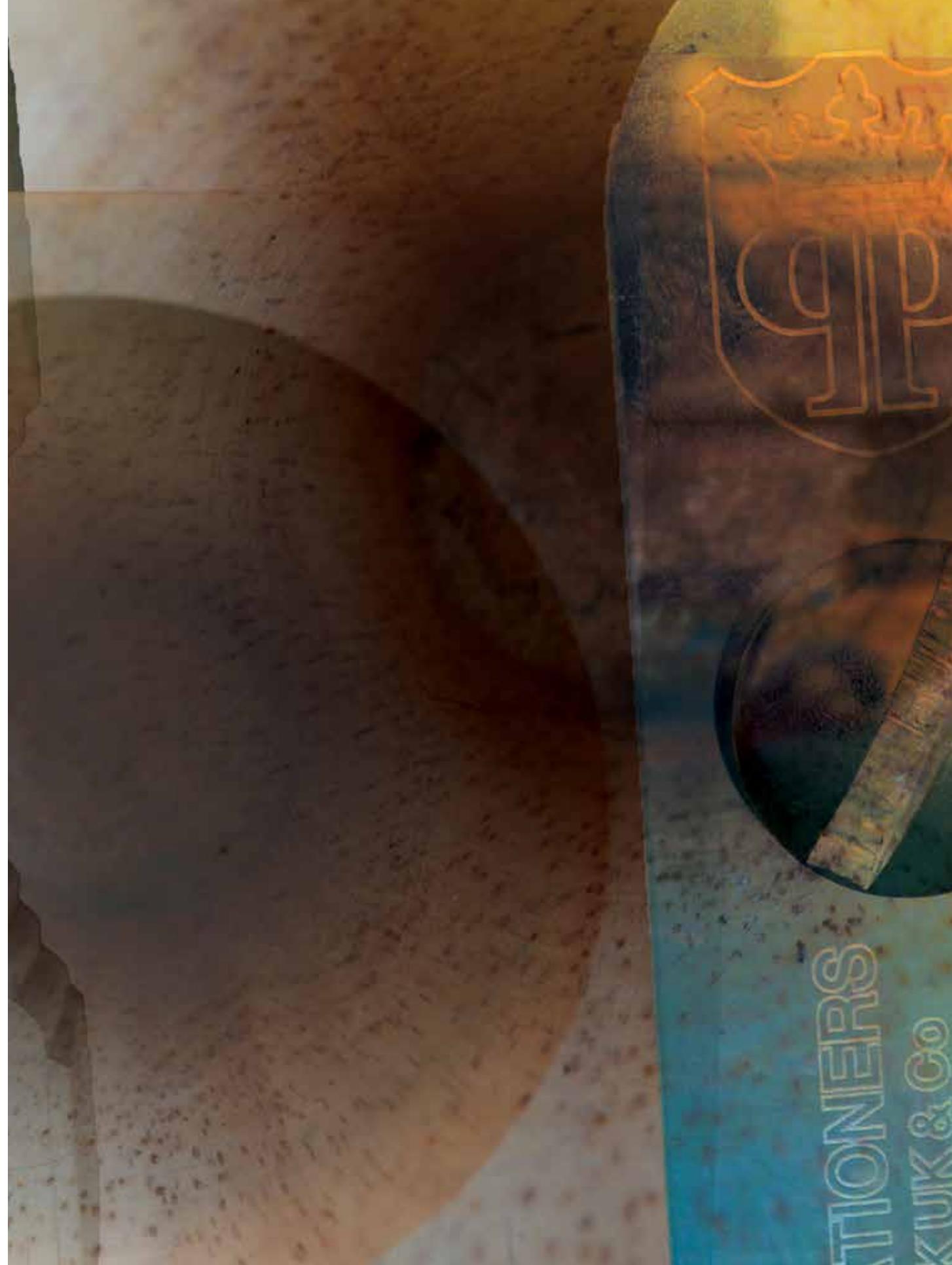
This music box means much more to me now than it did then. When I moved out of my father's house, I took it with me as a little physical reminder of my mother. It now resides on my bedside table where I see it every day. I don't keep a lot of sentimental items, but this one has stayed with me through the years.

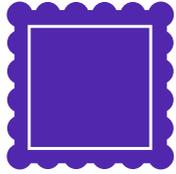




My father travels a lot for work. He goes all over the world, most often London and Hamburg. Although we don't get to see as much of each other as other fathers and their children, we have a close bond. One of the facets of that is the woodworking we both love to do. We are both often immersed in theoretical work, so it can be refreshing to make something with one's hands.

In 2011, he brought me a wooden pencil holder in the shape of a pencil sharpener. I loved the tactile quality of it, and the fact that it is larger than life. I bring it with me to every place I work, it holds all of the important tools I use every day. Wherever I set down my pencil holder, that's where I'm accessing my creative focus.

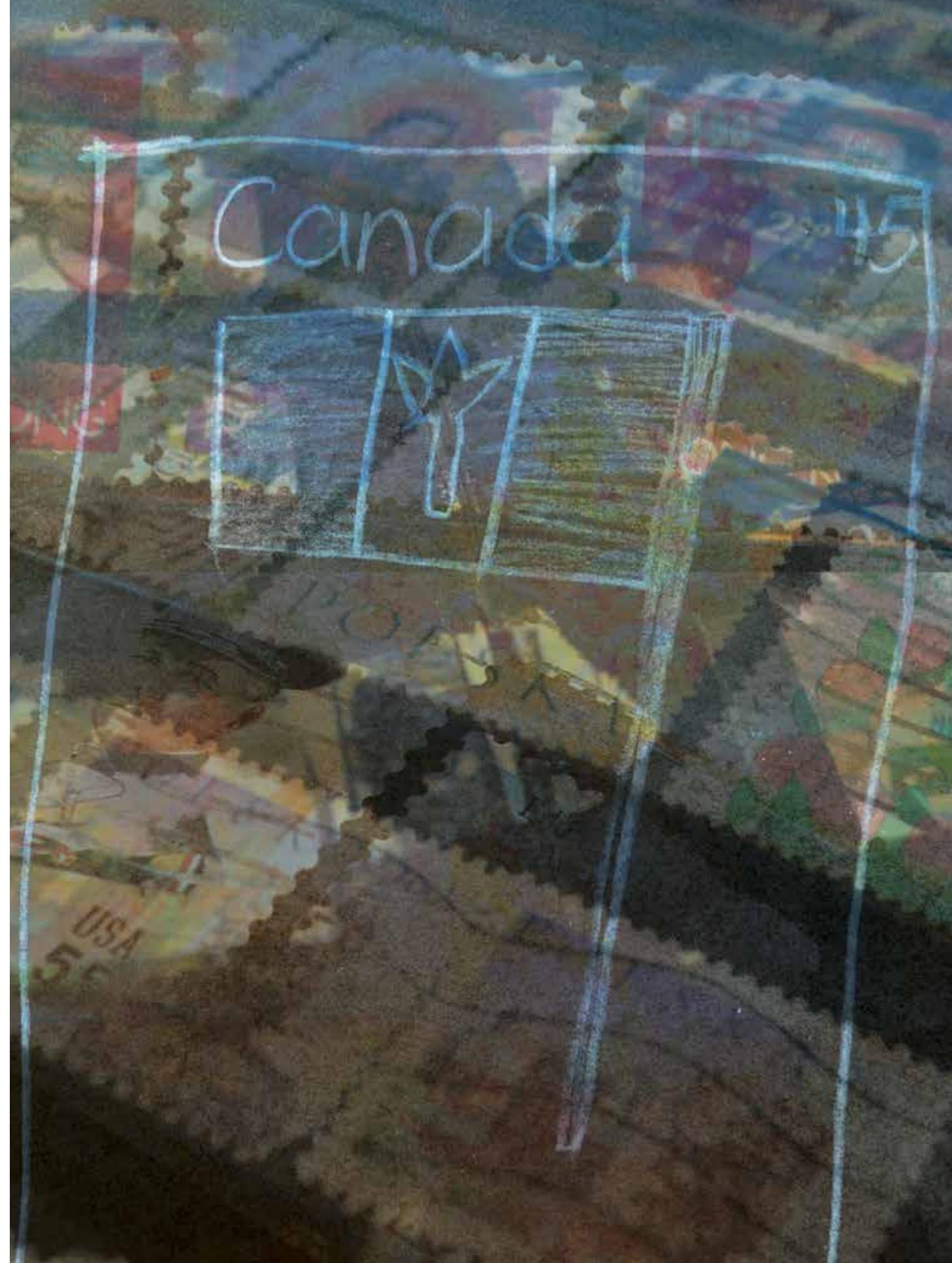
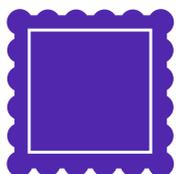




My family is very close. My aunt actually lives next door to me, and we are always spending time together. When I was five, she first showed me her stamp collection. She always loved collecting stamps. My other aunt, her sister, lives in San Francisco and travels around the world quite frequently so it is easy for them to build the collection together.

After more than fifteen years, the album is pretty much full. I was so passionate about collecting that I even drew a stamp on the back inside cover of the album. Once I filled it, I lost interest in collecting stamps, but lately I have been thinking about getting a new one.

There's something really special about getting mail in the old-fashioned way. It's much more satisfying than getting an email or a facebook message. I like collecting stamps because they carry a little sentiment about the letter sender in them. It's not the full message in the letter, but more like a glimpse into the interests and location of the sender. There's something really cool about that. Not to mention, the visual appeal of stamps is so lovely.



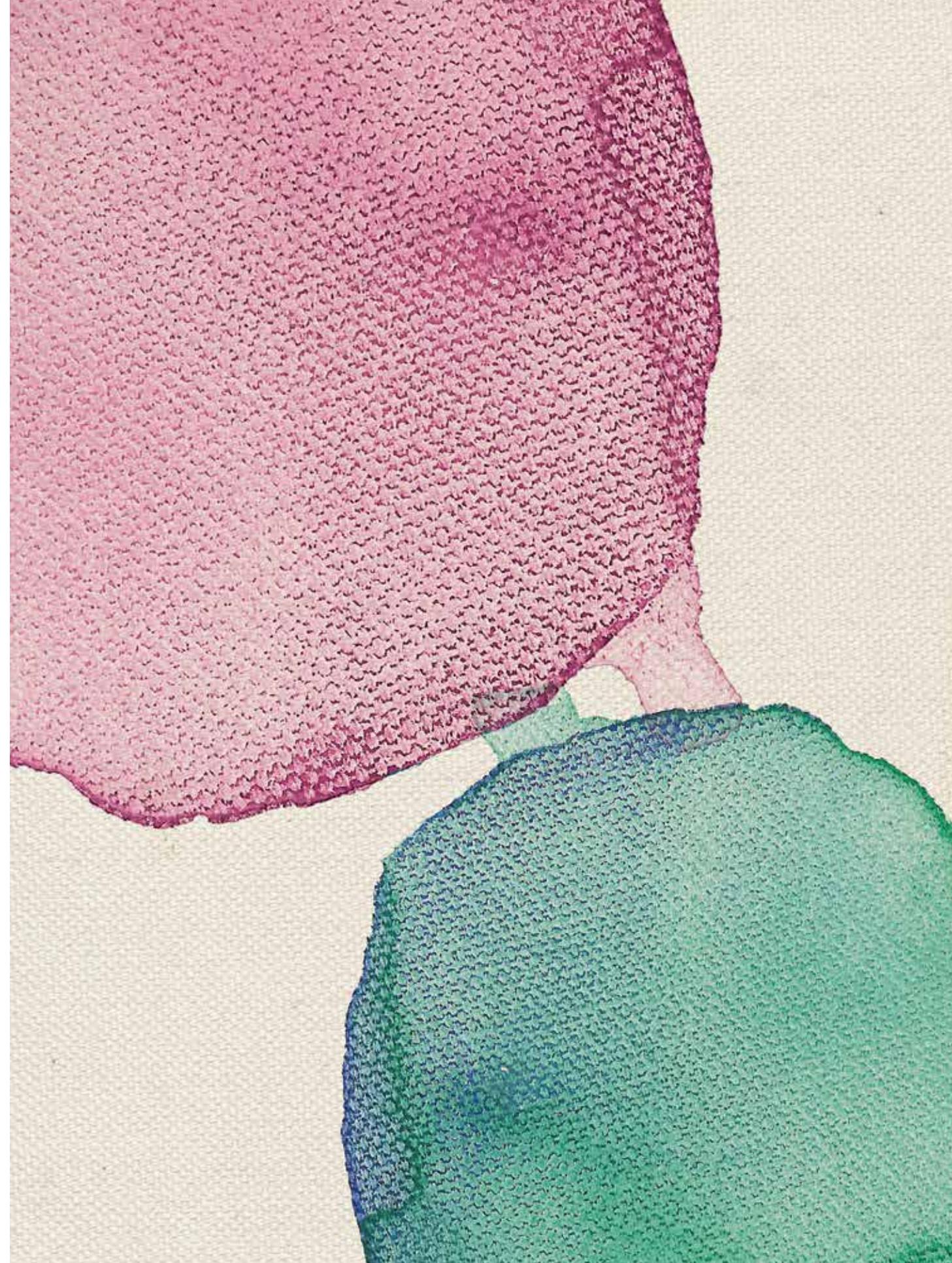


Back in 2010, I was working at an art gallery in Sudbury. I was dating a special guy, and I wanted to plan something special for our first official one-on-one date. His birthday was also around that time, so I knew it had to be something really cool.

