

The Oregon Holocaust Resource Center Presents

THE 2002 SALA KRYSZEK WRITING & ART COMPETITION AWARDS RECEPTION



2001 Sala Kryszek Award in Art - Samuel Jackson, *Mixed Media #4*

Sunday, June 2nd, 2002

2:00 pm

The University Center

Pacific University
Forest Grove, Oregon

Every year, the Oregon Holocaust Resource Center sponsors a Writing & Art Competition for middle and high school students. Named in honor of Sala Kryszek, a Portland resident and survivor of the Holocaust who passed away in 1986, the competition seeks to keep alive the legacy of the witnesses who survived the horrors of the Hitler years by entrusting it to a new generation. A special thanks goes to the Jakob Kryszek family, whose generous contribution makes the annual Writing & Art Competition possible.

2002 Sala Kryszek Writing Competition Award Winners

Anna Harley
Twality Middle School
8th Grade
Teacher: Joy McCollum
The Sala Kryszek Award in Writing
The Mask

"Grandma! Tell us the story of the mask. Please, please!" Chirped her grandsons.

"It is late," sighed Grandma.

"Oh please, its our favorite! One more story," Grandma began.

Once there was a great king who ruled over all the land as far as the eye could see and farther. He had everything he desired, but he wanted his kingdom to be greater than any kingdom on the earth. To tell all the architects and advisors he commanded, "Do whatever you must, I leave my kingdom in your hands. It must be great.

One day the king came out of his chamber to survey the beginnings of his new kingdom. He strutted to the window and peered out. His once beautiful kingdom was a smoldering wasteland. He stumbled back in horror. Smoke steadily puffed upward and flames licked the sky. The king flew down his stairs and to the gate where he collided with one of the guards. "What has happened to my kingdom? My kingdom..." the king stammered.

"Sir? You don't know? The king has ordered the land to be cleansed. All the previous filth was burnt away to make room for a new, better kingdom," the guard explained.

"I never would have ordered something this horrendous done to my own kingdom," the king exclaimed.

"Well someone did. Maybe one of the architects or advisors, they are an odd bunch. Anyhow, if it wasn't you then I say you do something about it and quick or there won't be a kingdom left to save," urged the guard.

"Where are my people? I don't understand..." the king murmured.

"Only Arian people are allowed inside the kingdom, Lord. The others have been sent to camps on the outskirts of the land," the guard stormed.

"No one is Arian in my kingdom, not even I!" roared the king.

"King, I have something that may calm your nerves," hissed a voice behind him.

The king spun around in fright and a small haggard man

glared up at him.

"Fool! I do not take advice from beggars!" the king snapped.

"But I have an offer you cannot refuse." The little man's blue eyes flashed as he slunk off into the shadows.

The king could not restrain himself as he hastened after the odd man like a dog on a leash. When the king reached the stranger, he was kneeling over something, and as he held it out he crooned, "Try this on, Lord, it will clear your mind of the hard truth." The king looked down at a shabby little mask with dark eyes and a malicious smile. The mask seemed to call him like a child whispering in his ear, "Try me on for size, it can't hurt. I can help you; let the architects and advisors alone. No need for you to get involved in things that don't directly involve you."

"Well, I suppose so," the king droned, and as if in a dream, the king lifted the mask to his face. The mask clamped onto his flesh, his mind cleared and it felt as if a heavy burden had suddenly been lifted off his shoulders.

"A wise choice, a wise choice," the little man cackled before he drifted into the darkness.

As the king strolled back to his castle he thought to himself, *"What a fool I was to think the architects were doing something wrong. That guard tried to confuse me, but I know better. I am no architect or advisor! I am a king, meant for ruling, not for designing, building or plotting! I will not get involved in something I know nothing of; they do not need my help. What of my people being sent away? I am no commoner; the camps will be fine places to live. I will not speak up for the ignorant peasants; they are obviously not needed, unlike me. Even though I am not Arian I will never be taken away."*

The king did not take the mask off from that day forward, and consequently he watched his kingdom come to ruin right before his eyes. The king had not truly seen anything for months. When the guard that he had met at the gate that night came to see him, he did not recognize the guard at first. The man was no longer the same strong, daring guard the king had known, but just a shadow of himself with deep, dark circles under his weary eyes.

"Where have you been, friend?" the king asked.

"The camps, everyone is in the camps..." His voice trailed off.

"Having a lovely time? I..." But the guard cut him off.

"You must listen; take off the mask that blinds you! Your kingdom is no more, and your people are dying

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by the thousands! You must help us and save your kingdom!" the guard screamed.

"Nonsense!" My kingdom is beautiful and the camps are best for the people!" The king roared back.

"They will take you too!" With that the guard was on the king. He ripped the mask off the king's face and yelled; 'Now you will see the truth!'

The mask soared through the air and shattered on the floor into a million pieces. Before the king could retaliate the guard was gone. The king was so weakened by the truth that all he could do was lay down and cry. He knew everything the guard had said was true. Why had he not seen it before? Just then, two strong Arian guards grabbed him and gruffly pulled him upright. "Where are you taking me?" the king asked.

"To the palace," they chanted, "to the palace."

When they arrived, the Arian architects and advisors formed a circle around the king and the guards. "You! You ruined my kingdom and outlawed my people from the land. Why?" the king spat.

"That is of little matter now that it is done," sneered one advisor.

"Yes! Yes!" chanted the rest.

