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Frames of Fiction

Photographic Narratives of Literature

Editors
Dr Anjan K Behera
Lenity B Aventh
Visedenuo Khruomo
Tiamaongla Imchen

An MA English (Class of 2026), Tetso College Initiative
Published by Kethu Publishing House

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PREFACE

This ebook emerges from two interlinked exhibitions, "Frames of Fiction: A Photographic Reimagination of Novels" and "Frames of Fiction: The American Chapter," conceptualized and executed by the MA English students of Tetso College in 2025. Together, these exhibitions sought to explore how visual media can extend, complicate, and reinterpret canonical literary texts for contemporary readers and viewers. Bringing photographs and critical reflection into dialogue with selected novels, the projects invited the students to inhabit familiar works from within, rather than merely observe them from without, thereby transforming reading into an embodied and affective practice of interpretation.

The first exhibition, "Frames of Fiction: A Photographic Reimagination of Novels," focused on Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, and E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*. Each of these novels is a staple of modernist and early twentieth-century literary study, yet they are also dense, structurally complex works that often resist easy visualization. By inviting students to translate moments, motifs, and character trajectories from these texts into photographic form, the exhibition encouraged a close engagement with narrative voice, temporality, and interiority. In *Lord Jim*, questions of guilt, honour, and the possibility of moral redemption were reimagined through images that foreground isolation, fractured perspective, and the burden of memory. Photographs inspired by *To the Lighthouse* turned to light, shadow, and spatial composition to evoke Woolf's meditation on time, consciousness, and the tenuousness of human connection. Interpretations of *A Passage to India* grappled with colonial encounter, cultural misunderstanding, and the elusive desire for friendship and justice across imperial divides, seeking to render visually the tensions that animate Forster's novel.

The second exhibition, "Frames of Fiction: The American Chapter," extended this experiment in visual criticism to a set of American literary classics, namely Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, and Nathaniel Hawthor-

-ne's *The Scarlet Letter*. The selection spans the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and traverses generic boundaries between the Gothic tale, the sentimental abolitionist novel, the picaresque narrative, the modern African American novel, and the historical romance. In visually re-imagining Poe's tale, students highlighted the themes of decay, doubling, and psychological disturbance through stark contrasts, architectural imagery, and claustrophobic framing. For *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the photographs explored the affective power of scenes of family separation, spiritual resilience, and the violence of slavery, emphasizing how Stowe's work sought to move readers toward moral and political reflection. Engagements with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* foregrounded the river journey as a space of both freedom and danger, as well as the evolving relationship between Huck and Jim, inviting renewed consideration of questions of race, conscience, and the formation of ethical agency. Visual responses to *The Bluest Eye* and *The Scarlet Letter* turned to questions of stigma, embodied shame, and the internalization of social norms, exploring how private suffering is produced by communal ideals of purity, beauty, and respectability.

These exhibitions were conceived not merely as displays of aesthetic skill but as pedagogical spaces in which literary analysis and creative practice could intersect in meaningful ways. The process of selecting particular scenes, symbols, or character relationships for visual representation required the students to read and reread the texts with particular attention to nuance, ambiguity, and affective resonance. In discussing composition, lighting, costume, and setting, students were compelled to articulate how textual details could be transposed into visual cues, thereby sharpening their interpretive precision. The labour of planning and executing each photograph, often collaboratively, also fostered dialogic engagement; interpretive disagreements had to be negotiated and justified, leading to richer, more reflective understandings of the novels and their critical receptions.

Furthermore, the organizational dimension of the exhibitions constituted an important site of learning in itself. Students assumed responsibility for curatorial decisions, thematic grouping, sequencing of images, and the drafting of captions and commentaries. These tasks demanded that they consider the ethical implications of representation, especially in wo-

-rks dealing with colonial violence, racial injustice, and gendered oppression. For example, when working with texts such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Bluest Eye*, students were encouraged to reflect on how visual choices might unintentionally reproduce harmful stereotypes or exploit the suffering of marginalized characters. The requirement to provide explanatory commentary alongside each photograph also reinforced the understanding that interpretation is always situated, partial, and accountable; images do not speak for themselves but derive significance from the critical frameworks within which they are placed.

The experience of embodying characters and inhabiting fictional worlds for the camera had a palpable impact on the students' relationship to these texts. Stepping into the roles of figures such as Jim, Mrs Ramsay, Dr Aziz, Huck, Pecola, Hester, and others required the performers and photographers to attend closely to gesture, posture, and facial expression as mediators of emotion and interiority. Many participants reported that this process allowed them to sense, rather than merely conceptualize, the conflicts and desires that animate these characters, whether it be Jim's haunted search for honour, Mrs Ramsay's quiet negotiations of care and selfhood, Dr Aziz's struggle against colonial suspicion, or Pecola's devastating internalization of racist beauty standards. Such experiential engagement deepened their empathy and, in turn, their capacity for nuanced critical commentary.

This ebook is the outcome of those intertwined processes of reading, feeling, and creating. It assembles the photographs displayed during the two exhibitions, accompanied by written reflections that situate each image in relation to its literary source and to broader questions within literary and cultural studies. The commentaries include interpretive notes, contextual information, and, in many cases, self-reflexive accounts of the artistic and conceptual choices behind each photograph. The volume thus preserves the ephemerality of the exhibition in a more durable form while also extending its pedagogical reach beyond the physical space of the gallery. For readers and viewers encountering these projects for the first time, the ebook offers an invitation to revisit canonical texts through the interpretive lens of young scholars in training; for the student-contributors, it serves as a record of their intellectual and creative labour at a particular moment in their academic journeys.

As a collective endeavour, this project demonstrates the vitality of visual culture as a mode of engaging with literary studies within the MA English programme at Tetso College. By foregrounding photographic practice alongside close reading and critical writing, the exhibitions and the present volume underscore the value of interdisciplinary approaches in the humanities. They suggest that classic works of fiction remain open to renewed interpretation when approached with curiosity, sensitivity, and imaginative courage. Above all, the images and essays gathered here testify to the creative spirit of the students whose work they contain—readers who have chosen not only to study these novels but to inhabit and reimagine them in ways that speak to their own contexts and concerns. It is hoped that this ebook will encourage future cohorts to continue experimenting with such intersections of literature and visual art, and that it will invite its audience to see familiar texts anew, through the discerning and inventive gaze of Tetso College's emerging literary practitioners.

Dr Anjan K Behera,
Dean & IQAC Coordinator,
Associate Professor, English.
Tetso College.

