




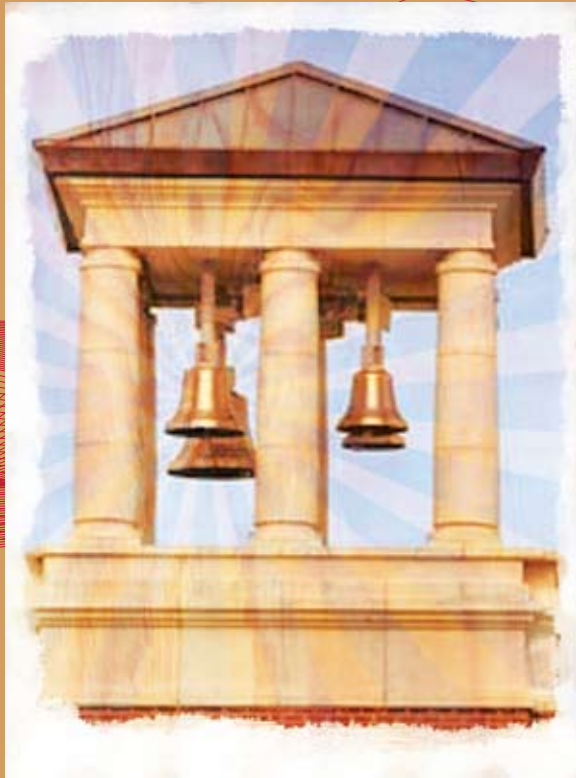
collage



a journal of
creative expression

volume 8

fall 2008



collage

a journal of creative expression

volume 8 fall 2008

a publication of the middle tennessee state university honors college



letter from the editor

In this semester's *Collage* I am incredibly thankful for the opportunity to address our readers. For those who are supporters and staff members, I wish to express my gratitude and congratulate you on a superb issue. To the authors and artists who made the effort and took the chance to share their work with us, keep creating and bringing beauty into the world. I thoroughly enjoyed your submissions, which I believe keep increasing in quantity and quality. As always, it is a joy to take them all through the process of grading, selecting and editing. However, cutting some pieces was even more difficult because of the quality of our submissions this semester. We only have so much room, so I strongly encourage everyone to keep submitting. We enjoyed your work, and I look forward to next semester's edition!



Hannah Green

staff

editor in chief	hannah green
designer	ashley sherwood
assistant editor	jolene barto
literature editor	dean andrews
assistant literature editor	jasmine gray
visual editor	beth rich
assistant visual editor	amy powers
poetry editor	jenna pucket
prose editor	susan hill
publicist	courtney ferraro
literature review staff	graham wells ashlie wolfenbarger tommy talmage
adviser	marsha powers



poetry

- 5 regrets for highway 41
monica brown
- 7 apple-biter
meghan e. davis
- 9 rememdiium
joseph lampley
- 10 a dog's uncertainty
j.r. robes
- 11 strawberry picking
jen hayes
- 13 i saw the mantis
jonathan schultz
- 13 should brevity be the soul of wit
eric benick
- 16 miranda
rachel laforte
- 17 untarnished name
alex grant
- 18 never forget lord byron
eric benick
- 19 and the ghost of charlton
heston smiled
alex grant
- 23 the poet
anthony adewumi
- 26 once was
john a. prince
- 30 shiavo
joseph lampley
- 31 hurricane 1
monica brown
- 32 family portrait
rachel laforte

table of contents

photography

- 4 underwater sky
sarah finchum
- 5 sibling rivalry
lauren a. wood
- 7 the baring of fangorn
jeremy friesen
- 7 muse
brett warren
- 10 crazy mary's treehouse
alex blackwelder
- 11 crazy mary's pickle forks
alex blackwelder
- 13 irony
patrick casey
- 17 untitled 13
jason ptacek
- 19 love is all you need
chet overall
- 19 ruins in peru
gabriel zurita
- 21 equus
kelsey travis
- 22 western expansion
brett warren
- 23 a sunday kind of love
lauren a. wood
- 29 daybreak
marcus laxton
- 31 elizabeth arden
kelsey travis

fiction

- 8 excerpt from barefoot
taffeta chime
- 12 tug of life
samantha mallory
- 20 james castle
cody brummett
- 28 mid-course correction
lani henning

non-fiction

- 4 worlds within worlds
meghan e. davis
- 14 zipp
renee davis
- 24 the cross
joseph quarles

art

- 6 rag and bone
adam gaskill
- 9 trapeze
lindsay stacey
- 9 scheherazade
wendy rau
- 10 lady the dog
sundy wright
- 12 untitled
danielle burns
- 14 colony collapse disorder II
lani asuncion
- 16 jarrett
emily may-ragland
- 16 valley
jason barnett
- 18 study of a hawk
ashley cochran
- 21 arte cru
mandalin paul
- 24 fiji retreat
miccah m. defriez
- 26 unity
jason ptacek
- 27 hopefully helpless
randy purcell
- 27 blissful boxer
jason barnett
- 30 big top swing
savanna r. teague
- 30 brad
jonathan wallraven
- 32 creative nonfiction
john neuhoff

worlds within worlds

meghan e. davis

I sat there looking at them in my hands: the pods of peas. So dirty on the outside, stained by the soil and bugs and all manner of outside influences. I almost didn't want to touch them. My hands felt dirty. I wanted so badly to wash them. I hadn't shelled peas in such a long time. Homegrown from my mother's garden, from Dave's garden. They looked short and pathetic sitting on my small, pudgy hands, those pods. I slid the fingernail of my right thumb into the crease and pulled. The pod split apart, and I almost gasped.

Gasped! Who gasps at the sight of peas in a pod? Oh, but they were so perfect. So small, packed together, so ideally circular, so smooth and green. It's the sort of thing I feel ill-equipped to describe but will always have an image of in my head. I stared at them for a long moment, loving each individual pea, before I carefully pushed them out of their marred and broken exterior. I listened to each one hit the metal bowl in my lap. I discarded the pod and picked up the bowl, rolling the perfect peas around in it. It sounded like tiny steel drums being played. They were laughing. I smiled. I set the bowl down and we smiled together, children together, breaking away from the cares of the world together. Pod after pod, I observed the beauty of the peas, so perfect and light on my hands that I almost never wanted them to get eaten. They looked so vulnerable, like children thrust into the world for the very first time, away from their families and homes that have always protected them from the damages of the world.

Each pod, a tiny microcosm, its own little world, fell out of my hands and the products of such small, ugly worlds were so beautiful, cascading into that bowl on my lap. I ached for more peas to shell, more children to liberate. I yearned to lose my education, my refinement, to walk in the garden with no shoes on my feet, no clothes on my body. I wanted to be completely alone with nature, live that way for forever, eat of the earth, and drink of streams

and rivers. I wanted to hide in the tall grass, hold butterflies in my hair, dance naked in the rain and drink it down, milk from the one true mother.

I smiled down at the peas in my bowl and rolled them all around to acquaint them with one another. I sighed and stopped the rolling. I looked down into the bowl and pondered the size of worlds, the scope of understanding, and how things used to be before phones and computers and brand names and even

clothes. I took one pea from the bowl and put it in my mouth. It was oddly cool though it had sat all day on its vine, in its pod, burning in the sun's summer heat. I rolled the perfect ball around in my mouth tasting its greenness. I bit it with my teeth and tasted it on every part of my tongue. It was hard like a small melon and tasted sweeter than I expected. I closed my eyes and meditated on these tiny worlds within the world I consider to be my own.



underwater sky
sarah finchum



sibling rivalry
lauren a. wood

regrets for highway 41

monica brown

Before a symphony of cows,
the undulating spread of hills
rolls like a lover turning on her side,
a blanket of fields
in Klimtian gold
covers the landscape
of slanted barns, chicken houses,
hens in the gravel shoulders.

When I drive down 41, I fail to notice
how the road cuts through massive slabs
of limestone or what flashes by
outside my windows,
the gnarled stump of a lightning struck
tree, the fleshy curves of a cow
sleeping, folds of curtains waving from
the windows of a house collapsing.

