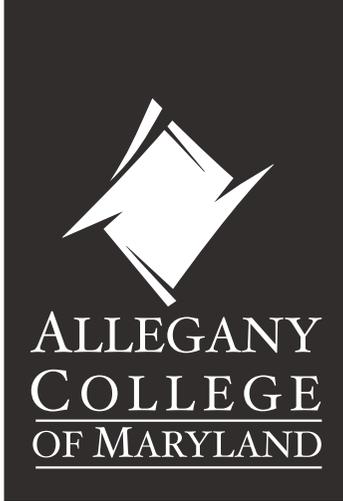




ALLEGANY
COLLEGE
OF MARYLAND



Expressions
2013



Expressions
2013

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ARTWORK FEATURED ON COVER:

“Foo Dog” by David Johnson

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Student Editor's Reflections

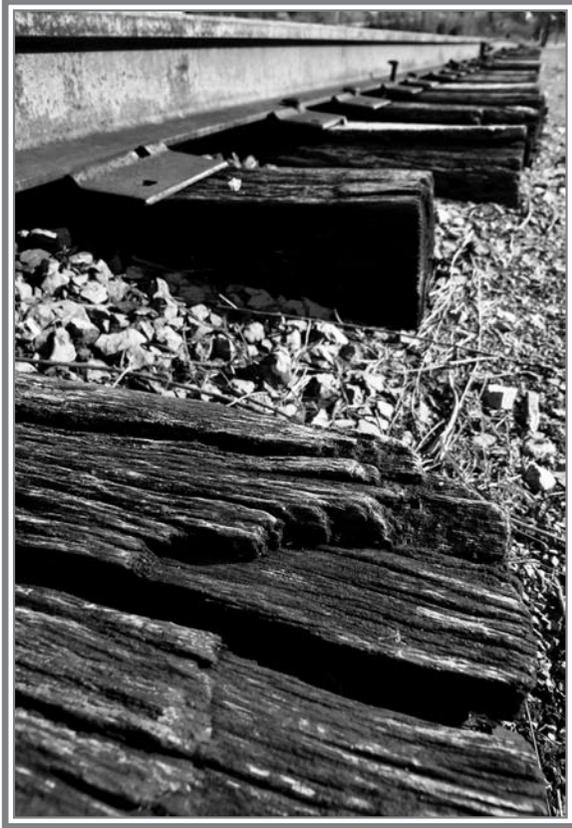
Dear Reader,

When asked to edit *Expressions* last fall, I agreed with much enthusiasm. After all, it was at Allegany College of Maryland that I discovered my love for writing and the arts in general. I searched for any way to give back to the institution that had inspired me. Throughout the fall semester and winter break, I chased down all of the writers and artists I knew on campus and urged them to contribute in some way.

I sought after these artists because, as a writer, I have found priceless the joy one experiences when allowed to leave the monotony of the every-day world. Unleashing variegated, unique minds is what publications, like this magazine, is all about. My work on *Expressions* fueled this feeling because for students there is no comparison to seeing one's own work in print.

As the editor, all that I ask of you, as a reader, is to dissect each of these works. Open up this magazine and release yourself into the world of these writers. Walk around; explore their uncensored minds and stay a while, because although the excitement of initially creating something is awesome, there is nothing better than knowing that someone else enjoyed it.

Thank you,
Brady Barnhart



Tracks
-Tracy Butler

Terminus

Michael O'Neil

I was born just blocks away from the first passenger railroad depot in the world, the Pratt Street Terminus of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. I learned to swim beneath the oldest railroad bridge still standing, the Carrolton Viaduct, which spans the Gwynns Falls River in Southwest Baltimore. The very first time that I ever “knew” a young lady (I use the term “knew” in the sense of the Biblical euphemism here) was in an old, abandoned Pullman Sleeper car, again on that same stretch of railroad tracks that I had spent so very much of my misspent youth exploring.

It's no great surprise, then, that even now as I approach middle-age, I'm still spellbound by the sound of a train in the distance, whether it be the low, growling rumble of the engine as it makes its way up a steeply graded incline, or the faint sound of the train's whistle blowing far off in the distance on a cold winter morning. Trains and anything railroad-related still manage to carry me back to my earliest childhood—if not in fact, certainly in my own mind for a few brief moments.

According to the preface of the excellent *History of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad*, the first stone of the B&O was laid on July 4, 1828 and passenger services began a little more than ten months later, although on a very limited basis. If one takes into account the crude (by today's standards, anyway) methods of industrial-grade construction projects of the time period, ten months is an incredibly short period of time in which to have gotten the project functional.

So much of my life, especially the formative years of it, have taken place within a stone's throw of a railroad, that I can't even imagine how my personality would have developed absent the comfort of the gently trembling ground beneath my feet as a pair of large diesel locomotives barreled past me, pulling a series of fifty or sixty fully-loaded cars full of freight, coal, automobiles, fruit, or any combination of thousands of possible items.

Some of my earliest, fondest memories are of my grandmother taking my brother and me by the hand and walking us to the vacant lot behind her house overlooking the train tracks so

that we could watch the trains roll past. A few years later, when I began elementary school, Grandma would take us to see the trains, and while we watched them go past us, she'd ask us how many coal cars we saw, or how many cars between the first boxcar and the caboose. In doing this, she had found a way to encourage us to learn simple math by turning a dreary chore into a favored activity that we actually *wanted* to do. Whatever formal education Grandma may have lacked, she more than compensated with wisdom, savvy, and all-around common sense.

When I first arrived here in Western Maryland just about one calendar year ago, I left behind me an extremely long trail of somewhat unpleasant memories I'd managed to develop over the last several years. One of the first inquiries I made upon my arrival here was "How far to the nearest active train line?" Of course, as anyone who is familiar with this region will confirm, I was not to be disappointed: there is a very strong railroad presence here, for which I'm very grateful. As a relative stranger to this area, with few friends and no family at all, it's only natural that I sometimes feel very much out of place, and I've found that a leisurely stroll along the railroad tracks is extremely therapeutic to me. As strange as it may sound, I find myself "connected" through my affinity for something which has always been identified with shipping, moving, and transporting. I won't even pretend to fully understand it myself, and all I know for sure is that I always have and still do feel a sense "home," of being at peace with the world, whenever I'm near a railroad. Even the pungent aroma of the creosote that's used to help weatherproof the cross-ties is pleasant to me.

In the mid-nineteenth century, when westward expansion and development was probably the most important force in this country, the railroads played an immensely important role in building this nation. Try to imagine how difficult it would have been to ship all the raw materials from the already-developed east coast (and, by extension, Europe and beyond) to the vast, uncharted, barely-explored west coast and all points in between. How would the plains have been divided up into farms and wheat fields if seed, fertilizer, farming equipment such as plows, tack for the horses, and all manner of vital supplies had not been brought in on the train? It doesn't require very much thought to appreciate just how very important the railroad has been in building, settling, supplying, and maintaining this entire nation of ours.

While passenger trains do not handle nearly as many people as they did in the past, there's still a great demand for the railroad to haul freight great distances at fairly economical rates, and this state of affairs is liable to continue well into the foreseeable future.

If I were to offer my own analysis of why I feel so attuned to the entire railroad phenomenon, I'd have to posit several possible explanations. Of these theories, some, all, or none may be valid; these are just speculation on my part.

First of all, there's the obvious geographical connection, in the sense that I happened to have been born and raised in an area rich with railroad history, as well as several still-functioning train tracks.

Secondly, there are my own personal memories of having grown up in the shadow of the railroad and the many milestones I encountered on the grounds of the train tracks and immediate surroundings.

Third, there's a long tradition of us working-class Irish digging the trenches, laying the track, and conducting the trains, so there's the culturally-ingrained respect & admiration for all things railroad.

I'm no psychoanalyst, and I don't presume or pretend to have any more insight into what might cause such a deep affection as I feel toward the trains, except to take a random, wild guess as to the nature of my fascination.

I'm not alone in feeling this way, as is proven by all of the railroad-themed songs and poems that have been written over the years. There's an entire sub-genre of American folk music devoted to train ballads. Think about that for a moment: have you ever heard of a ballad about a steamroller or a tractor? Both of those things are large, powerful pieces of heavy industrial machinery, yet neither of them evokes any strong sentiment. I suppose there's more than a little truth to the old advertising campaign slogan: "There's something about a train that's magic..."

With that thought, I'll offer up one last thought, as expressed by Aleksandr Azrael in his poem entitled "At the End of a Railroad Track," a thought that I find myself identifying with:
The railroad track is long

*With lots of hills and valleys
But I press on while singing a song
About my life and my mistakes.*

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Broken
-Shaena McBride

Carousel

Jonathan Treece

Thumbing the gnawed edge of his shining
coin, he considers his possibilities as he drops it
into the slot to be lost among the other
silvery discs that have reflected the eyes of dead men.

He rides the frenetic carousel,
a backwards grinning, deviant machine of steam and flame
that flays the air with a discordant calliope,
a dirge for a puppet from dead, brass pipes.

Cold hammers thump inside his head.

