

The Blue Guitar



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Co-Editor’s Note

Irish poet Patrick Kavanaugh thought it was more important for writers, poets, and artists to know every stone in a nearby brook than the latest happenings in Dublin.

Kavanaugh often wrote of the validity and necessity of the local experience to gain wisdom and understanding about the human condition: “Parochialism is universal; it deals with the fundamentals.” And: “Parochialism and provincialism are direct opposites. A provincial is always trying to live by other people’s loves, but a parochial is self-sufficient.”



Co-Editor
 Rebecca
 “Becca” Dyer

For this Spring Issue of the magazine, wherever or whatever is being observed — whether it’s ghosts on dark streets or coyotes on front lawns, what is in our backyard or in our front yard as the case may be — a sense of nearby place is key in translating the human experience in the natural or real world or the world of the imagination. To be concerned with, to be inspired by, to write about what is near to us, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, is as Kavanaugh once wrote, “having the courage of our parish.”

Location is paramount to the work of the poets, writers and artists appearing in this issue. Location often functions as a main character, whether it’s the streets of downtown Phoenix, the trails of the Sonoran Desert, a circus or a hilltop. Location gives readers an anchor for a definite sense of place, a foothold in a specific universe, and often becomes a window into the inner landscape of the writer, poet, and artist.

Enjoy immersing yourself in our latest issue and all of its many locations. Keep up the wonderful writing and creating, keep on submitting and keep on reading!

Rebecca “Becca” Dyer
 Co-Editor

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 back covers: *Marjory Boyer*

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

2 Poems By Roxanne Doty

The Ghosts of Old Phoenix

Leave your house while it's still dark
just before sunrise take Van Buren
west to downtown, forget the freeways
they have no heart, feel the soft morning
hint of light, the way it whispers itself
into existence, rides on the silence
of time and the speed of solitude

pass the Blue Moon strip club
the cheap motels, sorrows and stains
you'll feel the ghosts, hidden dwellers
of fallen places and glimmering change
beneath the high-rise condos
and hip music venues they roam the ether
hold a piece of your heart

sometimes you find old fragments
of yourself along seedy stretches
of decay *Why do you stay?* You ask them
Because there is no place else to go,
the ghosts say. *And all our stories are here.*
And because of you.

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Roxanne Doty lives in Tempe, Arizona. Her debut novel, "Out Stealing Water," was published by Regal House Publishing, Aug. 30, 2022. Her first poetry collection will be published by Kelsay Books in the spring of 2024. She has published stories and poems in Third Wednesday, Quibble Lit, Superstition Review, Espacio Fronterizo, Ocotillo Review, Forge, I70 Review, Soundings Review, The Blue Guitar, Four Chambers Literary Magazine, Lascaux Review, Lunaris Review, Journal of Microliterature, NewVerseNews, International Times, Saranac Review, Gateway Review and Reunion-The Dallas Review. Her short story "Turbulence" (Ocotillo Review) was nominated for the 2019 Pushcart prize for short fiction.

The Prostitutes of West Van Buren

You can still see them in the shadows
beneath billboards and burning skyline
exhausted by eternal longing, haunted
by nostalgia in this Sonoran city
that won't let them go even as time
lashes across the ragged horizon
like wind through open desert
they have grown old, abandoned
cigarettes hang from faded lips
once red as fresh blood
smoke rising like swirls of dust
in dark spaces of desire
dive bars lit by dull neon
flickering through empty nights
they walk with an aura of grace
towards an impossible death
trapped in a purgatory, a bardo
these spirits who in younger lives
were charged with crimes of solicitation
and enticement of eager men in cars
who cruised Van Buren
pulled over to curbs and demanded
the price of satisfaction

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4 Poems by Alfred Fournier

Field Guide to the Coyotes of South Mountain

If you find yourself on the south end of Phoenix and in the mood for wilder fare, something earthly yet ethereal on the tongue, don't bother to climb the twisting Saddleback Trail, peering among shrubs and desert sage for a glimpse of mythic yellow fur. Instead, try a walk through upscale neighborhoods at the base of the foothills, where sidewalks fronting landscaped yards provide good views.

Here you might easily find *Canis Latrans* striding a few BMW-lengths ahead on the pavement. In Spring, he descends from hills to hunt among front yard shrubs for rabbit or quail, strides without backward glance, with a strut to put Tony Manero to shame. His compass dead set, he pays no heed to tourist or resident but swaggers on without regard. A fine desert specimen. He knows who owns these streets and hills.

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Originally from Royal Oak, Michigan, Alfred Fournier is an entomologist, writer and community volunteer living in Phoenix, Arizona. He is the author of "A Summons on the Wind" (2023, Kelsay Books). His poems have appeared in Third Wednesday, Gyroscope Review, The New Verse News, The Sunlight Press, The Indianapolis Review, and The Blue Guitar.



To My Therapist Who Wouldn't Stop Talking

Who wouldn't let me get a word in.
Who may have needed therapy himself.
Who annoyed me by talking politics,
though I mostly agreed with him.
Who I mocked behind his back because—who does that?
Who, when I decided to end treatment,
acted like it was a breakup.

You weren't a bad guy.
I have to confess—
that time you paused long enough to listen,
encouraging me to read
a poem I'd written about isolation,
you cut to the heart when you asked,
*how would you feel reading it aloud
to a roomful of strangers?*
I balked.
Preposterous! Horrifying! Impossible!
Why would I do that?

But you planted a seed.
The moment I stepped to the mic, hands shaking,
to look across that sea of faces,
my words cutting the air like a long-needed rain,
something in me changed.
I learned I wasn't alone.
I wanted to let you know.
I wanted to say thanks.

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Observations at an Open Reading

The young poet at the reading told me
we are mathematical equations
comprised of deep love, and I knew
he was right. I might have asked
how one so young obtains such wisdom
but he quickly moved to the next line
and the next, then sat next to
the tall horticulturalist,
who he didn't know
loved bees and flowers.

She was barely older than him,
and when she stood at the mic
you could tell her long fingers
knew how to weave something—
sweetgrass or music
or mittens for children.

They hardly said hello to each other
but listened, as we all did,
to the poets, one after another,
their words tumbling
like mathematical acrobats
across the mat of our shared reverence
for each syllable,
every little flower,
every shy glance life has to offer.

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A Roadmap for Dementia

I've taken to writing letters then forgetting
I've sent them, or what I've said. In illusory
lucid moments, I've mistaken digital numbers
on the bedside clock for tokens of divine guidance.
With difficulty, I sort memory from dream,
fantasy from fact. I'm never quite sure
whether thoughts I've hidden for years
are pushing across my lips in vacant moments.
I can't remember the stop I made at the pharmacy
on the way home, and I was sure the lovebirds
we saw chattering beneath the mesquite tree
from the parking lot were fragments from a dream,
until my daughter said she remembered them too.
She wants to believe there's clarity behind my eyes,
that wisdom I've acquired will pass to her in time.
But I keep finding my car keys in the damnedest places.
I remember the glimmer of my first girlfriend's smile
more readily than which road my dentist's office is on.
And I'm starting to wonder, when will I feel lost enough
to stop and ask directions? Is this the road to heaven?
Or did I make a wrong turn at the Circle K?

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5 Poems by David Chorlton

Kestrel

Rock by rock sunlight falls
on the desert, gently balanced on the wind.
Cold early

but the horizons are alive
where land turns into air.

The secrets have gone back into
their crevices and curled up to sleep.

Sparrows flock where they
pick what they need
from the ground's imagination.

One flashing
moment a kestrel aims straight at
the chorus

of White-crowned and Black-
throated, which scatter with unsung
calls still in their throats. Ask the mesquite
what it saw:

a vertical descent,
a nail to fix one dry arroyo
firmly to the Earth.

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David Chorlton has long called Phoenix home. He tries to constantly find something fresh in familiar surroundings and writing has helped in this regard. So has the local wildlife, beginning with the birds that feed in his yard and stretching to the coyotes who can make even urban streets look like their own.

Awakening

Outside a darkened window
wing by wing a day begins, too small to be named
but moving at the pace
of appetite. When the thrasher
on a cactus sings
the daily news he's never out of tune.
How did the world sleep
last night?