The king looked around the circle like a helpless animal.

"You see you are too late. Now you must meet someone," laughed one architect. A proud Arian man stepped into the circle, and the king instantly recognized him but could not place him. Then his eyes widened in horror. It was the man who had given him the mask!

"I see you know him! He is to be the new king!" boasted the architect.

"I am the king! This is my kingdom!" Sputtered

the king.

"True, but you are of no use to us. You are not of the proud Arian race." The architect retorted.

"Help me! Someone-help me!" The king cried as the guards dragged him away. There was no one left to help him, only the proud Arians remained. The last thing the king saw as he was pulled away was the new king picking up the broken pieces of the mask, an expression of pure joy on his face.

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As Grandma finished the story the boys looked up through tear stained eyes and rushed to embrace their grandmother.

"How can people be so mean Grandma? I've heard this story a million times and it still confuses me," sobbed her eldest grandson.

"When people let themselves be blinded by a mask, terrible things can happen. Have you heard of the Holocaust or the Japanese internment camps?" Grandma asked.

"Yes, I know all about that," said her grandson.

"Then you know what can happen when people put a mask on, right? They do not want to get involved. The truth is just too hard to face. They pretend nothing is wrong. My children, you must learn to resist the mask and find the truth no matter how hard it may seem. Help others to see clearly too, that one person can make a difference no matter how small they are," Grandma explained.

"I promise, Grandma! I promise!" the boy vowed as he gave his grandmother one last hug before rushing up the stairs to bed. "Goodnight Grandma!"

"Goodnight, my darling."

Sergio- Francis M. Zenisek

Oregon Episcopal School

8th Grade

Teacher: Steve Brennan

Junior Division: 1st Place in Writing

Music of the Heart

He kept his mask in the drawer down the hall in his flat. He lay in bed. As he pulled himself up, he thought about the poker game he had played last night. He has hidden his poor hand well, over betting and straight faced, until many of his opponents folded. He chuckled to himself.

He paused and absorbed the sound of Bruckner's 8th drifting up from the radio; the soft, peaceful music at the end of the Adagio.

He thought to himself as he dressed in his uniform. Then his thought took an unwanted turn, and he was frightened. Would he fail his duty to the whole of the people? These thoughts circulated in his mind, until he calmed and thought again. He knew his mask grew every day; soon these apprehensions would be things of the past. But today he would have to be careful, he knew that his heart was still soft in places where it should not be.

He walked down the hall and took it out. Hard, cold, built of the observed sufferings that one would expe-

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rience every day of the new life. As he slipped it on, the music changed; the terrible march at the start of the Finale. He stood there a moment, the melody bouncing off, only letting the beat of the march through. Then he put on his jacket, and slipped out the door.

Out in the cold, rings danced about the puddles, and the trees bent and swayed beneath the gray sky. Yet, his mind only faced forward, attentive to the task that awaited him. Other people walked by, their eyes set forward, their masks also growing as they constantly blocked out what was there. As he turned a corner, his eyes almost glanced at the wall dividing the city. The wall those unworthies that he feared would take his heart were once kept. But he caught himself, and continued on, his mask fitting ever tighter.

At the station he boarded a train, others dressed the same followed. The train lurched and began to move. It clicked down the track, doubling the sound of the 2nd Symphony of some fairly famous composer, whose name he could not grasp with the same mask on. He sat down in his seat, across from two men playing a chess game. The younger man was desperately throwing a hopeless attack on the experienced player's strategy, knowing somewhere deep inside that there is no hope, yet not facing up to that truth.

He looked outside; the train was passing a lake, still for a moment under the sky. A young boy was skipping stones, oblivious of his surroundings, innocent with the movement. He looked back at the chess game, the older player had met the attack and put the younger in check mate. Money was handed over as the train began to slow. It finally stopped, and he left the train.

Once again out in the cold, the smoke of the train mixed with another smoke. The latter was the worse, filled with a putrid ash. It wasn't from here, it came from another, similar place down the tracks, where some people would be sent, of whom none would return. He checked in with a superior and took a position near a fence.

The unworthies walked by. Their faces were blank. A fragile sheet which was all that kept them from the full blown harshness of this reality. He looked and saw nothing. But he was afraid to look behind that cover. Was it true? Were these people truly evil at heart? The cause of all of the whole people's problems? Worthy of this punishment?

Under the sky, the counting and recounting com-

menced. A man was beaten to death for no crime at all. As he looked down at the body, he began to feel pity for the innocent man. He could feel a dull ache in his heart, a tug at a part of himself that he had tried so hard to hide. He had to know.

He walked up to a woman, blank, staring forward. He pulled off her faceless sheet. He expected a contortion, wizened and ugly, merciless. But he was met with a thin smile, a young girl with a fragile hope still within. He softly cried out to himself, as he stepped back.

As his mask fell to the ground, he looked around in the sudden flash of color. A song bird under the half blue-half gray sky alighting upon a branch. He saw rows and rows of people, with brightened faces, waiting for a chance to live their lives again. He saw his fellows, blank faced, committing crimes against the human heart. His heart was free to breathe the air again.

His heart. He winced, and thought of himself. He thought of his duty. As quickly as they had come, the feelings of pity were fleeing. The part of his brain that had previously ruled pushing this new found freedom back. It was telling him he had failed. Given in. He had cracked. He had felt sorry for life unworthy. He had failed the whole of the people. He tried to hold on to the color, the faces, the truth. He had seen it all! But to no avail.

