Editors' Note

Dear Reader,

It is with immense pride and gratitude that we welcome you to the second volume of *Epic Threads*.

When *Epic Threads* began, we envisioned a space in which engagement with the ancient world would not be confined to any single form. Scholarship might meet storytelling; ancient texts might inspire new poetry; history might find expression through visual art; and familiar works might be approached again through new and unexpected perspectives. With the publication of Volume I, that vision became a reality. With Volume II, we have had the extraordinary privilege of watching it grow.

This volume brings together a remarkable collection of voices and forms. Across short fiction, poetry, visual art, and reviews, our contributors engage with antiquity not as something static or distant, but as something that continues to invite interpretation, imagination, disagreement, and reinvention. Their work reminds us that the ancient world endures not simply because we continue to study it, but because each generation finds new ways to speak with it—and, sometimes, to speak back.

Volume II also marks an exciting period of growth for *Epic Threads*. What began at the University of Waterloo has reached contributors from across the globe, bringing together people from different institutions, disciplines, backgrounds, and stages of their academic and creative lives. The submissions we received were as varied in perspective as they were in form, each shaped by a different relationship with the ancient world. To see writers, artists, students, scholars, and enthusiasts separated by geography yet brought together by a shared fascination with antiquity has been one of the most rewarding parts of creating this volume. This year, the journal also introduced its first creative and review competitions, opening new opportunities for contributors to share their work with this growing community. More about each competition, and the extraordinary work it brought to the journal, can be found in the editor's notes introducing the Creative and Review sections that follow.

To every author, poet, artist, and reviewer represented in these pages: thank you. Thank you for trusting *Epic Threads* with your work, for the thought and care you brought to the editorial process, and above all, for sharing with us the many different ways in which the ancient world continues to inspire you. This volume exists because of your willingness to create, question, experiment, and contribute.

We remain profoundly grateful to Dr. Altay Coşkun, whose vision, mentorship, and continued enthusiasm have guided *Epic Threads* from its beginnings, and to Priscilla Carmini, whose knowledge and support have remained invaluable as the journal has continued to develop. We are also delighted to welcome Kate Coffell as Associate Editor, and are deeply grateful for the care, insight, and dedication she has brought to Volume II.

What began as an idea has now become a growing community. As *Epic Threads* enters its second volume, we are reminded that the threads connecting the ancient and modern worlds are not merely inherited—they are continually being rewoven. This volume brings together some of those threads from across the world, and it is our privilege to share them with you.

We hope you enjoy Volume II.

With our sincere gratitude,

Madelynne Parish & Mary Harper

Co-Editors-in-Chief