Mathematical Creation

Mark Huber
Claremont McKenna College

Gizem Karaali
Pomona College

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Mark Huber

Department of Mathematical Sciences, Claremont McKenna College
mhuber@cmc.edu

Gizem Karaali

Department of Mathematics, Pomona College
gizem.karaali@pomona.edu

Évariste Galois lived far too short a life, but managed a burst of mathematical creativity that astounds the imagination. In this issue, Andrea Albrecht introduces us to a short story of Perutz that reimagines the last days of Galois through a fictional protagonist. Along the way, Perutz examines the act of creation from different perspectives, and Albrecht examines his work throught the lens of the philosophy of Augustine.

M. C. Escher lived a long and full life, and the mathematical world is richer for it. Heidi Burgiel and Matthew Salomone go on a mathematical detective mission to discover how the disconcerting depth effects in one of Escher's woodcuts might have been created.

Donald Preece takes us on a whirlwind tour of mathematics embedded in English and French literature, while Lisl Gaal and Crosby Lewy take us back in time to a problem at once simple and confounding: the volume of a sphere. Carl Behrens discusses the deep question of the nature of mathematics and places it firmly in the material world through a revised Empiricism. Louise Anderton and David Wright advance the argument that teaching mathematics as though it were a cold, ahistorical set of facts not only robs the subject of passion, but can actually be a deterrent to learning in the classroom. Wrapping up our sampler from the World of Mathematics in this issue, the three mathematical lyrics of Lawrence "Larry" Lesser decisively bring music and humor into the mix.

In our poetry section, Eva Langston spins through emotions via a changing graph, and Manya Raman Sundström reminds us of the thrill of searching for new mathematics, while Pedro Poitevin alerts us to the dangers of drifting too far into a mathematical landscape. Finally, Kenny Moran leads us back to the genesis of mathematical creativity in his short story "Prove It!"