

The Blue Guitar



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Healing and Hope

Dedicated to the People of Tucson

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Editor’s Note

From a distance, as you drive into Tucson from the north, you can see the back of the Santa Catalina Mountains rise up. If the sun’s angle is just right, you can see the ridges of the range running smoothly up and down like sinews.

I say the back of the Catalinas only because when you live in Tucson, you become spoiled by the front views, nestled as Tucson is in a desert valley, comfortably cradled among four ranges — the Catalinas, the Santa Ritas, the Tucson, the Rincons. It was almost a prayerlike chant reciting their names and their directions to remember them: the Catalinas to the north, the Santa Ritas to the south, the Tucson (although we say Tucson Mountains) to the west, the Rincons to the east. It was impossible to get lost as long as you knew which mountain range was which.



Rebecca
“Becca” Dyer

I was born and raised in Tucson and met my husband there at the University of Arizona. My side of the family still calls Tucson home. Growing up, I remember equating Tucson’s hot, dry climate and desert setting, its palm trees, brush, cactuses and mountains, with the Holy Land. This is what it must be like, I thought, this is what a spiritual place must be like. I still carry that spirit inside me.

Call it what you will, but such a spirit has helped Tucson rise up after the unimaginable tragedy of Jan. 8.

Like the strong backs of the mountains ringing it, the city bears its grief and pain with dignity. It is willing itself to keep going, to salvage what it can, to focus on the good, to continue to reach out to those seemingly unreachable.

The rest of the state, indeed the nation and the world, could learn from such faith and perseverance, this unwavering sense of commitment and community.

With this issue, our fervent prayer is that the healing power of hope, like the desert’s miraculous rain, will continue to renew and restore, and love, like the wildflowers that each year signal spring, will continue to abound.

To the people of Tucson, especially to those who have suffered hardship and pain but continue to reach out and endure, this issue is lovingly dedicated.

Editorial Staff

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The Blue Guitar arts and literary magazine is a project of The Arizona Consortium for the Arts

www.TheBlueGuitarMagazine.org

Spring 2011

One Poem By Erin Armstrong

Six Degrees

© 2011

Static unfolds across the city

Nation

World

Bullets Scatter

Step up to a podium

Pep rally

The State of the Union: chaos

Tell the nation, tell everyone to be a teacher

It's what we can do for our children

Weeks ago stand in a stadium where athletes run back and forth across a waxed court

Sweat drips faster when you run

Pass out t-shirts and call that unity

Maybe

It is less than six degrees of separation in this town

Everyone was there

How do you comfort a city that acts like a town and doesn't know what to do when the violence of a city infiltrates their town?

The coyotes have come down from the mountains

The ants are making larger holes

Water doesn't run as far as we'd like it to

The cacti refuse to let death take them

The city works to survive

We wonder how to heal

Someone calls her self the hope girl

She looks like flowers splayed in front of a hospital lawn, candles burning through the night, pictures scattered, sterility broken, a city vigil in the midst of anarchy



Erin Armstrong is a lifelong Tucsonan and enjoys meeting the eclectic people the city seems to attract. She was protesting writing about the Southwest until she started writing her novel. She's spending this year working on said novel and teaching enthusiastic elementary school students Creative Writing. She will receive her MFA in fiction from the University of Arizona this May. Contact her at ella124@gmail.com.

One Poem By Esther Schnur-Berlot

Mayhem and Miracles

© 2011

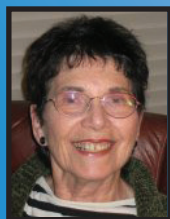
Saturday morning's Tucson sun
splashes across our local Safeway
entrance. An unknown actor wearing
a hoodie and sunglasses steps forward
appearing over caffeinated with
a blinking nervous system that suggests
too much tea talk.

In 15 seconds his inarticulate rage
fires off 31 Glock bullets shooting
a hole through the skull
of our congressional leading lady.
The rampage of explosive hate goes on
firing into the right to assemble cast –
a child, a judge, a groom to be
and chivalrous husbands covering
wives in their twilight years
to shield them from harm.

Frightened by the apocalypse
of the dead and wounded
the undaunted audience, of ordinary
people, tackle the crazed one.
They rush in all directions to care
for loved ones and strangers drenched
in blood.

Old Pueblo is under klieg lights.
Mayhem and miracles scream from
front page headlines. The President
arrives for the curtain call paying homage
and consolation to our desert hamlet.

With new found resilience we await
our leading lady's return to the stage.



Esther Schnur-Berlot is a transplant from New York City where she worked behind the scenes in TV commercials and then on to California where she taught wearable art. Now living in Tucson, she devotes her time to writing poetry. Esther's poetry has been published in the California State Poetry Quarterly, the Sonoma Collective and Desert Voices. E-mail lberlot@msn.com.

One Poem By Lynn Black

Dedication To The Living And The Deceased In Dahab - Sinai, Egypt; Re: Bombing Of 4/25/06

© 2011

The clear desert skies
clouded up this morning
and I cried ...

To the concierge of a hotel
who tried to take advantage of me
when I had sand in my eyes ...
may you meet 10,000 virgins in heaven.

The sands shifted today
parting and reshaping
a new destiny:

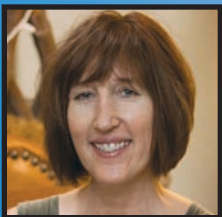
To the record store owner
dazzling me for hours
with a whole new world of sounds
as we drank Egyptian tea
and read our fortunes in our laughter.

To the gift shop owner
who carefully measured
oil of jasmine into a bottle..
distilling our friendship and love.

I whisper
to the restaurant owner
who also sang the Koran each evening
from a make-shift mosque
of clay and straw ...
a neon tube glowing atop
in the shape of an arrow pointing
towards the heavens

etching into my being
the chant of life ...

“I am part of you.”



Lynn Black has been a massage therapist for the past 16 years. Before that, she worked in the corporate world doing everything from legal secretary to selling cars. She has lived all over the country and traveled the world. Lynn has always been a writer ... from a little girl quietly trying to make sense of the world to the present. Lynn observes: “I say this: Many of us are afraid of sitting too close to the fire; we think the desires of our hearts might combust. That is not what happens ... not only will the passion consume, but transform.” Contact Lynn at: highergroundmassage@gmail.com.

One Poem By Cathy Capozzoli

From Nightgowns and Saltwater

© 2011

Winter drives a black cough
to carry ethers into collapsed lungs. Unseen hands
shake doorknobs. I cannot sing sleep back to the birds.
Lifeless flowers bend dark faces to dirt.

Half a body
under invasion
from each
of the four ways.
This is the territory
of anonymous stars.

Months hence, I awake from the last day to forget.
Buds come to branches long bare of pears.
I unclasp my hands gently, and the wind
gives dead leaves a holiday.



Cathy Capozzoli was nominated for the Pushcart Prize by The Blue Guitar Magazine two years in a row. Her debut chapbook will be published this year by Blue Light Press of San Francisco. Reach her at info@cathycapozzoli.com.

Two Poems By David Chorlton

Late Call

© 2011

*Last night,
Turning, I was blinded
By a ray of light.*

– Seigen-Yuiin

Centuries ago
Zen masters in Japan summoned their thoughts
for final
poems in which a hare might leap and a crow
might reel
or a mud-bull trot the ocean floor before in June
snowflakes
fall. More recently, Noel Coward said,
*Goodnight
my darlings, I'll see you tomorrow*, while Anna Pavlova
asked for
her swan costume to be prepared. Oscar Wilde
insisted
either the wallpaper had to go or he would.
Karl Marx
dismissed his housekeeper and told her
*last words
are for fools who haven't said enough*. For others,
the end
comes suddenly one Saturday before they have
the chance
to speak or to know why the man with the gun
picked them
on the morning after he telephoned a friend at 2 am
and left
a message in the dark inviting no reply:
*Hey man,
it's Jared. Me and you had good times. Peace out. Later.*

A Study in Hope

© 2011

Hope is a word from the dark, heard
when nobody knows who spoke.
Listen,

there it is again, in a foreign language; Arabic
this time. It's been spoken a lot
in Australia and Pakistan
asking for the rain to end, while the same word
in Niger asks
for it to start. We remember

how it stretched into a syllable so long
in Russian, Czech, or Polish, that it could

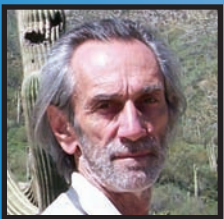
no longer be cut from the dictionaries.
It comes and goes. Sometimes years
go by

without our even thinking about it.
If rainforests could speak
they'd find a way to say it, but
the high pitched cries the howler monkeys make
in the canopy

are as close as they come.
It's impossible to know whether the polar bear
who swam for nine days to find ice
ever hoped, or how

the ice could say it hopes temperatures will fall
before it disappears. Hope is too abstract. Ice
on the other hand

is tangible. We know when it's there; the polar bear
would know when it's gone.
We hope she never has to find out.



David Chorlton came to Arizona in 1978, having lived in England and Austria. His poems appear in numerous magazines, including Main Street Rag, Skidrow Penthouse, Presa, Slipstream and Avocet, as well as online in The New Verse News, Untitled Country Review and a previous Blue Guitar Magazine among others. A copy of one of his recent poems was sent with the documentation for some seeds from Arizona to the Global Seed Vault in Svalbard, Norway, demonstrating that poetry sometimes reaches unexpected locations. Information on his publications can be found at: <http://www.davidchorlton.mysite.com/>.

One Poem By Christyne Moraga-Cisterna

In Memory

© 2011

Times remembered
By friends & family left behind,
Of the ones who've been called home,
And never to return.

Unable to understand...
Difficult to forget...
Yearning to accept...
Your Shadow in our Hearts.

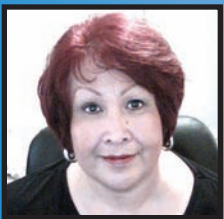
You're gone; we remain.
A part of you will linger,
Leaving behind an emptiness
That cannot be explained.

Wisdom,
Love,
Faith;
Comforts & keeps us.

We pray to our heavenly Father;
He is always with us.
He brings the everlasting light
Into the darkness of, your...
Shadow in our Hearts.

In Loving Memory

Peace & Blessings



Christyne Moraga-Cisterna was born & raised in Globe, AZ, a first generation Mexican-American. Writing has been her emotional outlet, escape, refuge and companion. Christyne started writing in early adolescence, got distracted with life and began writing again over the last 12 years. Her desire is for the reader to feel her words, allow them to speak to their own hearts & listen with an open mind. Contact her at cisternaz@msn.com.

