

PCAP NEWS

February 2021

The PCAP newsletter aims to keep incarcerated artists, writers, and performers informed of what the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) is doing and how to be involved. If you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter, please have them write to us.

A Note from the Interim Director

by **Nora Krinitsky**

Warm winter greetings to all of our Prison Creative Arts Project artists, writers, performers, and community members! It has been nearly a year now since we have been able to visit prison to conduct workshops, meet with artists and select art for the annual exhibition, and attend final performances and readings. A year ago, I never could have guessed that the pandemic would last this long. Now it's hard to imagine what the return to normalcy will look like and when it will arrive. Although the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccine is heartening, it is dismaying to see the virus continue to spread rapidly in prison as well as in the free world. I very much hope that you are all safe and healthy.

We had very much hoped to install the *25th Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners* on campus this March. But sadly, COVID-19 has foiled those plans. Access to campus buildings is still very limited and there are still prohibitions on large gatherings indoors. Travel remains inadvisable, which would prevent many people from coming to Ann Arbor to see the show. Even though it is in the best interest of public health to forgo the physical installation of the show, it was still an incredibly difficult decision. It is always so gratifying to see PCAP artists' work installed in the U-M gallery and I will miss that very much. Most of all I will miss getting to see artists' families and loved ones at the show and hosting artists who have returned home in the gallery.

But the good news is we are busy preparing for our first ever digital annual exhibition! I have been working closely with the PCAP curators to create an online version of the show that will allow viewers to enjoy the art, view artists' statements, and select art for purchase. This has been a huge undertaking, to say the very least. I am especially grateful to curator Alyssa Baginski who has been working with the art from the *25th Annual Exhibition* all year, preparing images and their associated data, labeling pieces with subject terms and themes, and creating short descriptions of each piece. This incredibly valuable work will help viewers navigate the online exhibition and find their loved one's art or art that particularly inspires them. Now Alyssa, curator Charlie Michaels, and I are working together to design the website where viewers will enjoy the show. Viewers will be able to see the art in thematic groupings as they would in the physical gallery, browse through all the art in the show, or look for art by a specific artist. The site will also feature our audio tour, the digital guestbook, instructions for writing critique letters to artists, and artists' statements. Visitors to the site will be able to purchase art by making an appointment for a PCAP cashier to call them. Conducting sales of art remotely has proven to be endlessly complicated—lots of red tape!—and I am indebted to Vanessa Mayesky and Graham Hamilton for all their work on this part of the process.

While there are elements of the physical gallery show that we can never fully replicate, there are also some exciting advantages of the online show. Previously, visitors had to physically travel to Ann Arbor in order to view the show and purchase art. The digital exhibition will be viewable by people around the world and all visitors with a United States mailing address will have the opportunity to purchase art. We will also host a series of virtual events during the two weeks following the launch of the show on March 16th. These events will include an opening reception, a keynote address by annual exhibition founder and senior curator, Janie Paul, a panel discussion among PCAP artists, a celebration event for PCAP artists' families, and a reading from the twelfth volume of the *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*. All of these events will be recorded and made available to watch online after the events. It is exciting that many more people will be able to view the show, attend events, and purchase art.

Meanwhile, our second semester of correspondence workshops is off to a great start! We learned a lot about how to make this program successful for our participants and our facilitators after our pilot program in the fall. I'm grateful to everyone who provided their feedback and good ideas about how we can best connect and make art together although we cannot visit prison right now. It is so exciting to see your responses to the creative prompts! I know that our facilitators have been deeply gratified by their role in the process as well. Our Program Coordinator Mary Heinen, PCAP faculty member Ashley Lucas, and our student Executive Board have gone above and beyond to provide support to our facilitators and help them learn this new program. Mary, Ashley, and the students on the Executive Board meet with facilitators on a regular basis, review each packet before it is mailed, help facilitators write creative arts prompts, help provide feedback to participants, and help facilitators troubleshoot any issue that arises. It really takes a village to run the correspondence program! I'm immensely grateful to everyone who works on the program and proud of how PCAP has pivoted to continue our programming despite these unprecedented challenges. It is a testament to the innovation and resilience of our community!

