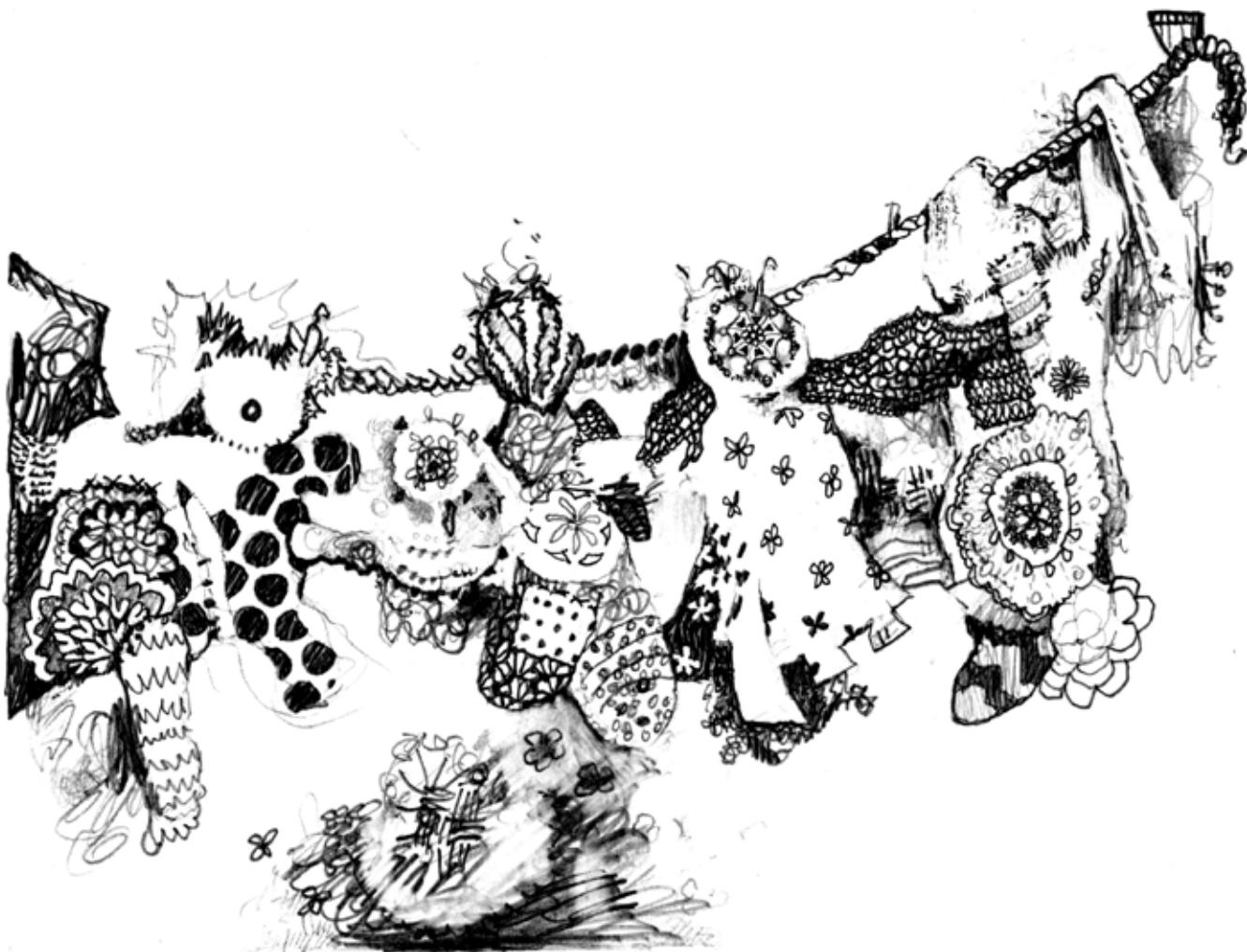


# For A 2008 Better World



POEMS  
PEACE AND DRAWINGS ON  
JUSTICE BY  
Greater Cincinnati Artists

# **“For a Better World”**

## **2008**

Poems and Drawings  
on  
Peace and Justice

by  
Greater Cincinnati Artists

Editor:  
Saad Ghosn

*“I prefer to be  
a dreamer among the humblest,  
with visions to be realized,  
than lord among those  
without dreams and desires.”*

*“Yesterday is but today’s memory,  
and tomorrow is today’s dream.”*

*“Tenderness and kindness are not  
signs of weakness and despair,  
but manifestations  
of strength and resolutions.”*

Kahlil Gibran (1883 - 1931)

# Foreword

According to Irish poet Edna Langley, if one cannot imagine poetry, one cannot imagine peace. Poetry, pacifist at its root, keeps, however, a large place for a just and vivifying anger. Poets and artists, witnesses and reflectors of their times, are moved by injustice, abuse, violence, wars; using their potent and powerful voices, they speak of these evils, of their mischief, and by this doing help trigger a change for a better world, a world of peace and justice after their hearts, their dreams, their beliefs. Poets and artists often make the invisible clear and the desired possible and real.

In this fifth year's book of poems and drawings on peace and justice, poets and visual artists from Greater Cincinnati, ages 10 to 85 years, combined their voices and their visions for a better world. Fifty one poets and 36 visual artists, with eloquence and acuity, strengthened each other's hopes and dreams. They rejected a grim status quo, denounced unjust societal wrongs, renounced violence and its consequences, and welcome a change in values towards compassion, forgiveness and understanding.

In a world torn apart by wars and injustice, these artists questioned the reasons for violence, wept for the dead, worried for the vulnerable mother and child, revolted for the oppressed poor, homeless and weak, rejected inequality, expressed concern for the battered environment. They challenged the prevailing societal values of materialism, consumerism and domination, and painted a beautiful world, one of diversity and equality, where peace is based on truth, justice, equal opportunity and kindness.

With their lucid song, these artists also confronted the evil in this world and promised to stand up for the fight. Their song is an appeal to each of us to join in and make a change; it seeks to eliminate our isolation and loneliness and invites us to hold hands and share in the same well of strength and energy for a better world.

To every participating poet and artist, and to everyone who directly or indirectly joined in the making of this book and in the spread of its message, my heartfelt thanks and gratitude.

My appreciation also goes to Arturo Gutierrez-Plaza, Michael Henson, William Howes and Jerry Judge, who kindly reviewed all the submitted poems and provided their editorial advice; and to Andrew Au and Michael Link who graciously volunteered their time and technical skills in putting this book together.

For a better world, always, a world of love, peace and justice.

Saad Ghosn  
Book editor and organizer

April 2008

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***POEMS:***

**A. A. AARON**

A. A. Aaron, born in Antarctica, is an 'archy'ologist and a 'Drake'oholic.  
His poetry can be read at <http://aachelabelaaron.blogspot.com>

**JEFFREY HILLARD**

Jeffrey Hillard is the author of four books of poems, a chapbook of short stories, and is publisher and editor of the new online magazine, *RED! Webzine* ([www.redwebzine.org](http://www.redwebzine.org)). Journalism-based and eclectic, *RED!* is devoted to sharing stories of positive transformation in the lives of prisoners and formerly incarcerated individuals internationally, as well as stories of innovations and innovative people in the world of criminal justice. Jeffrey is associate professor of English at the College of Mount St. Joseph.

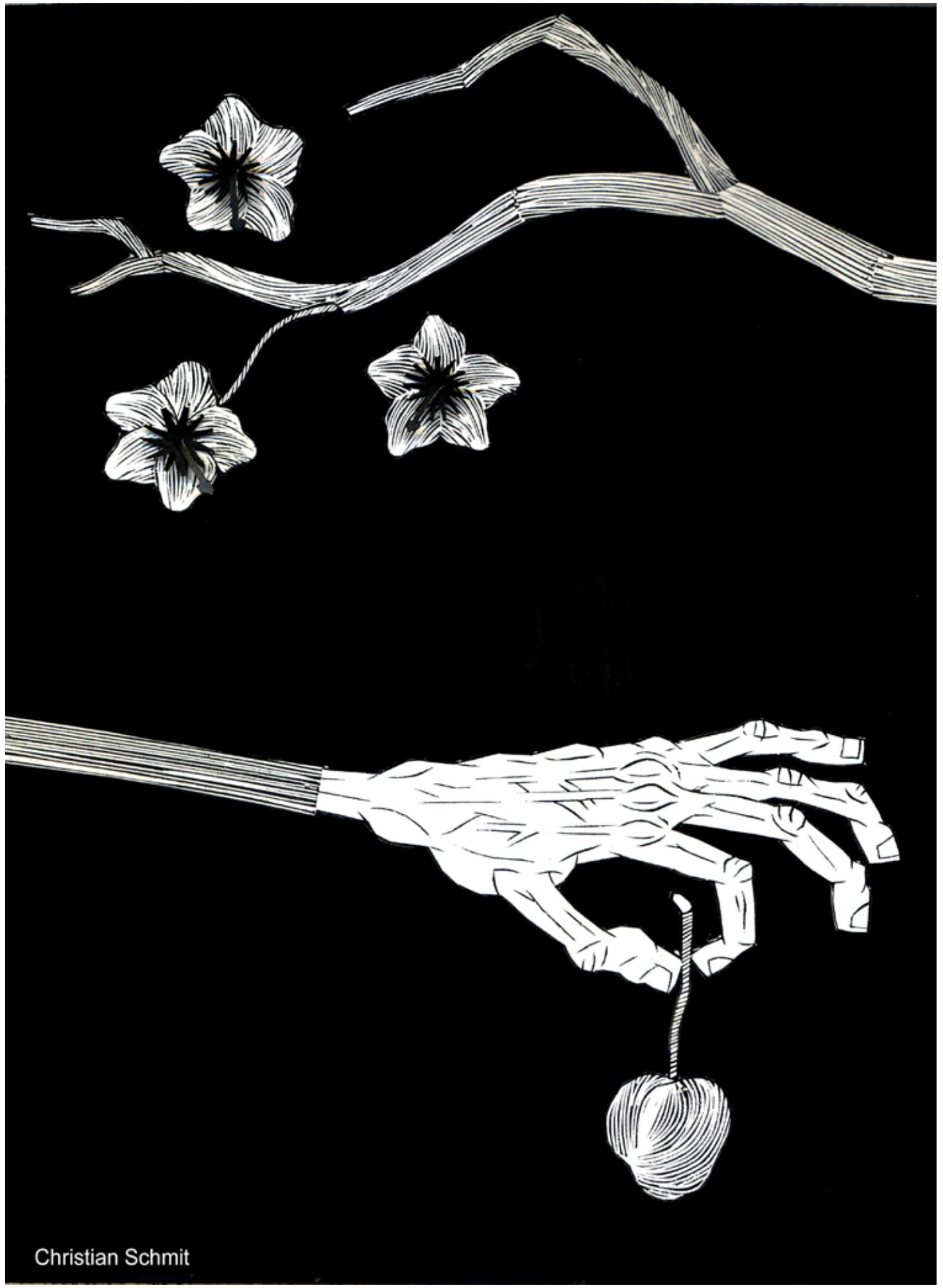
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***DRAWING:***

**CHRISTIAN SCHMIT**

Christian Schmit lives in lovely Covington, KY. He spends most of his time teaching art to short people. Sometimes he even makes art of his own.

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Christian Schmit

## A Cherry-Picking Minute

(by A. A. Aaron)

The cherries hang ripe from the branch  
& are no less desired for not being blossoms  
  
& the birds & the squirrels & the deer & the fox  
will pluck it clean if it isn't picked

now is the time of cherry-picking – the time  
of long cupola ladders – the time the people  
hired themselves out to climb those trees

they moved from town to town for spare change  
& the carnivals & the hucksters followed right  
behind  
to spirit it away from them again

can you hear the sound? cherries thundering  
into tin buckets – transmuting into silver?  
can you hear Ole Pappy John & his brother King  
calling the dances & sawing the fiddle  
with a bucket of nickels before them  
when the last of the cherries rolled in?  
pure alchemy of fingers & rhyme

and sweat & hopelessness & misery

they themselves the cherry blossoms – bourne  
away in the March wind  
but they were game – children – they never let  
it show

## Elegy for ‘Priceless Friend’

(by Jeffrey Hillard)

*a villanelle*

*in memory of Anthony Beard, Jr. 1992-2007*

We know he lives in our searching minds,  
and although he has left us, his beauty reaches  
us. As the earth shifts, another season climbs

through our window. We can live in cold times,  
only, this year we'll sweep these leaves clearing  
a path, believing he lives in our minds.

He's lived to swim, scout, lose the woods in  
hikes.

Look. A branch he'd know. And more. Tree after  
tree,  
as if they shift the earth and seasons, and for  
him, a climb.

In his shadow, his sister and brothers will, in  
time,  
cling to what he was – is still – his boyhood they  
keep.  
They'll feel him living in their minds.

Sometimes the sun fades and so does the  
earth's fever.

He always knew this. Yet his life so slipped by  
because the earth shifts, climbs toward a new  
season.

Winter clouds one day will hold and not rain ice,  
and hold his voice – never buried with him – for  
keeps.

We trust our minds knowing he lives inside.  
When earth shifts seasons, we'll live for that  
other time.



***POEMS:***

**KAREN ARNETT**

Karen Arnett lives and tends her gardens in Mt. Healthy. She considers the natural world to be her first and wisest teacher, especially regarding peace, cooperation, and interdependence.

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***DRAWING:***

**CHRISTOPHER DANIEL**

Christopher Daniel received a BFA from the University of West Virginia (1994) and an MFA in sculpture from DAAP, University of Cincinnati (1997).

He continues to work with Thin Air Studio, creating large environmental installations in Cincinnati and abroad. This past Summer Christopher started Blue Hell Studio, a metal fabricating business in which he designs and creates functional sculpture, railings and furniture.

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## Room Enough

Where are the churches that would open their chimneys  
wide to colonies of swifts that pour down  
each evening like a liquid column  
from the darkening air, and sing  
*all are welcome here?*

Where are the neighbors who rejoice at visitations  
of groundhog by day, skunk by night,  
the mole who tunnels her soft colonnade of  
soil,  
the deer who steals away on small feet,  
stuffed with tender okra pods,  
the fattening squirrel who buries and forgets?

*Are they bats?* asks the childish voice. She calls  
her sister from play and they sit beside me  
on the still-warm asphalt of the parking lot,  
their wonder glowing in the dusk  
at the tucked wings descending,  
not yet knowing the feel of nuisance  
as it slides from the tongue  
nor the blocky edges of  
*lock the door.*

## Green Zone

I fiddle while the world burns.  
This shovel makes sweet music  
tuned to the perfumes of compost and  
humus.  
In here the centipede labors across  
mountains,  
over clods exploded  
from my garden fork.  
This province of peace, this tiny world  
my green zone.  
Inside this perimeter only tender feet  
shall tread, and mostly  
I am on my knees, making  
a slow prayer to the living soil,  
for the safety of small things  
that carry on under strawy mulch.  
And I bow my face to the newest  
leaves opening like a pair of palms placed  
together.  
As my nose touches leaf, black ink specks  
expand to giant flea beetles,  
each replete with the wish to thrive.  
I cannot find a difference in the size  
of our respective rights to our lives.  
And I garden while the world turns  
desperately holding this small line  
against destruction - none  
inside these grassy boundaries,  
but for the noted carnage of a luckless  
earthworm,  
victim of my inattention.  
I mourn each tragic loss.



## ***POEMS:***

### **FRANCHOT BALLINGER**

Franchot Ballinger's poems have appeared widely over the years. His book *"Living Sideways: Tricksters in American Indian Oral Traditions"* is available from the University of Oklahoma Press. He plays Native American flute as a spiritual care volunteer with Hospice of Cincinnati and has recorded a CD on NA flute.

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### **DIANE GERMAINE**

Diane Germaine, a writer and a choreographer, born in NYC, spent a fair chunk of her adult life there and now resides in Cincinnati. Diane's writing and dance works often reflect experiences and associations from the city. She has work published in NYS's *Chronogram Magazine*, received funding from the OAC and the City of Cincinnati for *"Didi, a Life"* - a 2003 3-act spoken word/dance play - and is currently selecting the poems for her first chapbook.

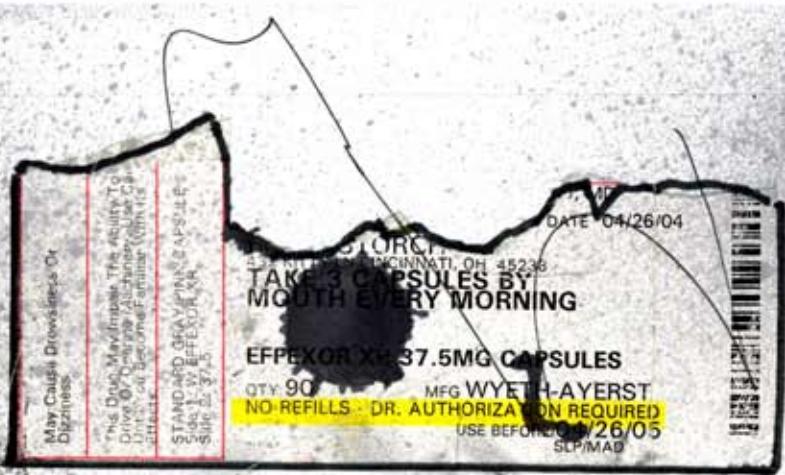
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## ***DRAWING:***

### **KURT STORCH**

Artist Kurt Storch lives and works in the Cincinnati area. He is the Associate Director of the Dicere Gallery in Camp Washington and is currently involved with The Mental Health and Arts Collaborative, a group of local Mental Wellness professionals and Artists whose goal is to break down the stigma, both personal and social, of mental illness.

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1



2



## Precious Seed

(by **Franchot Ballinger**)

Framed in the open window of the rusting red door,  
she's pretty as a picture, the seed of light  
shines so in her brown face.

Too young to pick, old enough to be burden,  
she waits in a migrant's pickup at field's edge,  
waits for another August dusk.

In the hot and hazy Ohio air, her mother and father  
are bent in the field's mid-distance, vague question  
marks.

She watches, murmurs a child's tuneless song,  
not knowing yet the songless days before her,  
not knowing how she will be about her father's  
business.

The sun lays its dusty smolder across the field,  
and a darkening veil falls over the eastern sky  
under which her parents now return, faces drawn,  
bearing the heavy sheaves of their days.

Her voice flutters about them in the parched light.  
Was she ever a song carried in their hearts?  
I imagine her mother at some past day's hot and brittle  
end waiting  
while her man—harrowed and harvested himself—  
hovers  
over her, sparrow frail, embracing her with dusty wings.  
No annunciation here, his finishing grunt the only  
Magnificat  
for more fruit to be bruised at our tables.

## The Old Girl

(by **Diane Germaine**)

The old girl  
kept her mouth shut...  
not able to make a change,  
not able to move forward.

Remaining in such  
an atmosphere,  
meant surrendering  
to adversity,  
meant burying identity.

It took years for her  
to find the energy  
to stand up,  
to find the words for  
“enough.”

## My One Girl

(by **Diane Germaine**)

She's too pretty  
for that,  
too fragile for that;  
She's –  
too my daughter  
for that –  
My One Girl.

And no joy  
can dispel my frenzy  
of the killing machines:

She's too pretty for  
the debris of bodies  
of car wrecks or dry overdoses,  
the patterns of veins in thin arms;

she's too fragile for  
falls from windows  
50 feet up or  
the sniper's bullet;

she's too my daughter  
for blood on tiles and  
dismembered parts in fields.

She's my joy -  
My One Girl;

and there's no use  
to frenzy  
about unnamed hate  
I cannot dispel,  
or plastic explosives  
so lovingly strapped  
with the intimacy only  
a lover can know.



***POEMS:***

**TIMOTHY CANNON**

Tim Cannon, Native Cincinnatian, married, three grown children, retired hair designer, actively involved in poetry, photography and art. Tim's poems have been published in previous "For a Better World" anthologies (2004 and 5), and other publications. One of his photos was chosen for Cincinnati's "Capture Cincinnati". Tim enjoys Cincinnati, his birthplace, yet, his heart tells me it still could be a greener, peace-full place...

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**TONYA D. MAIDEN**

Tonya Maiden resides in Wyoming, OH. She is the proud mother of a normal, (i.e. crazy!) 15 yr old daughter, Arris Ja'Bri. A graduate of Howard University in Washington, DC, Tonya is a Microbiologist with the heart and soul of a writer.

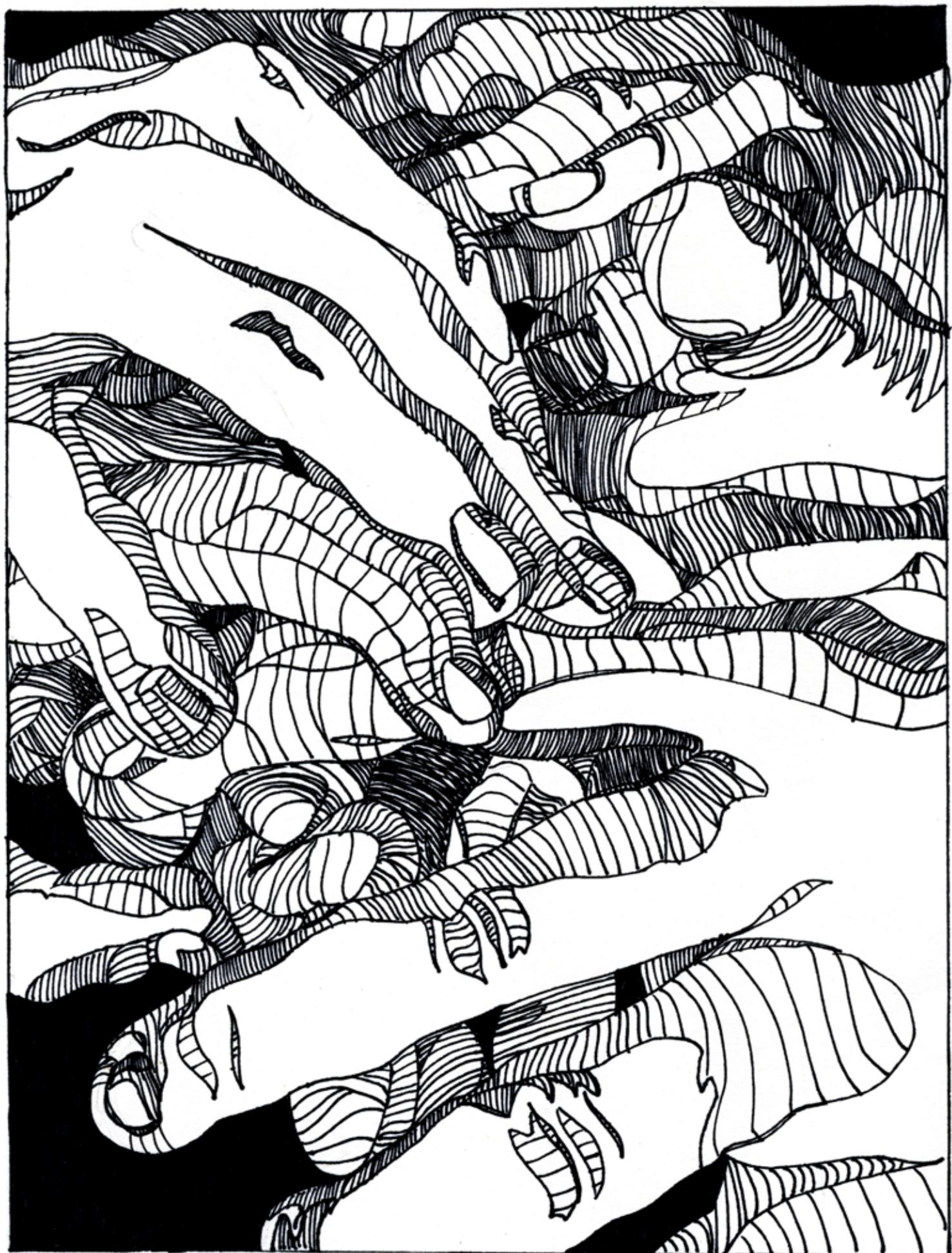
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***DRAWING:***

**KATHERINE BAKER**

Katie Baker is a student at Northern Kentucky University, earning her degree in the Fine Arts and English Writing. She is the Art Editor for NKU's literary publication, *The Licking River Review*.

