



# COLLAGE

fall 1996

# Collage

## **Staff**

Melissa Hoover, editor  
Christopher Ervin, assistant editor

## **Design staff**

Trista Moore, designer  
Brandie Hobbs, assistant designer & illustrator

## **Literature staff**

Amy York, literature editor  
Melody Boyd  
Seréne Seely  
Todd Cruse

## **Photographer**

Brian G. Miller

a special thanks to Andrew Mays for  
illustrations on page 5 and the cover.

*Collage* is produced by students  
and published for the students,  
faculty, alumni, and friends of  
Middle Tennessee State  
University. The materials  
published in *Collage* do not  
necessarily reflect the opinions of  
the *Collage* staff, Student  
Publications, the MTSU student  
body, faculty, staff or  
administration.

All materials are published with  
the consent of the author or  
artist with one-time serial rights  
granted to *Collage*. All rights for  
subsequent publication return to  
the creator of each work. No  
portion of this magazine may be  
reproduced without the explicit  
consent of the author or artist.

Visit the *Collage* web site at  
[www.mtsu.edu/~stupubs/collage](http://www.mtsu.edu/~stupubs/collage).

p  
o  
e  
t  
r  
y

9 Winter  
*Jonathon L. Hawkins*

10 Juliet  
*Christi Underdown*

11 Swallowing Whole  
*Chris Stovall*

12 London  
*Mary Ann Owenby*

13 An Emptiness of Wolves  
*Debbie Gayle Rose*

14 Alice  
*Rebekah M. Brown*

14 do you fall...  
*Melissa L. Marsden*

15 'Till the Cows Come Home  
*Susan Smith*

18 My Mother Used to Sing  
*Bradley C. Porter*

26 Night Wind  
*Debbie Gayle Rose*

27 Epilogue of Icarus (in a bathroom)  
*Jonathan M. Williams*

e  
s  
s  
a  
y

23 Killer Storms: Nemesis of the South That's Left Its Mark  
*Terry Campbell*

s  
h  
o  
r  
t  
s  
p  
o  
r  
t  
s

18 Child Proof  
*Bradley C. Porter*

f  
e  
a  
t  
u  
r  
e

21 Italy  
*Text by Carolyn Ford*  
*Photographs by Brandie Hobbs*

a  
r  
t  
16 Carolyn Ford  
*16 Brother Sun Sister Moon*  
*17 Italian Landscapes*  
*Meditation of Saint Martin*

20 Johnathan Nelson  
*Portrait*

p  
h  
o  
t  
o  
g  
r  
a  
p  
h  
y

6 Ki Young Hong  
*6 Saturday Afternoon Without Nath*  
*7 Are You There?*  
*8 The First Portrait*

29 Nathan Butler  
*28 Untitled*  
*29 In Circles*  
*30 in the kitchen...*

# Untitled

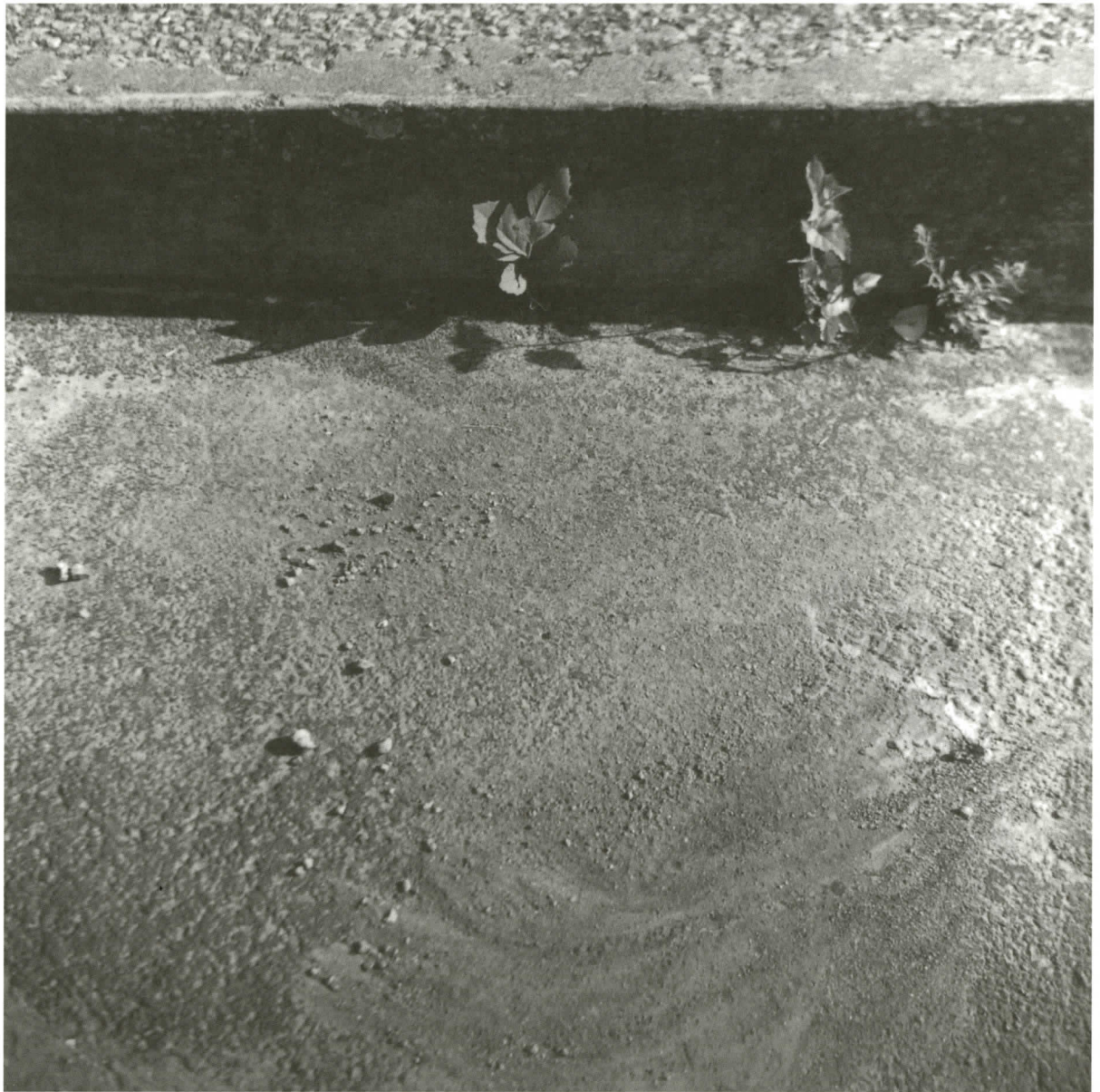
I can see your Tiffany lamp  
perfect and set  
in the dim room.  
You need not flip any switch  
There is already a fire burning inside me  
My stomach, blazon, alive with a cutting ribbon  
of heat,  
Much like a warm stream of urine  
firing through the chill of night  
I could see my breath.  
I could see the steam pouring off.  
This was the season of my desire.

