

Cardinal Sins

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Produced by the students and staff of Saginaw Valley State University and published on campus by the Graphics Center, *Cardinal Sins* features art, photography, poetry, and prose by members of the SVSU community, including alumni and faculty, and other featured writers and artists from across the nation and world. All submissions are considered for publication. Selection is made by blind voting by the committee staff. Staff members are excluded from receiving an award in any category.

Cardinal Sins uses Adobe InDesign. This issue features Goonberry, Dakota (Handwriting), Modern No. 20, Book Antiqua, and Lucida Fax fonts.

Cover Art by Kristen Kilar, entitled "The Imaginarium"

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Editor's Note

I have always considered *Cardinal Sins* to be something wild and untamable, because the journal changes editorship each year. I consider myself fortunate to be able to return as *Cardinal Sins'* editor-in-chief. I am proud to say that the journal continues to expand and grow. This edition is full of great work from both emerging and established artists and writers. I see only greater things ahead.

Its culmination couldn't have happened without the hard work of the *Cardinal Sins* staff. It wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our genre editors, committee staff, support staff and new managing editor. I would like to say "thank you" to everyone who has supported our latest no-fee poetry contest, including contest winners Bill Tarlin, Changming Yuan, Josh Crummer, Daniel Ari, and Joel Blunenau. We will continue this tradition with our nonfiction themed contest in our Winter 2014 edition.

For me, being editor-in-chief of *Cardinal Sins* has taught me to never stop doing what I love to do, which is connecting with people. Through my position here, I have been able to meet and speak with hundreds of writers and artists across the U.S. and the world. I have always been drawn to untold stories, and I am thankful when people want to share their stories with me.

Cardinal Sins is raw. We enjoy the bizarre, the surreal, the postmodern, the not-so-easy, the popped balloons, the frozen plums, the pop culture, the music, the beat, and we especially love anything that makes us want to turn your submission upside down and look at it in a new way. We love revelations.

We look forward to working with you and your work.

Happy reading,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandy Abraham', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brandy Abraham, *Cardinal Sins* Editor-in-chief

Ghosts on a Lake

Erin Case

We rowed through seasons,
seesaw waves. Meticulous
circles in the middle,
soft circles,
made of misdirected courtesies.
Apprehensively reaching,
we were ghosts on a lake.

I was stranger-blind,
in a haze. Indifference
disguised in a blanket,
soft disguise,
full of distant unguent secrets.
Placating one another,
we were drifters in the shade.

The first time with you when I was pretty sure the world would end even when I told you I was certain it would not

Justin J. Brouckaert

Jacuzzi—Windsor, ON—9:37 p.m.

I've been staring at your neck. The cords pop like twigs under fresh snow, and I want to clip them in the sexiest way. "I don't think the world will end tomorrow," you tell me. I recalibrate: this outdoor Jacuzzi, the looming doomsday prophesies, the sleeping couple inside who rents their house to honeymooners. We are not honeymooners. We are recalibrating. You slide down the tub, deeper in the water, and latch your body against my side. I run my fingers along your knotted spine. "No," I say. You need all of this. Need the stars to be brighter here than where we came from, to justify this night—the Christmas lights that trace the wooden fence and gazebo, the moon scaring shadows off the trees. The wine, the getaway. There is a stillness here that the tree branch in my periphery shifts and ripples, the shadow of a man walking into the yard and backing out, again and again. I keep my ears perked. What I should say to you, for comfort, is this: there is a feeling that waits for nights like these—nights that come before the ends of things—and this is not it. This is not even close.

Apron Strings

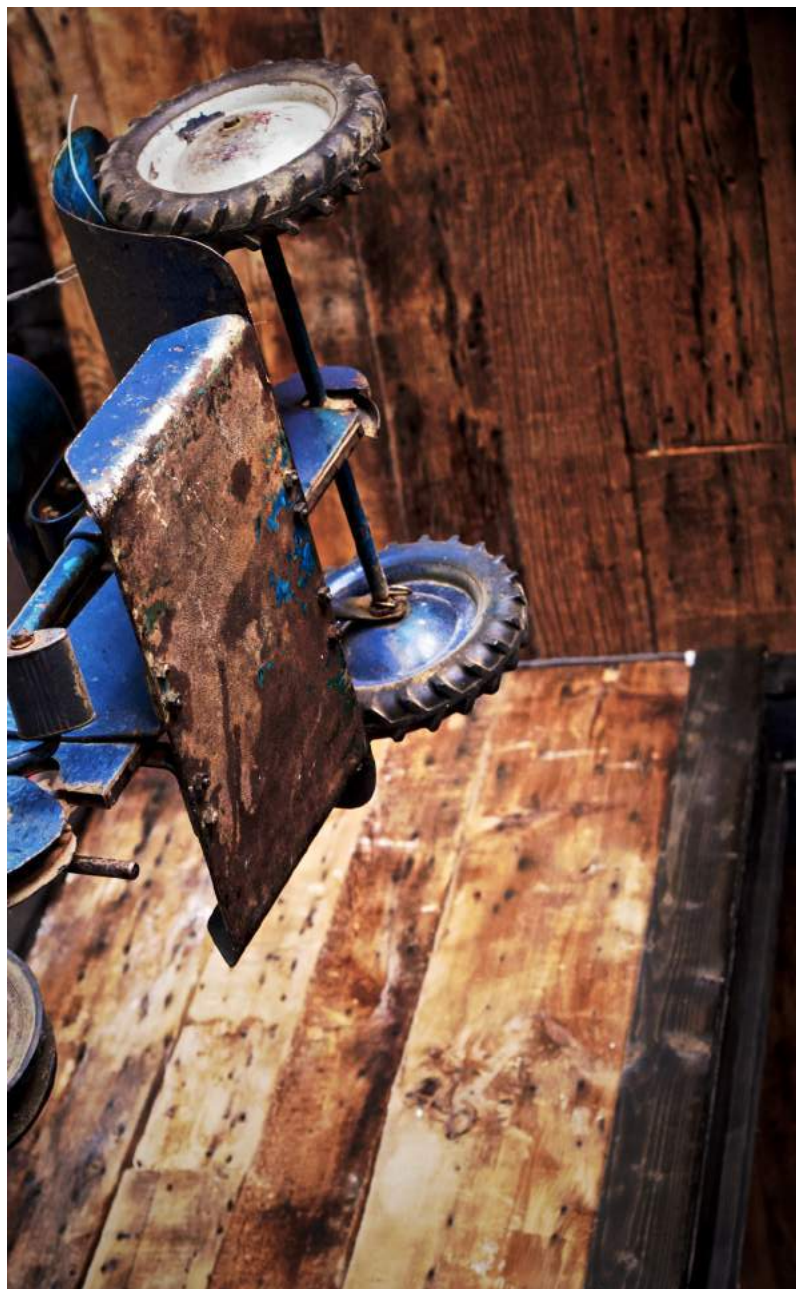
Erin Case



Prints of the Earth

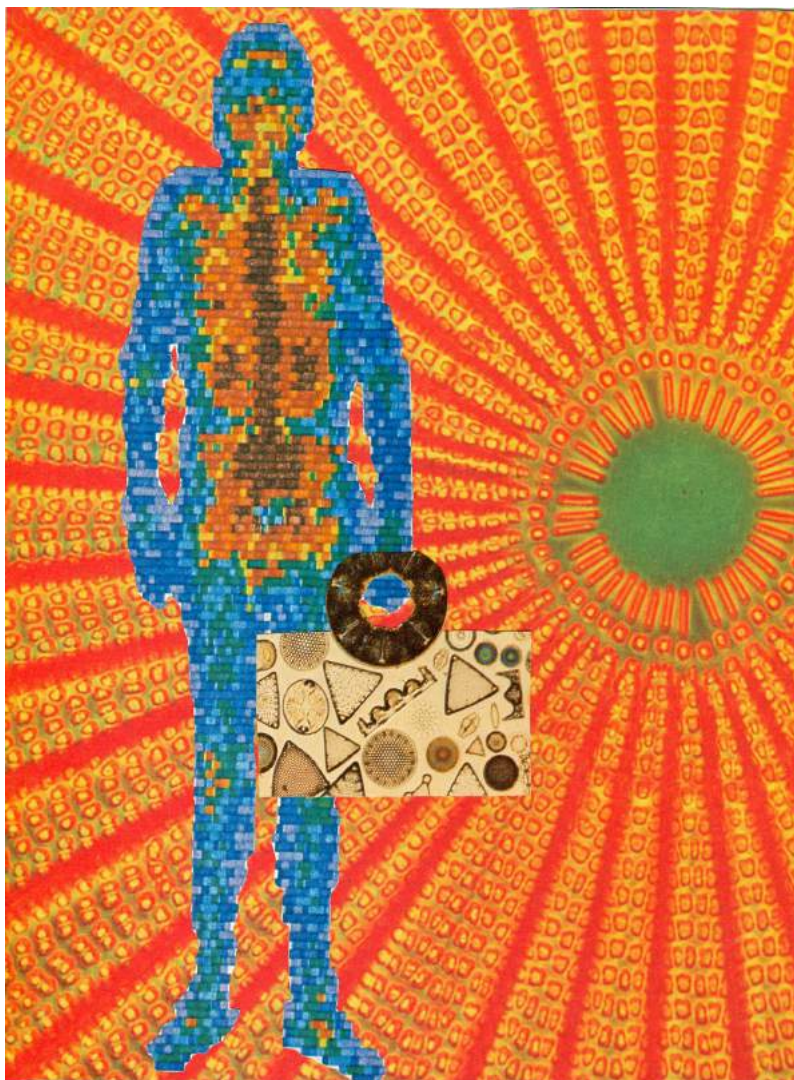


Vivian Calderon



Business Man

Kristen Kilar



louie scungil' saves the world

Lynn Hoffman

the ladies with the perfect hair ankle their
way off the sidewalk to avoid running into louie scungil'.
gay tom's dogs scoot sideways barking
and the bartender with the pink tattooed scalp
lowers her head and raises her step count
passing louie scungil' who is drunk enough
by seven p.m. on april first to embrace the world
and drunk enough to have just pissed in the fountain
at primo levy plaza where passyunk crosses tasker.
'i love you' louie screams 'love ya fucking love youse all'
'i am the messiah' he says 'jesus came back'.
there's almost-silence on the street,
the old guys hangin' on the corner,
they don't say nothin' because they went to school
with louie's brother and the perfect hair ladies
don't say nothin' because there's nothin' to say.
but fat joey, he's walking by, he turns to louie,
real loud, "you ain't no fucking messiah.
i know 'cause i'm the fucking messiah."
and one of the hair ladies, the one from haddonfield,
ronelle, she stops and takes a step to louie
"hey louie, it's me, ronelle. i'm the messiah.
me and my son anthony too, we'll save
your sorry ass."
and i guess you know what
gay tom's dogs said and you can image up
the corner boys all tapping their chests and
saying soft, "it's me it's me" and all the waves
of cooks and saints and blowhards up and down
the avenue yelling into the smoky spring night,
"i, i, yo, i am the promised one, me me."
and you can image up right now that you and me
and louie scungil' and all of them
were swept along the curb and into spring south philly air
blown past stoops and high into the center city night
and just like that, we were saved.
yeah, saved.

