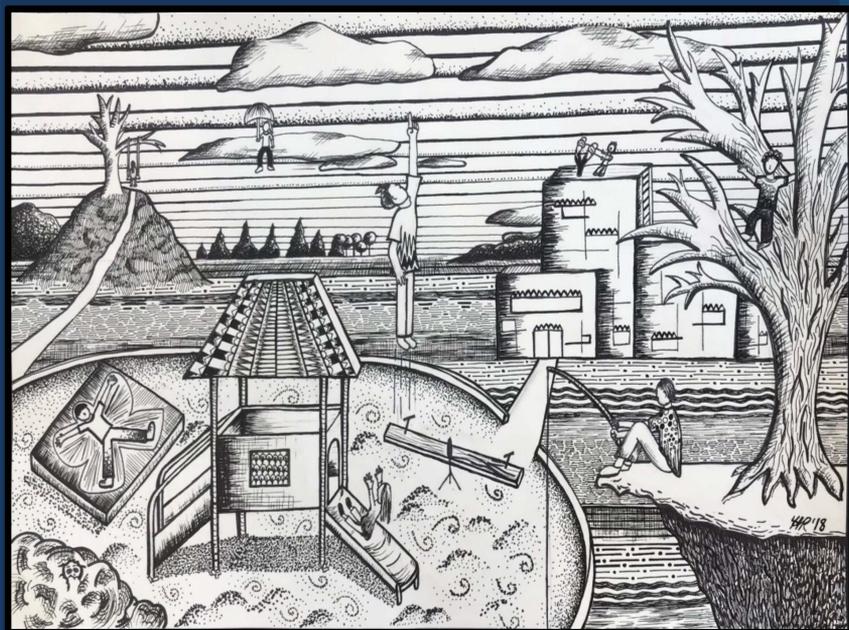


*The Nighthawk*  
*Review*  
2018



# *The Nighthawk Review*

Spring 2018

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**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Creative Arts Club and its publication, the Nighthawk Review, is to provide Thomas University students, faculty, staff, alumnus, and friends with a creative outlet. In doing so, we endeavor to engage in constructive criticism, peer-review, and helpful discourse that both enriches and documents the creativity of the Thomas University community. It is our purpose to encourage creativity without restraint, and to facilitate the presentation of meritorious creative works in publication.

The Creative Writing Club accepts submissions year round. Please email submissions to: [thenighthawkreview@gmail.com](mailto:thenighthawkreview@gmail.com). Be sure to include the author/artist's name, title of work, and email address of the author/artist. Submissions of poetry, fiction, plays, screenplays, photographs, and artwork will be considered for inclusion in future editions of *The Nighthawk Review*.



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## “JIM: A HISTORY” – MADELYN ZORN

Summer in Mississippi, where the dull gray weeds  
Long for death as much as God does.  
I was born out there, and set down quick to get warm mud  
On my toes. Because momma didn't want to spend the drinking  
money  
To cover feet that could not even walk yet.  
Only stumble some.

I had to grow up in a fire, in the backroom of the grocer's,  
In an emptied bottle, left by the door for me to clean up.  
I didn't know why daddy bought two chocolate bars  
And then fed them both to our dogs. I only knew  
The moonshine-bright smell of him as he came swaying home,  
The smell of his greatest creation, his favorite child  
Cradled safe in a still in the forest behind our house.  
*Son, it ain't gonna raise itself.*

And I knew of course the tilt of his black hat,  
That he cocked like a gun, creating a shadow to cover  
The swollen eyes of the night before, the demon still dancing  
In his vision, clacking red heels over the speakeasy floor.  
I knew this and what's more, I knew my mother's silence,  
Her coffee cup sweating rings onto the table, and smoke  
Curling around her head like snakes  
In the backyard grass.

But soon I knew other things, too. I knew  
I was taller than dad now, and that drinking  
Anger like water had made me lean.  
I knew that only my brother Tommy would survive this,  
Because he took the bed, and from the floor,  
I heard him still able to dream.

I also knew that he had to eat. To take the offering  
I laid, the leftover from an alleyway  
That he could never see me picking around in. He could never see  
Dad's swinging gate and terrible laugh, dad's blind hands  
And what they felt they had to leave.  
But I now knew the sweet  
Split knuckle of my own hand,  
The way the man sitting up there at the county school's  
Proud clean face had buckled beneath it.

I knew I wouldn't be let to come back up there  
On Monday, wouldn't be allowed in.  
That man had called me *just more white trash* and  
I had finally stepped up  
And proven it.

