

The Blue Guitar



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Editors’ Note

International crises. Public health and safety concerns. Economic malaise. Everywhere you turn today, it seems the bad outweighs the good, the negative obliterates the positive.

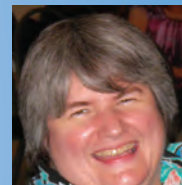
Yet, we can’t give up on this world. We can’t give up on each other. Times like these, we need to focus on what tips the scales and returns a balance to our universe: the arts.

“Arts create community,” Elena Thornton, founder and president of The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, so eloquently observed at the consortium’s recent Fall Festival of the Arts.

Indeed, arts are what makes us human, keeps us human, furthers our humanity. Arts enlighten us, lift our load, rejuvenate and restore us, bring us hope, make us whole, never let us forget. We need to remember that arts are the light that keeps darkness at bay.

And what would we do without all of you and the beautiful art and community you all keep creating! Thank you, Arizona! And keep those wonderful submissions coming!

Rebecca “Becca” Dyer
Co-Editor



Rebecca
“Becca” Dyer

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Fall 2014

A poem and art by David Chorlton

The Bare-Necked Umbrellabird

© 2014

The size of a crow and as black, with a stub
for a tail and a bright
swollen red at its throat, the Bare-Necked
Umbrellabird breeds in a forested
strip on the slopes
from Costa Rica down to Panama
with its survival narrowing
to a ribbon of chance.
When the sac swells
a male is preparing his deep,
endangered, mating cry, whose sound
bounces off the foliage
and disappears into the canopy
among the shrill and fluted calls
inhabiting light
that hangs in drops
at the tips of the leaves.

If you want

to see the bird, begin
by giving up hope. Ambition
is no guide
in a country recreated daily
by rain that washes away
the path on which you came.
Requesting directions, you'll hear a lot
of could and might be
but never any is. The more you ask,
the more you'll doubt
umbrellabirds exist. Somebody tells you
he saw one, but admits it may have been



"Rainforest #1"
Acrylic on canvas
2007

Continued on page 4



David Chorlton was born in Austria, grew up in England, and spent several years in Vienna before moving to Phoenix in 1978. He pursued his visual art and had several shows as well as writing and publishing his poetry in magazines and collections, the latest of which is "Selected Poems" from FutureCycle Press. Although he became ever more interested in the desert and its wildlife, the shadow side of Vienna emerges in his fiction and "The Taste of Fog," which was published by Rain Mountain Press. The poet will read from his work at 7 p.m. Nov. 7 at Changing Hands Bookstore in Tempe.

Continued from page 3

an illusion in the mist. Set out
in a landscape of steam, where the tallest trees
float and the ground underfoot
tries to swallow
each step as you take it.

When you hear
the Laughing Falcon
whose cry sounds so hysterical
it could be human, or the ladder
of notes the Lattice-tailed Trogon
climbs until it drops a low one,
it will be time to cross the river
where a bridge washed out, and go farther
into forest than you ever dared before.
The birds are a linguistic salad: Passerini's Tanager;
Violet-crowned Woodnymph; Green Honeycreeper;
Tawny-capped Euphonia,
and the flocks have so many species
nobody can name them fast enough
to know what they have seen.
They've learned to fly together
to be safe, while anyone alone

must be warned
about the dangers, day and night,
hanging from a bough
or camouflaged on fallen leaves
with a bite coiled and ready
to leave you resigned
as the venom spreads until survival
seems a poor option.
Along the chosen way,
from orchid to orchid, Fer-de-Lance
to a tapir's remains
and the tracks a jaguar made
after licking around his mouth,
is a density of leaves and leaning
trunks, still wet
from the last rain as the next one
builds and Green Macaws fly
below the clouds containing it.
It takes patience to continue
after days looking up
into occasional sunlight
pulling at the tall trees,
and ahead into the tangled shade
filled with cicadas and bromeliads;

Continued on page 5



**"Rainforest #2"
Acrylic on canvas
2007**

Continued from page 4

after weeks; after months that grow upon
months, the way epiphytes
grow on a trunk or a leaf, until they add up
to a lifetime. The journey

leads to a hollow

almond tree so old, a colonial darkness
is trapped inside, but it promises
no end. Disappointment
gathers with thunder
that accompanies the rain
when it slams into the earth
and washes all its flowers
grey, shading into mystery, before returning
to their natural pinks and yellows.

Here are frogs hardly bigger
than their heartbeats,
spiders making webs
with unbreakable strands, and ants
in columns leading back all the way
to creation, but no sign appears
of the Umbrellabird,
and it becomes hard to decide
between thinking it became extinct
or that it hasn't yet evolved.

There is no shame

in giving up after so long

and turning back for shelter, even when
a fellow traveler who wants no more
than to casually gaze
at whatever surrounds him, steps outside
in the morning and, looking around to find
the source of a strange booming sound,
asks, What kind of bird is that? and as soon
as he has spoken it is gone.



“Rainforest #3”
Acrylic on canvas
2007

The poet writes: “Researching potential locations for our 2007 trip to Costa Rica, I was intrigued by the description of Rara Avis, whose website said the place ‘isn’t for everyone.’ Women were forewarned to wear a sports bra for the nine-mile ride from Horquetas, which takes three hours and involves first a growling truck, and then a tractor with a trailer, to negotiate the road whose deep ruts get deeper as the forest thickens. The bridge over the river had recently been destroyed, but the hosts had provided a rope for everyone to steady themselves in crossing. It wasn’t a problem, neither were the most venomous snakes, one of which was seen by some lucky explorers during a night walk, hanging from a tree. The lodge is tucked into an area of primary rainforest surrounded by national park, and has an impressive bird list. One is unlikely to see too many of the birds during a short stay, but I had noted the Bare-Necked Umbrellabird in advance of the trip and joked about possibly seeing one, not realizing exactly how rare that particular bird is. Rara Avis was a fine adventure. Electricity was only available in the large dining area, open to the air on three sides, and the sounds of a rainforest night alternated between heavy rainfall and the many calls of creatures around us. After breakfast one day, I strolled outside alone to wait for what was to come next, and heard a deep, echoing call that made me look up to see what was responsible. High in the trees across the small clearing, a bird was moving gradually, stopping to call, and edging further along. There was the black ‘umbrella’ fringe around its brow, and the swollen red at the throat. I hurried to the dining room to pass word, but as invariably happens, when we all got back outside there was no more of the bird to be seen. A researcher from Tucson, visiting for several weeks to look into altitudinal migration, asked me, ‘How long was the tail?’ When I told her it really didn’t have one, she believed that I had, in fact, been lucky enough to see a bird even the resident guide had only spotted once in a year of work at Rara Avis.”

2 poems by Dieu My Nguyen

Color Death

© 2014

What I know of death is the color gray.
Its reflection –
a clear teardrop from a cloud.
The drop will make a coursing river,
in which, colors have an effect on the surface.

On the surface, the body smiles,
rosy,
in a black suit,
in a piece of hollow wood.
Hollow. Like a drum. Like a balloon.

What is a father anymore when his heart and guts and brain are
knifed out?
He is death, and it is in the color gray,
closer to white than black.



Dieu My Nguyen is studying creative writing and neuroscience & cognitive science at the University of Arizona. She runs and bikes around sunny Tucson to collect stories of the lives she meets. Reach her at dieumynguyen@email.arizona.edu.

Come Closer

© 2014

How to measure emotional distance?

The diameter of a hexagon in a beehive,
the length of a baby's pinky,
the gap between paper and the tip of the pen when I pause for thought—
those are the distances, the gaps I am able to measure,
for
if the length of the chasm grows to be
a tall mesquite,
an old coconut tree,
I cannot reach.
If it deepens—
from organic layer
to topsoil
to subsoil
and embeds into the bedrock—
I have no mechanism to dig, no ruler long enough
to count
the endless inches
that may exist when I stand
three feet from your toes that must be frozen in Tucson's November rain.

Do you want my hand or my breath?
There is a tiny fire in me—
Come closer and warm your toes.

My Tiny Creature

By Dieu My Nguyen

© 2014

A cricket cannot be tamed. The tiny creature has been sitting next to me on a half-green grass field. Any moment now, he may hop away. So tiny, but this body is uncatchable when his skeletal muscles contract and relax at a speed faster than that of my *Homo sapiens* body. So I keep him in a Ziploc bag.

It is a Tucson kind of August. The heat manifests in the quick tanning of skin and the futility of deodorant. Surrounded by trees, I wonder: Without human care, would all the tall mesquites and acacias still give life to such vivacious green?

A dead, brown Shumard oak leaf falls beside my stretched open legs. This quietness will be gone the moment I get up and walk toward the cars. I want to sit and sit and let my brain and limbs rest for a bit. The growing oak umbrellas me from the sun.

The sun is lowering, or am I rotating around it, sitting here so super still? My hair is combed backward by a tiny breeze. As if seeing that my ears are no longer blocked by hair, my companion begins chirping for attention. New to chirpings of any kind, I cannot decode this auditory emission. Since getting this tiny creature from PetSmart for 11 cents on a whim, I've researched crickets for the sake of feeling prepared. There are at least three types of cricket songs, sung by males (my cricket must be a male, then):

- The loud calling song to attract females.
- The quiet courting song to woo a sweetheart or two.
- The aggressive song to intimidate other males.

Which is this one, or is my creature producing a new kind of song, yet to be discovered? A song of plea, perhaps? After all, a Ziploc bag must be a damned prison, especially for a hopper.

I hold him by the antenna. He is smaller than the top notch of my pinky. He has a body brown as the dry spot of grass ahead and eyes so black and legs so thin.

The wind sometimes gets so fierce I am afraid his little body will be blown away. The moment I detect the stillness of the branches, I set the cricket down on the oak leaf that has not left with the wind. He is stunned into stillness, defying my expectation of his escape on the first chance of freedom. I am stunned into stillness, glancing at him. His eyes won't meet mine.

We both face the sunset glow. The silence is like that of two lovers, or hateful enemies, crossing paths after a long absence. It's as if each has been floating elsewhere while in the same room, at the same dinner meal, on the same mattress every night. But at the present moment, both our heads are clear, our

lungs clean, our hearts wide as we lean back and anchor ourselves to the Earth. If we turn and look at each other, the silence might roar and soar. So I don't initiate any movement. I look at the pinkness of the sky.

Then, he is gone.

What shattered the unity? The end of the western sunset? My turning to check on him?

Instinct must have yanked at him. My cricket has answered to the call of freedom, to the wind, and maybe to a mate or pal. He has vanished into the grassy field, blending into the brown patches of dryness. I blink and touch my chest and lungs—he hasn't taken anything of me with him upon his departure.

I wait.

I remember "The Little Prince": "You see, one loves the sunset when one is so sad." Just as the golden-haired prince tames a fox and becomes his friend for a while in the story, so the cricket has tamed me. But "I did not know how to reach him, how to catch up with him." I've given him a part of me, but he did not take.

My mind suddenly runs again, toward "matters of consequences": the essay due in two days, the check for rent I have not sent, my bicycle's dry and oilless chain, a lover I am afraid of losing, the uncertainties of the future, and all the life choices falling before me like ripe black figs as I sit and cannot pick and waste my time.

The sky has darkened in a blink. Perhaps I shall no longer wait for the hopper. I shall walk away from this moment now, back to the cars and buildings. Pleasantly though, in my lungs and limbs, a tune of quiescence begins to play, as if to say: "Slow down. You'll get there."

Sources

Covey, Andrea J. (2012). Information contents of house crickets (*Acheta domesticus*) songs and the evolution of multiple signals. State University of New York, Biology Master's thesis.

De Saint-Exupery, Antoine. "The Little Prince." Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. Print.

6 poems by Robert Longoni

Alaska

© 2014

This is no place even for the young, they say,
where the body shudders
and the wind blows so hard
you never breathe the same air twice.

That may be so, but the old still come,
if only to try it on their tongues, confirm
that it's always the same air,
even when their arches cramp

and sagging back muscles
cling to the nearest bone—
while the days grow short
and they keep talking like old sailors

addressing everyone: waves of
youthful faces rolling over rapids,
those left behind to age at home
or hunched in alleys,

and those like themselves
who choose to keep drifting,
learning to live with words
before losing them in the dying wind.

Bob Longoni taught composition and literature for ten years at the University of Arizona and served for one year as director of the UA Poetry Center before joining the founding faculty at Pima Community College in 1970, where he taught composition, literature, and poetry writing until his retirement in 1993. His work has been published in several small magazines and journals, three anthologies, and his own collection: "Woodpiles," Moon Pony Press, 1997. He has given readings and conducted workshops in Tucson, Tempe, and Phoenix, and in three other states. Bob and his wife, Vivian, now live in Gilbert. He can be reached at boblongoni@cox.net.



A Place in the Sun

© 2014

This morning when I saw our dog
curled up in a square of sunlight
on the living room floor, I thought
briefly of Montgomery Clift,

his gloomy quest in the film
that co-opted the phrase.
But quickly that image faded
and I skipped back to the time

before I had seen a desert
and dreamt during arithmetic
of a sand expanse stretching north
up the sunlit slope of my desk

until it fell off into the Grand Canyon,
reminded then that all I needed to do
was step out the creaky double door
of our one-room schoolhouse

to track down my own place in the sun
that moved with the seasons
up and down hills, through oak groves
and fields, or only a few steps

beyond our backyard chicken coop,
under a cluster of sumac, where
magically in the dead of winter
I could stretch out on a cushion of

green and reach for a handful
of snow. Or wait for an afternoon
in early spring to wander down
to the brook at the base of the slope

to watch bright civilizations of
salamanders go about their lizardly business
in patches of watery brilliance
just beyond the shadow of the overhang

that lengthened as I lay there
until the sun was gone, and they with it.

Distance

© 2014

The squirrel on the porch in the brightness
of midmorning looks like any other.
But she keeps coming back, circling closer,
until I'm forced to notice coarse gray hairs,
an awkward thickness in the hips.
She waddles to the edge of the deck,
lies facing the distance,
hind legs splayed, like our pug.

As she returns I discover
fur on sides and back
delicately scalloped like feathers,
tail vaguely striped black.
Now, ten feet off, on heavy
haunches, she chews. Her jaws
and cheeks pulse with grace.
She holds one eye on me—
a shadow behind glass, retreating
to the absolute distance of words.

Morning Stretch

© 2014

On my back in the living room,
legs bent, hands tugging at my thighs
trying to dissolve a knot in my hip,
happy to be distracted by
Chopin's Fantaisie—Impromptu,

I start paying attention to the notes,
their utter clarity, how like bells
they deliver in pristine isolation
the sounds he chose to release
from their galactic swirl into the
measured harmony of common breath

while I hold on,
fingers wrapped behind knees,
in a morninglit room
where clocks have no hands
in a world where rocks
beside trees turn to sand.

Mourning Doves

© 2014

What god were they
to the Greeks

that still moans
in whitewash heat,

bearing old grief
through hedges

to darken our rooms
with childhood gone,

lost love, generations
spent on change

when nothing
changes, the hedge

still in flower,
the bird still lovely

wooing the moment,
what happy god?

Windows

© 2014

1

My mother-in-law called
to report that for the first time
in years she heard something
in her right ear: voices
floating like an absolution
through her bedroom window.

So what if it was also
the last time. Some people
with their full senses
keep the windows shut all day.

2

My own mother suffered
from a one-way heart.
Everything kept pouring out,
but she couldn't find
where the opening was
to let anything back in.

3

When we lived in the country
we left our windows uncovered.
The hummingbirds didn't seem
to mind. Here we have drapes,
though they aren't needed,
with six-foot patio walls.

When I wake I pull back
the curtains and look up
at the same piece of sky,
knowing it's been waiting for me
all night while I pondered
what Stephen Hawking had to say
about what is apt to pour in
when our expectations
are reduced to zero.

Amanda Phipps

Peoria Artist



“Peaks and Valleys”
Oil on canvas
2013



Amanda Phipps works out of Peoria, AZ, and participates in exhibitions throughout the greater Phoenix area. She is excited to be back in the Southwest after spending a couple of years enjoying participating in the Seattle, WA, art scene. She plans to draw from her experiences from living in Seattle and traveling abroad in order to continue developing her work, and hopes that she will be able to further contribute to the Arizona art community. Her work is being exhibited at Minx Gallery in Phoenix. She has also shown at RAWartists at the Monarch, the 16th Annual Artlink Exhibition at the Icehouse and did an installation at the ARTELPHX exhibition at the Clarendon Hotel. Her portfolio can be viewed on her website at amandaphippsart.com. If you have any questions, are interested in commissioning a piece or want to arrange a private viewing, feel free to e-mail her at amanda@amandaphippsart.com or call 480-257-9848.

Amanda Phipps

Peoria Artist



“Ember”
Oil on canvas
2013

Amanda Phipps has worked over the years to develop her signature art style. Her environment, emotional state and favorite artists serve as sources of inspiration. Some artists who have influenced her work include Georges Braque, Clyfford Still, Jean Metzinger and J.M.W. Turner. Amanda’s artistic philosophy is something she is continually developing. She avoids restrictive guidelines on what art should be and simply focuses on making art that is positive and inspiring. Amanda also values formal education and training in the arts. Although she has not been degree seeking, she has taken classes at both PVCC and ASU in order to become more technically proficient and provide more archivally friendly work. The most defining characteristics of her work include depth, texture, movement, and contrast. Her work has been described as abstract, modern, colorful, and expressive.

- Amanda Phipps

Amanda Phipps

Peoria Artist



“Cavern”
Oil and acrylic on canvas
2013

Amanda Phipps

Peoria Artist



"City Night"
Oil and acrylic on panel board
2013

Amanda Phipps

Peoria Artist



"Stairway"
Oil on canvas
2013

Stars of Wonder

By Jordan Fowler

© 2014

It was the perfect night for stargazing—a cool breeze, no moon and not a cloud in sight. After a long day of hiking and dinner around the campfire, my dad and I walked over to the lake near our campsite and lay down on the pier. We had a 360° view of the wonders the sky held.

My dad began to speak, explaining the theories behind this great expanse in a way that I might understand at only seven years old.

“See all these stars? They’re incredibly far away from us,” he told me, his voice low so as not to disturb the quiet of the night. “The light takes so long to reach us here on Earth that if we had a telescope powerful enough to view them up close, we’d be seeing them millions of years in the past.”

“Really?” I asked.

“Yes. And if there was someone on those stars looking at us, they might be seeing the dinosaurs right now.”

