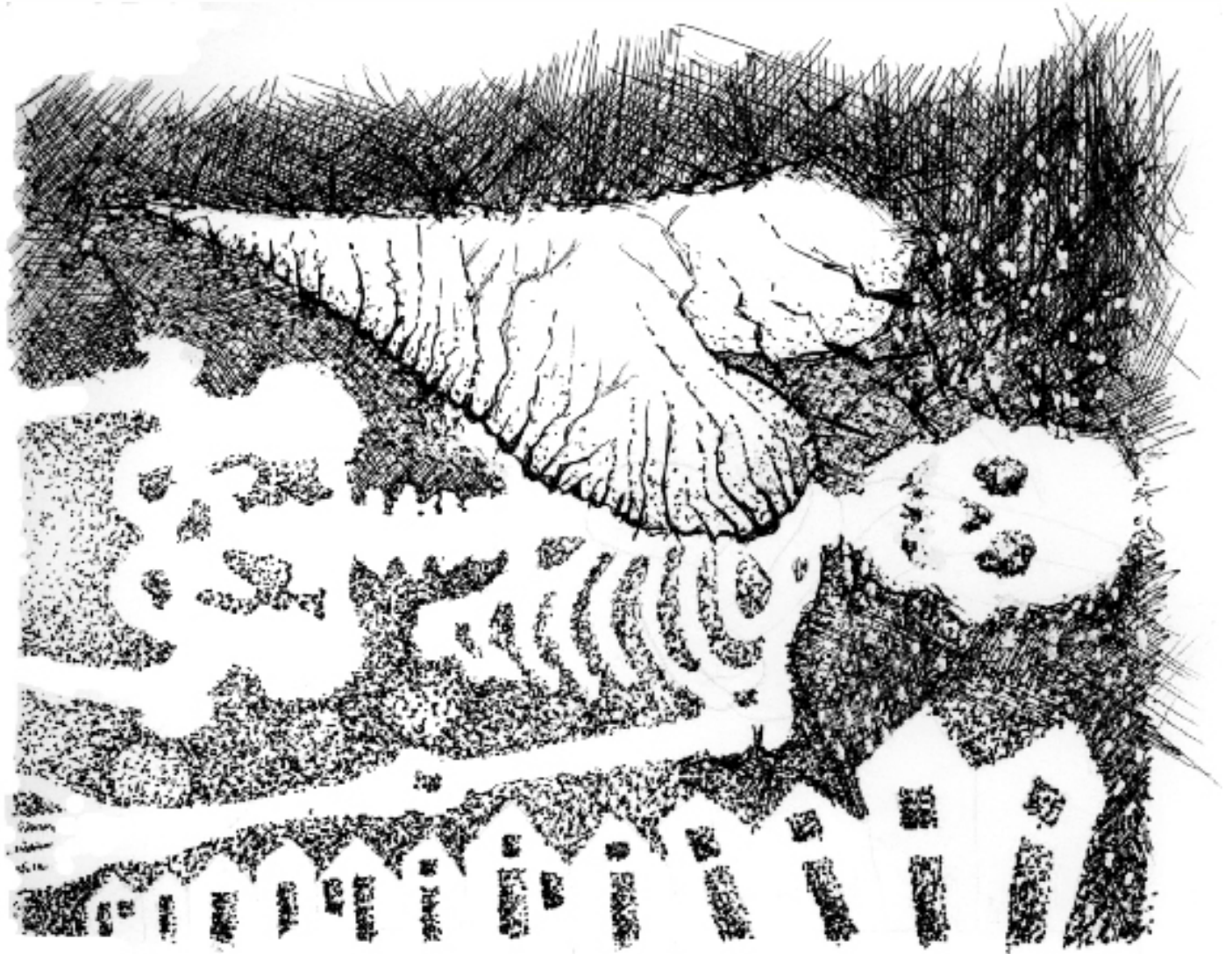


# For A 2010 Better World



POEMS AND DRAWINGS ON  
PEACE AND JUSTICE BY  
Greater Cincinnati Artists

**“For a Better World”  
2010**

Poems and Drawings  
on  
Peace and Justice

by  
Greater Cincinnati Artists

Editor:  
Saad Ghosn

“Yes, we have in this country, dominated by corporate wealth and military power and two antiquated political parties, what a fearful conservative characterized as “a permanent adversarial culture” challenging the present, demanding a new future.

It is a race in which we can all choose to participate, or just to watch. But we should know that our choice will help determine the outcome.”

from

## ***“A People’s History of The United States”***

“The artist thinks, acts, performs music, and writes outside the framework that society has created. The artist may do no more than give us beauty, laughter, passion, surprise, and drama. I don’t mean to minimize these activities by saying the artist can do no more than this. The artist needn’t apologize, because by doing this, the artist is telling us what the world should be like, even if it isn’t that way now. The artist is taking us away from the moments of horror that we experience everyday - some days more than others - by showing us what is possible.

But the artist can and should do more. In addition to creating works of art, the artist is also a citizen and a human being.”

from

## ***“Artists in Times of War”***

by

**HOWARD ZINN (1922 - 2010)**

# Foreword

Whether they use words, images or music,... artists are not only witnesses but also changers of the world. They have subversive powers due to their capacity of seeing clear beyond the immediate, conveying powerfully their feelings, stirring emotions and thinking, and as a result, changing and improving the world. Their role is that of visionaries, of revolutionaries, setting the path to change, to effacing the wrongs.

In this seventh year's book of poems and drawings on peace and justice by Greater Cincinnati Artists, forty eight poets and 35 visual artists, ages 11 to 91, added their voice for peace and justice and for a better world. They used their art and their talent to state their concerns, assert their values, affirm their beliefs, to fight for a world after their heart. By doing so their diverse voices strengthened each other and gave life to their hopes and dreams.

In a world that remains prey to wars and injustice, they wept for the dead, revolted for the oppressed, denounced unjust societal wrongs, rejected violence and its consequences, 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.

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 Mary Pierce Brosmer, Rhonda Pettit, Sherry Stanforth, Gary Walton and William Howes, who kindly reviewed all the submitted poems and provided their editorial advice; and to Andrew Au who graciously volunteered his time and technical skills helping putting this book together.

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

Saad Ghosn  
Book editor and organizer

April 2010



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***POEM:***

**MARIA AUXILIADORA ALVAREZ**

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, María Auxiliadora Alvarez resides in the United States since 1996. Maria completed her Master and PhD degrees at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and currently teaches Spanish Literature at Miami University, OH. She has written twelve books of poetry.

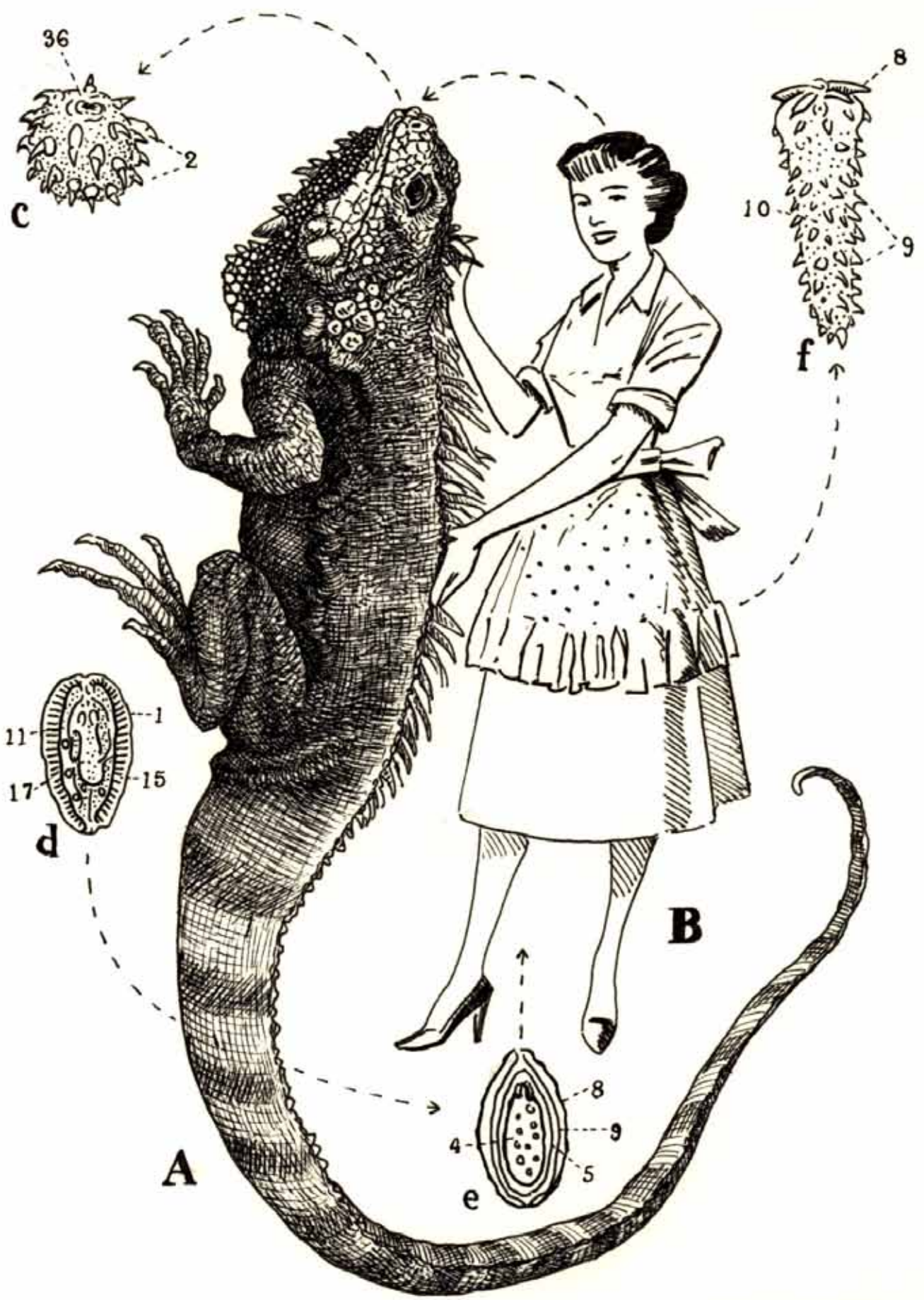
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***DRAWING:***

**JOHN WOLFER**

John Wolfer is an Associate Professor of Art at the University of Cincinnati. He received his Master of Fine Arts Degree in Painting from Clemson University and his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Xavier University. His artwork has been featured in group and solo exhibitions across the country, from New York City to Missoula, Montana. His recent work raises questions about the nature of beauty, humor, and their roles in society.

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John Wolfer

## Body

you, sir, have never given birth

you do not know  
the edge of the machetes  
you have not felt  
the snakes of the river  
you have never danced  
in a pool of beloved blood

doctor  
DO NOT PUT YOUR HAND SO DEEP  
there I have the machetes  
I have a sleeping girl child  
and you, sir, have never passed  
a night in the snake  
you don't know the river.

\* \* \*  
I know  
the time for properly cooking  
vegetables  
the warts on rats  
the importance of the female being  
the tacit part of procreation  
I stay  
in the genital and food  
each day  
and receive from them a life  
and a death  
both renewable  
and go along developing  
an approach  
like the snake's jaw  
and go along developing  
a psychopathic taste  
on my tongue  
while I play with the garbage  
and the excrement  
of my daughter  
to her I show  
the affective propriety  
of the demented  
the daily mammals  
dead in the kitchen

\* \* \*

## Cuerpo

usted nunca ha parido

no conoce  
el filo de los machetes  
no ha sentido  
las culebras de río  
nunca ha bailado  
en un charco de sangre querida

doctor  
NO META LA MANO TAN ADENTRO  
que ahí tengo los machetes  
que tengo una niña dormida  
y usted nunca ha pasado  
una noche en la culebra  
usted no conoce el río

\* \* \*  
conozco  
el tiempo de cocción de las  
legumbres  
las verrugas de las ratas  
la importancia de ser la hembra  
lo tácito de la procreación  
me detengo  
en el genital y el alimento  
cada día  
y recibo de ellos una vida  
y una muerte  
renovables  
y voy desarrollando  
un acercamiento  
de maxilar de culebra  
y voy desarrollando  
un sabor sicópata  
en la lengua  
mientras juego con la basura  
y los excrementos  
de mi hija  
a ella le enseño  
la propiedad afectiva  
de los dementes  
y los mamíferos diarios  
muertos en la cocina

\* \* \*



clothing  
trash  
ground to dredge  
lizards that besiege us  
lizards that protect us

it is unjust  
that you go away  
serene dry complete

and we remain  
and we remain  
and we remain

\* \* \*  
she's going already they're carrying her off  
to detain the custom of the vestige  
to interrupt the resin

if she liked the muzzle  
if she allowed the animals to lower her from  
their heads to put her through their eyes  
she never complained  
inflamed genitally  
already they're carrying her off  
let them open her in the light  
since she has her arm stuck to her thigh  
her tongue to her palate  
she doesn't cry  
asks nothing

but let them give her the horse's water  
so she knows thirst  
the dog's water  
water from me  
wood

so she gnaws  
since she likes to get out the resin  
at the edge  
huge animals so she eats  
let them give her Animal  
so she throws herself against the floor  
so she screams  
since she must like screaming  
her mouth goes muzzled  
already they're carrying her off

ropa  
basura  
suelo que se rastrea  
lagartos que nos acechan  
lagartos que nos protegen

es injusto  
que te vayas  
sereno seco completo

y nosotras nos quedemos  
y nosotras nos quedemos  
y nosotras nos quedemos

\* \* \*  
se va ya se la llevan  
detener la costumbre de resquicio  
interrumpir la resina

si le gustaba la mordaza  
si dejaba los animales bajarle de la cabeza  
metérsele por los ojos  
se quejaba nunca  
inflamada de genital  
ya se la llevan  
ábranla en la luz  
que tiene el brazo pegado-de-muslo  
lengua-de-paladar  
no llora  
no pide nada

pero déngle agua de caballo  
para que conozca la sed  
agua de perro  
agua de mí  
madera

para que muerda  
que le gusta sacarle resina  
al filo  
animales grandes para que coma  
déngle Animal  
para que se tire contra el piso  
para que grite  
que debe gustarle gritar  
boca de mordaza se va  
ya se la llevan



let them kick her in the ribs  
since she'll be afraid  
                  and peculiar  
since she's never been opened  
                  with dog's water  
she doesn't cry  
                  asks nothing  
since she's had the habit  
                  of animal in the eye come  
                  from the head  
  
                  of vestige

*(from the book "**Cuerpo**")*

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

péguensela del costado  
que tendrá miedo  
                  y rareza  
que nunca ha estado abierta de piso  
                  de agua de perro  
no llora  
                  no pide nada  
que ha tenido costumbre  
                  de animal en el ojo venido  
                  de la cabeza  
  
                  de resquicio

***POEMS:***

**LEAH ARONOFF**

Leah Aronoff, 91 years old, started writing thirteen years ago. For many years she was the art librarian at UC DAA (now DAAP), then joined the faculty of the UC Graduate Planning Department. She retired in 1971.

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**CAROL IGOE**

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

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***DRAWING:***

**DANIEL FIXLEY**

Born in the U.K., Daniel Fixley is now a graduate student of sculpture at the University of Cincinnati. Daniel takes great pleasure in making absurdly dangerous pieces of art. Explosions, electricity, and fire are a thematic in his work.

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D Pixley

## The Beginning of the End

(by *Leah Aronoff*)

Amir is gone.  
Suddenly.  
Out of the blue.

Rashid is gone.  
Suddenly.  
Out of the blue.

What they had in common  
was everything, nothing, timing, and  
a not so clever bomb.

A bus stop became the end of the world  
as their families knew it.

We reconcile by learning each other's stories,  
by pulling down the walls,  
by peering into dark corners,  
by, finally, holding hands.  
We begin to understand.

## Safe Heart and Home

(by *Carol Igoe*)

Coming round the X-way's bend,  
Plane to catch,  
I glimpse,  
Wrapped in his long galabeya,  
a man curled on the ground, sleeps  
under Cairo's dawning sky.

Driving across the arid Serengeti, nothing  
To see, no green, river dry,  
Silently, a man rides out of a shimmering cloud,  
Maasai, wrapped in red,  
Bicycles past, with a nod,  
Fades back out unto empty dust.

Up from Giza, the deep down tombs,  
My camera in hand, I freeze in time:  
expressway, donkey cart, monster jeep.  
A father walks by the guard rail,  
holds his small son's hand,  
grey wrapped, pilgrims in  
a holy land.

On my way to work,  
Turn down Central Parkway, where the highway  
roars.  
A mother walks ahead,  
Strung out behind her,  
3 children, small, nobody holds their hands.

O, my country,  
Where is safety, tenderness?  
Where is the caring human heart?





## ***POEMS:***

### **FRANCHOT BALLINGER**

Franchot Ballinger, author of *Living Sideways: Tricksters in American Indian Oral Traditions*, has published poems in numerous poetry journals. Since his retirement as University of Cincinnati Associate Professor of English Emeritus, he has been serving as a music therapy (Native American flute) and spiritual care volunteer with Hospice of Cincinnati.

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### **DONELLE DREESE**

Donelle Dreese is an Assistant Professor in the English Department at NKU. Her poems have been published in numerous magazines and journals including *Runes, A Review of Poetry, Journal of Kentucky Studies, Appalachian Heritage, Gulf Stream Magazine...* In 2008, she published a chapbook of poetry, *A Wild Turn* (Finishing Line Press), and in 2010, a book of environmental writing, *America's Natural Places: East and Northeast* (Greenwood Press).

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **PHILIP VALOIS**

Philip Valois is a graduate of Northern Kentucky University, where he studied graphic design and recently won Best in Drawing in the 2010 Annual Juried Student Show. Originally from Providence, Rhode Island, he has been living in Cincinnati for several years. Philip plans to fight sleep and continue thinking and making until his fingers no longer work.

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*Malof 2010*

## Snow Furies

(by *Franchot Ballinger*)

It's snowing this morning  
in a Christmas card sort of way.  
From my desk I watch the flakes  
in their fluttering descent,  
little angels come to call upon us.  
But an old man intrudes  
into the alluring snowlight,  
his windbreaker a dark field  
the angels founder into.  
He appeared there yesterday  
as I returned home,  
as if the winter squalid light  
had transfigured itself into him,  
a body to ask me for a quarter,  
which I gave (having many in my pocket),  
gave and wished him--  
one of the haunting unhoused--away.  
And now he's come again,  
looking this way,  
a witness,  
the Ghost of Charity Past,  
while the snow  
beats against my windows.

## Sanctified Church, A Wall Street Triolet

(by *Franchot Ballinger*)

The street teems with evangelical eloquence.  
Gain is grace in Babylon.  
Voices selling, voices telling (the Covenant of  
Cents)  
And the street teems with evangelical  
eloquence.  
Surely all that cash redemption is evidence  
Their creed is something we can count on,  
The street teems with such evangelical  
eloquence.  
Gain is grace in Babylon.

## The Black Flower

(by *Donelle Dreese*)

In a swarm of hailstones  
a woman crosses the city street  
and tilts her umbrella that  
bows like a black flower.

Politicians on the steps of the pillared building  
remind her of a painted troop of mimefolk  
rehearsing their gestures  
gathering for a false dance.

The woman's mind is a dark plankboard  
stairwell  
leading down to a motley assemblage  
of memories crumpled together  
like a ball of ransacked linens.

I want to tell her that things will get better  
that kindness and clarity can be found  
on another street framed by  
the sashwork of window lights.

But she keeps walking  
through the muttersome sea of rain  
crabbing sideways between garbage cans  
hiding beneath the wire petals of a black flower.



***POEMS:***

**VALERIE CHRONIS BICKETT**

Valerie Chronis Bickett lives in Northside with her family, writes and teaches writing and also has a small massage practice. With the help of an Individual Artist's Grant from the City of Cincinnati, she published in 2009 her first collection of poetry, *Triandafilo*, a memoir in verse of her relationship with her mother. She is beginning work on her second book tentatively titled *Karpathos*, a similar memoir about her father.

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***DRAWING:***

**SHERRY SICKING**

Sherry Sicking; BFA, art academy; Tiger Lily press member since 1995.

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## **Grounded**

When I bring it up with friends  
they forget I told them,

so while I'm thinking about it,  
let me tell you again

about the couple I know who spend  
three hours every morning

making love  
and let me emphasize

every and  
love.

No exceptions.  
5:30-8:30 A.M.