One Poem By Whitney DeVos

for those who became Tucsonans

© 2011

*Dedicated to Daniel Hernandez and the
residents of Tucson.*

i.

come walk
beside
my wounded
body

the flaying
between us
is only ours

& we can give
no lashing

in return
after all –

our
lashèd
parts
still
sing

let us remember and bless the wingèd

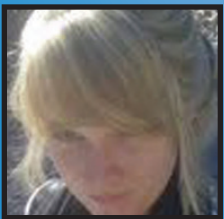
*& blessèd be the creatures that slither
on the ground*

the untouchable
enduring

great bodies
of land
great bodies
in the sky

of water

Continued on page 10



Whitney DeVos is an MFA candidate in poetry at the University of Arizona in Tucson. She is the co-Editor-in-Chief of the literary journal *Sonora Review*. Her work has been published online at Back Room Live, and in print, *Passwords*, a literary magazine of the Claremont Colleges. She sometimes manages blogs about Dante at <http://infernsummer.org>.

distressed
and spilling
over

in this
they are like us

the inevitable
opening up

privileged
to survive
if only
once

our most
vulnerable
structures

static
intact

and if again, to know love

the vitriol

that comes
with being

separate

yet
clasping
organisms

o
belovèds

the necessity
of preserving

words / the incorporeal

our simple
gestures

our

bridges

Continued on page 11

ii.

when
they
are
drawn

the ability
to weep

though
our bodies
have gone
strange: something
recalling hope
here:

a realization

and the capacity
to hold

what feels
like a vacant
organ
again

iii.

we try
our hands

at the backs
of chairs

we clutch
the backs

of others

Continued on page 12

iv.

lanterns

the brittle
wind

v.

and yet:
all this
accounted for

the tangents
of human
despair
beside us
shorn bodies
dead bodies

even now
emitting
a periphery

light
it seems
once

traversed
the air
cleaved

vi.

and yet: come walk
 beside me

I shall
walk

alongside
the moat

trench
of your
body

and you
 alongside mine

in spite of:

the book's answer:
sadness

is something
that grows

 yes, alive wants
 a harbor

and us, we shall be still
newly-picked

 our bright wounds shining
 from woolen mouths

this munificent ritual shedding
 of words
 and yet:

vii.

suddenly the rain
fall

wind chimes still
gleaming

One Poem By Jonelle Farr

The Door

© 2011

Catastrophe.

Unsteady and stumbling through the crumbled rubble—
This depicts what our lives have now become.

Disaster.

Our house has been swept away
Like a drawing from a dry erase board.
All that remains is a sea of cement slabs
Looking like a disorderly upheaval of crushed ice;
A foundation—
Its wooden beams stretching flimsily towards the sky
Like the loose ends of an unfinished wicker basket;
Part of a once-strong brick wall
Standing crudely sawed in half,
Its edges looking like corrugated cardboard;
In the background
A telephone pole twisted like a wire—
Bent and swaying like a blade of grass in the slightest of breezes.

A Door.

One oak door standing tall and solitary
As if it has roots too deeply twisted in the ground
For the confusing whirlpool of wind to wrest it from the earth.
How it survived I will never know;
But there it stood
Outlined by the perfectly measured door frame
Looking like a picture hanging against a sky
As gray as a steel sheet
Hovering over the chaos below.
How many times has this door been opened and closed?
Now it stands closed for the last time.
Even if it were opened
It would only reveal the same tragedy on the other side;
Yet the brass doorknob shines like a golden orb
Captivating the eye and drawing me in.
I reach out a trembling hand
To gently touch the smooth familiar handle.

Revelation.

The door is a beacon of hope
Towering above the ruin and decay.
The door may close off my past way of life,
But it is still a door—
One that can also open to opportunities
For starting over fresh and new.



Jonelle Farr, a 20-year old native Arizonan, resides in Chandler where she attends Chandler-Gilbert Community College pursuing a degree in Liberal Arts. During the Fall 2010 semester, Jonelle took her first ever creative writing class; "The Door" was the result of her first assignment for that class and was published in the Gila River Review online journal. She has, since then, written a few more poems, a short work of fiction, and some descriptive non-fiction. Though new to writing, Jonelle has discovered a new love and plans to continue as time allows. Jonelle wishes to thank her professor, Mr. Patrick Finn, for his insights, support and enthusiasm — "Thank you, Mr. Patrick." She can be contacted at jonelle.farr@yahoo.com.

Laura Fellows

Sedona Artist



**“Catharsis”
Watercolor**

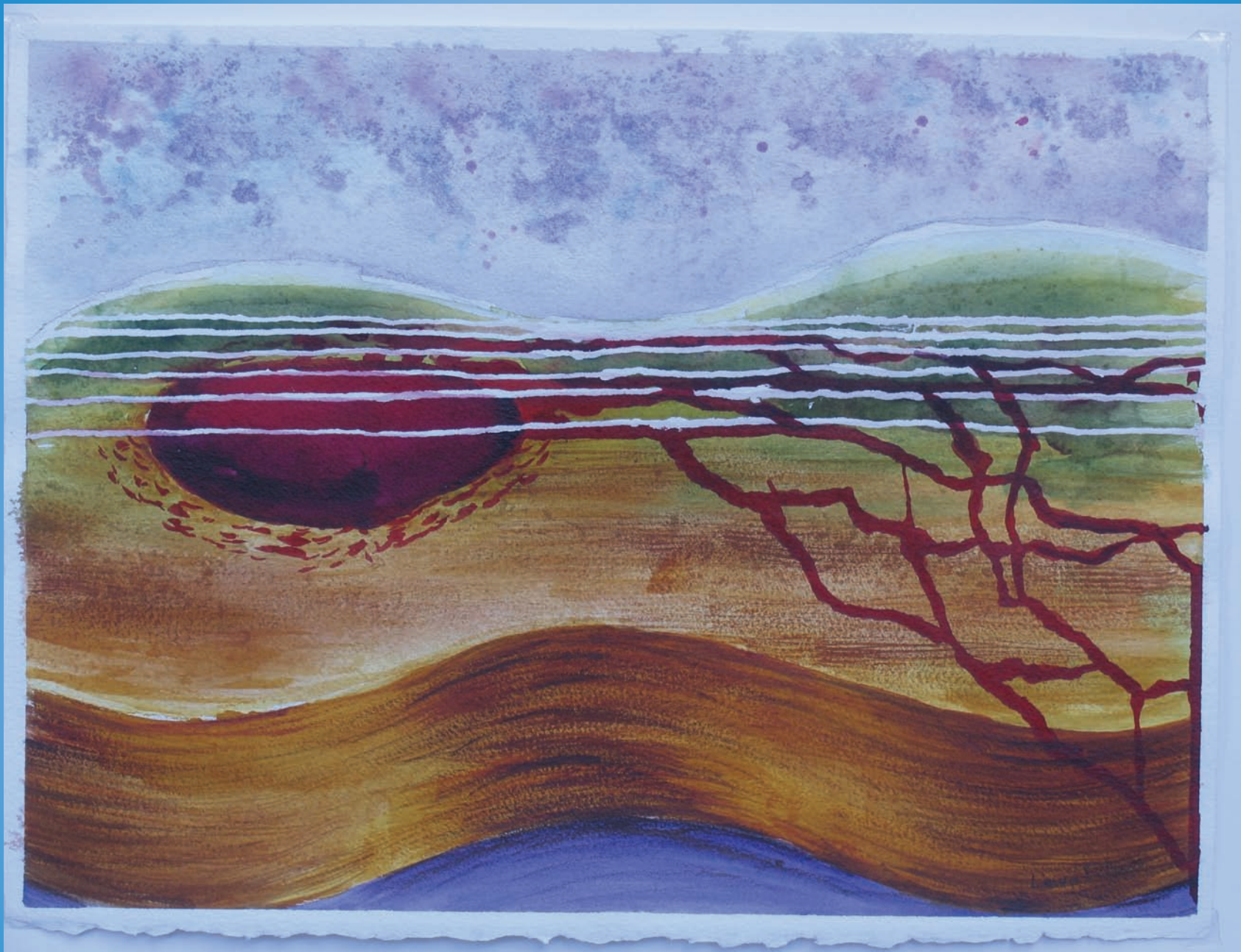


Photo by Greg Ulrich

Laura Fellows was born in West Virginia into a family of artists, writers, and musicians. Her family lived in several states on the East Coast. She moved to Arizona as a young adult, living in Flagstaff, Tucson, and eventually Sedona. She has four degrees unrelated to art or music, and has worked as a school psychologist and a clinical social worker. Since her youth, Laura has been an avid outdoor enthusiast, and has been involved in rafting, canoeing, skiing, hiking, and cycling in Arizona. She has studied art and music in a variety of settings and plays classical guitar, violin, mandolin, ukulele, recorder, and harmonica. After experimenting with other mediums, she settled on watercolors as a medium. She paints with bold colors on quarter sheets of 140# or 300# Arches paper, and is particularly enamored with filbert brushes. She paints almost exclusively from life, and uses photographs only occasionally to add missing details. She can be contacted at laurafellows@msn.com.

