

COLLAGE

fall 2018

A Journal of Creative Expression
50th anniversary edition

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Thanks

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A special thanks to the Art Department, especially Noël Lorson and the Graphic Design Department, for providing invaluable feedback and resources for this magazine. Thank you to the College of Media and Entertainment, the English Department, and all MTSU departments, faculty, staff, and students who have contributed to *Collage* over the decades.

Letter from the Editor

Collage changed my life. Cheesy as it sounds, it's true. If I am being honest, I initially joined the staff more to correct people's grammar than to fulfill any deep-seated editing passions. That changed after my first meeting. I was surprised at the level of motivation and intense discussion, and I left the meeting with a strong feeling of commitment that has not yet wavered. To this day, what impresses me about *Collage* is that the entire staff works together in order to showcase our students' diverse talents in a beautiful magazine.

This semester, for the second part of our fiftieth anniversary edition, we opened our arms to MTSU faculty and staff, *Collage* staff, and less-recent alumni. With a record number of submissions, our community's response was overwhelming. I would like to thank everyone for supporting us and entrusting us with your creativity. This magazine would not be possible without you. I am also proud

to announce that our most recent magazines, the fall 2017 and spring 2018 issues, won national crown awards from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

In its long and colorful history, *Collage* has undergone critical developments, but it has changed significantly in just the last four years as well. We have created a stronger online presence by publishing every issue of *Collage* online, launching a website, and adding digital media to our list of acceptable submissions. Our audio and video submissions would not have been conceivable in 1968, when *Collage* was founded, but by creating new traditions, we can be inclusive and adapt to the modern world.

Collage has become such an important part of my growth and self identity, that I contemplated putting off graduation for another semester. Rest assured, I

won't, but I did think about it. When I was worried, I looked to my previous editors in chief, Caitlin Noonan, Chloe Madigan, Luke Judkins, and Kimi Conro, for guidance—they worked incredibly hard and acted as strong role models. I learned leadership skills from each of them that I will use for the rest of my life. If the previous editors in chief can venture off into the unknown, I will do my best as well. I can also say that, after four and a half years of working on *Collage*, I will still correct anyone who uses a two-way modifier in an essay, but, if one asks nicely, I can now give constructive feedback as well. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of *Collage*.

Rebecca Clippard
Editor in Chief

a note from the designer

In this special 50th anniversary edition, the torn paper elements throughout the design incorporate text from past issues of *Collage*, dating back to 1968. This is a nod to the roots of this arts magazine, and the general handmade aesthetic of this issue echoes our common foundation as writers and artists.

STaff

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table of CONTENTS

audio

- 50. Villain | ROQUÉ MARCELO
- 50. Tears in Savannah | ROQUÉ MARCELO
- 50. Whirlwind | DILLON MATHENY
- 50. Ten Gallon Hat | DAVID BASSETT
- 50. Ending Well | DARRELL VANZANT
- 50. Starting Today | DARRELL VANZANT ★
- 50. Fake | WILLIAM MANUEL
- 50. Mayan Poison | WILLIAM MANUEL
- 50. CSM 1969 | WILL BANKS

video

- 50. Do Not Touch | CORRIE WUNDER
- 50. Lemonade | AMOS PEARL
- 50. Curtains | JOHN LANE ★
- 50. Crystal Sky | COLE ALSUP

feature

- 20. A Facebook Tête-à-Tête | KELSEY KEITH

prose

- 12. Nomad | JENNIFER MCNAMARA
- 30. Sacred Places | GEORGE BOKTOR ★

poetry

- 06. 11:11 | LAUREL O'NEILL
- 07. I Already Have Plans. | ESTHER PARSON
- 09. Untitled, Untimed | HELEN WILDS
- 10. We're Young and This is the Beginning | KORY WELLS
- 16. Signs | JESSICA CARLAN
- 18. So Long to the Good Old Moon | KORY WELLS ★
- 19. I've met your muse, | J. PERRY
- 22. April's Returning Rains | CHRISSY PETRONE
- 24. Fishing Stocked Rivers | J. PERRY
- 25. Dear Lover, | VALKYRIE RUTLEDGE
- 26. Untitled 3 | CHLOE MADIGAN
- 28. Venus | JESSICA CARLAN
- 29. Untitled 2 | CHLOE MADIGAN
- 32. Letting Go | BRYSON LIGHT
- 33. The Crow's Bouquet | HEAVEN MORROW
- 34. Untitled | BRIAN FRANK
- 34. The Westbury Elegies #10 | JAMES HAMBY
- 35. Pressed Lavender | BRYSON LIGHT
- 36. Waiting | BRIAN FRANK
- 37. Everything at Once | HEAVEN MORROW
- 38. The Sum of Light | DELLA WHEELER
- 39. Gorgon | VALKYRIE RUTLEDGE
- 40. Walking on Snow | ANONYMOUS
- 42. Route TN-240, from Murfreesboro | SARA SNODDY
- 43. White Picket Fences | HAYDIN OECHSLE
- 43. Gone Are Their Sons | JARED FRAZIER
- 44. Donald Oswald Alexander | SYDNEY SMITH

- 46. The Girl Who Lived | MARISA GRAHAM
- 47. Erudite | BELL DOSKI
- 48. Captivated | ESTHER PARSON
- 49. Hysen | CHRISSY PETRONE

photography

- 06. Wish on the Tip of Your Nose | DAKOTA GREEN
- 08. Boats at Long Hunter | JOHN PEDEN
- 10. Convergence | BROOKE FITZWATER
- 14. The 6 at 12 | STEPHANIE VAN HORN
- 16. Dance | JASMINE WEATHERSPOON ★
- 19. It's Only a Paper Moon | HAYDIN OECHSLE
- 22. London Fall | RACHEL HAMBRIDGE
- 24. Breakthrough | DYLAN HENRY
- 25. Vaillys | DAVION BAXTER
- 28. Brentwood | JASMINE WEATHERSPOON
- 32. Father | KIMI CONRO
- 33. Sunny | PRIYANKA MODI
- 35. Gentlemen and Their Bikes | WAYNE CORLEY
- 36. Matzu Has Returned | DAVION BAXTER
- 36. French Press Pour | GUY SHELTON
- 37. Portrait One | VANN TATE
- 38. Good Times | JACOB JONES
- 39. Unfair Funfair | JONATHAN TRUNDLE
- 41. Apex Moonrise | KIMI CONRO
- 42. Nashville Explosion | HEATHER POLLARD
- 43. Abuelos | MADELINE QUINBY
- 44. An Athlete with Dreams | JACOB JONES
- 45. Roses Are Red, Painters Are Blue | RACHEL HAMBRIDGE
- 45. Redemption | STEPHANIE VAN HORN
- 46. In the Clouds of Salkantay | DESTINY SEATON
- 47. Treeboy | JOHN LANE
- 49. Modern Avalanche | NAIDANIEL NELPER

art

- 06. End of Days | MADISON PITTS
- 07. Toes | MORGAN WESTERBECK
- 08. For the Birds | CALLIE NORTHERN
- 08. The Perfect Body | LYDIA SIMS
- 09. Memories from a Broken Home | HANNAH PIELAK
- 10. Nugget | EMILY WATKINS
- 11. Phantasms | MOOSE WILLIAMS
- 11. Night Breed | KAELIN COOPER
- 15. Family Portrait | LYDIA SIMS
- 15. Le Lion | BRIANNA MCDANIEL
- 17. New Orleans | JARROD HOUGHTON
- 17. The Traveler | SYDNEY EMERSON
- 18. Chasing a Dream | KATHERINE RAYMOND
- 23. Aftermath/Debris: Secret War on Laos | SISAVANH HOUGHTON ★
- 24. Vortex | CROWE JACOBS
- 26. C Is for Cat | LESLIE HAINES
- 26. L Is for Lion | LESLIE HAINES
- 26. A Prescription for Hurt. | LYDIA SIMS
- 27. Art Quilt August 2018 | JOYCE SLOAN
- 27. Hear Me | MAGGIE STRAHLE
- 27. Jadie | CROWE JACOBS
- 28. Shame | MOOSE WILLIAMS
- 32. Father | KIMI CONRO
- 32. Exit | MARY MURPHY
- 34. A Fading Sincerity | JAKE YANDLE
- 35. Portrait with Flowers | MADISON PITTS
- 37. Birdstiary | COURTNEY GILLIAM
- 39. Jack Torrance–The Shining | OLIVIA JACKSON
- 42. Memories of Saigon | ZACHERY WRIGHT
- 47. New Beginnings | BEVERLY WARNER
- 48. Conversations | SYDNEY EMERSON
- 48. Punch the Clock Day | DANIEL ZAJAC

End of Days

Madison Pitts
oil painting



11:11

Laurel O'Neill
poetry

I wish for you in black-mooned nights.
I wish for you with bare bones and
brass eyes in the threading light reflecting
off the empty pool.
I wish for more stars.
I wish for your open chest,
moonlight spilling out between each rib
until the rot's all but gone
from the cavity around your heart.
I wish for more pennies lying heads-up.
I wish for you, loose-knuckled and sure,
in my room where you will
turn around three times before lying down.
I wish for teeth to no longer remind us of tombstones.
I wish for the cemeteries in our heads to empty,
the packed graves overturned by miracles
and the noises we never let out of our mouths.
I wish for more wishes.
I wish we didn't need them.



