



Gracies Dinnertime Theatre

As Seen on CCTV
Volume 37, Issue 1
27 August 81AT(2026)

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hellskitchen.org/gdt

Welcome
(Back) Issue!

Erratic, building quickly, and surprisingly tough when touched. These qualities of a spiderweb in a porthouse stirred vague recognition in me when I was 15, on a pagan ritual campout in the boonies of Missouri. Hot and muggy, each day climbed from near 80F in the morning to 101F at midday. Though the coven had decided to situate itself out in the wide yard-clearing of an old farmstead, artificial shade was crucial. If not one's own tent, or the porthouse, or a camp awning, there was nothing but hot sun and lawn grass out to the forest edge, in which laid deceptive and copious amounts of poison ivy. In the footpaths and trailways, the ivy stood guard around the edge: dare not to tread further than what you have already decided to marr.

At night, the clearing was for the bonfire. That was what a campout of any kind inevitably is: alcohol, cigarettes and pipe smoke, hand-rolled weed cigarettes, and mostly, good soup. And plenty of it! As a teen, the smaller children asleep, your friends (from Memphis!) deciding to sleep in the supposedly "haunted" farmstead, when they bring some weed from home it's a no-brainer to take three hits on a comfortable front porch bench. It's a no-brainer to go towards the dying fire and chat with your uncle, and have a mocktail with the zero-proof stuff he brought for you. I really enjoyed the nighttime far more than the day; if anything, consider we were camping at, quite literally, the time of the year

in which the days were the longest and hottest: summer solstice. The ever-brief and cool nighttimes were rewards for the suffering of the day.

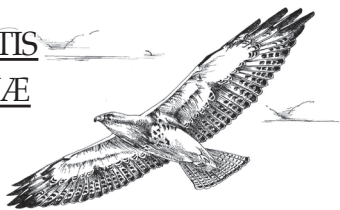
On the solstice, that is the sunset in which you thank the sun for its efforts in providing the energy for the defrosting of winter into water for spring, the energy for the spring itself, the surge to carry it and build in the summer: quickening. Thanking it for its efforts, and recognizing that it must now begin a slow decline, and rest; allow for the refinement of the development first achieved through spring and early summer. When twilight arrives, and the sun has finally set, the air turns sweet with the breath of relief. This night may be the shortest, but now it is the start of the shorter days.

Towards the end of the campout, the spider-web that I'd seen growing rapidly, each and every day, was consuming the right-hand corner of the porto, underneath the hand sanitizer. It was a curious oddity at first, nothing more than three small strands, thin but strong, like someone had tied up small tightropes for the fae. No such misfortunate luck. Days later, after having changed my period pad, pants down, freshly wiped, my eyes met the unmistakable and heart-stopping bright red hourglass of a western black widow spider, *Latrodectus hesperus*.

Gracies Dinnertime Theatre has plenty of hot stuff to serve up, and all of it with some dreadful bite. I hope you had a good summer, because fall is going to chill



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ



Gracies Dinnertime Theatre (GDT) is a founding member of Hell's Kitchen (HK) and is published by Carissimus Diablo.

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G.S.

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IMAGINUM AUCTORES

Page 1: Resaleforacause. "Resale for a Cause Logo." 2010. commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RFC_LOGO1.png

Page 2: Paul, Kerris. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Swainson hawk in flight." 2014. pixnio.com/art/line-art-illustration-pictures/black-and-white-line-art-drawing-of-swainson-hawk-bird-in-flight#img_info

Page 6: Degri. "Ball of paper." 2010. commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ball_of_paper.svg

Page 7: Jackson, Helen Hunt. Chapter one decoration. 1878. *Saxe Holm's stories, second series.* commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chapter_decoration,_1-Saxe_Holm%27s_stories,_second_series.png

Continued on page 3.

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you, perhaps less than thrill you, and winter might be rainier than you think. The world's on fire, how 'bout yours? I wish I could tell you about my summer, but I think it's best for my safety and others' that I remain vague; it has taught me plenty about seeing through the veil, and to discern between those who say they *like* Rochester, NY, and those who genuinely *love* it.