I stared up at the sky, amazed at what I was hearing. It wasn’t quite time travel, but it was close enough for me. I was hooked.

The vast infinity of our universe, and the immense smallness of the space we occupied, amazed me. I struggled to understand the speed at which the stars’ light traveled and their distance from us, numbers too big for my young mind to grasp. I wanted to lie on that dock forever, wrapped in darkness and surrounded

by the silence, picking out constellations and shooting stars.

This moment was by no means my first encounter with science. My father, a mechanical engineer turned pilot, had a passion for science. He took every opportunity to teach me and my brother about the inner workings of our universe, whether that meant trips to science museums or a crudely illustrated lecture about physics over dinner. This was, however, the first time I had encountered a topic grand enough to fill my mind.

My interest in the universe hasn’t waned since that evening on the dock. In the years to come, I would sit outside at night with my father trying to focus a telescope or stay awake long past my bedtime listening to an astronomer explain what we saw in the sky. I devoured Brian Greene’s writings on the origin and nature of our universe.

But many other interests have revealed themselves to me as well, as the stars do when your eyes adjust to the darkness. I’m sure my dad hoped I would follow in his footsteps and become a scientist myself, but my short attention span and desire to acknowledge my creative side led to a compromise: I would become a science writer. Instead of making my own scientific discoveries, I would explain those discoveries to others. In this way, I combined my two loves, writing and science, without having to sacrifice the passion I discovered that night on the dock.



Jordan Fowler is a journalism student at the University of Arizona. Originally from Texas, she has grown to love Tucson since coming here. She works for the UA newspaper, *The Daily Wildcat*, and has done both reporting and design. She hopes one day to become a science journalist and write for a newspaper or magazine. Contact the writer at jfowler1@email.arizona.edu.

The Brat

By Shirley Mason

© 2014

They waited at baggage claim for their bags to come round on the conveyor, and while they waited, the brat, Aggie, launched determined kicks at Claire's legs. While Claire quietly danced a sidestep, trying to avoid Aggie's constant attacks, Keith pretended not to notice. Or perhaps he really didn't notice. Tall and handsome in his Chesterfield coat, he kept his gaze fixed on the baggage conveyor. Claire, acting as though nothing unusual was happening, winced and shook with each violent kick from the five-year-old child. Maybe she could stand one more kick. And then one more. Maybe for Keith there was no limit to how many kicks she could stand.

Standers-by watched—some wishing they could intervene, but soon bags came, and, relieved of responsibility, people found their bags and hurried out.

As she did at the start of each day, the receptionist wiped off the polished mahogany front desk. While she did that, the computer whiz watched and scanned the plush reception area while she relaxed in a side chair. It was early and the other employees at Keith Wadrow Promotions hadn't yet arrived.

"So Keith has found another sucker," the whiz said to the receptionist.

"Yup. He's acting more content these days, and he's getting personal calls now and then from a certain woman."

"Anyone I'd know?"

"No, this one's an unknown—Claire somebody. Apparently, she's Keith's neighbor in Greenwich—they met up there. His looks and power, and his money, will always catch another one. Little do they know."

"Was that court case ever settled?"

"Yes. He's free once again. No woman can stand to live with the brat, and he never disciplines that child. Doesn't recognize her serious personality problem. I'd say the child has Borderline Personality Disorder. Makes you wonder what's in store for her—and him—when she's a teenager."

"She's over the border alright—clinically psychotic, my guess," said the whiz. "Man, do I hate to see Keith coming in with her. The last time the brat was here, I was out to lunch, and she crawled under my desk and unplugged everything, server, modem, everything. I had a time of it getting everything back online."

"Tell me about it!" the receptionist said. "That was the time she thought it was so funny to throw my jelly beans around the office. And I had to pick them all up. Keith thought that was okay—just part of my job. He scarcely noticed and said nothing to her. If he brings that child in again and leaves her with us, I think I'll write a new job description and ask for a raise. A big one."

"Fat chance. You know our pay is terrific—and the contacts—you love working here for the contacts. I know I do. I love seeing the stars that come in. And Keith knows that. He knows he could get a hundred women in a heartbeat to replace us. And we've met a few thrilling dates here, to boot. And many memorable parties to attend."

"Well, we're lucky for the most part that—except for occasional office visits—unlike his girlfriends, we've been able to avoid his child."

"Too bad, we can't warn his latest—Claire—you said her name was. That child's a bad seed. Once, when Keith brought Dinah, his prior, in with that child, the brat snatched my scissors and tried to jab Dinah. I grabbed the scissors—Keith saw what was happening, but said nothing. I wonder how long it

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Shirley Mason writes: "For 17 years, as programmer/analyst, I wrote small software systems for installations in CT and NY. I'm a homemaker, mother, pilot, divorcee, widow, writer and painter, though it was hard finding time for the latter two. During my long Connecticut commutes, I wrote limericks in stop-and-go traffic, but time didn't allow me to take writing seriously until recent years. Now I've finished three novels, one novella and many, many short stories. My published novel is 'The Strength of Water.' I'm editing its sequel, 'The Strength of Time.' Stop at my website, www.shirleymason.com, for my short stories and paintings."



will take Claire to drop him.”

“If she’s at all normal, she will soon. Maybe the benefits of going out with him are still too attractive. As usual, with those benefits in the offing, it takes a little time.”

While she waited for Keith, Claire turned to see her profile and adjust her hat. Hats were coming back in style, and with an elegant hat tilted down over one eye, one could look mysterious, interesting. Not too big a hat—people shouldn’t stare at the hat—just at her. Her lean straight body, and chiseled face, attracted her share of glances. Keith would be pleased—he loved to be with such a woman. Claire knew that. Although he was certainly cold, she was working on warming him up. He excited her, made her churn with anticipation. It was worth putting up with his strange child. But what to do about the child? Keith didn’t recognize the seriousness of Aggie’s hostile and aggressive acting out. He had said her behavior was just a temporary setback from having a famous star for a mother, one who was never home, and who didn’t give the child attention when she was home. He had to compensate for that, he had said, so he often took the child around with him, convinced that in time that would heal her. But that wasn’t the only kind of attention the child needed, Claire thought: she needed strict limits for a few years, some that she could learn to trust. Along with a hearty dose of psychiatric voodoo.

Well, she didn’t want to lose Keith. He took her to famous places where there were famous people. She was living!—the quiet little Claire from Tulsa. Going to hot places at locations mentioned only on a website, and only if you had the code, could you access the information. With him, the ride was wild—he was always networking, watching for a new star, one not too messed up yet. And lovely little trips—they had just returned from a first-class weekend in Hawaii. She had hoped that showing Aggie how to build sandcastles would quiet Aggie for an hour or so, help Aggie to like her more, accept her in Keith’s life. Instead, for three days, Aggie had screamed, “I hate you.” Even on the plane coming home, Aggie had kept up the I-hate-you shouting, until the flight attendants and passengers focused stares of amazement at them.

Before she got to the door, Claire heard the child’s scream, “I hate these flowers!” She opened the door and there was Keith holding in one hand a bouquet, and in the other, the child, mouth wide-open howling. Keith, holding the flowers above his head, was trying to stop her from plucking off the blossoms. Petals lay about their feet.

Claire tried to speak over the child’s screams. “Oh, I thought we were going out to dinner. Sorry, if I misunderstood.”

“We are,” Keith said. “I can’t seem to get a sitter anymore, and anyway the child needs parent time, and restaurant training. I hope the formality at ‘21’ subdues her. Roger, the manager, is a good friend; he understands.”

While the driver waited with the limousine, Keith kept an iron grip on Aggie’s gyrating body, as they stood just outside the door. Claire quickly attended to the flowers, her hopes for a romantic evening with Keith seemed to wash down the drain as she filled a vase with water and arranged the bouquet. The petals of one stem lay outside on the stoop where Aggie had managed to pull at them with her desperate little hands.

When Claire came out, Keith helped Aggie into the car first, then Claire, afterward taking his seat by Claire.

“I have to sit in the middle,” Aggie yowled.

“All right,” Keith said. He opened the door and got out. “Everyone out,” he ordered. “Claire, please take a seat by the door. Then, Aggie you get in next.” After they were settled, he climbed in, sitting next to Aggie.

Claire said nothing while they completed this arrangement—just followed orders.

“You can’t sit next to my daddy,” Aggie shouted, glaring up at Claire and jabbing her finger into Claire’s thigh. Keith accepted this, his face immobile, his thoughts appeared to be flung far off. On the drive down to Manhattan, Aggie alternated between jabbing Claire’s thigh and snapping her finger on the back of the chauffeur’s head.

“I’d love to eat upstairs,” Claire said, as they entered the restaurant. “I’ve never been up there.”

“My Dear, that would be nice, but with Aggie—the bar lounge is a better choice. Noisier. And the ceiling toys will help distract her. Upstairs is as quiet as a tomb.”

“I hate a quiet room,” Aggie yelled. She lunged her shoe at the maître d’s console. “I want to eat in the lounge. I have to see the toys!”

When they were seated, Keith handed Aggie an iPad he had brought along to help keep her occupied while they ate. He had long ago learned that the quiet use of pencil and paper would hold her attention exactly one minute, and then be flung on the floor.

Claire studied the menu, but her thoughts were on Keith. Why couldn’t he have found a sitter for Aggie? She ventured a tentative and risky hint, “Do you have reliable childcare?”

Keith appeared not to hear as he surveyed the room, nodding to acquaintances.

“Dear,” Claire said a bit louder, “Do you ever use a sitter for Aggie?”

“No! I hate sitters!” Aggie insisted.

Keith turned to focus on Claire’s face. An exquisite face,

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good bones, good to be seen with. “I gave up on sitters. They’re busy all the time. I’ve tried to keep an au pair, but they just don’t know how to handle Aggie. She’s a little diva. Divas want what they want, when they want it.”

The music that by now Aggie had found on the iPad was asserting itself loudly, as Aggie, standing in the aisle, gyrated about, waving the tablet over her head. Keith rose and snatched her back into her seat. He stopped the music. Then he showed Aggie a game app that he hoped would distract her from starting the music again. That seemed to work long enough for him to turn his attention back to Claire.

“There are a few connections I can bribe into staying with Aggie, but she raises a fuss if I don’t take her everywhere with me now. And it’s good for her to have a broadened experience before she starts school.”

“I’m never going to school. I’m going everywhere with Keith,” said Aggie. She had both hands on the tablet, shaking it violently. “I want the music!” she wailed.

“It needs a rest for a minute, Aggie, then perhaps it will play again later,” Keith said.

He continued to answer Claire’s question. “She started kindergarten recently, but Porter’s said she needed another year of maturing at home. They said she needs more of her mother’s care, but you can imagine how that would be, with her mother off around the world making one movie after another. Shannon’s career, as you know, is spectacular, thanks to me. I promoted her career, but not—her mothering instincts,” he said with a grimace as he popped an olive into his mouth. Satisfied with that answer, Keith’s eyes swept the room again. Several people raised a wave.

Aggie seemed to be taken with the idea that the tablet had to rest. For a moment she was quiet while her suspicious eyes circled from Keith, to the waiter, who was now standing at attention by their table, and back to the tablet. She listened to Keith and Claire ordering, her narrowed eyes on guard for any devious plots.

“I want peanut butter and jelly,” she ordered, “and sugar cubes. I want sugar cubes, NOW!”

Keith said to the waiter, “Peanut butter and jelly for Aggie, please. And—,” he drew a deep sigh, “sugar cubes.”

Now there was a lot of commotion as a famous couple entered—one whose careers Keith had managed.

“Ah—there’re Julia and Brad.”

Before the couple had a chance to be seated, Keith waved them over to say hello, and to introduce Claire and Aggie. Aggie sat still long enough to study the couple, then she carefully selected an olive and flung it at Julia’s white silk dress. As though nothing important had happened, not even stopping

mid-sentence, Keith reached over and moved the dish of olives across the table.

“I want those olives,” yelled Aggie, her voice loud and penetrating.

Fortified with his engaging smile, Keith steered the couple over to their table and briefly chatted while Julia dabbed at the spot left by the olive.

“I’m so sorry, Julia, you know how kids are,” Keith said. “And with her mother gone all the time, I’m afraid it falls on me to be Aggie’s full-time parent.”

With spectacular incomes, from movie careers that Keith had guided, Julia and Brad could supply a small nation with silk dresses. Julia managed a gracious smile. “It’s nothing,” she said. “There’s no need to apologize.”

Aggie meanwhile, had found the delights of kicking Claire under the table. After the third kick, Claire moved her chair around the table opposite Aggie; far enough that Aggie’s foot couldn’t reach.

“Well, that was nice,” Keith said, as he sat down. “I recently pulled together a new movie contract for Julia. You’ll be seeing her in ‘Dare to Dodge’ before long.” He appeared not to notice that Claire had moved around the table.

With dinners before them now, Keith and Claire had a sense that, while Aggie was busy taking apart her peanut butter and jelly sandwich, they should utilize the lull and eat fast.

Soon, when Aggie’s interest waned for dismantling the sandwich, Keith started the game of identifying toys and icons jammed overhead on the ceiling. In the past, this had kept Aggie’s attention long enough for Keith to eat. But Aggie’s spirit had been rising in response to Claire’s moving across from her to where her foot couldn’t reach, and she stood, marched around behind Claire’s chair, jerked her hat off, tossed it on the floor, and proceeded to vigorously rock her chair. Before Claire had time to set down her wine glass, it shook, sprinkling wine down her arm.

Waiters, standing toward the back, unobtrusively shook their heads, looked at each other. One hurried over, handed Claire her hat, and with his towel, dried her arm. Was there anything else he could do? he asked. Before Keith or Claire could answer, Aggie, bored with bothering Claire, was shaking someone else’s chair. The stranger stood up, looked around to see who was responsible for this awful child, and focused on Keith. Without apology, Keith rose and yanked Aggie to the back of the room.

“Would you kindly give Aggie a tour around the kitchen?” he asked a waiter. Normally, Keith didn’t ask—he told. He was used to demanding and getting what he wanted. However, he knew these waiters were on duty and really had no time for

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tours. Even so, the waiter took Aggie by the hand and disappeared with her toward the kitchen.

Claire took a deep breath. Perhaps the peace would last through dessert and coffee, she hoped. Please, twenty minutes to let her nerves relax. She wanted to enjoy her time with Keith. He was a beautiful man; she wanted to caress his face.

Keith ate in silence while continuing to look around. There were people here whom he had helped, people who had helped him. People who took quick glances at Claire, as though asking themselves whether she was someone they should know.

But their peace was short-lived: Claire despaired to see the waiter approaching with Aggie in hand. Gripping both of Aggie's arms, the waiter dragged and pulled her along, as she used her loudest siren in protest.

"Sir, we can't keep her sweet little hands out of the food, and the stoves are very hot. I thought it best if I brought her out of the kitchen before she got hurt. And, sir," he whispered quietly, "when I stopped her, she bit me."

"I understand," Keith said. "Kids will be kids, you know. We have to leave now anyway. Thank you for trying." He pulled from his inner jacket pocket a bundle of twenty-dollar bills that he discreetly placed into the waiter's hand.

As soon as the waiter released Aggie, she threw herself on the floor, kicking and wailing. "I wanna go back in the kitchen!" She grabbed the waiter's ankle and hung on.

Trying to concentrate on their dinners, the nearby patrons averted their eyes and struggled to keep their conversations going. Though the lounge was a rather noisy place to eat, nothing could equal Aggie's disturbance. Waiters attempted to hide the confusion, kept busy with this and that, more than necessary. '21' felt a shift in the universe.

"We have to go now, Aggie," Keith said. He pried her fingers off the waiter's ankle. "It's getting late and we still have to ride to Greenwich."

"I don't care! I wanna see the kitchen again."

Struggling to hold her arching body, Keith picked her up and followed Claire to the exit.

Fortunately, on the drive home, Claire and Keith could finally sit back and relax. But not right away.

First, Aggie amused herself by tapping the chauffeur on the back of his head. Then she stuck the tablet, now blasting out reggae, up to his ears, and shouted, "Do you know this?" At last, she slumped down on Keith's shoulder and fell asleep.

For the rest of the ride to Greenwich, no one said a word.

He felt the lashes again. Even now, thirty-five years later, Keith wondered how his mother could have allowed her most recent husband to abuse a small boy. She didn't know about the kick across the room, or the back-handed slaps; for those, she could be forgiven. But she knew about, and condoned, the beatings. The kick across the room had been especially devious. His stepfather, with a rare smile for Keith, had waved a finger and beckoned him over. Keith expected a treat or at least something good. Maybe this man had taken a turn, actually liked him—wouldn't slap him. Keith went over to him.

"Now turn around," the stepfather said—again with a smile and with a sweet expression he rarely used.

But when Keith turned around, the man planted his foot in the middle of his back, and gave a shove that sailed Keith across the room. He just managed to catch himself before he hit the opposite wall.

"Now pick that up!" His stepfather spoke—his face wild.

What had he left where it shouldn't have been? Keith could no longer remember, but he had had so few possessions, it couldn't have been much more than a coloring book. He had not been able to defend himself. He had had no voice.

Each shout from Aggie was a shout at that stepfather. With each kick Aggie hurled, Keith felt a little revenge. Maybe if she could kick enough people, he could beat his stepfather.

Nicole Royse

Chandler Artist



“Dusk Charm”
Acrylic on canvas
18 x 24 x 2



The artist says: “I grew up in Orange County, CA, moving to Tempe, AZ, for high school. I began exploring the mediums of art at a young age due to my very chaotic childhood. I went on to study and graduate with a Bachelor’s of Arts degree in art history from Arizona State University. As an artist, I have had the opportunity to exhibit my artwork at a variety of venues throughout Arizona and California, accumulating over 65 exhibitions in a seven-year time span. Also, I am the curator at Willo North Gallery and the curator of Shade Projects at the monOrchid in Phoenix. I am also a freelance writer covering the arts across the Valley for AZFoothills Magazine, East Valley Magazine and YabYum Music & Arts. As an artist-curator and writer, I focus on bringing attention to the visual arts throughout our state. I reside in Chandler, AZ, with my husband and three children.” For more information, please visit nicoleroyse.com.