Laura Fellows

Sedona Artist



"Post Catharsis"
Watercolor

Laura Fellows

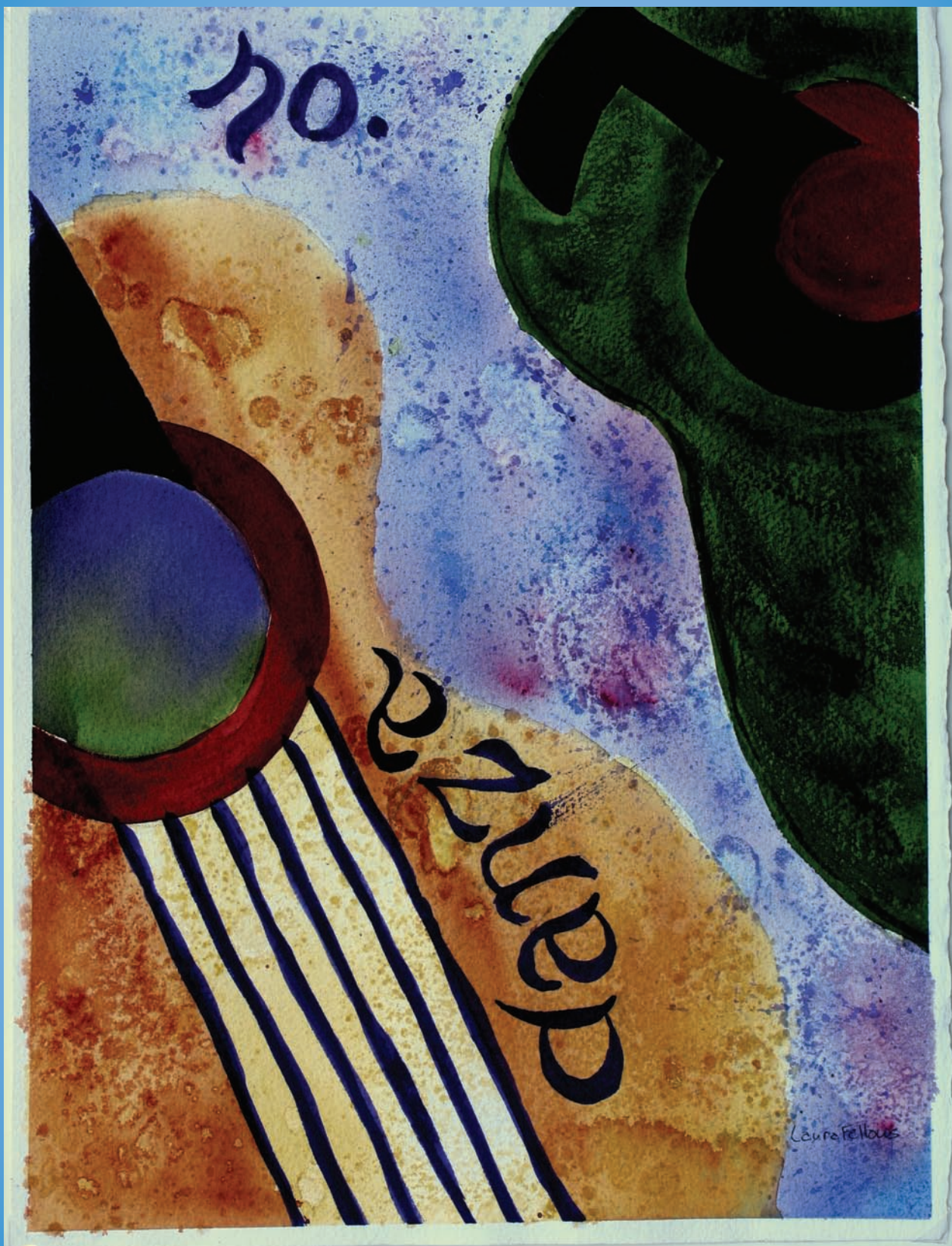
Sedona Artist



“Post Katrina”
Watercolor

Laura Fellows

Sedona Artist



"Danza Soledad"
Watercolor

Laura Fellows

Sedona Artist



**“Balance”
Watercolor**

Creativity has been an unrelenting force in my life; I have been a visual artist, a writer, and a musician as long as I can remember, although I was encouraged to pursue a practical career. Sometimes this force is a flowing river, and other times it is an explosive force pent up behind the dam created by my job obligations. I am a person with a lot of energy and stamina, but even for me, it is daunting to find the time to paint, write, and play music while developing an unrelated career. School assignments and job-related tasks have provided me with many opportunities to write, but painting and music have competed for my time and energy. One evening I stuffed my guitar into the background of a painting I was rushing to complete so that I could play the guitar. I was struck by the vision that my painting could become the vehicle to chronicle my musical life. Thus was born the focus of my current artistic life and a venue in which the creative force behind my visual and musical art could intertwine and emerge in one tangible form. I play the guitar at a level of obsession. When my last job vanished beneath me, I found myself on an intensified journey with the guitar. Clinging to my music life seemed like a viable way to hold onto myself and remain focused on creating a future. I began rising at 4:30 every day so that I can play the guitar at least 30 hours a week. The painting Catharsis was a reaction to having botched a guitar solo performance due to my enthusiasm and performance nerves, I was not able to play the piece, and I found this to be painfully frustrating due to the amount of work I had invested in the piece. The painting is really a self-portrait of my reaction; I am the guitar. I am currently very involved in creating a series of music-related paintings and they all similarly relate specific emotional stories from my personal path as a musician. Nevertheless, emotions are universal and it is my hope that this truth will enable my paintings to touch the viewer and facilitate their reflections of their own emotional path.

– Laura Fellows

One Poem By Flora Gamez Grateron

Ironic

© 2011

Dedicated to the victims of the Tucson Tragedy

There's a song that goes like that; an old man turns 98,
wins the lottery and dies the next day,
or a death row pardon two minutes too late
rainfall on your wedding day,
how about a black fly in your
chardonnay?

Isn't it ironic?

There were no premonitions on that deceptive day
as the Catalina Mountains overshadowed the Safeway
a backdrop to the scene about to unfold
illusion of safety, a perception of peace
a wide open space, unguarded,
a hunting field.

Isn't it ironic?

An area, like any corner of our nation
protected by an amendment to assemble and speak freely
preserving the right of the people to keep and bear arms
a parking lot; a battle ground; as the first shot hit home
at half-laugh and mid-sentence, like a rag doll
she dropped.

Isn't it ironic?

A grandmother fell, a judge, a young child
mere puppets on stage, their strings cruelly cut
chaos erupted, scrambling like deer,
playing hide-and-seek, or Russian Roulette?
a lunatic's eyes, a spray of bullets,
and silence.

Continued on page 21



Flora Gamez Grateron, a Texas native, has been writing most of her life. Born the seventh child of nine, her stories and poems reflect the complexity and rewards of living among a Mexican-American family rich in culture and tradition. Flora's work has been published in *The Blue Guitar*, an arts and literary magazine of the Arizona Consortium for the Arts, and in *La Bloga*, a *Flor y Canto* out of Los Angeles speaking out on Immigration issues. Her *Corrido* on her 89-year-old dad was one of the winners at the 2010 Tucson Meet Yourself Festival. Flora has also been published in the *Oasis Journal* 2010. She belongs to *Sowing the Seeds*, a women's writers group working on an anthology. Flora graduated from the University of Arizona and teaches English/Language Arts in the Sunnyside Unified School District in Tucson, Arizona.

Isn't it ironic?

The shells are spent, the Glock's work done
humans like mummies shuffle around
pantomime takes over, signals and gestures
like characters on a stage that abruptly collapsed
but for some, the craziness matters
none.

Isn't it ironic?

The strong and the able sprang into action
there were heroes that day, and angels and saints
the setting no longer befits the light hearted play
the muse has arrived and turned it into Greek tragedy
as the scene nears its end, our main character's eyes
close.

Isn't it ironic?

We wept and lamented, gnashed our teeth and asked why?
we visited memorials, lit candles, paused and contemplated
we read their life stories, learned their names, attended funerals,
but one thing we could not do was comprehend, or worse,
feel the pain of the mother, or wife, or husband left behind to
mourn.

Isn't it ironic?

One act of cowardice, an instant of insanity, brought disbelief,
people of strength brought to their knees by the news
darkness overtook our sunny Old Pueblo
we struggled to return to 'before 1/8/11'
but after that day, our city was
tainted.

Isn't it ironic?

Our beloved Tucson became a euphemism
reluctantly, we became the new Columbine, or Virginia Tech
"Let's hope we don't have another Tucson," they remark
still we pray our main character recovers to take a bow
when the stage lights dim and the final curtain is
lowered.

Isn't it ironic?

One Poem By John Mikal Haaheim

Often I Meet

© 2011

After a line by Theodore Roethke

Often I meet, on walking from a door,

Someone I think I knew, but cannot place.
I stand on an awkward edge of hello, fumbling
to bind frayed edges, torn apart.
Glances collide at my rasped Good Morning.

He harrumphs,
Good Afternoon
in counterpoint.
We retreat forward
to our separate days.

Often I hear, when I still my voice,
words I know, but never spoke
as obligation beckoned.
Words to support or defend.
Pale statue beside
myself in vexed immobility,
lest my comfort be interrupted.
Stifled words dine
like unwanted guests
on twinges of guilt.

Often I savor, in some dimly lit café,
a slice of perfect-apple pie, redolent
with cinnamon, nutmeg, home and hungry boy.
Parents who mend broken toys,
bad at arithmetic, good at multiplying love.

I picture them today
in sandwich boards.
Front: Honor thy mother and father.
Back: Where did we go wrong?
No point of contact.

Often my hand, in dark and narrowed space,
sinks in diaphanous blanket of web: highway,
pantry, playground, gossamer-strand kingdom.
Uncomprehending invasion with fevered hand
catches me open-mouthed, aghast, at bay. Momentarily

I am quarry ensnared.
I withdraw, wipe
the web across
my shirt — callous
home wrecker.
Often I catch, on some errant breeze,
the scent of rue. Botanic embodiment
of emotion, wafts past lures me onward.
One does what one must and would
do again. Route chosen years ago.

No detours, no
stoplights. Compulsion
propels me.
Without end. Nemesis
with my shoes.



John Mikal Haaheim is a retired counselor and educator with a B.S. in English from Iowa State University. His M.A. is in counseling from the University of North Dakota. He was raised in a military family and served as a Psych Tech during the Vietnam Conflict. He lives with his wife, Linda, and cat, Taz, in Sun City West, Arizona. Contact him at mikalhaaheim@yahoo.com.

Two Poems By S.M.T. Hedger

Blown Away

© 2011

Where have all the children gone?
One by one they left

I want never to see
The pool of blood a child leaves

Still worse is
To look away

The sightless that walk amongst us
Take it all in stride

Bullets rip through our innocents
A shame we can't conceal

When a small frame falls
From the view of crosshairs

I see the mournful mothers
I hear the wailing fathers

We have lost so many now
Our children pay the price

Too little the time
Too empty the casing

Caught in the scope
Of zero tolerance

Too void the justice
Too loud the boom

How can we emerge from the darkness
When we kill the light

Written for the fallen desert blossoms:

Tanee Natividad
16 years old girl
Shot and killed
Tucson, Arizona
November 18, 2001

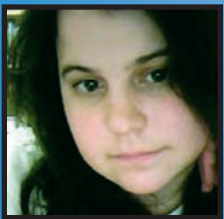
Brisenia Flores
9 year old girl
Shot and killed
Arivaca, Arizona
May 30, 2009

Sergio Huereca
15 year old boy
Shot and killed
Mexico-Texas Border
June 6, 2010

Brenda Arenas
15 year old girl
Shot and killed
Tucson, Arizona
August 5, 2009

Christina Green
9 year old girl
Shot and killed
Tucson, Arizona
January 8, 2011

Lovingly this poem is dedicated to these children; and to all children who find their end in front of a gun.



Sara was born and raised in the Arizona desert among the foothills of the Superstition Mountains. She became aware of social issues and inequalities at a very young age, and has always used poetry to mend. Recently her poetry has been shared on La Bloga's "On-Line Floricanto," Immigrants2bfree and on the Facebook page Poets Responding to SB1070. In January, Sara was invited to read "I Will Be Silent No More" on France Kassing's radio show, on KDVS 90.3 FM broadcast from UC Davis, California. Her proudest achievement is her volunteer work to stop the deportation of American veterans. You can join her and learn more at www.valenzuelabrothers.com. Currently she lives in Syracuse, NY, as a student, wife and mother.

I will be silent no more

© 2011

I heard the lies growing up,
The ones that are whispered in white folks' homes.
The jokes that aren't funny
But program you with a smile on your face.
The jokes about shooting "cans."
The jokes about them, the others, the not us.
The illegals, the wetbacks, the aliens.
All those over there,
In front of the Home Depot
(When they were still allowed to stand there
And beg for honest work, for labor).
And they would run up to the sides of white trucks
Driven by white men.
And I would wonder with my child mind,
Why do they run?
As a farmer's daughter we ran our horses
When we wanted to sell them
To white men in white trucks,
In order to show off their value.
Now, as an adult, I see the two displays as the same.
As I have grown so has our hate toward them —
The others, those over there, the not us.
When I enrolled in college I was so happy.
Happy to be a woman,
Happy to be the first in my family,
Happy to be in higher education.
2 years in, Proposition 300 was passed.
Many people have forgotten it now.
It was the first step of control,
Of open racism, of open hate,
Of closed thinking.
And it passed in my birth land.
It was so that they, the others, the not us,
Could not get, and would not get, a foot up.
It was a ban on educating them.
If you could not prove your citizenship
Then you — a not us — must pay out of state tuition
For the entire duration.
This inflated tuition was 3 times my fare.
And in that moment, it happened.
I found I have a ball in my throat,
A round and heavy sphere.
If I swallow it, it shall consume me.
So I keep it there, lodged.
It is the blackness that shuts out truths,

And it will silence you.
And so it went on,
With the minute men,
And with the people who tipped over
And destroyed water stations,
Pouring water, Arizona's blood
Onto the dusty desert floor.
Knowing that they caused certain doom
For them, those others, the not us.
And then, SB1070 so we could once and for all
Be done with them — the alien, the illegal, the wetback.
They are not even worth reading about
Or teaching about.
She said we have to keep it from our children
As if it is something catchy.
HB2281
Don't speak of them, the others, the not us.
And when Tucson schools refused,
And funding was threatened, they swallowed hard
The sphere of lies and silence.
Now it rests in their belly and they fight no more.
Justice forever gone, scattered in the Sonoran wind,
And still it was not enough.
Now they — those others, the not us, over there —
Must carry papers,
Just as the Jews were forced to in Nazi Germany.
And all of this has defined us
More than it has them.
We who whisper behind closed doors
And in voting booths.
We who sit on the sidelines and cheer for no one.
We who let them — the dictators — tell us what to believe.
We who evict the indigenous
And call babies anchors
And as I write this,
I feel the ball in my throat contract and tighten.
Perhaps you can feel it too?
It is awkward and discomforting,
And as it tries to silence me I cry out.
I will not let this hate define me
Nor my generation
Nor my people.
And I will yell
And I will tell all who will listen.
I will be silent no more.