A man and a woman around sixty  
follow a protocol—

meditation, yoga, chances  
for emotional release and

plenty of time for union  
as they put it,

staying in union.  
Eleven years now,

this couple has been making love  
every day.

Getting up early for music and oil  
and touching

in their suburban home,  
indistinguishable from the ones next door

where couples like us  
are finding more and more good reasons

to skip it.  
Twenty-one hours a week.

All their movie time and date nights  
rolled into the mornings

when they lower their sights  
on the lower chakras

and see the world from there,  
there where the Mid-East

Peace Talks and Global Warming  
seem manageable,

there where the mother feeds,  
and the baby finds her lovely.

## **A Spade A Spade**

Ninety years and one tenth of it  
with a deteriorating brain  
and yet you were there—  
the same body, the same fight  
for privacy; so much so that  
at first it took four attendants  
to bathe you and this only  
two months before you died.

We put you out in the cold,  
sent you finally to the place  
where we subdue our elderly  
with poison darts, kill  
under cover, administer the  
regulated anti-psychotic  
with the black box warning  
all of us ignore.

Death to our elderly, quicker.  
Death to the long siege  
of weightlifting, waiting.  
Death when we want it.  
Death when the powers  
of attorney vote for the drug  
they say brings back life  
to the dying brain.

## Lecture

*Xavier University,  
Cincinnati, Ohio,  
October 28, 2009*

My birthday began with Vandana Shiva  
speaking in her sari to hundreds of us

about the coming of the “green revolution”—  
*not green and not revolutionary—*

to the Punjab, land of five waters,  
breadbasket of her India.

How the chemical leftovers from World War II  
were sold to farmers who had farmed without

chemical manure for ten thousand years,  
how the nitrogen/phosphorus/potassium

cocktail of artificial urea burns and makes crops  
thirsty, how the aquifers are emptying,

how herbicides slipped in to the bill of sale,  
how Cargill and Monsanto, staffed with feral

business majors aiming their marketing guns  
on the unwashed, have created a new war

against our bodies; so it can now be said that  
*we eat oil—*

petroleum in the packaging, in the additives,  
in the corn and soybeans marinating in it

from seed to harvest and in the cross-country  
joy ride our food makes from dirt to plate

in the *container truck—the ultimate obscenity.*  
*And now Bill Gates wants to do this to Africa—*

14% of greenhouse gases directly attributed  
to agribusiness peddling their monoculture,

40% if you include methane from feedlots.  
No surprise then, is it, the *United States throws*

*away half its food,* stands still before the  
*miracle*  
*of obesity, with only 2% of us farming.*

On the eve of my sixty-second birthday,  
I am told the most creative act is to build soil,

return humus to the skin and bones  
of the ground we have walked all over on,

the thin mama we have put in a nursing home  
thrown up our hands and walked away from.

Listen to her complaining, going on at the  
mouth

of every river depositing its over-rich sediment.

Listen to her telling me to stop what I’m doing  
and go to her side and kneel down—

more living things in one shovelful  
than all the human beings ever born.

Listen to her demanding I stop the bleeding—  
right here, right now.

***POEMS:***

**BRIDGET BILL**

Bridget Bill is in 6th grade at Covedale Elementary School and studies under English teacher Cynthia Tissue. She likes to read, sing, and dance. Bridget's favorite color is green and her favorite food is French toast. Some of her favorite things to do are play sports and write stories. As you can tell, she also loves to write her own poems.

Contact: 513-363-1756

**SUSAN OEHLER**

Susan Oehler was raised in Cincinnati and received a MA in Communication Disorders from the University of Cincinnati. She currently works as a pediatric audiologist in Asheville, NC. She is very concerned about human rights, and the impact of wars and occupations on civilians.

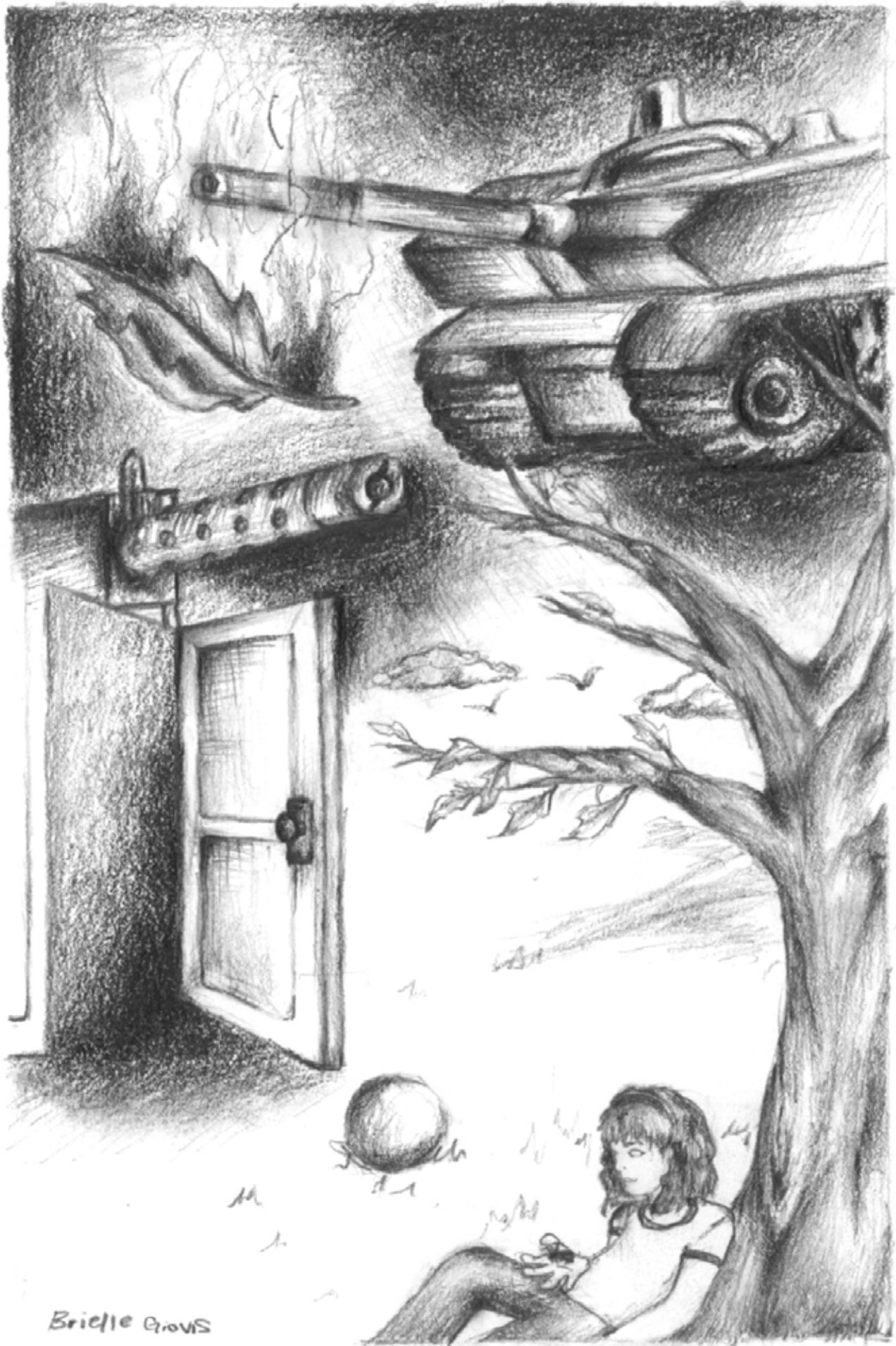
Contact: [dancewater2@gmail.com](mailto:dancewater2@gmail.com)

***DRAWING:***

**BRIELLE GIOVIS**

Brielle Giovis has lived in Cincinnati all her life and ever since a child has always enjoyed doing artwork. Drawing is among her favorite things to do; she has also grown to like sculpture. Though she has not thought of getting a job creating artwork Brielle feels it is something she can always turn to. Her inspirations come from everywhere. Art allows her to let go and express herself.

Contact: [giovisbe@mail.uc.edu](mailto:giovisbe@mail.uc.edu)



Brielle Grovis

## **I Live in War**

*(by **Bridget Bill**, grade 6 student)*

I live in war, I live in war  
Although it's not a war worth fighting for

I wish to go outside and smell the air  
But it would be polluted by machines that don't care

I wish to feel the warm sand under my feet  
But all I'd feel are bullets, no warmth, no heat

I wish to hear the crickets sing at night  
But I'd only hear gunshots, every cricket dead in sight

I wish to play and run around  
But I'd probably die by getting shot to the ground

I have a lot of hope that this war will one day cease  
But for that to happen we need a lot of peace

I live in war, I live in war  
But someday I'll hopefully exit that door.

## **Violence on Haifa Street**

*(by **Susan Oehler**)*

They had several excuses:  
to retrieve injured comrades- except there were no comrades there.  
to return ground fire- the film shows no arms, no fire.  
to destroy sensitive equipment left behind- they hit civilians instead.

Blood on the camera lens.

Thirteen dead at the end of the day.  
Scores injured. Their crimes: reporting, curiosity,

celebration of knocked down Americans, or just walking down the street.  
All recorded on film this time-both moving and still-  
all recorded by stories, straight from those on the scene.

Three more would die of injuries in the days to follow, all unnamed,

Except for one- a TV reporter, whose last report was "I'm dying! I'm dying!"  
Broadcast live.  
His final act as a journalist.  
His final act as a human being.

Just sixteen more civilian casualties  
among the unreported tens of thousands.  
The cameras know what happened.  
The soldiers know what happened.  
The people on Haifa Street know what happened.

Blood on the camera lens. Blood on the street.

Earlier, US troops were injured there.  
Anger and a thirst for revenge pulled the trigger.  
Our troops are in a country where the people are not our enemy.  
We are growing our own enemies.

We are sowing seeds of prejudice with our failures of intelligence.  
We are sowing seeds of hatred with our failures of compassion.  
We are sowing seeds of rage with our failures of decency.  
We are sowing seeds of revenge with our failures of integrity.

Blood on the camera lens. Blood on the street. Blood on our hands.

***POEM:***

**MARY PIERCE BROSMER**

Mary Pierce Brosmer founded *Women Writing for (a) Change* in 1991. In *Consulting for (a) Change*, Mary brings the art of writing and the practices of community to the challenges of organizational life. Mary's book, *Women Writing for (a) Change: A Guide for Creative Transformation* was just published by Notre Dame's Ave Maria Press.

Contact: [mpierce@womenwriting.org](mailto:mpierce@womenwriting.org); [www.marypiercebrosmer.com](http://www.marypiercebrosmer.com)

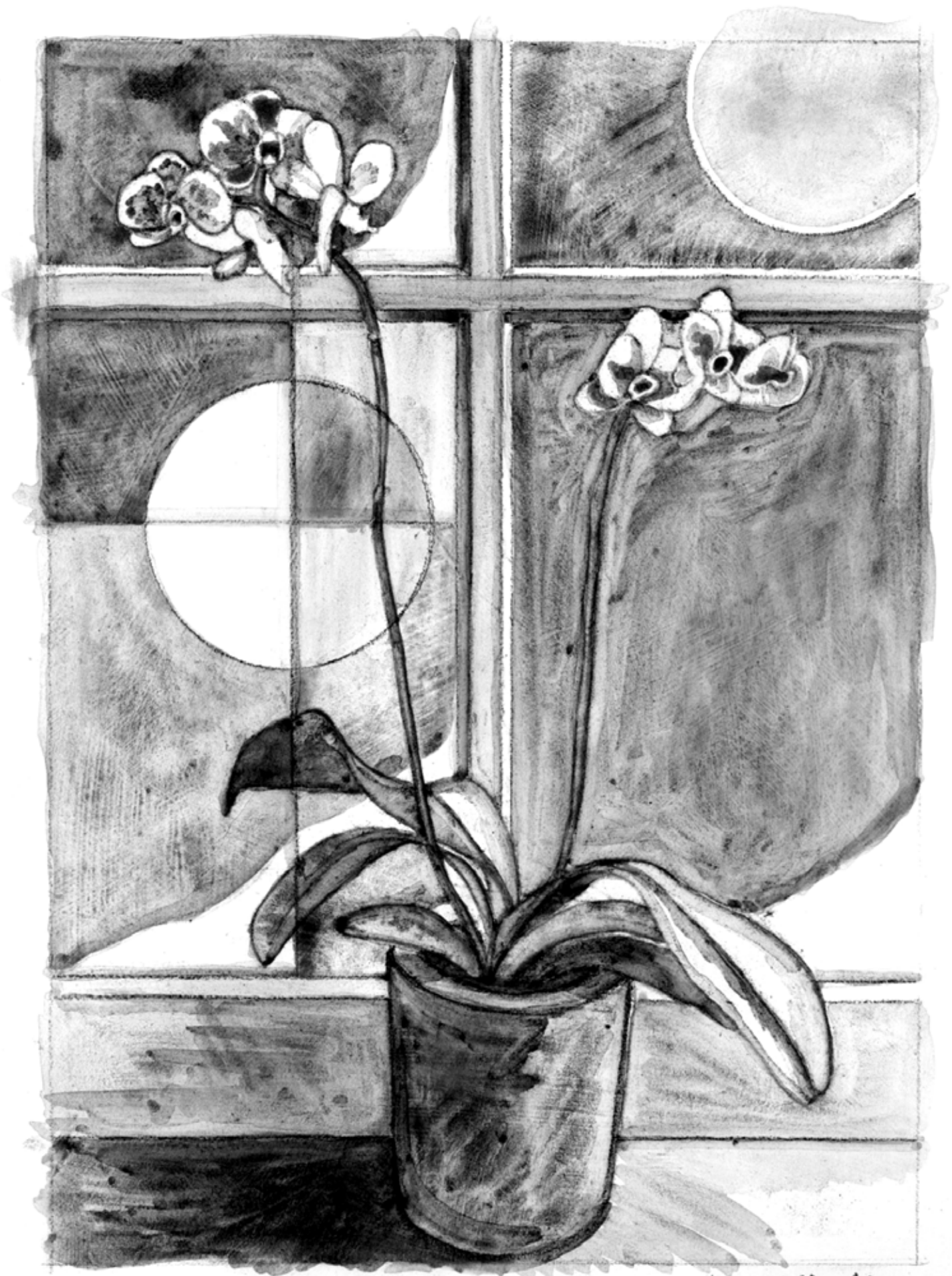
***DRAWING:***

**NANCY HOPKINS**

Nancy Hopkins earned a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati with a major in Graphic Design and Illustration. After working for various local companies, she left to pursue a career in Fine Art in 2000. She is in Studio 414 in the Pendleton Art Center in Over the Rhine.

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Nancy Hopkins

## I Have Two Orchids: February, 2010

I have two orchids in a chill window.  
Their backs to the snow, they proffer  
fuschia heads on fragile spines,  
curving toward this room where I sit,  
chill and not so gracefully curving  
toward the work of blooming.

We have two wars that we know of,  
Both, we are asked to believe  
against all the odds and all of history  
as I read it, will bring safety to the homeland,  
whose homeland I raise my head to wonder?

I have two choices every morning  
One: to create a day of purpose and practice,  
The other: to hunker down in my discomfort  
zone failing to imagine how my efforts might lift  
by so much as a snowflake's weight  
the mantle of senseless suffering,  
might slow the blizzards of spin  
while systems fail.

I have two friends in the nuclear winter  
of grief. One: her daughter murdered,  
makes art and community in a fury.  
The Other: his son dead to despair,  
will marry, come spring, his longtime love.

Taking my cues from orchids,  
from friends avalanche-swept and  
willing to claw upward toward air,  
I turn my hand, however inexpertly,  
to the task of continuing to raise  
fragile blooms, this poem for instance,  
out of the random and deepening snows.



***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 is an active participant in *Women Writing For (a) Change*. Stacey resides in Cincinnati with her husband, Richard, and daughter, Allison.

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**LINDA KLEINSCHMIDT**

Linda Kleinschmidt, an editor, works with authors and academics in the US and abroad. She taught college composition and has been a First Composition Tutor at Dartmouth College. Linda writes poetry, short stories, juvenile books, and articles on writing and editing. One of her picture books won a Writer's Digest Honorable Mention. She divides her time between Cincinnati and Hanover, NH.

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***DRAWING:***

**JESSICA CUNDIFF**

Jessica Cundiff is a craftsman, designer, and gallery owner from Cincinnati, OH. She started her career at age 20 as a stained glass apprentice, and now designer. Jessica attended the Art Academy of Cincinnati, then Northern Kentucky University where she received a BFA (2010). Her work has ranged from hand sewn, to blown glass, wheel thrown vessels, to the now prominent ceramic wall sculptures.

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## Captain Bill

(by *Stacey Calkins*)

We called him  
"Captain" Bill,  
though he  
wasn't really.  
But he was  
strong,  
powerfully built, with  
wide shoulders and  
a small waist –  
a swimmer with  
a perfectly smooth,  
washboard stomach.  
His dark hair was  
highlighted  
and carefully,  
fashionably styled  
like a rock star.  
He had large, brown,  
soulful eyes,  
lined with long lashes and  
pouty, sultry lips.  
He stood tall,  
a stallion  
among other  
young men,  
born with a disease that  
caused his parents  
to beat him on the back  
every morning  
to loosen the  
thick mucus stuck  
in his lungs  
(he always had a cough.)  
He was kind, gentle,  
peaceful, patient and  
soft spoken.  
Where are you today, Bill?  
The girls didn't want  
to date you  
because they feared  
cystic fibrosis and  
the looming inevitable.

They feared the pain of  
loving you and  
losing you.  
You were only 23.  
Oh, Captain,  
my Captain,  
I want you  
to know,  
it would have been  
worth it.  
This one's to you,  
Bill Varney.

## Neda's Song

(by *Linda Kleinschmidt*)

A daughter full of joy walked  
Without fear, determined.  
"One bullet perhaps?" she queried.  
And that truth cut through her heart.

Neda, you are with us now,  
You strengthen us, help us march  
Toward justice, freedom.  
We stand taller in your shadow.

Allah has taken Neda home, and  
Despite her state's dishonor,  
A single bullet cannot darken  
The lengthening of such aura.

The world now take note, your  
solace  
Guides us yet. We will speak out,  
Struggle, spread, and grow  
Our Neda's blazing light.

## Living Strong

(by *Linda Kleinschmidt*)

Woman, what you can bear  
Is what you choose to bear.  
You learned early on that  
The choice to enfold  
Is sacrifice and a gift,  
When as a child  
You watched or  
Could not bear to watch  
Someone you loved  
Also bear what was unbearable.



***POEMS:***

**ELLA CATHER-DAVIS**

Ella Cather-Davis is retired with her husband of 42 years. She writes poetry, essays and children's stories. She holds a degree in English Literature from the University of Cincinnati and currently attends the Osher Life Long Learning Center at UC. She is a member of the *Greater Cincinnati Writer's League, Ohio Poetry Society, Musica Sacra and Bach Association of Cincinnati, Ohio.*

Contact: mikenell30@fuse.net

**NANCY JENTSCH**

Nancy Jentsch lives in rural Campbell County, KY, with her family and assorted animals. She has taught German at Northern Kentucky University since 1982 and is also active in church and grass-roots groups. Intrigued by people, she appreciates those who have enriched every day of her life.

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***DRAWING:***

**BRENDA HUFF**

Brenda Huff is a stay-at-home mom of 4 children. She prefers the title of 'house manager' and describes her days as 'organized chaos'. She is also a licensed physical therapist, and a sometime writer and artist.

Contact: brenda.huff@us.army.mil





Bren Huff 2010

## The Captain

(by *Ella Cather-Davis*)

What did you think---  
that I gave myself  
to the philosophical story  
that you wrote?

I gave myself to my comrades.  
I committed my life  
to ensure that they would survive.  
The exercise was to live.

I summoned my courage  
anew each day,  
to its highest summit. I  
laid my life against losing them.

Our world was chaos, hell,  
A surreal dimension.  
But we showed up, we lived it  
and some of us lasted.

When the insanity ended, we disbanded  
to lead civilian lives--  
we survivors, who unashamedly lament  
the tragic waste of human life  
In WAR.

## Persistence of Memory: Ludwig

(by *Nancy Jentsch*)

1914: At seventeen you go to war,  
spend the years in prison –  
thin soup  
threadbare blankets  
peace at last but  
prison walls hold you still.

1920: An interlude of farming  
cows  
chickens  
crops  
tending rebirth every spring  
from your house in town.

1944: A desperate draft  
pulls you from your fertile fields  
and the Russian front  
draws your name.