Nicole Royse

Chandler Artist



"Implicit"
Acrylic on canvas
24 x 30 x 1.5

My artwork focuses on abstraction of form through the use of line and color by working with acrylic and oil paint on canvas. I focus and draw on the natural world that we encounter every day and throughout the course of our lives. I aim for my work to be modern in aesthetic by using clean lines and a bold color palette while maintaining an elegant simplicity of form. Through my examination and exploration of the natural world and my inner self, I am led on a journey of rediscovery where I must sift through the complexities of life. My artwork is also in many ways a reaction to my life experiences. Everyone experiences a wide range of events, reactions, emotions and beliefs; through all of this, a history is created that essentially makes us who we are today. This history and journey is important, unique and essential to every one of us. In each of my artworks, I try to examine my life, a memory, or an event through which I use line, color and texture as my tools. Through each painting, I express a pure and simple idea, an idea that others may reflect on and connect to while encouraging them to examine their own lives in some way.

- Nicole Royse

Nicole Royse

Chandler Artist



“Fractured”
Acrylic on canvas
24 x 30

Nicole Royse

Chandler Artist



“Radiate”
Acrylic on canvas
22 x 28 x 2

Nicole Royse

Chandler Artist



“Obscured Bloom”
Acrylic on canvas
18 x 24 x 1.5

3 poems by Brintha Gardner

The Sun

© 2014

It rises,

Glimmering beams
shine upon earth mother

Stretching,
its light cascades.

Extending,
to touch the trees.

Encompassing
the animals that bask
beneath its rays.

A ball of fire,
source of heat and light,
source of existence,

yet, still, a source of death.

When it sets,
darkness envelopes;
Wait a few hours,
for it shall rise again.

The Greeks called it Helios.
The Romans called it Sol;
I call it God's gift to the world.

We bow to it,
small mortals from down under.



Brintha Gardner started writing poetry at the age of ten. She is inspired to write when she is drawn to a feeling that bursts inside her with honest and pure emotion. Her life passion is to inspire and help people and non-profits around the world the best she can. Brintha is an agency model/actress and was recently crowned Mrs. Indo-America Globe 2014. Presently, she resides in Phoenix, Arizona, with her husband, Brett Michael Gardner, and their daughter, Jaya Evelyn Gardner. E-mail: brintha_gardner@hotmail.com. Website: www.facebook.com/brinthagardner (official global fan page).

Through Innocent Eyes

© 2014

Through innocent eyes, the world
is a playground,

Gallivanting, rejoicing in a
laughter-filled park,

The effervescent children, they
see fluorescence even in the
luminous dark.

The crimson trees, the azure sky,
but what remains the most
beautiful is a twinkle in their eye,
Their faces beam a sun-filled
glow; sharing and caring they
couldn't tell you if they even knew
how to lie.

Let's pick berries, one screams
aloud, until we tire,
And after, let's tell stories around
a wondrous fire.

With marshmallows on sticks,
we'll eat and be merry;

We'll scamper around the tree
filled forest like Tom and Jerry.

Once the games are over tonight,
we'll embark in blissful slumber,
And dream of roses, lilies and
sunshine, like a landscaped
whisper.

A beauteous garden with a sea of
flowers, they were everywhere
you looked,

We must stop talking now as our
heavy eyelids begin to droop.

365

© 2014

Sweet melody of the bird perched
on a tree,

Enticing aroma of freshly brewed
coffee.

Bundled under a warm blanket,
the soothing rain on my window,

Nourish this pure ground so our
love can grow.

Your love can conquer all,

Through storm and winds, from
Spring to Fall.

It's unrelenting, come let's take
this dive,

You can count on my love three
sixty five.

For there will be laughter once
again,

Healing follows pain my darling
friend.

And I will never leave your side,

We shall thrive, oh yes we shall
thrive, through this love

by which we abide.

Walk by me, hold my hand,

The words of love you speak,
only my heart can understand.

You respect me so much, it
means the world,

In response to that smile, yes...
I'll be your girl.

Happy Joys

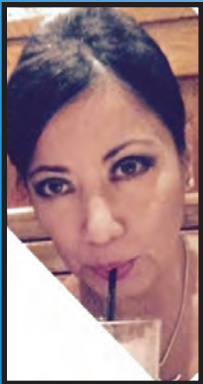
By Angela M. Lopez

© 2014

The simplest joys are always the happiest

Joy is:

the start of a new day
watching a hummingbird feed at five in the afternoon
an infant's giggle
a child's sense of wonder and awe
the first blush of true love
lost and found, found and lost.
Wild mushrooms.
The cat with the golden-blue eyes.
Purple sunsets
strawberry sundaes and candy apples.
The hearts, the candy, the long stemmed roses, the ivory towers
The illusions that it can all be real one day.
Deep Sleep. Dreams...
A journey from the conscious to the subconscious.
Waking refreshed.
Family, mom and apple pie.
Saying, "thank-you"
A gentle tone of kindness, a stumbling politeness
One look of validation, a sense of connection
The sharing of one's affection
Giving undivided attention
Balance, Harmony, Tranquility
The stillness of one's Soul and solace found therein
The finding of oneself in Serenity.
The unfolding of the Universe
Independence.
An open mind, a mended heart
World peace.



The poet writes: "Hi, my name is Angela M. Lopez and although I traveled and lived abroad extensively, I discovered that the best place to be is here, in Arizona. I love sunshine, hot weather, and swimming all year long. I love the tides of the ocean, the full moon, and star constellations. I enjoy anything quirky, funny, or silly. I love fortune cookies, astrology, numerology, feng shui, and an occasional ghost or love story. I am the Queen of Superstition, Myth, and Legend. I love crunchy and salty stuff with fruity Sangrias. I love the color red. On the practical level, I am a Humanities Professor in the areas of English literature and Composition, Foreign Language (Spanish), and Art. I enjoy writing and experimenting with color and have recently started participating in art exhibitions. I enjoy style, elegance, and grace. I hope that others can view my work and find a message that resonates in their life."

A poem by Amy Kalama Hochreiter

Home

© 2014

Can it be my Eagle self that soars above skies so
blue?

Or a native scout who climbs up high to see what's new?

Perhaps a wizened mystic retreats to the desert to
pray

An explorer finding canyons and caves along the way?

An ancient song arises and leaps within my
heart

Whenever feet first step onto this sacred part

Then Soul knows it's home, as my heart opens
wide

As trouble free and starry as the Arizona skies.

In modern days it's less metaphor but still the
same

This is a wild land as yet untamed.

Maybe a farmer planting corn, a mother holding her
young,

An artist painting purple hills, a teenager having fun.

Wherever I am in body, my soul transcends this
form

For here in Arizona, this light is always born!

Spirit speaks more clearly here, amongst the stars and
sky

Its essence births this land; more than fills the eyes.

Speak softly here of magnificence for it's all
around

Walk gently here upon your path once it is found.

Hurry now, protect it, this hallowed sacred
space

In all of the Universe, this is our place.



Amy Kalama Hochreiter has worked as a Master of Social Work in health care (hospitals, home care, outpatient clinic, hospice and rehab) with most ages and diagnoses for over 25 years. She became interested in integrative health care and learned Reiki when her infant daughter was ill with cancer and a heart defect; she has been a Reiki Master for 20 years. Her daughter is now a married young adult, and assisting her in her journey toward health was a tremendous teaching and blessing, which Amy now shares with others. Amy served as adjunct faculty in the University of Arizona Program for Integrative Medicine (Dr. Weil), teaching an online module about Energy Medicine and Reiki to medical professionals (MDs, NDs, etc.) as well as a mentor for medical students. With other Reiki Masters, she initiated the development of a Reiki Clinic at a local hospital in 1995, one of the first hospitals in the U.S. to officially allow energy healing for their patients. She continues to give advanced energy medicine sessions to clients to awaken their hearts, and as a certified Coach, she helps clients achieve personal, health, life and business success. Amy began writing poetry as a child, making her own gift cards and sayings for family members. Over the years, this gift continued sporadically with the muse calling during quiet times of introspection. Amy's poetry was recently published in Sibella, a women's online poetry journal, throughout 2012.

Christina Anne Lask

Tucson Artist



“Reflective Pursuit”

Mixed media - acrylic on fiberglass

March 2011



The artist says, “Growing up in the Sonoran Desert city of Tucson, the magic monsoons are deeply ingrained in my soul. Anyone who has experienced this season will tell you that there is a special scent in the air that is unlike any other. It often causes vacationers to make this area their second home. It is that scent that I so fondly refer to when I am returning to Arizona for a stay at my home base. I call it ‘getting into the zone.’ After graduating from NAU, I spent many years in Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa. About 10 years ago, I started to divide my time between Arizona and Oregon, where I enjoy the richness of the fresh green everything. This is where my eyes are treated to the ocean, rivers and beautiful flowers in every color. All of these wonderful joys found in nature are what fuels my creativity. My family history is rooted in service to the community through education, a noble cause. I took a different path. Having always owned and operated small businesses, I have found an outlet for my creative side. My art is sold in several galleries in Oregon and Arizona. I have annual shows in Portland, as well as smaller receptions on a monthly basis where I can personally connect with my collectors.” The artist can be reached via e-mail at info@liquidstonefusion.com or 541-990-0442 and welcomes comments. Her website is liquidstonefusion.com.

Christina Anne Lask

Tucson Artist



“Party Cruise Line”
Mixed media - acrylic on fiberglass
April 30, 2014

My work is very unusual and captivating. I paint with acrylics on fiberglass in a 3-dimensional form. Light plays an integral part in the viewing. As the light changes during the day, it finds its way into layers, valleys and ridges, creating an almost endless supply of new images. My art often evokes differing interpretations depending on the viewer, something I enthusiastically encourage. Because of this, I attach four fasteners to the backside at each corner, so that collectors can personalize and orient their art pieces accordingly. Limited-edition signed giclee prints are available on select art. Please contact the artist for more information.

- Christina Anne Lask

Christina Anne Lask

Tucson Artist



“The Spirit of the Hawk”
Mixed media - acrylic on fiberglass
Jan. 1, 2014

Christina Anne Lask

Tucson Artist



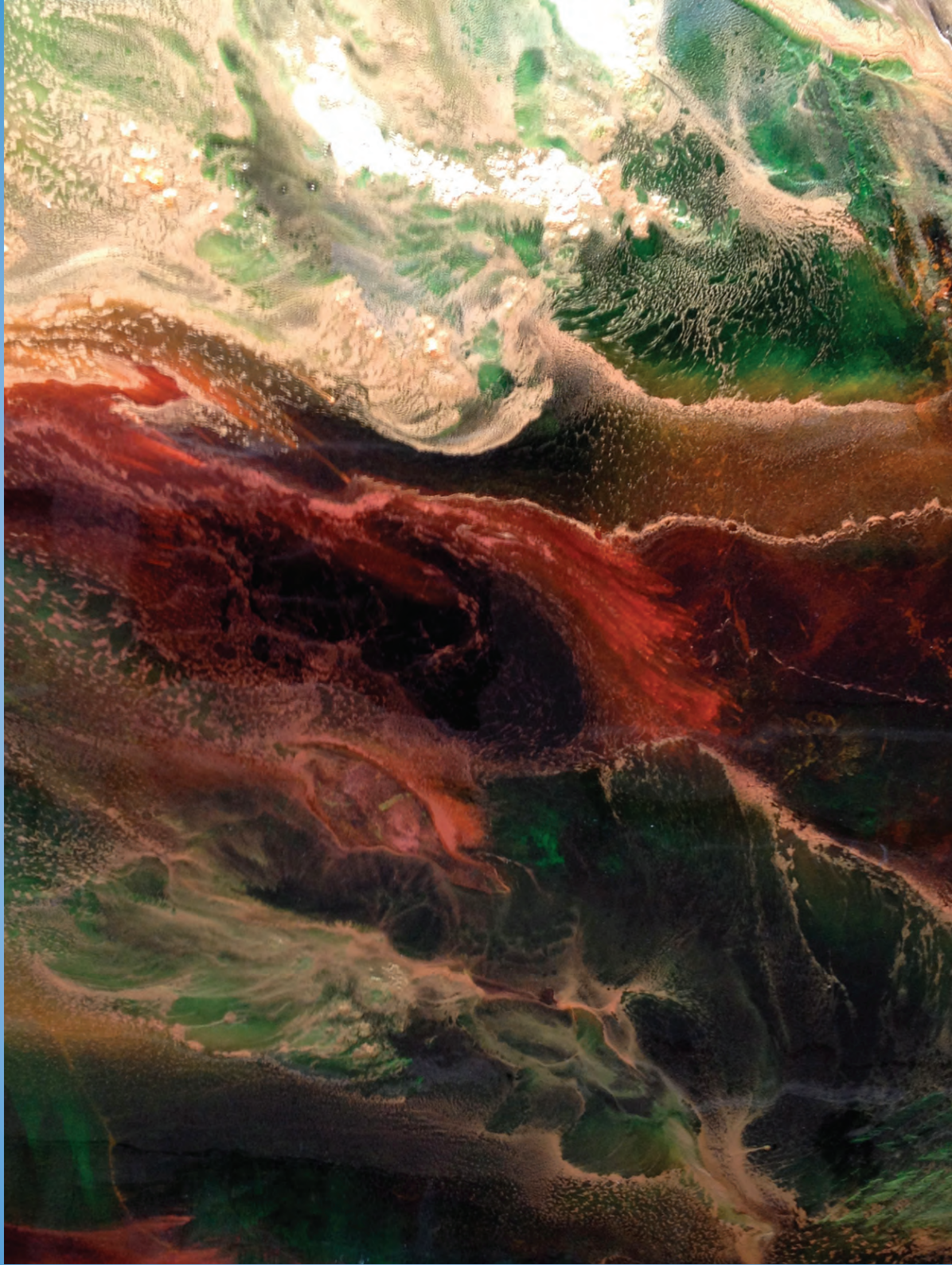
“Tulip Festival”

Mixed media - acrylic on fiberglass

May 2012

Christina Anne Lask

Tucson Artist



"Emerald Emulsion"
Mixed media - acrylic on fiberglass
February 2014

The Princeton Plan in Jackson Heights, N.Y.

By Joan Lowell

© 2014

“Are you a man or a mouse?” Walter, our neighbor, asked my husband, Irving. It was early summer 1964, and we were living in Jackson Heights, a middle-class community in Queens, New York City.

As part of the civil rights movement, the Princeton Plan, an experiment to integrate schools, had just been created and our community was selected as a site. Our elementary school composed of all White children was to be paired with a school in a nearby community of all Black residents. Kindergarteners would stay in their own school. Black children in first through third grades would be bused to P.S. 148, the White school in Jackson Heights, and White children in grades fourth through sixth would be bused to P.S. 127, the Black school in East Elmhurst. (Louis Armstrong, Malcolm X and Harry Belafonte lived in East Elmhurst.) Our daughters would be entering first and fourth grade in September.

Our neighbors were American descendants of Italian, Irish, Greek and Eastern European immigrants. There were no people of color. We all owned our own brick attached Tudor style homes and took pride in our small backyards and front patios. Our children played together in the street and on the front stoops. The idea of integration was anathema to many adults.

The news spread of the coming changes, and neighbors held block meetings where they expressed their anger, yelling and cursing, and planned their response. Some chose to send their children to parochial schools. Others would boycott the schools, picket the entrances and send their children to an alternative “private” school.

Irving and I found that we could not participate in these reactions. We saw this as an opportunity for our children to grow and learn. We had been watching the incidents in the South during the freedom marches, were deeply saddened by the recent murders of young Freedom Riders Andrew Goodman, James Earl Chaney and Michael Schwerner in Mississippi. Andrew Goodman came from Flushing, N.Y., a neighboring town. We saw the Princeton Plan as a step forward and we felt privileged to be a small part of it.

We had one family ally, Penny and Charles, who lived across the street. Their son Johnnie was the same age as our middle daughter Denise and we agreed that we would send our children to the public schools. This is what prompted Walter’s question to Irving.

The boycotters created a “school” above a row of stores 30 minutes away from our street that would be reached by public bus. They hired a few teachers and bought basic text books for various grades. They told their children that this would be safer.

The days before the start of school, rumors flew that there would be protests and violence at the public schools. James Farmer, African American civil rights activist and leader of Congress of Racial Equality, was expected as well as organized White protesters. We were concerned but not deterred.

The opening morning, with all three daughters in hand, we walked Fran, our oldest, to the corner to wait for the bus to P.S. 127. We were the only children and parents there to board the bus. Our neighbors stood nearby jeering and one spat at us. As

Continued on page 41



Joan Lowell has held leadership positions in the nonprofit sector for over 25 years. She served as executive director of Hospice of the Valley from 1983 to 1994, followed by two years in the Peace Corps, Kazakhstan, where she served as counselor in business and NGO development. She has continued this work to date in Arizona, Russia, Ukraine, Thailand, Malawi and Tanzania. Upon her return from the Peace Corps, Joan served as vice president/senior advancement officer for donor services for the Arizona Community Foundation until 2007. She has written a series of articles for the Arizona Business Journal, the Prescott Courier and most recently the Arizona Daily Sun. She has also been published in Newsweek. She is a board member of four family foundations and four nonprofit organizations and consults to nonprofit organizations in Arizona. Joan has a B.A. from Queens College, N.Y., an M.S. from Adelphi University, N.Y., and an M.P.A. from ASU.

the bus arrived, we kissed Fran and watched her board. As soon as the bus left, we walked the two blocks to P.S. 148 to deliver Denise to first grade. White people milled about the front of the school and called out curses. There was no Black presence. The bus had not arrived.

As soon as our daughter was with her class, we hurried back to our house for our car and drove to P.S. 127 to be there before the bus. Black parents were smiling as they delivered their children for the first day of school. There were no pickets or protesters. The bus came and there were several White children aboard. Most came from an apartment complex not far from our home. When all the children were in the building, we left to get on with our day, greatly relieved.

Time passed and our children did well. Fran was often the only White child when I picked her up at birthday parties, and she had good friends in her class, both Black and White. One day, she had an argument with a boy in her class. The teacher said, "Now, just because you're different colors, doesn't mean you can't be friends." Fran said, "No, he took my pen!"

Denise became friends with Delbert, a classmate. When I mentioned that he was Black, she said, "He's not Black. He just has dark skin." She played in the schoolyard with Attila Shabazz, Malcolm X's daughter. We were pleased with the color blindness of our children.

About a month after school started, the parents who had sent their children to the private school realized that it was not a good alternative. The classrooms were crowded, there was no PT or music or art and the children were riding public buses with adults on their way to work. After instilling in their children a fear of the Black children, they had to send their youngsters back to the public schools.

We had looked at this experience as an opportunity for our children to learn, but we realized that we learned, too. We recognized that though it may be easier to go along with the crowd and public pressure, there are times when our hearts and souls don't allow us to do that. It was a struggle we could not avoid.