FOREWORD

Prof. Shobana P Mathews

From the silent, flat, verbal page into the vibrant visual domain of physical three- dimensional space is one of the most radical acts of interpretation a scholar can undertake. In *Frames of Fiction: Photographic Narratives of Literature*, compiled by the MA English Class of 2026 at Tetso College and published by Kethu Publishing House, we witness a profound manifestation of this transition. Born from two interlinked public exhibitions this volume docu--ments an extraordinary pedagogical and artistic experiment. By deliberately moving away from cold, detached textual analysis, these student-researchers have chosen to inhabit canonical narratives from the inside out, turning reading into a deeply felt, bodily experience.

The Ekphrastic and Experiential Method

At the heart of this project lies a unique reversal of classical ekphrasis. Traditionally, ekphrasis refers to the literary description of a visual work of art. Here, the student-practitioners reinvent that concept by using the medium of still photography to describe, critique, and reinterpret dense narrative texts. This ekphrastic turn acts as a powerful critical tool. Translating complex literary concepts such as Virginia Woolf's shifting temporalities or Joseph Conrad's moral ambiguities into a single, frozen visual frame forces an intense textual engagement. Inherently experiential, as the project's editorial board notes, the objective was to transform traditional literary interpretation into an embodied practice. The students did not merely read about Dr. Aziz's struggle against colonial suspicion in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, Mrs. Ramsay's quiet negotiations of care in *To the Lighthouse* or Pecola Breedlove's devastating internalization of racialized beauty standards in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Instead, they took on these roles themselves. By physically stepping into the shoes of these characters, the student-actors had to interpret how a fictional figure would stand, hold their breath, or look away under the weight of an emotion. This physical immersion bridges the gap between the abstract and real human embodied empathy, producing a deeply personal form of critical commentary.

The Lived Materiality of Literary Texts

Frames of Fiction reminds us that literature is not always an abstract concept in a vacuum; it possesses a lived materiality. The text is built out of textures, environments, and physical weights. The brilliance of this collection is how the students found these literary textures within their own local landscapes in Nagaland. Literary materiality recognizes that a text's settings and psychological weights can be mapped onto the physical world around us, grounding global classics in local realities. To capture the profound isolation, guilt, and lingering shame of Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*, the students staged a night shoot within a local plantation. The sticky, dark rows of trees and the heavy nighttime silence provided a tangible backdrop for Jim's psychological confinement. Similarly, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* found its physical form in the crumbling, abandoned transport office of Dimapur. The cracked concrete, damp air, and overspreading dust of this real-world ruin became the literal architecture of Roderick and Madeline Usher's decaying minds. Through these choices, the project demonstrates that classic literature is alive and waiting to be anchored in the physical spaces we inhabit every day.

Visualizing and Executing through Photographic Processes

Translating a novel into a photographic narrative requires careful technical execution. The students have discovered that a camera lens does not simply record a scene but rather constructs a point of view. The choice of framing, camera angles, and lighting functions as the author's narrative voice. The student commentaries highlight the technical problem- solving required to bring these worlds to life. During the night shoot for *Lord Jim*, the team had to rely on phone torches and hand-held flashlights, directing light from precise angles to carve shadows out of the pitch-black plantation. This mimicry of chiaroscuro lighting visually mirrored the split between courage and fear raging within Jim. For *The Bluest Eye*, the photographic process became even more deliberate. Shooting on location, the team focused on creating an unsettling atmosphere through post-production colour grading and lighting manipulation. They intentionally avoided conventional, clean compositions, using colour and shadow to evoke the raw emotional pain and loneliness of Morrison's novel. Through these technical choices, editing transformed standard digital images into powerful, visual statements.

Performance, Costuming, and Capturing Narrative Exuberance

The actual execution of these frames required meticulous art direction, specifically in costuming and still photography. To capture the essence of distinct historical eras—from 17th-century Puritan Boston in *The Scarlet Letter* to the antebellum American South in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—the students had to carefully design and arrange garments that could communicate a character's status and inner life instantly.

A New Model for the Humanities

Frames of Fiction: Photographic Narratives of Literature stands as an innovative model for contemporary humanities education. It proves that analysing classic literature does not have to be confined to writing traditional essays. By stepping out from behind their desks and moving behind and in front of the camera lens, the MA English students of Tetso College have shown that classic novels remain open, living systems. They invite us to look at these familiar texts once again, viewed through an inventive, fresh, and deeply discerning gaze. This book breathes life back into the tired, beleaguered world of literary studies.

Thank you, scholar-artists, for this succeeding in this Herculean task!

Professor Shobana P Mathews,
Department of English & Cultural Studies.
Christ (Deemed to be University),
Bangalore Campus.

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CHAPTER I
A Journey to Chandrapore

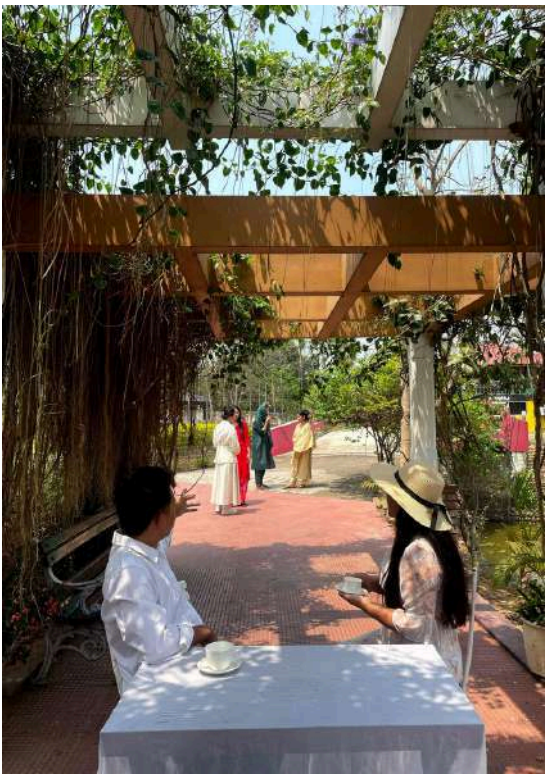
We journey to the fictional town of Chandrapore, created by E. M. Forster in his novel *A Passage to India*, first published in 1924. Set in colonial India during the British Raj, it follows the tense friendship between Indians and the British, showing how prejudice, fear, cultural gaps, and rigid social norms shape their relationships. Through Dr. Aziz, a thoughtful Muslim physician, the elderly Mrs. Moore, and young Adela Quested, the story reveals how fragile trust can be when two worlds collide under imperial rule. A pivotal incident at the Marabar Caves exposes raw divisions and misunderstandings where Ms. Adela Quested accuses the Indian Dr. Aziz of having molested her. Forster writes with quiet force, turning a personal conflict into a larger reflection on racism, empire, and human connection—or the lack of it. The novel feels both political and deeply human, which is why it still matters today.

