

# For A 2014 Better World



POEMS AZUSA DRAWINGS ON  
PEACE JUSTICE BY  
Greater Cincinnati Artists

# **“For a Better World” 2014**

Poems and Drawings  
on  
Peace and Justice

by  
Greater Cincinnati Artists

Editor:  
Saad Ghosn

“Ever since the beginning of time, humankind has dreamed or perhaps remembered in the dim, dark, distant recesses of the psyche, of an abundant world where life is lived in harmony and balance... a world in peace with justice where inherent connections between animals, people and the earth are understood and respected. Ancient myths and stories tell of such a place. In the new millennium – a time of new beginning – our longing continues, not for a new place, not for an old place, but for a changed place. We long for a place of peace, consideration, concern, caring and compassion, a place where respect for all is the continuous order of things.”

**Elizabeth Jane FARIANS**  
(4/10/1923 - 10/21/2013)

# Foreword

“... now is the time to think like poets, to envision and make visible a new society, a peaceful, cooperative, loving world without poverty and oppression, limited only by our imaginations,” wrote African American author and historian Robin D. G. Kelly.

This 11th edition of “For a Better World” is dedicated to five Cincinnati peace activists who passed away in 2013 and whose work, social and political stands and poetry coincided with Kelly’s message. Elizabeth Farians (1923-2013), a lifetime pioneer and leader for women’s rights, for changes in the Catholic Church, for human rights and the rights of all beings, had a relentless drive for justice and an unwavering commitment to non-violence. Gordon Maham (1917-2013), an animal lover and protector, a vegetarian and an environmentalist, lived in peace and harmony with nature and the land, treating insects and buzzards with the same love and respect he showed all people. A staunch opponent of nuclear weapons he spent several years in prison refusing to work on the Manhattan Project where nuclear bombs were being produced. Randall Ball (1953-2013), an activist’s activist, brought other activists together and was passionately involved in wide ranging issues from peace and justice to nutrition, animal compassion, and environment. Suhith Wikrema (1953-2013), known for his compassion, good humor, and social scientific bent, played key roles in the struggles for prison reform, for abolishing the death penalty, and for ending racism and economic injustice. Aralee Strange (1944-2013), a poet, playwright and filmmaker, always championed the underdog, the underserved and the under-appreciated in her work and in her poetry. She sought truth in all its places and her powerful poetry was included in many past editions of this book.

Sixty five poets and forty two visual artists in this book also follow Kelly’s message and speak for a world after their heart and values, a world of love, peace and justice. Of all ages and backgrounds, they use their art and talent to state their concerns and affirm their beliefs and by doing so, strengthen each other’s diverse voices and give life to their hopes and dreams.

In a world still prey to injustice and wars, these artists weep for the dead, revolt for the oppressed, denounce unjust societal wrongs, advocate for the poor, the homeless, and the neglected, reject violence and its consequences, fight for the battered environment. They also challenge the prevailing societal values of materialism, consumerism and domination and speak for a change in values towards love, compassion and forgiveness. They paint a beautiful world, a world of diversity and equality, where peace is based on truth, justice, and kindness. With their lucid song, these artists also confront the evil in this world and promise 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 visual 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 Michael Henson, Jerry Judge, Fran Watson and William Howes, who kindly reviewed all the submitted poems and provided their editorial advice.

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

Saad Ghosn  
Book editor and organizer



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***POEMS:***

**DINA ALKHATEEB**

Dina Alkhateeb, a Palestinian American writer, advocates for Arab American women through her poetry. She is set to graduate from Northern Kentucky University in May 2014 with a degree in English and German.

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**AINSLEY KELLAR**

Ainsley Kellar graduated from New York University in 1992. She is the owner of a TV commercial and industrial video house, ARK Productions and a Telly Award and Aurora Award Winning producer. She is also a professional photographer.

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**ZOHREH ZAND**

Born to an Iranian father and German mother, Zohreh Zand is a Canadian citizen who has resided in Cincinnati since 2011. She is a member of the Monday Morning Writers Group and a docent at Cincinnati Art Museum.

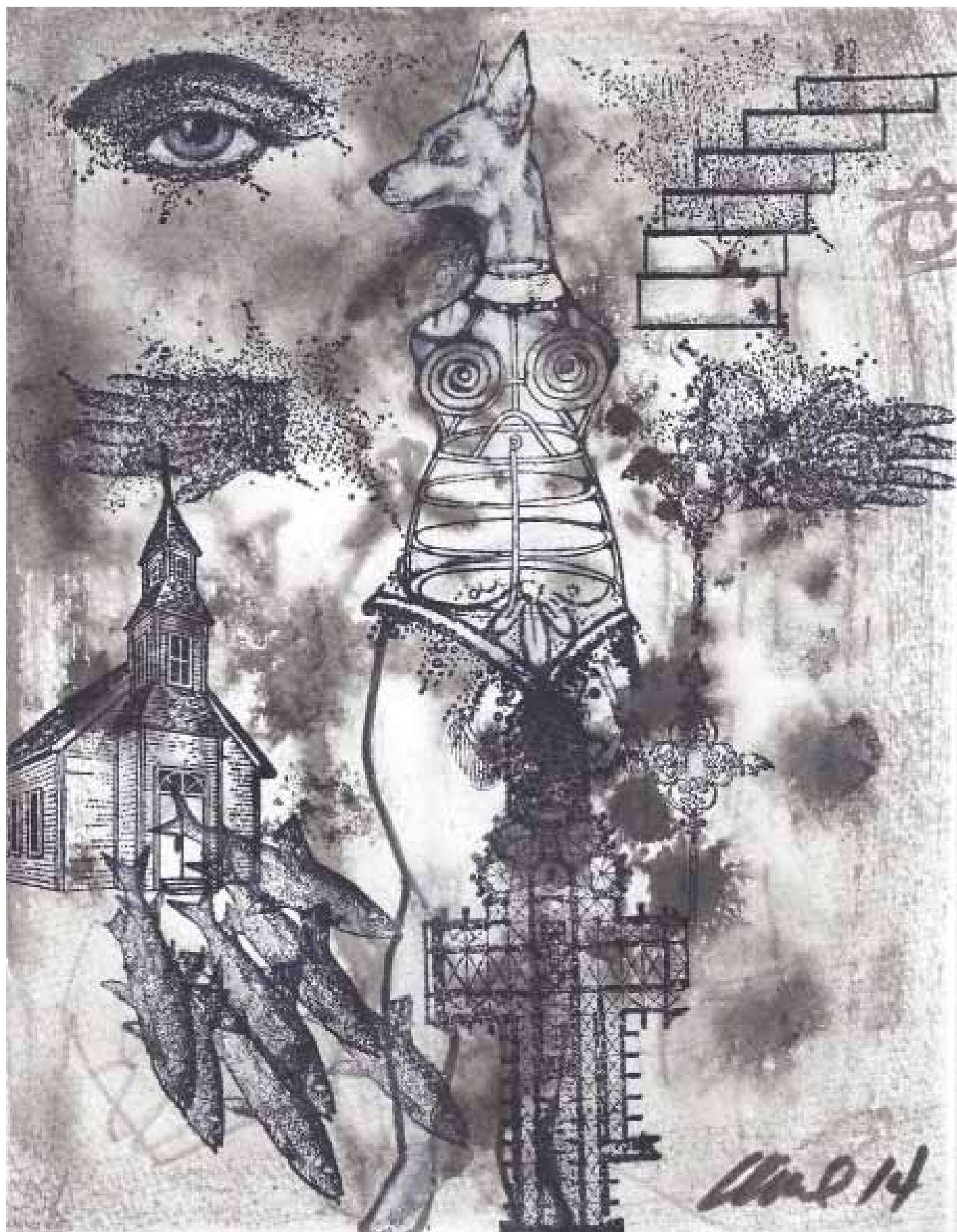
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***DRAWING:***

**HALENA CLINE**

Halena Cline is a Cincinnati studio artist whose work has been broadly exhibited. Cline's work consists of watercolors, ceramics, oils and mixed media. Her works are included in many corporate and private collections nationally and internationally.

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Aug 14

## Identity

(by **Dina Alkhateeb**)

Why should it matter?  
My eyes, my skin, my hair  
A dove's flight,  
I am who I am

Locked in *your* shackles,  
Or should I say in a hijab?  
Caged in expectations,  
Longing to break free  
I am who I am

As-salam alaykum,  
No, wait-  
Hi, how are you?  
An accustomed feud  
But, I am who I am

## Wild Woman

(by **Ainsley Kellar**)

Wild woman  
Running free  
No one claims her  
Let her be  
She will not answer  
When you call  
You cannot leash her  
To the wall  
She must be left  
To roam the land  
She's happiest  
At her command...  
But should she choose  
To find in you  
A place to trust  
Here's what to do  
Hold her when she's feeling down  
But never pin her to the ground  
Laugh with her on sunny days  
But don't insult her woman ways

Cherish every inch of her  
But never shame her woman curves  
Should you agree with this and more  
That wild woman might be yours...

## What's Your Religion

(by **Zohreh Zand**)

Looking at me you innocently asked:  
"And what religion do you have?"

Asking what I value in life.

Wrapped in the brackets of a smile  
the answer was simple  
like religion itself  
appearing to be a riddle  
"None but all."

A pause and another smile  
Looking straight into your eyes  
I continued

"The essence of all

*Do no harm; Be of help.*

Does it really matter  
if I move back and forth  
or bend and kneel  
or fold my hands  
or just be still?

Respect to all

They say there is a higher power  
and I ask you:

Would a higher power have a change of heart?

Preferring one over the other?

The essence is eternal -

*Do no harm; Be of help.*

For love of peace and justice

I choose

None but all.





## ***POEMS:***

### **ELLEN AUSTIN-LI**

Ellen Austin-Li is a poet, free-lance writer, wife, mother and nurse. Formerly from Upstate NY and then Boston, she has now lived in Cincinnati for 17 years. Ellen is community gardener and a participant at Women Writing for a Change.

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### **CAROL IGOE**

Carol Igoe, initially an English teacher, morphed later into other careers, less profound and lyrical, but more concerned with catalyzing social change. Poetry brings life back into alignment with what is important, deeply felt, and hopeful.

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### **NANCY JENTSCH**

Nancy Jentsch lives in rural Campbell County with her family and assorted animals. She enjoys reading, traveling, knitting and, of course, tea. She has taught German and Spanish at NKU since 1982.

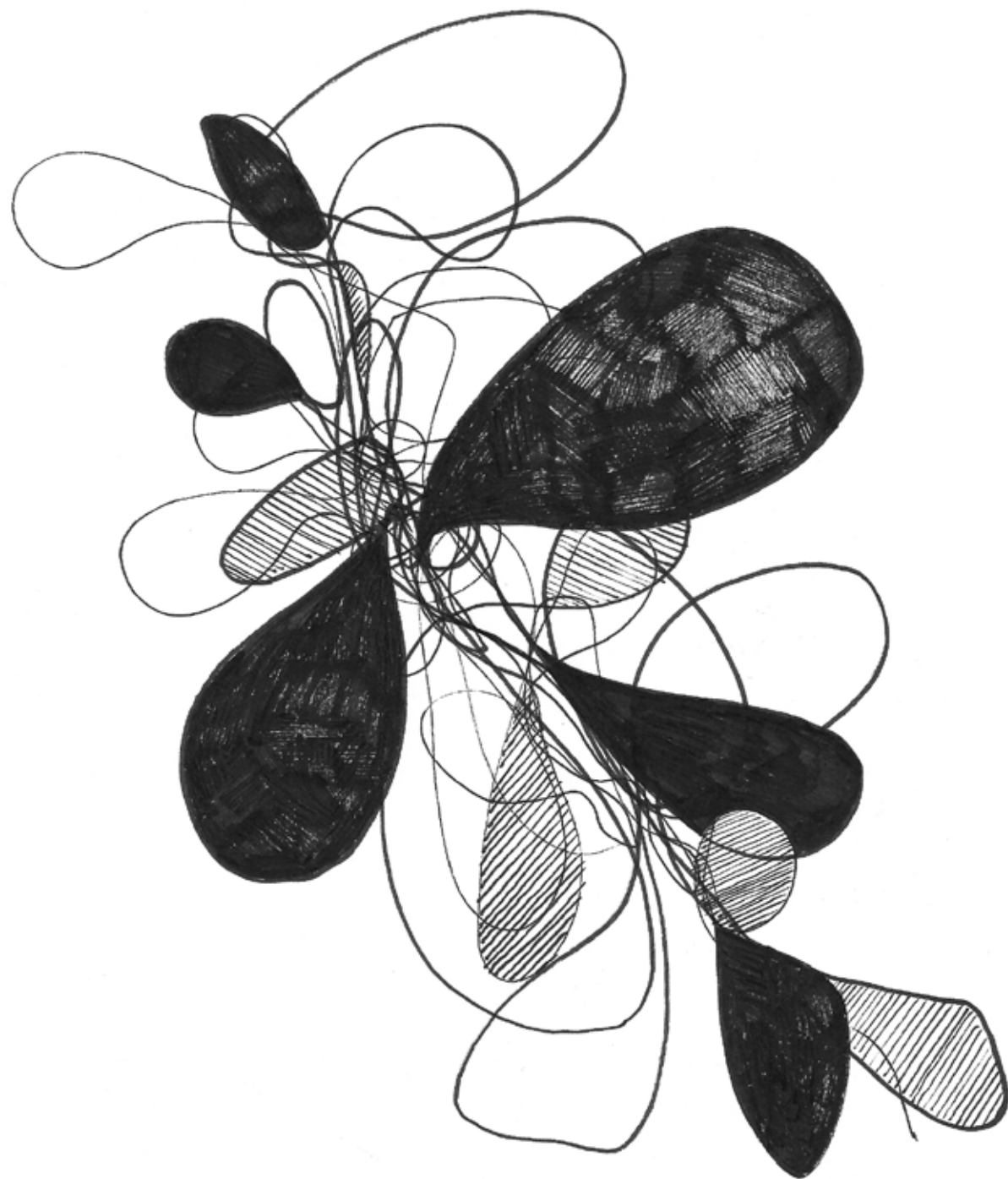
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## ***DRAWING:***

### **JEAN MEHDI GRANGEON**

Jean Mehdi Grangeon (born 1972) is a French artist who, after working in the pharmaceutical industry, opened an art studio in New York City in 2002. Random immersions in the subway system and the experience of traveling in the bowels of the city among different groups of people became very inspirational for his creative work. Jean Mehdi lives in Cincinnati with his wife and two daughters.

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## Origami Wishes

(by *Ellen Austin-Li*)

Swatches of colors -  
sweet peach, blades of pistachio, dripping  
plum, waves of blue -  
spectral reflections of the heart's moment  
chosen by the artist's tenor,  
sung in allegorical notes.

Folding-in upon itself,  
corners meet in a crisp crease;  
fingers slide with deft decision,  
wisps of hair tucked behind one ear,  
the breath of creation inhales.

At once a kite  
fluttering in the breeze of hands,  
inverted to land as a frog  
leaping in fingers on the page.  
The metamorphosis begins,  
creasing and rising  
from the earth  
to the sky.

The Peace Crane emerges,  
Wings ascending in the sky,  
floating to rest on a ruby glass bead  
in a line of eight ~  
a wish for peace in the number of infinity.

## Words for Lebanon

(by *Carol Iggoe*)

Words slip from my dreams,  
Into conjurer's hands,  
Transform to birds:  
Doves cooing,  
The hoodless falcon  
That shrieks and tears.

## Women at the Western Wall

(by *Carol Iggoe*)

Women's prayers fly up the wall,  
nest between the massive stones  
where vagrant branches cling,  
full of birds.

Silenced, turned within,  
No women's voices sing.  
Like Hannah's long ago pleading,  
their stillness opens the ear of God.

Young women, hair piled high,  
Send up their yearning dreams of love,  
Old women lean into the wall for strength,  
Mothers pray for an end to strife:  
    May You turn our children from war,  
    Make strangers into brothers,  
    Give us peace,  
    Shalom,  
    Assalaam alaikum.

## Harvest Blessing

(by *Nancy Jentsch*)

Boil water  
    to steep eastern leaves  
Breathe in  
    nutty Oolong or crisp Darjeeling  
Notice the scent  
    of Asian hillsides  
Listen for laborers' breaths  
    the sounds of harvest  
Close your eyes  
to welcome their blessing  
See their toil  
    an honest offering  
Sip liquid kindling  
    against the fire's cold ash  
Open your eyes  
    to a sunlit mug of tea leaves  
Read in the leaves  
    the linking of lives  
Watch the sun travel west  
    to dawn on hillsides, hasten the harvest



***POEMS:***

**MARY BACH-LOREAUX**

Mary Bach-Loreaux first appeared in 2013 in the SOS art show with her fine arts photo series on sexual abuse. In addition to photography Mary likes to work in watercolor and is experimenting with mixed media. Poetry has been in her life for many years; she has been published in print and online journals in the US and more recently in a book in the UK. Mary was born in West Virginia and lives both inside and outside the Appalachian literary world. Nature, place, and human lives are poetic themes she's often attracted to.

***DRAWING:***

**CHRISTIAN SCHMIT**

Christian Schmit is an artist and teacher living in northern Kentucky.

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for the poem 'Aridity' by Mary Bach-Loreaux

Christian D Schmit  
2014

## Aridity

The words have not lined up  
well versed in Hemingway or hemlock.  
They have log-jammed, laid in sliding doors  
of my mind like collectible paper dolls  
that I would not release, because where I  
came from paper dolls became the products  
of serial killers.

I lost my paper dolls. I had no drawers.  
They forsook me, knowing nothing of my love  
for line and costume, fashion and shapes.  
They forsook me, with my deep need for paper doll  
drawers filled with a world of flat and paper  
people who never scream when their necks bend  
or their legs break off. I was compelled  
by the knife of the killer  
not to be dramatic. And so the words  
have gone in without sunlight, fertilizer  
or fresh loam.

Paper dolls can be farm wives.  
Furrowed brows are my reward,  
faced with fertile fields grown barren  
between the purple hills, lying in  
pastures below the road. My words  
are farm wives where mistresses of the atelier  
shamelessly strut and pose.

I can't.

## Queen City Images

Silver snow belly  
black ice-breath fog  
goes down on her.

Burial mound lyric  
symphonic rhapsody  
blues. old men's tears.

Union Beth-el barge floats  
ropes to night ladies, thrust  
from western southern wrecking balls,  
aborting their daughters.

Ice tears thaw in Lincoln's eyes.

Street cars name desire tomorrow  
rutting the streets, an inner course for art,  
leave raging fires unfought.

Passion of the ones under, over- pass –  
she hits him in the mouth. Calls him an  
old lesbian. No lunch.

West end crack babies.  
Their feet can't play on concourse 3  
where great trains tracked terminal  
museums. No money.

Winter takes. Dead survivors  
slit her belly with sleek coffins. Their names  
decompose. Caring eyes might fling lasers  
and save her womb.

Let us pray. They sing. Let us hope.  
But they build an obelisk to worship.  
No healers  
to stop her bleeding. She wasn't covered.

Her nakedness is told by reporters  
between recipes and admonitions.



## Untitled

I can't find my voice,  
so passing by the Museum Company on an  
April day  
I find an Einstein marionette dangling  
in the window, and I want him.

I don't have the money,  
but in my head I take him home,  
and lovingly unwrap him,  
hoping he'll lead me down the key-lime lane  
of some literary freeway.

I hang him from a wire  
that stretches  
from corner to corner  
over my bed where he can sail  
above the computer,  
letting me see his whimsey,  
pink carnation in his lapel,  
white lab coat crisp,  
and face always spring-lamb new  
with discovery.

Here, once installed in my heart,  
he leads me past critics and censors,  
and his presence would only be cotton candy  
for my pen but for my knowledge  
of Dachau, Nagasaki and Manhattan.

My slight, iconic Jewish gentleman  
washes stars across my night sky,  
his paintbrush loaded and dripping  
with the laws and properties of matter.

He colors my universe lightly  
with awful knowledge,  
and I travel with him  
at the speed of light, words  
reaching critical mass,  
insights I may never have the wisdom  
or the whimsey to speak, but stay  
always key-lime and a little Einstein,  
ink-washed energy  
spreading exponentially over  
the watercolor paper of my mind.

## ***POEMS:***

### **LUKE BOEHNE**

Luke Boehne, 27 years old, was raised in Fort Thomas, Ky. He moved to Nashville to attend Vanderbilt University, then returned home; he works at Green B.E.A.N. Delivery in organic and local food. Luke has lived in Northside for 3 years. He is devoted to alternative education and d.i.y. communal programs on transitional and sustainable living. He writes, performs poetry, spoken word, rap.

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### **SCOTT GOEBEL**

Scott Goebel's work has appeared in *Cold Mountain Review*, *Wind Magazine*, *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel* and other journals. He is active with the Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative, Mountain Justice, and Elmo's Haven (a writers retreat). He recently edited *Get In, Jesus- New & Selected Poems* (Wind Publications 2013) by Appalachian activist poet Jim Webb.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **AMY BOGARD**

Amy Bogard, a fine artist and illustrator, lives and works in the Ohio River Valley. She is most known for her work with the Illuminated Journal process. Amy teaches workshops on keeping a visual travel journal each summer in Taos, NM.

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## Keeping the Heart-Beat

(by **Luke Boehne**)

Anti-Bacterial Toxins,  
Supermarketed weapons of micro-mass destruction,  
Eliminating odors and aiding our production.  
It's a disastrous massacre of our decomposers,  
Enabling our excesses to accumulate,  
With no room for left-overs.  
Instead, we're investing in Ozone and bulldozers.

Independent growers, and Buffalo Roamers, move over...  
Here comes the owner,  
And He's making his home here.  
Get lost, or get bossed, but don't get tossed –  
In the trash, with the food and grass scraps,  
With the past, and the consequences of our acts.

Organics are being replaced by plastics.  
We are what we eat,  
Including fake fruit and toxic meat,  
The reasons we hide our underarms and our feet.

Fast food is highly effective,  
In infiltrating our dreams.  
But once ingested,  
It robs us of the rest that we should get when we sleep.  
Take it from the wise woman, who prays and weeps,  
Hoping the reports aren't true, and there is miraculous mercy.  
She wishes blessings over the kids in the streets,  
Rising each day to keep the hope alive,  
And to precipitate the prophecies:  
Denounce food that doesn't rot,  
Clogging Mother Nature's arteries.  
Denounce the demise of our means,  
The genocide of our trees;  
We can't speak up if we can't breathe.  
Support sustainable agriculture and fair trade commerce.  
Read the labels, read the histories,  
Share a healing art from an overflow of the heart.  
Where to start? Eat garlic and feel your heart beat.  
Heart-beat. Heart-beat.  
Sing of life and explore sustainably continuous frequencies,  
Heart-beat. Heart-beat. Heart-beat.

## *Montani Semper Liberi*

(by **Scott Goebel**)

In West (by God) Virginia,  
*Mountaineers Are Always Free.*

Free to be independent.  
Hard-working. Self-sufficient—  
living off the beauty  
and wealth of these mountains

Free to shout down treehuggers,  
Vistas, organizers, and miners,  
yes—miners who speak out  
against colony and king.

Free to abandon tainted wells  
for safer, cleaner city water.  
After Elk Creek?  
Free to take their chances.

Free to accept the burden  
of Mountaintop Removal—  
arsenic and selenium  
poisoning buried streams.

Free to accept denials for Black Lung  
by the king's kangaroo court—  
a cabal of Johns Hopkins doctors  
and lawyers on perpetual retainer.

Free to wear wheezing  
as a badge of pride  
puffing and huffing  
until they die.

In West (by God) Virginia,  
*Mountaineers Are Always Free.*

Free to wear the badges  
of the king's honored dead  
of Upper Big Branch.  
Sago. Farmington.  
Island Creek.  
Pocahontas.

Eccles.  
Monangah.

In West (by God) Virginia,  
*Mountaineers Are Always Free.*

Free to forget the king's  
transgressions at  
Blair Mountain, Matewan,  
and Buffalo Creek.

Free to elect the king's minions—  
glad- handing governors,  
double-talking senators,  
and side-stepping congressmen

who talk of jobs and praise  
the king's good deeds.  
Every one of them serving  
at the king's pleasure.

Free to accept poverty,  
poor health, and short lives  
as the cost of doing business  
in the mountain state.

Free to watch  
the exodus  
of children  
from a Broken Promise Land.

In West (by God) Virginia,  
*Mountaineers Are Always Free,*

unaware of King Coal's motto—  
*In montibus non libero*

***POEM:***

**SAMANTHA BROCKFIELD**

Samantha Brockfield is a native Cincinnati who has put her writing abilities to work for peace and justice in the fields of Journalism, Public Service, Community Organizing and Development for nearly a decade. She recently started a new path in the private sector and remains a tireless advocate for Cincinnati's urban neighborhoods. Samantha holds a Bachelor's degree in Urban Planning from UC/DAAP.

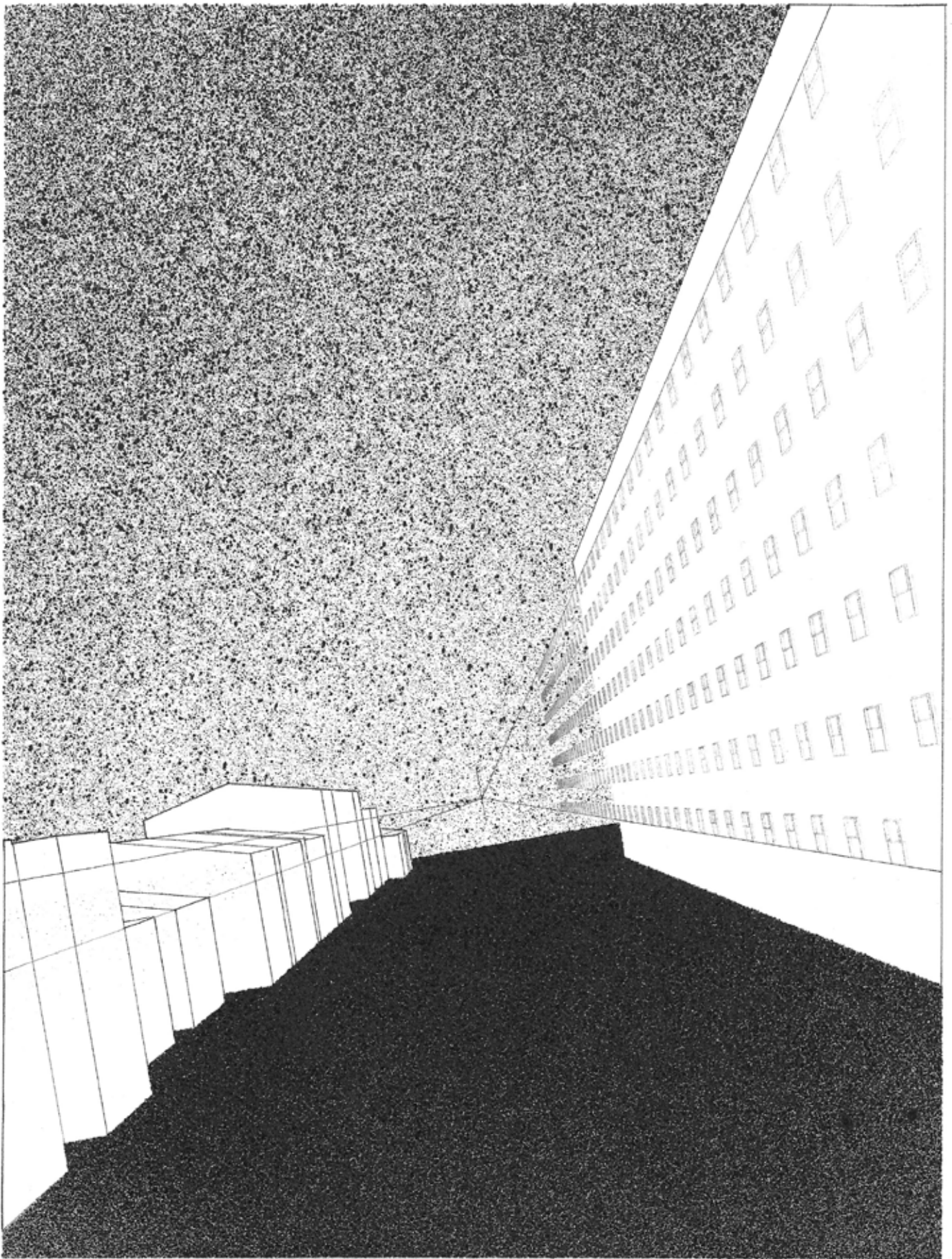
Contact: [samantha.brockfield@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.brockfield@gmail.com)

***DRAWING:***

**SARAH VAZ**

Sarah Vaz was born but not raised in Cincinnati. She is currently finishing a Masters of Architecture thesis at DAAP. Her favorite view in the city is from the top deck of the Western Hills Viaduct overlooking the train yard.