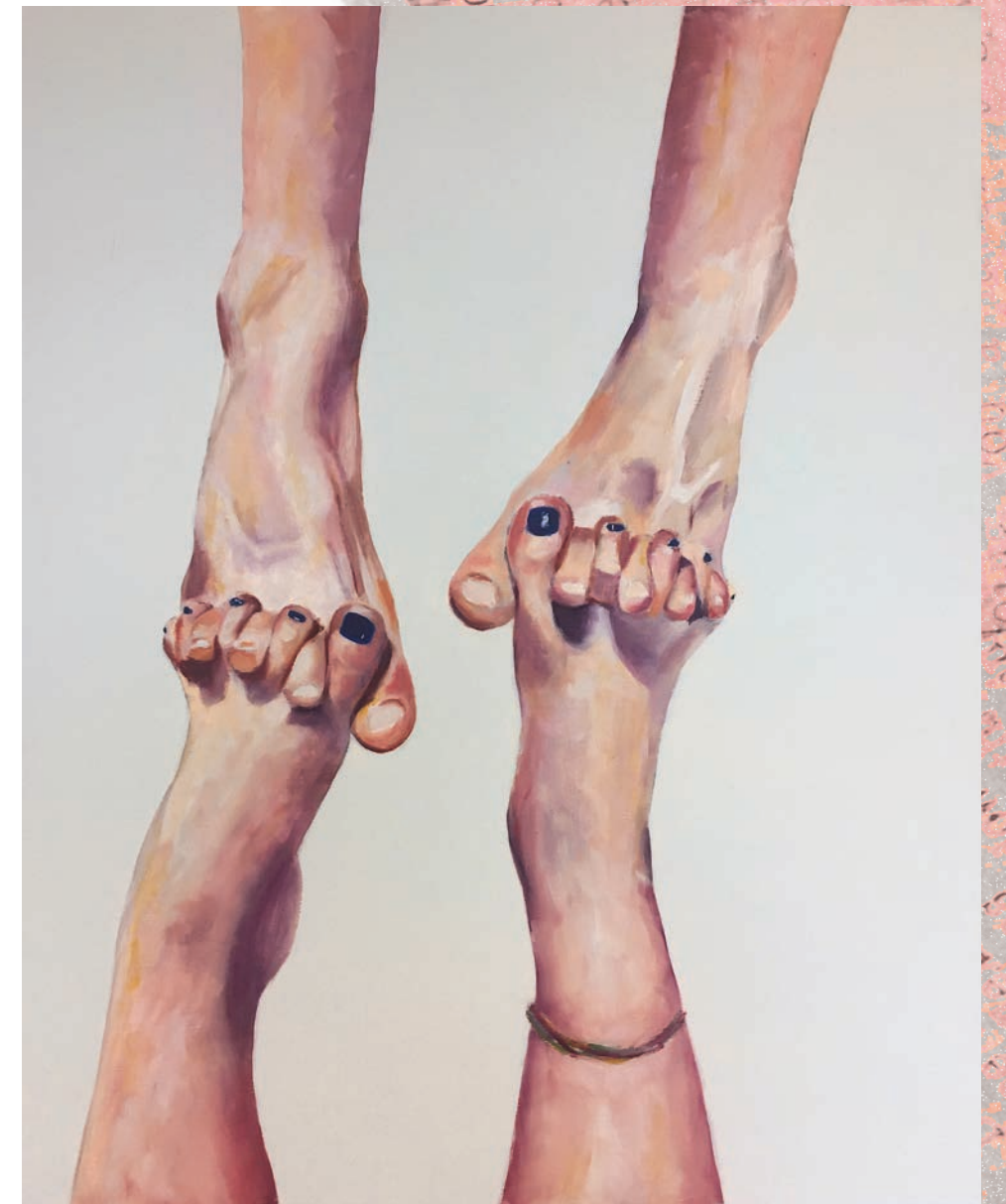
Wish on the Tip of Your Nose

Dakota Green
photography

I already have plans.

Esther Parson
poetry

You ask me if I want to go to Greece with you,
“It depends on how my plans go,”
which has always been our family code
for saying “no.”
Not that you remember that.
You ask me if I want to go to Washington, D.C.,
“I have a special class to attend that week,”
another way of having plans.
Mom eluded Grandmother this way
one hundred thousand times;
I never expected to use it with you.
I missed you so much
when you went to Basic,
I pulled your hair out of the drain
to make a locket.
I cried when you joked, dear sister,
about the bombs whistling above
when you were in the sands overseas.
I would have gladly agreed then.
You returned same as ever,
my older constant sister hero.
Children put toys and heroes into boxes
when they start to grow up,
and arguments and disagreements
grow into infectious cysts between sisters.
You moved five states away,
even if you hadn't,
I still would have plans.



Toes

Morgan Westerbeck
oil paint on board

Boats at Long Hunter

John Peden
photography



For the Birds

Callie Northern
sculpture; shipping box and wood slab



The Perfect Body

Lydia Sims
oil on canvas

Untitled, Untimed

Helen Wilds
poetry

I am 16, beginning to drive.
Being allowed a taste of sweet freedom,
a rite of passage.

I take the same path to a friend's,
the corner market,
a first boyfriend's.

I drive along the winding road,
away from home,
past the old church.

Then, the old man with the produce stand.
I've never met him before,
but that is okay because he is there.

In front of his house,
a hand-painted sign reads,
“wife called says bring home tomatoes.”

His stand sits on a patch of grass,
worn by years of constant attention,
held together by warped wood and wire.

In the summer,
he sits with crates of fresh fruit,
dirt clinging to unearthed vegetables.

Later, gourds, pumpkins,
hearty reminders of the changing season.
He takes a deserved hiatus in the winter.

He returns in spring with blooms.
A reminder of the sweeter and kinder things
on my path to my young destinations.

Then, I grow up.
I go, move, and give way
to the clichés of young adulthood.

The sweet freedom is often a swift, rotten burden.
Still, as my seasons pass,
I acknowledge time in new ways.

But life is passing for others,
tumbling and spinning through time.
Time untitled in lives I did not realize affected mine.

Until I return,
travel back to the home,
the path that I once took.

Time has not stood still,
and perhaps I am the worse for it.
Because on a crisp September day,
the produce stand that should have been
is nothing but a dead, brown patch of grass along a road.

Memories from a Broken Home

Hannah Pielak
acrylic, graphite, and marker on canvas



We're Young and This Is the Beginning

Kory Wells
poetry

Evening, we walk a garden of amethyst
marvels—structures and steel, pylons
and progress, burst-blossoms of light.
Between skyscrapers, we gather close
our coats as steam swoops
from the underground, nearby
the scent of coffee and yeast
almost enough to tempt our course.

Earlier, I took your hand for the first time,
inked on your palm an address.
This is where I want us to go, that word, *us*,
hanging like the full moon in tonight's dark
blue note of sky. Now, blocks away, sirens.
A woman pilfers a trashcan for dinner.
A man dead-walks into stopped traffic,
palms high. As if it will ease the desperation,
you reach for my hand. Or do I reach
for yours? We are new and believe
we need an excuse to touch.

Above us, rows and rows of windows,
like diamonds in a jeweler's case, flash
with a thousand shiny promises. Flash
like a fevered undoing of buttons and cuffs.

At an open door, we find our belonging—
a woman in jazz club shadow-smoke,
her mouth at the mic a bloom of orchid,
her voice a plume of pleasure and truth.

She sings our fortune.

Later, the streets all but empty, we walk
and walk and my shoes rub blisters, but
we're hand in hand—what's a little pain?
Beside us the topaz river glints.



