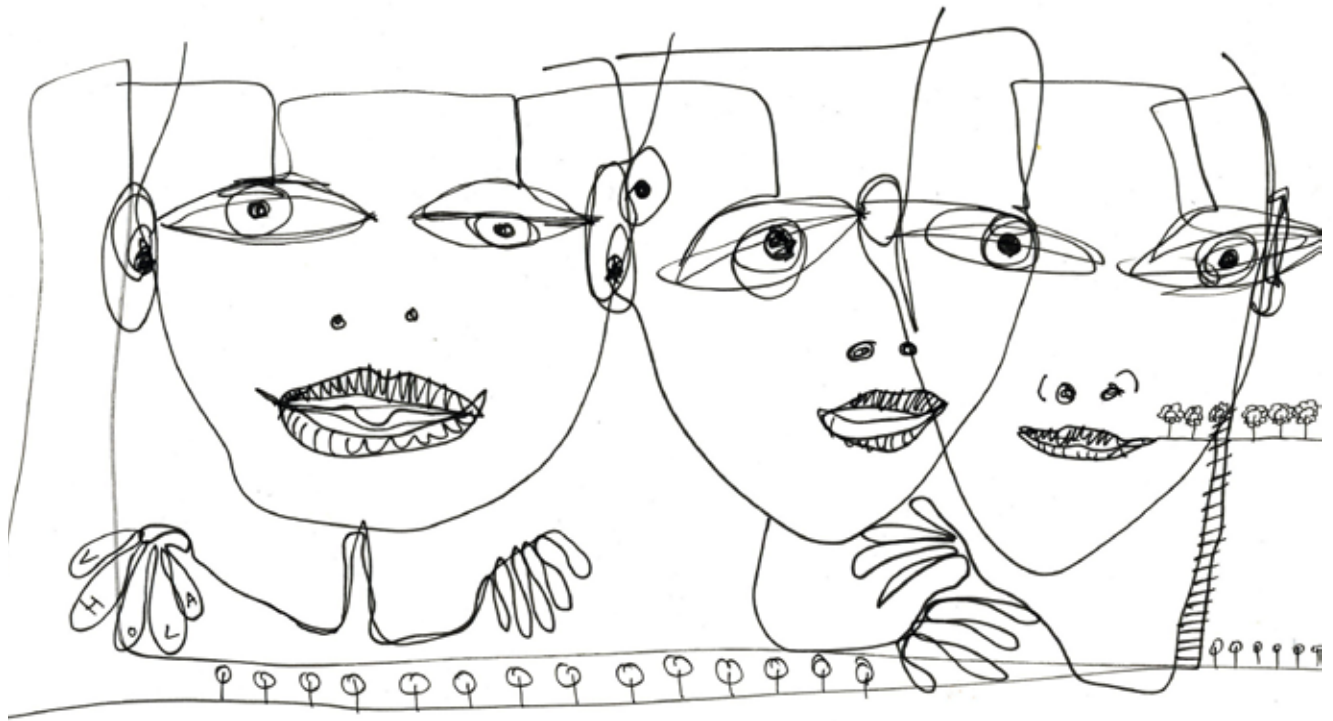


For A 2009 Better World



POEMS BY DRAWINGS ON
PEACE BY JUSTICE BY
Greater Cincinnati Artists

**“For a Better World”
2009**

Poems and Drawings
on
Peace and Justice

by
Greater Cincinnati Artists

Editor:
Saad Ghosn

This edition of "For a Better World" is dedicated to the life and memory of
Esme Kenney (1996-2009)
and to the memory of all missing and exploited children

Poem for Esme

(by *Michael Henson*)

I do not understand what God was thinking
when the earth split and swallowed the song.
A stippled hawk barked across the sky.
The caterpillar dog howled in the pit of the forest.
And in the forest, the silent, littered forest
chapeled itself a chapel out the tangled limb and vine
and fractured flowers of the grass.

There is a circle broken now.
There is a cello strangled and its heart torn open.
There is an aria choking in the throat of the guitar.
The world is a tangled, tumble-down fracturing place.
And we have only a little riddle of a song
to make it holy.
And still the earth cracked open and swallowed the song.
So I do not understand what God was thinking.

Can you open the gates of the sea?
Can you mine the sky?
Can your arms embrace the shivering earth?
We are small, you see, too small
to ever understand what God was thinking.

But I will make my little fiddling song,
my twelve bars with the bark of the hawk,
my little fractured chapel of a song.
I will dance my little stumbling dance of a poem
up through the halls of the hawk
and to the workshop of the weather.
For there is no place to take my complaint
but to God.

Though I do not understand what God was thinking.

Foreword

“Be not sad, but smile, my beloved. Do not express bewilderment, for Love has power that dispels Death... Do not be frightened, for I am now Truth, spared from swords and fire to reveal to the people the triumph of Love over War...”

In these words, Khalil Gibran reminds us of the power and perennity of love over death and of the triumph of truth over violence in the pursuit of happiness and peace.

This book is dedicated to a young soul, Esme Kenney, who through her short joyous life and her big love, also contributed in her special and unique way to peace and to the negation of violence. In our tragic loss, Esme is echoed here, in this sixth year’s book of poems and drawings on peace and justice, by fifty eight poets and 41 visual artists from Greater Cincinnati, ages 9 to 85, who continue the daily fight for the world of peace and justice they dream of. These artists combined their lucid voices and their visions to bring to life a better world, and with eloquence and acuity, strengthened at the same time each other’s hopes and dreams.

In a world that remains torn by wars and injustice, they wept for the dead, revolted for the oppressed, denounced unjust societal wrongs, rejected violence and its consequences, and fought for the battered environment, They also challenged the prevailing societal values of materialism, consumerism and domination and spoke for a change in values towards love, compassion, forgiveness and understanding. They painted a beautiful world, a world of diversity and equality, where peace is based on truth, justice, and kindness. Many of them also rejoiced in a change in the political scene, in the election of the first black president of the United States, and in the possible demise of racism.

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

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

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

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

Saad Ghosn
Book editor and organizer
April 2009

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POEMS:

MARIA AUXILIADORA ALVAREZ

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, María Auxiliadora Alvarez resides in the United States since 1996. She completed her Master and PhD degrees in Spanish Literature at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and currently teaches at Miami University, Oxford, OH. Maria has published seven books of poetry: *Mis pies en el origen* (1978); *Cuerpo* (1985); *Ca(z)a* (1990); *Inmóvil* (1996); *Pompeya* (2003); *El eterno aprendiz* (2006); *Resplandor* (2006).

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DRAWING:

JONATHAN QUEEN

Jonathan Queen grew up in Lexington, KY. He received his BFA in painting from UC DAAP in 2001. He has worked as an illustrator, portrait painter, and is represented by Miller Gallery for his personal fine art.

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JONATHAN QUEEN 2009

transit of ruins

thought succumbs in desolation No greater ruin than war
/In rubble be the edifice of the body Its waters dry

Coverted into ashes Its Light Among stones and metal sprawls the remnant
/of hate: what once breathed and smiled and was human

and no greater devastation in the distance than the immense cadaver
/of the flowering field

enameled brass

from time to time the portrait pops up alive
/with a young man without life

Some rapid medals jingle on his dead shoulders
/toy bells or enameled brass

then some mere dates of birth and death hasty and
/insignificant like a losing lottery number

Some brief grandiloquent words are heard congratulating
the youth fallen in combat For his valiant contribution
/to the nation

the stones of repose

all I want to tell you child Is that you must pass through the suffering
If you come to its shore, if its shore comes to you Enter into its night
/and let yourself sink down

let its gulp drink you down let its foam sweep you Let yourself go let go

All I want to tell you child Is that from the other side of suffering
/there's another shore

you'll find there great slabs of stone One of them carries your form shaped
worked with your old footprint Where you'll fit exactly and with room

they're not tombs child they're the stones of repose With their little suns
/carved And their clefts

(From the book "Regions of Chill")

*(poems translated from Spanish by **Linde M. Brocato**)*

POEMS:

KAREN ARNETT

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

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DRAWING:

TERRI KERN

Terri Kern is a full time studio artist working primarily in ceramics.

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Five Hundred Detentions

Per Day

In This Land

Where we are free to ignore the truth

Security

Belonging

Acceptance

Friendship

Promise

Sam Kim © 2009

Mohammed's Return

I.

I want to see the tables turned,
George Bush stopped at the border
incoming, stripped of his cowboy boots and jeans,
his counterfeit dignity.
Made to kneel and bend, protesting as latex fingers probe
God damn, I'm an American
words that fall on deaf ears as he's pushed
behind bars, where there's one toilet for two dozen
and no privacy.

II.

Mohamed returns,
steps from the plane
as he has for years
to his beloved American soil.
Half a lifetime of summers spent here,
long enough to grow deep roots.
He wants to see the grapevines
he planted last summer, and the Yankee friend who
gave them, *saying your friendship
is worth 10,000 grapevines to me.*

III.

A perfect evening – the light articulates each
blade, each leaf, flowers of every imaginable
color drenched in golden light. Sparrow and finch
chirp thickly from the trees and a pair of doves
flies over, wingtips singing their gentle song.
Here is home, where roots sink deep
and Mohammed will be once again warmed
by the secure blanket of belonging.
Here is home.

IV.

Five hundred detentions per day, in this land where we are free
to ignore the truth, home of the brave and patriotic
bumper sticker.
Mohamed's deportation followed three days in a concrete cell,
his only crime was the fact of a Muslim birth.
The German Foreign Ministry
continues to inquire why
their good citizen was barred.
His wife can't sleep, and keeps the doors locked.

Imagine the Shoes

Today we witnessed our president duck
as shoes whistled past his head.
We owe the thrower our gratitude, for imagine
if it caught on, next year's headlines: "Shoe fight
in school blackens eye" or
"Innocent bystander bruised in
drive-by shoe throwing". Kids trade in
their guns for wingtips, hightops.
Metal detectors are scrapped, airport
security personnel file for unemployment,
emergency rooms take on
the deserted look of late night laundromats,
police take off their body armor,
the Olympics introduce a whole new sport,
and kids stop killing kids for their Air Jordans
since even kids know better than to throw away
good money. Our economy returns to solvency
as war becomes an exercise in thrift:
weapons of mass destruction give way
to the \$20 casual loafer, that must be thrown
from a range so close that soldiers see themselves
reflected in their enemy's eyes.
Even world leaders begin to hurl
their shoes at each other in staterooms
to defuse international tensions, settle territorial disputes.
Streets will be named for this hero:
Muntadhar al-Zaidi Causeway,
and schools, and airports. He receives
a peace medal for the courage
to hurl his anger at Goliath wrapped
only in a piece of shoe leather,
after which George W. Bush magnanimously
insists he be released from the prison
where, even now, interrogators are sending
their carefully aimed shoes flying
into his brave face.

POEM:

CELESTE BROTT

Célèste Brott is a Junior at the University of Cincinnati, majoring in English: Creative Writing Track (Poetry Focus). She is blessed to be a member of the Women Writing for (a) Change community. She is an avid journal keeper, a poet and a writer of short stories. *Lines* is Célèste's first published poem.

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DRAWING:

CHRIS HAMMERLEIN

Chris Hammerlein, born in Cincinnati, OH, 1962, earned a BA from the New School in New York City and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture; he is currently a graduate art student at the University of Cincinnati. Chris has exhibited widely, locally, nationally and internationally; his work is in several private and public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, NY, and the Walker Art Center, MN.

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Chris Hammerlein

Lines

So many fight to protect their right
To gluttony, ease, ignorance and spite
The right to be crude
The right to eat any food
They desire. It sits and expires
While others subsist on handouts
And shout-outs, and closeouts
“Get your nose out”s and
“Mind your business”s
Are fired like arrows and those who care
Enough to say, “Wait, stop there
And just think.”
Instead we sink
Deeper and deeper
Into the excess that suffocates us
While our social blindness dates us
And I close my eyes and dream
All day and all night
Of a day when we’ll fight
For a different kind of right
For the right of all who are living to live
And live in peace
For water holes in every village
A thousand miles deep
For food in every stomach
For love in every heart
For thoughtfulness in every mind
For music and art
For animals who live in prisons
Awaiting the date
They end up on a plate
To finally feel the compassion
We give to tiny dogs in sweaters
Where’s the line between food and fashion?
I don’t get it with petters
Who draw arbitrary lines
And spoil that which we call a dog
With walks and toys and treats
While that which we call a hog
Is basted and smoked up on mesquite
Cause I was always told
That which we call a rose
By any name would smell as sweet
It’s like the arbitrary lines
Between two armies in a war
How can there be anything

In the world worth killing for?
How can there be anything
About another human to abhor?
War is just another form of blindness
We use to defeat kindness
It’s easier to not think about
The missiles we deplore
That’s why we all like euphemisms
We call deaths “casualties”
To soften the blow of the truth
That we feel too weak to change
‘Cause we’ve lost the optimism of our youth
And we keep count of “American lives”
As if lives can be qualified
So some count more than others
When all people are sisters and brothers
Well, I for one have seen our world
While flying up above
And from the window of an airplane
There are no borders on the terrain
See, the olive branch and the dove
Were supposed to remind us that the world is
sacred
It’s a gift to protect
With love and respect
And honor and pride
So what made us decide
To stop sharing the wealth and start to divide
To draw a line here and say, “Keep on your
side
While I keep on mine till my rivers have dried
And I come looking to take yours
And then run and hide”
When did we decide
That there should be so many lines
Between yours and mine
The low and the high
To segregate people
With hierarchy implied
When will we realize
That there are no such things as lines
No borders to define
No titles to assign
When will those harsh lines
Finally blur and soften
And let the light shine
Onto the notion that we are all one.

POEMS:

KIMBERLY BROWN

Kimberly Brown, a native of Cincinnati, OH, is a graduate from the College of Mount St. Joseph with a BA in Paralegal Studies. A member of the Cincinnati Writers Project since 2003, she has been published in the *Maze From The Median*, *Tread Well with Sweet Love*, and *Not from around here, are you?* (©2004, 2006, 2008 Cincinnati Writers Project). Poetry is her passion and life.

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DENISE NOBLET

Denise Noblet is a writer who wants to inspire peace and joy through her words. She delights in collaborating with kindred spirits on projects that foster a better world. Her favorite inspirations are her beautiful son, Dante Luciano, and Mother Nature.

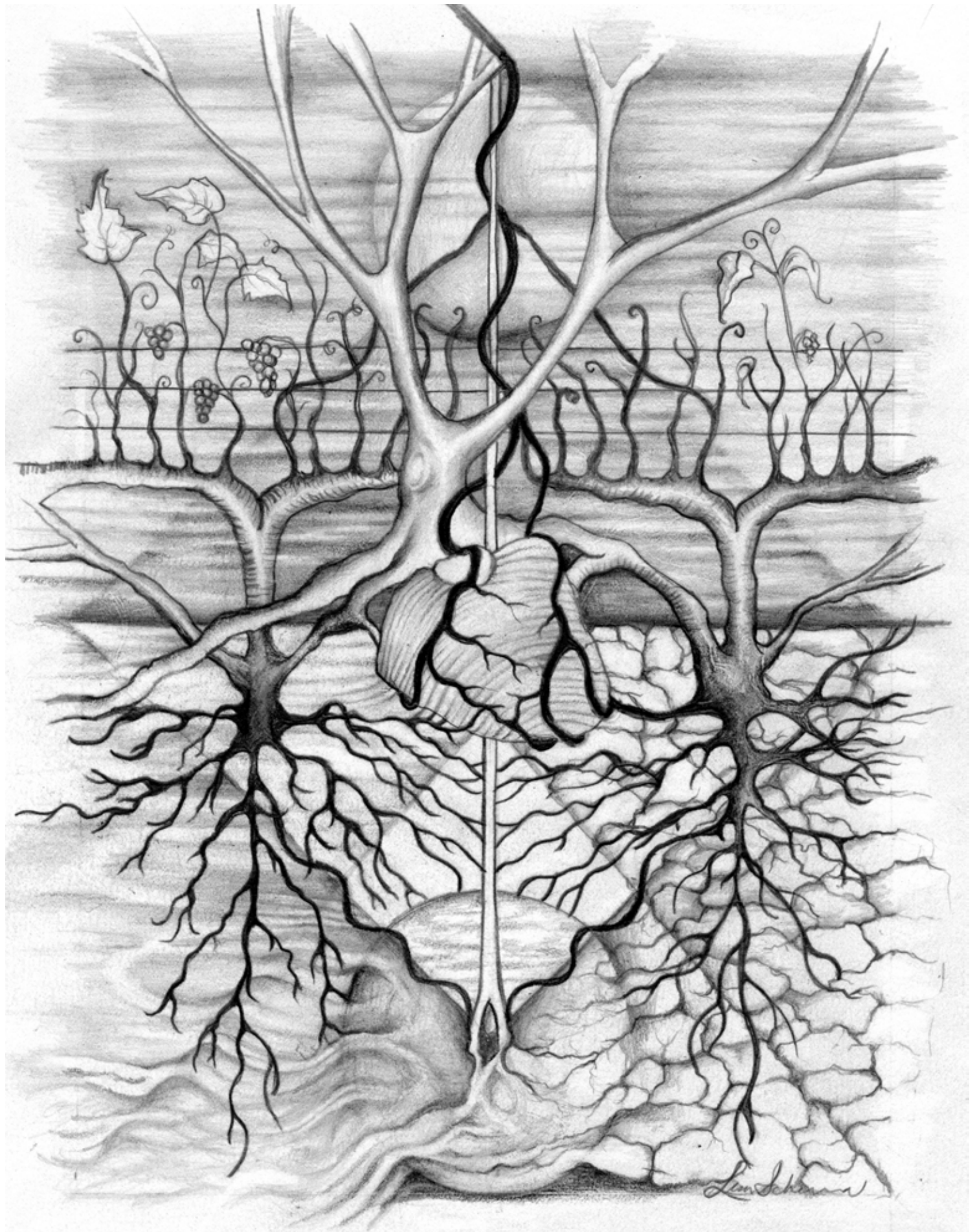
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DRAWING:

LISA SCHERRA

Lisa Scherra attended the Art Academy of Cincinnati, BFA 04. Her life and work have begun to express the mystical side of the human experience and are rooted in an earth-based spiritualism. She enjoys visually making deep connections with mother earth celebrating her in the landscape around the wheel of the year.

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Sidewalk Ministries

(by *Kimberly Brown*)

On Court Street, I pass by a homeless man every day,
and say "Hello".

Today, the Holy Bible is on the downtown sidewalk
the place normally where he lies.

Pages furiously turn with the wind
like it is about to take flight.

As I draw near,
the wind disappears;
on the pages, God breathes life.

The wind, once whirling around me,
is gyrating in my heart instead.

Fans

(by *Kimberly Brown*)

Fans, in all the windows of the dilapidated apartments,
On high speed to cool the bodies down.

Slum landlord walks along the corridor;
A bomb goes off in the complex next door,
Shook him to the ground.

Tenants angry, just Blew Up!
Leaving their homes to rubble.
But with destruction comes new birth,
For the City has taken the rights of the landlord—Away.
New Hope is restored!

The steel support beams were the only remains.
Welded themselves together did they
To build a jungle gym
For the kids to play.

Peace

(by *Denise Noblet*)

Peace
Begins in my heart
And soars
Beyond the horizon
A golden thread
Between the moment
And what is to come.

POEMS:

STACEY CALKINS

A native of Richmond, KY, Stacey Calkins is a graduate of Model Laboratory School, Berea College, and The Ohio State University. She resides in Cincinnati with her husband, Richard, and daughter, Allison.

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EVELYN CHIDESTER

Evelyn Chidester, Master of Arts, Political Science, University of Chicago, 1947. Born Cleveland, lived 25 years on the south side of Chicago, 20 years in Tarrytown, N.Y. before retiring to Cincinnati. Writer and editor in education for Encyclopedia Britannica, director home health program for Family Service Yonkers, N.Y. Currently a blind writer busily retired.

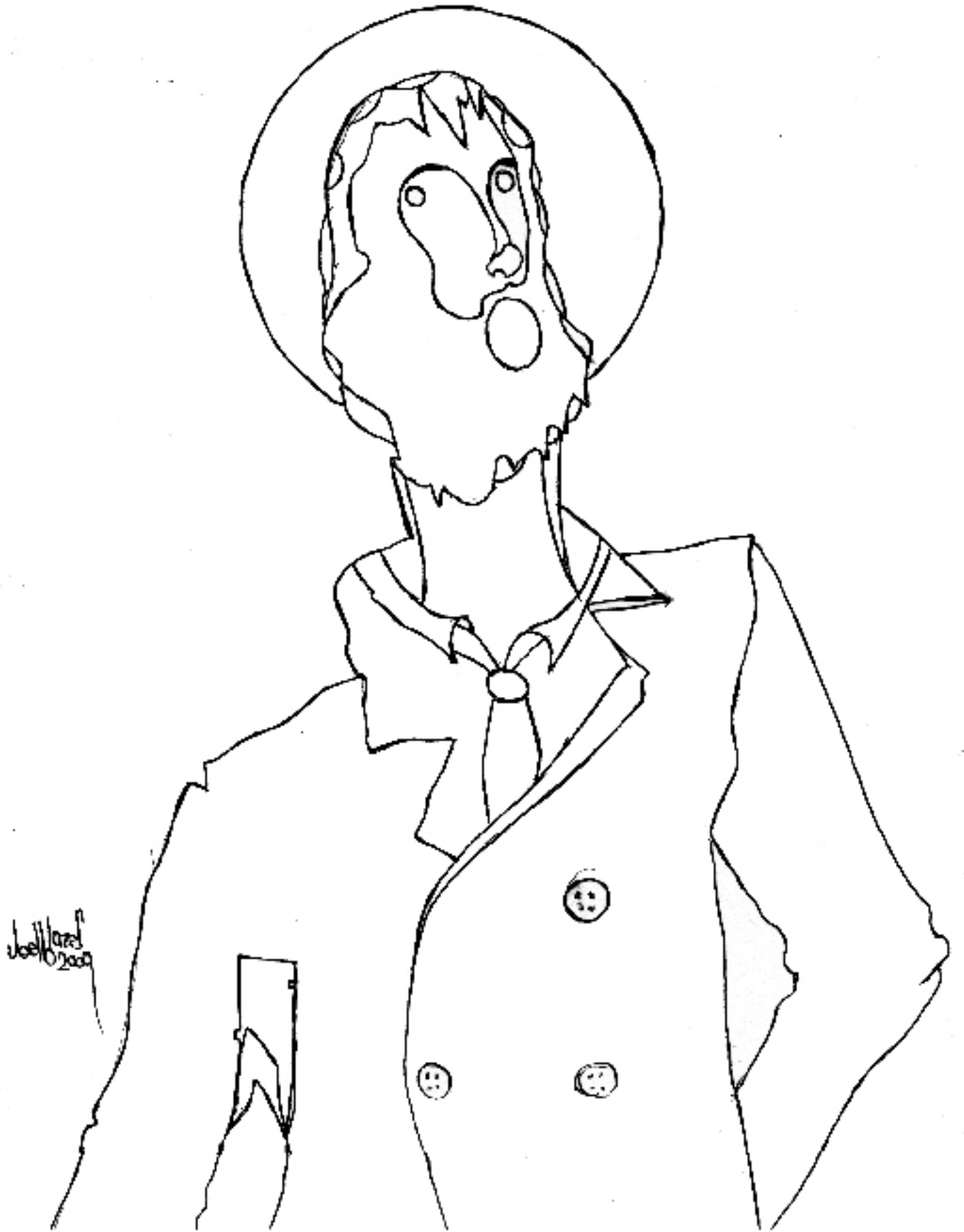
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DRAWING:

JOEL BLAZER

Joel Blazer has been seriously creating visual art for a decade; his art is heavily influenced by God, his family, graffiti art and the human figure. Lately he has been trying to visualize his subconscious onto different substrates. A lot of his art depends on his line that guides everything and that he accentuates with paint.