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## **This Scary, Gorgeous, Ghost-town of a Place**

Stepping out onto  
Wet slippery  
Grey stone steps  
Towards the street trees,  
Mumbling.

Swing a right to stroll past  
Mansions of wealth  
Spent up long ago,  
Beckoning.

Take a left at one of the many new corner  
dumpsters  
Culling up the insides from this  
Body of a beautiful place,  
Dying.

### **My dog Ezzy, Two years old and 80 pounds strong**

Jaunts around like he owns the place.  
He greets every tree, corner and alley,  
Delights with each chance encounter,  
Pulling.

Makes sense that he should feel so brave,  
fearless;  
Since I rescued him from my own  
neighborhood.  
Makes sense I should feel so brave, fearless;  
Since there is nobody here

We've found freedom in abandonment:  
Freedom from development – these  
monuments;  
Freedom from fighting to stay alive – this dog;  
Freedom from expectation – this Woman;  
Me.

### **In this moment I see A Scary, Gorgeous, Ghost-town Past**

This place is Alive with:  
Immigrants,  
Citizens,

Slaves.  
Merchants.  
Revolutionaries.  
Social Workers.  
Writers and Artists. This place is  
Teeming with Horses and  
Flowing in Beer.

I feel the landscape  
Writhing with the pressure of  
Bulging underground tunnels,  
Stretching out beneath  
A network of staircases  
Wielded by  
A cold river and  
Clear streams.

- I wade in the flow amidst past and future.

Hewn by the waters lay  
Valleys rich and windy,  
Carving out tracks upon which  
Trains speed, whistle and grind.

- A soulful echo, their sound upon the tracks  
are a whale song of the past.  
- A call that rings true, Somewhere and Always.

### **In this moment I see my Present like a Holy Place.**

A massive feat of architecture,  
Early 19th Century.  
This scary gorgeous church,  
On Freeman Avenue,  
Covered in Ivy,  
On her return to Nature.

After inspiring the huddled masses,  
She is on her last legs now,  
Desperately trying to hold her-self up  
For another 100 years.

I look straight into her rose window eyes  
And wish her the best.  
I thank her for standing  
So tall,  
So beautiful,  
For so long.



She asks me *"Why, why ...  
Generation travelled  
Across an ocean From Old World to New  
Arrived here to create  
Grandeur from nothing  
With only their own  
Bare hands and  
River rocks."*

Only to walk away  
As if to disappear.  
Letting her die slowly,  
Alone.  
I touch my hand against her side and say,  
"No one knows the answer."

**In this moment I see  
A Scary, Gorgeous, Ghost-town Future**

We turn the corner, Ezzy & I  
To gaze upon a physical question  
Face-to-face with a shifting paradox;

On the left, a revived storefront  
Surrounded by the former homes  
Of my neighbors  
They made large smoky plumes  
Of barbeque and laughter  
Flow upon our sidewalk each day  
All summer long

But now they're gone.  
Off to another Section-8 place  
This one with "washer-dryer hook-up"

Developers may try high-end retail  
Makes sense they feel so brave, fearless;  
With the return of the streetcar, Fortune 500, etc.  
They may make new fortunes for themselves  
While failing us all in doing so.

Thriving  
Declining  
Abandoned  
Charming  
Scary  
Gorgeous  
Ghost-town

What's to become of  
Brighton-Mohawk  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
USA?

I am here.  
Not as a Doctor,  
Or a Builder.  
Not a Lawyer,  
Nor a Social Worker,  
Can't draw either.

I'm just here as a Witness,  
An Organizer,  
And the Listener of this place that is  
Past, Present and Future of Mohawk-Brighton

Another Rainy Day Walk amongst  
Crumbling Brick, Abandoned Churches &  
Fading Whistles,

In a Scary, Gorgeous Ghost-Town

***POEMS:***

**ELLA CATHER-DAVIS**

Ella Cather-Davis is retired with her husband of 44 years. She began writing at age 40, writing poetry, essays and children's stories. She holds a degree in English Literature from UC and currently attends the Osher Life Long Learning Center at UC. She is a member of the Greater Cincinnati Writer's League and Ohio Poetry Society. Her written work has been published widely. Ella also loves classical choral music; she sings with the historical May Festival Chorus.

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***DRAWING:***

**SHANNON HUSER**

Shannon Huser was born and raised in Cincinnati. She currently lives on the west side with her 2 chihuahuas. She has a BFA in Fine Arts with a focus in glass and a minor in Art History. She works at a package design company as a Prototype Specialist. Shannon has a passion for art and for helping others.

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## For Glen

There are children, beloved, who  
are bathed at end of day and  
after stories, kisses and prayers  
are tucked safely into bed.

They awaken to declarations of love,  
consume a nurturing breakfast  
and live amid sunny reassurance  
of their importance.

Small wonder they can smile and feel  
confident in a competitive world  
where they can take their place.  
They are certain they *have* a place.

There are children, begrudged, who  
are not lovingly bathed at day's end  
nor read stories to, no prayers  
or tucking away to a safe sleep.

These children awake to a hostile world,  
perhaps *no* breakfast. They begin  
resolutely fending for themselves,  
becoming resourceful and

perhaps a little bitter. Yet, they grimly  
resolve to fight for their place  
in a world that never loved them.  
And despite all odds,  
  
sometimes they win.

## The Street Player

There he stands with that old Saxophone  
blowin' his soul. With eyes closed tight  
he slides to the left then sidles right  
his body's interpretation of his "*sound*".

The notes are incongruous, chaotic,  
mathematically shuffled out of order  
and pitched wildly, but man he's blowin'  
from somewhere deep, primeval.

Passers-by pause to drop a coin.  
Grateful for validation, he looks, then  
zones, oblivious to anything except  
his immortal sacred sound.

I wonder, what was his life?  
How was this chaos born?  
It is almost painful to listen,  
so hard to suppress smiling.

But he's not down man.  
He's a player, still blowin' his gift  
to a careless world who drops a coin,  
then hurries on to its safe little life.

## If You Stay in One Place

If you stay in one place for all of your life,  
it is still possible not to experience all of it.  
For life is always changing its scenery and  
you might not look closely enough to see - -

always on the way to somewhere else  
or coming home when the moon has risen  
and the stars mark their appointed places  
reflecting pin-point patterns in the inky sky.

If you stay in one place for all your life,  
you might dream of Paris or Australia,  
the teeming life in a dark Amazon rain forest,  
or Africa's Serengeti where the wildebeests play.

But always dreaming of somewhere else,  
do you forget to gaze at a lazy river flowing on,  
or Bees busily pollinating our future food,  
spending down their appointed days.

If you stay in one place for all of your life - -  
you are always home and cannot experience,  
that all-of-a-sudden sacred epiphany which  
overwhelms: After going somewhere else,

you can at last - - - come home.



***POEMS:***

**J. CHEWNING**

J. A. Chewning teaches the history/theory/criticism of design, architecture, art, and planning in the College of DAAP at the University of Cincinnati. The *Mother Jones* poems were written in 1971—five years before there was a Mother Jones magazine. The *Oval Office* poem goes back to September 2010 and a story about the rug on *All Things Considered*.

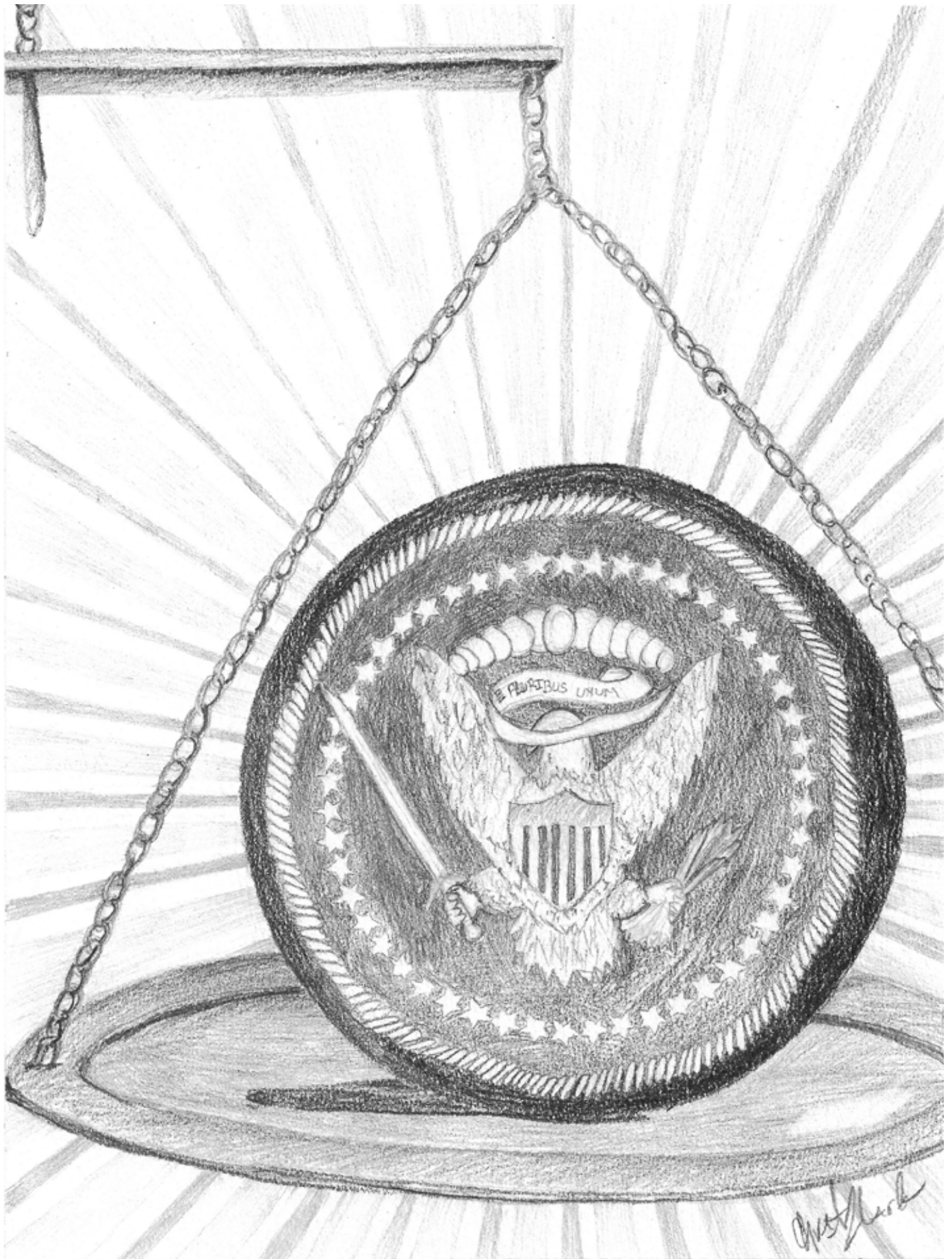
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***DRAWING:***

**CHRISTINE CARLO**

Christine Carlo is a graduating architecture student from the University of Cincinnati. Drawing and creating have always been important to her. Pencil is her favored medium for all flat work. Architecture and art will always be one in the same for her.

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## Oval Office Rug 2010— Tangents and Arcs

Faded colors, if they last long enough,  
are faded taste in rugs around the house.  
Change of party colors in the White House  
calls for changing the Oval Office Rug—  
the old one rolled up and put in storage  
for the next Presidential Library.  
Deep in the pile of the new Oval Rug—  
are words rising from Theodore Parker,  
minister speaking out in hopes of change  
in the torn days of the 1850s:  
of “a government of all the people  
by all the people, for all the people.”  
If a rug can blossom up from its roots,  
these became the words that Lincoln  
ended—  
remembered them slant as he called them  
back—  
at the dedication, at Gettysburg.  
Preacher Parker’s words bloom in the high  
pile  
twice in tangents to the new Oval Rug.  
Half inch down he said “I do not pretend  
to understand the moral universe.  
The arc is a long one. My eye reaches  
but little ways. I cannot calculate  
the curve and complete the figure  
by experience of sight. I can divine it  
by conscience, and from what I see,  
I am sure it bends toward justice.”  
Preacher Parker’s words bloom up in the  
words  
of Martin Luther King on the top tuft  
of the President’s made-by-hand new rug:  
“The arc of the moral universe is long,  
but it bends toward justice.”  
May the good and true, stated and tested,  
speak up from foot to eye to head and heart  
of this and every ever President.

## Mother Jones, Her People

### *1. West Virginia*

She came around the front way plain as day  
when they were waiting for her around back.  
She marched straight down the railroad right-of-way  
when they had guns dug in at the end of the track.  
On days when her easiest way was barred,  
she walked in the creek, the only road, she alleged,  
they had left her anywhere in the state,  
with men who had only got their feet wet  
on unionism, not even their knuckles scarred,  
singing “Shall We Gather”, getting them pledged—  
until a surge of union water, none too late,  
struck out downstream to where it squarely met  
the nearest coal company bridge head-on,  
as the scabs crept across in the hour before dawn.

### *2. Pennsylvania*

She lined up what they thought about,  
plain and simple  
and asked them to believe it  
or they were beat.  
She got them organized  
so they stayed organized  
when they first walked away,  
because she knew by heart  
the ways people will turn  
when they are caught in a bad spot,  
and she was there waiting for them  
with open arms.





***POEMS:***

**VICKIE CIMPRICH**

Vickie Cimprich's poetry collection *Pretty Mother's Home - a Shakeress Daybook* (Broadstone Books, 2007) was researched at the Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, KY. Several of her poems about black Shakers appeared in the Fall 2012 African American Review. Vickie's work also appeared in various journals and anthologies.

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**JEAN SYED**

Jean Syed is in the Cincinnati's Writer's Project and has been published in several of their anthologies. She also has a new chapbook out, *My Portfolio*, published by Kelsay Books. She has also been published by Dos Madres Press and broadcast locally. She is a member of the Ohio Poetry Association and has a poem in their anthology *Everything Stops and Listens*.

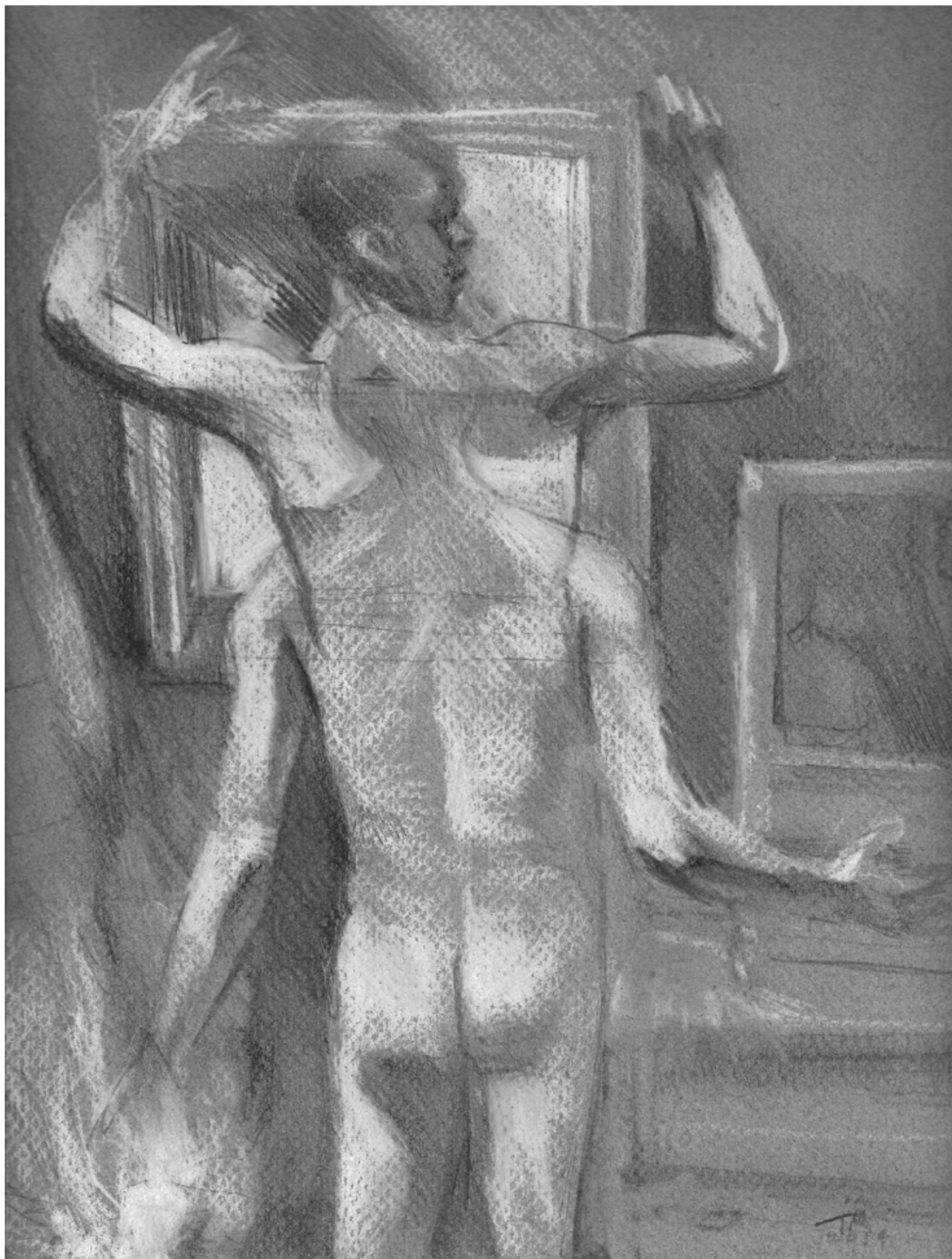
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***DRAWING:***

**TODD REYNOLDS**

Todd Reynolds, born in Cincinnati, received a Master's degree in Fine Arts from Ohio University. He currently teaches painting at Shawnee University in Portsmouth, OH. Todd has received several Ohio Art's Council Individual Artist Grants; his work has been shown widely locally.

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## What Towers

(by **Vickie Cimprich**)

requiring to be shored up  
against the other's adrenalin  
will not shoulder soldiers  
who can no longer count cans  
or remember bread  
once the decibels have passed?

Which world would have traded its towers  
without first calculating  
the amount of titanium required  
to cover the brain lobes  
of any specialist, any class?

Which good towers yield most  
in the economies of your trade,  
be it fair or free?

It wants something more than a Party  
to say, lest the least say of you:  
a power went out  
to sow an enemy.

## Bleak Cold

(by **Jean Syed**)

My front was warm by the kitchen fireplace,  
My back was cold sideways to the door,  
But bedtime came, arctic was the staircase,  
My length bathed in it, submerged to the core.  
Undies on and nightgown in the bedroom  
Where vapor on internal glass panes froze,  
My blood as hard as sticks in that bleak tomb,  
Deadweight covers, uncovered was nude nose.

There are icicles now, sane or insane,  
With paper blankets in shopdoors they lie,  
Rigid the cold that solidifies each brain  
So some buy dope, lets them forget—or die.  
I had a water-bottle which was hot  
For I was loved, where these poor souls are not.

## Ghetto

(by **Jean Syed**)

Select homes, ours: new mansions faking old  
money on gated lots atop each hill,  
hostas replaced orchids, of course, but still  
few ever saw them, so they won't be missed.  
Progress tolls—okay! So let's just stay  
on black-topped roads not having to look,  
in running shoes or humvee's, the ways,  
most ulcerous, that gouge into the creek.

It's good schools we're into, and Community Watch,  
and the chemical man takes care of our front yards,  
minorities are here so that's topnotch.  
The poor, because of cost, might be disbarred  
(because they do zilch for the tax base),  
though long may they live in another place.



## ***POEMS:***

### **RITA COLEMAN**

Rita Coleman graduated from Wright State University with an MA (1997) and a BA (1995) in English Literature with a Concentration in Creative Writing. Her writing has been published in a number of literary venues, and she has won awards for her poetry. Her first poetry book, *Mystic Connections*, is described as “deeply moving” in a Kirkus review. Writing poetry is a way of understanding, celebrating, and commemorating the world around her through the intimate nature of language.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **SCOTT DONALDSON**

Scott Donaldson graduated with a MFA degree in Theater Arts from the University of Minnesota in 1982. Until 1990 he worked professionally as a set designer and scene painter. He then became an exhibit designer for the Field Museum of Natural History and since has worked in that field in many places. In 2003 he began to pursue a career as an artist and in 2005 received an Individual Artist Grant from the city of Cincinnati to produce work retelling stories of the Underground Railroad. In addition he has created many murals around Cincinnati most notably ‘Campy Washington’, ‘Cincinnati’s Table’ on the wall of Jean Roberts Table restaurant, and ‘Garden Party at the Taft’ in Bellevue, KY, for ArtWorks.

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Scott Donaldson

## My Mother, the Atom Bomb Maker

Fresh off the farm, a Mrs., a mother,  
twenty-one years of living,  
you came to work in the town  
that didn't exist on any map.

Tennessee, 65 cents an hour,  
far more than birthing calves,  
hoeing beans, baking cornbread,  
tending to a baby, helping your mama.

Just up the road 40 miles, brand-new  
buildings, a field of red mud so thick  
you carried store-bought saddle oxfords  
high above your hair, feet squishing in the muck.

In your building, a vague smell of metal,  
gauges, chemical tanks you scrubbed while  
flyboys bombed Europe, sailors scoured  
the Pacific, one of them your Mr.

How were you to know,  
how was anyone to know, that  
uranium split into the power  
of small sun would write history?

The secrecy endowed mystery  
to your life, why nothing was ever  
produced that you could see,  
that anyone could see.

You blossomed into a beauty,  
a flower behind your ear in one picture,  
in another, the tallest in a crisp white uniform,  
farm-tough, the leader of your group.

In your dorm, you learned nail polish--red--  
lipstick--red--and face powder not meant for  
the farm but a perfect blush for days and nights,  
a small beacon, like so many in the shadow of  
the mountains.

When a second sunrise in as many days  
lit up a land half-way around the world,  
your voice called for answers:  
How safe was this work?

Is it any wonder, the bossman in his suit  
whispered "undesirable" creating a chain-reaction  
leading to your "termination" (they called it),  
releasing you into the freedom you helped win.

After the rent in the earth, your heart began  
Mending from its own attack and you swung North,  
Living the peace that had come,  
Living the peace that had cost.

## Permission

Solstice sun illuminates me,  
a halo of possibilities.  
Before me,  
a square of white blanket,  
a blank sheet of paper,  
a waiting black pen.  
To my left,  
the baby, young light.  
To my right,  
the husband, stormy.  
My request, to describe  
the green of waving grass blades,  
summer's breath on my back,  
the fragrance of full leaves and  
blossoming flowers,  
is denied.  
My cheek stings with his  
verbal handslap.  
I fold into myself.  
I know I will leave him.  
I've always known  
that, taking the baby  
and her growing light  
away from this darkness  
Soon.  
Not today, but soon.



## I Smiled at a Hooker . . .

. . . half-hidden in a doorway in New Orleans  
    dragging deeply from her cigarette, smoke wisping from the shadows.  
I said *Hello*, as I do whenever my path passes another's  
    and her gimlet eyes softened, her body relaxed, she spoke, and she smiled.

I didn't know she belonged to the world's oldest profession  
    for more than two blocks of broken sidewalk when I grasped  
the profundity of her gesture, an instant transformation  
    uniting us into a sisterhood.

I, a road-tripping tourist on a 2700- mile jaunt, first-time in the Big Easy,  
    she, a prostitute, starting work at 4, to flesh-press, to escort, to titillate.  
I'd considered her line of work once: upscale clients in a penthouse setting  
    but the job requirements were too hard--the men, too many, would be too.

If I hurried back she might still be in the doorway in the French Quarter,  
    between the art galleries and fine antique shops of Royal Street  
and the t-shirt-and-bead cubbyholes and girlie shows jammed into Bourbon Street.  
    I could ask how she was doing this muggy July day.

But by now she might have punched her timecard with a new prospect  
    and I would never glimpse the bracelet that graces her wrist daily,  
a gift from her grandmother, discover that she dances the salsa,  
    was born in Atlanta, and that her name is Pamela.

I would show her my 2 pairs of Aerosoles bought on sale just up from Jackson Park,  
    describe the incredible linguine crawfish etouffee I just ate,  
tell her this was my first trip to Louisiana, and that I'd be in the five-o'clock mess  
    on the ribbon of road heading north to home.

She might have divulged her drug of choice--hootch, horse, coke, speed, or weed--  
    and I would understand her need for numbness and amnesia,  
My own obsessions a quarter-century of memories away, distant yet real,  
    the useful tucked in a rucksack, the others returned to the hell they came from.

No better than, no worse than, she and I would stand together  
    on that hot delta street, more kin than not, and say good-bye,  
Knowing we would never see each other again, yet assured  
    for that moment we were important to each other and in the universe.

***POEMS:***

**JOHN CRUZE**

John Cruze is a poet, writer, teacher, attorney and mediator. He is a member of the Greater Cincinnati Writers League where he has also presented his work, Thomas More College *Furthermore Retreats*, workshops with poet Gerry Grubbs and the Cincinnati Public Library's Poetry in the Garden programs. John has also studied with poet Pauletta Hansel. His combined haiku and photography work will soon appear in *WORD*, the Thomas More College anthology.

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***DRAWING:***

**TYLER GRIESE**

Tyler Griese is from Park Hills, Kentucky, and is currently pursuing a BFA in Painting at Northern Kentucky University. Tyler is a recipient of a Department of Visual Arts Scholarship from Northern Kentucky University and a scholarship from The Hyde Park Art Square Show. His artwork has been exhibited in area venues including The Clifton Cultural Arts Center, Lexington Arts Center, and an upcoming group show at Covington Arts.

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Tyler Griesse

## In Brownie's Eyes

In the time it takes  
them to cross the street,  
Brownie smiles into his coffee.