Early fall  
And the mist,  
urine  
and  
breath

This is the result of wanting you  
You, who is shepherded in the dimness of your  
Tiffany lamp.



*Joey Rositano*



Saturday Afternoon Without Nath  
*Ki Young Hong*



**Are You There?**  
*Ki Young Hong*



The First Portrait  
*Ki Young Hong*

# Winter

The moon hangs low tonight.  
Skating over trees  
With quick, cutting glides.  
You can almost hear the laughter  
of young boys.  
Their polished faces  
Sliding along the grooved paths.  
But their laughter subsides now.  
There's no chorus,  
"Come on the pond's frozen."  
No, not tonight.  
The wind picks up now  
Scooting dead leaves into a magnificent twirl.  
They dance until they crumble away;  
soft kisses for the winter skin.  
For a moment the boys' laughter returns  
Saying, "Look at me!!  
See what I can do."  
The cool wind quiets the boys  
Howling its importance.  
"No, not tonight,"  
It says.  
"I will only look at the moon.  
I will see what the moon can do."

*Jonathon L. Hawkins*





# Juliet

Her pale lipstick on the soda can.  
The vision of her breasts  
pressed against that white shirt  
that Hugged her Close,  
as I felt her  
pressed against my white skin  
and Hugged her close.

It's my "time".  
I guess I'm more  
susceptible.  
I guess I've  
Always known.

She's constantly glowing.  
Summer shines around her  
In her "encyclopedia" words,  
In her soft-spoken speeches,  
In her brilliant mind,  
In her shy writing.  
No clouds can block the light  
that warms me.

Our time, our childhood, our "growing up".  
Boys that never really matter.  
Men that do.  
Men hide as boys.  
And boys peek out of men's eyes.  
Eyes that never comprehend.

Her hair falls in front of  
her quiet hazel eyes.  
Eyes that work every time.  
Unsuspecting eyes.  
I brush the strand away  
and feel the light straightness of it  
fall, fall, fall  
through my fingers.  
Nonsense to ignore.  
Love, but nothing like I've felt.

It's my "time".  
I guess I'm more  
vulnerable  
to feelings  
Always here.

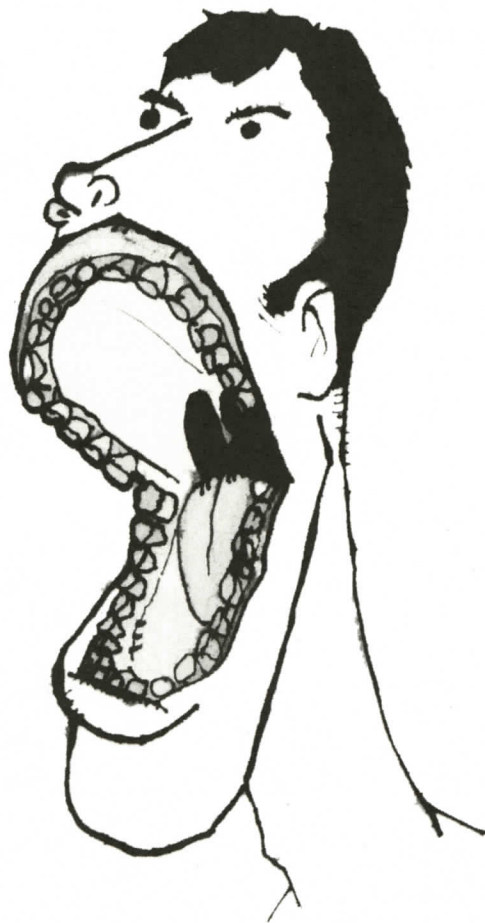
She'll never know,  
Especially about that hurting night.  
I wanted  
That kiss.  
That forbidden, yet tangible fruit.  
Just one for safe keeping.

I'll hide the urge,  
the wish,  
that never came again.  
I'll love her, the only way I can.