 Did its dreams make up
for what it did awake?
First glow on the hawk's breast
where he's waiting for the air to warm, ready
to tear the light
apart with a claw. The killing
isn't clean

 on channels five and twelve.
It's all somebody else's wedding bells
and gunfire there. And yet how peacefully
the hawk is rising
straight into the sun
 as if
its distant fire meant only warmth.

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Local News

The sky shows its silver lining
to the north side of the mountain.

Grey today, the sun
diluted over all
a person can survey.

*Did you see, was that
a whiplash turning round
the corner, or coyote
exploring in street time?*

The body count
makes war news sound like sport; every bulletin
hurts, but it's natural to forgive
the pack when early
morning howls announce a kill.

*They're usually
active just before dawn.* The hour a dream
turns back toward the night.
When the ridgeline glows
and all the news
is local.

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Memory

Sunlight peeling from a cloud
above Mount Wrightson, each step closer
to the peak is a breath
the wind takes
and Mexico rises from a chain
of blue valleys.

The high rocks think out loud
about holding to the steep
side of the trail that winds its way into
the air, exploring the unknown.

Where are you going? asks
the lichen, *where are you from?*

It would be easy
to fall, stepping into the sky.
But many life zones stand between
wonder and fear.

Later when
it's yesterday again
the mountain remembers
the ascent, the nervous glances down,
and pulls free of its foundation
to change places with the sun.

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The Passenger

Today's date is drying out
after two days' rain, cloud light
and grackles
facing beakwards at the sky.
There's a man so polite when he gets on the bus
no one notices
 the breakfast gin
that makes his breath smile, though it's impossible
to overlook his trousers
when they reach a risky low. Full moon
tomorrow, and the grass
 in the park will howl.
Today it's still damp: throw a ball, chase
a shadow back into the bushes.
Next stop he struggles
with his belt, Thank you, Thank you,
speaks with grace
 that belies his disheveled
appearance when he steps gently down
to wait for his connection.
January twenty-fourth,
fifty-two Fahrenheit, lunchtime still
two hours away. He turns
 to convey
appreciation one more time
as the doors close and he sits on the bench
with his string quartet mind
in a hard rock bluesy world.

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My Tumamoc

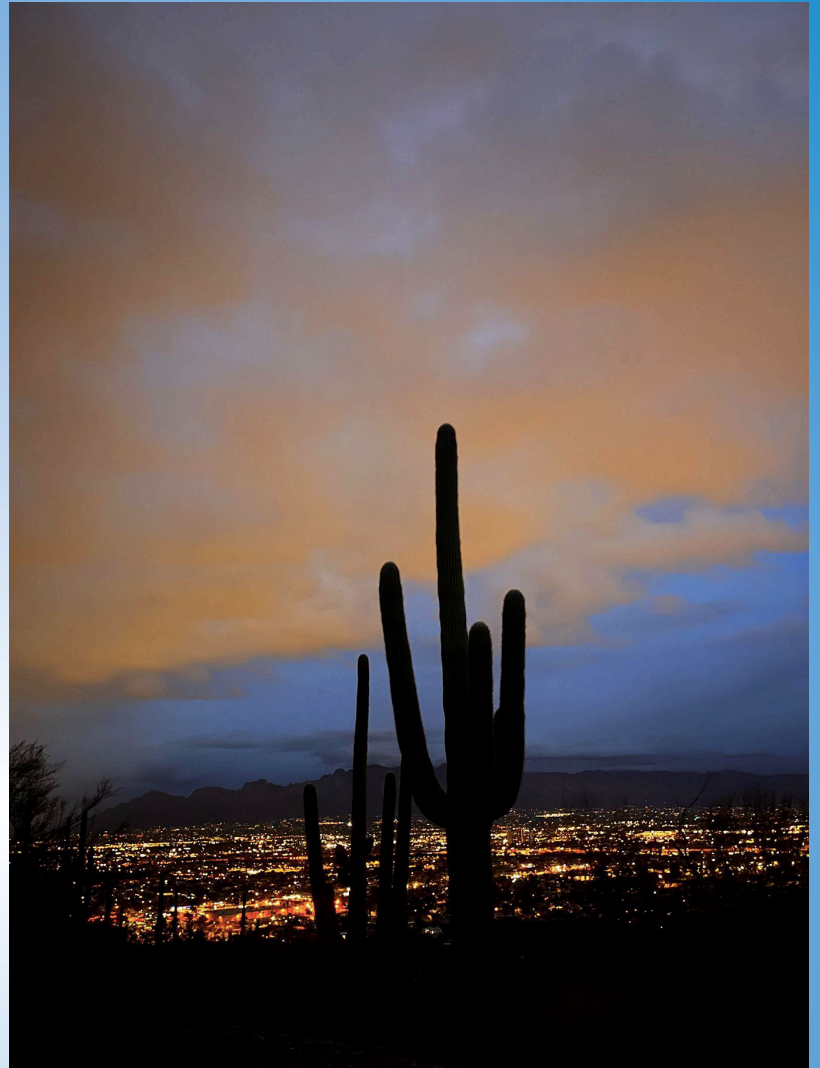
By Meleny Gradillas

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Intimidated was the first time my eleven-year-old self felt when my parents dropped me off at the hill. I took my gaze from the paved trail up towards the top, then examined the rest of the hill down. I had never seen such a large piece of earth before. “Watch out for snakes, Mel,” my cousin said as she pushed me up the trail. Now, I was afraid. My heart skipped a beat. I couldn’t tell if it was from the excitement of trying something new or if it was from the idea of a rattlesnake biting off my leg. I followed closely behind, watching her trek up the first incline, her long brown hair swinging side to side as she adjusted her ponytail. “Pick it up,” I remember her shouting from in front. I moved my little legs forward wondering why I decided to accompany her.

My breath quickened and I felt sweat dripping down my back and from my temples. As much as I wanted to just lay and bury myself on that hill, I was more afraid that my cousin would be disappointed in my lack of determination. We had just reached the first excessively steep incline. I hunched over to catch my breath, and I moved myself off of the pavement to the dirt to let the other hikers pass. Each one of them seemed to be there for different reasons. Some were there for exercise; those were the older women and men who seemed to have made goals and resolutions at the beginning of the year. Others, the older folks, trotted along the trail in their hiking gear and working their hiking sticks. Some were there for the scenery. And others were there for peace. As I gathered my strength, I began to reflect on why I would want to be there.

Tumamoc Hill, a popular three mile round trip hike in Tucson, Ariz., is the perfect beginners hiking spot. For many,



Saguaros on Tumamoc Hill look over the City of Tucson in the evening, Monday, Jan. 22, 2024. (Photo/Meleny Gradillas)

Continued on page 15

Meleny Gradillas is a south Tucson native and aspiring journalist. She has a knack for writing and a dedication to serving her community. She is currently a junior at the University of Arizona, majoring in journalism. Meleny has a passion for photography and feature writing and often spends time outside with her pets. She is a storyteller with hopes of telling the stories of the beautiful people in her community and making a positive impact through her voice.



it is their sanctuary of peace. It is their year's achievement. It is their success story. It is a place of tears and laughter. It is a place of history where people can release their energy. For me, it is my place of reflection.

I revisit the hill every so often to let off steam or get my steps in if I'm feeling too lazy to work out. But there are times when I am in need of a mental reset. One I cannot find at my crowded home. My Tumamoc, I call it. Every step I take is a moment I get to ground myself back to the earth. Connecting my body and soul with la tierra that I call home. I share my peace with the saguaros and my breath with the animals. I've cried with the wind and shared my stories with the native rocks. I laugh now at my initial intimidation from the hill; how I wish even then I would have understood its magic.

Butterflies

By Paula Ashley

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My house, bought in 1987, was a model home. The walls of the entry and living room are hung with a blue and tan striped grasscloth paper. There are three photographs hung beside the coat closet door. The black and white photograph on the bottom is of Cathedral Rock in Sedona that appears to be taken from a vantage point across the flowing stream in Oak Creek Canyon by Loren, my youngest son. The feel of the flowing waters and the undulating rocks washed by the stream mesmerizes me today.