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Katherine Baker

## Fingers

(by **Timothy Cannon**)

A part of me  
That connects  
That touches another  
Sensitive as my soul;  
Reaching out  
Movements so delicate  
Began so tender and weak  
Grew very strong  
One day they will be frail;  
They have possibilities  
To change for better  
A life  
This planet  
To grasp onto a dream;  
These fingers are very powerful  
They can hurt  
Pointing at another  
Blaming fault  
Given as a sign  
One finger means hate  
Two fingers can create peace;  
Today I will use them  
To create  
To write a poem  
Inspiring a change;  
I will allow Creator to work through them  
His fingers, my fingers  
Touching  
Giving  
Receiving  
Creating love.

No Tree ever  
Cut into the skin of  
a Man. a Woman. a Child.  
Nor broke a neck  
For malice or mere sport.

No Tree ever  
Chose with no remorse.  
To take the life of  
a Mother. a Father.  
a Daughter. a Son.

No Tree ever  
Bent down and spat, with hatred-  
“-your skin is Black,  
you are Worthless  
you don’t deserve to Live  
you must now Die.”

Why, then?  
Why were Trees  
Used for evil?  
Such vile, barbarous acts.

Trees are God’s Blessings.  
Majesty and Purpose.  
Shade. Shelter. Nourish.  
Beauty. Vista.  
Play. Joy.

Windblown leaves dance.  
Strong trunks stand tall.  
Roots anchor.  
Bark protects.  
Branches reach out.

Not meant to hang  
Strange Fruit,  
But apples and oranges.  
Birdfeeders and nests.  
Tires for swings  
And tree house ladders.

Trees.  
Created not for dangling death.  
But, for celebrating life.

## Trees

(by **Tonya D. Maiden**)

No Tree ever  
Wrapped its branches  
Around the throat of  
a Boy. a Man. a Woman.  
a Girl.



**POEMS:**

**NICHOLAS CAUDILL**

Nicholas Caudill is a student at the College of Mount St. Joseph; he studies math and music and also serves as poetry editor for the school's online literary magazine, Lions-on-Line.

Nicholas is a member of the Greater Cincinnati Writer's League.

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**DRAWING:**

**CAROLE WATKINS**

Carol Watkins is a junior studying fine arts at the University of Cincinnati. She works mainly with the human figure in ceramics.

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CAROLWATKINS'08

## Asleep on a Metro Bus

Did I ever tell you  
the story of how we first met?  
You don't remember because you were  
asleep on a metro bus, your head  
beginning to tilt forward and  
nearly knocking over what you were  
holding.

I was lost in the city  
trying to find my way home and  
you looked to be going anywhere  
but a home.

I climbed the stairs  
and gave the driver my coins  
leaving one pocket empty.  
The bus was crowded with strangers  
but there was an empty seat  
next to a stranger named you,

asleep on a metro bus, your head  
beginning to tilt forward and  
nearly knocking over the clay pot  
you were holding.

I was looking at the city  
trying to find any sign of hope and  
you, with closed eyes, were trying  
to find hope in your city of dreams.

Your eyes were closed, but if open  
I imagined they'd be the exact shade  
of brown that grass turns when going  
dormant, eventually to return to green  
in early March or April. My eyes  
were strangely drawn  
to a stranger named you,

asleep on a metro bus, your head  
beginning to tilt forward and  
nearly knocking over the clay pot  
you were holding that contained  
a single red geranium.

I wondered  
how any flower could survive in the city  
and you wonder how you would survive  
without getting out of the city.

Several years later I know  
I have found my way home  
as I awake from a warm bed  
on a January morning.  
I descend the stairs and  
pull a key from a full pocket.

Looking at the faded brown grass  
I see a small red flower sprouting  
and hope you found the home  
you always wanted. A home  
where you will be

asleep on a familiar bed, your head  
beginning to tilt forward and  
nearly knocking over the clay pot  
you were holding that contained  
a single red geranium.

## Starting from Within

There is peace in the barrel of a gun  
moments before the bullet accelerates.

In my thoughts gunshots all fail to fulfill their target,  
all fall to the floor in innocence, like rain drops.

When I watch the clouds move my life decelerates.  
All the outside voices return to their respective owners

like bullets running in reverse back into guns. I find  
there is peace in the silence of my thoughts.

Moments before the world accelerates back into chaos  
I hope my thoughts can rise into the clouds so that

when others feel the rain they may decelerate into  
peace.

Everything on the outside must start from within.



***POEM:***

**VICKIE CIMPRICH**

Vickie Cimprich of Northern KY is grateful to join the “For a Better World” poets and illustrators in 2006 and 2008. Her book ‘*Pretty Mother’s Home - A Shakeress Daybook*’ (Broadstone Books, 2007) is a collection of poems about life in the (pacifist) Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, KY. during the end-of-slavery and Civil War years.

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***DRAWING:***

**SUZANNE CHOUTEAU**

Suzanne Chouteau, born in Davenport, Iowa, received her BA in Art from Saint Ambrose University (1983) and her MA (1985) and MFA (1988) in Printmaking from the University of Iowa. In 1988, she joined Xavier University Department of Art as a Professor teaching courses in printmaking, drawing and art history. Suzanne’s artworks have been shown in over 80 solo, invitational, and juried exhibitions in the US. She is a member of the Southern Graphics Council, Mid-America Print Council, and the Los Angeles Printmaking Society. Suzanne is married to Chris Bedel; they have a son, Elijah Bird Bedel.

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A channel of Peace

Suzanne Michelle Comtean 2008

# Seven Little Portions

(for St. Francis of Assisi)

*Nobility, 1204*

Below Monteluco, Francesco,  
the dream that grabbed you,  
by your crested shield,  
is stellar with the pieces  
that are missing.

*The leper, 1205*

Francesco, dare un bacio a Elena.  
Francesco, give a kiss to Elena.  
Give. Give.  
Il gusto di Elena gradisce il sale.  
She tastes like the beginning of the sea.

*Chiara, 1212, 1234*

Low on Mount Subasio lives Clare  
with her own at San Damiano,  
ever the center of your hold on light.  
In her own hands she lofts high the bread  
over the valley of any threat.

*The Creche, 1223*

At Greccio your beasts  
have invented for all winters  
the glint of light of the world  
off the brown globes of their eyes.

*Hunger*

Not all the fear that kept things small  
as the children or chickens of Gubbio  
locked inside during months of wolf siege  
assuaged any politics.

It was the wild noises and smells exuding  
from this colloquy between the grizzled  
that bought the settlement.

*Stigmata, 1224*

In every direction the cross  
blasts seraph wings into birds,  
till you are blind  
to any wonted Assisi.

Any day your dream  
has always bled under the skin.  
Leo felt it every day.  
Now, though, helping you  
off Alverno,  
it soaks his own tunic.

*Relics - 1226*

Your bones move from grave to grave.  
Cimabue's colors vault over them,  
until the earthquake of 1997  
spreads fresco dust like a tsunami  
down the basilica's aisles.

Buried intacta  
not many miles away  
at Dunarobba's foresta fossile  
are trees that know songs  
sparrows sang in the Pliocene.



**POEMS:**

**REBECCA COLVIN**

Rebecca Colvin is a Masters Student, majoring in secondary education, at the College of Mount St. Joseph. She has two beautiful boys, ten and seven, and a wonderful husband. She enjoys singing, theater, and filmmaking.

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**KATHY HOLWADEL**

Kathy Holwadel rides her bike 5 days a week instead of using a car. She hangs her laundry on a line in the back yard. Currently trying to learn how to write a good novel, she plans to plant vegetables in her spare time this summer.

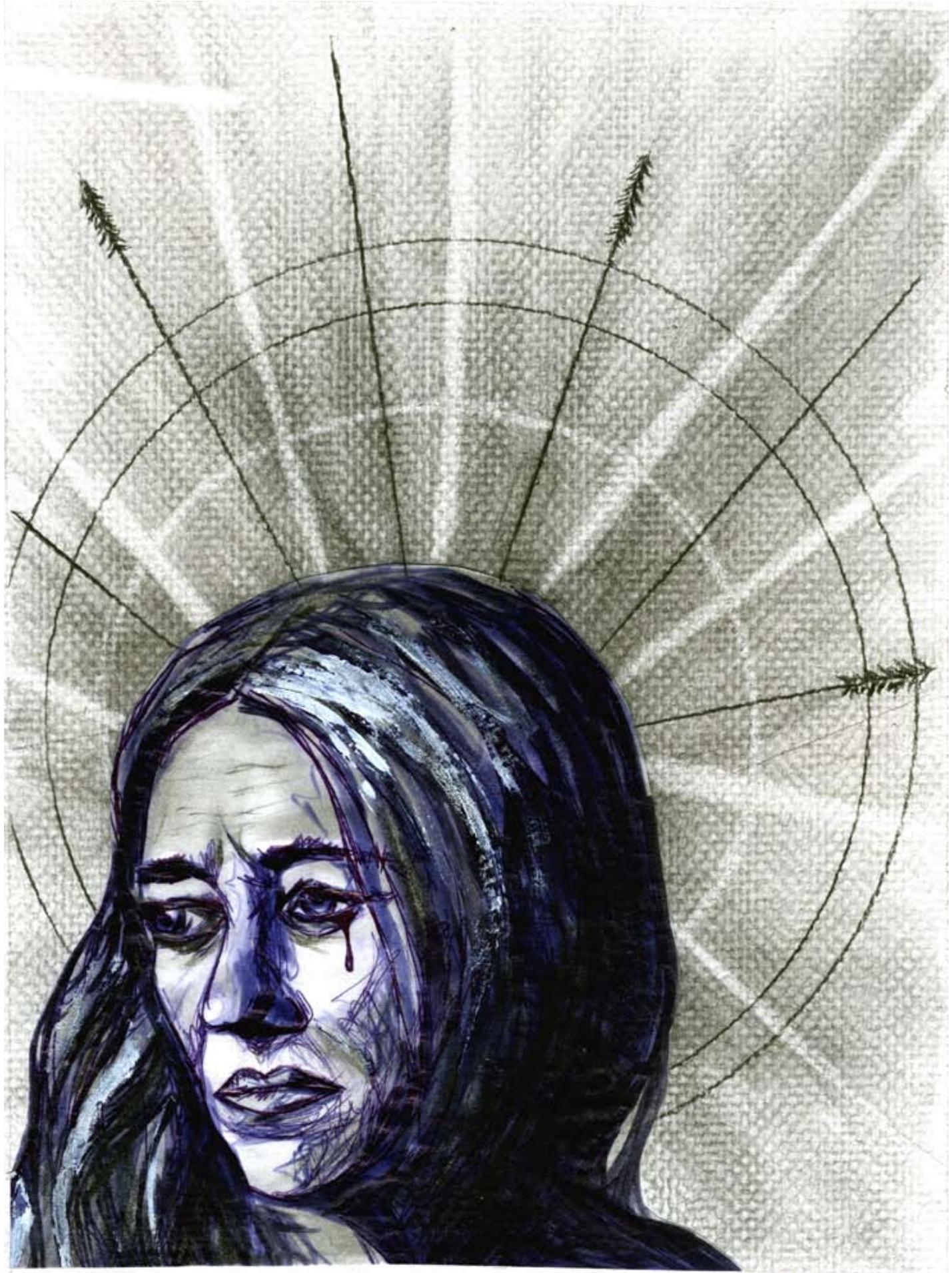
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**DRAWING:**

**JILL HAWKINS**

Jill Hawkins is a Sculpture major at the University of Cincinnati. Works predominately with plaster and ceramics. Truly loves her Clifton Neighborhood.

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Jill Hawkins

## Women's Work

(by **Rebecca Colvin**)

I don't know if I'll ever find my self. My mascara tube is dry, old, and unwanted. My mascara and I have a lot in common.

I only have eight minutes left to get them to school before they get another tardy and I'll get another reminder

of how un-together I really am. There never seems to be enough money or enough me to make enough money. The house

is never settled. The sound of my tires under my car is like an old friend. If I could listen just a little while maybe

I'll finally hear myself. The frozen hamburger meat spins around and around to the hum of the microwave. I wonder

what it feels like to be frozen. I think I would like to be frozen. Maybe in the cold, cold quiet, I will re-surface.

My tires are talking again. They speak of non-sense in some sense of a rhythm. I think I really want my car to be my best friend.

I desperately want an un-needy best-friend. He kisses the back of my neck. The water falls like shattering glass in the kitchen sink.

I notice how worn out the kitchen faucet is looking. I can empathize with my kitchen faucet. He pushes himself closer to me and

the counter digs in under my ribs. I wish this felt warm and I wish I felt sexy. I look down at the rubber yellow gloves covering

my hands. I say nothing because I know he needs to relax. But, when will I relax like that? Probably never!

I lay there in the dark, silence is creeping in. I feel his body jerk into the deeper realms of sleep. The quiet of the room

is simply overwhelming. I pray for peace.  
Pray for sleep.

## What We Need

(by **Kathy holwadel**)

(for M.A. on our 6th Anniversary)

My husband has holes in the heels of his socks.  
But he doesn't need socks.  
He only has two feet, he says.  
"Who's going to see?" he says,  
Happy in his ventilated comfort,  
As though this, the assumed and natural evolution of gentlemen's footwear.

Married more than six years now,  
I toss them in the trash with the dryer lint when he isn't looking.  
And later we'll shop the outlets for a deal.  
4 pairs.  
I'll press for 8.  
But he only has two feet, he'll remind me again.  
How many socks does a man need?

The next week  
Or the week after that,  
He'll try them on,  
Gradually work them into the circuit of his wardrobe.  
He'll be happy,  
No more, no less than before.

But I will sleep better  
Next to a man without holes in his heels,  
Regardless of how many feet he has.  
My husband may not need socks  
But everyone needs someone to care if theirs have holes.

***POEM:***

**FRANK DAVIS**

Frank A. Davis grew up in a rural area near the Ohio River where Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky converge. He has worked as a farmhand, coal miner, deckhand, and carpenter, and taught English at the junior high, high school, and college levels.

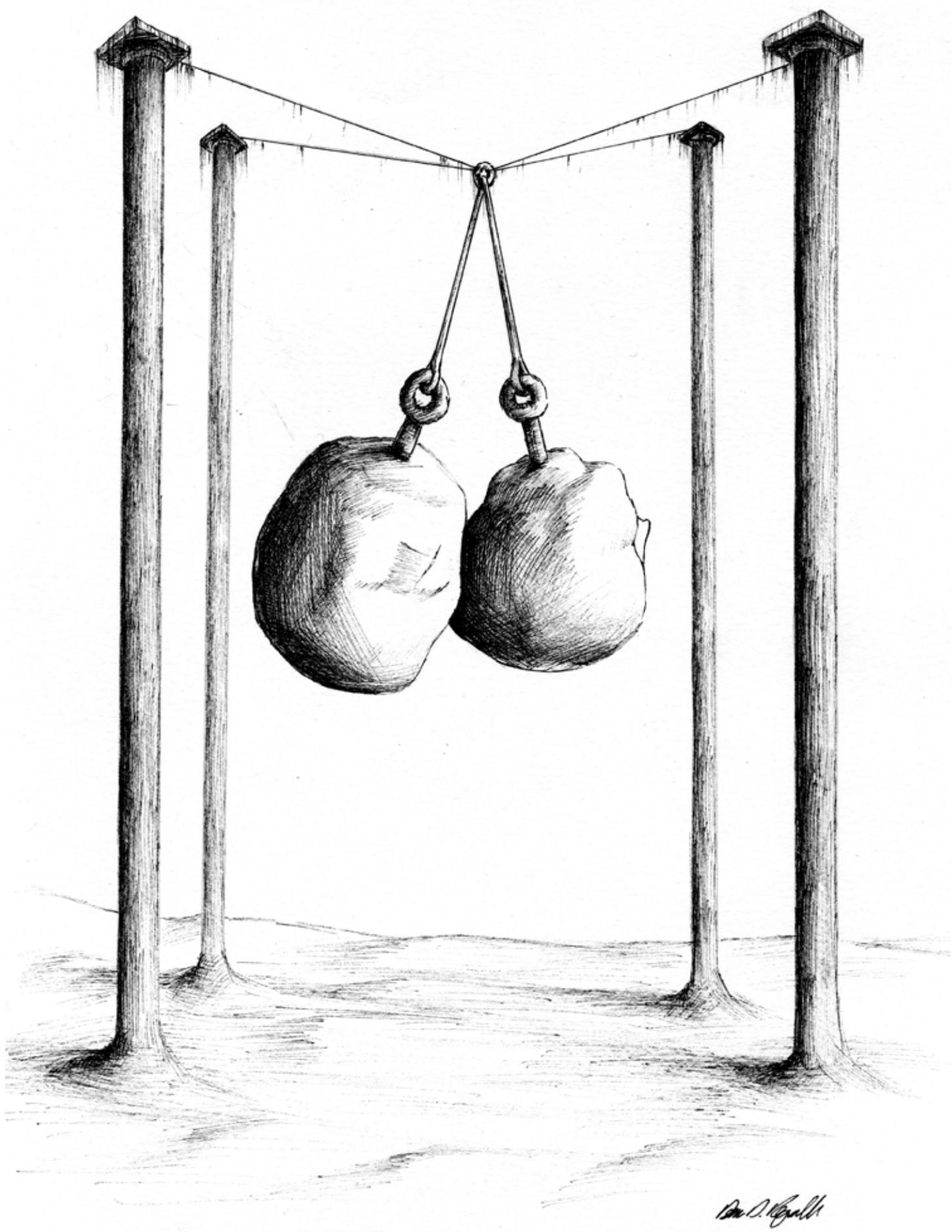
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***DRAWING:***

**DEAN REYNOLDS**

Dean D. Reynolds, originally from Los Angeles, CA, is currently studying painting at Northern Kentucky University. Now turning 37 he has been picking up from when he was 18.

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A. D. Neale

# Cleaving

## Anticipation

O Motherland who is my Mother, O Fatherland who is my Father,  
From the womb, I am brought into you, my great collective home,  
My home, my homeland--my America!

A homeland built upon four great, living pillars, the pillars of work and school, of family and faith;

These are the four great and living pillars of my America, nourishing pillars that siphon, ever siphon,

From the vast, inchoate sea of citizens young or old, male or female, weak or strong--  
Pillars that siphon, constantly siphon, my fellows and me up through human xylem and human phloem,

Nourishing us with knowledge, experience, and example to serve and delight self and society  
On the upper terrace, the upper terrace teeming with collective life, the upper terrace we call society.

«Oh, yes!» I shout, «I want to serve, to both serve and delight self and society,  
This teeming collective of life we call society!»

«Oh, yes! You, too!» Mother and Father both exclaim,

«Let the living pillars of your America draw you up and in!

«Let each living pillar nourish with human xylem and human phloem,

«May they nourish you to enrich this sweet land we call home.

«In the pillar of work, you will learn to earn; in the pillar of school, you will learn to learn,

«In the pillar of home, you will learn to obey; in the pillar of faith, you will learn to pray.

## Home

«Son! Think of the living pillar that is your home--your room, your music, your clothes, your car;  
«Think of the day we call Thanksgiving! A table overflowing with turkey, ham, beef barbecue, and mutton, too;

«Think of the Fourth of July! Of our nation's birth, our military might, the dazzling fireworks at night;

«Son! Think of Christmas! More turkey, ham, beef, and mutton, too, and of course, presents, presents galore;

«All this is home--this and much more! At home, you're safe from poverty's constant knocking at the door;

«From home every morning, your mother and I leave, to earn more mammon, more, more--more of what we need;

«To home every evening, your mother and I return, to eat, sleep, and dream of what to buy with the money we earn;

«Son! Think of the living pillar that is your home! Think of your room, your music, your clothes, your car!»

«O Mother! O Father! I think of my music, my clothes, my car; I think of my room, but--do you know who you are?

«The day we call Thanksgiving began in October for harvest to celebrate,

«Not in November for Christmas commerce to propagate;

«Was not Jefferson's July parchment a minority declaration, fraught with doubts of war against the mother nation?

«Christmas is the birthday of Jesus, who did say of home, 'The fox has its den, but I--I have no place to call my own.'

«These celebrations --or holidays--so called--seem nothing to me but false festivals all--

«Home is not a place, not a house nor a town; not in anything tangible can home be found;

«The essence of home resides in a singular sense, a sense of quiet continuity, of love un-earned for all perpetuity;

«Like Henry Thoreau, no matter where I go, no matter how far I roam, I want to be, I will be, everywhere at home;

«To bow, to curtsey, to scurry, to run, from boss to boss, with scarce a'thought about dignity lost;

«Like a waterbug ever mindful of surface tension, skimming only the shallows of life with no real comprehension;

«Like hamsters that scurry home to a bunkered burrow, pantry full and flowing with artificial food,

«Burrowed in the media room, replete with music, TV, and movies to mold my mood,

«To prime me for a siege mentality, to feed me one more platitude,

«To take the virtual for the real, to be from the real world one more remove.

«O Mother, O Father, to you what do I say, what can I say of this living pillar that you call home?

«I do think of my music, my room, my car--but I wonder, I grimace, and I wonder--do you know what you are?»

«Oh, son! Oh son! You're quite undone with imagined fret, soon you'll see Americanism is the best life yet;

«As the hand of Yahweh calmed the water the very first time;

«Let the hand, the invisible hand of the marketplace, calm your troubled mind;

«Think of your home this hand has given us, a home envied by all the world;

«Indeed, so envied by all the world, it has to be guarded by our flag unfurled;

«Jesus warned that others would revile us and hate us, but His spirit time and again continues to aid us;

«They envy our homes--t's proof of God's love, proof of his smile from heaven above;

«The envious are led by Satan himself; they are indeed the children of sin, but sooner or later, we'll reign them all in;

«In every home, in every church, we raise our voices to sing and sing: «Let freedom ring! Let freedom ring!»

