

## **On Cambrian**

### **Zoë K**

*From far away all I can make out is a cluttered collection of color. But I step closer and the mess of black tendrils and pale trinkets come into focus. Is the black eating up the mess? It smothers the edges of the art, suffocating the disorder and drawing my eye to them.*

*The white light blares down from the top, chaos coming into focus. A glossy shade of pink and red drips down from the sides, melting into the mass of colors at the bottom. It's almost like candle wax, melting together, burning everything in its path.*

*The white light blares, illuminating the organisms, blobs with tails. Seeming to make you understand: the name was planned. But bring your eyes closer and look a little further.*

*As the white light blares down, the darker points of the picture get blurred out. If you look closer you can make out the clutter of corsets and cells, people dressed in different centuries, cut out pages from a book, man-made contraptions.*

*The white light blares down onto the structures. Drawn in-depth, the three-dimensional depictions add to the scene. Crumbling columns become cities. Bridges blend into towns. Skyscrapers and inventions tower over the rest. The structures blend into a barren land, broken by cracks in the sea of what could be sand.*

*When wildlife meets civilization they begin to blend. Elephants and armadillos get swept into the expanse sea that is humanity. Their colors begin to disappear. No longer their natural, stormy day - grey the animals begin to turn white. Slowly losing their life. The animals depicted are drowning, pushed back by the attack of what is made by human hands. Over time have we lost our lifeline? The nature we started with. 514 million years ago, nothing was ours.*

*As civilization creeps closer I begin to wonder if the wildlife will survive. Maybe this art is a moment in time. If painted later the animals will vanish entirely. What will be left? The black tendrils are seeping down the sides, the animals can't seem to fight out of it. Will anyone hear their cries?*

*Civilization blends and bends into the shapes of contraptions, contraptions become creatures, and from that all I can determine is chaos.*

*This piece of art makes me panic. The name of the gallery suddenly makes sense to me. Why do we exist? How did we get from creatures to civilization? Creation becomes the creators. And I start to think who decides? What is alive? And I come to the conclusion that nothing ever truly survives.*

*The painting screams questions out to me that I cannot answer.*

*What are we even doing. . .*

*Here?*

*How did we get. . .*

*Here?*

*Do we belong . . .*

*Here?*

*How long will we stay . . .*

*Here?*

*How strange. How strange. How strange it is to be anything at all. How strange is it to be the cause of the fall of creatures. How strange it is that it isn't the other way around.*

*How strange.*