The mask was on, it fit snug as ever. The bird was shot under the gray sky. He saw rows and rows of things, they were faceless, awful. The counting was done, and he took up his post.

At the end of the day, he sat in his chair by the fire in his flat. He did not take off his mask. He had no reason to. Cold beats escaped from the radio. The music was gone. He absorbed them, and they helped patch up his heart. It was aching, and he wondered if it would ever stop.

As he lay down in his bed, the rain pattering on the roof, he thought he heard a scream inside of him, pleading for him to let go. He pushed the thought out of his head and fell asleep.

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Kaila Heiserman
Twality Middle School
8th Grade
Teacher: Donna Krauthoefer
Junior Division: 2nd Place in Writing
Hungry for more than Food

When I was younger, I got sick a lot. I remember asking my mom why I got sick so much and she told me not to worry. She told me that everyone has problems, mine were just more noticeable. As an American living in today's society that statement has become more real to me. I look at my friends and family, and I wonder day after day how they hide all of their problems so well. We live in a society where people strive for a standard of perfection. No one has problems, right? Wrong. I look at all of the models and movie stars, and singers, even children who get good grades, and live in a nice house. They look perfect, but to live that life would be more difficult. It is those standards of thinking perfection that cause all of the problems. In real life happy endings aren't inserted conveniently before the last commercial break. We are led to believe that beauty is to look a certain way. Everybody looks perfect, but everybody also has a mask of pain, that in today's society is rarely touched.

I was recently diagnosed with anorexia nervosa, but if you look at me you would think a normal teenage girl who maybe diets every now and then, but who doesn't, right? I often catch myself comparing my body to that of my peers, strangers I see walking down the street, and to beautiful women on television. I'm so glad that braces are making my teeth look straight, platform shoes make my legs look long and makeup covers up all of my blemishes. But what if they didn't? Then I, along with most of the American women wouldn't fit in the media's "perfect" image. Sixty-nine percent of television characters are thin and only five percent are overweight. The average person sees four hundred to six hundred advertisements per day. So it isn't surprising that in America today, there are approximately seven million cases of anorexia nervosa. But the only people who truly know how it feels to have anorexia are those who have lived through it. It is a never-ending monologue that plays inside the mind from the minute the person falls asleep. I wish I could just enjoy one meal without feeling like I have let myself down. It has even become difficult to get myself to go into the lunch-

room to eat in front of other people, because I don't want to eat, and when I don't, then they will look at me, and somehow have shattered a piece of my mask. But how did eating become a punishment in my mind? Why do I let myself feel guilty after a meal when I look at my empty plate? While surrendering to my fear of food, I sit, amusing my friends with gossip so the rumbling of my stomach will be silenced. Even though the hunger is such a strong pain, I can't let it get to me. What if someone felt the pain that goes through my mind? I can't let them take another piece of my mask off. How can other people love me, when I don't even love myself? People sometimes say, "I can't believe you that you think you are fat or that you diet, you have such a good body." But if they only knew what I have had to go through to get this body.

We are bombarded with the message of perfection from the time we are little girls when we get our first Barbie Doll. She has the perfect figure, perfect cloths, perfect skin perfect boyfriend and perfect life. Even people who look great don't have a perfect life. We never really escape that image of perfect bodies, which we equate to a perfect life. When we grow up, we are still surrounded with that same image of perfection. It just continues with the Victoria's Secret Catalogue, the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit editions to movie stars.

I live near a busy road and sometimes I sit near the street corner and watch the cars driving by. All the people, men and women, some drive fast as if late for an event. Some driver slower as if they have all the time in the world. What kind of problems do they have? Even people who look successful or have it together have hidden conflicts. It is a universal human condition, that we all have struggles at some point in our lives. You would think that if everyone has problems, then why can't we just share our problems with each other and we would feel a lot better. But we hide everything because we are afraid of acceptance. Many people are afraid to reveal who they really are inside for fear they won't be liked or accepted. It's a calculated risk that we take everyday. Even though there is that risk of rejection or misunderstanding, there is freedom in taking off the mask. I know, because through my struggles, I am now gaining a deeper understanding of myself. Food is more than fuel for my body; and hunger pains more than an empty stomach. The pain can be to fill a desire for acceptance and realness in this world where it is not safe to take the mask off.

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LeAnn Holland-Ramirez
Twality Middle School
8th Grade
Teacher: Donna Krauthoefer
Junior Division: 3rd Place in Writing
Color Your World

Mary walked slower as she approached the house. Would he be home, waiting for her? Alex had said that he would never hurt her again. She wanted to believe that he would change, now that the baby was coming. After all, he was her husband, he loved her and he had promised, “never again.”

Her thoughts were interrupted as she noticed a fragile pair of glasses lying in the middle of her path. She picked them up and curiously slipped them over her eyes. Through the glasses the world that was full of color was now suddenly black and white. Her bruises, hidden by makeup, appeared as dark blotches, and were once again visible. Shaken, she ripped the glasses from her head. The bruises were now hidden and colors again became part of her world. She shoved the new glasses into the pocket of her sweatshirt and climbed the steps to the door of her home.