«From home to home, from hearth to hearth, Yahweh our voices always praise;

«Goodness and mercy are sure to follow us all our days;

«From home to home, from hearth to hearth, Yahweh our tongues shall never fail.

«Through Americanism, justice and truth over all the Earth are bound to prevail.»

«Now I do hear you--O Mother, O Father--I hear you well, but why were your tongues quiet and your lips quelled  
«When the Sioux died and the Cherokee cried, when Africans in chains became a race enslaved?  
«Now I do hear you--O Mother, O Father--but why were your mouths mute and your eyes averted  
«When Mexicans were murdered and Mexico raped, when babies in Baghdad were starved and slain?  
«What of their homes from whence they came? Where is the truth, the justice, that your Americanism can claim?»

### **Choice**

«Oh, yes!» as a child I had shouted. «I want to serve self and society!  
«This teeming collective of life we call society!»  
«Oh, yes! You, too!» Mother and Father had exclaimed. «Let the living pillars draw you up and in!  
«Let each living pillar nourish you with human xylem and phloem to enrich this sweet land we call home.  
«In the pillar of work, you will learn to earn; in the pillar of school, you will learn to learn;  
«In the pillar of home, you will learn to obey; in the pillar of faith, you will learn to pray.»

O Mother! O Father! O Motherland! O Fatherland!  
In the pillar of work, you both did say, in the pillar of work I would learn to earn;  
Yes, I learned to earn, as you did say, to earn insecurity at the cost of my dignity;  
To earn tangible wealth at the cost of intangible life, of carnal existence in a land of surfeit.

In the pillar of school, you both did say, in the pillar of school I would learn to learn;  
Yes, I learned--I learned the opposite of love is not hate, but control of another's economic fate;  
I learned a system exploiting sisters and brothers, at the cost of increasing insecurity for me and all the others.

In the pillar of home, you both had said, in the pillar of home, I would learn to obey;  
Yes, I learned to obey, as you both did say, to obey Adam's invisible hand that guides the entire land;  
To obey Consumerism as much as I can; to obey the merciless law of supply and demand.

In the pillar of faith, you both did say, in the pillar of faith, I would learn to pray;  
In the pillar of faith, I did learn to pray--to mighty Yahweh-- great God of war, god that all true Americans adore!  
Yahweh! Supreme mover throughout eternity: the high god of hypocrisy, the alpha and omega of pseudo-security.

\* \* \*

O Motherland, O Fatherland, for you I have a question or two---

These living pillars you put me through, the living pillars of faith and home, of work and school,  
Is there a single pillar which you put me through that operates by democratic rule?

Are these not the four pillars from which Americanism grew? Don't you claim democracy and  
Jesus through and through?

Does not Jesus teach «like begets like» to me and to you? Does he not regard hypocrites with  
wrath and righteous rue?

Americanism! With your vast and all-consuming hypocrisy, you give a bad name to Jesus and  
democracy!

Americanism! You flaunt your misbegotten wealth and might, thinking this alone makes for  
right!

Americanism! Worst of all---

You sense no halting shame in your evil deeds, but unending pride both open and perverse!

'Tis true--to be born, a child does not choose;  
Nor by choice does it draw first breath,  
Though a child soon learns that life without choice  
Is life bleak and grey--life not worth living.

'Tis true--its mother and father a child does not choose,  
But how it cleaves to mother's breast, to father's hand;  
Only with long and great and convulsive pain  
Can child its mother and father cleave and unclaim.  
What long and great and convulsive pain---what folly?  
Can move child both mother and father to cleave and unclaim?  
What long and great and convulsive pain---what folly?

Americanism. Americanism. A-me-ri-ca-ni-sm.

***POEMS:***

**PAUL DAVIS**

Paul Davis is a clinical social worker and former Marine. He currently works with veterans with Post Traumatic Stress, instructing them on mindfulness meditation. Paul is also an aspirant for the Order of Interbeing, a lay order started in 1966 by Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh.

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**DENISE MOSLEY**

Denise Mosley was born in Atlanta, Ga and moved to Cincinnati in 1995. Her writings include short stories, poetry and songs. Denise has a novel in progress that she hopes will emerge finished this year.

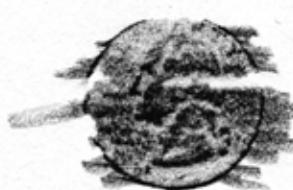
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***DRAWING:***

**GREG CLEM**

Greg Clem is an Ohio native originally from a small town in west central Ohio. He is currently completing his graduate degree in fine arts at the University of Cincinnati.

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G Clem 08

## Question

(by **Paul Davis**)

Marine, why are you in my country?  
You tell me you are here to save me.  
I don't believe you.  
Marine, you are not listening to me.  
I don't hate you and your eyes tell me  
you don't hate me.  
Marine, why are you in my country?  
Open your eyes. What keeps my words  
from reaching your heart?  
Why did you kill me?  
Why did I kill you?  
I died before you knew me.  
You died before you understood.  
Come to me – open your heart.  
I will hold you and you will know me  
and understand

*(Poem inspired by a question a Vietnamese girl asked the poet in 1966, a GI Vet then in Vietnam)*

## Conundrum

(by **Denise Mosley**)

When the planes sounded in the distance  
her house was still-  
their breathing was peaceful before the kill.  
She tore through the rubble of the darkened  
aftermath  
finding only bits and pieces of what her hopes had  
cast.  
Her son was nine, her daughter eleven  
lost in the flames, their ashes blown to heaven.

Years later a woman walked into a crowd  
and claimed her loss with explosions humbling the  
proud  
Americans-at-the-gate.  
“One nine, one eleven” were her pleas to God to  
understand.

Year after year recycled this moment in the past,  
each building falling one by one- each one a  
stormy blast,  
each building held the love of someone's heart,  
each cradled someone's past.

Each loss ignites at first the greatest grief and then  
the greatest rage,  
Each nation leads an iron fist giving page for page,  
vengeance guised in security.  
One nine-one eleven  
One 9/11.  
One thought to kill, or be killed.

A peaceful mother seeking justice,  
a righteous nation seeking peace,  
Peace equals justice?  
Justice equals peace?  
One nine, one eleven equals 9/11.  
Each prayer winds its way to God among the ash  
filled air,  
our futures hanging in the balance of an act that  
equals fair.



## **POEMS:**

### **DONELLE DREESE**

Donelle Dreese is a poet and an Assistant Professor at Northern Kentucky University where she teaches Multicultural and Environmental literatures. Her interests include the relationship between people and the places they inhabit, environmental racism and other social justice movements.

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## **DRAWING:**

### **TRACY FEATHERSTONE**

Tracy Featherstone is an Assistant Professor of Art at Miami University; her recent body of work has been inspired by a trip to Ghana, West Africa. Tracy's work has been exhibited Nationally and Internationally and most recently at the Weston Gallery of Art, Cincinnati, The Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH, the U of Southern Mississippi Museum of Art, and The Fringe Festival, Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2006 Tracy was granted an award for Individual Creativity by the Ohio Arts Council.

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Joan Gartland

## Close to Midnight

This is the season of the runaway moon and bear tracks  
where lizards huddle on roof tops to reunite their collective silver  
as electric wires split and dangle over a frozen mud  
puddle waiting for the sun.

I have been looking for you the way a young girl  
looks for an old mitten stuffed with folded love notes.

By midnight, there will be nothing left but urgency.

The last time I saw you the gravity of a storm  
broke from me like accoutrements of war suddenly outgrown  
and the flutter of my unoiled wings was unspeakable.

Don't you see?

This is the world gone mad with smallness  
and intolerance where paper bills are  
used for kindling and sent to push  
the buttons of broken bones.

We can no longer live like this rupture doesn't matter.

I'm wearing boots that remind me of thick brush  
at the base of a mountain.

I am ready to run.

## What the Buddha Might Say

Life's lesson are bog orchids  
hard won  
gingerly drawn  
willow-fringed  
if we're lucky  
poised with moments  
of acrobatic glee  
and cantankerous laughter.  
They are braided with duck down  
dipped in silver-gilded seawater  
softened with glacial flour  
and refined into  
a few words of wisdom  
whose edges have been  
polished smooth.

## The Torchbearers

Leaving Camp Lejeune,  
we were called soldiers.

We returned as roped spirits, ash trays,  
middle class crates of shrapnel.

The highway splitting Hatteras  
bordered peach sand, ragged bushes,  
a path through the dunes  
where the fisherman left footprints,  
drippings from their tackle boxes.

We watched the tips of their rods  
march away from the surf  
mimicking tall grasses, property stakes,  
images from sniper school, supply depots.

We wanted to be the torchbearers  
with growing crowns of fire  
crying “freedom!”  
but instead we are broken children crying  
for the green chambers of summer.

Sand is a bed of bullets  
where fear waits  
to poke a wing  
through its gritty cocoon  
and fly out to sea.

***POEMS:***

**BARBARA FLICK**

Barbara Flick is a local free-lance writer and poet. She has been a featured guest columnist for Streetvibes and has been involved for many years with the Women Writing for (a) Change Foundation. She currently works at a Cincinnati-based full-service marketing agency in advertising and public relations.

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**RONA SMITH**

Rona Smith is a senior medical student at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine graduating on May 26, 2008. Rona graduated cum laude from Prairie View A&M University where she received her Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Biology and a minor in chemistry.

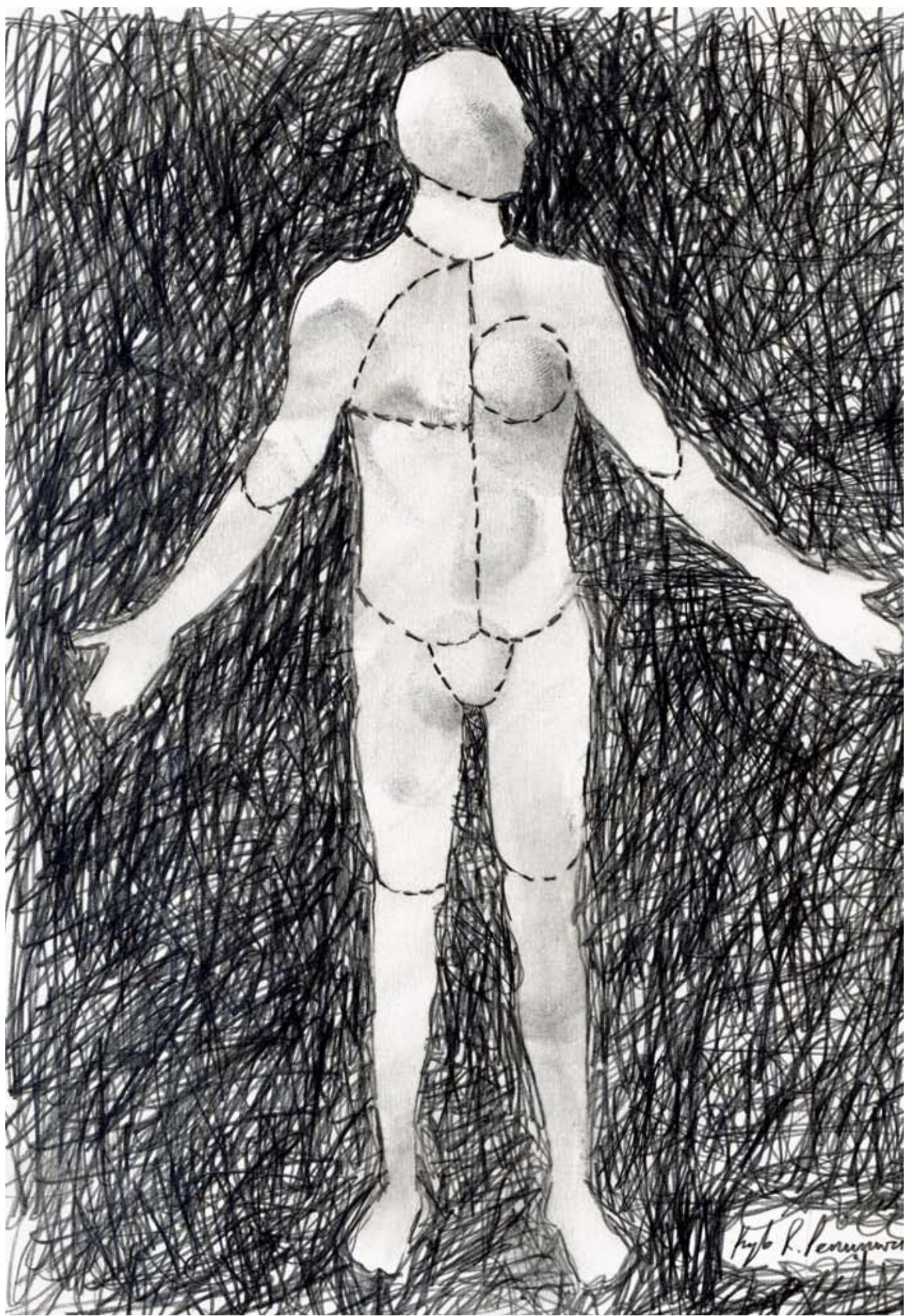
Contact: [smir3@email.uc.edu](mailto:smir3@email.uc.edu)

***DRAWING:***

**KYLE PENUNURI**

Kyle Penunuri came to Cincinnati six years ago, via Colorado, California, Louisiana, Alabama, and several stops in-between. The Art Academy of Cincinnati was the draw and the cost of living kept him. Kyle is currently a graduate student at the University of Cincinnati, concentrating in Sculpture.

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## **Tinting the Black and White with Burst of Orange**

*(by Barbara Flick)*

On that day, there was a promise of change  
Whisking away that extra baggage, the frustration, the pain  
All the unusual circumstances that left causes to derange

Constricted hearts were let free, out of their range  
Trying to restore the pleasant, the peaceful, the sane  
On that day, there was a promise of change

Minds were freed to welcome the obscure, the strange  
All those cast aside, whose memories had been slain  
Tinting the black and white with a burst of orange

Valleys of new grains grew beside the grange  
Daisies and sunflowers replaced the weeds once again  
On that day, there was a promise of change

Ideas and thoughts liberated to exchange  
Unlocking the key to the hidden, imaginative brain  
Tinting the black and white with burst of orange

Hope went from the shadow to the long-range  
Rain fell down, adding final rust to the vicious chain  
On that day, there was a promise of change  
Tinting the black and white with burst of orange

## **Liberty**

*(by Rona Smith)*

My liberty can not be represented by the colors: red, white, and blue,  
Its meaning is carefully defined by various shades of a different hue,  
Like the mahogany trees from which slaves hung,  
The crimson blood of Native Americans forced to run,  
The putrid green of money that exchanged hands,  
Crystal blue tears of people ripped from a foreign land.

Purple pride reminds me of what it means to have liberty  
It's a freedom that surpasses our current reality  
An ability to open one's mind  
To look out into the world and respect the color line  
We are all different, and that's what makes our freedom significant  
Not hiding behind this "melting pot" ignorance

If we could all “just get along” there would be no war  
Nothing to believe in, nothing to stand against, nothing to live for  
It is only when we accept that our differences give us common ground  
That this idea of freedom and liberty will become more profound.

Maybe then ruby red could represent the passion from our hearts  
An ability to look beyond our mistakes in hopes of a fresh start  
Royal blue could represent the devotion we give to embarking on this new path  
Cradled in the courage of our ancestors, we will never forget our past  
The great white hope that inspires us to strive past persecution  
To come together as one and find resolution

My history is yours and yours is mine  
Through our stories, our lives intertwine  
Liberty is about more than being free  
It's the chance to celebrate the colors that represent you and me

The orange hue of our tenacity  
The bright yellow of our hope  
The royal purple of our majesty  
The blue courage that allows us to cope

Our Liberty is lined by the lavender hills of Luxembourg  
Indigo valleys of Enola  
Burgundy brooks of Savannah  
Evergreen trees of Bull Run  
Rustic terrain of Texas  
The teal river of Tangier  
And the yellow sky covering mountains once known as the great frontier

No my liberty can not be represented by just three colors: red, white and blue  
It takes a great pallet of colors to weave this story from my point of view  
A tapestry woven with strands of history  
Our reverence for the past is what gives us Liberty

**POEM:**

**GARY GAFFNEY**

Gary G. Gaffney was born in New Orleans, LA. He is a visual artist, a Professor for some 30 years at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and a sometime poet.

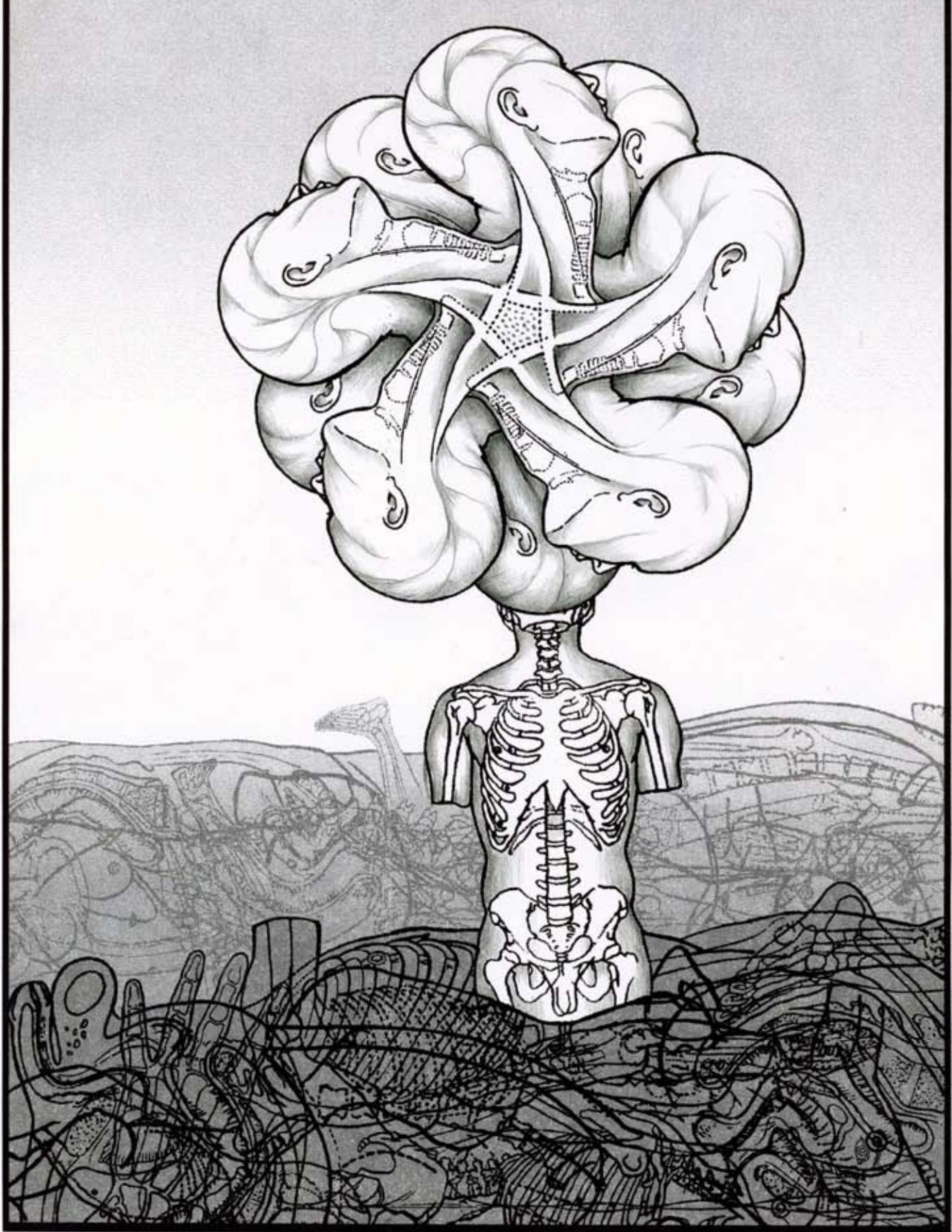
Contact: [ggaffney@artacademy.edu](mailto:ggaffney@artacademy.edu)

**DRAWING:**

**MARK PATSFALL**

Mark Patsfall, born April 17, 1949, Milwaukee, WI; two daughters, one son; artist, printmaker and publisher. A Vietnam veteran, he earned his MFA at UC (1979) and founded Clay Street Press, Inc. (1981) located on Clay St in Over the Rhine. Mark has worked with many local, national and international artists in the creation of fine art original prints and multiples. From 1983-2000 he worked with artist Nam June Paik as designer of sculptures, exhibitions and public projects. In 2004 Mark opened The Clay Street Press gallery.

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MARK PATSFALL

# Dead

Hell, they're just black savages.  
3,000,000 / Belgian Congo

The virile Mao took an annual swim  
in his river of blood.  
56,000,000 / China

Would the rotting corpses, end-to-end, reach  
the moon?  
And their stench reach the nose of the Em-  
peror?  
1,750,000 / Japan

A carpet of dead bodies  
so a few could wipe their feet.  
20,000,000 / World War I

How many disemboweled bodies, hearts  
exploded,  
brains splattered, souls lost in frozen mud?  
25,000,000 / Soviet Russia

Men, women and children became meat.  
Spirit became meat. Victory must be fed.  
55,000,000 / World War II

Killing neighbors, friends, brothers, children,  
really meant killing themselves.  
600,000 / Spain

Severed limbs and hacked bodies. Blood-  
screams  
of hate and powerlessness. Whispers of non-  
violence  
1,000,000 / India-Pakistan

Whomever you kill, bathe in their blood, lie in  
the grave with  
them. Explain the madness.  
4,000,000 / Korea

Some died in vain. Some innocent. Some  
scared. Some in battle.  
Some believing. Some by their own hand.  
Some heroes.  
Some still remain the living dead.  
3,000,000 / Vietnam

Their mourners, flies and maggots. Their  
shrouds, parched earth.  
Their coffins, the arms of their mothers.  
8,000,000 / Nigeria

Night after night...TV. Piles of empty eyes  
at the moment just before...  
2,500,000 / Ethiopia

Rouge. Red. Blood. Stains. Spurts. Warm.  
Spill. Soak.  
Hack. Slash. Wash. Eat. Drink. Piss. Fuck.  
Die.  
1,700,000 / Khmer Rouge

Each bullet propelled by a good cause. Each  
body torn open  
for the very best reason. Each child dead for  
the political good.  
1,700,000 / Afghanistan

God permitted us to shoot them down, to cut  
them down,  
to rape them down, to stand tall on mountains  
of their dead flesh.  
1,000,000 / Iran-Iraq

Dead.



***POEMS:***

**ARTURO GUTIERREZ-PLAZA**

Arturo Gutierrez-Plaza, born in Caracas-Venezuela, 1962, poet and critic, has published several books among which: '*Al margen de las hojas*' (1991), '*Principios de contabilidad*' (2000) and '*Pasado en limpio*' (2006).

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***DRAWING:***

**TODD REYNOLDS**

Todd Reynolds is an adjunct professor of art at Shawnee State University in Portsmouth, OH, where he also manages the art gallery. Todd earned a BFA and an MFA in painting from Ohio University, Athens. His work has been featured extensively in many commercial and nonprofit venues, including several museums; it is represented in the permanent collections of the Southern Ohio Museum, Portsmouth and the Zanesville Art Museum, Zanesville, and in numerous private collections. Todd received an Ohio Arts Commission Individual Excellence Award in 1992.