Convergence

Brooke Fitzwater
photography



Nugget

Emily Watkins
glazed stoneware clay

Night Breed

Kaelin Cooper
digital illustration



Phantasms

Moose Williams
monoprint on paper; ink and cardstock



Jennifer McNamara
prose

talisman

Balsa wood: pale with a coarsely-striated grain; soft, like sueded silk; nearly weightless. The squinting, smiling eyes and insouciant nose on the upturned profile, the hint of a shaggy ruff, and the razor-sharp toenails are all burnt chestnut, etched with a needle-fine line into the figure of the howling wolf. He sits proudly on the windowsill, the nightstand, the makeup table.

roadside shrines

Life on the road was a maelstrom of color, redolent with layerings of bodies and food and place: the sunrise over barren gold fields and red-copper cliff; snow driving at the windshield as we hurtled through the night. The bus exhaust, the sweat from pointe shoes that hung, swaying above the seats, and the smell of sleep rising from tangled bodies mingled with fast food from the drive-thru and slow food cooked in the dressing room between performances. Costumes that needed to be mended before the next town littered the aisle of the bus: sumptuous silks and jeweled velvets tumbling over utilitarian gray carpet. Beneath it all rumbled the harmonious cacophony of private joys and public sorrows played on repeat.

Home, in those days, was an elusive idea framed by my ever-shifting viewpoint between one-night-only performances of *The Nutcracker* or *Swan Lake* or any of the myriad ballets the company performed while touring the sprawling western states, and I often longed for the closeness of the upstate New York winters of my childhood. Orange peels and cinnamon simmered in a cast iron pot on the woodstove while snow steadily accumulated outside the window.

The walnut floorboards shrank in the cold, dry air, creaking with every step we took. We counted the long nights by the number of books we devoured, burrowed into heaps of knitted blankets and quilts sewn from our outgrown clothing, our hands wrapped around steaming cups of hot chocolate.

Touring made it important to be anchored by small comforts at the end of each day’s road. I practiced being at home within myself by making portable shrines, curating collections of places and times, and calling forth memories sparked by meaningful objects: the balsa wood wolf; a postcard that found me at the motel in Billings, sent by my boyfriend who was flung somewhere across the globe; the mustard-colored velveteen pillow that I picked up at an antique store in rural Washington; the rust- and moss-colored woolen scarf that had belonged to my grandmother and was big enough to tuck around my body in the small bus seat.

I practiced being at home within myself by making portable shrines, curating collections of places and times, and calling forth memories sparked by meaningful objects...

I could nestle them into any corner that I claimed as my own, perch them on the edge of a TV stand in a dim motel room, or clutch them before stepping onstage in each new town.

The ritual of setting up an altar provided a moment of focus amid the carefully-orchestrated, chattering chaos of backstage: the clouds of hairspray; the mix

of sweat and perfume; the precious cups of long-cold coffee; the muffled clatter of pointe shoes on hollow stages; the pile of down slippers, woolen legwarmers, and fleece pants stripped from my body and discarded moments before I stepped onstage, sparkling, and quickly swaddled around my body as I exited the bright lights, exhausted. Against these flashes of frenetic living, the stillness of the wolf’s upward gaze in the dressing room mirror, eyes fixed on mine, was the side door to the home in my heart.

home sweet home

EUGENE, OR: THE DOWNTOWNER LODGE.
There are used needles and condoms, and dirty underwear is in the bathroom. I buy a sturdy, earthenware coffee mug at the Saturday Market.

BILLINGS, MT: THE DUDE RANCHER MOTEL.
Brad mails a pound of coffee beans from the café where he works in Boise. They arrive a day ahead of us, as does the postcard from Patrick. I peruse dog-eared volumes of poetry by Sylvia Plath, Robert Creeley, and Jane Kenyon in a bookshop on the main street.

THERMOPOLIS, WY: THE DAYS INN.
Bear, bighorn sheep, bobcat, deer, elephant, gazelle, giraffe, lion, rhinoceros, tiger, and others staring from the walls of the Safari Club lounge off the lobby. I find a small, bendable cow with its legs akimbo in the muddy parking lot. It reminds me of my black-and-white cat, belly swinging like an udder as she prowls the yard, stalking squirrels. Uneasily, the cow takes its place next to the squinting wolf.

SANDPOINT, ID: _____.
The pre-professional students who travel with us are given rooms in the basement of the main building, where the owner lives. There is only one exit—through

his living quarters—and no windows. We pool our per diem and pile into a few rooms at the Holiday Inn instead. I find a worn, midnight-blue pea coat at the Army-Navy store, with a dry-cleaning receipt from 1952 folded into the inner breast pocket.

VICTORIA, BC: THE EMPRESS HOTEL.

We actually don’t stay here; it’s too expensive. We stay at a nondescript, high-rise, chain hotel. We make reservations to take high tea at the Empress on Christmas Day, since it is the only establishment other than the Chinese buffet that will be open. But on Christmas morning, I turn my back on the wolf, the cow, the books, the empty mug, and the high tea. I stare out the window, fourteen stories up, and stay in bed.

someday

I wanted the house emptied of everything. I wanted to paint it a quiet shade of pale gray, and to throw plain canvas drop cloths over the sofa from the thrift store and the chair leftover from my last relationship. Empty, bare, and still, so I could start to hear what home might sound like: which birds sang in the morning, if an owl might ghost out of the kudzu-covered tree towering in the ravine behind the house, how many cats congregated at midnight, whether or not there were phantom footsteps in the attic, which stair tread creaked when I stepped on it. I wanted to smell the books, stacked and leaning against each other, at last, on the shelves, floor to ceiling, bowing under the weight of thoughts, words, sentences, stories. I longed for the clean, impersonal smell of plaster and paint, and dreamed of wet dogs, bread baking in the oven, and wisteria wafting from a pergola outside the kitchen window. I wanted sunlight streaming through wide panes of muntin-less glass, bleaching uneven floorboards, defining door jambs layered with centuries of peeling paint,

warming soft wooden countertops, and shearing around the spindles on the banister. I wanted to see what home might look like—where my MeMe’s lavender bubble quilt might drape, where the photo of all of us toe-deep in the endless sea of the Great Salt Flats might hang, where my wolf might finally rest, where something might tether me to here and now.

moving day

Packing was never my thing. I clung to too many memories: the mug, the books, the cow, the pea coat, the receipt; dish rags, old t-shirts, empty mason jars, pots and pans with mismatched lids; soaps for clothes, for dishes, for multi-surfaces, for bodies; remnants of fabric from outdated clothing I had sewn, ribbons, beads, zippers, boxes of buttons, colored pencils and sketchbooks, needles and thread; lists, diatribes, and reminiscences, poems and sketches, accounts of the lives I participated in—thousands of pages in hundreds of notebooks. There are beach towels and extra pillowcases; flour, sugar, lentils, rice, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, preserved lemons; paper clips, pens, CDs and DVDs, thank you cards, checkbook refills, and tax returns; sandpaper, hammers, screwdrivers and screws, paint swatches, paintbrushes, paint rollers, paint trays, and half-empty cans of unknown paint colors; a desk and chair, the mid-century cherry table we refinished, the stainless steel table that doubled as a kitchen counter; the stained-glass lamp that Jerry made, the scrapbooks my mother kept, our bikes, and my sewing machine; a dresser, a mirror, a rocking chair; blankets, hand-tatted lace tablecloths, crocheted throws; the cedar chest that belonged to MeMe, my Nana’s wedding dress, my mother’s diploma, my father’s fire helmet; the dogs’ beds, the iris rhizomes that outgrew their bed, the extra mattress in the spare bedroom; the candles from the wedding, the blue bubble Depression glass dinnerware, my grandmother’s wine glasses, the Belleek

bowl, and the Waterford vase; the thousands of little things: the miniature iron figures from India, the rocks from every body of water I’d ever put my feet into, the sterling silver baby rattle, the old glass bottle with sand from the Craters of the Moon, the ash from Mount Saint Helen’s, the Styrofoam cup my uncle sent to the floor of the ocean in Alaska, the Tibetan singing bowls, the tiny clay bowls Becky made, the paper snowflake my niece made. All of my memories, caught between this and that, here and there, before now and after then. The wolf, who had watched every moment as it unfolded, kept his counsel in his silent howl.

arrival

The house smelled like fermented urine. There was one window air conditioner in the bedroom, black with mildew, and barely wheezing a puff of dank air into the silent room. The front door had needed an assertive shove to open: the humidity of the southern summer had swelled the wood under the chipped paint, and the door and jamb were stuck tightly together. I hadn’t remembered the stained, cadet-blue carpets, the cracked wooden toilet seat, or the black-and-violet mini-blinds. I could not breathe for the noxious fumes and putrid stench.