Above this photograph is a museum print of the “Stairs of Montmartre” by Brassai. The lampposts are shrouded in a gray mist evoking mystery, intrigue, and death as they lead to one of the famous cemeteries of Paris where many of the famous are entombed. This print reminds me of my trip to Paris in 1993 when I climbed these stairs and strolled the cemetery monuments. The tone of the print echoes the tone of the wallpaper and leads not to a cemetery but to a rebirth.

And finally, on top of these prints, there is an eighteen-by-eighteen-inch white canvas on which nine black butterflies lift their wings into the hall air. These are surrounded by a number of small colorful butterflies added for interest. “Butterflies” is an art project Randy, my husband and I, collaborated on. We had been inspired by an installation in the entry of the Phoenix Art Museum called “Black Cloud” by Carlos Amorales. Although the installation described as “a plague of moths” was intended to be foreboding, we found the immersion quietly tranquil and awe inspiring.

The years Randy and I have been together have been happy years. I had been working full time when my mother fell and broke her hip. It was only four months after my father had died and she was living alone in her house. She was first moved to the independent living home near where she lived that she

had seen before when my father was alive. But a few months later, she had a compression fracture in her spine and had to be moved to assisted living.

I found it impossible to keep up with her medical care, paperwork, and the responsibility to take her out of the home where she was living so she would know she had not been abandoned there. I took a voluntary retirement package and looked for a flexible job that allowed me the time I needed to take care of my mother without wearing me out. I started teaching math at one or another of the local community colleges. As a single woman at that time, I also liked to go out dancing on Friday and other nights when possible. About two years before my mother died, I was at one of these singles dances. I stopped at the psychic’s table set up by the door and asked if there was someone for me out there. She said yes and that he was right there that night. “Sure,” I thought, and drove home as usual with no prospects in sight.

The next Friday night, a younger man stopped at the table I was sitting at to talk. He did not ask me to dance. Then he was there the next Friday and the next. He still did not ask me to dance. He talked about his guitar and writing songs. Finally, he asked me to go with him to his workplace Christmas dance. I said maybe, but we must meet for coffee first. We met at the Coffee Plantation in the Biltmore shopping center. We talked and talked and talked until the sun went down. I let him pick me up for his workplace Christmas dance. Finally, we danced. I agonized over our age difference, but all my girlfriends told me to “go for it.” So, it was not long before Randy moved in with me.

One of our favorite activities was to go to HobNobs on McDowell Avenue on Tuesday nights. The food was good and

Continued on page 17



Paula Ashley is a retired software engineer. She lives in Glendale, Arizona, with her husband and a colony of feral cats who sleep under their bougainvillea and sometimes honor them by following them around the yard. Currently she is working on a family history/memoir, “What Sparks Story or What is Left After the Declutter.” This is Chapter 24, a draft of the last chapter. p.c.ashley@ieee.org.

By Elena Thornton

there was a cowboy playing the guitar. One week, he held an open mic. Randy stepped in to take his turn at playing. When it was time for us to go home, we walked the historic Roosevelt Neighborhood south of the café. In summer, the old houses with grass lawns were shaded by trees where it was about ten degrees cooler than in our xeriscaped neighborhood. Unfortunately for us, the owners moved their cafe elsewhere and HobNobs as we knew it no longer existed.

My mother lived in an assisted living home not far from my house at this time. I visited her regularly, bringing her to my house for some meals and driving her about to see the Arrowhead Lakes with the water birds that lived there. Randy came with me to the Dairy Queen next to the home for our weekly outing. Later, as her health failed, he helped with the wheelchair when she needed to be taken to medical appointments. We married the year after my mother died. We had planned to marry a year earlier, but I never could keep up with the last wave of medical issues so a wedding could not be planned. Then since all the relatives had come for Mother's Memorial Service, we simply went to the Glendale Justice of the Peace to marry. It was a lovely service and I could not have wanted anything more. Randy and I have been together, talking together, taking long walks together, and going to open mics together ever since.

We are born into this world of land and sea, of dirt and air, of body and mind. We seek to walk, to eat, to grow, to learn, to live our authentic selves. Then one day there is a break, a pause, an inner knowing that we are not what we thought we were. When the body and mind are again in sync, we enter our new life. Just as the butterfly starts as a larva, a worm, a caterpillar on the earth foraging for food to sustain itself then when it is ready spins itself a cocoon. There in the cocoon of interior rearranging itself until finally emerging as a butterfly. The lifetime of a butterfly is brief, a week or so at most. They flit from flower to flower spreading pollen to energize the next generation of flowers. At eighty-four I sense my remaining years will vanish quickly. I hope to leave this memoir/family history to my son and granddaughters to ground them in half their ancestry before they sprinkle my ashes into the San Francisco Bay in remembrance of Pauline, my grandmother, who I was named for, and whose ashes were sprinkled there.

A Poem By Paula Ashley

Because You Helped Me Take Care of My Mother

the black & white vintage floor at Dairy Queen
behind the Place where my mother lived
became our Sunday date night.

I picked up our food at the counter
while you told my mother the same story
you told her the week before

about how you almost
sat in the pickles & mustard
& ruined your pants.

She laughed every time.

When on Saturday nights we went out dancing,
the disco ball at La Posada
flashed circles of light across the floor
& the cloud of failing kidneys & failing heart
faded behind me.

You went home with sparkles from my dance shoes
still dancing on your black boots.

When it came time to bury my mother
in the National Cemetery on Cave Creek Road
beside the grave of my father buried eight years before,
you read the Methodist service.
The wind rustled the papers in your hand

& you said my mother was there.
She came, you said, & she laughed —
the laugh of release & of good times
dancing with my father at university dinners

in her black taffeta dress,
brown hair swept up on her head,
trailing *Wind Song* as she left me

& you entered my door.

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Andrés Caballero

Tucson Artist



“Los Danzantes 1”
Risograph print on black paper

17x11

2023



The artist says, “I grew up in Mexico City where I began working in documentary films to later include photography in my practice. There, I began an examination of Mexican identity through Lucha Libre events. Where social constructs such as gender roles, masculinity, catholicism, morality, the conformation of the ‘other’ and our indigenous roots are all portrayed on stage. Overall, the examination of this tradition elucidates the constructed idea of ‘Mexicanity,’ revealing some of the causes and consequences of the aforementioned social constructions.” Instagram: [@andcaballero_](https://www.instagram.com/andcaballero_).

Andrés Caballero

Tucson Artist



“Los Danzantes 2”

Risograph print on black paper

11x17

2023

“In this series, my aim was to draw a parallel between the artistry of dancing and the dramatic spectacle of Lucha Libre fights. I carefully selected frames where the luchadores display a sense of fluidity and grace, similar to dancers. These fights, with their intricate choreography, serve as performances that blend athleticism with an undertone of eroticism. Furthermore, I sought to highlight the element of drag inherent in Lucha Libre, characterized by the use of masks, makeup and costumes to craft a performative persona. This aspect is often overlooked or negated owing to the idea of virility that is portrayed with figures such as El Santo or Blue Demon. Mexican identity is defined by masks, not only as a physical item but a metaphorical one that hides our vulnerabilities and intimacies.”