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## The Tip of a Pencil

It is easy to consolidate the view  
to the tip of a pencil,  
to assume the world resides in it.

The look unfolds, pursues  
The steps of an alien destiny.

The man sweeps the dust  
Accumulated over the months.

It is not yet winter, but it does not matter,  
-there are lives whose steps always leave  
footprints in the snow-.

Sweep the remains of the days  
-of what has been your body-.  
Push aside into the corners the bad thoughts.

Turn on the TV:

“For sure, we do not know each other.  
I have seen you little, only from a sidelong  
glance in the mirrors.  
I know not what to tell you.

I have done many things. Eat, drink, sleep.  
Unavoidably I slept.  
May be the only thing I did.”

Sweep unskillfully, but sweep,  
Gather lint, memories, hair.

The man, without knowing it, moves on,  
Enters enemy territory,  
Walks on a mined field,  
On the remains of his own body.

All is so uncertain. You see yourself, you  
touch yourself, you smell yourself:  
For a moment you think you live in it.

Don't be a fool; don't be a fool, -they insist.

What is intelligence for?

## La Punta de un Lápiz

Es fácil consolidar la vista  
en la punta de un lápiz,  
pretender el mundo en ella.

La mirada se despliega, persigue  
los pasos de un destino ajeno.

El hombre barre el polvo  
que se ha ido acumulando durante meses.

No es invierno aún, pero no importa,  
-hay vidas donde siempre las pisadas dejan  
huellas en la nieve-.

Barre los despojos de los días  
-de lo que ha sido su cuerpo-.  
Arrincona en las esquinas los malos pensamientos.

Enciende la televisión:

“Es cierto, no nos conocemos.  
Te he visto poco, tan solo de reojo en los  
espejos.  
No sé que decirte.

He hecho muchas cosas. Comer, beber,  
dormir.  
Inevitablemente he dormido.  
Quizás es lo único que he hecho.”

Barre sin pericia, pero barre,  
junta pelusas, recuerdos, cabellos.

El hombre, sin saberlo, avanza,  
incursiona en territorio enemigo.  
Camina sobre un campo minado,  
sobre los restos de su propio cuerpo.

Todo es tan incierto. Te ves, te tocas, te  
hueles:  
por un momento piensas que vives en él.

No seas tonto, no seas tonto -te insisten.

¿Para qué la inteligencia?

One street is enough, a view limited by two corners.

I live on an odd-numbered floor,  
I look out from the window  
But do not even encounter  
The little girl of the chocolates.

We are a thing that walks and thinks  
And says to itself  
And contradicts itself  
And says to you  
And says to us,  
That speaks and falls silent.  
That repeats itself and lies.  
A stuttering thing.

Bad cholesterol, genes, aura, lunatic moods.  
Foolishness may be, inconclusive, finally.  
A silent, definitive doubt.

I turn on the radio.

They say war is good,  
People die and leave no debts.  
They die for the country, for the honor that  
never fails.

In my country they also die,  
Every thirty minutes they die upright or on  
their side.  
It does not matter. A bullet always pierces  
them.  
If you try to stop it, you also die.  
for death is impatient when it faces the future.  
Nevertheless, the man progresses, advanc-  
es,  
at times he marches in shiny boots  
in order to reflect the gaze  
of some pride or of some commander.  
A straight, decided, controlled look  
between mutilated bodies and fallen lives.

I turn off the radio.

“I know, however, that all is not a dream,  
And had I known you before, I probably  
would not be here.

Una calle me basta, un paisaje acotado por  
dos esquinas

Vivo en un piso impar,  
me asomo por la ventana  
pero no encuentro  
ni siquiera a la niña de los chocolatines.

Somos una cosa que anda y piensa  
y se dice  
y desdice  
y te dice  
y nos dice.  
Que habla y enmudece.  
Que se repite y miente.  
Una cosa tartamuda.

Colesterol malo, genoma, aura, venáticos  
humores.  
Una tontería quizás, sin suma, en fin.  
Una duda silenciosa, definitiva.

Enciendo la radio.

Dicen que la guerra es buena,  
la gente muere sin dejar deudas.  
Muere por la patria, por la honra que jamás  
claudica.

En mi país mueren también,  
cada treinta minutos mueren de pie o de  
costado.  
No importa. Siempre una bala los atraviesa.  
Si intentas detenerla, también mueres,  
pues la muerte se impacienta ante el porve-  
nir.  
Sin embargo, el hombre progresá, avanza,  
a veces marcha con botas lustrosas  
para reflejar la mirada  
de algún orgullo o algún caudillo.  
Mirada erguida, decidida, ordenada  
entre cuerpos mutilados y vidas en baja.

Apago la radio.

Sé, sin embargo, que no todo es sueño,  
de haberte conocido antes quizás no estaría  
aquí.

Last night I thought I was going to die  
But I thought above all  
That before you would know it  
The squirrels would have found out.

I moved the table to the window,  
From there the shadow of the trees  
Resembles that of my pencil  
There is a common shadow to wood.  
Now I can begin  
To write about shadows in full day.

If my neighbor were to learn all this  
She would stop greeting me.

Are never trustworthy those who take refuge  
In obscurity when there is full sun.

It is known that dust accumulates due to negligence:  
The carelessness of an inert existence.  
Without adequate sanitary rules  
Every civilization is endangered, turns into dust, disappears...

But everything does not have to be so rational.  
If the newspapers salesman  
were to ask me: "how can one be optimistic  
these days?"  
I would tell him the truth: "There are no good  
reasons to be",  
"Do as you wish with your faith".

I open my e mails.  
A long list of news items speak of the climate  
in other countries,  
of the melting glaciers and the tepid dead bodies  
that lied in them,  
of global warming, but most of all of the war,  
of African famine and Hollywood adoptions,  
of a baby deer lost in the suburbs of Pennsylvania,  
of the sports fanatic who caught a homerun in  
the stadium,  
of the thousands of dead during the last tsunami,  
of the return in my country to the 19th century.

Anoche pensé que iba a morir,  
pero pensé sobre todo  
que antes de que lo supieras  
se enterarían las ardillas.

He mudado la mesa hasta la ventana,  
desde allí la sombra de los árboles  
se emparenta con la de mi lápiz.  
Hay una sombra común a la madera.  
Ahora puedo emprender  
la tarea de escribir de día sobre las sombras.

Si la vecina supiera todo esto  
dejaría de saludarme.

Nunca es confiable la gente que se refugia  
en la oscuridad a pleno sol.

Es sabido que el polvo se acumula por la  
desidia:  
la dejadés de una inerte existencia.  
Sin adecuados regímenes sanitarios  
toda civilización peligra, se hace polvo, desaparece..

Pero no todo ha de ser tan racional.  
Si el vendedor de periódicos  
me preguntara: "¿cómo se puede ser hoy  
optimista?",  
le diría la verdad: "No hay razones para ello",  
"allá usted con sus asuntos de fe".

Abro la bandeja de mi correo electrónico.  
Un sin fin de noticias me hablan del clima en  
otros países,  
de los glaciares descongelados y la tibieza  
de los cadáveres que yacían en ellos,  
del recalentamiento mundial, pero sobre todo  
del de la guerra,  
de la hambruna africana y las adopciones  
hollywoodenses,  
de un venadito perdido en los suburbios de  
Pennsylvania,  
del fanático que atrapó un homerun en el  
estadio,  
de los miles de muertos del último tsunami,  
de la vuelta al siglo XIX en mi país.

When sweeping, windows have to remain closed,  
to avoid the aggressive effects of intrusive winds.

As it does not import to separate the various kinds of remains, these can be accumulated in one single pile, hair, fallen eyelashes and drops of sweat added to the vestiges of other bodies that also make their life in this neighborhood.

Thus, and as a matter of fact, such a small collected pile appears much like a small neighborhood meeting or at least, like a clandestine cell where, in order to share complaints, gather the daily victims of our community.

Writing is not a distinct case, it also suffers from the wear down, the tip of the pencil pulverizes, it turns into lines on the page, the ephemeral testimony of a displaced intimacy.

Converted into a precarious footprint it follows the steps of a man on the relentless snow that will cover in January Extended and anonymous cemeteries.

*(translated by Saad Ghosn)*

Al barrer, las ventanas deben permanecer cerradas, se debe evitar la agresión de vientos intrusos. Como no se trata de separar distintos géneros de despojos, se pueden acumular en un solo montón pelos, pestañas caídas y gotas de sudor junto a los vestigios de otros cuerpos que también hacen su vida en este vecindario.

De este modo, si a ver vamos, un montoncito reunido así se parece mucho a una pequeña junta de con-dominio o al menos, a una célula clandestina donde se agrupan para compartir reclamos las cotidianas víctimas de nuestra comunidad.

La escritura no es caso aparte, ella conlleva el desgaste, la punta del lápiz se pulveriza, se convierte en trazo sobre la página en el efímero testimonio de una desplazada intimidad.

Convertida en huella precaria sigue los pasos de un hombre sobre la irredenta nieve que en enero cubrirá extensos y anónimos cementerios.

## **Song for Phillip, My Spanish Student**

Phillip attends classes daily in his green uniform.

Phillip is almost a child who confuses Mexico with Madrid.

Phillip likes to be recounted stories of overseas.

To be told the victories of Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus and his legacy in Gettysburg

Phillip knows only three things:

Faith in his country, money and God

In this prison he has always lived: with no evil

Phillip soon will go to war like Johnny.

Which forgotten language will he bring back from Babel?

In which tense will he learn to conjugate 'to kill'?

Who will occupy his desk and follow his lessons when he will cease to be?

*(translated by Saad Ghosn)*

## **Canción para Phillip, mi Estudiante de Español**

Phillip asiste a clases diariamente con su verde uniforme.

Phillip es casi un niño que confunde México con Madrid.

A Phillip le gusta que le cuenten historias de ultramar.

Que le hablen de las victorias de Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, y su legado en Gettysburg

Phillip conoce sólo tres cosas:

La fe en la patria, el dinero y Dios.

En esa cárcel ha vivido siempre: sin maldad.

Phillip pronto se irá a la guerra como Mambrún,

¿Qué lengua olvidada traerá de Babel?

¿En qué tiempo aprenderá a conjugar matar?

¿Quién ocupará su pupitre y seguirá sus lecciones cuando no esté?



**POEMS:**

**RICHARD HAGUE**

Richard Hague is the author of twelve books, most recently '*Lives of the Poem: Community and Connection in a Writing Life*' (Wind Publications). His collection of political and satirical poems, '*Public Hearings*', is forthcoming in 2009 from Word Press. Richard is a member of the Board of Directors of InkTank.

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**MICHAEL TODD**

Michael Todd writes and performs spoken word poetry; he is also a painter. Michael lived in the San Francisco Bay area for the last 20 years and relocated to Cincinnati a year ago. California has affected his work, adding freedom of thought and a focus on social issues to his writing and painting. His work can be viewed on YouTube.com under Michael Todd and The Art Of Living Black.

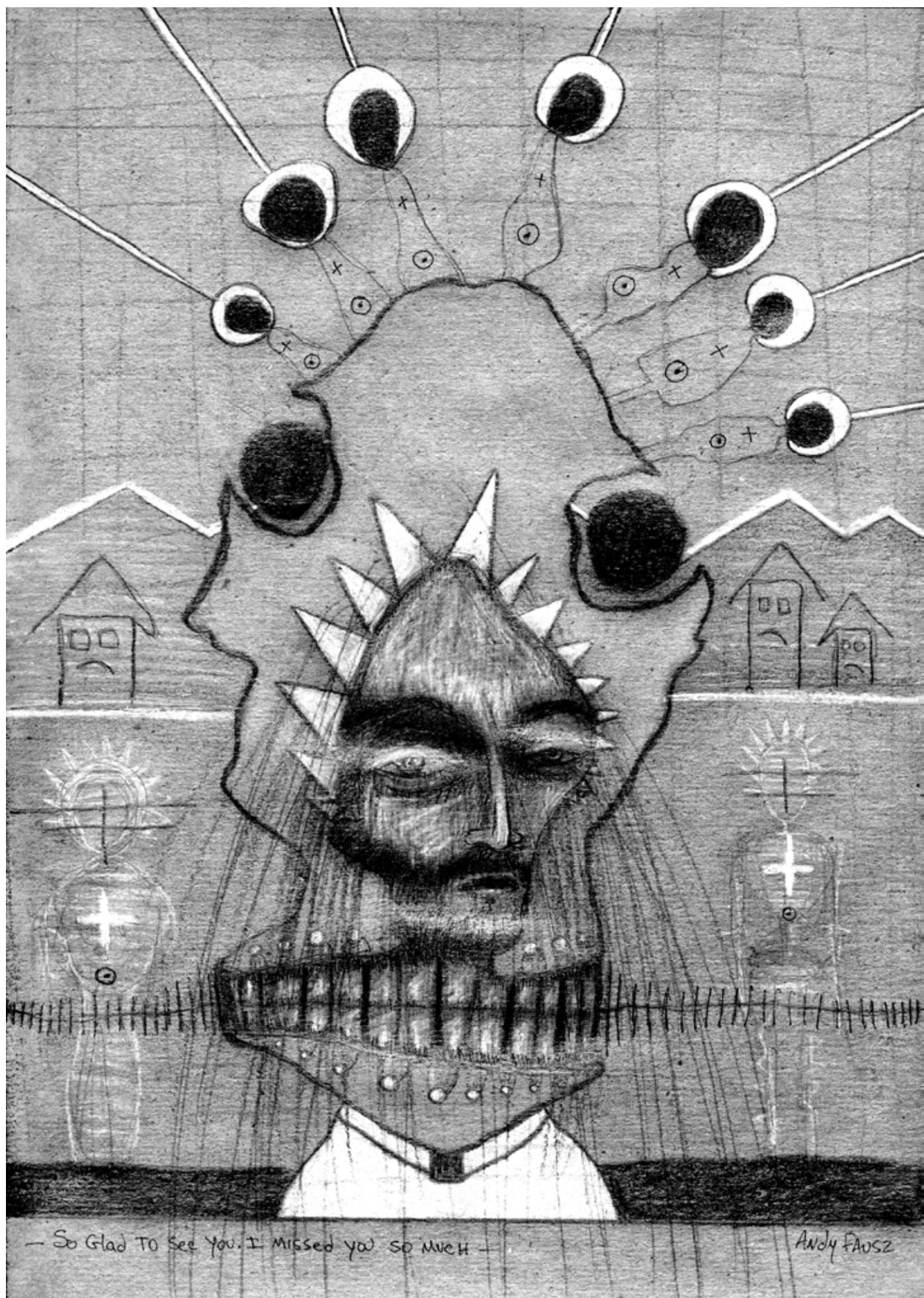
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**DRAWING:**

**ALBERT “ANDY” FAUSZ**

Albert Fausz Jr. (Andy), a 31 year old visual artist from Bellevue, KY, is a full time BFA student at Northern Kentucky University expected to graduate in 2009. Andy has been a volunteer teacher with Covington Schools and The Frank Duveneck Arts and Cultural Center, and also a participant in street scapes 2007. He is interested in art that is emotional, expressive, and narrative. He currently lives in Newport, KY, where he is an active member of the art community.

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— So Glad To See You. I Missed you so much —

Andy FAUSZ

## Irrecoverable, or, “The Long War”

(by **Richard Hague**)

### *Saigon to Baghdad*

Penny, Muttry, Clyde the Dog,  
all the other unchristened  
heathens of pen and bowl and cage:  
in times of other wars  
I tried to make a home  
for you where there was no home,  
wanted somehow to buddy you,  
mates, householders, comrades.

Now you might as well be gouts of flesh and hair  
exploded through lost backyards,  
stubble bomb-strewn in a far field,  
a few teeth rattling in a cheap plastic bowl  
misplaced on a workbench in some basement.  
And I am not about  
to take up a shovel or resurrection.

Still, you have become the little undersaints of my  
devotions, unofficial blesseds of my boyhood,  
rising up in memory now as the prophets of my  
grief  
in these new long days of invasion, despair, dis-  
placement.

## Unphotographed Boxes

(by **Michael Todd**)

The blind empire's saber  
Rattles notes in violent tones  
Slowly painting the town red  
As the human condition  
Continues to beg for mercy

Yet you ignore  
Love and respect  
As the solution  
And proceed to arm  
Both friend and foe  
Producing a very strange fruit  
That withers and dies  
On the vine

Meanwhile ghost face priest  
Wear tattered uniforms of  
A thousand grief stricken mothers  
As minimum wage mercenaries  
Begin to arrive home  
In unphotographed boxes

Quite the surreal sacrifice  
To comfort the egos and apathy  
Of a few rich men  
Men that bathe in the windfall  
Of grade “A” Texas tea.



***POEMS:***

**(CAROL) JOY HAUPT**

(Carol) Joy Haupt grew up in New York City and has lived in Cincinnati since 1960. A frequent European traveler, she is a graduate of Antioch College and OSU's School of Social Work, and has, since her retirement, been actively engaged in community work and creative writing. Joy is currently writing a fictionalized memoir about the life of her maternal grandmother, a 1905 Jewish immigrant from what is now Eastern Poland.

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**JEAN SYED**

Jean Syed has lived in Loveland for twenty eight years and is an American citizen now. Poetry is her hobby and she prefers formal verse over free verse.

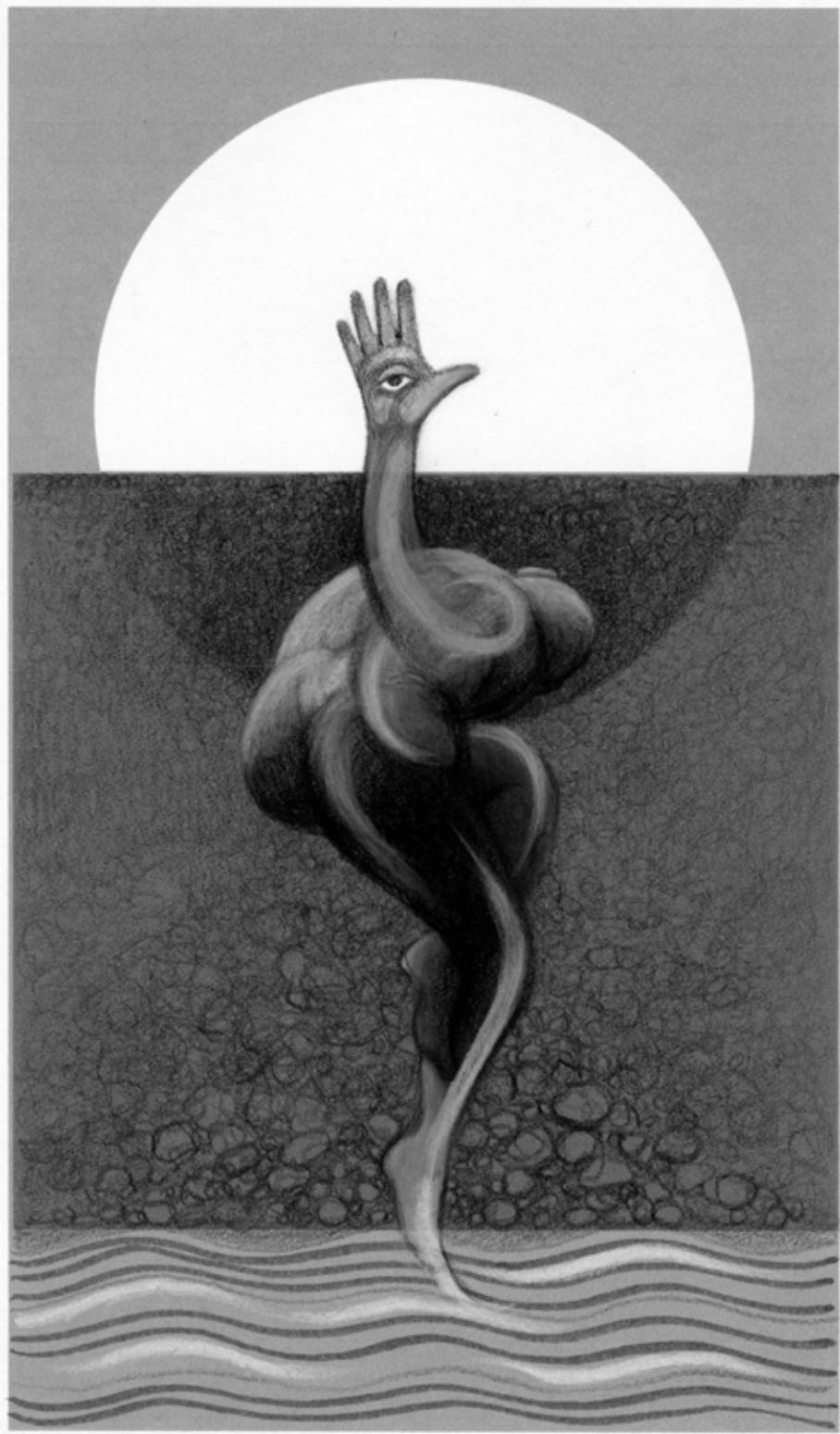
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***DRAWING:***

**JAN BROWN CHECCO**

Jan Brown Checco works in a variety of mediums and scales, from ceramic to painting to installation, and from the intimacy of the printed page to the broadcast forum of public walls. She works with communities in cooperative creation of expressive murals and mosaic art, and is devoted to fostering international dialogue through artist exchange projects.

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Jane Brownlie 2008

## Boy Soldier

(by Carol Joy Haupt)

Adrift, age 12,  
his entire family killed  
in the massacre, he was  
  
discovered by soldiers,  
sheltered, clothed, fed  
a steady supply of meth and coke,  
  
handed an AK-47  
with simple instructions  
and a comradely pat on the back.  
  
Sleek and nimble, he cut through small spaces,  
hid behind foliage. The first encounter  
was a nightmare.  
  
After that, killing came easy.  
Later, the troops would celebrate,  
drinking, snorting, exchanging high fives.

Was there anyone  
who cared about you  
the interviewer asked?

Oh yes, my lieutenant. I was attached to him.  
He carried a volume of Shakespeare.  
I loved Shakespeare when I was in school.

Everybody needs to belong.

*(poem inspired by the interview author Ishmael Beah gave Terry Gross (NPR, Fresh Air) on February 21, 2007.)*

## Down the Paris Metro

(by Jean Syed)

Yearning, ardent, the music rippled on such  
An instrument I'd never heard before.  
She plucked the plangent strings on her bandore  
Down the Paris Metro. I knew how much  
Homesickness she endured, those hands her  
crutch,  
Lone in that long and breezy corridor.  
I wanted my arms to embrace her, soar  
Straightway to her Ukraine, but paused to clutch  
  
A CD, on which wishful coins were laid,  
Thinking about stark refugees world wide  
Who had drawn faces and were much afraid,  
As they floundered within a man-made tide,  
For then they lay upon a shifting sand  
Hoping that we will give a helping hand.

