

Ephemeral

an artistic journey
of nostalgia

What Is Ephemeral?

That indescribable faint smell. That lost melody that holds such memories. That taste that once brought you so much comfort. The dusty toys and books that filled your days long ago. Those old videos and movies, filled with endless entertainment. Those special places that made up many old memories. Those faint glimpses of the past, leaking into the present, if only for a brief period of time. We call on you to share through ART a piece of your memories growing up. On what you look back on fondly and yearn to feel that way again. ArtsConnection's Teens Curate Teens 2026 (TCT) is excited to invite you to this communal project.



Gallery





1- **ASHLEY ALLENDE**

HIGH SCHOOL FOR ARTS AND BUSINESS

TEA PARTY, 2026

ACRYLIC, 16 X 20

Before beginning this painting, Ashley Allende reflected on her personal nostalgia and chose to depict a childhood memory that she still remembers fondly. She recalls the time she and her best friend, little brother, and little sister planned a tea party inspired by ones they had seen in cartoons. Allende spent time with those past memories and made sure to incorporate authentic details, such as the children's tea cups they used and childhood desserts, including chocolate chip cookies and Oreos.



3- CLOUDI

EDWARD R. MURROW HIGH SCHOOL

ANYWHERE WITH YOU IS HOME, 2026

DIGITAL, 15 X 20

To Cloudi, nostalgia feels like a warm childhood summer memory, which is reflected through the soft yellow tone, wispy blue clouds, and vivid green grass present in her artwork. The two girls depicted in the work (inspired by Project Sekai) are illustrated to capture their meaningful bond and shared struggles, feeling almost human despite being fictional characters. According to Cloudi, their nostalgia lives in the small, joyful moments they had; she is able to evoke these emotions through her illustration storytelling. This work depicts the character leaving school on a hot day, cooled by a gentle breeze, and finally meeting a friend holding boba drinks. Together, they laugh and talk freely. In those fleeting moments, their happiness feels endless, and they realize that being together makes anywhere feel like home.



4- GUS PLATT ZOLOV

INSTITUTE FOR COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION

***AMNIOTIC*, 2026**

SHORT FILM, 16:9 ASPECT RATIO

Amniotic tells the semi-autobiographical experience that Gus has had as a twin preparing to leave for college. This film represents his fear of separating from his brother in the future. “For my entire life, I have been with my twin brother, sharing everything, always talking, always together.” Amniotic addresses the reality that he will face, having to separate from his brother. It might be scary, but in the end, their connection will transcend distance and circumstance. In Amniotic, Zolov addresses all the nostalgia he has with his brother, as well as the mysterious unknowns of the future. He uses experimental editing techniques to intersperse archival footage of his brother and him into the film, adding to the feeling of nostalgia and the grief that comes with change. Additionally, Zolov and his brother star in the film, making the production of the film feel extremely real and emotionally charged.



5- HAIFA SUDIRJO
STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL
MY HYPERREALISM, 2026
ACRYLIC, 12 X 16

The type of nostalgia that Haifa wanted to focus on was the imaginative mind of a child, also including how those creative aspects are still mirrored in her current life. This was done by adding the pencil case that she currently uses, where all of the dreamlike creatures and objects are spilling out of it. Haifa loves this painting since the colors were interesting to play around with since the result was to have all of those vibrant colors exist in harmony. It's been difficult for her to let go of childhood interests for more "mature ones," the way she had to put down the multicolored pens in favor of black ink for exams. But it'd be ignorant of her to dismiss what her childish stationery means to her. The sight of a cute character at the end of her pen is enough to keep her happy and in touch with a side of herself that she doesn't want to lose completely to the hands of coming-of-age. And so, Haifa's artwork represents that through a fantastical world jumping out from something as simple as a pencil case, because in the end, it isn't so simple.