When Mary opened the door she immediately knew her worst fears had come true. The air within greeted her with the now familiar stale stench of alcohol. Rough hands seized her arms as she frantically scrambled for the door. The dining room turned into a boxing ring. She felt a blow to her head. Her vision turned crimson and a warm fluid washed over her face. She stopped resisting and helplessly waited for it to stop. Her body screamed from the pain as she instinctively blacked out.

When Mary woke her left eye was swollen shut and her vision blurred. Her head ached with pain. She needed medical attention badly, but she wouldn't go to a doctor. A doctor would tell the police. She would be taken away from the only man who ever loved her, and her baby would grow up without a father. Alex wouldn't hurt her again; he was tired and had been drinking. It was her fault, she should have come home sooner.

Why feeling her stomach, to see if the baby was ok, she came across the glasses that lay in her sweatshirt pocket. She pulled them out and placed them on her head. Once again her sight reverted to black and white. Flashes of herself in a hospital room entered her mind. Black bruises

covered her body. The doctors who surrounded her were all white except for one who told the doctor next to her that the “baby would not make it.” Now another vision appeared. She was standing next to a black tombstone that read only one date, “Died, April 22, 1999.” She was crying and sputtering out the words, “I am so sorry my baby, never again.” Terrified, Mary threw the glasses across the room where they clattered onto the kitchen table.

All evening her eyes stared at the glasses and never let go. Sitting in the corner, her body unwilling to move, she wondered what the glasses were trying to show her. Alex stumbled from the bedroom and made his way toward the refrigerator. Mary's eyes stayed transfixed on the glasses. Now, noticing the glasses, Alex picked them up and threw them at her. The thought of what Alex might look like through the glasses pulled at her. She set them over her eyes. Unsurprisingly, the kodachrome world of black and white returned. She scanned the white room until her eyes fell upon him. His body was white, but a dark shadow hovered above him. Gloom radiated from his body and chilled her spirit. She now knew what the glasses were showing her. She did not take them off, but quietly got up and left.

Six months later, Mary held her new baby girl in her arms. She gave her the name Veronica (one that has to do with the true-being) and told her to always strive to live up to her name. “The secret to life, is to force ourselves to examine our own fabrications to find the truthfulness that lies behind them. Try to look deeper and beyond what things appear as on the surface, look into the heart and always wear your glasses of truth. Sometimes the world is not Technicolor, or even carefully shaded tones of gray, but only the stark truth of black and white.

2002 Sala Kryszek Writing Competition Award Winners

Parisa Javedani
Jesuit High School
10th Grade
Teacher: Michael Benware
Senior Division: 1st Place in Writing
Victim Of Hate, Bearer of Hope

You think you know every secret about me?
Call to mind a few details-then we shall see.
Did you notice the muscles on my bony hand?
They came from years of working the land.
Did you see the scar above my lip?
That came from a thrashing-the officer's whip.
The numbers etched on my left shoulder
With passing years have gotten much older.
But to them this is all I was-simply an ID.
I was one of the many in the Holocaust, you see.
Beaten and whipped: tortured for fun.
And yet there I stayed; I dared not to run.
Picked up from my house: the victim of hate.
Shipped off to Auschwitz: let right through the gate.
My mother and father and three sisters too;

When I asked where they were, nobody knew.
They took my birthday present, my second-hand shoes.
Replaced my worn out cloths with ones completely abused.
For nearly five years, I lived off slate bread.
This was a delicacy-the best we were fed.
Tortured nearly to death, I learned not to complain.
To the officers, Selection, was their entertaining game.
Not once did I cry as I watched my friends go.
I was the bearer of hope-to them, I would show.
They stripped me of my cloths, my belongings too.
My schoolbooks and toys-the old and the new.
First went my family, and then all my friends.
As they led me through a maze, seemingly without end.
From my life, they cut out a fairly large part
And thought they had shattered my heart.
My childhood they took, but not my spirit.
I was nine years old then and I'm still living to tell it;
In hopes that my story will change your mind,
And inspire *you* to unmask humankind.
For what meets the eye is not always true;
Seeking what's behind it-that's up to me and you.
From an outsider looking in, I beg you, hear my call:
Ignoring what's hidden, will bring our downfall.

Rebecca Bornstein
Rogue River High School
12th Grade
Teacher: JoAnn Loudermilk
Senior Division: 2nd Place in Writing
Trickle Down

I saw the news today,
How grand,
Our daily rubble and revels
Spilled nicely into sixty-second segments
Meant to catch our eyes,
Wrapped around a thousand little
Daggers that bend and bow and break our minds
Until we buy
Whatever it is they're selling.
You know,
If Allen were here he'd say
That the best minds of our generation
Are hiding behind madness,
Because it's the only thing left untouched by
A system where we've got money talking,

Money walking,
Money selling off the truth,
Money selling ourselves into
The slavery of patriotism,
A war on drugs and sex
And peace
And money buying us a policy of
Grasping with our clumsy iron fist
Until it hits the table with a force
Like the crumbling of towers,
Like the crumbling of our girls
Modern day sacrificial lambs
To the media god of thin,
And our paternalistic government just sits
On its hands and watches
Our society of conformists
Waiting patiently,
Like dogs,
For some crumbs from the table of big business,
For some crumbs from the table of truth,
For some crumbs from the table that tells us
It will all just trickle down,
Trickle down,...Trickle...Down

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Lucas Mortinson
Rogue River High School
12th Grade
Teacher: JoAnn Loudermilk
Senior Division: 3rd Place in Writing
One Another's Saving Grace

The shy boy with the dark complexion eyed the girl for what seemed hours. She sat in the midst of a group of friends who had all eyes on her as she told her story. They laughed at the conclusion and watched as the football captain, Roger Smith, walked past. Roger stopped and began to talk to the girls. The shy boy sighed, rolled his eyes, and then, quietly went to class.