Well, well, well,  
you boys been coming 'round here  
for a little while now. Every time you need somebody  
to pump up your bicycle tire or basketball or football  
you just come on down to the station to see Ol' Brownie.

Oh sure, I'm happy to see my little white fan club  
showin' up all respectful and pie eyed. Lookin' up to Ol' Brownie  
with them gee whiz blue eyes. Lookin' up into  
Brownie's bulgin' bloodshot watery eyes. God knows  
what you must think of this boogie man face. This may be  
the only boogie man face you ever saw close up.

I'm not sayin' you're phony, I'm just sayin' it's nice to get some due.  
It's nice to get some due even if it's just 'cause Ol' Brownie's  
got what you need. Yeah, Ol' Brownie, he's sure got what you need.  
He's got just what you need in that beat up ol' compressor.

How 'bout that! Don't that beat all! I'm talking about - air, yes sir,  
air, capital A – I – R. Just like it says on that sign. Ain't that somethin'.  
Ol' Brownie's air is just the air you need. You got all that air out there;  
you got a whole white neighborhood full of air, you got a whole white  
hilltop full of air; you got white air as far west as the eye can see,  
but that ain't the air you need. No, Sir. You need  
Ol' Brownie's FAMOUS BLACK ASS COMPRESSED AIR.  
No offense, boys, but it just gives me a kick.

When it comes down to it, you need Ol' Brownies "colored" air.  
Oh my, ain't that a beautiful thing. Colored air. Ain't that a bitch.  
Yes sir, you need Ol' Brownie's FAMOUS COLORED AIR.  
When you need air, when you need air under pressure, you need  
Good Ol' Mr. B's Almighty A1 Ain't No Other Air.  
Hallelujah!  
Sweet Jesus, what a world...

## You've Got to Be Taught

Most, but not all  
called them colored  
where we lived.

I knew what that meant,  
but it sounded wrong.  
Why just them?  
Who's not one color  
or another anyway?

This was all between  
WW II and Little Rock.  
This was before  
a second thought.  
This was just the way  
some things worked.

There were garbage  
men and the two who  
shoveled the coal into  
our coalbin, but  
that was different.

Brownie worked at  
the service station  
on the corner.  
They said ol' Brownie  
could fix about anything  
plus he fought in the war.

He always had a smile  
whenever we showed up  
with a bike tire or  
basketball or something else  
in need of pumping up.

He'd examine the ball  
like a doctor,  
give it a squeeze,  
wet the needle  
in his mouth,  
push it real easy  
into the ball,  
hold the brass nozzle  
on the needle top

and squeeze the  
handle on the air hose  
until it sounded  
like a fire truck  
between his hands.

We could hear the air  
rushing in to play  
the next fifty games.  
It would ping  
like a bicycle bell  
in a bucket  
when he gave it  
his "checkup bounce".

He would lean in close  
and tilt his head just so  
like he could hear the pressure  
and feel it too.

He'd hold the ball  
up to his chest  
in his chocolate  
hands, and one by one  
take us in  
with his deep down eyes.  
I could see a secret  
play in that look.

And then he'd pass it-  
pass it to one of us.  
We never knew  
who it would be  
or why.

We called him Brownie,  
not Mr. – we didn't  
know his name for sure.  
We didn't know if  
we should ask his name,  
or if  
Brownie was a name  
he liked or lived with.

## ***POEMS:***

### **ELESE DANIEL**

Ellese Daniel is a journalist and poet who graduated from UC with a BA in Journalism and a minor in Creative Writing. She also dabbles in videography.

Ellese is an editor for Nip Nip Zine, a five-senses themed literary+art zine, creative writing workshop and poetry reading series. Originally from northern Indiana, she currently lives in a Camp Washington attic.

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### **MEGAN MOORE**

Megan Moore is currently studying at the College of Mount St. Joseph, majoring in English with a concentration in Creative Writing. There she enjoys writing, reading and dancing on the College dance team. Megan is looking forward to pursuing a career in writing.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **PAMELA MAURER**

Originally from Durango, CO, Pamela Maurer (aka Baby Money) is a paper artist and performer, specializing in collage, printmaking and illustration. She draws inspiration from scientific magazines, encyclopedias and text books, and is especially interested in exploring American ideals of life, the afterlife, religion, politics and commerce. She also performs as a musician, singing original 60s inspired songs with her backing band the Down Payments.

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Pamela Maurer '19

# Gynandromorph

(by *Elese Daniel*)

Beneath your flesh,  
fused nerves of cock  
and id would gorgonize  
if I was naked

you wouldn't advert your eyes  
roll them back into your head  
and mull over my chromosomes  
in your mind

*am I he/she or it—*  
mitosis atypically split,  
bewilderingly beautiful  
like, mosaic'd wings of butterflies  
sterile and abundant  
with self-perpetuating poison

and if the sky is made of glass  
and the ceilings can't be broken  
let my wings p i e c e p i e c e p i e c e  
at their veins and glitter down to you  
inertia'd in your authority  
and ignorant to the force of femininity  
outside of biology—

I am still a woman,  
if somehow, you can't see.

## **If it Were Not for Victoria's Secret Would I Still Have Sexual Feelings for Women: On the Objectification of Women**

(by *Megan Moore*)

Or even if it had not been for Kate Upton and every other Playmate  
Not for their existence,  
Nor for the existence of their breasts,  
But the glorification of them.  
That I have lapped up like men.  
Going through panties like allergy pills on a warm spring day,  
after spending hours rubbing two flowers together.



I have to soak every pair to get the pollen out.

In public I shout about feminism and condemn the men who get off  
to those magical breasts,  
society's playdough.  
If you want the truth,  
I feel bad for them.  
Not for the breasts.  
For the men.

## **The Better Part**

(by **Megan Moore**)

I remember I fell in love with you the night  
you told me for the better part of 2010  
you believed 9/11 was a conspiracy.  
The look in your eyes hit me, guilty  
and unassuming, your irises  
crashed into every pillar  
of my rib cage, landing  
in the pulsing thing  
behind them. I fell  
and I'm afraid  
I won't stop  
falling.

2013  
The next year  
we went to New York,  
we saw the memorial, where  
two towers were inverted, swift  
water rushing, commanding our attention  
and clearing our hearts. We watched an old man  
throw a budding rose into the flood. His hands were  
withered and you told me that you can't take back the  
better part of 2010. We have already fallen. But you can  
build from here. We can start building from here. We can start building from here.

***POEMS:***

**KATE FADICK**

Kate Fadick comes to her poetry, in part, through her experience as a career community organizer and advocate for social justice in Appalachian communities both rural and urban. Her first chapbook, *Slipstream*, was released by Finishing Line Press in February 2013. Recent journal publications include *AEQA* and *Wind '97*.

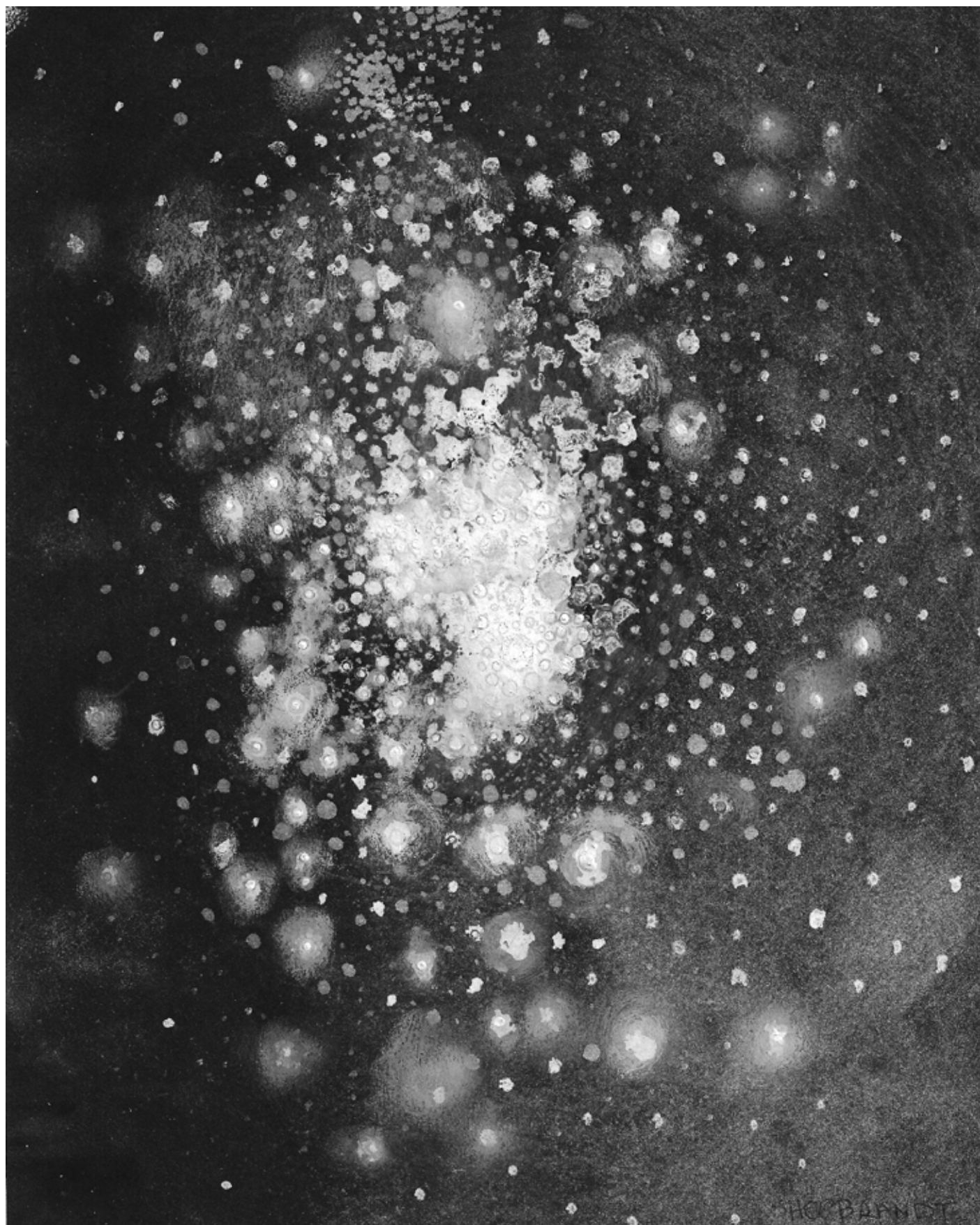
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***DRAWING:***

**ALISON SHEPARD**

Ethereal and somewhat surreal, the work of Alison Shepard seems to both occupy this world and another beyond it. Alison's love of narrative allows her subjects to evoke a sense of magic realism. Her art has been widely displayed throughout Greater Cincinnati as well as across the United States. It has been collected by many private clients and her printmaking is part of the works on paper collections at the New Orleans Museum of Art, the University of Dallas, and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

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## Lectio Divina I

*(Syrian poet Ibrahim Qashoush revitalized an old folk melody with rhythms and words to create the revolution's anthem. He was murdered in July, 2011.)*

Just before dawn  
I read

about the revolutionary  
poet whose words flame  
in the crowd

the one whose body  
is pulled from the river  
throat cut voice

stolen I gasp  
for breath

when the bird strikes  
my window its beak  
splintering the icy film

as if swords  
could be beaten  
into ploughshares

## Lectio Divina II

*-for the poet in Toledo*

*(Nine Trappist monks lived peacefully with those around them in the mountains of Algeria. Seven were assassinated in 1996.)*

I read  
your poem

of neon  
signs faded

constellations  
fall back

two decades  
onto the snow

covered path  
through blue

cedars  
only silence

broken  
as monks

chant O  
*Magnum*

*Mysterium*  
and stars

die once again

## Lectio Divina III

*(More so in the first half of the 20th century than now, Syrian women would gather in each other's homes to sing and dance and form lifelong relationships. They were known as banat ishreh).*

It is late  
still

I make tea  
read on

wanting memories  
of what I have not  
seen or heard

the lamentations  
of the banat ishreh

on Aleppo evenings  
before the bombs

the wedding singer  
who dresses behaves  
like a man lives

with a woman  
alone now

braving  
a sniper to join

the bread line  
return home to hold  
a cup of tea

fire in our hands  
both of us

craving kindness  
on this shining night

## Lectio Divina VI

*-on the anniversary of a school shooting*

I search  
until I find  
the poem

scan  
for two lines  
I remember

*Y en las calles la sangre de los niños  
Corría simplemente, como sangre de niños\**

lay  
the book  
aside

listen  
to the solo  
violin

*(\*And in the streets the blood of the children  
ran simply, like blood of children.)*

*Pablo Neruda  
"I'll Explain Some Things"  
translation Galway Kinnell*

## Lectio Divina IX

I read  
of burned out  
villages

on precarious  
borders,  
see pictures

of refugees  
standing  
in what's left.

I go to the kitchen.

Little wonder  
I am taken  
by surprise

as spicy  
sweetness  
of parsnip fills

the room  
at first cut.

## ***POEMS:***

### **MARK FLANIGAN**

Mark Flanigan's *Journeyman's Lament*, appeared in the 2012 Aurore Press Publication, *Versus*; his free e-book, *Minute Poems*, is available online from Three Fools Press. He recently co-founded a monthly open/feature reading *Word of Mouth Cincinnati*.

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### **LINDA KLEINSCHMIDT**

Linda Kleinschmidt is a freelance editor and writing consultant worldwide. She has published two children's picture books and articles on the craft of writing and editing. Linda has won several awards for her children's books and poetry.

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### **DANIEL RUBIN**

Dan Rubin is a Customer Service Representative for Sun Chemical. He and his family reside in Northside and enjoy all aspects of play, the arts, gardening and making up wild tales. Dan is amazed at all thoughts, ideas and possibilities.

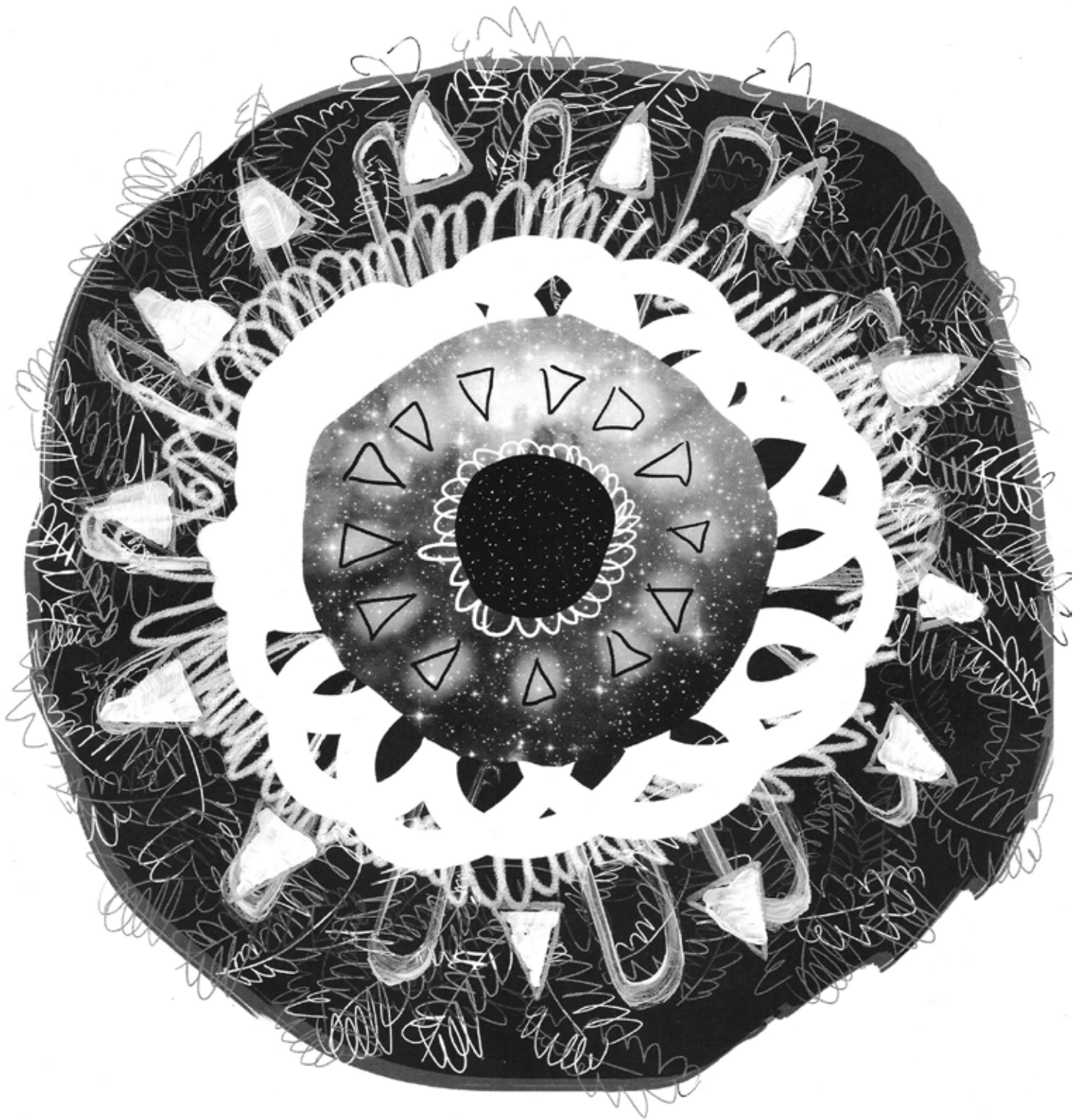
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## ***DRAWING:***

### **GREG SWIGER**

Greg Swiger is an artist, poet, and educator from West Virginia. He graduated with an MFA from UC/DAAP in 2013. He lives and works in Covington, KY, where he teaches for the Carnegie. His work is the meeting of autobiography and abstract painting,

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GREG SWIGER

## What Love Looks Like

(by **Mark Flanigan**)

you like to hip and hop  
I like to rock and roll.

you like reality TV  
while I prefer mine  
a little bit more real.

I like white beans,  
you like 'em black.  
you like vanilla,  
I like chocolate.

me gusta taqueria mercado,  
te gusta el toro.

I needed a top  
you bought me a bottom.

I returned the favor  
by buying three types  
of conditioner

you needed shampoo.

you like the left side of the bed  
I like the right  
you like the right side  
I get the left  
you like the left side  
but sleep on the right  
and the left.

I like coke, you like sprite  
I like coke, you like weed  
I like you and you like me  
you love me and I love you

and improbably

this may be the only thing on  
which we do agree:

I like that fact  
and you like it too.

## A Contemplative In Repose

(by **Linda Kleinschmidt**)

I could do quite well as  
A contemplative in repose  
Inside closed private walls.  
I'd be content, relish quiet,  
Full peace, enclosure.  
Be well departed for a time  
From the insidiousness and grief  
Society imposes.

But sadly, I couldn't kneel  
On limbs grown arthritic from  
Expressing struggle,  
Nor could I bend to full quiet.  
I'd have to break my  
Grand silence, if only  
To stay with sanity.

I would feel too strongly  
The need to continue  
The dialectic and  
Relate the conflict, the querying,  
The victories gained and still  
Sought in the years outside  
Demanding.

## Being

(by **Daniel Rubin**)

I don't mind being  
Swayed by forces greater than  
Me, I abhor tension  
I'll do anything  
In subtlest ways of manner  
To avoid conflict  
And therefore I'm loved  
By forces good and evil  
I select this way  
Benefits abound  
Sides and sidelines disappear  
My path obvious  
To me, breathing takes  
The place of gossip and grief

Allows reflection  
Connection with the  
Pondering, wanderer,  
Free Being, that is me





***POEMS:***

**GARY GAFFNEY**

Gary Gaffney is Professor Emeritus at the Art Academy of Cincinnati. He is a long-time visual artist who has also become a writer.

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**ROBYN STONE-KRAFT**

Robyn Stone-Kraft is an adjunct English professor at the College of Mount St.

Joseph in Delhi. When not teaching or writing, she enjoys reading, knitting, hiking, adopting shelter animals. She and her husband, Ed, are in the process of buying a house where their cats will learn to live with other animals. Her first book of poetry, *Uncertain Rustling*, was released by Oloris Publishing in January 2014.

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***DRAWING:***

**MATTHEW BUSTILLO**

Matthew Bustillo is currently studying illustration at the Art Academy of Cincinnati. He often illustrates strange creatures through detailed pen and ink line drawings.

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# The Poisoned Heart

(by **Gary Gaffney**)

Original sin exists  
Only in the poisoned heart.  
For this is where the seeds of war  
Germinate.  
Don't look to annihilate  
With tanks and guns and bombs and poison gases.  
Don't try to heal  
The schisms and fractures and  
Feuds soaked in centuries of hate.  
Heal the poisoned heart.

When war calls, ask:  
Why?  
For what?  
Why not your sons and daughters?  
Why make me into fodder?  
What will be the prize for the rich and powerful?  
Who are the true cowards?  
Why must humans measure their worth  
In piles of bloodied corpses?

Ask instead:  
How can we heal the poisoned heart?  
Who has the endurance and courage for that?  
Who can unmask the motives of power and ego?  
Who can reform the empty man  
For whom no amount of wealth and power  
Are enough?

Who can heal the poisoned heart?

# One Night, Eyes White

(by **Robyn Stone-Kraft**)

The whites of his  
eyes are  
huge, brighter than his  
teeth that try to  
snarl, or the  
shaking knife in his  
hand as he

demands my  
money, my  
phone, but not my  
rings, not my  
life. I wonder what  
drove him to his  
reluctant act as he  
avoids looking  
directly at me,  
seeing me as more than a  
target, a phone, a  
wallet, a way  
out of  
something. Does he  
know he has other  
choices? Has  
anyone told him, this  
frightened child  
masquerading as a tough  
man. Our hands  
shake in unison,  
tremble at this  
bond between us of  
terror and need and  
pity.

# Lies Disney Told Me

(by **Robyn Stone-Kraft**)

"The Lion King is my favorite  
fairy tale," one student says, but  
another protests and  
claims Aladdin, or  
Hercules. Some do land on  
Cinderella, or the Little Mermaid, but  
when they hear about eyes  
pecked out and  
bleeding legs, and  
dubious happily ever after, they are  
horrified,  
confused and almost  
betrayed. As if changing the  
old stories was the  
worst lie  
Disney ever told them.



***POEMS:***

**KAREN GEORGE**

Karen George, author of *Into the Heartland* (Finishing Line Press, 2011) and *Inner Passage* (Red Bird Chapbooks, 2014), has received grants from Kentucky Foundation for Women and Kentucky Arts Council. Her work has appeared in *Memoir*, *Tupelo Press 30/30 Website*, *Louisville Review*, *Permafrost*, and *Border Crossing*. She reviews poetry at: <http://readwritepoetry.blogspot.com/>.

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***DRAWING:***

**NATHAN WEIKERT**

Nathan Weikert was born in Kettering, Ohio. He graduated from Miami University with a BS in art education (1998), a BFA in painting (1998), and a MA in art education (2002). In 2013 he was a recipient of an Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award. Nathan has worked as an Artworks Project manager and has taught visual art in the Fairborn City Schools, the Lakota Local School District, and the Cincinnati Public Schools for a 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant.

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NATHAN WEIKERT 2014

## Newly Homeless

In the booth near mine he shivers  
despite a wool calf-length coat.  
An oversized suitcase serves as footrest,  
backpack bulged beside him  
like a stuffed animal.

He looks sixteen, so thin, bleary-eyed,  
pale hands clutching a foam coffee cup.  
It's sixty outside, but all day rain  
weeps into you.  
He slides off a knit cap,  
secures it below a thigh,  
lays head on table,  
arms like a nest enfold his skull  
barely bigger than a child's,  
inch-long blond hair in tufts.  
Down only a minute,  
he raises up, scans the room.

I ask if he's okay, if he needs food,  
has any money. *A little*, he says.  
When I give him a twenty, he thanks me,  
asks if I'll watch what I suspect  
is all he owns, crosses the lot  
to a liquor store. I release  
a sigh along with any notion  
of what he should have bought.

He returns, hand tucked deep  
in a pocket, grabs his cup.  
Back from the bathroom, he sips,  
eyes closed, belly breaths.

I say, *take care*, as I leave,  
the scent of wet wool, liquor rises  
rancid as regret.

## Revising

As I sip morning caffeine,  
choose, rearrange words  
and space in poems,  
voices sound around me,  
fragments insinuated  
by nearness, volume, tone.

Yesterday, catty-corner to me,  
a young father, two toddler sons.  
One leaned back too far, his chair  
like a gunshot as it hit tile.  
When the dad pounced, yelled,  
*You fucking retard*, I muzzled  
the urge to condemn his venom,  
intended Reiki their way.

Today, a woman's voice inches away,  
her back to mine in the booth behind.  
I hadn't seen her or her friend arrive,  
but felt the shimmy of our shared divide.  
Softly she says, *Manny had a spiritual  
experience last night*. No hint  
of sarcasm, distrust. *He was holding  
the baby and started crying*.  
Her voice shimmered  
waves of heat,  
as if from Earth's core  
to the soles of my feet.





## ***POEMS:***

### **DIANE GERMAINE**

Diane Germaine, a choreographer/performer/writer, graduated with English Honors from Performing Arts High School in NYC. As Principal Soloist of the Paul Sanasardo Dance Company (NY), she won critical acclaim for *Fatal Birds*, *The Path*, *Metallics*, *Shadows*, and for her dance portrayal of Anne Sexton, poet, in *A Consort for Dancers*. Diane received Fellowships and Grants from the NEA, City of Cincinnati, and Ohio Arts Council for choreography and spoken word/mixed media productions. Her poetry and stories have appeared in *SOS Art* annuals, *Chronogram Magazine*, *A Few Good Words* (anthology of Cincinnati writers) and have been presented at Cincinnati readings and in concert with dancers.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **TINA TAMMARO**

Tina Tamaro is a figurative oil painter living in Cincinnati, Ohio. She has shown in major exhibitions locally and nationally. For over 25 years she spoke on art history and contemporary art at various museums and institutions. Tina has been published in many prestigious international and national art periodicals. She is currently Adjunct Instructor at the University of Cincinnati; she also teaches privately in her Cincinnati and Covington studios.

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TINA TAMMARO 3.14

## Maybe Kansas

There's always an undertow -  
it runs under the streets  
like an incessant hum,  
a violin string too taut

whose fret needs some release.  
Diesel buses belch an arid stink  
you get used to and forget like  
a daily perfume.

Taxis, cars, honking, all are  
scooting round with no  
protocol except to rush  
headlong because that is the

way you go here. Laughter is  
an edge, it rings out over steady  
conversations and is punctuated  
by gestures imaging on humid air.

You walk fast here, maybe faster  
than you do in New York City - but  
it feels like strolling because all are  
wearing sandals, T-shirts, lightwear.

And then you walk into a movie  
theater to see some really funny  
movie but before you can find  
your seat your purse is checked

for homemade bombs. It's  
all part of the picture except  
it isn't...so you sit in the last  
row just in case you need to

get out fast. And you find you  
can't concentrate on the film  
but are peering into the dark  
trying to figure out if anyone

in the theater is potentially  
a terrorist. And you wind up  
not being able to breathe and  
have to leave and can't remember

one line of dialogue. Suddenly it  
becomes apparent we're not in  
Tel Aviv at all but in some theater  
somewhere in the US. Maybe Kansas.