Mrs Moore's chance encounter with Dr Aziz is one of the first real moments of human connection in 'A Passage to India', where an Indian Muslim and an English Christian meet as equals instead of as representatives of empire. It also matters because the mosque setting gives the scene a spiritual tone: Aziz is protective of the holy place, and Mrs. Moore's respectful response makes him trust her immediately.

Ms. Adela Quested enthusiastically discusses with Mrs Moore about her visit to the mosque.

Mr Fielding hosting Mrs. Moore, Ms. Adela Quested, and Dr. Aziz for tea at the Government-Run College for Indians at Chandrapore

Ms. Adela Quested listens in awe as Dr. Aziz describes the diversity of India



The Bridge Party is organized by Mr. Turton, the Collector, in the British Club Garden. It is presented as an official attempt to "bridge" the gap between the English and the Indians, but it ends up proving how wide that gap really is. Instead of mingling naturally, both groups stay apart, watch each other suspiciously, and treat the event more like a social performance than real contact.

Dr. Aziz's arrest is a pivotal turning point in A Passage to India, shifting the story from tentative cross-cultural friendships to explosive racial conflict. It stems from Adela Quested's accusation of assault after the Marabar Caves outing, exposing deep-seated British prejudices and colonial power imbalances. Even after Aziz's acquittal, the event shatters any illusion of harmony, symbolizing the impossibility of true connection under imperialism. as Dr. Aziz describes the diversity of India

Right after Aziz is detained on the train returning from the Marabar Caves, Fielding defies orders from Mr. Turton to step back and insists on supporting Aziz's innocence. This clash intensifies in Chapter 19, when Fielding argues with British officials like McBryde and Callendar over baseless accusations against Aziz.

In an unexpected turn of events, Ms Adela Quested retracts her accusation of molestation against Dr Aziz in court, thus collapsing the prejudicial case against him.

During the Hindu festival at Mau, Dr Aziz and Ralph run into Mr Fielding & Stella in boats. Dr Aziz realises that friendship among the English & Indians is not possible.

The People Behind *A Journey to Chandrapore*

- T Yanglikhumla
- Thujovelu Keyho
- Jianthuingam Gonmei
- Kimiyeka T Zhimo
- Kivinoli Awomi
- Janet Achumi
- Therali Z Kikon
- Kesotuonuo Angeli Rulho
- Holikali Achumi
- Kekhrielenuo Thao
- Alivi Achumi
- Khriebeinuo Dziivichii
- Drass Merry L Phom
- Boduralu Khesoh
- Yongdiba Sangtam
- Livi Sumi
- Thsaropila Sangtam

Student Experience Recounted:

Our group's presentation on *A Passage to India* helped us understand the novel in a better and more practical way. While preparing, we discussed different aspects of the story, such as friendship, colonial conflict, misunderstanding between cultures, and identity. Sharing ideas together made the preparation easier and more interesting.

It also improved our collaborative skills and gave us more confidence while preparing for it. Overall, it was challenging but an enjoyable and meaningful experience.

-Kivinoli Awomi

CHAPTER 2
The Price of Shame

Lord Jim is a gripping novel published in 1900 by Joseph Conrad, and is a powerful and deeply moving story about a young sailor (Jim) whose life is forever altered after he abandons the SS Patna in a moment of fear. What follows is not just a tale of adventure at sea, but a painful journey through guilt, shame, and the difficult search for redemption. Jim spends the rest of his life trying to live down that single act and prove that he can still be honourable. Conrad presents him as a flawed but very human figure, someone torn between weakness and the desire to do right. The novel remains memorable for its rich atmosphere, moral depth, and its haunting question of whether a person can ever truly escape the past. whose life changes after he abandons the SS Patna in a moment of panic. From there, the story follows his struggle with guilt, shame, and the desperate wish to become a better man. It is both a sea adventure and a deeply human story about failure, honour, and the need for redemption.

The flooding of the SS Patna causes panic and disorder, exposing the crew's fear and Jim's failure, setting into motion a series of unfortunate decisions and outcomes for Jim, who subsequently abandons the passengers on the ship, leading to shame that follows him for the rest of his life.

Marlow first speaks to Jim outside the court, after the inquiry/trial, as the former leaves the courtroom. Marlow is fascinated with Jim, who he says stands out among all others, and is 'one of us'. Marlow narrates the novel.

Jim's life after the trial is hard because the Patna disgrace follows him everywhere, making ordinary work and peace impossible. Even when Marlow tries to help, Jim cannot stay settled, since the memory of his failure keeps driving him away.

Upon his arrival at Patusan, Jim is captured by the natives. Patusan is a fictional place in 'Lord Jim'. Conrad presents it as a distant inland settlement in the Malay Archipelago, isolated from the outside world and serving as both a real setting and a symbolic space.

The Burmese ambush in Lord Jim is a tense moment that shows how precarious Jim's power in Patusan really is. When the attackers surprise him and hold him at gunpoint, the scene exposes the constant threat of violence beneath the surface of his authority. Jim may be respected as Tuan Jim, but the incident reminds readers that his position is never fully secure. It also highlights a major theme of the novel: the struggle between courage and fear. The ambush signifies that identity in the novel is fragile, and even a man like Jim can be shaken by sudden danger.

Jewel is a mixed-race woman in Patusan, described as part white and part Malay. Her background shapes her insecurity and her fear that Jim, like other white men in her family's past, may eventually leave her. In the novel, she is not just Jim's lover; she also represents vulnerability, mistrust, and the painful legacy of colonial relationships.

Gentleman Brown is a pirate and rogue who arrives in Patusan near the end of Lord Jim. He is clever, ruthless, and dangerous, and is the binary opposite to Jewel

Gentleman Brown deceives Jim, exploits his mercy, and triggers Dain Waris's death, destroying Jim's authority in Patusan. His fall shows that one moral mistake can undo hard-won respect and identity.

Jewel pleads with Jim because she fears he will leave her, and she wants him to stay safe and protect himself. Her plea comes from love, but also from the hurt of a life shaped by abandonment and broken promises. Doramin is the old Bugis chief in Patusan, and Dain Waris is his son and Jim's closest ally. Dain Waris's death caused by Jim's decision to allow Gentleman Brown to pass through Patusan ultimately leads Doramin to shoot Jim, ending the novel's tragic chain of events, and Lord Jim's saga of shame.