Poetry, nonfiction, op-eds, investigative pieces, fanfiction, visual mediums, and satire, satire, satire: this is *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre*. Erratic. Quickly-building. Containing within it heart-stopping beauty and bite. GDT is the collegiate student publication for the underground, the underfoot, the underpass; watch as we are ground into paste on bricks in the rain, only to print something new the very next week. Relentless: curiosity, persistence, and kindness. The best way to read GDT is to develop an obsession, I think; what has happened to Bloodclaw the Victorious Mother and her lover, fangore the loser and maybe dad? What shall Ask Susan answer next? Will Seanth and Goose argue over punctuation again? Are you our next star in-house poet? Only time will tell.

Another thing! Even though I may wax poetic and provide updates about what's going on in Rochester, NY, fret not: GDT is enjoyed best wherever you are, not wherever we happen to be located. If you have something local to you, or are not located in Rochester, NY, your content is still 100% welcome for submission to our email, graciesdinnertimetheatre@gmail.com. You may request to have a print version of the issue mailed to you and the .pdf as soon as it becomes available, a week after publication. All of our issues are available online at hellskitchen.org/gdt/PDF, and donations to the Hell's Kitchen PayPal are tax deductible—yes, really! Your monetary donations help support our big ideas and shenanigans, and big ideas for shenanigans. So sit back, put your napkin on your lap and tuck in—dinner's HOT! 🍽️

—Goose Waffles, Co-Editor

WE WANT YOU!

Hungry for more? Join our Discord! Next up: what to do with your brand new fridge.



IMAGINUM AUCTORES. CONT.

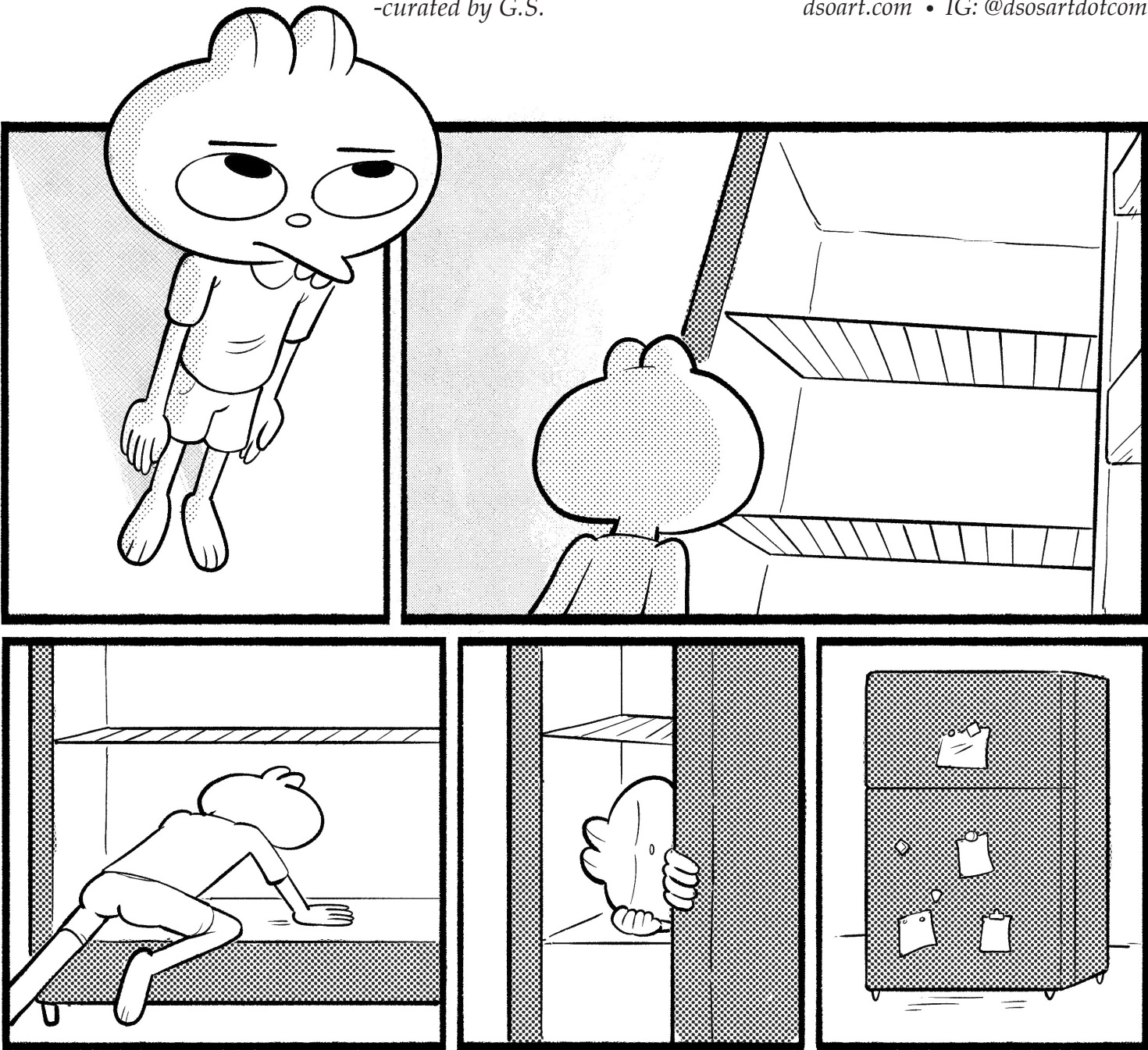
Page 8: Mucha, Alphonse. Two untitled illustrations. 1893. *Mémoires d'un Éléphant blanc*. commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gautier_-_M%C3%A9moires_d%27un_%C3%89l%C3%A9phant_blanc,_Armand_Colin_et_Cie,_1894_(page_205_crop).jpg and commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gautier_-_M%C3%A9moires_d%27un_%C3%89l%C3%A9phant_blanc,_Armand_Colin_et_Cie,_1894_(page_203_crop).jpg