The dark melody becomes haunting repetition,
splitting him through the middle,
twisting him inward, downward,
as the moon crawls under his skin.

I am what you made of me.

I am what I have cast out of the clay of myself.

With the burden of an old man's eyes,
the young man watches the world spill past him.
Draped like a shroud over a rusting, iron horse,
a monument to attrition, he lies
still and quiet as a winter dawn.

Home

Miranda Sines

What makes a home? Anyone can live in a house, but love makes that house a home. The truest statement I ever heard was “home is where the heart lies.” The only home I have ever known was my Grandparents’ home. It was always filled with so much love from them. As I got older I realized that it wasn’t the house that was special, but the people who made it special. I always thought, growing up, that home would always remain the same. For that to occur, everything else would have to stay the same. Unfortunately everything changes at some point.

My grandparents’ home was a big old white farm house with a green front porch and green shutters. It sat a quarter of a mile from the banks of the Yough River in Confluence, PA. The front of the house was back a few feet from the road and the sidewalk. Around the rest of the house was the yard which was surrounded by trees for privacy. On one side of the house there were blue bells and other flowers my grandmother planted. The flowers smelled so wonderful that I always loved walking by them. On the other side there was a lilac bush under the kitchen window and a ring of tulips where there were always baby bunnies living. Walking into the kitchen you could always smell the lilacs through the window, and my grandmother baking bread.

At the center of my enormous family were my grandparents. They had had seven children, five boys and two girls. Of the girls there were my mother and my aunt Brenda. I’m an only child and my aunt had three boys at the time. As for the boys, or my uncles, there are Jimmy, Donald, Chuck, Joe, and Johnny. Between them, they had a total of ten children as well. We always got together on Sundays and every holiday. I know that’s hard to believe with such a big family, but we made it work. I didn’t know, as a child, that my grandfather never liked us arguing and would tell everyone to act like a family. Looking back I realize he was the glue that held our family together.

My grandfather was a tough, stubborn, and hardworking man. He always tried to stay busy whether it was mowing the grass, fixing cars, or tending to his garden. As he got older he

started to get sick and he couldn't do some of things that he used to. He always tried to hide his pain, usually by staying in the house, watching Nascar or the rodeo on television. I remember those times well because that was when we spent most of our time together. Unfortunately, though, he was taken from us in April of '98. I see now that as a kid I didn't understand him too well. He always kept his emotions inside. Growing up I thought that he just didn't love me. He always thought kids should be seen and not heard, but that was how he was raised. As I got older I understood him and his love for me. He was always the first one there when I got sick, and he always bought me ravioli because it was my favorite. Thinking back, I wish I could have showed him how much my family and I loved him. I always hope that it was enough.

My grandmother didn't hide her feelings like my grandfather. She always tried to be the sweetest woman she could, and was one of my best friends. We always loved to do things together like baking bread, going to amusement parks, and doing chores. We tried to make everything as fun as possible. In the fall we would go and play in the leaves together. I remember my grandfather walking up saying "Which one of you is the kid?" and turning away laughing.

After my grandfather passed away, my uncles moved into the house with my grandmother. Home was never really the same; it was sort of a shadow of home. My grandmother never really cooked anymore. The family rarely got together because we were always fighting. My mother and I went to see my grandmother as much as possible, but home wasn't the same without pap. My grandmother wasn't herself anymore either. After a long battle with cancer my grandmother passed in January '03 and the house was foreclosed on. I can't even go by now to see it anymore; the person who bought it ripped it down. As much love as a home can give you, that is how much pain it can return.

When you're young you take things for granted. You think things will be there forever. Loss is a cruel and unbearable part of life but we all have to go through it. All I have now are memories. Sometimes I'll smell homemade bread baking, the smell of lilac bushes, or even the smell of burning leaves, and it'll take me back. It's nice because for a moment I'm home.

Sunday's (Almost) Walk

Lynette Marie Huff

The leaves are turning golden red, my love.
The air is chilled and the sky is mauve.
We stroll along the paths of this park,
Hand in hand as we begin the walk.

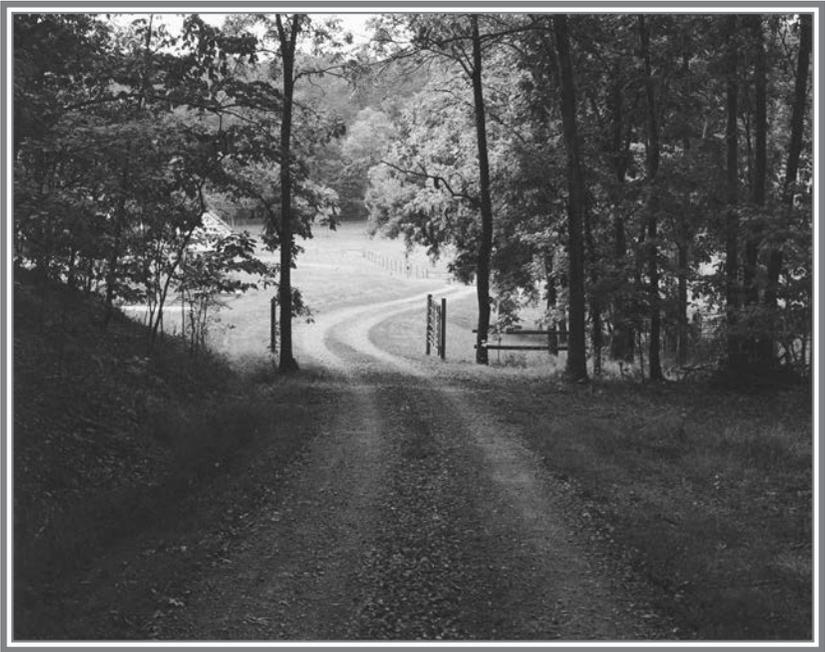
I press closer to you as we turn.
The wind comes alive and moves us along,
My hair a dark cloud engulfing my face.
To you, you say, its beauty and grace.

Squirrels chase each other up a tree.
We laugh at their antics, you and me.
A puppy runs up to sniff your shoes,
Runs back to the master he's afraid to lose.

The pond's surface ripples and trees sway.
On a park bench is where we'll stay,
Hearing the sounds of this and that.
The smell of peanuts in little brown sacks.

You offer a kiss which I receive
With that tender gesture lovemaking's conceived.
With a knowing look and a touch,
I say smiling, "Let's not walk on much."

Heading back home to our warm comfy bed,
With talk of hot chocolate and freshly baked bread,
We curl up together when it is all done,
From Sunday's (almost) walk in the late afternoon.



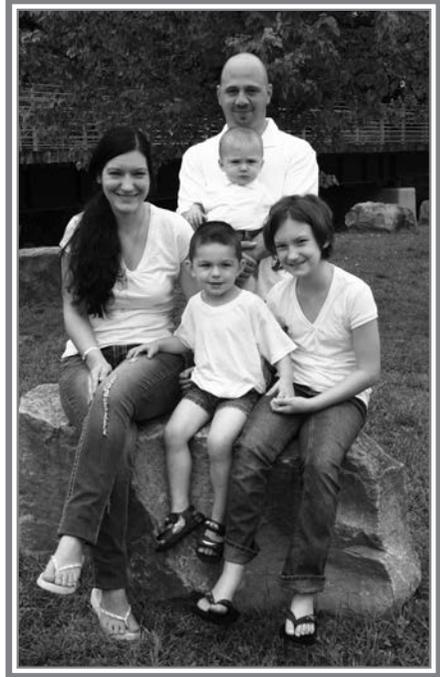
Graveled Gate
-Caitlin Squires

He said... She said...

Reflections on a painful separation from family and the joy of reunion after deployment in service to our country

Davida and Chris Ringler were students in my on-line English 101 class during the summer of 2012. When they submitted the following essays on dealing with an ongoing frustrating experience, I was immediately struck by the human face they both put on the struggle between patriotic service to our world and the immeasurable strain such service puts on the families of those engaged in war. I applaud them for successfully enduring a situation that has been repeated thousands of times through the years.

David E. Bohnert
Associate Professor of English and Speech
Allegany College of Maryland



The Ringler Family Reunited
*Seated, Davida Ringler; Caleb, 3; Cloey, 9.
Standing: Chris Ringler holding Cody, 1*

A Frustrating Deployment

Chris Ringler

I remember like it was yesterday, I was sitting there on our couch trying to find the right words to tell my beautiful wife and my sweet young daughter that I was leaving on a deployment to Afghanistan. It was the middle of June of 2009, and my wife and I were expecting our first son to be born in July when I received the news. To me this was so unfair. I had waited so long for a son, and now that he would be here in less than a month, I had to leave. I was so angry. Anger was not the only emotion going through my head; I was also scared and worried about my family. I knew from the time that I heard the news it was going to be a long year.

July 7, 2009, came around, and my first son was born. It was the most awesome experience holding my son for the first time. I knew I had to make the best of the short time we had as a family, so we hurried back home once we were released from the hospital and settled back in at our home. Before I knew it, it was the end of July and time for me to leave, and that is when I became angry. I was mad that I had to leave my family; knowing it was my job and my duty did not make it any easier for me to leave my wife and children. I was steaming like a boiling pot of water, just knowing that the place where I would be for a year did not even want our help. So, why should I help? But my late grandfather always told me, "War ain't fair, son."