One Poem By Joshua Hunter Hensley

Todo un Mente

© 2011

I'm sorry
Ask me a question
Because I have to say

I don't have hope
Probably none at all
I'm not sure right now

I see things as a farce
Of self-perception, us and them
And I think all of us are

Repeating things, everything, you know what I mean
And the collective mind of all of us, though not filled
Is cluttered with Information and History and Fun and Truth and lies and Media etc. etc.

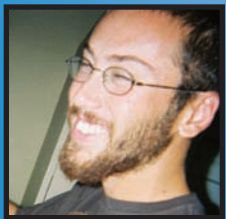
According to what that mind already had set up
In a certain part of the planet
I don't believe the New Times or the World Wide news
So
I will not respect a killing spree
There are no dirty words for it

hope

In anything Living off a dui like an irregular heartbeat
Regretting nearly all the drugs we've ever done

This state is reactionary and scary,
I like brown people
Why does everyone look so Mad on the street
I'm paranoid as (expletive deleted) on and off the freeway
This is a police-state
The weather sucks (no offense)
Driving is maniacal
Punishment unusual

Continued on page 26



Joshua Hunter Hensley works as a landscaper for the fascist banking system. He lives in Phoenix, AZ and is constantly being surrounded by strange things. He is 24 years old.

I'm sorry
I do not know why

I started attacking Arizona for the way I perceive
How can I express hope
I don't know how
I'm sorry we're like this
I'm sorry to say

Yet what can we really do but pray for those people and love them
Make an effort to be Good
And be Funny
When I thought of Hope I became sad
I can't express it

Insanity is either
A complete mental breakthrough
Or breakdown, we all know that
The govt. is a dream

Wake up

Go out and accost people with Freedom
With Truth
Spread Healing words of Hope

At everybody you see on the street
Don't ask me
Question yourself, I'll try

Dear Mind
I Love you
I'm sorry for what I said earlier

Come here
Let's make up
I'm so sorry
I Love you

Would you like to buy some roses or a painting or some
Poems or a book
Can I mow your lawn

Please just don't be sad, Mind
I Love you
I'd do anything to get you back
I guess
That's my only Hope

Peace

One Poem By Cora Holley

Hope Shining

© 2011

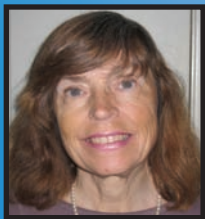
I grieve today —
My loved one has passed on,
beyond the Sun.
I'll grieve tomorrow and too many more;
But I know that there is peace,
Beyond the Sun.

I'll grieve in loneliness today
but I'll grieve with joy;
for stress and pain, like mist, dissolved;
and I'm sure that there is peace
Beyond the Sun.

I'll grieve in darkened light today,
the evening of a life;
the curtains not completely drawn,
for I know that there is hope,
Beyond the Sun.

I'll grieve a little less today;
Tomorrow hurries in;
Fullness of Joy,
brightness of Hope,
in a land beyond ...
Beyond the Sun.

For I know that Hope, resplendent, shines,
Beyond the Sun.



Born in Ireland, Cora Holley now lives in Arizona with her husband and children. She has a London College of Music Diploma. Cora writes inspirational stories, both fiction and non-fiction, but her passion is for poetry writing. She is a member of East Valley Christian Writers and Mesa Christian Writers. Cora is a contributing author to "The French School, Bray, Remembered" by Jennifer Flegg, and has had a devotion published on the Internet (<http://www.mustardseedministries.org/>). Contact Cora at: corralejoholley@cs.com.

One Poem By Sean Medlin

A Two-Part Letter for Citizens of Earth Enduring Tumultuous Times

© 2011

I

When I saw the revolutionary's shot,
Fall
Crippled winged and burning,
I thought,
...The whole world will soon be on fire.

Soon, cars in New York and Washington will explode with Molotov madness,
And Cruise missiles will sink into U.S Soil.
I admit, I haven't been following the crisis in Libya or Egypt.
I have been too wrapped up in my own ignorance
But there are gunshots denouncing freedom,
And soldiers killing civilians in the name of a dictator,

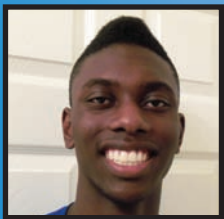
This,
Sounds like 1959 the Cuban Revolution,

This,
Sounds like 1791 the Haiti Revolution,

This,
Sounds like too many dead bodies and empty guns,
People of Libya,
People of Egypt,
I may not know your history,
Or the wars you've already fought,
But you've alerted a sleeping world and now we watch in awe as you shake an old regime
 With vigor and bloodshed,
I am with you...

Signed,
An Ignorant American.

Continued on page 29



Sean Medlin writes: "I didn't start writing poetry until 6th or 7th grade. It was then that I realized my love of rhythm, rhyme, and metaphors. Growing up, my dad always played jazz, R&B and Hip-Hop. He would always make CDs for me; he never let me listen to the radio. My mom also greatly supported my hobby of reading; she would buy me a book whenever I wanted one. Because of my parents, I learned to express myself through words at an early age. Over the years, my poetry and writing talent has grown, but I still believe I have much more growing to do! I won an Editor's Choice Award for one of my poems, 'Ghost' in September 2008. My English teacher at Agua Fria High School used to let me read my poetry in front of the class; however, last year, I started performing my poetry every Friday at a Spoken Word Coffee Shop called the Fair Trade Café, on 1st Avenue and Roosevelt. The Spoken Word experience has helped me mature and learn more about the art of poetry and how to write and perform better. I've also been one of the top scoring Brave New Voices Slam poets; I've made it into the Grand Slam at Fair Trade Café, with a chance to be on the Slam team to represent Arizona!" Sean also advises a high-school poetry club. Contact Sean at chronic_poetic@yahoo.com.

II

Do not weep.
The sea is not angry with you.
Mother Earth doesn't hold grudges.
8.9 might as well be the Devil's number,
No one deserves what you've stomached.
As your reactors pop, like kernels in a microwave
And the water bulldozes through your cities in an attempt to kiss the sky...
There is hope.

There is hope for you.
You who stood against two Atomic bombs and shrugged off the ashes,

You who dared to innovate and build futuristic wonders for the world,
You Japan, there is hope for you.
I see it in the goodness of people,
Who will help like they did in New Orleans,
Who will help like they did in Chile.
The Citizens of Earth will not let Japan become another Haiti,
Recovery can be made possible with more than just dollars,
There are a thousand praying souls pleading for your country to heal

I am with you.

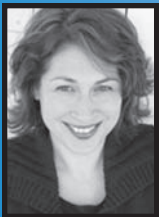
Signed,
An Ignorant American.

Marie Lang

Mesa Artist



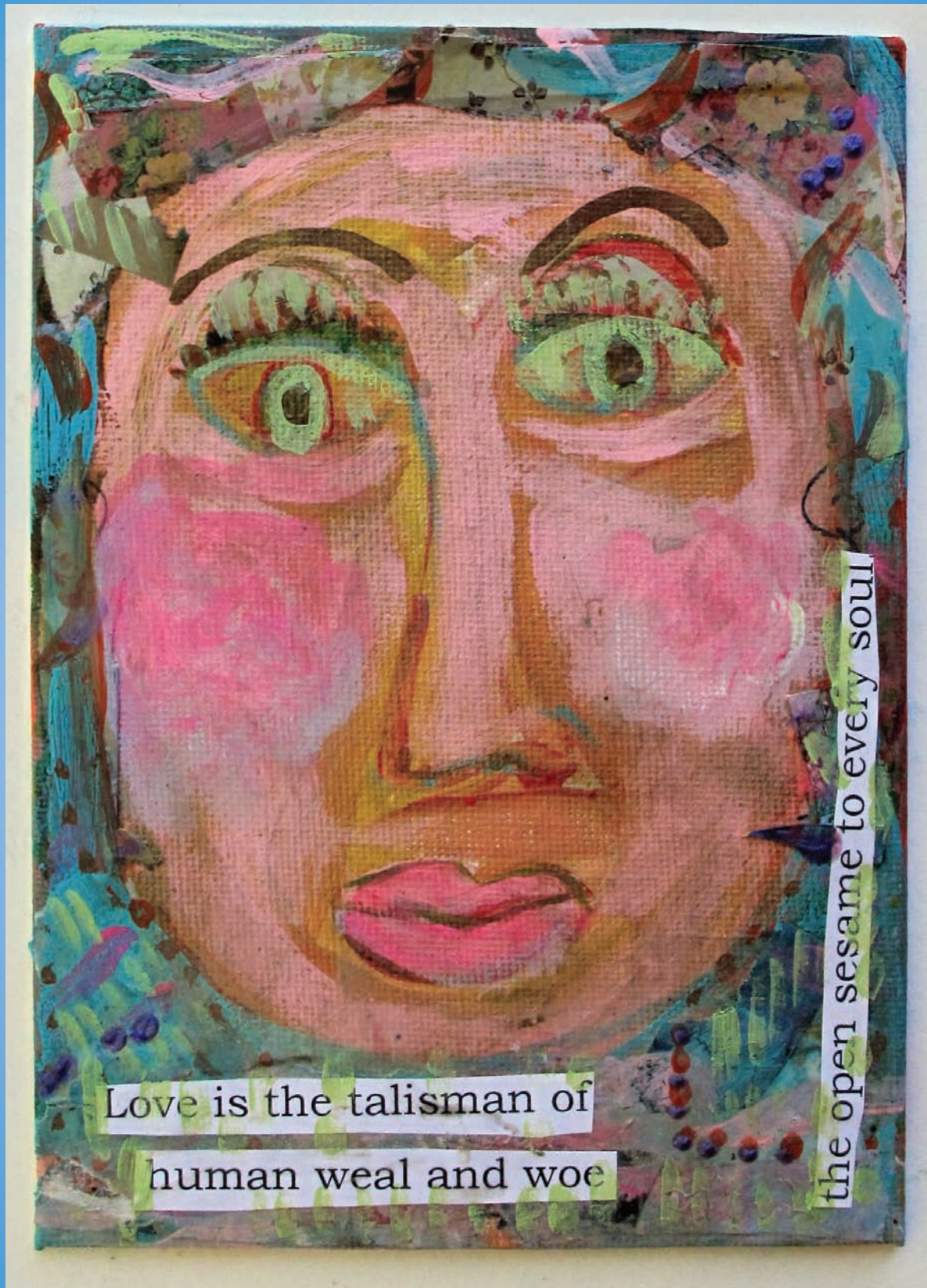
“All that we love deeply becomes a part of us”
Oil paint and paper



Marie Lang was born in Chicago and raised in Columbus, Ohio. Marie recognized at a young age that her love of art would be a lifetime passion. Her work has been described as “wordless and refreshingly primitive, without reliance on words and intellect.” She began publicly exhibiting her paintings in 1983, and since then has consistently exhibited her work in art galleries throughout the Midwest, including Mars Gallery and Eclectic Junction in Chicago, Woodwalk Gallery in Wisconsin, Roy, G. Biv Gallery, Acme Gallery, and The Painted Monkey in Columbus, Ohio. Marie graduated from Ohio State University in 1989, and in 1991 she earned the credentials ATR, as a registered art therapist. She has been the featured artist on an award-winning profile documentary series, which aired nationally, called “D’art.” Patrons living in Columbus, Atlanta, San Francisco, Chicago and New York have collected her work. In addition to her work as an artist, Marie is a mother and wife, married for 25 years. Marie Lang has also been a presenter overseas and locally, presenting workshops on creativity and faith and healing from loss and grief. After the death of her first son in 1997, she began to use art to help children heal from loss. Currently, Marie resides in Mesa, Arizona, where she paints, rides horses and is writing about art as prayer. Marie can be contacted at marietlang@gmail.com or on Facebook.