Page 8: Tuğba. "Golden autumn leaves on branch against sky." 2025. www.pexels.com/photo/golden-autumn-leaves-on-branch-against-sky-37880777/

Comic Corner

-curated by G.S.

Comic by Sam Owen
dsoart.com • IG: @dsosartdotcom



JUST-A-FRIENDLY-REMINDER-COMIX PRESENTS:

GREAT NEWS!

YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!

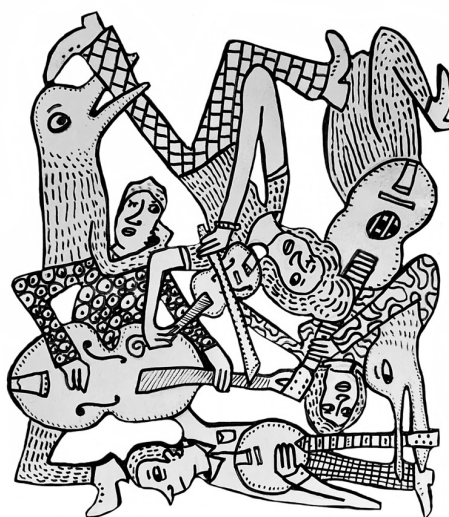


Comic and "the onlies" by Sam Bartlett

sambartlett.com • IG: @realsambartlett

Support both Sam O. and Sam B. by visiting their websites and checking out their merch!

Sam Owen's comic series "Garffeld" will be published starting next week. All work is published with the artists' permission. GDT was not paid to feature them.



Something Happened This Summer (We Think)

-by Bullhorn Acacia

It is a well-known fact in the world of journalism that when summer comes around, with it comes a severe shortage of headlines. In fact, throughout the whole summer semester of 2025, the writers at Hell's Kitchen couldn't scrape together enough content for a single *GDT* issue!¹ This year, determined to break our losing streak, we put all hands on deck, sending out our reporters to scour the brick-laden streets and pleading with our inside sources for any morsels of information on the current happenings at RIT. However, we were met with disappointing results, to say the least; and to say the least, indeed, because as far as any of our sources can tell, an all-time record low of *one* singular thing of note happened during this year's summer semester.² We still don't know what it was.