The People Behind *The Price of Shame*

- T Yanglikhumla
- Jianthuingam Gonmei
- Kimiyeka T Zhimo
- Kesotuonuo Angeli Rulho
- Alivi Achumi
- Chaangsonla Chang
- Annie Ezung
- Nucilu Shijoh
- Nutolu Nienu
- Thujohu Soho
- Boduralu Khesoh
- Thsaropila Sangtam
- Tsuthula K Yim
- Mheche Medo

Student Experience Recounted:

Working on this project was a memorable and exciting experience for our group. Since we did the shoot at night in a rubber plantation, the dark surroundings created the perfect atmosphere for the novel's themes of fear, guilt, isolation, and moral conflict. The shadows and silence of the place made the scenes feel more realistic and dramatic.

One of the most challenging parts was managing the lighting. Because we were shooting in the dark, some of us had to hold flashlights and phone torches from different angles to create the right effect for each scene. We also had to adjust poses, expressions, and camera positions many times to capture the emotions properly. Even though it was difficult, the process was fun and helped us work together as a team.

While recreating the scenes, we understood that the novel is not only about adventure, but also about human weakness, regret, and redemption. Through our photographs, we tried to bring the emotions of the characters to life and visually represent Jim's internal struggles. Overall, the photoshoot was both creative and meaningful, and it helped us connect more deeply with Joseph Conrad's story and its timeless themes.

-Mheche Medo

CHAPTER 3
The House that Waits

Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, published in 1927, is a quietly powerful novel that explores the inner lives of the Ramsay family during their visits to a summer house on the Isle of Skye. Rather than focusing on outward action, the novel moves through shifting thoughts, memories, and emotions, capturing the passage of time and the subtle changes it brings. At its heart lies the long-promised trip to the lighthouse, which becomes a symbol of longing, distance, and the elusive nature of fulfilment. Through characters like Mrs. Ramsay, who embodies warmth and unity, and Mr. Ramsay, who struggles with insecurity and intellectual ambition, Woolf presents a deeply human portrait of love, loss, and the fragility of relationships. The novel, which employs the stream-of-consciousness narrative technique, is remembered for its lyrical style, psychological depth, and its moving reflection on time, art, and the search for meaning in everyday life.

The Ramsays' residence is their summer house on the Isle of Skye in the Hebrides, off Scotland's rocky coast. Their son James wishes to visit the lighthouse visible from the shore, while Mr Ramsay refuses. The lighthouse becomes a recurrent motif in the narrative.

Mrs. Ramsay's dinner in "The Window" creates fleeting unity from chaos, her artistic triumph. It brings together the key characters in the novel - Lily, Tansley, Bankes, Carmichael, Minta, Paul, among others, and lays the exposition for the narrative.

The young artist Lily Briscoe is among the guests at the Ramsays, and she observes the depth of Mrs Ramsay's aura, immortalising it as art in her painting. She is not confident of her artistic abilities yet, and this painting remains unfinished for more than 12 years.

In the second section of the novel titled 'Time Passes', the outbreak of World War II causes the house to remain unoccupied. Time stops for none, as the house ages and weeds take over. Key characters like Mrs Ramsay, Andrew, and Prue pass away.

As the novel comes to close, the guests return to the house and Mr Ramsay finally takes James and Cam to the lighthouse. Flooded with memories of Mrs Ramsay, Lily Briscoe finally completes her painting.

The People Behind *The House that Waits*

- Abigail Yanthan
- Janet Achumi
- Holikali Achumi
- Visedenuo Khruomo
- Khipili
- Livi Sumi
- Tiamaongla Imchen
- Ketousieno Prescilla Khamo

Student Experience Recounted:

I took on the role of photographer for our group project on *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf, and it proved to be a particularly meaningful experience. Unlike the others, I was not in front of the camera as one of the actors or models serving as subjects but instead, I worked behind the lens, capturing moments as they unfolded. In doing so, I realised that I, along with my team members, were in a way, constructing our own narration of the text.

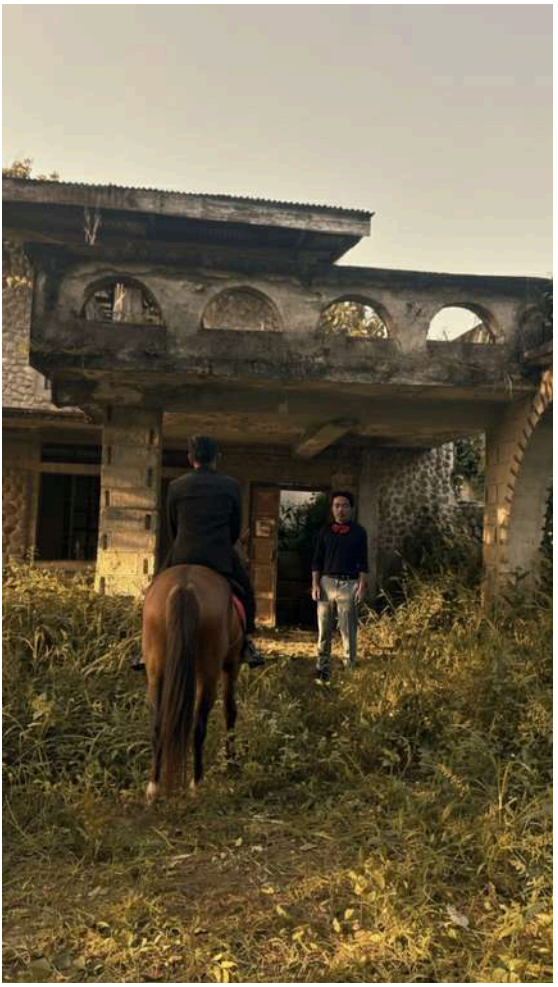
What stood out most was how this role positioned me as a reader from a different perspective. I was witnessing events in real time through my own gaze, much like I had encountered them while reading the novel. There was something compelling about seeing these moments come to life which was both fascinating and surreal in its occurrence.

At the same time, the project required a strong sense of collaboration. As a group, we had to interpret the characters as in how they might behave, present themselves, and occupy space and take that to translate those ideas into costumes, settings, and expressions. Through this process, we not only embodied the characters but also remained viewers. This dual role of acting as participant and observer ultimately became one of the most intriguing aspects of the entire experience overall.

-Ketousieno Prescilla Khamo

CHAPTER 4
A Dynasty in Ruins

Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*, published in 1839, is a chilling tale of decay and dread centered on a crumbling mansion and its last inhabitants—two doomed siblings, Roderick and Madeline. There's no tidy plot here, just a slow suffocation under gloomy skies, with the house itself seeming alive, its moldy stones and murky tarn mirroring the family's unraveling minds. A single jagged crack splitting the facade hints at the madness and doom waiting to swallow them whole. Poe gives us Roderick, a hypersensitive wreck haunted by his own terrors, and the ghostly Madeline, who refuses to stay buried, crafting a raw study of inherited curse, isolation, and the blurred line between body and soul. Famous for its gothic atmosphere and eerie fusion of setting with psyche, the story lingers as a haunting probe into fear's power to destroy from within.