Before I left, I had to attend some routine training, and I understood better what my grandfather meant. After seeing all the things that the military was training us on for our safety, I became scared. At first, I tried to hide the fact, but it wasn't long before I was calling my wife, crying like our newborn son. I couldn't believe it. It was as if I was in a movie. There was something different there. I could not sleep or eat, and constantly there were explosions and alarms going off. Like my buddies that were with me, this was not the atmosphere we were used to. I remember talking to them, debating how much we would tell our wives

simply because we did not want them to worry any more than they were. I knew my family was just as scared as I was.

As all of this was going on around me, I could not help worrying about my wife and children back home. As a husband and a father, it has been always my role as the family protector, but while I was gone, my wife took that responsibility along with many others. Feeling helpless that I could not protect my family was without a doubt one of the biggest challenges I faced.

This experience that my family went through in support of our nation has brought out many feelings, anger, fear and worry for my family. There are some days even now when my wife and I are reminded of the trials that we faced, and how they have made us stronger. I have said before and I will say it again; my wife and I have been through more in our seven years than some have been through in twenty years. We both still get angry at the military as we will in a few weeks because the military believes my presence in a camp half way across the U.S. is where I am needed to be this July. It seems like I can't win in July.

Our Deployment

Davida Ringler

When my husband deployed with the United States Army in September of 2009, I too faced a lot of challenges. I went through many phases of feelings. I felt angry at first with my husband and the Army. I had to learn to adjust to being by myself, and I had to learn to do things my husband did for us. I learned a lot about myself when my husband deployed. I grew as a person. I built a better sense of independence, and I found a new sense of confidence. I still remember the night my husband came home from work, and told me he got "the call." My husband received a call from the commander while he was at work. He had called my husband to give him advance warning his orders were in the mail, coming "certified signature

required" mail. When my husband told me, my first reaction was to go numb. I was numb with shock. I then began to feel anger, anger that my husband was leaving me, and that he had made this obligation. Our son was just barely a month old, a son we tried for years to have, and now I would have to go through the first year alone. The timing was horrible. It was not fair to me. All I could think of was anger and pity for myself. I held all these feelings inside, of course. On the outside, I had to remain strong for my husband. My main concern was him and I had to be his rock. Once he left, I broke apart. I was just going through the motions. I was just living one day to the next not trying to accomplish anything. I just tried to make it from sun up to sun down. I had decided I had enough of this miserable attitude and wanted to do something positive for me, my kids and my husband. I decided to locate a home in my husband's hometown.

I rented a home in Oldtown, Maryland and had to move from Smithsburg, Maryland to our new location all by myself. I had a difficult time with this adjustment. The first night in a strange place was horrifying. I also had to learn to do things around the house my husband once did. I had to shovel the snow from the driveway and change light bulbs high in the bathroom. It was close to the holidays when I moved, and I remember breaking down a time or two. Going to Thanksgiving and Christmas functions were the hardest. Being around family without my husband was hard, because ordinarily he would be there beside me. I had a really hard time in the beginning. I felt as if I had lost my best friend. Eventually, I learned to cope with my feelings.

I began to understand I was not alone, and soon I would be reunited with my husband. I knew I had to recover from my sadness. This time I had to be strong for my children. I knew they needed me. I began to settle into our new home. I got used to doing the outside chores. I'd joke and say, "I was the man of the house." I learned how to work a weed eater, and was so proud of myself for that. I cleaned out the shed all by myself. I replaced the pity with pride. With this new sense of pride came confidence.

When my husband was home he always made the phone calls, to the phone company or just to call a store to see if they had a certain item. I was always too nervous to make the

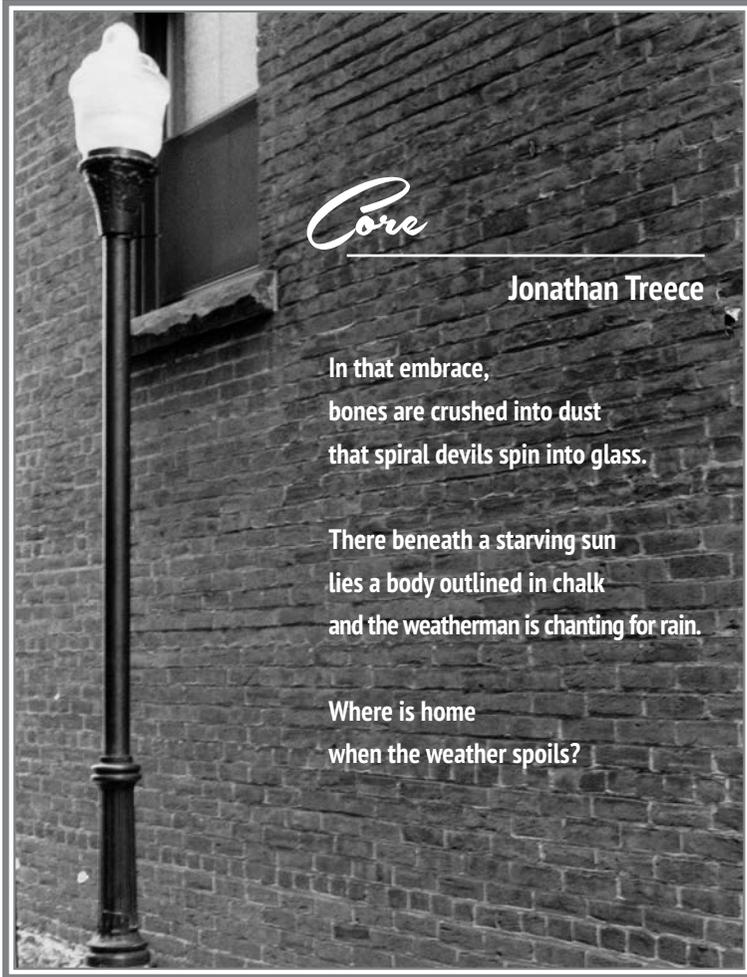
phone calls myself. It seems silly to say now, but I would not make any calls. I would always ask him, and there were those times he just did it because he knew I would not want to. It was a known thing between us. When my husband was deployed, he was not able to make those calls for me anymore. So, I had to make the calls. I made the first calls when I moved, calling the phone and electric company. Then, not long after our move, the car broke down, and I had to call the shop. Before I knew it, I was a phone pro. My anxiety over a simple phone call had disappeared. I was able to take care of these things all on my own. I was confident with myself. I became a more outgoing person. I found my voice.

I now can go out and strike up a conversation with a stranger. I can now call the phone company, without preparing first. When I go to school, I have no problem talking to fellow students. My husband's deployment helped me to find myself. I can do things around the house now, without having to yell for my husband, even though I still do sometimes to make him feel good. I was able to take a horrible situation and grow from it. My phase of anger and pity was also a learning experience. Through this hard time, I learned just how much my husband meant to me. He truly is my best friend.



Untitled

-Adam Brant



Lonesome Alley
-Sandie Narvaez

Africa Fight

Mbala Mbala

In this society full of ruckus I'm viewed as a young black man.

Entirely wrong:

I am African. I represent not a country but a continent.

Therefore with many behind me I speak with confidence.

I love my history, and like an addict I strive to know more.

Often I sit with my uncle to hear the greatness my bloodline stores.

Just listening to his stories bring thrills to my body, like to a kid
in a candy store. He tells me we weren't always viewed as insane,
that our ways have been corrupted and misjudged.

United we all become when we dance. A single voice we all become
when we chant. Together we're ready to fight like soldiers in stance, but instead
we fight each other, acting like we comprehend, as if unity was too much
of a great demand. They tell me a kid wouldn't understand
that there are many factors involved, that unity wouldn't mean
our problems are solved, that we'd be putting too many things
at immense cost.

But I still have belief.

Honestly I think we just turned a new leaf. All we need to do is turn it back
around. They tell me I'm irrelevant; well I'll just use my sound
or you could call it my voice,
my God-given talent.

Bob Marley said Africa unite.

Well, I say Africa fight.



Abandoned
-Tracy Butler

I Was Ashamed of Her

Lynette Marie Huff

My mother was born in a small village in Puerto Rico in 1944 to a poor working class family. In all, they were seven – my mother, four brothers, and her parents. Life was hard for my mother and her family, but then again, that was true of so many people during that era. At the insistence of a cousin, my mother came to the United States with one of my uncles in 1959. I won't go into the details of the circumstances, but she was fifteen years old and was expecting to make a better life for herself under this cousin's tutelage. Although my mother visits Puerto Rico, usually twice a year, she remains in the United States.

My mother came here knowing very little, if any, English. She quickly learned and now, at sixty-six years of age, she reads and understands it better than her own native language of Spanish. But to this day, my mother bears a heavy accent which can be a little difficult for someone to comprehend if they're not used to it. It's because of this accent that I was ashamed of her.