The event took place somewhere on the academic side of campus, seemingly perpetrated by a current, former, or future student or faculty of the institution, or just someone coming to visit. What we do know is that the student/faculty/visitor responsible is a hominid of the *Homo sapiens* species, and they were holding some sort of bulbous object, according to a photo from an anonymous whistleblower. Below is an excerpt from an interview between the whistleblower and a(n also anonymous) *GDT* representative.

Anonymous: "You call it bulbous, but I wouldn't call it bulbous. It looks more oblong to me."

Anonymous: "Elliptical, even."

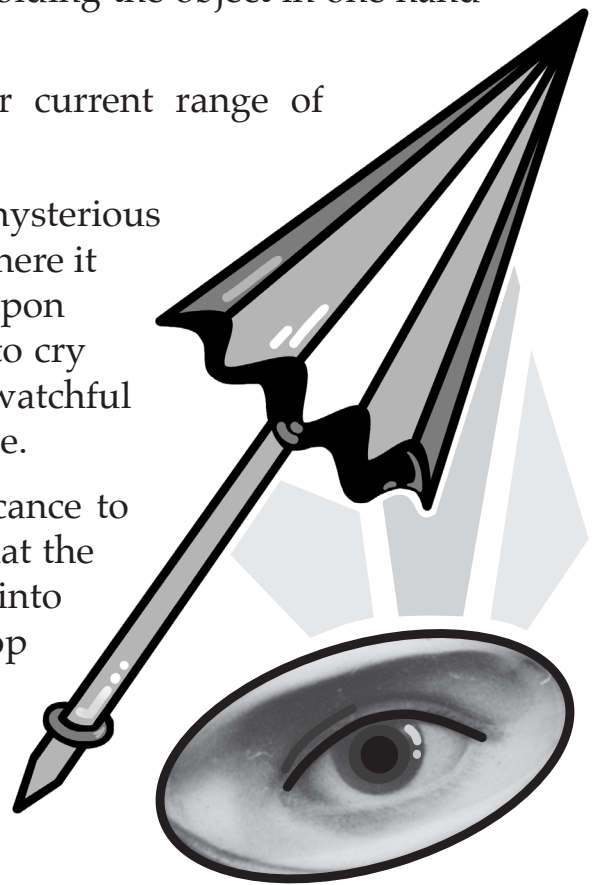
Anonymous: "Elliptical indeed. Or perhaps ovate. Anyway, the figure seems to have been holding the object in one or more hands or feet—they could have been doing a handstand—at the time of the event. You'll have to forgive me; the picture came out quite blurry due to all the light from the eye in the area."

Anonymous: "Is it possible that they were in fact holding the object in one hand and one foot?"

Anonymous: "Absolutely not. That's outside our current range of possibilities."

The whistleblower went on to describe how the mysterious individual dropped the ovate object onto the floor, where it splattered into a more isosceles-triangular shape.³ Upon realizing what had happened, the individual began to cry "like a baby" (Anonymous, summer 2026) under the watchful eye's ever-present and sometimes overwhelming gaze.

The whistleblower insists that there is some significance to this scene, but it was at this point in the interview that the memory-altering effects of the eye started seeping into the whistleblower's mind, causing them to stop rambling and ask the *GDT* representative present if they were their mother (they were not). Our team is still looking for more information on this matter and wishes the whistleblower luck in finding their real mother. 🏠



1 Layout faerie from summer 2025's note: technically, this is not true. There was a *single* one.

2 A drastic dip from previous summers' trend of at least three interesting things per year (despite Trump's insistent promises to make more things happen in the summer).

3 The whistleblower wanted to clarify that it could have been more of a scalene triangle, but the key takeaway here is that the shape was by no means equilateral in nature.



NOTE: THE FOLLOWING FOUND-ESSAY WAS RETRIEVED FROM THE LIBRARY OF BABEL, THE INFINITE LIBRARY OF EVERYTHING EVER WRITTEN ([LIBRARYOFBABEL.INFO](http://libraryofbabel.info)). THANKS TO THE REFERENCE WORKERS AT HELL, INC'S SEMITA DIVISION, PARTICULARLY JIM COWAN, FOR RETRIEVING AND RECONSTRUCTING THIS PIECE.

What is *GDT*?