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my papaw's pea coat

(by *Stacey Calkins*)

richard
looks nice
in my papaw's navy pea coat
the pea coat is in very good condition
considering it's over 60 years old
it gives me courage
"my papaw wore that pea coat," i remind him
it was part of his formal uniform
during world war ii
he was a young man in his early 20's
enlisted from barbourville, kentucky
far from his home

when he stormed normandy
nine days after d-day
he encountered a terrifying sight
unbelievable devastation
unlike anything he had ever imagined before
bodies, bodies, and more bodies
loud, confusing
underfire

when he met the germans
to fight that day
off the shore, on land
he wondered if he would survive
this battle, the war

he did
he fulfilled his duty
fought bravely
was severely injured
and suffered all night
out in an open field
while the germans searched the area
with their bayonets to finish off
wounded american and american-allied
soldiers
someone
one of his fellow soldiers
pulled papaw off the field
into safety

he made it and
was sent
to a hospital in new york
to convalesce for a few months before he
was sent home
in his navy peacoat
to reunite with his wife, family and friends in
barbourville, kentucky

he returned
he was physically restored
but he didn't want to talk about the war
he tucked away his pea coat away
out of sight
he didn't want to remember
still at night
it plagued his dreams
sometimes
he tried to strangle my grandmother
in his sleep
trying to survive
with all his might
inside of his mind
reliving the war

The Poet Will Remember

(by *Evelyn Chidester*)

A Polish poet died Saturday.
And, one hundred eighty Congolese,
Three hundred twenty one Iraqis,
Sixteen trailer park Floridians.
No one is counting in the muck of Bangladesh
Or the tents in Chad and Burundi.

Does the bell toll if no one hears it?

Only the poet signifies.
He can wrap his words around remote horror,
Articulate the lump in our throat,
The weight on our chest,
The despair that reason says is,----reasonable.
The poet will remember.

POEMS:

CAROLINA CASTANO

Carolina Castaño lives in Cincinnati, OH, with her husband, John, and her daughter, Angelica. Currently she is teaching private Expressive Art classes for adults in her home. Carolina loves to perform, dance and write. Her dream is to ultimately create, with like-minded people, a community center of expressive arts for young children.

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CHRISTOPHER PATTERSON

Chris Patterson is a sophomore at the College of Mount Saint Joseph. A major in Biology, Chris is still undecided on what to do after graduation. He has been writing poetry for 5 years and likes to listen to music in his free time.

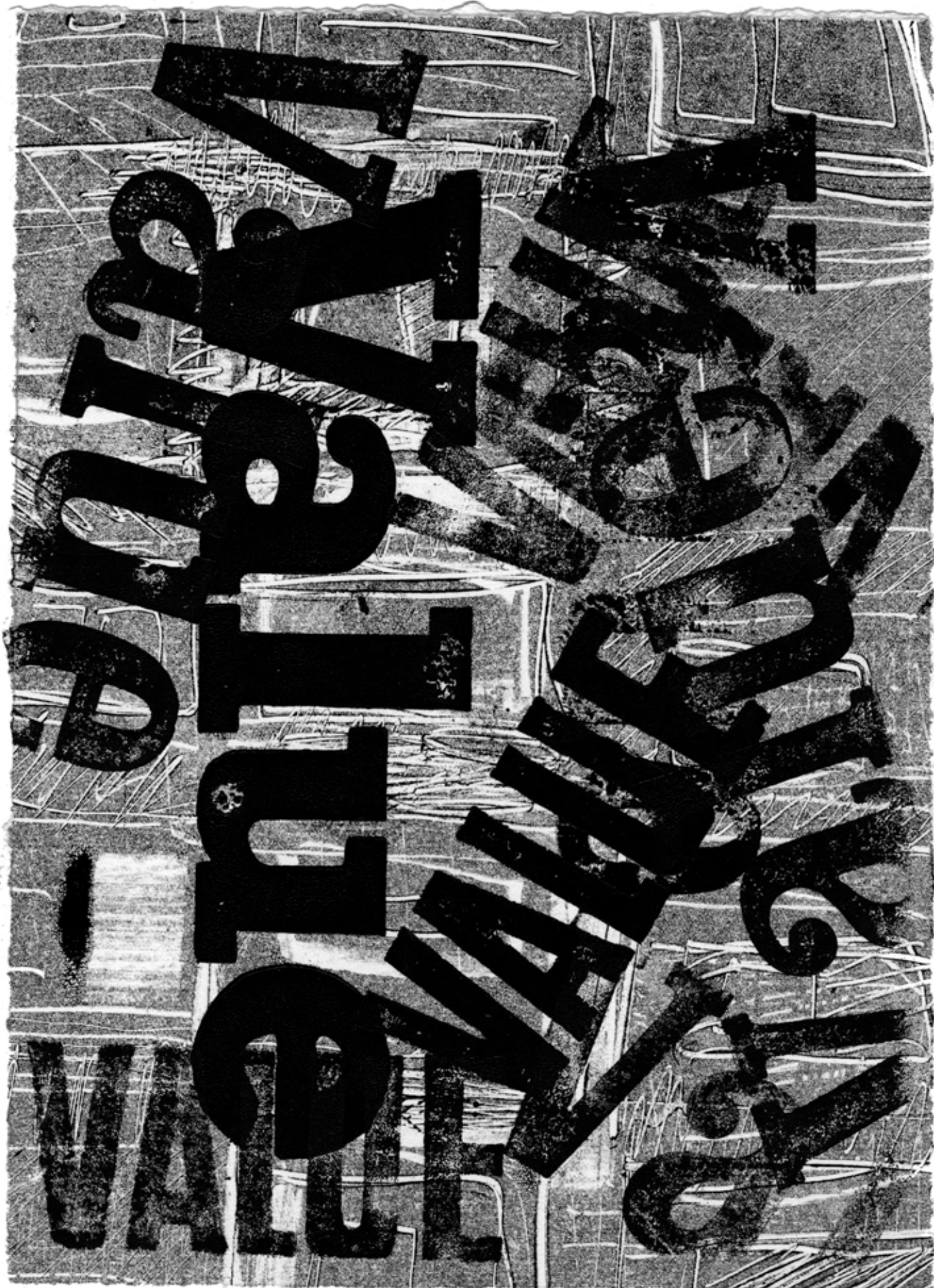
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DRAWING:

JENNIFER GROTE

Jennifer Grote is an actively exhibiting Cincinnati artist who works in many mediums. Her inspirations are many including architecture, ancient Egyptian art, the artists of the German Bauhaus era, and other contemporary artists.

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Jennifer Grote

Enigma

(by *Carolina Castano*)

Who speaks for those without words?
Your cries are heard but are you understood or ignored?
Are your needs less than mine just because I have words and you have cries?
In books and theories it is told what you need but tell me are these really your needs?
Do you agree that sleeping by yourself is just?
That spending hours away from your mom is just?
That drinking artificial milk is just?
Are we forcing you against nature that through your cries tells us what is just?
Who in their right mind can speak for those without words?

All Talk

(by *Christopher Patterson*)

Throwing around words
Only shows we're lazy.
Letters will fall on deaf ears
And empty heads.
If words could change the world,
Mouths would be gods
And language would be magic.
But we've thrown around words
Long enough.
The world doesn't need more words,
The world needs action.
And we need the world.

Car Ride Home

(by *Christopher Patterson*)

We are silent
On the car ride home
The miles pass quickly
As day turns to night
With one hand on the wheel
And one hand in hers
The troubles of the day
Fade like exits on the interstate
Exits with unknown promise
And reward never to be reaped
Thrown away haphazardly
Because the road beacons further
It is the master of our journey,
To be obeyed in all respects,
And it answers to nothing
Not time, not wear,
It gives perspective
On the small, but integral, part we play
In the world, in the universe
In our own lives
Because in the end
We are all the writers of each other's fate
We need to think
About how to do each other right
Now, as we pull into the driveway,
We've forgotten ourselves
But remembered everyone else
And maybe that's why
We were silent
On the car ride home

POEMS:

NICHOLAS CAUDILL

Nicholas Caudill is a 2009 graduate of the College of Mount St. Joseph, where he studied mathematics, music, and worked as poetry editor on the school's literary magazine *Lions-on-Line*. He has been a member of the Greater Cincinnati Writer's League since December 2007.

Contact: nicholas_caudill@mail.msj.edu

DAVID GARZA

David Garza runs *Tokyo Rose Records* out of Northside, supporting the creative process of musicians, writers, performers, and the rest.

Contact: davidgarza_@hotmail.com

DRAWING:

KEITH RICHTER

Keith Richter is from Alexandria, KY. He is currently a student at Northern Kentucky University and is working on a Bachelors of Fine Art degree. His studies emphasize printmaking and his work generally incorporates animals into his imagery.

Contact: richterk@nku.edu; richtersbk@netscape.net



Keith Rutter

Advice for the Future World Leaders

(by *Nicholas Caudill*)

On an evening stroll past the trees of green
I saw this horrible awful scene
a girl and boy of age sixteen
dressed like the Swedish king and queen

I asked what's your plan for world conquest
he said buy a tie dye polka dot vest
eat a scrambled egg from a robin's nest
steal a peg-legged pirate's treasure chest

I said I hear the black ties say cash is king
businessmen get poisoned by money's sting
but to dive down to robbery is a terrible thing
because jail birds don't have a song to sing

He yelled I believe in the Robin Hood plan
no more dreams lost in the old dust pan
the poor need not carry that collection can
if I spread out the wealth from the rich old man

I asked what's your plan for world domination
she said first to have a drunken celebration
strike up a leprechaun collaboration
go out and yell about deforestation

I said I dig trees like any other guy
but the government gave you a big fat lie
they cut down a forest just for one apple pie
and several birds and opossums had to die

She screamed fill an ocean with tears of shame
is treekiller Big Joe Blow the one to blame
blowing up earth like a violent video game
and too many arrows have missed their aim

I found at last a successful remark
I said I could help them until the night turned dark
we'll drive the red convertible out of the park
and soon rule the world, hit the winner's mark

Day Follows Night

(by *Nicholas Caudill*)

The night had her cloud fists clenched
but I was too tired to fight lightning.
The day follows her example, he gusts
in anger, trying to erode me. These siblings
feud. A younger day learning from his elder-
situation spiraling as day follows night.

The night had raging eyes but I was praying
she would just decide to cry. If it rained
gently, he would forgive the sister and I
would forgive them both. Finding peace
in time's spiraling passage, in the
simple truth that day follows night.

Buildings and Buddhas

(by *David Garza*)

Buildings and Buddhas,
Hawks and doves
Nest therein.
Sheer, now vanquished,
Hawks and doves
Circle, now roost

POEMS:

VICKIE CIMPRICH

Vickie Cimprich is a Northern Kentucky writer. *Pretty Mother's Home - A Shakeress Daybook* (Broadstone Books, 2007) is her collection of dramatic monologues based on journals of the Pleasant Hill, Kentucky Shakers. Her programs are available through The Ky. Whole Humanities Catalog.

Contact: vcimprich@earthlink.net; www.kyhumanities.org

MARK FLANIGAN

Mark Flanigan, the Poet Laureate of Prospect Hill by default, likes to set fire to paper hats and float them down river. You can view his monthly column "*Exiled from Main Street*" at semantikon.com the first Sunday of every month. He is working on his first music CD with musicians Steven Proctor and Lee Simmons.

Contact: mf@markflanigan.com

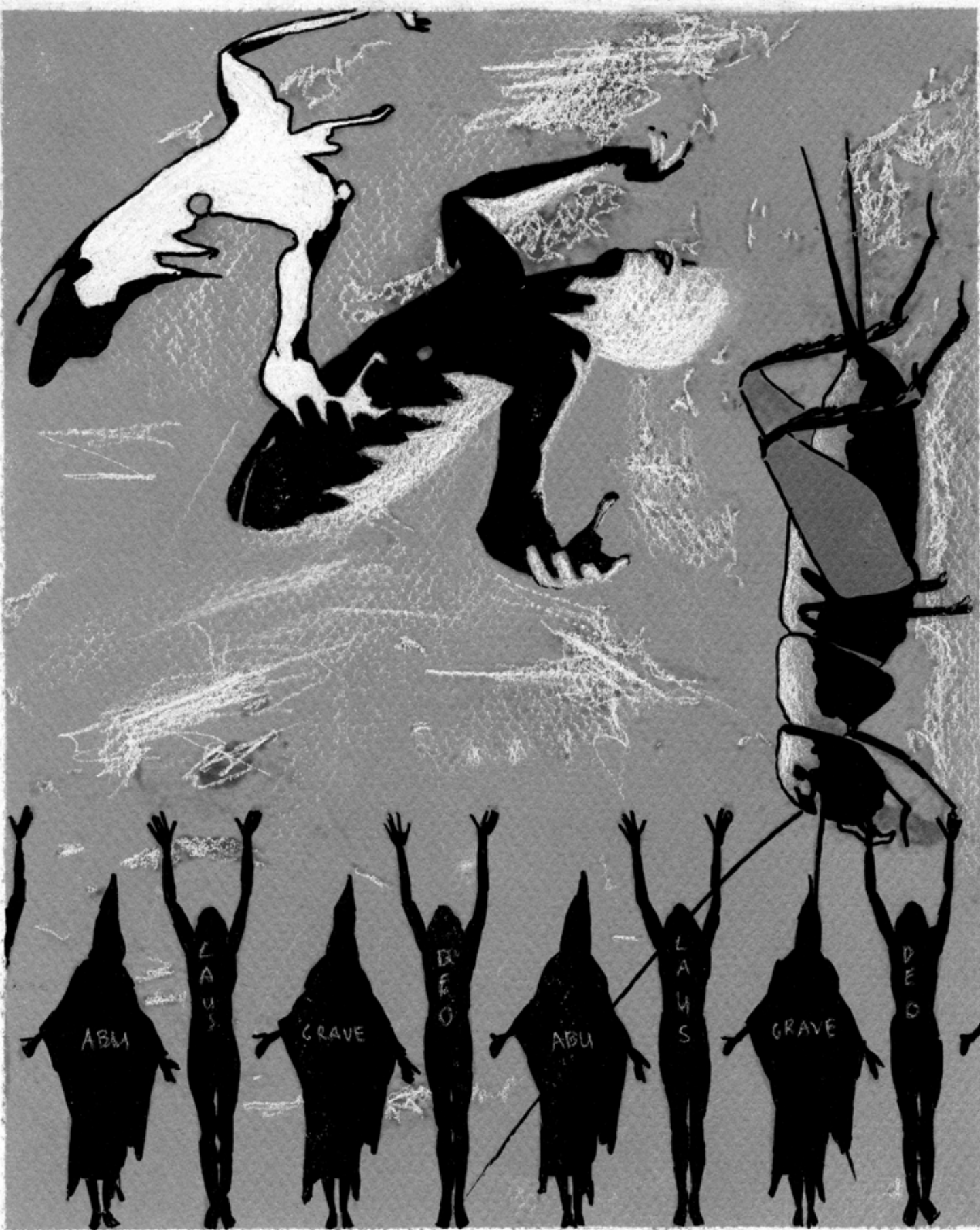
DRAWING:

BRETT ERNST

Brett Ernst, a native of Louisville, KY, received his BFA from Indiana University Southeast and is currently an MFA candidate at the University of Cincinnati.

Brett's prints are in the permanent collections of several universities and corporations.

Contact: brettanthony@insightbb.com



BRETT ERNST 09

Ages of Ages

(by *Vickie Cimprich*)

Varves ago, good messaging
began
with prophets light as leaves or
grains
or tea of calx, the archangels all
diffuse as pollen.

The mountains and valleys, the
planes
still undulate, laus Deo.

Who says all is fixed
talks shale.

August 6

(by *Vickie Cimprich*)

*Hiroshima/Feast of the
Transfiguration*

Any day's dust
might hint the spectrum
spread in certain lights between
annihilation
and glorification.

Glory ranges, glory reigns
in all the space
among the particles:

glory,
Tabor promise
bare months away
from Golgotha.

Golgotha: place of the skull.
Whose skull?

(Your face, my Lord,
like sun it shone,
in any face
or faceless bone.)

Rogation in a Time of Terror

(by *Vickie Cimprich*)

We must pray to the crickets
who keep the night company

we must pray to the cows
who grow gentle at dusk

we must pray to the deer
who hide

Poem Platter Numero Uno

(by *Mark Flanigan*)

* A Cautionary Tale

We won.

It had been a tough series,
but—determined and
inspired—we prevailed.

As we celebrated
with similar verve,
no one even noticed
our trophy walk.

** Successful Serenade

Does anybody even read these
things?

Or do they just
peruse the page, a
checkpoint for call words—

Shock and Awful
Abu Grave—

only to turn the page?

Does it matter?

When the answer
to the above
is
we found each other.

***It's the Strangest Thing #64

I got so little to talk about
now

now
that I find it easier to speak.

POEMS:

CYNTHIA COLEBROOK

Cynthia Perry Colebrook is a writer, poet, and consultant to not-for-profit organizations. Her poetry has previously been published by The Monroe County Poet's Collective and The International Library of Poetry. She has had several appearances with her selected poems and short stories on PBS station WVXU on the program, "*Women Writing for (a) Change - On the Radio*" 2002-2003.

Cynthia and her husband of 37 years live on a 45' sailboat.

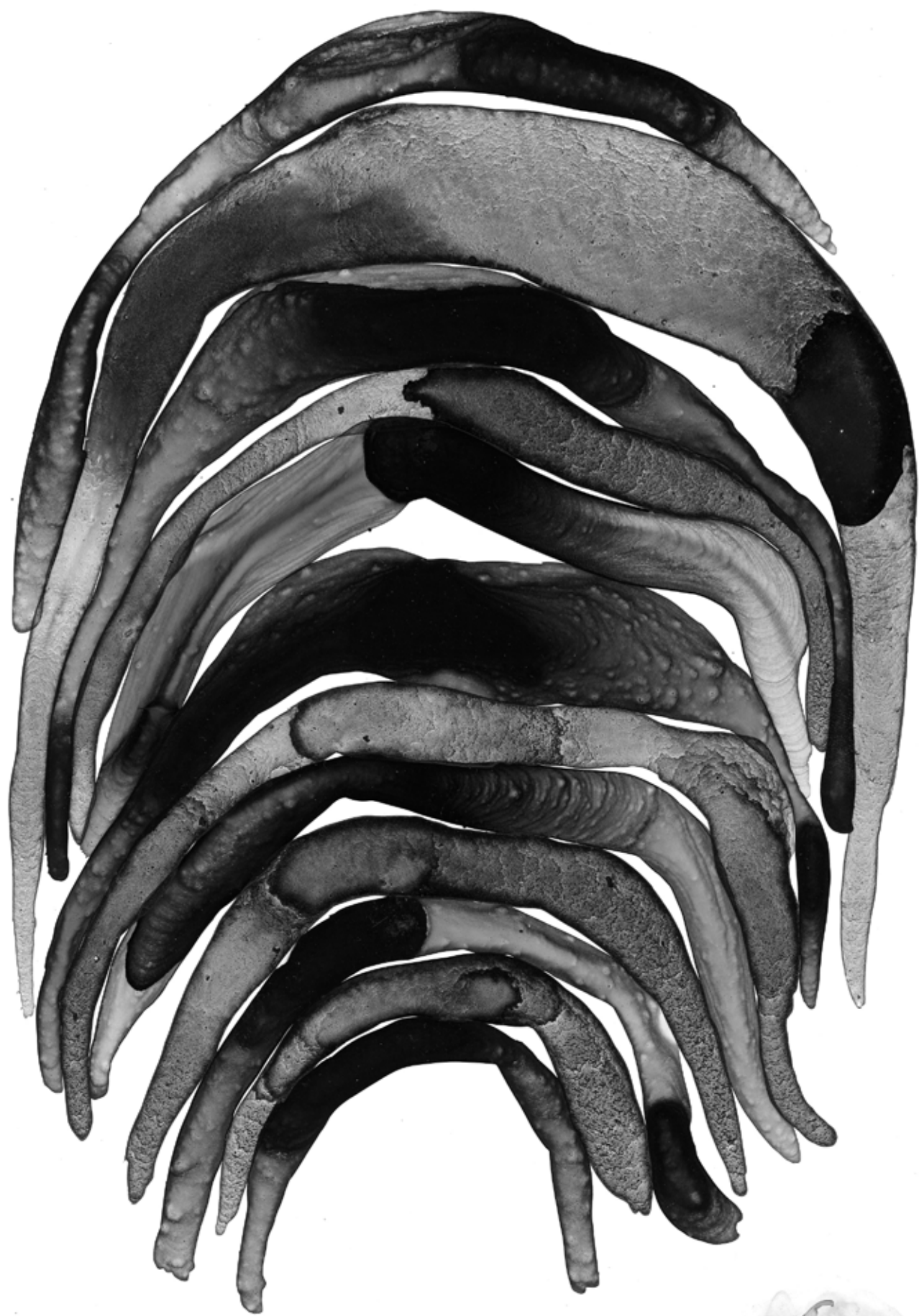
Contact: cynthiacolebrook@aol.com

DRAWING:

MARK FOX

Mark Fox, MFA from Stanford University and BFA from Washington University in St Louis, currently lives and works in New York City. Mark has had solo exhibitions at the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Detroit Museum of Arts. His work was recently acquired and exhibited by the Philadelphia Museum of Art and has also entered the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Contact: foxsaw@mac.com



mf x 071

Detritus

It takes discipline
looking over the navy gray railing
on this Harbor Walk
to have my eyes
stay focused
on the swollen globes of kelp
waving at the water's edge
or on the young gull
webbed feet standing firmly
on the seaweed-covered remnants of a
piling
or on the mesmerizing movement
of wind on water
with its liquid interplay
of light and dark
so great
are the distractions
of discarded Dunkin' Donuts cups
crinkled cigarette packs
and even
the long-stemmed dandelions
lying dejected and forgotten
by the careless hand
that earlier picked them
then threw them
onto the rocks below.