Marie Lang

Mesa Artist



Love is the talisman of
human weal and woe

the open sesame to every soul

“The Talisman”
Oil paint and paper

Marie Lang

Mesa Artist



“Transformation”
Oil paint and paper

Marie Lang

Mesa Artist



"A step at a time"
Collage

"I believe that art is most powerful as an expressive outlet for all that it means to be human, colorful, messy, spectacular."

– Marie Lang

One Poem By Naomi Miller

The strings of my guitar lament

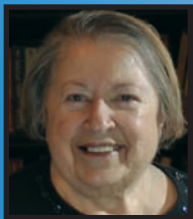
© 2011

The strings of my guitar lament
the passage of my time not spent
in meeting, greeting issues of the day
that come so frequently across my way.

Oh yes, my children call and I respond,
For them, I'm always ready with my wand.
My neighbors, too, can call on me to act.
With friends I know, I have a silent pact.

But then, where is the reaching hand, the caring touch,
for those whose lives "do not amount to much"?
(in parlance of the men in power and place
who make decisions for those they seldom face)

I must not slide along that silent throng.
I must not play that corollary song.
I'll be a player with my word and deed,
give voice and hand to grow an action seed.



After a longtime career as a professor and psychosocial therapist in the field of social work, poet Naomi Miller enjoys writing and retirement in Oro Valley. Contact Naomi at rochester10@comcast.net.

Two Poems By Brian Mostoller

Primal Scream

© 2011

Primal scream
is what I want.
Throw everything to the wind
and see what comes back.
Plant that which does.
It's March.
Good time for winds.
Here I am,
O wind.
Scatter me to the sky
and cast me on good land.

Reckoning

© 2011

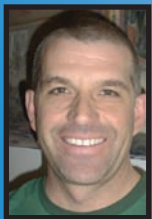
*Come on, my enemy, we have yet to wrestle for our lives,
but many hard and miserable hours must you endure
until that period shall arrive.*

— Frankenstein

“What did you expect?”
he heaves between breaths.
He smiles.
Hair clutches his face, and
a corner of his lip twists up.
“I’ve hunted you a long time,”
I say, but my voice wanes and my head sags.
Ragged and icebound,
we stand.
“You don’t have the guts,”
he taunts.
His breaths slower, measured.

A seed
from somewhere in my childhood,
he embedded himself
in soft, moist thoughts.
He grew thick and dark,
and sprouted severity.
Tall and ripe,
he choked my clarity.
All I could do was
chase.

“I don’t know what to do.”
The dull throbbing pounds the words
from my mouth.
He laughs.
“I want a different end,”
I say.
No more chase.
Make friend
from fiend.



Brian Mostoller has been writing poetry for over thirty years. He was born in Montana but was raised in Utah. He graduated with a B.A. in English from Willamette University and an M.S. in Health Studies from Portland State University, both in Oregon. Since 1994 he has been a high school English teacher and football coach, both in Oregon and in Arizona. He lives in Phoenix with his wife, Wendy, his two children, Brady and Maggie, and two retired greyhounds, Mambo and Santa Fe.

One Poem By David Pischke

Geometry

© 2011

At Thanksgiving my brother-in-law prays like the
Widow Douglas over the mashed potatoes I made.
I tip my head down and mumble 'Amen' to please him,
but I don't really mean it.

Later, when we walk in the snow and I am behind him
trying to rest my feet into his footsteps
reducing my effort, I see his footprints point outward like
a duck's. I've also noticed a duck's feet are quite
different from ours.

If I drew a line between the tips of the toes then followed
the instep with two more lines finally
meeting at a point, the triangle would
be obtuse, which is the only thing I remember from geometry.
Maybe, 117 degrees at the crucial angle.

When I walk with my head down avoiding eyes maybe
pretending to read the papers in my hands I see my
feet. The left points full-steam ahead like the Titanic
going for the iceberg.

My right foot, however, veers starboard out toward
unknown adventure until it is brought back
by the force of my leg to which it is fully attached.

And my footsteps can be made into a triangle too,
even if it is acute.



A rare and elusive Arizona native, David Pischke lives and works in the Northwest Valley. He teaches American Literature and Creative Writing at Liberty High School where he founded the school's literary magazine and speech and debate team. David is married to an intelligent, tall, and stunning wife. They have one son and two big dogs. Contact him at DaPischke@peoriaud.k12.az.us.

One Poem By Dan Ramirez

Bullet Democracy

© 2011

Ten AM, a Safeway parking lot.
As she speaks, treacherous chance pulls her number.
Firecrackers? Motorcycle exhaust? Gun.
The bullet enters her head and
fifteen grams of abrupt lead weigh her down.
She stops mid-sentence, swaying with the extra load,
fading, wondering who else Madness has tapped,
why someone decided to vote with a Glock.
Balance loses to gravity and she falls,
surrounded by crying, curses,
draining dreams onto a parking lot curb
while the gun sings, over and over,
the only note it knows.



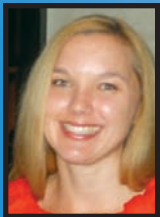
At 17 Dan Ramirez was discouraged by his family and high school counselor from pursuing a career as a writer. Forty years later, he picked up a pen and discovered his voice as a poet. Contact him at luftpistole@cox.net.

Nicole Royse

Tempe Artist



“Alteration”



Nicole Royse is a fine artist located in Tempe. Her website is www.nicoleroyse.com. She can be reached at nicoleroyse@gmail.com.

Nicole Royse

Tempe Artist



"Zenith"

Nicole Royse

Tempe Artist



"Layers"

Nicole Royse

Tempe Artist



“Radiant”

Nicole Royse

Tempe Artist



“Vivacious”

Nicole Royse

Tempe Artist



“Awakening”

My artwork focuses on abstraction of form through the use of line and color by working with Acrylic and Oil paint on canvas. I am a young emerging artist (self-taught) with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Art History. 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

One Poem By Jeannine Savard

Some Afterwords

© 2011

Someone opened the discussion with
“We live, and then we die.”
Then you, Tim, reminded them
about the chance for an “Afterword.”
All they had to do was write. You said,
“Live, and write. Do it for yourself, and
for those who can’t.”

Most winter days you wore a natty gray cardigan
over a black cotton tee, fit
the description of R.’s last persona:

tough guy in the guise of a grandfather
waking from his nap

In Spring, green vines and samurai tattoos
crawled out of your shortened sleeves. You said
in conference, “Just looking at these
gives me strength.” Remembering that, and how
I fought with your conviction – you’d never get old.
I was afraid, watching you walk backwards, waving,
your head and shoulders filled with the faint chimes
carried over from the chapel, and in the corridor,
sky’s glassy cinnamon light.

Remember D. who admitted in class she lost her faith in men?
She has now confided to us, not long after your heart attacked, after
you didn’t make it back, that you had offered her once
your gloves. It was a cold night in January, both of you in line
waiting for the concert doors to open. She confessed your kindness
was real, but she was stuck, couldn’t get back the trust.
Still, she reminds herself: *Live, and write.*

On my way home yesterday, under crimps of tussock grass,
an unexpected rabbit stood-up: gray coat, glossed muscles, flexed.
I called him *Ikiru*, for you – to *live* – continuously. I wrote
what you might have said with the voice of your favorite filmmaker:

*There’s allowances for desires, even a longing for distances ahead, and
for any number of incisive jump-cuts along the way. All of you,
live on.*



Jeannine Savard is an Associate Professor of English at Arizona State University and teaches poetry workshops at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Her new volume of poems, entitled “Accounted For,” was published by Red Hen Press in February 2011. Contact Jeannine at jsavard@asu.edu.

5 Poems By Richard Fenton Sederstrom

Easing the Light

© 2011

When you flick on the light, you flick on the light only.
You don't think, don't need to.
But thinking is control, you know, which
You lose in the unthought flick of the switch
To the silent, masterly surge of blind lightning.

With a candle, even a brief stub, maybe only
A stub from the neglected rear of a kitchen drawer,
You control the light, control all that the light controls.
Your hand controls the light defying wind,
While you illuminate the secret map of your palm.

With the oil lamp you accept the laws of control
That come from having to buy the oil,
Having to bring home the oil along the paved road,
The oil paved road going back to gravel
In the gentle imprecise control of memory.

But when you have shut the door,
Have allowed the outside to darken, have lighted your will,
Then you fill the lamp in the resin scented,
Fire scented old kitchen, your grandparents' maybe
Or theirs. You trim the wick.

You light the lamp.
You adjust the wick for the light correctly controlled
To the brightness and the dimness you need
to control time to the needs of your soul,
And you open the book to light the poem.



Richard Fenton Sederstrom lives in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona and Mexico and the North Woods of Minnesota, the places in which he was raised. "I am fortunate to have retired from all respectable pursuits, especially teaching. Now I return to the classroom as a visitor, where, instead of teaching out of pedagogy, I teach out of confusion and into it, the way teaching should be done." He has published poems regularly in *Big Muddy*, *The Talking Stick*, *Red Owl*, and *Saint Anthony Messenger*. He has also been published in *Tar Wolf Review*, *The Tule Review*, *English Journal*, *Plainsongs*, *Mother Earth Journal*, and *Ruminate*, among other journals and magazines. His book of poems, "Fall Pictures on an Abandoned Road" came out last December, and his new book, "Disordinary Light," has just been published. Contact Richard at richard_sederstrom1221@q.com.

The Good Close Darkness

© 2011

The temptation of this revolving
door into the darkroom.
If I stand in the middle
of the magic circle,
Slowly turn, spin
in my new cosmic freedom
the cylinder of door
either way I desire,
it will open not like the turning
of the clock, but either way I will,
into the cloud of unknowing.
I turn the door so . . .
So very slowly,
for it is all of infinity
I have in mind, that orbits
just outside this fragile ozone.
I feel with a hand for the open portal.
It is there, just there
where my fingers slide through,
then my hand.
Then, in my void of eyeshot
all that exists
is the good comfort of
willed momentary nothing.
My dark hand draws back,
in its stronger will,
to the good terrible
everything,
The disordnary light.

