

For A 2014 Better World



POEMS
PEACE AND DRAWINGS ON
AND 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.

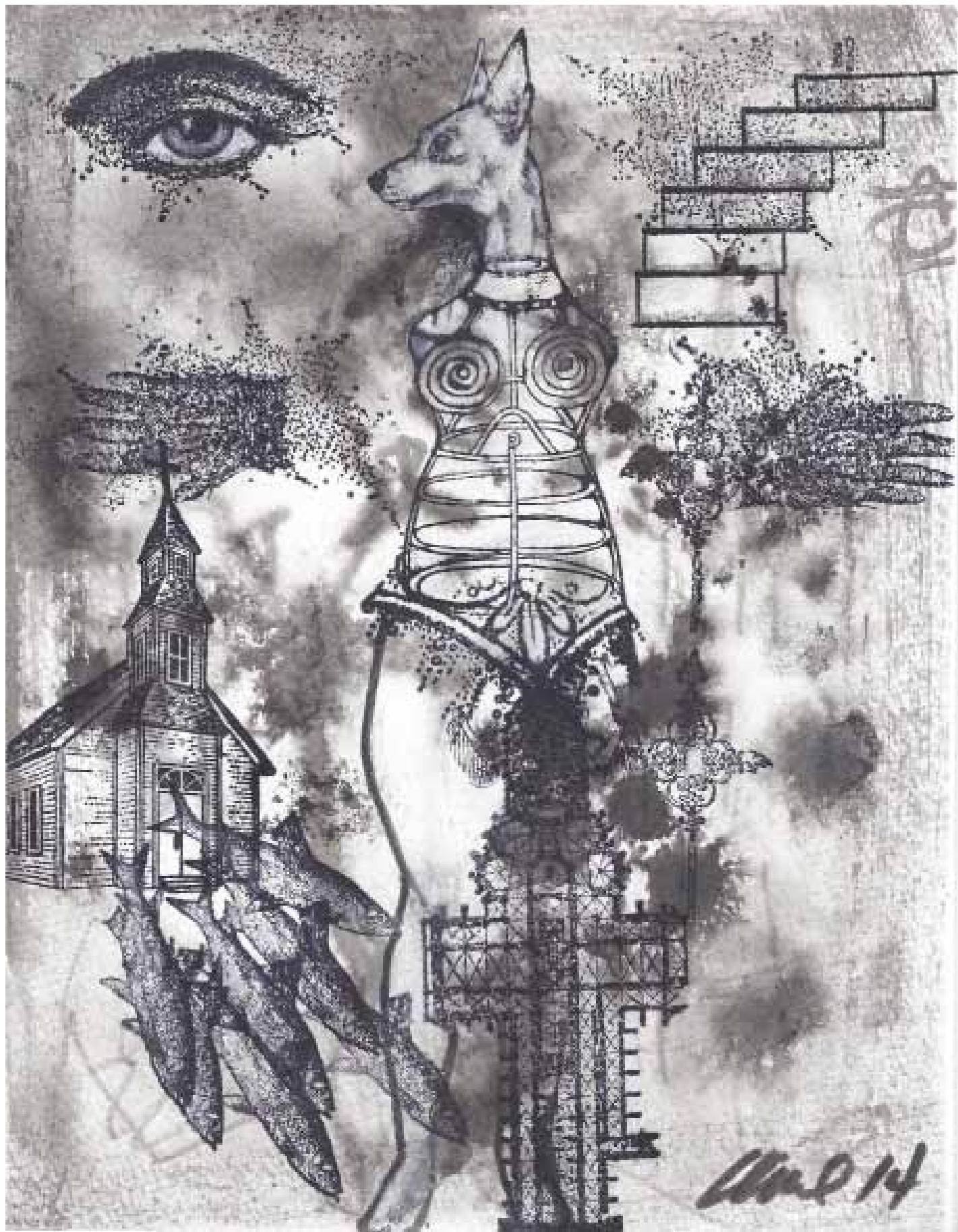
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DRAWING:

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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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

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.

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

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.

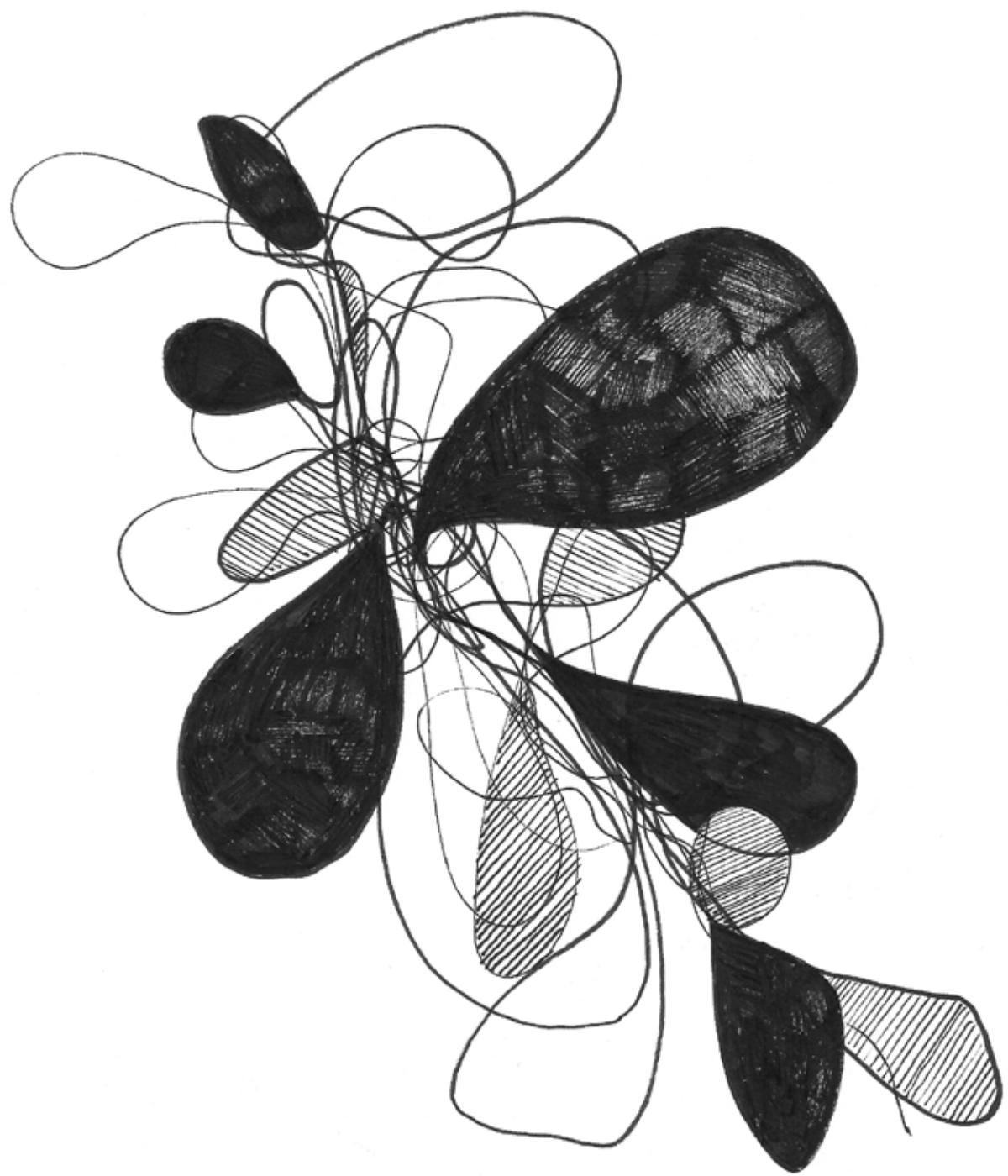
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DRAWING:

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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drawn on 2014

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 Igoe**)

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 Igoe**)

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 Schmit
2017

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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AMY BOGARD 2014

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 Cincinnatian 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.

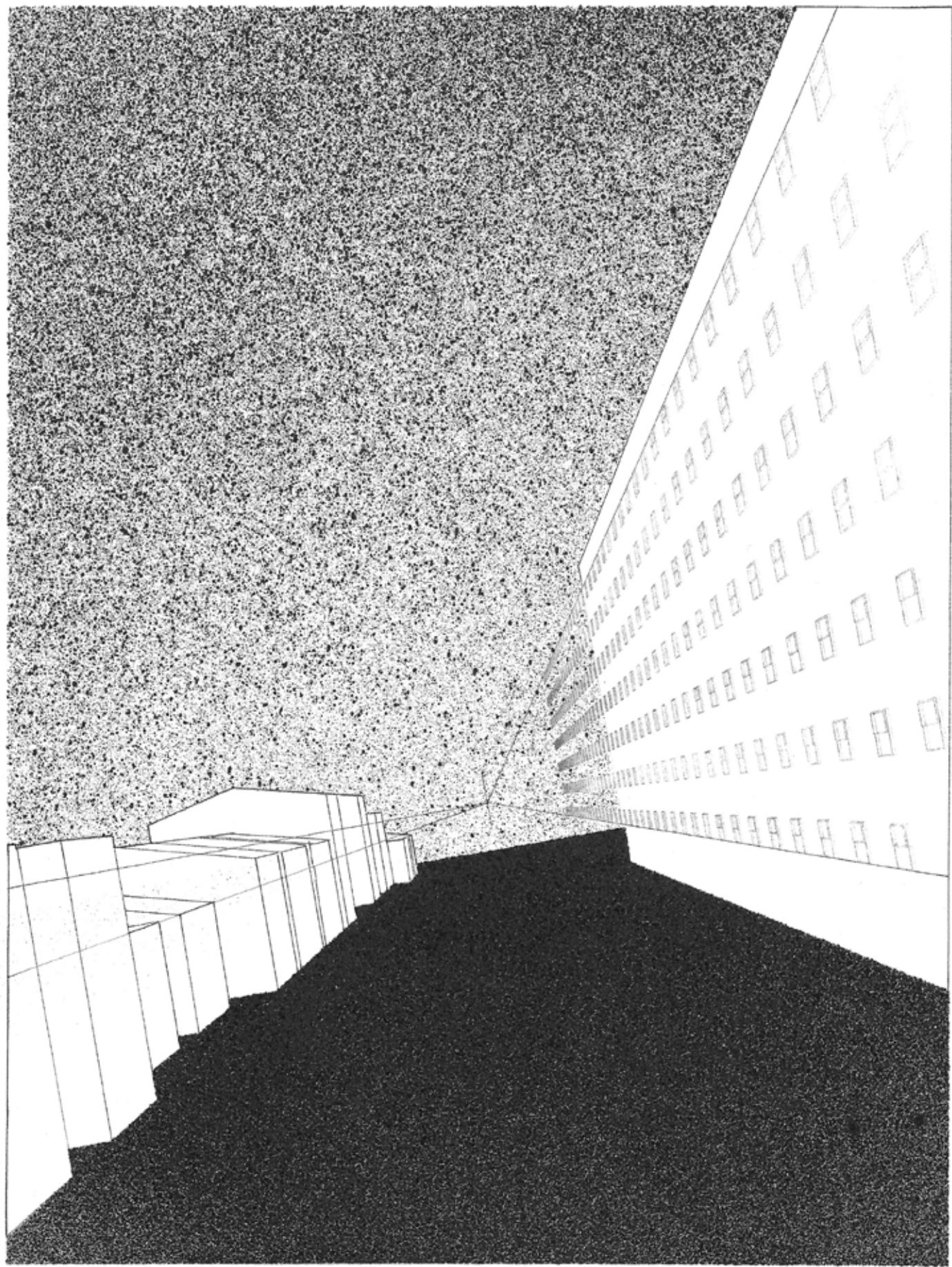
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DRAWING:

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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S. VAZ

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
Teaming 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 barbecue 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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Shannon
Huser

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, begrimed, 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*.

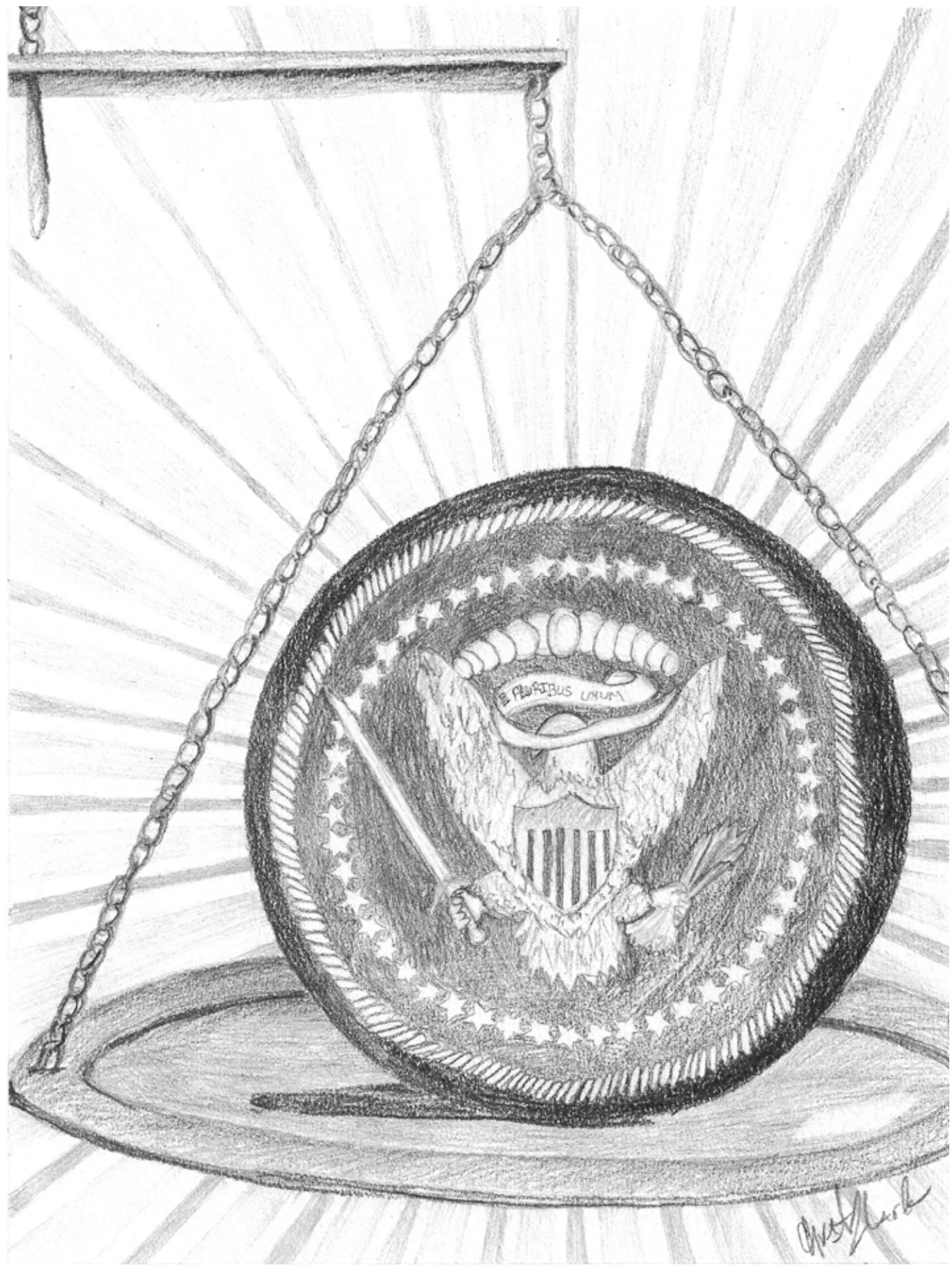
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DRAWING:

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*.

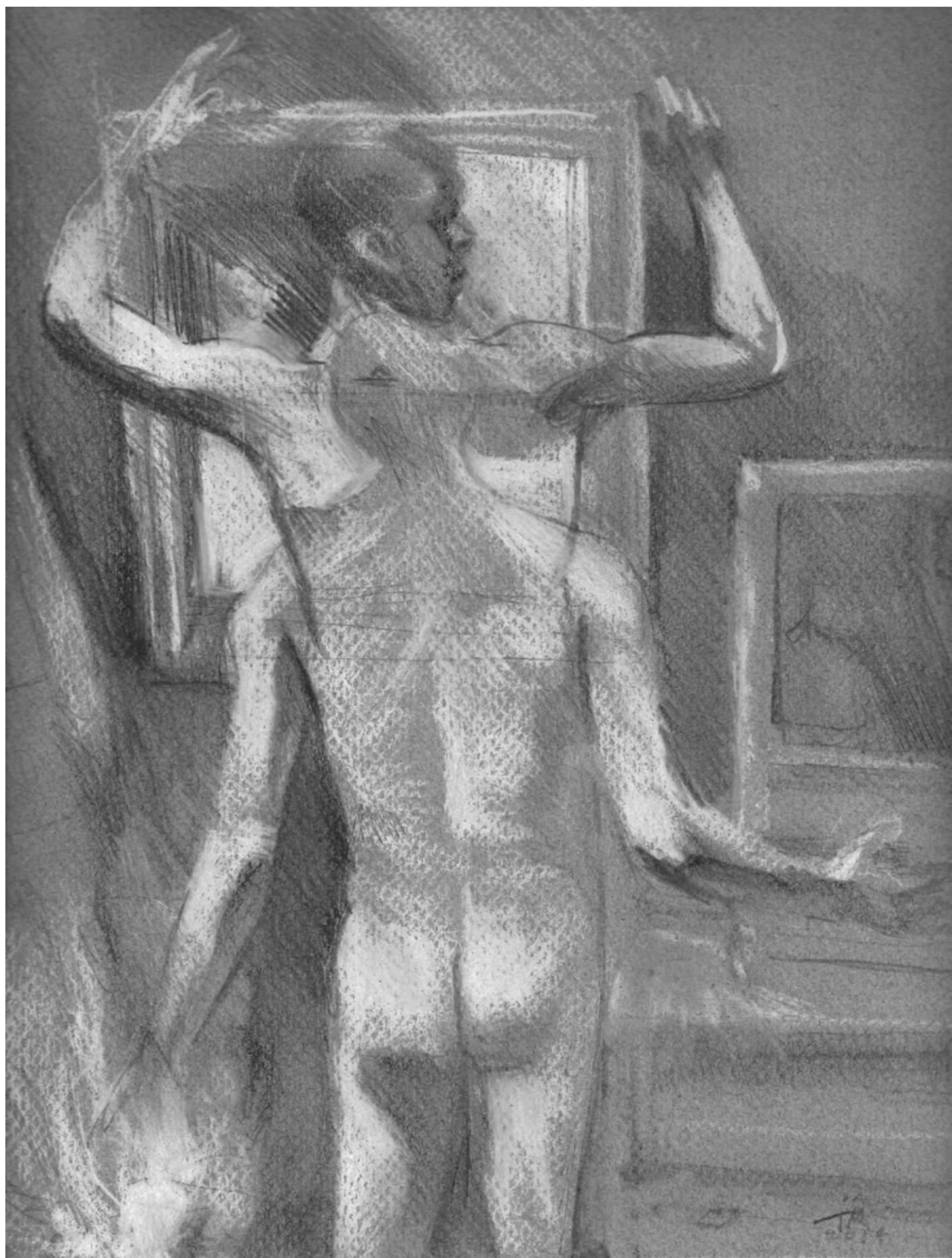
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DRAWING:

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 Donahue

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 Paulette Hansel. His combined haiku and photography work will soon appear in *WORD*, the Thomas More College anthology.