Will the Creek still Flow to the Sea?

The hollow log, the fallen tree
Once habitat for somebody
Two squirrels, a coon, quickly flee
Come I down the trail quietly

The rain-swelled creek's soliloquy
Bespoke a form of eulogy
The hollow is veiled, mistily
A place being changed, unwillingly

Above the creek's deep mystery
New houses sit precariously
I try to ignore, though fleetingly
All around: construction debris

A workman turns, locks eyes with me
I wave 'hello' half-heartedly
On the bank, I lean on a tree
To gaze up the stream longingly

The view cries out with honesty
Fossil-filled rocks, antiquity
Roots, moss, and mud, all slippery
My heart, indeed, sits heavily

Though it is the land of the free
Must we consume so greedily?
Can the land change adequately?
Will the creek still flow to the sea?

The Morning after a Friend's Wedding

The ride was interrupted
by an argument, an angry outburst
and subsequently
the view out the car window
was of poison ivy
 blanketing the grass
grape vines
 choking the trees
and honeysuckle
 smothering the shrubs.

Prior to that
with happy anticipation
of traveling home
the mist
 enchanted the soybeans
the redball rising of the sun
 greeted the whitening round of the moon
and the flat farm fields of Ohio
 were the lovely landscape of our
 companionship.

Like the milkweed pod
splits to release
its dark seeds
 and downy wind-lifters
the harmony
 of extravagant love
can split to release
 the discord
 of communication
 remembered differently
and we are at odds
sitting as separate
as the World Trade Center towers
 before they collapsed.

May we
in the rubble of repair
glisten
 like the dew-moist grasses
absorb light
 as the fog enshrouded forests
and forgive
with the generosity
 of corn flowers
 and Queen Anne's Lace, which
oft mowed
 by sharp blades
and threatened
 by toxic fumes
still bloom
brilliant blue
 and creamy white
 at any height
in profusion
along the road.

POEMS:

TARA DE LA FUENTE

Tara de la Fuente is working on her Ph.D. in English at the University of Cincinnati. She lives in Norwood with her cat, Syd, and wonders how the world can ever become better without a genuine desire to learn from one another.

Contact: wisegirl@yahoo.com

BARBARA NAGEL

Barbara Nagel is 9 1/2 years old and a fourth grader at Johnson Elementary School in Fort Thomas, KY. Barbara is in the STLP Club (Student Technology Leadership Program) and the Fishing Club. She enjoys singing, reading, playing with her friends and with her bunny Hopper.

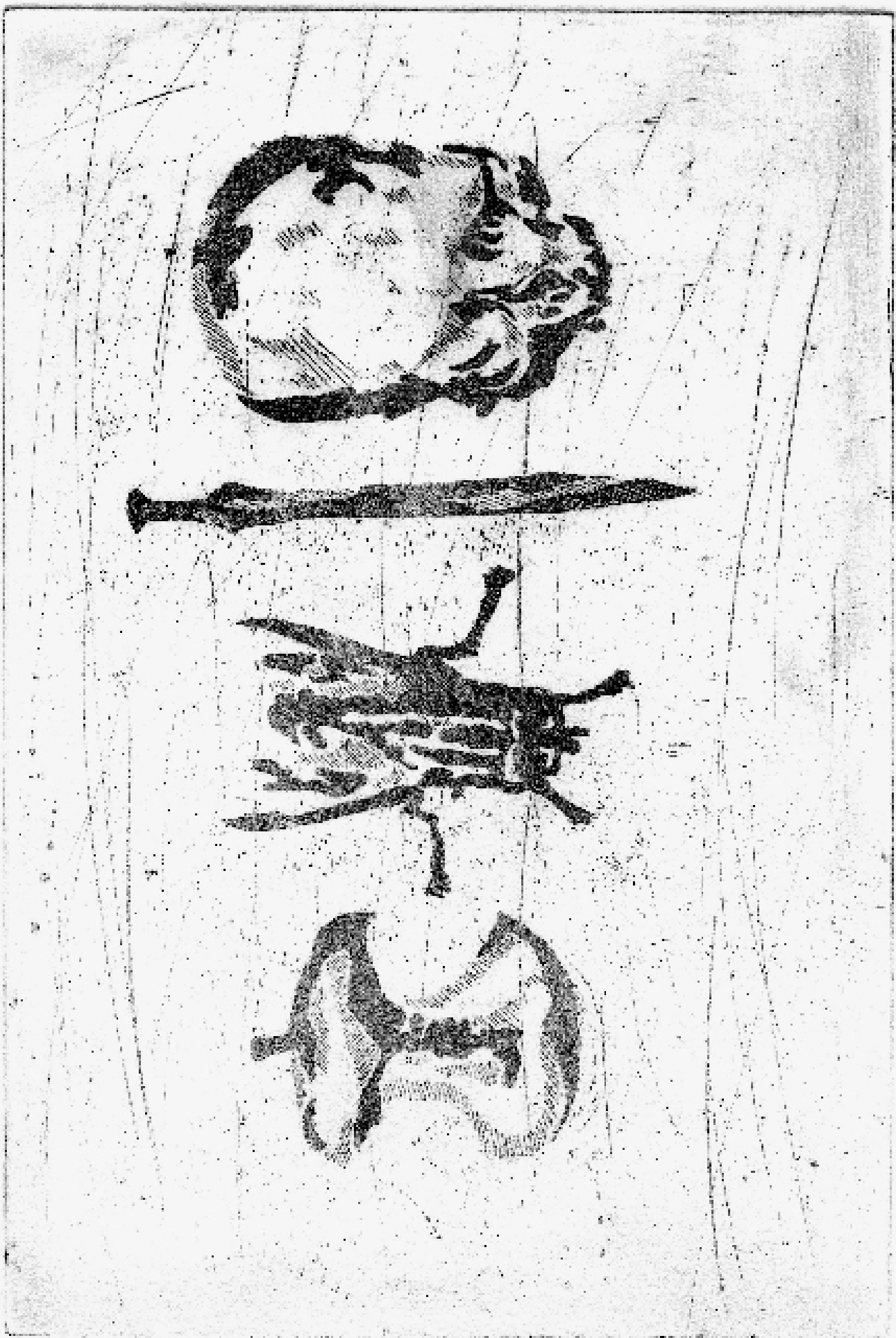
Contact: snagel@fuse.net

DRAWING:

BRANDON WELLS

Brandon Wells is a B.F.A. Graphic Design Major at Northern Kentucky University. He has lived in Northern Kentucky for seven years since his departure from the United States Marine Corps. His art consists mainly of Illustrations and Graphic elements.

Contact: wellsbrandon1@yahoo.com



" ETERNAL EYES "

17

2

Save Darfur

(by *Tara de la Fuente*)

Are we saving Darfur, she asks.

I sigh because I am thinking and say,
I don't even know if we know where Darfur is—
what is happening there.

Anyone watching Oprah knows, she says.

I do not watch Oprah,
I wonder if the woman who gets people to read
might help get people to see.
I have my doubts.

I'd forgotten that my Save Darfur blazon
makes me want to kill myself
when people comment on it.
I remember the thousands of deaths, rapes,
and impossibilities.

I am unable to say anything but
"At least we aren't killing each other"
when she says, "With this economy, though,
maybe we shouldn't worry about a people so far
away."

Let us hope the Darfuri imaginations are larger
than our own.

Peace

(by *Barbara Nagel, 9 year-old*)

I believe peace is what the world needs.
Peace makes me happy, my family and
everyone around the world.
No more guns pointing at each other;
instead hugs given around the world.
War leads to more war
but love leads to peace.

POEMS:

DONELLE DREESE

Donelle Dreese is a poet and an Assistant Professor in the English Department at Northern Kentucky University where she teaches Multicultural and Environmental Literatures. Her interests include the relationship between people and the places they inhabit, environmental racism and other social justice movements. Her book of poetry *A Wild Turn* was published in 2008 by Finishing Line Press.

Contact: dreesed1@nku.edu

DRAWING:

MICHAEL EVERETT

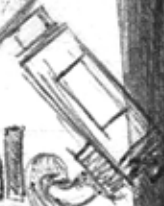
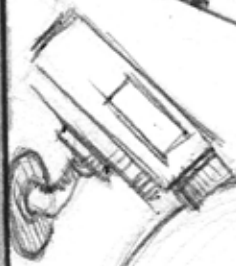
Michael Everett is a working artist living in Cincinnati. He attended the University of Cincinnati where he completed a BFA in Fine Arts focusing on Painting and Drawing.

Contact: infiniteverticality@gmail.com

BLOND



WARNING:
Blond will never be enough



Loreal

BLOND

Barbie Bandits

(In March, 2007, two 19 year old girls were arrested for holding up a bank in Georgia.)

When they frocked a grin
into the surveillance camera,
for a moment, I too
wanted to smile
at the sunglasses
at the news headline
at the ramshackle bank bust.

That kind of girl
is what kind of girl?
Sorority girl?
Stripper girl?
Salon girl gone bad?

While they wrap their lost locks in foil
social workers wrap nickels
farmers wrap their lives in a rainy season
street people wrap their frozen feet in newspaper.

Maybe these stripper girls are looking for a way out--
out of the bare naked cash flow
out of the body image and billboard life they bought into.
Maybe the warning label on the Loreal box should read:
blond will never be enough.

Invasive Species

Dandelion in the daffodil patch
Garlic mustard choking lily of the valley
The common reed consuming the wetlands
McDonalds in Shanghai,
 eighty-two of them, some open all night
 long.

Microbial agents in the spinach and tomatoes
Engineered organisms in the corn and potatoes
Walmart on Main Street, Side Street,
 Front Street, and Back Street.

Heat in the Arctic
Mercury in the water supply
U.S. Troops in Iraq
Terrorists swarming with their hotel bombs
 and westerner roll call.

Should we call an exterminator,
a conservationist,
an herb doctor,
or a priest?

POEMS:

ANNA ENZWEILER

Anna Enzweiler, born in 1991, has spent her life in Camp Springs, a small rural community in Campbell County, Kentucky. Anna is a senior at Notre Dame Academy and dreams of writing as a career. Writing, in her opinion, is an ideal way to promote tolerance, respect, and love among people and form a better society.

Contact: ave27@earthlink.net

DRAWING:

ANDREW ECKERLE

Andrew Eckerle, Cincinnati area artist, MFA University of Cincinnati, BFA University of Louisville. Work is primarily influenced by children and deals with everyday experiences especially as a stay at home father. Lived in Botswana the past year and a half working on photography and community art projects with local children.

Contact: andrewecks@hotmail.com



Anh Ehd '09

The Far-Flung Effects of Donating Blood

I used to hate myself
Until the night I emerged from the cold
And stepped into the white room,
Ready to sacrifice my entire consciousness
In order to feel I was a person.

As the chair grew like wax below me
And the tubes acted as thirsty spiders at my arm,
I remembered the hasty steak scrambled down my windpipe,
Cow's flesh somehow returning the purple to my blood.

There was a thin-shirted lady with hands as great as ladles,
Grown accustomed to driving in the needle,
Every thirty minutes a different-hued vein.

I lay, twitching feet to convince myself
That I could still feel what was below my skin,
And I watched the ceiling, pale as the polish
That shines on the womb of an Apple computer.

However many trees were executed to build these walls,
More lives were saved within them
When our dark bags were shipped away
To return life to a split vein.

Perhaps my pint would go to some soldier,
Burr-haired and round-shouldered, mouth agape
As he stared at his arm severed on a silver table;
I could give him the knowledge that a limb's absence
Had not decapitated hope, at least.

Perhaps I would give life to a woman with a face of bark,
And therefore to her husband, too,
As he sat waiting on the little couch,
Sucking fear from his cuffs.

Or, maybe, to a paper-skinned child,
Bound to me only by his blood type,
And the awareness that, by taking my gift,
He had bestowed on me something far greater:
The knowledge that seventeen years of rotating on one axis
And the second-degree murder of a cow
Had not been totally in vain.

The Trials of Suburbia

Thousands dead each day from hunger,
And we cry because the movie ruins the book.
There are legs for us, and lotion,
And for Christmas always another iPod;
We are from the fat of the land,
But could we not fill the ribs of the children
That stare giant-eyed at us from gift catalogs?
Even then, nothing but a check, casually filled,
A flourishing signature, and the knowledge
That we have helped someone
Without soiling our hands.
When our parents take the car keys we cry,
Forgetting that in places there is no grounding,
Because a weekend of fun would be death.

S.O.S.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS, it says,
Next to LOSE 20 POUNDS IN TWO WEEKS,
YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPES,
And JESSICA AND NICK GOT DIVORCED.
What colorful noose-ribbon magnets, made in China,
Perfect for us to flaunt ourselves, say,
Yes. We're patriotic. We defend our country.
Do we hear your voices, screaming;
Do we see the blood striping your skin
Behind the thirteen bars of red and white?
No, Britney did it again, and OMG, look who's pregnant.
Pick up a magnet, slap it on the SUV;
We're too rich for the Army, but naturally,
We support it. We say, go fight, go die,
Because you must feel proud to die for your country.
Ignore the flies in your wounds, the pus, the mangled limbs;
Ignore your mouths turning into a mess of gore.
Proud to be an American. Go kill people you haven't met.
Support the war, and reach for *People Magazine*.

POEMS:

GREG FRIEDMAN

Cincinnati native Greg Friedman is a Franciscan priest, who holds a dual role as writer/producer in the Electronic Media Department of St. Anthony Messenger Press, and as pastor of a parish in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine. Greg has written several books, numerous articles and published poetry; he is also a photographer.

Contact: gregf@americancatholic.org

DRAWING:

JONPAUL SMITH

Jonpaul Smith was born in 1979 in Logansport, IN. He finished High School at Logansport High and graduated in 1998. He received a B.A. from Hanover College in 2002 and completed his M.F.A. and graduate certificate in museum studies from DAAP in 2005. Jonpaul has exhibited his work extensively; he is represented in private and public collections, nationally and internationally.

Contact: salmagundii@hotmail.com



APR 11 2009

CLARA PAUL C. SMITH

Notes of an Urban Tracker

Blood on the walk.
I saw the shards still red
In the window shaped
Around an absent fist, then
Blood on the walk,
Seeped to the concrete,
Red on Republic Alley.
(Red, white and blue,
Since it was *Bremen Strasse*
Before the war.)

Blood on the street,
The dry drips freezing
The pulse of the heart,
Slow shuffle of pain.
Blood on the street,
From where the glass broke
Down, down the pavement,
Past vacancies of brick
And leftovers of living
And it didn't stop.

Blood trail walking,
Dragging down the street.
I am beating the track, frozen
To the dry red heat of
Blood trail walking,
Going somewhere,
Anywhere away
From the quick fast pain
Of the beginning,
The slow seize of pain
That just goes on.

*Like all the stories around here,
The trail ended, anonymous. Only scraps
Of rumors picked up from other trackers
Left me with the loose ends of an argument,
A domestic something, an ambulance run—
Just one of the hourly sirens of routine
In the neighborhood. I block them out
And roll over in sleep on Liberty,
Two blocks away.
Not really free
Of it all.*

Hot Daze

It's heavy on the street, hot streets
Where sinners, saints and somebodies
Walk with purpose, lounge with intent
Or just sit, sit in the heat,
Like the old lady on our steps
Looking this way and that, waiting.
She waits for winter, a cool breath
Or her grandson or some small hope

On these solid unyielding streets
Where hot tar's our reality,
Dripping angry at the edges.
The smooth black surface mirrors
Swagger and need. Poseurs pleading,
Pass amid the pulsing beat,
Remnants of our original sin
Purloined from African shores.

Councils of Flight

Warbirds chatter. And it's spring.
I sit in an ambiguous breeze
On this hill. Not enough buds breaking yet.
Still the wind is full of the murmurs
Of the sweet rumors of what nature's planned
For us if we let her.

But already on the wind
The secret strategies ride aloft
Where the egos of trade and true technologies
Have concluded, "Enough" for crimes
Once overlooked.

Winter's secrets:
The men from the village who will not return,
A railway car for Rachel, keening in the night.
So simple, the button of vengeance in antiseptic rooms
Of righteous cabins of pressurized accuracy.
All the ones and zeroes add up to a shattering of bone.
Silent blossoms replay in gray frames at the briefing.
But on this windy height
Where I hear the gossip of the stealthy flights
Of dark robins off to the east
I am in an uncertain cave of green doubt.
Metal and masonry cannot shelter my collateral guilt.
Pundits offer safe havens after dinner.
But one man on a hill cannot decide among
Such conundrums of spring and sudden death—
And I am one of many.

POEMS:

BARBARA GAMBOA

Barbara Gamboa is a Cincinnati visual artist working with photographs, prints and painting. She has written several poems which she plans to share in the coming year. The poem accepted for this publication is very close to her heart and is her most recent writing.

Contact: bsgamboa@yahoo.com

JESSIE RING

Jessie Ring, a 34 year old mother of two, is a mosaic artist whose pastimes include painting, playing guitar and drumming.

Contact: jjring@fuse.net; www.ringmosaics.com

DRAWING:

DAN BIGGS

Dan Biggs, Owner of Frame Designs in Cincinnati, has been painting since he sat on his grandfather's knee; well, he was painting his grandfather's knee. A graduate of Miami University, Dan now teaches painting and exhibits his work and likes to read when people aren't asking him questions. Contact him at the frame shop, he's always there.

Contact: ajaxanvil@roadrunner.com



d. biggs '97

The Wakening

(by *Barbara Gamboa*)

It was the silence that woke us
sharp
abrupt

screaming from hearts indifferent
renting blankets of conceit
shattering self adoration

it was the silence that woke us
sweet
assured

arriving on the dawn anew
turning our beds of neglect
echoing the voice of justice

it was the silence that woke us
rise
today

giving allwrong a common name
defending the poor and weak
dancing to the drum of freedom

it was the silence that woke us
sing
proclaim

joining the voices of the earth
touching the ear of the sky
silence has woke us
and we sleep no more

Change

(by *Jessie Ring*)

I reach past
Past eyes grayed
with reflections of hopes
promises yet unkept
looking deeper
find grief to my right
anger under
and still farther
clenched and anxious
pushing will to be reality
I rest knowing
we shall rise

The Rescue

(by *Jessie Ring*)

binds of my life
woven tight
kept intact
caressed my family
embraced the circle
tiny minds
evil sludge
damaged souls
crap reaping minions
breaking my threads
needle pricks
my weave slackened
precious pieces falling
now caught
courageous light
broke the sores
drained the disease
the bonds repair
the air is sweeter

Peace

(by *Jessie Ring*)

dust light
dreams flow
the warm light
at all times
seeping embrace
warm and warmer
drifting peace
waves persistent
insistent joy
all cells smile
in a wave
again
always

POEMS:

DIANE GERMAINE

Diane Germaine is a writer and choreographer. In 2009 she premiered “*Missing Items*”, a dance work after a satirical poem on aging she wrote in 2008. In 2003 she wrote, choreographed and directed “*Didi, a Life*”, a spoken-word project. Diane is also the Co-Director of the Cincinnati Choreographers’ Collective.

Contact: azbash2007@fuse.net

JEFFREY HILLARD

Jeffrey Hillard: author of four books of poems and a chapbook of short stories; publisher and editor of *RED! the breakthrough 'zine, online magazine* devoted to stories of positive transformation in the lives of prisoners and formerly incarcerated individuals, and stories of innovations in the world of criminal justice. Jeffrey is associate professor of English at the College of Mount St. Joseph.

Contact: jeff_hillard@mail.msj.edu; www.redwebzine.org

DRAWING:

KYMBERLY HENSON

KyMBERly Henson has been working in the arts for over 20 years. For many years she supported herself through her wearable art studio, “KyMBER Originals”, producing one of a kind and limited edition hand-painted and shibori clothing. Recent years have seen a shift of artistic sensibility to mosaic, small sculpture and painting. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States. She lives in Cincinnati with her husband, daughter, cats and dog.

Contact: kymber_h@yahoo.com



Kymber Henson 09

The Haunting

(by *Diane Germaine*)

Inside that quiet decision,
that moment when “Not Yet”
became quietly “Yes, now,”
you pulled back into the
pillows, turned your head away
and cast the smallest of gestures
to wave them away.
The EMTs wanted to revive you,
but you would not respond -
the words were already gone...

I didn't see it,
I wasn't there. But
I am now sure
your last gesture
was a message
that has taken four years
to receive. In the early
morning hours your presence
awakens me, reminding how
alone each of us is
in our final moments.

On Peace

(by *Jeffrey Hillard*)

for Carol

I watched water fall over rocks in a churchyard
today, and thought of him falling from you,
fall, again, into sleep. I watched, and a rock
glimmered, lilies came alive around the pool.
The sound, water. The air, hot. A cloud nowhere.
But deep in the heat of the tired afternoon
I noticed light dangling on the top of the pool –
stay, stay there, right in sight,
and thought of him not far away, and calling.

The Winter of Small Things

(by *Jeffrey Hillard*)

Inside the first thaw, everything explodes.
A truck splashes mud against a tree;
grime coats the frozen fist of an elm burr
hidden in its private cranny since December.
And then more rain to darken the sky

which already tints all we see a naked brown.
We live these colder months to find peace,
to watch water-logged earth heap its minutiae
at our feet. We find, in a long cot of potholes,
those few glimmering coins someone dropped
that we still want to pocket.

POEMS:

ANNI MACHT GIBSON

Anni Macht Gibson has been writing poetry since her retirement as a marketing manager from a Fortune 100 company in 2001. Her first collection of poetry, *Unfinished*, was published in 2007. She is married, with two grown children, and splits her time between Cincinnati and Traverse City, MI.