Digging

Brandin Dahlstrom

Every evening my father took his coffee out into the fenced backyard along with his wooden shovel. It was ritualistic. He had been at it for over fifteen years now, four before I was born. I looked on from the window of my bedroom. The second floor of our rustic ranch-style home had become a hollow sanctuary. My mother left us when I was ten; unable to handle the seclusion Father's digging had brought her. She kept the family afloat by working two jobs, seven days a week. I stayed behind for him after Mother was through. The rift in their marital bond had grown, not unlike the holes that caved in the quaint half acre like remnants of a small comet. Mother left at the break of dawn, stopping by my room on her way out. She kissed my forehead as I lay in bed, and I awoke to small tears beginning to bead in the corners of her eyes. She had only the strength to tell me to come with her, to a better life, one without holes. I remember looking into my mother's hardened features. Her large, empty hazel eyes stared back at me like two of Father's unfinished projects.

That seemed so long ago as I peered out the window into the backyard where Father was getting close to finishing his late-night ritual. The piles of dirt had accumulated over the years, forming humps in the landscape. Each hole appeared as its own entity without any distinctive structure. The vigilance with which my father went about his business was almost admirable, but over the years he had emptied from his labor in the backyard. The only time the dirt departed from him is when the rain came—refreshing, revitalizing rain.

...

"Daddy, bring that dirt pile over here, we need to get the land ready."

"I think that's enough for today. Why don't you run along inside while I finish up."

Okay."

"Look Mommy, Daddy is still playing."

...

The rain seemed to awaken him, at least temporarily, until the next evening when he would be in the backyard, working the shovel into the earth. He became instilled with indescribable determination. I tried to ask him about the digging, but each time I received a more obscure response than the last. Mother once told me that he often drifted away in his thoughts when he spoke of digging; a trend that

began on the day he started.

Over the years, Father appeared thicker from the layers of dirt that embedded themselves into his clothes and skin. When I was fourteen, I began to notice the considerable amount of residue that had built up inside of our home. The doorway was stained an earthy mixture of browns; smeared handprints decorated our hallways and stairwell. The washroom was neglected. Father had stopped bathing altogether, preferring to let his overalls soak in the rainwater. He kept giving me the same empty glare as if he wasn't even sure why he continued to dig. One evening, he had more coffee than usual and staggered into the living room where I sat by the low crackling of a dying fire. His shovel had snapped in the middle of the handle. His solemn stare was transfixed by the minuscule embers. Father moved across the room to the front of the fireplace. I sat in silence. The pieces of shovel poured out of his hands into the ash. I felt my stomach churn. A small puff of soot accompanied his sudden haste toward the door. I ran after him, looking for any way to keep him in the house. The back door was opened nearly off its hinges. I saw him furiously throwing dirt over his right shoulder. He was digging with his hands. Hands that once caressed my Mother's face, held his beautiful child, reduced to extensions of his obsession.

Traveling Light

Erin Case



Stories From the Barn

Alison Bur



Convolutions of Eden

Logan Mooney



Greenhouse

Nickolette De Clerck

The air was still. Max heard the wind outside. He opened his eyes and saw the force all around him. The glass kept nature's uncomfortable push outside.

Max listened to the plants whisper against each other. Hanging plants kept their chains noiseless while they slept closest to the sun. Max's sweat-drenched hammock shifted as he stretched. Naked, he slept with his garden.

The smell of fresh soil and hose water hung thick, along with the sickly stench of old sweat permeating from Max's body. He sat up on the edge of the hammock and saw his wife's car in the driveway, which meant it was already past five in the afternoon. Even with the sun in descent, the greenhouse was around 85 degrees, but was made even more uncomfortable with humidity.

Max slid off the hammock. His frame was average, though a little below in weight. He ate exclusively out of his one-month-old garden, and as a result went without food occasionally. Max had attempted to eat dirt and water – both dry and mud – but it didn't satisfy him. His beard grew thick, not yet long, and his hair hung down to his earlobes.

It had been two months since he lost his dream job, and three months since he lost his dream girl.

From the kitchen table, Leah watched Max wash his balls with the hose. She knew where they'd been. Max didn't know she knew. With her eyes fixed on his figure, she twirled pasta around her fork. They hadn't spoken in three months. It wasn't his fault. She didn't know how to handle it. Leah had just continued her days as usual, knotting herself up inside; twisting the days like pasta around a fork.

Max walked outside with the hammock and running hose. He hung it up in the red maple then hosed it down and gave himself another hose down. Water dripped from his beard and hair. Leah continued to twirl her fork. He looked like a goddamn hippie.

Leah lost her appetite. She laid down her forkful of pasta and grabbed her wine glass, not out of thirst, but vacancy.

Dressed, Max began searching among his tomato and green pepper plants for dinner. At this point about four months

ago, he'd have been making an excuse to his wife about having to catch dinner with his boss. He'd met the girl at a different restaurant every week. The city was big, but the restaurants with bars held the same people every night.

In the garden, Max found only small peppers that if picked now would be bitter. The Roma tomatoes though, were ready. They'd been her plants. She'd encouraged him to grow. She'd given him her one-month-old plants just before leaving. Before the greenhouse, he'd kept them on the back porch. He'd cared for those plants the best, waiting for fruit.

Max picked three tomatoes and rinsed them with the hose. In the sun's rays, he saw that the tomato skins were bright and untouched. Max bit into the first tomato and was instantly convinced no fruit could be more delicious. Hungrily, his teeth tore at the skin, but pushed easily through the soft flesh. He lapped at the cavities and seeds. Juice dripped into his beard, but he didn't notice.

Finished, he held the second tomato up to the sun. One blemish was present, but forgivable. Again, his teeth cleaved the skin. He chewed and rubbed the bruise on the opposite side of the tomato. Max took another bite.

He chewed more slowly this time, feeling the flesh on his tongue. Max crushed it against the roof of his mouth and teeth, searching for the unfamiliar flavor. Shifting the food in his mouth, Max felt it. He pushed the food out into his hand and examined. A small tomato worm wriggled among the half-chewed food.

Angry, Max opened the door to his greenhouse and tossed the ruined food. He broke open his last tomato and found the juice and seeds brown. It housed three more worms.

Leah looked out the window, across the greenhouse and into the sunrise. The house, empty except for her, smelled fresh. She kept the windows open so the wind could keep her company.

In her robe and slippers, she slipped out of the house onto the back porch, the corner of which was still stained with dirt from those goddamn plants. In her arms was lasagna she'd made from scratch. She'd bought the tomatoes for the sauce at the market the day before.

Leah walked across the yard to Max's greenhouse.

Through the glass panes she saw him curled up. She pushed the door open, carefully avoiding the smashed tomato that sat just outside the door.

Max looked pathetic. That bitch had sucked all the life out of him. He'd let himself go wild. Leah had watched him eat mud his first week in the greenhouse. She'd woken up to him vomiting mud in the middle of the night. Max had wept that night until the sun rose.

As far as Leah was concerned, the girl was still at large. The greenhouse was just a continuation of her bullshit. She knew where the tomatoes were from and wasn't opposed to them being smashed outside. Leah could still see tomato seeds in his beard, though.

She put the still warm casserole dish on the bench and adjusted the blanket that had fallen. Leah kissed Max's forehead and headed back to the house.

Max woke early to the sound of his wife leaving for work. The wind was still outside. The hammock was dry and he was curled into a ball. He opened his eyes and stared at her tomato plants. He looked past the tomato plants and saw a familiar face.

"I can't believe you built this," the face cooed.

Max blinked, squinted, and blinked again. "Leah?"

"Do you think she'd come visit you when you were so alone?"

Ginger.

Max pulled himself down from the hammock, taking the blanket with him, and walked to the other end of the greenhouse. He wrapped his arms and blanket around Ginger. "I'm so happy to see you-where did you go?"

Ginger squeezed him. "I can't believe you built this," she said again.

Max started to weep. "It was for you, Ging. You were always there."

"Not like her."

Max shook his head.

She pulled away from him. "Why aren't you at work?"

Tears still falling, Max pulled her face close to his.

"Since you left..."

"You left work?"

Max's grip tightened.

"How long have you been sleeping here?"

"About a month and a half. Your plants needed company."

Again Ginger's eyes scanned the room.

Max's face grew bright. "I've missed you so much."

Ginger smiled and wrapped her arms around him. "You must've spent so much on this."

He spoke into her hair. "Money is no object."

Leah watched as Max wrapped the blanket around Ginger and delicately moved his plants to make room for her body on the benches. He pushed the lasagna out of the way.

The wind whipped around Leah.

Ginger didn't push rich men away. Who could blame her? She was beautiful, but dumb as a rock. Or was she so smart she knew she could make the most out of life with her body?

Max rocked with her, but felt nothing. Ginger's arms and legs were wrapped around him in a warm embrace. There was nothing that pushed Max to go on. He stopped and looked at her. "Ging..."

She looked up at him and said, "Max," entwining her fingers with his.

"Why did you leave so long ago?"

Ginger sat up and grabbed his member. "Babe, don't you think this is a bad time?"

Pushing her hand away, he repeated, "Why did you leave so long ago?"

"Work. You know how my boss is."

"I do." Max's stomach knotted up. His eyes wandered and he saw Leah in the driveway. The greenhouse creaked in the strong wind. The hanging plants rattled their chains.

Leah pulled her luggage into the trunk of her car. She turned and glanced at the greenhouse.

Max's eyes met hers. He shook his head. "No," he said aloud.

Leah just stared.

Ginger looked outside the greenhouse and saw Leah.

"Leave." Max pushed Ginger away and off the bench. She stumbled, tried to catch herself, and Leah's casserole

fell and shattered on the cement floor. Ginger snatched her clothes and started towards Max, but he ignored her advances. He grabbed her hands, and she struggled. "Leave now," he growled. "And never come back."

Ginger ran, scared. She slipped on the tomato just outside the door, but caught herself on the doorway.