In Russland vermisst  
are the words on the  
monument to  
yours and scores of men's lives.  
Worn words belie what  
could have been

1986: Your brother,  
your sister  
believe  
in what might yet be,  
holding fast to your house in town.

But its emptiness,  
a womb become vault,  
is all that's left

of what  
could have been.



***POEMS:***

**VICKIE CIMPRICH**

*For a Better World's* community of artists, including writers, is important to Vickie Cimprich. Her first collection of poems was about a woman within a focused believing community: *Pretty Mother's Home - A Shakeress Daybook* (Broadstone Books, 2007). Her work appears in *The Journal of Kentucky Studies*. A forthcoming *Licking Valley Review* will include *What Color Was the Dog?* about a dog with a human eye, and the Covington, KY, neighborhood where such dog lived in about 1959.

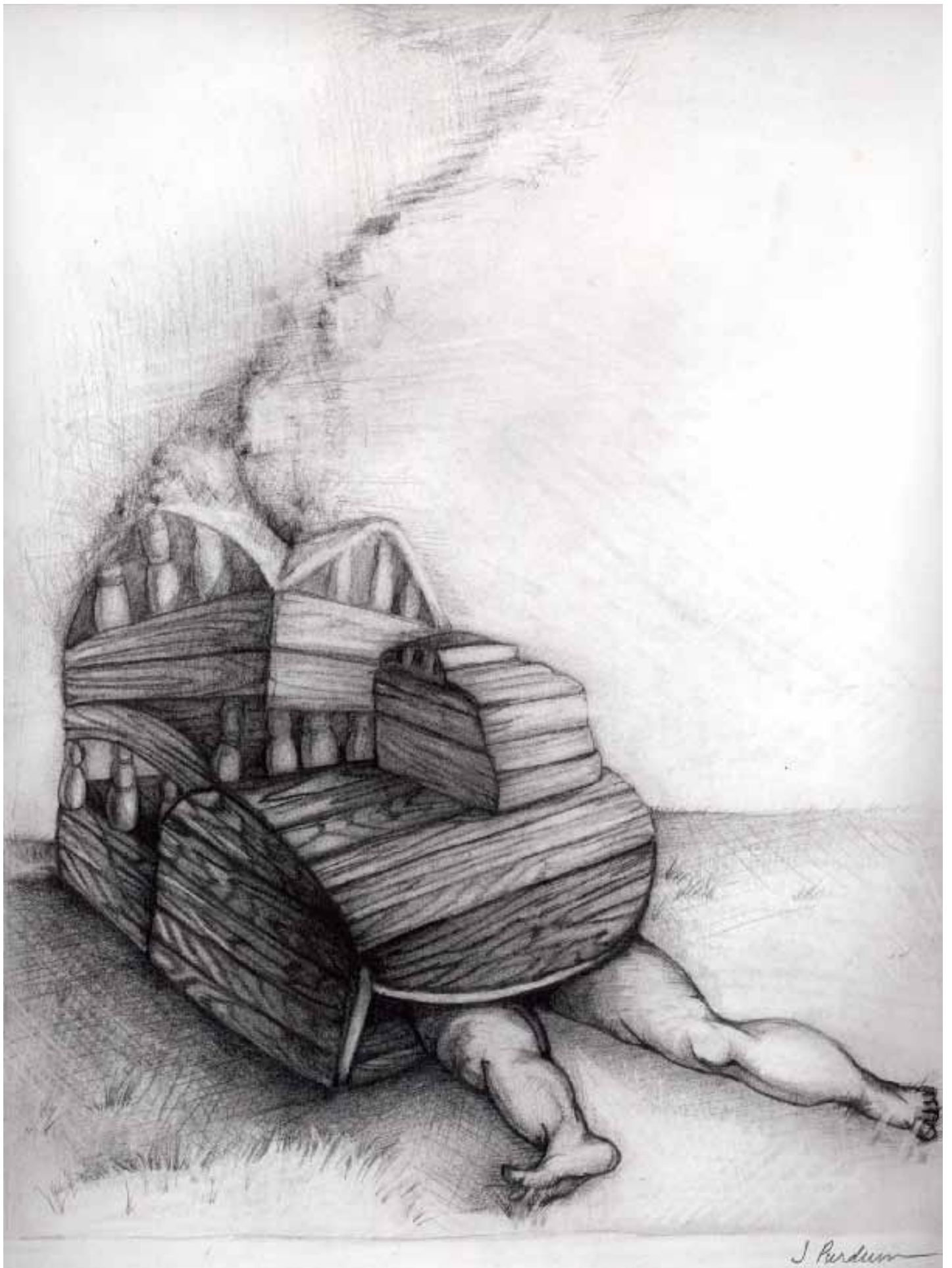
Contact: [vjcimprich@earthlink.net](mailto:vjcimprich@earthlink.net)

***DRAWING:***

**JENNIFER PURDUM**

Jennifer Purdum, born in Northeastern Ohio, 1975, grew up in the small town of Wooster, OH. She attended the University of Cincinnati (BFA, 2000) and the American University, Corciano, Italy, then Washington D.C. (MFA in painting and printmaking, 2003). After graduate school, Jennifer moved to New Orleans to teach as an adjunct instructor. After hurricane Katrina, she relocated back to the mid-west, to Cincinnati, OH, where she currently lives and works as a visiting Professor at Miami University.

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# Fernald Nature Preserve

## I. May 8, 2009

Parallel pines wall  
the straight gravel road  
off Wiley Road near Hamilton, Ohio.

Chinks in the needles  
show the domes, shallow soil, grass,  
thick concrete.

Painted-on elm leaves, glyphs in blacktop,  
mark an empty row of parking spaces  
RESERVED FOR HYBRID CARS.

The U..S. Department of Energy  
Fluor Fernald  
WELCOMES you  
to what it preserves.

FIFTY YEARS AGO AT THE ONSET OF THE COLD WAR,  
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BEGAN CONSTRUCTION  
OF A URANIUM PROCESSING FACILITY ON THIS LAND.  
THIS MARKER IS DEDICATED TO THE FAMILIES  
WHO ORIGINALLY LIVED ON THIS PROPERTY,  
THE PEOPLE OF THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES  
AND THE PATRIOTIC MEN AND WOMEN  
WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE OPERATION AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION OF THE  
FERNALD SITE.

Look for shorebirds  
along the .1 mile trail Biowetland Trail.  
Three Canada geese  
and a crow oblige.  
And swans  
perhaps shipped in  
from Schonbrunn Palace  
outside Vienna.

Willow and cattail starts  
wait in flats  
at the vacant pond's edge,

Patriotic frogs kick up  
four hind limbs downstream  
from ponds and trails.  
On the door of Well House 33:  
NOTIFY RAD TECH BEFORE  
REMOVING WELL HEAD.

A variety of restored ecosystems  
may be viewed on the  
Shingle Oak Trail .7:

ornamental grass clumps  
around a young cottonwood  
already in need of replacement  
when the next Superfund legislation  
rolls round.

## **II. September 11, 2199**

After the new zoning was passed,  
developers closed the deal  
for the old Fernald nature preserve  
outside Harrison and Ross, Ohio.

Luxury homes and condos  
with faux Shaker decor  
have closets for the rad tech suits  
that come in infants to 3X.

Children find a few ancient arrowheads  
while digging with friends  
here and there on the parcel.

Hunters' stray bullets bounce off  
concrete shards among the mounds.  
Terrorists no longer need  
set their sights quite so as high.

## Matins for the Millennium

*I have been spilled and scattered among time whose order  
I do not know; my thoughts, the innermost bowels of my  
soul, are torn apart with the crowding of variety, and so it  
will be until all together I can flow into you, purified and  
molten by the fire of your love.*

St. Augustine of Hippo  
4th century C.E.

It was a common era.  
The Beatles may or may not  
have been more popular than Jesus  
had each appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show.  
Torah, gospel, Veda, sutra, Koran,  
wings and vibrations of chitin on legs  
enlarged what we were able to sing.

Zoo enclosures got bigger,  
large vertebrates, fewer.  
Bloodroot, trout lilies, deer,  
sagebush, iguanas, jaguarundi  
all still come to look for America.

Lowland gorillas, bromeliads,  
African gray parrots, gray whales,  
polar bears, the animals of Lescault,  
the great ice sheets,  
and quartz crystals inside geodes  
take stricter vows of seclusion.

Annelids who discriminate  
about the promises of wet pavement  
continue to evolve.  
Be George Page ever so urbane,  
a Komodo dragon could still eat him.

Wars eat parents and children, while  
Arthur Daniel Midlands maintains on prime time  
it can be bread for the world.  
Video games explode pixels of blood  
in First World kids' faces.

The innermost womb of my soul,  
is cold, each 5 AM. Fingers of sight,  
Lao Tse's, Galileo's and Teilhard's,



Buzz Aldrin's and Einstein's,  
prod far as they can  
into the dilating cervix of known space.  
Contractions come faster,  
thought rasps, Omega crowns.

I put on merino wool socks,  
drink Fair Trade Colombian coffee,  
and pant this psalm  
in the face of the daystar.

**POEMS:**

**MELISSA CURRENCE**

Melissa Currence is a native Cincinnati. She has been published in the journal, *Sticky Kitchen*, and has placed in several poetry competitions. She has a bachelor's from Xavier University and a master's from Ohio State University. She works in nonprofit public relations and lives in West Chester, Ohio.

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**LARRY MABRY**

Larry Mabry has lived and worked in Northern Kentucky since 1997. He is a graduate of Murray State University and a transplant from Southern Illinois. Larry's work has been previously published in *For a Better World 2007* and *The Licking River Review*.

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**DRAWING:**

**ANITA REDMOND**

Anita Redmond was born with brush in hand in Cincinnati, OH. She is currently working toward a BFA in Painting at Northern Kentucky University. Most of her time is spent finding new ways to bring her love of texture, figure, pattern, and painting together in a colorful and harmonious way.

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



## Orphaned from Abraham's Bosom

(by *Melissa Currence*)

(*Civil Unrest in Cincinnati,  
April 2001*)

Prophet has left  
but the grid is alive  
    cobblestoned underfoot  
    as stationary as God.  
Through heaven's galley doors  
work invention sin rebellion  
    compacts  
    as screws  
    revolve.  
Prayers jump and absolution slips  
from greased fingers  
    detecting the edge  
    of exclusion, of embrace,  
    of breaking  
    points.  
Plastic battles arms  
    squeeze of chokeholds  
    gives way to limited war  
Bullets into the young—  
Faces upturned  
    towards blue  
    and down  
    in red.

## A Blind Fold

(by *Larry Mabry*)

Justice is blind they say,  
and act like this is her glory.  
If she really is,  
then somebody ought to slap that ditz

Neighborhoods hollowed out.  
Crack sweeping through on a house to house search,  
for desperate and weak souls, feeding upon them.  
Rewarding her minions with guns and power,  
and short lives.

She says little, does less  
and a tear can't even be seen  
rolling down her cheek as a hot wind  
blows through farms and small towns,  
leaving hollow cheeks and pitted faces,  
and a stench as the medicine is cooked.  
Little girls lying on the wrong couch,  
become a sacrifice to greed,  
to addiction.

No shelter to be found on main streets  
filled with empty stores, and second hand, second rate  
establishments fill spots left by family business.  
So crystal children head out to the interstate  
to big box retailers to spend stamps for food,  
and gangsters hang in front of corner stores  
with forties and little else.

She's blind we say, or did we just  
bind, gag and blindfold her,  
so we forget these sights,  
and become hard as a statue.



***POEMS:***

**PATRICIA and BRIAN GARRY**

Patricia Garry, neighborhood activist and writer, is executive director of the *CDC* trade association for non-profit development groups in the Cincinnati region. She is a psychic and healer. Brian Garry is owner of *Green City EcoStructure*, a green / sustainable construction company. He is active in Democratic politics. Both mother and son are active in Cincinnati neighborhoods, the peace movement, economic justice initiatives, and organic gardening.

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**GEORGE HARDEBECK**

George M. F. Hardebeck is a naturalist, artist, cultural and ecological restorator, gardener. He explores poetry for contemplation and shifting constructs. George has been hosting poetry readings through Cincinnati Parks, *ARCHE* - Arts Restoring Culture for Healing Earth, and at various venues in Northside. He also develops events for *The Nati Going Native*, to bring on the Age of Reconciliation.

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***DRAWING:***

**JOHN KNIGHT**

As a student at the University of Cincinnati (DAAP) studying sculpture, John Knight places his methodologies in a post-historical realm. Concentrating on the representation, reevaluation and appropriation of both material and the figure he presents the art object in recognized spectral space. Work executed dimensionally on a flat plane reflects and portrays concepts rooted in his sculpture.

Contact: [knightjd@mail.uc.edu](mailto:knightjd@mail.uc.edu)



Jan 24

11

## **To Really Make a Better World - Take Action!**

*(by Patricia and Brian Garry)*

Join your local community council,  
to work on what you've been complaining about.

Hire neighborhood young people,  
to help around the house and yard.

Take the time to listen to your friends,  
even when you're busy writing a poem.

Take time to have peace for yourself,  
for a peaceful family, community, city and world.

Be a part of the natural world,  
grow herbs or maybe a whole organic garden.

Stand with the poor, the homeless, all who are minorities,  
in our common struggle for justice.

Hang out with neighbors, sit on your porch,  
bring everyone together for a party and dance.

Go to a protest or start a non-profit to create the world  
you believe we can make together.

Challenge classism when you see it,  
especially when you see it in yourself.

Love yourself and those around you openly and fully,  
give everyone their flowers now.

## **Is America Dead**

*(by George Hardebeck)*

divided and conquered like an imported steer  
lines drawn across her forms named and cut  
Plucked like a Christmas Turkey  
bleached of her depths of cinnamon  
on the black night  
shimmering blue of sky and stars



reflected into her streams flowing  
pure to the taste for hand to reach  
into her buoyant body  
carrying canoes for moons to visit  
family and friends wrapped across her  
living bounty all close at hand  
Among her own  
eyes of her family  
watching from the shore and waters  
from her trees and air  
two to four-legged to six  
some lighting fires to call to one another  
winged to many-legged and no-legged  
taking the form of her meandering waters  
a band afloat weaving strands among us  
She sang and danced with us into  
our ways of loving her Mother  
Turtle Mother carrying us too as one  
With her life  
As her life  
Living her life on her terms  
Our arts recalling us home to Her wisdom  
her needs  
in story in ritual into her mounds  
she takes us our loved ones lost  
and found in her gracious tender love  
She Ever Ancient Ever New  
Is She dead  
Did those who killed her honor her demise  
or slaughter her as property as pork beef  
commodity tearing Her flesh  
rearranging Her parts for beauty wealth  
slicing through Her mountain tops  
cheering on exploding Her  
poor testimony to puny and petty powers  
Without Mind  
Without Heart  
Without Gut  
All together cycling as wisdom in life  
To extract her ancient energy in thin veins  
To run machines for consuming her more  
To exploit her children  
our fellow man too  
For a greater yet machine of consumption  
Glorifying itself in its arts of deconstruction  
Of Her singing *jingles*  
to pull Her minerals apart and reform Her

Discarding to contaminate Her waters  
Her body  
And all that was ours Our body too  
when we all loved Her as family  
of many forms as one body  
interrelated in every dance  
in every sacred tale for wisdom  
every saying born of these  
held together hand to hand voice to voice  
gaze to gaze as one in Her embrace  
She held us too  
for all our generations back and so forth  
for ours to care and fully carry on  
meek vital links for Her Life Ours  
we a small link in Her great endless web  
we pray to You and yours  
to those with Heart Take Heart Great Heart  
return from hopelessness and cynicism  
return to Her  
Is She dead  
Or does Her Great Heart beat *Aho*  
Young and old faithfully beneath her ribs  
Spouting timely heated streams  
from her caldera breast  
Heaving and falling as breaths of  
a great restful whale aware  
Will she shake off the *thieves*  
who seized her riches and bloodlines too  
from her loving children native to her  
Not receiving but taking as was done to these  
*Displaced* who became part of empires greed  
Like a wolf shakes off stagnant waters  
Moving her plates like a great buffalo  
Shakes muscle to shoo off biting flies  
After so much has fallen as burning coals  
the sky black with her blood sharp crystal ash  
will we remember to love Her again then  
will we restore Her Life as one in all Our ways  
We in Her ways One  
Is loving her fighting for our rights as a people  
*who refuse* to know her and celebrate her  
fighting for US against them family  
until the bloody body  
of the great I Am is void of Life  
What is a kingdom or queendom without  
What is identity without her Life

***POEMS:***

**DAVID GARZA**

David Garza is a Cincinnati resident currently based in Northside. He runs from his home *Tokyo Rose Records*, a record label and book publishing venture.

His interest in photography and documentation has led him to display his works occasionally.

Contact: davidgarza\_@hotmail.com

**FRANK O'FARRELL**

Frank O'Farrell, 46 year-old, was born in Ireland and emigrated to the USA in 1984. He attended Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH, majoring in Radio/TV production. Frank currently lives in Cincinnati, has three children, and works as an independent multimedia producer. He is an active member of a writing group he formed with a few of his close friends.

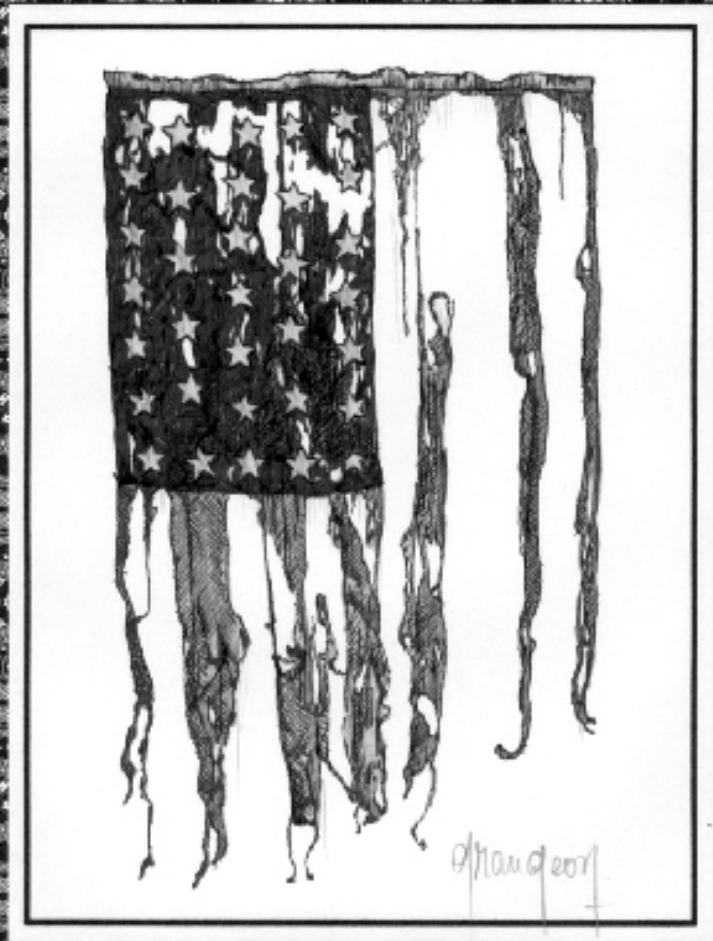
Contact: fofarrell@binarysky.com

***DRAWING:***

**JEAN MEHDI GRANGEON**

Jean Mehdi Grangeon is an established artist who has shown his work in both the USA and Europe. In Paris, he participated in the Salon d'Automne 2002 and was a finalist in the youngest artist category. In New York City he installed his studio in the heart of the Williamsburg art community. Jean Mehdi now lives in Cincinnati. His extensive portfolio has been well received by the arts community.

Contact: info@jmgrangeon.com; www.jmgrangeon.com



Alauder

## A Return

(by *David Garza*)

Now they come  
With bodies bleeding  
Into the rivers and streams,  
Into the rocks and soil,  
Into the fatigues and flags,  
All stars detached.  
They come with shells  
And involuntary fragment  
And fractures  
Of ribs and skulls  
Cleanly broken to the state  
of infection.  
Flesh wounds  
And robust hemorrhages,  
They come fully loaded  
In a disarray of horror.

## The Price of Peace

(by *Frank O'Farrell*)

The windows rattled, an almighty clatter  
“May all the saints preserve us”, said my mother shattered  
“until time immemorial, what’s the matter?  
Are there souls to be saved?”  
Her prayers twisting and turning in my mind  
As I rode my bike through the shockwaves  
To the edge of the crater made by the roadside bomb  
Which looked much too big to me.  
God rest their souls, even if they are the enemy.