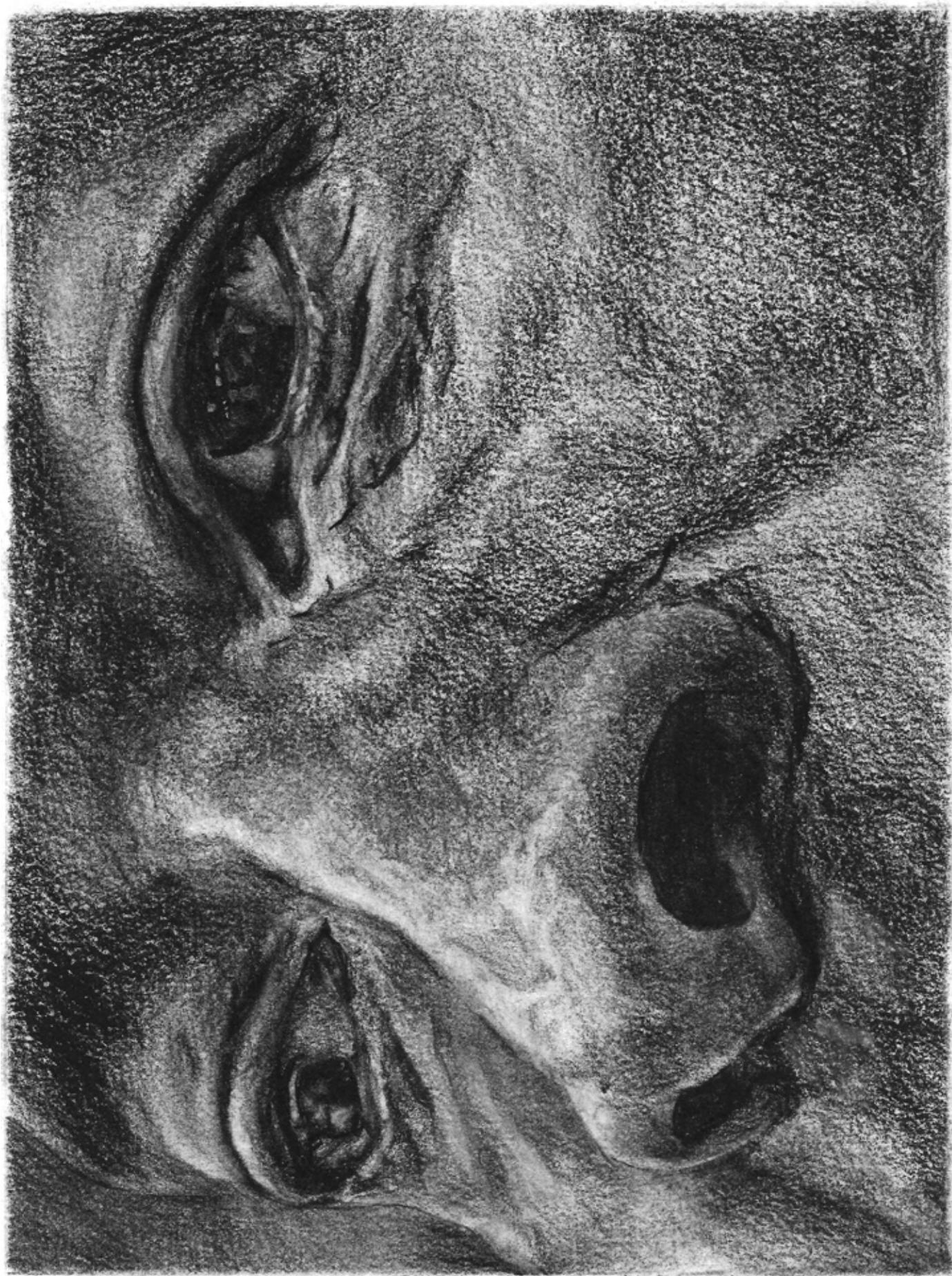
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DRAWING:

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

Elese 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.

Elese 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 Mann '94

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 piece piece piece
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 *AEQAI* and *Wind '97*.

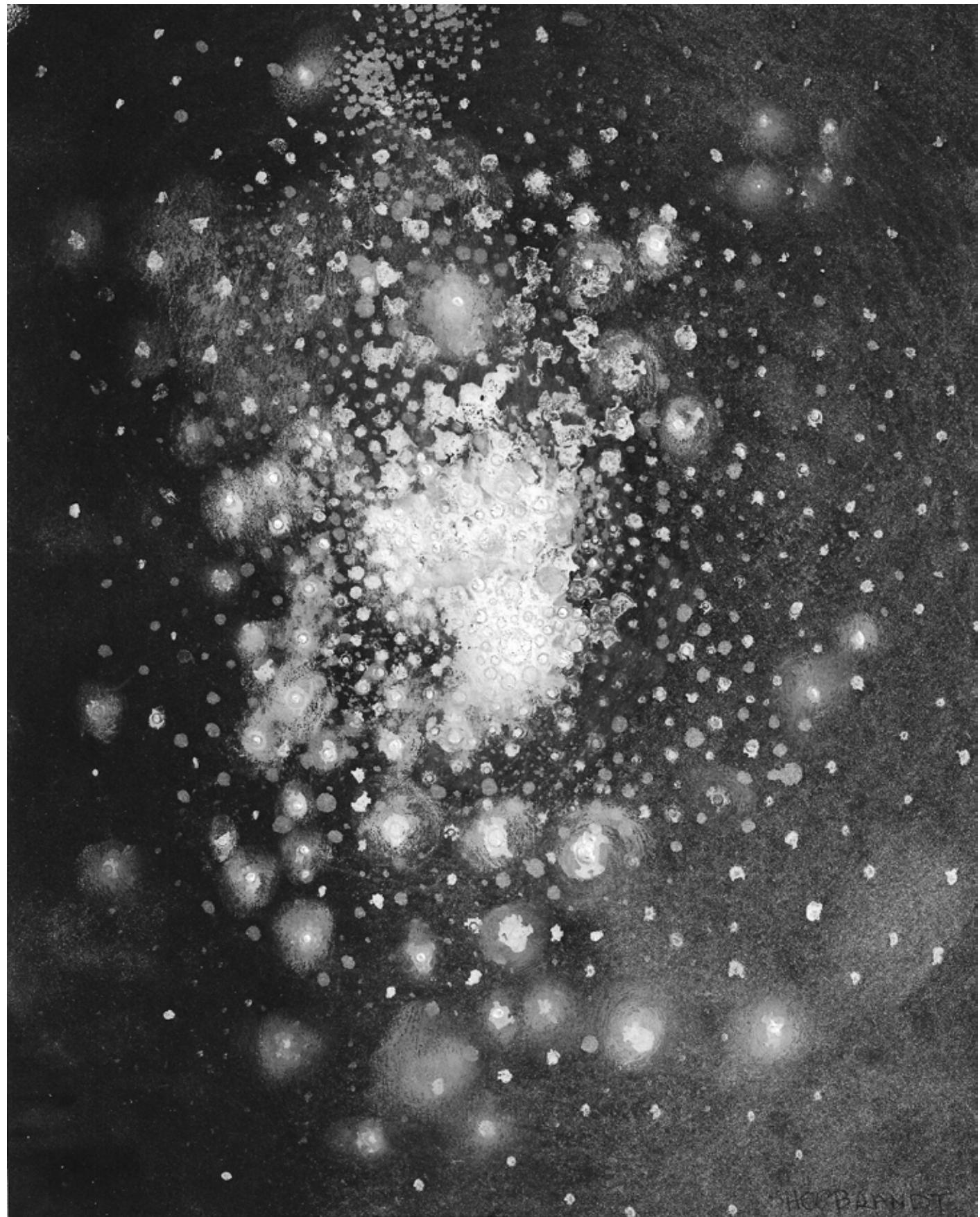
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DRAWING:

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

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

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

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 ninos
Corria simplemente, como sangre de ninos**

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.

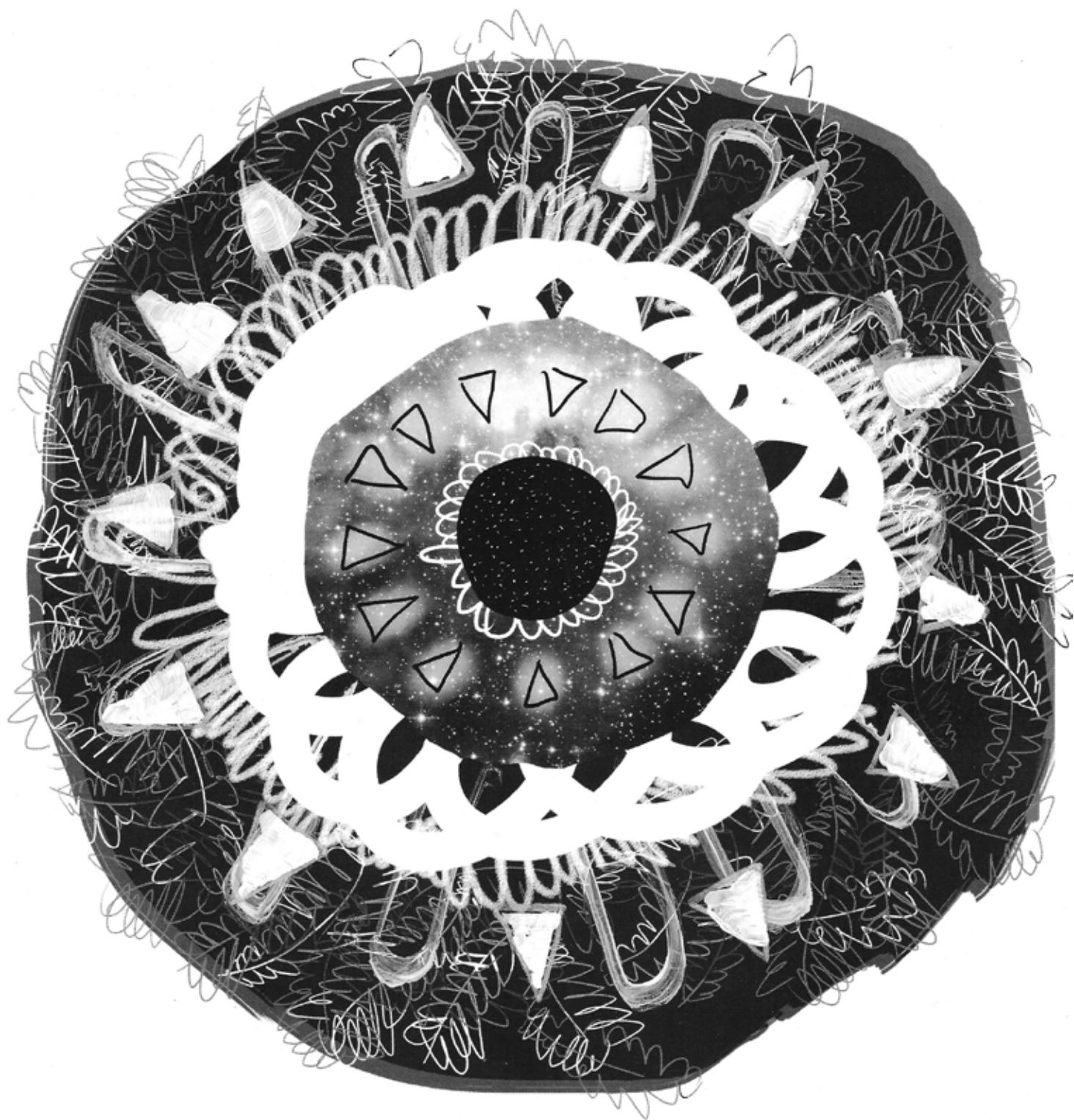
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DRAWING:

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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Matthew Baskin 2011

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/>.