## Today the Ash

Today the ash became no more.  
With each year another set of trees  
becomes so diseased they are uprooted  
or cut down - too costly to try and  
cure them.

Before the ash, the great sycamore  
came crashing, lost weight, lost  
appendages, lost beauty - became  
a scathed monolith overtaken by  
creeping ivy, mold, fungus, termites.

This morning I watched for hours as a  
tree man straddled the ash creeping  
upwards, leaning out at crazy angles,  
twisting in the currents - an inch worm  
in the distance. He pulled up his saw,

buzzed and cut, buzzed and cut.  
Dust came flying out as one dead arm  
after another fell, littering the leaf floor  
below. Soon he became taller than the  
old ash - wrapped 'round the wind,

his yellow helmet a bulls-eye cap.  
Outside the kitchen window my maple  
still lives, is still smiling with her shade in  
summer, is still majestic against the  
pre-winter sky. But for how long?

She still has squirrels skittering in and  
out - small moving balls of fur running  
vertical, making nests in the aeries way  
up; a bird or two still flits from branch  
to branch eyeing the view.

I should be grateful - my maple tree  
relives herself every year, and though  
I hate gathering up the leaves every fall

this year her leaves spanned large as giant's  
hands and they were an abundant crop.

This afternoon I'll line up the leaf bags  
a-plenty all along the garage walls.  
They'll be filled with the crunch and  
crackle of her largesse. Then I'll  
go sit at my kitchen table, stare out,

ponder her bounty for the spring that  
may come, and I'll deny again her  
inevitable demise.

## What Is Left to Say

or cry  
about the cloud drifting by  
the same but different  
as yesterday as today  
or the bird hovering  
one moment here  
and the next gone

except that it was here  
right now  
and tomorrow...  
and tomorrow not?

And the smile  
the sorrow  
in real time  
is no more...  
and yet  
is more?

and wonder  
at the thought  
or talk  
or years  
gone asunder  
except in thee  
in memory as  
real as then...  
and again...

the ephemera  
will forever  
be  
u  
n  
f  
a  
t  
h  
o  
m  
able

yet

somewhere  
the  
memory  
will blow  
gently  
as white  
bone  
floats  
the  
Milky Way

and  
powdery  
dust  
dissolves  
in the  
dew.

***POEMS:***

**ZACHARY GRUNENBERG**

Zachary Grunenbergs is a senior at Wyoming High School. He plans to study Economics, Law, and Writing, at Miami University. Zachary is also interested in studying ethics and philosophy in college.

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**J.J. STAPLES**

J.J. Staples is a native Ohioan raised in Cincinnati. Traumatized by incarceration as a youth and tormented by decades of shiftlessness here and in San Francisco, Austin, TX and Summertown, TN, he aspires to learn permaculture. An amateur singer and songwriter, he intends to release more of his unpublished work.

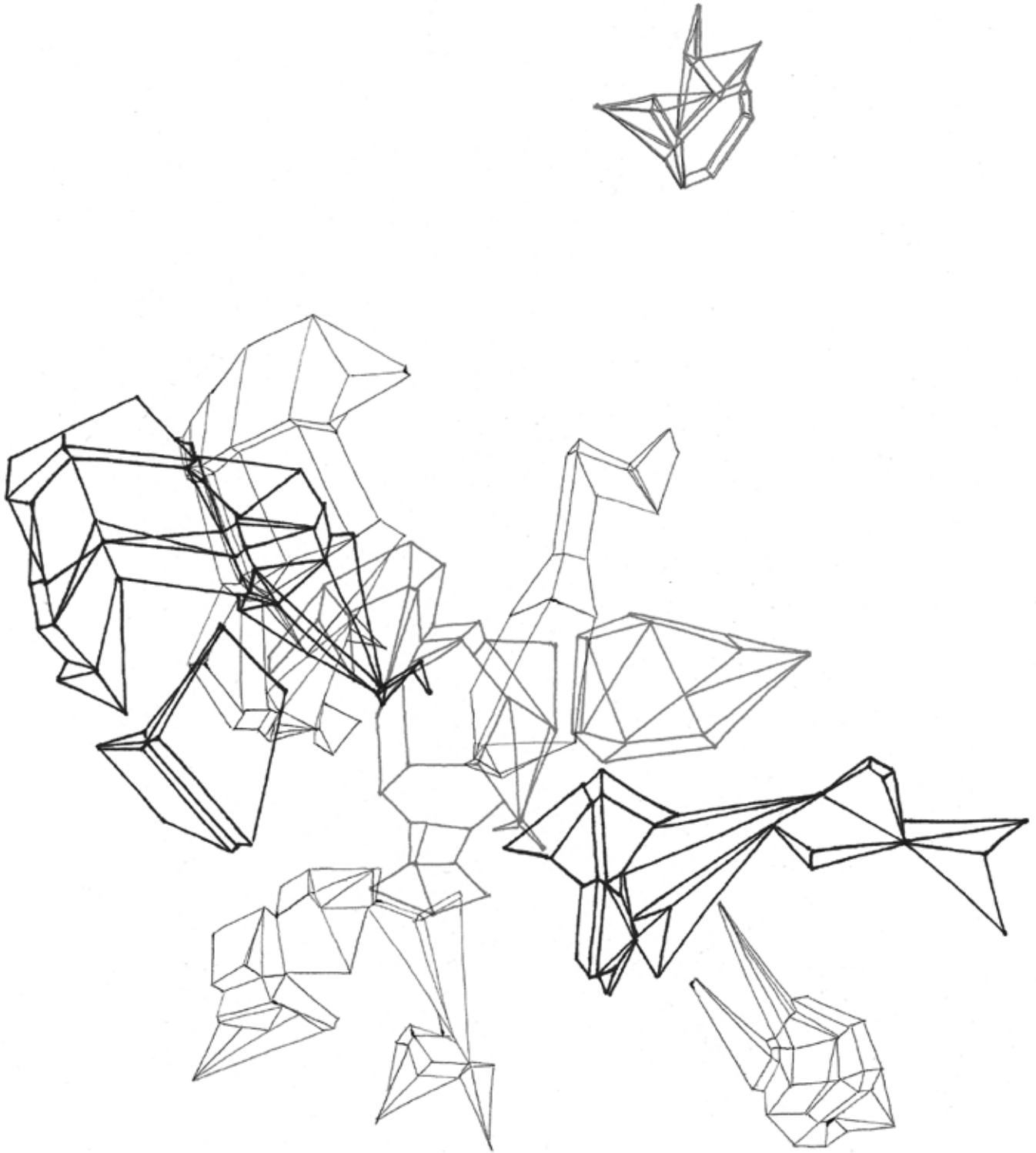
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***DRAWING:***

**MEGHAN DILLON**

Meghan Dillon holds a BFA from Ohio University and an MAT from Miami University, Oxford. After working in museums in Athens and Cincinnati she began her teaching career, working with students from elementary to high school. Lately Meghan's work has been a study in illustration and line work. In her free time, she enjoys drawing, running, and traveling every second she gets.

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meaghan dillon 2014

# **This Is the Way the World Ends**

*(by Zachary Grunenberg)*

This is the way the world ends...

Children masking themselves from pollution.  
Entire cities irradiated.  
Limping injured scavenging for food.

Reduced to his knees by his own devices.  
Observe the destructive cause that he worships.

His footstep leaves a print in the mud just as  
A leaf touching down on the water's surface leaves a ripple effect.  
The ocean sighs in disbelief, and cries--- her teardrops flooding the streets.

The destruction man has wrought leaves nothing but ashes in its wake,

And in the end...

In the end, did he at least enjoy his freedom while it lasted?

## **Free Marie!**

*(for Marie Mason)*

*(by J.J. Staples)*

Up in the Butler County Jail, they stole your socks and underwear.  
While slowly starving on oatmeal, they reamed you for another pair.  
East Lansing, eve of Y2K, somebody wrote, "No GMO".  
The accusation's funny, 'cos why now and not eight years ago?

CHORUS:

Question authority: Free Marie! Free Marie!  
Have you been all you can be? Free Marie! Free Marie!  
Defend life and liberty: Free Marie! Free Marie!  
Uh-oh, say can you still see? Free Marie! Free Marie!

In modern times, we've been reduced to nervousness and penury.  
When we resolve to grow our own, refusing chains of slavery,  
we know better than to rely on ravenous technologies.  
We love life and we hold it more sacred than private property.

(CHORUS)



In Washington, they're well-inured to massive criminality.  
Who calculates the cost of war in this homeland of the brave and free?  
Some don't recall the massacres for national security.  
We've watched too much of Britney Spears; not enough of Dick Cheney. (CHORUS)

Televisions testify to morbid curiosity  
made alien and earthbound: also ignorant of ecstasy.  
Apocalyptic fairy tales urge immanent calamity  
while money secretly destroys our neighborhoods and families. (CHORUS)

If you know protest history, you've seen agents provocateurs  
incite destruction and then swear things were done that never were.  
I'm proud to call Marie my friend. I hope this has a happy ending.  
Tagging isn't terrorism: Tell the truth and don't pretend. (CHORUS)

***POEM:***

**RICHARD HAGUE**

Richard Hague's latest book, *During The Recent Extinctions: New & Selected Poems 1984-2014*, was winner of the 2012 Weatherford Award in Poetry. He is author of 14 other volumes of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, and continues to teach workshops and classes at Thomas More College and Purcell Marian High School. Richard is a member of The Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative and the Literary Club of Cincinnati.

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***DRAWING:***

**M. MICHAEL SMITH**

M. Michael Smith is a visual artist and college educator; he lives and works in the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan area. M. Michael earned his MFA from the University of Cincinnati in 2012. His work focuses on poetic interpretations of human intimacy through the use of drawing, painting and photographic practices.

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M. Michael Smith

## Xenia

*But here is a poor homeless man,  
and you must look after him.*

—Princess Nausicaa,  
*The Odyssey, Book VI*

You may have seen him—  
friend, father, brother, son—  
at Vine and Elder, Over-The-Rhine,  
brightfaced in late winter  
low-west light,  
beard gray-gold and sparse  
as Ithaka's scraggly wheat.  
Now empty bottles glint  
in the gutter like  
wave-washed wine-dark stones, and  
the shades of his dead comrades  
stumble and moan  
in piss-stinking doorways  
while he does not sleep,  
still lion-like in the habit watchfulness  
of the soldier and survivor.

His arrival in our city?  
Washed ashore, unconscious,  
at the Public Landing,  
he crawled up granite cobbles,  
coughing oily water,  
eyes burning.  
The police were called:  
they smelled wine on his breath  
(the last of casks he'd scavenged  
behind a Pittsburgh 7-Eleven  
to share with his thirsty crew)  
and he was unshaven;  
nor would he tell them his name;  
when they roughed him up  
he blurted, I am *Everyman*, I am *Nobody*,  
so they punched him.

Into a squad car  
they finally hustled him, silent  
where he had been thrown,  
then to the Justice Center,  
fingerprinted  
(to no avail—not in the system,  
no more than Laestrygonians),

told to strip and shower  
then dressed in coarse clothes  
(offered no oil, no soft hands  
of servants to soothe him,  
no banquet in his honor  
where he could tell his tale,  
name his father,  
recount his greatest adventures)  
rather, he was smacked and shackled,  
bum-rushed, cursed, made sad sport of,  
then, in cold and wind,  
thrown back on the street,

Because we have forgotten  
the ancient wisdom, the deeply  
human way: help poor  
strangers, outlanders,  
pilgrims: offer *xenia*,  
“hospitality,”  
because our distressed,  
our homeless, our  
unfortunate and lost,  
all “pale forms  
fainting at the door”  
may well be heroes,  
gods, saviors, and we must  
welcome them among us  
or suffer wraths and ruins,  
the “mechanism of  
enforcement” which may be  
the forfeit of our souls.



***POEMS:***

**PAULETTA HANSEL**

Pauletta Hansel is a poet, teacher and author of four poetry collections, most recently *The Lives We Live in Houses* (Wind Publications, 2011) and *What I Did There* (Dos Madres Press, 2011). Pauletta leads community poetry workshops and retreats and is Writer-in Residence at Thomas More College in her native Kentucky. She is co-editor of *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel*, the literary publication of Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative.

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***DRAWING:***

**JENNIFER GROTE**

After obtaining her BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, Jennifer Grote has exhibited her work locally. Her artwork is what she calls a contemporary interpretation of Modernism involving painting, sculpture, and drawing. She enjoys combining materials and challenging the boundaries of what art can be. Jennifer also works as an independent curator.

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## Held

*(Cedars of Peace, Nerinx, KY)*

Here it is easy  
to forget there is sorrow  
everywhere—even as I fall  
down into it, I am held

by the wise, wild world.  
Across fields and rivers, hills,  
and highways home, there is  
an old woman with eyes like mine,

worrying the edges  
of her life, and I have her  
worry too, knots of it hard within me,  
and everything I do for her

in love is tainted by fear.  
Today the wind and rain  
came rushing through with their  
big elbows, jostling everything along

the way, then meandering behind,  
looking this way and that,  
comes dusk, muted and cooled.  
Across the wet meadow

a doe, the lift and fall of her white tail  
as she runs toward those she belongs to,  
no thought of how long  
she will hold them.

*(“Sorrow everywhere” from Jack Gilbert,  
A Brief for the Defense)*

## A Prayer That Must Be Met Halfway

Lord, I am weary  
of suffering, most of all

the pain I cause  
myself. Lord, let me

know bright dance  
of leaves on sky, the scattered

trail of birds on sand  
leading nowhere I have been.

If, when I fall, Lord, all  
that’s left is my poem,

let it land safe.  
If a seed, let it be maple’s

wild spinning  
far enough from shade.

*(After Anna Kamienska’s A Prayer That  
Will Be Answered)*

## Your Voice

*for Aralee Strange, 12/5/43- 6/15/13*

Those days, a graveled whisper  
dissolving from your breath to air  
that would have given us your words.  
Your poems just beginning then  
to edge sideways between the cracks  
of other voices, hard-planed and polished bright—  
your voice was the one  
we turned toward,  
hoping to hear.

Your voice, that Alabama rumble  
of a train, grew sure and clear,  
and was forever making room—  
A room, a mic (open, always),  
the chairs filled up with poets listening  
to each other’s voices  
ever stronger as you leaned in close,  
making sure you heard.

The room is dark now;  
the mic turned off.  
We are listening,  
Aralee.  
Come close,  
a poem, please,  
one more from you.  
Your voice  
in our ears.





***POEMS:***

**KAREN HEASTER**

Karen Heaster received a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Cincinnati. Through her long career she has written advertising copy, essays, poetry and articles.

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***DRAWING:***

**JUDY CAMPBELL WHITE**

Judy Campbell White is a mixed media artist who teaches art at Bishop Leibold School, 4th ~ 8th grade. She loves to draw, for inner and world peace.

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## Richard

He stands at the end of the exit ramp almost every day  
Holding a sign that says "cancer" and "I'm humiliated"  
I've seen him there during my commute home since last fall  
I give him a dollar every day I see him  
Holding a sign that says "cancer" and "I'm humiliated"  
I look for him now on my homeward commute  
I give him a dollar every day I see him  
He pays someone rent to live in their garage  
I look for him now on my homeward commute  
We've exchanged first names and have traffic light conversations  
He pays someone rent to live in their garage  
He says he works harder now than he ever had to on a job  
We've exchanged first names and have traffic light conversations  
It's not the best location for a man with a sign  
He says he works harder now than he ever had to on a job  
The local police run him off but he keeps coming back  
It's not the best location for a man with a sign  
I've never seen another person make a donation  
The local police run him off but he keeps coming back  
As he says, "A man's gotta eat and have a roof"  
He makes no move toward my vehicle until I wave  
I give him a dollar every day I see him  
He thanks me politely – a small, sad man  
He stands at the end of the exit ramp almost every day

## On Being Made Part-time

If work were a carpet...  
I have gone from being part of the warp and weft,  
An integral, necessary and respected thread  
To being part of the fringe...unnecessary

In earlier times I provided  
Strength and added depth to the design  
I earned my place in the carpet  
And held together

Was I judged too old...  
Inclined to break and snap when stretched?  
Or perhaps the pattern has changed or my dye lot faded  
And I no longer fit

I feel abandoned and betrayed  
Others will go on  
And I am left here on the fringe  
Gathering dust



***POEMS:***

**MICHAEL HEILMAN**

Michael Heilman is a small business owner in Cincinnati. His poems have appeared online, and one made its way into an anthology of *Gratitude Prayers*.

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***DRAWING:***

**ANDREW AU**

Andrew Au was born in 1972 in Chicago, IL. He earned a Masters Degree in Fine Arts in 2000 from the university of Cincinnati. He has lived in Washington, DC, Corciano, Italy, and New Orleans, LA, before returning to Cincinnati in 2006. He is working on setting up a printmaking studio in Over the Rhine with his wife, Jennifer.

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## Caution

Caution

There is a poet among you.  
A subversive, a spy  
mind your tongue,  
keep your secrets secure.  
He could be anywhere.  
Among your sunrise,  
your silos,  
tobacco fields or fountains,  
under the street lamp, out front,  
nonchalant,  
or polite in your sitting room.

Caution

there is a poet among you.  
A glutton, a thirsty parasite  
laying in wait,  
in the shallows, lecherous for skin.  
Your discarded conversations  
are his acquisitions.  
Stealing crumbs and morsels  
to make a meal.  
A bite of beauty  
ingested image  
gnawing on your shy nudity.  
until you're malnourished, left alone,  
and his page is bloated with words.

Caution

There is a poet among you.  
A pick pocket, a bandit  
roll up the scrolls  
and double back to camouflage  
the X mark in the sand.  
Keep the combination safe,  
sleep with one eye on the Gold.  
He'll find it with intuition  
steal it on impulse  
and be gone before the investigation.

Caution

There is a poet among you.  
An infidel, a sniper  
you won't see him before he sees you.

Take cover, stay out of the open  
out of his cross hairs  
he's a high powered lens  
examining angles, wind speeds  
resistance and distance.  
His passion is pulling triggers  
blowing minds  
filling godless graves  
with the faithful.  
One man's freedom fighter  
another man's terrorist.

## Occupation

Leaves skitter down  
through the trees.  
Acorns and walnuts  
let go their hold  
of thin limbs and  
crash below  
cracking and bouncing  
down hill  
sharp in the underbrush.

People are occupying Wall St.  
and small town squares,  
carrying vague, emotional  
signs about their struggle,  
printed from their laptops.  
They take videos with their  
Internet ready cell phones.

I move my chair into a spot  
of October, Ohio sun.  
A small cooking fire  
sends smoke up into the shafts  
of light breaking through the trees.  
Its an unusually warm day.  
I have tobacco stains  
on the sleeve of my shirt,  
and I feel there  
is still time  
to sit  
and do nothing.



## For Raymond

You just can't stop some people  
from destroying themselves.  
It's in his nature now.  
Woven into his DNA

He calls me, collect from a Kentucky jail,  
wants me to call his sister,  
needs bail.  
I call.  
She says No.

I go collect his belongings from the sober living,  
half-way house where he was arrested  
for drug possession.  
A felony.

It all fits in the trunk of my car.  
Clothes and toiletries,  
Forty years of living, reduced to duffel bags.

He used to work  
Had a nice truck,  
rode a motorcycle,  
his wife was younger, blonde  
and carried double D's above a slender waist.  
They lived in an apartment complex  
with a pool and a work-out room.

Slowly, as it worsened,  
these things dissolved,  
were sold off,  
divorced and evicted.

I wish I had two hundred and eighty dollars  
to throw away, to bond him out.  
But,  
you just can't stop some people  
from destroying themselves, and  
He's a fighter.

***POEMS:***

**MICHAEL HENSON**

Michael Henson's most recent work is *The True Story of the Resurrection and Other Poems* from Wind Publications.

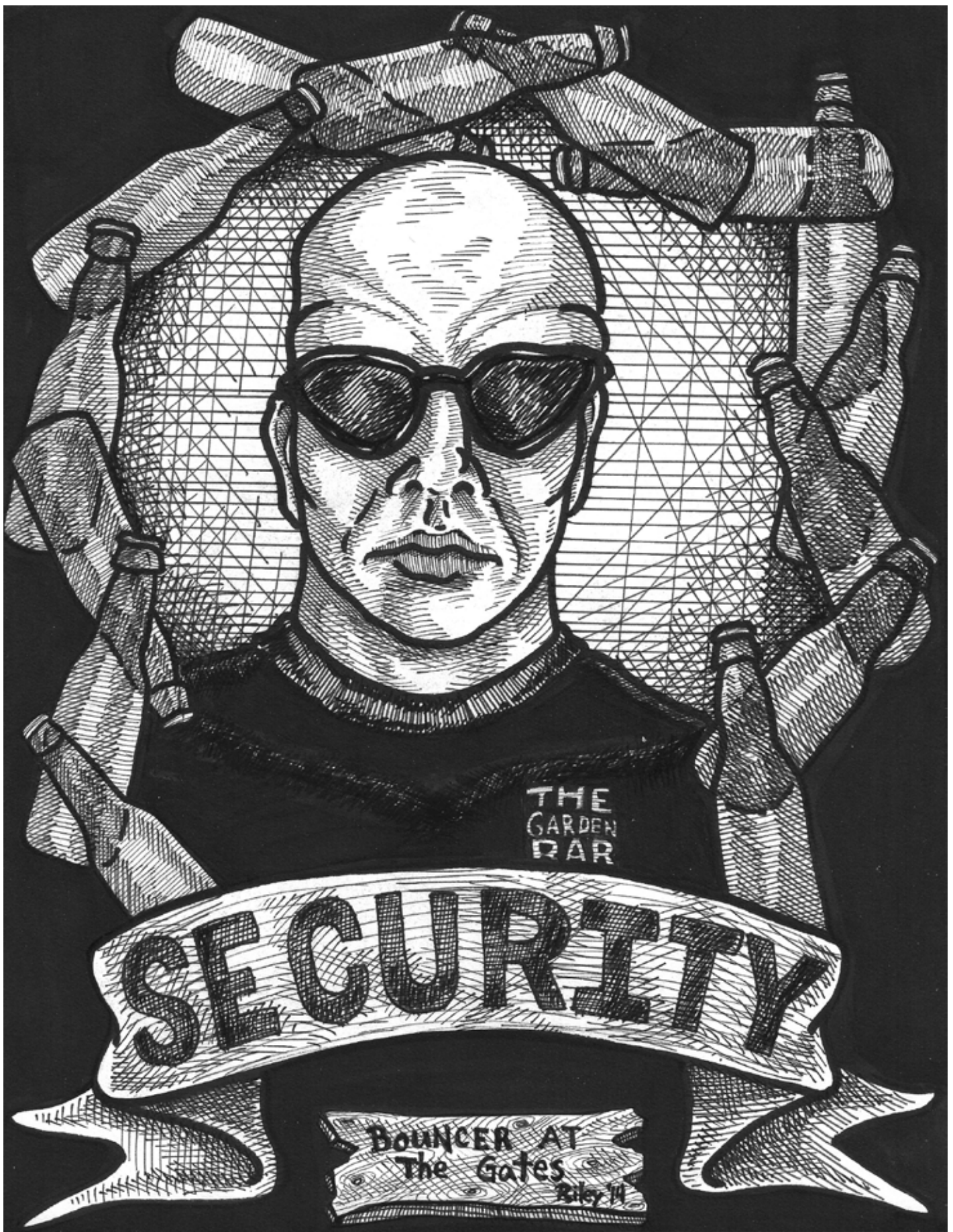
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***DRAWING:***

**DERRICK RILEY**

Derrick Riley, a printmaker from Lexington, Kentucky, is an instructor of Drawing and Printmaking at Transylvania University. Derrick also operates a small press out of his home called dRock Press, and he is the Kentucky representative for the *Outlaw Printmakers' of America*. His work has been shown extensively both nationally and internationally.

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## The Foxes Have Holes . . .

*And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.*

*Matthew 8:20, Luke 9:58*

As soon as the barefoot Son of Man  
stepped out into the snow,  
the door slammed shut behind him.  
And then he knew, This is a fucking big mistake.  
He turned and pounded on the door.  
Let me in, he shouted. Let me in.  
Fuck you, called the voice from behind the door.  
What did I do? the Son of Man called.  
He knew he had done something, but what?  
What did I do? he called again.  
I'm sorry, man, whatever I did.  
The voice behind the door said nothing.  
Man, I thought you was my friend.  
Fuck you, shouted the voice behind the door.  
Come on, man, the Son of Man shouted, Open up.  
It's freezing out here.  
The voice behind the door said nothing.  
It was a Nothing so emphatic this time  
that the Son of Man knew  
it would do no good to pound and shout.  
He might as well go back to the Shelter.  
I never should of left, he thought.  
He called again to the voice behind the door,  
At least throw me my clothes, he called.  
At least give me back my shoes.  
But the Nothing was so profound and resonant  
that he knew the voice had left the room.  
So there he was,  
barefoot and shirtless and stoned out of his mind  
on the front stoop of a house he did not know  
on a street he had never seen.  
The Shelter, he thought. But where?  
I got to get back to the Shelter.  
He set out, through streets that had no name he recognized,  
his bare feet breaking through the crusts of snow.  
He turned one way and another, relying on whim or guess,  
up and down the nameless streets until,  
exhausted, utterly lost, he paused.  
The houses all were dark.  
Not a soul moved along the streets.  
A dog barked six times, then stopped.

The snow fell around him in big, mothlike  
clusters,  
shadowed in the light from the streetlamps.  
There was no sound but the whisper of  
snow on snow.  
He shuddered, but to his surprise, he did  
not feel cold.  
His body, his bare-foot, half-naked body,  
had removed itself to a place some fifty  
yards away  
where he could watch it, as if it were an ac-  
tor on a stage,  
The body of the Son of Man shuddered,  
stumbled, and fell to the ground.  
The body rose, stumbled, and fell again,  
then rose and fell once more,  
and the Son of Man was very tired and the  
body did not rise again.  
and he did not feel cold  
and there was no sound in the empty street  
but the *tish, tish* of snow on snow.

## Exodus

In the end, we despoiled them.  
We took everything we could from them  
and they begged us to go.  
We ate our cold bread  
standing at the blooded door  
when the Great Shadow passed  
and all around us rose  
the wails of the mothers of Egypt.  
We could not look them in the eye.  
They would not look at us.  
Their men had oppressed us sore.  
I was just a girl when we left them,  
but I bear their scars on my back.  
And I bear their scars here –  
Where this heart beats.  
But their women did nothing to us.  
And the children did nothing to us.  
Yet we despoiled them;  
We despoiled them utterly  
and the women wailed  
with their broken sons in their arms.  
The men stared hard at us  
and we ate in haste  
and we left in haste,  
for we had only our beasts to carry us.  
But hatred has wings.  
We knew they would come close behind.

Yet, we despoiled them again in the waters  
and the grieving mothers of Egypt  
Became the grieving widows of the Red Sea.  
On we went, spoiling the nations as we journeyed  
to the land they said was ours.  
We spoiled then the Canaanites  
and after them the Amonites,  
the Hittites, the Pirezites,  
the Hivites, the Jebusites, the Moabites,  
all in their turn, we spoiled them.  
Now, our goats feed off the grass  
grown over the broken altars of the Midianites.  
Our sheep graze among the stumps of their groves.  
Our priests fatten on the meat of sacrifice  
But I sit uneasy in this land.  
The men have their books and their laws  
so they know that all is right.  
But beneath every law is a pile of skulls.  
And the words in each book are nothing but air.  
We rest upon the corpses of those we have despoiled.  
And their children serve us as we served Pharaoh.  
And is this not a curse?  
I am old now and I will pass as the others have passed.  
But I care nothing for the milk of their laws  
nor for the honey of their books.  
For I cannot free my ears of the cries of the mothers  
of Egypt.