As a teenager in the 1980's, I was, let's just say, a handful. I kept my mother in a constant state of anger, grief, and frustration. Needless to say, as an adult, I now regret making my mother despair for me. However, as a young know-it-all, I felt embarrassed by her utter butchery of the English language whenever I heard her talk with a neighbor or a teacher. I wanted to hide in the dark corner of a room until the whole incident was over. The only relief I felt was when she spoke in Spanish again. Stick to what you know, Ma.

Certain words still get stuck in her mouth and when they finally pop out, it's a webbed mess; words like "very" sound like "berry." "It's berry nice to meet you." And "sure" comes out like "chore," as in "I chore like that." To a young girl, having a parent stand out this way meant her mother was uneducated, simple, and poor. The thought of my friends having a conversation with her terrified me. They'd laugh at her, at me. It mattered what people thought of me at the time. I didn't want to be a laughing stock because of my mother's knack

for sounding like a transplanted Spanish hick. I avoided bringing friends over so I could be spared the humiliation.

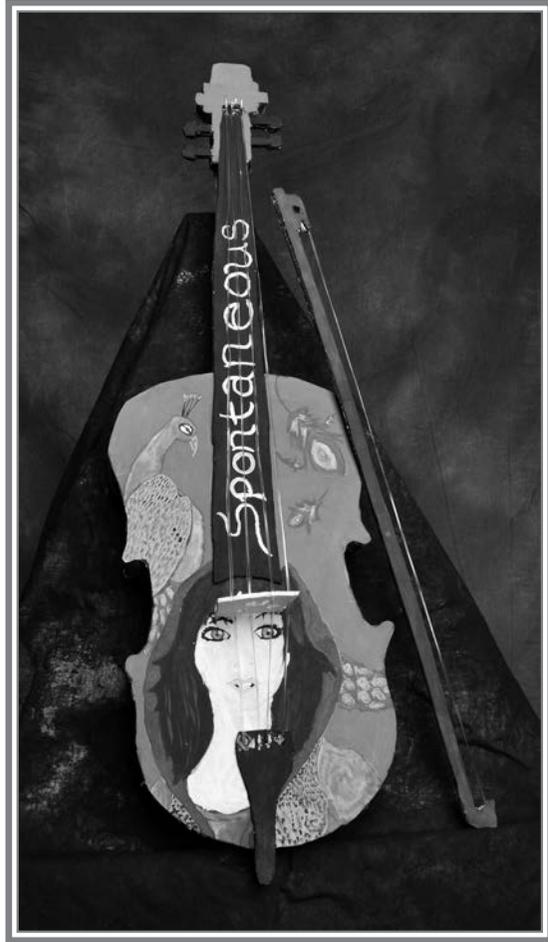
My mother was, of course, oblivious to my fears. She went about her days and nights as usual. She read articles out loud from the newspaper, which made me cringe at every slaughtered word. She held conversations with neighbors as I walked away and pretended to wonder how much business the bodega across the street was doing that morning. She would even SING in English! I found myself wishing deafness would come strike me down during those episodes.

I can see now how silently cruel I was to my mother. Without her knowing it, I labeled her and placed her on the low shelf in my “bookcase” because I thought it was where she best belonged. She didn’t stimulate me intellectually. She added nothing to my education. She couldn’t outdo me academically. How very wrong I was and how easily I can admit that now. I love my mother because she taught me more than I can ever say, and it had nothing to do with academics.

I recently realized that I didn’t know very much about my mother as a person. I’ve only thought of her as, well, my mother: the glue who kept things together, the disciplinarian who at times was harsh and stubborn. I also know she’s a funny, sarcastic, hardworking woman who had pushed aside her own goals in order to make a home for my father, my brother and me. She did the best she could with whatever challenges she faced. No matter what her problems were—financial, marital, or just dealing with her difficult children during their rebellious years—my mother kept going.

My mother has a wonderful saying that I always remember and often utilize. She once said something to me in Spanish during a time when I was at a crossroad and didn’t know which way to turn. Her advice was, “You can’t cover the sky up with your hands. People can still see it.” It was her maternal way of saying, “Face it.” I respect my mother and have for quite a long while, starting about when I myself became a mother for the first time nineteen years ago. She sits on the top shelf where she deserves to be.

Now, when my family and I visit New York, I stop at that same bodega, pick up the newspaper, take it to her, and ask her to read some of the articles to me. My mother’s voice is the sweetest I’ve ever heard and I’ll chore miss it someday when she’s gone.



The Violin Girl

-Sandie Narvaez



Ripples of the Sole
-Jennifer M. Twigg

The Beauty Beneath the Water

Dorine Smith

I had only ever seen it in the movies. As a child, I wondered why it looked so angry and aggressive. In the movie the sun came out and the day was beautiful; everything was pleasant, people sat in their chairs reading books and enjoying the sounds coming from it. And then the day turned nasty and dark clouds came into the sky and the rain came down hard. The sounds were still there but they were no longer friendly; they were loud and scary.

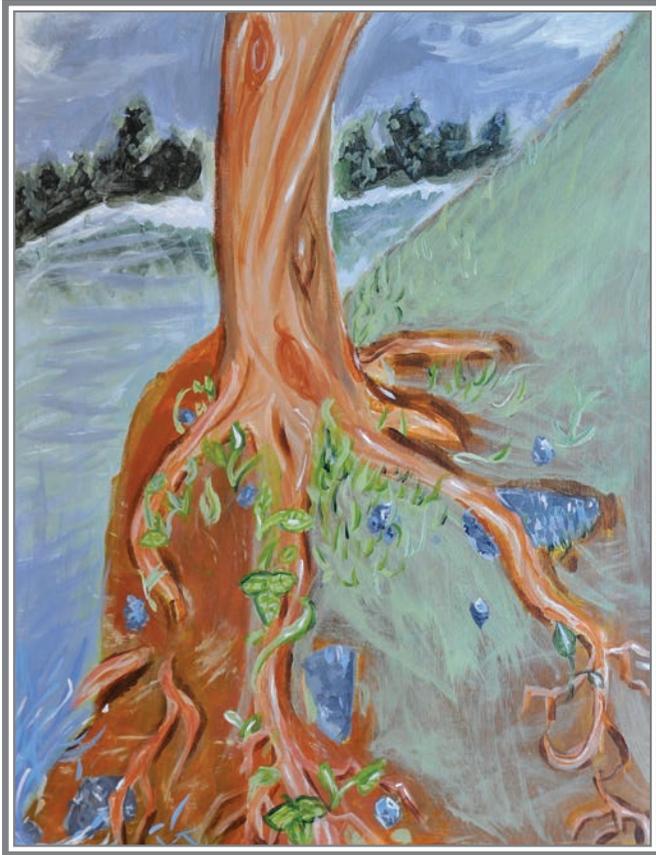
I was an adult when I saw the ocean for the first time. The books and movies didn't do it justice. It was like a gentle giant when I put my toes into the warm water. I stood still, letting the water bathe my feet. When it subsided I walked in a little farther only to be chased back to the sandy shore by a wave. Watching the waves gave me great pleasure. Children played while others surfed. I had a calming lazy feeling come over me. There were boats in the distance that appeared to be small, but as they approached the dock they were enormous. The sky seemed to touch the water, they became one. Pam and I decided to spend our vacation in Key West because we both love hot air balloons. The week we had chosen to go there was a hot air balloon festival. We knew this trip was going to be filled with adventure and excitement. The first day we were there, we went to the beach to watch the balloons. We sat on the sand leaning back on our blanket watching as they passed lazily overhead. The sky was filled with all colors, shapes and sizes. In the distance, it looked like the sky was full of brightly colored polka dots.

There were lots of people. Some were family members of the balloon teams and they would wave as their favorite passed above us. The food stands were bustling and the smell of food filled the air. There was a boy and his dog down by the water. He threw a Frisbee into the water and the dog swam out after it time and time again. The boy was tired a long time before the dog was. There were so many boats of all sizes out in the water watching and having their own fun. We watched in the hot afternoon sun as people jumped off the upper

decks of the boats into the water. As the afternoon passed and the sky turned dark we knew we would be back to watch the excitement the next day.

The next day Pam and I learned of a new world within the beautiful clear blue water. We had a chance to snorkel with friends. Under the blanket of deep blue crystal lives a world almost too amazing to describe. We slipped into the warm salty water and immediately began to float. We knew there were large fish in the water because we could see them from the boat. Trying not to panic, we put our facemasks and snorkels on. We tasted salt on our lips and could feel the ocean breeze warm against our cheeks. The opportunity was there for us to learn some of the secrets of our new underwater world and we took it. We felt lightweight as we tried to keep our heads underwater. We both wanted to see everything. Not too far under me I saw a stingray swimming away after we had intruded in his private world. The underwater vegetation was breath-taking. The coral was shaped in so many different ways. It was sharp to the touch and mysterious because you knew that creatures lived in it. We weren't allowed to stand on it; to destroy something so amazing would be a crime. There were schools of fish everywhere we looked and the colors were vibrant. It was all too easy to lose track of the time. Before I was ready our boat returned us back to the above world.

Upon leaving Key West the next day, we flew over the water. Different depths of water were represented by different colors. There were greens, blues and shades of aqua. Pam and I vowed to return, but the next time we would stay longer.



