

Northern Lights
2013



University of Wisconsin
Marinette Arts Journal

Cierra Seid is a sophomore at UW-Marquette. She plans on majoring in Communications.

Sylvia Thoney is a sixth grader at Menominee Catholic Central. She enjoys writing short stories and poems. After she finishes high school she plans on attending college to become a veterinarian.

Vanessa Vincent is a UW-Marquette freshman and graduate of Menominee High School. She plans to transfer to UW-Stevens Point and major in environmental science to pursue her interest in hydrology.

Nikolaus Wrench was born in Marinette, but raised in Twin Lakes, WI. He has always loved art, through childhood until now, as it has always allowed him to express himself. He wishes to become an art teacher, so being in an art journal is a great step for him.

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TWO BIRDS by Bo Young Park

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Contributors

Kayla Anderson	James LaMalfa
J.C. Anthony	Sherin Manassra
Rachel Badgley	Dail Murray
Bai Yansang	Morgan Oczus
Victoria Boone	Bo Young Park
Travis Brimer	Zachery Pasdo
Shane Cahill	Richard B. Peterson
Cassandra Clement	Blake Pograd
Linda Crozier	Cierra Seid
Larissa Hogan	Sylvia Thoney
Richard E. King	Gonzalo Orive Villa
Paul Krause	Vanessa Vincent
Brenda LaMalfa	Nikolaus Wrench

Cover art: INVOKE XUEN THE WHITE TIGER by Gonzalo Orive Villa

Acknowledgments

We were not able to publish all the entries this year, but we wish to thank everyone who submitted their work for this journal.

Editorial Committee: Amy Reddinger, Chair, Jennifer Flatt, Allen Learst, Tara Da Pra, Maureen Frawley, Susan Peterson, Zachery Pasdo, James LaMalfa

Thanks also are due to Connie Scofield and John Kuhlmann for their assistance in collecting art submissions.

Northern Lights is funded by the UW-Marinette Student Government.

Brenda LaMalfa is a UW-Marinette student and Program Assistant for the International Student Program. She speaks Spanish and French and taught ESL for 1-1/2 years in Guadalajara, Mexico, and enjoys traveling, languages and meeting people from other countries. Brenda hopes to graduate from UW-Green Bay with a Bachelor's of Applied Studies next spring, her self-directed focus on International Studies.

James LaMalfa has an MFA degree in art from UW-Madison. He has taught at four universities, including UW-Marinette. His interests include making public art, both sculpture and murals, silver gel photography and aviation as a pilot and photo journalist.

Sherin Manassra is a sophomore at UW-Marinette. She is pursuing a degree in education. She is a mother of four kids, and is originally from Palestine. This has influenced her art.

Dail Murray is a cultural anthropologist and Emeritas faculty at UW-Marinette. She lives in Menominee, Michigan.

Morgan Oczus is a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Marinette campus. He is currently studying and majoring in English. His interests are primarily art and creative writing.

Gonzalo Orive Villa is a 2013 freshman at UW-Marinette. He was born in Madrid, Spain and moved to America when he was three years old. Once he graduates from UW-Marinette, he will transfer to UW-Stout; he has plans of studying game design.

Bo Young Park is a UW-Marinette student from South Korea. She has come to Marinette to learn English and American culture.

Zachery Pasdo is a sophomore at UW Marinette. He plans on majoring in graphic design. He has always loved to paint, and with new college classes and techniques, his art is only getting more creative each day.

Richard B. Peterson is a 1954 graduate of the UW Extension Center at Marinette with a degree from UW-Madison in industrial management. He has been an active class auditor at UW-Marinette since retirement and a contributor to *Bards on the Bay* and *Northern Lights*.

Blake Pograd is a student at UW-Marinette. She is originally from Menominee and is a graduate of Marinette Catholic Central. She will be graduating from UW-Marinette this spring and will continue at UW- Green Bay for a degree in either chemistry or biology.

Kayla Anderson is a freshman at UW-Marquette. She is planning to graduate in 2014 and continue her education at UW-River Falls where she will major in biology and work towards becoming a veterinarian.

J.C. Anthony is an eclectic seeker of truth from the north woods. Though he wishes to further develop his skills, he does not pursue a degree; albeit, he believes that knowledge is its own reward.

Rachel Badgley is a sophomore majoring in music with applied piano. She enjoys observing, spending time in, and writing about nature.

Bai Yansang is from China and has been a student at UW-Marquette since fall, 2012.

Victoria Boone is a freshman at UW-Marquette, a member of the U.S. Army and a single mother of three children. She is working on her associate degree with a potential major in English or Psychology. She is a recovering cutter.

Travis Brimer is seeking a degree in psychology at UW-Marquette. He studied art for 3 years at Stephenson High School. His fascination with the human form and behavior has influenced his art.

Shane Cahill is a 20-year-old short-term transfer here at UW-Marquette. He plans on returning to UW-Stout to seek a doctorate in Nanotechnology.

Cassandra Clement is 16 years old. She resides in a special boarding school to help her with Bi-Polar and Asperger's Syndrome challenges. Writing is one of the best ways she has found to express her feelings and the struggles that she deals with on a daily basis. (Submitted for Cassie by her mother, Renee.)

Linda Crozier is a custodian at UW Marquette. She's looking forward to spending more time with family, friends and the beauty of life after she retires this year.

Larissa Hogan teaches human anatomy and human physiology at UW-Marquette. She also has other interests.

Richard King is a retired general manager who spent most of his career in Madison and Milwaukee before moving to Marquette. A creative writing class in college sparked his interest in writing. He has achieved modest success in publishing his writing and an occasional win in writers' contests.

Paul Krause is a UW-Marquette student who is majoring in pre-med. He has also appeared in the TOB production of A Midsummer Night's Dream.