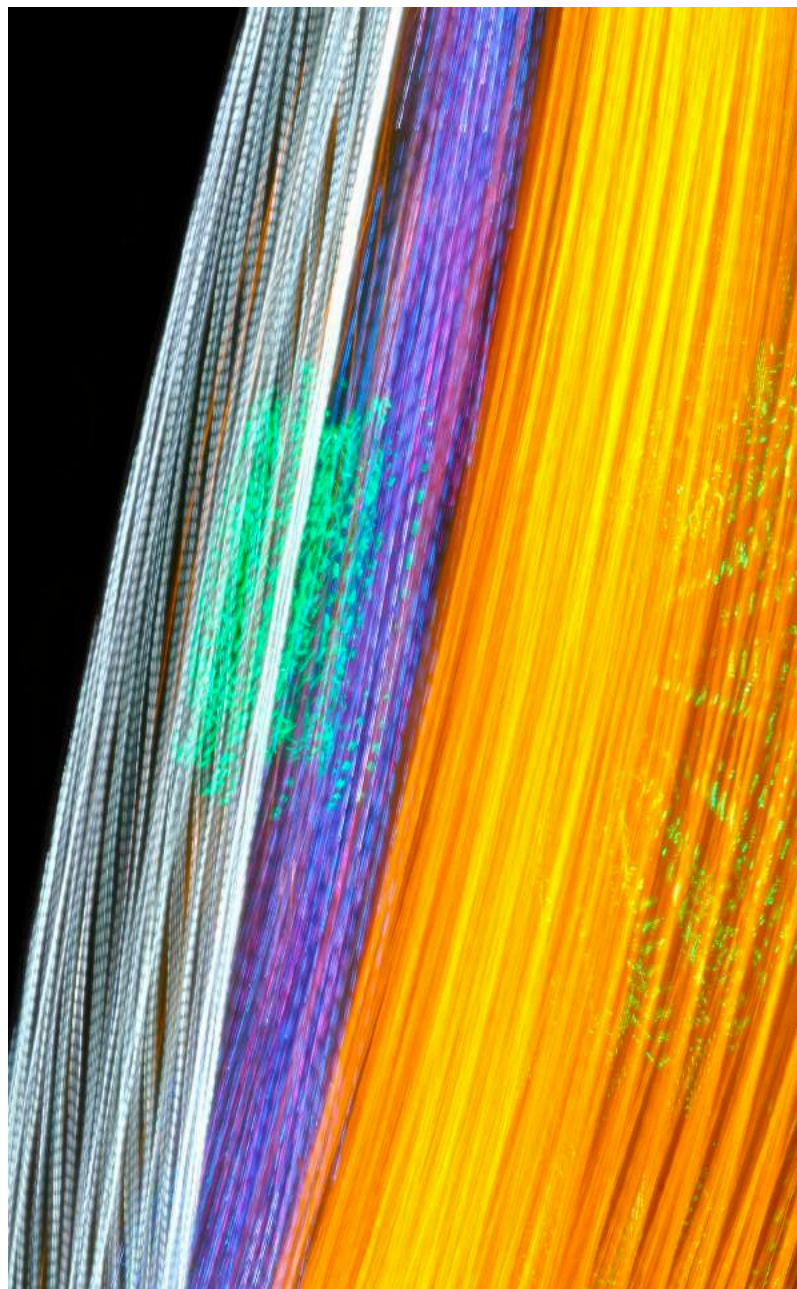
Max ignored her.

Ginger slammed the door behind her, shattering a number of glass panes in the greenhouse wall.

Max didn't watch her run away, but turned to see Leah already gone. The wind calmed down. The plants were quiet and dead.



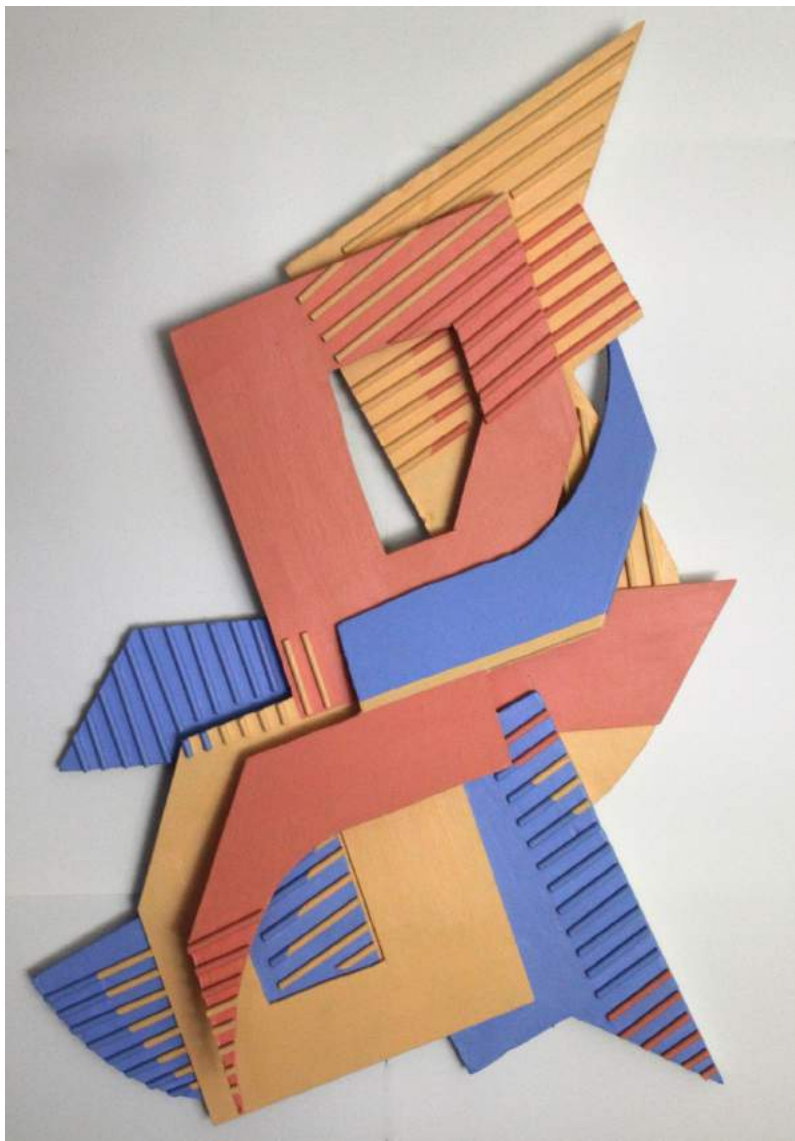
Fair Lights



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The Bed: Morning



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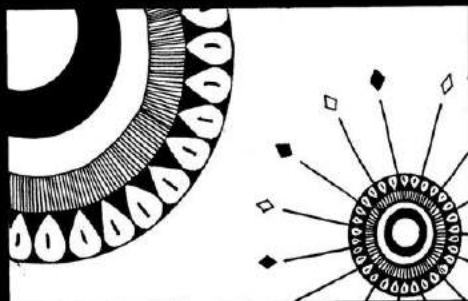
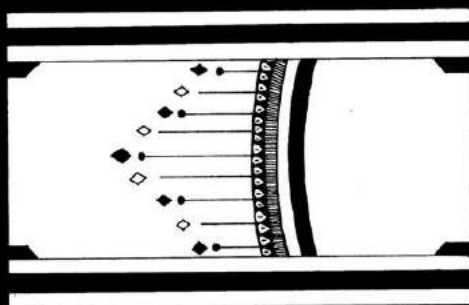
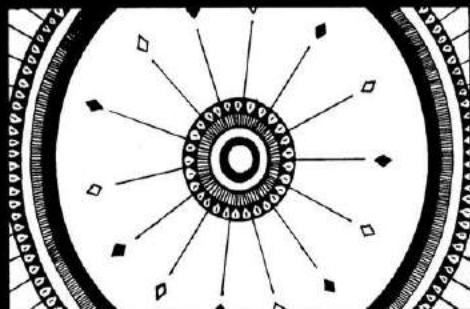
I stared at his snoring, heaving form from the edge of the bed.
I couldn't see the blue eyes, and I couldn't hear the pleading.
My body was covered, cocooned in light armor,
armor that I hoped did not appear coy,
armor that I hoped did not beckon a challenge.

He was mad. I had said no, and he was mad because of it.
He had slammed his head down on the pillow and encased
himself in covers.

This time I didn't apologize and tug on his shoulder,
feeling guilty for leaving him without that which he held so dear.
This time I didn't concede and attempt to eagerly open up to a lie.

Serendipity

Jessica Wright



Untitled [A jagged light, perplexed, like a freshly dropping propeller,]

Clare Harrison

A jagged light, perplexed, like a freshly dropping propeller,
spinning out of control, a simple enough memory, stagnant,
as if lying in the cooled autumn leaves, leaving traces of disbelief,
it creeps back with navy weighted droplets, swaddling the mind
as the bark does sap with a paled majestic complexion,
cooling the heart in grey fragments, growing in concrete,
up and between overgrown moss tentacles,
nipping at rivers of loosely knitted stitches,
the numb fibrous descent is brief as a bloom cut with frost,
dimming again into the eve.

California

Erin Case



Twelve steps is what it takes for a face to stop talking in italics.

Emily Gennrich

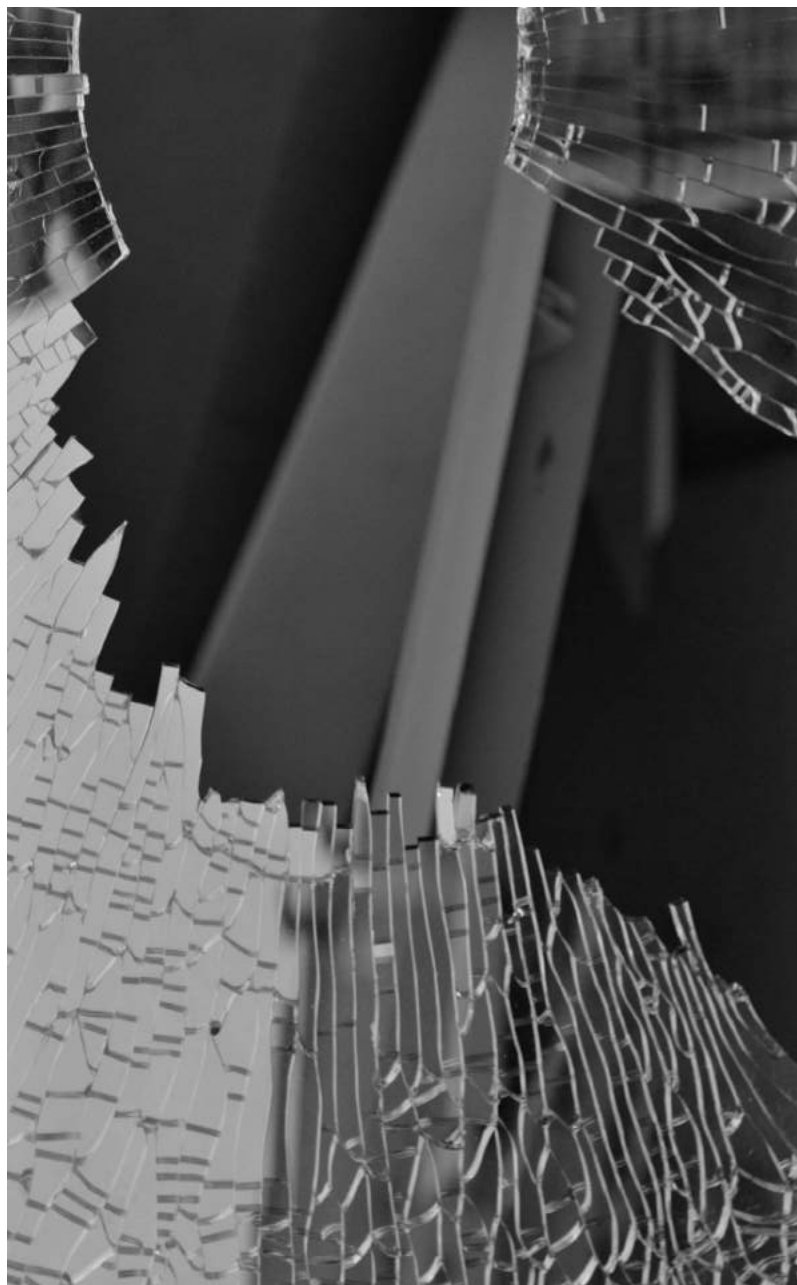
For me, the foreground is two years prior and many miles away. Your feet are narrower than average and we don't know what that means. It takes thirty-one years to reach a billion seconds but you're only twenty-nine. So for now I look for organic blinks.