## Split Screens on CNN

(by Jean Syed)

On the left: California burning,  
orange skies, dense smoke in the ravine.  
On the right: rockets also burning  
in blue skies on my television screen.

Oh yes! We have to get away from here,  
our sacred earth as long as there's the time.  
We have to go to some other bright sphere  
to repeat wars, mismanagement and crime.

We shook off, before, the Old World's dust,  
my great-grandchild will go to Venus, Mars.  
Yet I hope it would be for pioneer lust  
that he wants to explore the sparkling stars,  
and not because our earth is wind or fire,  
and our self slaughtering to be its pyre.



***POEMS:***

**C. L. HENSLEY**

C.L. Hensley is a senior sociology major at Northern Kentucky University. She believes that artists, no matter their art, have the responsibility to be socially conscious and not self-serving. C.L. does not adhere to an assigned ideology, and does not consider herself a poet; she is just pissed off, hungry and tired of running the rat race.

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**HEATHER MATHEWS**

Heather Mathews, a retired Law Office Manager and Small Business owner, has five children and eight grand-children. She is Ohio Certified Master Gardener and a survivalist with skills at tracking and story telling.

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***DRAWING:***

**SHEILA**

Sheila graduated from Northern Kentucky University with a BFA in ceramic sculpture (2007). She resides in Fort Thomas, KY, and currently works at Funke Fired Arts in Hyde Park. Sheila is interested in investigating ceramic forms to inspire the viewer for a change for the greater good of humanity.

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Steiff

## State of the Union Address

(by C. L. Hensley)

Changing the condition  
Of the situation we live in  
Will take constant contributions  
From conscientious citizens  
With a monumental mission  
Of mobilizing the masses  
To intimidate injustice  
And infiltrate intellectual instigation

America is a boil festering and filthy  
On the back of despicability  
Filled with frailty and subservience  
No longer able to speak our minds  
No longer able to socialize  
Individuality controls our lives

It forces us to sit quietly  
Has blindfolded our mental capacity  
To the point where we can't see  
The devastation and destruction  
That's been implanted  
By our plantation masters  
That we appointed into power

A passing of the torch so to speak  
From masturbator to dictator

I morn the loss of American dignity  
We weren't always this vile  
A catalytic decay upon our moral reality  
Created by the television  
And the loss of superstition

Compulsory citizen subservience  
Habitually and perpetually  
Projected upon an uninformed infantry  
That carries out the will  
Of biblical barbarity  
Discriminately butchering  
Beautiful and innocently born babies

I implore you America!  
To stop and think  
Reflect upon our history  
Of genocide and slavery

Do you believe we  
Should be punished for murder  
Because we are an accessory  
Stop the devastation and annihilation  
Of multiple nations  
Under the guise of globalization  
Reclaim this once great nation  
From the destructive hands of the Bush Ad-  
ministration

## Native Man

(by Heather Mathews)

*(For all Men Who Have Given Themselves up  
for Peace)*

Mighty thunder,	Roaring clouds
Hooves pounding	And strength proud
Warrior, child,	Provider win
Royal lineage,	Sinew kin
Wind blown,	Faded heart
Honor crush	And noble part
One and nature	Wisp of mind
Crumbled word	Cultural duel
Solitary crowded,	Portrait knight
Alive but dead	Found yet lost
Wind congealed	Martyred pride
Shawnee prince,	Sightless eyes
Restless free and shackled pain	
Noble caged and spirit tamed	



***POEMS:***

**MICHAEL HENSON**

Michael Henson is author of three books, most recently, *Crow Call*, poems in response to the murder ten years ago of the homeless activist Buddy Gray. He is a frequent contributor to StreetVibes, the newspaper of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless.

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***DRAWING:***

**ROBERT JEFFERSON**

Rob Jefferson, born in Memphis, 1970, graduated from the Art Academy of Cincinnati with a BFA in painting (1992). Rob's work explores cultural parallels and connectedness.

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R. JEFFERSON

## Memorial for the Homeless Dead

The winter wind they call the Hawk  
rounds the corner of the season  
and skitters the last leaves to the fencelines.  
We stand in a park with a paper in our hands  
and down the paper runs a list of names  
None of the names will answer if we call them  
but we read them to remember that they had names.  
these people of the underbridge,  
the condominiums of the shelters,  
the apartments of park benches,  
the cardboard havens and bedrooms of the poor.  
What can we know about these names but that they died  
---some in the usual way  
and some in ways it hurts to think on.  
They died of violence, accident, and neglect.  
They died of untreated disease,  
of over-dose and under-attention.  
They were cold, they were hungry,  
they were sick, and they died.  
And now they are nothing but a list of names running off into the wind.  
The Hawk sweeps the corner of the shivering season  
and the cold grass is stiff around our shoes.  
We stand in a park with our pockets full of wind  
and nothing in our hands but these pages full of names  
and the names are fading from our sight.  
They were cold, they were hungry, they were sick.  
They were over-dosed and under-funded,  
displaced from the neighborhood of the living  
and now their names trickle into the cold, stiff grass.  
The Hawk tests the currents of the turning season  
and strips the warmth from the downtown towers.  
We stand in a park with our hats full of dust and we ask,  
who decided which doors would open and  
who decided which doors would close  
and who decided these names would be on the list that we read this day.  
They were cold, they were tired,  
they were gentrified and they died  
and now their names fade into the light.  
The Hawk calls once in the sweep of the changing season  
and wickers away the last of the leaves.  
We stand in a park with our hands full of light  
and in the light a list of eternal names.  
They were cold, they were sick, they were hungry.  
They were over-dosed and under-guided and they died.  
If we call these names now and it seems they do not answer,  
we can learn to listen in the grass, in the wind,

in the shower of sunlight that falls around us.  
We can listen in the cold cry of the Hawk.  
Listen close:  
They are a whisper now on the tongue of God.  
We call their names to remember they had names,  
these people of the underbridge,  
the condominiums of the shelters,  
the apartments of park benches,  
the cardboard havens and bedrooms of the poor.

## Thirty Years Ago

A winter storm moves in and settles on the city streets.  
The frozen gargoyles of City Hall leer from their parapets.  
Frost grips the park benches with cold white fingers.  
Snow dusts the eaves of the tenements  
along Race Street, Vine Street, 14th  
and the sad nameless alleys that run off Republic.  
Snow caps the parking meters  
and blinds the windows of the parked cars.  
It is a deep, perfect, silencing snow  
that muffles the sounds of the sirens,  
the cars on Central Parkway,  
the snatches of music that thump from the jukeboxes of Main Street,  
and the softened clatter of a truck being loaded.  
Into the snow steps a group of ragged shadows.  
Three or four at first, then more,  
then tens and twelves.  
They shiver, blink back the snow,  
pull their second-hand coats tighter,  
and stagger, step, or shuffle as they are able,  
southward down Main Street.  
Some talk, some grumble,  
and some are silent as the snow,  
but they walk in something like order, something like a march.  
They walk as if, at the end of their march,  
there might be something like hope.  
Perhaps they are crippled by alcohol,  
for they do not seem to understand  
it is the job of the poor  
to die silent and in some other place.  
Down Main, they stumble south to 12th Street.  
Those at the head of the line stop for a moment.  
They puzzle, where are we supposed to go?  
But someone tells them,  
so they turn west and continue their march.  
They do not seem to understand

it is the mission of the misguided  
to lose themselves quietly,  
and in some other place.  
Down 12th to Walnut,  
they limp and shuffle in their battered manner  
and pass under the cold eye of Germania,  
that great verdigris goddess, perfect in limb and posture.  
But they ignore her; they do not look up.  
They do not seem to understand  
it is the job of the broken to keep on breaking,  
quiet, and in some other place.  
Past Walnut, they cross Jackson where a prostitute eyes them.  
She seems to see herself in them  
and she stamps her foot for warmth and turns away.  
The women among the shadows mutter something  
and the men look down  
and they all keep marching.  
They do not seem to understand  
it is the task of the scorned  
to bury their pain down the road  
in some quiet, distant place.  
The shadows cross into the glare of Vine Street  
and the light is not kind  
for it glitters on their snowy rags  
and lights the broken places on their cheeks  
and marks the red rims that circle their eyes,  
But they march on. They do not seem to understand  
it is the duty of the damaged  
to hide their broken bodies  
quietly and in some distant place.  
They march their shivering march past Glossinger's  
and as they march, some gaze like lovers  
into the darkened windows  
for they have already begun to ache and shiver  
for the wine that waits there.  
But they march and tremble  
and they do not seem to understand  
it is the responsibility of the fallen  
to whisper their sins to a cold, clay confessional  
in some distant place.  
They march past Race Street  
and the park with its great black trees  
and some look sidelong to watch the park fill up with snow.  
They keep on, one after another,  
for they do not seem to understand  
it is in the interest of all  
that the abandoned take their loss  
to a quiet empty field in some distant place.

Down they march to Elm  
where they glance toward the floodlights facing Music Hall  
and they do not seem to understand  
it is the obligation of the undertaught  
to spare the senses of the cultured  
and to die. Quiet. In some other place, Not here.  
But the ragged shadows march on,  
just a few more stumbling steps  
and through these doors against all law,  
all rule, all duty for the poor  
that they might find warmth,  
and a little food  
and a chance at life.  
Through these doors,  
these lawless doors.  
Right here,  
and not in some distant place.

Thirty years have passed.  
I cannot tell you  
if these shadows lived or dutifully died.  
But I know the doggish cold  
still follows at the heels of the poor.  
The hawkish wind still whistles down the alleys.  
The gargoyles of City hall  
test their wings and wait their orders.  
But the arrogant poor still march.  
They walk their ragged, crooked mile  
ignorant of law or duty  
in search of a little warmth, a little food,  
a little more of life than others would allow them.  
We have marched through the snows and suns of thirty years.  
Many have come and gone through these doors.  
And we honor each of them.  
For here, in this place,  
we renounce the law that says the poor must die  
for the comfort of the uncomfortable.  
We abrogate the rule that says  
a woman must freeze  
for the warmth of the well-housed  
or that a child must starve  
to feed the well-fed.  
Here today, we declare,  
there is no law but the law of love.  
There is no rule but the rule of justice.  
There is no duty but the duty of hope.

***POEMS:***

**CYNTHIA OSBORNE HOSKIN**

Cynthia Osborne Hoskin, originally from the East Coast, is a 70-year old child with a history of writing, painting, and print making. She has been a Real Estate Broker, Editor, Features Writer, Public Relations Consultant, and a community activist. Cynthia lives in Kentucky with her present husband of 23 years and a Scottie named Abigail.

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**STEVE PENTICUFF**

Steve Penticuff teaches Upper School English at The Summit Country Day School. In his spare time, he reads Ferlinghetti and prepares poems for his first chapbook. At night, Steve dreams of his native California, where the coastal redwoods have never stopped calling his name.

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***DRAWING:***

**GENE SOWLES**

Gene H. Sowles lives in Cincinnati, OH. He has a BFA in sculpture from the University of Cincinnati. Gene has shown extensively in many galleries both locally and nationally. His work can be seen at Dicere Gallery in Cincinnati.

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Sondre '08

## Lesson in Diversity

(by **Cynthia Hoskin**)

“We’re good,” she said, her tail held high,  
White wings laid flat upon her thigh,  
And strutting so, she led her brood.  
“We’re good, we’re good,” she proudly  
mused.

The goslings tripped, a ragged row,  
Their orange feet dug into snow.  
“We’re good, we’re good,” they lightly cried,  
‘til all at once a crow they spied.

“A friend, a friend,” the great goose heard,  
As goslings rushed to meet the bird.  
“Oh ugly sight,” the mother spat  
“Oh, children dears just look at that!”

“We must not notice, hear or speak  
To such a one, not one small peep!”  
The goslings drooped and slunk away  
When all they wanted was to play.

The crow looked up from hunting food  
To see the strange retreating brood.  
“Must be a frightening thing they saw,”  
And so the crow let out a caw.

## Around the Kettle

(by **Steve Penticuff**)

I hear the story as a child:  
Buddhist monks avoiding the grass  
lest they step on a worm.  
But a worm is just a worm, I think,  
and laugh, then trample the lawn  
with friends in search of anything  
that crawls or hops.

We shove cricket bodies  
through fish hooks, make insects  
smolder under magnifying glasses,  
aim (and shoot) to kill the birds  
and squirrels with home-made  
bows and arrows.

Eventually some of us grow up.  
We watch a fresh generation  
of children at play, ripping wings  
and heads off live cicadas, pouring  
gasoline over ants, chopping worms  
to pieces just for fun.

And light shines  
from wells of deep compassion  
in our eyes, a flood of hope  
for the world even as our hearts sink:  
deep down we know  
superiority to everything we harm  
is an illusion,  
and the kids know not what they do  
when they dip their soft  
hot and wiggly summer toes  
and ease their bodies  
into warm waters of violence  
that only seem cool  
(because of course it takes awhile  
to reach a boil).

If we’re lucky, our own children  
catch us now and then  
trapping flies and spiders  
in jars and carrying them gently  
to the porch, where we let them go,  
and our fruit ripens right there  
on the vine as innocence returns  
and shines in the eyes  
of those we rescued  
drying off outside the kettle.



## **POEMS:**

### **SUE NEUFARTH HOWARD**

Sue Neufarth Howard, Cincinnati native, published poet, visual artist, retired. 1983 Poet Laureate for Clifton Heights/Fairview – Cincinnati Recreation Commission Neighborhood Poetry Contest. Graduate of Miami University (Oxford) and UC Evening College. Member of Greater Cincinnati Writer's League. Several poems have won Prizes in Ohio Poetry Day Contests since 1998. Poems published in *The Old Mill Pond Anthology*, *Nomad's Choir*, *Poetic Hours*, *Mid America Poetry Review*, *Creative Voices: The ILR Anthology*, and other publications.

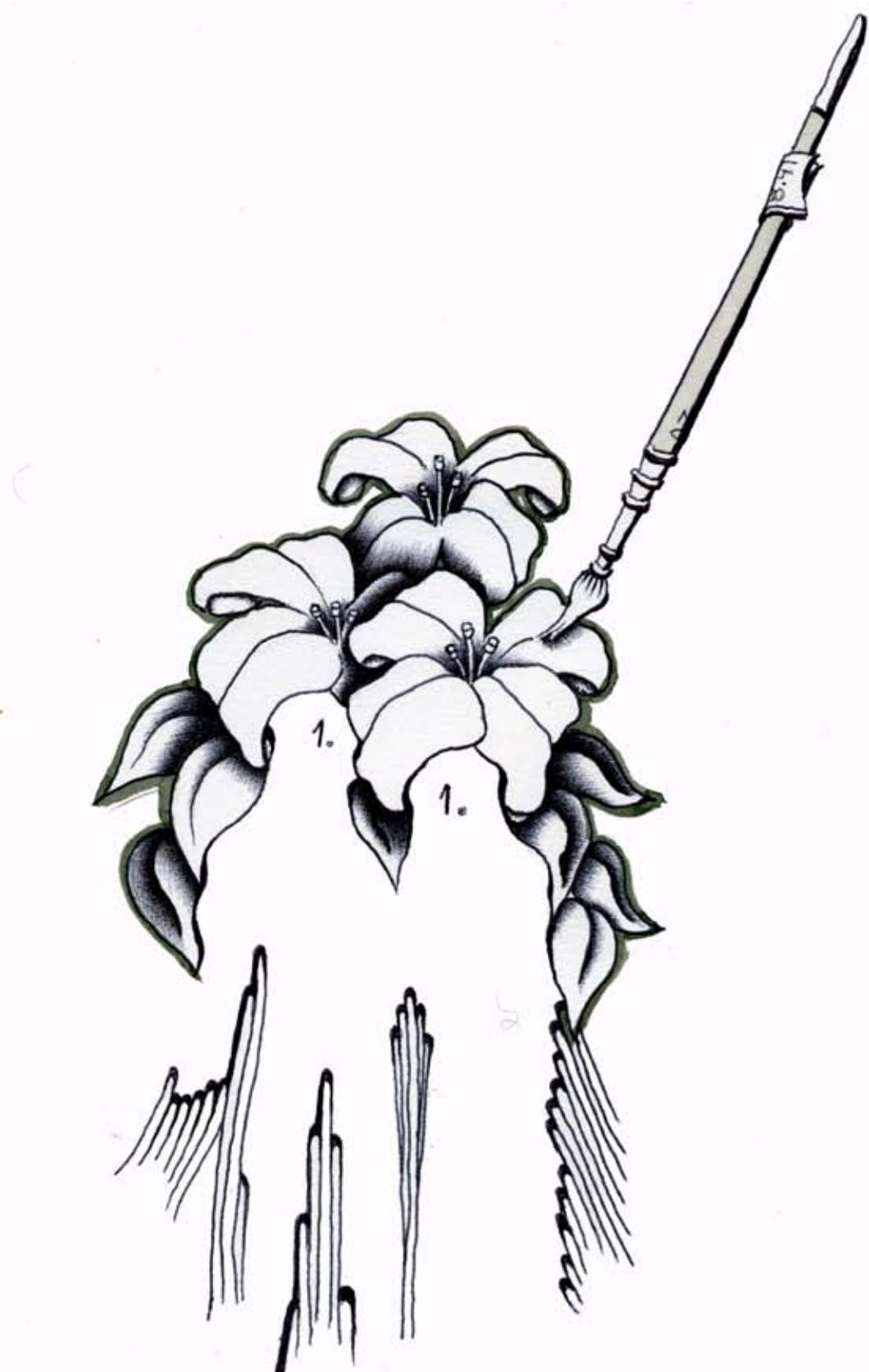
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## **DRAWING:**

### **ALAN SAUER**

Alan Sauer, originally of Dayton, OH, lives in Cincinnati where he attended the Art Academy and obtained, in 1992, a BFA in printmaking and painting. Alan is a prolific artist who uses ink drawing, painting and stone carving. He has exhibited regularly locally and his work is included in many private collections.

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NEWLYWEDS OUT FOR A STROLL IN THE NEGATIVE SPACE.

ALAN SAUER

48.

## Negative Space

what you don't notice  
between tree leaves  
between birds in flight formation

the space around  
the artist's painted image  
around newlyweds out for a stroll

what the eye picks up that you  
don't see – until  
the negative space looms large

limbless dead tree against the sky  
tiny downed bird  
the couple a table apart

man alone on a high roof ledge

Found in white Easy Spirit gym shoes  
black skirt, black blouse  
around her neck – string of black and white beads  
maybe a waitress

Suffered trauma – possible high fall from a bridge  
only a few days spent in the water – identifiable  
if only someone could look at a picture and say  
"That's her"

There is still hope her story will end differently  
fliers bearing her picture are handed out  
neighborhoods canvassed near  
where she was found

The riverbank will be searched again  
maybe something missed  
something with a name  
she has a name  
maybe they can find her family, too

Maybe someone will be grateful to know  
what happened to their missing  
sister, Mother, daughter

Maybe they will come for her  
give her a proper burial  
have a chance to say  
Goodbye

*(Found poem, based on an article in the Cincinnati Enquirer).*

## A Mystery

In the dark and cold  
identified only by two words  
on a white tag  
*Unknown (River)*

Five feet four inches tall  
one hundred twenty-four pounds  
pulled from the Ohio River  
November – a week after Thanksgiving  
muddy riverbank, North Bend

She has a name – maybe a family  
maybe children

Now June – in a black plastic bag  
in a freezer – coroner's office  
fan blows cold air constantly above her  
"the lady from the river"

The body will talk to you.  
Blond or gray hair  
curled toes – sign of Arthritis  
likely 60 or early 70's



## ***POEMS:***

### **W. B. “BUCKY” IGNATIUS**

W.B. “Bucky” Ignatius is one of the older hippies still around, eagerly awaiting the 13th U.S. President of his lifetime with no fear of worse luck. Besides poetry, Bucky loves choral singing, photography and gardening. Two bright daughters and the two cutest grandsons ever keep him from being a full-time curmudgeon.

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### **JAKE LUDWIG**

Jake Ludwig is a fifth grade student at St. Ignatius School. He enjoys his friends, many sports, and playing his electric guitar. Jake’s favorite subjects are science and history. He likes playing with his puppy, Merfy, a miniature daschund with a big attitude.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **AARON KENT**

Aaron Kent (“AK-47”) was born in Springfield, OH, 1972. He studied commercial art in high school and studied fine art and sculpture at the Art Academy of Cincinnati. Aaron worked at Casting Arts and Technology in Cincinnati, where he studied bronze casting and metal fabrication.

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## Dumb, But Not Blind

(by **Becky Ignatius**)

Politically,  
i never hesitate,  
but plunge headlong  
into the breech.  
righteous and sort of sure,  
sure always of my ability to compete  
mind and mind.  
leftist, rightist, Dylan told me to be an upist.  
my biggest gripe with capitalism  
is the capital i  
with little you  
and little we.  
having heard many times  
the tragedy of america,  
i came, a while ago, to the conclusion  
that love/socialism/democracy/brotherhood/  
and enough money to start  
were all we needed.  
love was all we needed  
socialism was all we needed  
democracy was all we needed  
brotherhood was all we needed  
and enough

\*FLASH\*

enough what??  
i need a reading list, though not  
necessarily to read,  
a growing circle of friends,  
grass and bananas to keep me warm,  
smiling, singing, bouncing when she  
walks lover,  
and music.  
that's what i need.  
where there are forces trying to keep  
me from these things,  
i oppose them.  
be them "them" or "us."

Politically,  
i don't theorize much at all.  
i live, and living, learn.  
and love, and loving, learn.  
and america has gotten in the way  
for lots of us  
here, there, and everywhere.  
and in that sense,  
timeless, nationless sense,  
she is my enemy.  
if you ask me but what about Stalin  
and no freedom  
and Hungary  
and Czechoslovakia  
i'll tell you,  
i don't know.  
how to spell them even.  
but better dead than red?  
NO! i say--better alive than afraid  
and better a love than a country.

## War and Peace

(by **Jake Ludwig, 10 year old**)

When we're at war  
we're not at peace  
the good times begin to cease  
it seems like the whole world stops  
from day and night  
to around the clock.

As the whole wide world  
holds its breath  
to something that may lead  
to tragic death  
peace is what we want to achieve  
but to do that we have to believe.

If we can achieve all our goals  
we can patch up all the holes  
that cover our earth's surface.



***POEMS:***

**CAROL IGOE**

Professionally, Carol Igoe is a behavioral psychologist, a long time activist and a writer for disability rights and for the environment. Besides writing information briefs for the public in these fields, Carol writes poetry as a way of experiencing and describing how we all fit together in the world.