We had put an offer on the house the day it was listed, an act of desperation on our part, as the price range of rental units where we could bring both our cat and our dog was well beyond our means. The gentleman who had lived there had died, leaving behind some bows and arrows tucked into the rafters of the house and a stash of beer cans for target practice. His children were divesting themselves of the property and the memories. They accepted our offer, closed the house up, and left it to fester through the summer months.

cont’d on pg 14

It was plain, a tract home built for veterans

returning from WWII. There were two bedrooms, 11'x11', a single bathroom with the original cast-iron tub, white enamel ringed in aqua from decades of mineral-laden water, a kitchen that was too small for both a modern stove and refrigerator, and charred floorboards in the dining room where the stove had been placed. The original knob-and-tube wiring had been partially replaced. The massive cast-iron waste pipe in the unfinished basement hung from the floor joists of the living space above. You could feel the house beginning to fold into itself, to tumble down the slope in the backyard to the creek hidden in the tangle of brush and detritus in the ravine. The two tiny bedrooms faced east, looking toward that vast, lush, green jungle. The front rooms of the house faced west toward the quiet street. We faced forward, full of dreams.

home

The original oak floors have been exposed and refinished. The toilet has been replaced. The blinds have been removed, and late autumn sunlight trickles in. The newly-plastered walls have been painted Benjamin Moore's "titanium," a quiet, pale gray that echoes the golden-green grass, the steel-blue skies, and the violet thunderstorms. A pot of water simmers on the stove, wafting the scent of oranges and cinnamon through the air. Bread rises on the counter. The mockingbirds and mourning doves converse in the yard. A million little things nestle into bright corners, and the wolf howls happily from the windowsill over the sink.



The 6 at 12

Stephanie Van Horn
photography

Le Lion

Brianna McDaniel
encaustic



Family Portrait

Lydia Sims
painting on canvas



Signs

Jessica Carlan
poetry

think of the earth symbol
as the dirt you were scooped out from,
the first pagan breath you drew
as your insides shuddered with that struggle
to be born.

be new
as your mother wept over you,
lost in a haze of prozac in her white gauze gown.

think of the air sign
as the sleep in your grandfather's office,
lying peaceful in your carrier
while she was on suicide watch,
your tiny lungs rasping.

think of the water sign
as when you knew you needed Jesus
though you didn't know who or what he was,
but your little legs kicked in the baptismal pool
ready to send you boiling to hell
at five, your most tender age,
and your father said the consecration
plunged your head under the surface,
the first of many times.

think of the fire sign as the will within you
tearing through another womb,
ready to be born a monster,
no longer a maid,
a raging animal with ambition
and the strength to see it through.

you will claw your way out of the day-darkness
into the peace of a full night's sleep;
you will shed this cursed skin for a better.
your own element will stamp out their flames.

The Traveler

Sydney Emerson
mixed media collage



New Orleans

Jarrod Houghton
sculpture

★ So Long to the Good Old Moon
Kory Wells
poetry

—Life magazine headline, July 4, 1969

When I was young, I wanted to go to the Moon,
but I've only made it to Milwaukee,
which is to say I have learned
about adjusting expectations.
When I was young, I planned to move
to the big city, any big city,
but my hometown grew and grew
in a labyrinth of commerce around me,
which is to say only certain bodies at rest
tend to stay at rest, not to mention
good urban planning is a must. When I was young,
I was going to drive a Porsche 944 flat on the floor,
but I've been all four-door sedans and minivans,
which is to say I had kids I was not planning
with a husband I was not planning
the latter of whom came into my life
wearing plaid pants, which I was
definitely not planning,
which is to say that love is the unbalanced force
unnamed in Newton's first law,
and I learned early on:
one, to accept people as they are,
even if they have no fashion sense, and two,
planning will only take you so far, but love—

love will take you everywhere, even
to Milwaukee in winter, which is to say
although I reserve the right to complain,
we do what we have to do. Older now,
I take uncommon pleasure simply anticipating
an afternoon cappuccino
from a powdered mix, which is to say life
is improbable, and if you look, you'll find a galaxy
in your cup, perfect and round and spinning.



Chasing
a Dream
Katherine Raymond
acrylic on paper, 18" x 24"



It's Only a Paper Moon
Haydin Oechsle
photography

I've met your muse,
J. Perry
poetry

the one you penned those words about,
those words that won them over,
the crowds, the critics, but
I don't buy into that.
When her eyes met with me,
the world did not fade out,
the birds sang steady-volumed,
my heart kept beating.

Her hair was yellow, plain,
thoroughly ungolden. The excess
of her skin was not a gentle
curve about the hip—it did not
dare me to trace its outline
with those small, soft brushes.

No honey slipped out
when she spoke, her inhale
didn't suck me in, my mind
had no trouble leaving
the lips right there
on her face.

Unlike you, no part of me burned
with the hope of her full legs
wrapped around my waist. I saw
her light was fading. I knew
she'd grow old and stop smelling like
lavender fields.

Still, I see the way
you look at her, and

you're right.

A Facebook Tête-à-Tête

Feature by Kelsey Keith

Unless you believe in psychic mediums, it would be difficult to speak with the author of any work in Dr. Joan McRae’s Foreign Literature in Translation course, considering most are dead. However, for our final projects, we had the chance to read novels written within the last decade. We were pretty jazzed—no offense to Alain Chartier and his cohort. We read a work recently translated into English and used our course skills to create a Wikipedia page for it, and, if needed, a page for the author as well.

Katrina Scott and I read *The 6:41 to Paris*, originally the French novel *06h41*, by Jean-Philippe Blondel. At first, creating the pages felt like cooking for Gordon Ramsey: concocting something knowing that the likelihood of disapproval is high. But the difficult part was not pleasing the Wikipedia gods, it was finding information on our author, Mr. Blondel.

One day during another unfruitful research session, I joked to Katrina that we should find him on Facebook and message him. Like many of my jokes, Katrina took me seriously, so in a moment of emboldened youth and desperation, we sent a message to Jean-Philippe Blondel.

Having prepared ourselves for rejection or worse—being blocked by a French stranger on Facebook—

we were surprised to see a response from him later that evening.

“Hi Katrina! My god, I’m flattered,” it began.

There is no eloquent way to say that we “geeked.” We were flattered that he, a successful author, would take time to respond to a couple of random students from Tennessee and to discuss a novel that meant a great deal to us. We asked Blondel questions about him as a person, which he quickly averted, noting he’d like to keep the focus on his novel.

“...it was so much more interesting for a novel to have them brood about their past...”

The 6:41 to Paris, which recounts a failed relationship from twenty-six years prior, is a short but impactful novel that validates the lasting impression some people leave on a life. One thing that made it resonate was the realistic nature of the characters. We asked Blondel a great deal about Philippe and Cécile, the two upon whom the plot focused. Blondel remarked they were not based upon anyone in particular, mostly just facets of his own personality, but he deliberately chose to have



From left to right, Katrina Scott, Kelsey Keith, and Dr. Joan McRae

them interact through their memories.

“As Europeans, they’ve been brought up not to voice their feelings too directly,” he said. “Besides, it was so much more interesting for a novel to have them brood about their past and try to realize to what extent their brief encounter 26 years ago changed their entire life.” We agree. Blondel’s choice of communicating the plot through rambling thoughts makes it beautifully relatable.

Without spoiling the ending for any potential readers, he told us about the indecision he faced in finalizing the ending, even disclosing what he believes happens after the text ends. We never expected that, but we welcomed his refreshing candidness. Blondel was also surprised by his novel’s success. In fact, he didn’t want to submit

it to his publisher because he was certain it would be rejected. Translated into ten languages so far, he was clearly wrong, and he sees it as a testimony to the universalness of the novel’s themes: choice and aging. It’s brought him opportunities he never thought he’d have, such as traveling to Estonia in May 2018 to speak about the novel.

Although *The 6:41 to Paris* is Blondel’s only work translated to English as of now, he says he has one titled *Exposed* expected to be published next year. Until then, we recommend you dive into the world of *The 6:41 to Paris*, and even though we hear there’s a pretty well-done Wikipedia page on it, we recommend you find a copy.

Katrina and I are tremendously grateful to Jean-Philippe Blondel for speaking with us and to Dr. McRae for encouraging the process. If nothing else, let this serve as a reminder that powerful writing is being created all across the world, and, in an increasingly global society, it and its authors are more accessible than ever. ■



Author Jean-Philippe Blondel | Cedric Loison



Covers of *The 6:41 to Paris* (top) and *Exposed* (below)

April's Returning Rains

Chrissy Petrone
poetry

I left the gate of my garden open,
but he never showed again.
He left one rain-soaked April afternoon,
bags packed, boots laced tight,
“Baby, I love you, but nothing here’s right.”
He rolled with the thunder, and I was left.