The unnamed narrator arrives at the decrepit House of Usher, struck immediately by its spectral desolation—the eyeless windows, the minute fungi overspreading the masonry, and the lugubrious tarn below, where the mansion's sombre reflection lies motionless, devoid of ripple or stir.

Heeding a peremptory letter from his melancholic boyhood companion, Roderick Usher, who languishes in acute physical and mental torment, the visitor crosses this threshold of decay, soon to encounter whispers of the family's ancient mysteries: a sentient mansion seemingly imbued with life, and Roderick's harrowing conviction that an ancestral curse dooms the Usher lineage to extinction with he and his twin sister Madeline.

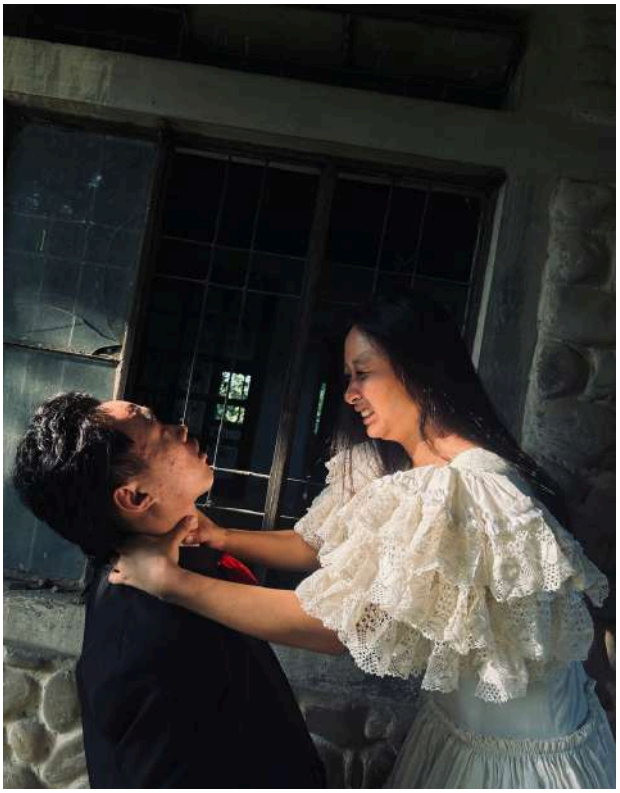
Exemplifying American neoclassical Gothic fiction, Poe's tale masterfully interlaces psychological horror, enigmatic decay, and supernatural portents, blurring the boundaries between the corporeal and the uncanny.

As the narrator acclimates to the House of Usher's oppressive pall, he and Roderick seek solace in nostalgic reminiscence, poring over arcane tomes of medieval lore and improvising gloomy musical reveries to stave off encroaching madness. Roderick confides his twin sister Madeline's baffling affliction—a corporeal wasting that eludes medical diagnosis—while, mid-conversation, her spectral form glides past the library threshold, ghastly and remote, her gaze unheeding the two men ensnared within the house's sentient gloom.

"Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers."

On one such gloomy night, Roderick bursts into the narrator's room informing of Madeline's death. Her death marks the gothic crescendo of Poe's tale, where the boundaries of life and death blur into supernatural horror.

Roderick Usher, gripped by paranoia and his sister's catalepsy mistaken for death chooses a secure underground vault to safeguard her corpse for two weeks before public interment. Located deep beneath the House of Usher, directly under the narrator's bedroom, this long-sealed, lightless crypt, damp and oppressive, was originally a family burial chamber for the ancient Usher line. Her body, encoffined with heavy iron lid screwed down, rests behind a massive copper-sheathed iron door, doubly secured from outside.



Madeline appears at the end as a bloodied, half-dead figure who breaks from the tomb and staggers into Roderick's room. Her return overwhelms him with terror, and he dies in fear as she falls upon him. Almost at once, the house begins to split apart and sink into the tarn, as though the family's fate and the mansion's fate are one. The narrator escapes, and he becomes the lone survivor. Poe leaves the ending with a powerful blur of certainty and doubt, so the reader is left imagining whether the horror came from a curse, madness, or both.

The People Behind *A Dynasty in Ruins*

- Ketousieno Prescilla Khamo
- Lenity B Aventh
- Hechuya Magh
- Selu Thingo
- Tsuthula K Yim
- Mheche Medo
- Tiamaongla Imchen

Student Experience Recounted:

Our group photoshoot based on *The Fall of the House of Usher* was truly an adventurous and memorable experience. We conducted the shoot in an abandoned building (the abandoned transport office of Dimapur), which perfectly matched the dark and eerie atmosphere of the story. The location gave off haunting vibes, and with our costumes, expressions, and overall setup, it genuinely felt as though we had stepped into the world of the novel itself.

The entire process was both exciting and enjoyable. Every member of the group cooperated well, and through the photoshoot we were able to bond with one another even more. It was a completely new experience for all of us, allowing us not only to understand the novel more deeply but also to explore our creativity and imagination. Recreating scenes and emotions from the story helped us appreciate its gothic elements and mysterious mood in a more engaging way.

Overall, this was more than just a project, it was a creative journey filled with teamwork, learning, laughter, and unforgettable memories.

-Janet Achumi

CHAPTER 5
Boston's Scarlet Outcast

Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, published in 1850, is a haunting novel set in 17th-century Puritan Boston, where Hester Prynne emerges from prison with a scarlet "A" stitched to her clothes, marking her as an adulteress and igniting the town's righteous fury. Far from a simple tale of punishment, it traces Hester's quiet rebellion against suffocating moral codes, her bond with her wild, otherworldly daughter Pearl, and the secret torments of the guilt-ridden minister Arthur Dimmesdale and the vengeful physician (and her husband) Chillingworth. The scarlet letter itself evolves from badge of shame to emblem of defiant strength. Renowned for its moral complexity, rich symbolism, and unflinching probe into sin, hypocrisy, and redemption, the novel endures as a stark portrait of individual conscience clashing with collective judgment.

Hester Prynne is publicly shamed by Boston's stern Puritan community and forced to wear the scarlet "A" as a visible mark of adultery (her baby Pearl is illegitimate), while their cold scorn, judgment, and exclusion reveal how the church governs both law and life. Confined to the prison of communal disgrace, she is denied dignity, reduced to a warning for others, and made to endure her punishment in relentless isolation.

In Chapter 4, Hester meets Roger Chillingworth, her husband long thought dead, whose return darkens her ruined life. After Hester bears Pearl in his absence, Chillingworth hides his identity from Boston for fear of shame and ridicule. His anger caused by this "betrayal" makes him the novel's antagonist.