The crazy idea occurred to me that I could sneak him into the gallery after-hours for a birthday picnic on the top floor. I covered up the cameras and snuck him in. We watched movies and drank beer late into the night. At one point, he was trying to uncork a bottle of beer while trying to kiss me at the same time. Suddenly, the cork came loose and the beer went everywhere. What a first date! He was really embarrassed but I didn't mind. I think the whole thing made me like him even more, actually.

We fell asleep amongst our picnic and woke up around 5:30 AM. In a rush, we cleaned up the remnants of our night and I uncovered the cameras. Even with all of my tireless efforts, the gallery was forced to enlist a rule that no visitors are allowed in the building after 5:00 PM, which still stands today.

I decided to keep the cork afterwards, which began a lengthy collection of little keepsakes to commemorate our relationship. Of course, I didn't tell my boyfriend about it until a respectable amount of time had passed, and we both agreed humorously that the collection was physical proof that I was secretly a creepy stalker.



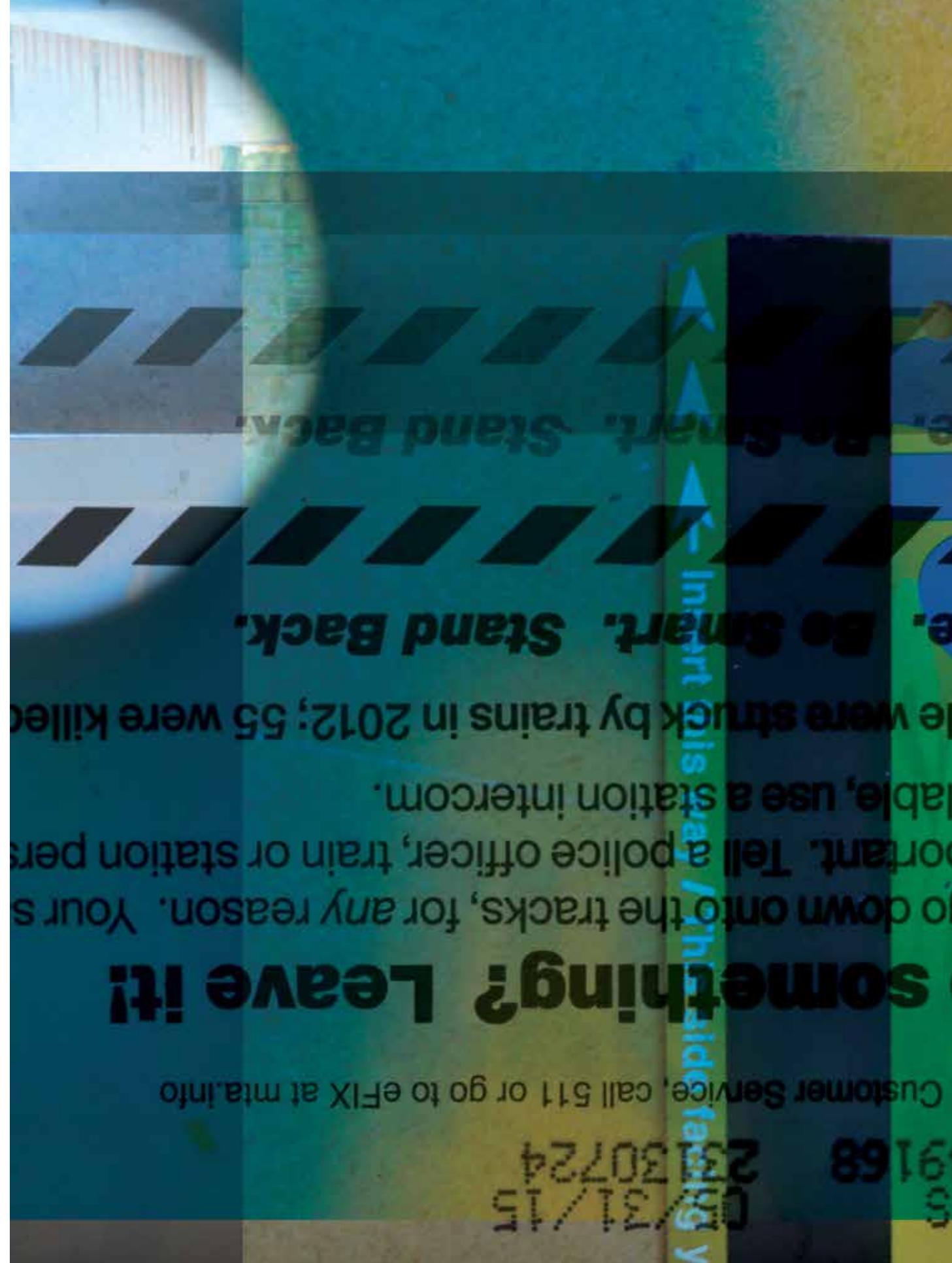


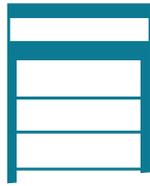
In the summer of 2014, I worked an internship in New York City. For three months, I lived in a big city on my own. I learned a few lessons in independence, but none as depressing as the story of the Metrocard.

I was buying a monthly pass on my Metrocard each month. One day, with about three weeks left in my final month, I was heading into the subway after a long day of work. I reached into my wallet for my Metrocard, and it wasn't where I usually kept it. I started to panic a little, because, you know, monthly passes aren't cheap, and in my panic, I dropped my phone down the entire staircase into the subway. I ran down into the subway to get my phone, and rationalized that for now, to get myself home at the very least, I would have to buy a new one. I popped my credit card into the machine, made my selection, and out popped my credit card again. With nothing else. The machine ate the Metrocard. I couldn't BELIEVE my bad luck!

I went to the ticket agent and explained what had happened. He was nice enough to let me into the subway for free, but that wasn't going to fix my problem. I still needed a way to get around for the next three weeks. The next day, I had to buy yet another monthly pass (this is the third one if you've been counting).

It's been half a year since and I've since been reimbursed for the one the machine ate. I still keep the (second) Metrocard in my wallet. I don't really think about it being there, it's just habit now. But I do look at it once in a while and think, "Oh, hey, try not to lose items worth more than \$100!" It's a harsh reminder of my independence.

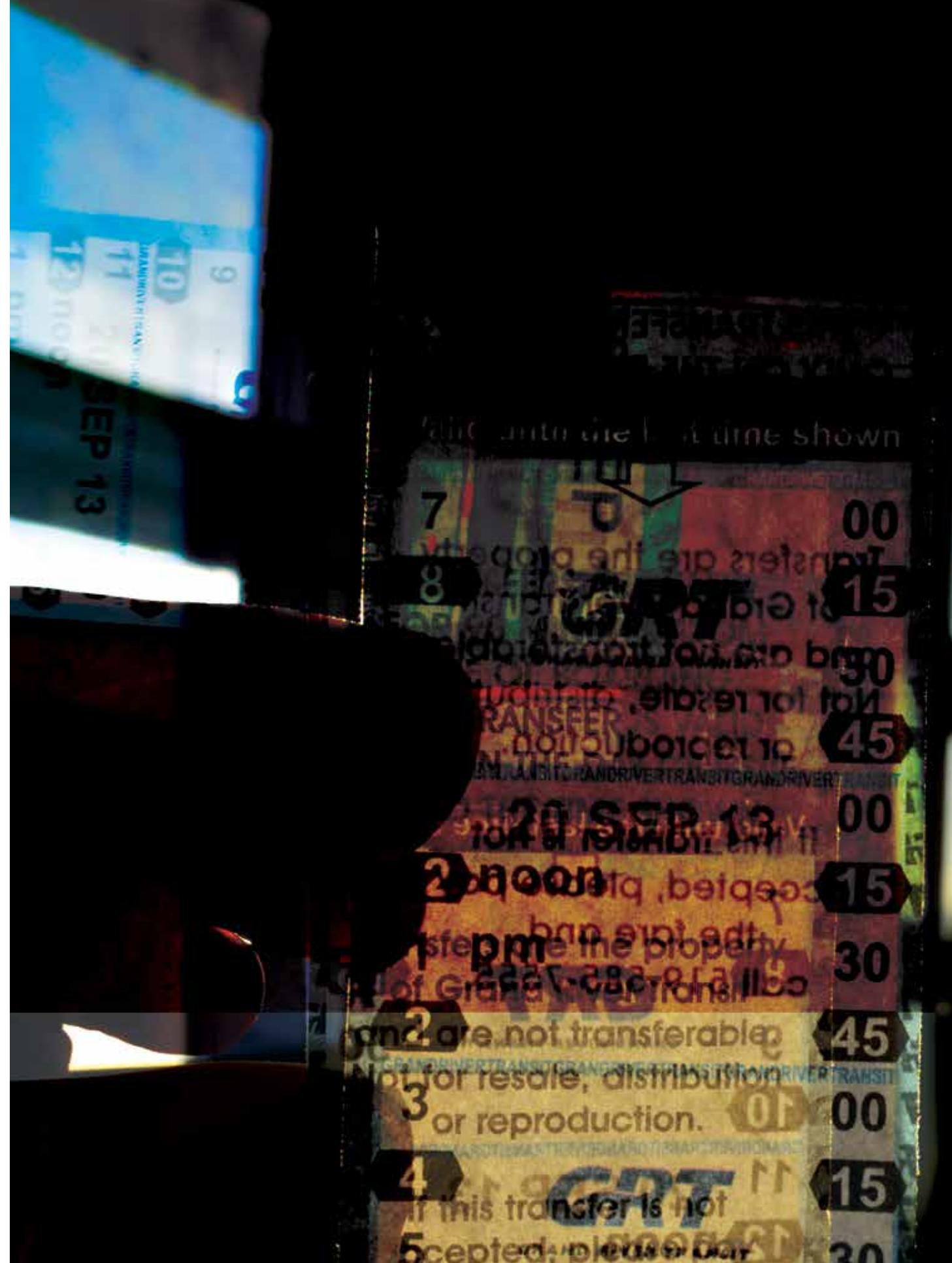




I got this bus ticket during a trip I took to Waterloo in September of 2013. I was visiting to compete in the annual Startup Weekend with some friends. We had worked all-nighters for the past two days, and so I took a few hours on the final day to have lunch with a friend who lives there.

I was waiting for the bus when I realized that I had no fare, not to mention any idea of how to get where I wanted to go. There was another person waiting at the stop, a woman of about middle-age. I guess she noticed that I had a confused look on my face, because I saw her open her purse and produce bus fare. She handed it to me and asked if I knew where I was going. With her help, I made it all the way to meet my friend for lunch.

I still can't believe how nice everyone is in Waterloo. I am so used to the general apathy of people who live in Toronto, that I almost didn't believe that this woman genuinely wanted to help me. I never expect these sorts of things to happen, but when they do, they make my week. I keep this ticket in my wallet to remind me to pay it forward whenever I can. The world needs more random acts of kindness.





I received this fox plushie in late 2009 from my girlfriend at the time. It was a birthday present, and it came by mail because we were in a long distance relationship. She bought it in Michigan where she lived and shipped it to me in Montreal. The card read, “I can’t hug you, but when you’re sad, you can hug this!”