# Swallowing Whole

I pulled up and stopped.  
There was no one around,  
the radio was off and rain  
fell hard like it does when  
people vanish. I killed the  
lights and sat there. My  
senses sharp as the dying.  
To the left my wife  
and home, straight ahead  
a dead-end, and to the right,  
a small bar in Tijuana  
where girls with no name  
bring you bottles with worms.

*Chris Stovall*



# L o n d o n London

I was an easy lay —  
two years ago  
Seduced by the wine of foreign tongues  
Devoured by your lycra eyes  
and spandex leer  
Plucked from bare red-clay feet  
Delivered into black suede platforms  
of pulsating Picadilly streets.  
Under your tutorship,  
I forged my study of sensuality,  
perfected the mask of opaque-eyed, jaded hater,  
modeled my premiere performances  
after  
the patchwork promiscuity of Soho  
and matinee-soiree, diamontee-fondlings of Chelsea.  
Glorying in this hormonal volcano  
inebriated by abrupt freedom  
my departure  
pried  
a lover's mourning  
loitering  
counting the seconds til a  
chance return.

But my encore performance  
left me wet-nosed and frost-bitten.  
You are the festering octopus  
of the dun-colored Thames.  
Tentacles encircling  
ensnaring  
any spark of shiny-faced life  
to suck out the quivering  
vibrant marrow  
only to leave  
me  
deserted and weary  
alone with the gray, decaying seaweed  
of tube dwellers  
settling down to the bottom  
of labyrinthian streets  
coughing on billowing pub smoke  
empty.

An Emptiness of Wolves

Then came the winter of no wolves  
The night mocked us with empty echoes  
Of howling wind and haunted rain  
Huddled close to heatless fires  
We mourned our brothers and sisters  
Having sold our souls for silence  
We ran out of others to blame  
And named ourselves kinslayers  
We wondered who would fall next  
To the fate our foolishness had wrought  
The few who remained alive inside  
And knowing what honor meant  
Went unarmed and unclad into the night  
And never returned to our hearth.

*d o y o u f a l l . . .*  
**do you fall . . .**

do you fall between  
the lines of deception  
in your game of avoidance  
like chocolate candy  
so sweet on the tongue  
or the angels of the night  
fast asleep in their beds  
I charged you with your  
misconceptions of the  
mysteries of time -that  
great circular body  
and your eyes wilted  
at my disappointment  
in you and my heart  
wilted in shame  
do I fall between  
the lines of deception  
in my game of silence  
like rose petals  
on the floor

*Melissa L. Marsden*

C  
o  
l  
l  
a  
g  
e  
14

*A l i c e*  
**Alice**

The memory be green and that is thus befitted  
To the service of the Queen, a task too often quitted, by  
A little girl named Alice, who was poorly baby-sitted.  
The Queen was wrath, took her to trial, but she was fast acquitted.  
The Cat said naught, but only smiled, and back to home she flitted.  
Once she'd returned, The Reverend deemed her to be half-witted,  
But "Curiouser and Curiouser" was all that she admitted.

*Rebekah M. Brown*

# Till the Cows Come Home

Jessie Pindar never thought  
a prayer for rain would send  
Schoharie Creek busting its banks,  
licking across the Valley  
on that cold Middleburgh morning.  
At milking time,  
when the rush of water knocked hard  
against the weathered Dutch barn,  
there was no way to lead the lowing Holsteins  
from the warm swirling flood inside.  
Not even yelling could awaken them  
from the trance they felt when  
cold water surged around them,  
pulling them under.  
High up in the loft,  
little Henry watched their spirits rise up,  
one by one,  
to join Grandpa Pindar up in heaven.  
Blood of that family ran deep among them,  
thicker than the water which stole those  
sixty-nine lives before their eyes,  
that farmer's blood which makes you  
cry when you have to,  
pick up the pieces,  
and move on.

## Nominee

**C** I am currently seeking a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in clay and a minor in painting. I have discovered similarities in the ways I have used both  
**a** mediums. My clay work has recently gone away from functional forms to highly colorful,  
**r** story-filled forms. I incorporate my painting skills with glaze application allowing color  
**O** and brush strokes to be prominent on the surface and allowing my paintings to become  
**l** thick and three-dimensional like the surface of a clay pot.

**O** My clay forms have dealt with imagery involving graffiti and mark-making  
**l** throughout history. Graffiti to me is not just vandalism; it is a way of telling a story of  
**y** one's time, marking one's territory, and expressing one's thoughts. Graffiti is the youth's  
**n** story on a wall just as hieroglyphics are to Egyptians and frescos are to Italians.

**F** This summer I attended the MTSU Study Abroad program in Gubbio, Italy.  
**O** This trip was extremely influential. Italian culture is so different from our own. While in  
**r** Italy I tried to find a link in my graffiti work to the things that intrigued me in the artwork  
**d** that I was seeing. I discovered that frescos and stained glass were very much like graffiti in  
the sense that they tell stories. I also made a correlation between the historical religious  
figure's iconography and the "tag" graffiti iconography to which I am drawn. Three major  
visual influences in my work were seeing historical art works of the Renaissance like the  
"David" and the "Sistine Chapel" by Michelangelo and frescoes by Cimabue and Giotto,  
seeing architecture in my surroundings in Gubbio and other cities, and seeing the  
landscape of the Umbrian region.

**O** After returning from Italy where I worked on clay, painting and drawing, I have  
**r** tried to express my discoveries through my artwork. I am currently working with  
**d** traditional Italian glazes on clay tile pieces dealing with religious iconography. I am also  
using my Italian influences in my drawings and paintings.