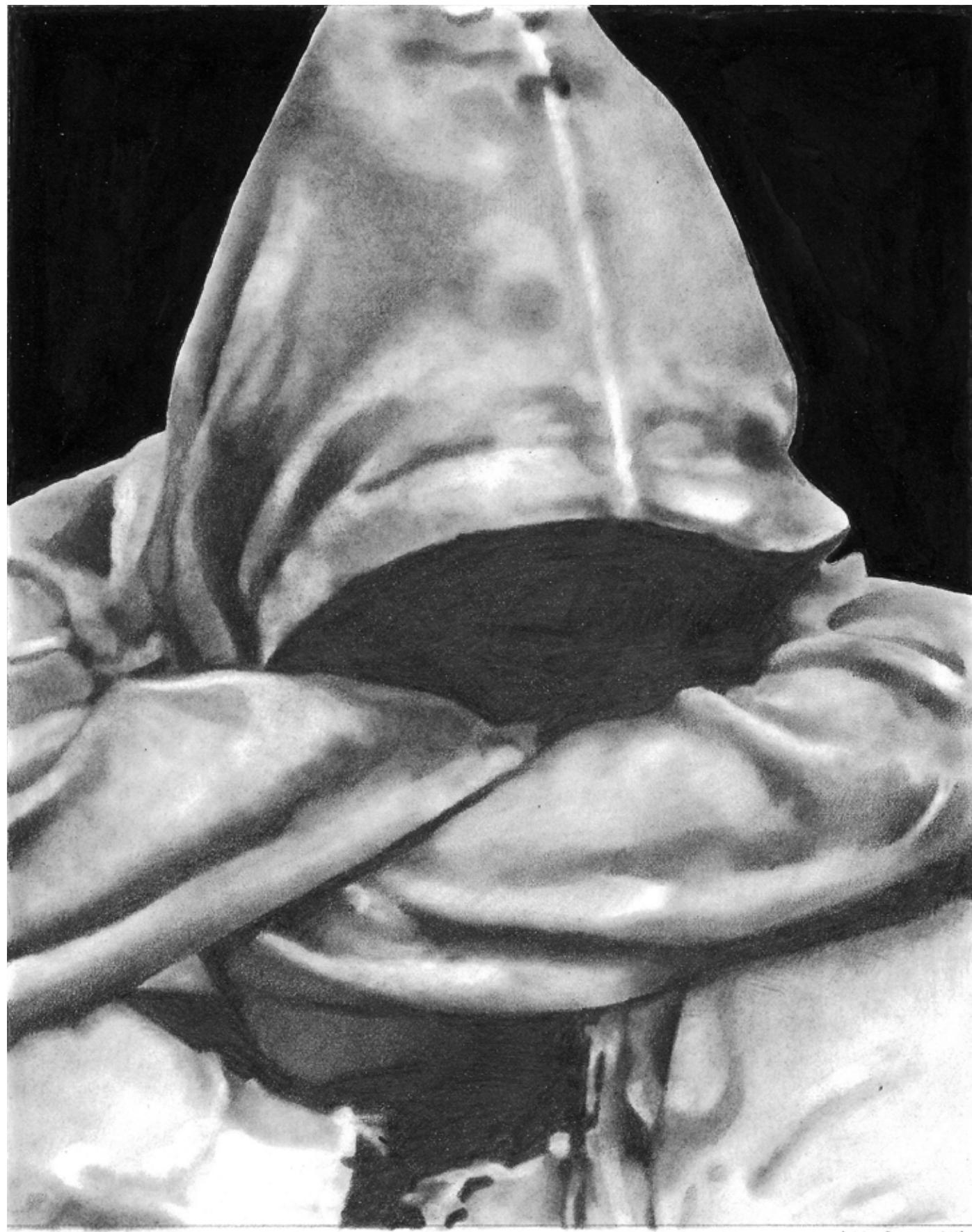
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DRAWING:

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 Tammaro 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.

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

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...

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

and
powdery
dust
dissolves
in the
dew.

POEMS:

ZACHARY GRUNENBERG

Zachary Grunenberg 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.

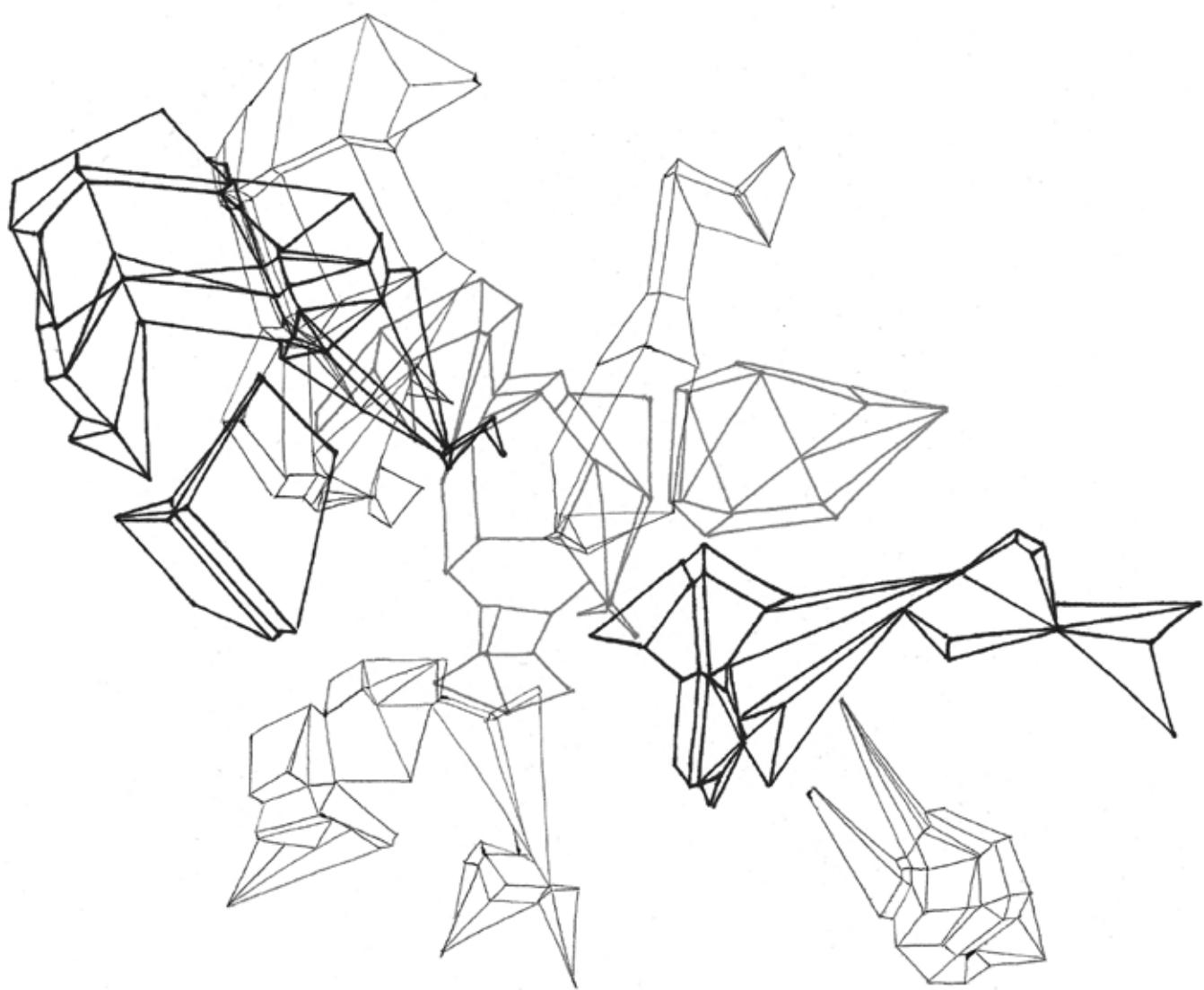
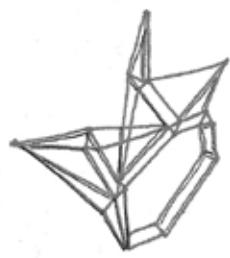
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DRAWING:

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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meghan diller 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

Paulette 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). Paulette 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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gennadieva

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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JUDY CAMPBELL WHITE

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

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

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

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.
It's 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.