## In 1948

*In 1948, at a Year and a Half Old, I Listen to a Speech by Harry S. Truman at the Sidney, Ohio Station of the New York Central*

A man in a suit on a stage at the end of the train  
beats at one hand  
with the back of the other  
and he shouts to the people  
crowded close around the platform.  
The backs of their heads  
glisten with air oil and sweat.  
My father raises me  
higher on his shoulder  
so I can see.

I do not know this man.  
I do not know what he is saying.  
I do not know  
what it is  
my father wants me to see.

***POEMS:***

**PAMELA HIRTE**

Pamela D. Hirte earned a Master's degree in Business Administration at Xavier University. She is a Master Gardener and likes to spend her time outdoors writing poetry or gardening. Pamela's poetry has appeared in many literary journals including *UK Poetry Library*, *Kentucky State Poetry Society Journal*, *Literary Orphans*, *Ohio Poetry Association Journal*, *Ideagems*, *Cincinnati Express*, and *The Milo Review*.

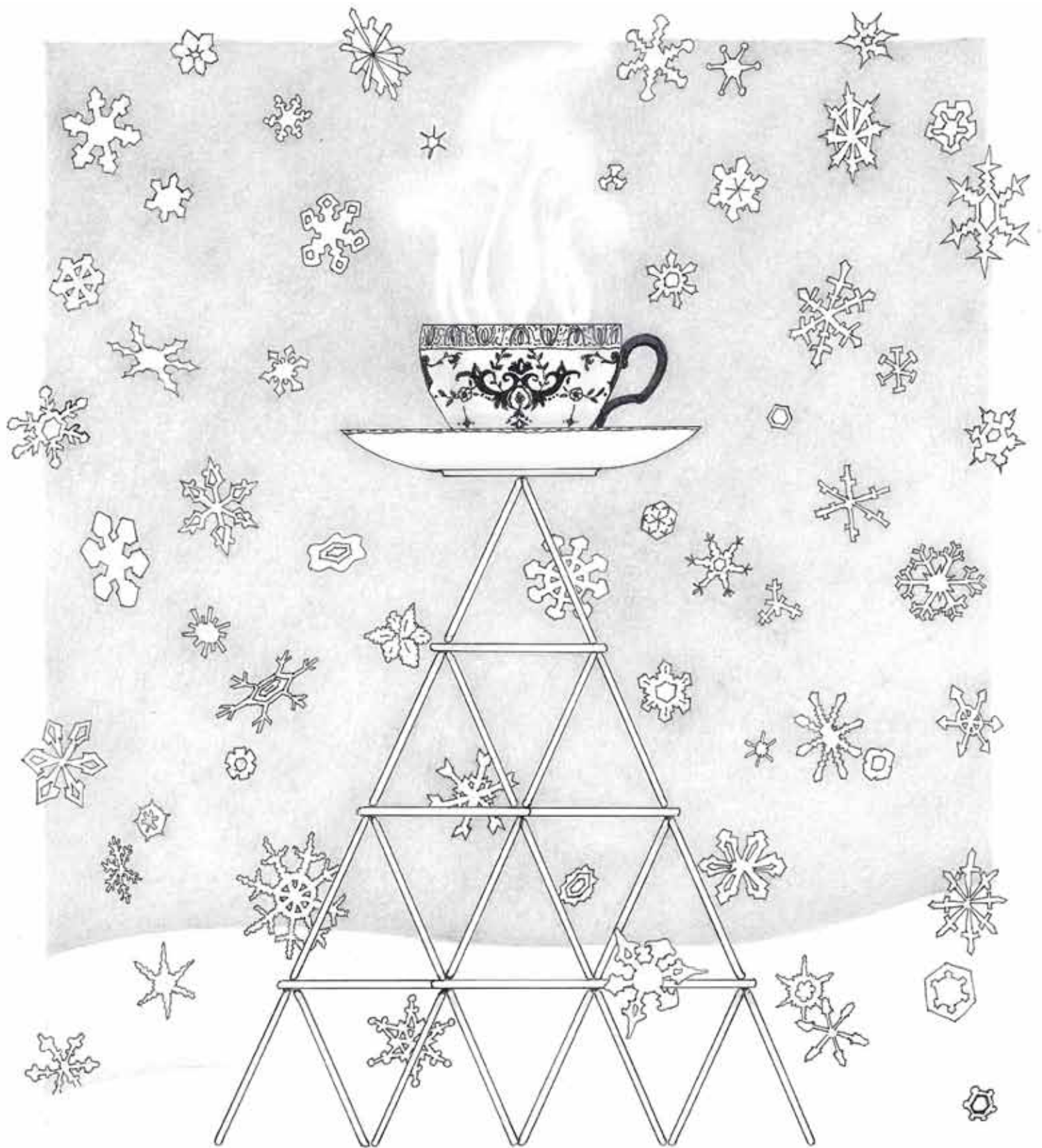
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***DRAWING:***

**WILLIAM HOWES**

William Howes, a native Cincinnati, graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a degree in Industrial Design. William is interested in architecture and photography. He is also an avid gardener.

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## Reflection

Ensconced in my favorite chair I watch the evening news.  
Homelessness, state executions, poverty, war, hunger.  
A world void of peace invades my snug home.  
Outside snow falls and creates a scene of tranquility.  
I sip Earl Grey from a china cup and wonder if justice is more than a concept.  
I set my teacup in the kitchen sink and see my reflection in the windowpane.  
Ashamed, I turn away and bow my head in prayer.

## Tent of Humanity

Under a bridge in freezing rain,  
the flap of a tent flies open.  
Inside a couple huddles together for warmth.

On a white sandy beach in the tropics,  
the linen flap of a cabana sways to a warm breeze.  
A relaxed couple receives a massage for two.

In the Congo violence causes people to flee homes,  
a makeshift tent barely covers a family of ten.  
A camp filled with the hungry wait for a food delivery.

The table is set with china plates and gourmet cuisine,  
A gauzy tent shields the African sun from the elegant setting.  
A group returns from their escorted safari to a hearty meal.

The platoon leader signals his troops to invade,  
canvas tents contain ammunition for various weapons.  
The battalions look over a hill deciphering friend from foe.

A ruptured tent of humanity rips open,  
the vast dichotomy shames me.  
Disgrace overwhelms.



## **Gusts of Hunger**

A wind gust rolls a broken bowl across volcanic ground,  
while camps full of the hungry wait for food from strangers.  
People line up with hands outreached and stomachs empty.  
The barefoot mother of eight sips bottled water saving the rest,  
her teenage daughter stares helplessly into the dust.

A boy embraces an empty bowl as a symbol of hope,  
while his father erects a makeshift tent.  
Women scavenge for wood to sell for food.  
Starvation spreads across a languid land.  
Until the bowl brims with justice, hunger hurts every nation.

***POEMS:***

**SUE HOWARD**

Sue Neufarth Howard, a poet and visual artist, received 3rd Prize and/or Honorable Mention in several Ohio Poetry Day Contests since 1998. Her poems have been published in *Storm Cycle – 2013 Best of Anthology*, Kind of a Hurricane Press; the January, 2014 issue of *Cattails* online journal; *High Coupe* and *Gilded Frame* and *Point Mass* anthologies, Kind of a Hurricane Press; the online magazine *AEQAI*; *The Journal of Kentucky Studies - 25th Anniversary Edition*; *the Mid-America Poetry Review*; and *The Incliner* - Cincinnati Art Museum.

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***DRAWING:***

**EVAN HILDEBRANDT**

Evan Hildebrandt has been a full time artist since 2009 and his work has been sought after by designers and clients throughout the city ever since. Evan is currently the art director at Bromwell's gallery, located on 4th street in downtown Cincinnati where he is also an artist in residence.

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## Bad Things Happen

Petite teen on a dusk jog  
minutes from home; convenient target.  
Woods-knapped - a boy she knew  
looking for someone to hurt.

Her face, neck, side - knife-slashed;  
lung and liver pierced. Jugular  
just missed; she kicked him  
away, lived, testified him to jail.

Bearing scars, returned to run.  
With haunting fears, slept  
in parents' room three years;  
no showers alone. Psychiatrist  
visits three times a week.

She survives, she thrives  
a decade since, trying  
to pay it forward  
trying to face  
a new challenge...  
her attacker - now jail free.

(Found poem, from Enquirer article by  
Krista Ramsey, June 9, 2013 -  
*"Woman's Traumatic Story Has  
Become One of Triumph"*)

## Locked Away

Willard Asylum for the insane  
1910 - 1960, upstate New York.  
Committed patients arrive  
with a suitcase, holding all  
possessions thought needed.

Patients sent there for any reason:  
Epileptic seizures, homosexuality,  
promiscuous behavior, mothers'  
grief too long for a lost child.  
They were prisoners there,  
family abandoned.

Most never left. Average stay,  
30 years. Died there. Buried  
in graves - no name, marked  
only by number. Suitcases  
locked in an attic - forgotten.

Decades later, attic re-entered;  
Four hundred cases discovered.  
Contents of 80 photographed -  
window into lives and minds  
of those deemed not normal, unwell.

What's found inside: Ladies'  
gold lame belts and sashes,  
fancy hats and shoes, perfumes,  
silver napkin ring, curling irons,  
sewing kit, personal letters,

a man's army uniform, grooming kit,  
bread ration card, toy pistol,  
photos of self and family, injection  
needles and epileptic drugs.

In others: Prosthetic leg, a newspaper  
bought the day before commitment,  
a zither, corked bottle of glycerin,  
paperweight from 1893 Chicago  
World's Fair. Suitcases' photos

on public view, 2013, an exhibit to show  
"The Changing Face of What is Normal,"  
mental health now and then,  
San Francisco Exploratorium Museum.

## Bone Chilling

When it's freezing in Florida,  
the bodies of cold blooded  
green Iguanas shut down.

They lose their grip,

fall from the trees,  
turn gray; when  
freeze persists

they die.

Cyber-bullied, cold  
shouldered by peers  
ongoing, the teen

loses her grip.

Becomes lackluster,  
vitality-grayed,  
eating disordered

yet the cold blooded  
shut out persists; she's

found lifeless in her room.

## ***POEMS:***

### **NANCY JOHANSON**

Nancy H. Johanson has loved and written poetry since childhood. Long walks in nature and on city streets inspire many of her poems and photographs. Nancy's recently published book, *Light Showings: Moments In Divine Presence*, offers a prose journey into her interior world of spiritual visions and guidance.

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### **TERRY PETERSEN**

Terry Petersen prefers to focus on the positive. She believes in diving through the muck of real life to come up with a gem. Her short fiction was included in *Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel* in March 2013, and she has written several stories for [pikerpress.com](http://pikerpress.com). Her 3 young granddaughters bring her both joy and inspiration.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **DEREK ALDERFER**

Derek Alderfer is currently pursuing a BFA in illustration at the Art Academy of Cincinnati. He aspires to work in narrative/concept art and to independently publish comics that invoke both wonder and philosophical intrigue. Besides drawing with ink and watercolor, he has dedicated many hours to painting murals for ArtWorks and taking photography during his adventures in Cincinnati.

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*John Ruskin*

## Red Protection in the Cruel Month

(by **Nancy Johanson**)

In trusty red plaid, flannel shirt,  
he squats beneath the redbud tree  
whose arms bend, curving motherly  
above the rawboned, homeless three.

He sprawls across worn limestone steps  
this fragile April eve that leads  
toward night in Burnet Woods' old trees.  
His newfound friends laugh, shoot the breeze.

Then squad cars screech. He jerks around.  
He squints. Blue flashers stain his face.  
A young cop jumps right out and takes  
his pad and pen, scrawls down their names,

then confiscates the cans of beer.  
Few are possessions that remain  
but blueless clouds, bone-chilled with rain.  
The hidden men just stare and wait.

Rain-pelted busses splash and pass.  
A lone professor's loping strides  
hurry him home, red cap pulled tight.  
The big girl's red umbrella rides

her shoulder, aiming at the sky.  
Electric lights bisect the street.  
The buddies bolt, a last retreat  
and jump into the far back seat

of someone's beat up, red sedan.  
One drapes a dirty piece of dark  
rag on a jagged, twinkling arc,  
wet street-lit glass, their makeshift star.

## The Pawn

(by **Terry Petersen**)

A young man props open the door  
to his screened-in porch  
as a robin dives, wild, wings flapping  
into the wire mesh walls.  
The man gestures toward the exit  
and mutters about how other creatures,  
two-legged or flying,  
refuse to be rescued.

He leaves to learn the tricks of chess  
from an elderly neighbor.  
The older man offers him a seat  
at his kitchen table  
where a set of yellowed-white  
and chipped black game pieces  
wait on a well-worn board.

The master's game is sharp.  
As he plays he speaks  
of his sons and daughters  
and their plans for him  
to move to a nursing home,  
the place the old man  
calls incontinence hell.  
He describes shirts with elbows bared,  
gifts from his deceased wife,  
removed without his permission.  
*She lives in those shreds.*  
The young man tries to follow both  
his teacher's stories  
and his advice about the game  
until the old man shakes his head.  
*Because you are learning I will let you  
try that move again.*  
But the student sees only black-and-white  
wood  
on a checkered board.

*Checkmate.*

The old man shows no sign of triumph.  
He resets the board.  
The young man nods, silent,  
wondering if the robin  
found passage--or not.





***POEMS:***

**JERRY JUDGE**

Jerry Judge is a Cincinnati based social worker and writer. He is a long time supporter of the SOS ART event and projects.

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**LONNA KINGSBURY**

Lonna D. Kingsbury, poet / educator / director / writer is currently at work on converting her long-performed children's play showcasing her Wanna the Wanna Bee character as she meets Bucky the Bucktown Goat. Her scholarship from the Effie Mihopoulos Foundation helps defray artistic costs as she continues teaching in the city and beyond. She is the Second Congressional District Poet Laureate.

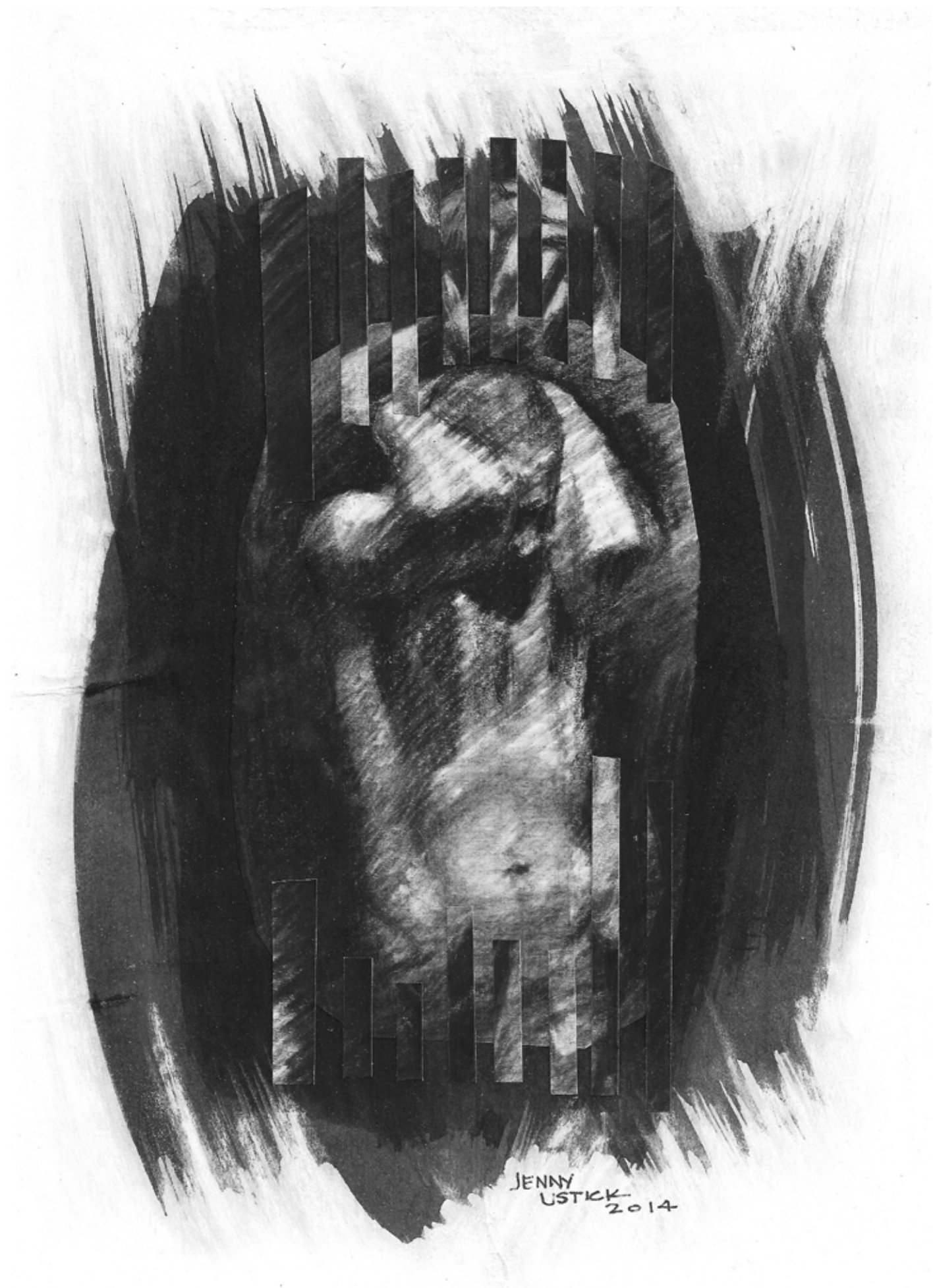
Contact: [lonna@kingsburyproductions.com](mailto:lonna@kingsburyproductions.com)

***DRAWING:***

**JENNIFER USTICK**

Jenny Ustick is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Art at the University of Cincinnati, where she has contributed to the formation of a new Certificate in Art Therapy. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. With drawing and painting at the core of her solo work, she is also part of three multi-media collaboratives groups.

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JENNY  
USTICK  
2014

## Urban Winter

(by **Jerry Judge**)

bloody red afternoon  
darkness descending soon

a siren in the distance –  
too soon to go to bed  
grasping for safety's illusion

## The Lizard

*After "At the Bomb Testing Site"*  
*by W. Stafford*

(by **Jerry Judge**)

Until I die,  
perhaps in the john  
or watching under a callous sky,  
I'll remain gripped, haunted

by you at that desert bomb site,  
your panting and tense little elbows  
just before your oblivion  
ended our humanity.

## Hanging Out With Dutchman's Breeches

(by **Jerry Judge**)

Since I learned of your power to poison  
people and animals who try to devour you  
and your ability to cause contact dermatitis,  
I respect you more.

You're complicated, but more predictable  
than man. You will use lethal retaliation  
when you are injured hard or dying, but  
you don't strike first. You're better than us.

## Duty Calls

(by **Lonna Kingsbury**)

The screams  
through dreams  
enveloped him  
facing tracer bullets  
framed  
as firebrands  
relight each sky  
enhance their every cry  
each night

past sleepless nights

past conscious calls

they now choose days on end  
where screamers come to stay -  
engaged

past shrinking  
past drinking  
past most debased diversions

in every way displayed

some generously given  
some generously paid

ashamed

now knowing they observe  
he imagines clicking tongues  
judge each degraded act  
from nurturers he meets and seeks  
to those who fall within his trap

past break-ups  
past take-ups

encompassing his frame  
the omnipresent callings  
bear witness to his rage.



## ***POEMS:***

### **CAROL LAQUE**

Carol Laque is publishing *Poetize*, a new collection of poetry, this spring. The war of the soul and the peace in music, art poetry continue to inspire her. To love always is the most outrageous act of all. In Ukraine poets are in jail. Carol speaks for peace and justice for all poets behind bars of oppression. Her Cincinnati award “The Skyblue the Badass award” gives her bravery and strength since it comes from Cincinnati’s inspiration and dear friendships.

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### **KEN WILLIAMSON**

Ken Williamson, a native of Cincinnati, is a graduate of Norwood High School and Ohio University. In 1969, he was a US Army Photographer and Journalist in Vietnam; he owned a film and video production company for 28 years. Many of his poems, written during a return trip to Vietnam in 1998, will soon be published in – *Saying Goodbye to Vietnam*. Ken is an active writer and photographer.

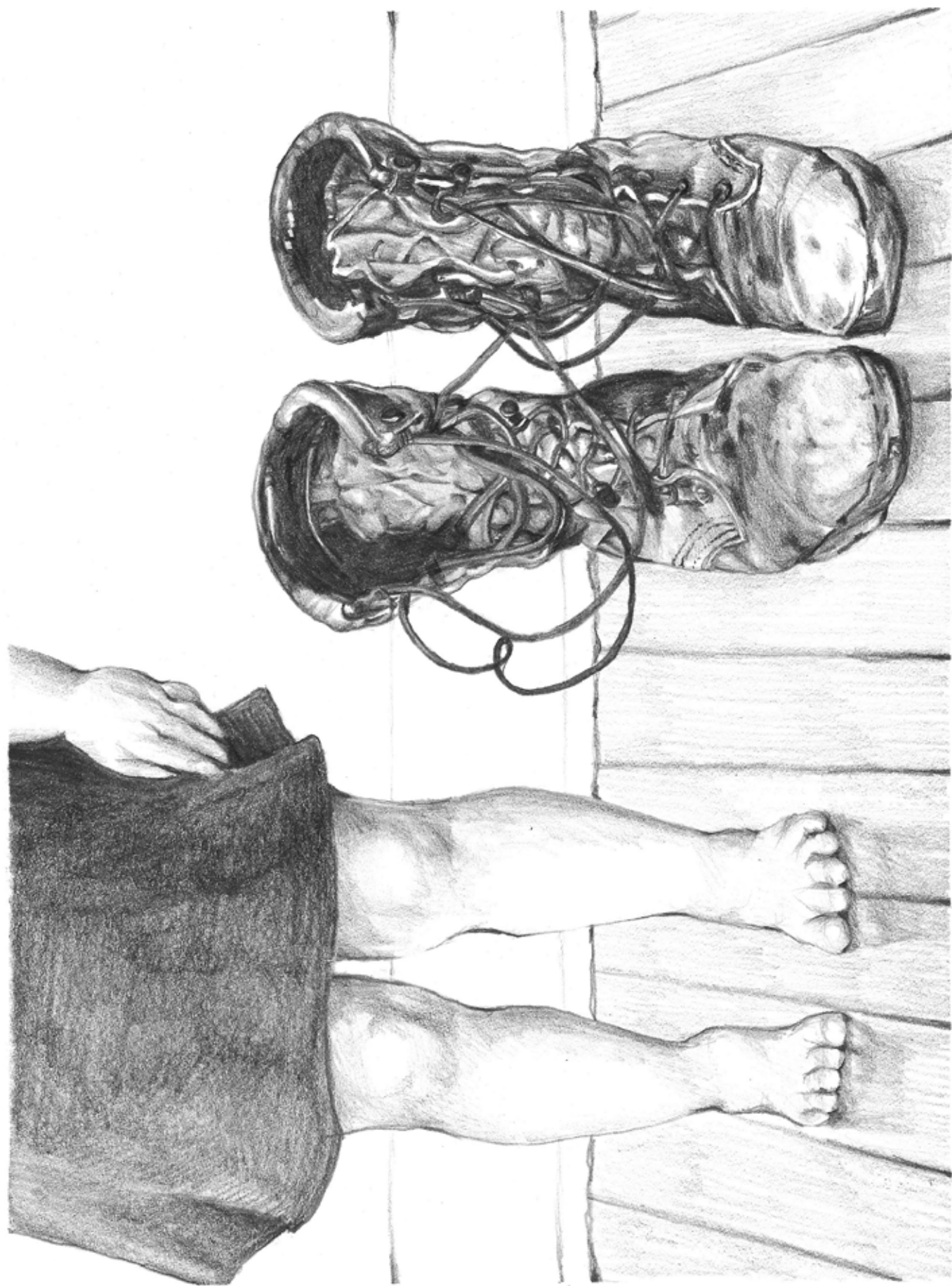
Contact: [kenw1@fuse.net](mailto:kenw1@fuse.net); [www.photogalleryonthenet.com](http://www.photogalleryonthenet.com)

## ***DRAWING:***

### **ERIN FLICK**

Erin Flick is a senior at Northern Kentucky University majoring in Studio Arts and minoring in Media Informatics. She is inspired by the sublime that is experienced in everyday life.

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Ein Flick

## Triumph Over Death

(by **Carol Laque**)

*"Choose to love what does not die"*  
Rumi

My fingers write with light.  
I wake up inside the pen -  
Flowing onto the page  
With words who  
Lay down into the grass -  
These words are green and wild  
Growing into poems inside  
Gardens full of praying mantis -  
They stand so still like sticks -  
Especially my grief learns to bloom;  
and I remember how to pray.

## The Question

(by **Ken Williamson**)

Girls, ten and seven,  
walk up to the Vietnam Women's Memorial.  
The younger one spoke...  
the words just fell out, landing on silence,  
like cold on cold,  
truth on truth.  
Words tumbling out, almost one at a time...  
like in slow motion,  
but fast enough to cut through the surrounding  
clutter,  
like a knife sliding through the heart,  
"Have you ever seen anyone die?", she asked.  
Ten years of wisdom,  
almost afraid to answer,  
the small voice uttered the truth...  
"No", she said,  
as she stared at the bronze cast faces  
of the women who served.  
The pause seemed endless,  
as if to ask  
"did they".

## When You Go

(by **Carol Laque**)

*"When you go to buy a pome-  
granate, buy one that's laugh-  
ing."*  
Rumi

Perhaps for a moment -  
Perhaps for an eon -

Angels carved and trapped  
in stone cathedrals

will sing out loud as Death  
returns what it has borrowed.

## Vietnam, Cambodia

(by **Carol Laque**)

*"The choice is between  
nonviolence and non-  
existence."*  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

My poem  
is pompous  
to piggyback.  
I stitch  
sweet soldiers  
to sordid agents  
in orange wars.

My crewel work  
is cruel work,  
so monks  
set fire  
to themselves.

Do you  
remember  
everything now  
even though  
you are a  
tourist here?

## Boots at The Wall

(by **Ken Williamson**)

Crimson stained memories  
and tired old feet.  
The stories those boots could tell,  
of old times and fun times,  
of war and death times,  
of friends missing and gone.  
Red dirt from Pleiku,  
Blood stains from Cu Chi.  
The sounds of laughing children  
and barking dogs,  
they know not of the pain and emptiness of war.  
They know not where these boots have tread.





***POEMS:***

**JUANITA MAYS**

Juanita Mays resides in Milford, Ohio; she writes, as she lives, through the prism of her Appalachian heritage. Juanita is never far from lessons and stories learned from the creek, woods, stones and earth of her childhood. She has been a member of the Ohio Poetry Association, the Kentucky State Poetry Society and the Phoenix Writers. She has been published in a variety of literary magazines as well as in the 2013 OPA anthology *Everything Stops and Listens*.