Exhibit Updates and Announcements

by **Graham Hamilton**

25th Annual Exhibition

We are creating a museum-grade website to share the *25th Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners*. The exhibit will go live on March 16, 2021. Sales will be made available from March 17-31, 2021. After this time, the virtual exhibit will remain online, but sales will not remain open. Please share PCAP's website address (prisonarts.org) with your family and friends. They will be able to view your artwork online and schedule appointments to purchase artwork by phone.

We have no plans to install a physical exhibit for the *25th Annual Exhibition*. We will begin to ship artwork on April 1, 2021. Sold artwork will be shipped to buyers. Unsold artwork will be shipped to the Primary Contact person listed on your paperwork. Exhibit sales payments will be processed this summer.

We apologize for any delay during this unique time in history. University accounts being closed for some time, remote working off campus, and other factors have kept certain aspects of the exhibit on hold for longer than anyone would prefer.

PCAP Miniatures 2021

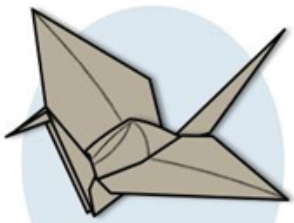
We are accepting *PCAP Miniatures 2021* Exhibit submissions through February 28, 2021. We have been receiving some interesting submissions so far. Those pieces selected for the exhibit will be photographed and a virtual exhibit will be created to share your art with the world. Sales will occur for a two-week period this summer. Pieces not accepted for the exhibition will be handled in the manner you designated on your submission forms.

We appreciate everyone's efforts to remain understanding and continue to lead with your creative spirit. For those artists who choose not to participate this year, we understand and hope you are well and will continue to engage in PCAP programming in the future.