*artist's statement*



Brother Sun Sister Moon  
19.5" x 25.5"  
Carolyn Ford



Italian Landscapes, set of two canisters  
height: 7" & 8.5"  
*Carolyn Ford*



Meditation of Saint Martin  
8.5" x 11.25"  
*Carolyn Ford*



# Child-Proof

BY BRADLEY C. PORTER

(Cynthia enters, utterly depressed. Charles sits, reading the newspaper)

Cynthia (huge sigh of utter dejection)- Hhhhhhoouuuuuuu.

Charles (behind paper)- Hhhhhmmmm?

Cynthia (annoyed)- I said! . . . Hhhhhhoouuuuuuu!

Charles (still behind paper)- Yes, dear.

(pause)

Cynthia- Charles?

Charles- Yes, dear.

Cynthia- Isn't there something you want to ask me?

Charles- No, not really darling.

Cynthia- Nothing at all.

Charles (paper down)- No. . . no. . . um. . . definitely not.

(paper up)

(pause)

Cynthia- Charles Anderson McKain I want you to ask me how my day went right now!

Charles (giving up and putting away paper)- How was your day dear?

Cynthia- Well, it was perfectly awful!

Charles- Hmmm.

Cynthia- I arrived at work late after fighting traffic for God knows how long. I couldn't find a parking space and had to wait forever on the elevator. There was no coffee. My co-workers were snotty and aloof. . . Oh, it was just awful.

Charles (sneaking paper back out)- Hmmm.

Cynthia- Marsha made the most horrible comment to me.

She said- (noticing her husband) Why Charles, are you listening to me?

Charles- Hmm? Oh, yes dear.

Cynthia (melodramatic)- Oh! You are not! I swear Charles you are not listening to me at all!

Charles- Of course I am dear.

Cynthia- You are not! No one loves me! Why don't you just leave me right now if you're so unhappy.

Charles- Perfectly happy dear. Don't be ridiculous.

Cynthia- Oh! I can't stand to be in this room! I'm going upstairs! Don't try and follow me! I don't want to speak to you!

Charles- Yes, dear.

Cynthia- There's no telling what I might do up there! The state I'm in! I might cause some harm to myself!

Charles- Yes, dear. Of course

Cynthia- I'm leaving! Don't come after me! There's no telling what I might do!

Charles- Yes, dear.

(Cynthia disappears. Several beats. Charles turns a page of his paper.)

Cynthia (reappears, coyly, childish)- Charles, dear?

Charles- Hhhmmmm?

Cynthia- Where's my aspirin? Mummy has a terrible

headache.

Charles- Hhhmmmm? Oh, yes, right here darling. (he produces a small child-proof bottle of white pills and sets it on the table)

Cynthia- Oh, yes, thank you dear. (beat. suddenly hysterical) I'm going back upstairs with my aspirin! Don't try and come after me! I might do myself harm! I've had such an awful day there's no telling what I might do!

Charles- Hhhmmmm. Yes dear.

(Exit. Several beats. Cynthia reappears)

Cynthia- Charles, darling?

Charles- Yes, dear?

Cynthia- Would you be so good as to open the bottle for me? I have such trouble with these child-proof bottles.

Charles- Of course not dear.

Cynthia- What do you mean "of course not?" You mean you won't open it?

Charles (lowers paper)- No. (paper back up)

Cynthia- Well, why not?

Charles (paper down, ever so slightly exasperated)- Because you're going to try and commit suicide by taking all the pills. Every Monday you come home, tell me about your day, and then ingest 5000 milligrams of The Wonder Drug that Works Wonders. I'm tired of finishing my paper in the ER. (beat. paper up)

Cynthia- Why I would never. . .

Charles- Yes, dear.

Cynthia- Charles, are you going to open this bottle or not?

Charles (paper down)- No dear. (paper up) (pause)

Cynthia- Well! I. . . well. . . Charles I. . . honestly. . .

Charles- Hmmm.

Cynthia (hysterical)- Charles you open this God-forsaken bottle right this instant! Right this instant I say!

Charles (paper down)- No. (paper up.)

Cynthia (fuming)- Well I. . . (pause, deciding to change tactics) Well I don't even need that silly old bottle. There are other ways to do drastic things! Mark my words!

Charles (mildly amused, from behind paper)- Like what?

Cynthia- I'll. . . I'll. . . Shoot myself in the head!

Charles- You're terrified of cap guns!

Cynthia- I'll slit my wrists!

Charles- You faint at stage blood.

Cynthia- I'll jump off the roof! I swear I will!

Charles- You get dizzy reaching for the top shelf in the kitchen.

Cynthia (desperate)- Well. . . I'll. . . honestly. . . I. . . (pause, suddenly changing tactics. melodramatic) Oh Charles! Why do you hate me so? Why do you treat me this way? Poor, defected, un-loved me. Why?

Charles (putting paper away)- Because I know you dear.