I watched from my porch, gate
swinging in the breeze.
My flowers grew high
and large that year.
Irises bundled heavy and purple.
Hydrangeas balled into white fists.
Azalea blossoms pushed and shoved
onto every single branch. Roses blushed
so flushed a red, neighbors rumored
I killed him, buried him deep
within the flower beds.

Summer came and swept
my flowers up. Replaced with
zucchini, tomatoes, peppers,
and lettuce. My garden gate open,
heavy with harvest. Many dropped
in and called. Henry, Hector, Eric, and
John. I sent them all out with something, told
‘em,

“Be sure to leave that gate open.”
Only John
clung like a bur to my clothes.
I tried to pick him off too,
he wouldn’t go.

John helped prune the weeds,
prep for autumn. We rolled in that
garden dirt plucking
pumpkins, carrots, potatoes,
and yams. He watched me,
I watched the garden
wither to winter and the snow fill the land.

John asked on the coldest
winter’s day,
“When will you close
that damn garden gate?”
I never said a thing.
I left it wide open, waiting for
April’s returning rains.



London Fall

Rachel Hambridge
photography



★ Aftermath/Debris:
Secret War on Laos

Sisavanh Houghton
acrylic on board, 12'x8'

Fishing Stocked Rivers

J. Perry
poetry

Rainbow Trout, aptly named, shining brilliant,
latches onto the shimmer of a lure.

Quick struggle, dragged ashore, beneath
the graffitied bridge, “Peace and Love.”

*Do I kill it? Yeah. How? I don’t know.
Dash its head against the rock.*

Again. Again. It spins in misery.
Multichrome knife into its gills—blood.

Still flopping. Sever the head.
Good, clean cut, like hot butter—blood.

Headless fish carried to camp,
didn’t think you’d actually catch anything.

Run the blade against the scales,
pull the rainbow from the trout.

Slice the belly, peel apart, coral flesh,
yellow-black guts, run it through the water.

Break the ribs, be methodical, watch your fingers.
When no one is looking, apologize.

You are not a killer. You are a hunter.
Your father told you well to take and not

give back. You are not your father.
Let the mangled body slip back into the stream.



Breakthrough

Dylan Henry
photography



Vaillys

Davion Baxter
photography

Dear Lover,

Valkyrie Rutledge
poetry

Our bare shoulders rest against each other comfortably
Unshaken by the cold
A honeyed-light illuminates the sloping bank of alpine snow
As I climb up your leafy spine
I crane my neck in search of an astral hive
You hold the sunrise in your cheeks
Like a crowded mouthful of peaches and cream
Spilling over your tongue and through our gates of gritted teeth
One day we’ll bathe in creeks beneath willow trees
And chase sweeter air for our calloused lungs to breathe
So if the answer to my prayer lies among the stars
I’ll throw myself toward the sun
And beg for a freckled heart



Vortex

Crowe Jacobs
acrylic

Untitled 3

Chloe Madigan
poetry

When you left, I locked everything away.

I put my eyes in a delicate, satin-lined box, angry
that they had failed me. Bitter over the fact that
they had turned red flags into gently-waving
banners.

I stripped away my skin and hung it in the back of
the wardrobe, no longer able to wear something
you had touched so gently, lovingly.

I snapped the fourteen bones of my hands and
threw them in the trash, having no need of them
now. Knowing they would never again touch
anything with the same warmth as your cheek.

I clipped away the cartilage of my ears, deposited
them in an old Tupperware, and placed them in
the back of the pantry. What else would be worth
hearing if it were not you saying you love me?

Finally, exhausted, I carefully slid my heart from
my chest. Placed it on the windowsill, lay in my
bed, and watched it beat

beat

beat

beat

and I wait



L is for Lion (left)
C is for Cat (right)

Leslie Haines
digital collage



A Prescription
for Hurt.

Lydia Sims
oil on canvas

Hear Me

Maggie Strahle
drawing



Jadie

Crowe Jacobs
colored pencil



Art Quilt August 2018

Joyce Sloan and Kimberly Dummons
cotton quilt, 38" x 38"

Shame

Moose Williams
drawing; charcoal on
paper, 24" x 18"



Venus

Jessica Carlan
poetry

I was carved out of marble like a goddess;
the world softened me into this limp thing
with soft, stretched skin,
weak eyes,
clumsy limbs.
I was a force,
crashing into cliffs and breaking them down
into the sands of the wastelands.
I was beholden to no one,
but grief has removed my agency,
and now there is nothing I control.



Brentwood

Jasmine Weatherspoon
photography

Sometimes, when I cannot sleep,
I dream about the palaces
and the aqueducts, the bathing pools
where shy women went about their business,
trying to ignore the shapes of one another.
Sometimes I imagine I am one of them,
white cloth clinging to my warm skin
in the steaming water,
and I am still young.
Whatever came before,
I can wash off in the perfect, pure water,
rise and go,
unabashed and clean.

Untitled 2

Chloe Madigan
poetry

What bothers me most, he says,
is that this will cause you more pain
than it will cause me
I look at him, confused,
marvel at the brain's knee-jerk reaction
to put up walls—defense
mechanism
a small smile, sadness, laces my
lips

What bothers me most, he whispers,
reaching after me as I walk out the door,
is that this will cause you more pain
than it will cause me
but he rests his hand across the
cold side of the bed at night
and feels my body, a hot fire that wakes
him from fitful dreams, clutching at
air

What bothers me most, he sighs,
unaware that I am already driving
down dark highways, far away,
is that this will cause you more pain
than it will cause me
but at the top of every foreign mountain he climbs,
he tastes my flesh in his mouth,
blood,
hears my whispered laughter in the
winds that whip around his face and sting his
skin

What bothers me most, he maintains,
choking back tears,
is that this will cause you more pain
than it will cause me
but when he takes the next girl to
the museum on the corner of 10th,
he sees the ghost of my face in every portrait,
and when she reaches for his hand,
hollow bones,
he flinches
looks in her eyes and says the same
words he said to me,
“I cannot love you.”
only this time it is
true

What bothers me most, he sobs,
crawling across the floor after me,
is that this will cause you more pain
than it will cause me
but he dives to the depths of an
abyss, hollow bone hands clawing
for any sign of my body
he has traveled in the wrong direction
I am floating among
stars

What bothers me most, he voices
out loud to the empty house,
is that this will cause you more pain
than it will cause me
and he realizes
that sometimes fear blinds us from
seeing the depth, the vastness of
another human life
and that when they are gone,
their absence may open into a
black hole

do not fool yourself, my love,
into believing you hold that kind of
power over someone who had the
strength to walk
away.

*What hurts the most is that
this will cause you more
pain than it will cause me.*



George Boktor
prose

“Water-birds,” the boy cried over the soft plashing of seawater against the shore, seeping into the rifts between the wind-swept rocks. Here, the whispers quieted, the reeds stilled, the air swelled, and by the pinch of the boy’s sun-beaten eyes and the break in his lips, there would be more questions than the fisherman had answers.

“Yes. Ones for the sky and ones for the sea. Each to their own kind,” said the father as he heaved a bucket of chum to the edge of the water, watching the sky first in the reflection, dressed all in white motley, then the shelf of old crags on the far side of the cove, then his long, grizzled face skewed by the ripples in the water. His eyes had been bluer, he remembered, and his skin clearer. Those long, scraggly arms hingeing from his shoulders had been strong once, full and formed. Waters here had always been clear, crystalline, nubile, yet they brimmed with something else. The tingle in the air was not always the spray of the surf. He smiled at his reflection, and it threw a jagged frown back at him. Was it he that grew older or the sea?

“And up there, a-ba?” The boy pointed a stubby finger at the wiry nests perched on the cliffs, the tall and mighty rock shelf.

The fisherman mussed the boy’s fine hair, so soft and silky against the grain of his calloused hands. It felt too precious to touch, or else it would be ruined in a way, desecrated, stomping on holy ground. “That there is where the water-birds go to sleep at night, Ino. They get tired, and there they sleep.”

This place was called The Crown. From their vantage, the sun would set behind the far cliffs and spread thin along the rocks, a great, gleaming coronet of bronze draped over the crags, twinkling

between the nests, and as the tapestry of night settled in, a moment of old glory rooted itself into the lap of the heights. The briny turned gold, a shore shawled in the riches of the sea. In truth, more tales numbered the cove than there were shingles on shore. The fisherman poured himself into this place, nourishing and nurturing; he gave more than he took, so that in its spurs and sprees, sometimes tempests and typhoons churning great bellies of water that towered higher than the cliffs, The Crown never deprived him of his own nourishment. They had come to an understanding long ago.

“And when do the water-birds in the sea sleep, a-ba?”

“They sleep when the water sleeps, Ino.”