His name was Tim, and he had noticed this girl, Rebecca, for some time now. He thought that she had it all. Everybody in her school knew her, all the guys were attached to her, she got good grades, was heading to a top-notch university- what could possibly be better. Tim had only talked to her on a few occasions and the words he spoke at those times were few. He wasn't a very outgoing boy and so it was hard for him to talk to her, especially with her being as popular as she was.

While walking home, Tim noticed Rebecca saying goodbye to Roger as they went their different ways. As Rebecca turned to continue her course, she saw Tim and waved. Tim returned the wave and then put his nose back to the ground and continued to walk. He knew that she hardly knew he existed. As he proceeded to walk with his head down, a voice called out from a few yards behind. "Want to walk with me Tim?"

Tim stopped abruptly and turned around. He gazed at the sight before him. Her blonde hair blew just slightly in the afternoon breeze. The perfume she was wearing floated under his nose and he was slightly overcome. He saw her and all of her perfection standing before him and he had no idea what to feel.

"Hello? Tim?"

Tim was torn from his trance. He nodded shyly and stated, "Yeah, that'd be great!"

They walked and Rebecca asked Tim questions about himself with sincerity. He answered, but only briefly. As they reached Rebecca's house, she asked him to hang out for a few minutes yet. He happily obliged and they sat and talked on her front lawn. She told him about her friends and how her life wasn't as exciting as it seemed. He told

her everything about him that he could bare to share with her. For the most part, he gave her brief answers so she wouldn't find out about the darkness hidden in his life.

After some time, he told her he had better be going. She asked if he'd call her that night so they could talk more. Tim could hardly believe what was happening. For her to even say hi had already made his day, that she talked to him for hours, and now-now she was giving him her number so he could call her! This is insane he thought! Rebecca grabbed his hand and wrote her phone number on it.

"Call me at around 8, Tim. That way I'll have my homework done and we can still have plenty of time to talk!"

Tim went home and after eating dinner he sat on his bed with the phone in his hands waiting for 8 to come around. He kept glancing impatiently at the digital clock hoping that the glances would speed up time temporarily. While waiting for an hour, he began to think about everything. He thought to himself that the timing of this happening was really great, because nothing else much in his life was working out. His parents had divorced a month before after being married for 15 years. His older brother had been jailed recently and his schoolwork was really getting to him. He was getting to a breaking point that he didn't want to reach. But with this new distraction in his life, he had something to be joyous for. How many other guys in the school got to say that Rebecca Wallace had given them her number?

He looked back at the clock and realized it was 8. He glanced at his hand to make sure he was dialing the right numbers into the phone. Before pressing the final number, he took a deep breath. The thought that this was all some giant gag crossed his mind briefly. He quickly shook it off and remembered how they had talked after school.

"Hello?"

"Hi-uh-uh...is uh-Ruh-Rebecca home?"

"Tim?"

"Oh-uh-yeah- is this Rebecca?"

"Yeah. How are ya Tim?"

Tim gained some composure and was able to start talking like they had been earlier. He felt much more at ease with her. They talked about everything and nothing for hours. They laughed for a long time before Rebecca finally told him that she should really be getting some sleep before her big volleyball game the next day.

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"You'll be going to it right?"

"Uh-yeah of course! I've been to a few this year."

"Yeah- I've seen you there off to the side. Well, I'll see you tomorrow in the morning Tim. Sleep well to-night."

Tim fell down into his bed overwhelmed with ecstasy. This day had been the greatest day of his life! Forget the fact that she was attractive and the most popular girl in the school... to him that was just the bonus. The fact was she was the only person that had really wanted to talk to him at all since he had moved there. He slept well that night and woke up the next morning with the joy holding over.

The two of them began to talk a lot more and became friends. With the passing half a year, they had become best friends. However, he felt that he wasn't being totally honest with her. She knew so much about him, but what she knew wasn't of the greatest importance a lot of the time. Sure, she could tell him that his favorite band was the Counting Crows, and that his favorite movie was Runaway Train, but she had no idea of his past.

He finally decided that it was time for this wall to come down and let her know about, what he saw as, his horrific past. They were over at his house laying on his couch watching T.V. as a Counting Crow's music video came on.

"I love this video for Mr. Jones," Tim explained. "I can relate to the song so much. I'm sorta glad it came on because it leads into something I sorta wanted to talk to you about. It's not a big deal, but I thought that maybe you should know it."

Tim went on to explain how his family life had been a living hell and that is why they had moved in the first place, to get something of a new start. He talked about his parents divorce more in depth, about how the lack of love was there at the end and that his brother leaving had only acted as a catalyst to the problem. He had been to the edge is how he had seen it.

"Back in October, I wasn't really sure if I was going to be able to handle it all. Everything in my world was coming crashing down and I had nobody-nobody!!! No friends to find comfort in, nobody to talk to about it all. I would go home after school and sit in my room with Counting Crows playing their ever so depressing music on my stereo and just think. Too much thinking gets bad for a person and I sometimes thought about going to my dad's closet and pulling out his gun and ending it. I had prob-

lems and the only way I could deal with them was to end it all."