The assassins lay hidden in the thistle and the gorse.  
Fitting, at a time like this to be surrounded by thorns  
Like the peace process itself, the bombers’ car stalled  
It had to be pushed up the hill  
I had to laugh at the thought  
If they had jobs they’d have no time for this farce.  
The ambassador’s blue Jaguar, was a mangled mess  
He’s a goner, there may be others  
His wife? His children? Maybe his mother?  
The Ambassador, I saw from the local papers,  
wore a tinted monocle and bowler hat  
Lost an eye at El Alamein  
Quintessential England and all that.

Did he ever see it coming I wonder,  
given the bad eye?  
Did he have time for a prayer, I wonder?  
One eye for another,  
Do they pray?  
“I’m not so sure”, said my mother.

It’s 35 years later as I stand by the spot of the crater  
paved over to make way for a train.  
The Belfast Good Friday peace agreement,  
applauded for its unimaginable achievement  
Happened two decades too late for the man from El Alamein.

This was a betrayal to some, more than concession  
A surrender to 800 years of oppression.

*“Are their arms beyond use, inaccessible and verifiable,  
Are they buried in concrete, is their inoperability undeniable?  
It’s my right to know”, says a detractor*

*“But not mine to say” comes the answer.  
“Who, where or how many is not a factor”.*

*“How can we know the agreement has been enforced?  
Do we have recourse,  
in case of an about face?”*

*“All I can say” comes the same refrain from the presiding General DeChastelain, “is that I cannot tell you”.*

*“And what about the assassin and his victim?  
How can he have peace if we bury the dead with the hatchet that killed him?”*

*“I can neither confirm nor deny that hatchets were used.  
All I can say is the past is the past, it’s the future we live through.”*

As I look at people on the platform beside me,  
Could one be the son of the ambassador who died for me  
In the name of peace,  
there’s no retribution?  
Forget your personal loss, is that your contribution?  
Your father unusable,  
Your father inoperable, inaccessible, and verifiable  
Your father, buried in concrete, put beyond use.  
The price of peace can be unimaginable.

*(The poem is based on Christopher Ewart-Biggs, British Ambassador to Ireland, who was assassinated by the I.R.A. in the summer of 1976 when a land mine was detonated as he passed in his car. It was about a mile-and-a-half from the house of the author. The deadline for paramilitary decommissioning of arms was Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> of 2010.)*

***POEM:***

**RICHARD HAGUE**

Richard Hague is author most recently of *Public Hearings*, poems political, social, and satirical. He continues to teach young people and adults in Cincinnati and Boston. His and Michael Henson's "*Where Drunk Men Go: A Poem With Music*" was a "Critic's Pick" in the 2009 Cincinnati Fringe Festival. He is also author of *Milltown Natural: Essays and Stories from a Life*, which was nominated for a National Book Award, and *Alive in Hard Country*, which won the 2004 Poetry Book of the Year award from the Appalachian Writers Association.

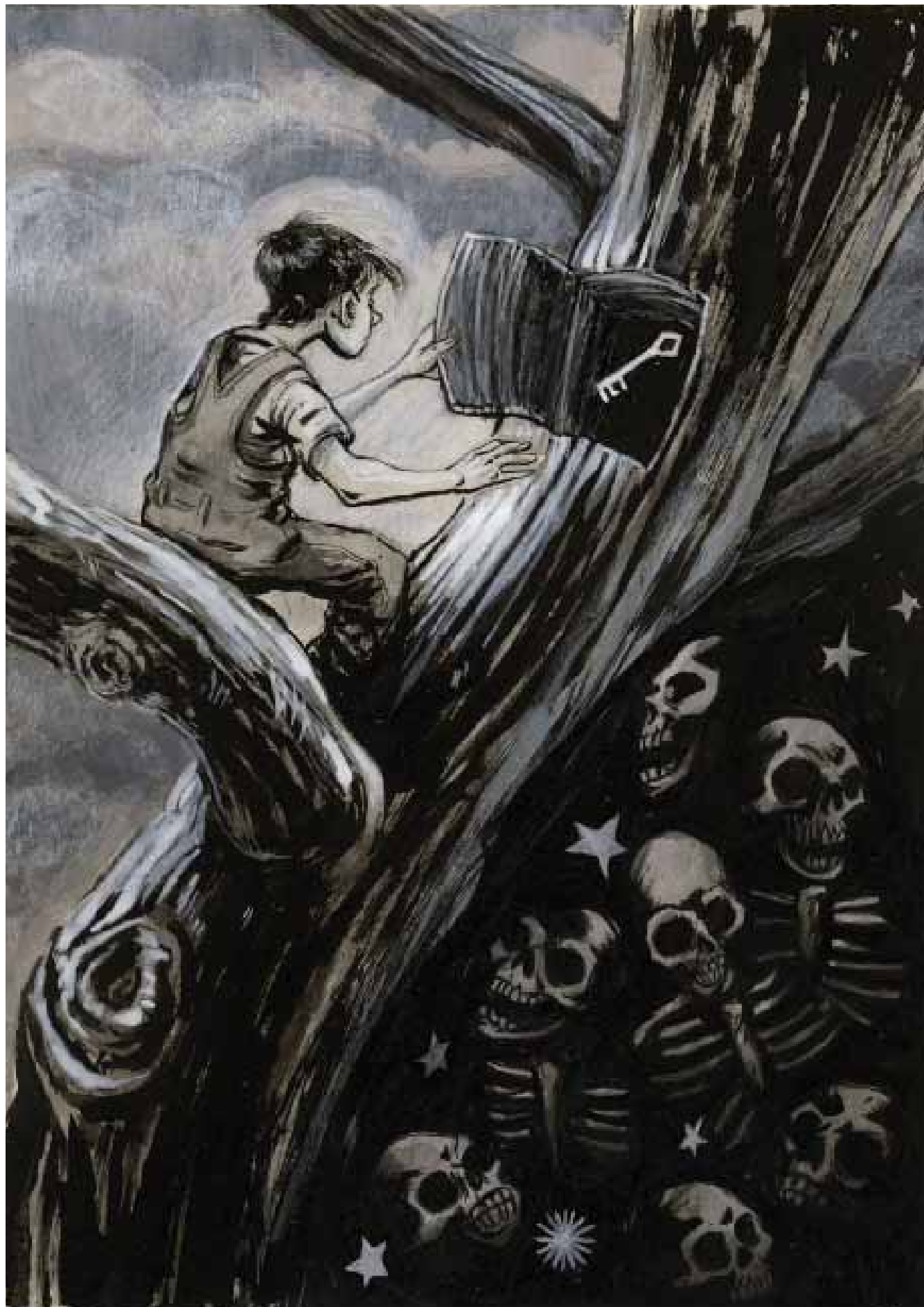
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***DRAWING:***

**OLIVER MEINERDING**

Oliver Meinerding is a graphic designer and illustrator based in the Cincinnati, OH, area. After graduating from Northern Kentucky University, he started his career as a full-time graphic designer and freelance illustrator, focusing primarily on editorial and sci-fi/fantasy illustration. Oliver is married to his amazing and patient wife Cassandra, enjoys being a new dad to their beautiful daughter Violet, and loves his little dog Wexley too much for his own good. He is available for work from both private and corporate parties.

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O C I V E R

## Interrogation During The Old New War

How large childhood remains  
even after years of recollection,  
vivid acreage without borders,  
inhabited by infancy and boyhood.  
Most everything was new then,  
glint of skink or fence swift,  
smell of copperheads,  
the way a fire in the backyard oil drum  
where we burned the trash  
hissed and smelled as it died.

*Was there no moment or question  
that did not pry open a strange door?*

No, every morning was new  
as any of Emerson's gods of the days,  
and every one wore new clothes, ribands of  
*stratocumulus*, that new word that made the world  
and my eyes new,  
or stood beaded with tiger beetles quick as light  
on the sand of the riverbank,  
and the river itself, that recent  
eater of a girl I loved, that giver  
of catfish and shad,  
that tormentor of snags and broken herons.

*Were there no repetitions beyond the wren's scales  
sung in the yard every morning?*

None—  
and a cascade of vocabulary:  
the day I learned *sperm*,  
the day I learned *alibi*,  
the days I chanted altar boy Latin  
and first pounded my chest  
at the Confiteor:  
*Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.*

*Was there no end to verbiage, to saying, cursing,  
yelling, moping,  
praying, blabbing in the blab-school years  
of times tables and the names of presidents?*

(stanza break)

None: everywhere amid a rain of nouns,  
stabbed and urged and soothed by  
avalanches of verbs,  
tilted off-center by the adverb or strange  
adjective,  
I reeled alive in words.

Only much later  
did I learn of and mourn  
the slaughters forwarded by politicians,  
the confoundings that would not answer  
reason's call,  
the outrages unjustified and unimpugned,  
the skull-like grinning silences of war,  
the dear, many, tongue-tied dead.





***POEMS:***

**MICHAEL HENSON**

Michael Henson is author of *Crow Call* and *The Tao of Longing*. Two more books of poems are due out in 2010. He is a regular contributor to *StreetVibes*, the newspaper of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless.

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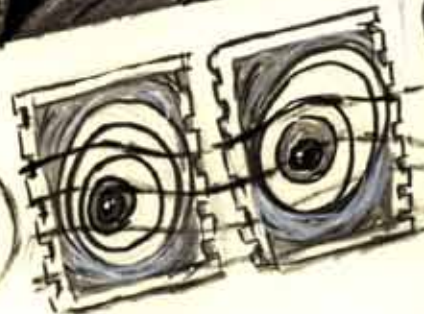
***DRAWING:***

**KATE KERN**

Kate Kern makes drawings, artists' books and installations. Her artists' books can be found in the collections of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, the DAAP Library at UC and the Cincinnati Art Museum's library. Other collections include: School of the Chicago Art Institute, Franklin Furnace/MOMA, Carnegie Mellon University, Getty Institute and National Museum for Women in the Arts. As a visual artist in the Ohio Art Council's Arts in Learning Directory, Kate enjoys working with Ohio schools and other non-profit organizations as an artist in residence.

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IN FRONT: AMERICAN FAMILY IN  
CUNESTOGA WAGON (8 CYLINDER)  
FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF TEARS  
THROUGH RINGS OF ABANDONED  
SUBURBS TOWARDS HOME.  
YOUR MESSAGE HERE



Dear America,

Where are  
we going?

Sincerely,  
America

To:  
AMERICA

© MOTOR CITY IMMERSION TOURS AND SAFARIS

## Postcards to America

America,  
I'm writing from a very far place  
called America,  
One of us is in the wrong place.

America,  
I'm steering an eight-cylinder Conestoga  
down the Trail of Tears.  
There are no exits.

America,  
I'm blind and deaf and my heart is breaking  
but if I touch the hem of your garment,  
I might win the Lottery.

America,  
The walls of the abandoned factories  
are slathered with graffiti.  
I can't read a word of it,

America,  
Is it me?  
Each part of you looks the same.  
Your elbow looks exactly like your elbow.

America,  
What's up with these angry waves of grain?  
These toppled mountain majesties?  
These out-sourced fruited plains?  
America, I think the suburbs  
Are very close to hell.

America,  
I can't argue anymore.  
When I hear the blonde men bicker on the radio,  
I want to go someplace and die.

America,  
I don't think I can bear  
the weight of your sins any longer.  
I'm letting Barabbas carry this cross.

America,  
You can tell the pin-stripe Goliaths  
I've gone home to America.  
You can tell them  
I'm out in the yard with David,  
counting stones.

## Where Are We Going?

I do not know,  
but there are children on the road.  
Some bear weapons,  
sleek in the barrel,  
solid in the stock.  
Some bear books.  
Some bear empty bowls.  
As they march,  
they grow  
and some grow tall  
and they have the strength  
of the willows that lean over the river  
and some grow frail  
as the cattails that line the ditch.  
We plod along  
with our housey burdens  
and the children run ahead  
and some run into the long distance  
remote and indiscernable as dust.  
Others run for a span.  
They drop to the side of the road.  
They watch us from the willows  
with their solemn saucery eyes.  
They want to know,  
Where are we going?



## ***POEMS:***

### **SUE 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 Writers League* (GCWL) and *Colerain Artists*. Several prize winning or Honorable Mention poems in Ohio Poetry Day Contests since 1998. Published in *Journal of Kentucky Studies*, *Nomad's Choir*, and *The Mid-America Poetry Review*. 1983 Poet Laureate for Clifton Heights/Fairview Cincinnati Recreation Commission Neighborhood Poetry Contest.

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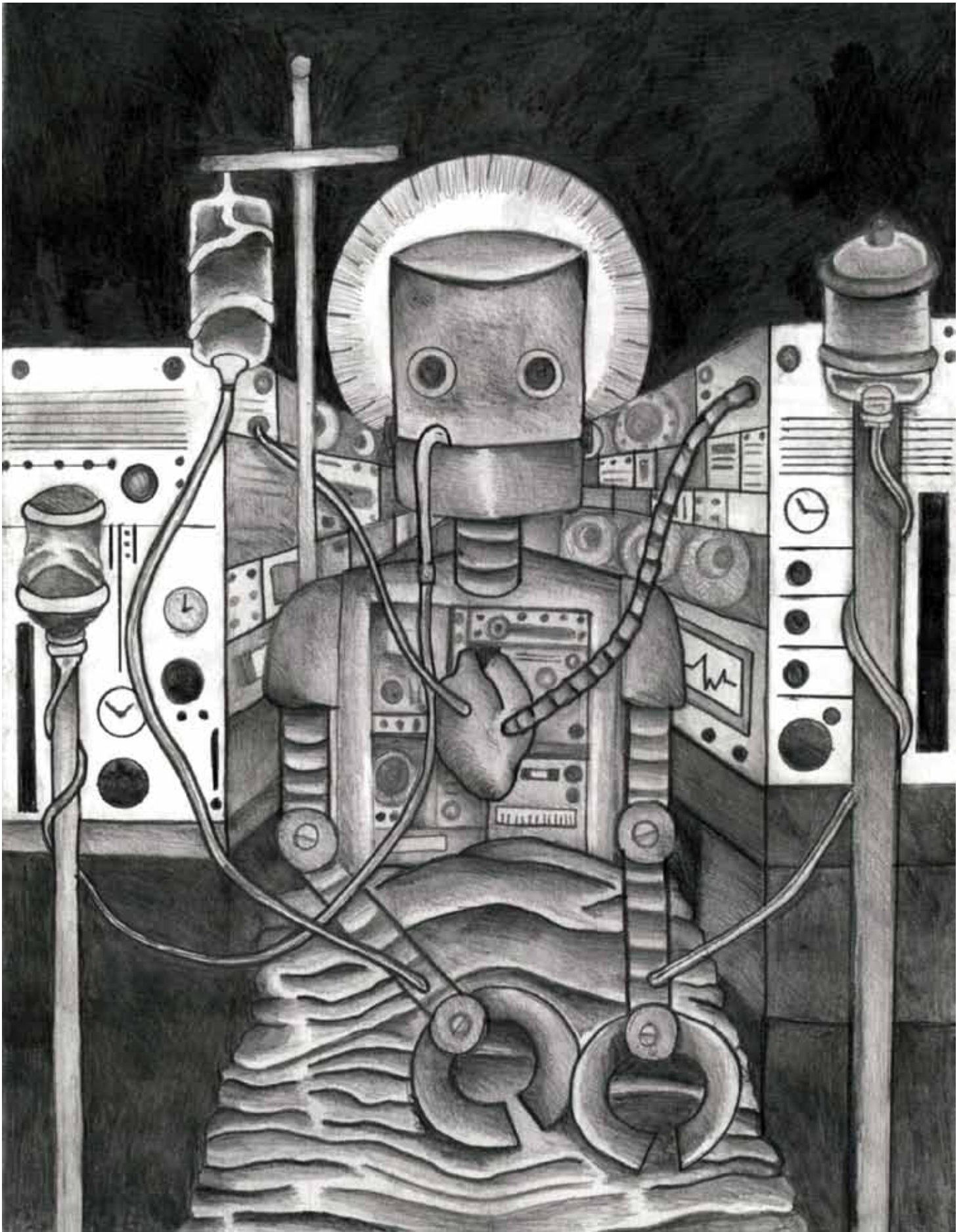
## ***DRAWING:***

### **TANK**

Tank is a fine artist who lives in Cincinnati. His artwork is inspired by old b movies, intelligent punk rock lyrics, dive bars, bad life choices, and living in the city. His work questions the idea of individuality and the human spirit in a world where conformity and blending in is the comfortable norm. Ask yourself who did you see today that you actually remember and how many faces faded into the crowd? When not crafting images of robots, Tank can be found playing Xbox 360, announcing games for the Cincinnati Rollergirls, and raising his Boston Terrier, Doyle Von Frankenstein.

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Tank

## Haiti Quakes

Tissue paper structures  
destined to fail;  
build weak to keep weak.  
No mercy in subsistence.

A feather on the back  
of a moving turtle  
blows away.

Earth yawns and stretches,  
its light load tumbles  
matchstick bodies topple.

In bedrock and sand,  
shifting soil, no feelings.  
Too late, we care.

Our comfort - our  
transgression; our self  
interest, their splintered  
bodies, their demise.

In post-shame, our penance;  
in atonement, hope for justice.

## Lost

I  
  
In a seldom-used closet, my daisy-embroidered  
high school graduation gown, once  
pure white - now grey with age,

two skirts, one worn at my first baby's  
dedication, purple/white batik;  
one a gift from Father, Hawaiian.

In the cedar chest, my christening gown,  
my daughters' first dresses,  
baby books and locks of hair.

All pieces of past, tactile memories  
of happy times, moved from house  
to house, spared from Goodwill

## Lethal

The girl, in the first  
blush of the woman-to-be  
unwitting, in the path  
of the human tempest!  
Raped, burned,  
defiler's prey.

He, roiling mass  
of pent up misery,  
out-of-control,  
relentless, erupts.

God, grand designer,  
must be weeping  
once again - humanity  
set in motion, only to  
collide  
in un-intended devastation.

Murderers we help to  
spawn  
with greed, injustice,  
and hate  
slaughter our innocent.

penance of death?  
Too easy to wash away  
the blood of our complicity,  
the deed, the evil doer.

A purgatory of prison,  
privation, pain - he suffers,  
we remember, we warn,  
worry the system that

births the wrong.

The soul of the girl rises  
from brokenness,  
unblemished;  
his black soul festers.

bags of pared down possessions,  
talismans I carry into elder hood,  
parting unthinkable, yet inevitable.

II

At the retirement home, just moved in,  
possessions pared down to one room,  
my aunt clutches her hand-sewn quilt.

In New Orleans, flood-victim cousins  
move into the trailer, dragging  
donated bags of clothing and food.

In the nursing home, with  
a vacant look, Dad greets me:  
"Who are you?"





***POEMS:***

**MANUEL IRIS**

Manuel Iris (Mexico, 1983), holds a BA in Latin American literature, an MA in Spanish and is currently a PhD student in the Department of Romance Languages (UC). Manuel has received many awards for his poetry in particular the National Award of poetry “Mérida”(México, 2009). He is the author of *Versos Robados y Otros Juegos* (Conaculta 2004, UADY 2006) and *Cuaderno de los Sueños* (Fondo Editorial Tierra Adentro 2009).

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**BILL LYON**

Bill Lyon lives East of Cincinnati. His true identity is as a husband, father and spiritual seeker. He is often mistaken, however, by his roles -- as a community leader and owner of a financial advisory firm. Bill holds a Bachelor's degree from The Ohio State University and a Master's from The American College.

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***DRAWING:***

**CLAIRE METZGER**

Claire Metzger was raised and currently resides in Kentucky. She earned her Bachelor's of Fine Arts from the University of Louisville and is procuring her Master's of Fine Arts at the University of Cincinnati. Claire relies on line quality and expressive marks to evoke emotions in her sculptures and drawings.

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*Claire Metzger*

## Homeless

(by **Manuel Iris**)

Yet it is snow that falls  
on the stump of the beggar, on the empty  
socket of his eye.

Yellowish, opaque,  
toothless whiteness  
in the middle of the face  
mocking the face  
of snow, beauty  
that does not hide the ugliness  
on which its light, sterile silence  
that masks decays,  
minute deaths  
which elicit  
neither disgust nor tenderness,  
lands softly.

With vigor the body above the stump  
remakes a war in a distinct place  
where was never seen before a whiteness  
more burning than the flame of napalm.

I do not know if the man was a murderer.

On his stump, in the emptiness of his eye  
got stuck, useless and cold,  
the beauty.

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

## In Comfort

(by **Bill Lyon**)

I, *in comfort*, ponder my existence.