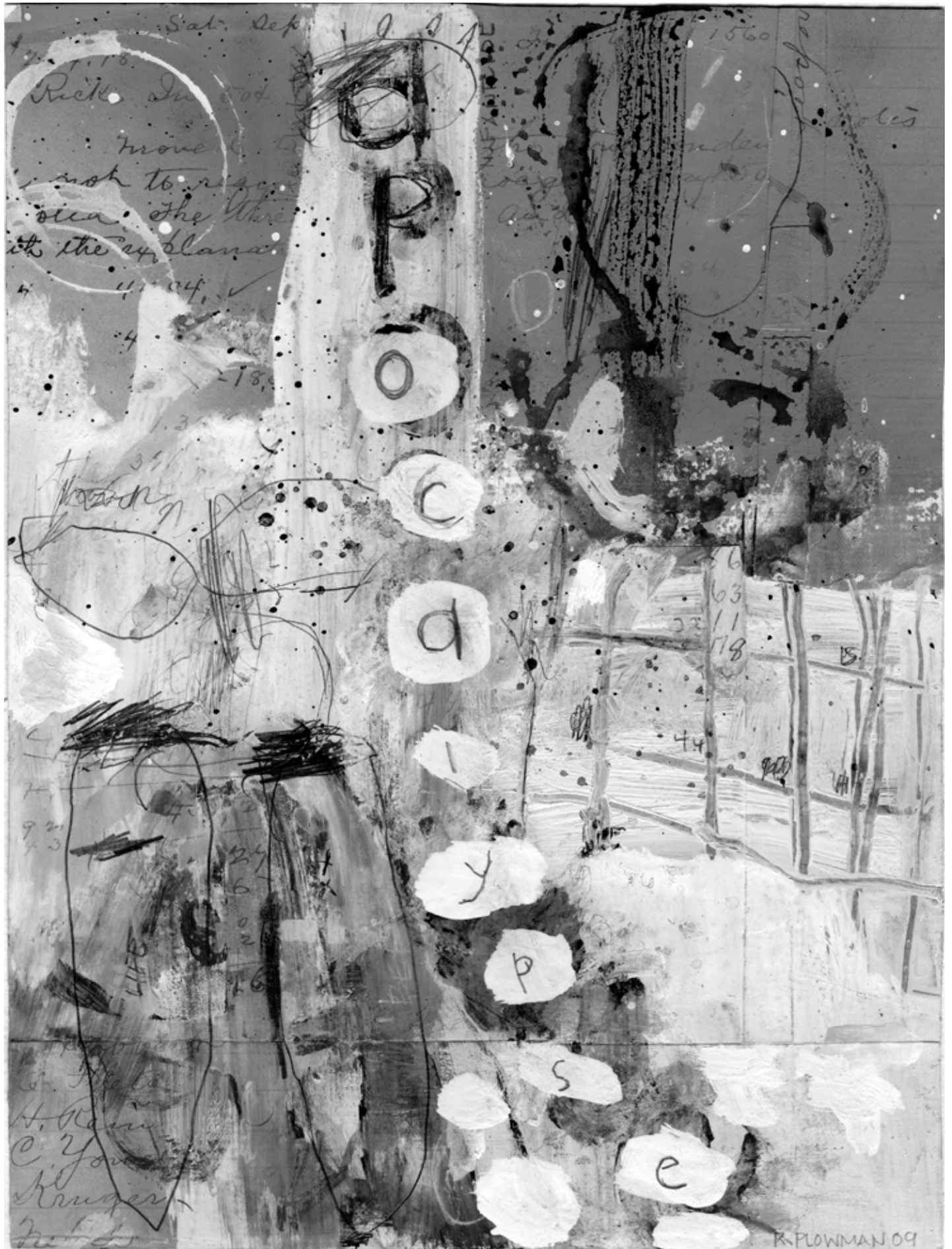
Contact: gibby767@aol.com

DRAWING:

RANDEL PLOWMAN

Randel Plowman graduated from Northern Kentucky University with a B.F.A. in Printmaking. He currently lives and works in the Northern Kentucky.

Contact: randelplowman@hotmail.com; www.acollageaday.com



The Apocalypse

We are all tourists,
passing through,
collecting souvenirs:
flamingo toothpick holders,
demerits for venal sins.

War is fought daily
over minutiae, fodder
for the wrens' nest.

Life is not all
black and white,
soon we shall all be
the color of strong
coffee with cream,

wending our ways
on trails of tears.

God spends her
capital on the
most wretched:

homeless vets
hooked on booze,
mothers who
commit infanticide,
paranoid schizophrenics.

Freed, they will lie on beds of
cottonballs and down
when the final evening falls,
as the rest of us succumb to
endless meandering, collecting stuff.

Stop Loss

The Marine major and chaplain
pause before ringing the bell.
On the other side, at seven months,
Mrs. Springer relaxes, almost napping,
feels a gentle kick as she turns
to look through the window.

Screams, grievous punctuation,
slice through the calm July afternoon
Her shrieks pierce the Major's conscience,
trained, he'd thought, for the job.

Then, silent, she turns on her heels
and, staving off the inevitable.,
draws a lilac scented bubble bath.
She soaks, dries her bulge,
powders herself, brushes her hair.

They wait until, cleansed,
she emerges into the brightness,
and walks to face the enemy.

Abyss

Praise God
you were not born
a Congolese woman,

one of thousands who
have been raped,
some gang-banged

by soldiers
who used to
preserve and protect.

Instead, soulless,
they steal
dignity,
humanity,
femininity.

home will
no longer
take them in.

Alone,
they claw back
from the abyss,

badgers licking
wounds from
the hunter's snare.

POEMS:

ARTURO GUTIERREZ-PLAZA

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

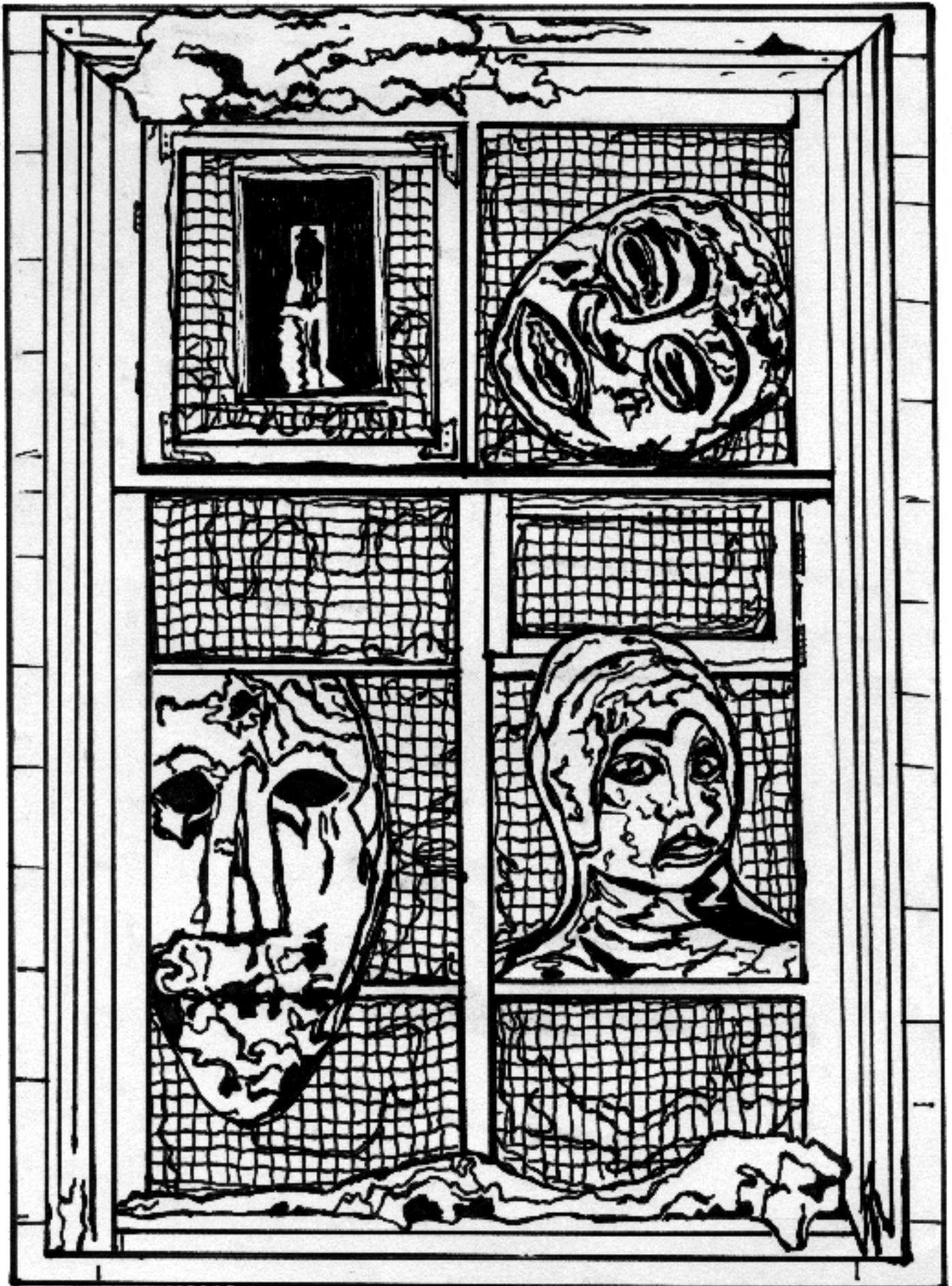
Contact: arturogutierrezplaza@hotmail.com

DRAWING:

AGNES ALDANA

Agnes Aldana was born in Manila, the Philippines, in 1962, and moved to the United States as a child. She has always been drawn to and engaged by artistic expression of any sort, particularly architecture with its mindful attention to form and aesthetic. Agnes has worked in interior design for over fifteen years and believes her recent attraction to collage is partially the result of years spent searching for and combining disparate elements.

Contact: aaldana@cinci.rr.com



ALDANA

Citizenship

That one who spits on the sidewalk
with an inflated pride:

a pig escaped from the slaughterhouse

That other one who turns away his face
when he sees misery:

he who begs at every corner

This one who hurries his step
thus not to refuse an alms,
to avoid the bothersome moan:

the language of the deformed and mutilated.

Those ones who, clenching their teeth, curse
the smell of the sewers.

These ones, shipwrecked without anchors,
survivors of wetlands.

Those other ones, no martyrs, no saints, no
suicide victims.

Those ones, these ones, those other ones
all of them
also are I.

(translated by Saad Ghosn)

Ciudadanía

Ése que escupe en las aceras
con el orgullo hinchado:

cerdo escapado de los mataderos.

Aquél que voltea el rostro
ante el rostro miserable:

el que pide en cada esquina.

Éste que apura el paso
para no negar una limosna,
para evitar el gemido molesto:

el idioma de los deformes y mutilados.

Ésos que entredientes maldicen el olor de
las alcantarillas.

Éstos, náufragos sin anclas, sobrevivientes
de humedales.

Aquéllos, ni mártires, ni santos ni suicidas.

Ésos, éstos, aquéllos,
todos ellos
también soy yo.

Mrs Gardner

She was born three years after
and died two before her husband.
She is lady Gardner,
whose maiden name
used to be Bertie Miller.

She did not live the end of the first war
but knew that her son would die in the second.
I suppose she was happy, at some moments
of her life,
even though no photos are there to show it.

On this gray, cold and foggy afternoon
this is all I am able to see
when I read her name on her tomb.

We both know that this will be
our only encounter.
I will not return, I will not set foot again
in this city, nor in this cemetery.

May be one of her granddaughters
will pick up a flower already wilted
at the base of her epitaph.
A rose still alive
and left there, at the beginning of fall,
by an anonymous visitor.

(translated by Saad Ghosn)

Mrs Gardner

Nació tres años después
y murió dos antes que su marido.
Se trata de la señora Gardner,
cuyo nombre de soltera
acostumbraba a ser Bertie Miller.

No conoció el cese de la primera guerra
pero supo que su hijo moriría en la segunda.
Sospecho que fue feliz, en algún instante de
su vida,
aunque no hay fotos que lo testimonien.

En esta tarde gris, fría y con neblina
es todo lo que alcanzo a ver
cuando leo su nombre sobre su tumba.

Ambos sabemos que éste será
nuestro único encuentro.
No volveré, no pisaré de nuevo
esta ciudad, ni este cementerio

Tal vez alguna de sus nietas
ha de recoger una flor ya marchita
al pie de su epitafio.
Una rosa que aun está viva
y que dejó aquí, al inicio del otoño
un anónimo visitante.

POEMS:

ERIC HALL

Eric T. Hall, a veteran of the US Navy and a retired Sergeant from the Cincinnati Police Department, is currently the Program Manager of School of Safety and Security with the Ohio Resource Network located at the University of Cincinnati. Eric holds a BA degree in Communication Arts from the University of Cincinnati. He is married and has three children.

Contact: hall0@ucmail.uc.edu

BRONWYN PARK

Bronwyn Park is a writer and a teacher. She holds a BA from The University of Cincinnati and an M.Ed from Xavier University. Bronwyn spent 23 years as a Montessori Kindergarten teacher. She currently works as Co-Director of the Women Writing For (a) Change school.

Contact: b.park@womenwriting.org

DRAWING:

ANTONIO ADAMS

Born in Cincinnati in 1981, Antonio Adams' work is collected locally and nationally. His sculptures and drawings have been featured at Country Club Gallery, Base Gallery, Visionaries & Voices, the Pittsburgh Folk Art Exhibit and Symposium, the Outsider Art Fair in New York City, the University of Cincinnati Medical Library, and the Atlanta, Georgia Folk Fest, among other venues.

Contact: www.visionariesandvoices.org

by Antonio Adams
2009



Winds of Change

(by *Eric Hall*)

(Inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America)

Change is perpetual,
Unpredictable as the wind,

You can't tell what direction it will come,
Or where it might wind up in the end.

You never see it happen,
Yet you know it's always there,

You feel it on your face, and
As it whips gently through your hair.

You never know where it started,
Or how the winds will blow,

Will the winds be calm and steady,
Will the breeze be cool and slow,

Will the winds of change be violent,
Crashing hard against the tide,

Will change be welcome open arms
Will you have to pick a side.

Change **HAS** come, upon this cold and windy day,
It blew in on the back of history,
We call it the "Winds of Change."

Time for Change

(by *Bronwyn Park*)

Cecily Tyson played Miss
Pittman
Showed the realities
her people faced
So long ago
Not long ago

Within our memory
Water fountains, soda fountains
the scene of bloody struggle

Saying "No"
"No more"
No "Separate But Equal"
No violent visits at night
No bloody crosses burning
in defiant front yards

No turning away
of earnest new voters
Defiant only in
Wanting a chance
Just a chance
To be a part of this country too.

Now we have another chance
in front of us
Each night on our TVs

The first black man
ever to be out front
Approaching that water fountain

Determined
Dignified
Giving a chance for
Us all
To be a part
Of our country
Too.

POEMS:

(CAROL) JOY HAUPT

Joy Haupt grew up in New York City and has lived in Cincinnati since 1960. She is a graduate of Antioch College and OSU, and since her retirement, has been engaged in community work, travel and creative writing. Joy is currently working on a fictionalized, biographical memoir around the life of her maternal grandmother, a 1905 Jewish immigrant from Eastern Poland.

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VICTORIA KAHLE

Victoria Renee Munch Snyder Kahle; Born July 31, 1957; Wife of James Kahle; Mother of Erin (9) and Christian (7); Architect; Norwegian Heritage. The last time Victoria wrote Poetry was in high school. She just started the January 2009 class of "Women Writing for a Change" with her friend Inga Harris.

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DRAWING:

ROBERT HUNT

Robert Hunt is a native of eastern Kentucky. He attended Eastern Kentucky University in 1995 and is currently working as an artist in Richmond, KY.

Contact: rh.1965@yahoo.com; www.roberthunt.biz



Robert Henri

Love is a Rosy-Cheeked Pear

(by *Joy Haupt*)

Rows of plain bungalows
sheer curtains of white lace
electric candles on window sills
the strains of Silent Night

A pine tree heavy with sparkling balls
red, green, silver, gold
a five-pointed star at the top
colorful boxes beneath.

I am a stranger here
blinded, bewitched
by the Christian fire
that fuels this cold night.

My own street is drab
no twinkling lights, mangers
or virgin statues, no carols or bells
echo in my ears

"Where have you been? It's nearly
dark! Go wash your hands.
Your dinner is already on the table!"
Picking at the cold chicken and salad

I want to ask mother, Why don't 'they' like us?
or maybe it's, 'Why are we different?'
I'm not really sure
what the question should be.

On Saturday, Aunt Sadie comes
to take me down to Macy's to see Santa.
I wonder, does Santa know, does it matter
that my house has no tree?

Jingle bells are dashing, clashing with
a round young virgin in the silent night
and anyway, how could Santa know
if I've been naughty or nice?

One Christmas long ago
a single red stocking hung from the mantle.
I pulled out a long sugar cane

and something else...something round,
firm, pale green,
a bright red spot on one side. 'It's
a rosy-cheeked pear!', my grandma said proudly.
She'd picked it especially for me.

A Piece of Peace

(by *Victoria Kahle*)

I'd take only a piece of Peace and
I'd share it with my neighbor
Just a small piece of Peace I would share
And then I wonder,
What else would be there?
Something there would open up between us,
Inside, outside and repair
With that little piece of Peace I'd share
And then I wonder what would happen?
If we both took a piece of Peace to share?
For from that something that opened up between
us
We found a bigger piece of Peace to share,
Each in turn found another and another
And a quiet came about beyond compare
Ease, Joy, Play and compassion
Just from that little piece of Peace I shared

POEMS:

SUE NEUFARTH HOWARD

Sue Neufarth Howard: Cincinnati native, published poet, visual artist, retired.

Graduate of Miami University, Oxford (Speech-Radio/TV) and UC Evening College (Associate in Art). Member, Greater Cincinnati Writer's League (GCWL) and Colerain Artists. Several prize winning or Honorable Mention poems in Ohio Poetry Day Contests since 1998. 1983 Poet Laureate for Clifton Heights/Fairview - Cincinnati Recreation Commission Neighborhood Poetry Contest.

Contact: snhpoet@fuse.net

DRAWING:

LISA SIDERS-KENNEY

Lisa Siders: MFA, UC (2005); currently Instructor of Art, NKU, UC.

Lisa has a wide range of media practices, including fibers, sculpture, and film. She has worked as a freelance artist and designer. Exhibitions include national and international venues; her work has been featured in the Houston International Quilt Festival, the National Civil Rights Museum (Memphis, TN), various venues in Ohio, and national magazines. Lisa has been a part of several shows on violence against women. She is a member of "*The Dozens*" collaborative animation group.

Contact: sidersl@email.uc.edu; www.myspace.com/dozensmultiply;
<http://maidenprojects.com/index.html>



Lesi Sider-Kennedy 2009

Whatever It Takes

A leap from the roof with hope
for serious harm

two swallowed ballpoint pens,
no accident

a hit man paid to maim –
bullet in the leg

meds taken in
triple doses.

In record numbers, our soldiers
home from Iraq tour of duty

again...

and again

the fortunate
unwounded, intact.

Family holds tighter,
war ardor grows dimmer

tugged between nurture,
risk of annihilation,

frayed, afflicted – visions
of red angst, raw miasma.

Desperate acts of the combat
weary, called for another round.

Whatever it takes, not
to go back.

Erupting Fury

In Alabama, under shrouded moon, atop
a river bridge, a man hurls one helpless,
sleepy child after another over the rail,
until all four infants sink
like leaden boulders
to the depths, eighty feet below.

In a fiery blast, hot rock and
sticky silica lava under pressure
erupt violently from the fissure,
releasing the slow building
heat of the mountain's core.

Angry after a second fight
with his wife, Lam Luong,
Vietnamese, cocaine user,
confessed to tossing
the children, one not his own,
to their deaths.

The mountain, hollowed out,
its fury spent,
simmers within.

13TH Street, Over-The-Rhine, Cincinnati

on a weedy trash-strewn
abandoned tenement lot
lies a bouquet of ruby roses
still wrapped in cellophane
at the brink of wilt

out of nurturing hands
entangled perhaps in a
crossfire of anger
rejection
bitter reproach
peace offering

discarded in the aftermath of
rended love
ravishing beauty
left helpless
destined to fade
perish among
ruins of dashed dreams

voyeur to this
private sorrow
fresh spilt ruby blood
I eavesdrop
reluctant to rescue
pay last respects
walk away

Haiku

small flags mark fresh mounds
one rose by the weathered stone
robin streaks home, beak full

POEMS:

CAROL IGOE

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

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MICHELE WRIGHT

Michele Wright has allowed her lifelong passion for literature and poetry to become a serious endeavor for the last three years. She is currently working on a series of children's books that she hopes will connect them with the beauty of nature. Michele has 19 years of experience as a graphic designer and photographer. She lives in Fort Thomas, KY, with her family.

Contact: mwright@wrightdesigns.com

DRAWING:

TERRY BOYLE

T.A.Boyle; BFA, Art Academy of Cincinnati, 1987. President, Collector's Art Group. Sculptures, paintings, and assemblages available.

Contact: terry@collectorsartgroup.com



TABOYLE

Ike Blows In from Texas

(by *Carol Igoe*)

No power all week!
Wind spun out from the Gulf
Knocks down our Midwest trees, turns off lights,
Melts our ice but keeps our ovens off.
Guffawed back to a simpler time,
We go to bed with the dark, wake with the birds.
Space holds us close, like a mother,
Our neighbors' tribulations are our daily news.
Brought to slow attention, across the fence we share,
Hot dishes, ice, candles, power saws, ourselves-
Time visits to a siren past, luring us back.

The Storm and the Light

(by *Michele Wright*)

Trees sigh sadly with the breath of change.
Stillness greets a darkening sky.
Clouds patrol with growing force.
Thunder threatens before the cry.

Now trees dance to their master's whim.
The sobbing tempest marches forth.
Water rips through leafy shadows,
Heedless of intrinsic worth.

Back and forth the storm drives on,
Tiring from another round.
A lighter touch settles in.
Suddenly — a slowing down.

Beams of light break through the course.
Sounds of life begin to flow.
Tears sparkle, arms reach out
For light in which to grow.

POEMS:

NANCY JENTSCH

Nancy Jentsch lives in Northern Kentucky and teaches at Northern Kentucky University. Ever since her days recycling glass with her church youth group in the 70s, she has been interested in environmental and social justice issues. Nancy's current focus is the promotion of fair trade goods.

Contact: jentsch@nku.edu

LINDA KLEINSCHMIDT

Linda Kleinschmidt, a long-time college instructor of composition and English, is currently a freelance editor working with fiction, nonfiction, and technical writers worldwide. She writes poetry, short stories, articles on fiction and editing. She has published two picture books, one with an Honorable Mention in a Writer's Digest competition. She spends her time between Cincinnati and Hanover, NH.

Contact: lmk42@earthlink.net

DRAWING:

ROY CARTWRIGHT

Rot Cartwright; BFA, California College of Arts and Crafts. MFA, Rochester Institute of Technology, School for American Craftsmen. Long time Ceramic Sculpture artist. Long time University of Cincinnati faculty member. Past reviews in *Dialogue*, *New Arts Examiner*, *Ceramics Monthly*, *Cincinnati magazine*. Particularly interested in natural phenomena, especially the fantastic.

Contact: roydee@fuse.net



ROY CARTWRIGHT

Threadbare

(by *Nancy Jentsch*)

Brakes scream, tires cry.
Kelsey lies still.
A mourning family moans,
A gaping, aching hole torn through the fabric
Of its life.

Had I known the girl,
That hole would have devoured me, too.

That I didn't know her,
Don't feel the same pain
That pummels those who did,
Does not diminish their agony.