Childhood's a funny thing. Relative terminology and boom boxes is all you've told me. We pretend you have amnesia so as to not disprove the theory. We both still reminisce: our formulas were always above the liturgies.

But more importantly, how many knots does it take to tie four mismatched shoes and which one should lead? Or perhaps it's merely twelve times the four plus x-years and y-number of meetings. Does Jeff help you think or think back to twenty bucks and a neighborhood on 2nd Street? I'm not mad, I think. I do still remember to occasionally talk to the ladies about sex and smiling and me.

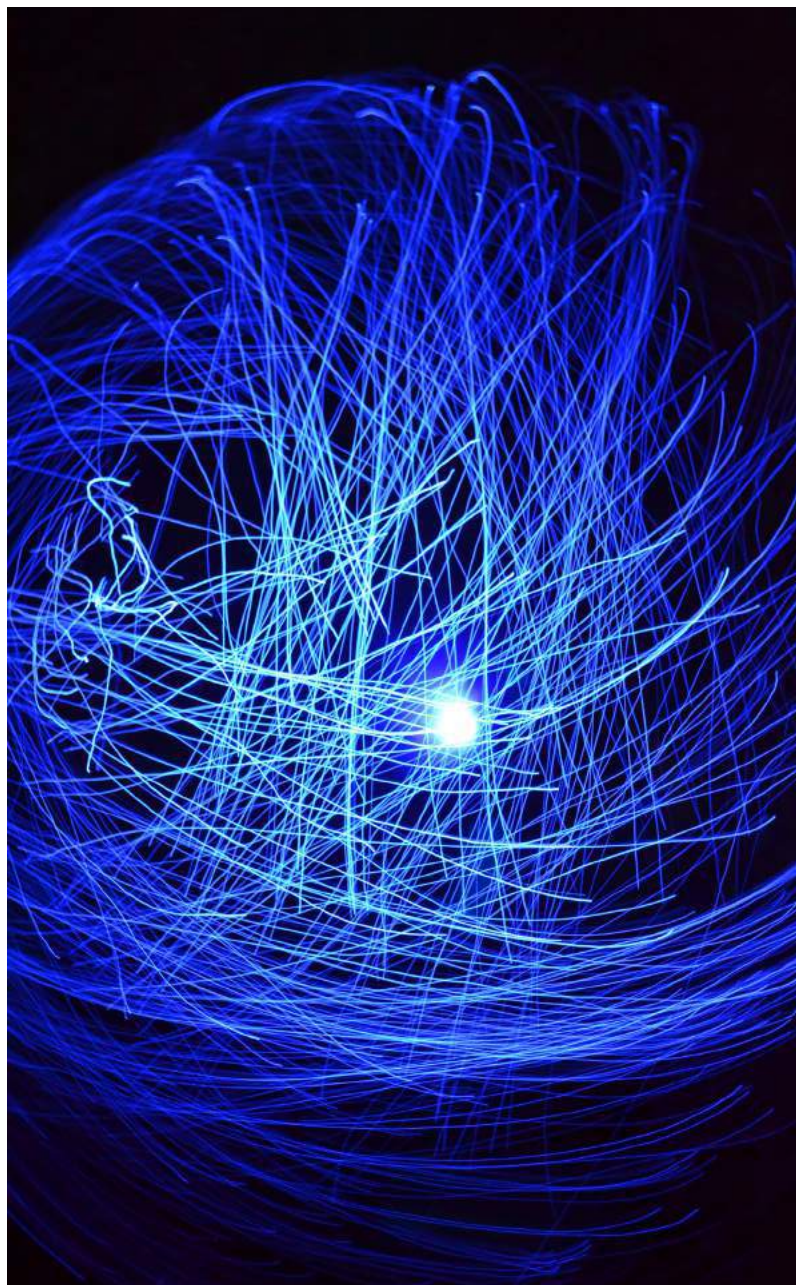
I apologize if it's inappropriate to say that you are like the moon in an indefinite wane. And I like the philosopher trying to phase the same waves. But now there's more than one face, and the symbiosis not the same. But at least I know there's a science to cycles, and sometimes anecdote all you need.