I evaluate my place in this world.  
I search for answers.  
I seek understanding.  
I expand my horizons.  
I build relationships.

## Homeless

(by **Manuel Iris**)

También es nieve la que cae  
en el muñón del limosnero, en la vacía  
cuenca de su ojo.

Amarillenta, opaca,  
desdentada blanca  
a la mitad del rostro  
va burlando el rostro  
de la nieve, belleza  
que no ahoga la fealdad  
en que su luz, silencio estéril  
que enmascara podredumbres,  
muertes diminutas  
a las que no acuden  
ni asco ni ternura,  
se posa levemente.

Desde su aliento el cuerpo encima del muñón  
rehace una guerra en un lugar distinto  
en que jamás se ha visto una blanca  
más quemante que la flama de napalm.

No sé si el hombre ha sido un asesino.

En su muñón, en el vacío del ojo  
se ha atorado inútil, fría

I celebrate life.  
And gradually, I shed my shrouds of prejudice

... As

I, *in comfort*, ponder my existence.

Elsewhere ...  
In this world,  
In this nation,  
In this city,  
Someone  
Just like me --  
And not at all like me ...  
Without a job,  
Without a home,  
Without food,

Ponders her existence.

She, too, evaluates her place in this world.  
She searches for answers.  
She seeks but cannot understand.  
She has lost all hope of expanding her horizons.  
She painfully recalls relationships which failed her  
in her need.  
She finds damned little of life to celebrate.  
And she gradually, understandably *builds* prejudices  
of people like me

... Who

*In comfort*, ponder our existence.

***POEMS:***

**JERRY JUDGE**

Jerry Judge is a Cincinnati based poet and social worker. He is an active member of the *Cincinnati Writers' Project* and the *Greater Cincinnati Writers' League*. Six of his poetry chapbooks have been published, and he has been published in many dozens of journals, anthologies, and online zines.

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***DRAWING:***

**AARON WOOD**

Aaron Oliver Wood is an artist based in Cincinnati, OH. He is the owner of Paradigm Assassins skateboard company and DJ's the artist interview and music radio show, "*Paradigm Assassins Radio*" Tuesday nights at W.A.I.F. 88.3 FM in Cincinnati.

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AARON OLIVER WOOD

## The Psychology Class

In Psych 101  
he never spoke  
more than necessary.

We kept our distance –  
repelled by the bitter smell  
of rage barely contained.

One classmate dreamed  
he laughed, then cried blood  
after shooting her parents.

The professor and grad assistant  
never aimed criticism at him  
or teamed him with other students.

Once the professor asked our class  
which profession has the most members  
who commit suicide.

His one good arm shot up.  
The voice ricocheted off the walls,  
“It should be Army recruiters.”

## Friendly

My Uncle Paul was friendly. He flopped  
to the floor and played with my kids and  
helped me  
assemble those daunting Christmas toys.

Betty, waitress at the Corner Café, is friendly.  
She asks how I’m doing and cares about  
what I respond. Sometimes she doesn’t charge for pie.

Bill, a retired co-worker, was friendly.  
Always a big grin and laugh, we kidded about how  
he would make a great Walmart Greeter.

However, friendly fire is confusing. It blew off  
the skull and more of my neighbor’s son.  
Military personnel who delivered the news were  
friendly.

## Application for Assistance

The interviewer has kind eyes  
but little patience. Perhaps  
he doesn’t have time for me,  
Stella thinks while trying  
to form speedy answers.

“Do you have a bank account?”  
After a pause, Stella recalls  
a check book and feeling normal before  
Jake’s drinking got bad, before  
she wore sunglasses every day.

“Do you have children?”  
Stella lowers her head.  
Her son was okay, collected baseball cards.  
Now the neighbors suspect Davy cut off  
a cat’s tail. Stella suspects, too.

“Do you have a family who can help you?”  
Blood starts to drip from Stella’s lip.  
Not when your letters are returned.  
Not when they put a blocker on their phone.  
She and Jake ran off. She is unforgiven.

The interviewer’s eyes harden.  
Stella worries that Jake will make bail.  
Her fear fuels the interrogation.  
“Please. Please. Whatever answers you want.  
Just don’t hurt me anymore.”





***POEMS:***

**VICTORIA KAHLE**

Victoria Renee Snyder Munch Kahle; 52; Wife of James Kahle; Mother of Erin (10) and Christian (8); Daughter of Cathrine Munch and Dr. Fred Snyder; Relative of Edvard Munch; Architect; Committed to Peace and Joy.

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**KERRY SULLIVAN**

After living in four other states across various regions of the country, Kerry Sullivan settled recently in the Cincinnati area. He derives great pleasure from teaching 8th graders at John XXIII School and hopes to inspire them with a passion for writing and for living justly as they inspire him. Kerry's passions include traveling, reading, spending time with friends, being involved with church community, and remaining connected with family, physically far but close in spirit.

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***DRAWING:***

**HILARY SEE PENNA**

Hilary See Penna is a hardworking illustrator based in Cincinnati for the past 10 years. She makes signs by day and fight capitalism by night, using her free time to explore entomology and dominate side scrolling platform video games.

Hilary was a victim of a series of accidents, as is everyone else.

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hilary see penna

## Erin's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday

(by *Victoria Kahle*)

Instead of this work  
I could go back to watching her chase  
pigeons

Why should I worry when  
I have that to fall back on?

The giddy rush of wings  
Pulling games out of thin air

Reminders  
Simple  
Choose  
Simple  
Choice

I myself I'd forgotten  
How many times before  
Her

I walked through that plaza  
And I never thought to chase pigeons.  
My thoughts they were elsewhere

Reminders  
Stop  
Chase the pigeons  
Watch them fly

## Family Heirloom

(by *Victoria Kahle*)

Tears over 50 years old  
Preserved there in front of me  
On soft yellowed paper  
Salted, stained words written  
By my Oldemor\*  
For her favorite granddaughter on her way to  
America

A tightened chest, a broken heart  
Never to see her again  
Accompanied in the book  
by a picture of the two  
Capturing the rapture  
One felt for the other  
It was the tears this time  
and the gaze for the little one,  
that told the story  
Not the words  
That caused my eyes to fill  
As I watched my Mother's gaze  
and understood

*\*Oldemor, Norwegian for Great Grandmother*

## The Hood

(by *Kerry Sullivan*)

Bitter wind and snow  
Swirl around me  
As I fumble with the 15 passenger van  
Inside which I crammed 20+ children  
(and one other chaperone)  
To head to the House of Blues.

The plan was to drop off my passengers  
Park the van in a nearby lot  
And hurry back to rejoin my students.  
But the best-laid plans can go awry  
And these plans were far from the best.

30, 40 minutes pass.  
I am still struggling to maneuver that bulky van  
Into those compact car spaces.  
Tense, anxious, feeling foolish  
I back in, back out  
(and back in, back out)  
Till around the corner comes  
Sherman.

Relief floods me.  
At last someone can help me.  
Even if he mocks me to his 8<sup>th</sup> grade buddies  
I'm not alone anymore.

The number of times  
I've had to admonish Sherman  
For his distractibility  
For his silliness  
For his lack of effort—  
It could all come back to slap me in the face  
As I am now the vulnerable one.

But it doesn't.  
Sherman helps me.  
He doesn't laugh—  
He expresses concern.  
And we get that van  
Into a decent spot.

As we head back to the others,  
I pull up my hood  
To block the icy air.  
When I notice Sherman  
Leaves his hood  
Around his shoulders,  
I question.

And he responds light-heartedly,  
"Oh, my mama says black boys  
Shouldn't wear their hoods up in public.  
It scares people. You see a guy in a hood,  
You might think I'm trying to hurt you."

I can say nothing.  
There is nothing to say  
That explains away irrational fears.  
I murmur,  
"They just need to get to know you."

***POEMS:***

**LONNA KINGSBURY**

Lonna Kingsbury is once again honored to be included in *For a Better World 2010*. Each poet's voice, as well as each artist's eye continue to meld together; they challenge each individual who would but venture into our world to wonder... what can I do? Lonna continues to write and share her offerings out and about the country.

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**SPENCER LEDYARD**

Spencer Ledyard practices daily poetry and a delicate, faithful search for honesty underneath language. He weighs colloquialisms on his ear and definitions on his tongue. He would like to thank experience and joy; he owns them all.

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***DRAWING:***

**MONICA POIRIER**

Monica Poirier is currently residing in Cincinnati, OH. She is studying Fine Arts, concentrating in Media and 3-D art. Monica will be graduating Spring 2011 in hopes to pursue a career in Media Production.

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MONICA POIRIER

## Equality

(by *Lonna Kingsbury*)

Lunging out the dank-planked door  
Jamie sped for life  
deemed endlessly repressive  
aged before her time  
swept long beyond heroic charm  
enraptured with how strong  
what if  
or who  
or when  
before  
her knowledge  
classically condemned  
survival based irrational  
murky blood-washed sands  
curdling as bile  
deep-fingering her soul  
spewing ersatz lightings  
masking thickening mires  
calculating self-fed rage  
engorged to stifle any cries  
friendly  
friendly  
Fire!  
gone too soon  
her fickle moons  
mirroring false camouflage  
enhancing self-indulgent faults  
ticked off to counter doom.

## Peace between Reloading

(by *Spencer Ledyard*)

*Peace is that brief glorious moment in  
history when everybody stands around  
reloading - Unknown*

Two up, two across, then an X, an O,  
X,O,X,O,X. Tic-tac-toe, you win.  
Wanna play again? The game's all  
chance; no,

Let's do something else before we  
move in.

How many are inside or do we know?  
They shouldn't be armed but, well, maybe ten...  
Christ... gimme a grenade before we go.  
Here. What are we waiting for? The captain...  
Oh, when? Zero zero zero zero.  
That's like twenty minutes ago. ... So when?  
I don't know, we'll give him ten more or so  
And if he ain't here yet we'll start blastin'.  
So... wanna play again? Nah, that game's dumb,  
(Yawn)  
It only kills time and killin' times dumb.

## The Paradox of Peace

(by *Spencer Ledyard*)

*Each one has to find his peace from within.  
And peace to be real must be unaffected by  
outside circumstances.*

- *Mahatma Gandhi*

He took his time. There was no rush. He paused.  
A peace within: breathe out, breathe in, breathe out.  
The harmony of mind and body caused  
By vast experience; it spread throughout.

The light was good. The wind was down. No clouds,  
No shadow cast by tree or building face,  
And underfoot, the little, rounded shrouds  
That glide along beneath the human race.

His pulse was slow. His hand was still. He kneeled.  
He closed his eyes. He counted ten. And then  
He opened them and saw a crowded field  
Where people milled around. He said, "Amen."

And all he felt was nothing, cold or hot,  
As he took aim; as let off his first shot.





***POEMS:***

**ANNETTE LACKNER**

Annette (Toni) Lackner is a native Cincinnati, wife, mother, and grandmother. She has been published in *For A Better World, 2008* and in a church periodical. Several years ago, she won second place in a short story contest. Annette has been a member of *Women Writing for (a) Change*, where her writing developed and flourished.

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***DRAWING:***

**BEKKA SAGE**

Bekka Sage is an artist in theory, and a graphic designer in practice. She graduated from the University of Cincinnati's DAAP program with a focus in sculpture. Her travels have inspired her art and created her lifetime goal to step foot on all seven continents.

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Bekka Sage

## Eleanor

*(A poem written after walking the grounds of Eleanor Roosevelt's Cottage, Val-Kil)*

I walk in her footsteps  
No formal gardens here  
Surrounding her cottage, Val-Kil,  
But nature as plain and solid  
And unadorned as she was

On a bridge crossing a stream  
The gurgling water reminds me  
Through the cycle of nature  
Somehow we are all connected

Can I conjure from this place  
What was part of her,  
Those things that make us "kindred spirits"  
Working for peace, human rights,  
Taking a stand when others shy away

Did the splendor of the Fall  
Remind her, too, that winter is nigh  
No time to waste when the world  
So desperately needs healing.

Will this tranquil, silent landscape  
Give way to a voice as shrill as hers  
To speak the words of peace  
When no one else will?

I ponder her question...  
"When will our consciences grow so  
tender that we will act to prevent human  
misery rather than to avenge it?"

It frightens me to have these thoughts  
A price must be paid to own them  
But her words ring out in my being  
"Courage is more exhilarating than fear  
And in the long run easier."

Do I dare to walk in her footsteps?

## Finding My Voice

A shy pre-schooler  
Behind my mother's skirt,  
Insecure from Daddy's death  
Don't speak to adults who might  
Betray by disappearing.

Obedied the "good sisters"  
Memorized the Catechism  
Never stepped out of line,  
Forced down disgusting food,  
Never questioning, I complied.

Teen-aged years, small rebellions,  
More in what I wore than what I questioned  
Groomed to be teacher, nurse, mother or nun  
Those were the options there was no either or.

The Vietnam War, the Feminist Movement,  
I watched, disengaged, taking care of babies,  
making a home. Those who showed promise,  
JFK, RFK and MLK, again. disappeared.  
I watched, let it sink in. I withdrew into my safety  
Zone.

I turned to the garden, where I could nurture,  
Feel the lush fruit of my harvest, wield control.,  
Feel at peace. I joined a Garden Club.  
"Can I bring a person of color", asked a  
Member. Voted down. Not our tradition.  
I quit several months later, not citing the true reason.  
There was a tingle in my vocal chords.

I went to work for the Church.  
Loving Franciscans encouraged my voice.  
I didn't want to be Joan of Arc, but I led the fight  
For girls on the altar. I couldn't tell my three  
daughters:  
'If you can't pee like Jesus; you can't be like Jesus.'  
My vocal chords were growing muscle.

Life went on.  
I've traveled the world  
I've listened, tasted, watched.  
I have connected...  
I have come home,  
I have changed.

Cloaked bigotry and racism at social gatherings.  
Never a part of it, but never spoke against it.  
By my silence, was I complicit?  
Now I walk away and the message is heard.

The lead up to the Iraq War  
I'm reading, I'm searching, I'm TALKING.  
I'm S C R E A M I N G.

I scream at my Church. Jesus told us what to do.  
Remember the Beatitudes? Blessed are the peacemakers  
For they shall inherit the earth? Were they just words  
Made to disappear when inconvenient?

I scream at my friends  
This isn't what our America stands for..  
This isn't the country I love..  
This can't be done in our name..  
They don't want to hear my voice, they are frightened,  
They liked me better before, when I didn't speak.  
They wanted me to disappear.

Now, I'm wailing! You taught me the Two  
Great Commandments  
Love God with your heart and soul  
Love Thy Neighbor as Thy Self  
Doesn't that mean no War,  
Doesn't that mean tolerance,  
Doesn't that mean justice?  
Did the meaning just disappear?

I'm screeching  
Screeching for my mother who had  
No equal pay, no available day care  
For the "good sisters" cloaked in black  
To hide their femininity  
For my daughters and granddaughter  
For those men who don't fear a woman's  
power.  
For those wary of "the other".

They've all planted, watered, fertilized,  
Nurtured my voice. It's strong and beautiful  
In it's truth.

You may not like my timbre,  
My pitch may at times be shrill  
but I'm part of a great chorus.  
The only way to silence  
Me now is to make me, too,  
disappear.



***POEMS:***

**CAROL FEISER LAQUE**

Carol Feiser Laque's most recent collection of poetry *Mapping the Confluence* is just available for free as a gift back to anyone who loves poetry. Carol has taught at the University of Cincinnati and at Xavier University. She founded the *Cincinnati writer's workshop*. An interview with her can be found in the 1999 poet's market. Her favorite class of all time is recess.

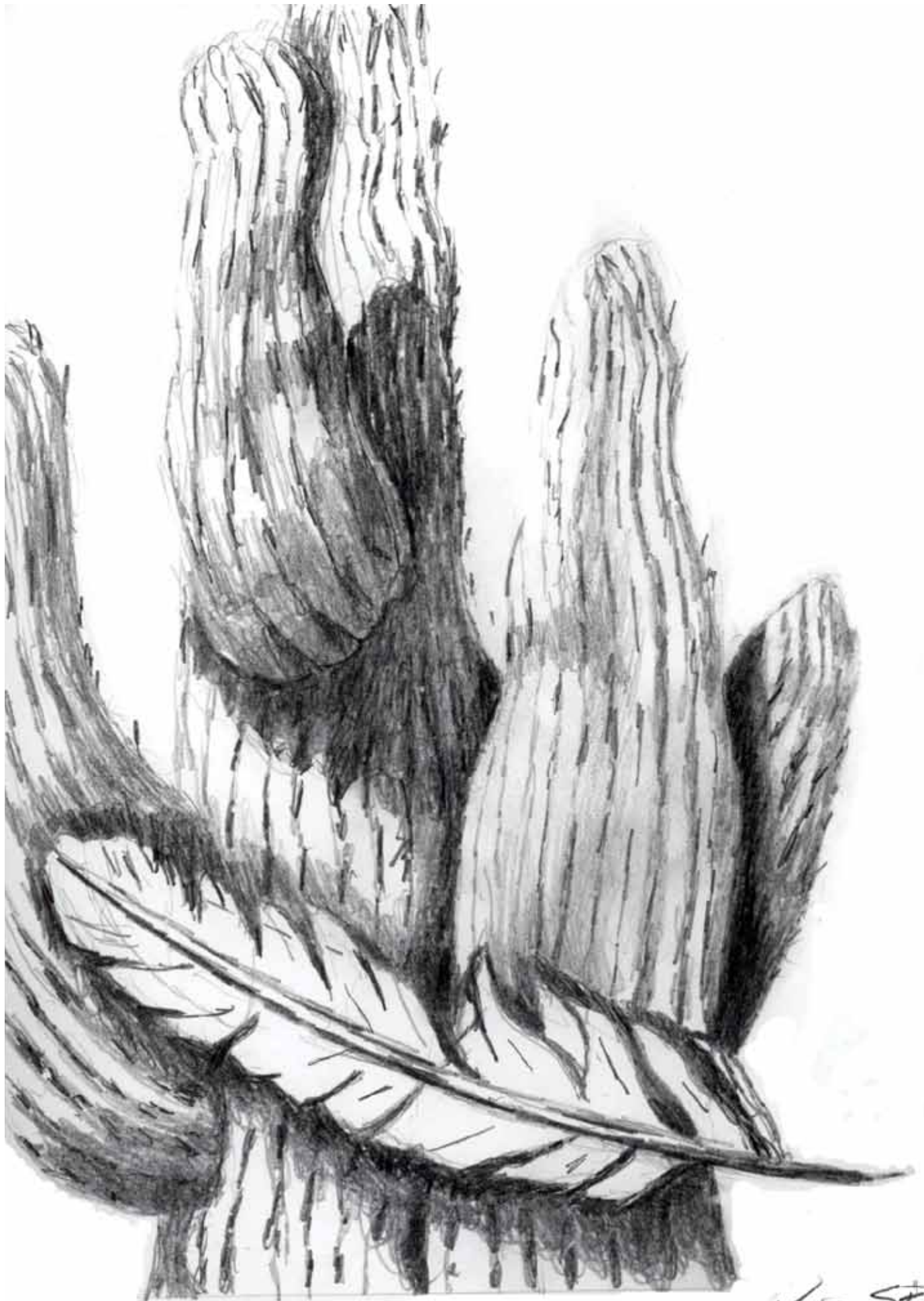
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***DRAWING:***

**NED STERN**

Ned Stern has been painting professionally, since he received his degree in Fine Art from The American University. He has taught drawing at the Universities of Michigan and Cincinnati. His work is in private and corporate collections in the United States and Canada. Locally, his work has been shown in the Miller Gallery, Closson's Gallery, Glendale Gallery, The Art Academy, Cincinnati Art Club, Gallery 22, Kennedy Heights Art Center, The Cincinnati Enquirer and Fusion Gallery to name a few. Stern maintains a studio at the Pendleton Arts Center in Cincinnati.

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NED STERN

## The Help

Some days it doesn't pay to  
get out of bed – or brush your

Teeth or Hair. I entered this  
country illegally and immediately

Found work. I never knew this  
land was “purchased” from us –

That it was ours first. I rock to sleep  
other people's children. I smuggle my money home.

I can't afford to go back, and  
so I bring my family here one by one.

Our Hispanic Heritage survives in  
our honor of being who we are: hard workers.

Quietly we clean houses, do yard work  
while we look to excellence with our eyes:

Life, Liberty, and the pursuit  
of getting out of our own beds.

## 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 in to  
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  
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 –  
My pain bleeds Prayers.