The fox, which I named Kitsune, travelled with me from Montreal as we moved to Kitchener, to Banff, and back to Ontario as I moved into residence at York University. She comes everywhere with me, even now, years after my girlfriend and I broke up.

We ended amicably, and I didn’t consider our time together as something to forget about or think of in a negative way. There was a time when Kitsune was stuffed in a closet, but she has pretty much always been a true comfort to me. When we moved from Montreal to Kitchener, I was forced to leave all of my friends and everything I knew. At that point, Kitsune was retrieved from the closet to help me with the move.

She sits on the pillow of every bed I have ever slept in. I have begun to think of her as a mobile version of the feeling of home. You can’t just find that anywhere.





One of my first memories of the beginning of the bond between my father and me was at a Toronto Blue Jays game in 2002. We were sitting pretty close to the field and I was hoping to catch a fly ball in my hand.

The game was an interesting one. During one pitch, the ball came at the batter with such force that the impact cracked his blue bat in half. And then, as we watched a particularly exciting pitch in the sixth, I had my prayers answered. I saw the ball coming straight for me! I stood up to try to catch it, but it sailed just out of my reach and landed on the seat directly behind me. As I turned around, I could already see three people scrambling towards it, and I didn't get it. I was so close.

My father noticed my disappointment and, being the man of action that he is, he took me to the bench and asked for a spare ball for his son. It was my first baseball game after all, he explained to them. A baseball was produced from somewhere behind the scenes and he handed it to me. I was so excited. I examined it all over, and noticed the dirt marks. It had been in play at some point in the game! Then I realized, among the brown smudges was a streak of blue. Lo and behold, it was the ball that had cracked the bat in half! This was a truly special ball.

Today, the ball acts as a reminder of the bond I share with my father. He travels a lot for work, but when he is away from home I still have the ball. I hope to pass it along to my kids one day in hopes that we will share a similar bond.





I was very close with my father. I was twelve when he separated from my mother, and I was the only one of their four children to live with him instead of my mother.

We had a close relationship despite the long hours he always worked. He loved his family, but his career was also very important to him. His proudest moment came when I was 18. He brought home a shining crystal eagle, an award he had received for his years of service and achievement of excellence.

Six short months later, my father passed away. There were highs and there were lows, and this was the lowest low for me. My siblings did not have as much reverence for his belongings as me, and they all wanted to sell the eagle. It was very valuable and would bring them a good sum of money, even if they split it between them.

I was so horrified by the way they treated his belongings as if they were dollar signs, that I took the box and certificate of authentication for the eagle and burned both of them beyond recognition. Now, the eagle had lost almost all of its monetary value. I know it was a brash move, but its sentimental value was the important thing for me, and I had to destroy its value to my siblings.

I don't regret what I did, even now that five years have passed. My siblings just didn't understand the relationship that I shared with my father, or the fact that a monetarily valuable object can hold a type of value that is more important than money.

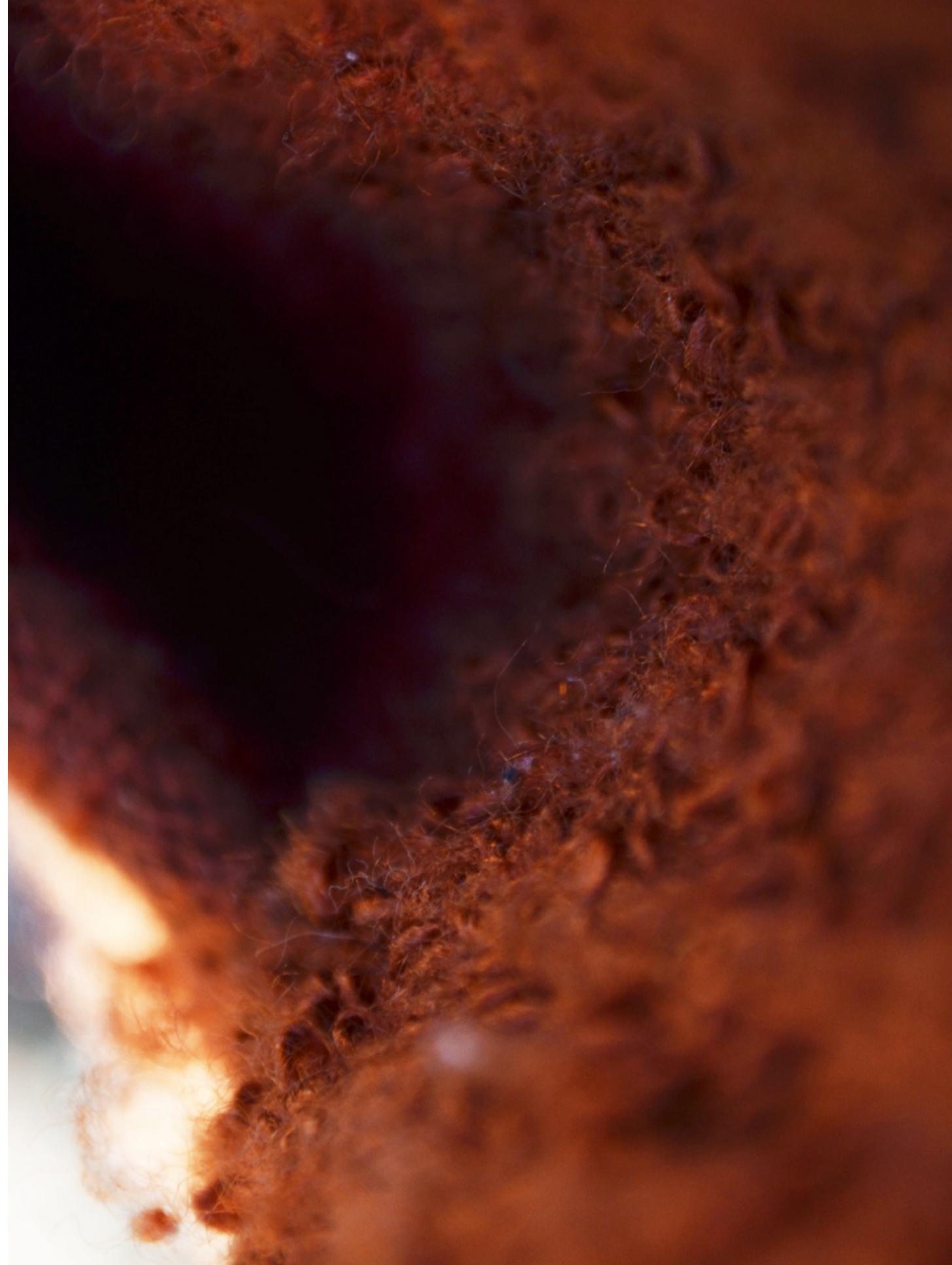




We used to live on a street where all the neighbours were friends. When we moved away (to a less friendly street), we kept in touch with many of our old neighbours. The Plants in particular were a very nice family. The father, Perry, would visit my sister at the Sobey's near our new house pretty much on a daily basis to pick up groceries for Sally, his aging mother who lived close by. Years passed and so too did Sally. My father wanted to help the family in any way he could, so he held a contents sale for the family in her small apartment. At the end of the day, when most of her old belongings had passed into the hands of strangers, I thought about how her memories would live on as these items continued to be used and treasured by others. These new owners may not have known her personally, but that doesn't really matter.

As I left, I noticed a wonderful copper-coloured sweater in her closet. It looked so warm and inviting that I asked if I could take it as my memory of Sally. The sweater is extremely soft and I often wear it around the house.

The first time I wore the sweater, I found a tissue in the left sleeve. I believe its warmth and coziness is reminiscent of a part of her spirit.

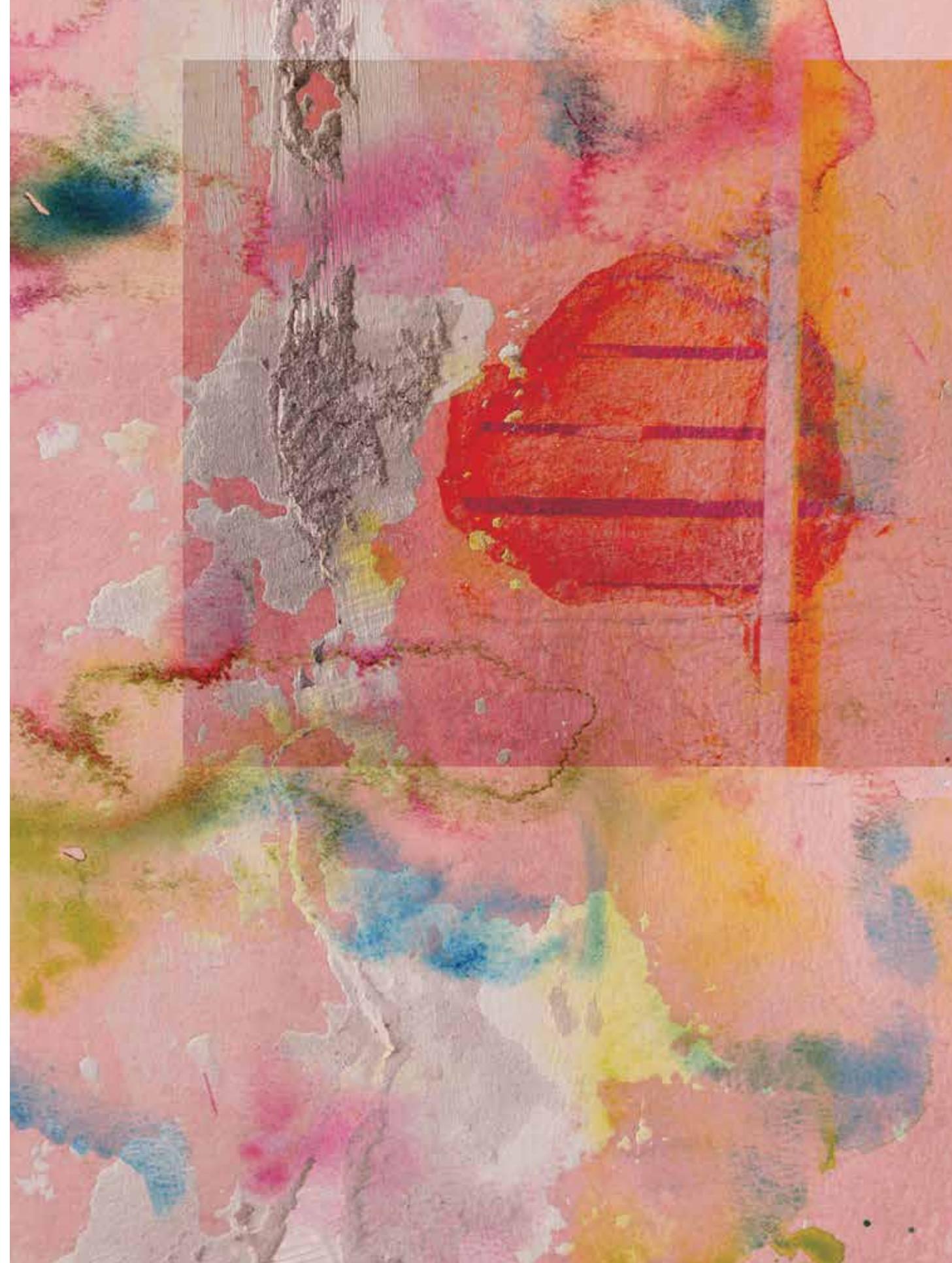




On the corner of Queen and Bathurst, where there now stands a furniture store, there once was The Big Bop. The Big Bop was a three-in-one concert venue that only all ages shows and gave any band a chance regardless of experience, genre, or talent. Unknown bands, including my own, would play in the same venue that had hosted The Misfits, Alexisonfire, Death From Above 1979, The Matadors, and many more great Toronto acts. Our small shows would attract the same attention as any other because of the community who practically lived at the venue. January 30th marked the last show ever at the venue, and anyone who had ever been to The Big Bop wanted to see it off.