6- JACQUELINE IZYUROVA

FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL

THE LAST TIME I SAW SUMMER, 2026

TEMPERA, 9 X 12

For Jacqueline, nostalgia is bittersweet, being the most common feeling she experiences. Sometimes she finds herself holding onto the past so much that she forgets to enjoy the future ahead of her. In her painting, she wants to convey the intense feeling of nostalgia when her summers are over. She used complimentary colors to show a contrast and the bittersweet emotions that come with nostalgia; orange being the joyful moments while blue associated with the sadness that comes along with those old memories. She used a skeleton to show a general sense of death, and she's turned away as she still clings onto her old memories



7- KEIRA LEGASPI

TOWNSEND HARRIS HIGH SCHOOL

SLEEPER, 2026

OIL ON CANVAS, 36 X 18

For Keira, she is nearing the end of her adolescence and going to college, which makes her look back and realize how she'll miss her childhood. She'll miss sleeping with her sister on the bunk beds, getting into petty fights or late-night conversations. To her, family is such an important part of her identity so she wanted to mirror that feeling and paint what exactly she'd miss after leaving for college; her and her sister, sleeping next to one another as a warm blanket covers them both. The textured portions of her painting are meant to show the feeling she gets every time she arrives home.



8- LOIS CHANG

FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL

***FOOD BRINGS MEMORIES*, 2026**

TEMPERA PAINT, 14 X 11

For this painting, Lois wanted to represent how food can bring memories by painting her and her mother making kimbap that has little things that represent their identities.

For example, through the flight ticket from Korea to New York representing her mother immigrating to America. She wanted to convey the duality between her mother and her when she was growing up in South Korea and her life living in New York City. Also inspired by the beautiful Korean fabric, she included it within the kimbap as well. Lois wanted it to be colorful through the different colors in the wood using warm and cool tones throughout the painting. She tried to achieve a vibrant contrast between the shadows and highlights and also convey the emotions of happiness to create a dreamlike setting to capture the viewers' eyes.



9- LUCY HWANG

FRANCIS LEWIS HIGH SCHOOL

***IN SEARCH OF HOME*, 2026**

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 20 X 16

This piece is a portrait of Lucy's father eating beef noodle soup in Flushing. Her father is from Taipei and immigrated to America in the 90's. Her and her father are similar with their tastes in food, one of their favorites is beef noodle soup, Taipei's national dish, as it has a unique flavor. The beef is stewed for hours, creating tender meat and flavorful umami broth. A favorite pastime of theirs is to try various beef noodle soups in New York City, in hopes of finding one that can taste as good as the ones in Taipei. They've been doing this since Lucy was a kid, so looking back on it is a nostalgic memory for two of them, as beef noodle soup is a big part of their childhoods. In this piece, she aimed to make her father the main focus, so she made the background details more blurry by putting a light wash of white paint mixed with water. Overall, this piece highlights the hardships of her father leaving his home country and the homesickness that comes with missing the taste of home.



10- MAIAJUNE BRETNALL

FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL

***FLEETING MEMORY*, 2026**

OIL, 9 X 9

This piece is done from a reference photo of a beach trip to Montauk in my childhood. The artist is running on the beach in this photo, looking down at the sand and experiencing their surroundings the way a child does. It is not a bright and clear day, it is dark, the clouds are hiding the blue of the sky, something expected from Montauk in September, and something that was always comforting for me as a kid. They expressed how they think often about the beauty of childhood, the isolated moments of life when one is not truly aware of their existence, when many are lucky enough to experience carefree bliss. These few years before age 10 are the most important, and most fleeting.



11-MARLO ARMSTRONG

DESIGN WORKS HIGH SCHOOL

***RAYS*, 2026**

MIXED MEDIA INCLUDING: PHOTOGRAPHY, COLLAGE, AND
ACRYLIC PAINT, 13 X 19

This piece is titled Rays. Marlo found an old image of herself around 2016, and used a photo editing program to fractalize and create a sunny, hazy look. She explored many different ideas, but landed on this because she felt it was not only the most visually pleasing, but because these colors bring out the dreamlike feel of her childhood. The image brings up positive memories of her time in Utah, bringing her back to a time before she grew out of her childhood innocence. She cut, layered and painted the bottom sheet to show how some parts of her past are clearer than others, and how some deep memories are neglected and buried. The tears represent the idea that healing is a timely process that can be beneficial, but it can eat at your soul. Healing means accepting your past, and not lingering on things that cannot be changed.