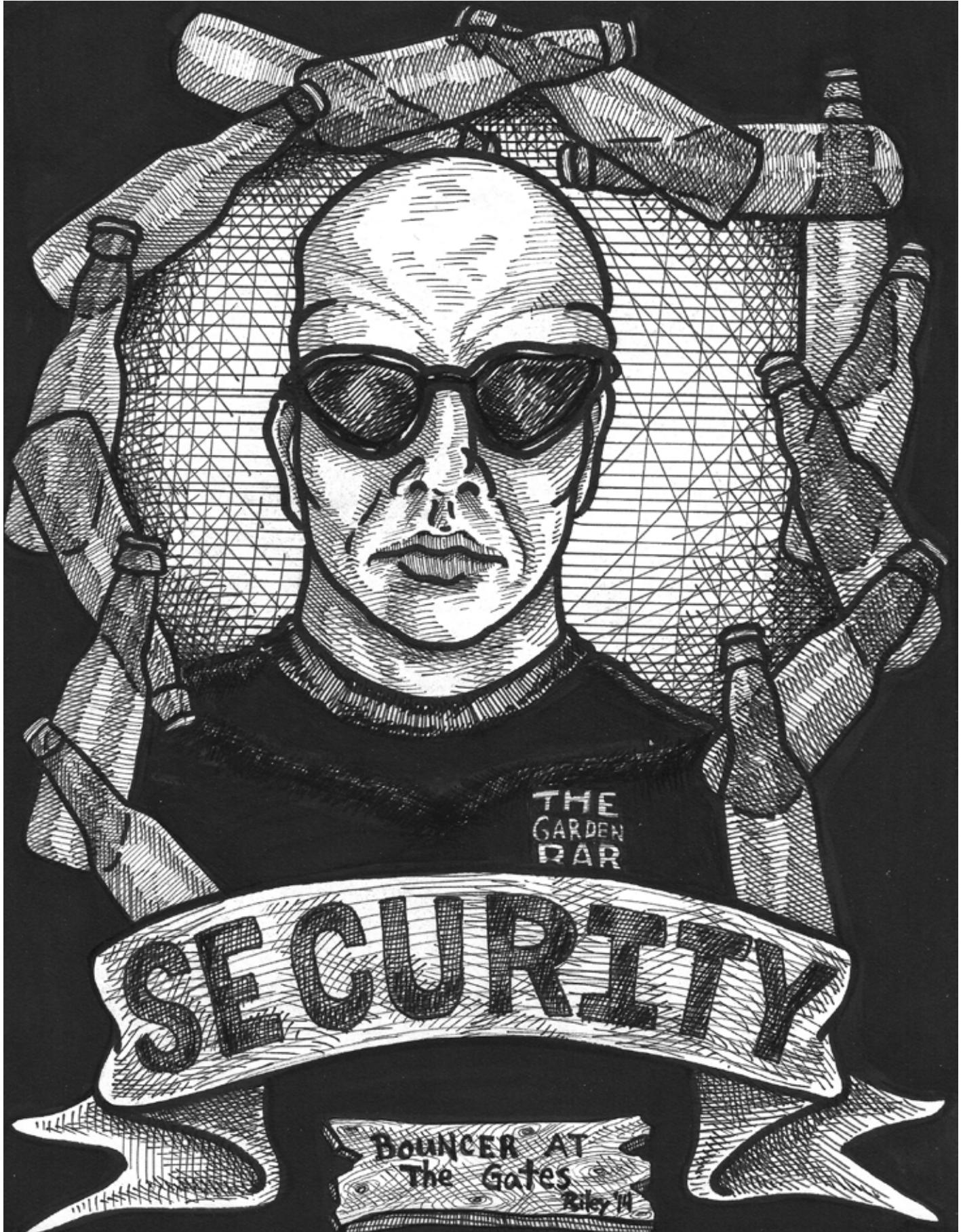
Contact: michaelhenson642@gmail.com

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.

Contact: www.drockpress.com



THE
GARDEN
BAR

SECURITY

BOUNCER AT
The Gates

Big W

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 actor 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 Pirezzites,
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*.

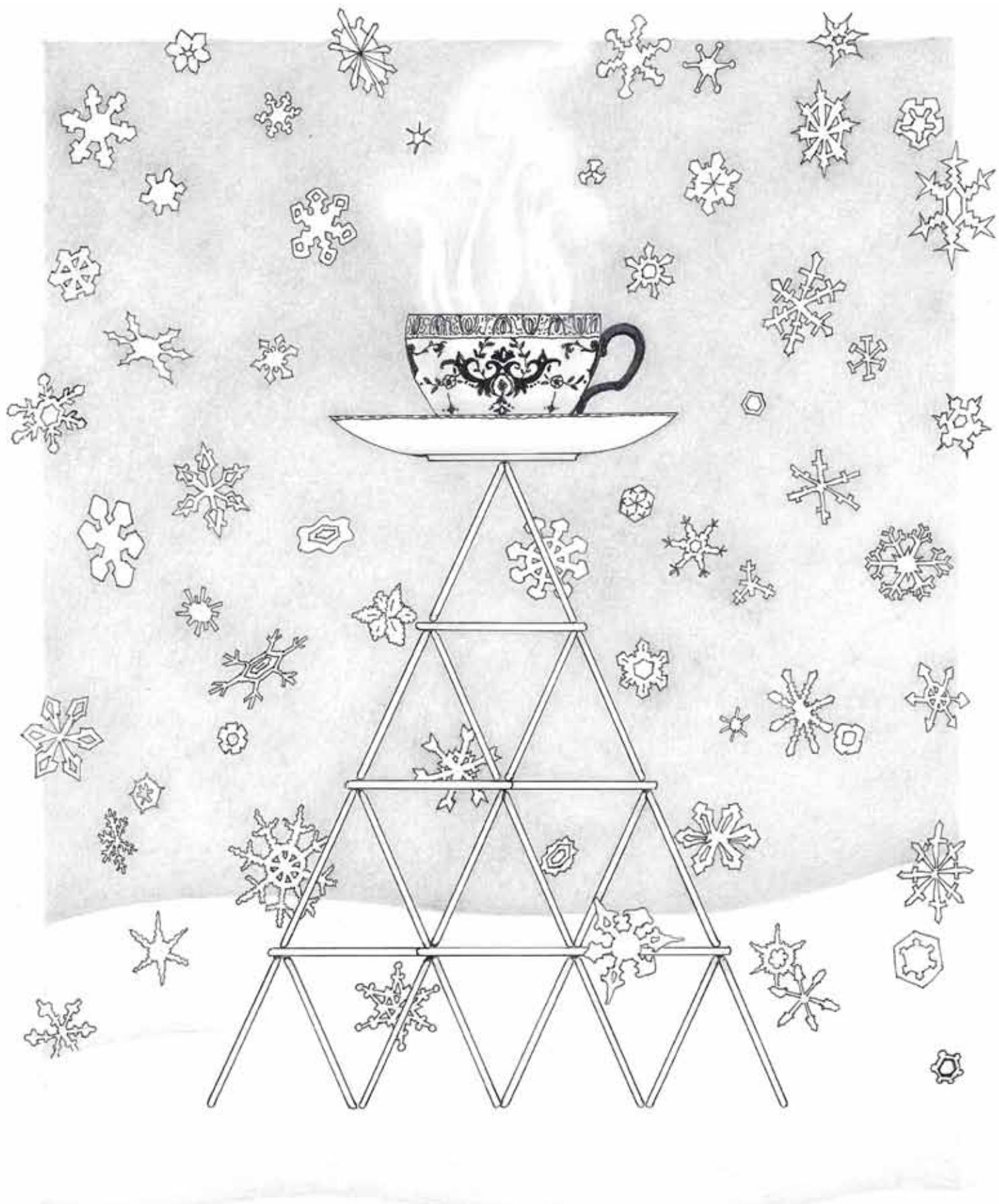
Contact: pamhirte@gmail.com

DRAWING:

WILLIAM HOWES

William Howes, a native Cincinnatian, 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.

Contact: evhildy@hotmail.com



Eve Hellebrecht

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-slash; 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. Her 3 young granddaughters bring her both joy and inspiration.

Contact: tpetersen@fuse.net; www.terrypetersen.wordpress.com

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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Derk Admiraal

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.

Contact: jerryj871@aol.com

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.

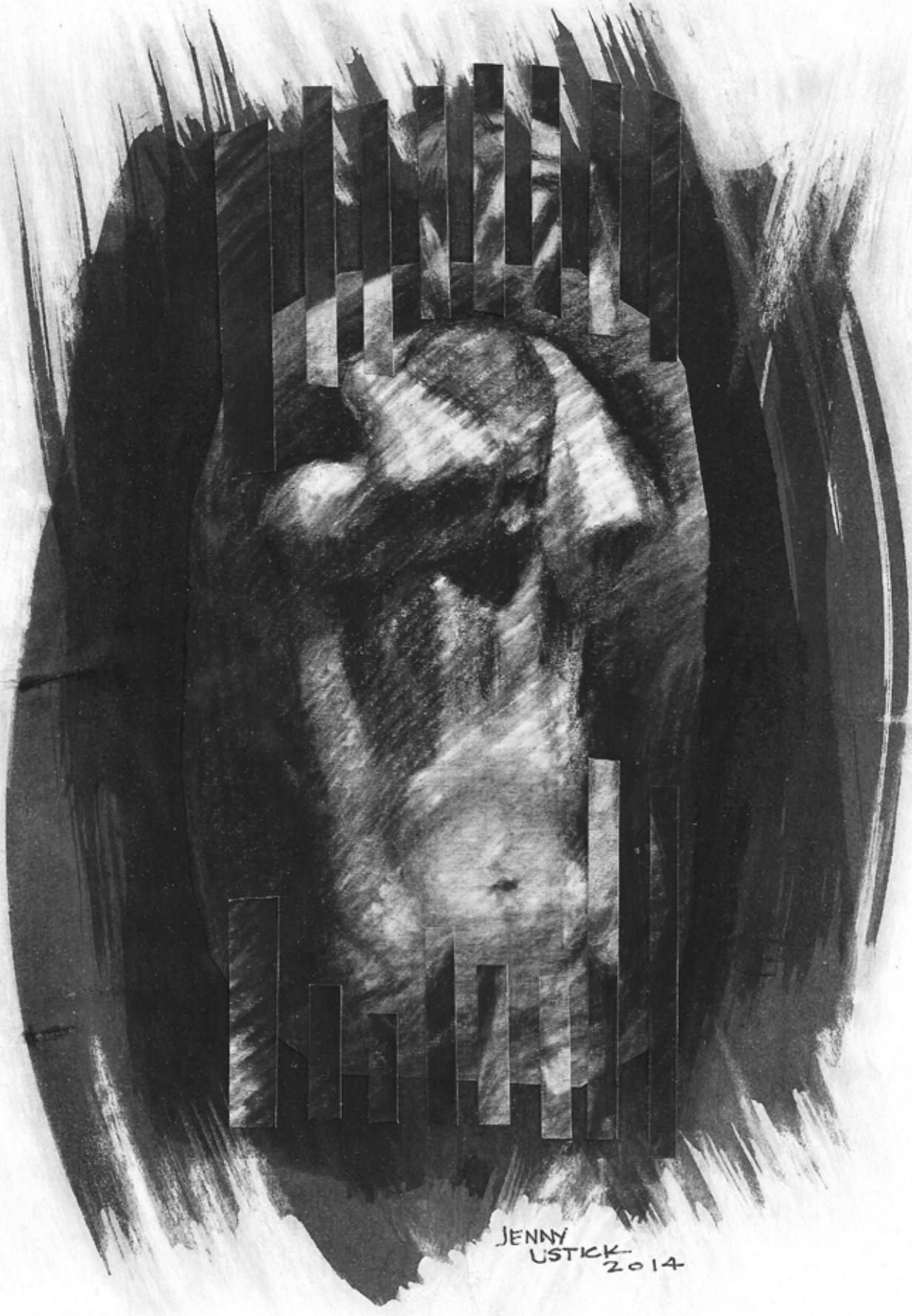
Contact: lonna@kingsburyproductions.com

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.