A Tree Stands
-Jillian Shanholtz

Face of the Forest
-Andrew Lease





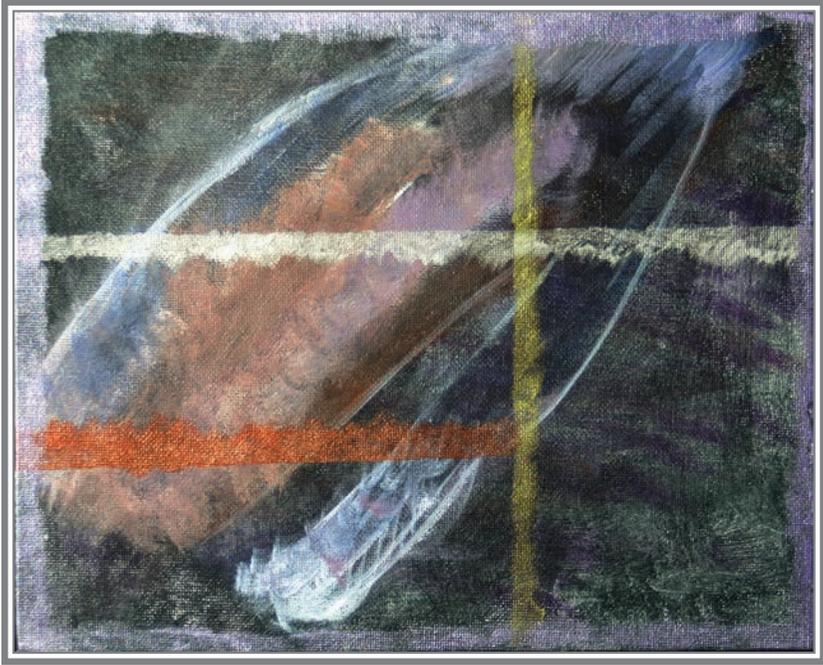
Leaves of Color

-Chelsea George



Couture Intensity

-Shaena McBride



Trajectory
-Rebecca MacBryghde



Textures of the Wind

-Shaena McBride



Stalks & Sky
-Tracy Butler

I Lived

Michael Fisher

Everyone at some point in their childhood was asked the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Answers range from astronauts, to firefighters, to the President, and often change as frequently as the child’s clothes; for obvious reasons many of these dreams do not usually come to fruition and often serve only for nostalgic purposes as we age. Throughout my youth, I like any child had more than my share of careers I wished to pursue, adamantly convinced that each one was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. To this day my future is still vague, filled with Get-Rich-Quick schemes and thoughts of adventure; the only difference today is that I do not fool myself with the idea that I have a plan. From those early days of my ignorant youth to today as a slightly less ignorant college student, my career choices have gone from photography to engineering. Through all these changes one thing has remained constant: ever since I learned that there was a world beyond my front door I knew that whatever my career, I would travel this remarkable hunk of rock until the day I was buried within its crust.

John Steinbeck refers to this uncontrollable urge as a “virus of restlessness” (Steinbeck 2). I believe this is an accurate description; I am also under the strong impression that this “virus” is hereditary. Although not every member of my family has been infected, it has taken an obvious toll on the lives of the majority of us. My brother Alec recently kayaked down the Grand Canyon and hiked back up and is currently travelling the country; also my brother Cailen and my sister Erin have traveled for many years, but are temporarily managing their symptoms for the sake of Cailen’s children and Erin’s puppies, which she believes are her children. I have also come to the conclusion that the “virus” that infects my blood is also highly contagious. A very close friend of mine, by the name of Isaac, has been infected due to exposure to my illness. When we were young, he was a very unadventurous boy; he spent the majority of his time indoors, playing video games or watching videos on the computer. But as he was exposed to me the virus began take hold, and our sickness fed into each other as we

explored the city of Cumberland from sewers and rooftops to abandoned buildings and the woods. As the years passed, I watched as my virus took a stronger hold of my friend than it had on me, starting with a spur-of-the-moment trip to New York on New Year's eve, to his current adventures in Peru.

Not everyone is infected with this illness to the extent of those previously mentioned, but I believe that there is always something in every person's blood. It may not be overwhelming, they might not even notice it, but there is always that little urge to travel in the back of people's head when they see pictures of beautiful places or hear stories of other's adventures; there's always that little voice that wonders what it would be like to be the one that took that picture or to be telling those stories. This is the nature of humans and the reason why travel can be so enriching; it does not have to be as extreme as going to Peru with nothing but a backpack, or kayaking down the Grand Canyon. Enrichment is all about introspection and the new experiences you can find anywhere; it can be as simple as walking in the park and looking closer at the color changes in the leaves; perhaps driving to work, simply take notice of the birds making a nest or the squirrels finding food. Travelling is not as much the physical journey, "but is itself the enterprise and adventure of the day" ("The Joy of Walking" 2).

Personally, as a bit of an adventure seeker, I prefer the extremes. When we had a day off school for Hurricane Sandy, I attempted to set up camp that night during the storm; unfortunately for me, Sandy was set on putting a stop to my camping trip. After I deemed my first shelter unsafe due to falling trees and flooding, I attempted to set up in a shallow cave I found, which sadly also got washed out. Although that night ended up being one of the most miserable experiences of my life, I'm glad I did it. Although I did not travel very far, I learned about my limitations and it changed me for the better; this is a key element of "transformative" travel, which is defined as "travel embarked upon by the traveler for the primary and intentional purpose of creating conditions conducive for one or more fundamental structures of the self to transform" (Ross 2).

An ideal weekend for me is one that I can grab my pack and disappear on some adventure for those few, short days. Whether it is rock climbing, snowboarding, or just

camping and exploring, I'm happiest when I can just get away and forget about the rules and expectations of the "civilized world." It's an indescribable feeling, and for some people it's almost instantaneously addicting and impossible to leave behind. Some people simply do not belong within the constraints of society. The "Turner Theses" suggests that these people may escape to the frontiers; unfortunately very few frontiers remain. The only remaining option for these people is to travel and lead a nomadic lifestyle, taking only what they need and going where they want. Unfortunately, people seem to think that these travelers are a blight on society and do not contribute; this couldn't be further from the truth. Without travelers the world would be largely undeveloped; many natural resources would remain undiscovered, the trade of these resources between countries and cultures would be greatly inhibited, and our understanding of these places would also be much worse. Without travelers we would not even understand our own country. John Steinbeck, an American writer, said after not traveling for many years: "[t]hus I discovered that I did not know my own country...I had not heard the speech of America, smelled the grass and trees and sewage, seen its hills and water, its color and quality of light. I knew its changes only from books and newspapers...In short, I was writing of something I did not know about" (Steinbeck 2). He goes as far as to call this "criminal"; I would merely call it ignorance, and also applying it to more than just writing, I would say that any nation without gypsies is one of ignorance and doomed to fail.

Fortunately for all of us, there are still many people with a wayward disposition, although our numbers are dwindling fast. Most people have lost the true value of traveling, which Thoreau says is a "noble art"; instead they are simply tourists ("The Joy of Walking"). Touring and sightseeing has its values, but it is not in the spirit conducive for transformation: "[a]lthough travel can change tourists' lives, few authors have actually used the term transformative travel to denote this type of travel behavior" (Ross 2). Tourism is too materialistic; it is all about the tangible aspects of travel. Tourists only care about the pictures they can take or the souvenirs they can buy. The true traveler does not even need to take a camera; although there is nothing wrong with taking pictures, the true traveler's



Leopard Mask

-Chad Harris

memory serves as photographs and his experience as a souvenir. This is because true transformative travel is the result of “intellectual curiosity, emotional need, or physical challenge” (Ross 2). Transformative travel is all about opening your mind and overcoming some physical or emotional challenge that will allow you to transform.