A FOREST SUITE by Rachel Badgley

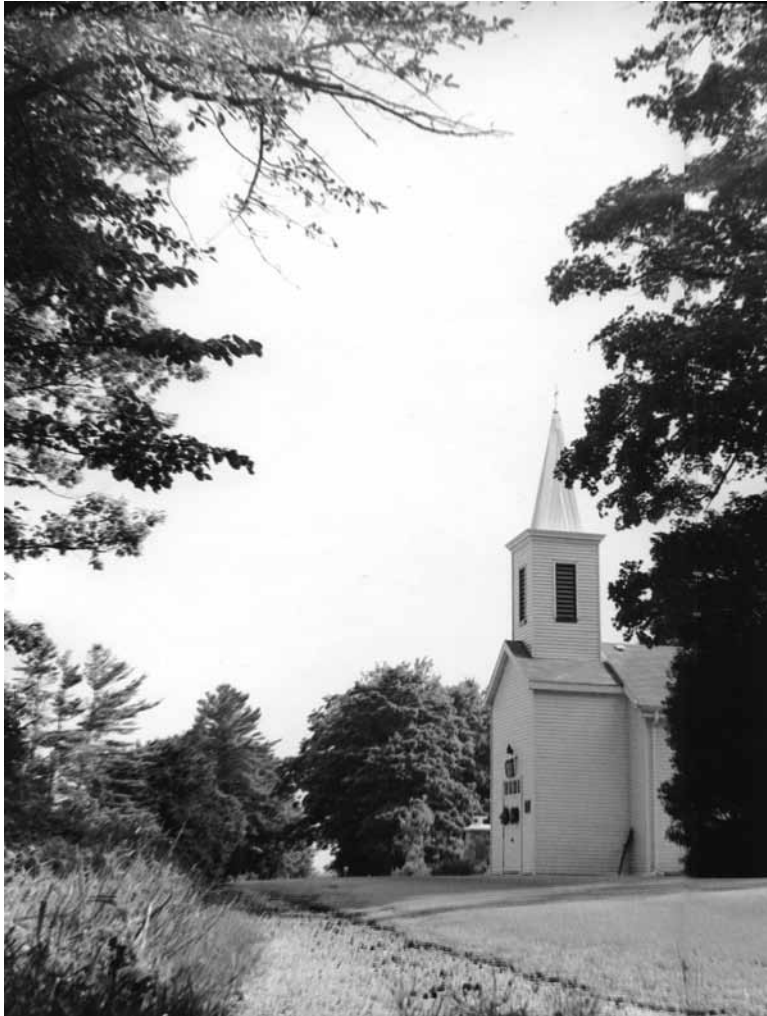
My eyes awake from slumber deep
To find their place in forest sweet.
Upon soft grass my back does lie
And in my ear, a buzzing fly.
The trees and leaves from overhead
Give refuge over my soft bed.
And now, the wind, the great maestro
Begins his forest suite just so:
The bending grass alive with string
And crickets with their seconds sing.
Warm woodwinds played by windborne birds
These flutists sing harmonious words.
Then maestro swells his well-honed art
And signals beating drum—my heart.



IN THE WOODS
by James LaMalfa

LARK SONG
by Rachel Badgley

A lark of broken wing tells more
Of his despondent state
Than words writ on this paper poor
Or on the well-worn slate.
An open window stands before
An empty soul: a cage.
While one outside cries "Nevermore"
Shall sunlight near assuage
The darkness of a prolonged shade
Or vision of the past—
Within him, tantalized, he's made
To serve—a song harassed.
Never to fly again so gay
Led by the course of sun.
Let now his voice be silenced, yea
A life of pain undone.
The silver chain let broken be
By gently flowing chords—
A captive song indeed made free.
Another spirit towards
A moonlit path, a future laid
For lark song proud may be.
A soul mercurial-born staid
For lark song's left in me.



WASHINGTON ISLAND CHURCH
by James LaMalfa

THE GIRL OF ECLECTIC CAPRICE
by J.C. Anthony

Earthen drums roar like thunder,
Omen of a grand event—
Branches bounce from purple to pink, juxtaposing a sky of ink,
As trees dance in color.

A boy of a field trip
In search of adventure,
Found amid the event, discovery adjacent,
In the shimmy of a girl's hip—

Her eyes a blazing conundrum,
With a smile impalpably soft—
As the music died, he pulled her aside,
To share the skin of a drum—

He held her hands to guide her,
But anxiety quickly befell—
For he broke once before, like a vase on the floor,
Forever piecing himself together—

She invited him with warm eyes,
The girl with hands so touchable—
But he held to restraint, bereft he could not compensate,
His past of heartache and lies...

When presence bares peace,
The future holds hope—
Albeit a mere moment, she saved him from his torment,
The Girl of Eclectic Caprice.

I ALWAYS THINK OF YOU
by Cassandra Clement

When I wake up in the morning
When I sleep at night
I cry and I cry
I always think of you
When I walk through the woods
When I stare into the clouds
When I say good-bye to friends
When someone says I love you
I think of you
When I walk outside in the evening
When I turn out the light
I cry and I cry
Wanting you here
I always think of you.

OUR SEA OF TIME
by Richard King

Crickets singing love songs
Fireflies floating on the breeze
You and me down by the sea counting stars
Just you and me laying on the cool sand
Listening to the sea.

Big orange moon coming up
Shining on the glistening sea
Whiskers on waves sparkling in the moonlight
Swishing and swaying to music
Only angels can sing.

