

I, ENHEDUANNA

A CELEBRATION OF FEMININE & NONBINARY CREATORS

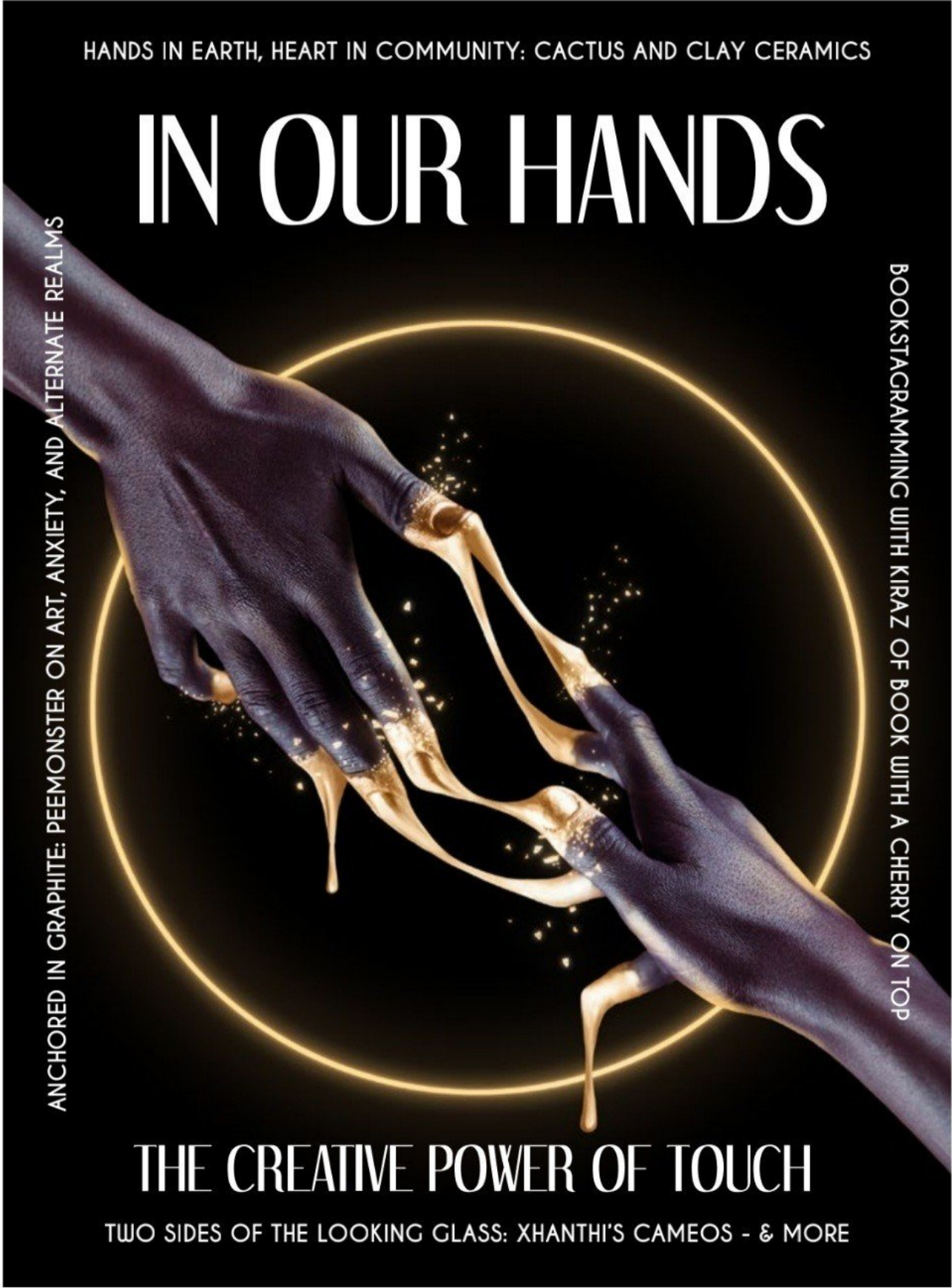
ISSUE 3

HANDS IN EARTH, HEART IN COMMUNITY: CACTUS AND CLAY CERAMICS

IN OUR HANDS

ANCHORED IN GRAPHITE: PEEMONSTER ON ART, ANXIETY, AND ALTERNATE REALMS

BOOKSTAGRAMMING WITH KIRAZ OF BOOK WITH A CHERRY ON TOP



THE CREATIVE POWER OF TOUCH

TWO SIDES OF THE LOOKING GLASS: XHANTHI'S CAMEOS - & MORE

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

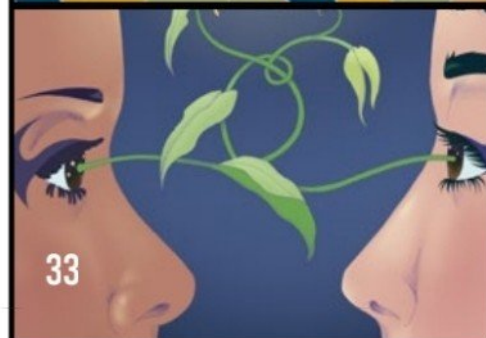
When my dear friend and writer for this magazine, Julieta Gomez-Frittelli, told me I had ‘effective chaos’ vibes, I couldn’t help but laugh and agree. I am effective—chaotically. So it sometimes comes as a surprise to new acquaintances that one of my favorite ways to wind down is perhaps one of the least chaotic activities one can engage in outside of outright meditation: crochet. When the world around me feels out of control, I retreat to that ancient art. As I pull up the yarn, each strand grazing the spaces between my fingers, every knot falls into line, creating something neat and orderly from a tumult of fiber. When there are no more knots to tether, something new and beautiful exists where before there was only string; usually a gift for someone I love. With crochet, I take uncertainty and disorder into my hands and turn them into warmth and care.

When I think of the creatives featured in this edition of I, Enheduanna, I think of how they, too, use their hands to bring comfort and beauty for all of us to witness. I think of Xhanthi delicately painting the eye makeup onto a tiny 3D printed cameo, of PeeMonster listening to the scratch of her graphite pencils as she brings her private world into our shared reality. I think of Kiraz of Book with a Cherry on Top placing her kindle into position to take a photo that will introduce her followers to a new cast of characters and their stories. Others, like poet Georgie Brooke, write about the influence of touch on our emotions. Beth of Cactus and Clay Ceramics crafts pieces which will be felt and enjoyed by her customers as they sip their favorite drink from her hand-shapen mugs. Each creative brings their own vision for a more beautiful reality to life and shares it through touch. In this edition, we hope you’ll be inspired to reach out and touch creativity as well. Thank you for reading!