Gracies Dinnertime Theatre (*GDT*) has been around, depending on who you talk to, for just over 30 years. That includes the 20 year *interverba* when *GDT* was, apparently, in Nabrasca. Even when first started, *GDT* was both trivially easy to describe, and surprisingly hard to explain. By their own admission they are not a student club, receive no financial support from the Rochester Institute of Technology, and, by extension, have no on-campus office space. They are unique in that that are uniquely independent on a campus where publications are governed by rules about posters— but that just describes the nuts and bolts. The content is where things get hard to lock down. Are they a zine? Well...they publish weekly during the academic year, which makes them more like an actual magazine. Are they satire? Sometimes. Sometimes they publish genuine, deeply researched journalistic pieces. Sometimes works of fiction. Sometimes poop jokes.¹

But *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre's* defining motif isn't the jokes, or even satire in the usual sense; it's the theft of institutional voice. Nearly everything *GDT* does formally borrows the apparatus of authority: detailed footnotes attached to absurdist pieces, legal reasoning taken to illogical extremes, definitions for words never used, journalistic byline conventions, even the disclaimers and colophons of a "real" newspaper. It fills these borrowed forms with content the forms were never built to hold— sincere trauma, deliberate crudeness, invented mythology.... The comedy isn't in the jokes so much as shoving things into boxes and watching the structures strain.²

That's also how *GDT's* most structurally ambitious pieces work: take a real, often personal premise and refuse to break character while extending the logic with total commitment. What makes *GDT* as a publication succeed isn't absurdity for its own sake, it's discipline. Discipline to publish weekly. Discipline not to punch down. Discipline to present readers with an actual arc, escalating stakes, and load-bearing research showing that the writers actually do know what they are talking about.³

The register clash, earnest and crude sitting in the same issue (sometimes on the same page), isn't an accident. It's by design. In an essay called "Authenticity," an editor wrote that *GDT* has "no authenticity and sincerity to spare, so when the funny thing is the insincere and inauthentic thing, we are not partial to it... even in our disdain, we are earnest with it." This is the same sentiment captured by one of *GDT's* founders, something the new generations of editors could not possibly have known about without diving into the lost content the Wayback Machine clutches. Somewhere in the past one of the founding members of *GDT* quoted from George Bernard Shaw's introduction to their work *Saint Joan*:

"...this contradiction at once brings an element of comedy into the tragedy: the angels may weep at the murder, but the gods laugh at the murderers."⁴

1 Library of Babel. "ifud_ctajdlxrsyjn". Wall 2, Shelf 1, Volume 26, Page 74. libraryofbabel.info/bookmark.cgi?ifud_ctajdlxrsyjn74

2 Library of Babel. "lowyinrmdymcjfxypd". Wall 3, Shelf 5, Volume 13, Page 271. libraryofbabel.info/bookmark.cgi?lowyinrmdymcjfxypd271

3 Library of Babel. "oaky_eb_hlapd". Wall 2, Shelf 5, Volume 28, Page 367. libraryofbabel.info/bookmark.cgi?oaky_eb_hlapd367

4 Library of Babel. "pxhvsot". Wall 4, Shelf 1, Volume 7, Page 400. libraryofbabel.info/bookmark.cgi?pxhvsot400

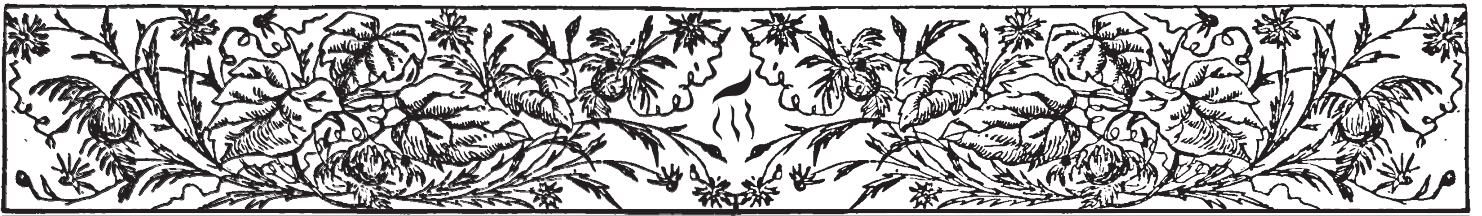
That's why a volume can hold an unironic story about a husband watching his wife lose her memory, a personal essay about gender and a Weezer album, and the horror of being a sanitation worker needing to clean up the poop from Sonic the Hedgehog, without *GDT* experiencing it as inconsistency. Sincerity and vulgarity are, by *GDT*'s own account, the same commitment pointed in different directions.