- Andrés Caballero

Andrés Caballero

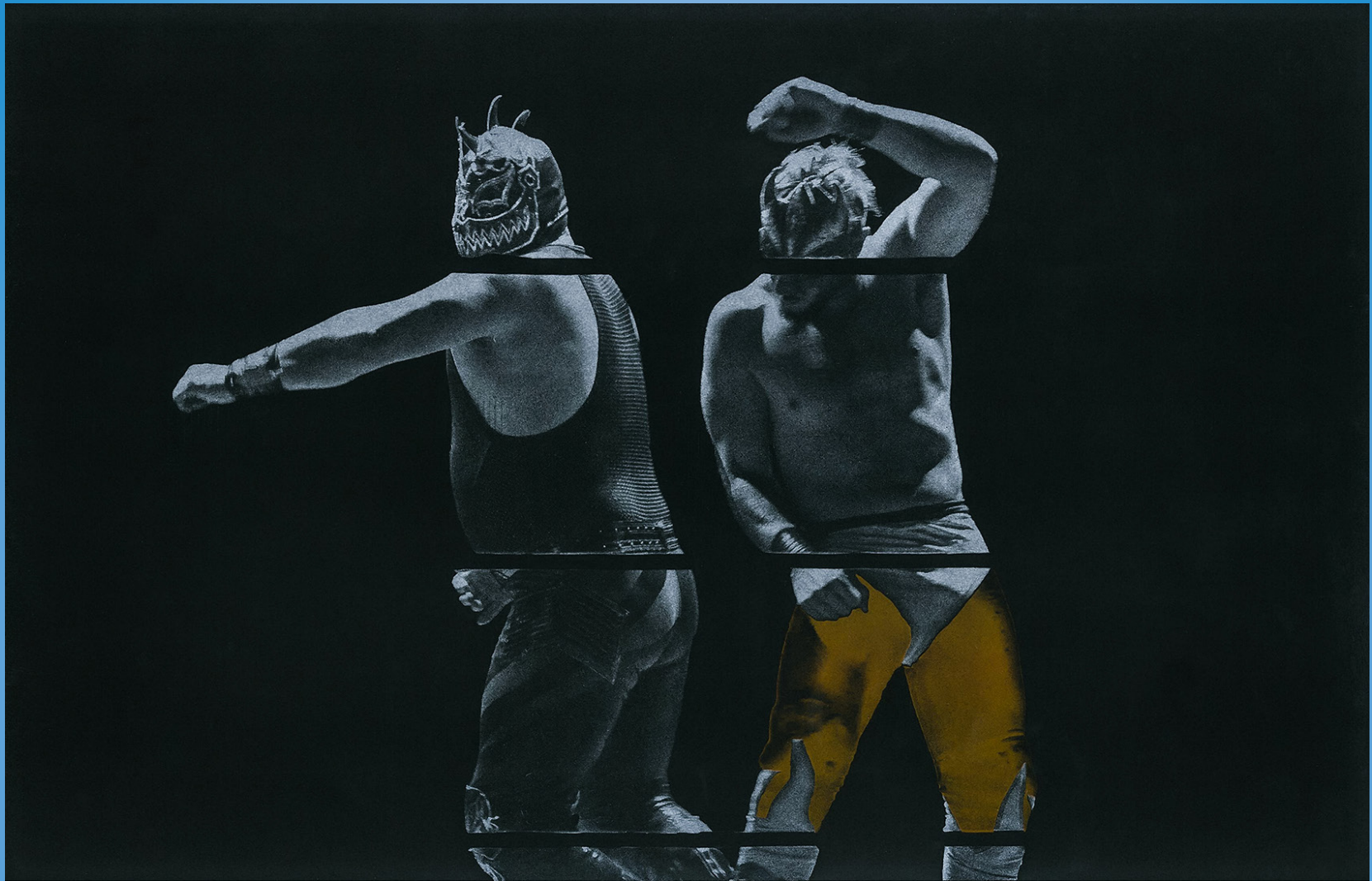
Tucson Artist



“Los Danzantes 3”
Risograph print on black paper
17x11
2023

Andrés Caballero

Tucson Artist



“Los Danzantes 4”
Risograph print on black paper
17x11
2023

Andrés Caballero

Tucson Artist



“Los Danzantes 5”
Risograph print on black paper
11x17
2023

Homework Adventure

By Duann Black

© 2024

“That way, that way, we’ve got to go that way,” Clarice said. She tugged at her father’s arm. “Daddy, please, can we go that way?”

Her father looked in the direction his daughter was pointing. The canal was that way. A bridge was not far away on the left, but Clarice was pointing directly at the middle of the canal in front of them.

“Stop, Clarice. Please don’t tug my arm, it’s beginning to hurt. I see two ways to get to the other side. We can take the bridge to our left or walk to the footbridge on the right, which should be faster.”

Clarice planted a pout on her face. She was rarely happy with grownups these days. They never wanted to have fun and had no imagination. “Okay, why don’t we sit on the bench over there and people-watch for a while?” she asked.

“If you insist,” her father replied.

Once seated, Clarice adjusted her glasses so the blue arrow revealed the spot in the canal she needed to reach. She knew her father wasn’t going to like what was about to happen, but that was too bad. He needed some adventure in his life. He saw the world in three dimensions. It was time he experienced more depth, as her teacher would say almost every day. Her

teacher told her she needed to reach the point at the end of the blue arrow to complete the homework assignment.

“Dad, can I look closer at the canal bank?”

“Yes, honey, but be careful. I don’t want you to fall in.”

Clarice meandered over to the canal’s edge, keeping both feet centered on the blue arrow her glasses revealed. She turned back toward her father, waved, and smiled.

Her dad stood up when Clarice stepped onto the river.

“Clarice!” he yelled, to no avail.

Clarice reached the tip of the blue arrow, closed her eyes, and jumped. When she opened her eyes, she was sitting at her desk in Mr. Higgins’s classroom.

The teacher noticed her return and marked her completion of the treasure map adventure on the class assignment board.

Clarice removed the glasses and paired them with the classroom network. From the glasses database, she picked the picture showing the blue arrow in the center of the canal and forwarded it to Mr. Higgins.

This was her favorite class. Exploring new planets with interesting architecture made learning a fun adventure. She was going to be the most famous explorer in the universe once she graduated from third grade.



Duann Black is an author and poet with stories to tell and things to say. During a multi-year break from emptying ink pens onto paper, she was the chief editor for her husband, Alan Black. They published 20 books, including “Metal Boxes” and “A Planet with No Name.” The author is currently working on a two-book collection of short stories she and Alan wrote. She is a well-traveled military retiree, always ready with a story to share.

Masterson First Sighting

By Duann Black

© 2024

It was the type of night stargazers lived for, crisp temperatures to keep you awake and a cloudless sky filled with countless numbers of vivid stars gleaming like diamonds on black velvet.

After securing my travel telescope with an old fan belt to the rear of my twin-barrel hovercycle, I drove to a beautiful desert oasis on the north side of the city. It was deserted, making it the perfect spot for night sky gazing. Shortly after arrival, I set up the telescope and relaxed while waiting for it to acclimatize to the ambient temperature. It would be about thirty minutes before I could begin my stargazing.

Pulling out a midnight snack from a side pouch at the rear of my hovercycle, I sat down at one of the concrete tables left at the oasis. Thirty minutes of peaceful quiet gave me plenty of time to enjoy a hard salami and extra sharp cheddar cheese sandwich. As I raised my canteen to chase down a sandwich bite with root beer, I caught a light out of the corner of my eye. I had never seen a night sky object so sharply brilliant. "Humph. What the heck is that? I didn't read about any new or returning comet visible in tonight's sky. If it isn't a comet, what is it?"

To be certain my eyes were not playing tricks on me, I held my breath and sat perfectly still, listening intently for engine noise coming from the light's direction. I heard nothing but desert silence. I returned the partially eaten sandwich and canteen to the hovercycle's side pouch.

Fumbling with my new multi-use digital whatchamacallit, I tried to line it up and get everything focused to take good-quality photos of the light. After taking ten photos using a different filter and various settings on each, I made a lengthy video recording through my telescope. I used more photo functions than ever before, trying to capture every detail of the object, both seen and

unseen.

The mystery object disappeared into the night beyond the sky horizon a little over an hour later. As I finished tying down my telescope for the ride home, a great horned owl flew in to take my place. He hooted his farewell as I urged my hovercycle into the air, leaving the once quiet oasis behind.

I was excited by the time I arrived home. Though I had an astronomy assignment to complete for my morning class, it and sleep would have to wait. Nothing felt more important than writing up the details of my midnight sighting.

After completing the Astronomical Society's night sky sighting report, I named it, "Masterson First Sighting." My last name and my first night sky sighting report. I hoped they would keep it. They usually gave nonsensical names to important sightings like this, but I believed my discovery was too important to rename, but time would tell.

I uploaded my report to the Astronomical Society's site just before 3:00 A.M. Sleep was catching up with me, making it difficult to stay focused, so I set an alarm to get two hours of sleep. I thought that would give me enough sleep and plenty of time to complete my homework. Promptly, I fell asleep in my living room chair.

A roar woke me up. Disoriented, I did not recognize where I was. After blinking several times to clear sleep cobwebs from my eyes, I discovered I was on the floor, surrounded by a cloud of dust and debris. A wailing alarm like nothing I had heard before was coming from my communicator. I would have shut it off if I could have found it, as it was no longer attached to my belt.