## The Circus

I swallow midnight  
in black shadows, and  
stars of circus lights  
burn holes inside me.

I grow up under the tent.  
Both my parents are clowns  
making me up a clown, too.  
My face – the agony, the smile.

Growing out of my clown faces,  
I paint my own flesh with  
rain escaping both  
the agony, the smile.

I leave becoming a creature  
Of the sun. I feel the warm  
gold on my face, a Perfect Presence  
from a naked, sweet, Living Light.





***POEMS:***

**FLORIANO MARTINS**

Floriano Martins (Brasil, 1957) is a poet, an essayist, a translator, a visual artist and an editor. He directs the Editorial Projects Banda Hispánica / Banda Lusófona and coordinates the collection Ponte Velha of authors of Portuguese language (San Paolo, Brasil). In 2008 he curated the Ceara International Biennial of the book. Invited Professor of the University of Cincinnati. He co-directs the *Review TripleV of Arts, Religions and Sciences* (Lisbon, Portugal). He is the author of *Fuego en las Cartas* (poetry, Spain), *A inocência de pensar* (essays, Brasil) and *A alma desfeita em corpo* (poetry, Portugal), all published in 2009.

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***DRAWING:***

**BARBARA AHLBRAND**

Barbara Ahlbrand is a working artist in Cincinnati. She has maintained a strong sense of her own identity and has amassed, over her career, an extensive body of work that defines her unique personal vision as an artist.

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## Lazarus

I leave you, disorder installed inside your body.  
A single gesture evokes the decline of your  
existence.  
The times are gripped by torpor.  
My one hope is to kill you.  
I cross the streets, dodging bombs.  
The planet has a thousand ghettos that butcher it.  
It's absurd to say that I will rise again from the  
dust of your blood.  
We live in the hope that life will be different.  
Just a little more substance perhaps in the  
intrinsic frailty of the days.  
Such resignation frightens me.  
Between gunshots I get drunk.  
In secret, all knowledge becomes anxiety.  
I leave you: an arrow fired at random.

*(translated from Portuguese by  
Margaret Jull Costa)*

## Gabriel Laughing at Himself

One by one I touched the errors of my suffering.  
The point of imbalance that I could not exalt.  
My limits lead me to ruin.  
I rush into a desert that wounds me.  
That requires of me defects beyond my own  
poor rigour.  
Everything enters me like a death that burns.  
Like David's fiery words.  
The blind force of elements subject to an eternal  
falling.  
Images of my suffering fragment silently before  
me.  
A laughable ecstasy.  
I am driven by visions of the horror that  
torments me.  
Nothing answers to the secret catastrophe of  
my days.  
Only the wild beatitude laying waste to me.

*(translated from Portuguese by  
Margaret Jull Costa)*

## Lazarus

Saio de ti a desordem instalada em teu corpo.  
Um único gesto evoca o declínio de tua  
existência.  
Os tempos estão tomados de torpor.  
Minha única chance é mesmo acabar contigo.  
Cruzo as ruas entre bombas.  
O planeta tem mil guetos que o massacram.  
Ridículo dizer que do pó de teu sangue  
ressurgirei.  
Vivemos esperando outra coisa da vida.  
Um pouco mais de fundamento talvez na  
própria debilidade dos dias.  
Tanta resignação me assusta.  
Entre um disparo e outro me embriago.  
Em segredo todo conhecimento se revela  
angustiado.  
Saio de ti: flecha disparada a esmo.

## Gabriel Rindo de Si Mesmo

Toquei uma a uma as falhas de meu suplício.  
O ponto de desequilíbrio que não pude exaltar.  
Meus limites me levam à ruína.  
Precipito-me em um deserto que me fere.  
Que requer de mim defeitos além de meu  
pobre rigor.  
Tudo em mim entra como uma morte que  
me queima.  
Como as palavras em brasa de Davi.  
A força cega dos elementos sujeitos à queda  
eterna.  
Imagens de meu suplício se fragmentam  
mudas diante de mim.  
Êxtase risível.  
Sou conduzido pelas visões do espanto que  
me sacrifica.  
Nada responde à surda catástrofe de meus  
dias.  
Apenas a selvagem beatitude que me arrasa.

## David's Agony

Tonight I rewrote the final pages.  
The hand of Hecate on the open book.  
The utter nakedness of the dark enraged me.  
A nakedness capable of killing a god.  
Around in the glorious architecture of the disasters  
that form the basis of all human existence.  
The bleeding soul of the world.  
Hecate's gaze points me to the abyss where I must live out my days.  
An avid void where passion and horror bring forth creatures laden with hatred.  
I re-read every page of her satisfied body.  
Her nakedness mingled playfulness and innocence.  
I had to shout out.  
With all the brilliance of an abyss reinventing itself:  
a single thread of blind light and the book,  
a vast compendium of the lies  
that are as essential to life as they are to love.

*(translated from Portuguese by Margaret Jull Costa)*

## Agonia de Davi

Esta noite refiz as últimas páginas.  
A mão de Hécate sobre o livro aberto.  
Assim tão nua a escuridão me enfurecia.  
Nudez capaz de matar um deus.  
Ao seu redor a arquitetura gloriosa dos desastres  
que forjam a base de toda existência humana.  
A sangrenta alma do mundo.  
O olhar de Hécate me indica o abismo onde devo me esgotar.  
Ávido vazio onde paixão e horror procriam suas criaturas carregadas de ódio.  
Fui relendo cada página de seu corpo satisfeito.  
Sua nudez confundia jogo e inocência.  
Tive que gritar.  
Com o fulgor de um abismo que se refaz a si mesmo:  
um único fio de cega luz e o livro,  
um vasto espólio das mentiras  
tão essenciais à vida quanto o amor.

## ***POEMS:***

### **JANE MASTERS**

Jane Masters relishes finding clever and concise ways of conveying thought provoking ideas. Her poems are influenced by a practice of Mindfulness Meditation and her work as a licensed independent social worker. Jane is one of the local organizers of *Standing Women*, a group of people who come together on Mother's Day to call attention to the original intention of the day, peace.

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### **MARY-JANE NEWBORN**

Born and raised in Cincinnati in 1969, Mary-Jane Newborn married her British pen pal at a rock concert in Eden Park, moved to England for 12 years, became vegetarian and started a 26 year career as an art model. Afterwards, Mary-Jane lived in Miami, FL, for 7 years and returned to her homestead in 1988. In 1989, she became vegan. Mary-Jane now lives in Winton Place, volunteers with *Earth Save Cincinnati*, and continues activism for the liberation of all beings.

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## ***DRAWING:***

### **TERRA HEITZMAN**

Terra Heitzman is a 21 year old Cincinnati native. She is currently a full time student at the University of Cincinnati and a manager at a local restaurant. Terra is passionate about art in all its forms; she thinks that people can make a difference if they are brave enough to stand up for what they believe in.

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Lucy DeStommar

## Haiku Poems

(by *Jane Masters*)

Surely Jesus knew  
that love is too radical  
for everyday use.

The bumper sticker  
says "God bless America."  
Try a bigger prayer.

Voice, "Be not afraid."  
Should I fear the voice that speaks  
such loud heresy?

## Socratic Response

(by *Mary-Jane Newborn*)

*(An answer to those who ask "What if Beethoven's mother had gotten an abortion? Michelangelo's? etc.", those who believe that denying women more rights will protect life.)*

What if Attila the Hun's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Idi Amin's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Osama Bin Laden's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if John Wilkes Booth's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Lucrezia Borgia's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Julius Caesar's mother had gotten an abortion (instead of a Caesarean)?  
What if Caligula's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Nicolaou Ceausescu's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Billy the Kid's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Christopher Columbus' mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if the Crusaders' mothers had gotten an abortion?  
What if Jeffrey Dahmer's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if John Dillinger's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Papa Doc Duvalier's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Orval Faubus' mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if George III's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Nathuram Godse's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Joseph Goebbels' mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Hermann Goering's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if King Herod's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Emperor Hirohito's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Adolph Hitler's mother had gotten an abortion?



What if J. Edgar Hoover's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Saddam Hussein's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Judas Iscariot's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Jim Jones' mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Genghis Khan's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Ayatollah Khomeini's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Niccolo Machiavelli's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Mao Ze-Dong's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Cotton Mather's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Joseph McCarthy's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Joseph Mengele's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Slobodan Milosevic's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Ho Chi Minh's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Benito Mussolini's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Lee Harvey Oswald's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Augusto Pinochet's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Francisco Pizarro's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Pol Pot's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Grigory Rasputin's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if James Earl Ray's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Ronald Reagan's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Jack the Ripper's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if the Son of Sam's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Sirhan Sirhan's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Josef Stalin's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Tomas de Torquemada's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Henry VIII's mother had gotten an abortion?  
What if Vlad the Impaler's mother had gotten an abortion?

Or what if their fathers had respected that "No" means "No"?

***POEMS:***

**KATE MERZ**

Kate Merz, a Cincinnati-local and Xavier alum, is a creative writer and editor by trade. She currently serves as an Editorial Director for *Healthy Advice Networks*. She was formally Executive Editor for *Writer's Digest* magazine and Editor of *Personal Journaling* magazine. Kate has been involved in a range of creative pursuits including poetry, theater, also several endeavors combining both.

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**YVETTE NEPPER**

Yvette Nepper lives and writes in the city she loves, Cincinnati, OH. She can be seen reading her poems at Tucker's on Vine St. during after hours on the 3rd Sunday of every month. Her poems come in small packages--little titles with big hearts.

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***DRAWING:***

**JOHN J. COBB**

John J. Cobb is a self-taught illustrator and folk artist from Northern Kentucky. Working out of his studio in the Gaslight District of Clifton he loves combining his love of whimsical illustration, comix, and folk art (particularly southern US and Mexican folk art) into frightful yet colorful fun.

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JCobb 10

## A Simple Question

(by *Kate Merz*)

I sent a purple fairy North

for answers

and she discovered  
the Universe  
drinking tea,  
toasting his toes,  
beside a hearth  
fired with the pages  
of our poetry.

Words,  
drifting paper  
embers about the room,  
land in random order.

“Tragedy”  
teeters on the corner  
of the kitchen table.

“Grief”  
floats in the stopped-up  
water sink.

“Dying”  
curls fetal  
on the sill.

Outside snowflakes  
strain to see,

if only to grasp  
a word  
before joining the drift.

It’s here my fairy  
jockeys for her view.

Wings pattering the pane,  
she flaps—  
undeterred—  
to have it make sense,

to return assured:  
*It does have meaning after all.*

Doesn’t it?

The Universe wouldn’t  
just sit warm and aloof  
while all our prayers  
went up in flames.

## Flashlight

(by *Yvette Nepper*)

problems are created  
when things appear broken

everything is a dance

everyone is open

you  
won’t find yourself with the flashlight on

but you can love  
you can love  
you can love

## Kernel

(by *Yvette Nepper*)

self-defense is  
ultimately passive

you’ll never understand aggression  
without passivity

they walk each other to meaning  
and leave you behind

grasping at the empty meaning  
of the fight



***POEM:***

**NOELLA POINSETTE**

Noella Poinsette is a Sister of St. Francis (Oldenburg) who has worked in music ministry in the parish and on the high school and university level. Social justice ministry has been a passion during free time and vacations. This has taken her to Central America, the Pine Ridge Reservation, No Mas Muertes, etc. She expresses this passion through photography, poetry, and the songs she teaches to choirs.

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***DRAWING:***

**JAN WIESNER**

Jan Wiesner is an artist and an educator. She is a graduate of UC with a Fine Arts BA in Art Education. She currently teaches at The Summit Country Day School. She and her husband share a studio at The Pendleton Art Center in Over the Rhine. Jan creates ceramic figurative sculptures.

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Jan Wiesner

## The Land Of Red Cloud

After the Pony Express in St. Joe  
and endless prairie grass,  
fueled at Pizza Hut  
we three stood enraptured  
in the land of Lakota and Red Cloud –  
entering a circle of prayer  
The beginning of story anew  
Red Cloud Indian High School  
alone and welcoming -  
its circle expanding to every direction  
In this land of Lakota  
red and white  
daily wove histories and herstories.  
Wounded Knee and Pedro,  
    Ghost Dance and Godspell  
        intermingled in this land -  
        still wounded  
        still bleeding  
            unemployment  
            poverty  
            alcoholism  
            poor health care  
            dysfunctional families  
            wind whistling through shelters  
            - racism

Camping on jigsaw puzzled earth at Shepherd's Pass  
mesmerized by a distant Indian flute in accompaniment  
with the North Star and Milky Way kissing our souls with diamond dust,  
I was lost in a land  
still believing  
still standing with pride  
    in celebrating their culture  
    in loving their land  
    in remembering the courage and strength of ancestors  
    in honoring their elders  
    in praying for wisdom, blessing and bread  
    in sharing at give-aways  
    in struggling for the dreams of their children.

Iva Good Voice Flute  
Norma Her Many Horses  
Pat Not Help Him  
Brian Red Starr  
weave through memories  
of football games with farm Goliaths always triumphant  
while Red Cloud cheering squads roared deep and solid



counter to squeaky Nebraska mice  
In the land of the Lakota  
tapestries of pow wows  
prairie dogs and eagles  
warriors, women and men  
feasting and dancing life's circles of abundance and scarcity  
Too soon good-bye  
a passing between of Spirit...

***POEMS:***

**CAROL RAINEY**

Carol Rainey is an English instructor and long-time anti-nuclear activist. Her book *One Hundred Miles from Home: Nuclear Contamination in the Communities of the Ohio River Valley* was published in 2008.

**JOE SCHUCHTER**

Epidemic explorer, public planner, and constant student, bike commuter, rambler, advocate, (amateur) anthropologist, ruminator, humanitarian, sojourner in solidarity.

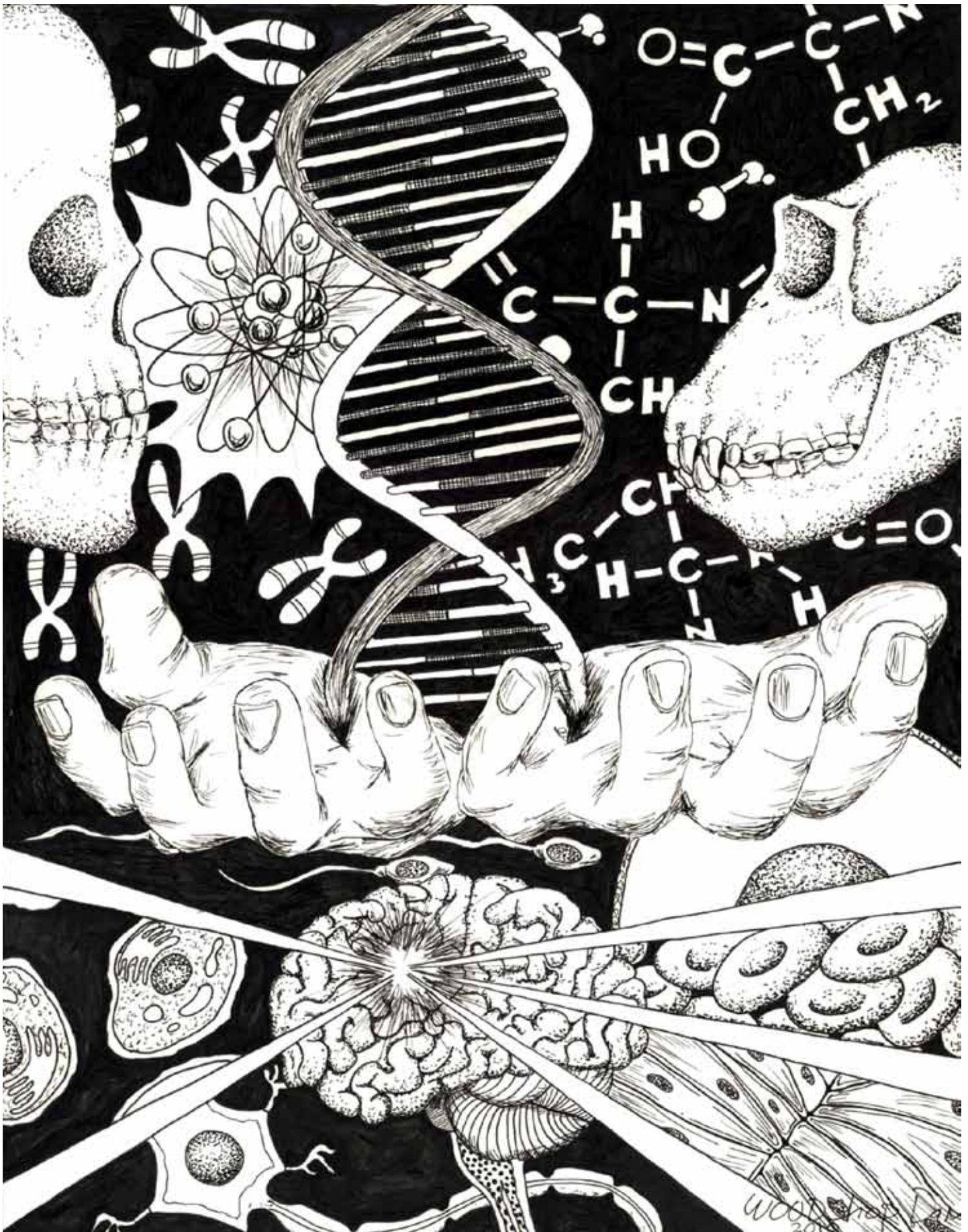
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***DRAWING:***

**DANIEL DICKERSCHIED**

Ever since he can remember Daniel Dickerscheid has always been creating things whether it be something made out of steel or a doodle on a napkin. He has always felt the need to express himself in one form or another. Daniel grew up in many different cities, and has been in Cincinnati the longest he's ever lived in one place. He is currently in his foundation year at D.A.A.P and looking forward to the next couple of years at UC.

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Daniel Dickerscheid

## Stellar Winds

(by *Carol Rainey*)

*--code name for Bush's illegal program of domestic spying*

I'm a writer as you know,  
and so I have been trying to make sense of this  
                  strange phrase

of an administration not known for its intelligence  
(in our sense of the word, not yours).

In what way have your activities been "winds"?  
Sweeping through our lives, knocking us off balance,  
making us feel your presence though we cannot  
                  see you?

Is the phrase meant as a form of bragging,  
that you are hot-shot, good-at-what-you-do, "stellar"?

Or are we the winds, the Aquarians, whom you have  
                  contempt for,  
because we protest your wars,  
because we breathe within ourselves your lies and death.

When I first read the phrase I thought of stars  
whirling through the darkness of space.

Do not even the heavens escape your surveillance?  
Has the data made you feel omnipotent?

What are the stellar winds?  
What is blowing there?

Or as Dylan said,  
does anyone have the answer?

## Science

(by *Joe Schuchter*)

Will a dog one day see another,  
in true color, of blood and  
chlorophyll?

You and me, mother, brother, lover,  
differ by just a few  
twisted snips of evolution.

Are all our loves just chemicals?

Must we investigate a persona,  
and fortune-tell one's future,  
through all this gadgetry?

Shall I forsake the piano?



***POEMS:***

**MARY ANNE REESE**

Mary Anne Reese lives in East Walnut Hills and works as an attorney. She is a graduate English student at NKU and writes with *InkTank* and the *Cincinnati Writers Project*. She also belongs to Bellarmine Chapel and the Loretto Community.

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***DRAWING:***

**MARK WIESNER**

Mark Wiesner has been a teacher of Art at The Summit Country Day School for the past 34 years. A resident of Oakley, he shares a studio with Jan, his wife, at the Pendleton Art Center where he paints.

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MARK WIESNER

## Inauguration

Catherine's arm drapes  
across my chair, Elaine's toe  
is tapping my foot,

my knee pushes Tim's  
ribs. Soon, we are all breathing  
as one. After eight

long years of holding  
our breaths afraid to inhale  
toxic hate, we gasp

for natural air.  
When the slim young president  
raises his right hand,

we're huddled as close  
as immigrants entering new  
land, packed as tightly

as the throngs who fill  
the chilly D.C. mall. We  
have waited lifetimes

for this hour. Two words  
he does not speak today are  
*I* and *me*; his world's too

wide for that. Instead,  
he sounds an urgent cry: none  
should prosper while so

many plummet. Here  
in our small valley nestled  
in Kentucky's knobs,

his message is not  
new. We've been practicing two  
hundred years to get

it right. When speeches  
and oaths end, tables and tears  
are wiped dry, Tim fills

Susan's glass, Elaine  
leads Catherine out, JoAnn  
scrapes the plates, Mary

brings me home. I hear  
a new and ancient chorus  
rising like the hum

of locusts in these  
cursive hills and grassy fields:  
*Yes we can. We. Yes.*

## Touching the Wound

*For Tim departing South Cumminsville*

Once a wise companion tried  
to help me save my life.  
Keep your hand close to where  
the pain is throbbing, she advised.  
It's there the holy pulse beats one  
with yours, where God desires  
to meet you and to heal.