But I learned quick and I knew. Knew that the wind  
Whispered at night, always about me. So concerned  
With me, this world of unpainted houses, sagging roofs.  
It told me that soon we'd have to abandon Mississippi, would have  
to stop  
Making unsure her illusion of sobriety. I knew that the judge,  
When he told dad as much, told him to *git out of Miss'ssippi*,  
That he was cutting his eyes,  
Was really looking at me.

And so momma's in the hospital now, a pin stuck clean,  
Right through the softness of her brain.  
Dad said *its helping her*. I don't know.  
But twelve men had to pull him out of a gutter  
One other night, all twelve and he had them all beat.  
That bravado that is stupor and clove and deterrent -  
I wonder vaguely whether that's something I'll inherit.  
All this *fine* heredity.  
This high tolerance to life  
As well as to drink. Either way  
It was finally 1960, so I knew it was time for me to leave.

And so the world opened up  
Like the torn seam on my only good shirt.  
I wore that shirt, wore it when I met her father the first time.  
Her father was my commanding officer, with a chest  
Of medals for liberating the death camps of Germany. He looked  
me over  
Once and I knew he had seen. But no.  
I was just some kid, a bad accent, sure,  
But anonymous, skinny. Standing in his pink  
Living room and waiting  
For his little Suzie, just like the other boy from the  
Friday dance last week. And the week  
Before that.

But later, sitting in his car with her, I felt like I was dead  
And watching a stranger from sleep. The roundness  
Of her face was in fact turned on me. And her innocence

Was the innocence of my imagined God,  
Who had long been a substitute for sleep,  
Who was somehow somewhere already inside of me.  
I tasted it when I kissed her, curled thin hands around  
The fullness of a living blonde body and upset the scarf  
On her head, just knocked it a bit out of place. Like flesh skinned  
And wrought for the empty stomach, I did not feel a rebirth.  
Just a salvaging.

So even though she was only sixteen, I married her,  
And suddenly I was moving back South,  
A preacher with a child packed and folded  
Safe in a belly, that small, soft-headed seed  
The fear of my line's self-fulfilling prophesy.  
The giving of my history.  
All this in just a few weeks.

With the coming of my Michelle, dad stopped drinking  
And I started to age immediately. Time became a blood-letting.  
My face grew lines around my mouth and eyes  
As dad laughed on a macramé couch, bouncing my baby  
On his chest, a cigarette hanging from his open mouth.  
Is this the end every road promises?  
Salvation of a creek, water in my eyes,  
And insects buzzing strong and lost in the throes of  
Hope. After all, the milk is set out and waiting at home,  
with cake, strawberries, cream, set on a sideboard,  
Made by a girl who always makes sure me and my child  
Have enough to eat.

She makes me want to believe, though my mother  
Still sits quiet in the corner. She has never stopped  
Being silent. Black eyes of the crow at the window,  
Waiting for whatever gore would wash up  
On the side of the road  
Wine sweet.  
As steady in the face of reform  
As they had been in taking in my beatings.  
This lets me know that the past is still burning  
Through me like disease. And that judgement  
Will always be forthcoming.

But Shelley,  
She grows like I never could quite do.  
Smiles cut knowingly towards the photographer

In her school pictures, and ready for dances,  
Hair high on the lawn, dressed all in blue.  
Her and her mother  
Made my praying to what I would never see  
Seem less like sorrow.  
So I stand at a pulpit each week  
And say things I really do mean

Even if I do not understand them just yet.  
I grow old this way. I suppose I am old now,  
Am a man who, buttoning cufflinks on Sunday morning,  
Cannot help but think about this thing I've chosen to believe -  
The horror of His forgiveness. Of his absence.  
I knew then I would always be a lack, a lack  
That cleaved like that -  
Receding back to the bottles littering the hot Delta shore  
And the cemetery I had to cut through as a child  
To get back to town from my tilted house -  
Back to civilization, to the worn blandness  
Of the soul. Of a Greenwood street.

So, of course, it is old Mississippi who I take as a lover.  
She is not a state, she is a stranger.  
She is my past, a summer I have not lived in forty or fifty years  
At least. I drank her down in one swallow, and was  
Drunk. I suppose the weight of being God  
Must eventually tear at the meat.  
So I took to the lowness of my beloved humanity.  
I kissed hands that held no ring.  
My brushfires, burning,  
Providing awful light,  
Kicked up inside of me, like an animal.  
Like the big black dogs that sat on the rotten floorboards  
Of my childhood porch,  
Eyes narrowed to slits and dark rippling coats  
Reminding you of their  
White teeth.