The lineup for the last show ever at The Big Bop consisted almost solely of amateur bands, many of them unsigned and still in high school. The music started at 2:30pm, I arrived at 4:00, and by 6:00 the venue was at capacity with a massive line to get in. At around 11:00pm, the audience had finished the alcohol they snuck in. The sad truth that the venue they loved and had spent so many great nights at was closing started kicking in. Everyone started going insane. To the brutal sounds of some metal band you've never heard of, people were openly tearing out, punching, and kicking through the drywall. Security stood watching in what I like to think was approval. My friends and I wrote our band names on the wall, each grabbed a chunk of the venue for ourselves, and once the final act had played, we left The Big Bop forever.

I keep this chunk of drywall safe on a bookshelf in my room dedicated to trophies and important objects from my life. It's a physical reminder of my years in high school and contains fantastic memories of growing up. It's my piece of Toronto history and represents the start of my (hopefully) long career in music.

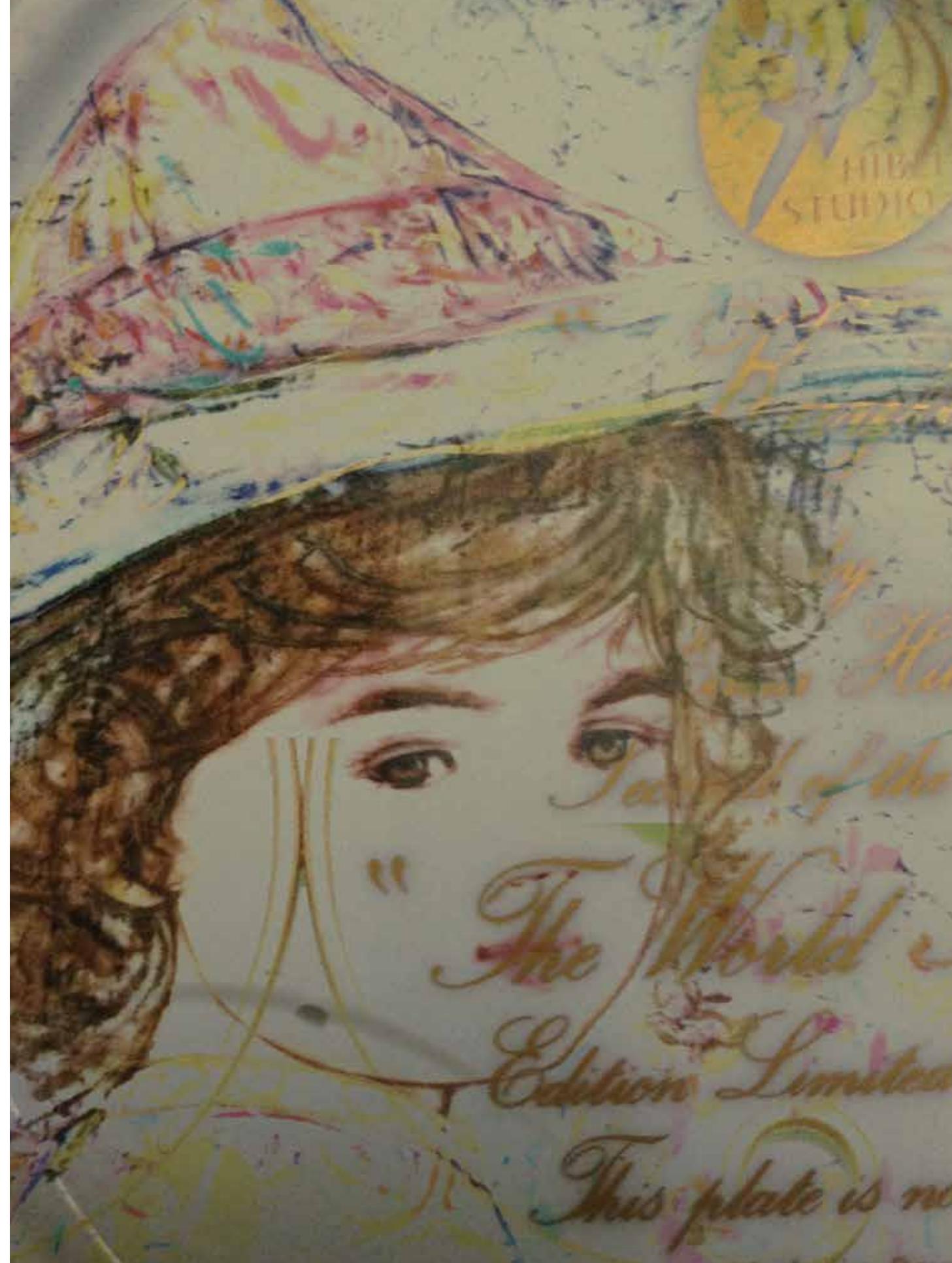




My grandmother used to run an antique shop in Montreal. She would sell all sorts of things like old knick knacks and odd furniture. One common item in the shop was series of plates. She had all sorts of decorative plates in sets of two, three, four, or on their own.

When her daughter, my mother, turned sixteen, my grandmother gave her a beautiful set of four plates. These plates depicted a young woman named Leia and her family. Leia is my mother's hebrew name, so of course she equated the images of the plates to what her own family might look like one day. One plate showed Leia by herself, two plates showed images of her family, and the last plate depicted a young girl with curly brown hair. The back of the plate reads "Kaylin" - the daughter of Leia.

In 1989, my mother married my father. Only two years later, they moved to Toronto to start a family. When I was born, my mother thought about the plates she loved so dearly and about the fact that I was born with a thick head of curly brown hair. She decided to name me Kaylin because I reminded her of her beloved set of plates. She bestowed the plates to me and I still have them today.





I try to go to Nuit Blanche every year. I love the idea of a huge city-wide art festival, much of which is delightfully accessible to the public. Planning for such an event can be challenging, considering I usually go with a group of people and everyone wants to see different things.

During the 2013 Nuit Blanche, as I was exploring the installations with some friends, I noticed that a few of them were slowing down. As I know from experience, when one person starts to complain, everyone will begin to feel tired and the night may end shortly after that. As I predicted, my friends began to fall away from the group.

I was focused on making it to sunrise this year. First of all, it is the goal beyond all goals for Nuit Blanche. There are a select few who make it the full twelve hours. Second, I wanted to see an exhibit where people were cutting up yellow strips of paper all night, until they threw them up in the air to coincide with sunrise and the end of the festival.

As I trudged my way to the last stop, I was beginning to feel the fact that all my friends had ditched me for their warm beds, and that perhaps I should have followed suit. And then, the sun rose. I had thought that the yellow strips of paper were going to be thrown in the air by everyone, but to my dismay only the cutters of the paper were allowed to throw them. The event was sub-par.

As I took the subway home at 7:00 in the morning, I felt tired, cold, and a little cheated. I was just about to vow never to attend Nuit Blanche again, when something wonderful happened. A girl came up to me, holding a tiny burgundy flower. She told me that the flower was the same colour as my scarf, and handed it to me. This one small act was worth waiting up all night for a dumb confetti party.



Part Two:

Logic & Analysis

What defines value and how does that definition change from person to person?

How do we interpret the sentimentality that is possessed and reflected onto inanimate objects?

This section aims to further the abstract theories gleaned from the first section into analyzed data sets which might be useful in answering specific questions raised at the beginning of this project. Using various methods, the stories displayed in the first section will be interpreted and extracted to create visualizations of a more logical format.

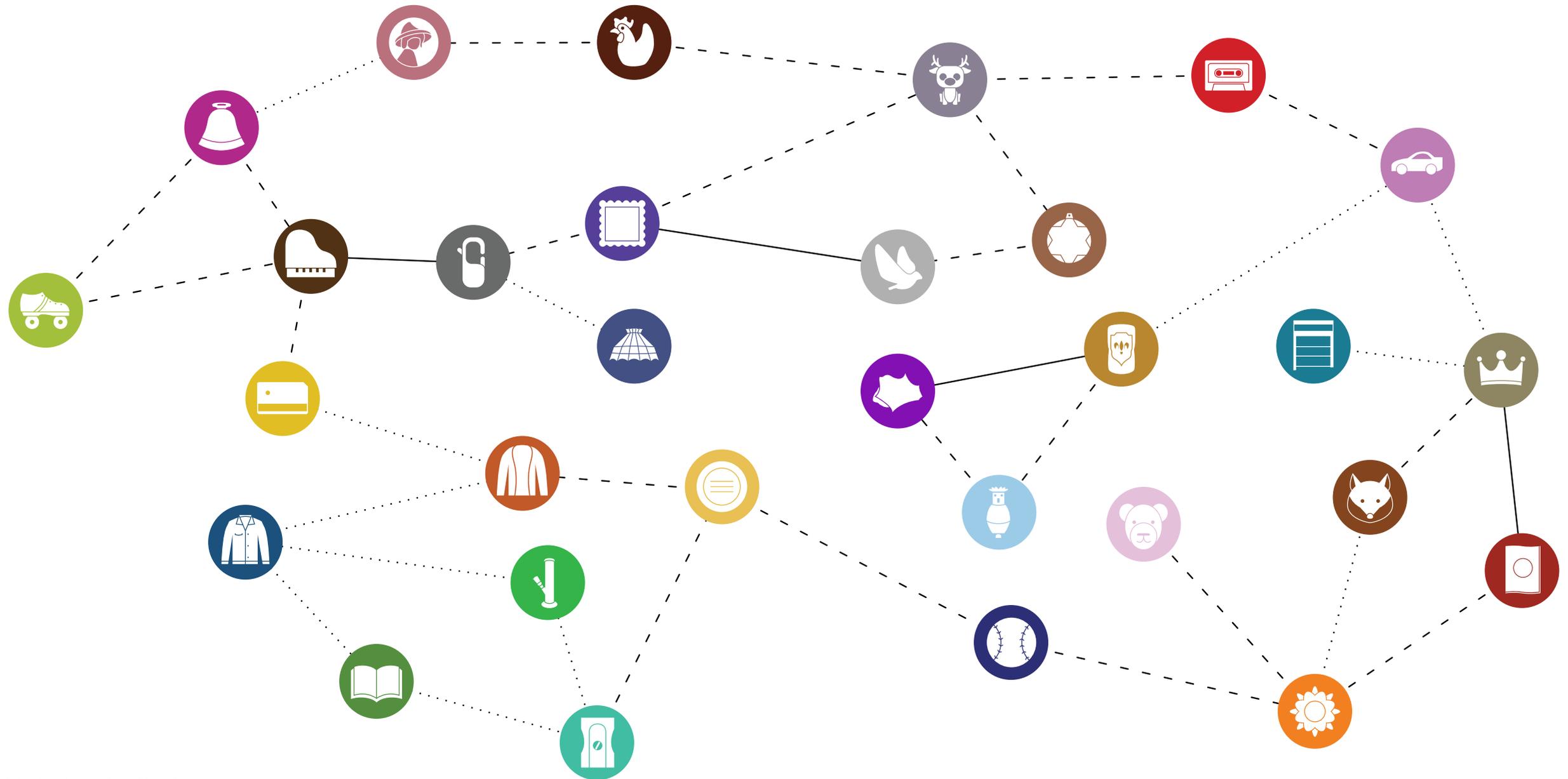
You can interact with any of the following infographics inside the digital companion piece at:

chloesilver.ca/favouritethings#data

Object Relationships

Each node represents an object and its owner.
The connections represent a similar definition of value.