In early 1966, we felt that our neighbors were not people with whom we wanted to live any longer. Irving's business had grown and we were financially able to build our dream house, a sprawling ranch on an acre of land in Dix Hills, Long Island. We moved in July.

A few years later, the Princeton Plan was terminated.

3 poems by Ronald G. Auguste

A Prayer For Today

© 2014

(For Langston Hughes)

Give me a poem of delight,
For solace, when I'm feeling sad;
And give me music in the night,
To make me glad.

And give me laughter, and a smile,
That sparkle easy ... and sincere;
And give me love – Though for a while,
I'll count it dear.

And give me faith, that I may be
Unmoved by storms of hate and spite,
So even in an agony,
I'll do what's right.

Give charity to make me kind,
Even to those who do me wrong!
And both in body, and in mind,
Please make me strong....

But leave some sorrows ... that I may
Still have recourse to turn to Thee.
O give me joy! – To greet each day,
On bended knee.

The poet writes: “ ‘A Prayer for Today’ is one of my poems written in 1963, during our quest for Civil Rights in the United States. Originally written using the singular personal pronouns, I later created a version in which these pronouns were used in their plural forms. In remembering Langston Hughes, I dedicated this poem to him.”



The poet writes: “I was born in Saint Lucia, in the West Indies. After spending many years in London, England, I emigrated to the USA in 1970, and became a citizen in 1975. I am the father of two sons – the second one deceased – and one daughter. In my early teens, strongly influenced by traditional poets such as Shakespeare, Byron, Longfellow, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and William Cullen Bryant, I started writing poetry. I've written hundreds of poems – quite likely more than a thousand – a great number of which are dedicated to family, friends, and public figures whom I admire and respect. In Phoenix, I have often read in public places – libraries, bookstores, coffee shops, and, occasionally, in schools. Some years ago, after a reading at Horizon High in the Paradise Valley School District, I was informed that some of my poems had been copied for circulation there. I've also read my poems at venues in London; in Santa Monica, Calif.; and at several schools in St. Lucia. I can be reached at RGAaPoet@aol.com.”

A Wedding Poem

© 2014

(For Emily Bloomfield, and Byron Auguste, my son)

Your old lives ended, your new life begun!
O may that life be like a splendid sun,
Forever burning, lighting up a way
Of Love and Peace – Through an eternal day,
Full of kind deeds, born of a mutual caring,
Sweet little things to make your lives endearing.

O may you love full free that you may give,
With selflessness, as long as you both live,
Not only pleasures, thrills, and joys – Well spent! –
But hope, and faith, and trust, and sweet content,
To each other ... and may you bare your hearts
To learn the maxims there that Love imparts;
And when comes trouble, or a little woe,
Be understanding, and the cause will go.

A wedding is a fusion of two souls,
Two hearts, two loves, two minds, two goals,
Forever into one.... Does that sound wise?
To me, it does; but you must compromise,
That your two lives may blossom as one flower,
Which grows more fragrant every passing hour;
And sends its perfume lingering on the air,
Sweet as a song that will not disappear,
But haunts you with clear notes throughout the day –
And haunts you still, though your youth fade away.

May you love dearly: as Husband and Wife,
Please be the essence of each other's life –
The yearning and the breath; and yes, the star!
And all the other precious things that are....

Treasure your love, and let your love be true,
Fresh as a rose in dawn's light's gems of dew.

True love is great! And wide! And mountain tall!
In width and depth, true love surpasses all!
But such true love will feel the greatest hurt –
Why, even mountains ... crumble into dirt....

May God, and all his Angels up above,
Grant you their Peace, to make Divine your Love.

The poet writes: "I wrote 'A Wedding Poem' — a derivative of my very own 'Wedding Poem' — in 1992, when my son asked me to read one of my poems at his Wedding Ceremony. A great number of copies were distributed at that wedding! Since 1992, I have dedicated 'A Wedding Poem' to a large number of people all over the world, and I have posted it on numerous online sites, beginning with AOL. Sadly, I have discovered some plagiarized copies of my 'Wedding Poems' — and others! — on the Web, posted by a few thoughtless people on sites which are worldwide ... and so public ..."

Our Wedding Poem

© 2014

(For Anita, On Our Wedding Day)

Our old lives ended – Our new life begun....
O may that life be like a static sun,
Forever burning, lighting up a way
Of love and peace, through an eternal day
Full of kind deeds born of a mutual caring –
Sweet little things to make our lives endearing.

O let us love full free, that we may give,
With selflessness, as long as we both live,
Not only pleasures, thrills, and joys – Well spent! –
But hope, and faith, and trust, and sweet content
To each other ... and let us bare our hearts
To learn the maxims there that Love imparts;
And when comes trouble, or a little woe,
Be understanding, dear ... the cause will go....

A wedding is a fusion of two souls,
Two hearts, two loves, two minds, two goals,
Forever into one.... Does that sound wise?
To me, it does; but we must compromise,
That our two lives may blossom as one flower,
Which grows more fragrant every passing hour ...
And sends its perfume lingering on the air,
Sweet as a song that will not disappear,
But haunts us with clear notes throughout the day,
And haunts us still, though our youth fade away.

I love you dearly – Now that you're my wife,
You are the very essence of my life!
The yearning and the breath! and yes! the star!
And all the other precious things that are....

Please love me long, and let your love be true,
Fresh as a rose in dawn's light's gems of dew.

My love is great – It rises tower tall!
In width and depth, my love surpasses all!
But such Great love will feel the Greatest hurt! –
Why, even mountains crumble into dirt....

May God, and all his Angels up above,
Grant us their peace, to make divine our love.

The poet writes: “ ‘Our Wedding Poem’: A poem I composed for my wife, Anita, on our wedding day in 1965. From this poem, I derived ‘A Wedding Poem,’ for my son Byron, and his wife, Emily Bloomfield, in 1992. I remember writing ‘Our Wedding Poem’ while I was sitting in the barber’s shop waiting for a haircut, on a sheet of paper I had procured from the barber.”

Poems by Lou Savenelli

The Quiet Sentinel: A Spiritual Journey

© 2014

Spirit

A gentle breeze
Bellowing through the clouds
Gently caressing the beauty of those she touches
Gracefully stepping through time
Through her journey
As she embraces the world around her
explores
absorbs
Perfecting mind, body and spirit

© 2014

Serene

a breath of spirit upon the earth
humbling us all into a state of quiet tranquility
a grace delicately caressing our souls
as we gaze at the gentleness of its beauty
absorbing its harmonious perfection
the gentle solitude engulfing our being
as a creation of the source
gifted to humanity

© 2014

The Tree

Leaves
long, narrow
bushy
full
the light amplifying their emerald facade
dancing in the breeze

© 2014

Creating a canopy
a shroud

enveloping the beauty bestowed within

A morning breeze
caressing its wholeness
gentle
swaying
nudging

The wind increases
its bountiful fullness
flowing through the air

a crow
magical, mystical
glides
among the thermals

The wind retreats
gentle
still
quiet.

untitled
in the stillness of mountains
the butterfly hearkens
cascade of flowers

Continued on page 46



The poet writes, "Having lived in Arizona for 18 years, a product of corporate America marketing communications and high school English teacher in Vermont, I always sensed something else was out there. That something was the Southwest inspiring me to my spiritual path, writing poetry, short stories, a family history while currently creating a spiritual blog accumulated from years of journaling. I write purely as inspired by the moment, the situation and nature to stir one's senses to 'see,' to feel, to embrace." Contact the poet at thequietsentinel@outlook.com.

A Moment

a parking lot
not where I want to be
too late
no choice
I walk
ah, a board walk
a guide to the water
walking above the marsh
marsh grasses
cat-o-nine-tails
awaiting the incoming tide
wildlife absent
the tide slowly drifting
approaching its apogee
a connection to the lengthy boardwalk
ah, this is where I should be!

cold
brisk
slight, gentle breeze
I stand
I gaze
I absorb
drinking in the ocean's beauty
the calmness
the serenity
the spiritual calling of the water
the essence of being

sun above the horizon
poised to impart its magic
waves
gentle, delicate
soothing, rolling, rippling
quietly to their landed destinations
shimmering
in their eternal motion
unhampered by clouds
conveying their glory upon mother earth.

a crystal
a meditation, a gift
secured lovingly within my palm
is this the moment?

meditating,
offering intentions
peace, tranquility, harmony
hope, beauty, serenity, wholeness

is this the place?
spirit acknowledges
is it now?
I wait
I reflect

the sun
gently highlighting the softness
of the limitless flowing waves
spreading its sheen from horizon to shore

fishing boats
small
slow
dotting the rolling surface

an island
tree covered
only briefly accessible at low tide

the meditation
flows
nudges me
I sense the moment

my arm rises
forward motion
the crystal
releases
arcs

the eastern sun captures the movement
glimmering
as it descends upon the sea
a gentle splash
creating small concentric circles
they expand
rolling lovingly on gentle rippled waves
approaching me at the end of an ocean pier

they dissipate
as gentle as that rolling sea.
A moment.

© 2014

a poem

a love so deep
beholds your soul
to express glory and wisdom
to return love
to bestow compassion
to open your heart
to share your heart
encompassing a world
of love and peace
often misread
so often consumed in rapture
to make right
to forgive
all forgiving
beholding majesty
...beholding
to love
to hearken
to call forth
to go beyond
to open your arms to the world
to extend gratitude to all
to embrace
to envelop
to behold
to call forth angels
to immerse
to cherish
hosting miracles
hosting life
embracing all
rejecting none
calling forth the holy spirit
for all mankind
accepting

to change the world.

4 poems by Michael Gregory

Seven years before Armageddon

© 2014

Seven years before Armageddon
poking through monuments routinely
ignored by those who should know better

looking as Fletcher later said
for values *functioning and in
sufficient strength* to enable them

to make of themselves anything more
from their colonial soil than complete
failures to adjust to the standards back home,

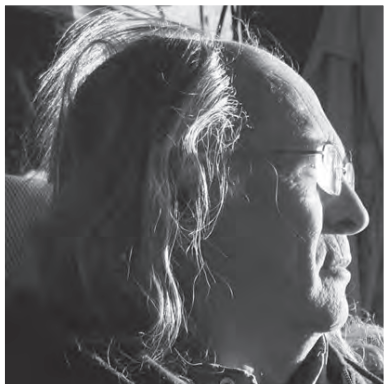
in the gloom of old places of worship
the light playing tricks on itself
as it had around Aphrodite

Venus on the half-shell said Ford the spindrift
she rose from spilled from her father's orchids
cut or bit off by an uncle or brother

the melancholy god's loss
the birth of love foretelling
the end of every man's parade

Just kidding yourself said Lewis
that you can see interiors
Art is all about surfaces

These pieces are from the author's "Pound Laundry" (forthcoming from Post-Soviet Depression Press), a book-length poem based on the life and work of Ezra Pound. The poem consists of voices on a variety of topics, often in Pound's own words or those of others past and present, historical, fictional or mythical, that were or were likely to be going through his head.



Michael Gregory's books and chapbooks include "Hunger Weather 1959-1975," "re: Play," and most recently "Mr. America Drives His Car," selected poems from roughly the last quarter of the last century and first decade of this one, published last year by Post-Soviet Depression Press. Since 1971, he has lived off-grid ten miles from the U.S.-Mexico border in the high desert grassland of southeast Arizona, the location of his 1975 book, "The Valley Floor."

Vapor trails in cloud chambers

© 2014

Vapor trails in cloud chambers
patterns in mesmerized sand
 light bent around massive bodies
 where something or other probably was

Mass becoming energy
involving singularities
 becoming mass again at the fuzzy
 logics threshold of quantum equations

The shape of measuring devices
contingent on state of motion
 relative to coordinate systems
 or second body a first points to

Through curvatures of unmanned space
indeterminate locales
 uncertain constituencies
 white dwarves on the shoulders of giants

Wrong hero wrong hell
lares penates and father held close
 against the suffocating press
 of mindless dead and unborn

Inspiration intuition
narrative imagination
 the turn to myth when reason fails
 escaping history via stories

In exile in desert lands
among hostile primitives
 to build again the eternal city
 entire still in memory

Acknowledging that there can be
no exactly truthful account
 only tantalizing attempts
 to transmit the feel of the thing

Wandering islands of disparate races
improvising associations
 stamping out-of-date on sources
 origins and principles

Mosaic patterns rising to the film
at the top of the melting pot *the epic*
 farings of a literary mind
 observed Miss Tricornered Hat

Interest the intellectual name of love

© 2014

Interest the intellectual name of love
reflected the non-political man reborn
in Berlin after his *libestod* in Venice

a love malnourished on analysis of decadence
an unearned income on cultural capital
later applied to the talking cure on the magic mountain

a melancholy love upholding the recognitions
that understanding plus devotion is passion
that passion is clairvoyant that conscientiousness

the essence of his art lies close to pedantry
erotic irony and literate loneliness
in a mathematically rationalized social world

Romanticism nationalism music humor
placed he said in impersonal parts of his being
by the century Nietzsche called *honest but gloomy* as if,

sick of the twisted almost joyous fatalism
of Goethe's will to deify life and the universe,
his nature trying to form a totality of itself

in the belief that only in totality
is everything solved and justified, as if
it had shaken free from the death-grip of ideals

left by *the feminine deceitful century* past
and was looking for a way to bill its submission
to the factual then coming into dominance

The musical a form higher than the literary
music and poetry being what fiction aspires to
not French rhetoric and English cant

a rhetoric in honor of the human race
a legacy of classical reason the generous
gesture heart-stirring phrase worthy of a human being

that is what makes life worth living, makes human human
in the Roman west, civilization if you will
the victorious advance of the literacized

Continued on page 51

politicized middle class antithesis
the French revolutionary the English puritan
deriding the ecstasy of German metaphysics

God in Heaven and Rome not within,
Gallic wit a fey *celtique* gallows humor
art a confession to the animal with many heads

men and women of no particular standing holding
bonafides that affirm a degree of intelligence
conferred for a fee by imbecile institutions

the USA not an attractive alternative—
base utilitarianism ignorance
conceit bigotry enslavement lynch law

vulgarity repudiation of public debt
swindles of neighboring sovereign states
mob rule *single-minded veneration of women*

The great majority boundlessly egotistical
said Schopenhauer *unjust unfair*
mendacious inconsiderate even evil

white-collar rabble and pink-stocking riff-raff
narrow-minded with very scant intelligence
cogs in the plutocratic drive for property

Pessimism synonymous with morality
when civilization has colonized nearly all
the once-free barbarians to the north and west

into a *Monte Carlo Europe literary*
as a Parisian cocotte somewhat amusing
somewhat insipidly humane trivially

depraved femininely elegant
implausibly adventurous and loudly
democratic *a two-step and tango Europe*

business and pleasure *à la* Edward the Seventh
when *gauche* freemason republican bourgeoisie
confuse mediocrity and excellence

intellectual aesthetics and politics
South American harbor-saloon mating dances
and Bach, the precise accomplishment of the fugue

*Personality the only thing on earth
interesting, the feeling of being coherent in
the atomistic anarchic unholy mass*

*Free and unequal, that is, aristocratic
Intellectual individualism
more aristocratic than liberal-democratic*

*Any idiot can be a conservative
every idiot is democratic
Equality and freedom exclude one another*

Freedom is independence of spirit, of feeling,
voting rights are opposite to freedom and duty
Only one with nothing calls out for equality

A democracy of the heart, of brotherhood,
of humanity of an order higher than that
of guillotine reason and redshirt humanitarianism

Cancer in the eyes

© 2014

Cancer in the eyes of prisoners
Dollar signs in the eyes of the young

in thrall to vile demands of banks
currency plus interest

the price of wheat the price of money
everyman has on his head

God and the banks from nothing
creating to be exact nothing

though dowsers tipping in other camps
tend to call it purchasing power

by which the young give credence
to the barons' crocodile tears

lending credibility
to claims we're all better off

with wages cut jobs lost
the cost of borrowing going up

the eyes of the young the aging eyes
sorrowing in their desire

for things real and things imagined
things they're made to believe debt

will give them when all it gets them is
cancer the sadness in their eyes

cancer the death of hope and freedom
the great majority locked up

in idiot rounds for wanting things
made scarce in a state of overabundance

desires bought off by combinations
lives signed off on the bottom line

Joan McConnell

Gilbert Artist



“Missy”
Acrylic on canvas
2010



The artist says: “I was born on Long Island in New York, the youngest of three sisters. I took every art class that was offered in school. While in high school, I majored in art, but never pursued my craft any further. It wasn’t until I was an adult that I found out my father and grandfather were both artists. I married my childhood sweetheart in 1986 and eventually moved to Arizona, where we raised our son. I’ve worked in human resources since 1994, but I’m hoping at some point to make my art a full-time career. I have volunteered at UMOMS, CASS and Fresh Start for Women, teaching art classes to victims of domestic violence, which gives me a great feeling to be able to give something back. Just seeing the joy in my students is priceless.”

Joan McConnell

Gilbert Artist



**“Untitled”
Acrylic on canvas
2012**

I work with acrylics on canvas, primarily painting landscapes and seascapes. I draw my inspiration from the impressionists and nature itself, trying to capture the essence of reflection and light. Working with bright colors enables the paintings to take on an energy that draws you into each scene with a different perspective. My paintings are meant to convey a sense of tranquility. Someone once told me that I paint the world as I want to see it, vivid, yet peaceful.

- Joan McConnell

Joan McConnell

Gilbert Artist



**“Lincoln & Elizabeth”
Acrylic on canvas
2012**

Joan McConnell

Gilbert Artist



**“Roxi, Gizmo & Palapa”
Acrylic on canvas
2012**

2 poems by Eva Willis

A Walk to History

© 2014

I touch the slender strands of sycamore leaves
on my solitary saunter
from the parking lot
to Montezuma's Castle.

It is August and a gentle zephyr
kisses the trees and my skin.
The creek denies any cares
and carries no complaints.

It has seen many changes –
building by the Sinagua around 1100,
life in the protected limestone cliffs for many years,
abandonment in the 1400s.

It has been years since my first visit.
As a child, I fondly remember
climbing up the handmade ladders
to peer into the rooms and pits.

We saw pots and shards,
remnants of an ancient desert lifestyle.
It is a walk to history and a
window into the past.