Cynthia (still melodramatic)- Oh! Whatever do you mean?  
 How could you possibly know how I suffer? What pain I  
 feel! What. . . utter. . . loneliness. . . I. . . experience!  
 Charles (blandly)- Because I hear about you pain and  
 loneliness every day. I could probably teach a class on it.  
 Cynthia (straightforward)- You're not going to open the  
 bottle.  
 Charles- No dear.  
 Cynthia- Absolutely not?  
 Charles (getting paper back out)- No dear. (paper up)

Cynthia- No matter how much I beg and plead and. . . and. .  
 plead?  
 Charles (paper down)- No. (paper up, firmly)  
 (several long beats)  
 Cynthia- Well then. If you're going to be that way. (she sits  
 down primly, long pause)  
 Charles (from behind paper)- Dear?  
 Cynthia (perfectly normal)- Yes?  
 Charles (looking over top of paper)- Dinner?  
 Cynthia- Yes dear. (lights down)

## My Mother Used to Sing

**B**radley C. Porter is a  
**r** junior at MTSU with a  
**a** major in Theater  
**d** Performance. His minors  
**i** are English and  
**e** Entertainment Technology  
**y** (in the College of Mass  
 Communications). He has  
 been writing prose and  
 poetry his entire life, but  
 says that this "humble  
 attempt at playwriting is a  
 new development,  
**C** encouraged by Claudia  
 Barnett, and I have found  
 it to be something I enjoy  
 very much." He is  
**P** interested in Theater and  
**O** Music (He is a  
**r** percussionist and  
**t** guitarist), and has also  
**e** discovered recently a deep  
**r** love for the art of  
 storytelling.

Five and my sister ten  
 Wide-eyed and tumbling head-first  
 Into an endless expanse of  
 sheets-pillows-covers

My mother's bed.

My Mother Used to Sing  
 and perform solemn recitations of. . .  
*The Monster at the End of this Book*  
 every character in a different voice

Wide-eyed and Wondering  
 my sister and I never suspected  
 my mother's subtle subterfuge  
 lulling to sleep with soothing melodies and scary voices

Pipes-frozen winter nights  
 and sweaty summer evenings  
 and sometimes in between  
 for No Good Reason What-So-Ever

My Mother Used to Sing

Bradley C. Porter



Portrait, 11.5" x 18"  
*Johnathan Nelson*

# Italy

*A  
Participant's  
Response to  
a Unique  
Education  
Opportunity*

BY CAROLYN FORD

Photos by Brandie Hobbs



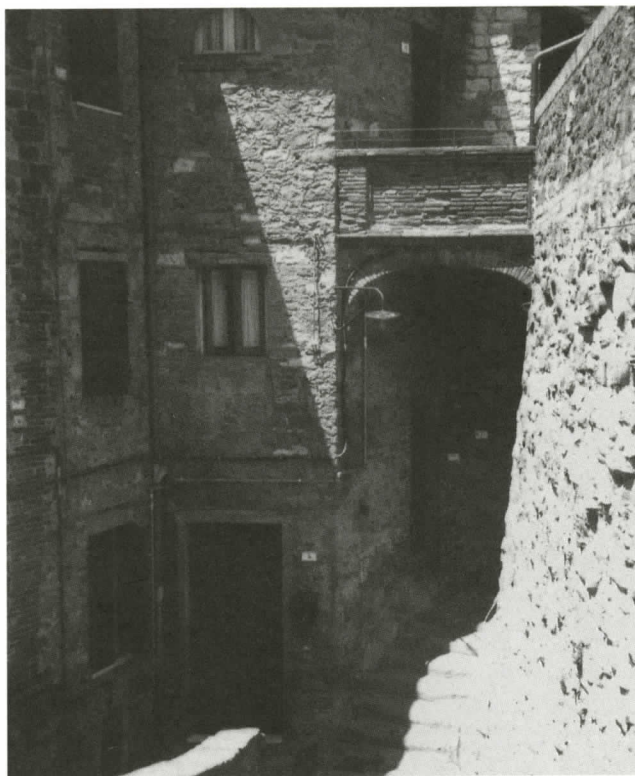
For the past two summers and continuing on for a third this year, the MTSU art department has held a study abroad program in Italy. Students receive six hours of upper division credit. This six-week program includes doing one's own studio work, visiting major historical areas, and participating in critiques and discussions of all that is absorbed. The program is not limited to art majors and encourages other areas of study to participate.

This past summer the students stayed in Gubbio, a medieval town in the Umbrian region. Students participated in ceramics, drawing, printmaking and painting. Clay students studied traditional majolica ceramic techniques popular to the region while printmaking, drawing, and painting students executed images indicative of the architecture and landscape in their surroundings. In addition to studio work, many excursions were made to notable art centers and museums. Students were able to see exact locations where fine examples of Renaissance art flourished. Some artists' works seen include Michelangelo, Giotto, Cimabue, Raphael and Fra Angelico. Historic sites included Assisi, Orvieto, Pompeii, Paestun, Rome, Florence and Urbino.

Much was to be obtained through recognition of the area and artwork observed, application of information seen, and definition in terms of critical discussion in techniques during critiques.

If you are interested in more information about the study abroad program to Italy, call the art department at 898-2455.