- monetary value
- - - - sentimental value
- practical value

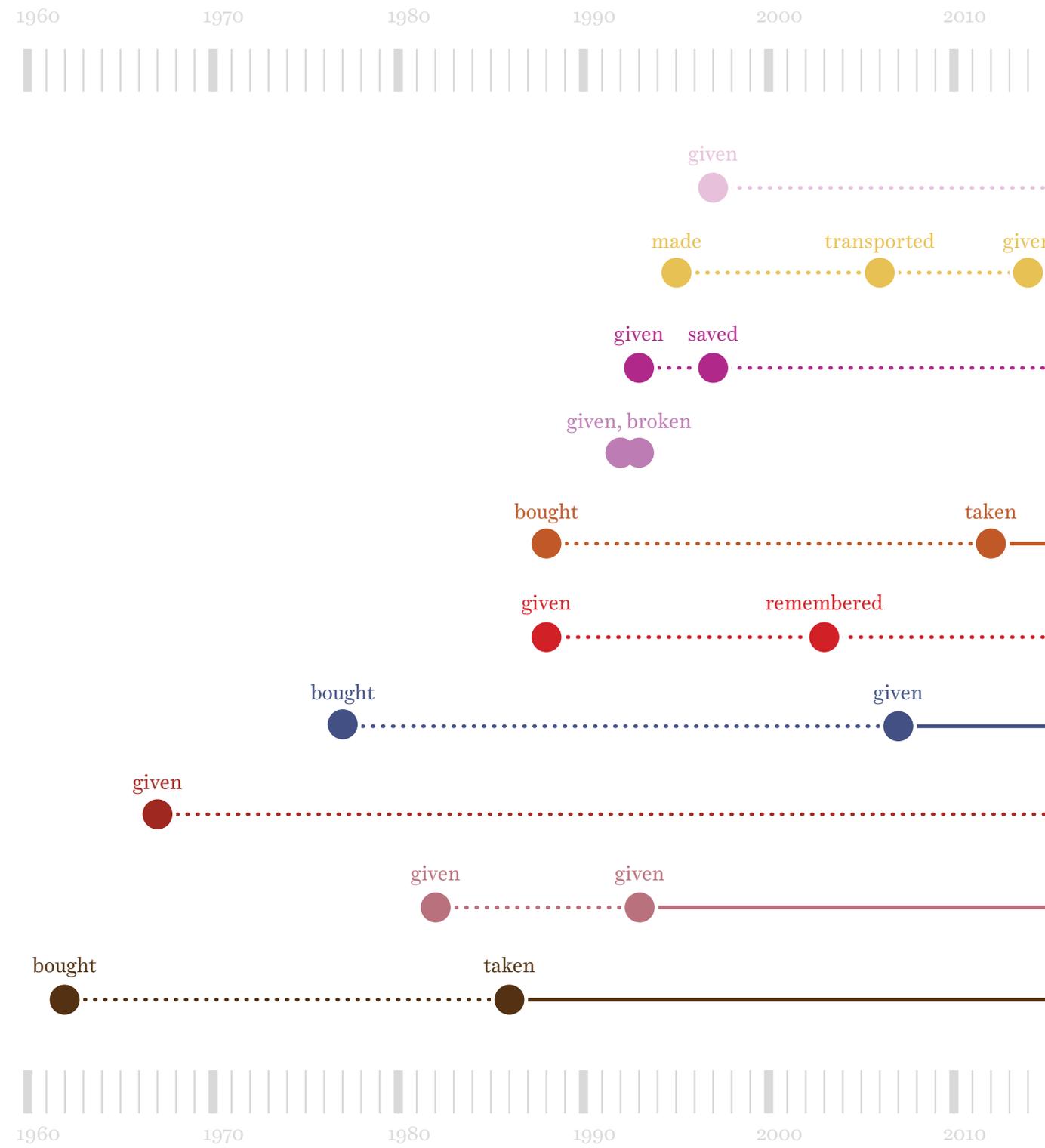


Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/object

Map of Actions I

A plotted history of each object through time.

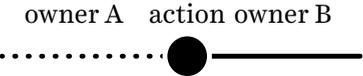
owner A action owner B
 ● —————



Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/action

Map of Actions II

A plotted history of each object through time.



2010

given



2010

awarded



2010

awarded stolen



2010

stolen



2009

given found



2002

given



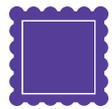
2001

chosen



1999

bought



1998

given



1997

given



Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/action

Map of Actions III

A plotted history of each object through time.



2014

given



2014

bought



2014

replaced



2013

given



2014

given



2013

given



2013

bought



2011

given, removed



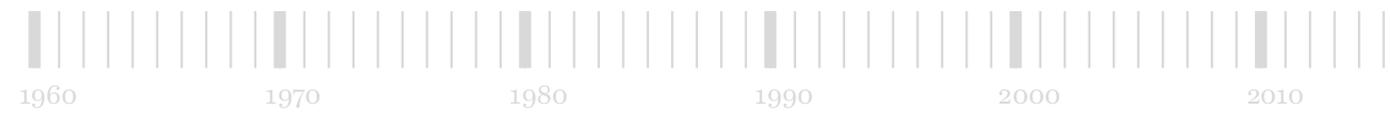
2011

given



2010

saved



Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/action

Value Over Time

A timeline of perceived value levels during ownership.