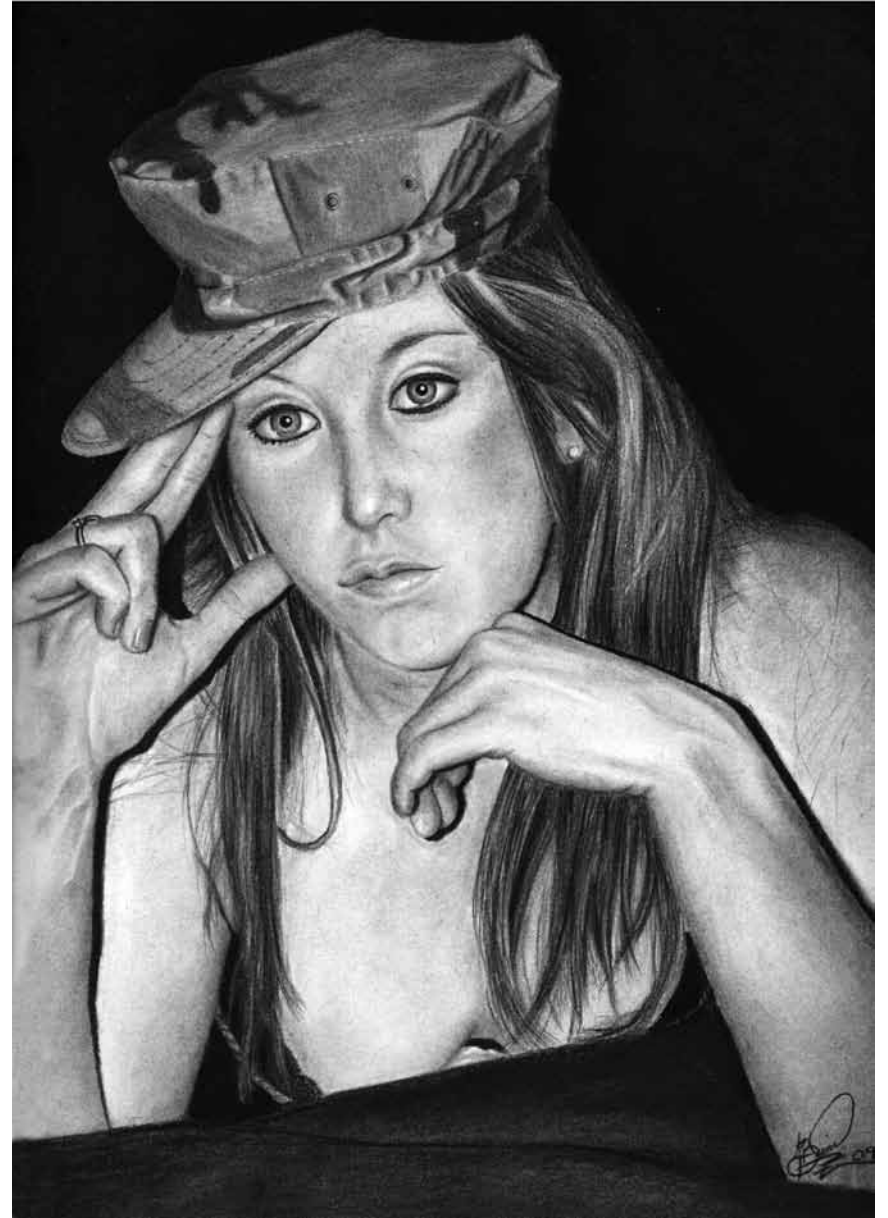
Life was fresh and full of adventure back then
Bodies were strong and minds clear and bright
We had the best nature could give
And a pocketful of time to spend
With no end in sight.

Time has been spent foolishly and wisely
But time marches on to a drumbeat no man can mute
Time is the thief in the night
That steals the strength and clarity we once had
When we listened to crickets singing love songs
Down by the glistening sea.

As time winds down for you and me
Be assured that memories of crickets singing love songs
And fireflies floating on the breeze
By the shimmering sea
Will stay with us as we enter eternal time
Under the big orange moon
As it paints whiskers on the waves of time.



CAR
by Zachery Pasdo



ARMY RECRUIT
by Travis Brimer

NAT COLE
by Brenda LaMalfa

Why am I fascinated by the voice of Nat Cole, more popularly known as Nat “King” Cole (born Nathaniel Coles, he later dropped the “s”)? I have often wondered about this since I first started loving his music, and the earliest age I can recall hearing him sing is 15 or 16. I remember listening to his albums in my bedroom of the home of my host family when I lived in Finland my senior year of high school. The records were there. The record player was set up. I started listening out of semi-boredom. Some of my favorite songs sung and immortalized by Nat are “Mona Lisa,” “Sweet Lorraine,” “Nature Boy,” “The Very Thought of You” (my absolute favorite) and “L-O-V-E.” I’m a romantic, I can’t help it.

So, what is it about him that curls the toes and reduces me to a pat of butter on the floor? His presence? His style? His great big smile? His piano playing and incredible success? Or is it simply his voice? For me, it’s a little bit of everything, but mainly, I’ve found his voice to be absolutely unique from any other singer I have ever heard. Here’s how I would describe it: he has a subtle, sweet vibrato, a huge, glaringly white smile (that affects intonation and enunciation, I know), and a kind of nasally, raspy singing voice - almost like it’s peppered with rock salt or rubbed with sandpaper. The irony is, sadly, he achieved that quality because he smoked (Kool cigs, to be specific) heavily for years. For him, it worked. It also killed him in 1965, before I was even born.

I grew up hearing about the great artist da Vinci (I’m Italian, after all). “Mona Lisa,” funnily enough, is as famous a song as it is a painting. It won an Academy Award in 1950; Cole’s version was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1992; it was used as the theme of a film and also played in Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* in 1954. Although I never saw them, Cole was in 28 films in his lifetime, most of the time, playing himself, from 1941-1965. (I wasn’t even aware he made any films.) His last film, *Cat Balou*, was released after he passed into the great beyond. He was, himself, inducted into several Halls of Fame (including Rock and Roll, as he was a major, early influence in that genre of music), had a postage stamp with his face on it (you know you’ve made it big when you get your own stamp!), and received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, ALL after he was dead for more than twenty years. In that respect, he’s a bit like Mozart and Van Gogh - posthumously famous. He even had one of the first black variety shows on television. Quite an impressive feat, considering the intense racial issues during that time.

I have a silly, but touching, memory of the song “L-O-V-E.” I used to love watching ice skating on TV during the Olympics. Kurt Browning, a handsome and devilishly charming solo skater (that I secretly had a crush on) danced to Cole’s version of this song. With Browning’s smooth ice skating moves and Cole’s smooth vocals, I fell in love with “L-O-V-E” (and



AL-AQSA MOSQUE
by Sherin Manassra



SHERIN
by Zachery Pasdo

a little more with Kurt Browning). Perhaps I like how Nat's songs make me feel, both romantic and hopeful (again, I play the Italian card), but isn't that a major reason why we all listen to music? We like how it makes us feel?