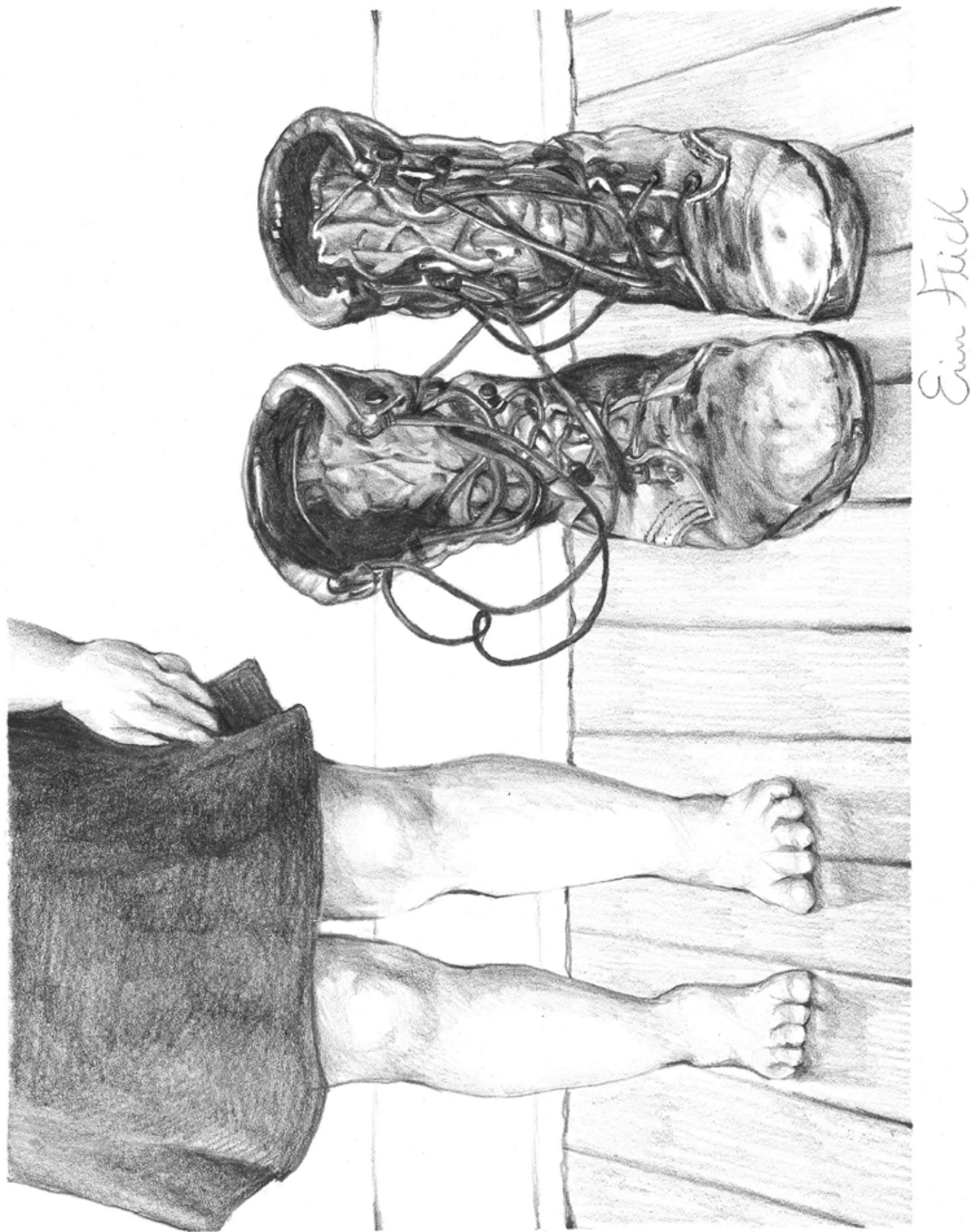
Contact: kenw1@fuse.net; www.photogalleryonthenet.com

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.

Contact: flicke3@nku.edu; www.erinflick.com



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.

When You Go

(by Carol Laque)

"When you go to buy a pomegranate, buy one that's laughing."
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?

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".

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.

Contact: daileyaf@miamioh.edu



"CAPRA IN GOMMUM"

ANDREW DAILEY 2011

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 forbad 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.

Contact: bm.mg@mail.com

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.

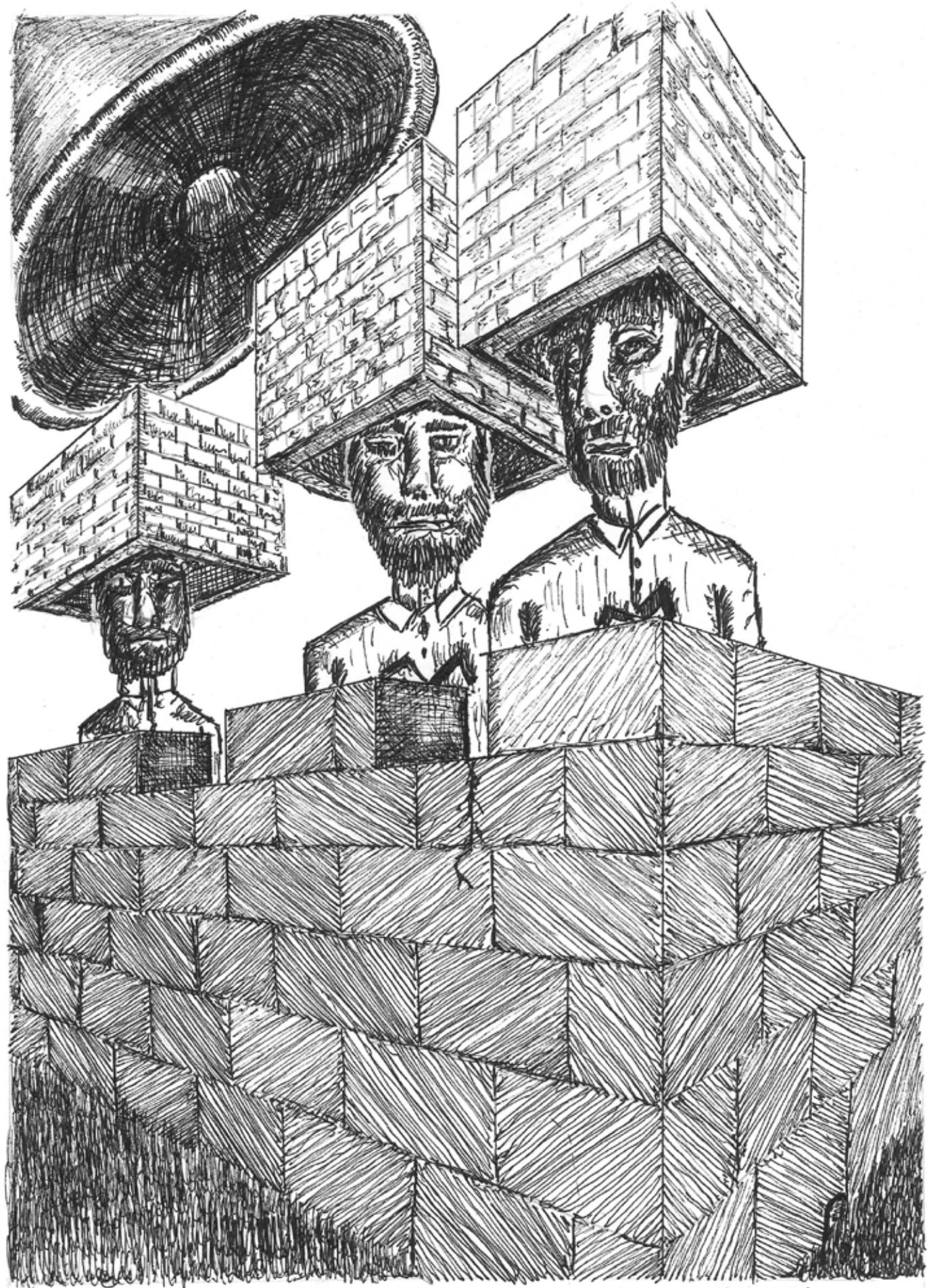
Contact: npoinsette@yahoo.com

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.

Contact: joliver.young@gmail.com



S. 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.

Contact: rootiema@hotmail.com

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.

Contact: towhey@gmail.com; www.tomtowhey.org



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, whiplike 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.

Contact: kentonbrett@gmail.com



Katsuhiko Ito

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.