Broken



Kelly Sievert

Blue Electric



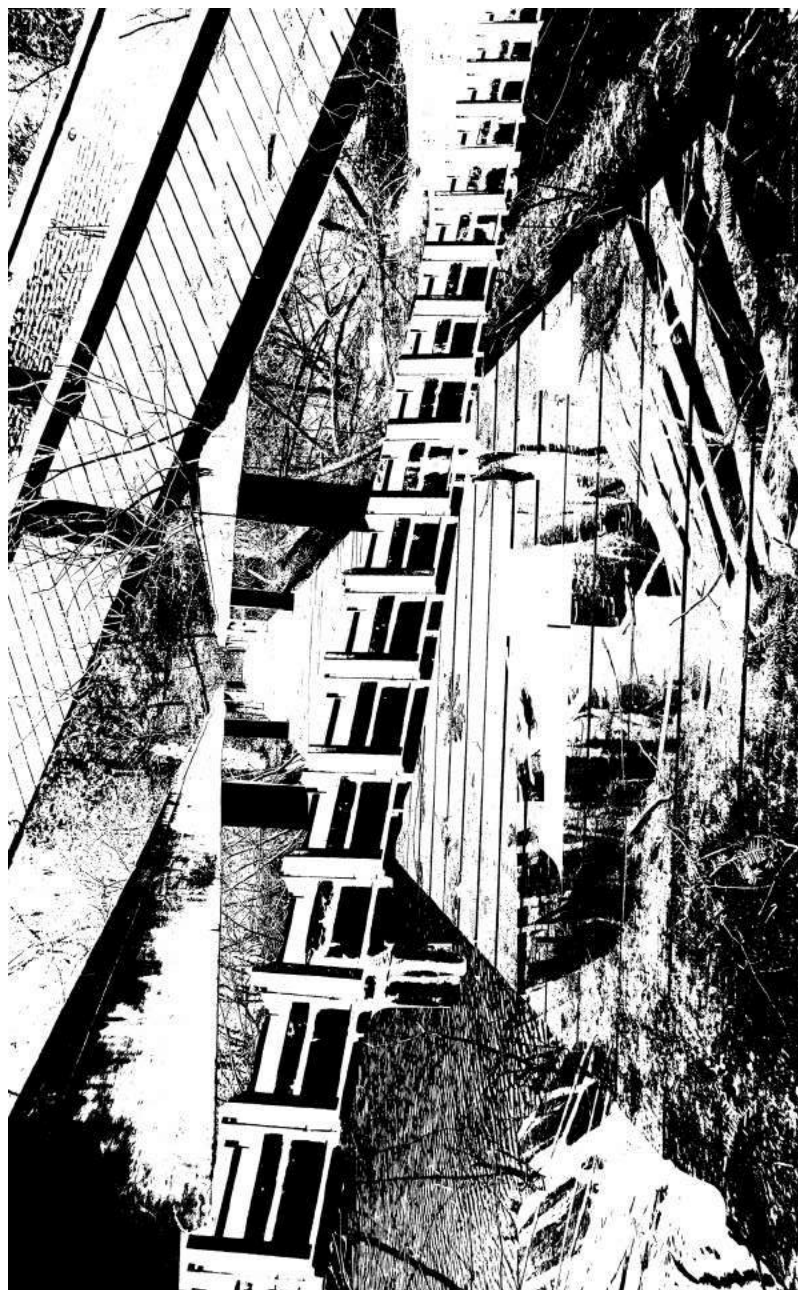
Kelly Sievert

Firefly Tango



Justin Kokkinis

Chiaroscuro Bridge



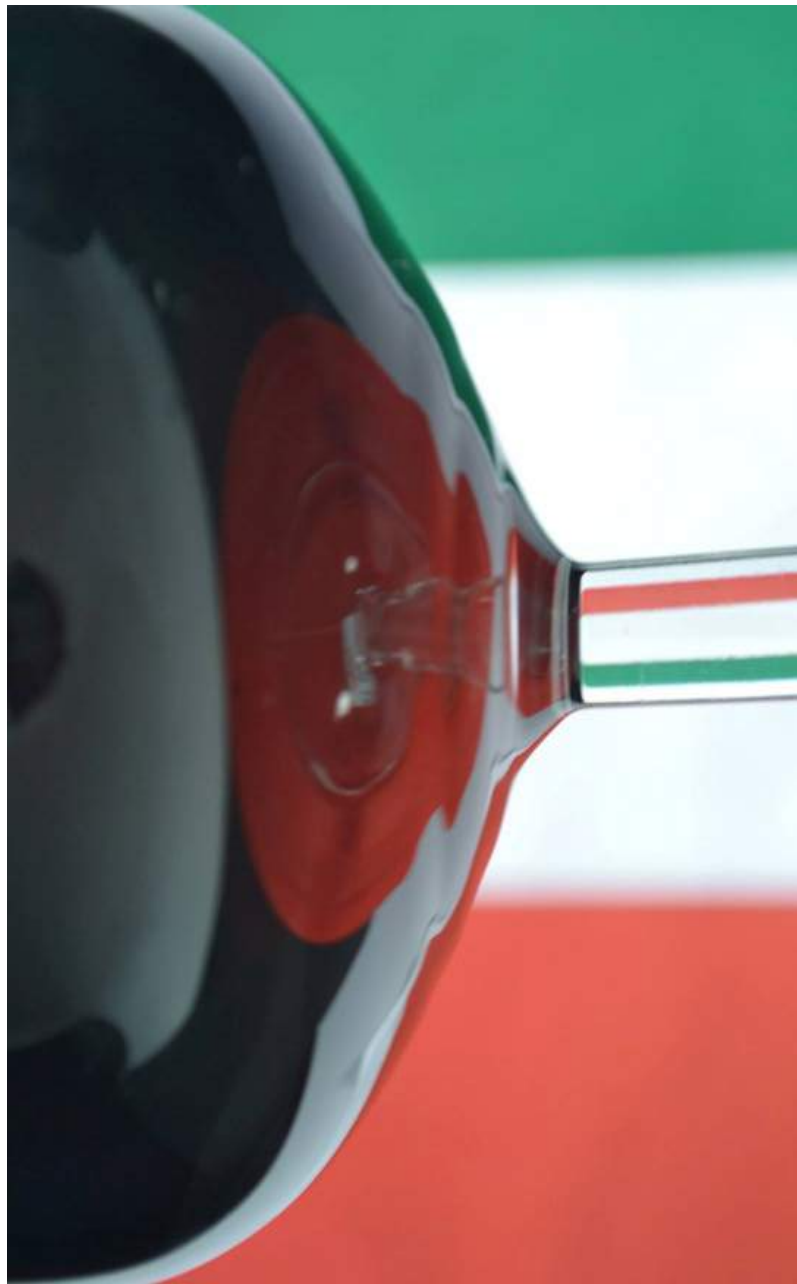
Justin Kokkinis

Cracked



Gabe Soto

A Taste of Italy



Melissa McComrick

Mistress

Misty Coss



The Other Woman

Nicole Yeager

"Margaret."

I raised my eyes from the cup of coffee to give Joe another glance.

He looked at me from where he was leaning against the counter, apparently unfazed. "You can't keep bringing this up. You're going to have to let it go sooner or later."

I glared at the microwave over his head.

Joe stepped behind me and rubbed my shoulders. "I mean, how many times do I have to apologize?"

I glanced up to see his eyes on the unfinished sketches that littered the table. I then looked at the drawings, and my fingers itched to destroy them.

"Why do you have to bring them out again?"

My throat hurt, felt dry, so I took another drink. I felt the caffeine sharpening my senses, making my hands shake.

"It doesn't mean anything; I just have to finish them. You know how I get when something's left unfinished."

I looked around the kitchen. The oak cabinets gleamed back at me. He'd built this kitchen with his own two hands. I looked back at the sketches. One eye on an unfinished face stared back coyly, meeting my gaze. I turned away lest old feelings of guilt creep up on me.

Joe appeared tired. I'd found the sketches on his desk after dinner and brought them out to the table. We had all our fights and deliberations at this table; it was our courtroom. The surface was scarred and scuffed, and one end wobbled just the tiniest bit when anything of any real weight was placed on its edge.

At my silence, Joe reached forward and dropped a strawberry into his mouth from the Tupperware container still on the table. He offered me one and I accepted, smelling the clean scent of it against the smell of charcoal always on his fingers.

"So it's not because you regret anything?"

Worn eyes, twice-loved eyes, looked up. "No. How could you even think that after I've proven so much to you?"

The sketches: charcoal shoulder bare, her face searching, teeth braced against bottom lip.

A car drove by on the street behind us, its heavy bass breaking our most recent pause. He expected a response.

I sighed. "I know you broke it off with her."

"For you," he said, selecting another strawberry.

"Yes, for me," I agreed. "But what if you can leave me as easily as you left her?"

"Damn it, Margaret!" His hand, heavy, slapped the beaten table. "There's no making you any happier. You want me to leave her to prove myself, so I do, but then you second-guess me in that as well. What do you want from me?"

"I want you to forget her!" He opened his mouth, but I pressed on. "Can't you just throw them away?"

His face flushed red and as he pushed his chair back, I thought he was going to walk out on the argument, but he stopped and rested against the frame of the screen door. "I still love her." He spoke with a quiet voice but the words found their way to my heart anyway.

I gasped and he turned around.

"Not like I love you," he tried to assure me. "Nothing like how I love you now. But she was a part of me for so long that I can't forget her, the things she did for me. It's an old love and means nothing to us."

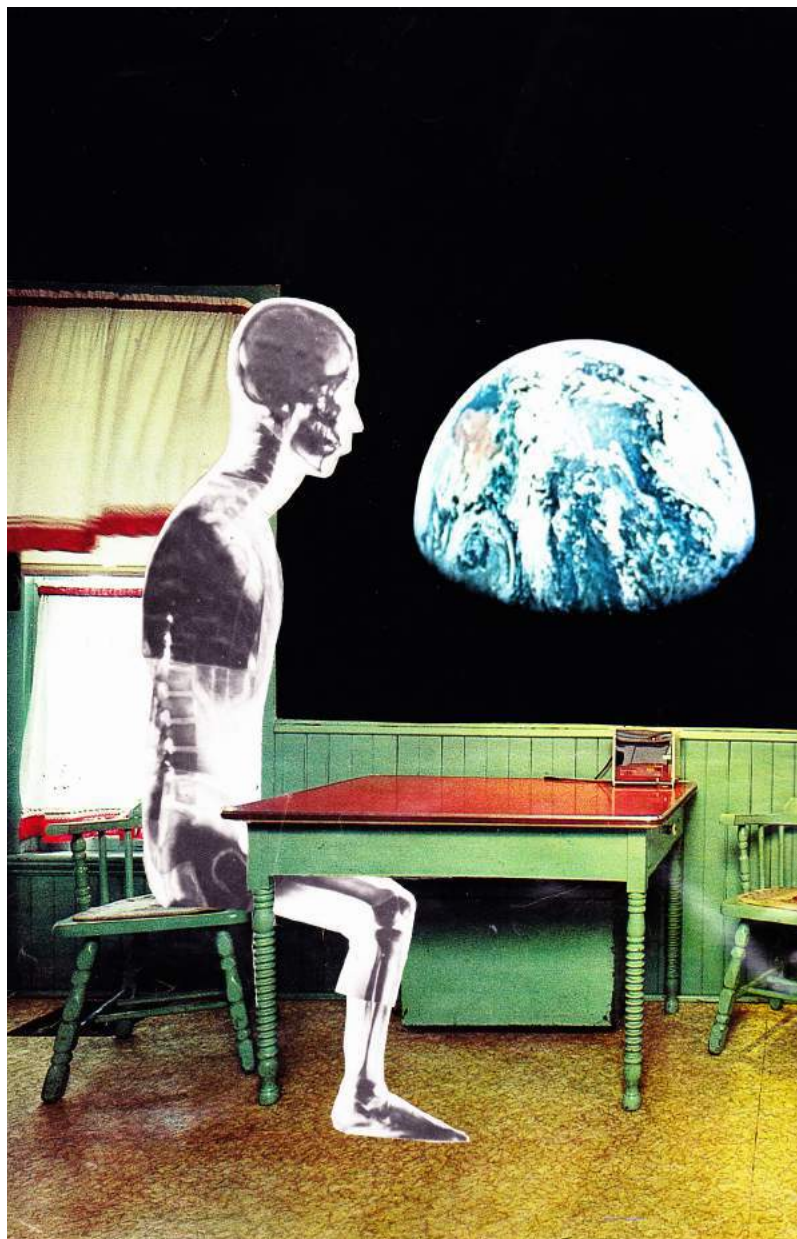
I thought of his walls, files, and tables of sketches. He never threw any out. He kept them all, even from before he developed his talent. I thought of what he'd given up for me and opened my mouth to demand more. "Prove it then. Throw them away for me."

He looked at the floor, jaw and hands clenching before striding to the table and scooping up his work. He walked across the kitchen in three long strides and deposited them in the trashcan, but not without crumpling them so I could see. Once he was done, he leaned on the counter, looking out the window with his back to me.

He proved his love for me, but I wasn't satisfied. Even with her accusing gaze crumpled in the dark, I felt for the woman who no longer owned his heart. I felt a tremor of despair when I considered that in a couple of months, or years, it could be my sketched face on the table with some other jealous girl in my chair.

Agoraphobia

Erin Case



Viitsima

Erin Case



Milkman in the Moonbounce

Benjamin Champagne

Dave was preparing to shoot a beer can or something from the top of Callahan's head. It was expected to be a success, and therefore everyone would cheer. There were probably some girls who would make out with one of them, if not both. Maybe my ex. She was there that night.

"Hey, come on! When the arrow punctures, Callahan's going to chug the beer. You're going to miss it!" I never even turned my head. Cheers erupted. My milkman walked onto the balcony.

"Hey, buddy, how are you feeling?" The milkman walked to the railing and looked down at the rest of the apartments. More people were shuffling up to the apartment. My milkman walked back and took a seat in the folding chair next to me.

"You've been reading the poetry of Alan Dugan?" he said. "And honestly, what profit has it been to you?" He fixed his eyes onto mine.

"Yeah, but this isn't the same. *He's* in there. My nemesis."

"You're making this more difficult than it needs to be."

At that moment, Whitney and her friend Taylor opened the door. Everyone shouted, "Burning Down The House!"

"Oh, my, god, what an awesome party! How did you get Dave Eggers to show up? He is so much fun!" Whitney shouted over the music. Taylor bent over to pet a mysterious dog that turned up for the party. I wasn't sure whom the dog belonged to. I looked inside. Dave had a lampshade over his head and was walking like an Egyptian.

"Why are you out here?" Whitney asked.

"Yeah... I just can't go in there with him. Everyone knows we got into a fight outside the bar last week."

And it was true. Everybody knew. I had my eye on the receptionist at the sculpture garden. I thought everyone knew that. I had asked her to go to a Graffiti by Numbers performance after we bumped into each other in the Fine Arts center. It was weeks away. One day, the day in question, she called and said she wouldn't be able to make it. I went to the bar to meet friends. The place was packed, and I was standing in line to get a drink. Then

Callahan cut me. He didn't even acknowledge me. He turned with two drinks in his hand, and we began to exchange words. Right as I began to fly off the handle, the receptionist walked up. She grabbed the second drink and kissed my nemesis right on the mouth.

"What? About that girl? She isn't here. I don't think those two are even together," Whitney encouraged. She lit a cigarette and leaned back on the railing. The wind blew her dress forward.

"That's not the point. If I go in there with this expression on my face, he'll see it. He'll know I'm a loser," I said. I was ashamed because Dave was the life of the party, and I had to pay him to come. I thought I'd be able to show off that I was friends with a famous author. I invited my ex here as well and now she'd see me all hang dog.

Taylor stood and grabbed Whitney's cigarette. Whitney fiddled with her phone. They looked like indie princesses. Saying, "Later," with a coquettish twinge, they extinguished the cigarette and went inside.

The sliding door belched hops and drum-breaks. But it closed just as quickly, and the warm air let me know my solitude was somewhat shared.