He's a legend, but not just for his voice and singing style. Few people know that his jazz and big band arrangements and wonderful piano playing were sweet, fun and made the listener just feel good. He was always smiling, never taking his success and fame for granted, and although he wasn't the perfect husband, he was a loving father to his five kids. His legacy continued on through the voice of his daughter, Natalie. And though her voice wasn't as distinct as her father's, she is a trooper and struggled through some difficult things in her life, and won, so brava to Natalie. She carried on the incredible talents of her father, even doing a posthumous duet with him, recording "Unforgettable."

I will always cherish and adore Nat and his music, for many reasons, and I feel I will keep his memory alive like a memento in the treasure box that is my mind and my memories. Thank you, Nat King Cole.



HUSKY EYES
by Blake Pogrnt

MICROCOSMIC DISHES

by J.C. Anthony

Across the floor I lay broken, en-route of vindication—
Malleable yet jagged, no longer mint condition.

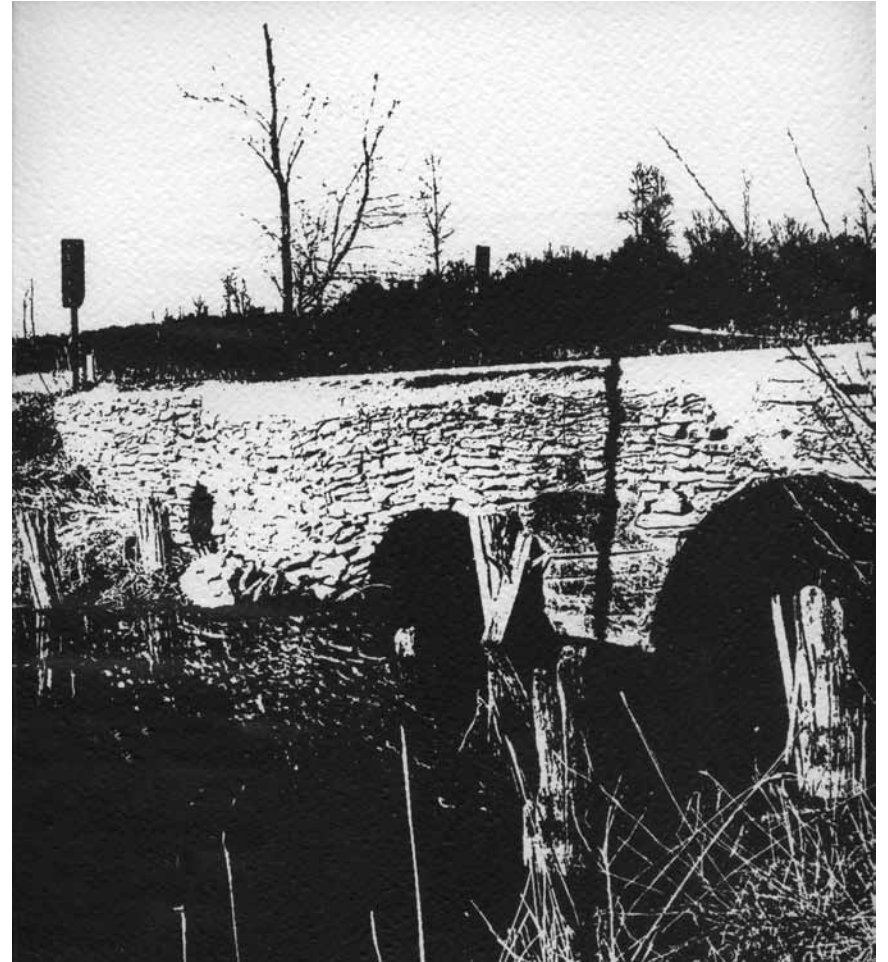
She's a dish I wish would never break, I was damaged enough for two—
But if she were to help me sculpt, we'd create something new.

It would be a shame to say, we are worlds apart...
...at two feet and arm's reach from the rhythm of her heart—

A nebula within china, behold this epic vessel—
She spins a stellar vase, on her cosmic potter's wheel.

The depth of a galaxy, sheer ceramic encompasses—
A microcosm before me, her eyes the spectral lenses.

It would be a shame to say, we are worlds apart...
...at two feet and arm's reach from the rhythm of her heart.