Warm Wishes from a Curator-in-Training

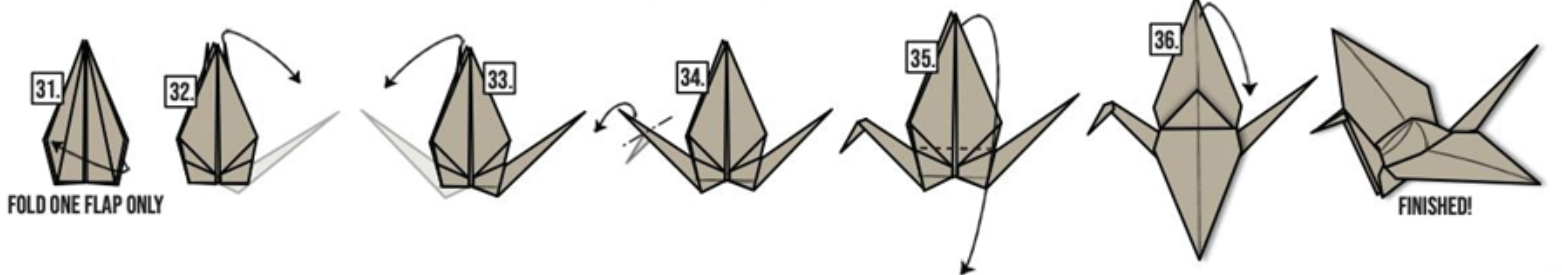
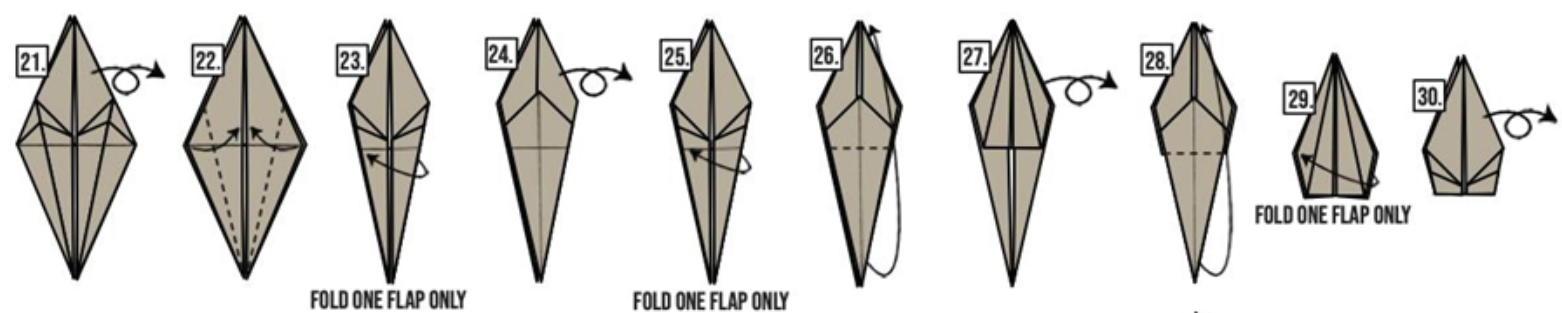
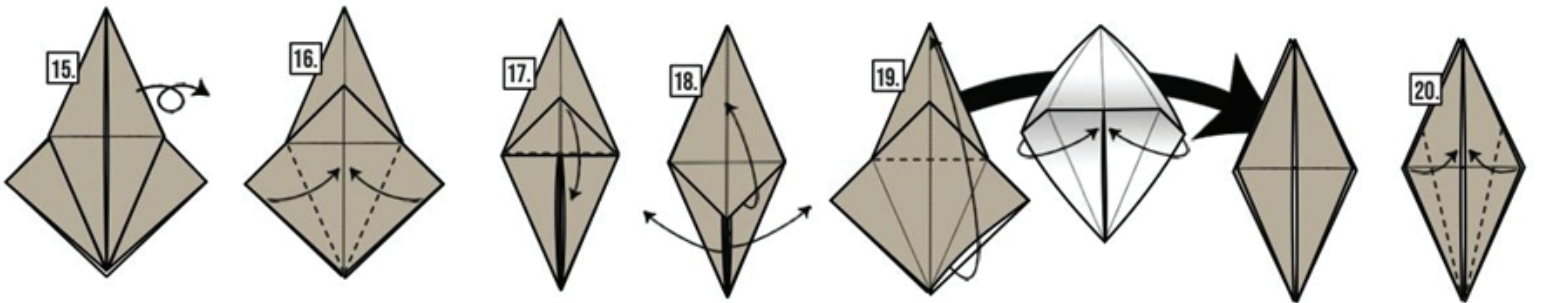
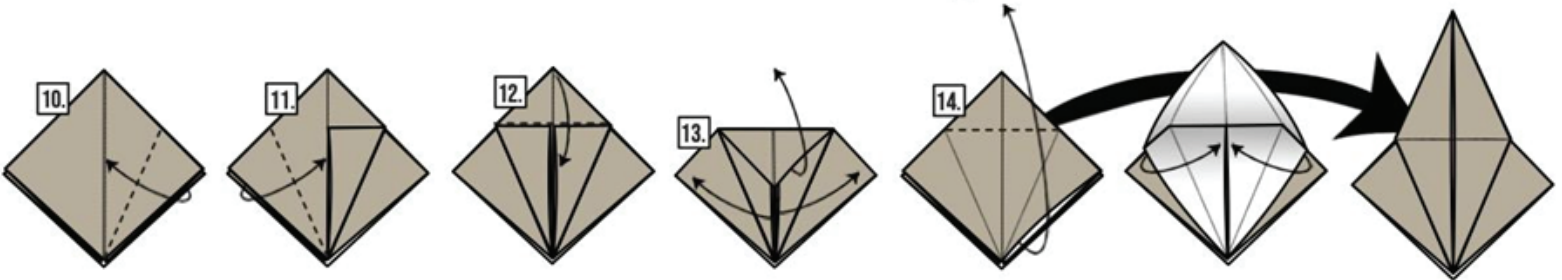
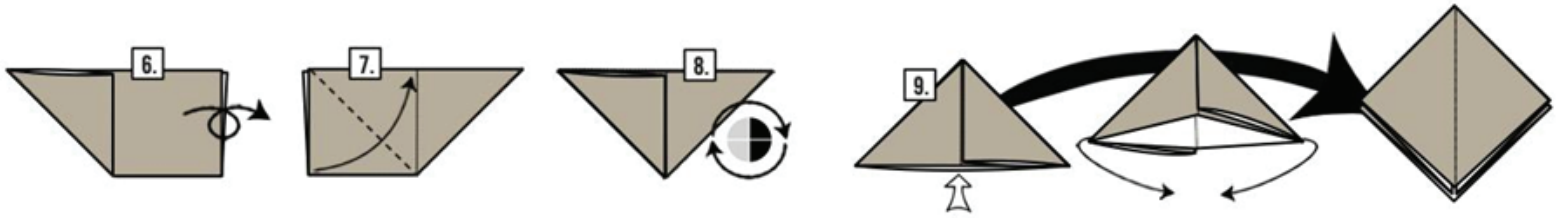
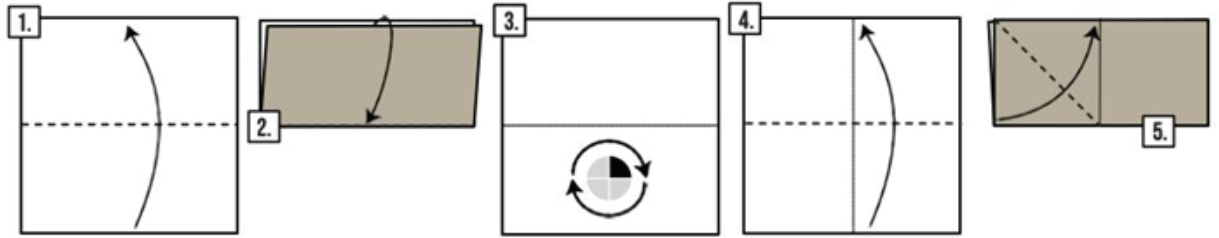
by **Caleb Foerg**