12-MAXINE WEIDER-BERGER

EDWARD R. MURROW HIGH SCHOOL

***PIGGY*, 2026**

SCULPTURE

This sculpture is based on Maxine's favorite stuffed animal, Piggy. Unfortunately, over time, he has grown from a fluffy pink pig into a brown rag. He has many holes, stitches, and a missing tail. She wanted to be able to memorialize Piggy because he had a profound impact on her childhood and memories. This sculpture started out with a cardboard armature. Then, she covered it in paper mache and added details, folds, and seams with paper clay. She painted it with acrylic paint, as well as some gouache. At the end, she used thick acrylic paint to add the details of the stitches. The pose she chose was also important because she wanted to show Piggy in a slightly slumped position. He can no longer sit up on his own because he has no more stuffing in his neck. Overall, the artist wanted this sculpture to represent the nostalgia of her childhood and preserve the memories of her favorite stuffed animal.



13-MENTA HAIEK
LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL
***CHILDHOOD WONDERS*, 2026**
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

When she was younger, Haiek remembers the feeling that absolutely nothing could beat, opening a new toy. The act of unboxing a new item that you've been wanting for so long really felt like a strong, vibrant, gleaming light coming out of a box. The feeling was like no other, almost addictive, because once you got the toy opened, and in your hands, you felt like you were on top of the world. This photograph she took was inspired by that euphoric moment you got by opening that little box containing whatever toy you wanted at the time.

Ever since she started getting older and growing out of the playing with toys stage she's been searching for a feeling that matches it, but she realized she could never achieve that nostalgic feeling that's been far saved in the past, and in the back of her mind, she can only appreciate the memories and emotions she felt at the time. The artist thinks that the fact that we will never be able to go back in time to that moment is what makes it special.



14- MIA KANALEY

FIGURE 14- MIA KANALEY
FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL

***WAITING*, 2026**

PHOTOGRAPHY

The transition from high school to college is a very daunting one. In this piece Mia touches on their unpreparedness for the responsibility, the label of “adulthood.” They made their piece to express the feeling of being stuck in the past, finding comfort in nostalgic memories and feelings with the impending doom of future burdens weighing down on them. They got the idea for this piece when they were going through their closet looking for art to put in their college portfolio. The old drawings made them nostalgic and long for a time where they didn’t have to think about college and future prospects. In the image, they surround themselves with a childlike drawing, shutting out experiences that may help them progress into a new phase of life. They took a self portrait and photoshopped it into a drawing with childlike qualities. In the image they sit isolated in a fake field of flowers by a fake house, with a thin paper crown, expressing how shutting oneself in the past doesn’t provide any real substance, just a temporary sense of comfort when the inevitable future closes in.



15- NICHOLAS MAYNE-CHANG

BROOKLYN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

REPLACED WHILE MY HEAD WAS

TURNED AWAY, 2026

PHOTOGRAPHY, 19 X 13

This photograph depicts one of Nicholas's close personal friends cutting a pink wig in her bathroom. The synthetic texture of the wig and her focused, deep set eyes serve as symbols of insecurity; wearing something fake to hide what's truly underneath is representative of the way young people tend to force themselves to change to fit a certain standard they think will make others like them more, and in turn, allow them to hate themselves less. This feeling, to Nicholas, was a very typical experience for people in junior high or their freshman year of high school, which is a piece symbolizing insecurity feels very nostalgic.



16-OLIVIA LEUNG

BROOKLYN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

OUR CURIOSITY, 2026

DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION, 18 X 18

To Olivia, The theme of this artwork is the nostalgic feeling you have when celebrating a birthday especially when you're alone and you miss those that were around you before, the inspiration for this photo is the artist and how their birthdays now include only their closest family and its not longer a big party like they used to do it before in their home country, The intended message for this photo is to show the loneliness a person who moves across countries has when it comes to old memories.



17- VEGA DE SEVE

FIGURE H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL

***I AM SO GRATEFUL !!*, 2026**

WATERCOLOR, 12 X 16

Vega finds warmth and nostalgia for the moments in the past who make her who she is now, reflected in this painting, she uses watercolor to portray that comforting feeling of interconnectedness.