CEDAR RIVER BRIDGE
by James LaMalfa

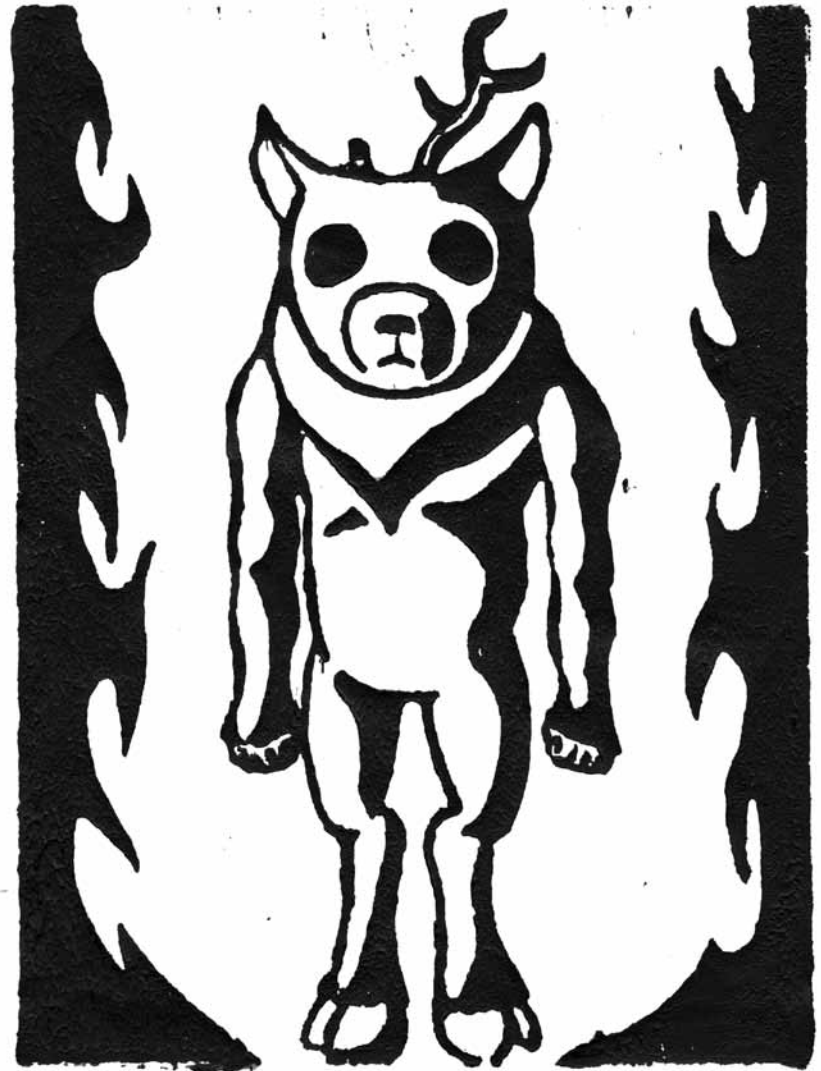
THREE DIMENSIONAL SONG
by J.C. Anthony

Radiant rays reflect on water's ripples,
The splash of a duck forms a new ring of dimples...
Rainbow in the clouds with a pink underlay,
Gust on gull's wings as it slowly drifts away...

Grant me an airfoil—so I can fly too,
And soar among the expanse of blue...
Gift me a beak and before long,
I too shall sing in this three dimensional song!

HAIKU
by J.C. Anthony

Why speak in whispers
when you can type with fingers?
New age gossipers.



IMPERFECT CREATURE
by Nikolaus Wrench

IN A WORD
by Richard King

Today I'm going to write about a new word I've recently invented. Checking the insanity files in my mind, I've come across an endless supply of useless knowledge accumulated by compulsive reading and consumption of modern media.

The word is re-garbaging. I suppose some folks would call it creativity. It essentially means creating something from the rip-rap, detritus, trash, dross, and other junk that a lifetime of words deposits in the networks of neurons that comprise the human mind. All the great literature, and not so great, has been born from words we've accumulated from those who came before us. All the literary plots we use to position our stories stem from only a few—the number varies from one (conflict) to thirty-six, with seven garnering the most votes.

Of course the true measure of creativity is being able to repurpose all that flotsam into a coherent structure that others can find meaning from. A poem, a story, an essay, a play, or a novel, is nothing more than an assemblage of rearranged words by our minds. That's why if you want to write, or at least write well, you must read.

Our ideas are comprised of words that must be salted away in the labyrinths of the mind for future mining. Just as sculptural art can be created from material junk accumulated in our junk piles, literary art can be created from repurposing the words stored in the junk piles of our minds.

It's the honing of the skill required to penetrate into the depths of our minds to where those special words are stored that enables us to creatively (re-garbage) recombine all the words that have come before us into something of value. That skill is concentration, and to concentrate, you must think about concentrating as you try to concentrate. When the mind wanders and flits, the deep concentration required to pull those building blocks of competent writing fades away.



GAGA
by Zachery Pasdo

MAIN DRAG
by Richard B. Peterson

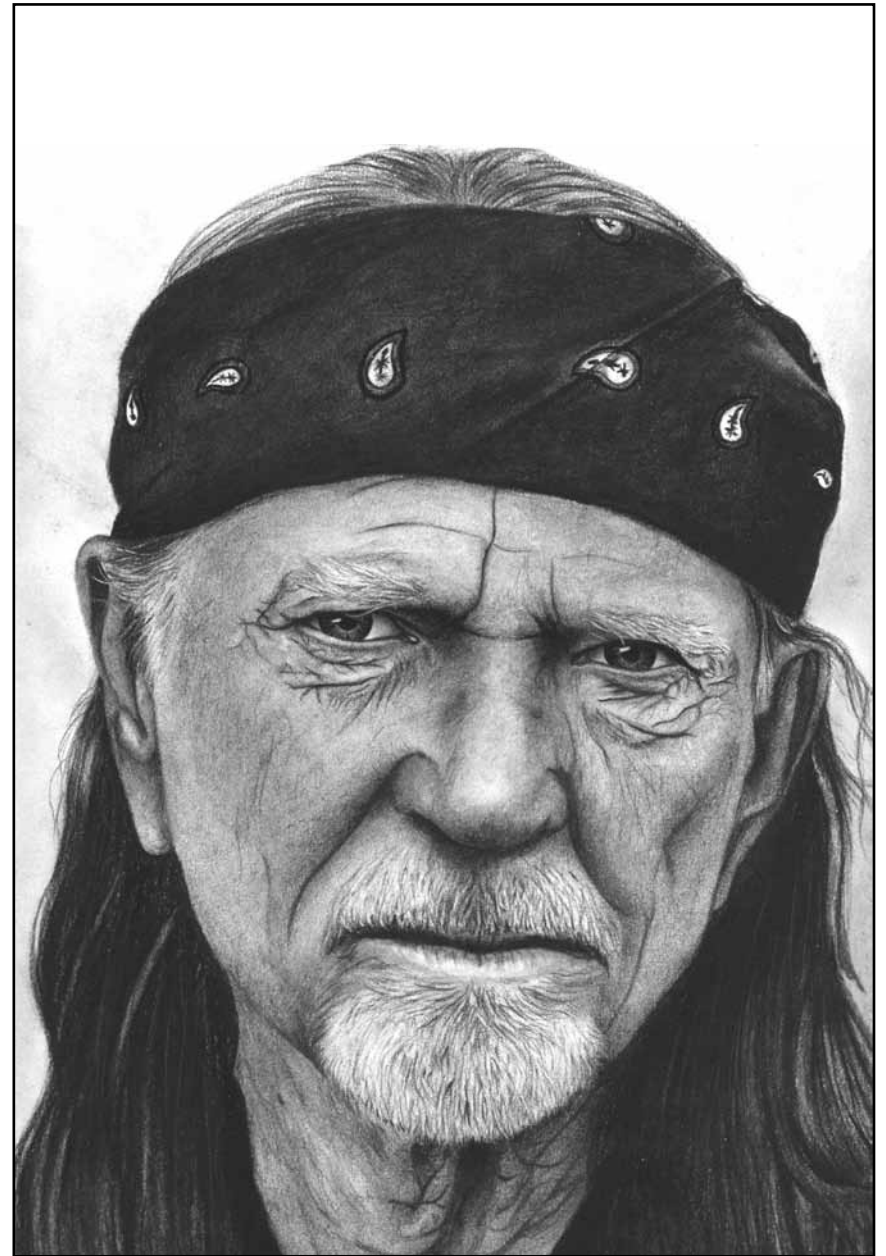
Presented in a moral frame of politics
One is good, the other bad, you get to choose.
Choose for Main Street or choose for Wall Street
Greed pitted against our hometown values.