The fisherman rolled up his pant cuffs and waddled into the waters. When he had reached knee-height, he jammed a fist into the chum and grabbed a smarmy glob of the stuff, feeling the gunge tickle down his knuckles and fingers, his nostrils curling at the stench. The sea didn’t seem to mind, taking the scatter of fresh chum without protest. He threw another handful.

“Come. Better to learn now, Ino.”

The boy balked at the sight of the snotty mess in the bucket, the dregs of rendered guts and herring meat and sinew. His hand stirred the slime, slow and thoughtful, peeled lips, slitted eyes, clenched teeth. Small splashes dotted the coming tide as he threw a handful into the sea. A plump blenny stirred from the clay and snapped at the morsels. The water hummed.

“And who are *they*, a-ba?”

“Who?” The fisherman traced the boy’s greasy finger, but it was the shudder in the base of his back that clued him in first, the prickle at the nape of his neck.

They were blotches on the canvas, pits in the

gemstone, almost like someone had traced out the figure of men crouched beside the water, picking at sand crusted on their shins, and poured lead into the cavity. Everywhere they moved, the waters shifted away, seething, repelled by the heft of their exoticness, so unfamiliar to this place, the place of nests and shores and crags and horizons, a place that had only known the push and pull of things in an order set like clockwork. But these men, creatures that were not unlike the boy and the fisherman, they went against the grain of the tide. They tinkered.

“A-ba, what are they—”

“Ino,” the fisherman barked in a low voice.

The men crouched in their sackcloth and sunhats with nets propped between their arms. One of the men, huddled over with his elbows canting against his knees with his eyes surveying the coming tide, whistled to the others. They shadowed a school of minnows lounging in a reef beside the shore. The nets flew in one swift motion, a maze of shadows imprinted on the water. They threw up a haze of sand and silt as they rushed into the surf and bundled the catch. Minnows floundered as the nets slinked to shore like old, bloated corpses. Hundreds of them. Thousands. In one fell picking, they stripped a coupling of minnows’ skins and peeled strands of the flesh and dined on the little flailing fish; red, runny meat hung half from their lips like lazy rat tails. Even from the other side of the shore, the fisherman could see the hunger in their eyes, a bright, beaming urge that scanned rolling water for more than just meat. Pillagers, the lot of them. Plunderers.

“Water-b—” The boy’s words ricocheted off the cliffs, his mouth clapped shut by the fisherman’s hand.

The men, unaware of the half-stifled shriek, crowded the edge of the shore for a better look

at the dolphins that stole through the backwash, a fresh herd. Their minnow-stuffed nets fell in folds when the men had rounded the cliffs and disappeared behind the break in the dunes, mounds of slate and shingle cobbled up in piles, as if mighty hands broached the sky and swept the beaches for gold.

“A-ba!” The boy roared. “A-ba! Water-birds!”

It was the fishermen who would call the birds back and harvest the reap: the minnows and herrings and salmons.

The shore ballooned with them, gray and glistening, fins zig-zagging through the tide. Some had even gone about picking at the chum and scraps coasting atop the water. Some whistled a little song, cryptic tunes, a maritime tongue. The fisherman hoped that, in his years, the sea would teach him the language of the surf, the moon, the stars that paddled the limpid night-waters like stranded strangers. The language of the water-birds. The language of riptides.

They returned in motorboats, jutting out from the water in a spray-cloud of mist, cloaking their faces, ghosts patrolling open sea, and surrounded the coalition of fins beside the shore. It was the harpoons in their hands, the silver luster, the dapples of rust at the keen ends, that had struck the fisherman most, as if the points themselves were probing him, plunging into his chest. The only way he could avoid calamity was to take it whole,

hoping for minor injury, and as the shot seized him, in the crucible of the moment, he receded back to the crusted clams that crowded his side of the shore, the boy’s hand balled up in his own, dewy moss carpeting a crop of grooved basalt beside them. He was only the spectator. The dolphins weren’t quite so lucky. A tension tauter than fishline seized the treble of the lapping sea, harpoons raised. What were they to do but watch?

The fisherman remembered the old ways. How fishermen of old would lure the cormorants from their high nests and twine bamboo strips around the birds’ throats, tying off the knots with a delicate finger, pinching the binds, blessing the birds with beads of cool water. The birds would flutter away and glass the tides with their lanky necks and graze the waters with open beaks. Fish slivered into their gullets, but the bamboo strips kept them from sliding into their bellies. It was the fishermen who would call the birds back and harvest the reap: the minnows and herrings and salmons. It was *Ukai* tradition to bless the waters for its spoils. *Ukai* tradition kept the fishermen fed.

Now, the crag nests bulged with sentinel birds. They watched from their perches.

The first man on the closest motorboat drove with his hind leg, sending the harpoon shooting into the water. It came back with globs of marbled blubber hooked to the barbs. Soon, the others joined in the butchering. The spew was red and sticky. Harpoons jabbed into the water and flashed back out. Long, sinewy arms worked tirelessly: thrusting, thrashing, flailing. Clouds of red engorged the surf, folded into the water with the tide...rising...falling...rising. Where fins used to be, blue-white bellies spilled bile and blood, drifting on slates of red. The sun sowed rubies onto the peaking waves. For the spattered men, the work

had just begun. They rolled up their trousers and slogged into the waters, pulling corpses with tired arms. Their sunhats wore red fingerprints.

The fisherman cupped the boy’s eyes, half instinct, half impulse. He couldn’t stand it—the sight of it—the raw resignation with which they loaded the limp carcasses, as if the slaughtering had been the work of others and they were sent to right a wrong. Against his hand, he could feel the boy’s eyes swimming behind their lids, a mind in guesswork, seeing without seeing. When the motorboats mended into the mirage of the sea—the barrier between water and boat breached, conglomerating into a single form against the tawn of the setting sun—the fisherman’s hand slipped away, and the boy beheld an alien world. What was it, this place? They had called it The Crown, once. Molested, this Crown. Pillaged. To know what was chum and what was dolphin flesh would be a wasted effort. The replenishment and rape were inextricable.

He looked at the boy and hoped more treasure hadn’t spoiled.

“A-ba.” The boy glared at him through misty, red-shot eyes, dribbles of mucus pooling under his button nose. “When does the sea sleep?”

This, the fisherman did not know.

“*Yukō*, Ino.” He took the boy in one hand, the bucket in the other.

The water hummed, a certain something in the air, too faint to hear, too loud to ignore, a whimper, a good-bye. On a nest slung between two protruding rocks, a cormorant prodded its sable plumage with a broken beak. Below, a minnow took from the red, fleshy scattering on the water. The boy wrapped himself around the fisherman, the soft *thu-thump* of his little heart pulsing strong like the seashore. ■



Father

Kimi Conro
photography



Exit
Mary Murphy
micron pens and colored pencils

Letting Go

Bryson Light
poetry

The moon is hung so carefully in the pale blue sky—the canvas is the art
Put down the brush, God
Don't paint hands
Don't show me eyes
You see my face
You've read this chapter
Close the book
I don't want to interpret mystic purples
Or orange blossoms
I don't want to know

Open the windows
Let those caged birds sing free
Let them drop the olive branch in my unknowing hands
We'll peel moss off the river rocks and send it floating downstream
—throw it behind us so it hits our ankles
We'll pluck leaves from tree limbs dipping their toes in the water
—let them kiss our slow bodies
I'll hold a stone between my hands
Not sharing the easiness of the movement
I'll throw it up in the air—it's your chance
We'll see the golden hour just for the second gravity doesn't want it
Watch how it hits the water
Splashing your hips
See it asking
Why—
It was given the chance to dry

The Crow's Bouquet

Heaven Morrow
poetry

My middle-aged widow sat staring out her window,
but all of her bright birds had bolted.
The yard was yearning for yield these days,
but no berries or blooms would burst from the beds,
so my once-married Mary just stared at that muck February
and imagined her little birds were there.
I asked around at all the pretty birds in town,
“Will you please go visit my wife?”
But the blue jay was busy
and the plover was too pretentious
and the egret had an excuse
and the cardinal was too conceited.
But the Crow, this colorless corvid,
he took pity on my poor, passionate soul.
“I've wondered something my whole life,
answer my question, and I'll visit your wife.
Why do humans wear rings on their wings?”
A taker, finally! So I answered him kindly,
“We give each other rings, set with shiny stones and things,
to wear when we are in love.”
The Crow nodded and cawed, “That's what I thought,”
and flew to find my sweet wife.
I come down to check on her now and again,
and the kind Crow did keep his word.
The brighter birds would not be back, and the Crow knew he was all black,
so every day, the Crow to her brings a bouquet of bright and beautiful things.