I am a musician and abstract painter, and nothing makes me happier than creating art. After designing and painting over 20 murals around Detroit, Highland Park and Ann Arbor, I started to use my time to develop my small canvas process. At the beginning of quarantine, I was couch crashing in Ann Arbor, spending every day with my roommates finding new ways to fill the canvas. We scavenged the streets for scrap wood, paint, and any other materials we could use. We set up tiny cardboard booths in the living room and started spraying paint with squirt bottles, straws, trash brushes and all sorts of things really. To be honest, most of the work we made didn't seem like anything worth hanging on to—but we took away a vital lesson: the freedom of creative expression. As both a guest and a curator-in-training, I don't think I've come across anywhere that exemplifies this creative spirit better than on our trips inside. I've learned so much from the few years I've spoken to so many of you. It's truly inspiring to see such a variety of beautiful works arising from inside. Even though we couldn't see you this past year, I look forward to seeing y'all and what everyone has come up with in these strange times sometime soon!



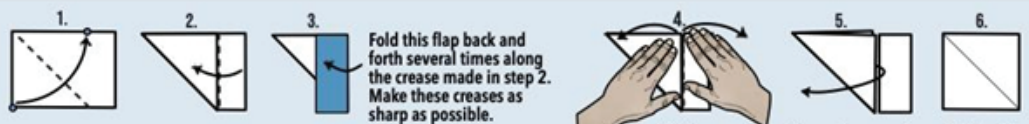
Origami Crane

GETTING STARTED: You will need a square sheet of paper (see instructions below). Start with the side of the paper that you want to show on the outside of the crane facing down, and the side you want hidden facing up. Also, if any step is confusing, it can help to look at the next step to see what the finished fold will look like.



How to fold a square:

Start with a regular sheet of paper (like a call sheet) and follow these instructions to make a square sheet of paper:



Gently tear paper apart along the folded edge.

Open up to reveal square.

Finished!

Linkage Project

Would you like to stay connected with PCAP when you return from prison? The Linkage Project offers a community to join and the opportunity to build a network with other artists, writers, and performers. Members receive invitations to workshops, PCAP volunteer opportunities, and cultural field trips. Though in-person activities are suspended for now, our members stay in touch by text and video chat. If you would like to participate, please write to Vanessa Mayesky when you have a release date or email pcaplinkage@umich.edu after you come home.