I never notice
orange plastic flowers on the graves,
how they blaze against a sky
of wintry gray,
so who am I to stop and overlook
this sudden summer brightening,
this kudzu snaking like a wild mane?
I never think of faces pressed against
tiny airplane windows, how the landscape
seems to passengers gazing down,
a quilt tacked with asphalt seams,
rock walls, and wooden fences,
veins of water trickling
through the pieces.

I look up at the roar above
and send them my regrets
with hope that their soft looks
might hush this trembling body,
lush and effortless
as we know it.



rag and bone
adam gaskill
[mixed media]





the baring of fangorn
jeremy friesen



muse
brett warren

apple-biter
meghan e. davis

Working so hard to dispel this apple-eating evil.
So hard every day to shred this image of weakness.
Me, the one at fault, the apple-biter.
Was it even an apple? Who cares?
Semantics are semantics, but I —
I am a woman.
I am a flower and a fighter.
I am a child and a mother.
I am a sexual being:
Forceful, unstoppable, raw.
I am the classic virgin:
Clean, soft, untouched.
I am the dichotomy that is woman.
Always, men speak of the feminine power and mystique.
So why? Answer me this: why?
Why, after thousands of years, am I still trying?
Still working so hard to dispel this apple-biting stigma?

excerpt from barefoot taffeta chime

One of my happiest times was when I was fourteen, and Mom couldn't make it to a big dance recital, because it was on a Tuesday night. She would rather spend her Tuesday night with her clique than with me. And that was fine. She didn't have to see my mistakes. She dropped me off at the front of the studio, I took my duffle bag out of the back of the van, and she was gone. I felt so free. The lights shone brightly on me that night, and I was actually doing really well. Every twirl was in time, every sashay was graceful, and every smile was real. Because the pressure was off. I jumped into an aerial and was landing a split when I instinctively looked at the dimly lit seat where Mom usually sat. I happily expected to see an empty seat or an unfamiliar face, but instead—

“Dad?”

When my toe hit the floor first, instead of my heel for the split, I felt the wood in the box of my pointe shoe split. My toes slid between the wood and snapped when my butt hit the hardwood floor. Gasps filled the audience, and people stood from their seats. The music stopped. I silently cried.

I was so confused. Not by how in the world I broke my pinky toe in that maneuver, but why Dad showed up to the dance. I didn't even think Dad knew I danced.

Dad was a truck driver, and he was often gone driving on his route. Even when he was home, he made it known that he wanted to be back on the road. He barely talked to us. He usually sat on the couch with the television on and a beer in his hand. One Saturday afternoon when I was seven, Mom encouraged him to spend some quality time with me. Did I say “encouraged”? I meant “nagged.” I heard the whole thing in the kitchen. “If she wants to spend time with me,” he defended, “she'll tell me! She's old enough to

talk, Tyra!” He finally took me out fishing with him to shut up Mom. He called up the stairs, “Zoe!”

I opened the door wider to make it sound like I had it closed. “Yeah, Dad?”

“Why don't you and I . . . go fishin' or something?” He could not have sounded more uninterested.

I didn't know anything about fishing, but I answered enthusiastically, “Okay!”

I was most interested in the shoes he wore. I admired them while we picked out worms. I just wore some tennis shoes, but he wore these big rubber galoshes that went all the way up past his knees. I wanted to wear them. “Zoe!” he yelled when I let the worms slip through my fingers and back into the dirt. He let a couple obscenities fly, picked up his tackle box, and stormed into the creek. I sucked the insides of my cheeks and tried to pick up as many of the worms as I could.

Dad didn't explain anything he was doing. He baited his line, threw it into the water, and took a sip of his beer. I tried to mimic him, but I messed up the line somehow; it was tangled all over the fishing rod. After what seemed like an eternity of silence, something pulled on my string first, but I didn't know what to do. “Reel it in, Zoe! Reel it in!” I panicked but reeled it in as fast as I could. There was a lot of tension on the string from the knot in the middle of the rod and by the time Dad noticed it—SNAP! I gasped. We listened to the fish swim away happily.

“Dammit, Zoe!” Dad threw his rod onto the bank then stormed toward me.

“Dad, it—it was an acci—!” I screamed when the back

of his hand came flying at me. I fell backwards into the cold water. Dad picked up his tackle box, took a swig of his beer, and cursed his way home.

I sat in the water and felt my face swell. I cried and rubbed my sore cheek, assuring myself that this was my fault. I broke the line. I made Dad angry. I made him not love me.

Dad's little red truck came flying down the driveway, dust billowing behind the back bumper. When he passed by me, he threw his beer bottle out into the creek. I watched him leave, then slowly stood, leaving the fishing rod in the water. When I walked up to the front porch, I saw that Dad had left his galoshes on the doorstep. Water was pooled inside of them. I took off my shoes and slipped my feet inside his boots. The water seeped into my socks, and the rubber canisters came all the way up my legs. I sat on the porch with my feet in his galoshes for the rest of the day and ended up getting a nasty foot fungus that has permanently dyed my toenails a ghastly yellow.

It was my fault.

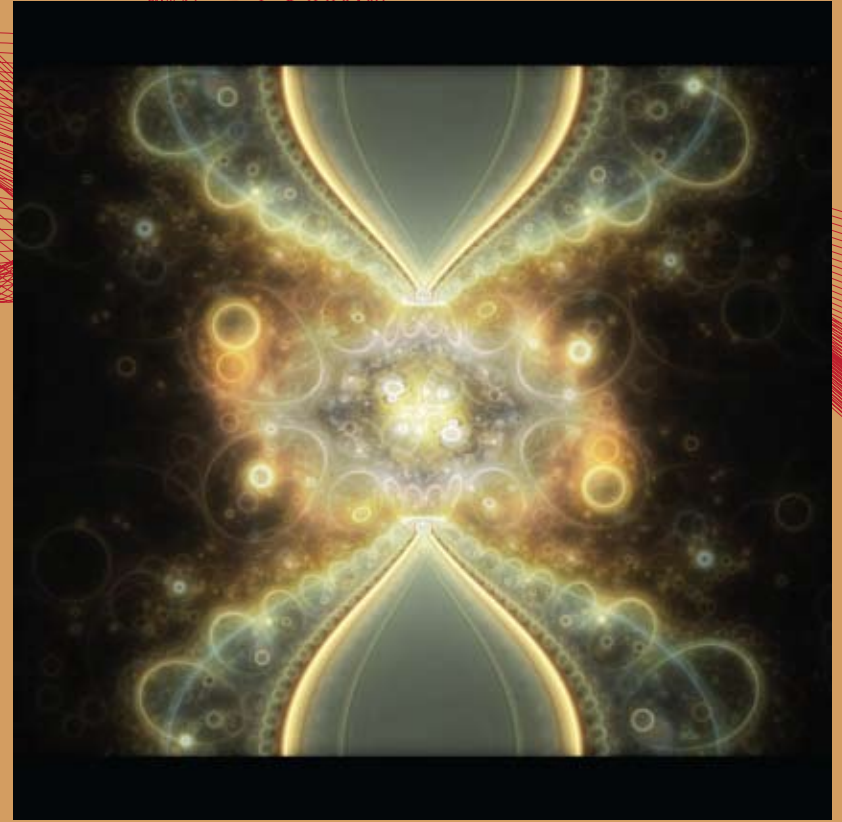
Was it my fault that my pinky toe was broken too? I rode in the same little red truck with Dad that night at the end of the recital, and I had to ask. “Why did you come?”

“Your mom sent me.” I was hoping he would give me an answer like, “Well, I realized that I missed my baby girl,” but I guess I couldn't be surprised at his honest answer. “She said that you were excited about this dance and wanted someone to be there.”