I rented this apartment because the living room was a Moonbounce instead of the regular old television, couch, Diane Arbus coffee table book. When Callahan first arrived, he navigated the Moonbounce without spilling a drop. I suspected that he must've topped me by having an anti-gravity simulator at his pad. Before I walked out to the balcony, I spotted him helping a young girl down into the dining room. I wondered if he'd caught me spying.

I walked to the rail and took a deep breath. The complex made a semi-circle. We shared a communal backyard. In the center I'd placed a kiddie pool with soapy water. I put two giant wands, the size of hula hoops, in it. The party spilled outside. My milkman was running with the wand, dragging six foot bubbles. People cheered him on. Neighbors came to the window to look. A bubble floated near me. I leaned over to pop it, but before I could, it exploded and misted me with a light film.

"Come on down, man!" somebody shouted. Everyone turned and looked up. Someone yelled, "Jump!" And it broke into a unified chant.

"I can't!" I yelled back. "I have socks in my holes!" I repeated that a couple of times until they finally understood.

Everyone dispersed. The word *bummer* was audible over the murmur. I should've done it. Damn. I lost my moment. I think my ex was out there too. Or maybe it was Callahan. Everyone seemed to be wearing androgynously chic clothes these days.

I got one leg over the railing, and I heard the sliding door open. "Scaramouch, Scaramouch, can you do the Fandango?" came roaring out. No, I thought. I made to throw my other leg over.

"You could break a leg. It doesn't look far, but it's high enough. You're drunk." I wasn't that drunk. She took a pull from the tubes on her beer hat. "Come here, I want to ask you something."

I came back over the railing and sat in the lawn chair next to hers. She smelled like lavender and chamomile, a walking box of Bigelow. I leaned in and told her how great she smelled. She blushed and took sip of beer. I spotted the tea bags tucked into her bra.

"Why don't you come in? Everyone is having a great time. I'm really glad you finally invited me after all these years." I didn't remember inviting her.

"A guy I didn't invite showed up, and he's hogging all of the attention. Everyone loves him, and I just don't get it. He's a fun thief. So what if he recycles or whatever, it doesn't make him a good person." Callahan had started a door-to-door recycling non-profit. It was designed to help little old ladies. It had since expanded into a city-wide division with plenty of employees. The office had drapes made of hemp.

"Do you remember when we went on the ski-trip? One of the other kids hit a tree and lost their memory. Well, you took it and used it in your stream of identity consciousness. Do you remember? We all laughed and called it recycling." She was smiling.

"That wasn't me," I said.

"Oh," she said. "Well, the point is, it's easy to change your mind. Just adopt one of the loving positions that you see around you."

What could I say to that? I was set. I'd wait it out. Most people were used to bar time. Callahan would leave by 2 a.m. My old youth pastor would retrieve a box of Franzia for me. Maybe the milkman would join me. I thought about Callahan in my second bedroom, looking over my paintings. My milkman would walk in and straighten him out, right? Explain the motifs and currents in the paintings that were still in process. Callahan wouldn't understand it without help. He'd need my milkman to explain.

Was I losing it? My nemesis wouldn't meander from room to room, trespassing on my rights. He was probably chatting with my ex. Probably detailing an experience when he met Brian Eno. Or maybe the other way around. Wait; maybe it was I who met Brian Eno. Or was it Kid Cudi? I wished that Whitney would come back out to the porch. She'd whisk me away under her purple dress. I closed my eyes and reclined.

"Where you been all night?" Eggers popped a Goose Island and handed it off to a beautiful girl. He offered me one. I smiled a purple-toothed grin and patted my box of Franzia. "This is Lauren," he thumbed her and she twisted at the hips, lit up and wiggled her fingers at me. "Your buddy Callahan is a fucking riot. He said he's going to have a party next week. I might stick around."

"Fuck," I said.

"Hey, what's the matter? This has been one hell of a night. It's like Donnie Darko DJ'd—who picked the music? Look, you've got to get inside. All the girls are asking about you."

"I'm embarrassed now. I don't want my ex to see me like this."

"Look, is this about Callahan? Just go in there and apologize for being a dick at the bar. He's cool, man."

"It's not that easy," I said. But I was a liar. It was easy. It was simple. All I'd have to do was walk in with Dave and go straight up to Callahan and tell him that I was sorry. I'd tell him I

was drunk that night. For all I knew, the receptionist didn't even mention me to Callahan. "Will you walk in with me?"

"Yeah, man." He put his arm around Lauren and me.

I walked in first. We went in unnoticed and I told him I wanted to get a beer from the refrigerator. I heard Callahan from inside the Moonbounce, followed by laughing. On the fridge there was a paper I hadn't put there. It read:

Tribute To Kafka For Someone Taken

Someone tapped me on the shoulder.

Are you, you?

I'm me.

Well, come along then.



The Neighbor's Kids

Marlin M. Jenkins

I know they're back in our garage: trail of red splotches in the snow. Always to our backyard - we can't get the garage door to close. Maybe they spend days in there. The dog doesn't even bark at them, though he rarely bothers with the garage. Just does his business and comes back in. They are probably playing with things forgotten - our kids' old toys, bikes with flat tires, whatever else. We haven't been in there since the door broke and we started to find piss on everything. We're not going to make them leave. We would no sooner chase away the stray cats, poison the mice.

marie's betting shop

Lynn Hoffman

sal the bookie is disinclined
to cover bets on things remote
exotic, nuanced or prone to interpretation.
you can't call him to put a fifty
on a soccer game in sardinia
or a higgs-boson match in switzerland.
nope. elections in nepal,
cartel contests in guatemala. nah.
phils givin' two and a half? sure.
so the subtle market down here,
the place for probabilities
to be probed and plundered
is marie's on mifflin.
marie listens to proposals, she
attends to, she likes the likely
she can smell when you bobble
the probable, she locks in the odds on the odd.
for instance: it's nine-to-four against a renaissance of All,
three-to-two in favor of a rise in Tide.
it's even money on teresa leaving that drunken sonofabitch
or father william being a three-dollar bill.
same for billy canuti making something out of himself
and the christmas lights being
redder this year than when you were a kid.
disputed outcomes are settled by
the parrot at Feeny's bar or the toss of a taleggio-
whichever comes first.
life's a bet marie says
except for the chance of
unravelling the string that wraps you in that one moment
in which you raised or ruined
the whole damn thing.
no if-node, no pathback
no subtle membrane around it, bro.
lock it up and use it marie says
it's all yours, one hundred per cent.

Blackberries

S. Michael Wilson

The grim, frowning woman at the fruit stand wants \$3.79
for a tattered cardboard container full of blackberries.
They should be appetizing, but their shine has faded with the stall
owner.

Dry and bloated, with puckered, gaping ends like hungry birds.

I pay the dour clerk out of pity rather than hunger,
desperate to preserve these perishables from consumer ennui,
and deliver them to my fridge where they hide behind the milk,
awaiting further instructions.

Visions of succulent berries sprinkled on cereal,
baked into muffins and spread over toast
entertain me for weeks, until the withered, moldy cornucopia
is disposed of unceremoniously, as dreams often are.



A Poetry Collective Experiment

Arra Lynn Ross

Late in April 2013, I was asked to be a part of a poetry collective experiment. The premise was this: a. all seventeen invited poets would create a chapbook of their work and send it to each of the other poets; b. the work should be tangible; and c. they were to be sent--in the mail--by August 15th.

I loved the idea of what cannot be created by a press, only by individual human hands. Also, I had a long poem that began my current manuscript and that seemed to ask for more form. Yet, the written word is easily overwhelmed by visual elements. I tried to be careful to make the words remain the center.

So I carved seventeen little basswood boats. Each boat carried a rolled scroll--the poem. Each boat and scroll were wrapped in hand-dyed indigo linen and stitched with red thread. On the linen, the words: *open carefully*. Each wrapped boat was sent in a small box stuffed with dried lavender and leaves of mistletoe. And the note: *you must complete all of the instructions to complete the poem*.

One more note was stitched inside the wrapping, with the scroll: *after reading, re-roll, place back on boat, place boat on water, and burn*.

The poem, titled [How I Set Her Down] was published by *Tupelo Quarterly* and can be read in its entirety on their website.

Poetry Contest Winners

Contest Theme: Expansion

Winner

"Misery Mojo and the Minds Less Blown" by Daniel Ari

Honorable Mentions

"lunch break" by Joel Blumenau

"Plastic Swords" by Josh Crummer

"The Clockwork Alien is Alienated" by Bill Tarlin

"Time Unfolding" by Changming Yuan

Check Out Our Upcoming Contest

For *Cardinal Sins* Winter 2014

Nonfiction Contest Theme: Translation

all you human beings look a lot alike to me

Lauren Ari



all you human beings look a lot alike to me

Misery Mojo and the Minds Less Blown

Daniel Ari

*"I'm a wearer of the dark.
I have a dark suit."*

—Dave Thomas

Despite the bolt-rattling oscillation
of our heads, some of us punks were able
to half-wonder what would become of us
once the guitar's itch was scratched. "No Future"
begs certain questions in the aftershocks.

Crocus Behemoth blew our minds often,
mad head warbling like a climaxing teen;
but better than those sound-scrapes, his bitter
perspective conveyed diagonally
how frankly fucking smart we were, we punks.

But bands break. A car crash stopped D. Boon's jam.
Pop culture punks bit the dust on drugs (yawn)
while aging bassists coupled and had kids,
went to sew the sutures of middle age.
Crocus took up the accordion, whined

on about himself, wheezing through his art
and the girlfriends that came and went with it.



Daniel Ari

Daniel Ari's forthcoming book, *I asked*, pairs poems in an original form called *queron* with illustrations by artists. Besides being a professional copywriter, he writes and publishes poetry and organizes poetry performances and events at home in Richmond, California, and throughout the Pacific Northwest. His blog is fightswithpoems.blogspot.com.

Daniel Ari speaks on Expansion

"No future" worked as a punk-rock slogan to get you out of your head so you could slam dance, wriggle on a dirty club floor, and bleed a little. Twenty-five years later, it interests me to see how the slogan has extended into its own inevitable future, despite denials. Sid Vicious went out very dramatically, but also predictably. D. Boon of MINUTEMEN died in the line of duty, crashing the tour van. The band's bassist Mike Watt married Kira Roessler, the bassist from Black Flag. They did a kind of punk-jazz album (that I liked), and later divorced. I didn't come across Dave Thomas/Crocus Behemoth/Pere Ubu until after the front man had gone solo; and the first time I saw him perform, he was a crotchety codger moaning with an old accordion. It was a fascinating performance, though. My wife drew the previous portrait of Dave Thomas at that show. People think it's me. (I also play accordion, but I smile more.) Since the last time I screamed "No future," I married, bought a house and had a kid. I could never earnestly scream the slogan today, wondering what dances and shouts my daughter's future holds.



