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The Lifeline Automatically Routes Calls by Area Code to the Nearest Crisis Center

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A Blue Passenger

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**The Lifeline Automatically Routes Calls by Area Code
to the Nearest Crisis Center**

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Arts
of Bard College
by
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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 2024

A Blue Passenger

This project embodies and responds to the daily endurance of disordered eating, exhaustion, and body image. The title "A Blue Passenger" characterizes an eating disorder as a constant part of life, and while it can be overcome, it will never go away. This invokes the image of a person and a physical representation of their disorder traveling side by side as passengers. The project is plunderphonic, consisting entirely of processed samples.

The final cover, shot by Harrison Edington, is a portrait of me taken late into the night outside of the New Robbins dorm, with blue tint covering part of the camera flash. I felt the picture showed exhaustion and embodied the mental strain of body dysmorphia.

This project sprung off from a project much older in its inception titled *Pfect Garden*, an unconventional vaporwave album surrounding my experience in a psych ward and the death of my roommate. This was my first attempt to create an album tailored to a listener with a particular lived experience. I released 2 albums under the *Pfect Garden* project, but neither of these are meant to capture experience in the same way that *A Blue Passenger* does. *Pfect Garden* is first and foremost a dedication to a friend, it is an elegy and a tribute to an imagined reuniting that will never come. *A Blue Passenger*, on the other hand, is a dirge, swinging between emotional low points and physical pain.

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The album is focused on mental health resources and outreach. As an artist, I'm drawn to individual experience, and creating pieces that reflect a person's thoughts in real time. I was influenced from seeking help using the 1-800-273-8255, or "TALK" crisis line. The "goal" of the album is to find comfort and peace, it's ordered to show a gradual healing from fear of the outside world (Tracks like "When I was 13 I Snuck Out onto My Roof at Night" or "Maybe if I Leave it Alone, It Will Go Away") to a gradual peace with oneself ("There is Hope"). Several of the titles of the songs are appropriated from governmental crisis line communication, "There are Urgent Mental Health Realities Driving the Need for Crisis Service Transformation Across Our Country," "Making It Easier for Americans in Crisis to Obtain Assistance from Trained Counselors," and "We Have Been Raising Awareness and Offering Support to Everyone Who is Struggling" all are quotes taken from the FCC website describing the capability of the 988 hotline. The interlude "Someone Thinks You Need Extra Support Right Now and Asked Us to Help" is taken from an automated instagram response after an account is reported for possible self harm.

The use of field recordings is of particular interest to me, as in the past I've used nature recordings to indicate a safe or peaceful atmosphere. The field recordings on this albums are much louder and create an unease, especially in tracks like "When I was 13 I Snuck Out onto My Roof at Night" and "We Have Been Raising Awareness and Offering Support to Everyone Who is Struggling". Both use field recordings of ordinary nights recorded with a sensitive microphone, making the playback seem far more intense. The remaining material on the album comes from edited samples from preexisting recordings, personal recordings of technology, piano, and telephone calls.

A uniting theme between the two projects is healing. They both create a soundscape reminiscent of trauma that allow a conclusion. I use the term "traumawave" to describe this approach to music. The audience for this music has always been myself, Pfect Garden being a project that began with the intent to never be released. Part of the appeal of this approach to art is that in lieu of verbally explaining personal trauma, this more immediate avenue effectively translates feeling through expressive means. I struggle greatly trying to explain why the nights I spent calling crisis hotlines feel so important to me even when the stress of my life at the time means so little to me now, and I could never explain my difficulty with eating using only words. For me, these emotions are beyond language.

A Blue Passenger Sample List

Prone 1

Prefab Sprout - Hallelujah
Fred Wesley and Maceo Parker - Half a Man

Last Night I Had a Terrible Dream

Antenna - Seaside Weekend
All in the Family Season 8 Episode 24
"The Stivics Go West"

Pang / Rumble

Todd Rundgren - I Saw the Light
Brainstorm - Waiting for Someone
Starland Vocal Band - Mr Wrong
Eek A Mouse - Star, Daily News Or Gleaner
Gene Harris - Higga-Boom
Strawberry Switchblade - Secrets
The Carpenters - I Can Dream, Can't I?
Mishio Ogawa - On the Road

Pit of My Stomach

Parliament - Prologue
Trevor Wishart - Red Bird: A Political Prisoner's
Dream, Pt. 1

A Blue Passenger

The Koobas - Constantly Changing
Dan Fogelberg - Since You've Asked
Michelle Duggar's Message to Her Daughters
About Body Image
The Carpenters - Goofus

A Hole So Deep:

FouseyTUBE - Goes OFF on Keemstar
and Clout Gang!!!
Loveliescrushing - Luminareal

TRNST1 Perc 037

Aoife Ni Fhearraigh - Lonesome and Troubled
Digital Underground - Holla Holiday

Feint

Yuko Kanai - Morning air

Prone 2

Brad Love Turning of the Earth
Johnny Mnemonic (1995) - Johnny Breaks Down

Faint

The Vampire Diaries (1996) (PC) Dialogue w/
Stephen
Flying Lizards - Cirrus

Played on the Ribs

Richard Stepp - Caught Up In A Whirlwind
Johnny Mnemonic (1995) - Johnny Breaks Down

Tube

The Godz - Godz
Omen - Bounty Hunter
Zapp and Roger - Heartbreaker (pt I)
Rahsaan Roland Kirk - Talk (Bright Moments)

Fed Through

Claude Denjean - Alone Again, Naturally
Arthur Russell - Tone Bone Kone
Tenpei Sato - Red Moon

Held by the Floor

The Carpenters - I Can Dream, Can't I?
The Bonneville - Zu Zu