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DUALITY OF BEING

THE POETRY OF REINA DAVIS

FEATURING ART BY NAZLI ABBASPOUR

ARTICLE BY JULIETA GOMEZ-FRITTELLI

Reina Davis' beautiful and bittersweet poem, *Cuidado*, contemplates the dual themes of grief and care, love and loss, in two languages and through two relationships. It highlights the multilingual and intergenerational nature of Davis's lived experience.

As the daughter of Spanish-speaking immigrants myself, Davis's inclusion of that complicated bilingual aspect of her life (*I have learned / enough Spanish / to embellish my tongue*) really resonated with me. Encountering little bits of Spanish in the poem felt very true to the way I use Spanish with my family and the ones I love.

I enjoyed hearing from Reina about the ways creativity has helped her explore her feelings and identity, how the privacy of her coded journal entries evolved into spoken word poetry, and her hopes for helping people connect to each other and their own experiences.



CIUDADO

“Con cuidado” My grandfather says,

and I am tattooed with obligation
to give him
daytime melodies
and
good night kisses
yet
another day.

Obligated

to keep my heavy soul
from slipping
into the cracks
of
the concrete
because
Martinez town taught him
there is still room for
descanso decorations
across the highway.
Roadside memories coated in
chipped paint.
tastes like lead.
leaves you
 heavy

still
leaves the streets
feeling hungry
for
dollar store bouquets
and
crude oil.

My grandfather carries
enough ghosts
on his skin
already.
Memorial portraits
in
permanent ink
cannot dig up grave stones
so easily.

“Siempre” I say,
and I lock the door behind me

carefully.

My lover looks at me and I learn what it is
to love someone so much
you fear the hurt
they have not
held
yet.
You fear empty beds
and
filled picture frames.

“Be careful” I say.

It is the first “I love you”
that falls from
my chest
before we both
gave permission
for our own breath
to utter it

proper.



I am creating rosary beads
out of vowels to hang between
your
wish bone
and
my hesitations.