I kept my head turned away from him and stared at the tree blurs out the passenger window.



trapeze
lindsay stacey
[acrylic on canvas]



scheherazade
wendy rau
[fractal]

rememdmium

joseph lampley

I have tasted the fire in your mouth —
Pieces of the golden Sun caught in your teeth
Our lip-locked smile — A radiance of shadows
Cast onto — Seared — Into these walls

That momentary nova — Our Zenith
Before Time had transmuted that gold into lead vests
And your body to glass and chemotherapies
Before the Cancer Atlas had led the Sun — So — Far — Away

In a scant year — Lymphoma had finished tearing down your blue sky
And had chased away the warmth of all embrace
Only the now smoldering embers — Of that kiss
Remain on my lips — A bittersweet remedy that could not keep you alight
And even in this scorch marked room —
I am still unable to swallow the Sun...

crazy mary's treehouse
alex blackwelder



a dog's uncertainty
(or vincent's blues)

j.r. robes

The tattered case creaks, snaps open
From ancient bed of red velvet
I pluck out
The harmonica

It glistens
Refracting soft lamplight.
You cock your head, tuck tail
Whimper, whine, shuffle
and trounce out the room.

I inhale, lick my lips,
kiss air, and say
"Alright" and
Revive the aural whirls and twirls:

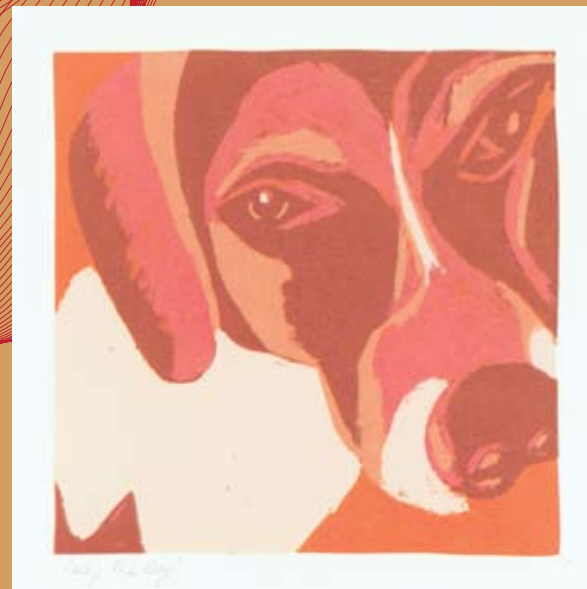
A-hoo-ka-cha-ka
Hoo-ka-cha-ka
Hoo-ka-cha-ka!

And a moment
Where our eyes catch

My harmonic-ing,
rolling and rollicking
Twistifies you
turns you 'round
Towards me again. You're back and
I'm a-hooka-chak-ing

And you're analyzing,
Howling in time,
(If a little off beat)
But your ribs itch so bad!

You flop over on your back
Rubbing your torso against the gritty berber.



lady the dog
sundy wright
[silkscreen print]

strawberry picking
jen hayes

I remember anticipating summer,
waiting for the sun to warm
long cold ground, waiting for that day
when my grandmother would put on
her best tennis shoes and we would
head down that dusty country road,
the road we frequented in May,
following other cars who knew the road by heart.

My grandmother's wrinkled hands on the steering wheel,
we'd follow the signs that would lead us
to the picking fields, one of a possible few,
depending on how the crop had turned out.
We'd grab the empty, white buckets
and head where the man told us,
sometimes row five, sometimes three.

Her old hands would part leaves
and search for the best, reddest berries,
ignoring the ones with bad spots,
ones that had already grown heavy
and fallen from their stalks.

Her bucket would always fill so much faster
even though I was less selective,
my young eye not yet in tune with the
ripening of the perfect berry.
She would smile and select the best two,
popping one into my mouth and one in hers.
"Always best fresh from the field,"
she'd say, with a wink.



crazy mary's pickle forks
alex blackwelder

We'd finish before the sun
got too high in the sky, the day too hot.
The man would assess our day's haul
as my grandmother pulled crisp bills from her wallet,
exchanging full buckets for the asking price.

On the way back home, we'd share a Dr. Pepper
from the can, the only real way to drink it.
As the summers passed, so did she,
and then one March she passed on.
The strawberries have never been quite as sweet
as they were all those summers ago.



untitled
danielle burns
[three plate etching]

tug of life samantha mallory

She couldn't stand to see herself die. The impact came in a rush of heat and glass and fuel and noise and insanity. The hot metal wrapped itself around her legs and clung to her for dear life. The bag of life-saving air exploded from the steering wheel and choked off her air supply. She inhaled nothing and exhaled carbon dioxide. Inhaled nothing. Exhaled carbon dioxide. Hot blood rivers seeped from her asphyxiated legs and their sister-streams ran down her face, into her eyes, tainted her spit. She opened her eyes to bloody red vision. Closed them to her life. Opened to bloody red. Closed them on her life. Her hands ran white from clenching the death wheel. Her wrists lost feeling. Her arms hung loose at her sides, but her hands held on. Noise. Faraway noise pounded her ear drums. They screeched in reply, forcing their scream through her chest and out of her mouth. A scream muffled by the insanity. Chaos loomed near her, ripped her from her metal grave. Snapped her legs. Broke her wrists. Brought color to her hopeful hands. She opened her eyes to bloody black. Closed them to the face of the only person she ever cared about. Opened them to bloody black. Closed on herself. Madness cradled her. Psychosis pulled her away. Her eardrums screamed again, forcing their cry through her throat. The red burned her skin. She itched to be free. She fought to be free of madness' arms. The unforgiving ground welcomed her with a cold embrace. Her knees battled her brain and moved. She crawled. Her eardrums screamed, but she swallowed it. The shriek reverberated in her skull and deafened her to the insanity. Her face met the loving pavement. Peace.



irony
patrick casey

i saw the mantis

jonathan schultz

One day, I walked the same sidewalk as everyone,
but I saw something that everyone missed.
Exactly what I noticed? Why, I saw the mantis...

It was hanging upside down from a cluster of pink flowers.
A persistent wind shook the branch, but the mantis was unshaken.
I'm certain there was some point it was making...
Some kind of point I am supposed to take to heart.

Perhaps, this mantis is just the start, the beginning of a significant part
of a new found optimism, a second chance.

I planted myself upon some steps in a trance, casting my glances
at each unaware passerby, not catching the sly
mantis, never raising their eyes.

As if they were the walking dead, more concerned
with their programs instead, bound never to witness the incredible.

For the first mantis had torn off the second mantis's head.