Still one is thriving while one is dying.
The auto-friendly malls have killed the core
Now boarded doors and plywood windows
Stare from vacant sidewalks of our youth.

No more walking or window-shopping
Run in the door and quickly buy your stuff
Or better yet, in just a keystroke
Select the book or tune and have it shipped.

So you select the street of choice.
The bustle of the Wall Street hustle
Or nostalgia for the distant past.
The street of dreams lives in our mind.

Dividends are there for those who risk.
The new order unfolds before our eyes.



WILLIE
by Travis Brimer

AN OBSERVATION

by Larissa Hogan

The brown earth of spring parted
and green points peaked between its dust –
grew taller and formed green ribbons.
May turned to June –
June to July,
July to August,
and the ribbons became crowned with flowers
of no particular beauty
but marked the passage of time:
from apple blossoms, violets, and
lilacs to roses
and dust covered silks.
And green silks yellowed, browned,
and detached from their bounty
to fulfill another season.



CHAIRMAN MAO
by Bai Yansang

THE BORDER TOWNS OF MEXICO: RAKING THE BEACH

by Dail Murray

The young Mexican lovers are asleep on the beach. The girl lies on her back, mini skirt, orange tank top, legs together modestly, her long wavy hair lying in the white sand like a black halo around her head. The boyfriend next to her, barefoot, shirtless, in what looks like brand new blue jeans, lying on his side, legs drawn up, back crusted with sand.

Crushed beer cans, silver and gold labels, glitter in the sun all around them like strange grave goods for two slumbering brown-skinned Mayans.

Five men, long sleeve black uniforms with "Tourist Police" written in white letters on the back, form a semicircle around the couple. One reaches down to shake the man's shoulder. They wait, arms folded, for him to come to. They wait as the girl rises to her knees, pulls her skirt around her legs, gathers her purse, scoops her fingers through the straps of her gold lamé high heel sandals and rises shakily to her feet. The tourist police saunter behind them as they leave.

Pink tourists lean back in their lounge chairs under the palm trees. Show over. Young women, some topless, some in thong bikinis, inert for hours under the fierce Caribbean sun, pay no attention.

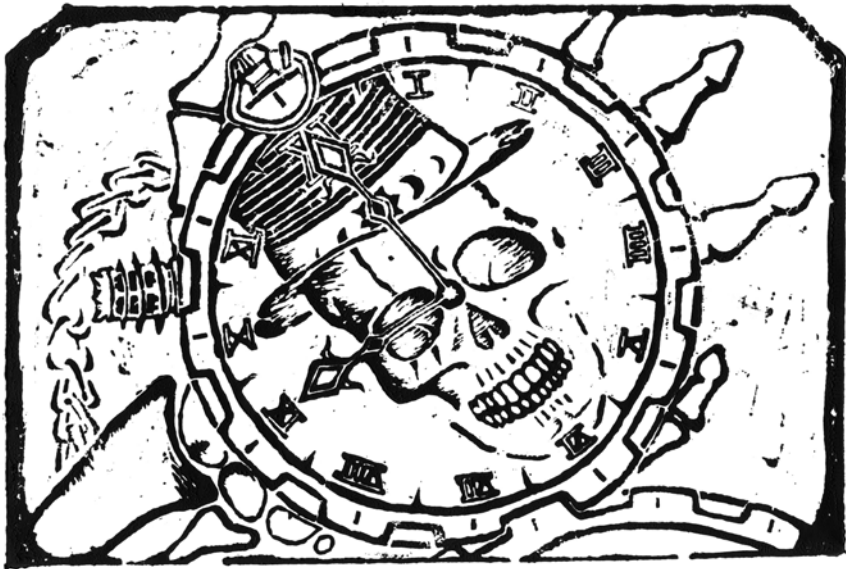
Day and night they rake the beaches here. Workers with wheelbarrows arrive early morning to gather up the coils of sea grass shoved ashore by wind and tides along with the junk of the world floating out there in the blue Caribbean. Plastic bottles, frayed rope, Styrofoam, shoes, only one, never a pair, and whatever else does not belong in the illusion of a perfect beach world, a sterilized brochure vacation, constructed daily just for us.