Suddenly, the alarm stopped, uncovering outside sounds, explosions, howling dogs, screams, and the distinctive hoot of a great horned owl somewhere close.

Musically Inclined

By Duann Black

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Mr. O'Shea's first day in the classroom would be a day he believed he would remember throughout his teaching career. In the weeks before school started, he wrestled with ideas on what he would say to his students on that momentous day. He would get to know his students throughout the school year. Why not allow them to get to know about him and why he was their new music teacher? Here's the story of that first day facing students as their new teacher for the first time.

"Good morning, students. I am Mr. O'Shea. On the information sheet at your desk is what we will learn this year. There's a copy for each of you. Today, we'll get to know a bit about each other. I'll begin by telling you some details of my musical background. Then I'll go around the room and learn about your background in music, which instruments you play, and why you signed up for this elective class." He checked the time and casually activated his silent watch alarm.

"To date, I have learned to play nine musical instruments." He displayed a slide on the class network showing the instruments. "As you can see, I have learned to play the harmonica, snare drum, one-value bugle, guitar, autoharp, dulcimer, ukulele, piano, and organ. I'll give you a short overview of each."

The next slide was a cartoon character sitting on the floor playing a toy piano. Several students chuckled at the cartoon. "The first instrument I learned to play was the piano. I took weekly lessons for seven years and practiced five days a week. Looking at the slide, you may have guessed this character is not me. It is Schroeder from Charles M. Schulz's comic strip Peanuts. No doubt he is playing Fur Elise by Ludwig van Beethoven, my favorite."

O'Shea brought up a new picture and laughter broke out across the room. He joined in. The picture was a toddler seated on the floor using serving spoons to strike the bottom of an upside-down metal pot set in front of him. "I realize I look too young to play a drum. When I entered junior high school, I was old enough to join our town's drum and bugle corps. During the summer, we marched in small-town parades throughout the area. We also participated in marching competitions and performed concerts at the local fairgrounds during the evenings. I enjoyed four summers with the group."

He brought up a new slide. "After marching with the drum for a summer, I switched to the bugle. It was lightweight,

offered me a wider range of music to play, and allowed me to take part more actively in marching competitions. This slide shows a bugle in use. We have a 19th century U.S. Army cavalry sergeant on horseback using a bugle to order the unit to charge forward. Does anyone know which John Wayne movie this scene is from?"

A student in the center row raised her hand. Mr. O'Shea checked his class seating chart. "Do you have a question, Karen?"

"Yes. Who is John Wayne?"

The rest of the class remained quiet. No one volunteered an answer to his question.

"John Wayne was a famous Hollywood movie actor. He starred in many westerns and action-adventure films during the 20th century. I am sure you will learn about him if you signed up for the film arts class."

"As a senior high school student, I played the organ at my church a couple of times a year when the regular organist was on vacation. Though I could play the organ as easily as the piano, I did not use the foot pedals and rows of switches and extra keyboards." He brought up the next slide. "As you can see, some organs are complex. Here's a photo of the pipe organ in Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, France. It was built in the 18th century and renovated several times. Though it looks huge, it is not. Today, the largest pipe organ in the world has 33,112 pipes. My small rural church owned a standard Hammond organ, without pipes."

"While in college, I decided I wanted to learn to play the autoharp. I bought one and spent most of the time tuning it. They can be sensitive to humidity and temperature variations. I would say it is the musical instrument I spent the least amount of time enjoying. This slide shows what mine looks like." He pulled a device from his pocket. "This is the tuning wrench. My autoharp has 34 metal strings to tune. Mine spent most of my college years in the case under my dorm room bed."

"A friend gave me a 6-string guitar and taught me the basics of playing. Sometime later, he gave me a 12-string guitar. Admittedly, I never learned well enough to join a rock band. The most accomplished guitarist I enjoy listening to is on this next slide. This is Canadian singer-songwriter Gordon Lightfoot. We will listen to some of his work later this year. He played 6- and 12-string guitars equally well. Sadly, I cannot say

Continued on page 27

the same for myself. I gave the 12-string guitar to a friend who played lead guitar in a local band.”

“When I moved into my first apartment, I wanted to play an instrument that would not disturb the neighbors, so I took an adult education class at the local high school to learn to play the harmonica. In one semester, I had fun and learned all the basics. If you read sheet music, once you’ve learned the basics of playing a harmonica, there is not much more to learn. Here’s a slide showing different harmonicas.” He pulled a small harmonica from his pocket as he changed the slide and played “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” for the class.

After the clapping stopped, Mr. O’Shea continued. “This little gem is a Hohner Blues Band 10-hole diatonic harmonica. It’s my favorite. Here is a slide showing someone famous who plays the harmonica.” He displayed the next slide. “This is country and western singer-songwriter Willie Nelson. If you are unfamiliar with him, do not worry. We will learn about his work later this year.”

“Next up on my musical journey is the dulcimer. It is not as well known as the guitar but has a rich history. Mine is a handmade 4-string hourglass-shaped dulcimer. It has a sound I enjoy like no other stringed instrument. Here is a picture of a famous dulcimer player. Does anyone recognize her?”

He gave the class a few moments to answer. Several students shook their heads. “Each of you will have fun in class this year, trust me. This is Cyndi Lauper, an American singer-songwriter. Notice the dulcimer in her lap. Her popular song highlighting the dulcimer is ‘Time After Time.’ ”

He picked up a burlap bag from his desktop and pulled out a dulcimer. “This is my dulcimer.”

He moved his chair to the front so everyone could see and sat down. Placing the dulcimer on his lap, he played a familiar tune, “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” Several students sang along.

“Thank you for singing along. That is one reason I wanted to learn to play musical instruments, so that folks could sing along with me. It is difficult to do that playing a harmonica.”

“My final musical instrument is the ukulele and here is my final slide. Does anyone recognize the woman on stage playing the ukulele?”

Karen raised her hand and looked like she was about to jump out of her seat.

“Yes, Karen, who is our ukulele player?” he asked.

“That’s Taylor Swift. My mom’s been to a couple of her concerts. Her music is usually playing somewhere in the house when Mom’s home,” Karen said. “I didn’t know she played a

ukulele.”

“Thank you, Karen. I am happy that one person in my slide show is recognized, besides me as a young boy, of course. A surprising number of famous musicians play the ukulele, including one we learned about earlier, Cyndi Lauper. From George Harrison of The Beatles to Elvis Presley, and others, the little ukulele is favored by musicians and nonmusicians alike.”

Mr. O’Shea looked at his watch. He was on schedule.

“Now it’s your turn. You learned a bit about me and my musical background. Let’s learn about you as a class.” He advanced to the next slide. “Here is a short list of things I would like each of you to say about yourselves as we go around the room. We’re going to keep this short and sweet. Please state your first name, brief music background, what instrument you play or want to learn, and why you signed up for this class. We should have enough time for everyone to introduce themselves. Let’s start with the first seat in the row closest to the windows.”

“I’m Jimbo. I play the banjo and can read music a little bit. Want to learn more, play better, and I signed up because I want to learn different kinds of music.”

As each student gave their information, Mr. O’Shea took notes on the class seating chart. The last student finished introducing himself two minutes before the clock struck the top of the hour.

“Thank you, students. This year will be an exciting musical adventure. We’ll listen to many types of music, played by professionals. My musical instruments will remain at home, I promise.”

The bell sounded, indicating the class period was over. Students had three minutes to get to their next class. Mr. O’Shea did not have a class the next period, so he began returning his dulcimer to the burlap bag. He turned around to see half of the students had not left the classroom.

“Can I help you?” He asked.

Karen stepped forward. “Can we look closer at your dulcimer? I’ve never seen one. I liked the sound it made, like nothing else I’ve heard before.” The students moved closer to the desk for a closer look.

“Certainly. One goal of class this year is to become familiar with as many musical instruments as possible. I may not find a sousaphone to bring into class, but I promise to find recordings of it being played, so we all learn to recognize it, as well as other instruments.”

Mr. O’Shea’s first day of class was a success. The students readily introduced themselves after he told them about himself, in a playful way. He was looking forward to teaching. He felt it would be the enjoyable adventure he hoped it would be.