Eva Marie Willis (B.A. from ASU) is retired and lives in Ahwatukee (Phoenix), Arizona. Since retiring, she finds personal expression in her numerous poems, in dancing, and in her oil paintings. She is the author of "With All My Heart," a collection of short stories and poems about relationships. It is available online from Lulu.com, Amazon, and Barnes and Noble. She is interested in politics, spirituality, dancing and living life to the fullest. You can follow her on Twitter under EvaTwits or contact her via e-mail at jwillis42@cox.net.



Monsoon

© 2014

Tiny, puffy clouds are cradling
the tops of the Maricopa mountains
while the dark, steely eastern clouds
open up and pour forth their anger
after the skies thundered their warning.

I think “run for cover,
keep my head down, and keep dry.”
In that moment of surprise,
it dawns on me my afternoon
plans will be altered.
I will be redirected home.

Runnels soon form
in the smallest of depressions
filling up quickly,
the water taking the path of least resistance.
I am suddenly pelted by small hailstones.
I dash across one runnel,
getting my sneakers soaked,
the gusty wind behind my back
pushing against me.

Now in my car
the hail is larger and smacking against
the windshield noisily.
“A microburst,” I say to myself,
as I cower in the car.
My weather app is loaded with
quickly moving green cells
smothering the area I find myself in.
Glad I only have one mile to home.

3 poems by Howard Russell

A Dawn's Embrace

© 2014

The ocean waves

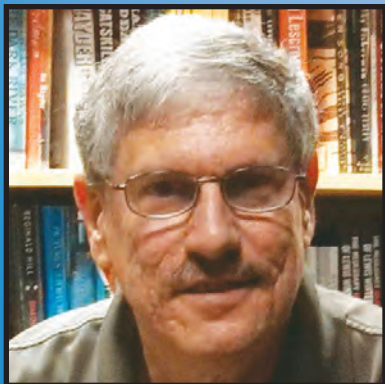
good morning with long, white curls
and gentle whispers.

A rhythmic cleansing of silt and sand,
soil and soul.

The gulls are not awake,
their siren sun still sleeping,
still and silent as the boats approaching from distant lands,
faint lights that sail the crease
between the sky and sea,
you and me.

The dawn arrives astride a dolphin
racing with the wind.
A pier appears from out of the darkness
waiting to embrace the hull
that carries you
with promises.
Promises.

I will, I can, I shall, I do.
A sacred sigh, a salty smell,
a healing breeze embraces us
As once again, the earth is blessed with morning dew,
me and you;
just me and you.



Howard Russell (a pseudonym) is 58, married (35 years) with one child (age 27) and has lived in Arizona since 1981. Maintaining a journal for most of his life, he's accumulated a significant amount of material about which to write. Whether from personal experience or observations of the human condition (particularly of family, friends, and co-workers who won't mind seeing themselves in print so long as the names are changed to protect the potentially embarrassed), his goal is to write and publish poetry and fiction that points out human folly through friction. To his credit thus far are two short stories and seven poems that have appeared in print. In addition, he has two novels in manuscript form, and is currently working on a book of short stories titled "The P.O. Box Mysteries." Reach the writer at rusel0630@gmail.com.

The Moonshine

© 2014

Once upon an evening dreary,
as I sat there, I could clearly
see the moonshine out my window;
in the still beyond my window.
It was cold and flat and penetrating
through my body, penetrating
with my soul degenerating
from the moonshine
in the still.

Eagerly I wished for morning
for the sunshine's early dawning
to save me from the yawning
sickness yet to come;
from the nausea yet to come
and the pounding like a drum
from the moonshine
in the still.

Ah, remotely, I recall
trying to consume it all
like a lake consumes a river,
all the liquid from the river,
when down my spine I felt a shiver
telling me to sever
from the moonshine
in the still.

Suddenly, I heard a clanging
as if someone in my head was banging
on a tin or pipe or baby grand;
I clapped my ears with both my hands
like Custer on his final stand
to quell the hammering from the damned
moonshine out there
in the still.

Then, in horror, all my skin
began to crawl as if within
an army of red, angry ants
erupted in my shirt and pants,
emerging from my shirt and pants
to make me itch and scratch and rant
from the moonshine
in the still.

“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God has sent you
into hell, so best repent you
from the evil of the evening,
from the foul and nasty heaving
that from your mouth was leaving
with the moonshine
from the still.”

Finally the rays of daybreak
appeared to sooth my pounding headache
and give me respite from my pain.
With aide from aspirin and caffeine
I swore that I'd henceforth refrain
from ever falling prey again
to the moonshine in the still
the cursed moonshine in the still.

But the moonshine, never stirring,
guaranteed the night's recurring
and my senses once more blurring
from its perch outside my window
in the evening's afterglow.
With self-loathing did I know
that I ever more would go
to quench my need and get my fill
from the moonshine in the still;
the blasted moonshine in the still.

Window on the Square

© 2014

Anything is everything and everything is anything in-between the lucid moments unencumbered by distractions slinking by in *short skirts* or *hard hats* or *flashing neon thoughts* like giant billboards on skyscrapers that hide their infrastructure from the light with artificial incandescence and elevators *rising and falling, rising and falling like heartbeats* from the penthouse to the basement on cables made of steel attached to weights that don't distinguish any floor from any other. Yellow cabs and bicycles honk and scream obscenities at pedestrians crossing 'gainst the signal oblivious to the urgencies pushing past them like the *stillness interrupted* by the buzzing sting of cellular reminders that others have their hooks in me. Scaffolding surrounds construction next to manhole covers camouflaging access to the sewage 'neath the streets that runs parallel to water pipes and power lines that share the underworld out of sight, *o u t o f s i g h t*, but integrated, unattended to until they break, then pandemonium. *P a n d e m o n i u m.*

Homeless in Hawaii

By Howard Russell

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Today he was on a mission.

The sand was warm and wet beneath his feet as he strode along the beach, the sound of the surf pounding in his ears, the sun browning his bare back. It never got too hot here during the day, nor too chilly at night. He'd foregone the life of study and surrealism for the chance to decompress. The police didn't roust him here as they might have in Mission Bay or Oceanside. The small lean-to he called home was sparsely decorated: a worn, discarded mattress rescued from the trash man, a 3 drawer nightstand, similarly repatriated, held his simple but adequate collection of beachwear, and a wobbly folding table served as desk and dining counter. A 'borrowed' public bench doubled as a chair and as patio furniture when he chose to sit and watch the sunset.

It was time for his weekly berating from his mother, so he was headed into town to charge his phone and pick up a new pair of flip flops. He earned a living giving surfing lessons and drawing caricatures at the arcade on the boardwalk. He kept telling her he would return to school *'as soon as this is out of my system,* 'but he didn't have the heart to tell her that it was unlikely he ever would.

As he walked, he found himself wondering about Jose.

Departing Los Angeles, the cruise ship blasted its horn as a pod of common dolphins escorted it through the channel. There were cheers and waves as the champagne flutes tilted, the bubbly contents scratching the throats that itched with anticipation.

Sam stood at the bow of the ship watching the seagulls scavenge for tidbits tossed and lost on deck. One landed on the railing next to him. He smiled. Shaking his head, he held out the last crust of his finger sandwich to his nomadic friend. The gull grabbed it willingly in his beak and flew off into the gathering twilight. Sam watched till the bird was out of sight then headed for the stairs.

Deck 3 was reserved for the ship's compliment of crew which hailed from more than sixty foreign lands. Registered in the Antilles, it plied the waters of the Pacific, taking tourists and vacationers between the shores and islands that it bordered and contained. Sam Watson made his way down the narrow hallway to the interior cabin that was his home for the next 2 days. Swiping the card in the electronic lock, he stepped inside and shut the door behind him. Normally unaffected by bouts of claustrophobia this closet-sized excuse for a bed chamber made him nervous. He was used to open fields and blue skies, not

cell-like confinement and artificial light.

Jose Gonzalez, an old high school pal and fellow wanderer, was asleep on one of the beds. Watching Jose's chest move gently up and down, Sam wondered why he'd signed on for a 6 month stint that required such stifling living conditions. He was only 48 hours from Honolulu and Sam was already regretting accepting Jose's invitation to travel by sea.

His cell phone buzzed. *Not again,* he sighed.

"Hi, Mom."

"So where are you now?" Linda said to her son, anger and worry balanced precariously in her voice.

"In L.A.," he answered, cupping his hand around the phone to keep from waking Jose.

"Why aren't you in school?" she asked. "What's this 'voluntary withdrawal' notice all about?"

"I'm taking a break. I only have one semester left anyway. I'll finish it next year."

"You'll finish it this year, if you know what's good for you," she fired back.

"What's the big deal?" he answered. "It's not like a biology degree is gonna get me hired anywhere, or make me a big shot Doctor, like you."

"Don't take that tone with me, young man," she said, loud enough to force him to hold the phone away from his ear. There was silence for a moment, then her voice seemed to soften. "I understand that the economy is tough, but without a degree, what chance do you have of getting any kind of job? I never said you had to be a Doctor."

"You didn't have to. You never say it, but that doesn't mean you don't expect it."

"And what's wrong with wanting you to be successful? Is that such a crime?"

"It is if I have to live my life your way."

"Can't you just come home so we can talk about it at least?"

"There's nothing to talk about, Mom. Gotta go – my battery's almost dead."

He clicked off and put the phone back in his pocket. It buzzed again and he pulled it back out, turning it off altogether.

"What was that all about?" Jose asked, rubbing his eyes.

"Nothing," Sam said, turning to face his cellmate. Jose was sitting on the edge of the bed, his dark, muscular physique an embarrassing contrast to Sam's scrawny frame. "Wrong number."

"Yeah," Jose said, running his hand through his hair. "Some

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broad named Mom keeps calling me too. She's a real pain. You run into any trouble on deck?"

"No. Must be, what? 2,000 passengers on this floating excuse for binge drinking? Nobody's gonna pay attention to me."

"They will if you have to show your sign-&-sail card."

"I'll say I left it in my cabin. No big deal."

"It'll be a big deal if they discover I snuck you on board. I'll get fired."

"Since when is steady employment a concern of yours? You turn establishment on me?"

"I don't give a shit about this job. I'll quit soon enough, once I've got enough scratch to get to Australia."

"So why a cruise ship?" Sam asked.

"So where else can you eat free, sleep free, and get paid for kissing rich people's asses?" Jose said, grabbing his uniform from the micro-closet.

"I'll let you know when I figure it out," Sam said. "I'm gonna lie down and get some Z's. Your shift starting soon?"

"10 minutes. Be in the dining room for the 6pm feeding frenzy. Surf and turf brings out all the slobs – you'd think no one ever taught these people how to use knives, forks and napkins. It's disgusting."

"Bring me some leftovers," Sam said, peeling off his shirt and kicking his sandals under his bed, "and bring some silverware – don't want you to think I'm a barbarian too."

"Will do," Jose said, as he finished pulling on his white shirt and straightening his cap. He grabbed his ID and headed out the door as Sam closed his eyes.

He woke with a start and nearly broke his hand when he swatted the wall. It took him a few seconds to realize the noise coming at him through the bulk head was the loud hum of washing machines. Jose told him they were neighbors with the ship's laundry, but failed to mention that it was next to impossible to sleep through the spin cycle. He pulled out his phone, turned it on and checked the time: 8:30pm Pacific time. There were 13 messages, all from his Mother, and he erased them without reading a single one.

He sat up and stretched, still yawning.

No sense laying here listening to the whites get bleached, he thought and reached for his flowered Hawaiian shirt. He checked his back pocket to make sure his stash was still intact, then bent down to find his sandals. He looked at the master key card that operated most of the doors on the ship. How the hell Jose got hold of it was a mystery, but it gave him anonymous access to the cabin – and anywhere else that he might like exploring.

The casino was on the Embarcadero deck located amidships. It was already filled with glazed eyed geezers investing their 401k funds into flashing slot machines in the hope of winning

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a more comfortable retirement. The craps and roulette stations were packed 3 deep, and the Texas-hold-em tables were likewise full with an audience of anxious souls waiting their turn with lady luck. Waitresses in short cocktail dresses and plunging necklines sashayed from table to table distributing lubricants to the crowd in an effort to grease their anticipation.

Sam found an open seat at one of the blackjack tables and sat down, laying two hundred dollar bills on the green felt.

"Two large," the dealer said without looking up. She counted out the chips and pushed them across the table to him, simultaneously stuffing the two bills through the slot into the metal cash box. Sam bet one of the twenty-five dollar chips and the dealer began sliding the cards out of the shoe. There were four others at the table, a young couple to his right who were obviously on their honeymoon, a middle-aged man to his immediate left, and an older woman in the left-most seat, playing two hands at once.

Sam was an experienced gambler, and though he didn't play as often as his craving demanded, he was disciplined in his approach and more often than not walked away a winner. His biggest gripe at the tables was the propensity of inexperienced players to grab the last seat and screw up the hand for the rest of the table. He was pleased, therefore, when on the first hand, the senior occupying position 6 held on with 13 despite the dealer showing a seven. When the dealer flipped her hole card over, it was a nine, and she had to hit it. The next card was an eight, which would have given Gladys – the voyeur senior – 21, but instead it caused the dealer to bust with 24, making everyone at the table a winner as well.

"Well done," Sam said to her, and settled in for an enjoyable evening of cards and libations.

"Where the hell have you been?" Jose asked when Sam made it back to the room. "It's almost 2 in the god damned morning! You still have your phone off?"

"Mom called again about a dozen more times and it was throwing my concentration off," Sam replied, pulling out a wad of \$100 bills from his pocket. "I was on a roll."

"You were in the casino?"

"Damn straight. Some matronly postal clerk named Gladys really delivered – she kept outguessing the dealer and everyone at the table walked away with a smile on their faces."

"Don't the dealers rotate?" Jose asked, confused.

"Didn't matter. Male, female, Filipino, Jamaican, she beat them all. For a while there I thought maybe she was cheating somehow, but the floor boss came over and checked us out for half an hour and left shaking he head. If she was counting, no one could figure out how."

"Did you eat?"

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“Drank my dinner, I’m afraid, though a cute blonde waitress named Cindy or Brianna or something brought us some trail mix. No one wanted to get up from the table for fear of screwing up the karma.”

“Just as well – the filet and tails are probably ptomaine laced by now. I wish you would have left me a note or something. I was worried.”

“Evidently not worried enough to look for me, the ship’s not that big, ya know.”

“I’m not supposed to know you, remember? If you get caught, I disavow any knowledge of your existence.”

“That’s too bad. I could have taught you a thing or two about blackjack.”

“I know all I need to know,” Jose said, turning away. “I’m going in the shower. I’m on the buffet line at 5am, and these mother fucking pigs can chow it down.” With that, he headed to the postage square bathroom.

Sam stuffed the cash back in his pocket along with his key card and collapsed on the bed. He was asleep in less than 5 minutes and never felt Jose fish out his key card and cell phone, nor did he hear the door’s click behind him when he left.

The banging on the door was loud and insistent. Sam snapped awake and yelled, “Hold on – be right there.” He looked over at Jose’s bunk, but it was empty. It didn’t appear as though his roomy had slept in it at all. Getting up, he smoothed his clothes as best he could, grabbed a comb from the nightstand and was using it to untangle his sweaty locks as he opened the door.

Two crew members with side arms flanked an officer of some type – Sam had no idea what rank a cruise ship officer might have – and it was this officer who addressed him by name.

“Sam Watkins?”

“Yeesssss?” Sam said, unsure how they would know his name – he wasn’t on any manifest and hadn’t provided any ID to anyone on board.

“You’re under arrest.”

“For what?” Sam asked.

“For robbery on the high seas.”

“Hey, I just came on board to get to Hawaii. I’ll pay for the cabin, if that’s what you want,” and he pulled the money out from his pants pocket, waving it at them.

One of the crewmen grabbed his hand and ripped the money from it.

“You think this is some kind of joke, don’t you wise guy?” the officer said.

“No – I can see you’re serious, and I was serious about paying my way. There’s over \$3,000 there – enough to pay for a lousy five by nothing cabin for two days,” Sam retorted.

“Where’s the rest of it?”

“The rest of what?”

“The rest of the money – from the casino,” Officer starched shirt said.

“That’s it – that’s all I won yesterday. Ask the clerk behind the cage – she cashed the chips for me.”

“I’m not talking about the chips, you moron. I want to know where the money you stole from the ship’s safe is.”

“*What? What money? What safe?* I have no idea what you’re talking about – I’ve been here all night since leaving the blackjack table,” Sam said, “just ask Jose. He’ll tell you – I’ve been here since 2am.”

“Jose Gonzalez?” Starched shirt replied.

“Yes – he got me on board. He said I’d be in trouble if I got caught, but all I’m guilty of is hitchin’ a ride. I didn’t steal any money.”

“Jose’s been on duty all night. He worked the midnight buffet and went straight to the kitchen to prep for breakfast. You’re going to need a better alibi than that. It will go easier on you if you just tell us where you hid the money.”

“I told you – I didn’t steal any money, and Jose was right here at 2am when I got back. Just ask him.”

“We already did, and he said he agreed to let you use his stateroom last night because you were locked out of yours and it was too late at night to get a new key card issued. He had no idea you were a stowaway.”

“He snuck me on board, you stupid bastard; I hid in one of the laundry carts and he pushed me right past your god damned noses...”

“Enough,” starched shirt said. “Marconi, take him to the brig. Jeremiah, toss the room, and then come find me. If it isn’t here, we’ll need to do a ship-wide search.”

“I’m telling you...hey!”

Marconi grabbed him by the wrist and spun him around, simultaneously pulling out a pair of handcuffs and locking one of them on tight. He grabbed Sam’s other wrist and before he could squirm away, he was cuffed and summarily dragged down the corridor, yelling, “You’ve got it all wrong. Let me talk to Jose. He’ll vouch for me. We’re friends. Let me go, you goon!”

With that, Marconi twisted Sam’s arm and he screamed in pain just as the elevator opened up and they disappeared inside.

“So tell again how you came to be possessing this master key card?” son-of-starched-shirt said. He was a younger version of the arresting officer and his uniform was identical except for the missing bars. His accent however – and his grasp of the English language – was distinctly not American.

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They were sitting across from one another, separated by a small table, inside a cell that was spacious by comparison to the cabin. The walls were white and bare, and other than the three cells surrounding his, there was no furniture, no decorations, and no indication they were on a floating paradise. In front of his inquisitor was a manila folder with his name neatly printed on the tab.

“I told you already,” Sam said, his shoulders sagging, “Jose gave it to me when I came aboard. He said I’d need it to get into the cabin, but I couldn’t use it anywhere else.”