At this point, Tim looked up from the television and turned to see Rebecca's beautiful brown eyes full of tears. She tried to wipe them away but they kept pouring. He looked bewilderingly at her. He didn't understand why this would set her off like this. In fact, he couldn't remember a time where he had seen her crying ever before this. She trembled slightly as she tried to speak to him.

"I'm sorry Rebecca, but I didn't want you to cry for me. I'm fine now. That one day you came and talked to me did so much for me. I felt like a person! You were almost like an angel there to save me."

Rebecca shook her head and wiped away some more tears. "You don't understand fully Tim. I've been holding out on you too."

He was now more confused than before. What could she be holding out on him?

"Tim- a lot of people don't really know who I am. Even the people that would consider my best friends don't know the dark truth behind me. Do you remember that first day that we talked forever on my lawn and then on the phone later that night? Well.." She sniffled and choked on her words slightly. "I was the most depressed then than I had ever been before. Everybody just assumes everything is fine in my life because of all the accomplishments and scholarships and friends, so nobody could see past it all and see that I was really just miserable. I always heard that doing something nice for somebody else makes you feel good, so I tried that with you cause I knew you were sorta new and people here weren't talking to you all that warmly. Luckily for me it worked. I had planned on going home and slitting my wrists that night. You were what saved me maybe. Since then, you've made me so happy!"

Rebecca went on to explain how much he made her feel like life was worth it all. She quietly continued to weep. Tim scooted closer to her and held her close as tears filled with years of build up came slowly trickling down her cheek. Gradually, her soft brown eyes raised and met with his deep sapphire ones, and in that moment, they both knew that everything was fine.

2002 Sala Kryszek Art Competition Award Winners

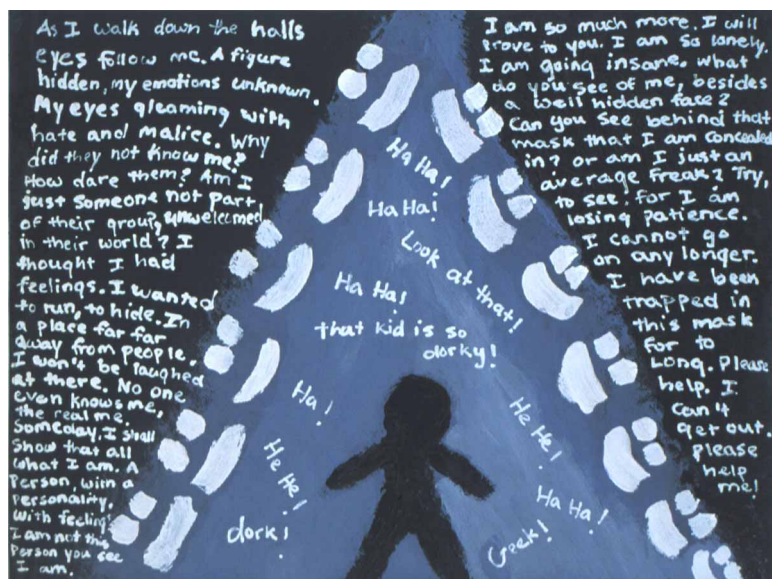
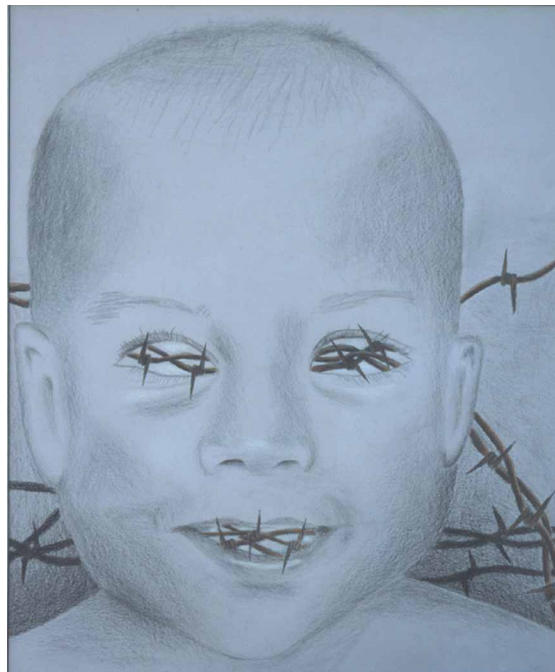
The Sala Kryszek Award in Art “Face of Innocence?”

Ryan Woodworth

12th Grade

Stayton High School

Teacher: Judith Frohreich



Junior Division: 1st Place in Art “Alone”