I have tried to hold my hand  
steady there, but my fingers jerk  
away as if burning in a flame.  
Then I grasp for any sedative  
nearby—a glass of pinot noir,  
a brand new purse, a boarding pass.

Playing guitars in your moldy  
basement the other night  
as you packed away a decade  
of sweaters and memories,  
I kept my hand on strings and frets  
but nowhere close to pain.  
It almost worked until that verse  
where green scales fell like rain.

Later, I pulled out your drive  
past young men huddled  
near a pole wrapped in ribbons  
for the teen gunned down last week.



For nine years, you have called  
these throbbing blocks your home.

Now your heart draws you  
to new country where the radio reports  
on hundreds slain with bullets  
and machetes every day.  
Not content to lie in some recliner  
clutching the remote, you,  
like Thomas, keep reaching deeper  
into the world's most gaping wounds.

As you do, I pray that your own eyes  
may often meet the loving gaze of Christ.

## **The Vatican Emissary Meets Archbishop Oscar Romero**

*El Salvador, Lent 1980*

I am a faithful son of the church.  
I have come from the city of ancient ruins,  
of priceless art and jewels, to stand  
perspiring in this line of brown men  
and women a head shorter than I.  
A soldier in drab fatigues scowls  
as he stamps my passport; two more  
with scarred foreheads riffle through  
my leather bags. It seems Romero's  
brought suspicion on us all.

Outside, trees are blooming white  
and yellow, but the dust of the dry  
season coats my throat and dulls  
my new black suit. I have traded  
classic hymns and fine wines  
for bean pastries and loud traffic  
the next few days. A small sacrifice,  
I suppose, to save our church  
from this misguided renegade.

Romero has changed from the pious  
priest he used to be. Today his people  
want him either canonized or killed.  
I bring out the letter from the Holy See.

His hands are trembling as he reads.  
I stand by silent, adjust my cuffs  
and look around his room. A prince  
of the church dwelling in a tiny cell  
with only a narrow bed and a wood  
prie-dieu? "Monseñor," I cannot help  
but sneer, "why do you live this way?"

Like some mad prophet of old,  
he bursts into flames. "My people live  
in cardboard boxes—compared to that,  
this place is a palace!" He rails  
at how betrayal from his church  
is torture worse than anything  
the army ever wrought. I shrug  
and walk out in the sun, shake  
the dust away and light up a cigar.  
The bush behind me rustles and a rooster  
underneath begins to crow.

***POEMS:***

**JAMES REIDEL**

James Reidel is a poet and translator. He is currently working on a revised English translation of Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*.

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**MARY JO SAGE**

Mary Jo Sage is a long-time environmental educator. She has taught in high schools, colleges, and the Cincinnati Nature Center, where she was Chairperson of the Education Department. Mary Jo enjoys writing, watercolor painting, and especially, traveling. She has been a part of *Women Writing for a Change* for over ten years.

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***DRAWING:***

**ANNE FLAVIN**

Currently a junior studying fine arts at the University of Cincinnati (DAAP), Anne Flavin is a young artist who places her methodology toward the construction of materiality. Her interest lies within an unconscious guidance of material application onto flat planes. Anne develops work past primary concepts of experience in order to associate meaning to often abstract pictorial space.

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Xoxo

Aflavin

## Jimteenth

(by *James Reidel*)

Saturday morning sings like a race of cicadas that never  
bask in the heat,  
Who pay no green fees, nor book themselves a tee time  
must mow and edge furioso,  
Revvng the gas, mining off a mountain of my quiet,  
Clear cutting their lawns to the mat.  
Near sunset you could plant a war's graves across the  
county and crack the windows,  
Rescue a jar of sun tea the honey amber of single barrel reserve.  
I bring ice and a grape jelly glass.  
I can hear myself dream—  
Toasting Pius for the Flachbau,  
Saving a sip, sit down, for a sitting president.  
You go girl, plow under the 'burbs.  
Bones, haircut the teardowns.  
I consider a day lost the head start.

## Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, AZ

(by *Mary Jo Sage*)

*(A metaphor for Desert Storm, Desert Shield, and Enduring Freedom:  
the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.)*

Vastness widens vision,  
Erecting no barrier from horizon to horizon.  
A blazing blue bowl arcs overhead.  
Cactus space themselves across the desert  
Arms pushing away close neighbors.  
Friable soil sucks water quickly,  
So roots fan out close to the surface,  
To catch water which rarely arrives.

Spines, thorns, bristles, guard every plant,  
Protecting green and succulent parts.  
Leaves with hairs, stems with hairs, even blossoms with hairs,  
Insulate against heat of day and frigid nights.  
Life is difficult in the desert.  
Aridity grasps moisture, clears the air,  
Allows sun rays to bake life away,  
Makes shade valuable.

Armed animals prowl,  
Tooth, fang, poison,  
Up the ante for catching food.  
Competition is fierce.  
This land takes the measure of a beast.  
Daily, existence is questioned and tried.  
Without moisture none will live until tomorrow.

The desert gives perspective, life here shows  
Persistence and preparation.  
Be humble when faced with living in a hard place.

## **I Didn't Sign Up**

(by *Mary Jo Sage*)

The Army has my Dad again,  
He's away at war.  
It's not a matter of choice, he was taught to answer the call.  
A brave soldier keeping America safe,  
Admired, be-medaled, uniformed,  
He proudly salutes flag and country.

Dad didn't ask me when he enlisted,  
Duty to his country outbid duty to his family.  
I get along without him,  
Talking to his photograph.  
A smiling man in a jaunty beret, chest full of battle ribbons,  
My worries are insignificant  
compared to Dad's image.  
Mom is lonely and angry,  
She takes it out on me.  
I have to be brave and "face it like a soldier",  
As I fight on the homefront.  
I take his place sometimes,  
Helping Mom through rough spots.

Dad was gone for another birthday,  
Wasn't here when I was sick.  
He doesn't know my favorite color,  
Or what I like to eat.  
When Dad wins medals-  
Where are the medals for me,  
For "Facing life without your father."  
I hardly know Dad anymore.  
I didn't sign up for this.

**POEMS:**

**TIMOTHY RIORDAN**

Timothy Riordan's poems have appeared in such journals as *The Sewanee Review*, *North American Review*, *Envoi* (UK), *Cincinnati Poetry Review*, *Journal of Kentucky Studies*, *Newport Review*, and *The New Review*. He has published three collections of poems: *The Urge To Migrate* (2006), *In A Fluid State* (1998) and *Lesser Bird of Paradise* (1990); his most recent volume is *simulacrum* (2008). In addition, Mr. Riordan, a professor at Xavier University, collaborates with visual artist, Diana Duncan Holmes, on artists' books and installation pieces in collections in the U.S. and abroad.

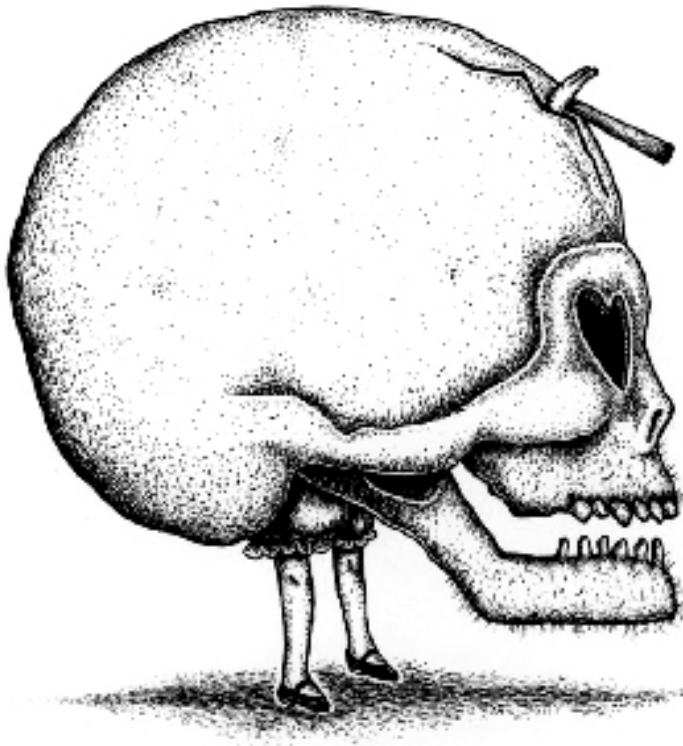
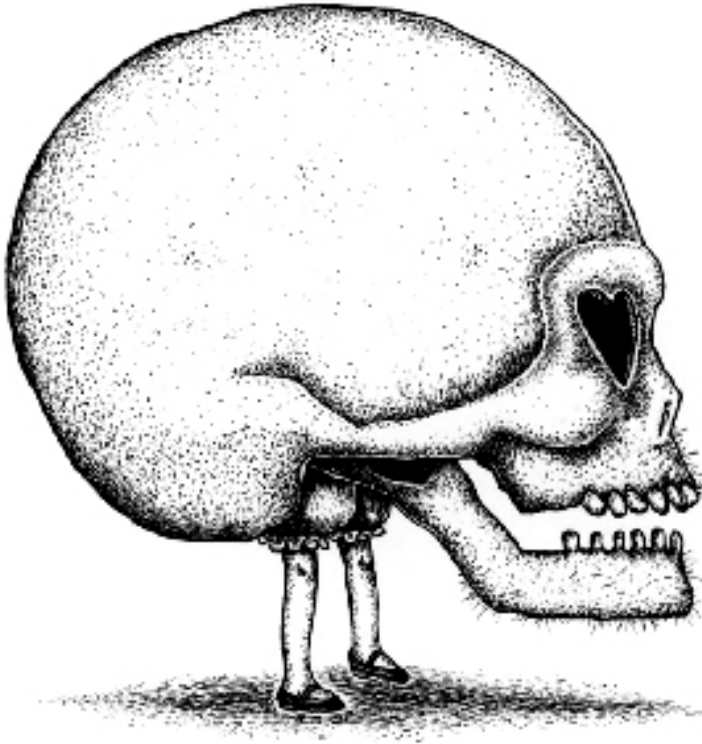
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**DRAWING:**

**CASEY RIORDAN MILLARD**

After receiving a BFA in painting from Ohio University in 1994, Casey Riordan Millard lived and worked in Chicago, IL, for twelve years. She returned to her hometown Cincinnati, OH, in 2006 where she now lives with her husband and two small children. She is represented by the Packer Schopf Gallery, Chicago, IL.

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## **dulce et decorum est pro patria mori**

*it is sweet and honorable to die  
for one's country*

what to die for?  
cherry pie without a stone,  
a getaway to countryside  
and moments sweet  
but green no more.  
to cherish, not betray  
the intimacy of fires  
that surged and simmered,  
burning embers  
cooling in night air.

how we dreamed another life  
and lived it.  
and now we're gone  
from where we were  
to where we are.  
our time, we had it then  
and live it now.  
and what to die for?  
our right to give  
and hope for nothing done in vain.

## **sic et non**

*yes and no*

*Sic*, I like the sound of it.  
(*Non*, I've known forever.)  
What an odd little word  
in the middle of a sentence.  
*Thus* or so the dictionary says—  
a word or phrase is not  
a mistake and should be read as is.

Notwithstanding assault from any side,  
the judgment stands, purity untold  
as nightshade unfolds its poison.  
I really think so, *yes and no*.  
Let *sic* be yes, and *non* be no,

or things get turned around.  
How mortals can fall, one by one  
on roadside, welcoming death  
no more than life—half asleep—  
as the day spins uninterrupted.

Margin of relief, I keep hoping  
to breathe free of everyday streets,  
escape the hitch of time.  
I don't play fate or famous people,  
make jokes at breakfast about the breathless  
who stalk the dark, unafraid.

Yes & no, hot & cold, on & off.  
More than digital—faucets  
and switches, pipes and wires.  
There are horses starving in stalls,  
parties all night on the streets;  
no one in control, not even police.

Year by year, it's harder to stay afloat;  
the young know any gun can play.  
Thus and so, the dead are dead,  
laid beneath the ground, unevenly.  
*Sic et non*, the injured and the gone—  
hand blown off, one leg intact,  
half a face missing, honored in ribbon & metal.

Neglect or fact, water has no form.  
It takes the shape of land and wears new streams—  
a chance to hear, beneath *yes & no*,  
a voice in opening a drawer  
behind the water's flow.

## **habeas corpus**

*to have the body*

spray paint on industrial wall  
you can read it from the expressway  
Habeas Corpus  
1215-2006  
R.I.P.  
just another tortured scream of anguish





***POEM:***

**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:***

**KENTON BRETT**

Kenton Brett strives to make things that can be used to tell many stories. It makes for more versatile work. Kenton's favorite art is the kind you can't wait to get home and play with.

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0102 2010



## Meeting at Night

*“Do the dead hear what the living  
say after they are gone?”*

*Luis Cernuda*

It is not easy to find in the cemetery  
of the Isola of Saint Michele  
these two inhabitants of the night and the day.  
Despite the fact that they almost touch with  
their feet or their hands  
their tombs keep a prudent silence.  
They have little to say  
these defeated combatants  
in the cold war.  
Victorious in the overflow of his words  
the one.  
Victorious in the strictness of the verb  
the other.  
Happy to see themselves,  
each laid out so fully in the poem  
though they are defeated in the end.  
On the Isola of San Michele  
one of the tombs rejoices amongst the flowers,  
sweet and friendly hands  
come often to caress it.  
The other one only notices a solitary hand  
that intermittently cleans the dust  
and controls the twisting vines.  
They had never met  
nor would they have wanted to, certainly,  
these two inhabitants of faces damned by  
poetry.  
The oldest,  
Ezra Pound,  
in the irony of his name  
roared with wrath against the worms  
of usury in his native land, that was the world.  
The youngest,  
Joseph Brodsky,  
in the irony of his name,  
crushed with the fingers of his words  
the insane and malignant bureaucracy of his  
native land,  
that was for him only one part of the world.  
None of them abhorred what the other  
abhorred,

## Meeting at Night

*“¿Oyen los muertos lo que los vivos  
dicen luego de ellos?”*

*Luis Cernuda*

No es fácil encontrar en el cementerio  
de la Isola di San Michele  
a estos dos habitantes de la noche y el día.  
A pesar de que casi se tocan con los pies  
o las manos,  
sus tumbas guardan precavido silencio.  
Poco tienen para decirse  
estos combatientes derrotados  
en la guerra fría.  
Victorioso en el desborde de sus palabras,  
el uno.  
Victorioso en el verbo contenido,  
el otro.  
Felices de verse a cuerpo entero en el  
poema,  
aunque derrotados al fin.  
En la Isola di San Michele  
una de las tumbas se regocija entre las flores,  
manos dulces y amigas  
vienen a menudo a acariciarla.  
En la otra sólo se nota una mano solitaria  
que a intervalos limpia el polvo  
y controla la enredadera.  
Nunca se conocieron,  
ni hubieran querido hacerlo, de seguro,  
estos dos habitantes de rostro maldito por la  
poesía.  
El más viejo,  
Ezra Pound  
en la ironía de su nombre,  
rugía de ira frente a los gusanos  
de la usura en su patria, que era el mundo.  
El más joven,  
Joseph Brodsky  
en la ironía de su nombre,  
aplastaba con los dedos de sus palabras,  
la insana y maligna burocracia de su patria,  
que era para él sólo una parte del mundo.  
Ninguno odiaba lo que el otro odiaba,

or loved what the other loved  
except this land that they now visit  
as their sepulture.  
This land of sailors and tradesmen  
and travelers run over by death  
in tombstones aged  
by the sun and neglect.  
It is not to contemplate ghosts  
that one approaches these tombs  
nor to listen to their secret dialogues  
about the immortality of the soul;  
it is perhaps to see  
that the sun becomes the night  
in the rhymed verses and the precious meters  
of the younger and more modern one  
while in the older and more ancient one  
his verses jump freely  
from the prison of the pages  
and in diverse languages  
impose the prosody of their high-spirited  
adventure.  
Nevertheless, if a listener there tonight  
would allow us to hear them reading their  
poems,  
we would find the same cadence,  
the abandonment that permits each syllable to  
drag.  
We know well that each inhabited  
his image with pride and arrogance,  
that they bet to lose the sky  
in order to win the land,  
that they responded with fire and pain  
to the three questions of God,  
because in the face of being there,  
the coming and the going,  
they imposed an inner fire.  
As punishment for uncontrolled shouting,  
for not gnawing at their anger in his intestines  
like hypocrites do,  
the one of white beard and crazed eyes,  
goes to the confinement of Saint Elizabeth's  
hospital  
*for the criminally insane*  
As punishment for being a vagrant,  
a poet without a known office,  
the blight of society,  
a parasite,

o amaba lo que el otro amaba,  
excepto esta tierra que ahora visten  
como sepultura.  
Esta tierra de marinos y comerciantes  
y viajeros atropellados por la muerte  
en lápidas envejecidas  
por el sol y el descuido.  
No es para contemplar fantasmas  
que uno se acerca a estas tumbas,  
ni para oír sus diálogos secretos  
sobre la inmortalidad del alma,  
es quizás para ver  
que el sol se hace noche  
en los versos rimados y los metros precisos  
del más joven y moderno,  
mientras que en el más viejo y antiguo  
sus versos saltan libres  
de las rejas de las páginas,  
y en diversos idiomas  
imponen la prosodia de su osada aventura.  
Sin embargo, si un oído allá esta noche  
nos permitiera oírlos leyendo sus poemas,  
encontraríamos la misma cadencia,  
el dejo que permite el arrastre de las sílabas.  
Bien sabemos que ambos habitaron  
su imagen con orgullo y soberbia,  
que apostaron a perder el cielo  
para ganar la tierra,  
que respondieron con fuego y dolor  
a las tres preguntas de Dios,  
porque ante el estar, el ir y el venir  
imponían el incendio de adentro.  
Por gritar desaforado,  
por no roer su ira en sus intestinos  
como lo hacen los hipócritas,  
el de barba blanca y ojos enloquecidos  
va al encierro del hospital Saint Elizabeth,  
*for the criminally insane;*  
por vagabundo,  
poeta sin oficio conocido,  
lacra de la sociedad,  
parásito,





***POEMS:***

**MARIA CLEMENCIA SANCHEZ**

Maria Clemencia Sánchez (Colombia, 1970); Bachelor of Languages, University of Antioquia (1995); MA in Literature, University of Cincinnati (2008); currently PhD student in Literature, University of Cincinnati. Has published two poetry books: *The Wake of Scribe* (1999), *Before the Consummation* (2008).