Joel Blumenau

Joel Blumenau has been writing, shooting photos and drawing for decades to mostly self-acclaim. His artwork appeared in *Saturday Afternoon* and photography in the *Apeiron Review*. His fiction appears in *100 Worlds* and soon in the *Eunoia Review*. He lives outside Chicago with his wife, two daughters, and a nervous dog.

Joel Blumenau speaks on Expansion

Well, for me personally, it is daringly expansive just to submit my work to anyone. I have been writing and doing other creative work in relative isolation for decades, not really having the confidence to put it out there for all to see. As far as the poem itself goes, I think the voice of this work highlights expansion in its anti-expansionist attitude. I wrote this based on my experience one day when I left my day job's office to get some lunch in downtown Chicago. I have been a bit tormented lately with the clear choice I must make for the rest of my life: I can live like the isolated, emotionally shrunken protagonist of my poem or I can be the poet and expose my soul to the rest of the world, reactions be damned. As daunting as it is, I think the right direction is obvious.

lunch break

Joel Blumenau

I am hungry.
I get up from my metal desk
put on my jacket
head down in the elevator
no one notices me leave.

Rain hits my face
as I try to avoid the puddles
on the sidewalk.
a pretty girl I will never know
walks and talks
on her phone.

The air is thick
like the steam off a wet blanket
all the buildings are gray.
my ankle starts to hurt
when I have to hurry
across the street.

I get to the restaurant
to order the same thing
every day
but the lady
always asks as if
she has never seen me before.

I bring my lunch
back to my desk.
rain drips off my thinning hair
and onto my sandwich
creating small mushy spots
in the bread.



Josh Crummer

Josh Crummer is an SVSU alumni who has recently completed his Master of Arts program at Central Michigan University. "Plastic Swords" is one of many poems written for his thesis, *We Are the Raiders*, a collection of poems about Zilwaukee, Michigan, which he hopes will become his first book by next year.

Josh Crummer speaks on Expansion

"Plastic Swords" is meaningful only if you've ever played make-believe with your friends as a child. Think deeply about what an inanimate object once was to you and your best mates, and all of a sudden a plastic sword might become something legendary - if only for an hour or two on a Sunday afternoon.

Plastic Swords

Josh Crummer

We'll find holy relics anywhere. One summer some
homeless guy in brown cargoes and a green hoodie
lay on the bench underneath powerlines
with the breeze and seventy degrees. Was he sleeping?
We rode bikes like sharks without training wheels.

Now he's awake. His eyes know we're here. He
stretches skyward and he's gone, leaving his walking stick
angled like a thin shield for the bench. *Hey mister, you left* –
We shout for hours; anyone can
be summoned if we just believe hard enough – but he's gone.

For all we knew, this was a stick from God. Moses made serpents
out of rods, a plain wooden cup
housed the Holy Grail for Indiana Jones. So here's us,
Lord of the Rings in wooden form. We're superheroes
swinging The One Weapon that can blow away entire planets,
crack the galaxy in half, break Joel's shield
no questions asked. And tomorrow everyone will try
to steal the stick, wield make-believe hacks
in real life, stiling all outdoor play into us vs. them.
Harpie shrieks go *share!* but no one can stop us.

At least, not 'til tomorrow when Mike brings the plastic sword
his Mom bought for his birthday
and suddenly there is balance; The One Weapon that can stop
The One Weapon. Synthetic gray force of the Sun,
The Stick, forlorn in a ditch, until another stick manifests.

The Clockwork Alien is Alienated

Bill Tarlin

1 *Gnosis*

The wire mesh in the window glass in the double doorways
in the school hallway is thin

English is my second language. I didn't have a first, I just watched
I failed math because I wouldn't look at myself in the mirror
I count my schoolmates and wonder why don't I know their names?
The radio, someone else's radio, follows me the rest of the day

The screen door / the swing set / the back rocks / the school path /
the chain link.
Tongue on metal.

No sister, I'm not hungry. The *butter* is clarified.
No sis

2 *Music*

I sing this hymn:

As English is my second language
As words replace all that I knew
It seems as if all things are equal
It seems things change but cannot die
Though in night they abide

Ave machina

I cede ferrules and catacombs
The king who argued my acquittal,
let him fall from the wall
let him fall from the wall

3 *Need*

Breath in the torso, breath in the toes
the lens of my arms overhead
equal to a flame's tapered yellow

The heat is invisible in the carnival sweep

I inhale musk through my pores
smoke in wool sweaters
pheromones in chairs

No man is proud to wield an acorn but urgency is oak

4 *Love*

Sleep came on like a trowel of mortar
Each glop squeezed out from bricks, a dream of hir

When my signature is legible I know I am awake

5 *Years*

The post-war raised-ranch home
though similar to the classic bungalow
does not qualify for restoration credits

My hard-won syntax is wasted on Welcome mats

6 *Vanity*

I recite the numbered eyelid lines that tell my age
Surely I will die in the next stanza

Clearly, clarified,
the sum and slumber
of any preceding pair

The earth which sprouts spirals
Welcomes me



Bill Tarlin

Bill Tarlin lives and works in Chicago. His poetry has appeared in *McSweeney's Quarterly*, *Exact Change Only*, and the *Columbia Poetry Review* and elsewhere in print and online. His eChap *Poems Unstressed* is available for all devices, and handmade editions can be requested at clumsyyogi.com.

Bill Tarlin speaks on Expansion



We clockwork aliens expand by surrendering to a symbolic existence. As much as language obscures our unitary essence, we are sustained by the chance it gives us to find others of our kind.



Changming Yuan

Changming Yuan, 5-time Pushcart nominee and author of *Chansons of a Chinaman* (2009) and *Landscaping* (2013), grew up in rural China, holds a PhD in English, and currently tutors in Vancouver, where he co-edits *Poetry Pacific* with Allen Qing Yuan. Recently interviewed by *PANK*, Yuan has poetry appear in *Asia Literary Review*, *Best Canadian Poetry*, *BestNewPoemsOnline*, *London Magazine*, *Threepenny Review*, and 730 other journals/anthologies across 28 countries.

Changming Yuan speaks on Expansion

Without a shape time can never be expanded as a physical entity, but it can be stretched in any way we may wish to as an abstract construct. It is probably because of this duality that makes time one of the most fascinating phenomenon to think about, to expand, to explore.

Time Unfolding

Changming Yuan

if on a Sunday afternoon
you really have nothing
better to do, try this:
fold every quarter of an hour
into an airplane, a rocket
with the front page
of new york times
or china daily, and set it off
far into the twilight before
headlines begin to fade, complaining
about being bent, the same old stories
crying out of pain, and all the innocent
words falling apart, like children
bombed by a killer monster flying by

Biographies

Brandy Abraham's poetry and prose have appeared in *Cardinal Sins*, *Stone Highway Review*, *Gambling the Aisle*, *Temenos*, *A Narrow Fellow*, *Squalorly*, among others. Follow her at @BrandyAbraham.

Daniel Ari's forthcoming book, *I asked*, pairs poems in an original form called *queron* with illustrations by artists. Besides being a professional copywriter, he writes and publishes poetry and organizes poetry performances and events at home in Richmond, California, and throughout the Pacific Northwest. His blog is fightswithpoems.blogspot.com.

Lauren Ari is a professional artist with work in collections internationally including the permanent collection of The de Young Museum in San Francisco. See her work and more at laurenari.com.

Peter Brian Barry will be a thorn in your side.

Anthony Betters is a junior, and a student of creative writing and history. He is the *Cardinal Sins* associate editor and hopes to pursue a career in editing while growing increasingly bitter over never being published. He is optimistic.

Tyler Beyett recently left the nest and is now working on his doctorate at the University of Michigan. Very often, he wishes he were still attending SVSU where many of his friends, favorite professors, and fond memories still reside.

Joel Blumenau has been writing, shooting photos, and drawing for decades to mostly self-acclaim. His artwork appeared in *Saturday Afternoon* and photography in the *Apeiron Review*. His fiction appears in *100 Worlds* and is forthcoming in *Eunoia Review*. He lives outside Chicago with his wife, two daughters, and a nervous dog.

Tyler Bradley is a spew of adjectives in which he chooses to identify.

Justin Brouckaert is the author of the chapbook *Look At This Fish* (Burning River Press, 2014). His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Monkeybicycle*, *Metazen* and *Squalorly*, among other publications. A 2013 SVSU graduate, he is currently a James Dickey Fellow in Fiction at the University of South Carolina.

Alison Bur likes to take photographs; she takes them all the time. Sometimes she has time to paint, read, sleep, and write. But mostly you'll find her wandering around campus, camera around her neck, taking photos of weird things that you pass by everyday.

Vivian Calderon is a painter and a native of Colombia South America. She studied anthropology and has a graduate degree in Journalism. From the age of 12 she has studied art with recognized artist Carlos Orrea. She also studied art in Italy and is currently continuing her studies in Fine Arts and Design.

Erin Case is a collagist from Midland, MI. Recent exhibitions include *PATCHWORK Project* at Elsewhere Factory (Rome) and Art in Transit's *Cutting Up Culture* (Canada). Recent publications include *Vegas/Rated*, *Lola*, and *Prototype Magazines*. This is her first poetry publication, and she's pleased to have won the category. See more at erincase.weebly.com.

Benjamin Champagne doesn't have the money to pay celebrities for appearances at parties. But for a low fee he himself would appear at any function you have in mind.

Misty Coss is a senior majoring in graphic design with a minor in art. In her spare time she creates unique up-cycled clothing and jewelry for galleries in the tri-city area. She hopes that when people view her artwork, they take away their own perceived meaning rather than one single meaning.

Josh Crummer is an SVSU alumnus who has recently completed his Master of Arts at Central Michigan University. "Plastic Swords" is one of many poems written for his thesis, *We Are the Raiders*, a collection of poems about Zilwaukee, Michigan, which he hopes will become his first book by next year.

Brandin Dahlstrom is a super senior and is the current president of SVSU's Improv Group, Work 'N Progress. He would like to thank everyone who has supported his efforts in whatever he is currently occupied with. He'd like to also thank you for reading and hopes you'll do so again soon.

Nickolette De Clerck responded: "I'm too young to have a biography, too old to make one worth reading, and still bitching about it."

Alyssa Ellison is majoring in secondary education English with a minor in history. She hopes someday to take a full tour of Europe and visit Romania and Vlad Dracula's castle. Writing is like breathing to her, and reading is a second passion. Her dream is to have at least one of her writings/series published.

Alexa Foor is a freshman at SVSU majoring in English and double minoring in creative writing and computer science.

Maria Franz likes to think she has stories to tell and likes to try to tell them.

Emily Gennrich is a sailing school dropout.