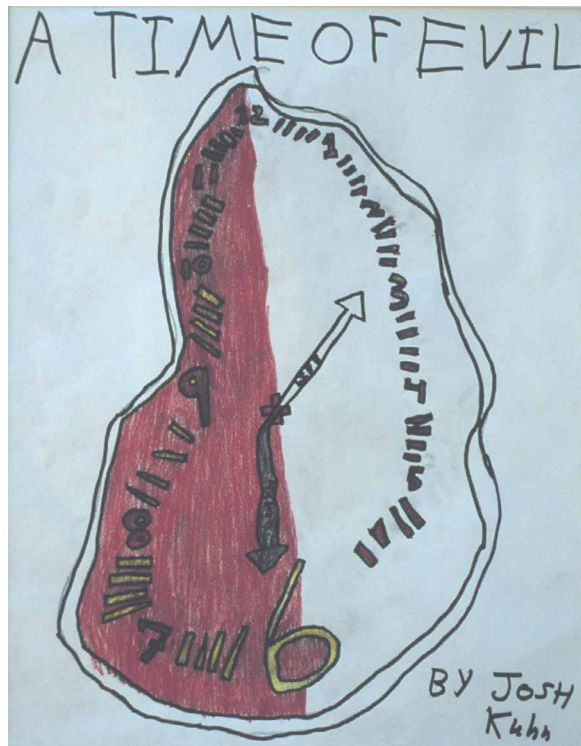
Brittnee Osmon

8th Grade

Valley Catholic Middle School

Teacher: Molly Bloom

2002 Sala Kryszek Art Competition Award Winners



Junior Division: 2nd Place in Art
"A Time of Evil"

Josh Kuhn

7th Grade

The Triad School

Teacher: Mollie Young

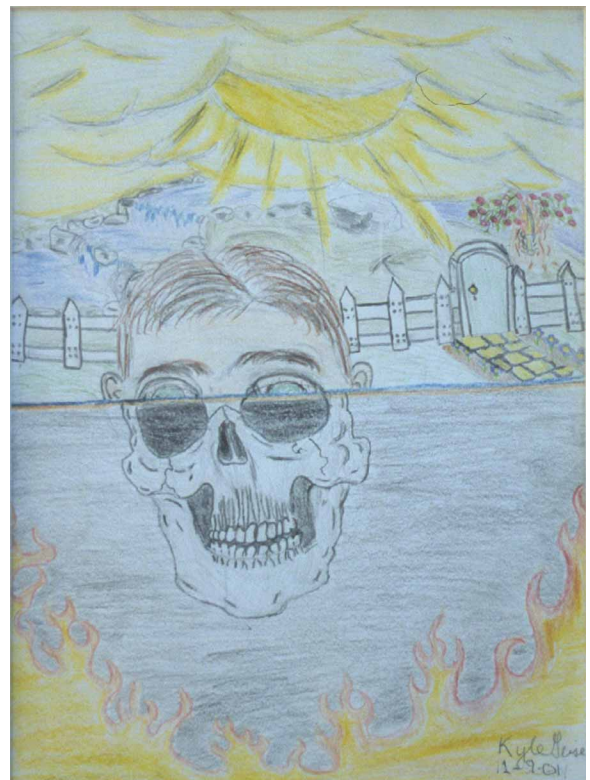
Junior Division: 3rd Place in Art
"What Lies Beneath the Skin"

Kyle Geise

8th Grade

The Triad School

Teacher: Mollie Young



2002 Sala Kryszek Art Competition Award Winners

Senior Division: 1st Place in Art

“Resist”

Jade Sheldon

9th Grade

Century High School

Teacher: Anne Abrams



Senior Division: 2nd Place in Art

“Looking Through the Lies”

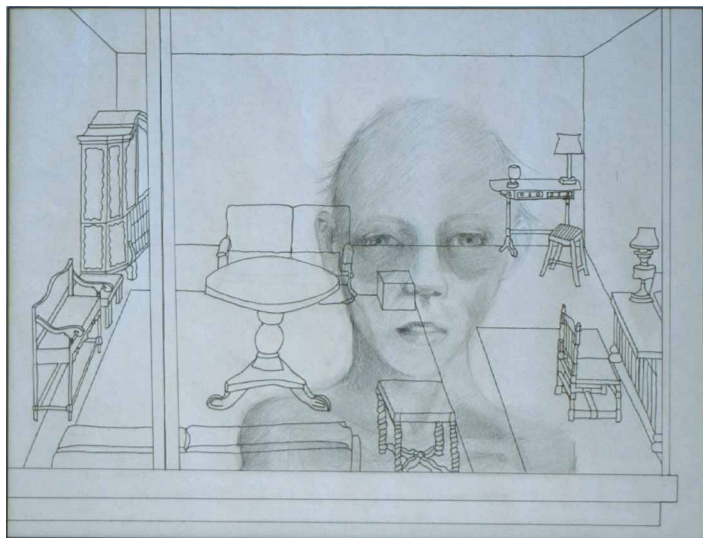
Cynthia Clark

12th Grade

South Salem High School

Teacher: Karin Hughes

2002 Sala Kryszek Art Competition Award Winners



Senior Division: 3rd Place in Art
“Woeful Dream”

Sarah Houts

10th Grade

Stayton High School

Teacher: Judith Frohreich

On behalf of the Oregon Holocaust Resource Center, I want to offer our sincere thanks for all of this year's participants entries in the 2002 Sala Kryszek Writing and Art Competition.

This year more than 300 Writing and almost 100 Art entries were submitted by students who live in 20 different cities in Oregon and Southwest Washington. The Competition judges were amazed by the talent and understanding of the Holocaust by all entrants.

I personally encourage you to participate in next year's competition, if eligible, and hope that this year's experience has helped you understand how hatred and bigotry affect every one of our lives.

With my sincere thanks and best regards,

Miriam Greenstein
President, OHRC

2002 OREGON HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER

SALA KRYSZEK WRITING AND ART COMPETITION TOPIC

Theresienstadt was established as a ghetto and concentration camp in 1941 in Czechoslovakia. It served as a way station for western European Jews on their way to Auschwitz. Eventually, Jews from Germany, Holland, and even Denmark were transported to Theresienstadt on their way to Auschwitz. This camp operated until 1945.