After being released from confinement, Hester meets Arthur Dimmesdale in the forest. There, away from limitations of civilzation, she tells Dimmesdale that Chillingworth is her husband and warns him of his revenge.

They also speak of their shared past, their suffering, and the possibility of escaping Boston together with Pearl. Arthur Dimmesdale is the minister in Boston and Hester Prynne's secret lover, as well as Pearl's father.

A meteor appears on a dark night when Hester, Dimmesdale, and Pearl stand together on the scaffold. Dimmesdale reads it as a heavenly sign of his hidden guilt, seeing in it the shape of a scarlet "A." The townspeople, however, later interpret the same light as "Angel," a tribute to Governor Winthrop's death.

Dimmesdale bears the letter on his chest as private penance for his hidden sin. Unlike Hester's public shame, his mark shows how secret sin can wound the soul just as deeply. The novel's ending sees Pearl relocating to England with her husband, while Hester chooses to remain in Boston.

The People Behind *Boston's Scarlet Outcast*

- Kesotuonuo Angeli Rulho
- Alivi Achumi
- Chaangsonla Chaang
- Kivinoto H Katty
- Boduralu Khesoh
- Thsaropila Sangtam
- Selu Thingo

Student Experience Recounted:

Working on our *Frames of Fiction* project based on *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne was a very creative and memorable experience for our group. We focused on expressions, costumes, lighting, and locations to capture the emotions and atmosphere of the story in the best way possible. Every scene required careful planning so that the mood and feelings of the characters could be portrayed realistically.

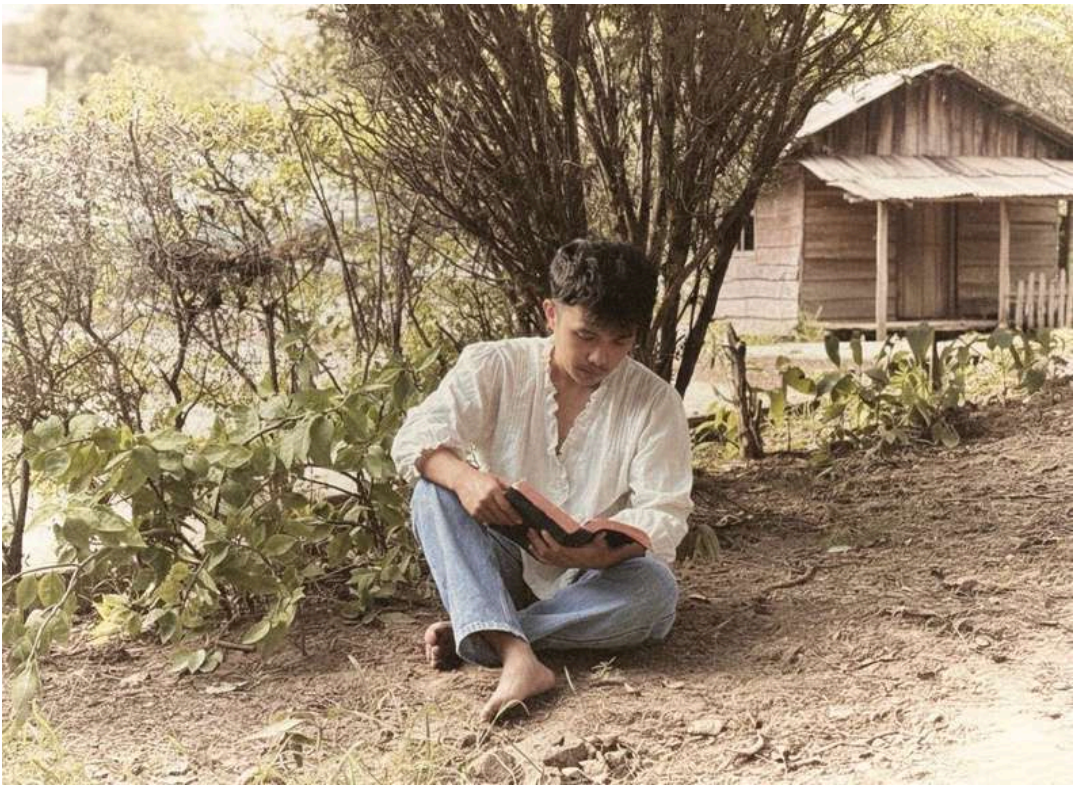
During the photoshoot, we spent a lot of time discussing ideas and searching for the perfect locations to make each frame meaningful and accurate. One of the biggest challenges was getting into character and expressing the emotions properly, especially the feelings of guilt, isolation, and strength shown in the story. At the same time, the process was also very enjoyable because there was constant laughter and fun behind the scenes while we tried to act seriously.

Through this experience, I became much closer to my classmates, and our teamwork made the entire process more special and memorable. Everyone contributed different ideas and helped one another during the shoot, which made the experience both smooth and enjoyable. More than just a classroom activity, it helped us understand the novel in a deeper and more interesting way. Overall, it was a wonderful blend of literature, creativity, teamwork, and friendship.

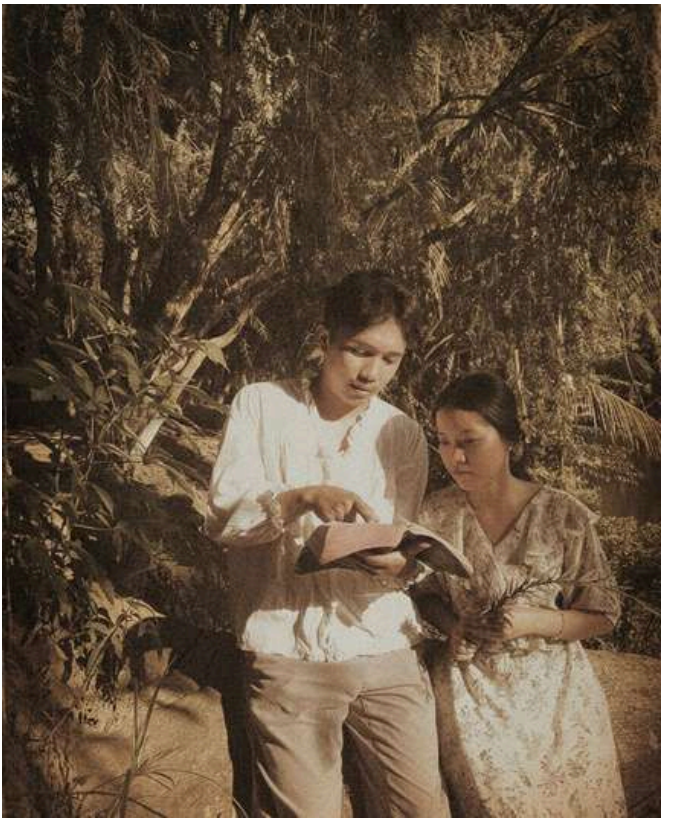
-Boduralu Khesoh

CHAPTER 6
A Requiem to a Slave

Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published in 1852, is a powerful and deeply moving novel that exposes the cruelty of slavery through the lives of enslaved men, women, and children. Rather than presenting slavery as a distant social issue, the novel brings it close through suffering, separation, faith, and moral conflict. At its center is Uncle Tom, a patient and devout enslaved man whose quiet dignity stands in sharp contrast to the violence and injustice around him. Through characters such as Eliza, George, Eva, and Simon Legree, Stowe presents a vivid picture of human bondage and the longing for freedom. The novel is remembered for its emotional force, moral urgency, and its lasting role in shaping anti-slavery feeling and public conscience.