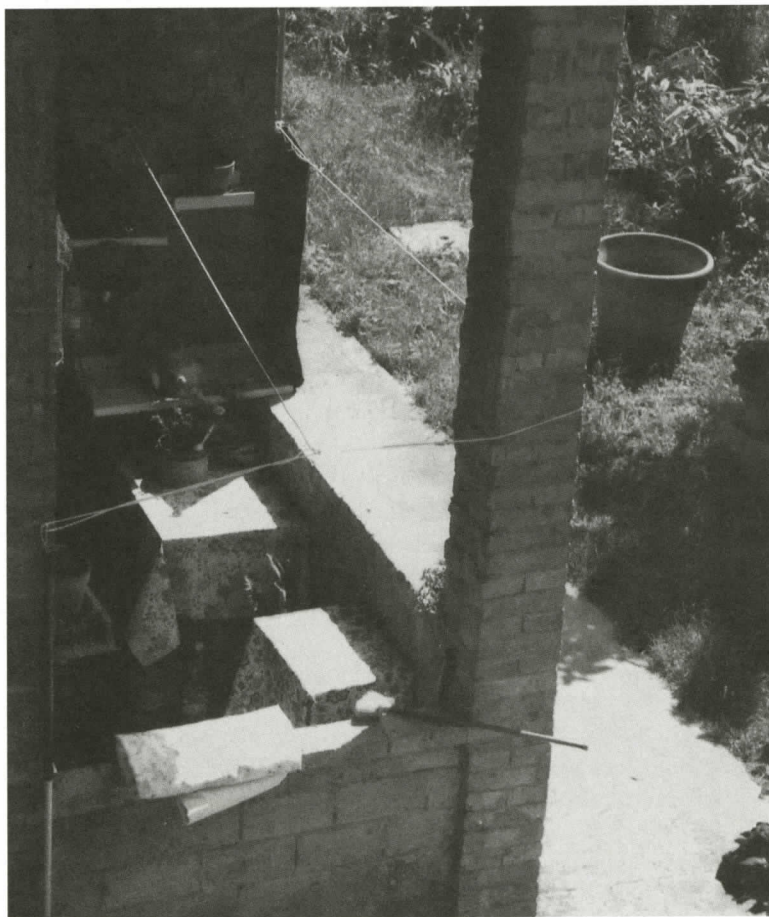
# Italy



C  
o  
l  
l  
a  
g  
e  

---

22



photographs by Brandie Hobbs

# KILLER STORMS: NEMESIS OF THE SOUTH THAT'S LEFT ITS MARK

BY TERRY CAMPBELL

*Some things haven't changed in the 25 years since Jennings wrote that a storm, "... often does queer things which cannot be accounted for . . ."*

A child ignores weather forecasts. They're boring. The forecasts by television weatherpersons have different effects, depending on who you are, where you live, whether it matters what's going on beyond your yard — a million things. For me, childishly, the drone of weather forecasts is boring — until mid-summer. Mid-summer brings forecasts of killer storms. My heritage lies in the Deep South, a region well known to have survived its share of killer storms. Different types affect other parts of the country. Those which appear suddenly in our southern hemisphere when the sweltering sun scalds the open waters are different. The atmosphere seems to be wiring the water, using an alien hand to stir the air currents.

Looking at a weather map on television gives one the impression the Florida Keys would be in a no-win situation. They appear small and vulnerable, a tiny string of pearls which could be snatched apart by a giant's hand. Yet most killer storms that attack our country wage war elsewhere. The most devastating one to hit the Florida Keys was Labor Day, 1935, when hundreds died because evacuation was impossible. While present-day killer storms have names, that storm will always be known only as the Labor Day, 1935 storm. Navy weathermen had not yet begun the custom of naming the storms on their radar screen after their girlfriends to keep track of them. And it was much later before men's names were used.

In a phone conversation recently, I reminisced about storms I remembered with Hunter Donaldson, or Captain Hunter as he's known in the Keys, and asked for tidbits of information. Hunter is a Director of the Chamber of Commerce of the Lower Keys (sans Key West, which has its own, of course). He also writes a fishing/feature column for the local *Lower Keys Barometer*. Both require his keeping track of storm systems, as does his marina on Little Torch Key. Little Torch is only four and one-half miles long and three-quarters of a mile wide. It's elite. Two marinas there cater to those who know and want the best. Captain Hunter's been catering to the best for a long time now. Through Little Palm Island (resort) he taught Kathleen Sullivan to dive and has been media visible since. Providing diving and fishing trips for the rich and famous requires knowledge of the weather. His own radar keeps up with "about 50 miles around."

"There are several things people don't realize about our position [the Keys]," he told me, and explained that Cuban and Puerto Rican mountains break the Keys and the storms' origins. "You've got to remember when a storm hits those mountains it's got choices; it gets confused." The storms come alive as he explains how they can disseminate on hitting the mountains or deflect and

head north.

"Now you take winds which begin off the coast of Africa, for example, and you can figure that most of the time they're gonna head up the north side of the country — building on open water, toward the Carolinas and Hatteras. If the winds come out of the Yucatan, they'll probably slam-dunk the Gulf Coast."

In our era of telecommunications, more people understand these storms. We have watched the weatherperson's map and heard how the sun steadily, constantly sears deep waters to a boiling point. Wind pulls the warm water up — the more water, the more "weight" or force, and the faster the winds spin. Water is the power source, so the more water over which the winds whirl, the more power and punch those winds pack. It comes back to me as Hunter talks of the vast waters off Africa and the Yucatan. No matter where a storm begins, terror lies in the miles of dark, hot water ahead. The winds wail overhead and play tug-of-war with the waves. The waves lose. The winds claim their victims one by one. A killer storm is born.

Captain Hunter comments that the Keys tracked 19 storms in 1994. In 1995, they watched 23. All were major, registered on a scaled of one to five, but none were "killer storms." Needless to say, even if a killer storm "somewhere out there" doesn't wash the Keys away, the weather has a definite impact on fishing and diving. "This year," his voice has an undertone of gratitude, "this year we've only had eight so far. That's a record. It's way below average." He comments that most people don't know 60 percent of killer storms come at the end of the season. "The worst time of all is August 20 to September 10.

"Another thing almost nobody knows," he offers as a piece of trivia, "is that the really big storms can come any month of the year. People think if it's not 'the season' it's okay. It's not. There is only one month — one month, that's all — on record during which there has never been even one significant storm. That's April. There's never been one recorded in April." He has his data down pat.