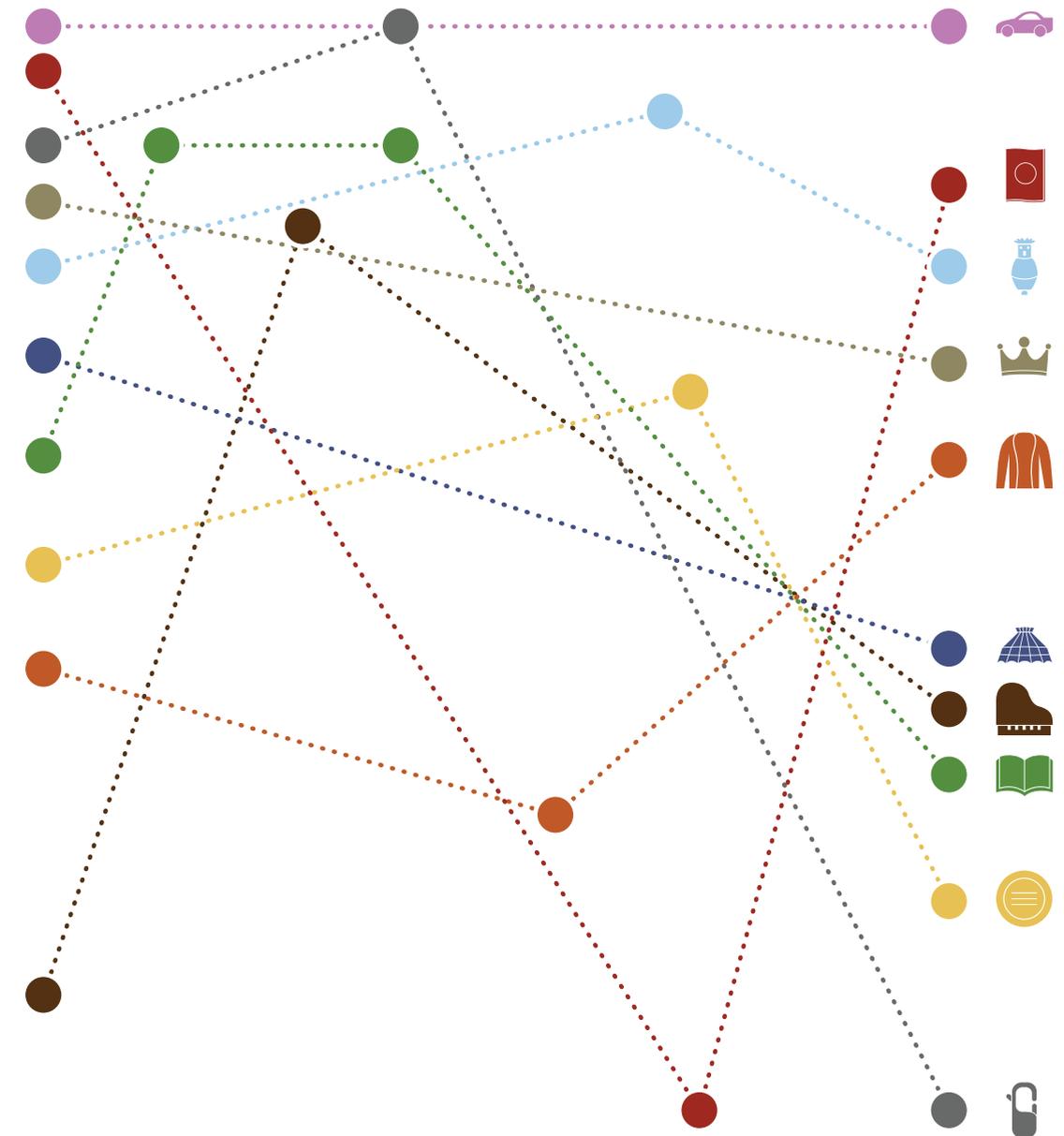
favourite item

highly treasured

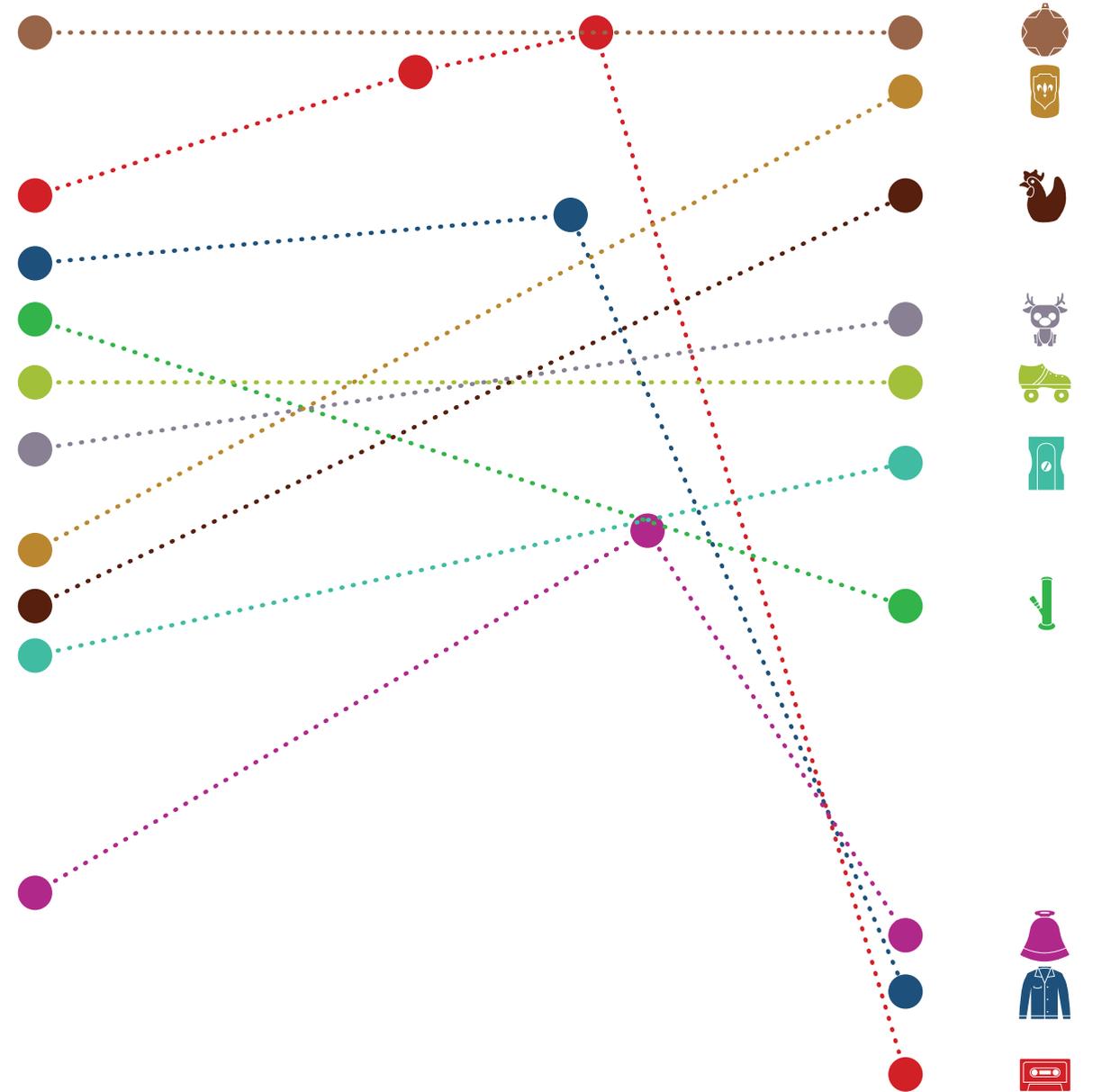
cared for

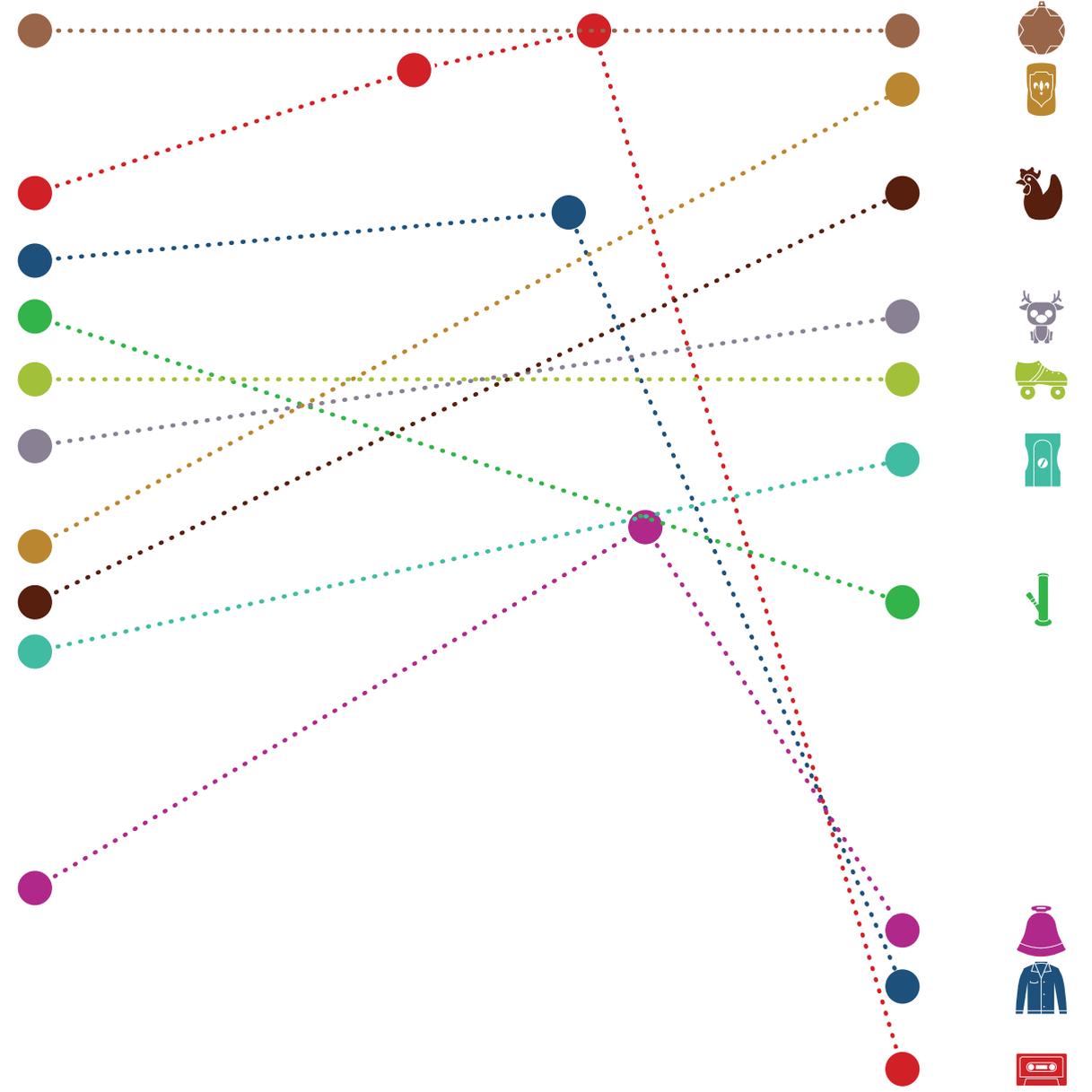
overlooked

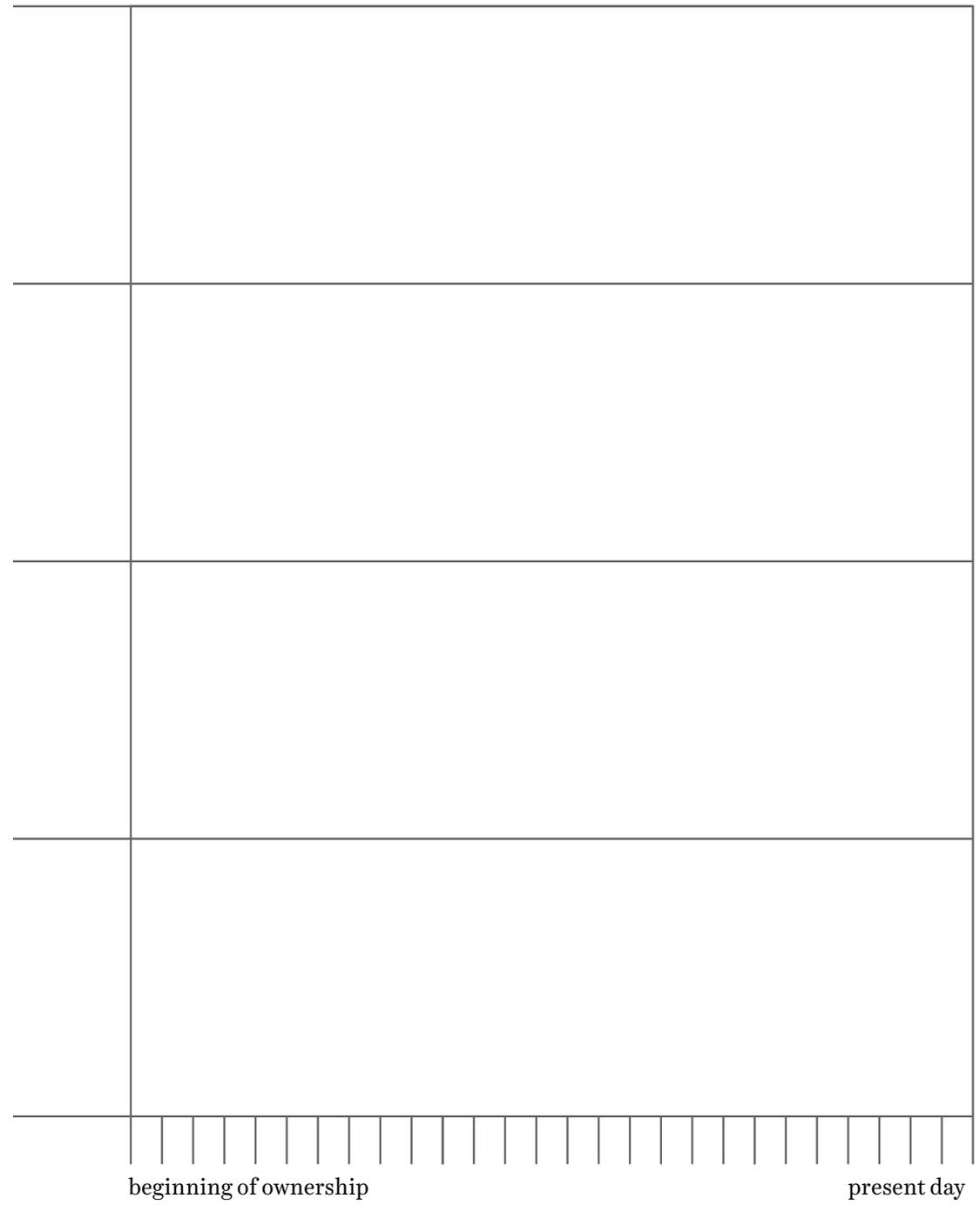
neglected



Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/time



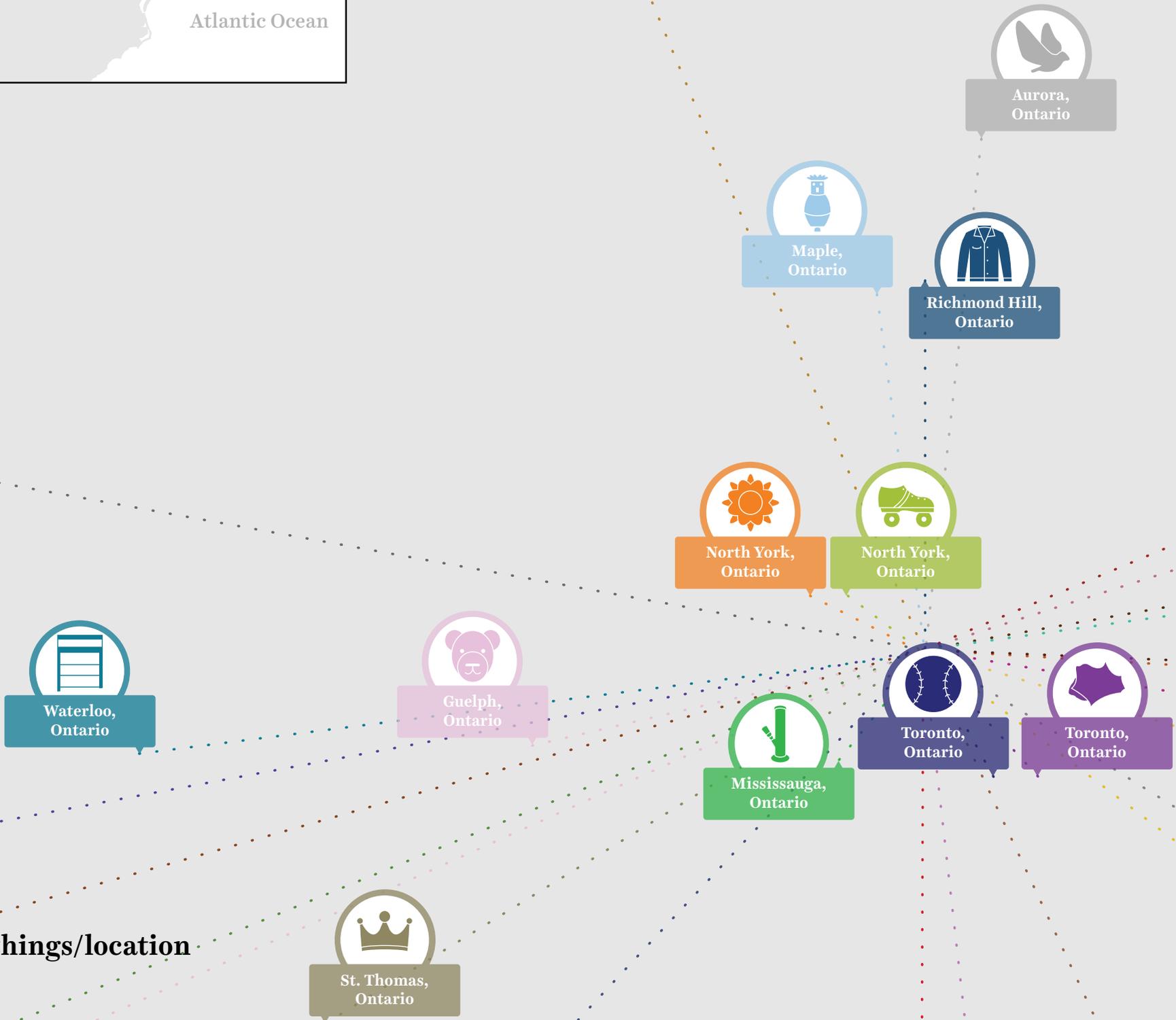




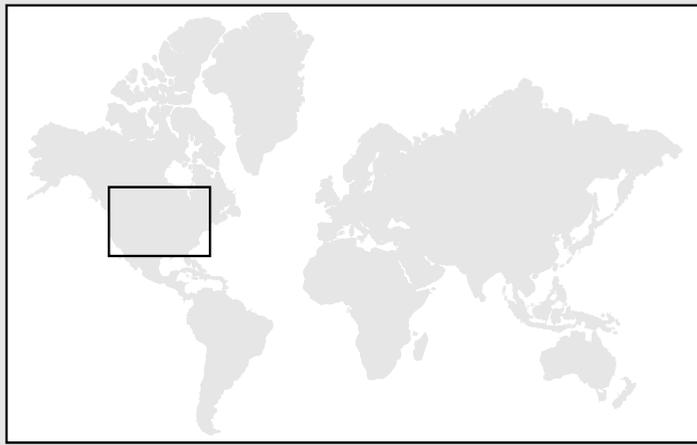


Locations of Origin: Greater Toronto Area

A map of various locations in which the objects have resided.



Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/location



Locations of Origin: North America

A map of various locations in which the objects have resided.