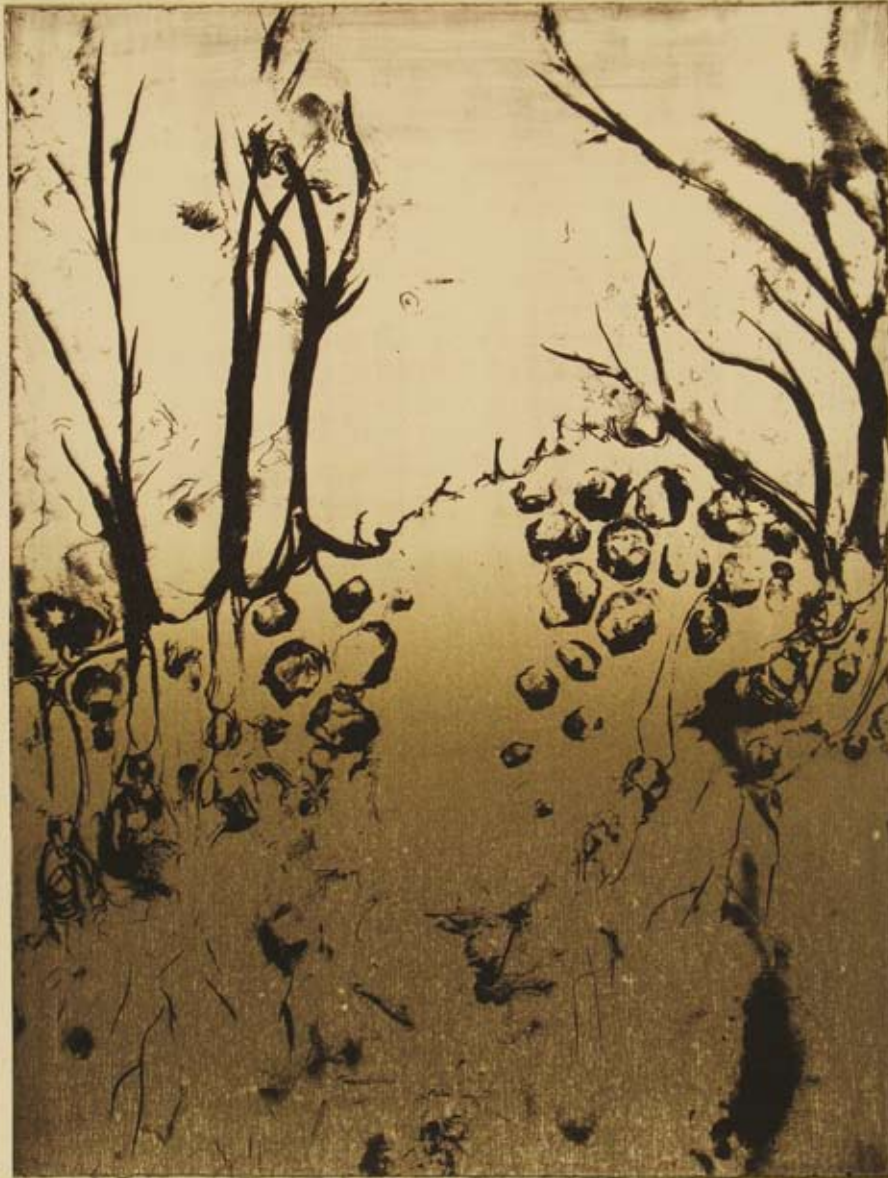
should brevity be the soul of wit

eric benick

Should brevity be the soul of wit?
Then let me ask you really quick,
Have I ever told you how you can cause even
The stoical moon to folly over your comely disposition?

No?

Well,
You can cause even the stoical moon
To folly over your comely disposition.



colony collapse disorder II
lani asuncion
[etching]

zipp
renee davis

“Do you remember when we met Dan?” Dad asked. Dad was just past forty, but his hair hadn’t changed to grey yet. I remembered that. “He was in the hallway with a toy pistol wearing camo pants,” Scott replied, not having to think hard. He was my “Uncle Scott,” and for all intents and purposes I was closer to him than any of my real uncles. “We adopted him on the spot. He was like a little brother,” Dad replied with a tear sliding down his cheek. I had seen him cry only one other time. I sat quietly in the corner knowing something was wrong.

I don't remember the first time that I met Dan. I guess I was about five. I just remember that he had an uncanny ability to loosen doors and windows. He would let himself in and find all the food in the house. You would open the door and there he was at the dining room table eating the little food that remained when you got back from your errand. He would always look up without breaking the rhythm of his eating and give this great big toothy grin. No one knew when he would come; he was a free spirit.

At first everyone thought the moth balls that he kept in his house were making Dan sick. We soon found out that it was more serious than that. Once he was diagnosed, he made frequent stops at the hospital. At first it was just one night here and there. Soon he had to stay for weeks at a time, and then he could not leave all together. I got to know the inside of Summit Hospital well in those days. We would drive an hour and a half one way to sit in the hospital room and chat with him. It was strange to see him in the same place for such a long time. We would walk in his room at the hospital, a small group of misfits to say the least. There was my dad who was called Cactus because of his charming personality. His sniper buddy from the army, Scott, made frequent visits. Everyone called him Horn. You can just imagine the implications. Then there was Horn’s actual brother, Todd. He was simply known

as Tumbleweed for an unfortunate tent experience during a wind storm. Then there was Dave, or Dead Eye. Dave had an interesting streak of luck. I am not sure what happened, but his eye needed to be replaced. They used one from an organ donor. There was my older sister, Nicole. She was normally outgoing, but lately she had taken to the corner of the room. I found myself mixed into the crowd, lost and not knowing what was happening. I was eleven.

His name was Dan Cory, but to his friends he was called Zipp. One time when they were all on a hunting trip, the temperature dropped suddenly like it does in Michigan's winter. Huddled on a tree stand, Dan attempted to zip his jacket shut, stealth his main priority. The zipper had frozen open, and the harder he tried, the more it wouldn't budge. He looked down to assess the situation more clearly, pressing his chin to his chest to get the desired angle. Finally, the zipper let lose, and his unfortunate lip became the zipper's victim. Thus Zipp was born, stumbling out of the wilderness of Michigan into a tiny deer camp with a lip swollen to capacity.

"What would you like to hear today?" one of my "uncles" would ask as they tuned their guitars in the hospital room. This group could play, albeit improvised style.

"American Pie," Zipp would shoot back.

"You know you are the only one of us who can play that," they would tease back.

"Give me the guitar, then," Zipp would reply.

"Give us another song," they would say. Finally he would give in.

"The Edmund Fitzgerald," he replied.

We all know that there is only one response to this selection. "Would you like to hear that with or without gunfire?" Horn chimed right on cue. The room went wild as the song of "The Edmund Fitzgerald" boomed from everyone's guitar.

The long tradition with camping in my family is to get

extremely drunk and play the hell out of a guitar. One time, a while back, Zipp was practicing a new song he was trying to learn. As the chords for "The Edmund Fitzgerald" rang out for the hundredth time, Horn rolled out of his tent in a stupor. "You play that one more time, and I am gonna kill you," he threatened before stumbling back into the tent to try another round of sleep.

Zipp waited a few minutes until Horn was surely asleep before he began to practice short riffs again. Horn, with a quiet yet focused determination, rolled out of bed once again, and began ruffling through his backpack. With curiosity Zipp viewed the behavior of Horn, his riffs becoming instinctually softer. Finally emerging from the tent, Horn let off a few shots to make his point clear. Zipp, taking cover from the wild shootout, tucked his guitar back into its case. All the men resumed their attempts to sleep, the echoes of gunfire barely cleared.

Dan had cancer. Slowly, chemo took its toll. Everyone knew that even this would only slow the growth. He had a very rare lung cancer, one that only provided about a one percent chance of living. He smiled the whole time, took any rare tea that his mother found from China, and ate the nastiest remedies that LaVena, his girlfriend, could find. He slipped away slowly. The doctors said that he would not make it to Christmas. I knew they were wrong. He was just too spirited to leave us.

I knew deep in my heart that he would get better. He could show all of the doctors just how wrong they were. Childish thoughts. On December 22, Zipp died in his early thirties. The beeping stopped, the whirring machines were turned off, and I never had to visit the hospital again. I still remember the smell, though. It has been burned into my memory.

Dan had always smelled of camp fires. He lived outside for most of his life, and a necessity was a good fire to cook and keep warm. It was a soothing smell after one got used to it. This smell was the indicator that he had found a way into the interior of your home. This smell still recalls thoughts of Dan. Dan wanted to be cremated. He also wanted his ashes

to be spread in almost thirty different places, most of which were illegal or dangerous. We poured through the list; there was cackling laughter as each destination brought up a new story. I went to some of the most gorgeous places that I have ever seen. We took three weeks, and slowly but surely marked off destinations one by one. There was Pickerel Lake, one of three in Michigan in fact. We chose the right one. The water was so clear that a person could see to the bottom of the lake at thirty some odd feet down. Another location was a fire tower, specifically the top of the fire tower whose supports had been cut; it was surrounded by a barbed wire fence and covered with "Do Not Enter" signs. We found it ironic that there were three buzzards circling the condemned remains of the old structure. Another destination was from the center of the Mackinaw Bridge. It is illegal to even break down on that five-mile stretch, but we timed the officers right and pulled into a point of construction. The bridge swayed under our feet as we recited the small eulogy that was said at every point of departure and quickly ran back to the car. I saw one of the most beautiful sunsets on the Manastee River and climbed to the top of Lookout Point. Dan sure knew how to pick a destination and how to break even the simplest laws.

