

Q. Can you introduce yourself and tell us a little about who you are?

A. Hi everyone, my name is Katherine Yang and I'm currently a junior at Northview High School. First and foremost, I love writing—particularly personal narratives and short stories that hark on simplistic human qualities. But outside of writing, I love dancing, trying new foods, and playing the violin!

Q. What first came to mind when you saw the theme Roots and Resonance?

A. Honestly, just by seeing the key words culture, resilience, and family, I immediately thought of my father. It was truly a time painted by my culture and family, from my culture through food and lotus pockets, to my family's resilience: one side with my father's absence, to another my father's solitude.

Q. Can you tell us about the idea behind your work?

A. My work is based on a true story. Just as in the piece, my father had left for China before COVID had begun, but wasn't able to return home for over a year. Every sentiment in my work rings true and branches from my own experiences, dealing with his absence through cuisine and learning to truly appreciate the value of family. However, I have slightly tweaked some narrative choices to better suit the storyline.

Q. What are you most proud of in your piece?

A. I'm really quite proud of my narrative timing, from a technical perspective, at least. I think I balanced the passage of time well in comparison with self reflection—it was honestly quite difficult juggling around so many different passages in one work, from introducing my family, explaining current and past events, to narration and summative reflections, all while trying to pace the passage of time over two years. Regardless, I'm quite happy with the results and I believe I wrote my story effectively!

Q. Was the piece you submitted something you're used to writing, or did you try something new?

A. Writing is one of my main mediums in which I express my thoughts, emotions, and all the jumbled up fancies that run rampant inside my head. It's something I find incredibly freeing. I find myself reaching for writing when I'm working through unfamiliar seasons of my life: times that feel new, uneasy, or hard to label. And so, I find the greatest comfort in writing pieces drawn from my own experiences, as this one is, alongside simple short stories