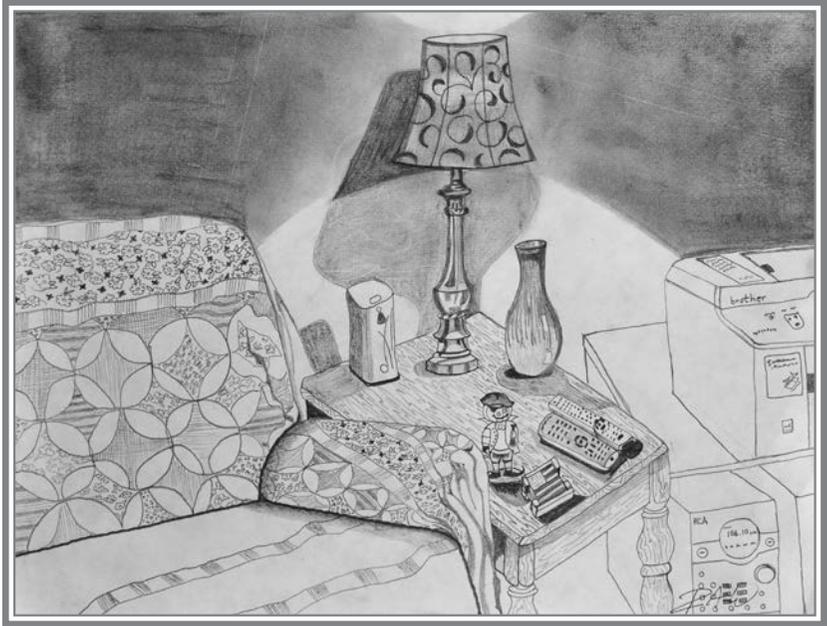
All people have a sense of adventure and exploration; sometimes it just needs stirred up. Although I always enjoyed traveling, it never became such a strong desire until I took a rather touristy vacation out west to visit many landmarks, primarily the Grand Canyon. After that trip I truly realized how little of the world I had seen and how ignorant I was to its ways, and I immediately decided that was not the life I wanted to live, or the person I wanted to be. I have seen too many people get caught in a rut trying to prepare for the next phase in their life, which is simply a preparation for the next phase, and so it continues in a never ending cycle. I don't believe anybody enjoys this cycle, but they tell themselves every day, every month, and every year that tomorrow, next month, and next year everything will be different. So people will work a job that they hate, in order to pay for the car that they can't afford, but can't sell because they need it to get to the job that they hate so they can pay the rent at the apartment they don't want to live in, but can't move from because it's the only place they can afford with the money they make at the job that they hate.

It's ridiculous how people will spend their whole life in this cycle, going absolutely nowhere, and will eventually die without ever truly living. Alan Watts, a British philosopher, points out this insanity in his lecture “What If Money Were No Object,” where he says “[y]ou'll be doing things you don't like doing in order to go on living, that is to go on doing things you don't like doing, which is stupid. Better to have a short life that is full of what you like doing than a long life spent in a miserable way” (Watts 1). There are so many people who should have had this told to them as children, and I have spoken with many who have realized too late that what they are doing with their lives isn't something they enjoy. Since I work at an indoor climbing wall, I will often speak with parents as their children climb, and I get a lot of questions about what I plan on doing after school and my interest in adventure sports. After I tell them that I plan on travelling as much as possible and so on, almost all of them look

extremely sad and will make some comment about wishing they had done more of those things while they were young. As mean as it may sound, these are the people whom I refuse to emulate. When I am on my last leg and death is looming, I may not have a nice car parked at a nice house with a huge TV, but I will have experiences worth so much more than any amount of money. In this way, even if my deathbed is a ditch on the side of the road, I will die happy, because no matter how short or long my life is, it will be filled with the things I enjoyed and I can look back with no regrets and tell myself "I Lived."

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Still Life

-Robert Weasenforth

Black Woman

Mbala Mbala

beautiful black woman mother of the earth
your skin embraced by the sun but led by a curse
your vast beauty misunderstood by the world has led me to hurt
big thighs and breasts of nice size
in which you've wrongly learned to take pride
forgetting yourself and breaking morals, just to please a guy
but i would be lying if i blamed it all on you
beautiful black woman i've compared you to female dogs and garden tools
we live in a society corrupted by lying fools
apparently to be successful you must use your thighs and boobs
beautiful black woman smart and intellectual
degraded by society now degrading yourself, how terrible
your self-respect has declined to a level so minuscule
beautiful black woman, your name forever stained
you possess the very great tools to drive a wise man insane
but it seems you're confused
allowing yourself to be sexually and mentally abused
beautiful black woman kind and loving but led by a curse
through your flaws i still see
my love from you shall never disperse
beautiful black woman mother of the earth



A Breath of Soul

-Shaena McBride



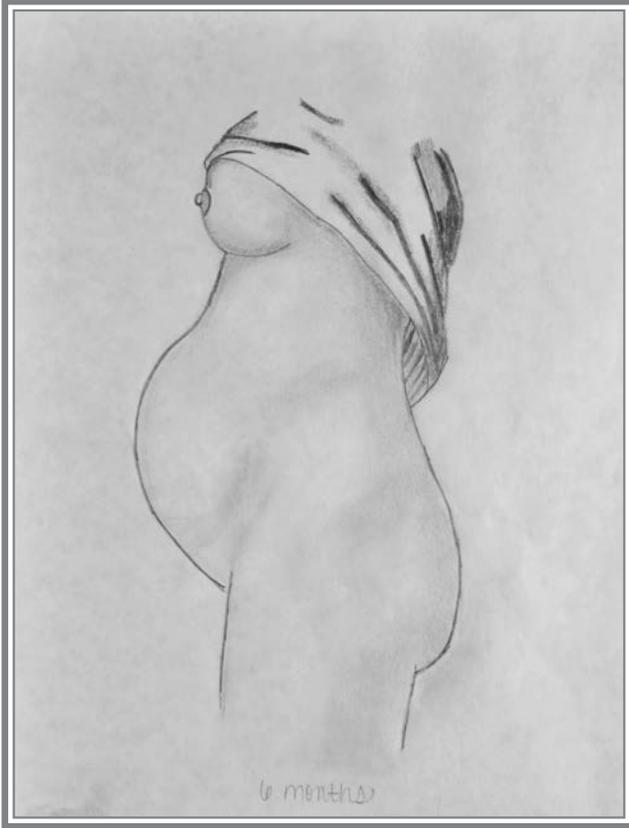
Untitled

-Isabella Redriver Storm

Honeycomb

Jonathan Treece

Near the gnarled and erupting roots,
the hive has fallen; the combs lie broken.
The sun's crush sparkles on the amber
of the ruptured, bleeding cells.
Amidst the crumpled wax, the drowning twist
in their own sustenance, brittle wings bound,
thrusting stingers toward an indifferent sky.
The survivors split the air in fury,
their patterns seemingly lost and random,
seeking the destroyer, their god-like adversary.
And the bear laps greedily
not for sustenance, but merely
for the taste of spoiled honey.



Untitled

-Samantha Jendras

I Am From God

Shakeesha Snell

I am. I am from. I am from God. I am from my mother's womb from which I believe He spoke me into existence and it was so. A place that He created to allow me to dwell. Warmth, comfort, peace and protection were all around me in this place. A home that was only temporary. An indwelling secret place where it was just He and I. A place where I grew and developed into His likeness. Mind, body and soul made into His perfect image. He put in and pulled out. He pressed and pushed. All wrapped up in His perfect little package. A special blessing from Him to them. I am from God.

I am from God. Things around me seemed unfamiliar. I was being forced out of this place of warmth, comfort, and peace. I was born into a world full of strife, malice, envy, immorality of all kinds, sickness, disease, and all works of evil. The list goes on! My life here begins and yes, I am from God.

I am. I am from. I am from God. Fed when I needed to be fed. Cleaned and bathed too. Not a care in the world. Everything was done for me. I did not have to worry about what I was in need of. Food, shelter, and clothing, all provided for me. At my disposal all the love and protection I could stand. Oh yes, I am from God.

I am from God. Off to my school days already. Leaving the security of home, going into a place of many. Strange people from unknown places were plentiful. I began to take my first steps toward Him unknowingly. Pushing, pacing, moving, then standing still. Time to move forward just because I am from God.

I am from God. The weight of life begins to slow me down and hinder me. I have false friends, an inevitable distraction from boys, then come children. I am now faced with the responsibility of others. Here comes the rollercoaster. Good times then bad. Up then down. All along, I begin to wonder, am I really from God? I ponder diligently on this matter. Here it is, I am walking through time, not sure what's going on around me. Why is this happening to me? I'm confused and dazed. One hardship after the other. "Why me, God?" is the question I asked.

Every action was so precise, on purpose I could say. It left me bewildered. Still asking more questions. "Why the pain?" "Why are you not protecting me?" "Why are you allowing this, that, and these to hurt me?" He then answers me. "Be wise." Wow, that's it?! I already knew the answer to these questions. "Just be obedient" is what I myself said to me. I have to stay away from this. Don't succumb to that. Don't follow after them or the likes of these. As I came to realize who I was, I realized who He was in me. I am from God.