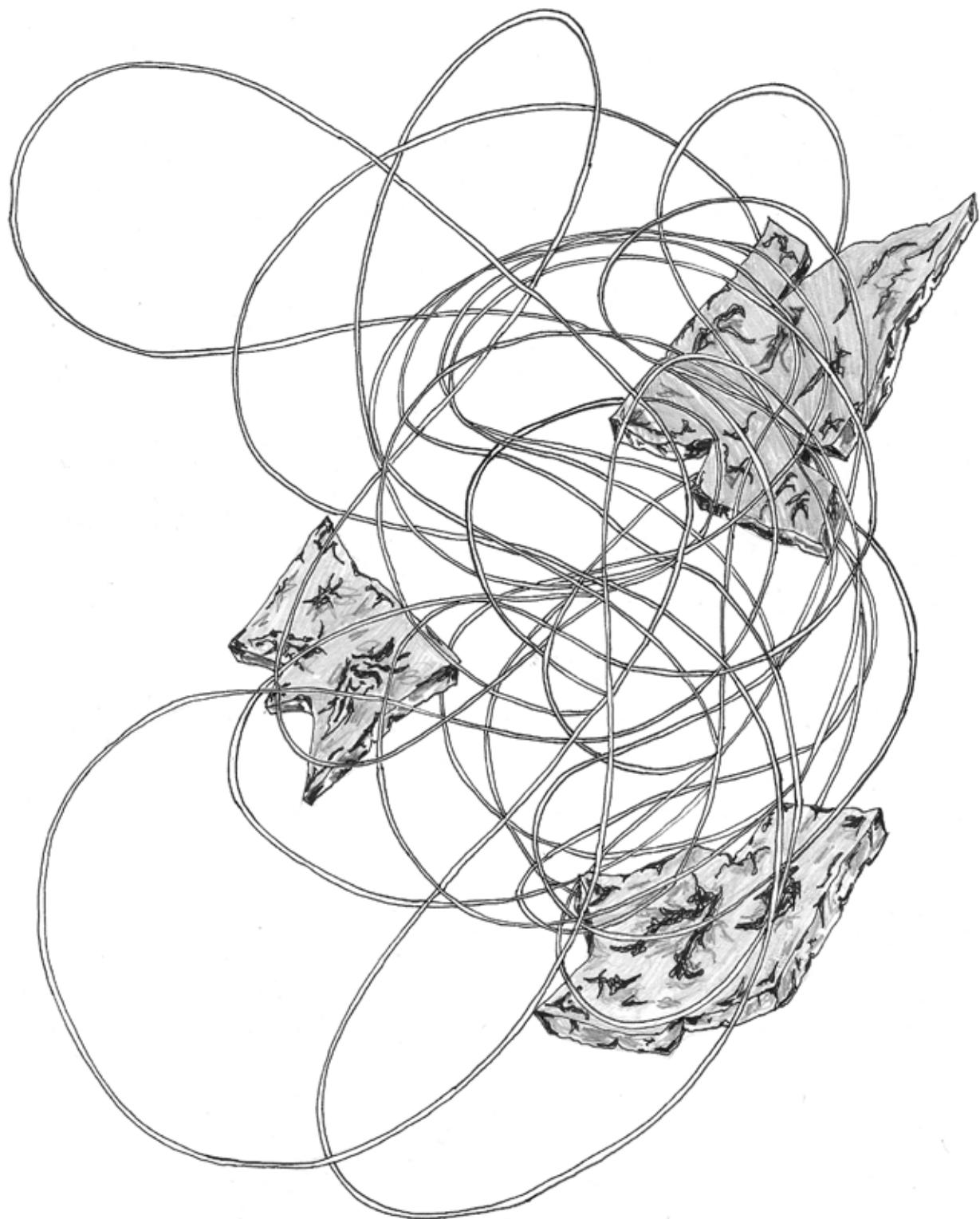
Contact: veganearth@roadrunner.com

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



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

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

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; 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.

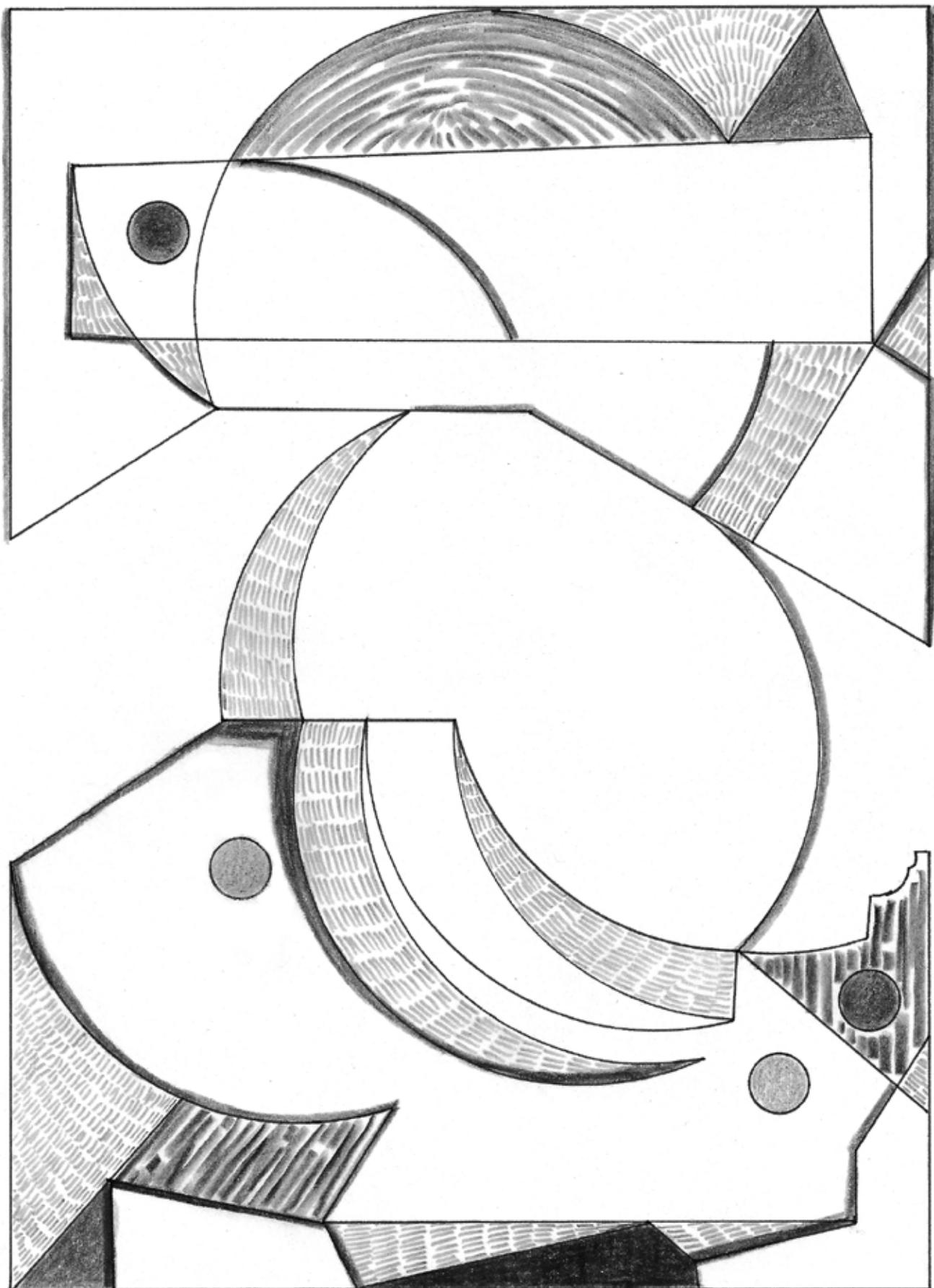
Contact: dickhague@purcellmarian.org

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.

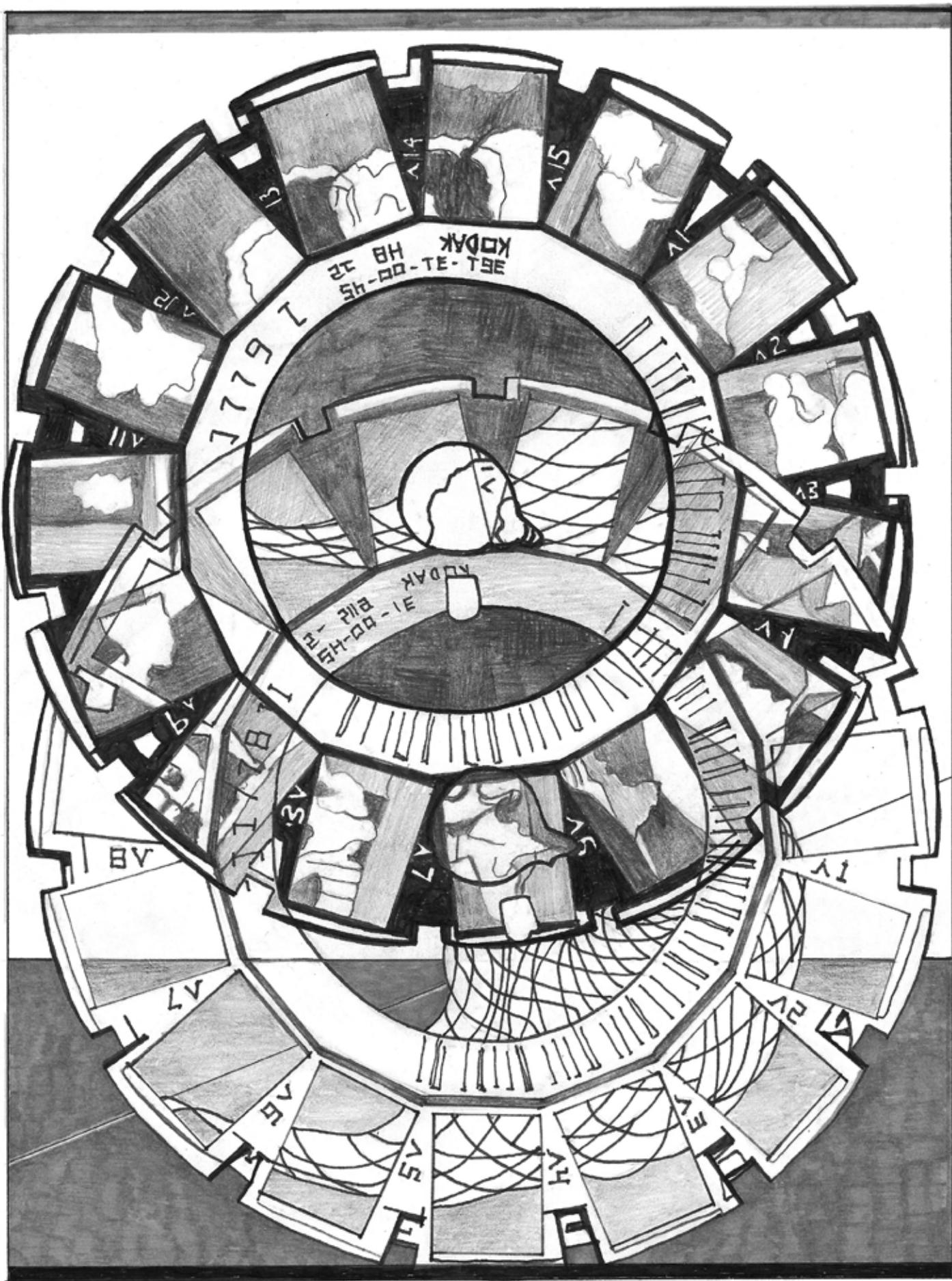
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DRAWING:

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.