Sunny

Priyanka Modi
photography



A Fading Sincerity

Jake Yandle
oil painting on canvas

Untitled

Brian Frank
poetry

The pulse of winter
pumps sludge onto roads
like a slobbering monster.

In the frenzied pace
of spinning tires
and shopping carts,

I find you snuggled among
tangle of ribbon and
wrapping paper.

The Westbury Elegies #10

James Hamby
poetry

These hanging walls, the streets of The City of Grief,
A capitalist paradise where all the statues fall,
Flags in faces—and coursing underneath
Is all that once again begins, is all

My grandfather saw and sensed. And in my sleep
I hear it, too: Prometheus's groans,
Hecate's torch, gray shadows of the deep—
And all my children scattered in the storm.

What is it, then, this thing in you and me,
These riddles in the dark, and how will it end?
We choke on air that once the dryads breathed,
Bereft of all the manna that was sent.

The fading of the stars, Fenrir set free—
The endlessly dead, the blooming dogwood tree.

Portrait with Flowers

Madison Pitts
oil painting



Pressed Lavender

Bryson Light
poetry

Glowing embers surround the great porcelain bowl
In the middle of the dark blue table
—It is not the sea herself
it is where she speaks so softly—against outreached arms
With slightly wet
Longing lips
Kissing lightly in between her tired speeches
She carries the cry of a banshee in the mist—my grieving mother—hiding behind great ancient
curtains that tremble like her fingers
She is found
Her burlap-thick covering thrown open by an unfamiliar gray fog—
That hisses against biological inclinations
And tempts her with two prongs
And lays eggs in her old tattered nightgown
And instead of slithering away
Disperses in screams of vibrant colors



Gentlemen and Their Bikes

Wayne Corley
1895-1905 glass negative,
scanned and digitalized

French Press Pour

Guy Shelton
photography



Matzu Has Returned

Davion Baxter
photography

Waiting

Brian Frank
poetry

There is no coffee this morning.

So I spill onto the floor and slosh
around uselessly for hours, hoping
someone might slip and fall and
accidentally embrace me.

Everything at Once

Heaven Morrow
poetry

She wore black on the first day, and they asked her, “Are you goth?”
The second day she wore a dress, pink, silky, frilly cloth.
The third day was pin-striped pants and heels. The vest on her blouse was gray.
The fourth was baggy clothes and boxers. They asked her, “Are you gay?”
The fifth day she wore thick leather and steel-toed Harley boots.
The sixth, she wore a turtle-neck sweater with hair bows and perfume.
The seventh day she rested at home, naked and undone.
Why feed an expectation when you are everything at once?

Birdstiary

Courtney Gilliam
book arts



Portrait One

Vann Tate
photography

The Sum of Light

Della Wheeler
poetry

It was the light, I guess,
the way it painted your face,
met you at every moment,
and highlighted
an untouched view
or the way I admired it
in all its forms
Under the shadows
of foggy forest trees,
or inside a cocoon
beneath the mist
of a waterfall
It could have been
the fire that lit up
mountains beneath sunset,
or the white walls
at sleepy sunrise,
tapestry starlight,
or even the light
that found me now and then
between tired, heavy blinks
I didn't want to miss a moment
because I knew the same flicker
that had been painting
my insides gold
for quite some time
was the same light
that had been painting yours,
and the most beautiful of all
was the sum of both



Good Times

Jacob Jones
photography



Unfair Funfair

Jonathan Trundle
photography

Gorgon

Valkyrie Rutledge
poetry

O desert storm with honeycomb eyes
Rage and pulse with rhythmic cries
O gentle machine, unravel your seams
Spill your potion to torture, scheme, thicken my screams, and smother beneath
Regard this proposal delicately
O ancient one, withhold my death
Embalm my soul with immortal breath
O murderous instrument, macabre as it seems
Infect my blood with parasitic disease
We'll perish like thieves and be hanged by the eaves
With your heart in my throat and mine on my sleeve
O sacred garden, I am blinded by hatred
This turncoat approaches you bloody and naked
O masterful deity, render me helpless
My skeletal aura, your expendable compass
To usurp, eclipse, govern, and kiss
The most beautiful romance to ever exist
O wicked lagoon that harbors this flame
With ominous rhythm lay siege to my name
O merciless venom, flood down with the rain
Flush barren this gulch of uncharted terrain
Pathological liars, we'll scheme and conspire
Insatiable bloodlust conceived within fire



Jack Torrance–The Shining

Olivia Jackson
digital painting

Walking on Snow

Anonymous
poetry

The ancient Earth gives up the secrets of her age in the dead of winter.
Hungry for sun, barren of foliage, all her frailties exposed and laid open,
Caressed only by the cold of the north wind.
Day after day, the gray sky meets the edge of the horizon with no joy,
No proof of life nor nurture.
The flowers of spring, new life of children, the bounty of the harvest,
Dim memories if they existed at all.

How do we sustain?
Calm our fears?
Is the desolation before our eyes
Final proof of our abandonment?

Where do we go when our Mother Earth cradles us no more?
What comfort is there when the gray and black of reflected cold blots out the sun?
How will we breathe?
How will we hope....

When the desperation of winter grasps us,
Bending us beyond breaking,
Something happens.

A gift?
A promise?
A joy?

We hope....

The night sky fills with the Water Moon
Air
Dead calm, not disturbing
Stars obscured
As clouds unseen then
Lit gray-white from reflections on the street-lamp-millions
Silencing even the stillness of the dark,
Leaving us wrapped in portend of unease of the unknown coming.

Then
It starts

Silent, cold, frozen
Almost unnoticed

Snow

Not the snow of slush and dirty cars
Not the boots and wet hair snow
Not a loud red nose

The snow of the innocent comes to call
Straight down, sky falling in silent
Comfort

Beholding silence,
Its purity covering naked nature’s harshness
Laying in its winter’s death

So there we stand,
Breath the only sound
Fog from our mouth the only rising thing
All else raining down covering scarred Earth with a virgin’s blanket
Promising her fertility with the thaw.

The unblemished path
Beckons the treading
Innocence of her untouched beauty exploited
By laughter of snowballs, skis, and
Angels made facing the sky
Leaving their noisy moments marked for tomorrow’s Sun.

Yet we are relieved.

Like the covered Earth,
Its flaws just hidden,
We know that we too will
Survive our flaws

Bounty will come
To Mother Earth from the nourishing Snow
Will we not have a blanket of love to cover us?
Will our arms not renew us when we are worn down
Scared
Battered
Despaired

Earth’s snow is our embrace
Covered, renewed,
Changed by the union,
Exploited, possessed,
Innocence lost,
Yet strengthened together

To go on
To breathe
To chance once again
Knowing that even in the winter of
Disappointed hearts

One love makes it possible to live again

You....

Apex Moonrise

Kimi Conro
photography



Route TN-240, from Murfreesboro

Sara Snoddy
poetry

From the middle earth,
between valleys
and tumbling hills, mountains
with no peak, steering home
to a house in the trees
where the corners, flecked
with leaves, husks left behind,
collect sighs like shadows,
to a mill, to a town born
from carbon that seeps into
cracks in the foundation
when the house gasps
from the cold—

This route, a way home
like a curving
fastball,
headlights shaving skin clean,
shave sleep from the bone,
the shadows of afternoon
in Summertown cutting
a sharp line, yellow lines,
two, one, and then none,
falling by the side, blinded
beneath a Tennessee sun.



Memories of Saigon

Zachery Wright
composite imaging



Nashville Explosion

Heather Pollard
digital photography

White Picket Fences

Haydin Oechsle
poetry

Back then
The beaten cobblestone path would roll beneath my feet
As I rounded the corner.

The yard
Covered and painted with overgrown greens
And all the toys she loved.

The knob
On that crackled and crickety red door would give way
To her welcoming giggle.

I set
My belongings on that well-loved chair
And she would run to me.

My eyes
Dark-circled and heavy, smiled
Just for her.

And now
You look at me behind these familiar, rusty bars and
I hope you know.

There's nothing
Nothing, that I wouldn't trade for those
crooked white picket fences.