4 Poems by Abraham Aruguete

Past

Flushed cheeks
As every former line speaks.
Subjects forbidden
Spill out of each word once written.
Teenage angst
Wafts around every former mistake.

The virulent violence
That paints the back of my eyelids:
Images of my bygone work
Once a source of pride, now besmirched.
If I could destroy it, rip it to shreds
What was at one time my thought
I now wish was but naught
Ashes in a fireplace
Phrases I wish I could erase.

Is this a form of self-destruction?
To hate your own work, a defenestration
Of all the things you held dear?
Is it a form of fear,
Something you, for a time, held near
That grows cancerous into something peers
Snicker at in the breakroom?
Or is it a radiant inferno of the moon
The virulent night that consumes
As you lay ensconced in your bed-tomb.

I suppose this is how you learn
But all traces of the process, I wish I could burn.

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Abraham Aruguete was born on the reservation, lived in Flagstaff, then Tucson, then back to Flagstaff. He has published in The Blue Guitar magazine before, and works as an instructional aide at a charter school. Currently grieving the loss of, well, everything, he hopes to one day own a car and be someone. He is always open to conversation at abraham.aruguete@gmail.com.

Careers

For the upwardly mobile dreamer

Losing a career is an act of God.
Little Jobs in job prep programs
Culled away by *rigor artis*.
Man proposes, the market disposes
And our creator does not give back twofold.

My enemies may make merriment. No matter
They too have seen the dreams of youth splatter
And made some explanation for it on the back-end
Will or want or intellect, my choice or the dice
Whatever helps you to sleep at night.

The moderately talented, much like the mediocre
Comprises the majority of the mean and median
How hard do we fight
Just to compare ourselves against our betters
Night after night?

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Haunt

The pine trees sway, the prairie dog goes to its lair,
The night turns to day, and I do nothing but stare.
Weeks go by, a child cries,
A blue slide, and I do nothing but stare.

Where goes the withered wherewithal when watching a wayward life?
Does it silently slither into senescent stories and subtle signs?
That which was near my heart was removed therefrom
Lost beauty in terror, terror in recollection.
Illness stalks me. Why should I not keep it
When the act of living brings me back again?

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Idiocy

Janitor of lunacy, please pray loosely
That no one ever sees an earlier me
Should short shocks shine through their eyes
At youthful folly put onto paper.

Let me, instead, wear a cloak of ill-begotten dreams
Back when I thought I was the ruler of the world
Philosopher mathematician king programmer of artistic merit
If only I was half of those things.

A cripple smiles in the bask of effervescent glow.
All the things he tried, and will never know
Pile into the deeps below
Where promise dies and never shows.
He has his broken dreams and friendships
A bad shot at SSDI
Medication for psychotic depression
And heavy, tired eyes.
To turn to life again
After having been so death-inclined
May it bury his past
With flowers at its side.

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3 Poems By Richard Fenton Sederstrom

Araby II: Leaving Midway

almost remembering: *Dubliners*

1

In a clouded flash I knew then why the wooden ring,
no matter how steadily it flew when I released it,
why though it felt solid and stable in my hand,
it bounced like a glared bird askew a windowpane.

A

Some notes:

- The ring is made of light wood: do I remember perhaps bamboo, a bit awry and too light for a sure aim? Maybe.
- The posts, none very long, are positioned in rank and file, shortest to tallest, four rows rigid in rank, five attent in file.
- Each is 2½” square in cross-section. Funny now, or not, I don’t bother remembering theme or decor: a garish Araby.
- Each squared post is cut on the same diagonal at an angle of 45 degrees: a surface 2½” x 3.” No sense estimating now.
- The acute point created by the angle is at the farthest side: the obtuse-angled side toward the front, toward thrower and ring.
- The ring, thrown at just enough loft, should slide spinning easily, horizontally over the post and descend quietly. But,
- the booth is too low inside for the ring to land flat in patient gravity. No way to aim a ring to loft and fall vertically.
- The surface of the sawn angle is greater than the cross-section. In silence you figure the math, the graceful play of geometry.
- So, the ring would strike the broad area. Still it is possible to win, especially in deductive theory; of course, theory ricochets.

2

I knew the empirical answer that first night,
after spending two—quarters I think—or dimes?

Continued on page 33

Richard Fenton Sederstrom’s family moved to the Sonoran Desert of Arizona in 1954. They brought Richard along, for which he is still both appreciative and bewildered. The Sonoran Desert, for all of humanity’s wounds and insults, remains a gift. Sederstrom’s seventh book of poems, “Icarus Rising: Misadventures in Ascension,” which occupies that desert from Tempe to Guaymas, appeared in 2020. A new book, “The Dun Box,” which regards “The American Century” as a total of minus 21 days in 1945, is finally finished as much as our world will let be, and has been released.



Continued from page 32

But I couldn't know whether I might win the game,
knowing anyhow I had no reason outside sanity
to waste another pointless wager.

I never learned this in school:
in grade school arithmetic or high school geometry.
William Occam whispers to me in our shared *Englisc*,
alternatives, then and now and now again.

The posts, the sawn angles, had been the offspring
of a literal homely caginess, ancient, calculated
through millennia of proprietary aggression
and I may have understood already what I needed
of that mind.

My action as the result was my introduction
to the long study of care for calculated inaction.
I ask Uncle Zhou again for no answer in particular.
Zhou smiles toward the great brown river
and drags his tail into the mud once again.

When I returned the next night, I returned
only for the walk, coal-gray strands of dusk and
the senile blink of pre-war (which war?) Edison bulbs.
Then a thoughtward grope through my homeward night.

B
Now *you* toss.
No, first imagine a bit-coin, a solid bit-coin.
Solider. As solid as your many fondest wishes.
Now toss. No, wait. I forgot.
Imagine a bit-*stake* too.
Manipulate, gently squeeze the AI.
Now toss. Toss!

Now, what did you learn that helps
make solid the angles we learn to measure
and yearn to imagine whole?

See? Did you see?
Did you see the ring settle gently in horizontal grace
over the top of the stake?

Did you feel the tintinnabulation
as faerie pixels whirl by to illumine the win you won?
Did numbers record in pixie-gold an electrified virtuosity?

Continued on page 34

3
I feel the wooden ring in my fingers,
held loose and just light enough,
between my guiding index finger
and my thumb supporting apposed.

I aim the ring and it glides,
spins from my hand.
I hear a gentle tick; the ring
grazes the top of the stake and bounces off.

I remember the ring, the feel of it
and the sound of it and my disillusioned
little soul has responded and resounded
for the years since, my subsequent three score and ten.

The tent is still olive drab military burnt green,
two stories, three stories high
of patched canvas in the humid cool
of early summer or maybe late.
It smells of canvas, a greenish creosote.

Back at our home on Rice Street,
centenarian oaks the age of the house
unroll the seedling light green of early summer,
or dull the senescent green of early fall.

I almost hear the Mississippi River just south.
My mind sees, feels
its knapped surface flash under the moon.

The tent has been dark for seventy years.
Should I try lifting a gap in the cosmos?
If I can lift it, not quite a foot,
could I slide under into the mouldy dark?

True time maybe? Far safer to pretend still?
Better to stay in the glare of Edison lights
in the Midway, grasp at a bauble moment
to delay the question of time? Instead,

through obsidian translucent blackness
I drift into the grey aspect
of freedom I have won
in the texture of care.

I can still learn and feel again
in my longing and long-engaged regard
for deep currents of directive loss:
not to lose by winning but to endure by learning.

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Epistolary Commentary

Richard

The poem is resonant and assured, beautifully written. I wish I knew who the speaker is, as I find no clues. At end I think of Robert Lowell, old and now dead, given the task of the bones.

* * *

Randy,

I think that the difficulty pinning down identity is one we share. The presence of some atoms of Cal may be telling, because I think the speaker of this poem *is* dead. I won't elaborate just now, but this poem involves the only clear narrative memory of my own that has no ties to any other. Like so many memories, the outline is clear, suspiciously so, because I have no memory of sharing the story with anyone.