Linkage Project Member Update

by **Martin Vargas**

An opportunity seems to be opening up for a fall exhibit at a prestigious museum out here, and Linkage artists are eagerly scrambling to get their work together for that. We will keep you updated on this in future newsletters, and maybe include photos. This is something that's available to you too, if you sign up to be a part of the Linkage Project.

Literary Review: Call for Submissions

The Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) is accepting submissions of creative writing—fiction, poetry, essays, or memoir—of up to 4,500 words (ten typed pages) for *The Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*. The next pieces selected will appear in Volume 14, appearing in 2022. Writers are notified with individual responses.

Send submissions to the PCAP office ATTN: Phil Christman.

Please submit the following information with your written work:

- Your legal name (so we can communicate with you by mail);
- Your name or pen name as you'd like it to appear in the journal, if that's different than your legal name;
- Your MDOC or BOP ID number;
- Your current address;
- A short paragraph about yourself/your writing that will be published alongside any accepted piece.

Thank you for your outstanding pieces of writing that you have submitted thus far. We strongly encourage you to continue in this creative process and send us any and all of your work. We will continue to read and respond to all submissions, though the process has been slowed due to COVID-19. Thanks for your understanding.



Other Opportunities

Two organizations have asked PCAP to share these opportunities with you. Please contact them directly if you have questions.

Saxapahaw Prison Books: Call for Submissions

Saxapahaw Prison Books is seeking submissions of artwork and writing from currently and formerly incarcerated people. Artwork dealing with literacy and books is particularly appreciated, but we will accept other themes. The writing should be focused on the importance of books on the inside. Descriptions of prison libraries and the books found or not found in them, discussion of censorship, anecdotes about receiving books, how books are shared in ways that promote community, what books mean to the individual, and other related themes are particularly desired. Accepted artwork and writing will be included in our book proposal. We are putting together a book centered on prison book programs. There are 50+ programs throughout the US that are volunteer run and send free books to prisoners upon request. We need the public to hear and see the voices of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people explaining the importance of books and education in their own words and through art. Our book will seek to inform the general about these programs and the value of them. In doing so, we hope to educate the general public about prisons and the carceral state. All proceeds from the book will go toward a grant for funding prison books programs. Written submissions should be between 100 and 500 words. Accepted authors and artists will be given credit for their work. Work should be submitted by May 2020.

Please send submissions to:
Saxapahaw Prison Books
P.O. Box 116
Saxapahaw, NC 27340

Prison Journalism Project: Submission Guidelines

Prison Journalism Project(PJP) helps incarcerated writers and those in communities affected by incarceration tell stories about their world using the tools of journalism: gathering and testing facts, writing with nuance, texture and insight and reaching a thoughtful audience.

WHO

Writers who are incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, family members, corrections officers, prison educators and others involved in the criminal justice system or affected by the experience of prison or jail. We welcome submissions by first-time writers, experienced writers and artists. We publish full name bylines unless you specify otherwise. You may publish under your first name or a pen name, but please provide a reason that can be published as part of your bio. We do not use titles (Mr., Ms., Dr. etc.) in bylines.

WHAT

Submissions under 1500 words. No more than one story or two poems per submission. Please submit only your best work and make sure it is legible. We cannot publish work that we cannot understand.

CATEGORIES

REPORTED NEWS AND FEATURES

Any articles that tell people about things that actually happened based on reporting and research.

ESSAY

Essays and memoirs about something you experienced.

OP-EDS

Opinion articles and commentary with a thesis or a call to action

NARRATIVE POETRY

We favor poems that tell true stories. No more than 2 submissions per entry.

PHOTO ESSAY

Up to 5 photos with 3-5 sentence captions describing the photo and the context. The photos should collectively tell a story.

Other Opportunities cont.

ART: Sketches, paintings and other art that illustrate a scene of prison life such as your cell, Chow Hall, places of worship, the Yard, etc. please highlight notable features in a few sentences.