*I still love you, you know?* I hated myself  
Even as I said it, said it to my Suzie Q.  
I felt like it was both the least  
And most myself I had ever been.  
And I felt like all I knew was leaving.  
Eviction, the only tenement of my life.  
So of course it was dad I saw

In the mirror the morning after the  
Dining room confession. Yes, I saw  
Christmas, and futures melted into birthday cakes, and a divorce  
Not just from a wife, but from a reality.  
I saw myself losing the girl  
Who pulled me from the rotten earth,  
Who had tried to make me holy.  
But I have always fallen back upon momma's mind,  
Her all-knowing wrist, aged now,  
Shaking the tabletop with ash that falls like memory.

So, you can see, how, almost sixty,  
Armed with the sought sentience of the gun,  
Cold in the hand and the mouth,  
It was the first coolness I'd felt all July.  
First coolness of my entire life.  
I felt momma and dad and Tommy  
And especially, those who would come long after me.  
Felt lovers who were not family.  
And felt a buttercream girl of seventy  
Who sits still in the window of me  
Folded hands the only martyrs  
Still longing to be blackened  
By the match I had struck  
And dropped.

Mostly, though, I felt just this punctured  
Orange-crate body that would swell  
In the oppression of the summer and the tinned failure  
Of A/C. I felt like God, finally.  
I felt Him like He was peeking around the staircase  
As though He lurked and bent curiously  
In the pull of the trigger  
Waiting to wipe blood from my eyes  
Hand on my back, helping me up,  
To let me become the ghost in the eaves  
My brain a nailed palm, a love given through.  
Burning, there is a revealed need  
For a new coat of paint on the wall.  
Yes. I kneel to give my blood and body  
Because I could always comfort myself with knowing  
That it is always summer in Mississippi.

## “SOMEONE’S MISSING” – MADELYN ZORN

Girls were disappearing  
Because it was summertime, because  
It kept raining, because everyone was watching  
Out of their peripheral. Because our pulses  
Spent the sun-fire days trying to beat  
Back the vacant past, trying to beat the blood alive enough  
To hold off death just one more day.

Four hot years with no seasons, tripping into five.  
Like living on Neptune - can you imagine  
Being caught inside the same weather your whole life?  
And what those divine ideas of acyclicity could do to one’s  
development?  
The price for worshipping rotten symmetry?  
See all the tadpoles with too many legs, moths who never  
Learned to love the light, and water, gray  
And boiling with longing for the fresh decay  
Of some delicate flesh.

This fever-world is heavy with heat like a house  
Built with no windows. It is good only to grow grief.  
The clicking of the shoes behind you on the rain-dark pavement.  
The wine you gave me nothing but a stain on my lips  
The next morning. Nothing anyone would believe.  
And the red sun glowering like the red  
Inside the thin opening of my body, the spreading stain of my life,  
Of the staged crime scene, making me new,  
Making me into a scarlet Proserpina, a bloody Persephone,  
Sore like anguish, the sluice of the berry and the scream.  
What do you expect of a world where we all must live on just six  
Pomegranate seeds?

You may whisper how I was the beauty death  
Loved like a blade. How this welling of the atmosphere was  
Warmth and not pressure.  
But it was not I who made Sappho’s island curl up and weep.  
And now our fruit, allotted slowly, blooms  
Only in spite. It sheds, it sweats. It fails to resist  
Rotting. It is something I learn to eat.  
And yet I am supposed to be a symbol of life.

These swelling feet, marked skin torn by dog teeth,  
This guillotine, this sweat  
Dripping into my eyes is nothing beautiful,  
Just violence. Heat.  
And I hate to have to hold still,  
Feel you place a crown on my head, expecting me to call you  
King.

But I can live on air and seeds.  
I can float back up from the bottom of people's closets,  
Dried swimming pools, suitcases half packed. In fact,  
The crawlspaces of collapsed houses have been churning out  
A new set of my skin each week.  
Heads cracked like melons, standing on the earthquake  
Of shaking thighs. And the anonymous face,  
That you broke into multiples.  
We buried rise, accordion out like paper dolls,  
Hot and hateful in this bleeding summer-spring.  
I hold my sheared sapling tree,  
And we sing.