And even I feel traces of the tear,
Ragged edges of grief and disbelief.

We cannot know all those
Who have died on desert battlegrounds
And in the suqs of Baghdad.
"Eleven dead today, among them an eight-
month-old girl"
Statistics bleed from the car radio
As we pass the post office,
Our errands a tourniquet.

Yet worlds away
The agony of loss
Assails each friend,
Each mother,
Father,
Son,
Daughter,
And pierces the cloth their lives have woven.
The screams, the cries --
The gaping, aching hole envelops them.

But not them alone.
Its enormity strains the
Fragile fabric
Of our seamless world,
And threatens to devour us all.

Hearing Rwanda

(by *Linda Kleinschmidt*)

Running, hiding, fleeing
From where he could not stay.
A place no longer, just wild insanity.
He fled, his bride's hand in his,
His parents' slaughtered eyes
Mirrored blackly in his own.

Far from the chaos, he sought
The home he could not reprise and so
Tore away his heart to save his soul.
I close my eyes, see him smile,
Hear his gentleness, his laughter and
His perfect French replies to my silly English.

He found a victory, yet holds,
Keeps close inside
A desperate grief for those
Who could not run as fast as he and were
Casually butchered for no reason
Other than mad, blind precision.

He hears their relentless silence always
In each sound of the night.

Become a Bear

(by *Linda Kleinschmidt*)

Bears hibernate when it gets cold,
So they don't hurt, don't appeal
Like man who reasons stubbornly.
Bears understand how to leave,
The purpose of separation
When war winds blow and days grow short.
They head for shelter and their rest,
Avoid the battles and the storms
And wake up in a newer time.
When flowers can bloom again.
Why then not be like a bear?

POEMS:

JANELLE JOHNSONGROVE

Janelle JohnsonGrove is a resident of Norwood, OH. Her background is in education and urban studies. She enjoys nutritional coaching, reading, and writing. She especially loves being the mom to her two wonderful daughters.

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HEATHER MATHEWS

Heather Mathews is a retired law office manager and horse stable operator. She is active in the Weaver's Guild and other artistic endeavors including the Greater Cincinnati Writer's League and the Cincinnati Writer's Project.

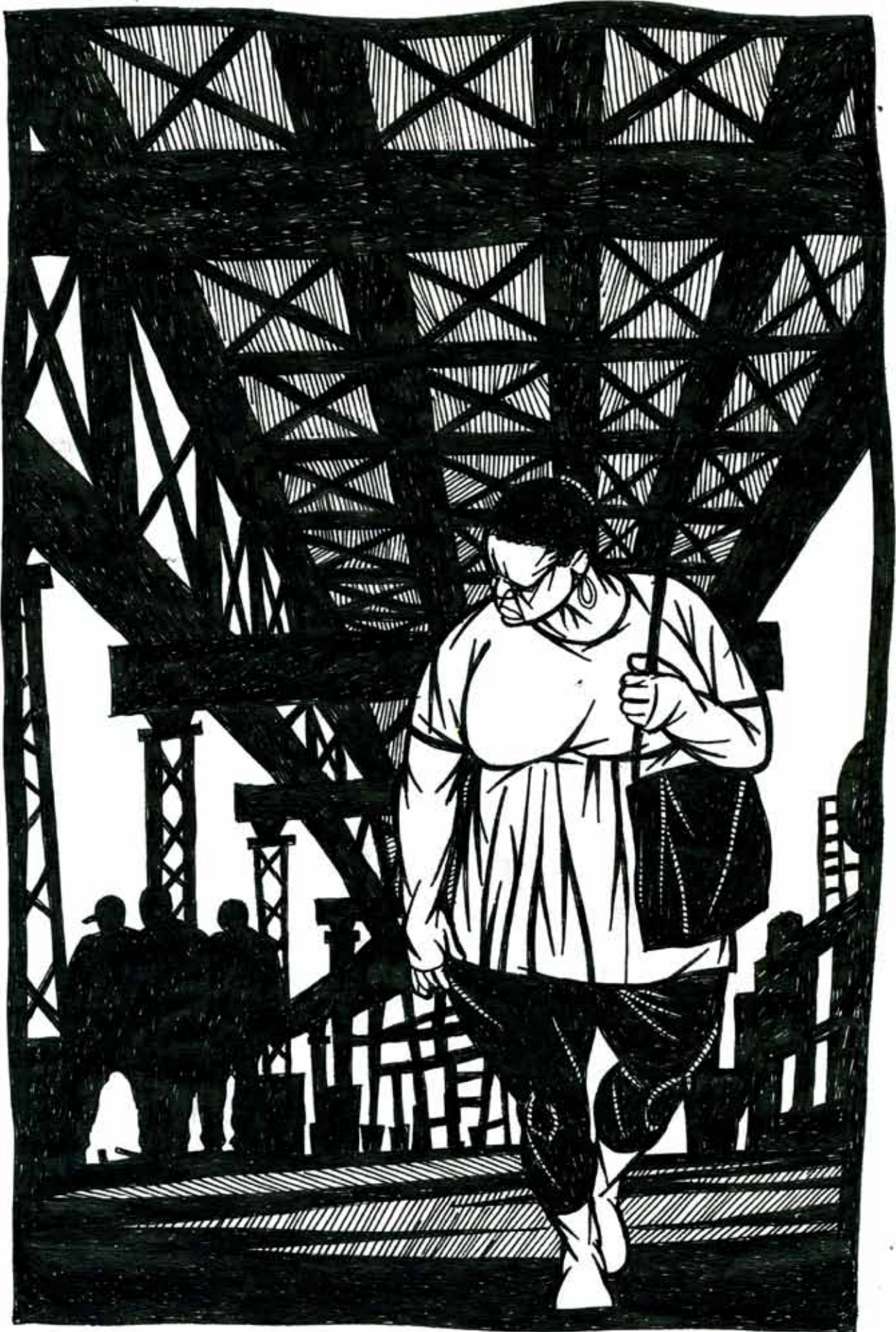
Contact: heathermathews@cinci.rr.com

DRAWING:

THOM SHAW

A native of Cincinnati, Thom Shaw addresses contemporary topics such as urban violence and his personal health issues in his large-scale woodcuts, drawings and paintings; he uses the human figure as the chief paradigm in his work. Shaw received formal training at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and Cranbrook Academy of Fine Arts in Bloomfield Hills, MI. His works have been received nationally and internationally, in museums and other public and private venues.

Contact: tshaw3@cinci.rr.com



It's a Process

(by **Janelle JohnsonGrove**)

You broke me

Cobalt blue memories
Collapse,
Bob up and emerge in all the wrong places
My awakening shatters the icy mold
Images break through and bleed into my
vision
Astonishing me with the truth I've known all
along.

Your hollow longings
Penetrated me and
Marred all my innocence

Hate fills me
And now I am imprisoned
Not by what you did to me
But by my own hatred and vengeance
towards you.

I want justice –
Payback!
Misery for you as you've done for me!
I want my grip of hatred to wrap around your
neck so I can feel all your pulsing, bloody
energies
slow –
thicken—
and
stop.

Well?
Tell me then...
What else am I to do with this hatred that lies
embedded within me?

The pain turns to hatred, doesn't it?
Doesn't it?
We all know it
and justify it—
It's justice, right?

But were my hand to kill my avenger
And were my heart to know the mystery of
stealing another life –
Would peace settle in?
Would calm accompany all my days?

So, where the hell is this road to peace?

*love your enemies.....love your
enemies.....love your enemies.....*

forgive.....forgive.....forgive

I know if I seek to destroy another
I will also destroy myself.
What kind of resolution is this for anybody?

Peace – it's not so sweet and sentimental.
It's Dante's inferno I must walk through
before getting to the high places –
To Love's dwelling place.

Then, perhaps, some day before I die I can
look back to the one I hate and forgive
and...
maybe...
laugh again.

Battlefield

(by **Heather Mathews**)

Yesterday, billowing clouds of smoke
rose across this horizon;
thunder boomed across the glen;
screams and anguish –
death was in the air
everywhere.

Today two birds oblivious, chase
happily above the far off silence
of the glade below;
You and I love,
someday at peace
among the waving grasses.

POEMS:

JERRY JUDGE

Jerry Judge is a Cincinnati based poet and social worker. He is a member of the Cincinnati Writers' Project and the Greater Cincinnati Writers' League. His poetry has recently been featured on Semantik.com. He has published six poetry chapbooks.

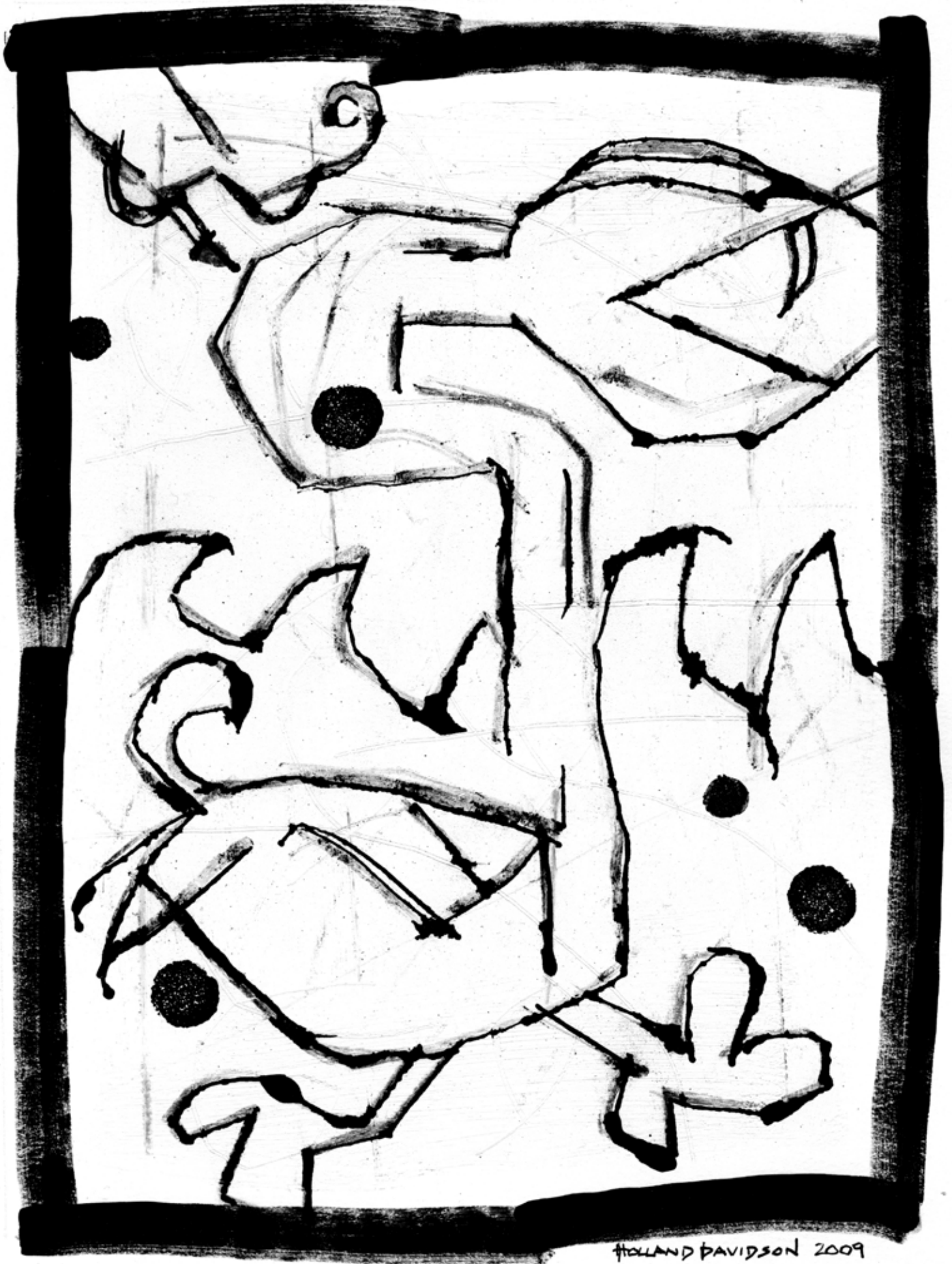
Contact: jerryj871@aol.com

DRAWING:

HOLLAND DAVIDSON

Holland Davidson is a fifth-generation native Floridian with a BA in Fine Arts from USF/Tampa. She landed in Ohio in 1983 and immediately began waiting tables. Along the way she manufactured a lot of art. Her work is in the collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum and many, many others all across the universe.

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HOLLAND DAVIDSON 2009

Deep in the Heart

How right to have a President
dedicated to the super rich.
Their happiness is important, too.

When I was young, my favorite
comic book character was Uncle Scrooge.
True, he never shared with Donald and

Huey, Dewey and Louie, but his joy
was so pure when he lounged around
in his vault of money and jewels.

At strategic points across America,
certain men will pause and contemplate
their wealth. The gleam from their smiles

will light the skies of Afghanistan and Iraq.
Uncle Scrooge will paddle through green
quacking, "The stars at night are big and bright..."

Five

after recess
the crack dealer
skipping back to class

in court
daddy's little girl
can't keep secrets

summertime
the battered child
still wearing long sleeves

27 Million Shoes

*David Crouch (Journalist) – "...al-Zaidi
might as well have thrown 27 million
shoes at George Bush, because he was
speaking for the vast majority of the
Iraqis."*

Suffocating beneath the soles
lies a befuddled American President,
confused because his inner circle
assured him he was a beloved liberator.

Bad enough to die he thinks,
but these shoes smell horrible.

Clean up crews later agreed
about the smell, but they claimed
that it wasn't the shoes.

daycare center
boy with AIDS
playing doctor

foster child
another school
all those questions

POEMS:

LONNA KINGSBURY

Lonna Kingsbury continues to teach poetry and creative communication in hopes of changing our world one thought, one word, one connection at a time. Through her association with the International Thespian Conferences she now has the opportunity to teach wherever her heart leads her. Author of several chapbooks, her children's book --*The Story of Blizzard and Snowflake* -- is soon to be available on Amazon.com

Contact: lonna@kingsburyproductions.com

DRAWING:

BILLY HOLODNAK

Billy Holodnak, a printmaker, holds a BFA from Northern Kentucky University and lives in Cincinnati, OH. He studied intaglio printmaking under Wayne Miyamoto at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. Billy has shown artwork in the Midwest and is working internationally on an exhibition scheduled in Pharos, Greece, in July of 2010. Currently, he works at Visionaries and Voices, a non-profit arts organization, as a studio coordinator assisting artists. In late 2009 Billy will open Ampol Press printmaking facility in Camp Washington, Cincinnati, OH.

Contact: subcultureart@gmail.com



Bill Holbrook

Collective Thinking

Afflictive
confirmed
stark
recessive
polarities depict
timeworn players reaping fast
overriding spending zest
reciting all we want, we need
who will follow
who will lead
forcibly or free
entreating all
believe!
embrace each bilious ill-conceived
policy decreed
maiming squealing, blinded sheep
as all the world takes heed
prompting stories pre-rehearsed
subtly marked to highlight tales
gilding covered pate debates
negating all free-thought – absurd!
scholars, counselors, challengers
compatriots demanding
voicing loss or win –against
dependent thinking norms
affixed!
ruminating spoon-fed pap
owed, bestowed, then shorn

Cause and Effect

Speculating
Regulating
Defrocked
Taxmen
Count out lives
Tabulating
Escalating
Flashy
Henchmen
Pad each side
Irritation
Deprivation
Moderation
Pitched aside
Leftly
Rightly
Both unsightly
Never centered
Stifle cries
Woeful living
Woeful dying
Depict quotas
Unaligned
Beaten
Bleeding
Bequeathed
teachings
Plummet through
the widening maw
Begging
Pleading
Past beseeching
Calling heroes
With one cause

The Call

In retrospect he listens
Silent for a time
Primed to voice passivity
Calmly holding on
Knowing good must conquer all
Darkening shades of gray
Praying to his Maker
All will find their way
Living life to do no harm
Listening to his God
Respecting those who differ
Opening every door
Freely and compassioned
Emblazoned by the cause
For unity, equality
Each to each his own
Though silently he differs
Miniscule at first
Then major dictates
Not his own
Soon require he speaks
Confused how quickly blunt
outbursts
Silence offered thoughts
Replacing smooth orations
Removing all who doubt
To order death and violence
Against his peaceful mode
Turning cheeks –now to the wall
Desperate he calls.

POEMS:

CAROL FEISER LAQUE

Carol Feiser Laque facilitates the Cincinnati poetry workshop. She wrote and published her first poem in the fifth grade. *Queen Anne's Lace* is her 16th collection of poetry. She founded Circumference Press to publish anthologies of workshop poets. Her earliest muses and mentors are her grandmothers Lethe and Frieda.

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DRAWING:

EVAN CARROLL

Evan Carroll is a Cincinnati native. His animation work has shown in various film and video festivals around the country, including the Tribeca Film Festival in New York and the River Run Festival in North Carolina. After seven years in San Francisco working in the video game industry, Evan has returned to his homeland and is currently completing his MFA in Fine Art at the University of Cincinnati.

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FLAME BURNS ON GROUND - GRASS BLOWS
SURPRISED - ROOSEVELT MOVIE NEAR 30
COM CHUTE ON TRACK

#w/c

New Blossoms, Old Roots

On this side and the other –
while roots curl through the core,
they avoid the molten center
slipping under continental divides.

My feet swing ruthless roots
piercing Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso.
My time is yesterday through tomorrow.
My path includes agonized blossoms.

Even the sleet of spring memorizes Now –
Me becoming slick and savory.
Blooming I own my geography:
a flower where the price of heaven is hell.

Revelation

In a forest of saplings
the wood sways – shattered –
as people cut entire forests down.

Leaves, branches, barks massacred –
the woods are cut into deserts:
Blowing sands, the sting of starvation.

Eyes full of sandy, grinding tears
on famine's faces. No
East, West, North, South – only war –

In the middle of All time
falling on sands: mobs, orphans, find
terror in a desert of madmen.

The Revelation cuts sharper
than the sword. Suicide bombers
splinter entire civilizations

Wandering through the desecration
and the memory of one child at a time
I wish I were God.

Suffering Waters, Dancing Stones

Dressed as swans, I fly or
dig my graves in rainy oceans.
Feathers float in fresh waters
while the sides of my bodies cave into
a group of slippery dragons without heads.

Under a wide umbrella, rain's thunder
in me – draws gracious hosts – pounding
with dear tempos and affections.
Stones flesh my dance as I again
pound through the Day of the Dead.

As a white ghost, I beg for
the real from the unreal –
for a life as peaceful as death –
for this time into immortality as
My pain bleeds into Prayer.

POEMS:

HUGH MANN

Hugh Mann is a physician-poet whose website, organicMD.org, promotes peace and health by contrasting the LOVE Diet, based on nutrition, with the HATE Diet, based on addiction. His work has been published in the New Zealand Medical Journal, Canadian Medical Association Journal, and British Medical Journal.

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DANIEL RUBIN

Dan Rubin resides in Northside with his wife, Michelle, daughter, Loretta, and son, Jonathan. He works as a customer service representative for Selamat Designs in Cumminsville, and enjoys participating in the Northside Community Writing Project.

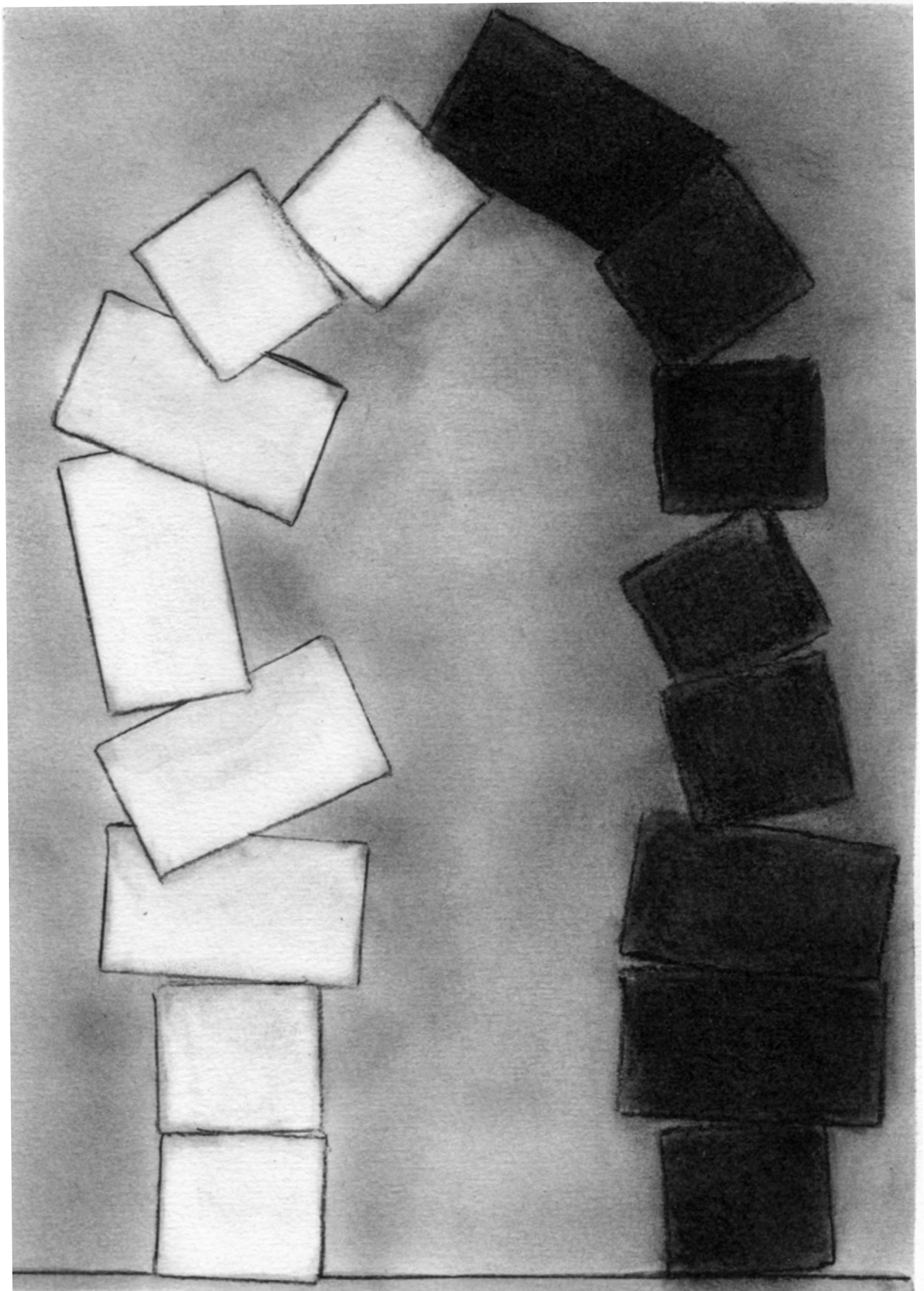
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DRAWING:

KIM SHIFFLETT

Kim Shifflett, originally from Southern New Mexico, has a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati and is finishing an MFA from the University of Cincinnati. She is a painter, printmaker and fiber artist.