I even know just where the circus had to have been erected, an eight-minute walk from home. But because I have no

corroborating narrative it is the only memory that I know of that may be entirely internal—a dream? a psychic fable? an axial breath?—and therefore entirely authentic, at least by default. The lesson comes from the ghost of my ten-year-old self who defeated a rigged game not by winning but by understanding, but I did not begin to grasp that until I had faced the (life and/or death?) challenge implied in your note. I've joked before about becoming my own grandfather; that it may be true both confuses and explains some meaningful drift among my generations and even our poems. Hugh, Cal, Richard.

So, here's an older poem about a more recent experience that I "know" happened, and with which you may be familiar from my publications. It came as a surprise by way of a question. It's what might pass as my only deific (quasi) moment of experience, therefore inauthentic, the memory being intact and connected, imagination ground-bound:

The Circus Beautiful

Smell of moldy canvas.
Canvas and smell stretched
over the pained wooden beams of the world.

Ragged teeth of the peaks of this cosmos,
rotten too from ages of survival.
And the two women,

few teeth and nothing vertical,
no gap symmetrical with any other gap,
more real

than the clowns over there
pretending to be roustabouts,
hammering Cosmos to Earth, bellowing
their profane paeon to no Creation worthy of song.

So few teeth,
a brown worn tangle
that the women would have to share to eat,
chew turn and turn about.

But their question was beautiful!
The double smile perfect, eager, raggedly noble.
"Are you in charge here?"

Continued on page 36

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I said “No” to the truth, nodded yes to the smile,
the beauty that asked *me* to take charge of the beauty,
the glide and tumble,
the soaring of star-glittered acrobats,
caress of cats,
terrible truths of clowns.

And the tent:
shouting, whanging of mallets beating stakes
to root Earth,
the rise of our cosmos of canvas,
mold smell now of living.

And I in charge, momentary ringmaster
of the dire, perilous, tumbling beauty,
the rotting wonder of the pinioned circus, Earth.

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For the Company

“All right, then, I’ll go to hell!”—

Predicament 1: Finn

If you are Huck you are damned.
You know this.

Miss Watson said so:
implied with corrective zeal.

You are Huck.
You have not lived with authority.

But Miss Watson? No?
Your unlettered integrity. So—

You said so.
And saying is believing.

Believing, like remembering saying, is.
You find now that you are.

Predicament 2: Twain/Clemens/Twain

A protean character may be
rounded among the twists and curves,
or pinched into the flint-shard crevasses
of angles.

“Heaven for the climate.
Hell for the company.”
But who’s to choose?
Who’s not to choose?

Predicament 3: Dante

The holy damned
have long forsaken the gift of lying.
But the gift of humor?

Does truth in laughter
tend toward freedom?
Damned freedom?

Continued on page 38

The greater the nudge of Holy Paradox,
Sanctus et Quantum, how much
better the surprise of irredemption—

your, our, their unseeled agony of vision
all through the talk and laughter:
“*For the company*”!

Predicament 4: Estragon

E: “*Nothing to be done.*”

. . . .

V: “*Everything’s dead but the tree.*”

. . . .

E: “*True. . . .*”

. . . .

Yes, let’s go—
[*They do not move.*]

Predicament 5: A poet’s dilemma:

“I’ve long longed to write a short piece,
its core in some famous play, like maybe
The Caucasian Chalk Circle. Or,
Well ‘*There’s no lack of void . . . unfinished . . .*’”

The shadow-hall of art is chthonic still,
its corridors narrow, bound, and blind.
Do most poems have some poet to blame?
Then a true poem has its silence for praise.

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Who we are

All about The Arizona Consortium for the Arts

The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is a nonprofit 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, multidisciplinary 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.

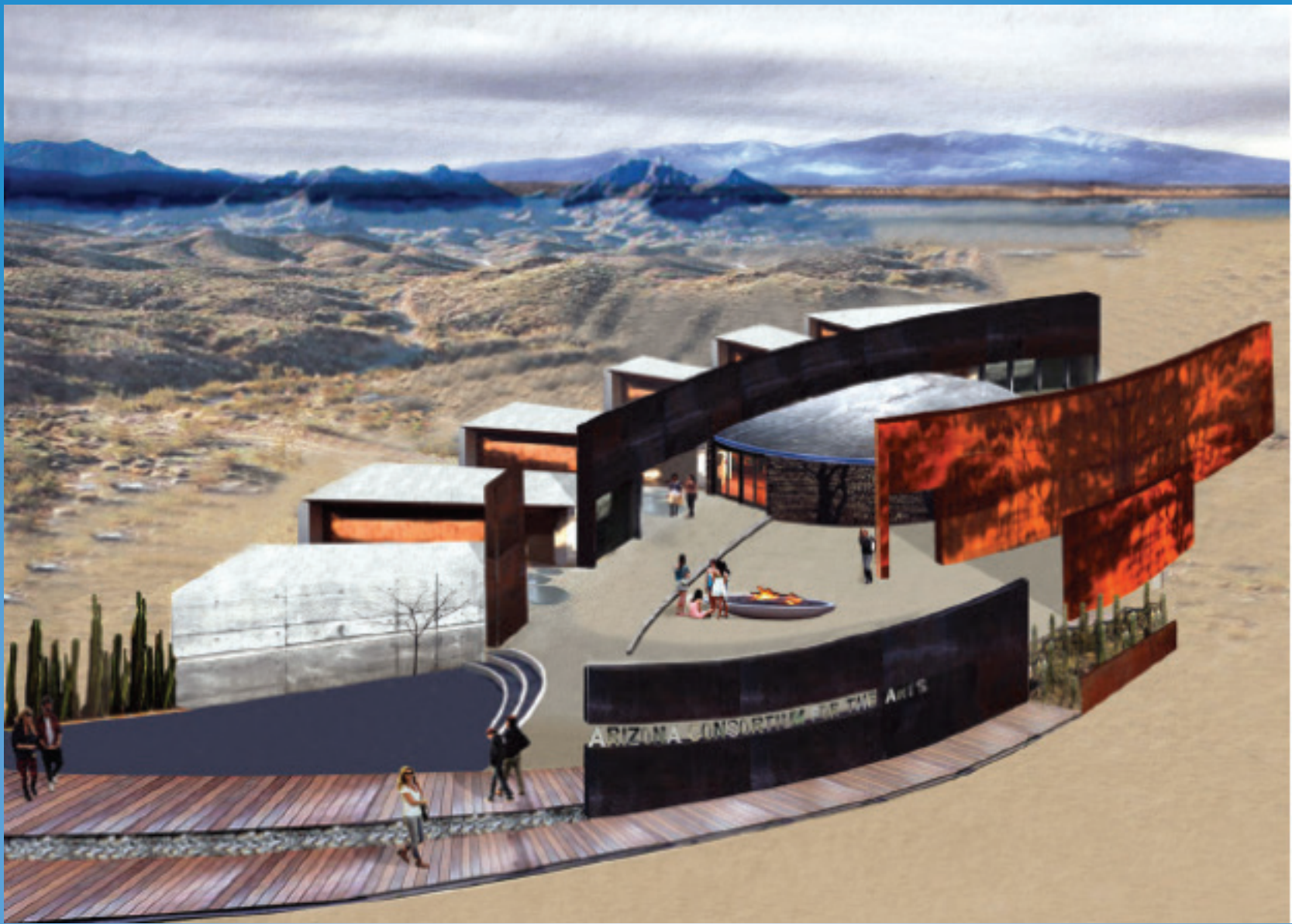
You can become a part of the Arizona Consortium and make a difference. There are countless ways to contribute, and the consortium is grateful for any donation in any form.

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 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.