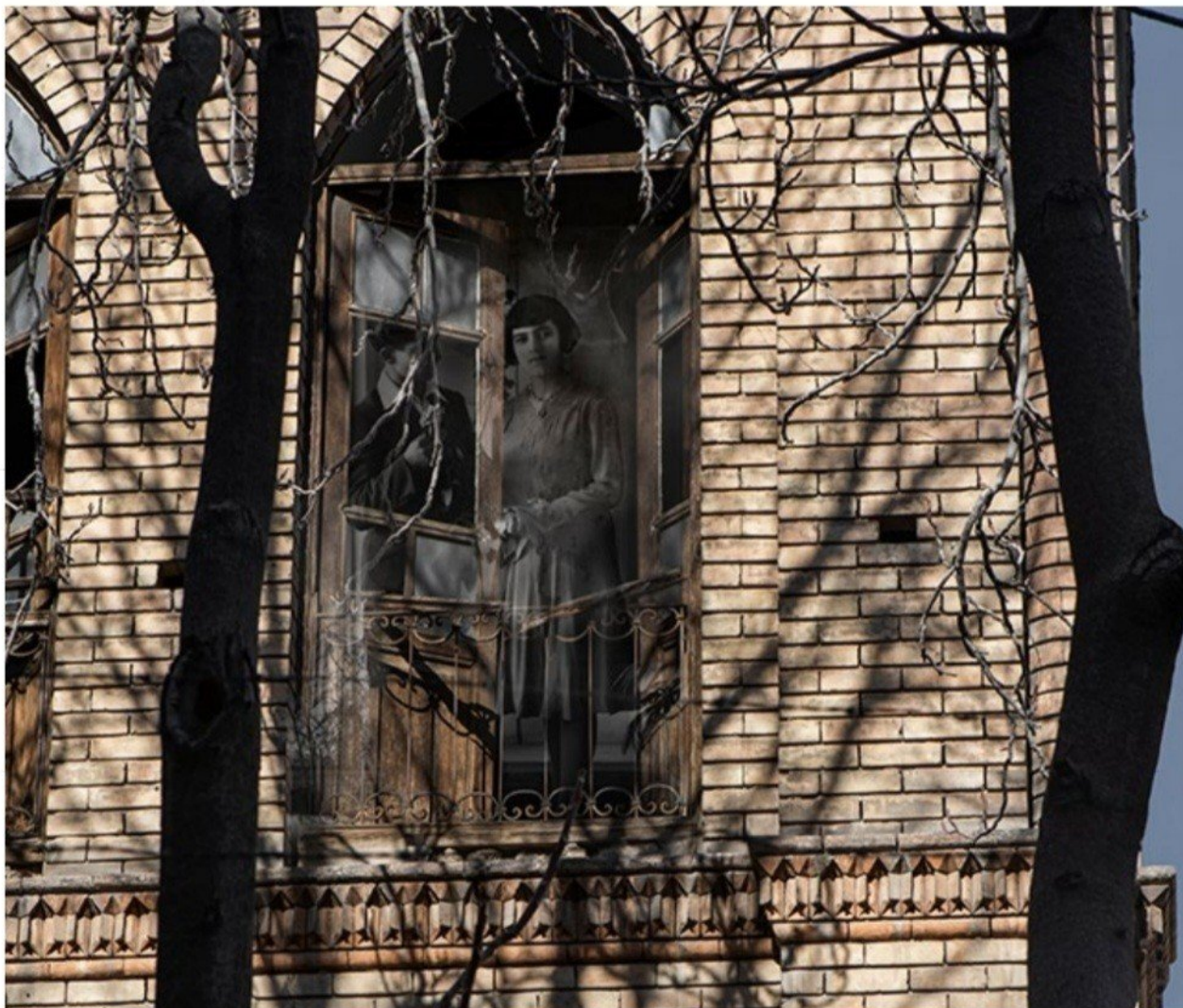
I have learned
enough Spanish
to embellish my tongue
with
enough prayer
to play god
seduce fate
as if I am signing a love letter to the future
that you will come home to me.

“Always” you say.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL BACKGROUND—
WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

My name is Reina Davis and I am a mixed-race Chicana originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico. I grew up in a multi-generational and cultural household, which I think was a really incredible and beautiful thing. With that, did come the struggles of finding where I felt I belonged, of a complicated relationship with Spanish, my grandfather’s first language, and working through and recognizing generational trauma. I graduated from the University of New Mexico in 2019 with a bachelors in both Gender Studies and Chicana Studies.

Art by Nazli Abbaspour



WHAT ROLE DOES CREATIVITY PLAY IN YOUR LIFE, AND HOW DO YOU USE IT TO CLAIM YOUR SPACE?

Creativity has helped me continuously shape my identity and allow myself the flexibility of learning and connecting with people with various experiences. Creativity has allowed me to utilize my voice in a way where I can connect with others through writing and has given me confidence in my stage presence. I have especially used creativity in the classroom when I teach, to show different and valid ways of learning and experiencing art and other content.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED WRITING POETRY?

I really got started writing poetry as a young child. I think I have always been really sensitive—even when I deny it—but didn't know how to explain to people how I felt or didn't trust that I could share those things even if I could explain it. My grandmother made me my first journal, a collaged composition book. That's when I started writing journal entries. I wanted to make sure these were extremely private, so I tried to write in a way that was "coded" but what I really was doing was writing poetry. I began to really lean into the fact that I was able to process my thoughts, days, feelings, and turn them into something beautiful. From then on, I loved how people were able to connect to my poetry, and poetry in general, in their own way and with their own perspectives.



HOW HAS YOUR CREATIVE EXPRESSION EVOLVED OVER TIME? DO YOU SEE A LOT OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POEMS YOU WRITE NOW VERSUS POEMS FROM EARLIER IN YOUR LIFE?

I definitely can see how my creative expression has changed over time. My writing really began as really expressing emotion in a visceral way. It wasn't until I got older that I was really able to explore that emotional intensity with my own identity and experience growing up. My writing has grown to explore more things such as spirituality, sexuality, culture, violence, and the intersection of those things. I've also been able to expand my writing into more experimental formats and combine them with collage work.

HOW DO YOU HOPE YOUR WORK WILL AFFECT YOUR AUDIENCE?

I hope that my work will cause moments of self-reflection and the notion that we must be gentle with ourselves. I want my work to explore the nuance found in our experiences, and the holistic nature of our beings be it with the spiritual, cultural, and feminine. 🦋