Uncle Tom is the novel's central figure: a kind, deeply religious enslaved man whose strength lies in patience, moral courage, and compassion. He lives with his wife, Aunt Chloe, and their children and is owned by a kindhearted Kentucky farmer. Christianity shapes Uncle Tom at the very centre of his character. He reads the Bible, trusts God even in suffering, and answers cruelty with patience, forgiveness, and love. In that sense, he most clearly resembles a Christ figure or martyr. Stowe uses him to suggest that spiritual strength can survive even the harshest oppression.



Little Eva is Evangeline St. Clare, the gentle daughter of Augustine St. Clare. Her friendship strengthens Uncle Tom's faith and gives him comfort, while her kindness deepens his sense of Christian love, hope, and moral endurance.

Eliza runs away in Chapter 7, after overhearing that Harry will be sold. She gathers him up at night, warns Uncle Tom and Aunt Chloe, and escapes on foot toward the Ohio River, then crosses the ice with him in her arms to reach freedom.

Uncle Tom is sold at auction like property, forcibly separated from the Shelby family and sent onward into the harsh slave market of the South.

Uncle Tom dies after Simon Legree orders him brutally whipped for refusing to betray escaped enslaved women. Even in suffering, Tom remains prayerful and forgiving, and George Shelby arrives too late to save him. Stowe presents his death as a martyrdom, making Tom a Christ-like figure whose moral courage condemns slavery more powerfully than argument alone.

The People Behind *A Requiem to a Slave*

- Ketousieno Prescilla Khamo
- Mercy Apon
- Therali Z Kikon
- Khriebeinuo Dziivichii
- Nukulu Hoshi
- Hechule Kath
- Drass Merry L Phom
- Yongdiba Sangtam

Student Experience Recounted:

Working on our project on *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a really memorable experience for all of us. As a group, we spent time discussing the characters, planning scenes, and thinking about how to bring the novel to life in a meaningful way. Since I played the role of Uncle Tom, I was able to understand the character more deeply, but the project itself was very much a team effort. Everyone contributed through arranging scenes, helping with costumes, and guiding one another during the shoot.

What made the experience special was how naturally we worked together and gradually transformed the text into something visual and engaging. Our shoot took place at Green Park on a warm and sunny day, which added to the overall atmosphere of the project. The open space and natural light created a relaxed setting that allowed us to work comfortably and creatively. As the scenes slowly came together through discussion and experimentation, the process felt both spontaneous and enjoyable.

What I appreciated most was the collaborative nature of the experience. Each member brought their own interpretation of the characters, and through costume, gesture, and expression, we tried to make the novel feel more immediate and alive. Looking back, the project felt less like a regular classroom assignment and more like a shared creative interpretation of the text that deepened our understanding of the novel.

-Yongdiba Sangtam

CHAPTER 7
Down the Mississippi We Go!

Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, published in 1884, is a powerful and enduring novel that explores freedom, conscience, and the hypocrisies of American society through the adventures of a runaway boy and an escaped enslaved man. Rather than presenting the river journey as mere escape, the novel turns it into a moving struggle between social convention and moral truth. At its centre is Huck, whose restless honesty stands in sharp contrast to the violence, foolishness, and prejudice around him. Through characters such as Jim, Tom Sawyer, the Grangerfords, and the Shepherdsons, Twain creates a vivid and often satirical picture of slavery, friendship, and the search for a better life. The novel is remembered for its realism, humor, and its lasting importance in American literature.

Widow Douglas, with Miss Watson's support, tries to "sivilize" Huck by teaching him religion, manners, reading, and the habits of a proper household. Huck resists this life of discipline and confinement, preferring freedom and the river to respectable society. His father is Pap Finn (reimagined in the image here), a drunken and abusive man who kidnaps Huck by taking him to a cabin across the river, imprisoning him there, and demanding control over both Huck and the money he has inherited.

As Huck fakes his death and escapes the captivity of his father, he meets Jim, an escaped slave. Jim joins him on the raft. They travel together down the Mississippi River, and their raft becomes the main place where they find safety, freedom, and friendship.

Huck dresses like a girl so he can go ashore without being recognized and find out what the townspeople think has happened to him and Jim. He visits Mrs. Judith Loftus, a stranger in town, and gathers information about the search for Jim, the reward placed on him, and the rumors surrounding Huck's own supposed death.

When Jim and Huck are separated, he comes to know about the Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons, two wealthy, aristocratic Southern families who are locked in a long, senseless blood feud. No one even remembers how the feud began.

Sherburn is a proud, well-dressed town leader, while Boggs is a drunken local who often blusters and insults people. Sherburn kills Boggs because Boggs keeps taunting him in public and refuses to stop after being warned. Huck sees the murder from the street. As the novel ends, Jim is declared a free man, and Huck continues on his adventures.

The People Behind *Down the Mississippi River We Go*

- Lenity B Aventh
- Ambikali R Mech
- Thujovelu Keyho
- Kivinoli Awomi
- Kekhrielenuo Thao
- Sharon Threlong
- Tsuktinungla Imchen
- Hechuya Magh

Student Experience Recounted:

Our photoshoot for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* turned out to be surprisingly smooth and far more enjoyable than we had expected. Everyone contributed equally and showed great cooperation throughout the process. Although we initially struggled to find the perfect location, we adapted quickly and made the best of what we had. One of the most memorable moments was changing into our costumes, our first look at each other instantly turned into laughter. While we may have lost a little time there, it added a light-hearted charm to the experience.

Maintaining serious expressions for the photographs proved to be quite a challenge, as every attempt eventually dissolved into smiles. We also spent time discussing scenes, adjusting poses, and helping each other get into character, which made us understand the story in a more engaging way. For a while, we forgot about our surroundings and the people watching us, and simply enjoyed being part of the moment.