And above all, *GDT* is committed to the bit.

Where the mask drops is when there is sadness and anger, which is different in kind from satire's usual ironic distance. When that happens, *GDT* is more solastalgia and *weltschmerz* with a masthead attached...closer to confession than controlled irony.

Honestly, though *GDT* is what you decide it is. Your interpretation is through your filter. Welcome to *GDT*. Consider contributing.⁵ 

5 Library of Babel. "phociecrvrhgw um,sn rw". Wall 4, Shelf 2, Volume 2, Page 178. libraryofbabel.info/bookmark.cgi?phociecrvrhgw_um,sn_rw178



Advice for Freshmen

—G.S. and *GDT* denizens

You may be wondering if you chose the right school. The right major. Well...we at *GDT* can't tell you that you were right, but we can share why we think RIT is a good choice.

We can also tell you that you have time to figure it out. You're here for four or five years (depending on your major) and given that around 80% of college students decide to change their major, you could end up as one of them in a couple of years. That's not such a bad thing. It's better to switch your major than stay miserable and pay an insane amount of money for a degree you hate. Here are some quotes from upperclassmen on the subject for you to think about:

"I changed my major from HCC to HCD. Hoping for HCE to become a thing next year."

—Ezra, 2nd year

"I sometimes regret choosing an engineering major over art because despite RIT's claims, it can be difficult to do both art and STEM here. I also felt unprepared for engineering after doing mostly art and music throughout high school. But after two years of doing well in my major and finally getting into an art minor I'm having more fun and finally, officially, pursuing both interests."

—Anonymous, 3rd year

"I started undergrad classes 'early' but didn't graduate til 11 years later. Definitely took my sweet time and traded clout for lore— totally worth it. I would spend the time developing as a whole human (not just a job hunter) again if given the choice. Some stuff is out of your control (uni is a cirque du bureaucracy) but you always get to choose joy in some regards. I had no tie to the school I wound up at except realizing I liked the vibe of the alums and wanted to be around more people like that."

—mighty_chondria, visiting alum

Overall, we chose RIT (or not) for many reasons. None were our amazing food. Some people come to college to explore their options, and others only take their required classes. I highly suggest doing the former. Do things outside your major, take a class just for fun, join a club or a not-a-club-just-students-publishing-things-together, and do anything other than rotting away in your room alone doing homework. 



Untitled

-by Rock Goblin

drank too much coffee
ate too much soup
listened to jazz
now gotta poop

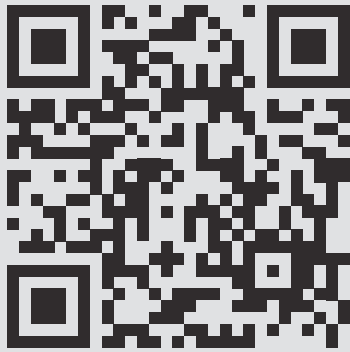
Have your own comic?
Art? Writing? **SUBMIT!**

graciesdinnertime theatre
@gmail.com

GDT publishes weekly. Pen names are
welcomed. Please send high-quality
images or .docx files for written content.

**YOUR AD HERE...
OR THERE...
OR ANYWHERE**

Email us about that, too.



Where do I lead? Keep reading!

The Return of GDT's
**Halloween
Story Contest**

1st Place: \$150
2nd Place: \$50

Submission Deadline:
October 21st, 2026

How to submit:

- 1) Save your work as a .docx or .rtf file.
- 2) Name your document with your last name as the file name (psuedonyms are acceptable).
- 3) Give us information to contact you.
- 4) Fill out the google form using the QR code above to submit your work.

Top submissions will be published
in a special mid-autumn issue.

All submissions remain the intellectual property of
the author. Stories must be fall- or spooky-themed.