Reading back on these small snapshots of his life, I realize he must seem like a hooligan that never grew up. I would agree with one part of that, but how many people do you know that fully lived their lives in thirty years? He managed to live a lifestyle that few would even dare, was in the army during Desert Storm, managed to work as little as possible and still be comfortable, and lastly, he touched so many lives. I find myself wishing I could have been older so I could have gotten to know Dan, that free and determined spirit.



jarrett
emily may-ragland
[acrylic and oil on canvas]



The boy depicted is Jarrett Steele. He is three years old and suffers from Osteogenesis Imperfecta, also known as brittle bone disease.

miranda
rachel laforte

I can't blame you for being a picky eater. Earth tone mush from a jar doesn't appeal to me either. The dab I licked off my arm — debris of a particularly violent tantrum — tasted like wet cardboard. The dog doesn't seem to mind, though.

I can, therefore, understand your need for mealtime entertainment. That's why I will itsy-bitsy-spider until my arms are sore and my voice hoarse like a forty-year smoker. So, in between pitiful tears sliding down rosy-round cheeks and cresting dimples, tiny lips open for a pink plastic spoonful of vegetable beef pilaf, waiting for that spider to go up the spout again.

It's worth the fight to see that impish grin of yours as I wipe up what the dog missed, and notice the spots on my shirt look like a drying Pollack masterpiece of green beans and chunky orchard fruit.

valley
jason barnett
[oil on board]

untitled 13
jason ptacek



untarnished name

alex grant

the slippers are warm and soft on my feet
I finger my mustache and butter a piece of toast

the coffee maker gasps for water one last time
and the newspaper smacks against the door

Eva kisses my mouth, then goes to retrieve
the coffee and the morning paper

upstairs, the shuffling of Heinz getting ready for school
soon he will bounce down the steps to sit in Uncle's lap

I will muss his blonde hair and feed him orange slices
we will share the bond of favoritism

Eva sets the paper and coffee in front of me
takes an orange slice and some toast for herself
and looks lovingly up at me, glowing

these peaceful mornings, wars are far away, forgotten
we remember only the seeming fiction of headlines

this afternoon, my friend Jacob and I
will sit by an olive tree in the park and play chess

and tonight, I will have visions of a different life

and I will be thankful for this life I have
I will be thankful for the goodness, for family

for the things that could have been but have not been
that I will be lost in the pages of history

never forget lord byron

eric benick

My cat
Wears like a scarf
Slung
Across indolent shoulder blades.
He stares into my pen motions
With primordial objectives
To capture
The distractions.

My cat
Watches dragonfly spectacles
With hopeful jaws clenching
With a salivating tongue
With watchful eye slits
And knows patience
Better than the most
Diligent of virgins.

I admire his alacrity
And his objective
Manifestations of respect
Or disrespect.
He never flashes
A fabrication.
I always know where I stand,
And this often determines the
Quantity of his food rations,
Because everything just wants to be
Loved.

I read to my cat
Poems out of
Capricious mind flares
And he sits
And watches me
In pretentious lethargy,
(He is a sophist, you see?)
And sometimes I raise my voice
Because I want him to be moved
And sometimes
I throw in pieces of Shakespeare
Or Pope
But he can always tell the difference.

My cat
Sheds his useless ideas
As if he wants me to
Pick them up for myself,
As if suggesting
That my own ideas are inept
And worthy of no regard,
And sometimes
My cat
Will go as far
As regurgitating
Big, omnipresent, pre-elaborated,
intestinal ideas
In the tight corners of my house
Knowing full well
That it will take me
Weeks to stumble upon,
But that when I do
I will be moved in directions
Beyond my own fathoms.

My cat
Is the great poetic
With a plutocrat's aesthetic;
Cowering to nothing,
Exalting only his domain;
Believing that twilight
Is a hymn
Written in his vain,
And that the stars
In their multitudes
Are arranged to spell his name,
But I let none of these ideas
Resonate for long
As I look him in the eyes
And say,
"Never forget Lord Byron,
That you still shit
In a plastic box."



study of a hawk
ashley cochran
[wood burning]



love is all you need
chet overall



ruins in peru
gabriel zurita

and the ghost of charlton heston smiled
alex grant

my brother Austin, all excitement and pride,
leads me out to the back yard

rifle in one hand
bucket of shells in the other

it is a World War II Mauser
that belonged to a German man
who killed seven Americans:

this was his weapon

my brother loves the thing
keeps it beside his bed
where he can look at it constantly

he walks through the house most nights
sliding the bolt in and out
finally locking it into place and firing
an imaginary round
I'm not much for weapons

Austin has to explain to his older brother
how to load
how to aim

today, there is sun
and a breeze from the Blue Ridge
we have no enemy

not even a paper target

we will fire shots wildly
through bramble and briar patch

and no one will be hurt, rather
two will draw closer together

james castle
cody brummett

Browneville County Times – July 23
HIGH SCHOOLS INCORPORATE IN-DEPTH
DRUG CURRICULUM

Browneville – The Browneville County Board of Education has decided to enhance their high school curriculum, adding a drug information course intended for adolescents. The course will take three weeks to complete and will be taught under the label of “Lifestyle Management.” The course will be required for all 11th graders. Subject matter will include well-known substances such as marijuana, ecstasy and hydrocodone. Also included will be lesser-known drugs such as ketamine, dimethyltryptamin (DMT) and psilocin. Absent from the curriculum are substances such as alcohol, caffeine and nicotine. The students will be required to do research on a number of drugs and will also listen to several guest speakers.

It will suffice to say that he had a lot of pressure on his shoulders. It was almost as if his mother named him “Iamgoingtocurecancer Franklin.” Or at least that was how he had felt as of late. With all of the eyes focused on his life, how could he feel so insignificant? If his life was actually a movie about his best friend, the end of the movie would credit him as “Friend #1.” However, as his bare feet touched the coarse, grainy pavement, he felt somewhat at ease, at home, not quite sublime, but not anxious either. His eyes gazed over the people below and he forgot about the somewhat immediate situation of which he was currently a part. “Sometimes, I go a little crazy. Sometimes, I go a little crazy just like you do.” He had listened to the radio all morning and was now humming the chorus that seemed to be lodged in his brain. A few of the miniature-sized people looked at him, a few even stared, but most were going on about their business. He couldn’t believe he had finally mustered the courage to climb up here and was now thinking instead of just acting.

A real man would have probably already taken the plunge. The wind was warm on his face, but his arms were rugged with chills. The placid surface that appeared to be miles below began to twirl in a freakish manner. He could sense the impatience of the people below him. “Just do it, already,” he could hear them saying. He felt like the ringleader of a circus that a thousand people had paid their hard-earned money to see but had suddenly grown frightened of the circle of fire. Backing out now would be the equivalent of punching a third grader in the nose, but the surreal setting that surrounded him beckoned for him to linger.

He did not want to jump. What would people think or do if he jumped? Would they even pay attention, or would they just float on by? But after all the preparation, the climb, the angst, he knew he had no other choice. He inched as close to the edge as possible — any more movement and he would be standing on air. His mind succumbed to an eerie feeling that he had felt before. Not the eerie feeling of a dead body or a ghostly movie, rather the eerie feeling of being on vacation and seeing David Letterman come on at 11:35 instead of 10:35. As he took what he hoped would be his last look down below him, his heart sank as he watched a mother and her toddler seemingly float below him. He wondered if his mother knew what he was about to do. A bit spooked, he jerked back and scraped his heel on the rough pavement. The minor pain stunned him to his core. He concluded that his life had been intended for this very incident. He would spend the rest of his days traveling from high school to high school, lecturing teenagers on how to not scrape their foot when they are stories above the ground.

He jumped. The fall felt like an eternity. As a matter of fact, if he had not been present for the previous four minutes, he would not know that he was falling at all. Regardless, he was conscious and knew all too well that this was his divine moment of truth. This feeling

was new to him. He felt like a blind man at a petting zoo. He floated on the air exactly the opposite way a feather would. His mind flashed back to his sophomore English class, something about Robert Frost and apples...What an odd thought at a time like this. He was always incoherent to the teachers who spent their lives chasing a degree that would mask the truth of “mister” or “misses” with that ambiguous “doctor.” The moment before he hit, he watched a youth scurry off of his plastic water float and out of the path of his jump. Inches away, he pinched his nose and braced himself for the water. His body went numb as he sank, and sank. He opened his goggle-protected eyes to see teens diving for sticks at the bottom of the pool. After all of the anticipation, the high dive wasn’t so bad.