“So how is it you lost it to the floor of the cashiering cage alongside with your cellular intelligent phone?”

“You mean my smart phone,” Sam said, trying to restrain his anger. “Someone must have planted it there.”

“Accordingly to you, the only one who’s known of your unknown presence was Jose. Are you to be accusing him of robbing his employer?”

Sam rubbed his temples. *How can this be happening? Could Jose have really done it? Why?*

“I don’t know. I’ve known Jose for nearly 10 years – I trust him like a brother. Why would he do this?”

“My own thinking exactly and the same. Just tell me where to find the money and I’ll see what I can do to suggest about leniency when we reach port. You’re still in international waters; we have probabilities of leeway, but once we’re back in United States waters, you will be as not so fortunate and likely be subjected to much stricter interrogation and penalties. Your best defense is honesty, Mr. Watkins.”

“I told you the truth,” Sam sputtered back. “I didn’t steal any money. I didn’t break into any safe and I have no idea how my stuff ended up in the casino’s cage.”

“Is it possible someone of low character stole it from you while you were much distracted at the table?”

“So you believe I was there at the blackjack table?”

“The cameras are having recorded your every bet.”

“So what about the robbery? They’ll show I was nowhere near the casino after I went back to the cabin.”

“Unfortunately, the cameras were much intentionally disabled and so the images are not there.”

“Of course. How convenient for you.”

“It is of no convenience, I assure you; we would love nothing better than to have such video evidence as pictures against you. We search the ship, and when we find the hiding place where you hid your ill-gotten goods you will perhaps sing a different story.”

“I want to see Jose. Get him down here and let’s talk, all three of us. He’ll tell you I didn’t do it.”

“I’ve interviewed myself him already, and he is claiming

how he never knew you and only lent you the use of his cabin so kindly until you could visit the purser to replace the key to yours that you dishonestly claimed was lost.”

“I don’t have a cabin, you dolt,” Sam said, standing up. The handcuffs kept him from moving very far from his chair, which was bolted to the floor. “I was staying with him in his cabin – he gave me the god damned key card.”

“Please be sitting down,” son-of-starch said without flinching.

Sam did as he was told and took a deep breath. “Check your manifest – I’m not listed. Jose snuck me aboard with the laundry.”

“So you have said so eloquently previously. It is clear that you are stowaway – a crime already supplementary to your growing list of offenses – but there is no evidence that Jose had any part in your planning, other than coincidental inclusion. I’m afraid he was – how do you say? – in simply the wrong time at the wrong place.”

The interrogator opened the folder and withdrew a sheet of paper.

“According to this, you were enrolled in Stanford. Biology major, with a minor in DNA sequencing protocols.”

“So?”

“So that’s certainly intellectual and scientific stuff, DNA sequencing. Says here you dropped out of school with just 6 credit hours missing for you to become degree’d.”

“I’m taking a break, that’s all. I’m tired of all the studying and crappy campus food.”

“DNA sequencing requires computer skills, is this not a truth?”

“I have to know how to use the computers. So does everyone nowadays. So what?”

“The surveillance camera and the safe in the casino cage are computer controlled. Perhaps you thought you’d use your high learning and brainy skills for a better use than sitting in a lab sampling rat DNA?”

“You really think I robbed your damned casino? Why would I do that? My Mother’s a Doctor for God’s sake! If I needed money, I’d call her.”

“Surely you would. We all go running to mommy when we need help, don’t we,” he said with an annoying smirk on his face. “That’s why there are 37 messages on your phone from her that have no answers, right?”

“You bastard – that’s illegal to check my phone!”

“Maybe in your country, but not here in the middle of the Pacific.”

“Fuck you. I want my phone back – that’s personal property.”

“You will be having your property back, just as soon as you

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turn over the money where it is.”

“I didn’t steal your money, you moron,” Sam shouted.

Son of starch closed the folder and stood up. In perfect English, he said;

“When we find it, I intend to have them charge you with grand theft on the high seas. You’ll be tried in a jurisdiction of our choosing. There are some very uncomfortable hell holes available to us, much less cushy than your present accommodations. I suggest you think about that before we reach Honolulu.” Then he spun around and left the cell, relocking it behind him.

“Did you launch the capsule?” Fernando said.

“Yes,” Jose said, covering the disposable phone with one hand as he leaned against the

bulkhead near the bow of the ship.

“When we have counted the money and are satisfied you didn’t withhold any for your personal use, we will let you know if your service to us is complete.”

“I didn’t keep a damn dime. I put everything from the safe in there. I took ...” he stopped when he heard footsteps.

“Everything okay, Jose?” he heard Gladys say as she walked up to him.

“Yes, Ma’am, just catching up with an old friend,” Jose said, holding his thumb over the cell’s microphone.

“Well, that was a delicious dinner last night. It’s too bad we can’t stay aboard one more night. Do you have plans here in Hawaii, Jose?” Gladys asked.

“No Ma’am,” he answered, then said, “Please excuse me – this is long distance.”

“Well, it was nice meeting you. Have a safe trip back home.” With that, Gladys continued walking. When she was out of earshot, he turned his attention back to the phone.

“You there?” he asked.

“What the hell is going on? If you are caught, you are on your own, amigo.”

“No one’s on to me. I put all the damn money in the capsule and sent you a picture of it to prove it. You’ll see that every packet is there.”

“For your sake, Jose, I hope so. How do you intend to get off the ship in Hawaii?”

“Same way I got Sam on – the laundry.”

“I might suggest you find another method, señor.”

“Why?”

“By now, your Americano pigeon will have spilled his guts. It was clever of you to use him as a diversion, but surely you can’t believe they won’t be looking for gringos like you in the soiled linens, eh?”

“Don’t concern yourself about my escape route. You just drop me from your list before I get back to the States.”

Jose heard the dial tone and realized the line was already dead.

He needed to use plan ‘B’ to get off the ship, preferably before it reached harbor and was swarmed by immigration officers and the Coast Guard.

Son-of-starch returned with a dinner tray a few hours later.

“Hungry, Mr. Watson?” he said, placing it on the table in front of Sam.

“What? You’re not going to make me beg for it like a trained monkey?” Sam said, digging in immediately. He may be in the brig, but the chow came straight from the main dining room and included steak, baked potato, mixed vegetables, a garden salad and tall glass of water.

“I’m not interested in humiliating you, sir. You’re in enough trouble as it is. I was hoping, of course, that you have been changed your mind and decided to cooperate by telling us where the money is,” he answered, using plain English again. He sat down on the other side of the table.

Sam swallowed a mouthful of ranch-covered lettuce and cucumber and said, “If I knew where it was, I’d tell you, but since I didn’t take it, I have no clue where it is.” He put the fork down and stared his inquisitor in the eye. “I have been thinking about it, however, and since I am an American citizen, I have rights, no matter what you claim. If I am truly under arrest, then I want to see an attorney, and if I’m not under arrest, then I demand to be released immediately.”

“You are in international waters, my friend, and subject to the directives of the Captain.”

“If it is truly dinner time, then my suspicion is that we are currently in U.S. waters, and I respectfully request that I see the Captain, or his representative, and I further demand to have my phone back; I’m entitled to make a phone call.”

“I’ll tell you what you are entitled to, sir, and I’d be watchful of the tone of your voice if I were you.”

“Look,” Sam said, dropping his voice and taking a different tack, “you obviously had a robbery, and if it isn’t me, then it has to be Jose. Have you seen him lately?”

“He’s on board. If we need to speak with him, we’ll locate him...”

“And then what? Let him just walk off the ship with the other passengers and crew? You’ll never find your money that way.”

“He is not allowed to leave the ship – his contract does not permit him shore leave at this time.”

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“In that case, you have a bigger problem – he’s got your money, and he’s probably planning on getting off the same way he snuck me on, except this time he’s taking your property with him. I heard him say he was only going to work till he got enough to get to Australia. I think he has enough now.”

“What are you suggesting?”

“Have your security staff focus on the laundry area. Our cabin was right next to the laundry room – that’s probably where he hid the money, and likely where he intends to make his escape from.”

Son of starch looked long and hard at Sam, deep in thought.

“If what you say is true, then why would he bother to sneak you on board and give you the key?”

“To frame me, obviously. I’ve had plenty of time to think about that myself, and it makes perfect sense. He gave me that damned master key card to see if it raised any red flags. When he saw that I was able to use it to get in and out of the room without setting off any alarms, he knew it was okay to use it to let himself in for whatever purposes he intended. When I fell asleep after playing blackjack, he lifted the card and my phone from my pocket, robbed the casino and left them there for you to find. He knew you’d trace the doors it was used to open and come looking. You’d find me, arrest me, and that would buy him the time he needed to get away. While you’re down here harassing me and your security is turning the ship upside down looking for the money, he’s playing cat-and-mouse with you till he can slip off with the cash.”

S-O-S pulled out a pad and pen from his shirt pocket and started writing. “Tell me exactly how he snuck you on through with the laundry – every detail. If you’re correct, we don’t have a lot of time.”

“*Please remain in the designated areas until your group is called for disembarking,*” the pleasant voice on the ship’s intercom said. It was 7:30am and the captain was positioning the ship for docking at Honolulu’s Aloha Tower Cruise Ship terminal. Jose made his way to the main deck behind the dining area at the ship’s stern. Passengers were lined up at the buffet lines for eggs, hot cereal and coffee, talking excitedly. The smell of breakfast drifted out the doors and past him as he surveyed the ocean behind the behemoth. The depth here was 35 feet and there were no prevailing winds. He knew he’d have to be careful not to get sucked beneath the ship as its powerful engines turned the propellers and azimuth thrusters to ease it next to the dock.

He worked his way to the starboard side, away from the gawking passengers watching the ship’s approach to the pier. He waited for a lull in the engine’s whine, looked around to be

sure there wasn’t anyone too close, then he slipped out of his boat shoes. He tied them to the strap on his back pack, stepped up on the railing and leapt out over the side. His high school coach would have been proud of his nearly perfect swan dive into the blue-green waters 30 feet below.

He struggled to the surface, the back pack a bigger drag than he had calculated, but he kicked like mad until his head broke the surface. He swam as quickly as he could away from the ship, staying under as long as his breath could carry him before surfacing again to gulp in a fresh lung full. He angled away from the ship, parallel to the pier, until he felt sure no one could see him before turning towards shore, aiming for the unoccupied dock a challenging four hundred yards in front of him. He was a powerful swimmer, but he tried not to think about the Great Whites that occasioned the waters around him.

“*W*e’ve searched the laundry room and every pallet scheduled to leave the ship, but I’m afraid there is no sign of your friend,” SOS said, entering the cell with Sam’s breakfast, consisting of scrambled eggs, toast, hash browns and bacon. A steaming hot cup of coffee adorned the tray as well, and Sam welcomed the sensation as it warmed his throat.

“Is there any other way off the ship?” Sam asked before ramming a huge forkful of eggs in his mouth.

“Other than jumping overboard, no,” SOS replied.

“Do you have lookouts for jumpers?” Sam asked.

“Our crew is trained to watch for anyone too near the railing, but it’s a big ship – someone determined to jump could simply wait till he was alone and leap undetected, I’m afraid.”

“I don’t feel the ship moving. Are we nearly in port?”

“Pulling in now. If he’s jumped before this, we’d have no way of knowing and certainly no way of finding him now. Most likely, he’s dead, either from hitting the water or from drowning – the ship only came within reasonable swimming distance in the last hour.”

“He’s a good swimmer – tried out for the Olympics in college but didn’t make the cut. If anyone could do it, he could.”

“Why did you not tell me this before? How do I know you aren’t working together? If he jumped and took the money with him...”

“We’re not working together. I’m telling you the truth. You’d better alert your security – my guess is he wouldn’t want to swim any further than necessary – you might still catch him.” Sam continued eating as if this were his last meal. “And when you DO catch him, bring him to me – I’ll deal him some justice for putting me in here – the kind you and the courts are too namby-pamby to dish out.”

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“Does he know anyone in Honolulu?”

“He never mentioned anyone. He kept talking about Australia. If he’s got the money, that’s where he’s heading.”

He pulled himself out of the water, ready to duck beneath the pier’s platform if anyone was up top. To the relief of his aching muscles, he was clearly alone. Once on the pier, he jogged to the line of buildings on the other side of the vehicle access road. At the first structure he came to, a warehouse of some sort, he tested the doors along the alley between it and the maintenance shed next to it. The fourth one opened when the latch depressed easily under his thumb. He stepped inside, locking the door behind him so no one could follow him, and stripped out of the waterlogged backpack, laying it on the cement floor next to the door.

His shoes were likewise soaked, but he put them on anyway. They made a sucking, squishing sound when he put them on, but they would protect his feet from any debris or shards that might be on the floor. He reached for the satchel and opened it, withdrawing a large plastic bag wrapped with waterproof tape. He checked to make sure it hadn’t ripped or the tape dislodged during his plunge and subsequent swim to shore. Satisfied that the contents hadn’t been compromised, he reached into a side pocket of the backpack and pulled out a smaller, plastic bag. He ripped it open and was pleased when the blinking light confirmed it was still operational. He toggled the navigation switch and verified that the capsule was still circling at 3 knots at a depth of 25 feet. He put both bags back into the backpack and walked to the far wall of the deserted warehouse. Using it as a pillow, he lay down and closed his eyes. The Companeros would not be happy that their capsule had lost its way and was mindlessly circling at depth, but their efforts to retrieve it would give him the time he needed to complete his journey.

“What the fuck,” Fernando said, still sweeping the beach with his eyes as if the capsule was somehow lost in plain sight. “Where the hell is it?”

“I’ve lost the signal, Nando,” Carlos said, keeping his gaze fixed on the remote control unit’s screen to avoid his icy glare.

“If he’s taken it, he will pay with his life,” Nando said. In truth, the money wasn’t enough to break a sweat over – they made more smuggling a single Chinese émigré into the U.S. than the entire take from the safe. Jose owed them, and if he could break into the ship’s safe as easily as he did this time, there were other, more lucrative jobs they could force him to do.

“He knows the risk of crossing you,” Carlos said.

“Good – then he won’t be surprised when we cut off his balls before shooting his brains out. We will make him an example.”

“Tell me again what you saw,” SOS said to Gladys as they sat in the Captain’s office. “I’ve never been in a Captain’s cabin – I thought it would have been bigger,” she said as she gawked at the pictures and awards hanging on the walls.

“The ship is built for the comfort of the passengers, not the crew,” SOS replied. “Now, about the man you say you saw jump over the railing...”

“Well, the Captain certainly should have a larger stateroom. I mean, his bed is no larger than mine! I think I’ll write a letter to your company’s headquarters and suggest they invest in better conditions for him.”

“Yes, Ma’am, I’m sure they’ll appreciate hearing your comments. Meanwhile, it is rather urgent to find the man who jumped. Where did you see him, exactly?”

“Oh, yes. He was on the back of the ship, the, uh, what do you call it?”

“The stern, Ma’am.”

“Yes, the stern. Sounds like sternum, but that’s in the middle of the chest isn’t it? Not on the backside. I wonder why they call it that?”

“I’m sure they had a good reason,” SOS said, his voice quivering. “Please, can we get back to the man you say jumped?”

“The man who jumped? Oh, him...he had a backpack on, and just before he jumped, he took off his shoes and tied them to the strap. Then he climbed up the rungs of the railing and dove off. I ran over – well, walked as quickly as I could, if you have to know – but when I got to the rail, I didn’t see anything. I thought maybe it was just my imagination playing a trick on me.”

“Yet you told the waiter in the soufflé line about it.”

“Well, after all the young man who jumped was one of your staff members – I remember him clearing my table last night after dinner. I thought someone ought to know that one of your busboys had quit. Will you be shorthanded without him?”

“No, Ma’am, we have plenty of help on board. Do you remember his name?”

“Then when can we get off? It seems to be taking a long time, and I have been waiting a lifetime to see Hawaii for myself. Surely missing one busboy shouldn’t hold up the whole ship, should it?”

“No, Ma’am, it shouldn’t, but losing anyone overboard is a serious situation, even a crew member. You say you saw him

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working as a busboy. Do you recall his name?"

"Yes, I think his name was Jose something-or-other."

"How did you know that?"

"It was on his nametag – he was our waiter at dinner, for goodness sake."

"Did you speak with him?"

"Oh yes – he was quite a pleasant young man, though I don't think he was very happy last night."

"Why do you say that?"

"He was talking on his phone near the *front* of the ship. What's that called?"

"The bow, ma'am."

"Bow, stern, how do you keep them straight? Seems you should just say the front or the back of the ship."

"I'll make a recommendation to that effect. Now, please tell me what you hear him say at the front of the ship."

"Oh, something about a capsule and not keeping a single penny or something to that effect. He seemed quite agitated, like someone was questioning his integrity. He's such a nice young man. Who would question his integrity, after all?"

It felt good to be out of the cell and walking again. His legs were cramped and his head was pounding with a tension headache. SOS was leading the way, talking as rapidly as his feet were moving.

"The woman from the blackjack table confirmed that you won the money fair and square. She also said she saw Jose jump ship just before we docked. He has a couple hours' head start, but he had to swim ashore and unless he had transportation prearranged, he can't have gotten far."

"What about the money?" Sam asked.

"She said she saw him with a backpack, but she also overheard him talking to someone about a capsule of some sort. My guess is it was a waterproof container and the money was in it."

"If he was smart enough to get this far, how do you know he didn't have a car or motorcycle waiting for him onshore somewhere?" Sam asked as they emerged from the elevator on the Princess deck. The line of increasingly impatient passengers stood uneasily near the exit, tantalizingly close to the ramp leading to shore and sun.

"I don't. If he did, then we may never find him."

"It's a small island," Sam said.

"It's bigger than this ship and we still couldn't locate him," SOS said as he waved the crew member aside so they could pass.

"Good point. Where are we going?" Sam asked, avoiding the angry stares of the passengers he passed on his way off the

ship.

"We're going ashore – you're going to help in the search."

"So now you believe me?"

"Until we find Jose and the money, I have no choice."