Gone Are Their Sons

Jared Frazier
poetry

Overtaken by swelling waters
Violent rains overfill narrow brooks and streams
Celestial tears slide off glistening leaves
And muddy the great barrows
Of Ancient men
Lonely souls await the dance of
Inquisitive torchlight on their earthen prison
Though it is not the sons of their sons who delve
Into the mounds of forgotten wisdom
But vagabonds—thieves who hold their beacons high
For to reveal their wicked faces to bleached bones
Would spell their doom
As those who lie secluded from the rainy world
Would impress upon their hollow eyes
The vestiges of avarice
And silently the wights would suffer
Knowing only this:
gone are their sons

Abuelos

Madeline Quinby
photography





An Athlete With Dreams

Jacob Jones
photography

Donald Oswald Alexander

Sydney Smith
poetry

Donald Oswald Alexander was his name but
his coworkers just called him by his initials

Every morning he rode the bus to work
sat in his tiny cubicle
 silent except for the reluctant restaurant clients he called to sell Styrofoam to-go boxes
 alone except when people would walk—no—dart past to snatch a Tootsie Roll from the
 basket he kept beside his regularly-shined nameplate
Every evening he drove straight home to his tiny apartment
ate a frozen dinner was eventually lulled to sleep by a movie, still holding a warm bag of popcorn

He really was a good person
but no one bothered to notice
just left him alone

One day he decided to walk to work
for a change
for fresh air
to see other people walking

He saw a little boy too
crossing the street
he fell
Donald ran to help
he stopped to pick the boy up
the bus didn't

An ambulance came—
eventually
the boy was fine

When Donald Oswald Alexander was finally wheeled into the hospital
he was still
just
D. O. A.



Roses Are Red, Painters Are Blue

Rachel Hambridge
photography

Redemption

Stephanie Van Horn
photography





In the Clouds of Salkantay

Destiny Seaton
photography

The Girl Who Lived

Marisa Graham
poetry

This an ode to
The girl who didn't know
How to defend herself
And shouldn't have had to

To the girl who felt like
There could never
Be any light
Left in her eyes

To the girl who cradled
Her own broken pieces
Because she was never taught
That someone else could carry the
Weight

To the girl who didn't think
That she would see
The other side of
18

To that girl who was losing faith:
We get the light back
We put the pieces back
We leave 18 behind our back

And We Live



Erudite

Bell Doski
poetry

I am the constant drip of ink
into a dim pool of ideas.
Pour me over the landscape sweetly.
Let me soak in the sundry warren.
Formlessly, gently, slowly,
I dip into valleys and climb hills.
Each crevice gives me passing gen,
which I swallow and ponder for years.
Watch me as I grow wise and tall,
as I let caution evaporate
like the sweet memory of fear.
Resolve courses through malleable
veins. The ones that bled in despair.
My journey has only just begun,
and I am merely at the start.

Treeboy

John Lane
photography



New Beginnings

Beverly Warner
oil pastel

Conversations

Sydney Emerson
painting



Captivated

Esther Parson
poetry

Skittles, the empty bank envelope,
a Q-tip, and a broken piece of Pop-Tarts
all line up to be the devastating showpiece:
the sculpture you created by sitting in a chair,
abandoning your dreams for comfortable times,
reading the glory that is created when others allow
their dreams to coalesce into written words upon their
pages, their installation that can be placed upon the huge
gallery we once called the Web.
A web that has entranced you, until
you are a willing victim gazing drone-eyed
in pleasure as the creativity, which you exalt,
is drained by the venom pouring in your veins
as the spider Procrastination slowly prepares to
eat you.

Hysen

Chrissy Petrone
poetry

*March 20, 2018: A man's body was found around 5:55 a.m.
between Bell Road and Brittany Park Drive
in the South Metro Nashville area.*

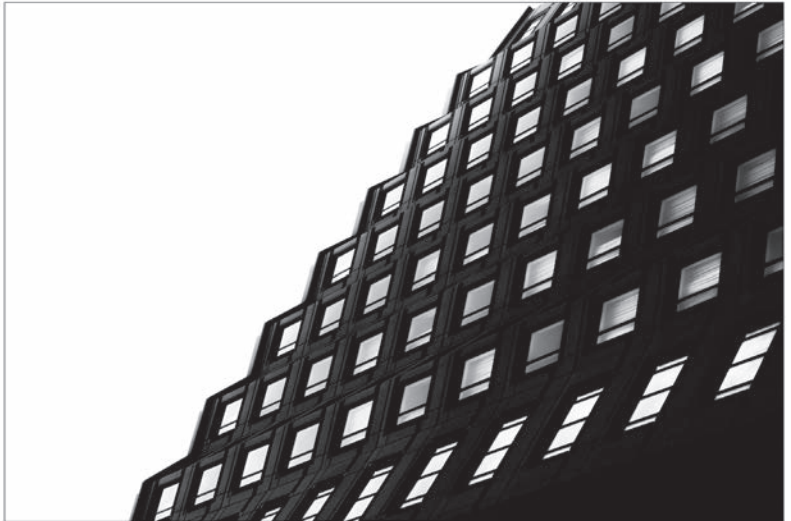
Your body on Tuesday was just
a bloodstain on Thursday. A russet
patch against the sidewalk
where you were shot in
glittering early hours.

There wasn't much to see.
A low black barricade. A pile of clothes.
Dark hair peeking out, not quite covered.
Sunshine filtered through pines.
Crime tape roped through woods,
blue and white and blue and white,
all clumped close looking over your body.

I drove slow. We all drove slow,
bumper to bumper.
We wanted to see you.
Wanted to know you.
Not your breathing days—no,
we strained our lucky rubber necks to know
why your blood splashed hot
that morning.

Reports say you were 25.
A young man, living between
Smyrna and Nashville,
but the details remain vague.
No suspects,
just you and fatal wounds.

There wasn't much to see, but I saw you on
Tuesday, and
your bloodstain on
Thursday
looked like dirt against the sidewalk.
No one drove slow to see it.



Modern Avalanche

Naidaniel Nelper
photography

Punch The Clock Day

Daniel Zajac
graphic design



audio

- | | | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|------|
| 1. | Villain | ROQUÉ MARCELO | 4:37 |
| 2. | Tears in Savannah | ROQUÉ MARCELO | 5:18 |
| 3. | Whirlwind | DILLON MATHENY | 4:12 |
| 4. | Ten Gallon Hat | DAVID BASSETT | 2:51 |
| 5. | Ending Well | DARRELL VANZANT | 4:00 |
| ★ 6. | Starting Today | DARRELL VANZANT | 3:02 |
| 7. | Fake | WILLIAM MANUEL | 3:39 |
| 8. | Mayan Poison | WILLIAM MANUEL | 4:21 |
| 9. | CSM 1969 | WILL BANKS | 4:02 |



★ **Curtains**
John Lane



Crystal Sky
Cole Alsup

video



Do Not Touch

Corrie Wunder

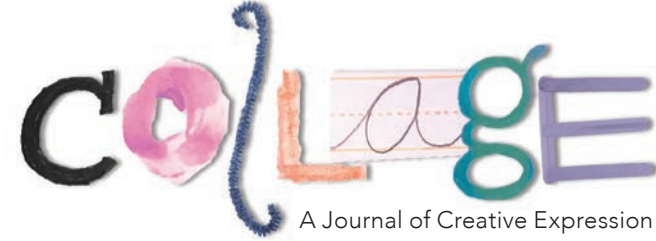


LEMONADE

Lemonade

Amos Pearl

Be sure to CHECK OUT the audio tracks and videos on our website at <https://www.mtsu.edu/collage/>



50th anniversary edition | fall 2018

Middle Tennessee State University

Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building
1737 Blue Raider Drive, Room 224
Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 37132

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Submit to Collage

Collage accepts submissions year-round. Submission forms and guidelines are available at mtsu.edu/collage/. Creative work, such as art, photography, short stories, essays, short plays, song lyrics, poetry, videos, and audio may be submitted digitally to mtsu.edu/collage/ or may be turned in at the *Collage* office, Honors 224, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Submissions are accepted from MTSU students, recent graduates, faculty, and staff.

Creative Achievement Awards

Each semester, six submissions receive Creative Expression Awards, one from each major category: art, photography, poetry, prose, audio, and video. Literature winners receive the Martha Hixon Creative Expression Award, and visual winners receive the Lon Nuell Creative Expression Award. Winners receive \$50 awards.



So Long to the Good Old Moon
Kory Wells
poetry



Sacred Places
George Boktor
prose



Dance
Jasmine Weatherspoon
photography



Aftermath/Debris: Secret War on Laos
Sisavanh Houghton
art



Starting Today
Darrell Vanzant
audio



Curtains
John Lane
video

Columbia Scholastic Press Association Awards

Crown Awards to be presented 2019

Gold Medalist Certificates
2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018

Silver Crown Awards
2007, 2008, and 2011

Gold Crown Awards
2012, 2013, and 2015

Production

TECHNOLOGY

Adobe InDesign CC | Adobe Illustrator CC
Adobe Photoshop CC | Apple Macintosh Platform | Windows Platform

TYPOGRAPHY

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PAPER

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BINDING

Saddle Stitch

PRINTING

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