Browneville County Times – September 13
SIXTEEN YEAR OLD FOUND DEAD,
APPARENT SUICIDE

Browneville – The body of a sixteen year old male was found on Juniper Street Tuesday morning. Investigators believe that the young man committed suicide by jumping from his bedroom window in his grandparents’ sixth floor apartment. The incident was reported by Martha Jacobs who, along with her toddler son, witnessed the fall. The toxicity report found the youth’s blood alcohol content to be elevated, as well as an elevated amount of dimethyltryptamin. “We honestly had no clue that he was into any of those things. I don’t even know what that stuff is or how he heard about DMT,” said the deceased’s grandmother, when asked about her grandson’s drug and alcohol usage.

arte cru
mandalin paul
[body painting]



equus
kelsey travis



western expansion
brett warren



the poet
anthony adewumi

I am the distinguished, I am the discrete,
I am the offspring of The Outlawz –
The rose that grew from the concrete.
I am the broken line between sanity and insanity –
The broken barrier between Jekyll and Hyde,
I am the aftermath of two complex minds
I am the victim of Misery's murder,
Far from being grown, I am a Gerber –
A baby in life and more of an infant in Christ,
I am the messenger of Right.
But I will never become a legend until I take my own advice.
I am the bulb of the limelight –
That you would sell your birthright and cut short your time line,
Just to obtain 15 seconds to shine bright.
I am the blind – couldn't see Christ if he touched the lenses of my Christian Diors,
In a land full of milk and honey, I am Eeyore –
An ass in a world of opportunities – I am the appetite, hungry for more,
So starving for hope, I pray up to the Sky with my knees on the floor.
I am the fear – your deepest thoughts that you refuse to project –
The vulnerable child that the forefathers refused to protect.
I am the underrated – the overlooked – the hidden,
The one desired by the flesh because I came from the tree of the forbidden.
I am the secret – wear a bandana so my face can hide,
Put on headphones to try and ignore the cries –
Coming from the victims of the Holocaust and Rwanda genocides,
I am an Ordinary man –
Trying to be home to the good so I can carry out His plan.
I am the resurrection of the martyrs,
I am their offspring but not like sons and daughters –
I am the product of their masterpieces – written seven lines farther.
I am the condemned in this carnal realm,
Write like it's mandatory but I am the required – I am not the admired,
However I'm never tired because of you I am inspired –
By the campaign of change – I am the voted,
I am the passion – I am the poet.



a sunday kind of love
lauren a. wood



fiji retreat
miccah m. defriez
[interior design]

the cross joseph quarles

It was midsummer in Tennessee. The evenings were sweaty forays into small clouds of mosquitoes. Meanwhile the peculiar screeching noises made by the cicadas, hanging from the tree branches like ugly Christmas ornaments, constantly impeded polite outdoor conversation. I was thirteen years old and as most adolescents at that difficult age, struggling with the strains of impending puberty.

I spent a lot of my time alone that summer. My little sister played with her friends, and my mother stayed in a bad mood. She was frequently in an overly medicated state, broken by occasional fits of her losing her temper and shouting at us in Spanish. I had no real friends in my neighborhood. We were never really accepted. I am certain now, with the advantage of hindsight, that it was because of my mother's South American heritage and temperamental behavior. We had moved there two years before and were the first residents of the suburb. Occasionally, families would move into one of the new cookie-cutter houses. More and more children and young teens played on the streets, some of them also from immigrant families, and yet I preferred to be by myself.

I frittered away my time by reading comic books or staying up late at night watching sci-fi and horror movies. I also spent the better part of the summer ranging the woods and cow fields near the construction sites of the quickly growing community. What a playground for a boy. I wandered the fields, finding undiscovered cow ponds, taking pot shots at frogs with my pellet gun, and exploring with my pet dog, a husky named Frosty, through creeks and mud holes. I crawled over the construction machinery in the uncompleted parts of the neighborhood and, in general, just goofed off in the partially-built homes.

On one of the hottest evenings of that summer, I was meandering through the gravel and sand piles

near the end of one of the unfinished streets. I was sweating profusely from the heat, and the sweat in turn aggravated the twenty some-odd chigger bites on my legs. I kept trying to resist scratching them and making them worse. To distract myself from the bug bites, I shot at a couple of discarded soda cans with my pellet gun. Frosty was sniffing and digging at various clumps of grass near the edge of the road. Some birds flushed from the grass nearby, and Frosty bolted back among the gravel piles. I then heard a metallic clanging noise and Frosty whining as though he was injured. Worried, I ran around a gravel pile and into the brush to check on him. He was dragging his nose along the ground and growling. I smelled a really strong odor: gassy and cloying. I then noticed a knocked-over diesel can and a puddle of oily-looking fuel. Apparently, Frosty had run into the can and splashed diesel on his muzzle.

I then spotted it, the symbol of hatred and ignorance in the South. My mouth immediately went dry, and a nervous flutter began in my stomach. The freshly made cross was wrapped in frayed quilts and cheap blankets. Coarse wire and twine bound the mix of fabrics to the shape lying on the ground, obscured from the partially finished road by the heaps of foundation material and dried out weeds. The bulk of the cloth had a dingy red look to it from the fuel soaking into it. For some reason, the thing that bothered me the most, in those first few seconds, was the baby blanket entwined at the center of that ten foot long misused symbol of the Savior. I stared for a few moments. Frosty finally sat down with his face covered in dirt, his tongue lolling in the heat. My face began to tingle. The sound of the evening cicadas and the heavy panting of Frosty, faded away as fear took hold of me. Was this obscenity meant for my family? Was it because of my mother? The sun was beginning to set, and I snapped out of my shock. I knew I needed to leave immediately.

I bolted and ran as fast as I could, dropping my pellet gun in my haste, oblivious to where it landed. I ran, unmindful of the cuts I received from running through a bramble patch. Frosty ran with me, thinking I wanted to play; he yipped excitedly and snapped at my heels. I jumped the fence to my back yard and burst through the back door. My mother was nearly scared out of her wits when she saw me. I had blood running down my legs and was out of breath. Frosty ran under my legs, knocking me to the floor. My mother went from being frightened to shrieking at me, as Frosty splattered mud and grass all over our new white carpet. She threw him out and proceeded to berate me in a pidgin of Spanish and English. I finally got a word in edgewise and told her what I had seen. She did not understand. I could not make her see any reason. She would not let me call the police. She told me to keep my mouth shut. She was sure the cross did not have anything to do with us. She said telling the police would just cause trouble.

I was getting used to keeping secrets. She made me keep quiet about the men who came to see her late at night while my father was out of town. She made me stay quiet about the pills she took and the bruises she left on my little sister and me. I kept quiet about the cross. I went to bed early, feeling queasy.

Later that night, the sound of emergency sirens awakened me. Frosty was baying in his pen behind the house. I jumped out of my bed and pulled open my curtains. Orange light bathed my face, and it took a moment for my eyes to adjust. Across the street from the front of our house, at our new Vietnamese neighbors' home, was a flaming ten-foot cross. A crowd of people was gathering at the end of the unfortunate neighbor's driveway. A police car pulled up slowly and stopped. A bored-looking police officer casually exited the car and looked around.

My mother, sleeping with Prince Valium, was incoherent, and I could not wake her. She would have probably slapped and berated me for waking her anyway. My little sister was sleeping soundly, and I felt the sudden urge to protect her and leave this bit of trauma out of her life, the beginning of a long cycle through our adult years. I pulled on a t-shirt and some shorts and ran outside.

The crowd was larger. Some of the people were laughing. Some looked shocked; others just stood around and talked in whispers. I stood by the curb and watched as the little Vietnamese father shouted and shook his fist at the crowd. His family stood behind him, still in their nightclothes. The children were crying and looking at the ground. I felt incredible shame, and I could not look at them. As the fire truck arrived, I forced myself to look up, and my gaze locked with one of the little girls standing behind the enraged father. Her little almond-shaped eyes were round with fear and confusion. I felt my heart skip a beat and I quickly looked away. The firefighters knocked the cross down and extinguished the fire. The crowd drifted away, back to their homes. I sat on my porch for awhile, watching the moonlit smoky pall hang in the air. The smell of cinders finally forced me back into the house.