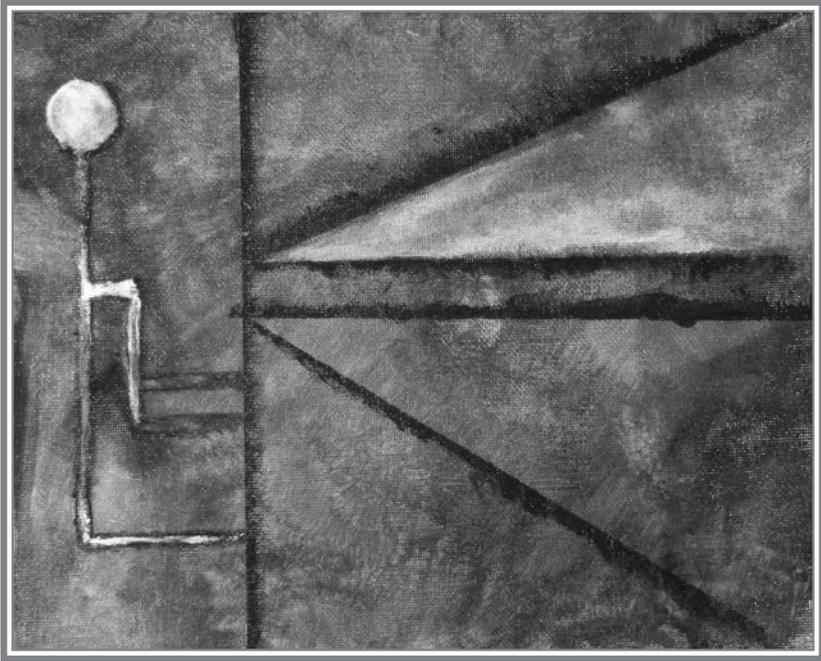
I am from God. Spending more time with the One whom I would be nothing without. I begin to walk and talk more to Him. He awakens me every day. He gives me my sound mind. He allows me the activity and agility of my limbs. I speak to Him and acknowledge Him. You are the One who allows me to walk, talk, and see. You allow me to taste, hear and even touch. I can never take you for granted again. I feel your presence even though I can't see you with my natural eye; yet you are real to me. You give me joy and peace. You love me and comfort me; even when things around me seem impossible and unbearable, you make it possible and I am able to bear it. I now know that whatever it is that comes my way, you made it all worthwhile. I am from God.

As I sit back and ponder, I remember all the things you have brought me out of. All the blessings you have bestowed upon me. I begin to lift my eyes more to you. I see you clearly now. You have been there all along. You have been a doctor and healer. You have saved my life and rescued me. You are my head and hedge of protection. My promise maker and keeper. My father and my friend. I love you, God. I thank you God. I worship you, God. You will never leave me or forsake me. I can depend on you always. You will always lead and guide me on the right path. I can go on through the rest of my life never questioning who I am, or who I am in You. I am. I am from. I am from God.



Poetic Injustice

-David Johnson



Fluttergrid
-Rebecca MacBrÿghde

An Eternal Requiem

Vince Gambino

The cold is biting, but the dawn revives me. I have not slept, though I have been brought before death. As the chill fades from my bones, I rise again. It is a long walk inland, as the steep cliffs have forbidden my ship a close landing. But there are those who should be remembered. I am sore as I clamber over the rocks and ruins of a dying world, the journals of the dead in my hand.

I search for their resting place, but fear they have not found peace. At last, I see two cabins a valley apart from one another. Here is where they must be. Ignoring the pained cries of my body, I journey to the smaller cabin, hoping to find the two I have remembered. Yet, I am disheartened when I enter. A woman sits there, alone, without peace. She is not there, and the cabin lies in disarray. I feel I know the state of the other house, yet I follow the cliffside path there regardless.

Together the bodies of the two lovers cling on the bed, praying, not to any god, but to each other, for peace. I would wish for them to find it, but I know they have not. Death has brought them nothing but a short reprieve. My mother would tell me to not remember them, but I cannot help but pity their journey. They have kept many memories, yet kept them separately. They dream apart, though they sleep together. The plague has claimed them both, and I remember their names. Alexander Ashton and Leora Horovitz. I wish them luck and place their memories between them, so that in death, at least, they may share them.

We cry that life is too short, but in truth, it is too long. Life stretches into a minute, and altogether it has lasted far longer than it should. Wakefulness begets the pain of existence, and only death brings the sweet sleep of oblivion. Yet, it is denied to us all, as is purpose, as is fellowship. But no matter how many people surround us, we are still alone, forever in solitude – how else would one live? To live with another; it seems almost a sin to deny ourselves the pain of seclusion.

Yet I do not leave them with my judgment, but with a fool's hope; the hope that they will someday find the peace they searched for before death. The path from their cliffside

cabin is precarious, yet beautiful. I trace their dying steps, but also their living ones. I watch the sunset where they died, holding each other, at peace, without fear. If only they had found such peace in death. Dusk brings me back to the brink of death, and dawn revives me once more. The cold creeps into my bones and soul, and haunts my heart. I am not at peace. The dying world still claims me.

Against the clock, I walk. I watch them shepherd the flock as one. Their solitude is meaningless in the face of their love. I open my heart to their memories. Though their flock died long before them, they are not forgotten. The tall grass sways and wonders; it has not forgotten the flock, though it does not know where they have gone. I whisper to the grass, but it does not understand. Perhaps it is at peace as well.

I walk through the remains of a once-sturdy wooden fence. Now, it is rotted and weak, and has no more purpose. It can fall, and be at peace with itself. I watch the lovers play in the grass, whispering sweet nothings to each other, listening to the wind, content with the world. They know it is dying, but they are comforted by each other. Perhaps their world is not yet dying.

The herd which feeds and clothes them is not so discerning as are they. Necessity drives them to speak, and even to share what little they have with each other. Fear and hatred gives way to acceptance, and perhaps the dying world is refuted, if only for an instant. The two cabins are small, and yet, the pain of solitude drives many to follow a foolish hope, a lie of companionship. And yet this lie can lead to truth.

They shout and scream, and are angry with each other. Perhaps it is simple fear which has driven them so. Fear of the unknown, and every man is a stranger to another. They close their hearts to one another, though there are no others to open them to. They stare at each other from across the hills, curious and yet repulsed.

A chance meeting, Leora Horovitz finds the island not as deserted as she once thought. Through the grass she sees a tall figure, Alexander Ashton. He, in turn, sees her, and suspicion fills their hearts.

At last, I can remember no more of them. They have left no more of themselves here. My feet lead me back into my boat, which I softly guide back into the open sea.



Landscape in Pencil

-Cara Trail

Time passes, and I am young again. My father pilots the ship and my mother brings me out on my first expedition to a dead island. She teaches me much about the beauty of our dead world. She teaches me of the people who live on these islands, their stories, scratched into the walls and cliffs, into the empty homes, in letters and symbols. The carcasses of a time long past litter the beaches and hills of the island, and my mother shows me a journal from within – the first of many. I have seen letters before, but these are the first with meaning.

She reads with me and speaks of the importance of memory. To remember the dead; to remember their hopes, their dreams, their failings and victories, and their final moments, is to respect them. It is to respect life, and respect the final moments of a dying race in a dying world. I learn of Jan Selkirk, a man of integrity who fought a terrible disease of the lungs for as long as he could, before accepting his fate and becoming one with a dying world in the only way one can.

I gingerly touch the pages and turn them, one by one, seeing the last moments of Jan Selkirk, passing through his life like a dream, aware of its illusory nature, yet unaware of it. He writes to his beloved, and can find no peace, yet the writing gives him peace; the lie comforts him. But he knows it is a lie. His letters fall out, page after page, unsent, unsealed, unread. I read them, and so does my mother, and we remember them, and him.

In the cliffs, we see his markings. He prays to a God he no longer believes in and warns others of his fate. He turns to the last markings of his memory. *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*. I remember this as well, and I remember the meaning, as my mother warns me against. She clings to their memories, but not to their hearts. Even as my young soul cries in pain for the hearts of others, my mother closes hers. There is no peace in her memory, only a driving impetus. It gives her a sense of belonging and meaning and staves off the hopelessness of truth that would so crush me.

Jan Selkirk cries for absolution, but cannot find it. He does not cry to be saved, for he knows his death approaches without end. He does not try to stop it any longer, but wishes only to know himself, and to know his memories. His shack is worn and weather beaten. The

windows are broken and the furniture beyond all hope of repair. They bear his memories as well. His guilt is written across the floor.

His love has not found him, though she lay in his house. She is not remembered, as are we. We leave her to search for him herself, at one with a dying world. The gulls scatter and cry when we leave the house. They do not know enough to remember, only enough to live, to ignore their mortality, and that of others. They are at peace.

Jan Selkirk tries to find solace in his memories, but does not yet know that there is no peace there. He struggles with his regrets and his mistakes until they overwhelm him. Life taunts him, but he neither struggles against it nor for it. He has accepted it. Even his guilt cannot overwhelm his spirit's search for peace.

We see his calls to every memory as his dying days approach, the plague cross haunts his dreams and his waking hours in equal measure. I cry for him, though my mother admonishes me. She no longer feels for those whom she chooses to remember. Her passion for their memories is unmatched; yet her relationship with them is cold, mechanical, unfeeling. The cave Jan Selkirk had made his final resting place is not dying. It is at peace. Burned out candles spill wax into ancient outcroppings, and ink and blood make their home in equal measure. It is a tranquil estuary, and the river no longer flows as violently as it once did. Jan Selkirk rests and escapes our world. His visage is not pained, but peaceful. I envy him. He has found his end.

We do not disturb his body, but instead leave him in his state of rest. The high tide of the river's thin tendril laps at his feet, but the grotto anchors him to his tomb. Sheet music is scrawled into the rock opposite him. He made music as he died, to ease his passing. Jan Selkirk sleeps, and no man can wake him. Nor should they. My mother gives me his journal, and I know what to do. I place his memories by his heart. He sleeps, and we dream for him.

Even now, all but the birds and fish have abandoned the dead island. It is one of many, and even the carrion birds have left our world. The dying is not dead, and cannot sustain them. The hilltop has a rusting edifice that once served to call out to the dying to lie to them, to say that they were not alone. It is now stooped with age and damage, weather and time claiming their pound of flesh. From beside it I see the boat, and father's kneeling figure, cradling a smaller one. Something has gone wrong.