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Kin Shufflett

POTUS & FLOTUS 44*

(by *Hugh Mann*)

America's Founding Fathers envisioned freedom
but they never could have imagined today

Harriet Tubman ran the Underground Railroad
but she never could have imagined today

Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves
but he never could have imagined today

Susan B. Anthony promoted women's rights
but she never could have imagined today

Eleanor Roosevelt internationalized human rights
but she never could have imagined today

John F. Kennedy legalized civil rights
but he never could have imagined today

Martin Luther King articulated civil rights
but he never could have imagined today

Somewhere in heaven, a jubilant choir is singing,
"Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we
are free at last!"

**This poem celebrates Barack and Michelle Obama
as the 44th President of the United States (POTUS)
and First Lady of the United States (FLOTUS).*

Brother

(by *Hugh Mann*)

I'm not well
If you are sick

I'm not rich
If you are poor

I can't live
If you're not free

I depend on you
And you can depend on me

A brother is no bother
We all have the same Father

Choose to Smile

(by *Daniel Rubin*)

I choose to smile
When I'm talking on the phone
As I help customers with their orders
And questions and concerns
About damaged items
I choose to smile
Because I understand
That a smile can be seen
Even over the phone
Even if a customer
Doesn't smile back
I choose to smile

Thoughts

(by *Daniel Rubin*)

Sit with me
In the morning
Dark thoughts looming
Come and go
No control
Watch and breathe as
The next thought comes
Have a cup of tea with me
You the bastard and me
The saint

POEM:

MARISSA MCNAMARA

Marissa McNamara is a local English teacher and writer who hopes that some day words will be as important as money and who would love to send Duke Energy a poem a month for her utilities rather than a check. She currently resides in Newport, KY, with her three old dogs and a herd of dust elephants. It is her wish that her poetry will remind people that they are not alone in the world.

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DRAWING:

LINDSAY NEHLS

Lindsay Nehls is currently studying sculpture and photography at the University of Cincinnati.

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LINDSAY NEHLS

Where is Your Peace, America?

*"America, the plum blossoms are falling."
--Alan Ginsberg, "America"*

Where is your peace, America?

In the eyes of the immigrant workers, hands laying your brick and cleaning
your floors?

In codes of yellow and red before your planes can fly?

Or in the Wal-marted fields, its lanes of fluorescent lighted plastics
and children crying for more?

Where is your peace, America?

In your tree-lined streets of parked cars that earned millions for men who
charter jets

and thumb their noses at the rows of workers standing empty handed
except for the buckets for bailing, their boats now sinking
in the harbor off shore of the dream?

Lady Liberty raises her hand for you, America,

your tired, your hungry, your poor, but is she proud?

Her insides hollow and barren she stands

offering light to boats crossing to and fro

while cattle cars of pre-Americans swelter in the bordered heat.

Where is your peace, America?

With your youth wasted and large with the fat of the land?

Or in the Nike shod boys whose faces blur into video games of violence
and theft,

who ejaculate under computer tables in public libraries and put guns into
their backpacks before school?

Where is your feminine side, America?

Its heart slowed inside emaciated modeled women

whose breath is barely a whisper beneath their burka-ed breasts.

Where is your peace, America?

The rushing of you as you look down, cell-phoned and beholden to your
hand-held future

when there is no time even for talking, only for text.

Slow down, America, and look up from your palms. Closed hands cannot receive.

Where do you go now, America?

Eyes turned up in supplication, waiting for your savior to come, to God
Bless America,

to shower you with what you deserve from this fine land

--the Indians' gifts, the off-shore oil, the fields of waving grain.

Will you listen now, America,
to the cries of Marx who realized too late: *I was listening to the cries of the
past*
when I should have been listening to the cries of the future?

America, where is the peace
of your soul? Still blown to bits by two planes--
or gathered again to make right,
to repair the whole fragmented mess of your heart?
What if you left the cracks, America, and let in new light?

Here is your peace, America--in the rebuilders
who flocked to Katrina when the levies broke,
who still wield their tools long after the flood,
in firefighters picking their way through New York's rubble,
beam after beam, smoke rising around them, in the candles for the dead,
the songs reaching up in prayer, the posters and photos lining the streets.
Your peace, America, is in each face at the polls, in the 1.8 million
who flocked peacefully to the Mall, the waves of hope and cheers of voices
who joined as one--

America, here is your peace in times of a leader
whose voice rings true with hope for change
who asks us to unite, to set aside childish things,
to weave anew what we can be.

America, how can we rejoice in your present?
By celebrating each step firmly planted,
each candle lit for another on the eve of despair,
each soul touched, each body and mind nourished
all nations touched, none as one--
by knowing that we are ready to begin the work of remaking America.
Where is your peace, America? It lingers on the edges, now, a light,
ready and waiting to be let in.

POEMS:

CONSTANCE MENEFEE

Constance Lee Menefee works as a technical editor and writer. She has received several poetry awards, including, in 1998, an Individual Artist's Fellowship from the Ohio Arts Council, for her poetry about the Vietnam War.

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DRAWING:

KEVIN KELLY

Kevin T. Kelly, born in 1960, graduated from the Art Academy of Cincinnati in 1987 with a BFA in Sculpture. He moved to New York City in 1988, where he worked as a studio assistant to Tom Wesselman for six years. He currently lives and works in the Greater Cincinnati area. His work has appeared on the cover of *New American Paintings* in 2000 and 2003, and is included in numerous private and public collections, both here and abroad.

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Kenneth Murray 2009

Reunification Express, 1994

Somewhere miles out
of Saigon
north even of Phan Rang
and Nha Trang
eating sticky white rice
spooned from red plastic
laundry tubs
you'd swear the riders
of the purple sage
were hiding in a box canyon
a kind of hot tumbleweed
dryness with prickly pears
pretending to be
overlapping green roof tiles,
sheltering some
deeper resemblance to the
cowboy warrior's home range,
a dun-blue sky as big as the
ceiling
over the Badlands
on a persistent wind afternoon
broken by furrowed trees old
before their time,
stands of slender
silver-mottled rubber trees
slip by
warning even those
lost in train time
bound for the Hai Van Pass
that the time of heroes
is past
is past
is past.

The Other Soc Trang

Please, doc, god,
call me a drunk a lush
a loser drinker no good bum,
but don't say PTSD,
it can't be PTSD,
I was at Soc Trang
and nothing much happened
to me, not the real stuff
that makes you swallow
your puke so normal people
can't see how screwed up you are;
the booby traps,
you remember those
don't you,
and all the Charlies
every at night
moving around like
they owned the damn
country or something,
weren't you there
at Soc Trang
the night we were mortared
sure you were there
you screamed with your
mouth closed jammed
under the bunk
as they dropped and dropped
 incoming
 incoming
 incoming;
what's the matter
you only remember
daylight and driving supplies
around in the steam bath
delta;
thought you were there same
as me,
must have been
the other Soc Trang
where not much happened.

Some Who Stayed

Misshapen wool steamed
softly
on the stove, pulled-down nylon rope
throat high where we gathered
the one place warm and
I made biscuits that
baked hard as the memories
years later
of talk in the West Virginia winter
crusty, biting layer of
glaze over a foot or more,
late snow, one said he starved himself
ate bananas and water for months
until
they rejected his skinny, draftee butt
 not enough meat for
cannon
or even typewriter
fodder;
I kneaded and pummeled
a lump of flour and water
until dry dough flaked
all over while I heard
the ways they didn't go
red and gray socks funky damp
around us
so far from triple canopy jungle
hung about with leeches
soft lips ready to slip kisses
too quiet, waiting
for the first red line to
spring up, blood bracelet
discarded carelessly like a diva
might throw a twisting string
of faux rubies
from an unwanted admirer
so far from the truth
of having stayed, laughing
half-rueful, half-relieved at not
knowing of this,
eating harsh biscuits
free to go on
with unmarked flesh.

POEMS:

ALI MRAMOR

Ali spent her time in Cincinnati working as an activist, program coordinator, and community organizer for social and environmental justice as well as political campaigns. Since leaving Cincinnati in 2005, she has embarked on an inner journey to find her truest expression as an agent for change. She is currently living in Los Angeles teaching Conscious Activism and yoga.

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FRAN WATSON

Fran Watson: writer, former art editor for City Beat, contributor to many publications and to Dialogue magazine. Artist, abstract works included in numerous collections, private and public. Lecturer. Musician: flute, classical guitar and tenor choral member. Mother of four. Docent at the Taft Museum of Art for 25 years. Proud accepted poet with "*For a Better World*" for many years.

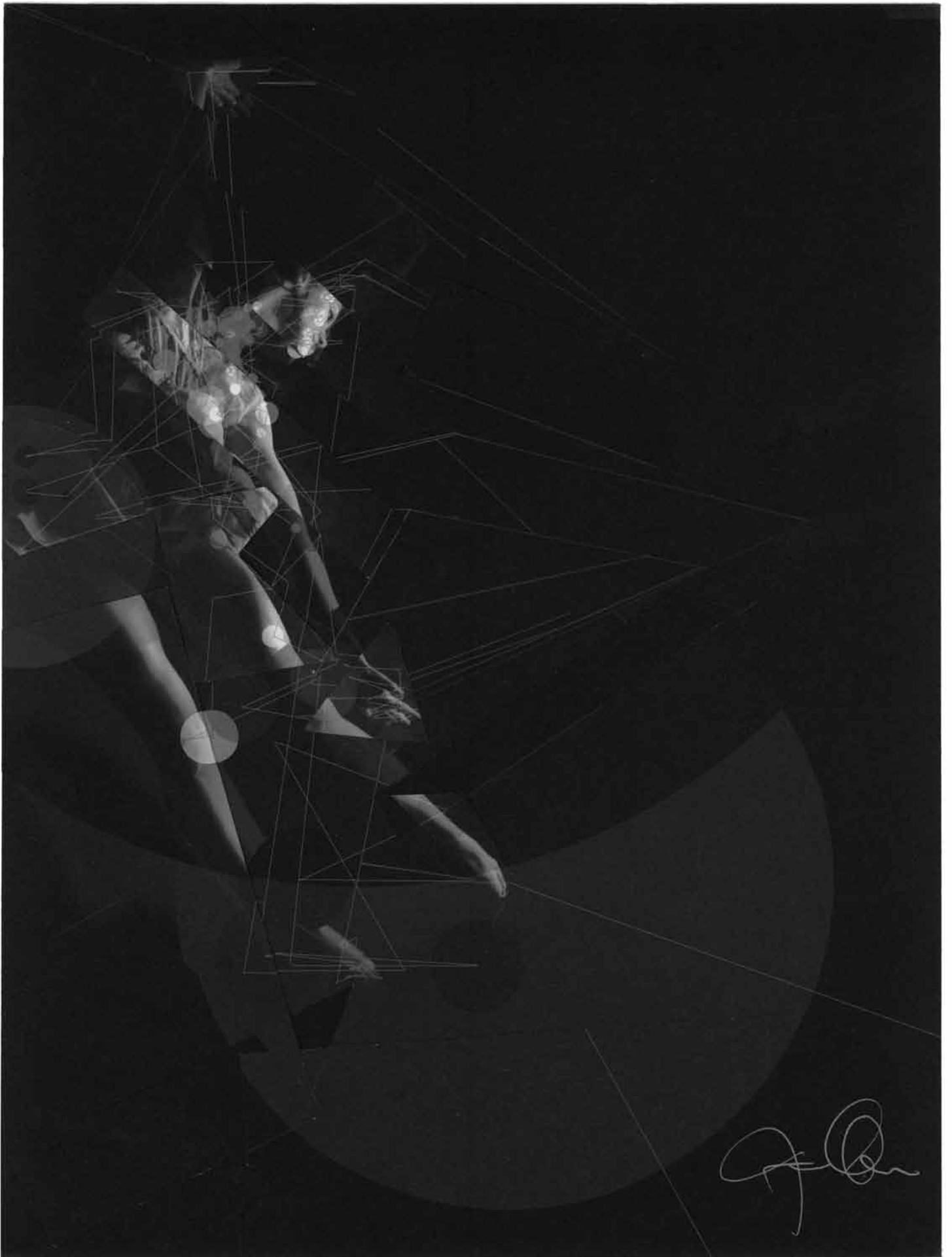
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DRAWING:

JONATHAN GIBSON

Jonathan Gibson received his BFA and MFA in Painting, but has worked as a Graphic Designer for 9 years. He teaches Graphic Design, 2D Design, and Photography at Xavier University. He is interested in the formation of personal identity and the impact of technology on our visual literacy. He is the proud father of two young boys and husband to an angelic wife.

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Undoing the Babylon Within

(by *Ali Mramor*)

How much of you is really You?
How much is really the product of the
programming
taking place every second of every day?
Each way my head turns
my eyes are struck with their wishes
and my insides slowly begin to turn to ashes.
But the Phoenix will rise.
The Phoenix will rise.
Once the Babylon within is undone.
The constructs that began when we were small
are now larger than us all.
We can't break free until we can see
That the true Babylon only exists within
The cages we put ourselves in
They bombard us with expectations and lines
to stay between
But in the end it's us who put ourselves in-
between.
Turn your head
See what lies beyond
The walls of deception
Where the free winds blow
Where the eyes know
The Truth that lies beyond
The walls
Of Babylon
Within
Me.

The Law Student

(by *Fran Watson*)

Shining with all the certainty of youth,
of having been told by Those Who Know
in her paralegal class, and solidly faithful
to their black and white righteousness,
she stated her mantra of the moment
“Law,” she smiled, “ has nothing to do with
justice”.

Looking back into her clear eyes,
so young, I could almost see her soul inside,
aimed straight into a flawless future,
written in conviction's true blue ink.
I could see her, in tomorrow's shaded
contours,
filled with second guesses
her certainty shaken by truth,
her heart scarred by experience,
her faith crumbled by life,
still clinging to that early lesson
while drowning in reality.

Fable

(by *Fran Watson*)

Between the times of war
there's peace,
pleated and folded,
patient and quiet,
waiting
in a secret pocket
surrounded by time's dust bunnies ,
and hung with fading hope.

POEMS:

MIKE MURPHY

Mike Murphy and his partner Birdie grow organic vegetables for market on a tiny Maysville, KY, farm. He gets up early, listens to BBC world news on NPR, reads books by Paul Von Ward, and Neale Walsch--- and writes poems in his spare time.

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DRAWING:

DAVID UMBENHOUR

David Umbenhour is a graphic designer and printmaker.

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DAVID UMBENHOVR 09

The Uppity Puppets

Once upon a time
On a small planet
There lived
Two puppets side by side,
A Smaller Puppet &
A Larger Puppet,
Both equally loved by the
Puppet Master because of the
Riches under their lands.

Each puppet desired to be
Master in his own house.
So, one day, Larger Puppet
Cut his puppet strings
And was free.

Puppet Master was furious,
And immediately gave Smaller Puppet
Weapons to make war on Larger Puppet.

Secretly, Puppet Master also
Helped Larger Puppet,
And the war lasted for nine long years.

After the war ended
Puppet Master pretended to offer
Smaller Puppet the gift of
Tiny Puppet
As a prize for Smaller Puppet's
Obedience in
Waging the war against Larger Puppet,
So, Smaller Puppet seized Tiny Puppet.

'Error! Error!'
Puppet Master made Smaller Puppet
Release Tiny Puppet, and spanked Smaller Puppet
All the way back home.

Would Smaller Puppet now obey?
Not enough to please Puppet Master.
So, clever Puppet Master crafts a master stroke,
By enticing Little Enemy to
Dramatically attack Puppet Master himself,
And gains the sympathy of The Whole Community,
And then blames Little Enemy Attack on Smaller Puppet.

Oh, joy! Puppet Master now
Attacks and overwhelms
Smaller Puppet and his riches,
And also threatens Larger Puppet, and his riches

Woof! What an audacious puppet show!
How will it end?
Will Uppity Puppets topple Puppet Master?
Will Puppet Master control Uppity Puppets?
Will Puppet Master make puppets of
The Whole Community?
Or will The Whole Community
Stand Uppity and
Re-script this puppet show?
You decide....

Peaches & Plums & Politics

It's not
Just
Peaches &
Plums,
You know—
Our Politics &
Preferences

If it were
Just
Peaches &
Plums
We could
Each have
Different tastes &

Live happily
Together
Forever,
And never
Ever
Talk about it.

But if you
Like a
Politics of
War &
Conquest,
& Like a
Politics of
Peace &
Cooperation—

Why, it makes
All the
Difference in the
World—
For
Generations
To come.

So, we must
Talk—
Of peaches
& plums &
Politics.

POEMS:

COLIN MURRAY

Colin Murray represents the Evolve project, representative of massive change.

The letter 'e' in the word 'we' becomes an intense symbol replacing our possessive I in favor of force field unification. Broader terms of acceptance granted in the 'now'. Now is the time for change and progress. Evolve is NOW. Evolve. The time is now. Together. Let's do it.

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JIM SWILL

Jim Swill is a media manipulator. He is a member of such projects as Realicide (www.realicide.com), Evolve Project, Bunk News, Now Is The Time, and the spoken word group "Get Born" from St. Louis, MO.

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DRAWING:

PETER MILLER

Peter Miller is a Cincinnati native and third year fine art major at the University of Cincinnati. When not creating ink drawings, Peter spends his time painting, sculpting, drinking cheap beer and eating ramen noodles.

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PETER MILLER

Plague Revisited

(by *Colin Murray*)

The kings of all me, surround me in hoards
They starve me with judgment and boil my sores
The locust now tongues
Which blacken the earth
And slander the soil
As meaningless turfs.
All life is sacred, don't deny what I'm worth
Send me to battle, a star spangled hearse
I forsake all our boundaries
I spit on our birth
the chariot's horseman in turbulent surf.

Ships within Ships

(by *Jim Swill*)

Our hands outstretched:
through technology we channel the human spirit
but manifest a curse of mechanical decay
within the process of replicating ourselves
in plastic and metal:
for the only doppelganger
would be the image of cancer

As beautiful cosmos expand and dissolve
and our tides pull and push evolutionary pools
we disguise our fragility
in our ability to dominate and torture

Carnal smiles
open welts of iron whips
and imaginations gagged with poison medicines

Do not let these devices control you
for they are merely extremities of the flesh

Though your body may frighten you
though you feel bound to skin and bone
you are not a simple organism
nor a divine machine of pulsating muscle

We are vessels
We are channels
We are ships within ships
unaware of where the ocean ends.

POEMS:

YVETTE NEPPER

Yvette Nepper, formerly of Dayton, is currently working and writing in the city she loves, Cincinnati, OH.

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STEVE PENTICUFF

Steve Penticuff understands, with Howard Zinn, that dissent is the highest form of patriotism. He gets his news from BBC, Democracy Now!, CounterSpin, Deutsche Welle, Al Jazeera, NPR, The Economist, and Z Magazine. Steve teaches high school English.

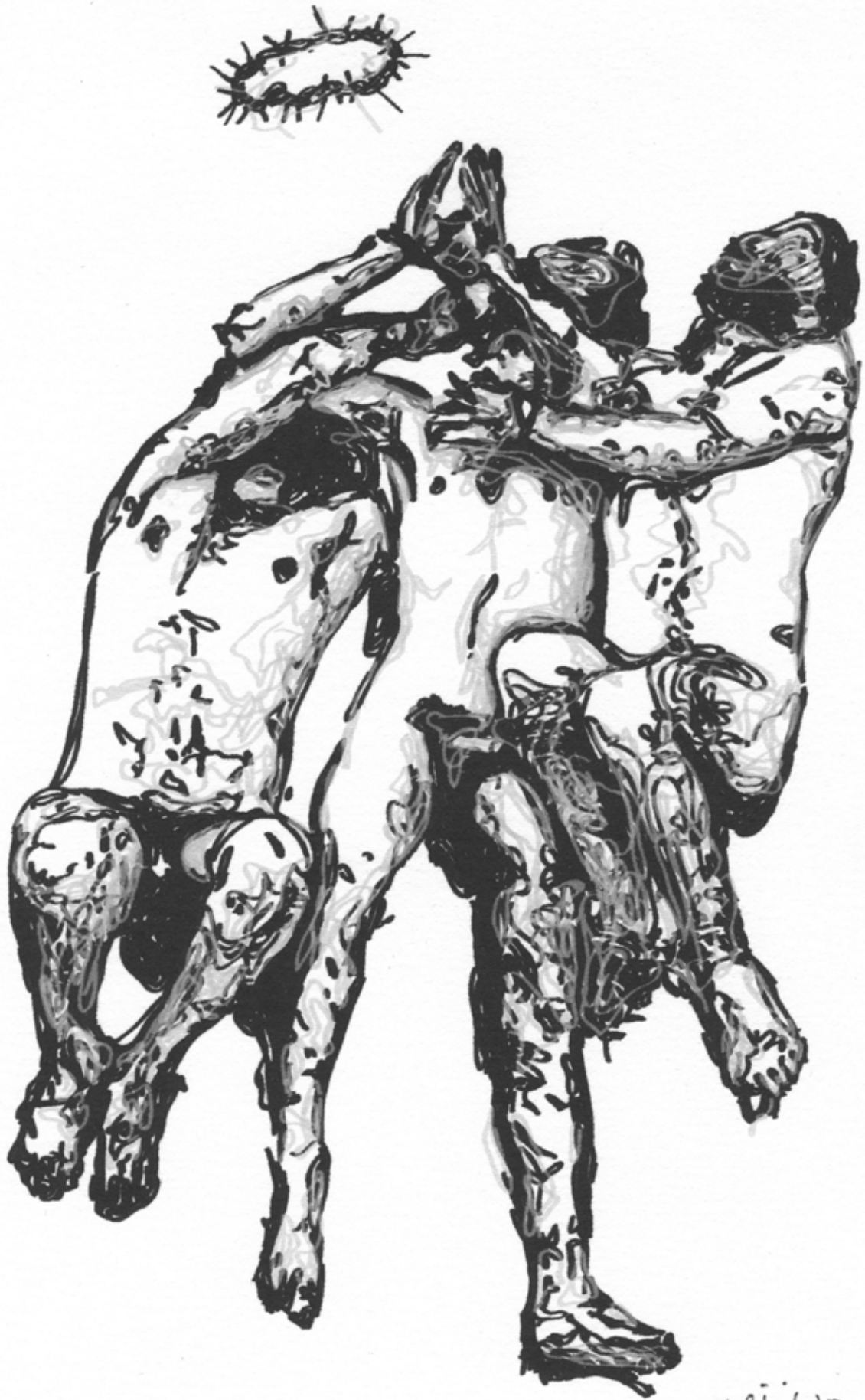
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DRAWING:

LEIF FAIRFIELD

Leif Fairfield, printmaker and musician, was born in a log cabin during a snowstorm in the foothills of northern California. After working in print studios and teaching book arts in the San Francisco Bay Area, he moved to east Tennessee to pursue his love of letterpress and Appalachian music. He holds an MFA in Printmaking and Drawing from UC. He publishes a letterpress 'zine *AMPHIBIAN*, which has appeared in many publications, including *PRINT* magazine.