A few days later, I went back out to the gravel piles and found a large stain where Frosty had knocked over the diesel can. Within the trampled grass, I could see deeply imbedded truck tire prints in the soil. I walked back to the road and found my discarded pellet gun, mashed into the ruts left by the Klansmen's truck. The barrel was bent into a U-shape, and the stock was shattered. Rust spots had already formed from the previous night's dew. I left it there and walked home, my head hanging low, my hands shoved in my pockets, and kicking at the dirt clods in the dust. My conscience, the night watchman of my soul, remained silent.

unity
jason ptacek
[graphic design]



once was
john a. prince

The Soccer Ball rolls across a busy street in The Bronx and comes to rest in an abandoned lot as the child is snatched up by an angry Father's hand. Once special. Long since forgotten. Two decades have left their mark like wrinkles on an old man's face. Lost among broken bottles and unraveled cigarette butts. Surrounded by weeds and all the little pieces of Nothing that used to be pieces of Something. A silent witness to the Urban Decay. Faded and Tarnished but still holding on to that last breath of air that holds its form. Air that was filled with hope and promise, insulated from the World's relentless assault. Held prisoner by the rough hide of the ball's outer shell. Left and alone, like a Time-Capsule with nothing inside but invisible memories. A group of Junkies pass by, in a hurry on their way through the overgrown lot to shoot up in the shade of the rotting Once Was. Once was a building. Now just Shade for lost lives. Shots taken, the Group of lost Souls makes their way back toward the street. Much slower now. Nothing left to rush for. One of them sees the ball this time and stops. He says to the others, "That's My Ball." Three simple words that couldn't even begin to voice the swell of emotion growing inside the broken man.

hopefully helpless
randy purcell
[cast bronze]



blissful boxer
jason barnett
[acrylic on canvas]

mid-course correction lani henning

This day the sun is absent, hidden behind low hanging, dark clouds, prepared to dispense rain at any second. Mr. Jones sits in a booth adjacent to the window at the local diner on the corner of Broad and Jefferson Street. Dawdling over his cup of coffee and paperback, *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac, he watches the traffic of the square projected across his personal transparent screen. Raindrops appear on the pavement and sidewalks. Simultaneously, a sea of black umbrellas sprouts over the heads of the various pedestrians, all who seem to be hurrying to their destinations, skipping over puddles and dodging passing cars as they cross the street.

The anxious cars and quick-paced footsteps contrast the diner's solemn atmosphere shared amongst Mr. Jones, the owner, and a dapperly dressed businessman. A bone-chilling breeze consumes the diner. Mr. Jones shifts his attention to the doorway. Meek and fragile, draped with a black, hooded coat and red scarf—distinctive eyes peer out from behind a dark, tangled mess of hair covering her face. Becoming the diner's newest addition, she escapes the depressing downpour. With every squeaky step, she slowly approaches the counter, where the owner already has her steaming drink prepared as if he previously knew her arrival time. Then, as quickly as she came, she too disappears, followed by an empty autumn breeze.

Mr. Jones, originally from a small town just east of the gateway to the west, has spent the last decade of his life traveling from town to town in search of an answer. The question, no more specific than: why and how? He has distanced himself from immediate family, and severed any pre-existing friendships. He finds part-time work anywhere that will hire and rents an underdeveloped, single room space inadequate for anything other than sleeping. He

spends his money on food and cigarettes and saves the rest in an old shoebox. When he accumulates enough money to travel to a new destination, he packs his things and simply vanishes.

* * *

Later, returning from a monotonous day of work, Mr. Jones boards the subway car. He notices her, the same straggly and modest soul from earlier at the diner. Her assertive, brown eyes meet his as the doors close and the car follows the tracks away from this mysterious creature. Mr. Jones notices her every day for the next week. As if she were shadowing his every move, she simply appears with a breeze or flicker of a street light.

Mr. Jones begins to return on a regular basis to the familiar diner, which is a block and a half away from his residence. Each day, she punctually emerges from the calm diner at eight in the morning. The continuous rain covers the city's streets and floods the sidewalks. Disheartened by the showers, the orange and red leaves gravely float in drain ditches along street curbs and press up against the sides of buildings in the space where the foundation meets the sidewalk. Mr. Jones develops an acute fascination for this beautifully mysterious lady. Despite the predictable downpour, she never carries an umbrella, but is always clothed in her black, hooded coat and red scarf.

This new town is like all the other towns through which Mr. Jones has ventured: streets, sidewalks, cars, restaurants, busy people, houses and homes. The difference between a house and a home is that a house is just a place in which one finds shelter from the outside elements, whereas a home is a place to which one anticipates returning, filled with family

love. This town has by far more homes than houses, unlike other previously visited towns. No matter where Mr. Jones ends up, he finds the same type of people in every town. Their faces and names melt into one enormous vague memory. "Lady," as Mr. Jones begins self-consciously referring to her, is different from all the rest. The more he observes her, the more he notices her observing him.

* * *

Oct. 10

Why is it that surrounded by 10,000 familiar strangers, one can still feel completely alone? How can one give all his love to another, and not receive love in return? Why does one worry about the little things in life? How are those who have lost everything still able to give thanks, yet those who have millions, still greedy? Why, how, why, how, why, how, why, how, why, how...?

Mr. Jones developed a habit of keeping a journal throughout his travels. His heart and thoughts poured across each page, like a river of endless wonder. He hopes that one day his journal will help him discover the missing part to his never-ending masterpiece puzzle. With each new town and the continuously growing array of acquaintances, the mystery becomes ever so increasingly difficult to solve. He sits on a splintered bench in the center of the town park, looks up to the sky, and lets out a long breath as if he had been holding it in all day.

Hours passed before Mr. Jones left that rickety bench. The sun began to kiss the distant treetops before he gathered his things and returned to his residence. There he packed all his belongings once more and planned to board the next train to anywhere.

* * *

Awakened by the steady beat of his head against the window, Mr. Jones observed the passing landscape, at first in a blurred, newborn vision which slowly progressed into a clear, articulated view across the landscape of green pastures, cows, farmhouses, and grey hills cuddled next to the horizon. After five hours of travel, the sun attempts to make its first faint appearance in the unanticipated gloomy sky.

Just as the train stopped under the large, black marquee of the station, the sky dispensed translucent sheets of rain. Mr. Jones gathered what little belongings he brought with him and began to make his way to the next chapter of his self-journey. Stepping out of the station, he looked around as if he were a lost child in search of direction. His search ceased when right before him stood a straggly, yet self-assured, lady draped in a black coat with a red scarf, holding an oversized red umbrella. Mr. Jones recognized the familiar presence —the same “Lady” he had encountered many times before. Her eyes locked on his as she began to speak for the first time.

“I’ve been expecting you,” she said.

With an urge of curiosity, a peaceful air, and nothing to lose, Mr. Jones immersed himself beneath the umbrella. For the first time, he felt safe from the storm that had been shadowing his journey. For an uncertain reason, he knew he would never have to run from it again. Mr. Jones and the Red Lady slowly vanished amongst the sea of black umbrellas.



shiavo

joseph lampley

Death— Is this communion made
In the hollow spaces between
The heart and the synapse—
A Genesis of the Blackening
We see when we close our eyes
As the Thread of Life crashes,
Landing scarlet side up—
To weave a helping hand of ashes.