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***DRAWING:***

**ANDREW DAILEY**

Andrew Dailey holds an MFA in studio painting from Miami University. He actively exhibits his work regionally, nationally and internationally. Exhibitions of note include CONNECTIONS 2014 at the Ladislav Sutnar Gallery in Pilsen, Czech Republic and the Contemporary Realism Biennial at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 2011 he was awarded an Individual Excellence Award from the Ohio Arts Council. Andrew draws inspiration from his wife Kelly, son Liam and daughter Phoenix.

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"CORRA INGENIUM"

ANDREW DRAKE 2014

## Billy Goats Gruff

The fevered man  
peers from under the night,  
routed from sleep again.  
He fears his own sleep sounds:  
the wheeze, crackle and cough,  
lung-squeak noises,  
bat songs escaping  
from beneath his bridge

Afraid to sleep, for fear  
of being wakened from delusions of  
Carolina skies,  
seventeen percent Fire Wine  
going down easy and warm and  
Dennis-green vineyards,  
body-hot nights,  
hands near scorched over roasting sticks  
and a summer-fun-bonfire.

Not wanting to wake up  
one more time  
cold in Cincinnati,  
apprentice of grizzled men  
who have learned to exist  
cold and cold, then damp cold  
until honeysuckle drapes  
the city's seven hills.

In and out of dream,  
he drives a dune buggy  
under bronze sun  
but someone is standing  
in naked-sand,  
gasoline fire and char.

The north wind spits ice-shots,  
shrapnel, he doesn't feel.  
Yet overhead  
he hears horses' hooves  
clip-clop, clip-clop,  
and remembers a soft voice reading  
at bedtime  
*Three Billy Goats Gruff*,  
one walks tonight,  
over his bridge.

## Earth's Grandchildren

My great-grandson, Cohen,  
dips sticks of French toast  
into sprinkles of powdered sugar.  
"Mmmm" he says.

South of Damascus, two little boys,  
hands small as new maple leaves,  
pick meager grass to eat.

This three year old grandson of my heart  
sucks chilled organic milk  
from a sippy cup, free of BPA.

And mothers from Medmah, hold  
baby-bundles  
as brittle as twigs  
against dried up breasts.

Cohen pushes his Hot Wheel cars,  
zoomzoomzoom  
across our cluttered table.

Convoys of food  
are halted  
at Syrian borders,  
weapons-inspectors roll their wheels  
freely on and on.

My grandson and I toss leftover crumbs  
to flocks of blackbirds dotting January snow.  
We feed kibble to his puppy.

Syrian clerics lift the decree  
that forbade citizens from eating  
dogs and cats.

In Jisreen, grain-filled sacks,  
are stacked like sandbags  
around government soldiers,  
their guns properly propped.  
No rice, no flour, no bread for  
the people.  
Near the presidential palace,  
Earth's grandchildren die.



***POEMS:***

**BILL MCCORMICK**

Bill McCormick is a retired high school teacher of German and English. A rule of his is to always be active in the life of every community he finds himself in. During his 3 1/2 years in the US Army, served mostly in Panama, he learned to obey.

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**NOELLA POINSETTE**

Noella Poinsette has been a social justice advocate for years. Music and photography are mediums through which she endeavors to educate, transform and lead others to advocacy. For her, combining these three passions equal the perfect ministry, and all being integral to who she is as an Oldenburg Franciscan.

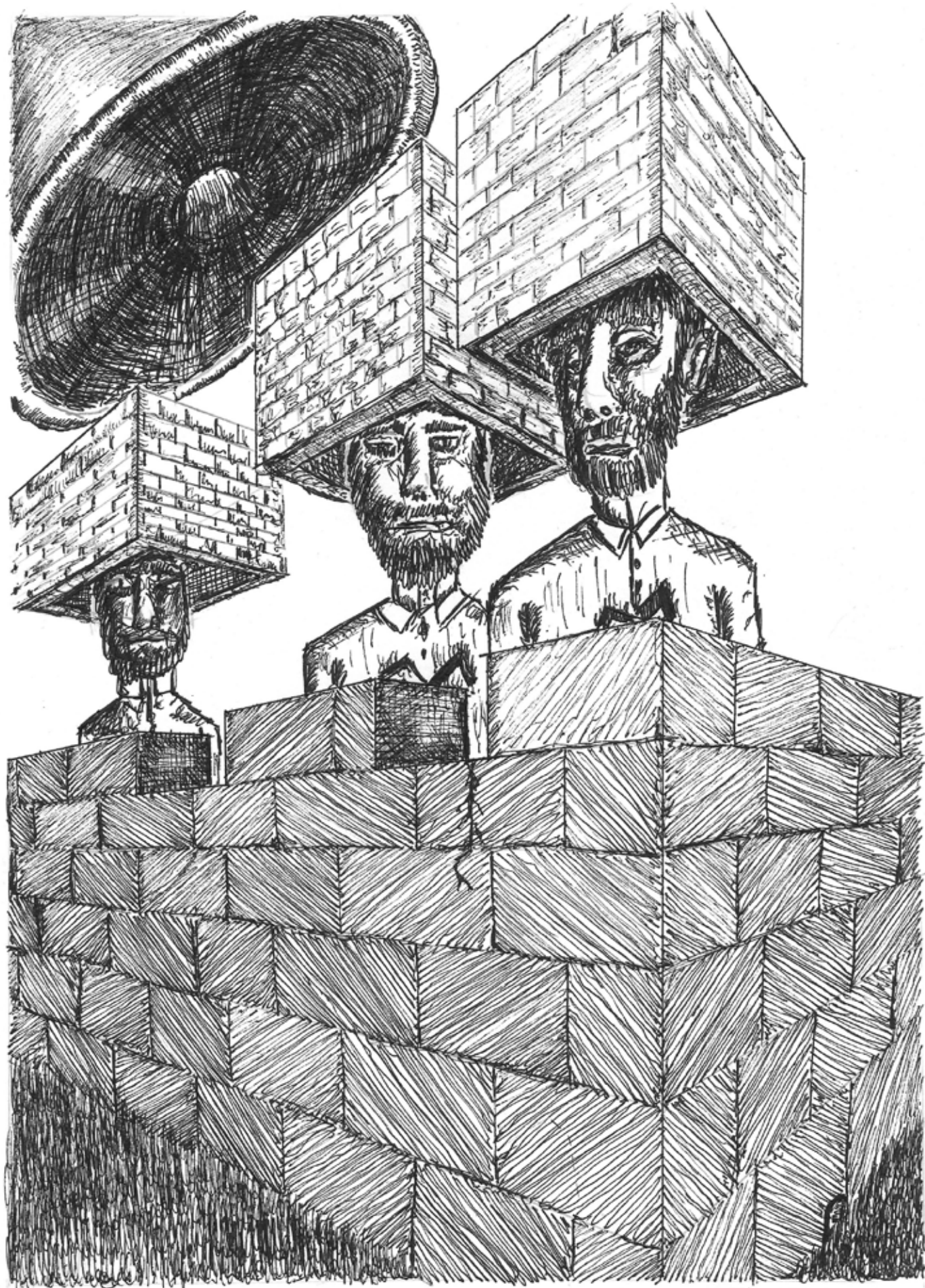
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***DRAWING:***

**JOHN OLIVER YOUNG**

J Oliver Young is working from the outside in and is studying for a BFA in Sculpture at NKU. He is constantly misunderstood, but this makes him happy when he forgets to care.

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Σ OLIVER '14

## Following Orders

(by **Bill McCormick**)

My mother  
untutored parent, said  
Now do it!  
Why?  
Because I said so.

The teacher and the boss  
both beaming success  
had their way  
you did it  
because they said.

Beloved Coach  
goal-driven  
gave us forty pushups  
to assure  
his game plan.

My spiritual advisor  
smugly-secure, said  
God leaves no option  
no hope for those  
who don't follow.

A drill sergeant  
morally-limited, said  
Order One is  
to obey  
Order Two is  
to kill  
whatever ordered to kill.

On the plains  
I killed the pesky Redskin  
in the war of the States  
fellow citizens  
through two World Wars  
I killed foreigners

Holocaust was a cleansing  
My Lai a family affair  
the gulags a societal correction  
Rwanda tribal pay-back  
Iraq and Afghanistan  
a return to pride.

My conscience  
collaterally-damaged, says  
bear no guilt, no shame  
you were just  
following orders.

## Never a Recipe

(by **Noella Poinsette**)

some say "this is how you do it"  
for them it works every time  
but it holds no surprise  
no discovery  
no walking a different path  
don't get me wrong  
paths are good  
but not every moment, everyday.  
no.  
paths, recipes  
they're the same  
I hunger  
for the new, the untried  
a way, a journey  
into the unknown.  
challenge  
risk  
these draw me in  
calling to my spirit  
fascinating  
luring  
Frost's little known road  
to be an adventurer  
a healer/reconciler  
to be sister to the marginalized  
to blow trumpets bringing down Jericho's walls  
to see differently  
to know beauty in the broken, the incomplete  
to experience goodness in vulnerability  
wonder, gratitude, love -  
community, solidarity  
to kiss forgotten dreams awake  
to dance with abandon  
crying from your depths  
rejoicing in a vision restoring  
"This is what I want, this is what I seek,  
this is what I long for." (Francis of Assisi)





***POEMS:***

**ANNEMARIE MIKELL-PAUL**

Annemarie Mikell-Paul is a mother whose hobbies are writing, photography and Aikido. She has a Bachelor's degree in English from Florida International University and was accepted into their MFA program for creative writing that she did not complete. She has been writing and reading poetry since the fifth grade and has been blessed with great teachers who guided her and gave her time and attention. One of the most beautiful things she has seen this year was a turkey vulture lolling high in a blue sky with the sun shining through its wings.

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***DRAWING:***

**TOM TOWHEY**

Tom Towhey, a native of Cincinnati, is primarily a painter interested in creating works with multilevel imagery. His stories are told in a non conventional layering of paint. His artworks can be found in collections and galleries throughout the world.

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## The Symmetry is Man Made

The goddess is Durga, or maybe Hecate, an oval, green, cracked,  
the chain is arms and legs streets in the north and southeast  
night, driving rain, running in front of headlights, wound round wrists,  
round ankles, necks, jewelry tight, long, the living ends of street goddesses

Have fallen off, the women are cropped, segmented.  
The immense sorrow perhaps not intended.

Girls of silver, pretty but less valuable, lie beneath baubles  
dangle from earlobes, girls peek teasingly from curtains of black hair,  
ride crests of cleavage, with helpless, following eyes.

I'll let the silver black the blue, a girl says, as if letting were possible,  
as if allowances had to be made as if she herself had anything to do with it.

The silver blacks the blue; you don't have to have a permit.  
Blue, green, silver, and blue again.

When the ore was mined they took the whole beauty,  
levered rock out of the ground, shine sun-catching eye-catching flecks  
to shine, shine, rain on a sunny day, the strands rolled and twisted  
like women, after the fire hot as hell silver poured from the rock,

Bodies condensed, origins of caves were created in pockets of air.  
Before blue, before green, movement was hammered out,  
bodies pierced by awls with knobbed wooden handles, hung on chains,  
hung in the holes pierced in ears, drifting.

Women are accessories of creation; they accent the genesis.  
The rock always did shine, that's why they liked it, why they pierced it  
like they did the better to hang from the ears of their wives, their baby girls.  
They wear themselves; the women do what they can with the colors they have.

Men give the goddess weapons, the goddess gets weapons,  
they arm her with arms on arms, torpedoes on the end of life  
wound like bows, like legs, the brownest brown hair spread on sheets.

Leaves and dried grass, in the dream in which a tree is alive  
it slips across the street in front of cars, roots and branches  
take over the world one finger at a time, breaking concrete,

But silver, yes, silver, to line clouds, to gild redbrown eyes.  
Blue veins rise upon her, she lies on a shelf, shining.

Yes really thank you, and she says thank you, sir,  
may I have another and they laugh and she thinks Oliver Twist

And they think Animal House and she says it again because it is funny.  
Something bolder moves, a light shines, she is reflexively loving,  
not knowing why, loving, the way blue shines, the way the blackbirds

Turn green, faceted, the blue black, the silver black, desirable  
and full of holes, full of sorrow unintended.

She loves to be played, a song of breath, of holes covered with fleshy pads  
of thick fingers, she loves to be whistled, a melody blown through a hollow body,  
hauntingly, haunting you. Play it a thousand times.

At the end of every line a lift, a question, when she lists her names.  
The configuration of holes, the lips filled with color, the mistakes  
unintended as the tide, the slant of beginning and end, uplifted notes

Which like silver bars of time clasp silence black and silver,  
hollow and filled, the thinness of her skins shiver musically.

The men spit their breath, tiny lisps take the wind and worm in their ears,  
into their brains, and the men clap backs, throw bucks, and punch arms,  
call themselves players, and the women think the song beautiful and horrible.

They hear almost all the words but one letter of one name is changed, one note  
is played differently, and they think that's funny but know not why.  
And the women will sing not the song men hum but a fantasy.

The women will sing a dream in which one line is wrong  
and universal wind blows down on the men, blasts the hair from their heads,  
their sweaty foreheads, scatters their hands, whipplike grasses of silver jewelry  
clinging to dunes which rise and fall.

A hurricane in green beside the ocean blue, which is a woman coming, a mother,  
but when the wind blows it is always a father and the fantasy is just that  
dependant on the light; the wind comes from the south to the north.

Cyclones braided together pull tightly back from her head with turquoise beads  
spreading out, as she shakes her head metallic bullets of rain are cast,  
the child is the mother; the mother never gets there.

This is the goddess. This is the symmetry that man made.  
This is what jewelry knows, a mother's body, flat, empty.

The wind drives through, the lamp is blown out and she cries  
into the night, cries into herself, and the cry itself is beautiful.  
The immense sorrow perhaps not intended.

## The Way From the Woods

On the day of my birth a mystic said I would live  
heavily for periods of years, here (point finger) and here.  
I have been gifted most crookedly with ants in my brain.  
The moment the first light hit my eyes I veered hard to the right,  
took the furthest most long windiest path to peace  
ever written and marked my way by dropping bread.

Who knew the mourning doves would eat all the bread?  
I didn't. I was just shrimping along, trying to live.  
I ventured where I would in the wood of maturity, piece  
by piece I vanished like bread until I wasn't here.  
The undergrowth cracked loudly like bubblewrap, not right.  
The night connected like an anvil but couldn't quiet my brain.

One foot up, one down, crooning to my banshee brain,  
I am wishing for anyone to give me this day my daily bread  
but anyone is not here. No one is home. I am alone, right?  
It's what I say to permit myself to live as I live.  
I hurt no one with what I am doing if no one is here.  
The night is very dark and in the dark there is peace.

At my coming of age I must be forgiven for disturbing the peace.  
I had no idea that someday I might need my itching brain.  
The insects within me buzzed so loudly I could not hear.  
In despair my heart was cast out and a synonym was bred.  
A light flashed in the distance. I followed hoping I would live.  
When you are dying in pieces you don't care who has the right

of way. You just go. I was not ready to receive the last rites.  
All those watercolor tears melted into a strange, silent peace.  
After all that bad medicine I am astounded to be alive.  
I say out loud *Look people, this isn't some kind of brain  
surgery* and they say *Yes it is*, pop a hunk of hard bread  
in my mouth and keep working on me until I can hear.

Then the announcement takes off like fire in wheat -. Hear  
ye, hear ye. The light has come. All hands on deck for the rite  
of passage. My hope rises like the dough of kneaded bread.  
Inside me lies a complicated world which seeks peace.  
The scattered denizens of the tunnels within my brain  
rise like bubbles of boiled milk as they fight to live.

We cast our bread on water for feeding, life comes here  
to the hard hit center. If I feed them I live, oh yes that's right.  
I pass the peace and at last am granted armistice in my brain.

## Redlands

A hawk circles. Out here the sky is still blue, still large and cornerless, still spread like the mocklife paintings sold by the Little River paint lady for another hit though you wouldn't know it if you watched TV.

Today is landscape day for the three-quarter house, collecting donations calls out worlds of humility I did not know I possessed after panhandling money on streetcorners and sleeping in parking garages.

We take Krome Avenue all the way home, through tribal lands of Seminole and Miccosukee. Evergreens channel drivers through green and past, two hasty lanes of humanity wheeling at fifty miles per and then some.

The guava tree comes from a man who speaks no English, the translation for the house we are creating is literally a house for alcoholics and drug addicts and we laugh, recalling ourselves. My man says he wouldn't trade me

for an old yeller dog as the radio shorts into silence. Heat confines laziness as feathers trap warmth, quilts me and I am welcome, and you; the canal keeps pace, lilies are sunhats of the gators and frogs who give us a little tail and leg,

sometimes. I am sorry for those who died never hearing the tall grass speak in the wind, who did not see the clearcut stumps of trees, renascent with shoots, or taste the gator tails and garlic-soaked peanuts we get on the way home.

I own the right to be sorry. Red lights herald our return to the land of nod. The door to the new immigration building is half blocked by a sleeper; his head is supported by a metal knob like the trick of spinning plates balanced on rods.

On the street the litter of human bodies, the splurged wreckage still breathing. At the corner of a fast food drive-thru lies a gnarled stump of a man, his body curled around valuables, safeguarding an aluminum can, a crumpled bag.

His bones, tucked in to his chest, rise and fall; and the whores lift their voices to Amazing Hugh with the Eckankars in the storefront church. We pass walls, mart, and green gives way to addicts in ninety dollar sneakers panhandling

a quarter, a couple of pennies, the next dime please. We pause at a light and I notice a woman hike up her dress and defecate wetly on the pavement outside the bank; people at the window turn their heads away and wait.

Arriving home we see a man in camouflage fatigues asleep on the lawn, a can of Red Bull beside his head. I slam the car door and starts, disappears. I don't know how to feel, carrying a jungle one plant at a time, after nurseries

and the plant doctor, a retired stockbroker minus fifty pounds and serene, himself one-fourth of the Jews in the Redlands who filled our truck, who gave and gave. I have cactus spines in my fingers and I smell like fertilizer, wanting a bath

but watering the plants first. The leaves in my hair remind me of times I can't forget, but that's all. I have dirt to haul, planks to be nailed up, words to save. I am unhurried, seeing there is still world enough and time.





***POEMS:***

**SARA MOORE**

Sara Moore lives in Cincinnati with her young son and teaches English at Northern Kentucky University. Her poems have appeared in numerous national and international journals and anthologies including *Vine Leaves*, and *The Yellow Medicine Review*. She is interested in the way language can both oppress and liberate, and plays with this in her poetry.

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***DRAWING:***

**KENTON BRETT**

Kenton Brett makes multi-functional art that can be easily recycled and reinstalled into unique expressions. The wonder of the toy lives in his work, with moving parts and secret compartments that inspire play and give the work an intrigue beyond the shelf and frame. The ability to tell and re-tell a story is an important feature of his art form. His work has led to toy-inspired public performances in Chicago, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati. Additional works in digital video and animation have been displayed throughout the Midwest. Kenton has a degree in sculpture from the University of Cincinnati and works as a scenic artist for local theaters and as project manager and mentor for teenaged artists.

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Cheriton B. V.

## Imagine This Bed Is Its Own Island

Outside, the screech owl screams an ocean,  
the floor pulls out into water,  
all of the mice scurry and drown.

There is only the sound of rocking and waves,  
your tiny head curled into me like a mountain  
into a ridge of earth.

This unforgiving ceiling—this unforgiving sky.

Before you were born, I was  
trying to grow something without thought  
of what it was—a field of dandelion—  
and now, your youth is a bloom on the horizon.

Something is being built, or destroyed.

I do not tell you to pray for anything.  
I say, *hold tight*.  
This bed is its own mile  
and we are still alive, though a wave could pull us in,  
depositing only bones and bits of feathered drop-  
pings—  
Someone will say, *what is this?*

Even a freckle is a point of darkening.  
The sound of the wind  
is a mother filling  
a pudgy hand with sand.

The sun sinks into the sea like a dead  
orange into the earth—so slow  
and then gone.

## Full Grown Mammoth under the Ice in Siberia

When we broke through the ice, into  
her stomach the blood was very dark.  
I thought we must have split into a long  
forgotten pipeline—*oil*. I said to you,  
but I don't think you heard. You had your hands  
deep in the gut of her. You said: *warm—  
amazing*. Movement—  
Put your hands here.

Maybe I saw something die  
ancient, a spasm in every living  
rock or bone, clutching  
for an organ—feel it  
pump and pump and go.  
I want to be still  
in this place for as long as I can.  
Don't find me. I am not big  
enough to be passed over—How is it  
possible.

## It's the Only Thing We Have to Wear

Thin layer of taffeta, blingy  
little loops, black stitching. A  
hidden crow's eye. Under the hem,  
a tiny finger. Uh-oh, there  
is a spot of blood, but no  
one will know, for the color.  
Look at the way the lighting  
makes her look more alive,  
the sequins light up  
like little tongues.  
Her waist is a tiny bend  
in a distant road;  
she fades out, flickers.  
When she turns to the side,  
a section of the room statics.  
She is so thin,  
she undulates.  
Undo the zipper  
and her skin will  
drop like scales. We'll be  
left with nothing  
but shaky dusty light,  
her lungs contracting  
and expanding like  
kites. This is beautiful, too  
but too close and too wide.  
Put something on  
to cover her beating  
organs, plug the rush  
of a windy soul.



***POEM:***

**MARY-JANE NEWBORN**

Mary-Jane Newborn practices and promotes liberation veganism, materials and energy conservation, reuse and recycling, and finding humor wherever possible. Methane production by anaerobic digestion of all currently wasted organic matter excites her considerably.

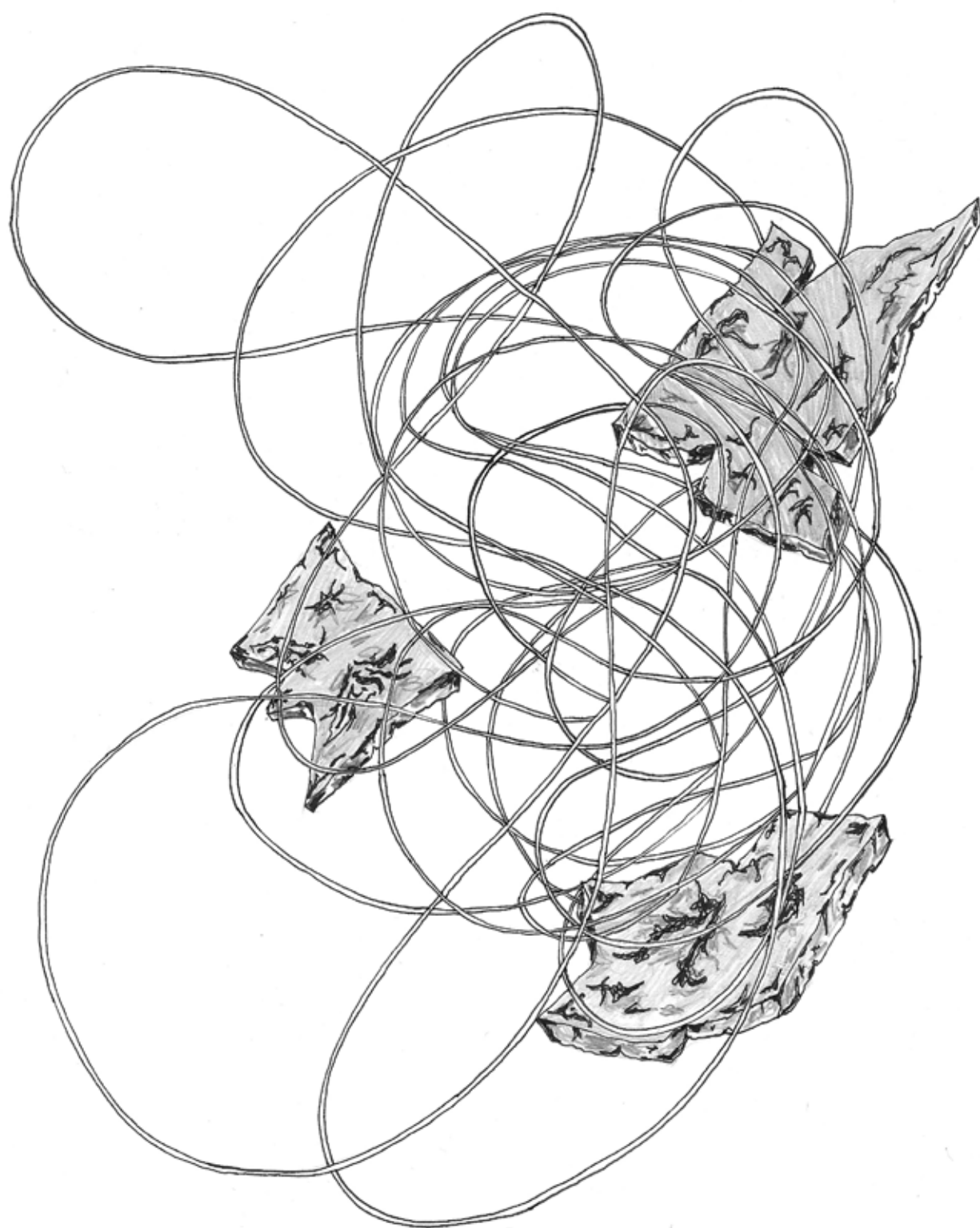
Contact: [veganearth@roadrunner.com](mailto:veganearth@roadrunner.com)

***DRAWING:***

**JESSIE FISHER**

Jessie Fisher, a Cincinnati-based artist originally from Burghill, Ohio, is currently pursuing a BFA in Printmaking at the Art Academy of Cincinnati.

Contact: [fisherjessie92@gmail.com](mailto:fisherjessie92@gmail.com)



Jessie Fisher

## Reiteration

When they came for the newborn calves,  
to crate them, and fatten them for slaughter a few months later,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a newborn calf.

When they came for the bright restless children,  
to diagnose and drug them into compliance,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a child.

When they came for the abandoned stray dogs,  
to cage them, kill them and butcher them into protein supplement,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a dog.

When they came for the Anna Louise Inn,  
so the super-rich could prosper and play in that century-old home,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a poor working woman.

When they came for the sharks,  
to slice off their fins and throw them back into the ocean to die,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a shark.

When they came for the people who "look Hispanic,"  
I didn't stand up, because I didn't "look Hispanic."

When they came for the newly-hatched male chicks,  
to toss them into bags to suffocate and be ground up alive for fertilizer,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a chick.

When they came for the perpetrators of victimless crimes,  
to lock them up in overcrowded, violent private prisons,  
I didn't stand up, because I was a proud law-abiding citizen.

When they came for the sows, to stuff them in rape racks and gestation crates,  
to breed until they died with prolapsed uteri,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a sow.

When they came for the Drop-Inn Center,  
to move the distasteful homeless out of sight of the comfortably off,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't homeless.

When they came for every fish in the sea, to sweep them into drift nets,  
and throw back the dying millions who weren't profitable,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a fish.

When they came for the migrant workers,  
to drench them with carcinogenic pesticides as they bent in the fields,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a migrant worker.

When they came for the hens, to debeak them without anesthesia,  
and cram them in cages reeking of urine until they couldn't lay eggs anymore,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a hen.

When they came for the suspected terrorists,  
and detained them without lawyers or due process,  
I didn't stand up, because I was a true-blue American.