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CHRISTOPHER HOETING

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.

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 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.

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 resplendor
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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

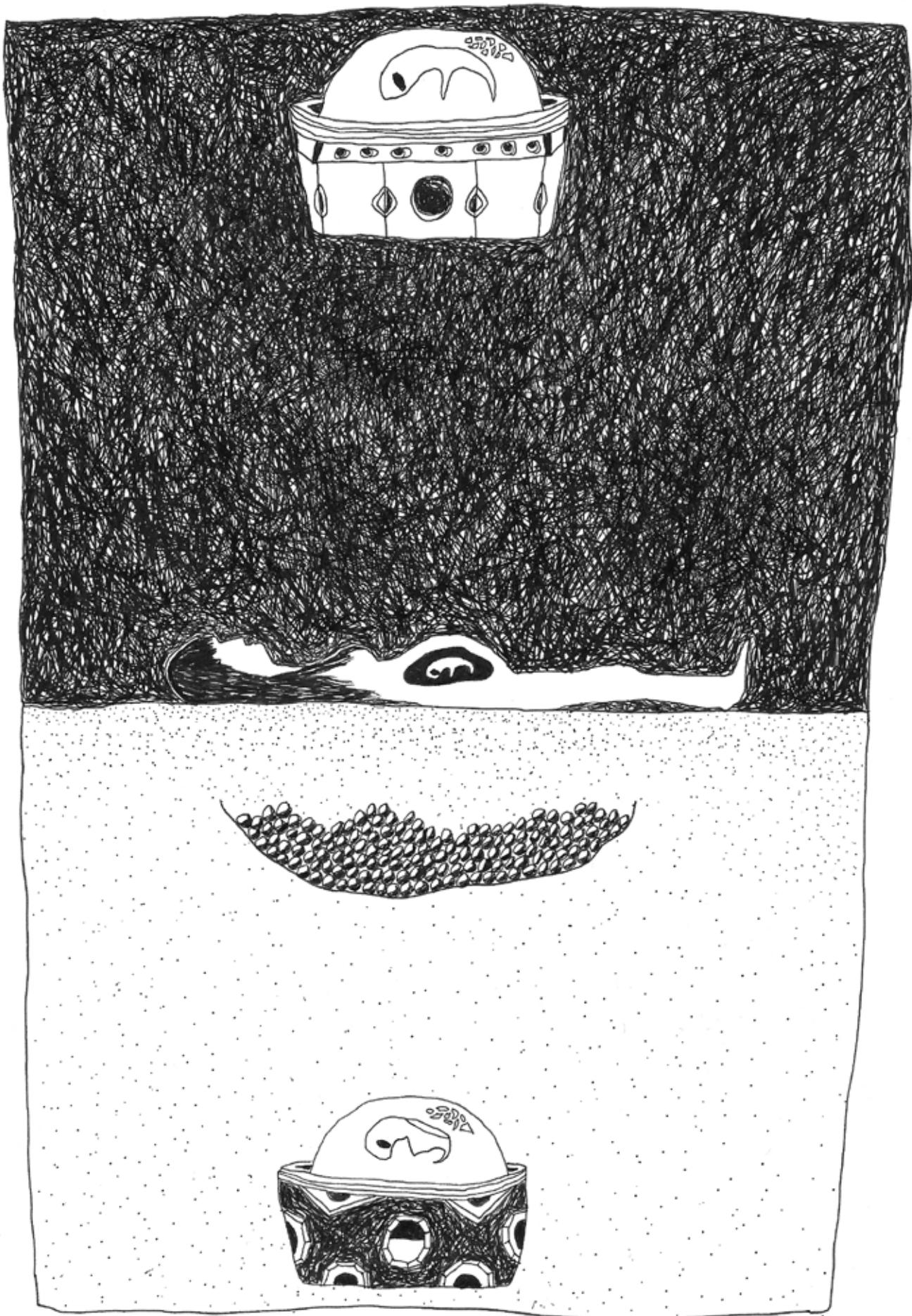
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DRAWING:

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.

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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 4/8/14

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.

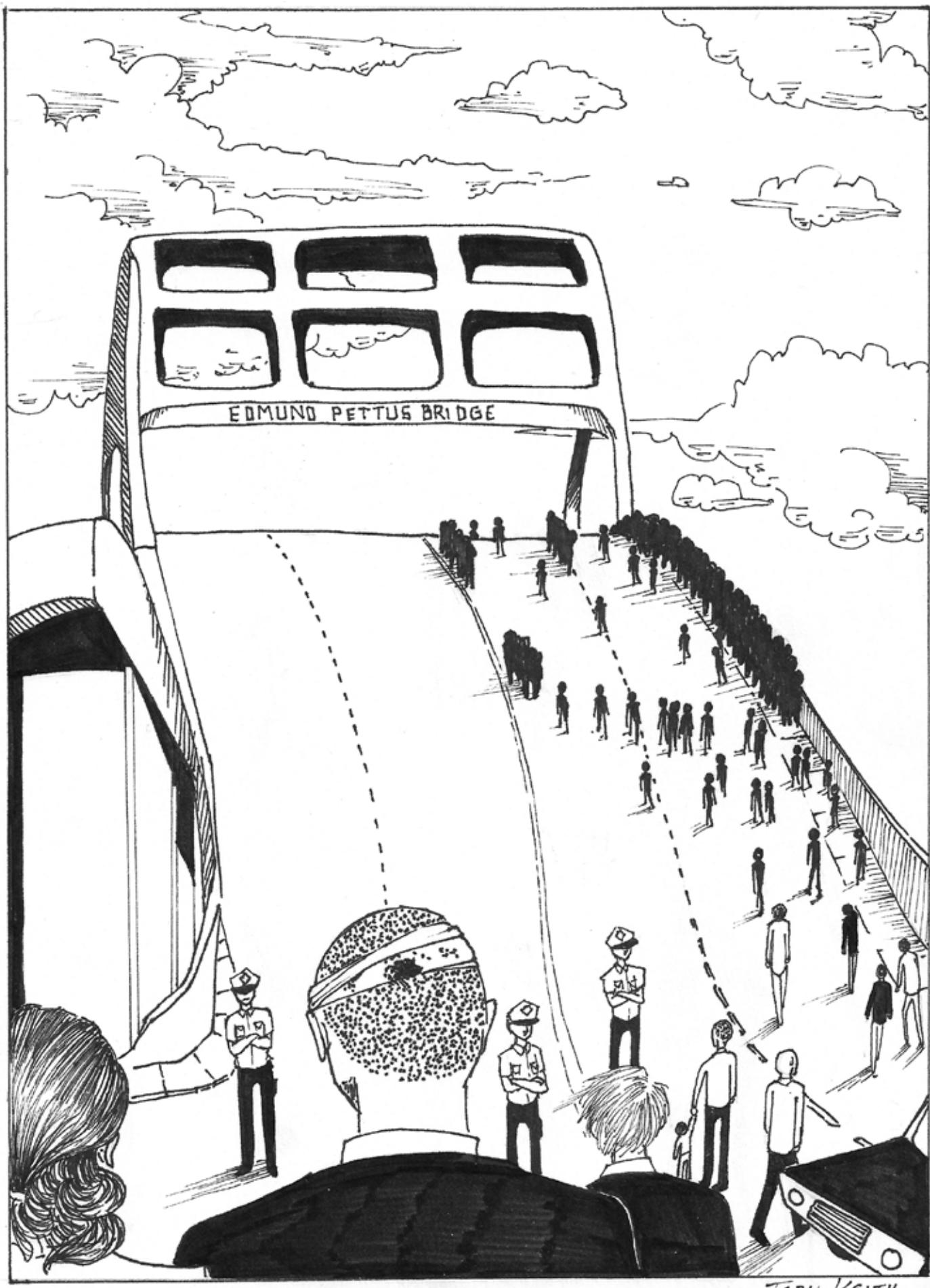
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DRAWING:

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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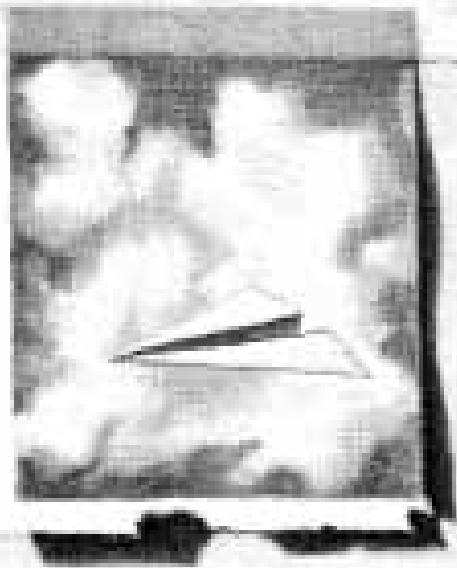
DRAWING:

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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Gregory

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 foreswearing 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.”