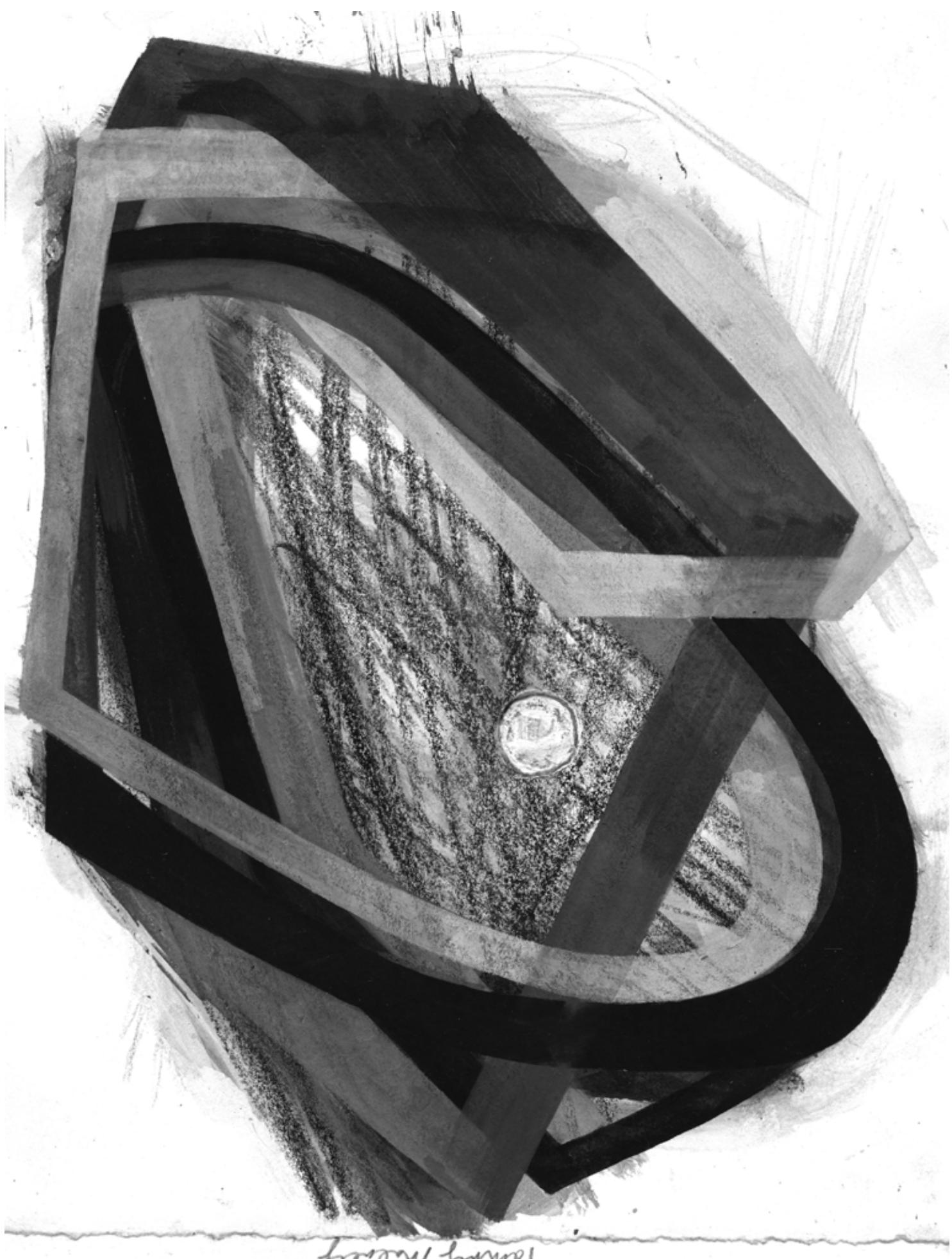
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***DRAWING:***

**TAMMY MALONEY**

Tammy Maloney, born in Manchester, CT, studied at Alfred University in Western NY and at American University in Washington, DC. Tammy now resides in Cincinnati, OH.

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large wheel

## February 21, 2008: What the Moon Saw

The moon eclipsed last night,  
Hung like an ancient Persian coin,  
dulled rust,  
then slowly grew back into silver light.

Hung over my quiet snow-filled street,  
not even a dog barked, the peace was so deep.  
Hung over all the mountains, rivers, farmlands  
of my country  
where there is no war,  
no tanks, no hidden bombs or ambushes,  
no helmeted soldiers, kicking down our doors,  
no ditches full of dead and tortured men.

Hung over sleeping Europe,  
the gods of war restrained and buried deep.  
Finally slipping into dawn  
at the farthest edge of war,  
past civilization's oldest haunt.

Hung in earth's dark red shade,  
broke free,  
then glowed again, full of hope,  
clear shining mistress of our night.

## The Year Turns

### Solstice

Menorah like  
bare trees  
thrust up  
their winter prayer:  
Forgive us our sins,  
Teach us compassion,  
Once again, send  
green life out of cold death.

### Resurrection

Spring wind pushed back my hair,  
Cupped my ear,  
Whispered  
Birdsong has reclaimed the air.

Cardinal, robin, mourning dove  
Stake out their trees.  
Waking branches pull in sun and rain,  
Leaf the sky, proclaim sweet life again.

Against all odds, snakes, frogs, fishes push  
upstream,  
Though deserts creep  
And polar ice caps slowly melt.

Resurrection!  
Once more earth spins our way among the  
stars.  
So may it be today,  
and for years to come.



***POEMS:***

**JERRY JUDGE**

Jerry Judge is a Cincinnati-based poet and social worker. He is a member of the Cincinnati Writers' Project and the Greater Cincinnati Writers' League. Jerry has published in many journals and has published four poetry chapbooks.

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***DRAWING:***

**LESLIE SHIELS**

Leslie Shiels is a painter in Cincinnati, OH. She graduated from DAAP, University of Cincinnati, in 1974.

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## If I Met George W. Bush

I'm a pacifist (usually) and besides there would be scores of Secret Service men measuring my every move – especially my hands.

No. It wouldn't be physical, but I would yearn to say something that would pierce him for almost forever like depleted uranium.

Yet, what could I say or show that would impact a mind and soul wrapped in denial's impregnable armor?

Like an armadillo bumping around feeling nothing, the President meanders on at our peril.

## Duty

*"I sleep clearly every night."*  
*Paul Tibbets, pilot of the Enola Gay*

How wonderful it must have been to follow and have such faith in your superiors and their good will that you could do anything without doubt, without guilt, and sleep like your mother, Enola Gay, still rocked you and sang lullabies while "Little Boy" just floated in the sky.

*("Little Boy" was the code name of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.)*

## Modern Garden

When he awoke,  
he saw his  
innocence exposed.

The landmine left him  
the only survivor  
from the Humvee patrol.

Like an obsessive lover,  
guilt has tracked him  
back to Ohio. He shows

his incision, snaking  
from Adam's apple  
to navel. He says

the army wants him  
back. He says he will  
return. There's no choice.



**POEMS:**

**LONNA KINGSBURY**

Lonna Kingsbury teaches poetry and creative writing at variant levels throughout the city. A native of Chicago, she makes at least one yearly sojourn to continue to be a part of The Chicago Poetry Fest and North Beach Poets. Currently active with Miami River Writers, Lonna helps facilitate Juanita Mays' newly reformed Milford group and remains founder of Cincinnati's Poets Anonymous as well as Miami Township Poet Laureate.

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**DRAWING:**

**EMIL ROBINSON**

Emil Robinson grew up in Cincinnati. In 2006 he completed his MFA degree from the University of Cincinnati department of fine art. Emil's work is exhibited nationally and internationally. He is dedicated to his art and his family. He currently lives in Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, OH.

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Emily Robinson  
2008

## News Brief

Breath held fast --aghast  
past any chance foretelling  
One on one  
somewhere  
alone  
cautiously awaiting  
fearfully negating  
the single course of Who  
and Why  
or When  
we meet  
replete  
with How  
or What the given time  
-will finally reveal.

Will it come as justice  
claiming first-fired fare  
from masquerading distance  
advancing to the vanquishment  
changing both our lives  
or will it come by happenstance  
quickly from the shadows  
protecting misspent shadowed peace  
Where one of us must die?

## Both Sides Now

Both were brave  
Both were young  
Both were justifiable  
Both were worried  
wearied by  
constant inconsistencies  
Both were caring  
Both had shared  
peaceful lamentations  
minus rents or sundry woes  
but now feared only how  
single-minded factionings  
undermined each soul  
face to face  
eye to eye  
juxtaposing goals.

## Epiphany

Two days --all night  
we're running scared  
breathing hard  
with sun too bright,  
colliding shins with every rock  
hidden within sight  
Blinded by the sweatings  
with one more ridge and maybe then  
I'll get my bearings, sit a 'sec  
breathe and find our company  
--if anyone is left

A little peace  
that's all I need  
a moment to reflect,  
find out where I'm posted  
not really lost, not yet  
as coordinates all neatly mapped  
directionally decree  
me somewhere past insanity  
and fear of echoed primal screams

My dream?

Just let me make it home.  
Please --map my way back home.

Alone  
below  
I'm counting days  
indebted as the rest  
keeping pace  
protecting  
unwilling to regret  
working through each nameless wrong  
stabilizing each course  
negating acts deceptive  
bettering the worst

And then a break  
too sweet, right there  
the peak!  
A breeze?  
Ah, coolness --good.

A quick glance up and  
Thank You, God . . .  
From climbed position  
gain my foot--

Oh, my God,  
now facing  
the one who made it here before  
shouldering his weapon  
frozen to the core  
waits for just that moment  
named before as one of truth  
hesitating slightly  
before the sub sequential burst  
exploiting time  
gone idle  
impugning prayers of benefit  
for each deceitful warp of faith  
for killing  
and for death  
as slowly flows the bleeding  
commingling  
--at rest

***POEMS:***

**LINDA KLEINSCHMIDT**

Linda Kleinschmidt, a long-time college composition instructor, is a full-time freelance editor working with authors in the US and abroad. Linda has been in love with writing since childhood; she writes poetry, short stories, juvenile material, and articles on the crafts of writing and editing. Her poetry has been published and won a few awards. She has published two picture books and won a Writer's Digest Honorable Mention for Juvenile Writing. Linda divides her time between Cincinnati, OH, and Hanover, NH, where she is completing her graduate degree in liberal studies at Dartmouth College.

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**GERALDINE WITTEKIND**

Gerri Wittekind is a 63 year old retired R.N. who has a passion for gardening, writing and Monhegan Island, Maine.

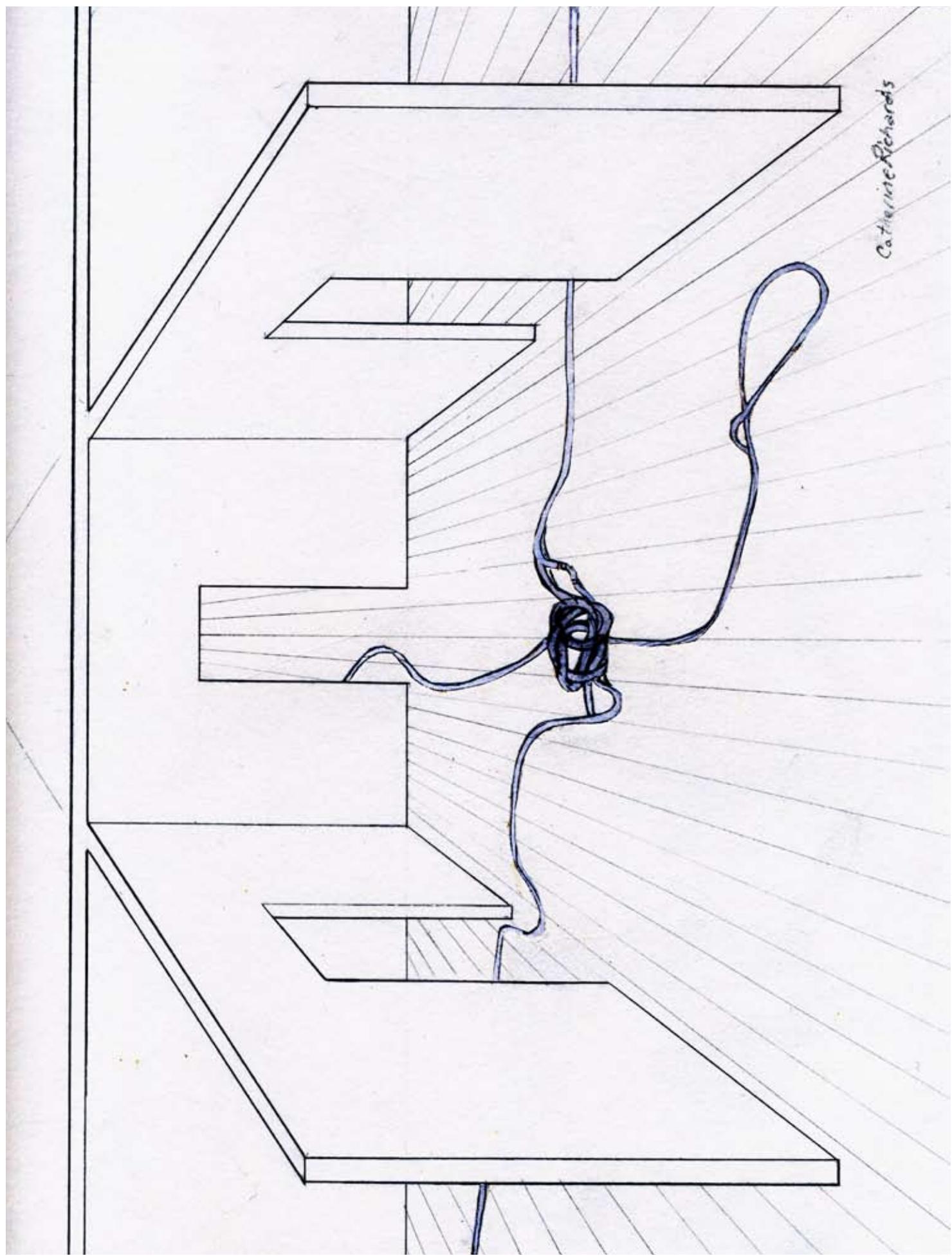
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***DRAWING:***

**CATHERINE RICHARDS**

Catherine Richards is a graduate architecture student at the University of Cincinnati. She is also an artist interested in all types of collaborative art making. Catherine recently worked in London, England, designing an exhibit for the Victoria and Albert Museum.

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## Pallbearers

(by Linda Kleinschmidt)

Woman, you are life's pallbearer,  
You eulogize and take the grief  
From the bearers of it.  
Husband, father, son, or friend,  
Woman, you hear the sounds, touch the wounds.  
Consume the sadness.

Are you strung of steel perhaps,  
Or is your soul task a calling  
Reaching back to Adam ?  
You are a lioness. You unfurl and enfold,  
Earth helpmate, an essence, you remain the  
Loyal carrier of ongoing.

Speak with ease  
of war  
and weapons.

Land mines, blackhawks,  
guns, grenades.  
Young men.  
Boys with toys  
and hard ons.  
Martyrs or murderers,  
depending on  
which side  
they fall.

*I have heard it said  
the world is starved  
for great men.*

## The Season

(by Geraldine Wittekind)

Hypocrisy.

Atrocities.

Christians, Muslims, Jews.  
Exalted leaders  
quote our holy books  
to excuse the things we do.

Millions die  
with bloated bellies,  
bulging eyes.

Orphans, widows,  
refugees  
cry  
into the echoes  
of eons.

And fat, old men  
smoke cigars.  
Toast each other  
with flutes of crude.

To everything  
there is a season.

It is the winter  
of our planet.

Mothers, sisters.  
Great women.  
It is not enough  
to bitch and breed.  
It is not enough  
to pray and grieve.

Great women.  
hear the plea from  
desert sands,  
canyons, caves.

Listen to the desperate cry  
in the roiling waves.

Get off your knees.

It is our season,  
our turn,  
our time  
to lead.



**POEMS:**

**ANNETTE LACKNER**

A native Cincinnatian, Annette (Toni) Lackner grew up on the East Side, attended Nativity Grade School and Regina High School. She does not have a degree, but took several creative writing courses at UC. She traveled extensively and spent time in Ecuador, The Phillipines, Thailand, India, and many States in the US.

Her poetry comes from the connection she made with various cultures. Annette is a strong advocate for peace and has written short stories as well as articles for her Church Periodical.

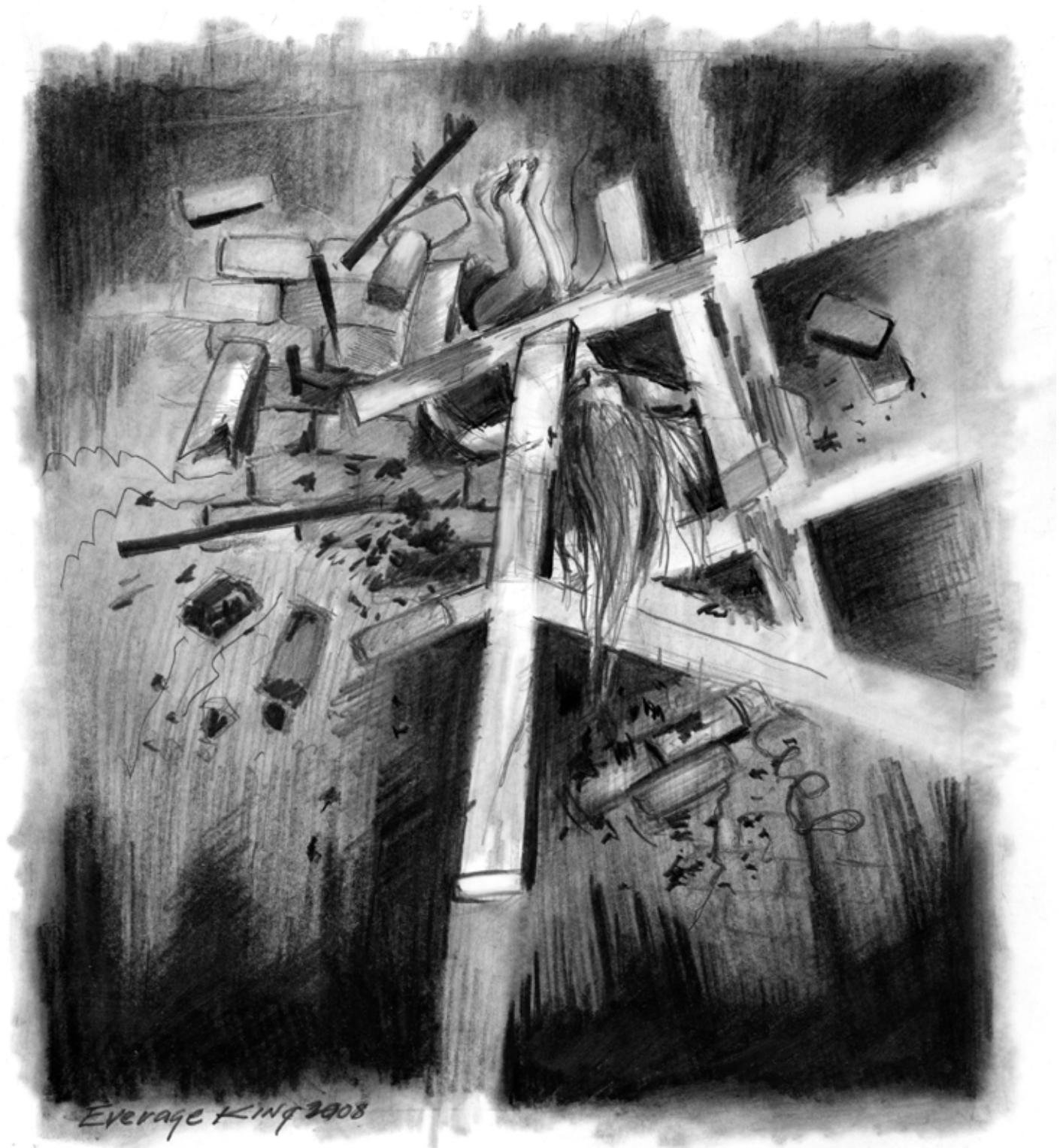
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**DRAWING:**

**EVERAGE KING**

Everage King, Atlanta, GA, born artist. Raised and educated in Cincinnati, OH. Attended UC with degrees in Liberal Arts, Fine arts and Education. Taught art in public schools in Columbus and Dayton, OH, and Baltimore, MD. Paints most often in watercolor and acrylic mediums in an impressionistic manner.

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Everage KING 2008

## A Traveler's Prayer

I saw you at the village well  
Along the dusty road to Jaipur  
Soap and towel in hand  
In a queue for a morning bath.  
Were Iraqis like you at the well  
When we "shock and awed"?  
I pray for them

I met you in the Philippines  
Your dead parents beside you  
Mummified in your tribal tradition  
Was someone mourning at a grave  
In Lebanon when unholy bombs exploded  
I pray for them

Welcomed into your Andes home,  
You wove a colorful blanket for me  
Your children proudly watching.  
Were families and blankets and homes  
Destroyed when the horrors of war  
Descended upon the hills of Afghanistan?  
I pray for them.

I saw your family on a train  
Crossing the River Kwai.  
Laughing, lunching, playing games.  
Was a family traveling the rails,  
Eating lunch, playing games  
When rockets showered down on Israel?  
I pray for them

Lost countrymen of September 11th  
Our military and their families.  
The bloodied minds and bodies  
At Walter Reed,  
I pray for them.

I pray  
I pray  
I pray  
Mostly, for a better way.

## Misguided Prayers

A child is dead.  
No more kisses on her curls  
No more patting of chubby legs  
Bright innocent eyes will  
No longer look in wonder  
At the simplest wonders  
Of the universe.

Pulled from the rubble  
Burnt and maimed.  
On one side of a line  
Collateral Damage.  
On the other  
Murdered by terrorists.  
Country of origin doesn't matter  
It's the same everywhere.

Screams in the streets  
If she had been aborted.  
Guardians raked over the coals  
If a freak accident had taken her  
A faulty product, a congressional hearing  
Whichever, there would be OUTRAGE.  
But for this little one, NONE.

World leaders say they're sorry  
Prayers go up to their God of choice.  
I am sickened.  
Lebanese, Iraqi, Israeli, Iranian  
She is the child of us all.  
Perhaps we should pray for our own  
Sorry souls.



***POEMS:***

**CAROL FEISER LAQUE**

Carol Feiser Laque has just published her new collection of poetry titled *Queen Anne's Lace*. Carol's favorite class is recess.

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***DRAWING:***

**MATTHEW REED**

Matt Reed is an artist, educator, and radical leftist currently living in Cincinnati, OH. His work has appeared in galleries locally, nationally, and internationally; and his illustrations have been used for magazines, comic books, t-shirts, and music album covers.

Contact: [mrmattthewreed@hotmail.com](mailto:mrmattthewreed@hotmail.com)



MATT REED

## The Hero

I have lost both arms.  
I have lost both legs.  
My body is full of shrapnel.  
My head is full of bullets.  
My lips and eyes are gone.

I say nothing. Burnt -  
my remains are shipped home.

Ashes and bone fragments  
are boxed tightly for  
my parents who receive  
medals for my bravery.

In the photograph my  
parents hold, my head  
is shaved, and I am  
19 years old for ever.

## Rocking Chair

A rock in my chair  
empty handed. I have  
lost time's children  
to carside bombings.

I have no parents, or  
grandparents, or children  
to notify from my  
empty handed rocking chair.