Bridges make a big difference, according to Hunter. "people don't think about it, but when a storm does hit here, it's got bridges. It can go over 'em or under 'em, but it's got someplace to go. If the same storm hit on land, say the Carolinas or something, it'd have nowhere to go and flood the place."

I remember as a child, living north of Tallahassee, near the Florida-Georgia line, there was a stretch of a few miles which traversed swamp. We called those backwaters of a major lake "the sloughs" and used four bridges across that stretch to reach Tallahassee. A killer storm some 150 miles wide veered sharply west and further north than expected and slammed into Jacksonville, due east of us. It never slowed down. It crossed the state and entered the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico to pick up more steam.

More than the wind and rain, I remember the bridges. Or, rather, the lack of bridges and the flooding after the storm crossed. Ours were not the solidly-built structures of which Captain Hunter spoke; ours were all destroyed. It seemed my world was destroyed. Huge cypress trees were uprooted. Snakes tried to find dry land in patches of roadbed. I was horrified. But I was also filled with awe.

In 1974, I was again filled with that same sense of awe when a killer storm struck my favorite beach — one few people knew about, and even fewer frequented. Captain Hunter remembers that beach well, too. It was a strip of land that ran parallel to Highway 98 for almost 15 miles some 30 miles east of Panama City, Florida. The Navy owned all land deep between beach and highway, so it was desolate and wildly beautiful. It ended in a curve of gentle half-moon point, where one felt the world was as it should be.

Captain Hunter remembered that it was in 1974 when Frederick sliced a mile-wide swath almost four miles back from the point. No one — not even the Navy — ever found out what happened to all that sand the killer storm took away when it picked up that mile of land. The awe I felt as I stood on the new "point," which was no point at all, and gazed across the gulf that appeared to have always been there was just as that I had left as a child when our bridges were blown away. But this time nothing could be rebuilt.

The beach Frederick cut up lies at the western end of Mexico Beach, a small, unknown beach until 1995, when it became a household name. That was when it was almost completely destroyed by a killer storm named Opal. We talked of other Florida storms. Betsy, in 1965, scandalized the nation because many died partying with her, refusing to evacuate. "One of the worst was in 1960; that was Donna," he reminds me. Andrew, in 1993, is well remembered. That was the last time Captain Hunter took his boats out of the water, helped evacuate the Keys and readied for disaster. He and the few others who stayed in the Keys then didn't know until the last minute Andrew would change his mind and head instead for Homestead.

Most of us are familiar with killer storms of the past few years, like Andrew. But we forget they've been breeding much longer. September 8, 1900, 96 years ago, the most devastating killer storm in this country in terms of death toll struck Galveston, Texas. According to *The Golden Coast*, by author/historian Arthur T. Kane, the storm screamed through with a tidal wave hanging on that killed 6,000 people. Kane describes land as being "scooped away," reminding me of Frederick, and a four-thousand-ton steamship was swept up and dropped on a bank," reminds me of Camille. Hunter remarks, "We don't even talk about Camille."

I talked by phone with Mr. Mitrovich, or Mitch as he likes to be known, who works in The Great Storm

area of the Galveston Historical Foundation. I verified through Mitch that Galveston, in retaliation against such a massive death toll swore to stop future killer storms if possible, and built a seawall of reinforced concrete. In the beginning several miles long. They prepared well; it was 17 feet above low tide, and had a base several feet thick. Granite was used with pilings for breakwater. It worked. Fifteen years later the seawall held and only eight people died in the next killer storm.

Mitch explains that the seawall was added onto over the years, the last addition being completed in 1961, and that now miles are still left. Mitch wove events of the story for me of which I was unaware. He explained how Dr. Isaac Cline had been in the water the night before the Great Storm hit and noticed the rising water. Mitch made certain, as had Captain Hunter, to explain the difference in waves, as we see them, and water surges, in which water simply walks along ahead of and with a killer storm. Apparently, Dr. Cline, as a meteorologist, was aware of a tropical disturbance coming around Cuba into the Gulf of Mexico. (I remember Hunter telling me how Cuba helps protect the Keys.) The next morning Dr. Cline went again to the water and was struck by a phenomenon he could only explain as signifying danger. The water was rising against a wind out of the north. Normally, with killer storms, the wind and water surges move in the same direction; this strangeness could only mean something very threatening. A chill went through me as Mitch told how Dr. Cline got on his horse and began galloping up and down the beach screaming for people to go inland, that there was "great danger ahead." Obviously, it was too late and/or not enough people listened. The death toll of 6,000 is attributed to the island alone — it is estimated another possible 6,000 died on the mainland.

Lesser killer storms have wrecked havoc enough that they stand as a testimonial to the tremendous power exerted by the synergy of wind and water and have gone down in history. They've left natural changes (loss of my point), human changes (the Galveston seawall) — sometimes a hesitancy to even discuss them (like Camille). Camille packed winds of 200 miles per hour. It still stands as the worst of our era.

My favorite book on the subject is simply titled, *The Killer Storms*, by Gary Jennings. A very definitive book, Mr. Jennings leaves out no technical details, yet almost humanizes killer storms. He describes one of the fundamentally frightening things about them. Hunter alluded to it — their unpredictability of movement. We have technology. We have personal observations of those who dare fly planes into these storms to aid predictions and help others live through them. We still cannot with certainty, however, tell where a killer storm will strike. Some things haven't changed in the 25 years since Jennings wrote that a storm, "... often does queer things which cannot be accounted for ..."