3-D Art Works
-Chad Harris

I follow my mother down the craggy approach to the dilapidated harbor, lined with the beached ships of men who no longer wished to remember. There is fear in her breath, and in her step. Our fear is well-founded. The disease that claimed Jan Selkirk struck while we searched for his memories. My sister is not Jan Selkirk. Her past is short, and her end, shorter. My mother cries and curses the man she has sworn to remember, and cradles my sister in her arms.

My sister dies, and it is reflected in her eyes. My mother's passion for the memory of the dead passes with her, and she no longer wishes to remember any other than her little girl. She allows the sea to claim her and drag her and the memories she carried with her into the eternal sea, and into a futile grave.

My father does not understand my journey any more than he understood my mother's, yet he complies nonetheless. Dead island after dead island is visited, some with the plague markings on the cliffs, and others without. Soon, he too follows my mother. They are not forgotten, and yet not remembered. I now pilot the ship, neither more alone nor less than when they were alive.

I am once again aged, as I wake, asleep. Again I return to a point of presence, rather than memory, and mourn for those forgotten. They do not comfort me, any more than I can comfort them. I am alone. Truly alone, and forgotten even by those who would remember. The pain is all that makes it bearable, all that gives me a sense of the end.

But who will remember me? None, save me. To remember is the last refuge of the living man in the dying world. My impermanence is my only marker, like so many I have seen and remembered for the merest blink that my passing life will exist for. In the end, it is without meaning. I yearn for the end, but cannot find it. I do not delude myself with the lie that death brings peace; for the dead can no more die than can the living be born anew.

I passed another ship and met its pilot. He was not a man to wish to be remembered, and the death of this world had already entered his eyes. Soon, it would spread to his body, and he too would join the skeletal hulks that littered so many of the islands I remembered.

We passed without words, he without life, and I without hope. For him, at least, he believed the end was near – I knew the truth of our eternal purgatory.

I am a shadow of a memory, and yet I remember many. My memory fades, though I am not yet the age of my father, dead and yet wishing for peace. I do not pray, for dying worlds are home to no gods, but I feel regret creep into my heart. A dying island has the plague cross scrawled into its white cliffs and the words of a man searching for absolution, and my memory jumps. *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ.*

Those I have remembered cannot help me, but I may yet be helped by their memories. I dock my ship by the old wooden dock from so many years ago, and cannot see it as it is. I can only remember it as it was. I pass my father and my mother, comforting my sister, who is not there. She has found peace. I remember her.

I follow myself, and my mother, watching as we remember Jan Selkirk. I follow his first steps onto the island, where his hope has forbidden him his peace. He prays for a new world, but is given no answer. The birds feed him for a time, and the ruins of a time best forgotten are made into his new home. The seaside cabin becomes his, and his alone. The wretched monolith gives him hope, and even his memories restrain him from finding his final rest. His love reads his memories, but cannot find him, even as she watches them happen. The journal in her hand is a mystery, and anchors her to this world.

My hand runs along the wooden fence beside the hillside path Jan Selkirk was so fond of walking. In the sand below, he has made music. No musician's symbols; only high tide bringing a somber cry for peace. But peace has already come here, and I am comforted by this. I stand there for a time, watching. With the tide fades the music, and the sun. The moon sheds her light on the sea, and in a boat across the way, a woman's figure is joined with the ocean. She is not forgotten, but has only joined a dying world.

Jan Selkirk has found the body of his lover, and mourns for her. He knows it is the plague he carries that has killed her, and yet wonders why she did not come for him. She herself does not know that she has not found him. He blames himself, and the plague he carries along with his lover into the cabin. Gently, she is placed upon his own bed to allay his guilt, but he

finds no peace in this, and neither does she. I weep, and my mother's heart hardens. She is without pity, but the journal shows us the memories of Jan Selkirk.

I continue to follow my mother and myself in the footsteps of Jan Selkirk. His life is no longer anchored to this world with hope, but with despair. I pity his memory. He cries out to God, and refuses to eat. He searches for the cure he believes can be found in the ship's husk, but when he sees it, he loses his stomach for it. He does not resign himself to his fate. He does not regret it. He accepts it.

Still, he wanders across the island without rest. He searches for peace, but cannot find it, no matter what he does. The river is followed in order that he might learn the secret of its peace, but he cannot find it. He does not yet know that he cannot find peace. He draws his symbols and warns others away from this place, yet it is still not enough for him. He turns to his god, and he turns to his music, but neither grant him what he so yearns for.

Weeks pass, and he no longer searches for peace. His voyage is aimless, and takes him across the hills and cliffs of the dying island. He has found his peace at last. He returns to his cabin one last time.

His supplies are few, and his body weak, yet he does not stop. He does not fight, for he feels his peace approaching. He does not wish for it now, but he accepts it. He does not follow the river, though his path takes him by it. His peace leads him to the cave, where he lights his final candles and allows himself to hear a final composition. Two figures watch Jan Selkirk lay to his final peace, and place his memories with him.

His body is no longer there. The rain and the tide have washed away the temporal husk that once caged a man known as Jan Selkirk. He is no more, and only his memory remains. Soon, even that will fade. My feet feel weighted with lead, but it is neither despair nor apathy that weighs them. I feel a warmth spread throughout my body. I have remembered enough. It is time to forget.

I do not lie down where he lay, for his resting place is not mine. I am comforted by his peace, but his peace is not mine. Even the monolith, which once spread the memories of those with hope, cannot house my body.

I will not defile his island. I leave, piloting the boat into the open sea. Here I have no home, nothing but the transitory illusion of an illusion; the merest memory of a memory. Blood trickles down my mouth as I cough, but the pain is no longer my concern. Jan Selkirk meets me, and he is not there. He is at peace. I have found him. Firmly, he grasps my hand and leads me nowhere.

What is a beginning without end? What is life without death? What is eternity in the hands of impermanence? A grain of sand that slips through the fingers of time without meaning, without value, without being.

Some deceive themselves and say that death comes for us all. In truth, death has already claimed us, and we are just wisps, shades of beings that wander without aim, without purpose, and without end. Without peace, we remain as such forevermore.

I look into his eyes as he takes me away, and I see the last moments of man. They will not be remembered. This world has found peace. It is no longer dying. There is only oblivion now, and it claims us all. I leave my memories, and those I have remembered. I do not allow the end to take me, but I accept it, and I join the dead world. I am at peace.

Inspirations



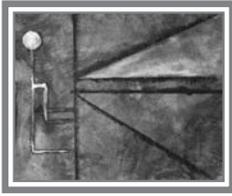
Chad Harris, *Leopard Mask and 3-D Art Works*

I was inspired by African culture and wanted to have artwork to represent it.

Lynette Marie Huff, *I Was Ashamed of Her and Sunday's (Almost) Walk*

The essay came about because of a phone conversation with my mom one evening. She was telling me stories from her childhood in Puerto Rico. After hanging up, I couldn't help feeling sad that I didn't know her as well as a daughter should know her mother. I wanted to write about my shame, my guilt, my acceptance, but most of all, I wanted to write about my love for her.

The poem was a contest between a former friend and myself. We gave one another a topic which we then had to build upon. My theme was a walk in the park on an autumn day. I was feeling rather romantic that late Sunday afternoon and as a result, the words to my poem came easily.



Rebecca MacBrighde, *Fluttergrid*

Sharing what I see and feel, challenging my humanism. There is beauty in everything. The fact that my venting and creating can hold value and meaning to someone not in my psyche is thrilling and intimidating.

Shaena McBride, *Couture Intensity*

Inspired by Gucci Couture advertisement found in later editions of *Vogue* 2012.

Sandie Narvaez, *The Violin Girl*

My favorite violinist inspired me. I wanted to be different from the other students and decided to make the violin, since that symbolizes Lindsey so well.

Michael O'Neil, *Terminus*

One of the most encouraging thoughts I have whenever I walk along railroad tracks is the implied promise of distant places and experiences waiting up ahead, always lurking just around the next bend in the rail bed, on and on, with no end ever in sight, but always implied.

Miranda Sines, *Home*

This paper was about my grandparents. Growing up, my mother and I went to my grandparents often. We had an apartment, so to my grandparents' was my home. After they died it was sold and the people that bought it, tore it down. My home is gone. It will always have a special place in my heart. I still feel the emptiness, the hole in my heart, when I think of my home not being there any longer. So I try to remember the way it used to be. I wanted people reading this paper to feel that. To take them to their own safe wonderful home or to share mine.

Shakeesha M. Snell, *I Am From God*

This essay is a true and realistic narrative of who I am. My faith in God is strong and tangible. I believe that I could not, cannot, and will not be able to do anything without Him, but with Him I can do all things.

Jonathan Treece, *Carousel; Core; and Honeycomb*

I like to write about truth, and the only truths I've found in life are sex and death. Everything else is just a shadow between the pinnacle of joy and the chasm of abysmal sorrow.

Expressions
2013



Lifeguard
-Tracy Butler

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