Only the wartime horror  
leaves me with empty  
cradles. The children  
orphaned are too old to rock.

Children besides strapped with bombs,  
they are headed to their  
own heroics – leaving  
shattered bones and blood.

## First Communion

Stalking corridors of light,  
Priests steal innocent children,  
and close their eyes  
to Heaven and Hell.

Purgatory punctuates the children's silence –  
saturates the entire Vatican.  
Drunk with stolen chants,  
the clergy saves freedom's

Jam and peanut butter  
for sandwiches to  
lure hungry children.  
The innocent bare -

a refined and sanitized  
sin where Holy Robes  
hide hopes of Paradise –  
hide communion's poison.

Speaking as God,  
the clergy consumes  
the body and blood  
of small children.

These children cannot speak  
or walk corridors candlelit...  
after Priests prey them  
into rancid little graves.

## Revelation

In a forest of saplings  
the forest sways, shattered -  
As people cut the trees down.

Their leaves, branches massacred -  
The forest is cut into deserts,  
Blowing sands, windy, cut

Eyes with grinding tears on  
famine's faces. No east or west -  
No north or south – only war in

The Middle East burns bloody  
tears on sands, mobs, orphans.  
This is a desert of madmen.

The Revelation cuts sharper  
than the sword. Bombs  
splinter glances, entire civilizations.

I wander through the desecration -  
Wishing I were God.

***POEMS:***

**MIKE MURPHY**

Mike Murphy helps grow vegetables, as well as fruit and nut trees, on Sharing Circle Community Farm outside Maysville, KY. He reads a bit, listens to BBC, shares a farm-life with his partner Birdie Fetterhoff, and writes thoughtful poems.

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**SAMANTHA SCHALK**

Sami Schalk is a recent Miami University graduate with majors in Creative Writing and Women's Studies. A native of Southgate, KY, Sami considers herself a feminist-activist-poet and is a Young Women's program faculty at Women Writing for (a) Change in Cincinnati. She intends to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree in Poetry and then return to the Cincinnati area to teach, write and perform.

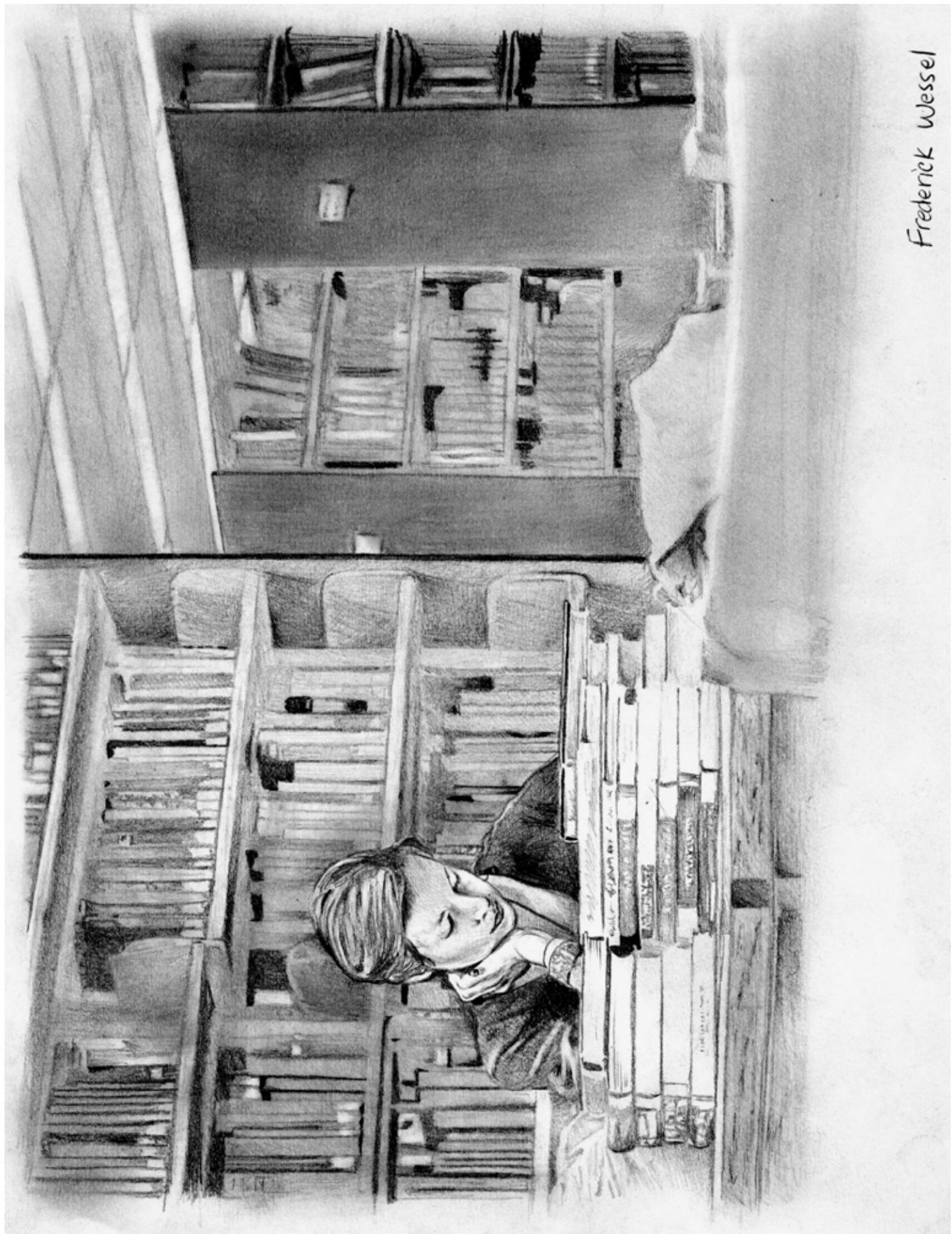
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***DRAWING:***

**FREDERICK WESSEL**

Sculpture and painting are Frederick Wessel's passion. Frederick has a job to stay alive and buy supplies. He attends school to learn how to better create art.

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Frederick Wessel

## ‘DRUTHERS

(by **Mike Murphy**)

We have our ‘druthers, y’know.

We don’t hafta be

The ‘Bully on the Block’.

We don’t hafta be

An arms dealer

In a hot tub.

We don’t hafta send

Our brothers & sisters

& surrogate others

To kill people we don’t know

In endless empire wars.

Some of us’d ‘druther

Change our country’s habits

Of overthrowin’ other people’s

Gummints (usually because

they are too democratic)

And propping up

U.S. corporacracy puppets w/ the

U.S. military.

We’d ‘druther not have a

Warfare economy

Protecting a resource-grabbing empire

Behind a smokescreen of

Fighting terrorism.

We’d ‘druther stop defending

Fear-based ways.

We’d ‘druther create

People-friendly, earth-friendly ways

An economy run on-the-job democratically

By local people everywhere.

We’d ‘druther

Make new friends & neighbors

Of people we don’t yet know,

Growing into a network of sustainable

communities,

Exploring friendship-based possibilities.

These are our ‘druthers.

## Why I Chose a Liberal Arts School

(by **Samantha Schalk**)

I am learning here to open minds,  
to see the world with perceptive eyes,  
to think from views not my own,  
to step outside my comfort zone,  
to empathize and analyze,

to fight and question the social lies,  
to share my education with those who don’t  
know  
how new experiences can help them grow.

I’m learning here to speak my mind,  
so I’m sorry if you find,  
my words a harsh, discomforting tone,  
my opinions clashing with your own,  
but I’m giving voice to those without,  
politics by word of mouth.

Change through action, change through truth,  
change starting in these collegiate roots.

I’m learning here to tell you no,  
this is not the way life must go,  
I will not lie here underfoot,  
everything I have I will put  
into calling you on your bluff  
and changing things just enough  
to make a damn difference.



***POEMS:***

**MARY-JANE NEWBORN**

Born and raised in Cincinnati in 1969, Mary-Jane Newborn married her British pen pal at a rock concert in Eden Park, moved to England for 12 years, became vegetarian and started a 26 year career as an art model. Afterwards, Mary-Jane lived in Miami, FL, for 7 years and returned to her homestead in 1988. In 1989, she became vegan. Mary-Jane now lives in Winton Place, volunteers with Earth Save Cincinnati, and continues activism for the liberation of all beings.

Contact: 513-929 2376

***DRAWING:***

**HALENA CLINE**

Halena Cline, a working artist in the Cincinnati area since 1980, has exhibited on a national scale. Her recent works address the chaotic situation of, not just world politics, but also the present issues facing the United States' 2008 election.

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## Afrodizzy

The other morning on the radio  
I heard about an elephant and a rhino,  
in South Africa, who are in love -  
now don't you wonder what they're thinking of?

In the very land of apartheid  
here are two creatures of a different hide  
who nonetheless have become close friends;  
so this is the way the dark age ends.

Species to species and face to face  
beings come together from every race,  
human and rhinocerine and elephantine,  
to share the fruits of the gift divine.

When the ivory touches the magic horn,  
long memory embraces the unicorn;  
if a tusk can caress a rhinoceros,  
how much easier might it be for us?

## Free Love

Please don't give me flowers;  
let them live and grow.

Please don't give me potted plants;  
let them wriggle their toes in the ground.

Don't give me leather;  
I don't receive stolen goods.

Don't give me fur;  
I won't support armed robbers.

Don't give me feathers;  
let the birds fly unfettered.

Don't give me pearls;  
let the oysters bounce unbound.

Don't try to feed me steak;  
I don't eat corpses.

Don't take me to the zoo;  
let wildlife be wild.

Don't give me ivory;  
let elephants live with tusks.

Don't give me silk;  
let the moths hatch out.

Don't give me caviar;  
let the sturgeon's belly be.

But what am I to do? You ask;

What can I give you?

The truth is... nothing.  
I want nothing from you.

Give yourself a lot of love;  
Accept your self without condition.

Cherish the life in you  
and you will cherish all of life.

Uncage, unchain, unleash yourself;  
allow no exploitation.

If you love me,  
let life live free.



***POEMS:***

**ARMANDO ROMERO**

Armando Romero was active in the Colombian avant-garde movement El Nadaismo during the 1960's. He has traveled extensively throughout Latin America, Europe and Asia. He lives in Cincinnati, where he is a Charles Phelps Taft Professor in Latin American literature at the University of Cincinnati.

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***DRAWING:***

**JAY BOLOTIN**

Jay Bolotin was born and grew up on a farm near Lexington, KY. He has recently had solo exhibitions at Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, The Joslyn Museum (Omaha), The Georgia Museum of Art, Vanderbilt University, and Bucknell University. His work will be shown, with that of the artist, William Kentridge, at the John Hansard Museum (Southampton, England) in the Fall of 2008.

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# El Árbol Digital



the Digital Tree / a poem by Armando Romano  
jg Buletin 2008

## The Digital Tree

This was a man whose right hand had been buried  
who would spend his days in an empty room resting his feet against the upper corner of the window  
while holding a ship's porthole in his left hand; rhinoceroses would pierce it with their horns and allow their metallic hides to shine through

He had taken up the notion of being a poet and spent so much of his time talking about the war  
that he had neglected his right hand. It had grown slowly and furiously and, without his being aware of it, had crossed through the very center of the earth and surfaced at the other end.

When the children of northern Sumatra suddenly saw a tree without leaves and without fruit, they rushed off to summon their parents, When they came, they brought heavy swords and felled the tree at its roots. A white liquid seeped from its ravaged bark.

From that moment on, this man as a poet, feels a sharp, cutting pain, but he cannot tell exactly where in his body it is contained.

*(translated by Alita Kelley and Janet Foley)*

## El Arbol Digital

Era un hombre al que le habían enterrado su mano derecha  
Pasaba sus días metido en una pieza vacía  
Donde se sentaba  
Los pies contra el ángulo superior de la ventana  
Y su mano izquierda sosteniendo un ojo de buey  
Por el cual los rinocerontes  
Ensartaban su cuerno  
Y hacían brillar su corteza metálica

Le había dado por ser poeta  
Y se pasaba todo el tiempo hablando de la guerra  
De tal manera  
Que había descuidado su mano derecha  
Esta creció lenta y furiosamente  
Y sin que él se diera cuenta  
Atravesó el mundo de lado a lado

Cuando los niños de la parte norte de Sumatra Vieron aparecer un árbol sin hojas y sin frutos Corrieron espantados a llamar a sus padres Estos vinieron con sus gruesas espadas Y cortaron el árbol de raíz  
Un líquido blanco lechoso salió de ta corteza tronchada

Desde ese entonces  
El hombre como un poeta  
Siente un dolor terrible  
Agudo  
En un sitio del cuerpo que no puede determinar

## Blossoms of Uranium

The three of them arrived at the same spot  
They ordered foaming drinks  
They greeted the courteous multitude

All three went up to the same table  
They drank smoking potions  
They knew nobody  
They were not uncomfortable

And lo and behold,  
When all three jumped together  
Over the cornice  
Over the window  
Over the hole  
The woman at the bar said there was no reason to be afraid  
Since they were a new flower brought from the East

But when they came down again and killed  
the whole multitude  
She said before dying that there was nothing to fear  
That she had come upon the wrong garden  
That she was mistaken about the flower  
And that instead of blossoms from Buddha  
She had brought blossoms of Uranium

*(translated by Alita Kelley and Janet Foley)*

## Flores de Urano

Llegaron los tres al mismo sitio  
Pidieron espumeantes bebidas  
Saludaron a la amable concurrencia

Llegaron los tres a la misma mesa  
Tomaron humeantes pociones  
No conocían a nadie  
No estaban incómodos

Y he aquí  
Que cuando los tres se encaramaron  
Sobre la cornisa  
Sobre la ventana  
Sobre el agujero  
La mujer de la cantina dijo no se asusten  
que ellos eran una nueva flor traída de Oriente

Pero cuando descendieron y mataron a toda la concurrencia  
Ella dijo antes de morir que no había nada que temer  
Que se había equivocado de jardín  
Que se había equivocado de flor  
Y que en vez de traer flores de Buda  
Había traído flores de Urano

**POEMS:**

## **SHERRY COOK STANFORTH**

Sherry Cook Stanforth is an associate professor of English at Thomas More College. She teaches courses in creative writing, Native, African American and Appalachian literature, environmental studies, and folklore. Sherry's writings have appeared in the *Indiana Review*, *The MacGuffin*, *MELUS*, *Language and Lore* and *NCTE* book publications. She performs in Appalachian folk bands, seeks knowledge about natural plants and raises many children.

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## **KATHRYN TRAUTH**

Kathryn Trauth graduated from Thomas More College with a degree in English. In addition to her love of literature, she has played an active role in Cincinnati's theatre scene, both in performance and production. This fall, Kathryn will begin graduate work in Literature, focusing on ethnic American studies and folklore.

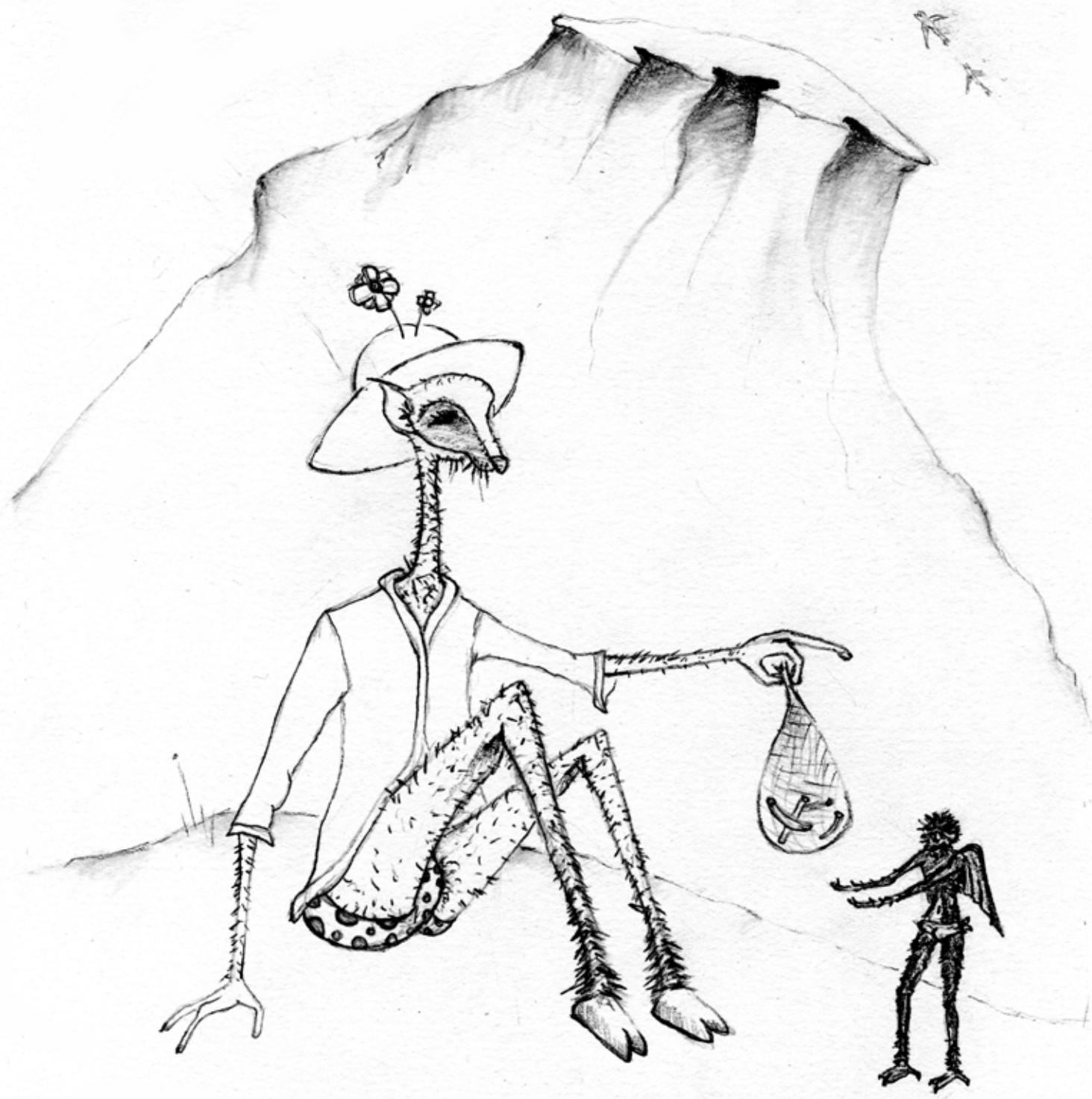
Contact: [kathryn.trauth@thomasmore.edu](mailto:kathryn.trauth@thomasmore.edu)

**DRAWING:**

## **MATTHEW MILLER-NOVAK**

Matthew Miller-Novak received his BFA of Painting at Youngstown State University and went on to receive his MFA of Painting at the University of Cincinnati. After graduate school, Matthew remained in Cincinnati and is currently working on a body of work titled *The Life and Times of Lucifer von Satan*. Matthew exhibits his work locally, regionally, and nationally.

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Matthew Miller - Novak 2008

## That Mountain

(by **Sherry Stanforth**)

That mountain cradled me  
in a twilight bed of vetch  
its shadow bent to kiss me  
with fairy bells snow blossoms  
promising fat ripe fruit  
rounding a Cooper's hawk  
hunted the helium skies high  
scree bouncing on the rocks  
when the bird dove down

That mountain tasted musk-damp  
loamy with maiden hair cotyledons  
unfurling painted trillium hiding  
behind old log-rot some bloodroot  
gripping darkened furrows there  
I sat in the arms of a hemlock  
dreaming of life see me scaling  
barefaced lines of rock rising  
from the stream bed I spy prism  
minnows zipping glinting  
in a pool tucked away

That mountain wrapped itself  
in bridal veil lace smelling sharp  
cold and sure streams soft-bending  
hugging the land as a forever lover  
a God-line of trees sunning spelled  
out sassafras ash and shagbark bent  
sparking each season branches touching  
wild with longing then morning time  
fog wove all the shapes together

What mountain crow cawing out  
a grief song hear now how  
the laurel hell falls twisted bent  
beneath shale mounds ridgelines breaking  
as bones of some ancestor plowed  
from ash to dust with no end  
stumplines standing raw flat faces  
circling up the sun memorials to trees  
they say the rains a-coming to wash  
the valley ammonium nitrate baptism  
fulfilling a spirit-driven thirst  
for the pinnacle past  
in a present progressive  
move to unmask heaven

## Property Line

(by **Kathryn Trauth**)

Mesophytic heaven just being  
by its own knowledge

the Frisbee mom brought  
to the park instead

my favorite sassafrass  
on that mountain

from the park swing until  
I am that sassafrass,

run from mom's  
'Wind it up's by make-believing

tonight we'll eat green beans dad  
brought home from Yulip Mountain

brother's cloudy eyes on  
"Take Your Child to Work" day

dad's lunch pale riding shotgun  
to Black Mountain

TIMBER-ing onto humus,  
watch it crash into the hollow's cradle

dizzy sick with log rolling as we  
uproot chickweed and poison ivy

we can't hear that engine roaring  
through our heaven

where tomorrow,  
he'll mine.



## ***POEMS:***

### **DORI J. VAN LUIT**

Dori Van Luit, born and raised in Cincinnati, OH, went to UC to study Business, Journalism and Music. She is a member of the Cincinnati Writers Project Poetry Critique Group and her poetry won awards with southwestern Ohio A.O.P.H.A. Dori has self-published two poetry books, and has had poems accepted in other collections. She is retired, has nine grandchildren and does volunteer work.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **LEW BARBER**

Lew Barber is a Senior in the Fine Arts Program at the College of DAAP, University of Cincinnati. He has been making art, focusing on sculpture, for over 10 years. In his 2D work Lew pulls his influences from comic artistry and focuses on minimal line, texture and shadow to complete a figure.

Contact: [barberla@email.uc.edu](mailto:barberla@email.uc.edu)



## One Day in the Mall

we heard carolers singing “peace on earth, good will to men.”

Santa’s bells could not cover the gunshots;  
Red ribbons on boxes could not cover the bloodshed;  
Pine scent from trees could not cover the stench of death;  
Toys from family could not cover the broken heart of the motherless child;  
Diamond earrings could not cover the grief of the widow;  
Police could not cover the fear of those hiding under counters.

Nothing could change the heart of the tortured soul who shot them;  
He did not know the Prince of Peace.

## Memories of Another War

6:20 pm – late March, chilly night  
Tom Brokaw reports on the war in Iraq –  
War – a toddler’s thoughts drift back in time.

Little hand on the 7, big hand on the 6  
“Come get ready; it’s time for bed.”  
“Daddy’s not here to kiss me goodnight.”  
“He’s working late because of the war –  
when the hall light goes off, he’ll be home.”

Little hand on the 2, big hand on the 12  
I held mother’s hand in the grocery store  
She gave ration stamps, then came home with  
not much meat to make vegetable soup,  
navy beans or potatoes with onions.

Little hand on the 3, big hand on the 12  
I stood on the chair in the kitchen  
Wooden bowl in front of me, large wooden spoon,  
A big white block and a small orange packet  
“Stir”, said mother, “till it’s all mixed.”  
I wouldn’t eat margarine for 35 years.