These failures in the flesh—
Flaws— Naught but prey for eyes,
Like the twitching butterfly pinned:
Opaque, expressionless observation realized.
Mutually framing Armageddon—
With blank faces pressed to glass
In sensual Death imitation—
And the final machine-fed gasp.

big top swing

savanna r. teague

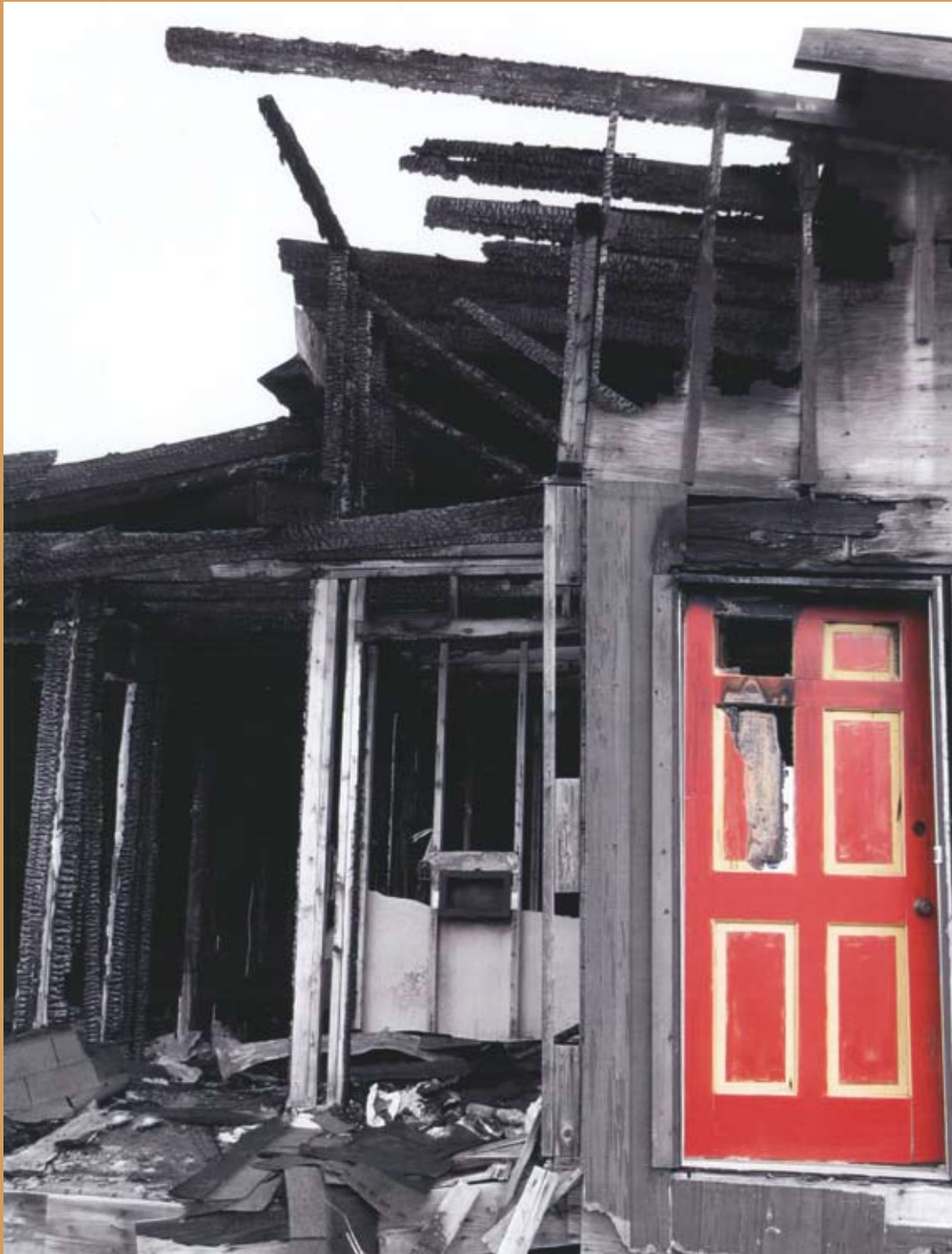
[hand-drawn/digital painting]



brad

jonathan wallraven

[mixed media]



hurricane 1

monica brown

The sky's busted out.
Clouds crash into clouds like angry gods.
Harsh watercolor washes of rain
pummel the landscape.
Great floods spill out from all the ditches.

The kitchen walls are shaking.
Diaphanous curtains lifted to the ceiling
revealed a mess of flotsam, whipping branches,
ships wrecked on the lawn.
Leaves, Magnolia petals splay
over the raised beds
of rosemary and lavender.

Here's the thing; I was alone,
catching water in my two cupped palms,
listening for bells in all that thunder.
Think September in Alabama,
that drive through Biloxi to New Orleans,
the gulf spilled out like warm bathwater
streamed across the road.

It's best to have lunch when your life is in danger,
to pick the reddest one with the thickest skin,
ignore the wind that whips against the windows.
At night I'm not afraid, I pray,

O billboard God,
holy maker of the ripe tomato
only you could tear fruit stands asunder.
Only you would send this storm.
I've never been one of your brave ones.

Because today is someone's birthday
I'll lean away from your abyss,
take red fruit and nothing more.

elizabeth arden
kelsey travis

creative nonfiction

john neuhoff

[cigarettes, corn syrup, and vanilla extract]



family portrait

rachel laforte

In the center is my father,
bent over a pile of colorful boxes,
wrapping paper stripped and discarded,
hurrying to assemble the contents before
his three boys explode from anticipation,
birthday cake and ice cream, all of which is
smeared across their eager faces.
Their mother leans against a doorway in the
background, arms crossed, lips pursed,
wishing he'd hurry up and finish.

I never met her, although in my childhood
choice words became associated with her name
when my mother signed the check every month for
boys now grown into young adults.

His unlined face, and the twinkle
in his eyes as he looks at a brother
I don't know makes me always wonder
if they got the better part of him,
and we just got what was left over.

to submit to *collage*:

Collage accepts submissions year-round. Each submission must be accompanied by a completed submission form, which is available at www.mtsu.edu/~collage. On this website you will also find submission guidelines, the deadlines for each publication and the latest *Collage* information. Submissions may be turned in at the *Collage* office, Paul W. Martin, Sr. Honors Building, Rm. 224 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or by mail. Submissions will not be accepted via e-mail, and you must be an MTSU student to submit.

creative expression awards

Each semester four Creative Expression Awards will be awarded from among the highest scoring submissions to the magazine. Members of the *Collage* Faculty Advisory Board will choose one top-rated submission from each major genre: poetry, prose, art and photography. Winners of the Martha Hixon Creative Expression Awards (literature) and the Lon Nuell Creative Expression Awards (visual) will be awarded \$50 each.

this issue's winners:

poetry: Jen Hayes, *Strawberry Picking*

photography: Marcus Laxton, *Daybreak*

prose: Taffeta Chime, *Excerpt from Barefoot*

art: Adam Gaskill, *Rag & Bone*

policy statement

Collage: a Journal of Creative Expression is an arts and literary magazine featuring the best MTSU student work submitted each semester. The volunteer student staff participates in a blind judging selection process and attempts to choose the best submissions without regard for theme or authorship.

Although *Collage* is a publication of the University Honors College, staff members and submitters are not required to be Honors students. Staff members are selected each semester from a pool of applicants and must have at least a 3.0 GPA and two letters of recommendation.

colophon

This publication was produced with Adobe InDesign® CS3, Adobe Illustrator® CS3 and Adobe Photoshop® CS3 using an Apple iMac8. Headline typeface is Fmiring Campotype One, and body typeface is Calisto MT. It is printed on 80 lb. dull white paper, and bound using a saddle stitch. Approximately 3,000 copies of *Collage* were printed by Franklin Graphics of Nashville, Tenn. *Collage*, Eighth Edition, Design by Ashley Sherwood.

Collage is a biannual publication of the Middle Tennessee State University Honors College. All submissions were reviewed anonymously and selected by a student editorial staff. The materials published by *Collage* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the *Collage* staff, Honors College, MTSU student body, staff, or administrators. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized in any form without written permission from the editor or adviser of *Collage*. Inquiries should be addressed to Middle Tennessee State University, MTSU Box 267, Murfreesboro, TN 37132.

Collage

Middle Tennessee State University

MTSU Box 267

Murfreesboro, TN 37132

(615) 898-5789

collage@mtsu.edu