He explains a killer storm may run perfectly straight; it may defy natural atmospheric forces and bend southward, to the left, or even against its natural rotation. A storm seems eerily human when Jennings remarks it may "wander around" for a while. It may just stop. It simply stands still, for hours or days, then resumes its former direction or takes off at a new angle. Jennings rarely sounds like a weatherperson.

One thing is certain, and Jennings addresses the real issue. "Eventually, however, almost every [killer storm] reaches land somewhere in its march. The first warning of the storm will probably be — as it was to the Last Islanders — the change in behavior of the incoming waves." He describes clearly changes in clouds, in the roll of the waves — their slowing, sluggish moment in contrast to their normal rock and roll.

His reference to Last Island follows an extraordinary narrative chapter titled, "The Last of Last Island." "There was always dancing on Last Island," he writes. Apparently before the Civil War, this long, narrow island off the Louisiana coast was quite a fashionable, luxurious, and popular vacation resort in the South. Jennings recounts a day with change in the waves and the sky, and the remarks about the weather by the laughing vacationers who refused to be frightened away. Until it was too late. This killer storm would have defied all tracking even now. Last Island (much as my beach in 1974) was, in 1856, torn in half. He says, "If you look for Last Island on a map now, ... it is a chain of islets separated by gaps of water."

A chain of islets separated by gaps of water brings us back to images of the Florida Keys. Four years ago when they were intact after Andrew, I was grateful the Keys were not another case of Last Island. You see, Captain Hunter is my brother.

As much as I love summer, it brings me strange memories. I shall always realize it is the season of our southern killer storms. I shall remember those I've known and, particularly, the first I knew of as a child. I shall also be reminded of another little girl — a colorful print of a small, beautiful child of the tropics. She seems about the age I was when I stood in awe and fear at storm devastation. There are obvious differences: she is an almost elegant, enchanting island girl; I was a little white girl from the Florida panhandle.

Another difference is much more subtle. You see, unlike me, she knew at a very young age what killer storms could do. She didn't need a weather channel. Her culture had many gods — some of whom had bad tempers. There was one in particular the islanders feared above all, and he they gave a special name. He was the only one to whom they taught this little girl to offer a strange prayer.

"Please," she would beg in her tongue, "Please, Hurakan, please stay away."



# Night Wind

The leaves clatter in the dark wind  
Like loose dentures in the mouths  
Of old men gossiping about death  
And taxes and the government  
Night lowers itself ever earlier  
As if the year has worn it out  
And it cannot wait to sleep long  
Deep dreaming about its youth  
When green was for growth, not death  
When the leaves dainty fluttered  
Or gusty rustled in gladness  
Not clattered like dentures  
In the mouths of old men

*Debbie Gayle Rose*

Epilogue of Icarus  
**Epilogue of Icarus**  
(in a bathroom)

TUCKED IN THE OPTIONALLY FIRM PALM OF THE COLD CERAMIC CAVE  
i SEARCHED FOR AN ANTIDOTE FOR IN MY ACHING CHEST MY SOUL HAD

C  
O  
N  
D  
E  
n  
s  
e

d into a fetal curl searching for the lethe that i did not possess

i saw the blue world  
through unstained glass  
tasted the salt of her seas upon my tongue,  
i felt the dampness of harshly lit morgues  
against my lungs

the fabric of security

SHED

The calloused breath of  
desire left me naked to shudder  
before the ungodly universe  
behind unattainable dreams  
and under a florescent  
trickle

alone.

C  
o  
l  
l  
a  
g  
e  
27



**untitled**  
*Nathan Butler*



C  
o  
l  
l  
a  
g  
e  

---

29

**In Circles**  
*Nathan Butler*



...in the kitchen...  
*Nathan Butler*

## A Special Thanks to our Patrons

---

PATRONS

Rick and Charlotte Swafford

PATRONS

Robert, Michiko, and Andrew Petersen

PATRON

Andy Womack

PATRONS

Chalmers and Betsy Brothers

SPONSORS

Janet Higgins and the Tulip Poplar Press

Olin and Vara Williams

Kevin and Ellen Donovan

John T. Bragg

FRIEND

Gay Brewer

*Collage* would like to offer a special thanks to the following individuals for their support:

Charles Jansen  
Andrew Mays  
Jenny Crouch  
James Lawrence  
Gay Brewer  
Carlyle Johnson  
Marisa Recchia  
Thomas P. Jimison  
Claudia Barnett  
Glenn Himebaugh

## SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The submission deadline for the spring 1997 edition of *Collage* is 4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 14th. All submissions *must* follow guidelines which are available at the *Collage* office, James Union Building Room 308. Submissions may be delivered to the same office or mailed to *Collage*, P.O. Box 42, Murfreesboro, T.N., 37132.

Fairness in the selection process is taken very seriously. The staff of *Collage* involved in selection are never allowed to see the names of artists and writers being critiqued (please see guidelines concerning cover sheet). Occasionally, we seek the opinions of MTSU faculty, who are also not allowed to see the names of the artists or writers.

Please direct any questions to the *Collage* staff at 898-5927.

## STAFF INFORMATION:

*Collage* accepts applications for staff year round. Application forms are available in the student publications office on the third floor of James Union Building. Typical office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

## AWARDS:

The *Collage* staff is pleased to announce the receiving of two awards for the 1996 academic year:

From the Associated Collegiate Press, the honor rating of First Class, with one mark of distinction in the category of art, photography, and graphics.

From the Associated Collegiate Press, Best of Show Award, Magazine: Fourth Place.