## “IMPERMANENCE” – ANDILE SITHOLE

To what gain is my martyrdom?  
How immaterial effect proves,  
How ephemeral – one’s influence,  
Therein, lies the truth that all is futile  
All purpose, ideals, morals – senseless,  
A dog chasing its tail,  
A sailor searching for the horizon’s end,  
The durability of change only equates  
To the next revolution  
Which may come at any moment, post –  
Unannounced, unconcerned, unabashed.  
We strive for greatness to leave a legacy that won’t last.  
We compete for glory that becomes useless but for fond memory  
Which too may fade in old age and become null in death.  
These temporal things we tinker with  
Yet treasure as if timeless  
But the ticking of time is the only sound of existence –  
Not the wind or sea or birds in trees or victory screams – they’re  
irrelevant.  
And in the end the only immortal, eternal, everlasting thing  
Is impermanence itself.  
For all things die, all fade, all wither away  
And that the only fact of life that remains –  
Unchanging, unchangeable, unchanged.

**PAINTING BY: ANNA MARIE AUGINS**



Psychedelic Moon

## “THE SOUL OF SOMEONE WHO ONCE DREAMED” – ANDILE SITHOLE

I used to dream

I used to have a passion

I used to believe

Key words: "used to"

Not anymore

I guess I'm not all I thought I was

I guess I'm going to die wasted potential

I guess apathy is my fate

I guess self-pity is made for me

I guess my bed is the only place I belong

I guess tears are my best friend

I guess giving up was always on the cards

I guess I'm useless

I guess I'm just the same as you all

you mediocre scum

*us* mediocre scum

I have become just like you

You people who work for no reason

Rather, no purpose than filling your middle class belly with cheap, middle class, just-barely-getting-by food, with thousands of calories and heart attack giving saturated fatty foods

And drive your scratched, stained, faulty, secondhand car you bought from that shady dealer you'd be ashamed to mention

And marry a somewhat tolerable human being to bicker and battle for power with till death do you part, or divorce, of course, which is likely since you know nothing of love

And manage to have just about enough left in the bank to sustain an excruciatingly mediocre lifestyle once the bills have been paid and the taxes done

And never know what it's like to travel to another country, but sure, go on some wild road trips that your shitty little unappreciative kids whine about and "hate you" for

And struggle to provide for those same shitty kids who don't understand just how much you sacrifice for them

And consider quitting your horribly soul-destroying job but stop these thoughts because you can never leave the half-comfort of a place that lets you just about live another day

And cry when bad things happen because it gives you an opportunity to cry about everything else in your pitiable predicament of a life

And laugh when bad things happen to other people behind their backs because for a change the joke is not on you

And maybe, if you're lucky, actually get a promotion or two which allows you to buy presents for your kids that they'll enjoy for three weeks then break or disband, or complain about for not being the "right one," but hey, it's the thought that counts, right

And maybe, you'll actually raise them to be cultured and respectful so they'll internalize their disappointment and feign excitement for your sake, instead of whining

And maybe they'll silently pity you, their parents, possibly even feel guilty, so they'll never ask for much, and when they do and you say you can't afford it, they'll say "it's okay"

And maybe these sort of kids will feel in themselves an overwhelming desire to work to achieve what you never could

And they'll aim to provide for their kids in a way that you failed to, which will make you happy, but only remind you of your failings and inadequacies

And hopefully, one day, if your children feel bad enough for you, they'll support you in your old age, giving you about ten good years of life

And hopefully in these years you won't be bed-ridden, frail, and quietly detested by your grandkids who think you smell, but you probably will

And hopefully you'll get to do things you always wanted to when you were young, but these activities are for young people you old piece of shit so the option is no longer available

And then you'll resign to the available joys of old age like peeping at the young nurse's arse as she walks away from giving you medicine, giving you the closest thing to an erection you've had in years

And that young stud will flirt with you for the sake of charming an old decrepit hag for banter, but you'll feel a tingle in your saggy breasts and a thump in your barely beating heart nonetheless

And you'll think the most profound thoughts which you neglected to delve into in youth, but your hands will be too shaky and weak to write them out

And you'll feel an overwhelming sense of pride and accomplishment if you can rise from your rocker, unassisted, or take a shit without a caretaker aiding you

And then, your children will visit you every now and then out of obligation, in debt to you for those first eighteen years when you taught them the art of getting by and achieving nothing –

And then, one day, you'll die. The world won't know. You might become a statistic and that'll be your greatest legacy, your footprint on this world

And you'll have lived a safe, sheltered life without a day of true zest because you settled for something less than that which fills you with joy

And just as you're about to drift off into the eternal slumber, all this will flash before your eyes and as you take your final labored breath, you'll wonder "what was the point?"