Respiration

© 2011

The still small voice barely breathes.
We approach the task of listening
Through the veil of meaningful distraction,
Of idle talk of this or that, exercises
Of the tongue, or of sleep, purposeful dreams.

All is respiration, tug and warp of original
Inspiration, the constant movement.
The final medium, the knowledge
Of what is heard of this news of death.

The still sculpture, bare skull, sullied flesh,
Is mere expiration, waste of breath
And spirit, the small true voice
Blown away with desert sand.

It is an urn fired dead, a petrification of spirit,
Rock bound, sere, which monuments must be,
If only to invite us into the true life.
Distractions, dappled, malleable,
Breathing, the being of it all.

A Tourist's Guide to the Inner Circle

© 2011

When you open your senses again to the raw silence
Of this desert, the rain has gone, and the thunder
That told you who invented the tall echo of just a little fear.

Then all of a sudden you smell the desert,
The fragrance raw too, of abundant oils, but so alien
That you wonder whether you are allowed to ply your senses.

You are beginning to wake to the energy.
You don't know where it comes from,
Or even that it may have a source.

So I'll tell you.
If you look back at that tall saguaro,
The first one you wondered at, didn't you?
Because you know the tourist is entitled to wonder,
Now look at the gray scrag of bush in front of the cactus,
The one whose leaves look so spare of energy.

It is creosote that so fills this void in your senses,
A mystery of volatile oils that nursed
Those long generations of Desert People, O'odham,
Into the joy of health,
The raw abundance of scarcity.

It is the scent of necessity's industry,
And you and I wonder at it too when we find out,
And not without a simple shudder maybe,
As civilization threatens to dry like the puddles already have
From that burst of mountain storm.

I can only tell you what I can't know:
I have walked into the bareness so far that not all the water
I could carry would prevent the ghost dance hallucinogen
Of sun-warped vertigo in this scalded Sinai,
Where nameless immigrants come to their sere rebirth,
Never welcomed, save as mummies.

Walk until nothing is left of life but a ring of creosote bush
Its rough circumference limning shadows in the acres within.

Wait under such shade as you can find,
Sleep as sleep may come, and in the dawn,
When the shadow of the clone of bushes specters out
From its mottled gray shroud, just note:

What surrounds you now is a creation five hundred
Of our fragile generations old!

It is time for you now to stand.
Perhaps we will bow to this ragged peasant mother
Before we walk the inner circle, caress her hard leather of leaves.

You are surrounded by what you are, and air, light, this holy breeze.
Should you allow the rain to fall,
Blessed fragrance of unremembered lives,

Children of our long disdain,
You will bear and nurture them in the circle of your timeless health.

Long Distance

© 2011

I have no telephone beside me here in the car.

It is at home in my living room,
Weighs some twenty-five pounds,
Is connected only to the wall
Anchored by four brass toggle bolts

And when I want to hear the phone ring,
Guide the children in my arms into my soul,
My grandchildren into our past,
My great grandchildren into our mist of ancestry,

I pick up the heavy dull black hand piece,
Place it silent to my ear,
And then I turn the little handle
And invite the scratched black bell into its ringing.

When I am done alerting the ether
With my phone's soft bells,
We talk to my parents and grandparents maybe,
Or my brother Jack, now to answer with them,

And our six generations converse together
In long distance party line voices –
HELLO? ARE YOU THERE?
YES WE ARE. HERE

Kip Sudduth

Phoenix Artist



“Hands”

Photography — infrared — Ektachrome slide film — montage.
1976



Kip Sudduth is a painter/ photographer/ mixed-media artist living in Phoenix. He says: “Vision and quality of touch conveys a strong sense of material presence of space and conceptually, the idea of time. Surface patterns merge the elements into a visual language of unity. In the 1970s I apprenticed with the Italian painter Manlio Guberti, who would agree in defining artistic creative endeavors as the ‘conceptualized heightened experience through textural relief, there is the possibility of increasing visual experiences for the viewer. I use heighten tactile experience in all the work I do. I first experimented with photography in 1964. I thought the first roll of film I developed and the first contact print I made was MAGIC. I have never lost this excited anticipation. My art has always been based on Chance by Design, time - space continuity, the unity of the elements seen and felt through a textural experience. The experience forces the viewer into the work allowing the process of visual self discovery. Images are found not only in real time, but form in space allows for new possible visual experiences. The sense of touch conveys recognizable realms, but when you shift the visual experience, that vision becomes multi - dimensional.” Contact the artist at gsudduth@cox.net.

Kip Sudduth

Phoenix Artist



“My Madonna of Frances Place”
(Mixed) Sepia toned — silver gelatin photography (developed by artist)
with splashes of oil paint.
1969

Defining my art or any art has always been rather a difficult, but its idea as Dante Virgil said ‘human art as the grandchild of God.’ ‘The Madonna of Frances Place’ is the first photograph that I did from start to end. That is, I developed the film, printed the silver gelatin print and sepia toned for final presentation. Ultimately I added the texture of sprinkled paint for a snow effect. (During my youth in Louisiana it seemed to snow several years in a row). How does this work relate to hope? In all art the viewer is able to find his own personal visual response, but personally, it represents hope not only as the ‘grandchild of God’ but our search of the unimaginable realized. In the 1970s I accepted an art specialist position with the Stockton Art Troupe, my first professional art teaching experience. In it, some twenty artists with diverse backgrounds came together under the tutelage of musical theater. I produced two large scrimms that hung from the ceiling. I back projected photographic slides at the finale of our troupe’s performance which gave response to dancers whose movement inspired free form musicality. The photograph ‘HANDS’ I present here was done as dancers were photographed while projected images of hands were being front and rear projected simultaneously and photographed again in infrared film. It represents the not only the importance of hope realized through touch, but the touch of human beings, the reaching out for one another multi-dimensionally. The making of art and the teaching of art has and always will be a privilege. I continue the search for visual vocabularies through new and alternative photography, painting, and collage. Please enjoy the possibilities of my present offerings of the past for the hope of the future.

–Kip Sudduth

Happi In Iowa

A Ten-Minute Play

By Asher Wyndham

© 2011

(KYLE tries fixing the loose chain on his trick bike. No luck. He's drunk. Some dented beer cans on the ground. ARNIE enters with a bag.)

ARNIE

Nice trailer. Really.

KYLE

If you're a Bible thumper, I'm gonna get my twelve-gauge.

ARNIE

Kyle... It's me... Arnie... Uh: Your uncle!

KYLE

("Who cares")
Oh...

ARNIE

Got in three hours ago. Still kind of jet lagged... Far walk from your Mom's. You live far out of town.

KYLE

Shouldn't you be in Japan?

ARNIE

No. I'm here for good. I completed my contract. So... You, you look different, bigger— older, I mean. You look good: lost some weight.

KYLE

Whatever.

ARNIE

What happened to your forehead?

Characters:

KYLE, 18. Chubby. Looks younger than he actually is. He's drunk. He has a bruise on his forehead.

ARNIE, late 30s, but he looks older. Can be played by someone younger.

Time:

Present. Summer. Mid morning.

Setting:

Outside a trailer (unseen) in Stokey, Iowa. No set, just a blank stage.

Note on Text:

Words in square brackets [] are not said. The words are implied by gesture or the words are just thought. A slash / indicates when the next character speaks, creating overlapping dialog.

This play was workshopped and staged read at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in Los Angeles in February, 2011. The playwright would like to thank the following artists for their work on the play: Steve Shade (Director), Rachael Friedman (Dramaturg), James Jonson (Stage Manager), Cameron Garcia (Arnie) and Esteban Suarez (Kyle).

KYLE

Can't you see I'm busy, fixing my bike? Fuck this chain!

ARNIE

Kyle... I thought it'd be good if—Before I settle down and get a new job, I thought it'd be good, you know, if we—

Continued on page 53



Asher Wyndham, originally from Canada, will be graduating in May with a MFA in Creative Writing from ASU, Tempe. "Tough Girls" was recently produced at the Minifest at Acadia University in Nova Scotia. "Fatima & Maama," published in the fall edition of Blue Guitar Magazine, was produced in Sydney, Australia earlier this year. Last year, his play "Cassius Sargent's Chicken Bones" received the John Cauble Award for Outstanding Short Play at the American College Theatre Festival and was staged read at the Kennedy Center in D.C. Contact him at asherwyndham@yahoo.com.

Continued from page 52

KYLE

Had a reunion. Lovely. My Mom forced you to come here! She thinks I'm going to fuck up again. Get into some pit of depression—

ARNIE

And get drunk?
(Picks up a beer can)
It's like nine in the morning.

KYLE

Move. You're casting a shadow.

ARNIE

I'm in Stokey for maybe three days, so... You were locked up in Juvie for five years! Kyle! You want me to go?

KYLE

...Came all the way to bumfuck Iowa to visit, so stay. I guess. Fuckity fuck!

ARNIE

Isn't that a kid's bike?

KYLE

Nno. It's a trick bike. BMX. Xtreme.

ARNIE

Cool... Uhm. Why don't you have a car?

KYLE

No money. But don't worry about me! I'm eighteen! I'm getting by, that's all that matters. I bought this bike from that kid Bubba next door. Now I don't hafta walk twenty minutes down the railway track to get to the factory. But if I don't get this fixed, I'm gonna have to walk again. Rent's cheap in this lot. I rent a room in this trailer from this guy Darrick I work with. He's cool. He breeds guinea pigs. Dresses them up like Superman and Lois Lane and makes them [fuck].

ARNIE

That's...cool. Your mom told me she hooked you up. How's working at the factory?

KYLE

Free ice cream! But I hate working at the same station with my mom. She's like a Pomeranian. Yapyapyaps about hospital shows. My teeth chatter like in a slasher movie!
(KYLE shows his teeth and tries to scare ARNIE!)

ARNIE

You're drunk! Look at all / these cans...

KYLE

No, I'm not drunk. Just had a few. A six-er. Actually seven. Not drunk. Seriously!

ARNIE

O-kay... Uh. How'd your chain get loose?

KYLE

Went off that curb. Was late for my shift, and Julio the manager tried to rip me a new asshole. Gotta put up with his bitching. My Mom needs her garden seeds, The Enquirer, / groceries—

ARNIE

You don't have to take care of her.

KYLE

With my Dad AWOL, she can't do it alone. Duh. There're bills, / mortgage, court fees.

ARNIE

Don't worry about her finances. I will help. I will try. You fill up your bank account.

KYLE

Whatever. I have no fucking clue how to fix this! / Shit! Shit!!

ARNIE

I can fix it. I can fix it! I've fixed a bike chain before. I've fixed your chain before.

KYLE

When.

ARNIE

When you were eight. We biked through Resurrection Park and—

KYLE

And I went over a dead raccoon. Yeah, but that was a long time ago...

ARNIE

Your chain came off. And you fell. And you scraped your chin. Here—

(ARNIE points at KYLE's chin. KYLE backs away defensively.)

Continued on page 54

Continued from page 53

ARNIE (Cont.)

You cried.

KYLE

No: I screamed! A dead raccoon with its eyes eaten out by bugs! Barf-gross.

ARNIE

I fixed the chain to stop you from crying. And you...hugged me and we biked through the park. And after we went to the Texaco, sat on the ice box.

KYLE

Ate Doritos, saw transports go by.