Surrey,
British Columbia



Sudbury,
Ontario



Montreal,
Quebec



Montreal,
Quebec



Lansing,
Michigan



New York,
New York



Brooklyn,
New York



San Francisco,
California



Kansas City,
Missouri

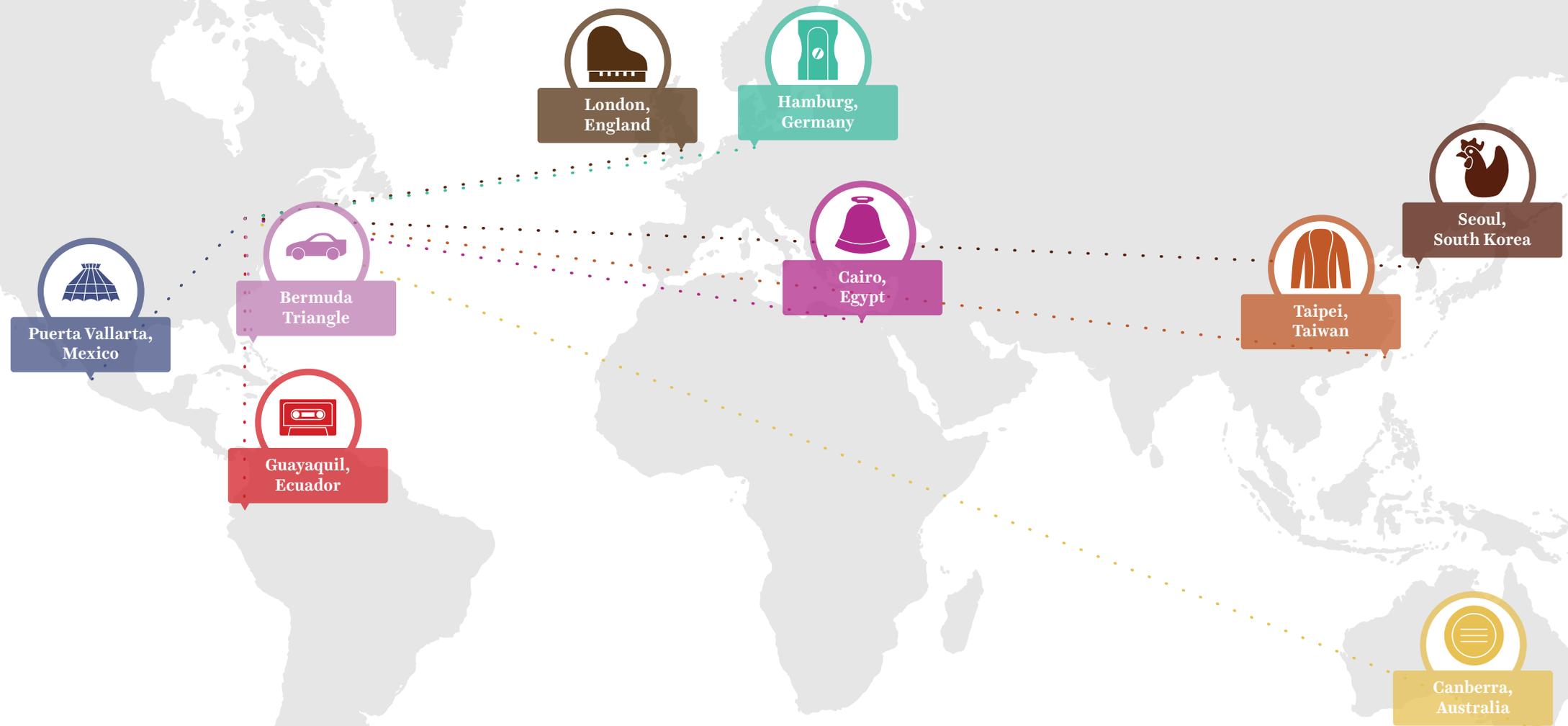


Baltimore,
Maryland

Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/location

Locations of Origin: The World

A map of various locations in which the objects have resided.



Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/location

Types of Value

Monetary

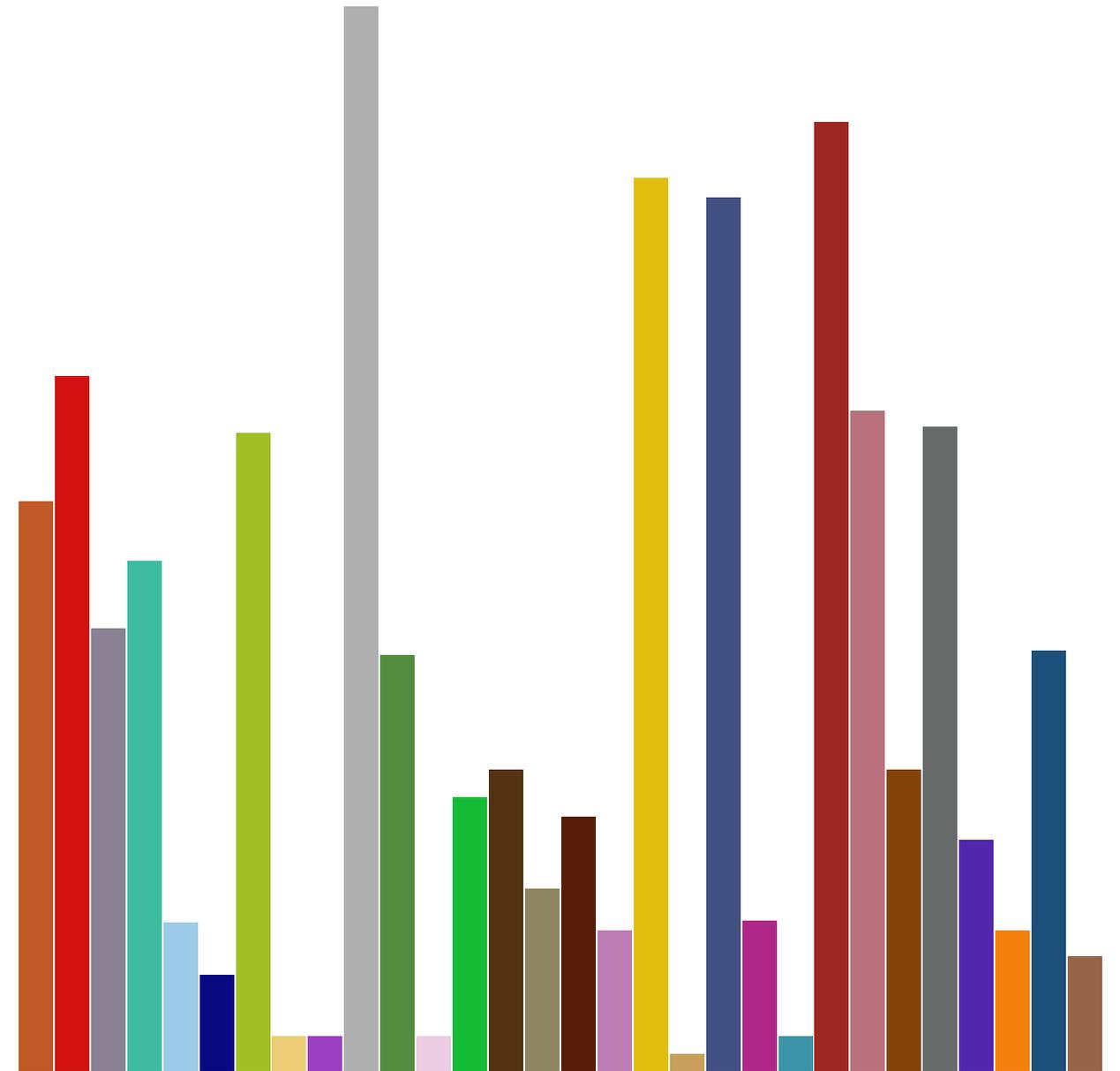
Value is a strange term. The concept of value or worth can signify different ideas to different people, and even refer to different facets of the same object. This series of infographics represents three different facets of the objects displayed throughout the catalog, those being monetary value, sentimental value, and practical value.

Monetary value relates to the cost of an item in currency. Some of these items have little or no monetary value because they were made by hand or given as gifts.

Sentimental value refers to the memories and feelings the owner might associate with the object as they relate to how the object was acquired or kept over a long period of time.

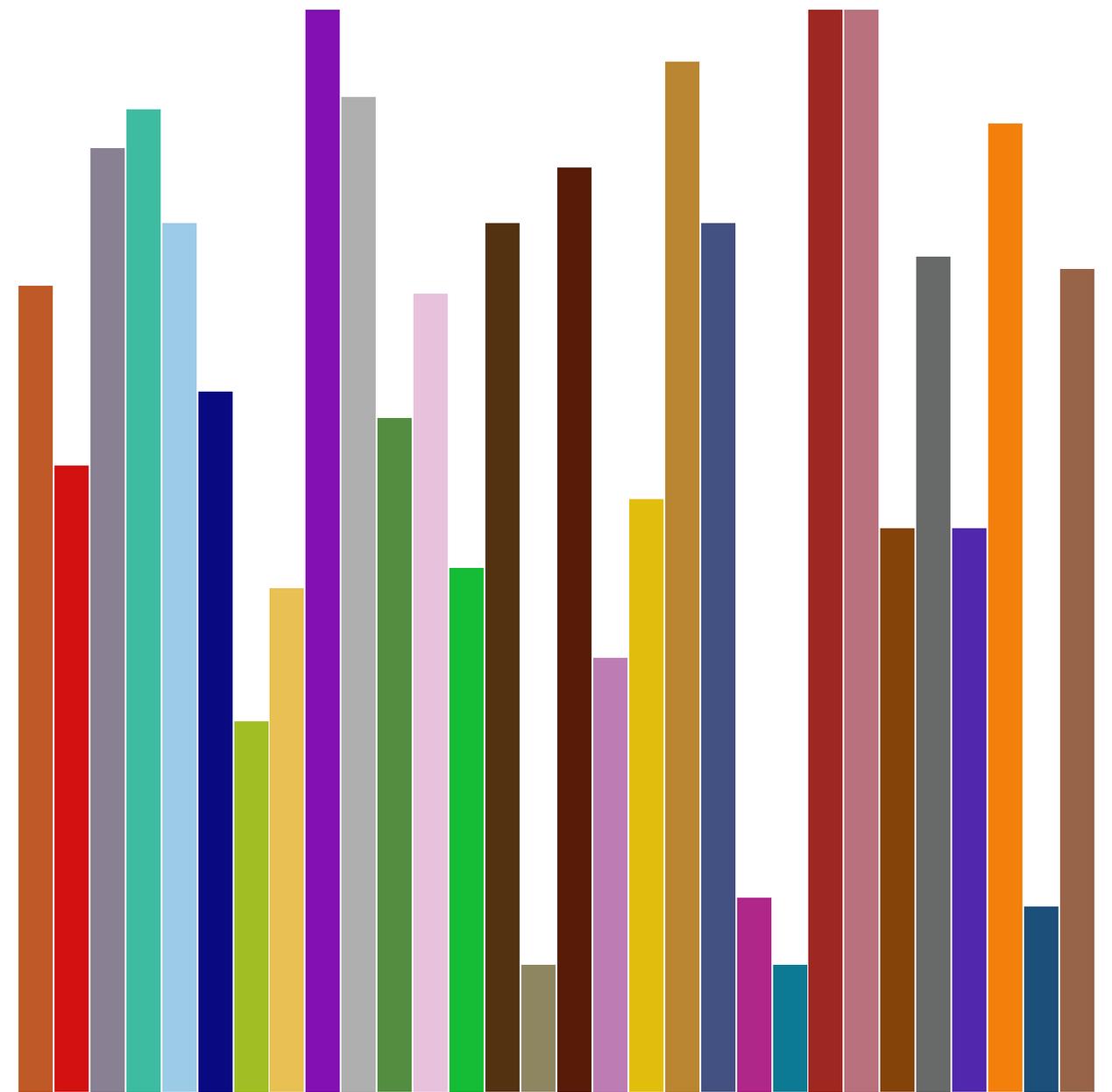
Practical value is simply defined as the usefulness of an object in completing a task. Some objects, like a book, offer a task of reading while others, such as a figurine, offer no usefulness apart from the joy obtained from their visual characteristics.