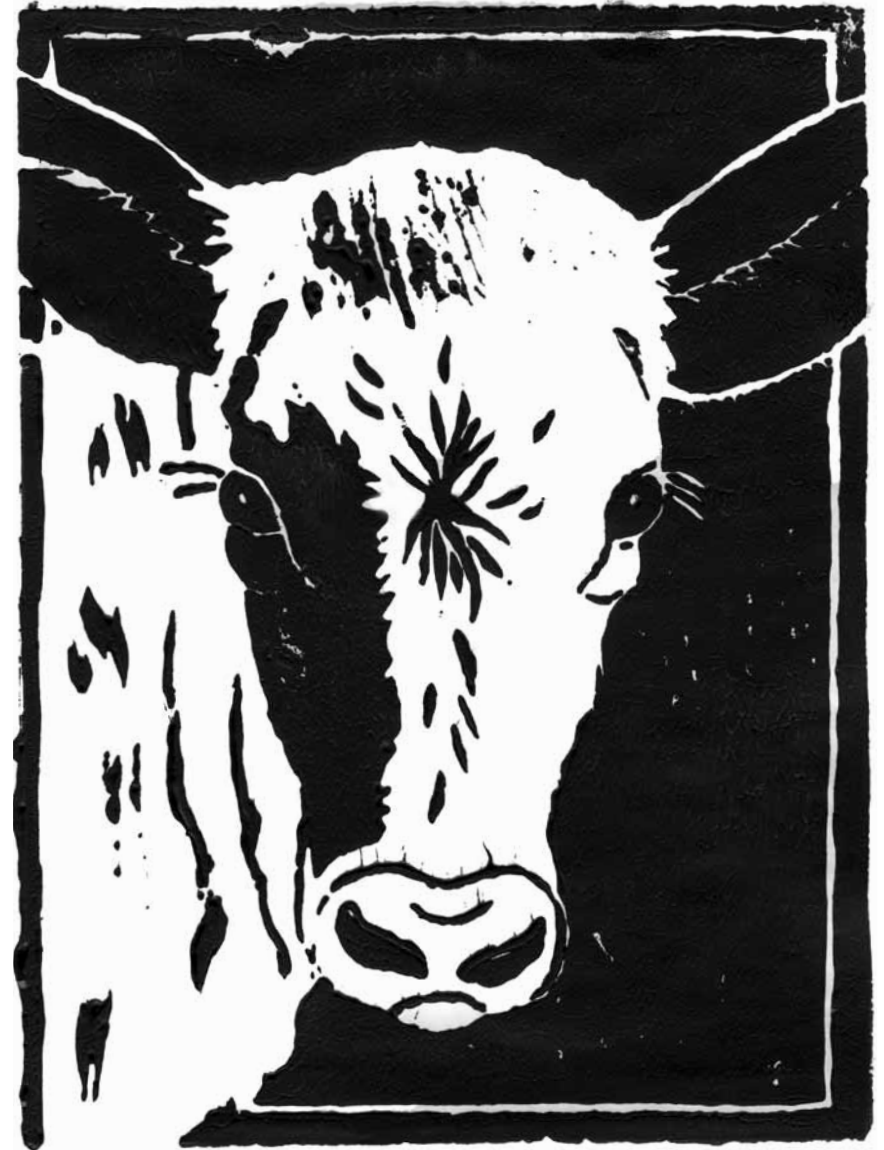
VACATION
by Larissa Hogan

LIFE CHOICES
by Linda Crozier

Woe to the person who has no shame
They deny completely that they are not to blame
They'll stab you in the back with no thought of remorse
Not wanting to take the right path of course
Beware of bad company that corrupts good judgment
They'll take you down to the path of lies and destruction
They are blinded by their vanity and the need for control
Trying to swallow you up in their tormented soul
Woe to the person who let's consuming pride overtake them
They will never find rest, only personal destruction



TICKING NOSTALGIA
by Paul Krause



BABY
by Kayla Anderson

BULLIED BY A GHOST

by Sylvia Thoney

Now you see me, now you don't
trying to fit in,
but then I don't
That's my life, my everyday life ...
tryin' to be cool,
but then I lose.
When I was young, younger than now,
I was bullied inside and out.
Becoming a rug.
That was wrong of them.
Being laughed at made me mad.
Sometimes sad.
I wanted to scream. I wanted to yell.
I tried to hold it in,
but then it came out.

BLOOD

by Victoria Boone

Blood running
Running down my arm
Pain
The pain gone from inside my heart
Am I crazy or am I sane
I feel the blade pressing and cutting my skin
I'm in control
I control how deep it goes
I control how much I bleed
I control the pain releasing from my body
All the pain is gone
The heartache, the hurt, the stress
Flows out with the blood
I am alive again.

THE RED HAMMER

by Morgan Oczus

I stand on the cobbled street in front of the tavern and wait. Stone-masons, smithies and carpenters bustle around the building's entrance. The workmen are dirtied, some smile and joke. I peer up at the cracked brick face of the building and rest my eyes on the large blacksmith's hammer which is mounted on a wooden plaque above the tavern's door. The evening sun shines on the plaque; it is a brilliant display of oranges and reds, accented with shadows in the cracked wood and reflections that glint between the flakes of rust. I pull at my cloak, but not because it is cold.

The air is rough inside the tavern. All the windows were boarded up years ago. From the dripping candles and scratched tin lanterns which line the high shelves that border the single room, light drifts to the smooth stone floor below. Near the wall farthest from the door, a large potbellied stove sits dormant in the corner. Now and then, stifled bursts of laughter squeeze past the curses of men and the slams of steins and escape through the building's cracks into the street, where they fade in the twilight. The tavern is crowded with patrons who shove and push their way to the scuffed counter. I remember the counter as it was years ago, the surface was uneven and knotted, the wood grain splayed in different directions. Over the years, bristly workmen shuffled their arms and elbows across the wood surface like a carpenter working a lathe. Now the counter is curved and smooth, like the flow of a river.

"I'll have another," a man yells. He ambles his way to the front of the tavern and tosses a coin across the ale stained counter. As he steps back with his fresh brew, his mug is pushed from his hand and its foamy yellow contents are splashed onto his chest by another intoxicated patron. The man recovers with a drunken whirl and returns the gesture with a clenched fist. I step back from the counter and give the two some room to wrestle. I make my way to an uneven chair in the corner of tavern, near the stove: the place where I always sit.