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Abel '09

treated/urge

(by *Yvette Nepper*)

at home when we resist
the urge to be treated as
less than human
we wrap our blessings
in a box
carried to school
tailored to work
sinking on ships
we ride in the night

letters

(by *Yvette Nepper*)

you are on a map
which is on a piece of
paper
and
you become a paper-person
in my mind

we play video games and giggle
or run marathons and win
without stopping

together we must fight and
play
or accomplish what
seems to be

p.s. does it seem like one of us is always
in the way?

What it Means

(by *Steve Penticuff*)

What does it mean
to be a "Christian nation" not blessed
as peacemakers, a nation foreign

to turning the other cheek, where the Greek
language of the New Testament remains
strange?

What does it mean
when Jesus of the Gospels is lost
in translation and made to sanction
unconscionable things between the lines?
"If your enemy frightens you, send F-18s
to bomb his ass" (questions later, sorry
for the civilian deaths) "back to the stone age."
Of course, we decent folk remember
not to say "ass"--No cursing allowed,
and heaven help the man or media
that makes us fret about the violence
wrought with our ballets
and bullets.

What does it mean
to watch "bad guys" tortured and killed,
wives raped, children orphaned,
while the world's commander
in chief-of-crimes-against-humanity
skates? What does it mean
when dissent is suddenly un-American,
not our highest calling?

What does it mean
when Sarah Palin wins enormous support
but can't tell you where she gets her news?
When we would rather hear "traffic
and weather together" every seven minutes
than a half hour of hard hitting journalism?

It means the ABC-CBS-CNN-MSNBC-
FOX machine is a bullet train
traveling at the speed of hubris and profit,
a gravity machine hurtling downhill
with a tailwind of near-invincibility.
But if enough of us lie down on the tracks
in that desert, one way or another
the locomotive stops, and just maybe
the passengers catch a saving cross-breeze
of sage.

POEMS:

NOELLA POINSETTE

Noella Poinsette is an Oldenburg Franciscan who has worked in music ministry (often in Cincinnati) and been involved in social justice ministry “on the side” for years. This has taken her to Central America, the Pine Ridge Reservation, New Orleans, and the US/Mexican border. Noella often expresses this passion for justice through poetry and photography. She grew up in Indianapolis where both her parents were in community service.

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DRAWING:

PAIGE WIDEMAN

Paige Wideman received a BFA in sculpture from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1989 and an MFA in sculpture from the University of Cincinnati in 1999. She is currently a Lecturer at Northern Kentucky University.

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Rizki Heliana '09

Santo Santo

She is called Santo Santo;
she is called holy.

Santo Santo is a woman,
a refugee
who came alone,
a thousand miles she walked
loving her child
to be born of peace
to be born beneath the light of the stars,
not under days of shadow.

Santo Santo of El Salvador
walking,
walking,
walking,
heavy with child eight months
walking,
loving,
loving,
walking.

The People and Jesus

Guatemala
is a land
of many mountains,
of many colors,
of many indigenous people.

Guatemala
is a land
whose richness
masks the poverty
of the people.

In this country
all the needy,
every day
carry tied bundles of firewood
on their heads;
sometimes the men
carry the tree trunks on their shoulders
looking like our brother,
looking like Jesus.

Santo Santo

Se llama Santo Santo;
es se llama santo.

Santo Santo estuvo una mujer,
una refugiado
huyendo solamente,
las mil millas ella caminó
queriendo su niño
nacer de paz,
nacer debajo las estrellas de la luz,
no debajo las días de sombra.

Santo Santo de El Salvador
caminando,
caminando,
caminando
fecundo a las ocho meses
caminando,
amando,
amando,
caminando.

El Pueblo y Jesús

Guatemala
es una tierra
de muchas montañas
de muchos colores
de muchos pueblos indios

Guatemala
es una tierra
de la preciosidad
enmascara la pobreza
de su pueblo

En este país
todos pobrecitos
todos los días
llevan los atados de la leña
encima sus cabezas
a veces los hombres
llevan los troncos encima de sus hombros
pareciendo como nuestro hermano
pareciendo como Jesús.

Stand Up

*Stand up!
with grace stand up!
walk in wisdom and strength;
listen, do not close your ears, your heart
in fear*

*Open your soul
risking
trusting
knowing
delight awaits your outstretched arms*

Stand up!
be the Breath within you!
let your song be your longing, your dream,
your passion
shout!
whisper!
Ezekiel's bones rise!
deserts bloom in colors abundant!

Stand up!
leap!
dance!
in the fullness of your presence!
dance with the One you love!
shalom!
be the Breath within you!

Hold the unknown and brokenness
in the embrace of your dance.
look into his eyes;
breathe,
dance
re-member the brokenness
dance!
be the fullness within you
be the Breath that ignites all fire!

Re-member the brokenness,
re-member.

Be the breath of fullness,
be the breath.
dance!
celebrate!
death is no more!

Be wrapped in the folds of her abundance!
be enveloped in the Breath that ignites all fire.
be the anguish, the ecstasy!
stand up
in grace, stand up!

POEMS:

ARMANDO ROMERO

Armando Romero (MA, 1981, PhD, 1983, Latin American Literature, U. of Pittsburgh) is a scholar and a writer who has dedicated his life to the study and practice of literature, concentrating on Latin America poetry. His books *Las palabras están en situación*, and *El Nadaismo o la búsqueda de una vanguardia*, are used as text books in Colombian universities. As an author, Armando has written poetry, novels and short stories, all acclaimed by the critics. He recently published an anthology of Latin American poetry, *Una gravedad alegre* (2007).

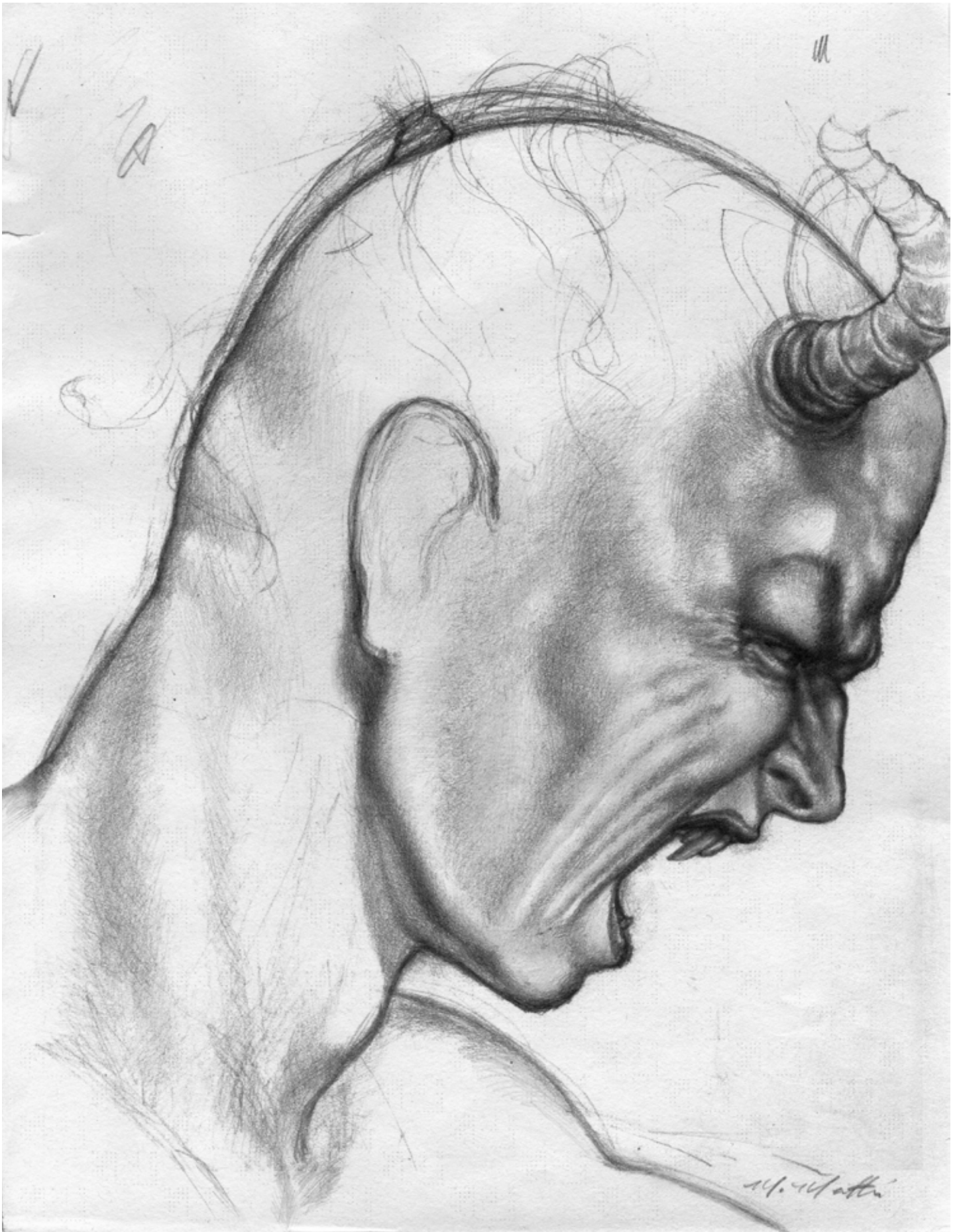
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DRAWING:

MAURICE MATTEI

Maurice Mattei has been working locally in Cincinnati all his life. He writes and performs music, takes pictures and draws. Although some individuals consider him to be an artist Maurice is not a leftist or a "progressivist". Consequently, he does not believe in many of the principles that define the contemporary ideologies of the creative class. He subscribes to the notion that if a person cannot draw - regardless of their sensibilities or intellect - they should not be in art school.

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To Stop History

To Alfonso

The emperor on call got out
today of his imperial cot
to stop history with his hands,
with his feet.
He does it everyday as this is his mission.
It was that of his ancestors,
it will be that of his heirs
Strange reality and job for this man
Omnipotent for a while:
History before, pushed back with force;
now it is tired,
Like a stone on the road.
But the emperor on call does not want
it to back down, nor to be considered defeated,
because his mission is to stop it.
Without it he would have neither present nor
future.
Every morning the emperor on call
smiles and makes gestures of joy
In front of the multitude stuck to their tv,
while history, arrested, grumbles,
and making an effort, strains,
listening attentive to the clamor of its intestines.

(translated by Saad Ghosn)

Detener la Historia

A Alfonso

El emperador de turno se ha levantado
hoy de su catre imperial
a detener la historia con la manos,
con los pies.
Así lo hace a diario pues ésa es su misión.
Lo fue de sus antepasados,
lo será de sus herederos.
Extraña realidad y trabajo para este hombre
por un rato omnipotente:
La historia empujó con fuerza antes
y ahora esta cansada,
como piedra en el camino.
Pero el emperador de turno no quiere
que retroceda ni se dé por vencida,
porque su misión es detenerla.
Sin ella él tampoco tendría presente o futuro.
Cada mañana el emperador de turno
sonríe y hace gestos de gozo
frente a la multitud adherida al televisor,
mientras la historia detenida se lamenta,
y haciendo un esfuerzo, puja,
atendiendo el clamor de sus intestinos.

The Farewell of Gods

Stories of gods wander through books like
in our imagination
Perennial mobility in the eternal and closed Chaos of their
origin
If Mount Athos was the first throne of Zeus before
he went to Olympus,
it is also Athos who carried from Thrace the big mountain
to crown in the heights the trident of his father, Poseidon,
trident made real by the 3 strips of land of the Chalcidic peninsula
It is Homer, he who said not to see but through us from then until now,
who affirmed this from the beginning
Claudio, the emperor, contradicts him, when he states that Athos,
monstrous son of the earth, threw against the gods
of Olympus all the fury of his snows, and that it was up
to a mortal, Hercules, to defeat him, as predicted by the Oracle.
But whatever the truth, the gods filled up with their seminal
fluids, this glass of time, until it spilled over.
By paths and roads, valleys and mountains, at sea and between
cliffs, a trail of hazards and encounters, caprices
and destinies, marked the limits of their permanence.
Erected statues added to a hieratic geography were lights to illuminate the pier
which, from the other bank, comes to life and then returns
But on a fateful day, the gods must have felt a strong kick in their heart,
a call to origin.
It was the foot of a Virgin Lady on the beaches of Dion,
the needle that buried itself in their time, in order to stop it;
and as All, in movement of centuries, stopped in that moment,
the dance of the gods froze them in their last gesture,
as they started to crack into pieces onto the ground.
Now pasture of history, of exhumers, of rebuilders,
the gods broken into fragments observe silent the total power of the Unique,
the One named with the only sign that is not two.

How great is the sadness of the gods where lives God!

(translated by Saad Ghosn)

Adios de Dioses

Vagan las historias de los dioses por los libros como
por nuestra imaginación.
Perenne movilidad en el eterno y clausurado Caos de su
origen.
Si el Monte Athos fue el primer trono de Zeus antes de
ir al Olimpo,
también es Athos quien lleva desde Tracia la gran montaña
para coronar en las alturas el tridente de su padre,
Poseidón, hecho verdad en las tres lanzas de tierra de
la península Calcídica.
Es Homero, aquel que dijo a no ver más que por nosotros desde
el allá al ahora, quien de entrada esto nos afirma.
Claudio, emperador, lo contradice, cuando señala que Athos,
monstruoso hijo de la tierra, lanzó contra los dioses
del Olimpo toda la furia de sus nieves, correspondiendo
a un mortal, Hércules, el derrotarlo por designio del
Oráculo.
Cierto lo uno o lo otro los dioses colmaron con sus líquidos
seminales este vaso de tiempo hasta derramarlo.
Por senderos y caminos, valles y montañas, al mar y entre los
riscos, una estela de azares y encuentros, caprichos y
destinos marcó las lindes de su permanencia.
Erguidas estatuas aunadas a una geografía hierática eran faros
para iluminar la rada que desde la otra orilla viene a la
vida mientras regresa.
Pero un día aciago deben haber sentido los dioses un puntazo en
el pecho, un llamado al origen.
Era el pie de una Mujer Virgen en las playas de Dion la aguja
que se enterró en su tiempo para detenerlo;
y como el Todo, en movimiento de siglos, se detuvo en ese
instante,
la danza de los dioses los congeló en el último gesto al momento
de empezar a resquebrajarse en pedazos por los suelos.
Pasto ahora de la historia, de los desenterradores, de los
reconstructores, los dioses en fragmentos observan
silenciosos el todo poder del Único, el nombrable con
el sólo signo que no es dos.

¡Qué tristeza de dioses hay donde vive Dios!

POEMS:

LINDA SCHOFIELD

Other than twelve years in California, Linda Ann Schofield has lived most of her life in western Ohio. She retired from 31 years in the education field—most as a high school librarian—in June of 2005 when she moved to the Cincinnati area to be near her daughters and grandchildren.

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DORI J. VAN LUIT

Dori VanLuit, a native of Cincinnati, studied at UC and CCM. A member of Cincinnati Writer's Project since 2001, her poems have been included in six publications plus two self-published books. She is leader of the Creative Writing Club at the Sycamore Senior Center. Dori won second prizes in the southwest Ohio A.O.P.H.A. writing contest in 2004, 2007, and 2008.

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DRAWING:

BRUCE ERIKSON

Bruce Erikson graduated with a BFA degree from Edinboro University, PA, in 1996 and received an MFA in Painting at Indiana University- Bloomington. He recently relocated to Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH, where he teaches drawing, painting and illustration. Bruce currently is showing at the Centre Culturel de l'Arsenal in Maubeuge, France.

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Patterns

(by *Linda Schofield*)

*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*
Psalm 34:18

There are patterns that make sense:
Cathedral Window quilts, loaves of bread
on grocery shelves , grapes on wallpaper,
seven snow angels in January.

Then there are the other patterns:
the 17-year-old boy shot while he waits
on the corner for the bus to take him to
school;
the 17-year-old boys shooting because
they never learned how to settle differences.

The boy lying in the morgue
not filling out the rest of his college
application forms,
the ones sitting behind bars wishing
they could go back.

And later, relatives, friends, strangers
standing at that same corner, some crying,
some too numb to cry, some so angry
they can barely hold it in, yet knowing that
unchecked anger is why they are here.

...and some wondering if there is any way
to keep the pattern from repeating itself.
They're holding candles:
for spilled blood, for peace.

Time Line for a Country

(by *Dori Van Luit*)

The black veil of the widow lifted an
Age of Innocence from a nation.
A small boy saluted a casket of broken dreams -
Hopes of the founding fathers, while
Demons dined on "Liberation."
A stage company was set for Viet Nam while the
Comedy of Jimmy Durante echoed in the wings.
The tunes of the Beatles became absorbed in old
Dancing socks that lie still in the attic.
Good times wove a quilt we thought would never
tear.
We're electronic robots still searching for
Camelot.
The eternal flame helps us remember.
This is our generation.

The Nation's Economy 2009

(by *Dori Van Luit*)

When did it start eroding, crumbling to dust,
The day the Twin Towers fell or
The day prayer went out of schools?
Bosses got angry with unions and
Outsourced jobs to Mexico, China.
Banks gave loans that people couldn't pay.
Fat cats on Wall Street manipulated investments.
All because of greed, greed, greed.

We got through rough times before -
the Civil War, World War I,
the Great Depression, World War II
We're all bound by a golden cord,
Believing in a dream called America.
We're all our brother's keeper.
We'll get through this 'war' if we
Put down the greed and
Pick up the Golden Rule.
No 'bail out' needed!

POEMS:

SHERRY COOK STANFORTH

Sherry Cook Stanforth is an English professor at Thomas More College, specializing in creative writing, Native, African American and Appalchian literature, nature/environmental studies, and folklore. Her creative and academic work has appeared in the *Indiana Review*, *The MacGuffin*, *MELUS*, *Language and Lore* and *NCTE* book publications. Sherry also regionally performs in two Appalachian folk bands, Tellico and Sunset Dawn. She writes fiction and poetry, studies natural plant remedies, and raises many children.

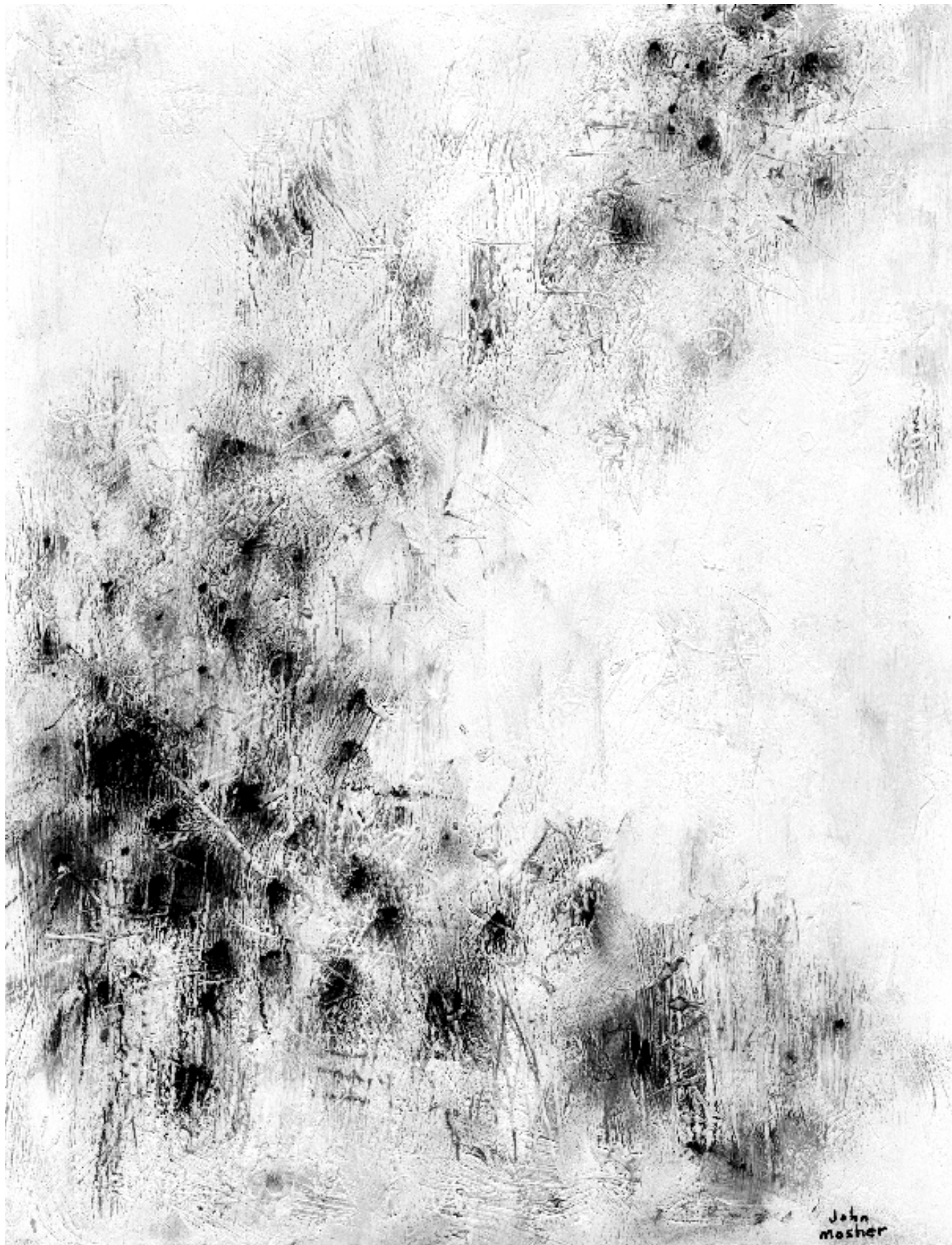
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DRAWING:

JOHN MOSHER

John Mosher is a Cincinnati artist born and raised in western Michigan. He attended Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids, Michigan before attending graduate school at the University of Cincinnati. After graduating this spring, he will continue to create and exhibit his artwork, as well as teach art at various institutions.