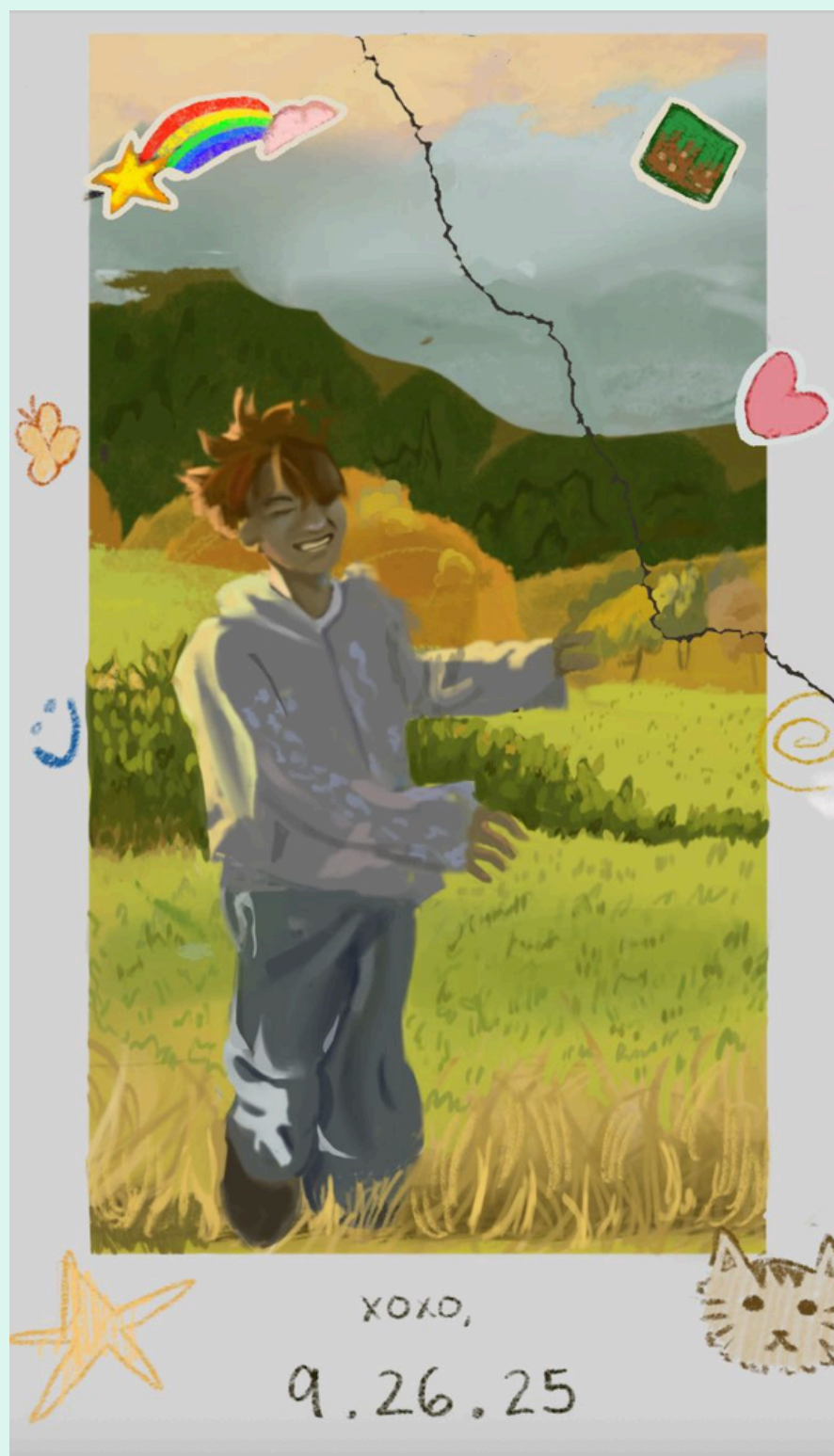
18- TATIANA ZUMBA

HIGH SCHOOL FOR ARTS AND BUISNESS

***A LONELY DAY*, 2026**

DIGITAL PHOTOHGRAPHY, 8.3 X 11.7

Nostalgia isn't always warm. A *Lonely Day* captures the feeling of a birthday party spent by yourself, missing old connections that have gone when moving countries.



19- WASHBURN GALVEZ

BEACON HIGH SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER POLAROID, 2026

DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION, 6 X 10.5

Inspired by their former best friend Timothy which they have had a falling out with, Galvez chooses to remember him through this piece of art work rather than lamenting over what could have been.



20- ZACK WEIDER-BERGER

LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL

***COLORFUL CARTON*, 2026**

SCULPTURE, 12 X 5

When assigned in class to create a 3D piece of art work, Zack chose to recreate a famous water tower which he had visited numerous times in his childhood.

KEEP IN touch



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