I reach into my cloak and dig for a few coins from a pouch on my belt. I wait for the barmaid to arrive at my table. The coins feel cold and heavy in my hand; I can see our sovereign's silvered face stare back at me. I didn't kill the king's son; nor did I try to raise him from the dead. Rumors about me being a killer of men and user of black magic have spread as a plague between noblemen and the royal family, but I wonder what proof they have. My magic doesn't enslave souls or reanimate corpses. I wonder if a malignant notion had rooted itself into their minds and by repetition become a twisted false truth, like a reoccurring nightmare. I would have stood before the king and his court to make my case, had the city guard not attempted to kill me.

The fight between the drunks has ceased, they both sit in chairs,

red faced and taking deep breaths. I notice an unusual man at the counter. He sputters as he tries to hold back coughs and drags an extra coin along the counter to the barkeep. He is not dirty like the other patrons, or endowed with arms made thick by manual labor. The man has short tar-black hair and a crooked nose; on his back is a burlap pack, secured by rope. He wears a cured leather tunic and rawhide boots: traveler's garb. He holds his stein in both hands. He walks with a half-stagger, even though he hasn't got through a drink yet. The stranger sits down in a chair at my table and buries his nose in his ale.

"You," the stranger says after a few silent moments, then he pauses for a breath, "why don't you have a drink, this place is wretched."

"It's a tavern," I say.

The stranger exhales and takes another drink. I slide my handful of coins back into my belt pouch.

"You are right," he says, "it's a tavern and you haven't got a drink!"

"I've been accused of a crime, I don't think I could handle a drink," I say.

"Half of the men in this place are probably accused of crimes," the stranger says. He gives me a half smirk. I say nothing.

Grunts and yells burst from the counter, it's another fight; no, a brawl. Clusters of men swear and throw their unsteady fists at each another. Steins are upset on the counter, and a tide of ale sloshes onto the floor. A man is pushed down to the hard stone by a tall and hairy patron who grips at the downed man's neck. A table away from mine, two stout men push themselves off of their chairs and dive into the fray. It's Lehman and Sod, two brothers who used to be smithies years ago. Now they keep the tavern in a fragile state of order. Lehman pulls the tall man away from the downed man's throat and slugs him in the chest. The tall man grabs at Lehman's wiry brown beard but receives another blow. At Lehman's side, Sod holds back a drunk with each arm.

The stranger looks at me.

"You seem something noble for a criminal, didn't fuzzy your mind with a drink," he says, "Are you going to do anything?"

The sound of metallic stomps pulls my mind and eyes from the brawl. At the Hammer's entryway, city guards push their way into the tavern. They stop beside the fighting patrons. They ignore the brawl and look about the tavern, with their short swords drawn. Their plate mail armor clatters as they twist and turn.

"Yes." I say to the stranger, my eyes still fixed on the guards.

I stand up from my chair and duck past the crowd that stands between myself and the guards. I press myself to the cold wall and take steady steps. The guards spread out and push people aside; each one brandishes his sword at intervals. They pull patrons from their seats and look over their faces. They inspect every person who stands. I slide closer to

Why would they praise such a thing?

A machine, a walking corpse, lifeless and soulless,
A small clockwork spider, driving a golem woven from flesh,
passively starrng outward, an unknowing pilot
observing, calculating, acting, reacting
gazing and turning its spherical,
gyros clicking, spinning, whirling,
a cyclone of well-oiled brass.

Four sharp jointed legs, circling it's eye,
a green light, growing and shrinking,
an uninterested camera lens, curious of the effects.
Yet at a loss to what they mean.

How am I both?

An impassioned creature of flesh and blood
and

A brass spider, turning, shifting, twisting
fueled by cold electricity.

How can I feel and yet have nothing?

How can I flood a page with emotion,
yet feel nothing from it afterwards?

Hear poetry, and get nothing?

Perhaps it's music.

Perhaps it's sound.

Maybe metal gears are what speak to the machine.

Maybe roots growing are music to the dead.

Maybe, maybe

I don't know.

BRASS SELF
by Shane Cahill

I wonder how I work,
how do my emotions work?
Why do they flare up,
like a fire work,
bursting forth in the cold dark.

Why do I feel pain,
With sadness, in my heart and chest
like a cold blade, twisting.
With anger, in my forehead,
like a hot iron, in a burning forge.

Why would simple chemicals
lifeless and pungent,
wires of proteins, walls of fats, spirals of DNA
cause me to write?
To thirst for more,
more words, more thoughts, more understanding, more interaction.
A dry throat, in a windswept desert.
A shackled mind, left to rot in a cultural prison.
An abandoned child, left in the woods to fend for himself.

Why can't I stop?
Stop the tears,
Stop the sharp needle pain,
Stop the heat, with it's ever beating passion
the lust, the hate, the sorrow
the sorrow.
The freezing cold ice,
encasing my heart in a numbing shell.

the door, still crouched low. My heart pounds under my cloak. A blade appears a few feet from me. I reel back. The sword wisps out of my sight. I stop; I look. The patron in front of me is pulled forward. A guard inspects him, the sword is held at his side. I dash for the tavern door.

Outside of the tavern, I break into a run. I don't know if the guard sees me. Only a shard of the sun remains above the horizon, deep in the purple and cloudless sky; a blinding burst of light strikes my eyes. Disoriented, I turn my face from the light. I stumble into an alley secluded from the open street and breathe. My mind is assaulted by the piercing memories of the past two days: I've been blamed for the prince's murder; I've been branded a necromancer—accused of sowing black magic between my fingers, and exorcising the souls of the dead; the guild of wizards won't take me back now, not as a practitioner of a vile and outlawed art. If the city guards are eager to flay my skin for a supposed offence, how will the wizards' council react? The rumor will entangle their minds like a set of hands on a person's throat, constricting the vital flow of an unseen resource, of air and reason. I listen; only the restless wind reaches my ears. I take a slow step to the corner of the alley and peer down the lane: I look back to the tavern, back to the entryway. The setting sun consumes the hammer above the door; it burns with a fiery red glow that burns inside me as I get ready to take flight.



SCREAM
by Cierra Seid



DECEPTION
by Vanessa Vincent