Amy Gibas is a Bachelor of Fine Arts candidate at SVSU concentrating in painting. She primarily uses mixed media to make abstract collages, but also enjoys the challenge of creating representational imagery, sometimes incorporating it into abstract compositions. Amy plans to have her BFA show in winter 2014.

Caroline Goetze is an SVSU graduate currently working on her MFA at the University of New Orleans' Creative Writing Workshop.

Arik Gottleber is a people-watcher. Not in a creepy, *Fatal Attraction* or *One Hour Photo* sort-of-way, it's just that she thinks we'd all make such fantastic subjects for a documentary some day.

Misty Grumbley is a lifelong learner. Love is her passion. Through love she believes you can overcome the hardest obstacles. She tries to stay optimistic by surrounding herself with people who are open. Every now and then she goes crazy and throws her emotions over canvas. Make love not war.

Clare Harrison is majoring in sociology, with a double minor in biology and chemistry. She loves nature, golden retrievers, and poetry.

Adam Haenlein is an ESL instructor at SVSU who reads Norton Anthologies for pleasure.

Lynn Hoffman has been a merchant seaman, teacher, chef, and cab driver. He's the author of *The Short Course in Beer*. A few years ago, he started writing poetry. In 2011 his poem, "The Would-be Lepidopterist" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Mostly he just loafs and fishes.

Marlin M. Jenkins has visited five countries this year, including a trip to see Ke\$ha in concert. He rants at marlinmjenkins.tumblr.com and mini-rants at @marlin_poet.

Kristen Kilar is surreal. Follow her at @kilar_artist.

Justin Kokkinis, student, adventurer, journalist, is enjoying the wild journey that is life. He thanks God for his continued success. He is also managing editor of *The Saginaw Valley Journal*. Qui audet adipiscitur- Who Dares Wins!

Kim Lacey is busy learning Swahili when she isn't waiting for her damn croissants.

Jamie Loubert was born and raised in Midland, MI. She attended Herbert Henry Dow High School. She is now a graphic design major with a marketing minor at SVSU. She enjoys photography and taking pictures of people, animals, and urban/landscapes. Jamie would one day like to work in advertising.

Melissa McCormick is an SVSU Alumni who graduated this past August. She hopes to move to Ann Arbor this summer and find a graphic design job, or at least some type of art job. She is currently a nocturnal cat lady.

Logan Mooney is a graphic designer and illustrator from Tawas, Michigan. Music genres he enjoys listening to while making art include metalcore, alternative and indie rock. Other hobbies: making music with his brother, snowboarding and writing comic strips. Power level: over 9,000.

Matt Ostrander wants to publicly apologize for his forgetfulness while being a staff member over the past semester, especially to Brandy for having to put up with him. Other than that he's a secondary education major who works for the *Valley Vanguard* and at Zahnnow Library.

Arianna Paver wants to thank *Cardinal Sins* for giving her another chance to share her passion with others. She graduates in May and wants to leave as many of her fingerprints on SVSU as she possibly can before she is forced to be a "real grown-up." ("Like *that* will happen," she says.)

Emily Phillips is a freshman in the art program at SVSU. She enjoys creating art, writing, and working on her family's genealogy. This is her first time working on the staff of an art and literature journal. She graduated from Airport High School in Carleton, Michigan and is majoring in graphic design.

Nathan Daniel Phillips is a cardiganed, spectacled fiction writer currently residing in Midland, MI. His work has appeared in *Cardinal Sins*, and he won the 2012 Tyner Award in Fiction.

Arra Lynn Ross is the author of *Seedlip and Sweet Apple* (Milkweed Editions). She teaches creative writing at Saginaw Valley State University and coordinates the Voices in the Valley Reading Series.

Kelly Sievert is a first-year student studying graphic design. In her free time she enjoys taking pictures of the world, experimenting with Photoshop, and dreaming up new ideas to become reality.

Aran Singh enjoys taking literature and creative writing classes. Other things Aran enjoys: films by Jean-Pierre Melville, Wesley Willis songs, and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*.

Gabe Soto got into photography when a friend engaged him in a bet on who could take a better photo. And Gabe won! This led to his being a photographer for two years now. And he enjoys it. Heisenberg would be proud.

Pete Stevens is the Fiction Editor at *Squalorly*. His work has appeared or is forthcoming at *Hobart*, *Pear Noir!*, *Pithead Chapel*, *Red Fez*, and *Cardinal Sins*, among others. More at petestevensfiction.wordpress.com.

Bill Tarlin lives and works in Chicago. His poetry has appeared in *McSweeney's Quarterly*, *Exact Change Only*, the *Columbia Poetry Review*, and elsewhere in print and online. His eChap *Poems Unstressed* is available for all devices, and handmade editions can be requested at clumsyyogi.com.

S. Michael Wilson is a writer and software trainer currently working out of the attic of a secluded compound located somewhere in central New Jersey. His work has recently appeared in several publications, including *Butcher Knives & Body Counts*, *Uncle John's Flush Fiction*, *Shriekfreak*, *Eric's Hysterics*, and *Ars Poetica*.

Tim Windy? Sigh. He's so dreamy.

Jessica Wright is pretty sure her keeper got distracted looking for the great god Pan, or possibly at an all-you-can-eat cheese enchilada buffet. Maybe she should start looking for wolves instead.

Nicole Yeager graduated from SVSU in spring of 2013 with her degree in secondary education and is currently trying to get her BA in literature. Honestly, she forgot all about this bio thing and is being politely told she needs it turned in ASAP. So yeah, other important stuff.

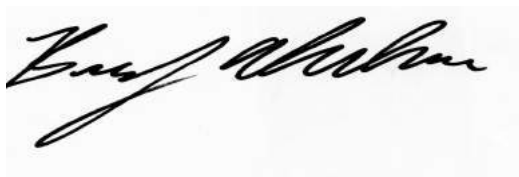
Changming Yuan, 5-time Pushcart nominee and author of *Chansons of a Chinaman* (2009) and *Landscaping* (2013), grew up in rural China, holds a PhD in English, and currently tutors in Vancouver, where he co-edits *Poetry Pacific* with Allen Qing Yuan. Recently interviewed by PANK, Yuan has poetry appear in *Asia Literary Review*, *Best Canadian Poetry*, *BestNewPoemsOnline*, *London Magazine*, *Threepenny Review*, and 730 other journals/anthologies across 28 countries.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all of the people who make *Cardinal Sins* possible: Tyler Bradley and *The Valley Vanguard*; Jason Schoenmeyer, Eltaro Hooper, Katrina Friedeberg, and the SVSU Student Life Office and staff; Dylan Kosaski and the SVSU Student Association; the Residence Housing Association, J. J. Boehm and the PJPC; Perry Toyzan, Angela Bublitz, and the Graphics Center; Linda Farynk; Suzette Zimmerman, Emmie Busch, and Jane Anderson; SVSU's English and Art Departments; President Eric Gilbertson and Cindy Gilbertson; Donald Bachand and Liana Bachand; Kristen Kilar for giving us permission to use her art on the cover; Anthony Betters & Pete Stevens for helping prepare for AWP Seattle; Theresa Stackhouse and Sharon Opheim; Chris Giroux for his continued support and dedication; Kim Lacey; Peter Brian Barry; our benefactors; our contributors; and, of course, the dedicated editorial staff & genre editors.

Thank you to those who helped turn this student-run art and literature journal into a stakeholder in the world-wide literary community.

Also, thank you for everyone that came out to see us at our first ever appearance at AWP Boston in 2012. We will see you in Seattle.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brandy Abraham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brandy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Abraham".

Brandy Abraham, *Cardinal Sins* Editor

Call for Submissions: Winter 2014 Nonfiction Contest

Contest Theme: Translation

Cardinal Sins seeks submissions of nonfiction for inclusion in our regularly scheduled Winter 2014 print edition. We accept work from writers everywhere, anywhere.

The theme of this year's contest is "Translation." We are *not* looking for *translations*. We encourage you to think about language, languages and culture in your submission. The *Cardinal Sins* staff is looking for nonfiction that we have not read before.

The winning entry will receive \$100 and author's work, a photograph, and a short bio will be included in the Fall 2013 issue of *Cardinal Sins*. Work selected for honorable mention will also be included, but no monetary prizes will be awarded for honorable mentions. Authors whose work is chosen for inclusion in our Winter 2014 edition will be invited to attend a publication party and reading at Saginaw Valley State University in May.

Submit one piece of nonfiction of 2,500 words or less per submission. Please include a brief cover letter and contact information, including your name, email, and phone number with your submission.

Send submissions via our submissions management system: (<http://cardinalsins.submittable.com/submit>). All documents must be submitted as .doc or .rtf attachments. We do not accept paper or email submissions at this time.

For deadlines, please refer to cardinalsins.submittable.com/submit

Please contact *Cardinal Sins* Editor, Brandy Abraham at cardinalsins@svsu.edu with questions.

Submission Guidelines

All general submissions must:

- be by SVSU students, staff, or alumni
- be submitted through (<http://cardinalsins.submittable.com/submit>)
- include multiple submissions for *a single category* in one document
- not contain any contact information within the attached document

Text submissions should:

- be in 12-pt. Times New Roman font, single spaced, with 1" margins
- include the title at the top of each page
- be attached in .rtf or .doc format
- Poetry should be no longer than 70 lines
- Flash fiction should be no longer than 1,000 words
- Fiction should be no longer than 2,500 words

Artwork/Photography submissions should:

- be 300 dpi or greater and have high contrast and sharp definition
- be attached in email in either .gif or .jpeg format
- *Note: photos that have been manipulated with a computer program should be submitted as artwork, not photography*

Maximum number of entries

- Submit up to 5 poems, 3 flash fiction pieces, 2 pieces of fiction, and 2 pieces of creative nonfiction
- Submit up to 5 artwork and photography pieces in each category
- You may submit to as many categories as you would like

Prizes and Judging

Prizes will be awarded in each of the 8 categories we publish: poetry, fiction, flash fiction, creative nonfiction, black & white photography, color photography, black & white artwork, and color artwork.

Staff reserves the right not to award a winner in a particular category if no submissions are judged worthy of the award.

The winner in each category will receive \$100 and recognition within the publication. All submissions will be entered into their respective category's contest unless otherwise requested.

Judging is done through blind, anonymous voting by the editorial staff. Members of the editorial staff are permitted to submit entries for publication but are excluded from winning contests in any category.

By submitting to *Cardinal Sins* you affirm that the work attached is solely your own. You agree to abide by *Cardinal Sins*' requirements governing submissions. If your work is accepted for publication, *Cardinal Sins* has the right to publish and distribute your work, both in print and on the *Cardinal Sins* Web site.

You retain all subsequent rights to your work.

Please visit cardinalsins.submittable.com/submit for deadline dates.

Thank you for submitting to *Cardinal Sins*.

These guidelines are subject to change; please visit our website for the most current guidelines.

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- ☐ \$35/1 issue

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