He woke with a start from the rattling of the doors. It took a few seconds for his eyes to adjust to the dark, but his ears told him that someone was systematically trying the same doors he had entered through. As best he could determine, they were one door away from the one he entered through. *Damn*, he thought, *should have tried the rest of them, made sure they were locked, as well. Too late now.*

He got up and grabbed his backpack. He made his way south along the wall in the opposite direction. When he could hear the door north of his position jostled, he sprinted across the expanse directly to the first door in the row. Waiting nervously, he pulled the remote out of the backpack and checked to make sure the micro submersible was still in its holding pattern. Satisfied that his Latino 'friends' hadn't managed to find or disable it, he placed the device on the ground next to the door and firmly grasped the door's handle. Finally, he saw one of the doors at the far end of the warehouse swing open, allowing the light from outside to flood the dank interior. His thumb depressed the lever and he eased his own door open as swiftly and quietly as he could. Edging outside, he watched as the last of 4 men entered the building, 3 of them in white uniforms.

He slammed the door closed behind him and ran as fast as he could to the jeep idling on the access road. He jumped in, tossing the backpack on the passenger seat, then jammed the stick into 1st gear and gunned it. He was already doing 60 and headed for Nimitz Highway when he spotted the searchers in the rearview, led by his old friend, Sam.

"Shit, shit, shit," Sam yelled as he watched the jeep disappear around the bend, headed towards the city. SOS ran up next to him.

"This is Lt. Nehala. Suspect has stolen a jeep, license 19882, and is headed inland on Nimitz Highway from pier 11. Alert all agencies – suspect has stolen goods on him, and may or may not be armed. Approach with caution. Send us a backup – we're at the Shimosa warehouse."

"How did he know? He couldn't have known," Sam said.

"He seems to have had this planned out from the beginning. He's either extremely smart or exceedingly lucky," Nehala said. "C'mon – let's go back inside."

"Why bother?"

"In his haste, perhaps he left us some clues."

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They walked together to the warehouse and tried the door from which Jose escaped. Locked. They sprinted down to the unlocked door at the far end and re-entered the warehouse, spreading out. Sam stayed with Nehala as they headed to Jose's egress point.

"What's this?" Sam said, picking up the blinking remote.

"Be careful," Nehala yelled, ripping it from Sam's hand and tossing it along the floor, away from the other searchers, then pulled Sam to the floor.

After 30 seconds, he stood up and slowly approached the device, examining it closely before picking it up. When he turned it over, he noted a sonar screen and a single blip that seemed to be going in circles.

Sam came up next to him, along with the other two security officers. "What is it?"

"It appears to be a remote control for a small submersible. If I'm reading this correctly, it is making 3 knots going in circles on the leeward side of the island."

"You think it's the money?"

"What else could it be? He knew we'd turn the ship upside down looking for it. Even if we found him, we'd have no evidence. Very clever."

"Not so clever – he lost it in his haste to clear out of here."

"I'm sure he has the location memorized. That's where he's heading now, I'll bet." With that, Nehala spoke into his cell again, "Suspect headed to the Leeward Coast. Do not approach suspect, I repeat – do not approach. Set up surveillance – we're on the way."

"You're not going to arrest him?"

"Not till he's retrieved the money. I want to catch him red handed."

"Without the remote, how's he gonna retrieve it?" Sam said.

"You told me he was a good diver and swimmer. If he could dive 30 feet off the back of the ship and swim a mile or more to shore, then he can swim a half mile off to the submersible, dive 25 feet to retrieve the money, and swim back to shore. Here's our ride," he said, pointing to the SUV pulling up next to the warehouse. "Let's go get a ringside seat."

"**Y**ou're certain? This is the capsule?" Nando said to Carlos.

"It is in the right place, and the sonar signal appears to be consistent."

"I don't trust these electronic tricks of yours. From now on, we make them deliver the money in person. That way I can kill them right away and not have to chase them down and torture them first."

"Yes, Fernando, I agree. Look – here he comes," Carlos said, pointing at the scuba diver rising out of the ocean as he walked

ashore. In his arms was the red submersible. He walked straight to the pickup truck and set it on one end of the open tailgate before sitting on the other end to remove his diving gear.

In less than a minute, all three of them were gathered around the object as Carlos produced a special wrench to unfasten the hatch. When the final bolt was removed, he grasped the handle and pulled it off. Inside was a neatly-wrapped package, sealed with waterproof tape. Nando reached in and grabbed it, placing it next to the submersible before cutting through the tape with his stiletto.

The stink nearly overcame them and they all turned their heads away, cursing and coughing.

"Mother of fucking god," Carlos said as he and the diver walked towards the front of the truck to get away from the awful stench. Nando simply covered his mouth and nose with a rag from the bed of the truck and turned back. Using his knife, he lifted the rotting lobster tails and meat from the bag and flung them, one at a time, down the beach. Then he picked up the red hull and threw it back towards the sea. He walked towards Carlos, his knife held menacingly across his chest. Carlos started backing up, but they both spun around when they heard the sirens.

"**B**ut where the hell is the money?" Nehala said, more to himself than to Sam.

They were at police headquarters, the red submersible lying on a table between them in one of the interrogation rooms.

"Who were those three on the beach?" Sam asked, ignoring Nehala's question.

"They fit the description of three of the Companeros gang. We're still waiting for fingerprint results to positively identify them, but from the mug shots, the one with the knife is Fernando Dominguez, the leader of the gang. If that turns out to be true, it will be quite a coup for the local police force. The Companeros deal in human smuggling; the detective who arrested them said they are quite notorious on the mainland, particularly Los Angeles."

"I can't believe Jose works for them. He may be a thief, but gangs and smuggling? That's not the Jose I remember."

"Was he much of a poker player in school?"

"Yeah, in fact he was. He took me plenty of times back when I knew him. Why? How did you know he played cards?"

"The Campaneros' M.O. They recruit card sharks, give them a generous stake, then introduce them into a rigged game where they are cheated out of their entire stash. Once they are in debt to the gang, they force them to do their dirty work, at least until their usefulness ends and they kill them."

"You think they killed Jose," Sam said, shock on his face.

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“No. Based on what they said to the arresting officers, they are looking for Jose, same as we are. If they find him first, then he’ll be a dead man.”

“Meanwhile...”

“...he has our money,” Nehala said, completing the sentence.

“He has one hell of a head start,” Sam said. “What about me?”

“You?” Nehala said as he pulled Sam’s cell phone out of his pocket, handing it to him. “You are free to go. You’d better call your Mother – she’s worried about you.”

When he got to Igwana Jim’s, Kellelani let him in to the back room so he could plug his phone in and have some privacy. When the bars finally showed up, he dialed her number.

“Hello, Mom.”

“Hello, Sam.”

“How’s Phoenix,” Sam asked, sure of the reply.

“Hot. I wish it would rain already. The monsoons have been here for 2 weeks and we haven’t seen a drop of water yet. The reservoirs are dangerously low.”

“The weather is tough all over,” Sam replied.

“So?” she asked.

“I’m not ready yet.”

“When?”

“When I’m ready.”

“And when will that be?”

“Sorry, Mom, gotta go – battery’s almost dead. Talk to you next week.” With that, he clicked off and was about to set the phone down to finish charging when he noted the flashing LED indicating a waiting message. His Mother had long ago real-

ized he was never going to answer her texts or e-mails so she stopped leaving any. He called up the text;

‘Sorry, Sam, didn’t mean to inconvenience you. Finally made it to Perth, heading for the Outback. Got in trouble with that damned gang and couldn’t wiggle out of it without making it look like I robbed the casino. I needed a cover to get away, and you showed up like manna from heaven. Don’t bother telling anyone you heard from me – I’m using a throwaway phone and this is the first and last message I’ll be using it for. If you wouldn’t mind doing a little digging, I left you a package. The attached map should be adequate to locate it. Could you please return it to the rightful owner? Thanks. Say hi to your Mom for me.’ Jose.

He clicked on the attachment and memorized it, then erased the message. He went out front and killed two hours talking with Lelli to let his phone fully charge. He said goodbye, grabbing his phone, a pair of new flip flops and a shiny new shovel.

“This came for you by FedEx,” the first mate said, handing the package to Lt. Nehala.

“Who’s it from?”

“The postmark indicates the Honolulu substation, but there’s no return address. It passed inspection by both x-ray and the dogs. There didn’t appear to be any threat.”

“Let’s find out what’s inside,” Nehala said, gripping the tab and pulling open the box.

He pulled the plastic package out. There was a note attached which he read aloud.

Mahalo – hope you’re in some exotic port enjoying the sunshine. I believe this belongs to you. Jose sends his regrets. Regards, Sam.

8 poems by Richard Fenton Sederstrom

Cell Phone

© 2014

Exhaustible patience.
Pristine clarity of our meditations
shattered into a clatter of rude molecules

from someone else's rainbow, unreachable
save by more than ordinary eyes,
all broken and only because a pair of pants

has burst into song.



In his fourth book, "Eumaeus Tends," the poet admits: "By choice and necessity, I lead an eremitic life. I have not been educated in what is called 'creative writing.' I do not deserve to display the credentials of the MFA, and so I cannot be regarded as a professional poet. I like it that way. It is probable that I make many mistakes. I am inclined to allow the beginnings of my poems to wander in prosy fashion and let rhythm take over when it has a mind to. Still, my mistakes are my own. But if anything I say is worth saying, the worth is my own too. I'd like to think that those who look at the poems may gain from my mistakes and venture their own. We may learn together and enjoy together the adventure of making language and sharing it." Contact the poet at richard_sederstrom1221@q.com.

A Child

© 2014

And I think of her
not only for the minutes
I hold her in the writing

but for the soul of her
that lives in the writing,
only in the writing
because of those minutes.

All that we love should
be held, not believed in,
but held close. And gently.

And believed in.

Charon's Choo-Choo

© 2014

*We feel the machine slipping from our hands,
as if someone else were steering;
if we see a light at the end of the tunnel,
it's the light of an oncoming train.*

*Robert Lowell,
"Since 1939"*

Dynee is five. She pushes
her baby brother Stevie in his tin stroller.
Dynee pushes because she is the Mommy.
I am the Daddy because Dynee is the Mommy.
So I run ahead, to get away from Daddy.
My little brother Jackie runs after me
because my little brother Jackie runs after me.

But mostly I run to be the first
at the last street corner we're allowed to run to,
about three blocks from-or-up-or-down Sibley Ave.
And because I am not allowed to run farther
I walk fast for another block, and that takes me
as close to the tracks as I dare let Jackie go.
Somewhere, I go farther. Somewhere I run

to meet the great black locomotive that pushes
out of the vast deep west to meet me.
The great gray solidity of steam hisses
toward me, whistle ready, bell-rope taut. Rolls
slower to meet with my salute. The engine chuffs
its invitation to come aboard and I come aboard.
I feel the cold of iron throttle through a leather palm.

My gloved hands are gauntleted to the elbow.
I check the dials, the clocks to somewhere east
and I jam the throttle lever forward to some
distant early sunrise, times past to when
this locomotive was new that is now obsolete.
Engine burns mine-mountains of gleaming black coal
Black diamonds sacrificed to the fiery furnace.

Then it slides past me, and Dynee now
and Stevie and Jackie back at the corner of Sibley.
In the aging mind of another childhood past
I reach into my shorts pocket for three coins—
pennies, two for my eyes, one for the engineer
who waves his hand now palm upward
in the grace of subservience to the deathless fire

or to question: maybe my small fate,
hidden until he raises
his palm to halt,
and bids welcome.

What I Mean to Say

© 2014

I really don't want to. And I said this
to him not unimpudently. I don't
want to because I get nauseated in gymnasiums.
And if I have to sit at the top of the bleachers
I'll come down with vertigo.

And you don't want me to throw up
my cafeteria lunch into the interstices
of some girl's sculptured coiffure.
Now, if you push through every one of my poems,
and I do not recommend that you do—

what I mean to say is:
if you keep reading all these poems,
you may tire of the word
interstices. I may write and say
interstices too often for your taste.

But *interstices* is a word I like to pronounce.
I pronounce *interstices* way beyond meaning.
Interstices is a sound both crisp and light.
Interstices freshens the tongue
against the unrelenting palate.

Besides, *interstices* reminds me of all
the hidden caves and valleys
all the silent places I haven't been yet.
Perhaps you'll keep walking with me
among interstices between the lively ears we share.

Note to the Office of Interpretation

© 2014

For Nick Salerno, magister ludi

I am delivering the enclosed ideas to you,
four of them so far, maybe five.
I anticipate that each of the ideas
is connected to the other three, or four.

I will not bore you trying to explain the connection
even if I thought myself worthy to do so.
Besides, each idea will explain at least part
of one or more or all of the other ideas.

The first idea is the white trillium
alone under a dying aspen.
The second idea is that morning in April that rose
like a yellow cactus blossom over the bay in Guaymas.
The third idea is a knot in a pine wall, the one just above
the homely lamp made of a cholla skeleton.
The fourth idea is what we just saw run out of
the screen door letting it slam, as usual.

One idea can never stand alone, so you say.
But if one idea *must* be supported
by at least one other idea, in their mutual support
they may speak only to one another, like poet to poet,
player to player, soul to soul,

and finally to anyone outside cloister or workshop
willing to sense an idea *ex nihilo*. Inside scholastic cryptophilia,
whatever is is only another pebble to kneel on, to prove
the breathless scruples of the lapidary imagination.

But outside! Ah.
Yes, there is a fifth idea.
Just there. And there as well. That multiplace world,
everywhere you and I have spoken.

Upsittingly I am Arranged

© 2014

Upsittingly I am arranged in this wooden desk chair, borrowed.
I have engineered and organized myself into a perfect discomfort,
a plinth of virtue.

I invite my sheltered soul to open the fine expanse of window.
Indomitable, six implacable panes, each about three by six feet.

Each a vertical grave.
A treacherous transparency of clear glass wall.
Each should be opaque for all the world they let in for us to touch.

Come. Share eyes with me outside our precarious terrarium.
Admire the two small trees, acacias of some sort, or wattle,
leather leaves of thrifty desert evolution.

I have time on my hands and my numbing backside
to wonder what the trees—

as foreign as we are here, as the windows are,
as the air in our breathless new world, the all-indoors—
what the trees, that is, might call themselves.

On the other side of the tarmac drive a wall protects the drive and us
from the threatening purity of green in the park we cannot see.
I am protected, as you are while you maybe only visit.

In the farthest distance a pale healthfulness of eucalyptus.
Just beyond the wall, sixteen strata of six-inch concrete blocks,
two large leafless trees, probable pecans.

It is March.
Whatever season or topology it is in here where we are so protected,
it is desert out there, irrigated to conform to the temperate
world of pecans.

If you and I could see through the wall!
We'd see the pecans waiting to bud.
Should not have long to wait.

I sit in the hardwood chair in the air conditioning.
Were I a child again I could pretend again.
I could pretend that the bare pecan trees are waiting for me to climb
and shake them into green.

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But I am a civilized victim of maturity.
I sit anciently on the wooden desk chair in the air conditioning
behind the indomitable glass.
The trees cannot hear me or you through the mechanical integrity.

We can no longer begin or pretend to hear the trees.
We can no longer reach the first branch to begin again.
The good ache in the infinity of our child's upward scramble maybe
way up that eucalyptus in the farthest clearest distance.

Do you remember the clarity?
High enough and in such danger of height and invention.
When we embraced the tree for our only protection the tree
whispered back its name.

Unremembering
we listened.

Toward the Horn Gate

© 2014

In this resolution of small chaos
Penelope has become Telemachus' father.
But what has become of Odysseus?

Loved again, but for what he had been
before, maybe only, maybe
in the shadow of her bridal memory now,

maybe a fading doppelganger,
having passed her test, not she her own,
living now in her Ithaca, not his—

Does he become to her a bauble,
a reincarnation of Calypso's
choice and tender morsel?

So loved, does he long already
for the memory yet uncontrived,
the landlocked shade of prophecy carved in ash?

An Intention

© 2014

that the poem after this might refract
from the ancient energy of a petroglyph
on a rough rock-face in the desert sun

directed by the impervious lines
in the stubble of granite, crude because
of the physics of brother and sister atoms

who make of immovable geology a sexuality
to reflect a purity not of beauty but of
articulate isness perfectly blended

into the script of eons of erosion—
the specific medium for Antelope, Lizard,
Sun-Radiance, Lightning-Bolt—inscriptions,

characters too immediate to the soul for mere beauty
in a language designed to celebrate
the raw abundance of scarcity, of appetite,

a shaman-world of necessary generation,
the opposite ideal of what the pencil and eraser will do
like a ghost to erode the sheet of paper

that reflects the scratches of the written poem,
a grave rubbing of what cannot erase itself
from lives that can do nothing else.

Chet Provorse

Peoria Artist



“Aaron’s Touch”

Digital photography

**Photographed January 2007,
processed Sept. 3, 2014**



The artist says: “I represent a diverse photographic life experience in fine arts, marketing, photojournalism, community service documentaries, multimedia and commercial video productions. During almost 40 years of image-making in Arizona, I have honed my style, sharpened my creative vision, and focused my perspectives to provide images with impact. My photographic interests are rich, varied and always evolving, with my quality and creativity earning national, regional and local recognition in solo and juried exhibitions, as well as in international publications and on Arizona public television.” A partial publication credits list includes Arizona Humane Society; Arizona Illustrated, KUAT-TV Public Television; Arizona Science Center; Habitat For Humanity; Mesa Tribune; Native American Connections; Native Peoples Magazine; New Times; New York Times, Sunday edition, arts section; Popular Photography Magazine; Scottsdale Views; and The Arizona Republic. Contact the artist at 623-341-2842, imagyst@cox.net or www.facebook.com/Imagyst.

Chet Provorse

Peoria Artist



“Blue Stone Bass”
Digital photography
Photographed January 2007,
processed Sept. 3, 2014

If you were to know only one thing about me, it should be that my photography is my passion. My camera and my mind's artistic eye allow me to create visions which others, though looking, may not see until I create my image. This is my gift, this is who I am, and vision I share. Regardless of the subject or action, I purposely do not present all of what is before me; rather, I seek to share impressions and fragments, allowing you, the viewer, to create the rest of the image and space in your mind's eye using what I have revealed.

- Chet Provorse

Chet Provorse

Peoria Artist



**“Big Iron on His Hip”
Digital photography
Photographed September 2007,
processed Sept. 3, 2014**

Chet Provorse

Peoria Artist



**“La Guitarra Sueña”
Digital photography
Photographed October 2007,
processed Sept. 3, 2014**

Chet Provorse

Peoria Artist



**“All American West”
Digital photography
Photographed October 2007,
processed Sept. 3, 2014**



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Open Mic: A celebration of the arts

Join us at our Monthly Open Mic Arts, Letters and Culture Events! This is a great chance for artists, writers and performers in all genres, spanning all disciplines and cultural representations, to get together, read, present, share, learn and enjoy. A featured artist is showcased for the entire month!