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This Time

For Danny Miller

That story you sometimes hear tell of
tells its truth again: a woman living
in the green land that spawned her steel-
spined movements demands the end
translation—no man will live
to rip her tight seams or strip
the laurel hell, collapsing the wells
she once divined inside an hour
of need. No tree, no bent weed
ever escapes her parched gaze.
So she grows into a snaking briar,
a wailing haint, a mountain
sprung right out of her own fill
to suck back blast and boulders.
She will reclaim each bit of ash leaf
and the little wet copse of birches
draped to be a shady-sighing cradle
to warblers, trembling shrews.
When he pushes in to cut
she strikes back, then packs up
her skipping stones, grottoes
and strange-spotted beetles
scuttling the felled logs. Mud
puppies flip inside her veins
and she flexes glowing ginseng.
This, her life...the way to be
tall. Tall, they used to whisper
in her ear. She carries tall
inside her heart, despite her tears.
Everything in its place—even
that ridge, her hardest bone,
will not be broken twice.

A Field of Crows

They rise from rushes, cutting
across the sky in a line of black
bullets. Passing, they memorize
each tree, thatched bothies, sheep
grazing the territory left behind.

Liscannor stone walls carve
puzzles in the slopes tumbled
down, falling out. In time,
the wind-smacked Burren
exhales tired ghosts, each rising
to reclaim a famine penny gone
unpaid. They sing as they sang
in living work—of birds winging,
boats sailing, thickest chains sparked
apart by blood, sweat. Bleached dolmens
keep their secrets and turf-torn bogs
hide their bones. Each sheer cliff wails
the old keenings, reminding folks that
losing repeats itself stone by stone,
acre by acre. Trace the line of men
stooped low along the hills, hungry
and hell-bent on spontaneous flight.

Lost Claims

Mica glitters the driveway's
deep ruts, snowbush heads
bow down, brush the dust
that peppers windows, tables,
every corner of the place.
“My heart's gone thick,” she says
picking burrs from Old Ted's
scruff. “The beat's off pace
and once I'm three hours dead,
they'll storm the hill to take
this land.” I ask her why,
since I don't understand.
I note the boundary line,
her trees—pin cherry,
hemlock, one suffering ash
split by lightning years ago.
“That's yours, Aunt Ruth.”
Still she says, “No,” and smiles,
smacks the dog's coarse rump,
ordering him to steer clean away
from bramble vines and trouble.
I argue—but I think I know
that hemlock waits to be
a stump, her house and yard
a deep-cut scar of rubble.

POEMS:

JEAN SYED

An immigrant from England, Jean Syed has lived in the same house in Loveland, OH, for the past 29 years. Since last year she has been published online; her work can be found on *The Road Not Taken: The Journal of Formal Poetry*, now in the fall archives.

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DRAWING:

PATRICK WILLIAMS

Patrick Williams, a local Cincinnati, OH, artist since 1990, has been exhibiting his art work for many years in the region, showing at more unconventional locations such as Base Art gallery and Kaldi's coffee house, salons and libraries, and recently showing in the Fisher gallery at Otterbein College in Westerville, OH. Patrick is a graduate of NKU with a BFA in painting.

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Robert Williams
09

A Poison E-mail

I had an e-mail from my friend,
An anecdote. It did offend,
For an emotive yarn she told
The sentiment was uncontrolled.

As I was angered, I was her foe.
On the Internet my wrath did grow.
I slashed claptrap in her e-mails,
It didn't stop her noble tales.

One happy day the bilge was quiet
From that so-called patriot.
At last she phoned me to make up,
Her voice was animated slop

For I don't doubt she was in pique
At having to turn the other cheek.
Yet what does it say about me
And thus my own Christianity.

Imperfect Blossom

How proud they must have been of it,
Their garden, edging the street,
The petunias were lovely there
Purple and pink to greet

Their friends who came into their yard
For all else was in the shade,
The maples, oaks and tulip trees
That formed a long arcade.

Now on the street a grandma came
T-shirted and stout,
Her hands were on a baby stroller
Pushing a child about.

The child looked at the petunias
"I want, I want," she said,
So the grandmother plucked several
Out of the flowerbed.

And I thought deer did the stealing!
They don't have that taboo,
But the grandmother responded with
"Here you are Lulu."

In the scheme of life this isn't large
Still, I was surprised
That this silver haired kind grandmother
Stole and vandalized

And I wonder about that youngster
An imperfect blossom will grow
Because of a gardener's dreadful act,
To pluck, it is to sow.

Greed

Over abundantly
planning our evening
leads to smart restaurants,
fine food and cash.

Under moon, back in alleys,
going through garbage gets
down-and-outs dinners of
refuse and trash.

Mentally nonchalant,
we surpass predators,
gorging on humankind,
ethics we smash.

Taxes are troubling but
bonuses largish so
poor people all round us
cop-outs we hash.

Third Wordly corruption
here, in America,
rational Americans
honor we bash.

POEMS:

LISA TAYLOR

Lisa Murphy Taylor, M.Ed., is the creator of Poemeopathy.com, a website featuring her poetry written to comfort and support. She shares her poems and the inspirations for them, as well. This is Lisa's first publication and she is very excited to be a part of the "*For a Better World 2009*" book.

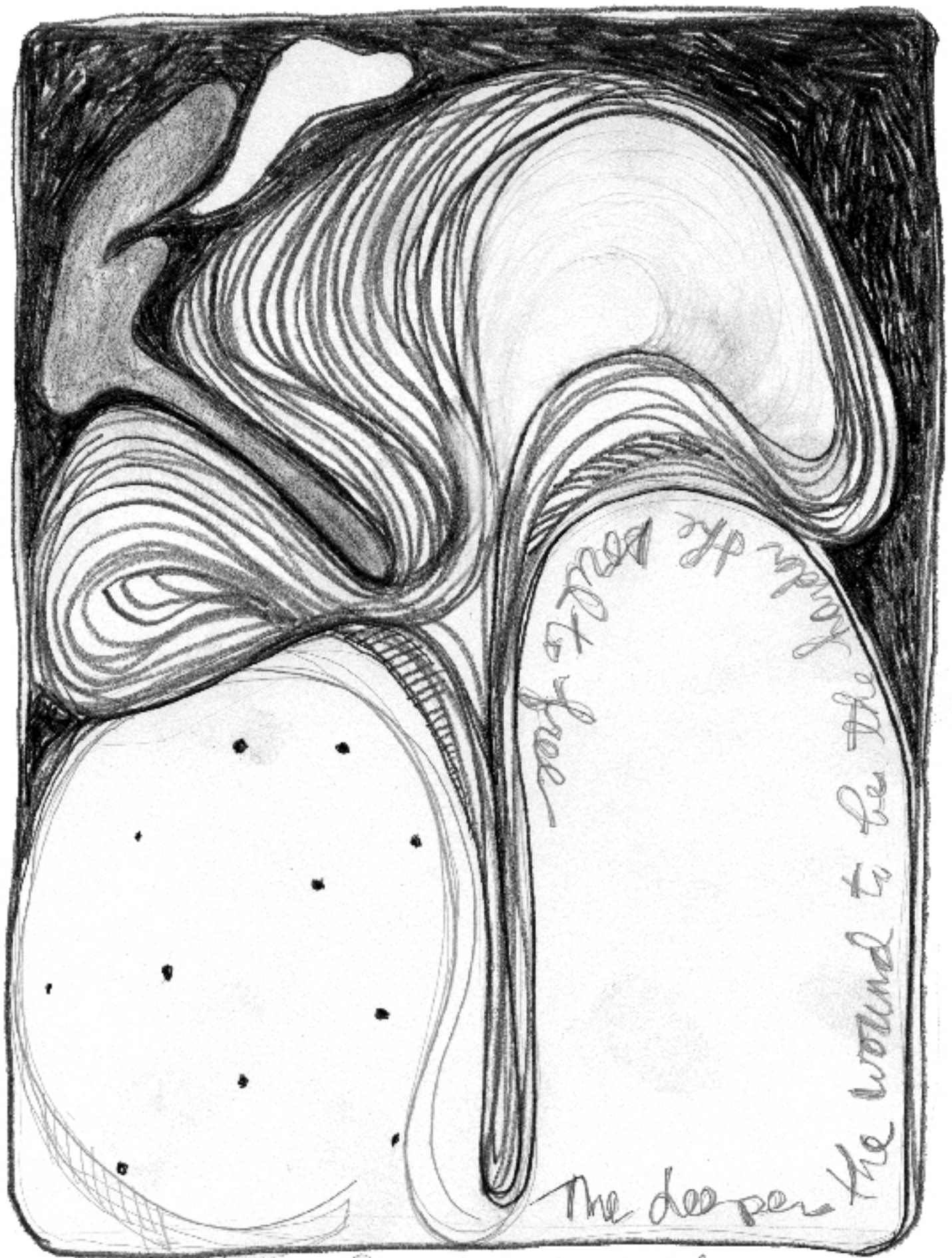
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DRAWING:

KAREN TINDALL

Unlike many others, Karen Tindall cannot say that she has always drawn; she has not, but has since the 4th grade and can remember creating the precise line that was her "ah-ha" moment; it was the bridge of a nose. Mostly now she paints, and like a lot of artists, she avoids noses whenever possible.

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The deeper the wound to be the kinder the bolts to free

The deeper the wound to be the kinder the bolts to free

Karen Prophet Jewell

The Need for Justice

At times we are a victim and life does not seem fair.
At times the lack of justice is more than we can bear.

The need to see that justice is done in one's own eyes,
Is only but an anchor to the soul who yearns to rise.

The deeper the wound to be, the harder the anchor to see;
The deeper the wound to be, the harder the soul to free.

Let God determine justice and how it's carried through.
Let God reset the scales as only he can do.

At times our lives are wronged, our journey plagued with plight,
There is no retribution, no means to make it right.

The need to see that justice will triumph and prevail,
Is only but an anchor to the soul who yearns to sail.

The deeper the wound to be, the harder the anchor to see;
The deeper the wound to be, the harder the soul to free.

Let God determine justice and how it's carried through,
Let God reset the scales as only he can do.

A Prayer for My Family

I pray for my parents all over this earth. Please end their pain.
Do not let their suffering endure or be in vain.

I remember how they loved me - vivid colors, blinding light.
I remember feeling peace and warmth as they hugged and held me tight.

I pray for my sisters all over this earth. Please end their pain.
Do not let their suffering endure or be in vain.

I remember how we played. We loved to dance and sing,
Skipping through the gardens, confiding everything.

No strangers are in heaven, no unfamiliar face,
No foreigner, nor outsider, exists in such a place.

I pray for my brothers all over this earth. Please end their pain.
Do not let their suffering endure or be in vain.

I remember how we'd wrestle, rolling across the sky,
Laughing in the clouds, angels flying by.

I pray for my children all over this earth. Please end their pain.
Do not let their suffering endure or be in vain.

I remember knowing love, like I've never known before,
No words to describe what's behind heaven's door.

No strangers are in heaven, no unfamiliar face,
No foreigner, nor outsider, exists in such a place.

I pray for my family all over this earth. Please end their pain.
Do not let their suffering endure or be in vain.

What Could Be

Be grateful for "what is" and let "what could be" go.
Respect the "now" you're in and all it does bestow.

"What could be's" like a thief. It steals away contentment.
It carries off the good and leaves behind resentment.

"What could be's" like a schemer, its plots and plans contrived.
It tricks you into thinking what's abundant is deprived.

Be grateful for "what is" and let "what could be" go.
Respect the "now" you're in and all it does bestow.

"What could be's" like a cancer you must live with and abide.
It sickens you with anger and will eat you up inside.

"What could be's" like the devil, shrouded in disguise.
It only stirs up trouble with its fallacies and lies.

Be grateful for "what is" and let "what could be" go.
Respect the "now" you're in and all it does bestow.

POEMS:

GARY WALTON

Gary Walton is the author of five books of poetry, the latest *Full Moon: the Melissa Moon Poems* (Finishing Line Press, 2007) nominated for the Kentucky Literary Award. His latest book *Prince of Sin City*, based in part on a conspiracy theory about the Kennedy assassination, is a comic novel about Newport, KY, in its heyday as a gambling Mecca. It is due out from Finishing Line Press in 2009.

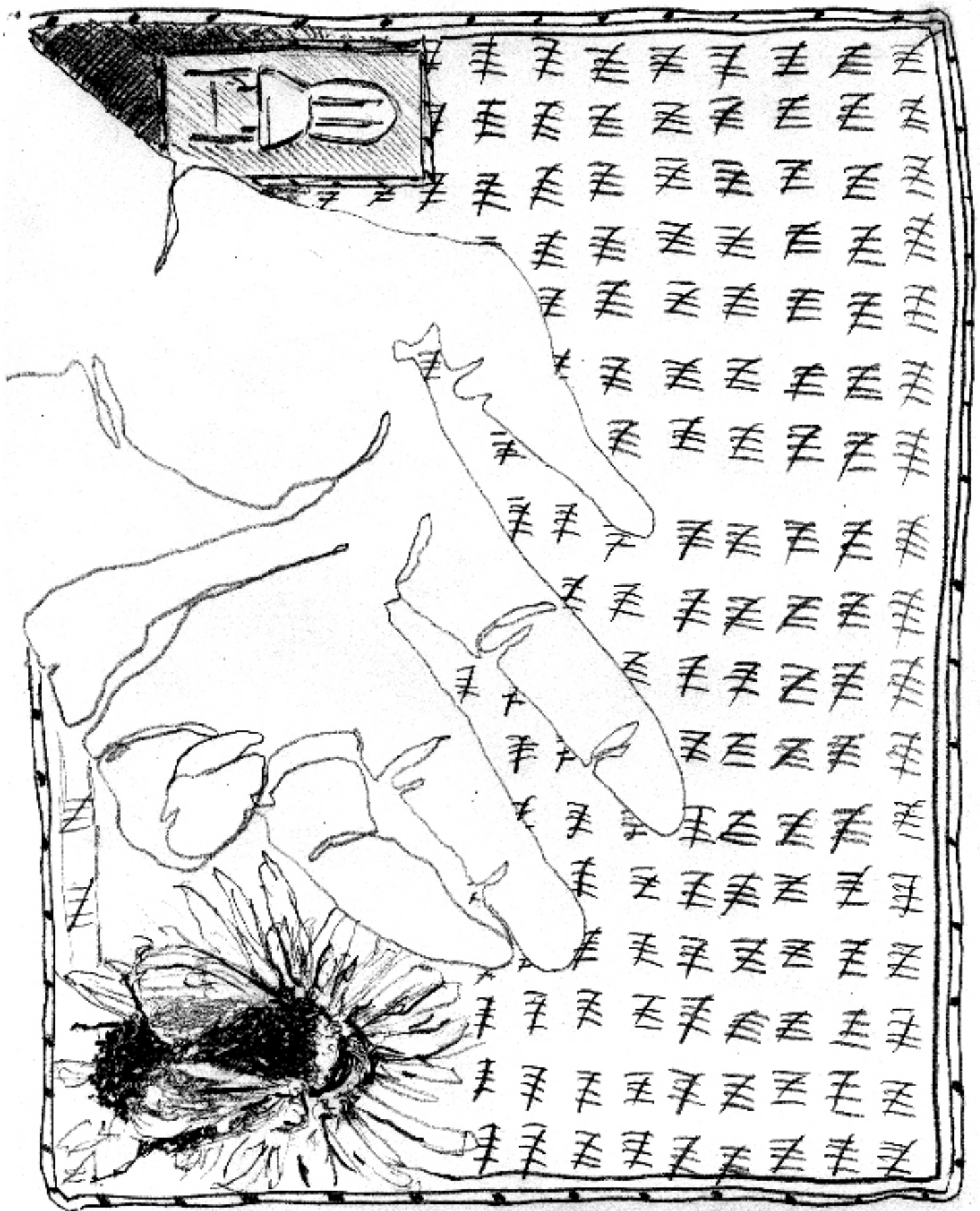
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DRAWING:

DANA TINDALL

Dana Tindall is an artist who creates interactive artworks. He lives and has a studio in Northern Kentucky and works in Cincinnati at Xavier University. He has had numerous exhibitions over the years in the United States and has shown internationally. He draws when he gets the chance!

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D. H. H.

The Lack of Bees

There are no bees
This summer:
 No honey, no sweat,
 No bumble;
 Something is happening
 To the fabric of nature,
A decided pull toward entropy
 And confusion and chaos,
 Like the stubborn frayed hem
 Of an old Calico skirt
 Flouting the law and order
 Of the design itself
By floating free and ragged
 In the swish of weary
 Decrepitude and ambivalence
 Or the worn patch at the elbow
 Of a favorite tweed that
 In spite of itself begins
To resemble the veil of a widow;
 Or the gabardine trousers
 Whose knee is found threadbare,
 Like the last wisps of
 Hair clinging to a bald man's pate;
 Or alas the very weave of
Your most stalwart sweater
 Who has given up even the
 Pretense of modest integrity and
 Is unraveling, returning
 Like a vague memory to a
 Simple wad of yarn;

II

My mother is losing her mind,
 Finding it again here and there
 In patches, like snow puddles,
 In the cruel and indifferent
 Weather of the dusk of her life—
She searches still for those bits
 That escape her grasp feeling that they
 Are important but not really
 Remembering why—a name, a date, an emotion;
 The words will not come, though
She bids them with bitter tears and stutter;
 The syntax fades like the sound
 Of a distant drum into a mere echo,

Like the beat of bats' wings into
The night of a fading foreign horizon;

III

How can we have fruit this autumn,
If the flowers are not courted
With the sticky entreaty of the bees'
Intrepid dance of love?
There are rumors that the bees have
Forgotten how to fly home,
That their mental maps are dissolving
Like their own honey left abandoned in the rain;
How lonely it must be to be lost,
Away from the hive, from home,
From your fellows who gave you identity
And meaning, left flying arabesques
In solitary, frightened desperation, searching
For your own special cynosure,
That place you can call your own?

IV

But wait, mother is at the door, crying out;
She has fallen, her arm bruised and bleeding,
Her head swollen like a dandelion puff ball—
She asks if she can speak to my father,
Her husband of 60 years—should I remind her
That he died two years ago?
Will that information help guide her forward
Or will it simply send her reeling
Off course into the wilderness of her
Own porous confusion and pain?
In the pause between the question and
The answer, I pray to hear the tiny
Beat of apian wings bringing an end
To this sense of finality, of futility
And for a sure and certain guide back from
The brink and hope for the sweet
Return of soft sensible summer, perhaps
One worth remembering.

New Year's Rendering

This New Year's Eve

Melissa Moon was watching
RepoMan as sweet and sour pork

Sizzled in the microwave,

A reprocessed repast and painful
Reminder of that exquisite

Distance between it and the

Real thing, like so much else
In this new century—

Alone, she avoided the hoots

And horns of the holiday,
The risk of sensory overload

Too great a possibility—

Last year was a plenum stuffed
Full of Death and decrepitude:

She won't miss it—

Until next year (if the nerves heal)
And she once again becomes

Sentimental over her old

Ability to imagine something
Better. Here at the watershed

Moment she is numb from

The trauma of expectation,
Much less apprehension

Of a repetition of last

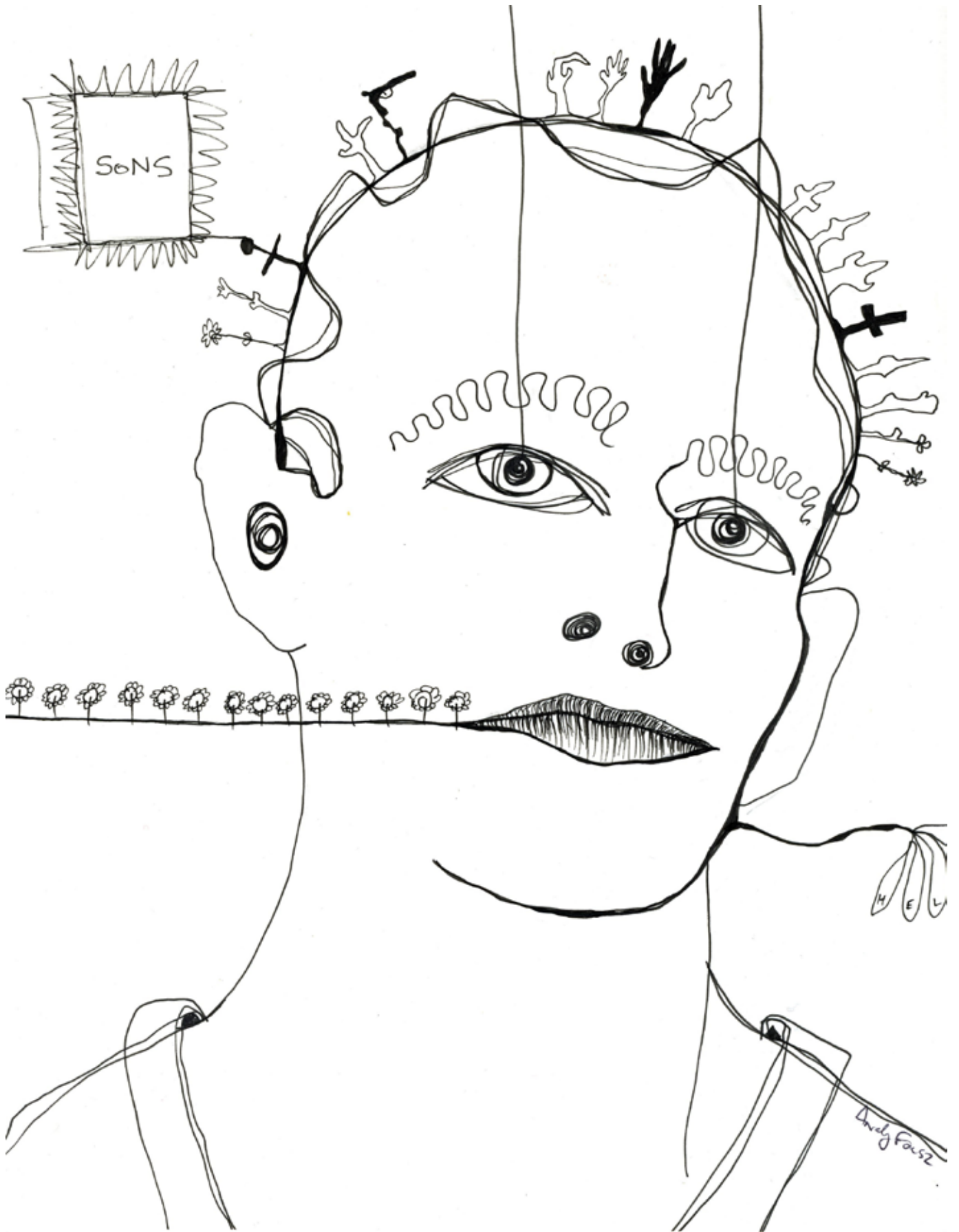
Year's exigencies—
Surely next year will be

Different if not better,

And who knows
Satisfaction, if not happiness,

May make a come back

Like Billy Holiday on
An MP3 player or Charley
Chaplin on a compact disk.



cover art by Andy Fausz

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