"What was my purpose?"

I guess I'm just the same as you all

you mediocre scum

*us* mediocre scum.

I have become just like you

and this fate awaits me too.

**PHOTO BY: JON MILLER**



Curtis Shed

## “DARK WATERS” – ANGIE GUTIERREZ

all i can see is nothing, no light, no way out  
just you and me and me alone  
no matter where i go, you'll always find me,  
    there is nowhere to run  
scared, that's how you made me feel inside, how easy it is for you  
    to come back  
i want to drink until I until feel nothing, mind and body numb  
light it up,        watch it consume me like you once did  
i'll be its prisoner for now, always crawling back to the arms of the  
    devil's son.  
    don't scream anymore, let me in, so let's get this over  
the more i fled, the more i bled, alone tormented daily by you  
    i watched you wash the blood of your hands  
        but you could never wash it off  
    come to bed, don't make me sleep alone  
i surrender once again, all i see is nothing, no light, no way out

## “LOST PARADISE” – ANGIE GUTIERREZ

Naive,  
oh boy, was I innocent  
Maybe even stupid, but I still don't know.  
You made me red, more like hot all the time.  
I didn't even think twice about it.  
Your light loving affection suddenly became rough  
You came told me things that I wasn't ready for.  
And I said *fuck it*.  
You liked me and I liked you,

You were like a tick, latching on to me  
Draining me, from everything  
I thought once was pure.

You continued to lie and deceive me, and I was still so trusting.  
I said *no* and you didn't listen.  
You taught me how to love  
And if I didn't do the things you wanted me to do,  
I was afraid.  
I was terrified that you would do something  
And I was right. You did do something.  
Room 101 will forever haunt me.  
Naïve, maybe,  
I was just innocent.

You left,  
You coward,  
Blaming it on a mental illness you've been battling.  
But why lie?  
I knew what you were,  
a leech, slowly sucking everything good that I had.  
I could watch you drown in your own misery,  
I wouldn't save you.  
Drowning is quick and silent just like my time with you.  
Watching you fight for your last breath

Your lungs filling in with water, your eyes bulging.

I didn't think much of it when you came and saw me.

You eyed me like I was some sort of prize

Your possession.

I kept telling you I wasn't yours that I wasn't going to have sex  
with you

But you did something that haunts me to this day.

You assaulted me,

Grabbed me by my ass in the middle of broad daylight, like I was  
your property

I was petrified I couldn't do anything, I was afraid you had a  
loaded gun

And you would pull the trigger if I did something that would upset  
you.

So now I finally can tell you to go to hell.

Touch me again and I swear to you

The last face you see will be your own reflection.

Just like Aly, Gabby, Uma Thurman and the many other women,

We will stand united and strong to keep

Fighting to stand tall.

We will not remain silent, your time is done.

Tick tock tick tock

We will stand together, united and strong.

I hope and pray that our faces remain etched in your mind forever.

That those steel bars and the grey walls are the things keeping us  
away from you.

**WATERCOLOR BY: JENNY SWEARINGEN**



Three Beauties

## “FIRE BONES” – LESLIE AKRIDGE

There's a fire in these bones, way deep down

One minute it burns and tortures and the next it gives me strength  
I inherited this heat, my Daddy made sure of that

Is it bad luck or resilience; well that depends on who you ask  
This fire in my pit, be black, red, or blue, is always hot  
Passion, defeat, rising, repeat, over and over again, I fan the flames

I can dig my toes into the swamp of this hell

Claw my way up past the sycamores to the top of the sticky pines  
There I can be lit aflame by the sun and

Unleash my wings that spit sparks and whisper ancient threats  
“You're gonna fall, little girl,” I hear the taunting  
Daddy always said hellfire is always there trying to drag me down

This blaze is a part of me, it can be wielded

My burn scars run deep and long, like the old river, etched into me  
I've tried to snuff the inferno with the cold black water

But I'm learnin' to feed the coals and embrace this burning light  
You were right Daddy, there's something pulling at me  
The fires have changed me; like a tattered phoenix, I feel the  
renewing heat

The hot licking hands pick me up so high

Over old muddy ground of my childhood, making me a beacon  
Let me show you how I use the heat of the flames to fly

I'm glowing, burning brighter, let me blind you with my light  
It's never too late Daddy, that South winds change  
I can be the firebird that guides the way to redemption, follow me

## **“LONG HAUL” – LESLIE AKRIDGE**

I hate you today; I am bitter and mad  
My scars are deep, and the knife is lodged  
Vows long gone, broken across the floor  
I feel scattered, you broke my heart, you fool

Your addiction unwinding of the knot we tied  
The thought of repair seems like too much  
That day, I wanted you out and I wanted to be free  
But what about for better or worse?