WHERE: Dog-Eared Pages Books, 16428 N. 32nd St., Suite 111 (just south of Bell Road), Phoenix, AZ 85032; (602) 283-5423.

WHEN: The last Thursday of each month, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

We also address key issues in contemporary art and culture, exchange ideas, learn new things through rigorous talks, conversations, debates and readings in an informal setting. Join us! Everyone is invited to bring a friend(s) and enjoy exciting conversations in the beautiful surroundings of the neighborhood bookstore. Meet new and old friends and enjoy! All programs are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Elena Thornton — (602) 263-5373 or info@artizona.org.

About The Arizona Consortium for the Arts

The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is a Non-Profit Organization approved by the Arizona Corporation Commission in February 2008. We hold a 501c3 tax-exempt status.

We are all-volunteer. We are educators, artists, performers, writers and supporters of all artistic endeavors, and are proponents and supporters of the rich, vibrant and diverse community of the Greater Phoenix area as well as the entire state.

The Arizona Consortium seeks to create a multicultural, multi-disciplinary arts center that will provide a home for our activities and foster artistic growth for people of all ages in conjunction with exhibiting artists, writers, actors, dancers and musicians who will share their expertise in



a gallery, theater setting.

Please visit www.artizona.org or www.theblueguitarmagazine.org for more information about becoming a member, networking, donating, advertising, volunteering or submitting work to The Blue Guitar arts and literary magazine, Unstrung poetry magazine and The Blue Guitar

Jr. literary and arts magazine for youth.

You can become a part of the Arizona Consortium and make a difference.

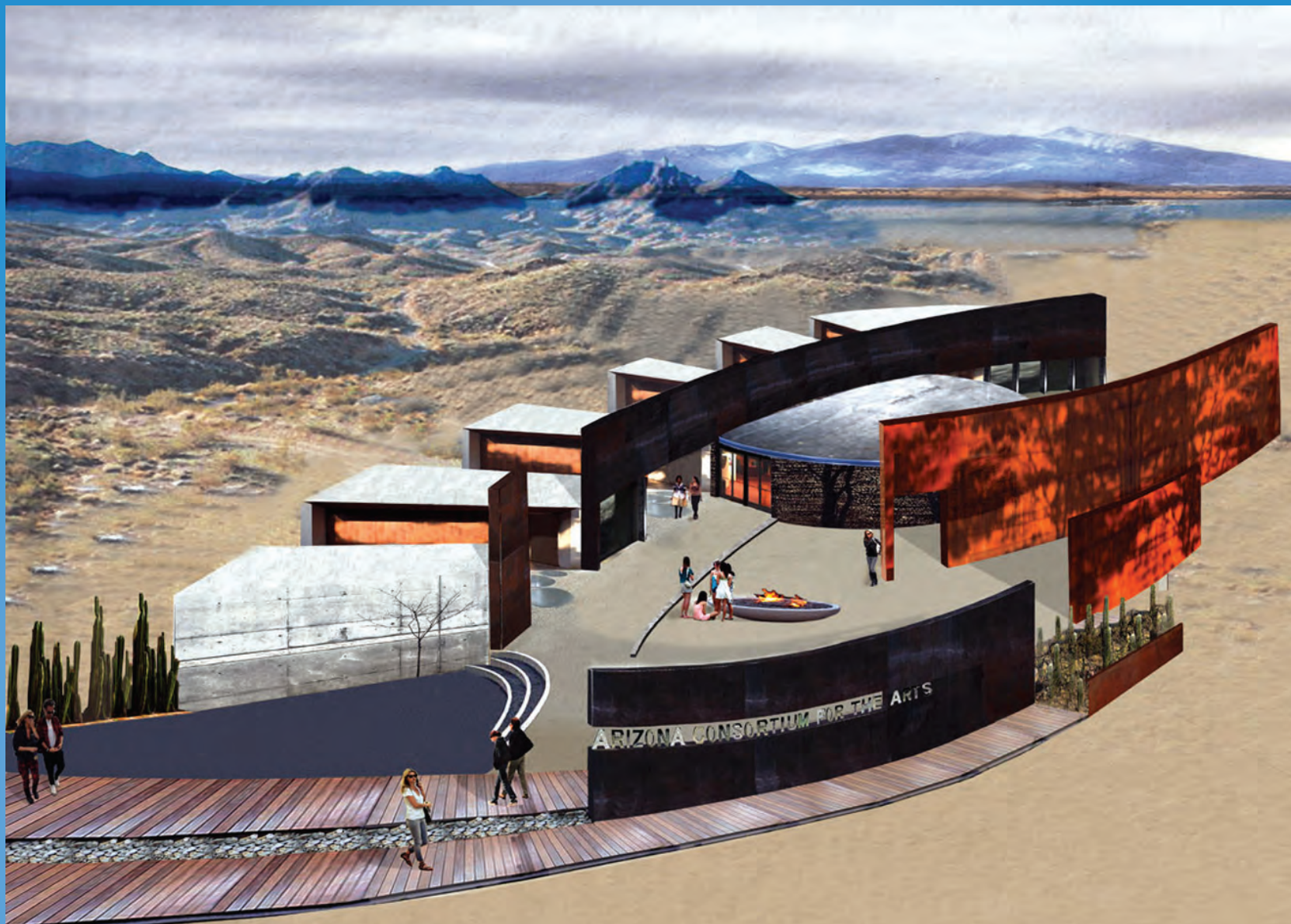
There are countless ways to contribute, and the consortium is grateful for any donation in any form.

For us to grow as an organization, provide various services to artists, and support inspiring projects, your financial support is needed.

Every dollar received will support our website, the publication of our magazines, and the establishment of our future center.

Please visit our donations page, <http://www.artizona.org/donate.html>, and donate today!

Thank you for your continued support!



A rendering of the consortium's dream multicultural arts center by Effie Bouras, building designer, Mechanik Design Office, LLC.

The consortium's vision for a multicultural arts center

The rendering of The Arizona Consortium for the Arts' dream multicultural arts center by Effie Bouras, Building Designer, Mechanik Design Office, LLC.

The Center will be a source and a destination for creativity and inspiration. It will be a home for many wonderful community organizations, creative and innovative multicultural and multidisciplinary activities, classes and projects representing and celebrating our diverse community.

The Center will be a cultural icon in the Phoenix area. The

Center will be an inimitable foundation for a unique experience, one that you'll want to share with family, friends and community.

Designed by Effie Bouras, the Center will feature numerous spaces for the arts in all genres, performances and presentations. A flexible and variable seating performance theater for rehearsals, concerts, theatrical presentations, video art and films, lectures, meetings and recordings will be available free-of-charge or at a minimum cost.

A Call to Writers for The Blue Guitar Jr.

Open to children and teens who write
and to adults who write
for children and teens

The Blue Guitar Jr. magazine seeks literary submissions for its next annual issue for children and teens. Submissions from children and teens and adults who write for children and teens are sought by Oct. 1, 2015, in all genres — fiction, poetry, plays, creative nonfiction — all geared to appeal to youthful audiences. Writers must submit original work and must live in Arizona. Simultaneous submissions will be accepted, but the writer must notify the magazine as soon as possible if the work is accepted elsewhere. It is free to submit, and submissions may be made in multiple genres. Please include your name and the best way to contact you on your submission. To submit or for further information, e-mail Editor Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

The Blue Guitar Jr. magazine is a project of the nonprofit The Blue Guitar literary and arts magazine and The Arizona Consortium for the Arts. The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is a startup, nonprofit group dedicated to supporting and fostering artists and the arts in Arizona, including the literary, visual and performing arts. For more information about The Blue Guitar and The Blue Guitar Jr. magazines and The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, visit our websites:
www.theblueguitarmagazine.org and www.artizona.org.

A Call to Artists for The Blue Guitar Jr.

Open to children and teens who are artists
and to adults who create art
for children and teens

The Blue Guitar Jr. magazine seeks art submissions for its next annual issue for children and teens. Submissions from children and teens and adults who create art for children and teens are sought by Oct. 1, 2015, in all media geared to appeal to youthful audiences. Artists must submit original work and must live in Arizona. Simultaneous submissions will be accepted, but the artist must notify the magazine as soon as possible if the work is accepted elsewhere. It is free to submit, and submissions may be made in multiple mediums; up to 5 images can be submitted. Artists are encouraged to submit images of work by e-mail; please provide high-resolution JPEGs of 300 dpi. Images must be identified in the e-mail with the artist's name, contact information, titles of works, dates and mediums. Please include your name and the best way to contact you. To submit or for more information, e-mail Editor Richard Dyer at richarddyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

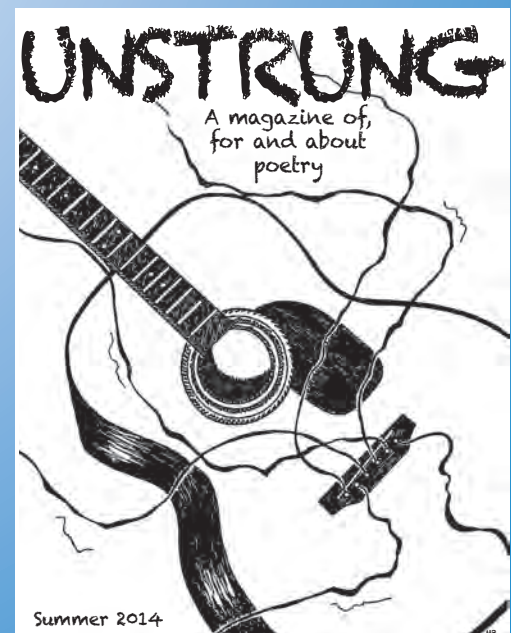
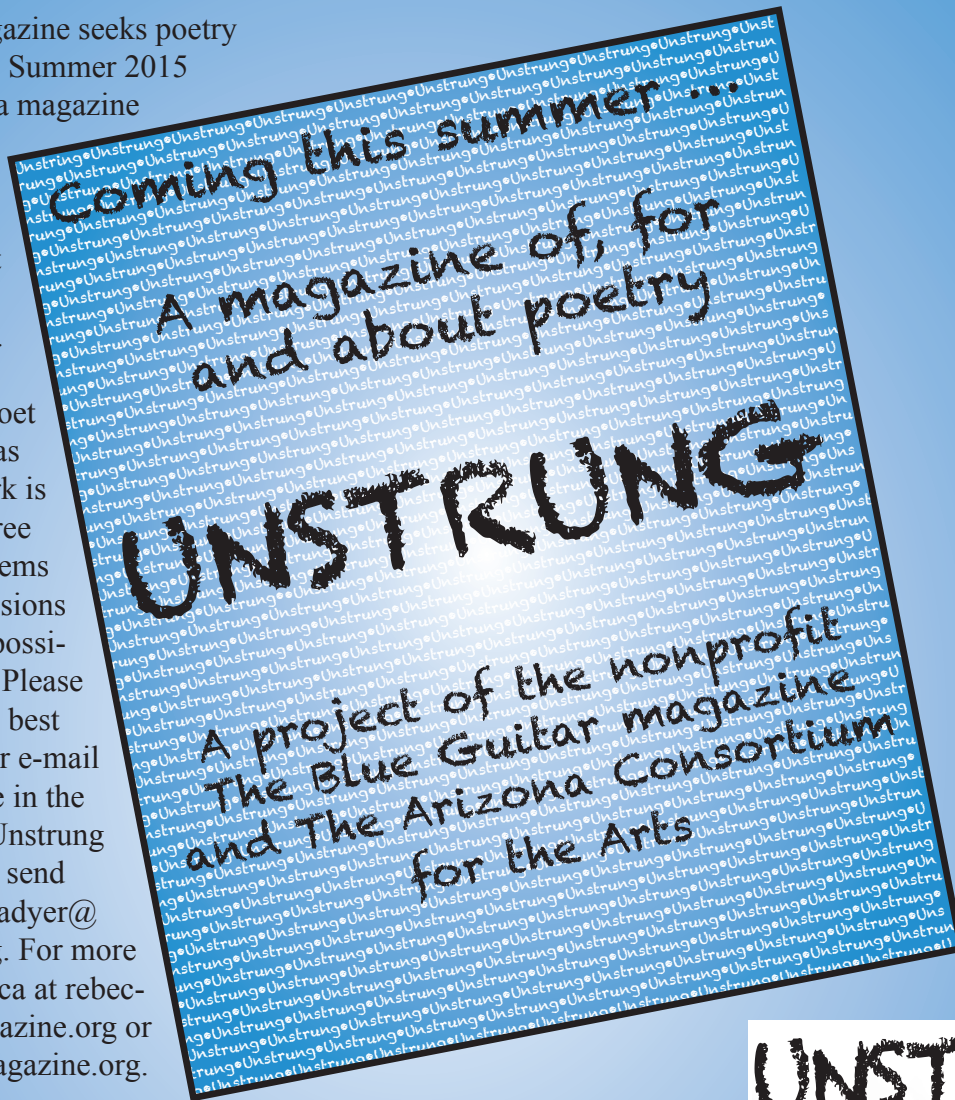
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www.theblueguitarmagazine.org and www.artizona.org.

A Call to Poets for the 2015 Issue of Unstrung

The Blue Guitar magazine seeks poetry submissions for the Summer 2015 Issue of Unstrung, a magazine

of, for and about poetry. Submissions will be accepted from June 1 through July 3. Poets must submit original work and must have a tie to Arizona. Simultaneous submissions will be accepted, but the poet must notify the magazine as soon as possible if the work is accepted elsewhere. It is free to submit, and multiple poems may be submitted. Submissions must be in the best shape possible and publication-ready. Please include your name and the best way to contact you on your e-mail submission. Please include in the e-mail subject line: Attn. Unstrung — Poetry submission, and send to Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, e-mail Rebecca at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org or visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

Unstrung, a magazine of, for and about poetry, is a nonprofit project of The Blue Guitar magazine and the nonprofit The Arizona Consortium for the Arts. The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is a startup, nonprofit group dedicated to supporting and fostering artists and the arts in Arizona, including the literary, visual and performing arts. For more information about Unstrung magazine, The Blue Guitar magazine and The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, visit our websites: www.theblueguitarmagazine.org and www.artizona.org.



Meet the staff of The Blue Guitar magazine



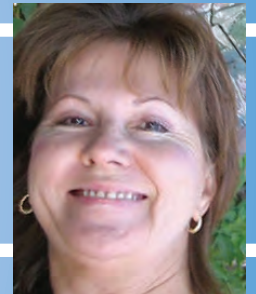
Elena Thornton, publisher: Founder and president of The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, Elena is an educator, artist and poet and lives in Phoenix. Reach her at info@artizona.org.

Rebecca Dyer, editor: A Tucson native, Rebecca is a poet, journalist and teacher now residing in Mesa with her husband, Rick, The Blue Guitar production editor. Reach her at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org.

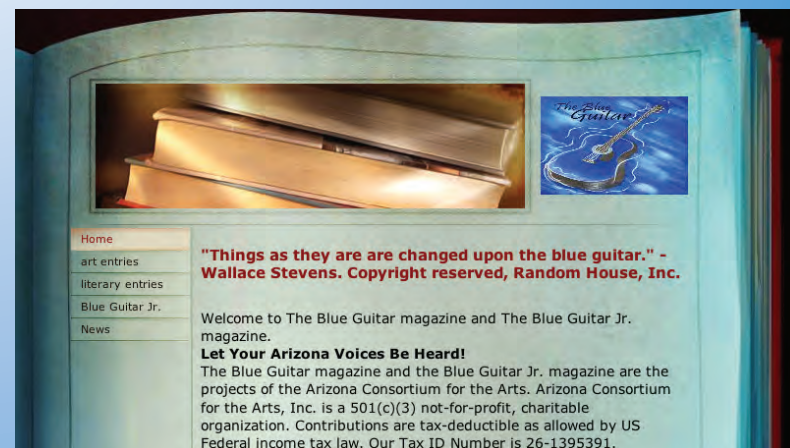


Richard H. Dyer Jr., editor: Richard (married to Rebecca, above) is the managing editor for a monthly and three weekly newspapers in the East Valley, a photographer and a welded-steel sculptor. Reach him at richarddyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org.

Marjory Boyer, cover design artist for The Blue Guitar: Marjory, of Scottsdale, is an award-winning artist, muralist and an acrylic painting instructor. Her biography and contact information are available at mboyerart.com.



Check our websites for news on the arts



The Blue Guitar Magazine's website is www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.
Like us on Facebook.
Follow @BlueGuitarMagAZ on Twitter.

Check out The Arizona Consortium for the Arts website, www.artizona.org. There, you can sign up for an e-mailed newsletter.

www.TheBlueGuitarMagazine.org

Fall 2014



A Call to Writers for Spring

The Blue Guitar magazine seeks literary submissions for the Spring 2015 Edition from Feb. 1 through March 6. Submissions are sought in all genres — fiction, poetry, plays, creative nonfiction. Writers must submit original work and must live part- or full-time in Arizona. Simultaneous submissions will be accepted, but the writer must notify the magazine as soon as possible if the work is accepted elsewhere. It is free to submit, and submissions may be made in multiple genres. Please include your name and the best way to contact you on your submission. Submissions must be in the best shape possible and publication-ready. To submit or for further information, e-mail Editor Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

A Call to Artists for Spring

The Blue Guitar magazine seeks art submissions in all mediums for the Spring 2015 Edition from Feb. 1 through March 6. Any artists who work in any visual art media, are 18 years or older and are part- or full-time Arizona residents can submit. It is free to submit and up to 5 images can be submitted. Artists are encouraged to submit images of work by e-mail; please provide high-resolution JPEGs of 300 dpi. Images must be identified in the e-mail with the artist's name and contact information, titles of works, dates and mediums. Submissions must be in the best shape possible and publication-ready. To submit or for further information, e-mail Editor Richard Dyer at richarddyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.



The Blue Guitar magazine is a nonprofit project of the nonprofit The Arizona Consortium for the Arts. The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is a startup, nonprofit group dedicated to supporting and fostering artists and the arts in Arizona, including the literary, visual and performing arts. For more information about The Blue Guitar magazine and The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, visit our websites: www.theblueguitarmagazine.org and www.artizona.org.

“Things as they are are changed upon the blue guitar.”
— Excerpt from Wallace Stevens' 1937 poem “The Man With the Blue Guitar.”
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Number 2
Fall Issue
FREE!

*“Things
as they are
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