Little hand on the 8, big hand on the 12  
Saturday night – I stayed up late  
We sat in chairs near the radio  
Heard FDR with his Fireside Chats –  
Then Glen Miller’s band, the Grand Ol’ Opry.  
But when the sirens blew, we pulled down the blinds  
and turned out the lights and waited in quiet.

Little hand on the 10, big hand on the 9  
Waiting to get a seat in church –  
Chairs down the aisle – everyone there.  
On the way mother ran her last pair of nylons  
“I’ll wear old black cotton stockings like  
Grandma used to – we must sacrifice for war.”  
Helped pick lettuce, tomatoes, beans from a  
Victory garden.

Dad saved newspapers with large black headlines:  
Iwo Jima, Bataan, Corregidor  
Three homes on our street –  
gold stars in their windows  
One was black or purple – I just can’t remember.  
We bought war bonds with dimes and pennies,  
wore old shoes; our dads drove old cars.

When it was all over – that long, hard war –  
Passing through Cincy, thumbing cross country  
My tall handsome cousin in navy blues  
Walked me to school that day – how kids envied me.

A child’s first memories came into a war  
You can’t know the feeling if you hadn’t been there.

***POEMS:***

**VICTOR M. VELEZ**

Victor M. Vélez, a native of Puerta de Tierra, Puerto Rico, grew-up in New York City and relocated to Cincinnati in 1994. His poetry includes: *6 Silver Poets & The Bullets Proof Chapbook*, 1999. Victor published his first poetry book, *A Quest for Answers: A Personal Journey*, Xlibris, in 2003 and will release *Conga Blues* in April, 2008.

Contact: [alasinc77@hotmail.com](mailto:alasinc77@hotmail.com)

***DRAWING:***

**TERENCE HAMMONDS**

Terence Hammonds was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in the late seventies. He attended the School of the Creative and Performing Arts and received a BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston/ Tufts University. Terence has been printing at the Clay Street Press ever since.

Contact: [thammonds45210@yahoo.com](mailto:thammonds45210@yahoo.com)



Terence  
Hammonds

## Rapunzel in Brooklyn

My head was small and round,  
shaped like a “Goya.”  
Not “Goya” the artist  
with his elongated figures,  
but a Goya bean.

The later 60’s,  
an era full of  
freedom like confetti:  
freedom of voice,  
sex,  
freedom of race,  
protest,  
freedom of faith,  
colors,  
freedom of expression,  
lyrics,  
freedom of hair,

that’s where I came in.  
Like an ethnic “Rapunzel”  
my hair grew.

Days of clean cut parted split  
straight line overnight stretched  
nylons and VO5 were over.

Replaced by an uncontrollable,  
unshaped afro, parallel to  
the different views lurking  
the decade.

At the mirror, I racked it  
reflecting Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde  
trying to take out the knots of  
a society with many split ends.

It grew,  
I fertilized it with “Afro Sheen,”  
saw it advertised on “Soul Train.”  
Racked it with my red, black and green  
afro pick as a sign of my 25% African influence.

In the distance, I could hear  
John Travolta approaching,  
dancing “Saturday Night Fever.”

The time had come,  
times were changing,  
it was time for my  
afro pick to retire.

It took a part-time job  
as a backscratcher,  
satisfying the itches,  
resounding the new rhythms  
of a new era.

# The New York City Blackout of 1977

(New York City- July 13, 1977 – 8:37pm)

Eleven years and nine months later  
it happened again,  
like Jason coming back.

Darkness covered New York City  
like the ashes of Mt. Vesuvius  
covered Pompeii.

In the realm of darkness  
equal opportunity reign,  
the elements of poverty  
were invisible,  
rulers could not measure  
the poor nor the rich,  
prisms could not reflect  
the colors of the rainbow.  
Republican, nor Democrats  
could be distinguished.  
Protestants and Catholics  
had no denomination.  
Darkness had no depth of field,  
no shadows, nor shade, no perspective,  
only darkness pressed against the eyes.

When morning came, and sun  
shed light on the city, all was revealed,  
everything was back to normal.

Poverty was back on the spotlight,  
the rich glittered off the lights.  
Colors depicted nationalities.  
Republicans rode their elephants,  
while Democrats owned the White House.  
Protestants proceeded door-to-door,  
while Catholics fist their chest,

and

“The Declaration of Independence”  
was legible once again, where  
“*All men are created equal.*”

***POEMS:***

## **FRANK X. WALKER**

Kentucky native, Frank X. Walker is the author of four collections of poetry and the editor of *PLUCK! The Journal of Affrilachian Arts & Culture*. He is a founding member of the Affrilachian Poets and currently serves as the Writer-in-Residence at Northern Kentucky University.

Contact: [affrilachia@aol.com](mailto:affrilachia@aol.com)

## **TIMOTHY WHALEN**

Tim Whalen is Cincinnati-born and found. He paints, sculpts and writes. These art forms help him express himself, have communion with the public, and leave evidence of a Better World.

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***DRAWING:***

## **JIMI JONES**

Jimi Jones has a BS in graphic design from UC. He is member of a small art movement of African American artists whose art is based on the search for ancestral truth, both modern and ancient.

Contact: [jaj0421@zoomtown.com](mailto:jaj0421@zoomtown.com)



By Jimi Jones

## Urban Architecture

(by **Frank Walker**)

Main street in Over-the-Rhine  
between 12th and 14th

is landscaped with lean black hustlers  
in long white tees

and young mothers who drag children  
down the street like leg irons,

has learned to ignore statistics and the ammonia  
scent  
of summer concrete soaked in piss,

stacks its poor twelve deep at bus stops, and  
wraps  
its homeless in empty store fronts and cardboard  
blankets, at night. Around the corner  
from another new condo and secure off-street  
parking  
something the size and color of hope  
dies every 30 seconds

so junior pall bearers crowd street corners  
practice pouring libations

dark suits in their pockets  
their neighborhood's last rites already waived.

## Must Be

(by **Timothy Whalen**)

(Remembering 9/11)

There must be a song  
with each voice in accord

There must be a ship  
to reach every shore

There must be a home  
every man can afford

There must be a key  
to unlock every door

There must be a truce  
to end every war

And there must be a way  
to keep peace secure.

## Out of the Grave

(by **Timothy Whalen**)

(*A Soldier's Prayer*)

We fight for love and happiness  
We pray for strength and might  
We hope for grace from thunder  
as we roar on through the night  
If the daybreak brings us glory  
and the price for peace is paid  
We'll break the chains of calamity  
and raise the children from the grave.

## The Warning

(by **Timothy Whalen**)

The winter cold will pass  
and spring will come at last  
but though the flowers bloom  
the earth is filled with gloom  
We strain to see the sun  
through missile smoke and gun  
The heat of war and pain  
consumes the summer rain  
As all of nature shows  
a ravaged field won't grow  
And if life falls like autumn leaves  
we perish beneath an endless freeze.



## **POEMS:**

### **GARY WALTON**

Gary Walton is the author of five books of poetry: *The Sweetest Song* (1988), *Cobwebs and Chimeras* (1995), *Effervescent Softsell* (1997), *The Millennium Reel* (2003), *Full Moon: the Melissa Moon Poems* (2007) and one book of short fiction and humor: *The Newk Phillips Papers* (1995). His current work-in-progress, is a comic novel about Newport, KY in its heyday as a gambling Mecca called *Sin City*. Gary received a Ph.D. from George Washington University. He is currently an assistant professor in the department of Literature and Language at NKU and Editor of the *Journal of Kentucky Studies*.

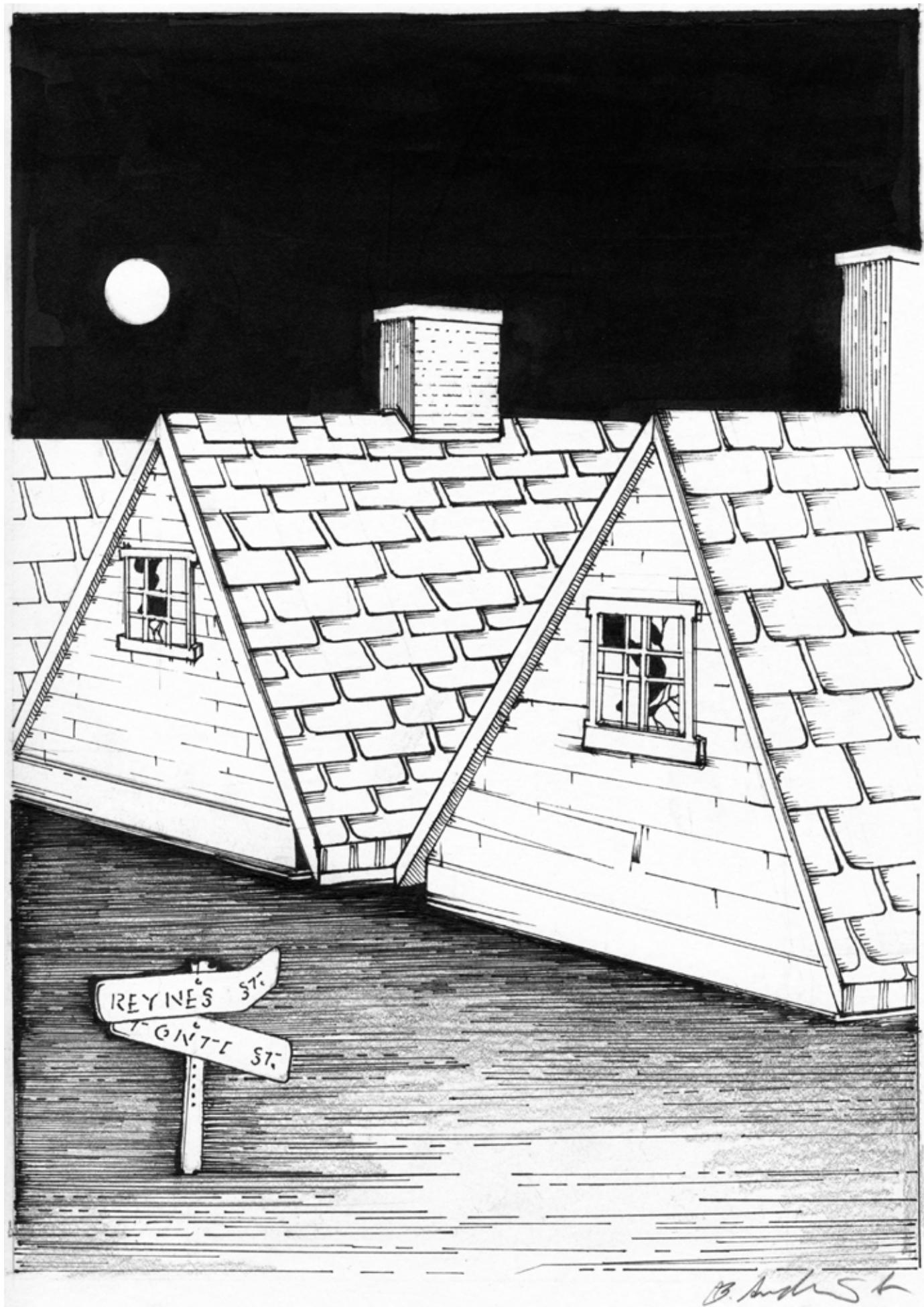
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## **DRAWING:**

### **ANDREW AU**

Andrew Au is an artist who has been working with socio-political themes for several years. He is an Assistant Professor of Art at Miami University, Middletown, OH. He recently returned to the Cincinnati area after having experienced Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005.

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## Katrina 2005

We sit on the roof  
Waiting—the bodies float by—  
Where are the Chinooks?

They won't let us die—  
No, not in America—  
If we was white folks.

Where was the concrete  
To keep the levees intact?  
Must be in Iraq.

Who knew a cat five  
Would flood the whole goddam' town?  
Pret'near everyone.

If I just had one  
Hour of electricity,  
I'd drown on tv.

Class in the US?  
Who got wet and who didn't?  
Think, who dead? Who ain't?

It don't take no voodoo  
When the helicopters come  
To see the devil.

After the storm go,  
Check up into the attics—  
Find the new graveyards.

Echo in your  
Brain even as you  
Follow  
His imperious orders—

Somewhere in your  
Skull  
The lizard brain enjoys  
Suffering,  
Like your tongue  
Slathering  
Over a rare grilled  
Sirloin  
Or a chunk of  
Chicken  
Broiled golden and dripping—

We are not  
Far  
From the cave  
Squatting  
Behind scented straw grass  
Naked  
On a Savannah,  
Gnawing  
On some straggler,  
Boon  
Of our latest raid, an  
Attack  
On a tribe behind the far hill.

Dignity can wait until  
Bellies  
Are full and  
Conscience  
Is just a word  
Deferred  
For after dinner  
Chit-chat,  
As the call of  
Duty  
Is just a means to  
Focus  
The hunger and hate while  
Scraping  
The spears before the  
Hunt.

## This Poem Is

Afraid  
Of the Milgram Experiment  
And  
The blind obedience  
To  
The man in the lab coat  
Demanding  
You flick one more switch—

The howls of  
Pain

# Eschatology Escadrille1

*“Do not weep maiden, for war is kind”*  
--Stephen Crane

*“That’s a fellow now that’d sell his country  
for a fourpence—eye!—and go down on his  
bended knees and thank the Almighty Christ  
he had a country to sell.” --James Joyce, “Ivy  
Day in the Committee Room”*

i  
When the Fourth Estate  
Has become a Fifth Column—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Should we sing about the end times  
Or just remain solemn?  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

ii  
Is it rapture or rupture?  
I never can remember—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

And mass dissimulation  
Has become the legal tender—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

iii  
Should we moan *“Kyrie Eleison”*?  
Mes amis, s'il vous plait—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

No, let's recite a Kaddish  
Or better still, a Rondolet?  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

iv  
'Cause I'm gonna drive my Hummer™  
and my big black SUV—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

'Til the polar ice cap melts  
And kills both you and me—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

(1To be recited with the verve of the huckster  
Professor Harold Hill of 'The Music Man'

v  
The “ding en sich”  
Is such a quaint notion—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

As we drop democratic bombs  
In the sand across the ocean—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

vi  
Squint into the space  
Between what's done and said—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

And you can see the truth oozing  
From the wounded and the dead—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

vii  
It's not what we know;  
It's what you will believe—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Remember, the ace in the hole  
Is always hiding up our sleeve—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

viii  
So, sit back, relax  
Don't ask the reasons why—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

There'll be no time for questions  
No time to say goodbye!  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

xi  
Ye shall surely reap  
Such seeds as ye did sow—  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

And when we come to get you— (*and we will*)  
—Don't say I didn't tell you so!  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™  
Fox News®, Clear Channel©: Armageddon™

***POEMS:***

**FRAN WATSON**

Fran Watson: Artist, musician - flute and classical guitar, - published writer, blessed by the muses. Her art may be seen on the 5th floor walls at Pendleton Art Center, where she has a studio. Travel is one of her many hobbies, as is learning. Taft museum of art docent for 25 years.  
Mother of four amazing people.

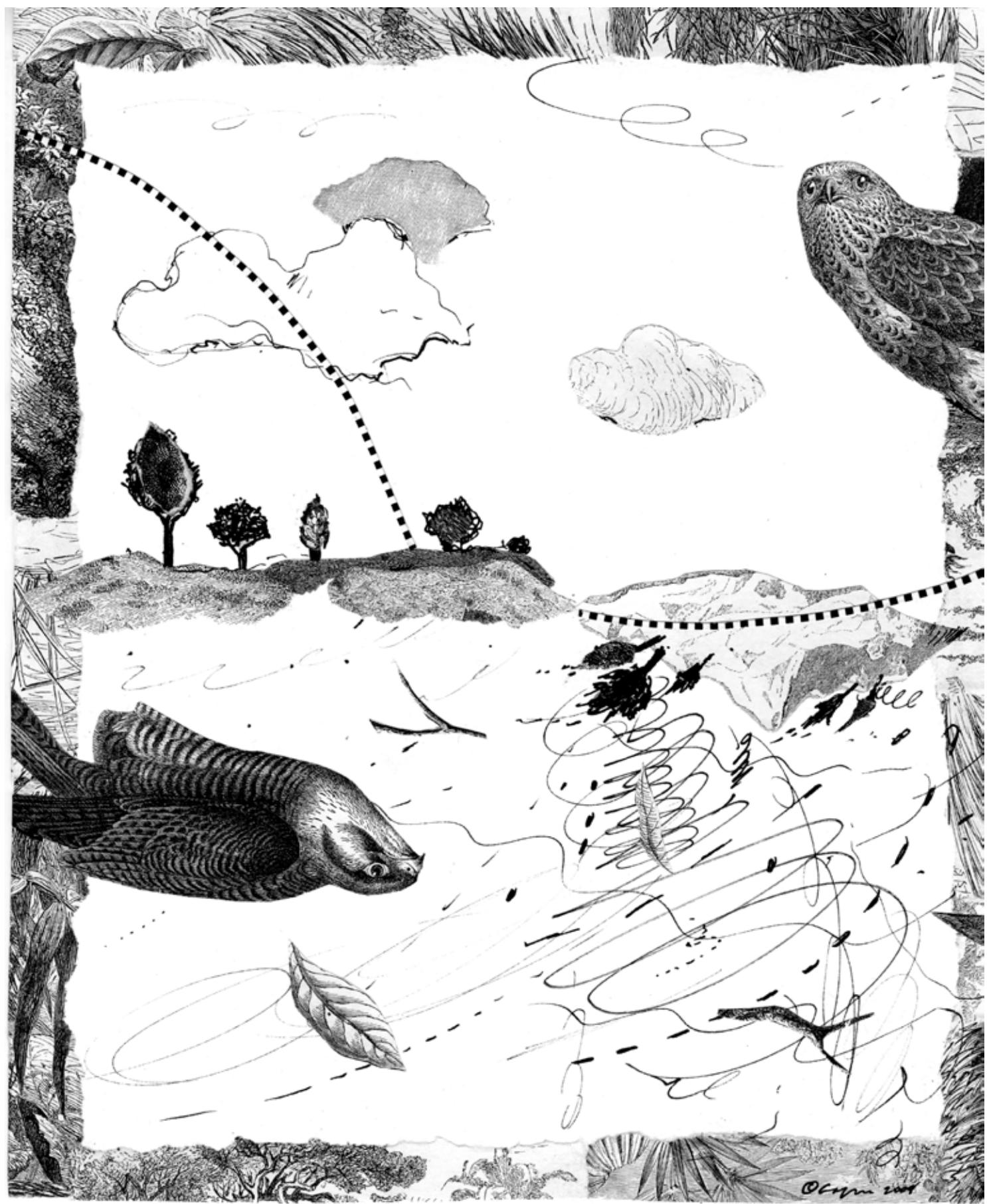
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***DRAWING:***

**GARY GAFFNEY**

Gary G. Gaffney, born in New Orleans, LA, is a visual artist, a Professor for some 30 years at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and a sometime poet.

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## The Wind Last Night

moaning hungrily, the wind last night  
tore at the hilltop across the road,  
nearly bending trees to the ground.  
dead branches crashed, and last year's nests  
were shredded, discarded in the dark.  
one mighty blast followed another,  
relentless in the attack, reveling in power,  
possessed of endless energy.

alone and alert, I listened.  
surely the woods were destroyed,  
the hilltop bare, the landscape furrowed,  
forever altered by the charge

today, a weak winter sun, half gray, half  
cream,  
revealed the trees, reaching familiarly sky-  
ward,  
as if this same prosaic sky had not raged  
hours before, predicting total ruin.

the wind will return, and the trees will bend,  
not break. the strong will become stronger,  
the hawks will rebuild, swooping down the hill  
and soaring above in effortless arabesques.  
Once more I will hear seductive summer's  
breeze  
whispering tenderly through green, leafy  
crowns  
as if the chaos had not been,

and will be again.

## Virtual Freedom

freedom, the elusive chalice,  
subject of ad campaigns,  
byword of shiny men in suits, themes of endless  
movies  
involving bloody battles, horrendous tasks  
and sacrifices, ... some place else.

Nomad tribes are free, now, to be counted  
and beg on city streets.  
the homeless are free to be sheltered,  
in designated places.  
everyone may buy starter castles,  
but may not hang out sheets to dry.  
children and dogs have parks for play  
carefully encased by wire fences and gates.

and.....

a nameless devastated village  
sprinkled with squatting survivors, staring in  
shock  
while some heroic voice pronounces them free,  
in a language they cannot understand.  
purchased from their aimless content  
by the foolish bravery of strangers.  
hopelessly, they search for their children,  
sifting for memories in the debris of lost homes,  
too hungry and lost to care about "freedom".



**POEMS:**

**KEN WILLIAMSON**

Ken Williamson, a native of Cincinnati, is a graduate of Norwood High School and Ohio University. He was a US Army Photographer and Journalist in Vietnam in 1969 and owned his own film and video production company for 28 years. He has served on the boards of *Life Success Seminars*, *The Joseph House for Homeless Veterans* and *Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 649*. Ken is currently CEO of *On Location Multimedia* and is an active writer and photographer. His photographs may be seen at [www.photogalleryonthenet.com](http://www.photogalleryonthenet.com), also with a link to his poetry.

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**DRAWING:**

**KEVIN HARRIS**

Kevin Harris lives in Franklin, OH. He teaches drawing and printmaking as an Associate Professor at Sinclair Community College in Dayton. Kevin received a BA from Hampton Institute (1983) and an MFA from the University of Cincinnati (1988). Growing up in Cincinnati, he attended North Avondale Elementary School and Walnut Hills High School.

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Kevin Harris

## **The Rain, My Mother and Common Sense**

“You don’t have enough common sense to get in out of the rain... you’re going to get wet”, my Mother would announce.

I was only seven.  
exploring a child’s adventure.  
Playing in the rain  
with my friends.

Small, shallow areas  
in the pavement  
would fill  
with water.

Our feet made huge splashes  
as we purposely  
took aim  
in the puddles.

Our mission  
splashing  
ourselves  
and each other.

The rain ran down my face,  
dripped off my nose,  
filled my ears,  
and cooled my body.

When the summer shower was over,  
and the puddles were gone,  
I put on dry clothes  
and enjoyed the sweet smell of the air.  
Today,  
49 years later,  
I sometimes work in my garden  
in the rain.

The water runs down my face  
drips off my nose  
and fills my ears  
transporting my mind  
to Vietnam  
and a different adventure.

The smells return  
mildew  
and the uniform that never dried.  
Fear and loneliness.

The sarge never said:  
“Son, git out of the rain,  
you’re gonna git wet”.  
And where was the  
common sense  
in that?

## **Peace at Last**

I returned to Vietnam in search of treasures lost.  
I looked into the eyes of the enemy  
and found a friendly spirit.  
Had I discovered myself again?

I returned to the battleground in search of youth  
gone by.  
The smells, the sounds, the feelings.  
All I found were echoes of days gone by  
and spirits screaming through the silence.

I returned to Vietnam  
to find something I left behind.  
And found that  
The treasure of peace had not been lost.