Theresienstadt was a center for Jewish intellectuals, leading musicians, writers, artists, scientists and professors. The Nazis sent many of them there to keep them isolated and to avoid suspicion from the outside world. While this population was there, the camp had a rich cultural life that included concerts, lectures and operas. Conditions in the camp itself were horrible: disease and starvation were constant problems.

Following the deportation of about 400 Danish Jews to the camp in the fall of 1943, the Nazis were faced with pressure from Denmark and Sweden to account for the whereabouts and the well-being of the Danish Jews. This led to an inspection tour from the International Red Cross in June of 1944. The Nazis carefully prepared for the inspection, "cleansing" the camp of sick and emaciated Jews. The Nazis rebuilt the camp to make it look idyllic and called it their "model" camp.

During this carefully orchestrated visit, the Jews were used to put on a show for the inspectors. The Red Cross workers were so impressed that they called off their scheduled inspection of Buchenwald, another concentration camp.



Class of children in Theresienstadt - likely a scene staged by the Nazis for the Red Cross visit.

After reading the background about Theresienstadt please read the following to guide you in responding to this year's Sala Kryszek Writing and Art Competition Topic:

When a visiting Red Cross team went into Theresienstadt, a concentration camp in Czechoslovakia, they observed tolerable living conditions; they heard an orchestra playing beautiful music; they saw well-fed prisoners; they saw children playing and heard their laughter. Everything about the camp was carefully designed to mask the horrors of imprisonment. The visitors were led to believe that all concentration camps were like this one. The visitors told the world what they saw, and the world believed.

Today, we are surrounded by events and situations where people allow themselves to be fooled by what they hear and/or see rather than face the truth.

Write a piece or create a work of art that will, through its message, encourage us to resist the allure of the mask and seek the truth that lies behind it.

Sala Sarna Kryszek

Sala was born November 15, 1926, to Aaron and Esther Sarna. She grew up in the small town of Warta, Poland, with three brothers and three sisters. Life was difficult in pre-war Poland. There was a great deal of prejudice against Jews. Yet Aaron and Esther raised their children in an observant and loving Jewish home. Sabbath was a special family time when they shared Sabbath dinner, sang, and included less fortunate friends in their celebration. Sala went to public and Jewish school during the day. When she was not studying, she worked in the family bakery. She loved to sing and dance, having inherited her beautiful voice from her father. Sadly, Sala's mother died when she was eight.

World War II began in 1939, shortly after her father remarried. At first the Nazis allowed the family to remain in Warta, but they were eventually forced to leave home and move into the Lodz ghetto. Everyone had to work hard just to survive. Fortunately they had food because her father and older brother worked in a bakery.

Later the Nazis liquidated the Lodz ghetto. Men were separated from women, children from adults. The sisters were torn from the rest of the family and found themselves on a torturous journey to the Auschwitz death camp. Sala and her sisters stuck together — their survival throughout the war seemed to depend on it. Yet they never revealed their true relationship to anyone for fear they would be split apart.

Conditions at Auschwitz were horrifying. The girls were housed in an overcrowded barrack near the gas chambers. They knew their existence was precarious. Sala was frequently beaten. Hunger was ever present. Food was so scarce that she risked being shot to dig potatoes with her bare hands or scavenge food from garbage. She shared what little she found with family and friends in the camp.

The only way Sala could survive was to leave Auschwitz. Escape was impossible, but an opportunity appeared when a farmer came to find workers. Initially, Sala was selected but the other sisters were not. She took an unbelievable chance when she refused to go without them, and it paid off.

Life on the farm was difficult for the girls, but better than Auschwitz. Work in the fields was hard. They had little clothing and only rags for their feet, but were fed three meals a day. The sisters worked in many other places after the farm. Conditions were insufferable, but the alternative was worse.

When Germany's defeat seemed inevitable, Sala, her sisters, and many others were force-marched through winter snows to a camp. The Nazis were preparing to kill them all when they were liberated by the Russian army.

With the war still raging and persecution rampant, a Jewish Russian officer suggested the girls work in a hospital to avoid harm by soldiers or deportation to Russia. Sala worked as a nurse's aid, until a doctor advised her sisters to flee to Poland for their safety.

After the war, Sala returned to Lodz searching for family. She discovered that her stepmother and a brother died in the camps. Another brother was shot at Bergen Belsen two days before liberation. His "crime" was taking two potatoes from a cart to fend off starvation. Sala's father survived to see Bergen Belsen liberated, only to die from typhus before doctors could help him.

Sala's younger brother was alive in Hanover, Germany. She followed one of her sisters there, where she met and married Jakob Kryszek. They lived in Hanover until moving to Portland in 1952, joining one sister and her brother. The couple arrived with few possessions and no knowledge of the English language. Jakob hoped to find work in the knitting industry, but economic conditions were tough. Sala was luckier, finding work first at Acme Rag and later in a cannery. Eventually, Jakob also found work, and the other two sisters arrived in Portland.

In 1954 my parents had my brother Albert. Three years later they had me. From then on, Jakob and Sala worked very hard, in time building a family business. Sala was generous, kind, and a loving wife and mother who cared about her friends, family and the community. She passed away in 1986.

Jerry Kryszek
November 1, 1992