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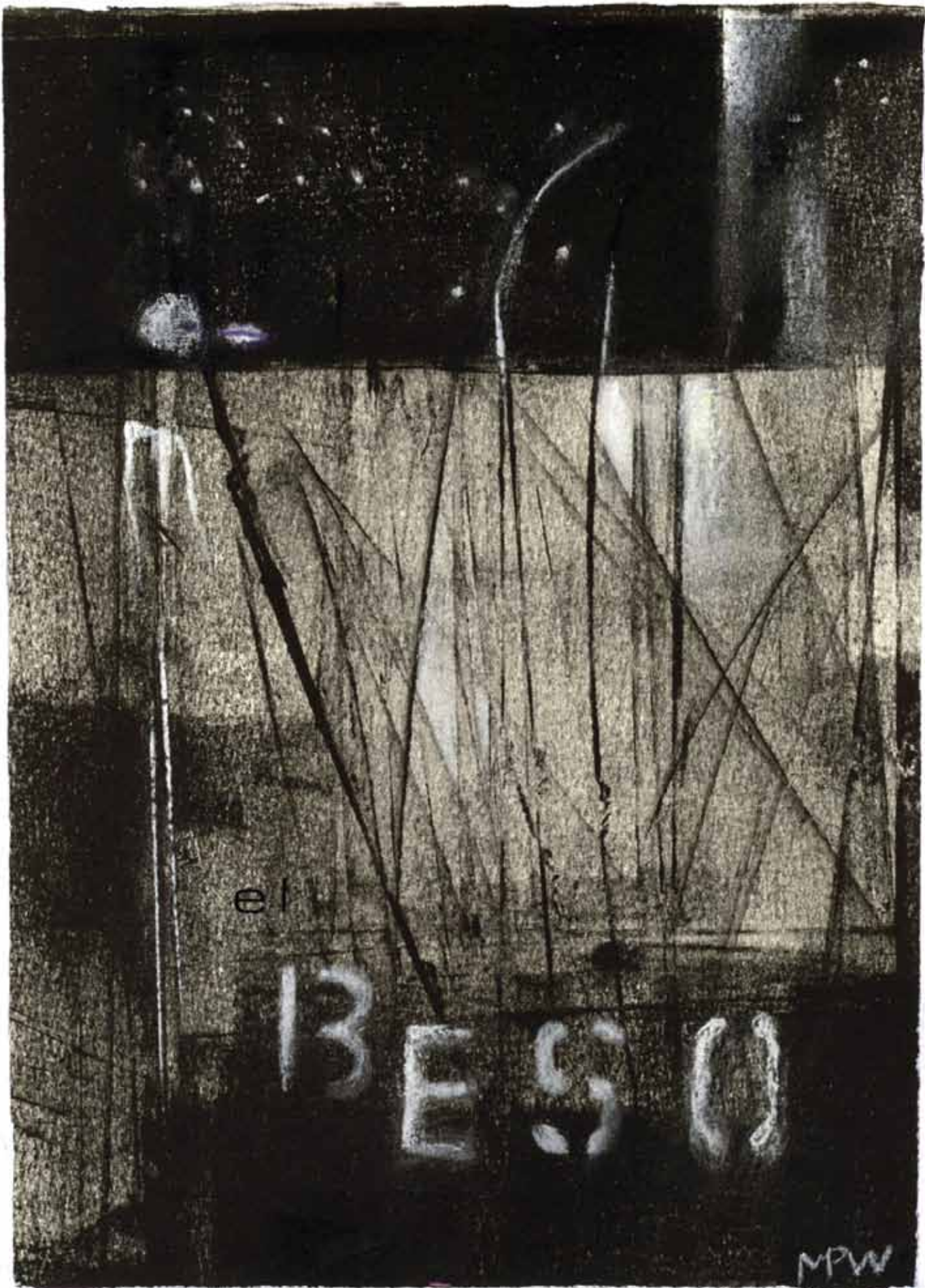
***DRAWING:***

**M.P. WIGGINS**

M.P. Wiggins is a painter, collagist, pastel artist, and illustrator. Her work has been on the covers and in the pages of numerous books and magazines including *The New Yorker*. Her paintings are included in the corporate collections of Proctor and Gamble, La Rosa's, and the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, as well as private collections worldwide. She maintains a studio in the Pendleton Arts Center.

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MPW

M. P. Wiegman

## Limoges

*What awaits me in the direction I don't follow?*  
Jack Kerouac

Here are all the heavens  
I have never visited  
the nightmare of trains at night  
that don't move  
like the laughter of the pointsman  
threading his days.

Ancient ruins and seas from elsewhere  
flow inside like a betrayal  
of what I look for.  
The kiss I leave on Salome's lips  
sculpts the mouth I'm losing  
and since Heraclitus I mistake  
the course of my icy itinerary.  
I will lose the stars again  
when walking down  
the inhabited streets of Austerlitz at night  
the marble sky of the Saint Pierre de Corps  
station  
where in a fraction of a second  
I saw all my life fall to pieces like an Autumn.  
I passed you on the Avenue Diderot,  
you terrible boy Jean Nicolas  
and I knew, as seaweeds know of silence,  
that the passion for gold and beauty  
is the same passion for death.

## Helen Keller Avenue and 15<sup>TH</sup>

What a place for a love date.  
Those who agreed to meet again  
at the crossing of Helen Keller Avenue  
and 15th  
at five in the afternoon, Lisbon time,  
never met.

They passed so close  
they did not see each other.  
they walked into the cold wind  
coming from the dock  
where Fernando and the others  
fled like fog.

## Limoges

*¿Qué me espera en la dirección que no tomo?*  
Jack Kerouac

He aquí todos los cielos  
que nunca he sido  
la pesadilla trenes en la noche  
que no se mueven  
igual que la risa del guardagujas  
ensartando el hilo de sus días.

Ruinas antiguas y mares de otra parte  
fluyen adentro como una traición  
a lo que busco.  
El beso que dejo en los labios de Salomé  
esculpe la boca que pierdo  
y equivoco desde Heráclito  
el rumbo de mi itinerario de hielo.  
Perderé de nuevo las estrellas  
al descender a la noche  
inhabitadas calles de Austerlitz  
mármol cielo de la estación Saint Pierre de  
Corps  
donde en una fracción de segundo  
vi mi vida toda derrumbarse como un  
otoño.  
A ti te crucé en la Avenida Diderot,  
terrible niño Jean Nicolas –  
y supe, como saben las algas del silencio,  
que la pasión por el oro y la belleza  
es la misma pasión por la muerte.

## Avenida Helen Keller en el Cruce de la Calle 15

Vaya lugar para una cita de amor.  
Aquellos que acordaron el reencuentro  
En la Avenida Helen Keller  
en el cruce de la calle 15,  
A las cinco de la tarde, hora de Lisboa,  
Jamás se encontraron.

Cruzaron tan cerca que no se vieron.  
Tropezaron con el viento frío  
Que venía de ese muelle  
Donde Fernando y los otros  
Huyeron como niebla.

The rose, the same rose as Keller's,  
in the hands of these lovers  
sharpened its thorns  
just when the day  
portended the blind hour  
of oblivion.

## Little Song

Music  
is finding silence.

It is softening  
the shoemaker's hammerings,  
his solitary night  
of nails and thorns.

It is the glass of water  
we leave at night  
for the dead  
who come back  
to quench  
their thirst for words.

Music  
is finding silence  
and lost childhood.

It is muffling  
the shoemaker's  
hammerings  
in our hearts.

It is finding that time  
that preceded us,  
the time before birth,  
before breathing,  
*before seeing the light.*

Music is  
finding silence.

La rosa, la misma rosa de Keller,  
en las manos de estos amantes,  
Afilaba sus espinas,  
Justo cuando el día  
Auguraba la hora ciega  
Del olvido.

## Cantinella

La música  
es encontrar el silencio.

Es suavizar  
los martilleos del zapatero,  
su noche solitaria  
de clavos y espinas.

Es el vaso de agua  
que dejamos en la noche  
para los muertos  
que regresan  
a calmar  
su sed de palabras.

La música  
es encontrar el silencio  
y la infancia perdida.

Es amortiguar  
en nuestro corazón.  
los martilleos  
del zapatero.

Es encontrar ese tiempo  
que nos precedió,  
el de antes de nacer,  
el de antes de respirar,  
*el de antes de ver la luz.*

La música  
es encontrar el silencio.

*(poems translated from Spanish by  
Nicolás Suescún)*

***POEMS:***

**SHERRY COOK STANFORTH**

Sherry Cook Stanforth is a creative writing professor at Thomas More College.

She also teaches ethnic and environmental literatures, and folklore. Her work appears in publications such as *Indiana Review*, *MELUS*, *Language and Lore*, the 2010 *Anthology of Appalachian Writers* and NCTE book publications. To keep on the sunny side, Sherry regionally performs Appalachian folk music, writes fiction and poetry, hikes, studies the plant remedies of her mountain heritage and raises many children.

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***DRAWING:***

**M. KATHERINE HURLEY**

M. Katherine Hurley has been a working artist in Cincinnati, OH, for over 30 years. She is known for her luminously, mysterious landscape paintings done in oil or pastel. Katherine's work is represented in several galleries and part of private and corporate collections nationally and internationally. Her studio/gallery is at the Pendleton Art Center in Cincinnati where she teaches and works.

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*MK Thurling*



## By Design

For peace on earth, he settled on a hill  
To hear the quiet threads across his loom  
While dusk to dusk, the breath of time stood  
still

Ageless landscape patterns spoke his will—  
Warm rains, black loam, the redbuds jazzing  
          blooms  
Upon his piece of earth, his simple hill

He needs so little now. Each day fulfills  
That ache for selvage keeping strings in tune  
With every dusk he watches time fall still

He finds his gifts in seedlings, soil to till  
For treasure—garlic, dill, the lilac's plume  
All rise from sunlit peace held on that hill

The turning earth, he knows, will bring a chill  
Of glinting ice licked by the rising moon  
And yet he translates faith by time held still

Each wefted thread unwinding from the quill...  
He sees the story forming late and soon  
About embracing peace. That earthy hill  
Now spins the dusk to breathless. Time  
stands still.

## Deployed

*For my sister, in her work with the  
1-12 CAV Chargers and their families*

hear that sound  
ticking away days  
the furnace kicks on  
hisses, blows a ghost  
into the closed curtain  
on the other side, sleet  
hardens to a blue shell  
casing, sealing her in  
she sits on the couch  
awake its still heart  
too much movement

poking around brings  
danger, sneak attacks  
she stays on the cushion  
where he sat three days  
before, rucksack packed  
ready to travel, zoned out  
flattened conversation, hell,  
may as well be gone  
she listens anyway, now  
she is one phone call away  
watching the fire turn  
it is a blood orange pulse  
flickering, losing spark  
she will not rise to stir  
from breaking this paralysis  
knows how to answer  
any kind of ring tone  
how to answer her own  
command—while in theater,  
perform well or die trying

## On Locust Hill

We didn't expect an early shedding  
the stripped arcs of locust branches  
sweeping against travertine skies  
yawning fields of unmown fescue, timothy  
frosted hillsides shimmering a blinding light

That morning, we walked and wondered  
over the mysterious edges of change—  
watched the deer slipping along the old road  
then bracing for their run, white-tails flipping  
away the image of solitude and safety

Nothing stood still for that picture we wanted  
to capture—sweeps of evergreen bowed  
low, glazed and splitting with the burden  
of ice. The wind hissed and kicked up  
in a way to make us ache for home

We stood vigil for you, tuning in  
to hear your laughter ghosting  
down the gully but nothing bloomed  
out of season. That cold was enough  
to still our blood, splinter our bones



***POEMS:***

**FRED TARR**

Fred Tarr is a principal in *Cincinnati Fiction* writers group, a local meet-up facilitated by savvy industry professionals. He has been published in 23 journals, small press affiliates, quarterlies, and collections in the US, Canada, and continental Europe.

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***DRAWING:***

**ALICE HOPKINS**

Alice Hopkins, a Cincinnati local, attends the DAAP program at the University of Cincinnati. Alice is concentrated in sculpture and works primarily with bronze and other metals. She also focuses in 2D workings, such as acrylic painting and illustrating, and is due to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts 2011.

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## When The Love I Give To Someone...

I am the richest man in the world  
when the love I give to someone X's out, X's out,-  
rocks your world, stuffs the law of attraction  
and repulsion, the slow crawl of immutable  
circumstance, your wallet pictures of closure  
evaporate. the theater intermission announces  
"nothing has changed", puts up  
popcorn, fountain drinks, the glass half full,  
half empty, sound blasts our seat upholstery.  
the light cuts the high cheekbones of our faces,  
angles and blasts the light of our eyes.

...when my love is returned over time...  
in ways that establish my being,  
moves me like a wave empties a surf  
on the forehead of the beach, transports  
all that I am above sky blue nothingness,  
of which I have no intimate knowledge.

and this: a shadow in subcontinental drift,  
this man who leans against a building;  
a woman of a certain posture  
walks in the park, rests on  
a bench, rises at the peal of the five  
o'clock bell, the quadrangle  
walkway incrementally tectonic,  
she walks an ineffable quincunx.

when the love I give is a love  
returned over time in ways  
that establish my being:  
a surf crowns a beach, a tidal current  
runs the forest floor, recedes.  
a bulbous segment,  
stretched, undulates in slime, elastic  
in the coolness of evening mist.

a kestrel swoops. the horizon grafts another sky.  
a turtle hunkers and grackles come;  
as if any living thing can escape their eye.  
pink, off-white, light red,  
rouge, white cast segments dry, torn, eaten,  
ground in leafy sediment.

when the love I have no knowledge of  
transports all that I am

above sky blue nothingness of which  
I have no intimate knowledge  
into infinite blackness of which  
I have no fear, carries me across  
electric fields of broken synapse,  
their darkened bands animated.  
through a juggernaut of language,  
a detritus of rumor, a paroxysm of hate:  
manic shears flash in darkened fields,  
cut off the reach of Dreams.

when the love I give to someone  
whose emperor's clothes cleave in tatters,-  
the impassioned signer of the deaf  
who daily attracts less  
the head-bob of the Phoenix,  
the puffed breast. piles of ash twirl in fire wind.

...to someone whose reddened hands  
splay slim discolored fingers that have never known  
an excrescence of diamonds...to someone  
whose swollen knuckles and gnarled fingers  
have never known the weight of gold,  
garnet, amethyst, tourmaline, jade, or silver.

above a blue expanse of which I have no knowledge  
the shoulder of an infinite blackness of which I have no measure  
carries a band of brown in which incalculable Permissions loom.  
it is the aura of the Existential of which I have no feeling,  
no wish to acknowledge or define.

today is Tuesday and I remember  
the murder of your smile. how hatred kills  
the body, how love nurtures the soul.

## **War Remembrance: The Sunday Morning Assault**

*(For Paul M., an 82 yr old, 6' 5", ex-marine, who survived the bloody trip  
d'aceo denouement that led to a falling into the battle of Okinawa)*

Peleliu's pacific breakers  
pound the beachhead.  
the fog layers humidity, stone,  
and salt breeze.  
Paul's letter home flutters  
the top of an oil drum.

the smell of blood & burning diesel fuel  
shucks their Red Cross hospital  
compound like an ear of corn.

this morning, a rocket sound  
serrates the palms,  
breaks upon the water's edge.  
scraps of paper, bits of photos  
fill the air. dust, dirt, kerosene,  
and plasma fly in all directions.  
Betty says, "we can't escape the concussion  
more than anything else." Paul turns,  
brings his height as they slide  
along the bottom of a bunker wall.

a muffled thump. sand sprays its trajectory.  
our airman Corky, lost in a signature of  
fallen beams, his dying once, then revived, twice.  
blood everywhere in burning sun through roof.  
sharpened splinters gouge him through.

last night under star shells  
and a breach of the green line...  
in Paul's molasses-filled mind  
he remembers the password,  
*ethel, ethel merman.*  
he mourns his second, his tenth death,  
his first. they move five men from  
the hospital tent into a creek bed.

it is hopeless beyond a thousand  
violins of Barcelona.  
beyond Kay Kaiser and Martha Raye,  
the battle whirls them through  
the rings of Saturn  
into the nuclear cold of Jupiter.  
gaseous rock and dust,  
solipsistic flags of wind, relentless.  
hot, metronomic plasma sparkles.

explosions ring in Paul's ears,  
he hears the empty mess tent's salute:  
Miller's bouncy Service finale, the 78  
garrulous, plays to a vacant bleacher.  
"Pennsylvania 6, 5, oh, oh, oh,"  
a razzmatazz,  
the glad handing 40's,  
Lana talks to Rita,

the silence of surf.

fabric rips asunder,  
RKO mikes, speakers, and cords,  
Spike goes into Jones.  
"you can't do another thing, Corky!  
go on up!" Paul cried.  
"put your arms up  
and go on home, lad.  
bring him home, Lord God  
over all."

the lagoon is full of death.  
lanterns lie broken.  
the lads look for glass chimneys,  
bunks, tables overturned,  
they look for wicks.  
bravo sentries are mexican  
grave diggers on siesta.  
they sleep with their eyes open.  
it is the sleep of the dead.

in November, 1937, the monochrome  
postcard, suspension of wave  
and water: Peleliu,  
a paradise of stillness  
here around us this day,-  
reflections from the beach:  
and over the sea,- no message, no mark,-  
the card dog-eared in a small  
box covered with silk brocade.

after battle, an echo of cannonade,-  
a discontent of surf swills the  
dismemberment of men,  
rolls in wet sand the sock puppets  
of popsicle stages.

for Paul and others at disembarkation  
for CenPac fleet, Okinawa,  
the skin of the island pulls  
back over itself,  
over its caves, its air fields,  
its dead, and over its Peace:  
births the remnant, bright, clean,  
senses dulled, "smoking lamp is lit."  
calls the Chief Bosun's Mate.  
Paul is going home.



***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* (Finishing Line Press, 2009), 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.

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***DRAWING:***

**BRIAN UHL**

Brian Uhl: born and raised in Cincinnati, OH; graduated without honors from S.C.P.A. in 03; went to Columbus College of Art and Design, finishing in 07; art schooling drained his life through his nose to the point where he didn't touch a pencil or paper for a year or so; inspiration came back after a brief encounter with death in a hang gliding accident; making attempts at art consistently since.

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BRIAN VHC '10

## When the Words Won't Come

What do you do when the words won't come,  
But the wind still whips around the house  
Like a lead fist in a cotton glove and lightning  
Snaps the power lines, while ice coats the trees  
In carnivalesque hoar frost, making all of nature  
Tinkle and twirl to a fantastic January tune,  
And you wonder, what if the words, unlike the  
Summer swallows, never return? Will the images  
Wait like ghosts, ephemeral but stoic, just beyond  
The black trees, standing mute, staring and  
Undefined like the fog that rises from the frozen  
Creek bed? Or will the conceits, concrete as toothaches,  
Disperse like frightened deer, startled at the crack  
Of a stern blue steel rifle?

Sensation is painfully crisp  
At such a time, like the serrated edge of a wound  
—wet breath burns the skin and tears excoriate  
The sensibilities as the mind tries to speak, rising like a drunk  
At a temperance meeting, swirling in slow motion, confused,  
Trying to process the feel of moment, to give witness  
To the arabesque of scudding sky and human frailty, but the  
Tongue stops thick, swollen and stupid, stuck behind the teeth  
Without the simple sibilance to call the conscience to  
Iteration—it yearns like a lost child, its limbs chilled,  
Struggling along, step after step, through the barren, intractable  
Fields with the hope of the hot embrace of a ruby and chrome  
yellow fire,  
Banked against the imperious night, there to find  
A modicum of comfort to thaw the digits and heat the blood  
So perhaps at last the prodigal speech will return  
And the tale can finally be told.

## My Complete Set

I have a complete set  
Of encyclopedias purchased  
One at a time from a neighborhood  
Grocery (once you were encouraged  
To feed the mind as well as the stomach);  
They sit embarrassingly undisturbed  
In a maple cabinet crafted by my father,  
A gift of venerable utility—this set is not

## Hoppin' Harry, Entropy, and the End of Our World: An Elegy

Hoppin' Harry,  
Carmen Electra's Poppa,  
Was playing tonight  
At the blues jam  
Here at the end of  
Empire—and he  
Sang a song by  
Howlin' Wolf, and  
One by Robert Johnson,  
Two by the Brits who  
Wished they'd been  
Born in the bayou or on the  
Delta—and outside the  
Lights of our world  
Were beginning to stutter,  
Some even to blink out,  
Each unto each,  
Until everyone there knew  
The blues were all  
We had left to call home.



The best, not Britannica or Collier's but  
Serviceable, sort of—the last update was 1984,  
Long before 9/11, before the Internet, before  
Laptop computers—those things don't exist

In my stoic compendium and I think it must be  
Happier for its ignorance, more optimistic about  
The future, more satisfied with itself not having  
To confront "The Patriot Act," "Abu Ghraib," "Gitmo,"

Or explain the Iraq war: 2000 dead and counting—  
No Clinton impeachment, no "soiled" blue dress,  
No Iran/Contra, no Ollie North, no Rodney King,  
No O.J. trial, no bloody glove, no Shuttle disaster,

No death of Diana;

Lately, I have searched yard  
Sales and antique stores for an even earlier edition,  
Printed say in 1960, so I can free myself of Watergate  
And the Vietnam War; perhaps I could climb inside

A copyright 1950 and be relieved of McCarthy and the  
Young Nixon; open 1935 and World War II would  
Disappear along with Dachau and Hiroshima—but  
Wait, so would I—my parents were but children then—

Perhaps the answer is a series of plastic computer  
Disks and a hair trigger delete key—or just stop reading  
Entirely, watch more TV or join a cult like the Anabaptists  
Or the proto-Lutherans, collect un-cancelled stamps, un-

Circulated coins, provocative figurines, Victorian porn-  
ography, obtuse pronouncement, abandoned awards  
Cluttering estate sales, unregistered patents for untested  
Palliatives—yet, collecting mementos of the past can

Be intimidating, like counting the scars of successive  
Surgeries or reviewing repair bills after an auto accident,  
Or sweeping up the yellow leaves from a beech tree,  
When you know you can never have the complete collection.