AUDIO STORIES: A recording of yourself or an interview with others, no longer than two minutes in length.

Facts in your piece must be information you gathered firsthand, not speculation or information that you've obtained through someone else. We cannot accept stories about your individual cases or that are accusatory about a specific person, group or institution. We also do not publish academic research papers or work not intended for a general audience. Any data that is mentioned must say where you got it from. We reserve the right to exclude portions of your work that don't conform to this policy.

By submitting your work, you grant us and our collaborators/partners permission to publish an edited/condensed version of it on our site on a non-exclusive basis. You own your work and can publish it elsewhere. We cannot re-edit a story once it is published, but if you would like your story taken down for any reason, please submit a request. If an error was inserted in the editing process, notify us with an explanation of the correction, and we will fix the story. We sometimes publish a screenshot of a part of your handwritten submission letter to accompany your piece. Any personal information is blacked out. If you prefer we not use your original submission, include a note in the header.

Submissions should include following:

- A header with your full name (if you prefer a first name or pen name as your byline, include a request with a reason that can be published as part of your bio (e.g. fear of reprisal, already established as a writer under the pen name, etc.));
- Prison ID# (your ID# is only used for verification and to send you information);
- Contact information;
- Date;
- Word count and suggested title/headline for your piece;
- A 2-3 sentence bio to publish with your piece including your institution. If you are already published, you are welcome to mention other work. We recommend mentioning your sentence because it makes you more transparent, and it will enhance your credibility as a journalist, but it is not required (if you do not submit a bio, we will create a simple one that says where you are incarcerated).

After we publish, we will send you an acknowledgment letter with a copy of your story unless you request that we not do so.

WHEN

We accept stories on a rolling basis. You will receive an acknowledgement letter after we publish your submission with a copy of your story as it appears online and a packet that could include updated submissions info, training material or a selection of articles from other PJP writers.

We have a large backlog of submissions, but we consider each one carefully. Please allow 4-6 weeks.

WHERE

E-mail:

submissions@prisonjournalismproject.org

Word or Google doc attachment. Filenames should include your last name. Example - TitleOfArticle.Smith.doc

JPay:

prisonjourn@psu.edu

Postal mail:

Prison Journalism Project
2093 Philadelphia Pike #1054
Claymont, DE 19703

March - May

March

Correspondence workshops continue in select facilities

Acceptance letters mailed for *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*, vol.13

Rolling submissions for *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*

March 16 - 31 *25th Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners* (prisonarts.org)

March 16 Opening Reception, 7:00 p.m.

March 17 Sales open, Public Tour 12:00 p.m.

March 18 Keynote, Janie Paul, 7:00 p.m.

March 20 Public Tour, 12:00 p.m.

March 21 Artists' Friends and Family Event, 2:00 p.m.

March 23 *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing* Launch Party, 7:00 p.m.

March 24 Public Tour, 12:00 p.m.

March 25 Artist Panel, 7:00 p.m.

March 31 Sales close

April

Correspondence workshops continue in select facilities

Rolling submissions for *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*

Artwork shipment beings

May

Rolling submissions for *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*

About PCAP

Mission Statement

The Prison Creative Arts Project brings those impacted by the justice system and the University of Michigan community into artistic collaboration for mutual learning and growth.

Contact Us

PCAP at University of Michigan
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pcapinfo@umich.edu
www.prisonarts.org

PCAP Faculty

Nora Krinitsky, Interim Director
Jose Casas, Phil Christman, Ashley Lucas,
Sarah Messer, Becca Pickus, Eugene Rogers,
Katie Rohwer, Cozine Welch, Jr., Isaac Wingfield

PCAP Staff

Graham Hamilton, Mary Heinen,
Vanessa Mayesky, Fernanda Pires

Annual Exhibition Curators

Senior Curator: Janie Paul
Curators: Alyssa Baginski, Jessy Butts,
Jeff Clark, Graham Hamilton, Charlie Michaels,
Vince Mountain, Martin Vargas
Trainees: Caleb Foerg, Bryan Picken, Kimiko Uyeda