ARNIE

Made the drivers pull their horns.

KYLE

And talked about stuff like Alien / Versus Predator!

ARNIE

Alien Versus Predator! And saw the eagle circling...

KYLE

Yeah.... So um. So can you help me?

ARNIE

Sure can—

(ARNIE flips the bike over and starts to fix the bike chain.)

KYLE

Thanks.

ARNIE

This'll be easy. ...Sorry, I didn't stay in contact with you.

KYLE

You didn't. Why didn't you send a birthday card? You know my birthday! We share the same fucking birthday! July the second!

ARNIE

Here: your present. Wipe your hands and take it out.

(KYLE turns away from ARNIE.)

ARNIE (Cont.)

All right, I'll take it out then. It's a Happi coat. H-a-p-p-i. Ancient Japanese warriors wore something like this. Try it on. C'mon! Please!

KYLE

I can't be happy wearing this around town.

ARNIE

It could be a bathrobe?

KYLE

Okay. Let's see what this kimono-whatever looks like on me... My name is Kamikaze Wasabi. I bow to my Sensei Bonsai.

ARNIE

(Laughs)

Happy belated birthday.

KYLE

Ditto. Thanks for the souvenir. I had fun on my birthday. I played Sonic the Hedgehog and puked my guts out on beer.

ARNIE

(Resumes fixing the chain)

I hope your mother gets on you for drinking.

KYLE

She does: "Don't end up a lonely drunk bachelor like your Uncle Arnold."

ARNIE

What!? I, I'm not lonely. And I'm not—I'm sober. Really.

KYLE

Admit it: you got shitfaced on your birthday too.

ARNIE

Just a sip of sake.

KYLE

[Really?]

ARNIE

O-kay: a bottle of sake. But I never embarrassed myself.

KYLE

Whatever. So, haven't found Mr. Right? Or are you like asexual like / a monk?

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ARNIE

Nno. I've been...busy. Paying my off fucking grad loans.

KYLE

You don't want that HIV scare again, right?

ARNIE

What!?! Why is she telling—Forget it. You fucked this bike up.

KYLE

She said you're like me: "Scared to move forward."

ARNIE

Scared!?! What!?! I know how to—I am moving forward! We, we're nothing alike. ...

KYLE

Yeah. I love tits and pussy. So why didn't you even send me a postcard?!

ARNIE

Teaching wasn't a vacation. It was my job.

KYLE

I saw a postcard from Malaysia? on mom's fridge. Some lake and garden? So: You had time to visit fuckin' Ching Chong La La Land, but not me in Juvie?! Even my drunkass crazy Dad did a better job staying in touch! Just admit it: You gave up being my uncle because you hate me!

ARNIE

I am here, aren't I?!

(KYLE takes off the coat, bunches it into a ball and throws it at ARNIE.)

KYLE

There's no point in you coming here. I'm gonna see more of my parole officer than you. I'm gonna test the bike out. Get out of my way.

ARNIE

Wait! Let me check the chain!

KYLE

Let go!

(KYLE gets on the bike.)

ARNIE

You're drunk! Just take a spin around the driveway.

(KYLE rides the bike in a circle around ARNIE.)

ARNIE (Cont.)

How about we go inside and...play Super Mario Brothers?

(KYLE rides faster. After a moment—ARNIE gets in the way and stops the bike—)

ARNIE (Cont.)

Remember what you said to me at Thanksgiving. When you were twelve.

KYLE

...Fuck off fag.

ARNIE

You slammed the front door in my face.

KYLE

...I'm, I'm sorry.

ARNIE

Not your fault, you were twelve, you know. It was your Dad and... But what you said, it...hurt. I had to get away. Des Moines, it was better for awhile but...Japan.

KYLE

I was guilty and I deserved it. So, you gave up on me.

ARNIE

I wasn't there when you were in court because I had to get ready for Japan! ...Okay. Yeah: I gave up on you. What you did when you were thirteen, it was...!

KYLE

...Yeah... I space off sometimes at work, brick after brick after brick after brick after... Mom shakes me awake, and Julio is like, "Are you a braindead motherfucker!?"

ARNIE

Your mom told me you've been...upset. Can't sleep. You have no friends your own age. So... What's up?

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KYLE

I saw him. On the Fourth of July. I drove up to get my Cookie Dough Blizzard in my mom's car and...It's Him. Trevor. He knew it was me. He had a hard time telling me how much the Blizzard was. ...Because I was the one who... His face is better, but it's still...fucked up. I couldn't look at him straight in the eyes. ...I—

(Fighting back tears)

I left money on the ledge. More than what the Blizzard was worth. I drove off to the Bomgaars parking lot and just... I cried...like a fuckin' baby... And beat my forehead on the steering wheel over and over til I was bleeding. And I watched the fireworks...through the cracked windshield...bursting. How can I forget what I did? Howwww?

ARNIE

You didn't light the match.

KYLE

But I gave Joel the matches!—my matches!—from my pocket! I b-. I b-burned some...gay kid.

ARNIE

What you did... It's in the past.

KYLE

If I had to do my life over again, I wouldn't've gotten drunk that night—I wouldn't've dragged Trevor from his house to the ball field and kicked him again and again and again—I wouldn't've dumped the kerosene on him—I wouldn't've given Joel the matches—I wouldn't've laughed fag when he was rolling—burrning on the snowbank— screaming—crying— Kyle!—Kyle!—Kyle!

ARNIE

He didn't die, so that's...good.

KYLE

The firefighters, they peeled Trevor off the snowbank. It was icy, so some of his skin came off... Do you forgive me?

ARNIE

You didn't burn me.

KYLE

DO YOU FORGIVE ME?

ARNIE

...Yes. Yes. Let's go to the park. C'mon.

KYLE

...Okay. After the park we can go to the gas station.

ARNIE

And look for the eagle.

KYLE

Cool. I'm gonna take my bike. I'm not really tipsy now. You can borrow Bubba's new bike. It's a trick bike like mine. AYO BUBBA! CAN MY UNCLE ARNIE BORROW YOUR BIKE?!

ARNIE

I don't think / I can ride a—

KYLE

THANKS! You know how to ride a bike. Let's go.

ARNIE

Okay. But wait—
(Offers the coat)
Happy belated birthday.

(After a moment, KYLE slides his arms through the coat. ARNIE takes from the bag and unwraps a Happi coat. He puts it on.)

ARNIE (Cont.)

Tadaima. It means: I'm back home. Tadaima.

KYLE

...Tadaima.

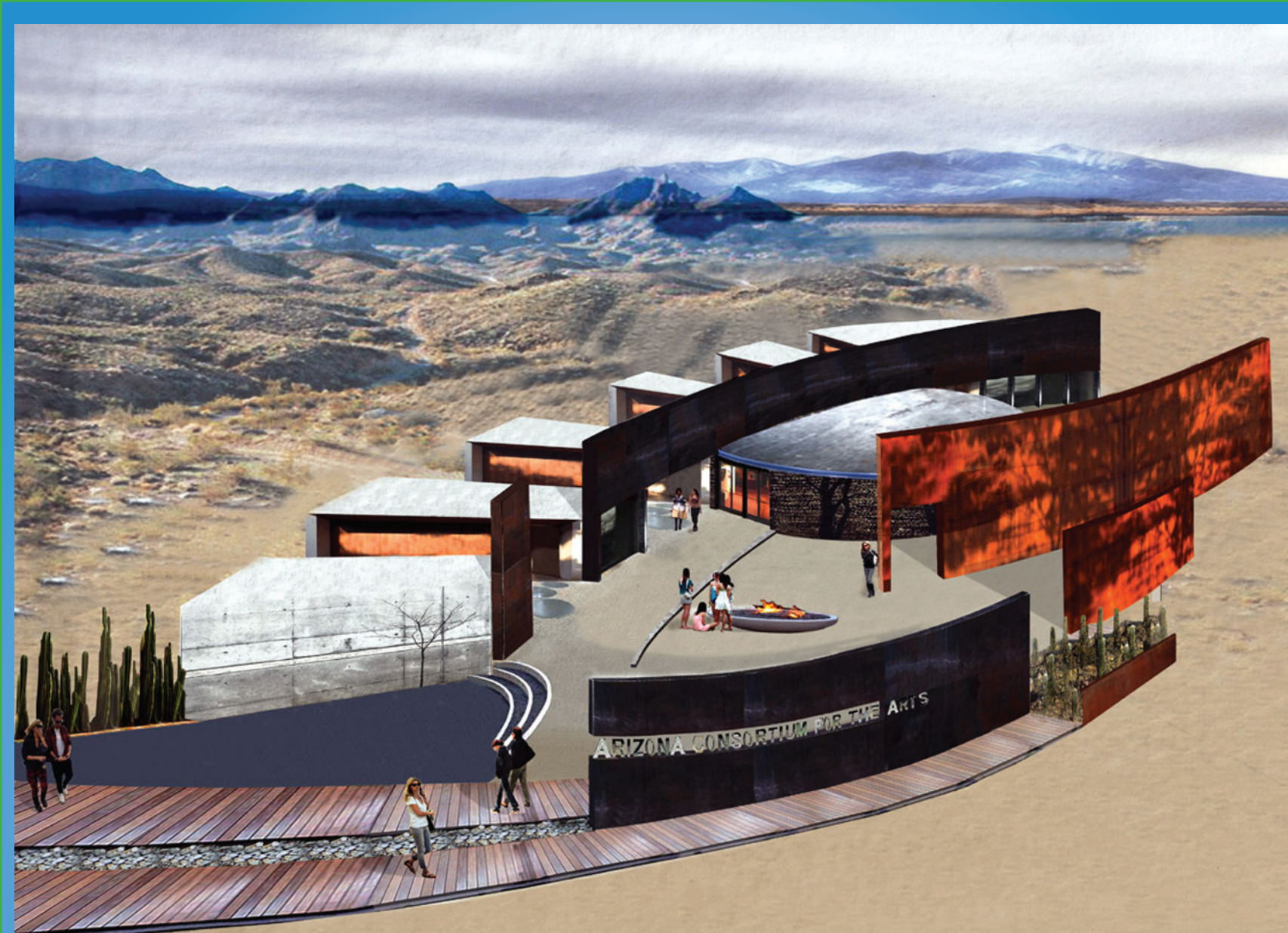
(They start to exit. After a few steps, KYLE's head crashes into ARNIE's chest. He sobs like a child. ARNIE puts the kickstand down. KYLE lets go of the bike. ARNIE pats KYLE's head.
END OF PLAY.)

Consortium benefit concert spotlights Valley musicians

On March 6, the Arizona Consortium for the Arts held a benefit concert in collaboration with the AZ World Music Initiative to benefit both of the organizations at the Il Vineaio Restaurant and Wine Bar at 270 W. Main St., downtown Mesa, Arizona. Visit www.ilvineaio.com. The afternoon and evening were filled with fine entertainment. Musical styles included Folk Rock, World Music, Latin Jazz, and Smooth Jazz by some of the Valley's most popular musicians. Many thanks to Jonathan Gabriel, Jazz-a-tukee, Radiant Sky, Greg Meyers and Gary Kiggins Duo and dulce VAS for the wonderful performances! Il Vineaio donated 25% from its sales. Many thanks to everyone who came, donated items, ordered food, drinks, purchased raffle tickets and purchased from vendors! A huge thank-you to Cameron and Cindy Selogie of Il Vineaio for their generosity! Many thanks to Sherry Finzer for organizing the incredible event, and thank you to all who helped! \$358 was raised for the consortium!