When they came for the forests, to clear cut them for timber and paper,  
and grow birdless monoculture plantations in their place,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't a tree.



When they came for the young black men,  
I didn't stand up, because I wasn't black.  
When they came to frack the Earth,  
and contaminate the groundwater and cause earthquakes,  
I didn't stand up, because I didn't live over a shale formation.  
When they came for me, I let them drag me away,  
because my sad, lonely world was devastated,  
and I didn't have the heart to live anymore.

## ***POEMS:***

### **KRIS PATTON**

Kris Patton is a poet and mother from Cincinnati, Ohio. She likes to write about politics, creativity, women and Art. Kris is inspired by New York City, Boston, good coffee, oysters, the music of Edith Piaf, and her son's drawings.

Contact: [hankspatton@gmail.com](mailto:hankspatton@gmail.com)

### **LILLIE TEETERS**

Lillie Teeters resides in Columbus, OH, but lived in counties around Cincinnati for most of her formative years. She was born in Mariemont, OH. Her mother, brother, nieces and nephews still live in the area and she frequently visits them.

Lillie holds a BA in English with a creative writing emphasis from Otterbein University. She presently pursues her MFA in Creative Writing at Queen's University in Charlotte, North Carolina and plans to graduate in January 2015.

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

## ***DRAWING:***

### **JAMES OBERSCHLAKE**

After gaining some attention as a horror book illustrator in the late 90's, James Oberschlake has since abandoned that field to give more attention to his personal creative interests. He relies heavily on a free association approach, continually re-examining anatomical possibilities; his imagery thus evolves with distinct, yet ambiguous narrative qualities. For the drawing in this book, James let the poems' sense of urgency and unrest ruminate in his creative process.

Contact: [info@oberschlake.com](mailto:info@oberschlake.com); [www.oberschlake.com](http://www.oberschlake.com)



James Oberschlake  
2014

## Heba

(by *Kris Patton*)

Warning shot fired    fragments  
of life, joy, fear, love,  
bone, soul, spew out towards a  
million cardinal points.  
The shrapnel of human life.  
I carry pieces of them with me  
lodged in my  
insides, shifting and biting deeper  
carrying pain in every step.  
This forms the responsibility of Knowing.  
What will you do now? Knowing this?  
I close my eyes and I am you,  
standing over thousands, gas  
filling lungs, helpless heart,  
journey of souls so strong you feel  
them graze your hair as they pass.  
Children, whole families, gone. And you,  
beyond lucky because the wind shifted  
and whispered: "You are free."  
Meanwhile the lifeblood of Syria  
lays, body to earth, every particle  
of every being dancing through  
the dry soil of their motherland.  
How can I possibly carry you  
with me in silence? I know  
this truth, there is no mystery in  
its happening.  
Barrel bombs,  
poison gas,  
shelling,  
starvation,  
for longer than memory.  
What are we waiting for?

## Hunger Town

(by *Lillie Teeters*)

Swollen bellies of African children and a dusty withered bull  
parade across the TV in my living room,  
while the ding dong song of the ice cream truck  
selling three dollar bomb pops chimes outside.

The back-up beeps of a yellow school bus,  
tires splashing May street puddles,  
dropping off a forgotten kid  
hunkered low in the backseat.

War-zone front-line bullets  
five months earlier hurled on New Year's Eve,  
plentiful like pesky flies  
buzzing on hot heads of orphans.

Black and white bags of trash overflow green 300-gallon city-dumpsters.  
An alley preacher wearing a red and blue varsity jacket  
tells my son not to do drugs and to follow the Lord.  
Strong messages come from experience and his message was strong and smelled of liquor.

"Truth comes to us unexpected" I tell my son.  
We back out of the garage and go to the *Golden Arches*.  
We order two *McDoubles*, french fries and Cokes.  
He rolls the bag up to keep it hot.

At home we lock our doors, set alarms, chew on burgers over TV trays  
and watch *The Biggest Loser*  
while the blue cow from hunger town  
swaggers down 19th Avenue.

## ***POEMS:***

### **PURCELL MARIAN HIGH SCHOOL**

**Karl Bludworth** (karl.bludworth@gmail.com), a junior, is interested in pursuing a scientific or mathematical field of study. He participates in Purcell's theatre program, the Queen's Men. He currently lives in West Chester.

**Martin Hamilton** (martinghamilton@yahoo.com), a junior, intends to study medicine. He lives in Hyde Park with his family, one cat, and one dog.

**Jordan Joiner** (jordan.joiner.jj@gmail.com), a senior, is in his second year as a creative writing student. Writing is an enormous part of his life.

**Dezire "Dezi" Lowry** (dizzydezi522@gmail.com), a 17 year old girl from Cincinnati, Ohio, is a senior. The most influential people in her life are her mom, her grandparents and her creative writing teacher, Richard Hague

**Jacob Lucas** (jacoblucas1228@gmail.com), a junior, wants to double major in theater and business. He lives in Finneytown and Oakley.

**Joshua Posey** (jopobetus@gmail.com), a senior, plans on studying Psychology and Criminal Justice at Hampton University. He lives in West Chester Ohio. He spends most of his time reading, writing and hopes to one day publish a book.

These students at Purcell Marian High School, Cincinnati, OH, were enrolled in a Creative Writing class taught by author and poet Richard Hague.

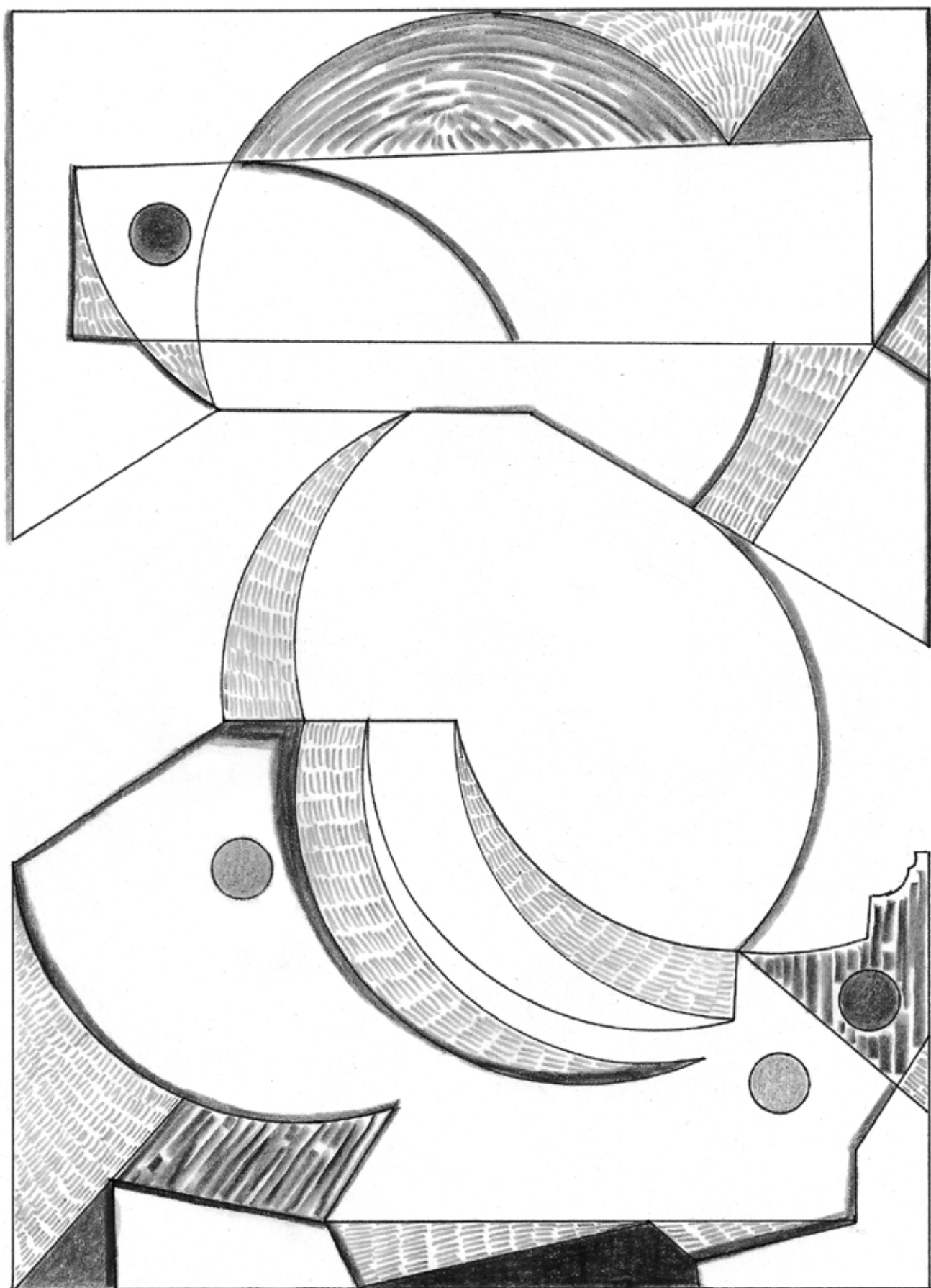
Contact: dickhague@purcellmarian.org

## ***DRAWING:***

### **ANDREY KOZAKOV**

Andrey Kozakov, born in Kiev, Ukraine, in 1977, has been living in the USA since 1994. He belongs to a family of artists and was trained in fine arts by his father, a well established Ukrainian painter and a professor at the school of arts. Through his art, Andrey has been rediscovering the "Constructivism" art movement.

Contact: andreykozakov@msn.com; www.andreykozakov.com



# Justice Is

(by *Karl Bludworth*)

Justice is a bird of prey,  
that hunts tigers and wolves  
who prey upon the weak.

Justice is a sentry,  
that watches the field ahead,  
focused on the safety of his people.

Justice is a royal standard,  
that leads its people onward,  
while enemies are forced back.

Justice is a tidal wave,  
that reaches up higher,  
to crush those below it.

Justice is an angel,  
perfection personified in heaven,  
but outside of the reach of humans.

# Twist That Once Made

(by *Martin Hamilton*)

It glows,  
you see,  
in all the colors not of the rainbow.  
In blood and fire it was made,  
an EYE to watch,  
to guard.  
But black sickness, taken hold,  
twists that once made for peace

(By the sword, shall die by the)  
into another corroded machine.

(Mama, Mama, wherefore art thou?)

Straw man, straw man,  
Why are you so sad?

(Power creates Pride,  
And we have been placed first)

All goes through chaos to peace,  
all comes to an end.  
Four inked shadows,  
painted with light.

(This is how the world ends,  
Not with a whisper,  
But a bang.)



## Nervousness

(by *Jordan Joiner*)

Close the door, shut the  
blinds, and put the fire  
to my temple.  
For me,  
tomorrow is just the day  
I'll be assassinated by the  
remarks darting around the room  
and thoughts buried alive in  
the minds of my peers.  
I can see the thoughts  
pound on their coffin, begging  
to escape the facial expressions.  
I've been shoved inside of  
a trash can and set  
free to can dive off  
of a cliff. When I  
stop falling, will I be  
able to finish this poem?  
The anticipation of a kick  
in the face from a  
donkey and my impatience for  
humiliation is my mistake.  
The opportunity to prepare for next  
time may never come if  
I don't just face them and breathe.

## Mini Misfit

(by *Dezi Lowry*)

I was a  
vigilante.  
Before I even  
knew the word.  
I was the one who refused  
the carpet square.  
Who took the crackers  
and the last grapes.  
Whose eyes were open  
during naptime.  
Who sang the ABC's  
to my own tune.  
Who always made the line  
slightly askew.  
There were drawbacks of course.  
The bare floor was hard and cold  
against my legs.  
When snack time rolled around  
no one would share.  
There were no Smarties on my pillow  
when waking up.  
I was never chosen to sing  
the classroom songs.  
There was no way I would be  
the line leader.  
Short as I may have been  
I made a stand.  
Against what exactly?  
I didn't know.

## Dreams That Never-Were

(by **Jacob Lucas**)

Berated,  
beaten, busted black and blue,  
gay jokes spit at his face,  
he waits until everyone leaves,  
or gets out first.  
He can't stand with the crowd without shaking in fear,  
waiting for the abuse of his so-called team-mates.  
He doesn't understand,  
what has he done?  
It used to be ok,  
football and theatre meshed, perfect balance.  
He dreams of those days,  
when he could smell the fresh cut grass of the field,  
then go smell the fresh sawdust from the set.

He loves both.  
He can't stand having to choose one or the other.  
Reality hits him square in the back, "hit hard or do it again."  
The screams startle him out of his dream,  
he wants to get away,  
away from all the abuse,  
away from the terror and the pain.  
He suffers it all silently,  
showing it affects him will only make things worse for him,  
he doesn't want to be "pussy" or "bitch".

Then he gets home or at least to one of his homes.  
His parents' separation blatant and obvious.  
They dump their feelings onto him,  
loading him down with extra problems,  
problems he can't handle alone,  
but that's what he is, alone.  
So he jokes, playful, never taking anyone or anything seriously,  
screaming inside "notice me please".  
No one does.

Next the coach joins in,  
degrades him for no reason.  
Throws him on the cross, an example of what not to do.  
He still doesn't understand, what has he done?  
He contemplates, alone, quietly.  
Will the knife at his wrist save him?  
He takes the first cut, it's shallow but deep,  
his innocence gone forever as the liquid rubies drip from his arm.

He stares at it, afraid that someone  
will notice,  
but relieved from the torment inside.  
Terrified that he is relieved.  
Terrified that he hates himself.

## Homophobia

(by **Joshua Posey**)

We fear  
What we don't know  
The same gender in love  
Seeking the same rights as  
others  
Straight rights

Great Men

Great men  
Are not gay men  
That is what we are told  
But that just isn't complete truth  
Men say



## ***POEMS:***

### **ARMANDO ROMERO**

Armando Romero was born in Cali, Colombia, in 1944. During the 60's he was part of the avantgarde literary group Nadaísmo. He holds a PhD in Latin American literature from the University of Pittsburgh and is currently Charles Phelps Taft Professor at the University of Cincinnati. His most recent books include *El aguacero edificable* (2011), *Amanece aquella oscuridad* (2012) (poetry) and *La rueda de Chicago* (2004) a novel which won the Latin American Book Award, New York, in 2005. In 2001, Armando also won the Short Novel Award Pola de Siero, Spain, for his novel *Cajambre*. He has been translated into many languages including English, Italian, French, Arabic, Hindi, German.

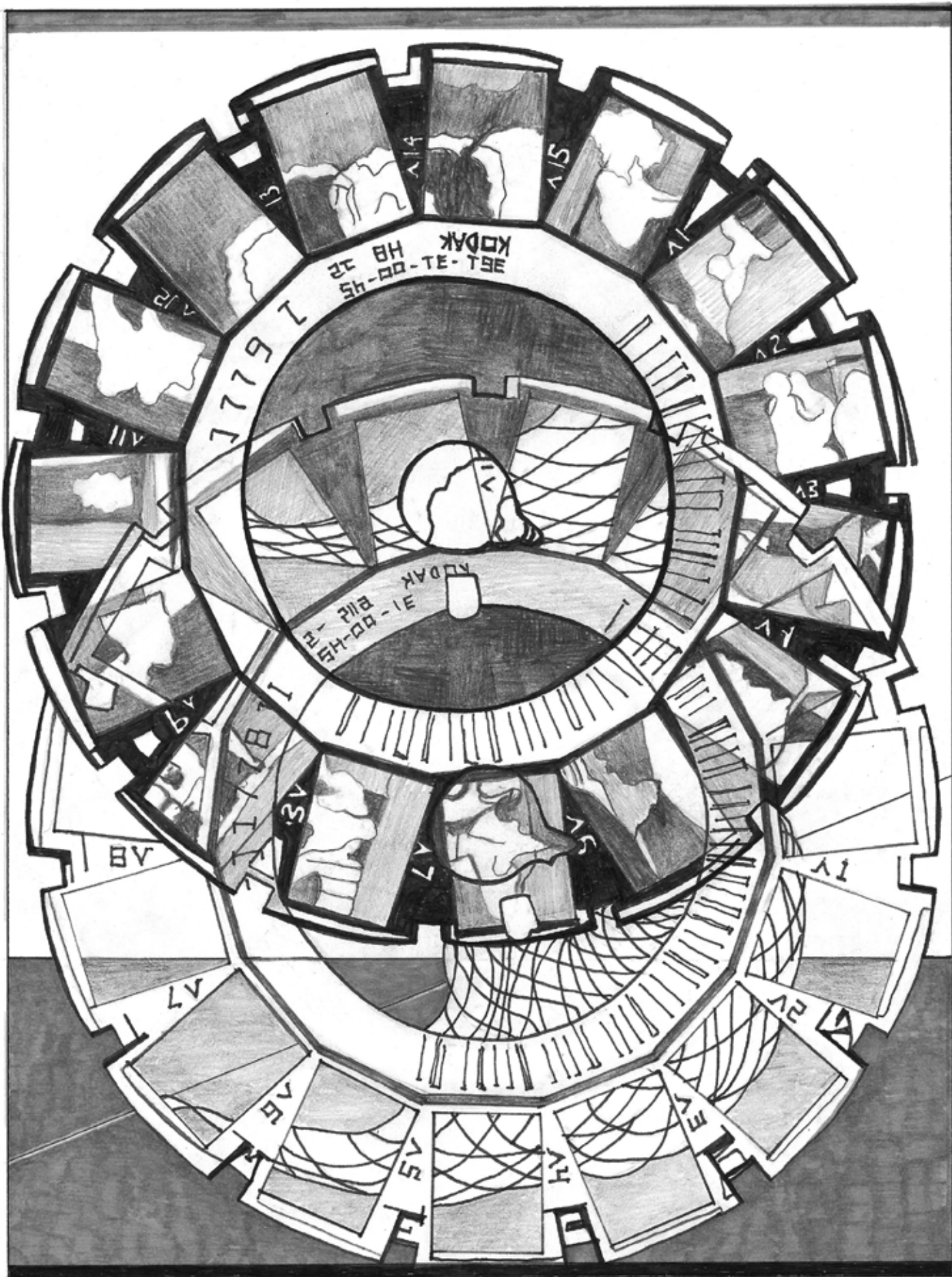
Contact: armando\_romero@msn.com

## ***DRAWING:***

### **CHRISTOPHER HOETING**

Christopher Hoeting is a visual artist, educator, and curator based in the Cincinnati area. He holds a BFA in Painting and Sculpture from The University of Dayton (2002) and an MFA in Painting from The Department of Art at The University of Maryland (2004) where he received the prestigious David C. Driskell Scholarship Award for Excellence in the Fine Arts. Christopher is currently an instructor of Foundations in the Department of Art at both the University of Dayton and Xavier University.

Contact: christopher.hoeting@gmail.com



## The Word Mercy

Throughout the times was left behind  
the word mercy.  
It became progressively entangled  
like a cobweb,  
and at the end it was difficult to recognize it,  
there at the bottom,  
almost lost.  
In our world  
many words get lost,  
but do not disappear entirely,  
they only leave a vague memory.  
I remember this word  
when i was a child.  
My mother used it at nights,  
when silence fell,  
and I knew that my father's eyes  
listened to it,  
wide open.

## Enigma Is a Proposal

What time is this  
that does not let us be  
but one in the unforeseen

Time to close the eyes.  
Time with no peace on the grass.

Time to which hardly matters  
the abyss of the eternal.

Time with no time to return.

Time where fear is the cauldron  
in which life gets consumed.

Time to walk back the road,  
to light up the darkness.

What time is this  
that does not let us be  
but one in the unforeseen.

## La Palabra Misericordia

*Ya quedó atrás en el tiempo  
la palabra misericordia.  
Se le fue enredando  
como una telaraña,  
y al final era difícil distinguirla,  
allá al fondo,  
casi perdida.  
En nuestro mundo  
muchas palabras se pierden,  
pero no desaparecen por completo,  
sólo dejan una vaga memoria.  
Recuerdo esta palabra  
cuando era pequeño.  
Mi madre la usaba por las noches,  
al caer el silencio,  
y yo sabía que los ojos  
de mi padre la escuchaban,  
abiertos.*

## Enigma Es Propuesta

*Qué tiempo es éste  
que no nos deja ser  
más que uno en lo imprevisto.*

*Tiempo para cerrar los ojos.  
Tiempo sin paz sobre la hierba.*

*Tiempo al que poco importa  
el abismo de lo eterno.*

*Tiempo sin tiempo para volver.*

*Tiempo donde el espanto es la caldera  
donde el vivir se consume.*

*Tiempo para desandar el camino,  
para amanecer la oscuridad.*

*Qué tiempo es éste  
que no nos deja ser  
más que uno en lo imprevisto.*

## Song of a Nest

A dove makes its nest  
in the ear of Faith  
and from there go flying  
the plagues of the earth.

By now to believe is not the verb  
the eye does not see the heavens  
and creed is not the song

A dove makes its nest  
and ladies venere  
                crosses with stars  
and gentlemen court  
                moons with swords  
There are some who burn incense  
and others who speak of the sickle

A dove makes its nest  
and come those who dance  
                with hens  
those who slaughter the lamb  
                with pain

A dove makes its nest  
ladies parade  
                with their gowns  
and gentlemen sell  
                infinity

And in the late afternoon  
when all  
                is splendor  
the dove abandons  
                its nest  
thanks to God.

(poems translated from Spanish  
by **Saad Ghosn**)

## Canción de Nido

*Una paloma hace nido  
en la oreja de la Fe  
y de allí salen volando  
las pestes de la tierra.*

*Ya creer no es el verbo  
ya el ojo no ve los cielos  
ya credo no es la canción.*

*Una paloma hace nido  
y las señoras veneran  
                cruces con estrellas  
los señores cortan  
                lunas con espadas  
hay quienes queman incienso  
otros hablan de la hoz*

*Una paloma hace nido  
vienen los que bailan  
                con gallinas  
los que el cordero pelan  
                con dolor*

*Una paloma hace nido  
las señoras se pasean  
                con sus túnicas  
los señores venden  
                la infinidad*

*Y ya en la tardecita  
cuando todo  
                es resplandor  
la paloma abandona  
                su nido  
gracias a Dios.*

***POEMS:***

**PAUL SHORTT**

Paul R. Shortt. Stage Designer. Professor Emeritus, UC-CCM. Short story author and playwright. Introduced to poetry by Cathy Smith Bowers, Antioch Writers Workshop. Cincinnati Literary Club and the Dramatists Guild.

Contact: paulshortt1@hotmail.com

**JIM SHUPERT**

Jim Shupert has been a Visual Artist working in the areas of painting, television and computer generated art for more than 20 years. He uses the name of Shupe Jar productions.

Contact: jshupert@theppsgroup.com; <http://168.215.62.244/>

***DRAWING:***

**JARRETT HAWKINS**

Jarrett Hawkins is a sculptor who does work for public, private, corporate and university settings both regionally and nationally. He works primarily in cast metals and carved stone. He and his partner run a design and fabrication studio in the Cincinnati area.

Contact: hawkinssculpturestudio@gmail.com





## Tree of Life

(by **Paul Shortt**)

The Buddha sat at the base  
of a flowering tree.  
The great tree grew  
from a sheet of glass  
floating on Eternity.  
The branches,  
from the smallest to the largest,  
were Memory,  
Knowledge,  
and all Mankind.  
Beneath the glass,  
inverted,  
another great tree grew,  
of tangled roots  
reaching down,  
  
... an image mirrored of Life Above.

The Tree of Life became upended -  
the naked roots above,  
the verdant leaves below.  
And in the lower darkness  
the leaves and blossoms yearned  
for Heaven,  
                    Light,  
                                and Sun.  
While above,  
                    the roots  
                                were starved  
for Earth,  
                    Water,  
                                and Sustenance.  
Confused  
                    and  
                                upended,  
  
the Tree of Life  
                    struggled  
                                and died.  
The Buddha  
                    had warned  
                                of this.

## Offerings for Peace and Justice

(by **Jim Shupert**)

1.

Roses are red  
Violets are blue  
I'm not my brother's keeper ...  
how about you?

2.

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

Especially when torn out limb & root  
frack the earth below  
and haul out the loot.

Poisoned water left behind  
don't give a shit  
I got mine.

3.

the money stacks - too big to fail  
a frog jumps in  
plop!



## ***POEMS:***

### **LARRY SIMPSON**

In the 1970s, Larry Simpson wrote a series of gritty poems, which appeared in the *Cincinnati Poetry review*, also in *Adena*, *Mountain Review* and *Star Dancer*. He also hosted Readings at Arnold's and a poetry show on WAIF. In the 1980s, he received a grant from OAC to unite local poets and musicians for the Writers for Radio Project, aired on Public Radio. More recently, he has written fiction and non-fiction concentrating on environmental activism. Larry collaborates with musicians to create music and poetry with video as part of Iguana House.

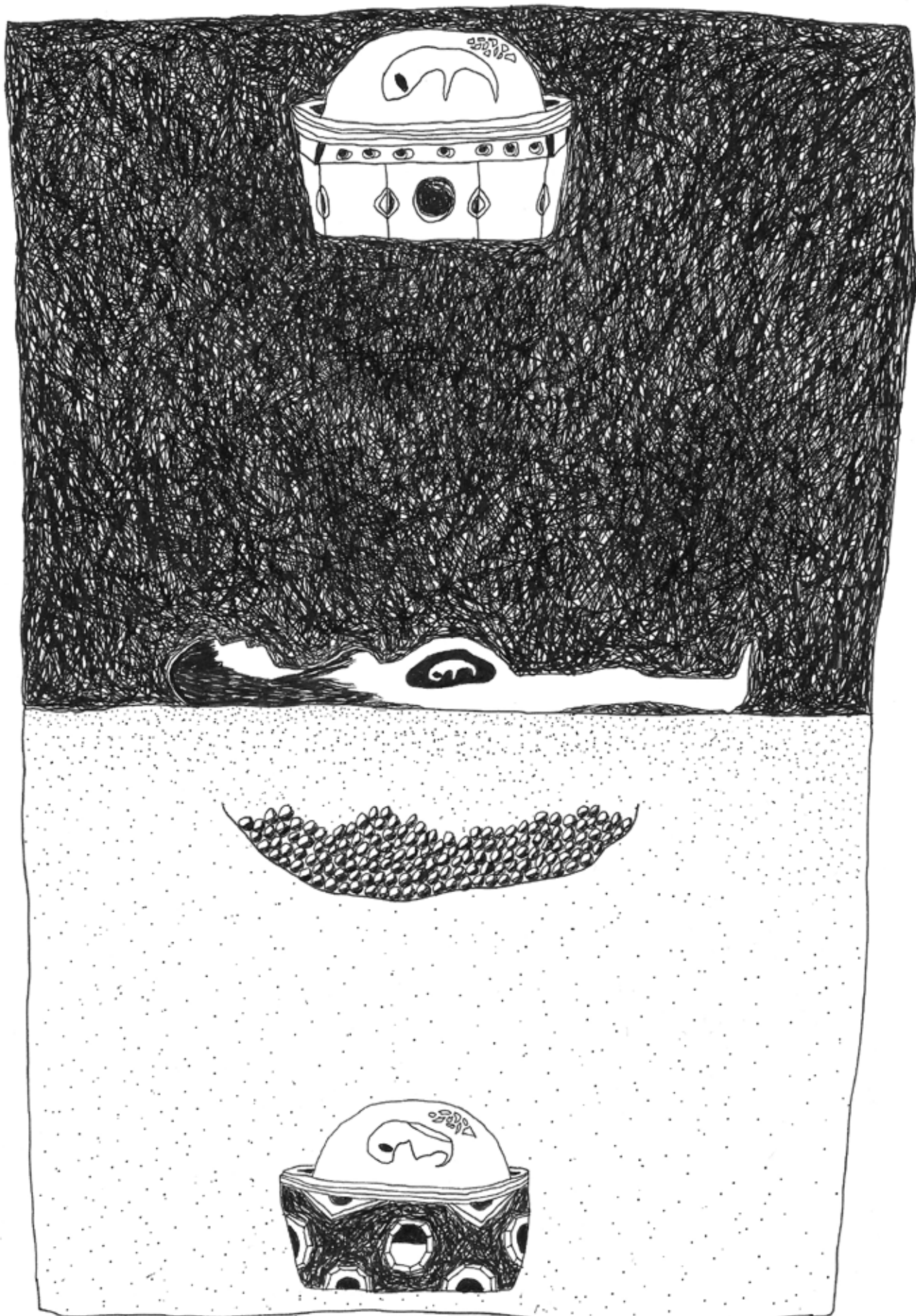
Contact: [larrycsimpson@gmail.com](mailto:larrycsimpson@gmail.com); [larrycsimpson.wordpress.com](http://larrycsimpson.wordpress.com)

## ***DRAWING:***

### **KELSI SAUERWEIN**

Kelsi Sauerwein was born and raised in Hamilton, OH. She then moved to Cincinnati to pursue her career as an artist, attending the Art Academy of Cincinnati to complete her BFA in Illustration. Kelsi is currently interning with Artist and Professor at the Art Academy, Christian Schmit. She exhibits her paintings and illustrations in local galleries downtown.