Overall, this project not only helped us capture meaningful and creative pictures, but also strengthened our bond as classmates and friends. It was a perfect blend of learning, teamwork, and fun.

-Thujovelu Keyho

CHAPTER 8
The Price of Beauty

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, published in 1970, is a haunting and deeply affecting novel that explores the damage caused by racism, colorism, and impossible standards of beauty. Rather than treating these forces as abstract social problems, the novel reveals their devastating impact through the painful life of Pecola Breedlove and the fractured world around her. At its centre is a young Black girl whose longing to be loved and accepted exposes the cruelty of a society that measures worth by whiteness. Through characters such as Pecola, Claudia, Pauline, and Cholly, Morrison creates a disturbing but compassionate portrait of family breakdown, self-hatred, emotional neglect, and the brutal pressures that shape identity. The novel is remembered for its lyrical language, psychological depth, and its enduring critique of racialized beauty ideals.

Growing up in a Black neighbourhood shadowed by prejudice, Pecola learns to see herself through a damaging lens: blackness is treated as shameful, while whiteness is held up as the measure of beauty. Even the cheerful world of Dick and Jane models white domestic perfection, and the blue-eyed doll she receives for Christmas seems to confirm that ideal. As others admire the doll, Pecola's own sense of worth quietly collapses, until she begins to believe that only blue eyes could make her lovable or beautiful.

Cholly and Pauline, Pecola's parents, are trapped in a loveless marriage, further complicated owing to their race. They often engage in ugly domestic disputes.

China, Poland, and Miss Marie, the prostitutes in the novel treat Pecola with warmth, talk to her without contempt, and offer a rare sense of ease and acceptance. Their boldness and self-possession also fascinate her.

Cholly Breedlove, often drunk and lost in despair, commits one of the novel's most horrifying acts when he violates Pecola in a scene charged with terror and devastation. Through the town's whispered exchanges, we learn that Pauline, overwhelmed by anguish and fury, beats Pecola after hearing of the assault. In the novel's final chapter, as Pecola's fractured voice emerges, it is revealed that Cholly has violated her once again, deepening the tragedy beyond measure.

As the novel ends, we come to know that Pecola has lost her sanity and stares and speaks to her own reflection in a mirror she carries. In her fantasy, the reflection is her one true confidant who assures her that she finally has the blue eyes she has always yearned for, and that she is finally beautiful.

The People Behind *The Price of Beauty*

- T Yanglikhumla
- Visedenuo Khruomo
- Nucilu Shijo
- Nutolu Nienu
- Khipili
- Tsuthula K Yim
- Tiamaongla Imchen

Student Experience Recounted:

Putting together the photos based on *The Bluest Eye* is probably the most challenging and at the same time creative experience I've ever had. Since beauty standards, identity issues, loneliness, and self-perception have played an important role in the novel, I tried to focus on emotions and feelings when creating my photographs instead of paying too much attention to how beautiful they were supposed to be.

A few photos for the project have been created by me in Green Park. Others were taken at my friend's rented place. I was up for photography and editing; consequently, a major effort has been put into creating the desired atmosphere by manipulating lighting, colours, expressions, and various editing techniques. Some photos were supposed to evoke certain emotions in viewers and at the same time make them uncomfortable, which was exactly the case with the novel. Most time-consuming was editing; in fact, a single alteration could suddenly transform an entire photo into a cinematic masterpiece or a badly edited photo from 2014.

Overall, this project taught me a lot about visual storytelling, teamwork, and how powerful photography can be when it's connected to emotion and meaning. It was more than just taking pictures, but it was about trying to make people feel something when they looked at them.

-Visedenuo Khruomo

CHAPTER 9

Snippets from the Frames of Fiction Exhibitions held at Tetso College

Dr Hewasa L Khing, Principal, addressing the gathering during the inauguration of the Frames of Fiction Exhibition at the Dr P S Lorin Excellence Centre on 22nd April, 2025.

The exhibition recorded a foot traffic of 1437 visitors, and engaged the Tetso College community in meaningful dialogue about the representation and art in the context of literature.

Shri Kvulo Lorin, Chairman of the Nagaland Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (NIDC) and Chairman/Director of Tetso College addressing the gathering during the inauguration of the Frames of Fiction: The American Chapter Exhibition at the Dr P S Lorin Excellence Centre on 29th October, 2025.

The exhibition recorded a foot traffic of 1655 visitors, and engaged the Tetso College community in meaningful dialogue about America and its society, and representation and art in the context of American literature. The exhibition also covered Black Pride, Native American culture, food and music, the Statue of Liberty, among others.

The team behind 'Frames of Fiction Photographic Narratives of Literature': MA English, Class of 2026, Tetso College

***Back row (from left to right)**: Mheche Medo, Khipili Sangtam, Yongdiba Sangtam, Kivinoto H. Katty, Nutolu Nienu, Holikali Achumi, Therali Z. Kikon, Abigal Yanthan, Mercy Apon, Thujovelu Keyho, Chaangsonla Chang, Alivi Achumi, Sharon Threlong, Thujohu Soho.*

***Middle row (from left to right)**: Kekhrielenuo Thao, Nuchilu Shijo, Ketousieno Prescilla Khamo, Drass Merry Phom, Hechuya Magh, Tsuthula K. Yim, Kesotuonuo Angeline Rulho, Jannet Achumi, Khriebeinuo Dzuvichu, Kivinoli Awomi, Jianthungam Gongmei, Tsuktinungla Imchen, Boduralu Khesoh.*

***Front row (from left to right)**: Hechule Kath, Selu Thingo, Visedenuo Khruomo, Lenity B. Aventh, Dr. Anjan K Behera, Tiamaongla Imchen, Nukulu Hoshi, Tsharopila Sangtam, Livi Sumi*

Frames of Fiction: Photographic Narratives of Literature is an innovative e-book by the MA English Class of 2026 at Tetso College, edited by Dr Anjan K Behera and others, and published by Kethu Publishing House. The book grows out of two student-led exhibitions that reinterpret canonical novels through photography, captions, and critical commentary, bringing literary analysis into dialogue with visual storytelling. It features works on *A Passage to India, Lord Jim, To the Lighthouse, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Scarlet Letter, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* and *The Bluest Eye, among others*, showing how reading can become an embodied and creative academic practice.

The MA English programme at Tetso College, initiated in 2019, has established itself as a vibrant centre for advanced literary study and research. It has produced two Nagaland University gold medalists, actively pursues research on indigenous themes and others, and regularly conducts workshops and academic engagements that enrich intellectual growth and scholarly exchange among learners. It strives to engage students in innovative pedagogy to promote critical thinking.

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