Photos by Richard H. Dyer Jr./The Blue Guitar Magazine



The consortium's vision of a multicultural arts center

The rendering of our consortium's 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.

Mesa Community College's fashion runway benefit for consortium is a smash hit

On March 12, Arizona Model and Actor Management partnered with Monique Fagre Swimwear to bring an incredible morning of "Runway Tips and Techniques" workshop to all the participants ranging from ages 5 to 40s to benefit the Arizona Consortium for the Arts.

The workshop was provided by the graciousness and generosity of designer Monica Samuels and her partner Maria Elena Fagre.

The workshop was an incredible experience for all the participants. Everyone received personal attention. The benefit of confidence and self-esteem-building was evident from the participants' smiles, especially for the little ones.

Mesa Community College donated two classrooms for the

workshop. The director of the Fashion Merchandising Program at MCC, Evonne Bowling, graciously planned for the classroom space and the runway. Also, Sondra Barr, 202 Magazine's editor, arranged for Sam Evans to be the event's photographer.

The organizer of the event, Gail E. McCauley, president of Arizona Model and Actor Management and one of the consortium's advisers, said: "I thought of an idea to give back to our community by making this workshop where everyone would benefit. The purpose of this workshop is for 100% of the proceeds to go toward this wonderful charity to support their arts and cultural events, projects and vision." Many thanks to Gail! The consortium is grateful to everyone who attended, helped and donated! \$415 was raised for the consortium!

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 now have 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.

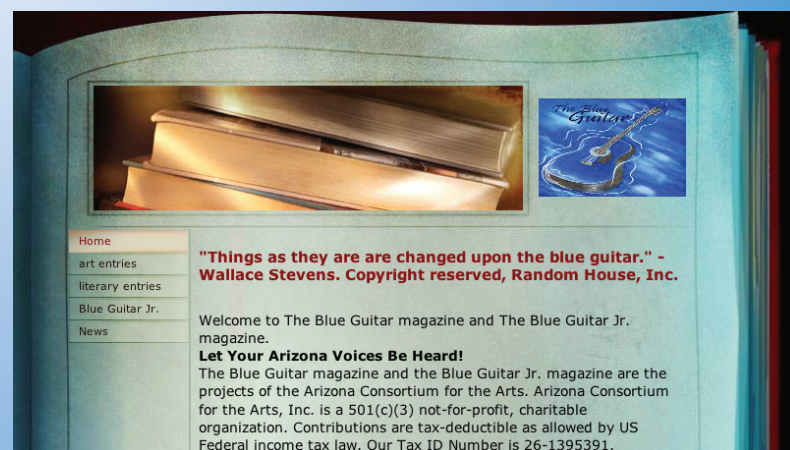
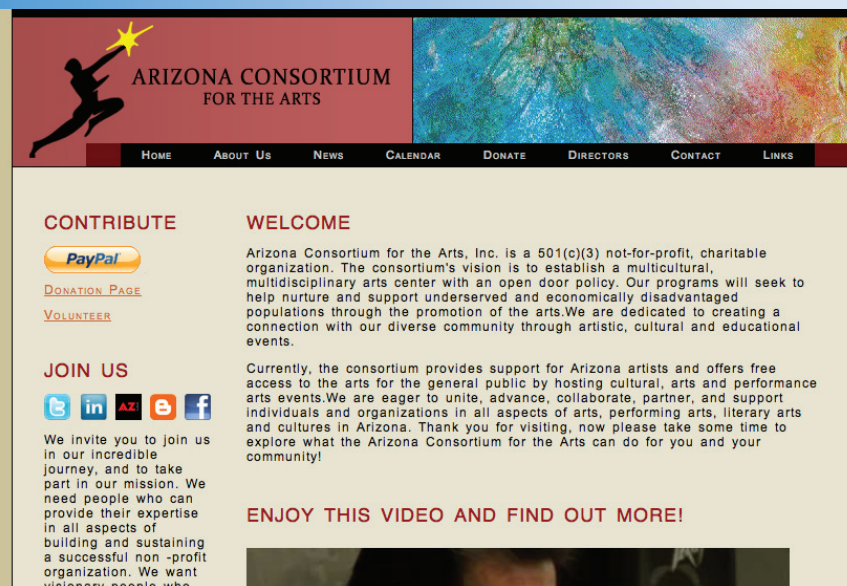
The Arizona Consortium's vision is to create a multicultural arts center, where children, teens and adults will become inspired, to develop their creative abilities, in conjunction with exhibiting artists, writers, actors, dancers and musicians who will share their expertise in a gallery, theater setting. Please visit www.artizona.org or www.theblueguitarmagazine.org for more information about becoming a member, networking, donating, advertising, volunteering or submitting to The Blue Guitar magazine.



A big thank-you from the Arizona Consortium for the Arts

Crystal Achey • Julie and Rick Mukherjee • Donna Donte • Debra Pelow • Olivia • Davin and Michelle Lavikka • Deborah Kay • Michelle Hawkins • Melanie Tighe • Frank Musselman • Sara Vannucci • Windy Lynn Harris • Wise Women Write • Moshe Bukshpan • Audrey Thacker • Partick McGinn • Kristina Konen • Ann Wheat • Carmela Ramirez • Michael E. Singer • Raven • Sharon Austin • Steven Sable – Stacia Holmes • Phoenix Center for the Arts • Phoenix Center Association • Eric Cox • Austin Vickers • Eric Aceves • Lynne Thompson • Jessica Dimino • Anita Shaw • Denise Landis • Marcia Fine • Pat Rios • Lori Landis • Amit Elazar • Nicole Romine • Elena Mitchell • Aurelia Lunt • Jonathan Gabriel • Anne Wallace • Macy's • Aleksandr Tulchinsky and Family – Leonid and Polina Tulchinsky • Ainnie Lasconia • Janessa McKibbin • Ralph "Rafal" Skrzypczak • Sarah Harrison • Lynn Black • Autumn Drozda • Patricia J. Jensen • Susanna Astarte • Nicholas Schulte • Thom Butcher • Zhanna Tevan • Arizona Classical Kids • Stacia Holmes • Yvonne Wilson • Joyce White • Anna Yakupovich • LaTorri Lindsay • Adrienne Chanatsky • Jason Bressler • Jorn P. Bates • Jeanne Eles • Marissa Keller • Barbara Fleury • Joe Floco • Gillian Benowich • Annie Loyd • Buz Essel • Kathy Henderson-Essel • Colleen Sugden • Linda King • Michelle Durnell Bullock – Dr. Judith Btandstadter • Rebecca Dyer • Richard Dyer • Sherry Finzer • VeeRonna – Dulce Vas – Radiant Sky • John Calvert • Jason Wiedman • Jazz-a-tukee • Greg Meyers • Gary Kiggins • Esther Schnur-Berlot • Susan Stephens • Bob Hurni • Society For The Arts • Barry Brooks • Paul R. Cocuzza • John Fontana -Keith Sparbanie • Monica Lynn Fidura • Roger A. Simpson – Michael and Fe Gabriel • Paul R. Cocuzza – AZCulture • Gabriel Bay • Warren Chu • Michelle Peralta • Bob Booker • Catherine R. Capozzoli • Lauri "Nugget" Hammond • Gail MacCauley • Rodney Houston • Tiauna Schneider • Stephen Hilliard • Katie Kral • Roger Kirk Nelson • David Fraley • Chrisal Valencia • Benjamin Kern • Nuha Sarraj -Tosca Kerr • Cecilia Castillo Fisher • Jake Beckman • Elana Lathan • Breyan Sussman • Keith Sparbanie • Dennis and Jeanne Yuresko • Elena Eros • Susan Canasi • Corinne McAuley • Cynthia Bowers • Phoenix Volunteers • Fawn Cheng • Joan Embrey/Johnson • Marti Otten – CJ Heru – CJ Rider • Gilead • Janae Jaynes Learned • Effie Bouras • Joan McConnell -Susan Stalteri • Darrylee Cohen • Andrew Smith – Dr. Trish Dolasinski • Rachel Greenfeld • Kas Winters • Courtney Tjaden – James Thornton • Howard H. Paley – Il Vinaio – Cameron and Cindy Selogie • Mesa Community College • Monique Fagre Swimwear • Monica Samuels • Maria Elena Fagre • Michelle Frias • Pamela D. April • Mai De Koch • Miwa Williams • Alaysha Hargrave • Bustos Family • Debbie S. Jennings • O'Brien Family • Kaitie Williams • Pearson Family • Misti Swink • J Lynn Mahoney • Cavender Family • Hollinger Family • Estera Siket – Forakis Law Firm – Silvertree Dentistry • Carla Pritchard • Jenny Dagnino • Jack Howell • Colin O'Donohoe • Nancy Johnson • Michelle Hamett – Jerahian family • Nicholas A. Baio • Jasmine Blanchard • Chuck Mallory • Kenneth Weene • Glenda Pitts • Dean and Andi Barness

Check our websites for news on the arts



The Blue Guitar Magazine's website
is www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

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

Spring 2011



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Dog-Eared Pages Books in Phoenix and its owners Melanie Tighe and fiancé Thom Butcher, are heavily involved in the community. They host author signings for local authors, children’s story times, book clubs, writers groups, poetry readings, a Scrabble club. They also host many events for the Arizona Consortium for the Arts. The consortium thanks Melanie, Thom and Dog-Eared Pages Books!

May 22 event to draw attention to local arts organizations

WHAT: A celebration of the arts
in support of the
Arizona Consortium for the Arts

WITH: Dog-Eared Pages Books and
a variety of small arts organizations

WHERE: Dog-Eared Pages Books, 16428
N. 32nd St. (just south of Bell Road)

WHEN: Noon-5 p.m. Sunday, May 22

WHO: For participation and information,
contact Chair of Event Kenneth Weene,
(602) 569-6426, ken_weene@cox.net

The Arts are a beautiful garden. They require nurturing and tending. This is an event to draw attention to the many arts organizations that blossom in the garden of The Valley of The Sun. This is a great chance for artists, writers, musicians, poets, and dancers to get together, meet one another, and find out what’s going on in North Phoenix. You never know who you will meet, who might be the one to help you further your art, your goals or who you will be able to help. Pack a lunch and plan to stay from noon ‘til 5.



Coming in May 2011,
the Third Annual
The Blue Guitar Spring Festival
of the Arts

For details, go to The Arizona
Consortium for the Arts
website, www.artizona.org



A Call to Writers for Summer

The Blue Guitar magazine will accept literary submissions for the Summer 2011 Edition from June 1 through July 15. Submissions are sought in all genres — fiction, poetry, plays, creative nonfiction. 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 Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

A Call to Artists for Summer

The Blue Guitar magazine will accept art submissions in all mediums for the Summer 2011 Edition from June 1 through July 15. The art entries, which will be selected by a jury for inclusion in the spring issue, must follow the theme of “Nature Images.” Any artists who work in any visual art media and are 18 years or older and are 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. Images must be identified in the e-mail with the artist's name and contact information, titles of works, dates and mediums. To submit or for further information, e-mail Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@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.



Volume 3,
Number 1

Spring Issue
FREE!

*“Things
as they are
are
changed
upon
the
blue guitar.”*