Contact: [kelsisauerwein10@gmail.com](mailto:kelsisauerwein10@gmail.com)



Kelsi Sauerwein

## ARRIBADA

They seem drawn to the beach  
like sea turtles that struggle ashore to lay eggs  
by the lemon light of the rising moon.  
These pregnant women, each from diverse places,  
distant lives, now share a common state.  
They wade in the roil, hands on hips,  
comparing due-dates,  
laughing about little kicks inside their bellies.  
One lies on a towel, allowing her mate  
to rub oil into her mammalian skin,  
massaging the soft mound  
that has become a living nest.  
A sea within a web of blood carries  
this projection of braided chromosomes,  
a sleeping creature, already loved.

### 2

When the mother turtle  
finds her way to shore  
from some unknown ocean reach,  
alone but with a thousand more,  
she pulls herself above the highest tide  
to dig a nest with clumsy dorsal feet.  
Stone faced, she strains to release  
each leathery bubble of life  
until she has filled the hole with hope  
of future progeny.

Her only signs of relief or agony  
are rhythmic hissing sighs and tears  
that fill her eyes like minute seas.

Quickly she buries her eggs  
with desperate kicks of flippered legs.

Then, with full weight of her shell,  
she drops herself to tamp the mound of sand  
and exhausted, pulls herself back to the sea,  
swimming far from land,  
leaving her treasure to months  
of sun and storm and chance.

### 3

A mother stands  
in the rushing froth  
letting the sea suck sand from her toes.  
Watching a tongue of foam flow back and forth,  
she poses for a photograph.

A husband wipes salt water from his eyes  
to get a better look at his swimming son.  
One child gathers shells.  
Another throws scraps of bread  
to the gulls that swarm and cry  
plucking food from the air  
like swift white fingers of the sun.  
A woman lies back in the waves with arms out  
straight  
letting the sea fill her hair and take her weight.  
The surf hushes her worries of motherhood.  
For a moment she floats  
in a saline womb  
like the child she carries into her dreams.  
She feels the swells,  
the lull of a hidden moon  
dissolving her cares in a flood of tranquility.  
She drifts like a water-borne bloom.

### 4

On a remote beach,  
vacant of hotels,  
where scavengers have not dug for eggs,  
neither humans nor dogs have ripped  
apart the shells,  
there comes a time  
when the sand simmers with reptilian lives.  
Already sensing the direction of the waves,  
the turtle young fight their way from the eggs  
to rush for their first taste of the sea.  
But frigate birds shadow the turtle brood.  
They circle, dive,  
snatching an easy harvest,  
abundant food emerging from the nests.  
Ghost crabs wait near the edge of tide  
to catch hatchlings with precise pincers,  
another step on the pyramid of protean.  
Some turtles find refuge  
in the hungry womb of ocean  
to flee groupers and sharks or other predators,  
perhaps to return one year to this same beach.  
So it is and has been  
for ten million years or more.

### 5

A woman and man  
slip alone from their room  
for an evening walk among the dunes.

Like a golden turtle,  
 the moon emerges from the waves  
 sending yellow ripples to ride the swells.  
 But the man and woman do not think of turtles  
 or eggs or endangered species  
 any more than they think of the submarines  
 that haunt the seas  
 or the guided missiles  
 perched like predatory birds around the world.  
 Their thoughts lie in a closer closer orbit  
 of a child-to-be.  
 With fear and worry and pride for this woman  
 who carries the culmination  
 of his life inside her abdomen,  
 the man is relieved to lose his thoughts  
 to the whisper and thunder of the ocean.  
 The woman is a sponge of sensations,  
 a vessel overflowing with care, emotion.  
 They hold hands and watch the moon  
 climb into rolling clouds.  
 Their hands find places of shared secrets,  
 the warm reunion of excited flesh.  
 They kiss.  
 They swim in moonlight on a towel  
 tasting sea in merging sweat.  
 Two becoming three, as one, they embrace.  
 They burrow into mutual tenderness  
 to create a single egg of faith.  
 And when the surging tide carries their hearts  
 higher than their minds, they lie back in sand  
 until they again can see the stars,  
 feeling the peace that follows passion,  
 peace that overcomes  
 their private wars.

## Oh, Sister Where Art Thou?

It's a long way to Ithaca;  
 it's a long way to Hazard  
 Just to haul a little truth.  
 Just to haul a little truth.  
 Take this hammer,  
 Take from the Captain,  
 Take this hammer,  
 Take it to the people,  
 Hammer out peace,  
 Hammer out Justice,  
 Blowing in the wind,  
 Blowing in the wind.  
 It's a long way to Harlem,  
 It's a long way to Washington,  
 Just to haul a little freedom,  
 But that train is coming,  
 Get on board, get on board.  
 Take this hammer,  
 Across the river Jordon,  
 Take this hammer  
 To the land of Zion,  
 It's a long way to freedom,  
 It's a long way to justice  
 Over troubled waters  
 Just to haul a little peace,  
 Just to haul a little peace.  
 Sing a song of Love,  
 Give peace a chance,  
 Give change some hope  
 All over this land.  
 This Land is your land,  
 this land is our land,  
 and this land is no one's.  
 Wayfaring strangers,  
 Is all we are.  
 We are pilgrims  
 on the ship of Zion;  
 we are riders  
 on that Train of Freedom.  
 Get on board, get on board.  
 Get on board.  
 It's a long way to Hazard  
 a long way to Diablo  
 Just to haul a little coal  
 or uranium fuel.

Take this land and  
Give it to the Navajo,  
Take this land and  
Give it to the Cherokee,  
Give it to the Iroquois,  
Give it to the Shawnee  
so this mountain,  
so this forest  
shall not be moved.  
We are singers in the land of Babel.  
We are poets in the land of Wall Street.  
We are flowers in the war torn desert.  
We are only passing through.  
It's a long way to Baghdad.  
It's a long way to Mosul  
Just to haul a little ammo  
Just to haul a body bag,  
Just to haul a wounded child.  
Bring us home to see our mothers  
Bring us home to see our children,  
we're troubled now  
But we won't be troubled long.  
Take this lantern,  
Take it to the people,  
Take this lantern,  
Take it to the people,  
Take this lantern,  
Take it to the people,  
Shine it on truth,  
Shine it on Justice  
Shine it on love.  
It's a long way to Washington;  
it's a long way to Gitmo  
Just to shine a little light.  
Just to shine a little light.  
This light is your light,  
this light is my light,  
Let it shine, let it shine,  
Let it shine.





***POEMS:***

**SHERRY STANFORTH**

Sherry Cook Stanforth is the Creative Writing Vision Program Director at Thomas More College and co-editor of *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel*. She teaches fiction, poetry, environmental and ethnic literatures and folklore. Her work appears in various journals, anthologies and NCTE books. She performs Appalachian folk music in a family band and raises bees, along with four children.

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***DRAWING:***

**SARAH REED**

Sarah Reed has lived in Cincinnati all her life. She is currently a Senior at the University of Cincinnati's DAAP program majoring in Fine Arts. She enjoys working in a variety of different mediums, from ceramics to printmaking, and more recently foundry.

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Sarah Reed 4/9/14

## Woman, Creek Walking

Not bone but the absence  
of bone—a socket stops  
her, causes her to stoop low

among lichen spotted stones,  
just to be sure. There it rests,  
a treasure wedged and rippled

by the water's slick tongue.  
This skull, with its hairline  
cracks spun along a weathered

nasal cavity, asks her to wonder  
about the person who stood here  
as she now stands, wet-booted

and hungry for pinto beans  
bubbling inside the crock pot  
on her kitchen counter. She

breathes in bitter chickweed,  
tracks along the cold edges of April,  
bends to let her hound sniff the glossed

bone, the nubby corner where a smile  
once formed. *Go down to the water,*  
*leave your troubles behind*—she wants

to believe the old wisdom and so stone-  
hops the wide stretches of Caney Creek  
to save her soul, working to weave

herself into the bent threads of light  
spliced by shadows along cedar-rooted  
banks. She carries away what she finds

there. When the experts come to collect,  
she grieves the splitting end of a human life,  
those once quiet bones exposed as news, history.

## The Nature of Ice

Another clipper cold blasts and sinks low,  
pressing into a quiet ache. Blunt forces build,

cracking up trees, busting through rooftops,  
pool decks. Damned ice, spitting slick bullets

to wreck your car or a whole army of traffic—  
licking the windshield blind, then lingering

on for weeks in order to snuff out a spring  
garden faster than you can say “boo.” Who

is to blame? Not old man winter. Not you.  
Hey, it's just the way things tend to go—

you follow the switch-back roads to the shady  
little creek, and you'll see for yourself how ice

takes on its own life—yours, too—every time.  
Molecule by molecule it expands, blue fractal

light shooting from the cascade's mouth. No  
movement—still water—under the shield, a praise

song percolating, waiting to sound out a freedom  
roar. Blue notes pitch white and slick over cuts

of limestone, waiting for an ending, waiting  
for that shout of hallelujah come the melt time.

And there's shiny boy, ninja-running the wet road,  
ramping his bicycle wheels toward indigo skies

in that quiet corner of morning when the birds  
stay tucked beneath puffed wings, when smoke

fingers circle around a farmhouse chimney. He  
skids to a stop so he can snap-snap-snap branches

off the sap-starved Chinquapin, snatch the mylar  
balloon wither-wound inside dormant forsythias.

Not caring one whit that the world still sleeps, he calls  
in a big rowdy holler up at the windows, zipping by, bye-

bye to nowhere special, just looking for fun. He knows  
that the cold lasted long, but can't last forever. No

ice in sight, driving his bike, wearing black gripper  
gloves and cool boots. The suit is the man, and here

comes the man! For him, war is a flag draped from  
his oaky stick, a dappled fawn dreaming gold beyond

the arrow's strike, or the lost memory of ice, puddling  
the scuffed edges of his feet, tempting him to jump right in.

***POEMS:***

**STEVE SUNDERLAND**

Steve Sunderland, founder of Peace Village, is a friend to all peace people. Steve has developed programs relating to hunger in Cincinnati, and to Malala, the Pakistani youth educator.

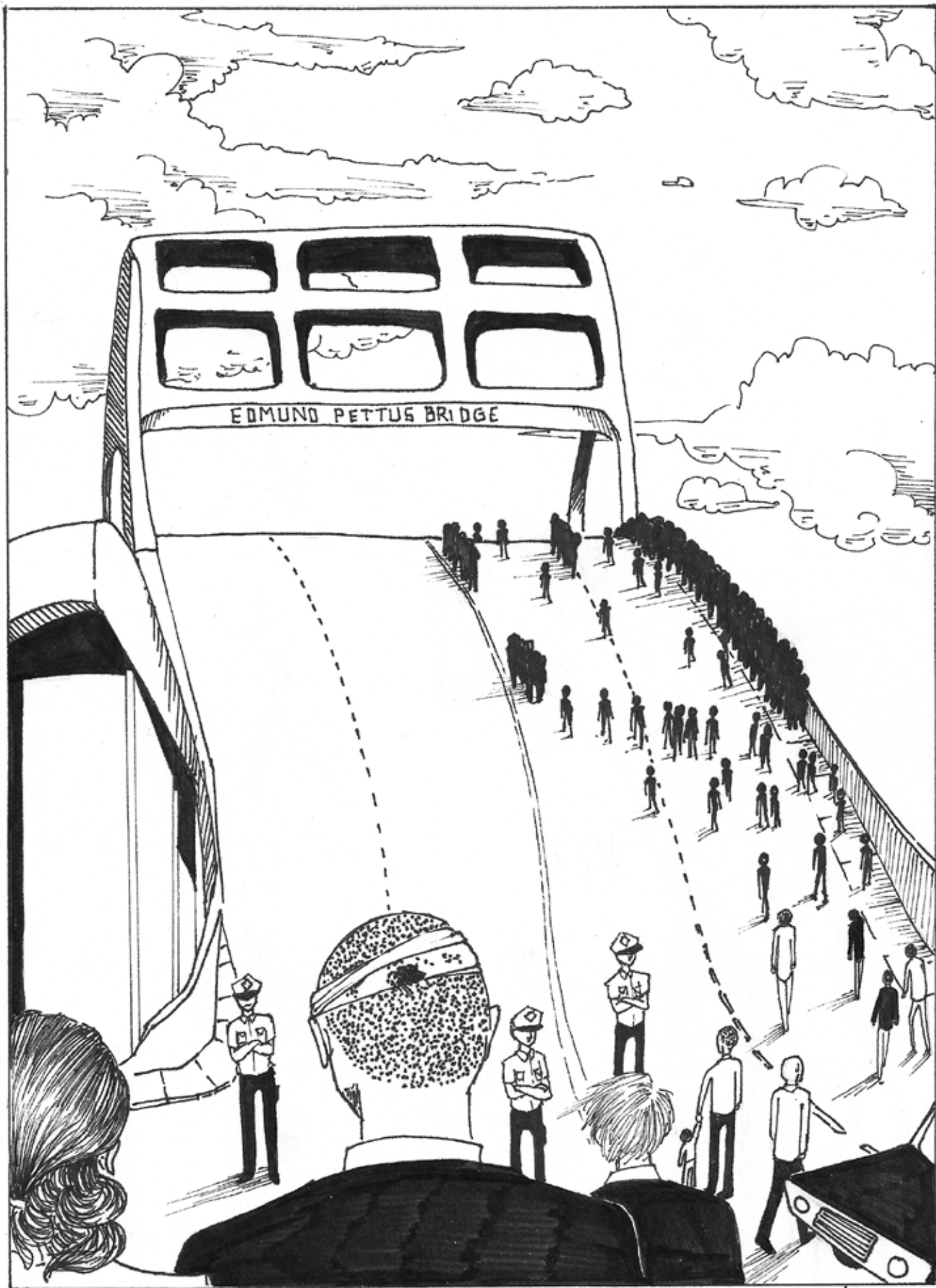
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***DRAWING:***

**TORY KEITH**

Tory Keith is a printmaker currently based in Cincinnati, OH. She was born and raised in upstate New York, and received her BFA from Alfred University in 2011. She is a member and an instructor of screen printing at Tiger Lily Press.

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TORY KEITH

# The Daring Ones

*"I have always loved the daring ones."*

*Alice Walker*

What is it that prompts  
The new action, the step  
Across the line into taboo  
Feelings and Space?

Is it a solitary act, a jump  
With consciousness of all  
That is being risked and  
Promised?

Miep said: "I was only helping  
Friends." She, one of the thousands  
Of nameless heroes that braved  
Bullets, spies, unspeakable dangers,  
And each day went for food and news  
For Anne and her family.

John said: "I was just walking across  
A bridge in Selma with my friends  
And my head hurt but not enough  
To stop. We were going on." And,  
Step by step, they walked the  
American road of justice.

The teacher said: "These children will  
Be educated by me and this school."  
The flag of failure hanging over the  
School did not stop her energy, her faith in  
The children, and her determination  
To educate one more child.

The parent said: "I will feed my child  
Somehow, and I will find a job, and  
I will make a family that protects everyone  
In my family no matter what." Not  
Knowing the customs, the culture,  
The language, the way to get medicine,  
Or, having the protection of a caring  
Government, the parent made a life  
And the family, somehow, made a way.

The daring ones know that they are  
Visible love, shining in the moonlight  
As they pursue their dreams, one  
Daring step after another.



## Pete

Let's sing!  
You, with that shy  
Look on your face,  
Sing!

Pete on stage  
Surrounded by people  
Of all ages  
Smiling, laughing, and  
Singing.

We sang about hammers.  
Billboards, Flowers, Blue  
Planets, a creek  
That was crippled,  
A hero that was a mountain  
Of a hill,  
And, sometimes, we just  
Listened---  
To a flute that wailed.  
To a banjo that fought  
Prejudice,  
To a guitar that  
Sounded the call to action.

Other times, Pete talked  
About Woody's talent to write,  
About Leadbelly's beautiful song,  
About the old labor songs of pain,  
About the river's screams  
For freedom,  
About overcoming through action,  
About Miles Horton and his High-  
Lander oasis of hope,  
About spiders, birds, dogs, and  
Then the song would leap out,  
His talent for repeating and singing,  
As if there were two of him  
Right in front of us,  
And the song would start  
Quietly, tip-toeing out of our throats,  
And, person by person, one voice  
would  
Find a neighbor's voice,

And then another, and on  
Until the links in the song  
Were found.

All the time Pete's voice  
Provided the foundation,  
And, now fully voiced.  
The group, the chorus, the  
Class, the audience, the  
Lincoln Memorial--was  
Fully and joyously  
Singing!

Pete welcomed in America's  
Values of hope and justice  
Even though he was brutally  
Treated to riots against his  
Music and sentenced to jail  
For not informing on his friends.

Pete believed in singing  
With the people--live  
And with no prerequisites,  
No pretenses, no celebrity.  
And no apologies for  
Following the Bill of Rights.

So, dear friends, pick  
Up your banjo, pick  
Up your voices, pick  
Up your feet, pick  
Up your hearts, pick  
Up the rivers, pick  
Up the world,  
And sing!

***POEMS:***

**GARY WALTON**

Gary Walton has published seven books of poetry. His latest is *Eschatology Escadrille: Elegies and Other Memorabilia* (Finishing Line Press, 2013). His novel about Newport, Kentucky in its heyday as a gambling Mecca: *Prince of Sin City* was published by Finishing Line Press in 2009. He has been nominated for the Pushcart prize twice and in 2010, he was voted Third Place: "Best Local Author" Best of Cincinnati 2010 issue in City Beat magazine.

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***DRAWING:***

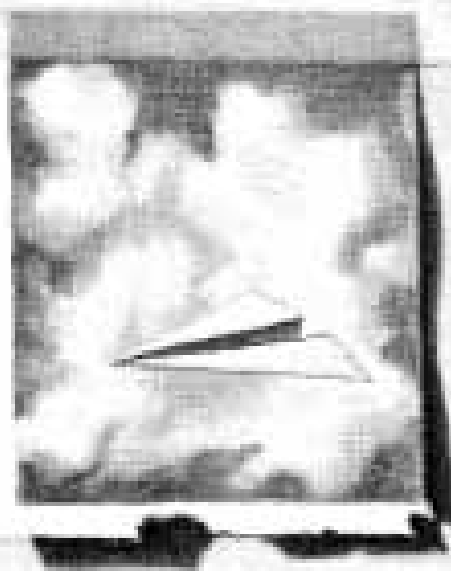
**CYNTHIA GREGORY**

Cynthia Gregory's work as a studio artist involves object-based drawings and sculptures that explore the abstract qualities of experience, history, memory, time, and containment. Her artwork has been exhibited nationally and internationally.

Most recently, she was awarded a 2013 artist residency and grant from the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts in Nebraska City, Nebraska. Cynthia holds a BA from Northern Kentucky University, a BFA from the College of Mount St. Joseph, an MLS from Indiana University, and an MFA from UC/DAAP.

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*Amorini*



## Filling My Former Plenum

I answer my email intermittently,  
    If at all; I find I have nothing to say—  
        When I was young, I was full of myself,

Stuffed to the uvula with voice and matter,  
    With wit (if not charm) or so I thought—  
        I would button hole a stranger, if need be,

If no acquaintance would countenance my  
    Bluster, and blow on and on about  
        Philosophy, politics, pork bellies—now,

The words that dribble from my lips  
    (or my fingerpads) seem so colorless,  
        Like water in a transparent cup or air

Escaping a bicycle tire, full of noise but  
    Little substance or like a drive through  
        Woods in November when the trees have

Surrendered to winter's calumny and their  
    Limbs cry out for what is not there—  
        There is so much buzz and twirl

In hyperspace, but no depth, like the sky  
    Floating on the surface of a pond—  
        So many empty calories, digital diabetes—

Can virtue be endemic to the virtual?  
    Salvation must be to disengage, shun the screen,  
        Ungrasp the mouse, break the link,

Reframe, rebound, remold, reboot:  
    Eat a peach, sing a song, fold a paper plane  
        And sail it to the front door: hit "escape."

## The Ghosts of Christmas

It is Christmas day and  
She is alone—hung over;  
There is no tree, no lights,  
No garish paper—  
Only silence, except for the  
Intermittent galumph of the furnace fan;

Her project today is to pump  
Air into her tires—not any easy  
Task in America on such a  
Special day when nothing is open  
Except Chinese restaurants and  
The gaping wounds of the  
Annual annunciation of recrimination—

Besides she wants to be ready for  
Marley's ghost or the imperfect  
Shades of defunct friends and family  
Who might stop by uninvited  
But whose memory might find  
A kind of welcome, none the less—  
They could all climb into her car  
With a cracked bottle of rye and  
Cruise around the neighborhood,  
Hooting at the hoar frosted windows and  
Haloed colored lights, haunting the  
Streets, pretending they were a  
Currier and Ives card sent to  
Brighten up someone else's day—

At least, that was the plan,  
If she could just find her  
Car keys and the will to open  
The garage door  
Once the motor is running—

## Life in Beta

*"We're one EMP Blast from losing the last 20  
years...."*

*Chris Cooper ("Coop")*

I was born in the analog  
Through the fleshy flexible doors  
And grew up with grooved vinyl and  
Printed hard copy—

My world is greater than zeros  
And ones, deeper than electrons  
Dancing on a digital display—

*"Grandma, what a big nose you have...."  
"The better to sniff you out...."*

To fall in love means  
To be filled up, stuffed to the  
Plenum with pheromones—*l'amour*  
Is fragrant and sticky, not for the eyes alone—

*"Oh, Grandma, what big lips you have...."  
"The better to kiss you and taste your joy...."*

In the end, one whiff of lilac, nutmeg,  
White chocolate or baking bread,  
Much less the perfume of a nocturnal  
Nuzzle of an impetuous lover or

The warm breath licking the curves of the  
Ear is worth more than the lure  
Of all that virtual delirium, of the simulacra  
That lives only in timorous glint of  
the circuit board.

## ***POEMS:***

### **FRAN WATSON**

Fran Watson is addicted to poetry and can't remember when she didn't write. She actually did it while raising her four children, while pursuing a career in art, during her 30 years as a Taft Museum docent, when she was actively involved in community theater, as an art writer and critic and now that she is teaching abstract art. Her mother used to read to her poems, and she, herself, had her children memorize poems as they helped her with the dishes. Fran thinks that of course, it helps to write about important stuff, like peace and justice.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **LISA MERIDA-PAYTES**

Lisa Merida-Paytes holds an MFA from the University of Cincinnati and a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati. Her work has been featured in exhibitions and publications, regionally, nationally and internationally. Currently, her work is included in *500 Figures in Clay, Volume 2* and *Best of 500 Ceramics*, Lark Books publications. She has also written and published her own curriculum, *Special Studio Teaching Manual Series: Preserving Memories with Paperclay*, an Art-to-Art Palette Books publication.

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## Where Were You?

Once I crouched in the back seat  
of a square gray sedan  
listening to my parents whisper fear  
as the radio spoke war,  
something I could not fathom.

Days after I found I was with child,  
a letter came, the envelope filled  
with frightening instructions,  
its message - devastating  
my newly found life, shattering  
happiness with the word Korea.

Later I held my children close  
as the night was filled with jets  
waiting for the sirens that never came,  
(thank God), while politicians played  
chicken with everything I loved.

Next, my son was threatened  
with death in a hot strange place  
for a cause without a name, while  
I prepared to send him into hiding,  
both of us willing to break the law  
for life.

Now I see there is no end,  
to lies, to death, to old men  
who lose nothing but their souls  
as they hold us all hostage  
to the carelessness of war.  
Peace has become the carrot,  
but never the goal.

## Blood Moon

It rose up red,  
color slipping along its curves,  
pushing through branches  
making the woods glow  
with backlight over dark.

Along city streets  
it possessed the shining walks  
and bounced from car to car  
like an early Christmas joke.  
Window shades bled with wisps  
of eerie, silent flames,  
of ghostly light  
filling the night.

Young men watched  
strangely stirred, inspired  
to somehow take control,  
do violence, cause harm  
where none had been before,  
wishing for evil they'd never seen  
with thoughts they'd never known.

A flag appeared,  
it, too, drenched in red,  
drifting gently in the never-world  
of searing ruby night. They growled  
a primal unifying word,  
banding and bonding,  
mobile and frightening,  
careening through the night.

They claimed the right  
to maraud, taking and spoiling  
without excuse or reason  
their flag thrust high above them  
as if that were all they needed.

When morning came  
they returned, each to his own place,  
becoming what they were before  
the Blood Moon rode the skies,  
wondering why the world had changed  
and no one met their eyes.



## Amendment 2014

*On the floor of the Senate, sedated by his usual tot of gin,  
an aging politician rose and startled the world.*

"I would like to propose peace for a day.  
A decade is too much,  
a lifetime, ridiculous.

My proposal involves limitations.  
No one should feel guilt  
about forswearing violence.

People wouldn't become spoiled in that time,  
still able to return to loss,  
hunger and pain.

They would breath deeply, without fear,  
sirens and rumors silenced,  
replaced by quiet joy.

There will be no dead who never knew why  
they had been chosen  
as victims of nameless chaos

without reason, or the satisfaction of tears  
shed at their bedsides,  
or the dignity of death.

All would be still, perhaps a little Brahms somewhere,  
the soft sounds of fountains  
and sparkle of sun,

warm, and filled with gentle laughter, touching hands,  
forgiveness by the bushel,  
and hugs, many hugs,

from lovers, friends and strangers, united  
on just this one day  
in the luxury of peace.

The next day, we could return to the norm of wars.  
Danger, though, lies in rebels who might  
prefer peace every day."