Meet the staff of The Blue Guitar magazine



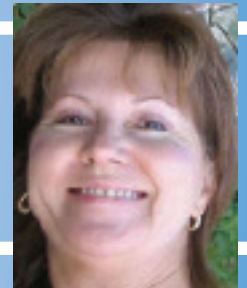
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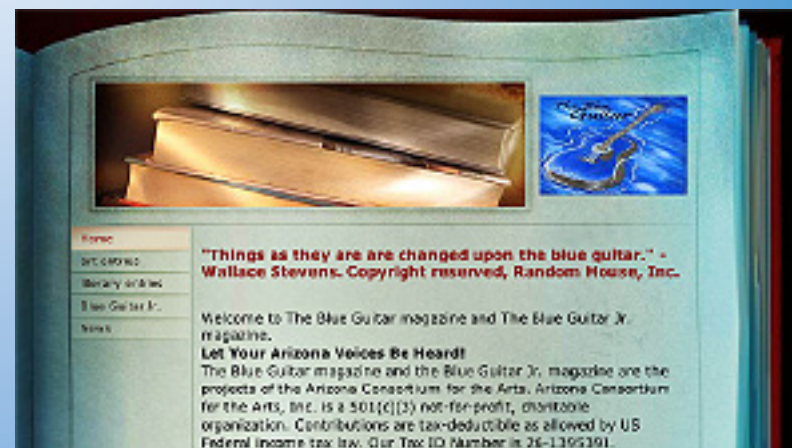
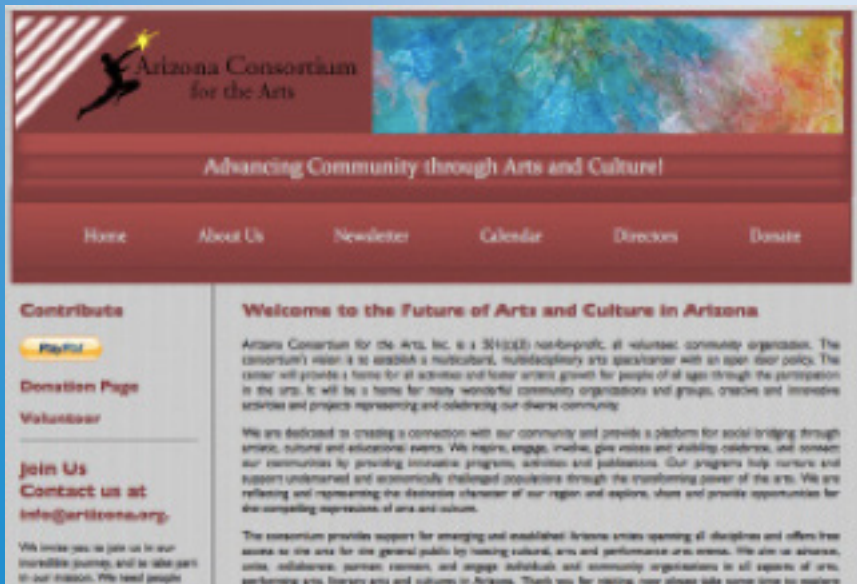


Richard H. Dyer Jr., co-editor: Richard (married to Rebecca, above) is the managing editor of seven monthly newspapers and websites in the East Valley, a photographer and a welded-steel sculptor. Reach him at richarddyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org.



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. Also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

www.TheBlueGuitarMagazine.org

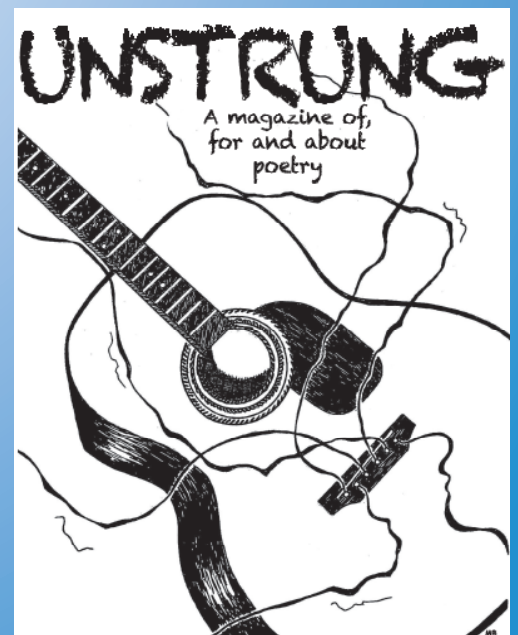
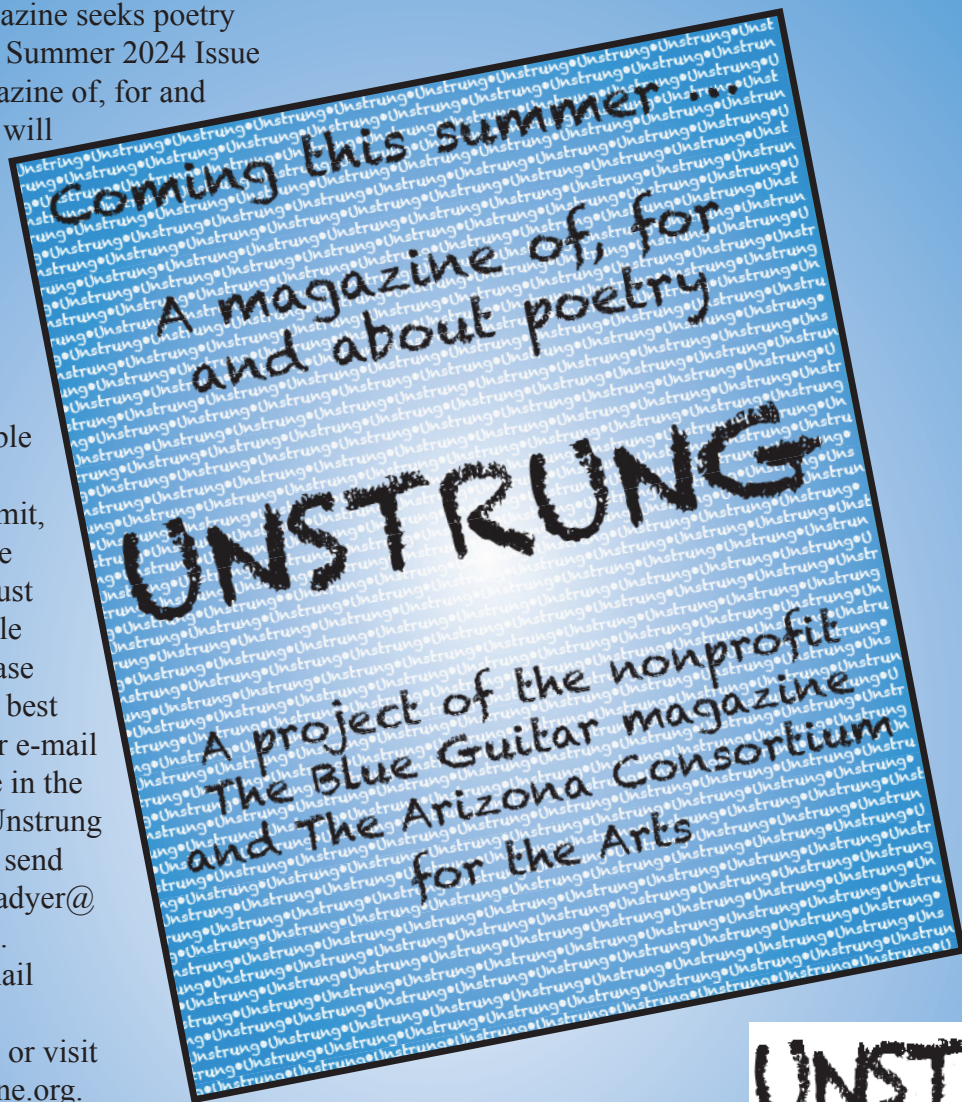
Spring 2024

A Call to Poets for the 2024 Issue of Unstrung

The Blue Guitar magazine seeks poetry submissions for the Summer 2024 Issue of Unstrung, a magazine of, for and about poetry. Submissions will

be accepted from June 1 through July 4. 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.



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, 2024, 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 additional 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 create art
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, 2024, 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 additional information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

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

A Call to Writers for Fall 2024



The Blue Guitar magazine seeks literary submissions for Fall 2024 Edition from Sept. 1 through Oct. 4. Submissions are sought in all genres — fiction, poetry, plays, creative nonfiction. Writers must submit original work (no AI-generated works) 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 Fall 2024

The Blue Guitar magazine seeks art submissions in all mediums for the Fall 2024 Edition from Sept. 1 through Oct. 4. 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 original images (no AI-generated works) can be submitted. Please submit images of work by e-mail and 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.



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“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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Volume 16,
Number 1
Spring Issue
FREE!

*“Things
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