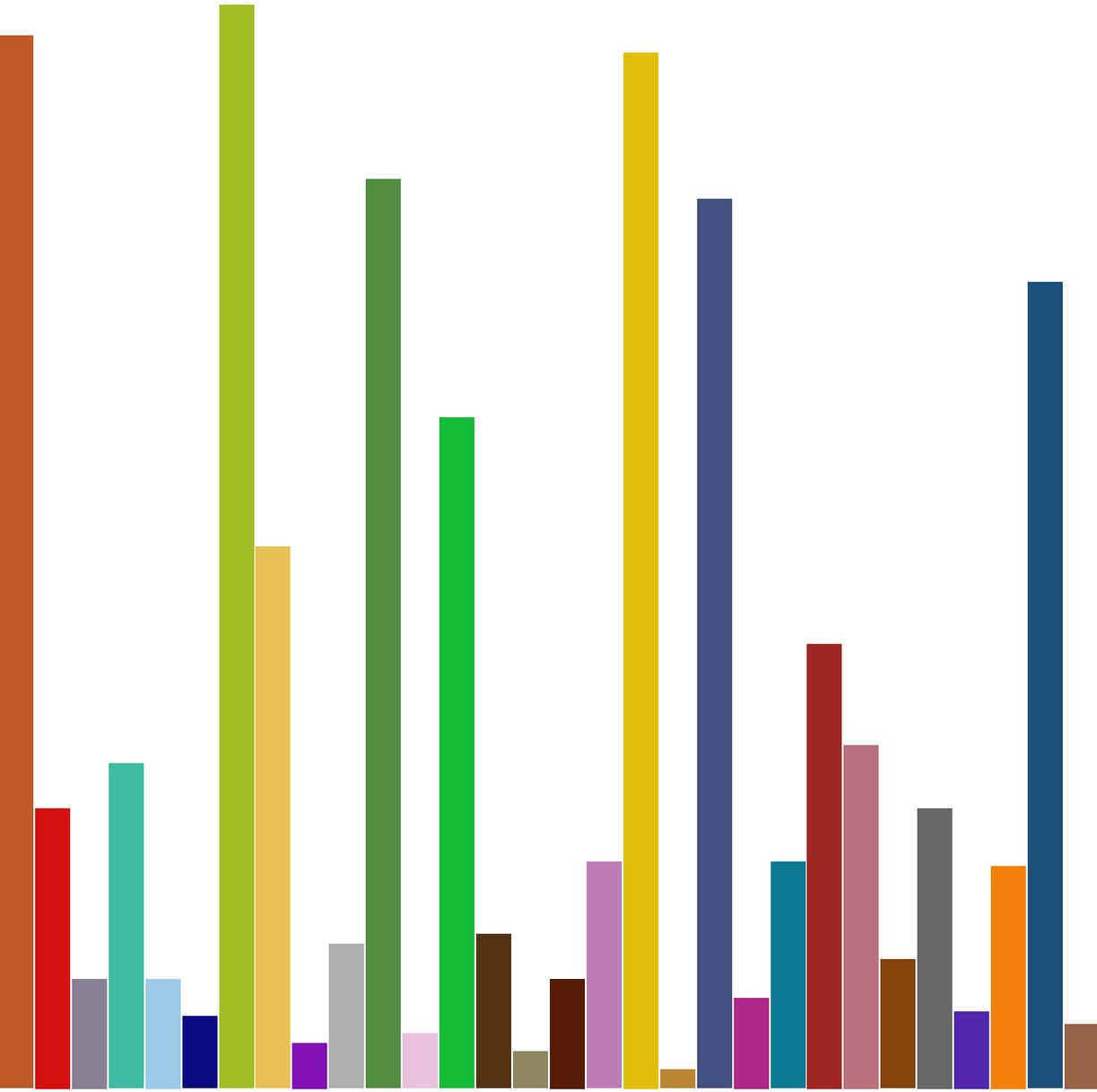
Explore the three contrasting values of these items as they are arranged, one on each piece of translucent paper.



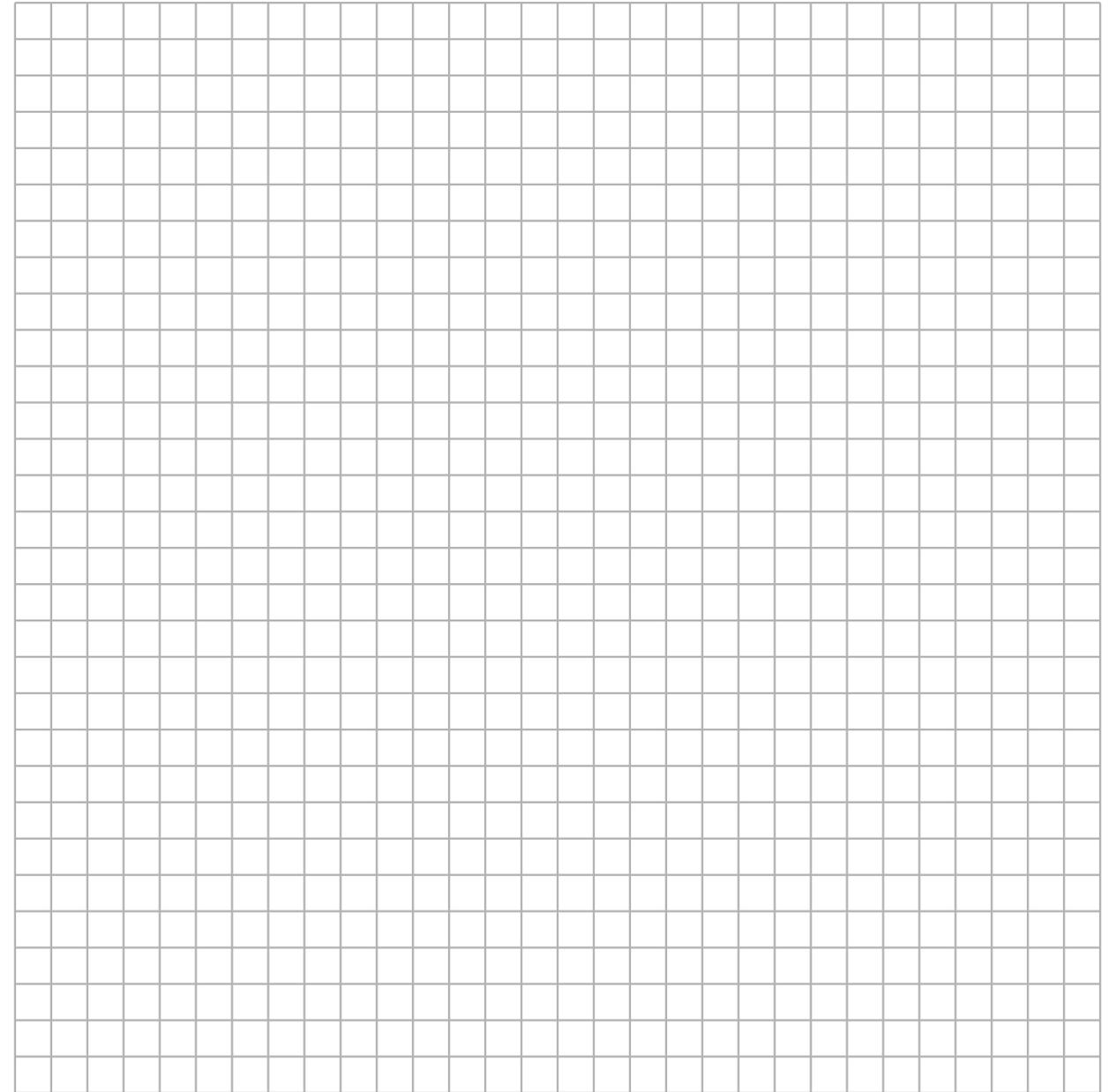
Interact with the data visualization at:
chloesilver.ca/favouritethings/value

Sentimental





Types of Value

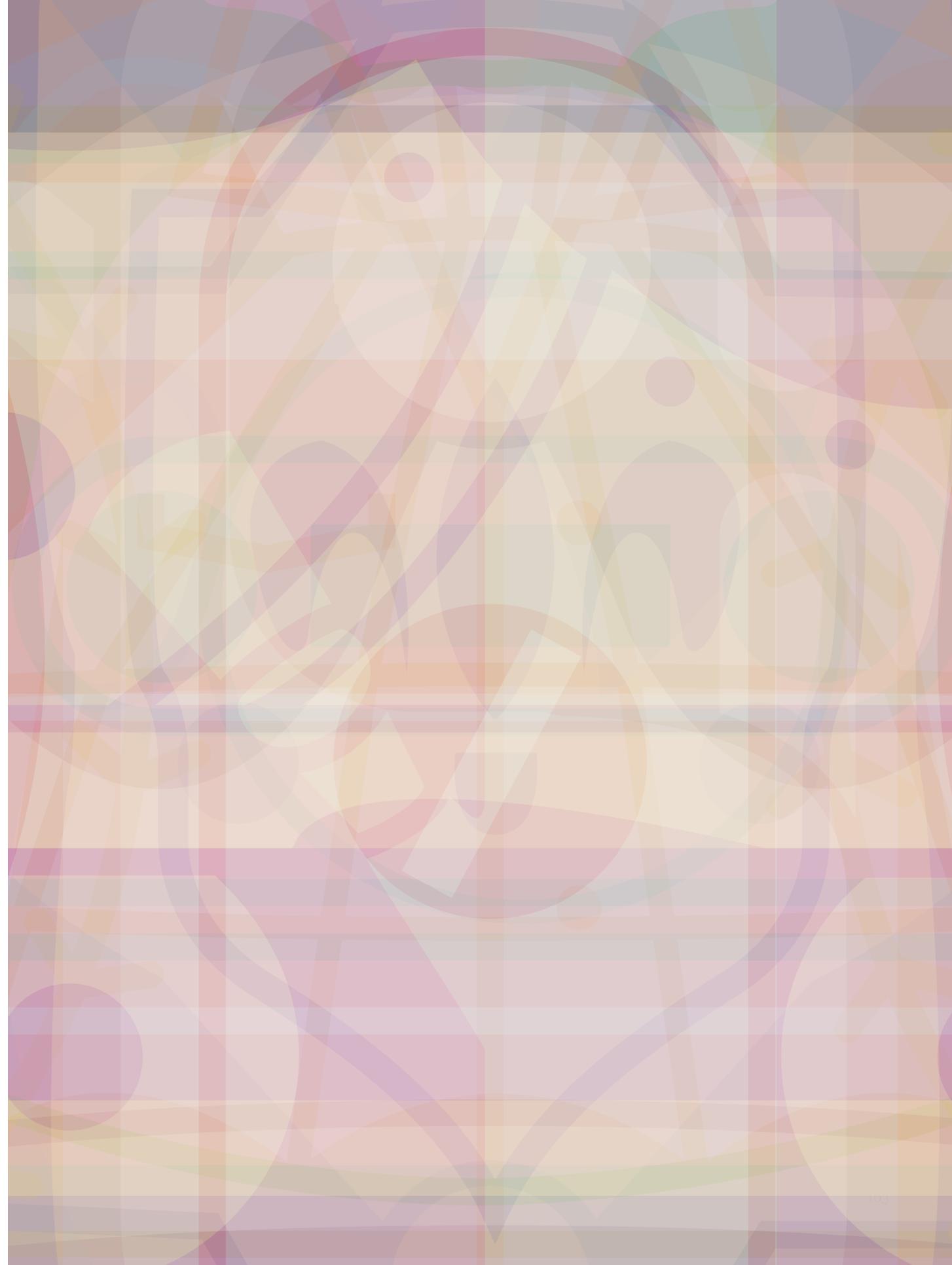


The word *value* is quite strange in its usage. Value can be used to define an object in either a qualitative or quantitative way. Value can shape the way we view objects, and their importance to us from a general perspective.

Throughout your exploration of this catalog, perhaps your own definition of value has changed in some way. You may find that you feel differently about some of your possessions, or that you now treasure them for slightly different reasons.

Value is a term as flexible and intangible as the reasons we have for collecting and treasuring inanimate objects. These objects contain no emotion or feeling, and yet we feel comforted or happy when we hold them. They evoke memories or assist us with tasks or provide an experience that cannot otherwise be replicated.

To me, the essence of this theory is the real value that these objects hold. To hold an object in one's hands and feel comforted by it is something very special indeed.





8

made with love
2015