We never read the fine print on the dotted line  
I knew the road to forever was going to be hard  
I see you working, changing, to keep me  
Forgive my hate and I'll forgive your stupidity  
Together we'll find our footing among the glass  
And we'll show them all how to make this last.

**PHOTO BY: CARTER VANN**



Monkey with Baby

## “VOICES FROM THE WELL HOUSE” – RICHARD CURTIS

*For Helen Keller and Mike Kelley*

As the legend goes  
When Helen Keller was nine-years old  
She and her teacher - Anne Sullivan -  
Were outside at the well house

Helen loved to feel the water on her skin

It was at the pump where Anne  
Held one of Helen's hands under the rush of cool drink  
And signed the letters W-A-T-E-R  
In the palm of the other hand

In that moment  
Helen realized how she could communicate  
Later writing in her autobiography  
“I left the well house eager to learn...”

This afternoon I traveled to Ivy Green and  
I placed a tape recorder inside a shoebox  
And I placed the shoebox in the well house  
And I recorded silence in the place where  
Helen learned to speak

And when I returned home  
I listened back to what had been recorded  
And to my surprise  
I could hear a faint voice crying:

To live a life in silence and darkness  
To be intimate with solitary thoughts  
To know uncommon loneliness  
To learn by touch and smell  
To find a language with fingertips  
To caress and be caressed by the world  
To navigate the change  
To live and keep on living  
To lock my bones away forever  
To... to... to...

## “THE NATURE OF GLASS” – RICHARD CURTIS

In the late 1700's, German physician and astrologist, Dr. Franz Mesmer issued his theory of *Animal Magnetism*. Mesmer claimed that living things had a vital magnetic fluid that animated them. He also maintained that illness was caused by blockages in the flow of energies through the body. As part of his therapies, Mesmer often used old kitchen magnets, laying on of hands and strange music to stimulate his patient. One of his favorite instruments to use was a Glass Armonica.

The Armonica was a kind of organ invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1761, made with an arrangement of glass bowls. A musician would play the instrument by wetting his fingers and placing them on the rims of the bowls.

Mesmer's objective was to send his patient's body into a kind of "crisis" whereby any obstructions to their animal magnetism would be released. This was often a gruesome spectacle of convulsions and vomiting. Mesmer claimed that in this state his patients reported unobstructed vision, able to see through bodies and objects.

For many years, Mesmer was the toast of Europe. His clients were many of the aristocracy from Vienna to Paris. Getting mesmerized was all the rage! That is, until 1784 when Louis XVI appointed a Board of Inquiry to investigate Mesmer's claims. Among the members of this committee was none other than the American Ambassador, Benjamin Franklin.

After a rigorous investigation, the committee found no evidence of a magnetic fluid in the human body, or any positive results from Mesmer's therapies. As a result, Mesmer was forced to completely abandon his practice, and he was branded a fraud. Shortly after, his wife passed away due to illness. Alone and destitute, Mesmer spent the last years of his life in exile. Coincidentally, by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Glass Armonica also fell out of favor after people began complaining that prolonged exposure to its high pitched sounds caused fits of madness.

There are some that claim glass is a liquid. Perhaps it is.  
Perhaps it is also imbued with a vital magnetic energy.  
Perhaps in its crystalline form it allows for unobstructed vision.  
Perhaps it holds the clarity of emptiness.  
Perhaps that is why when you touch glass with a wet finger it begins to sing.

## “SRI GANESHA RAKSHAMAM” – CARTER VANN

*Parvati ordered Ganesha not to allow anyone to enter the house. After a while, Shiva came home. Even after telling him that he is the husband of Parvati, Ganesha didn't allow him to enter inside. Shiva got angry and cut off the head of Ganesha and threw it away using his trident.*

Darkness falls with my head  
I cry out, in vain  
voice – voiceless  
lungs – breathless  
body – headless  
She doesn't hear my cry.  
(she isn't there anyways)  
Love to fury, existence on edge  
Teetering  
And then, with his grace,  
light springs from the dark  
These eyes  
This snake-like nose  
And then, he breathes  
his sweet, blessed breath into my lungs  
And Ganesh, I become

## “CAGE IN THE DARK” – CARTER VANN

There is a bird in a small, dark cage  
His feathers slowly dropping  
His song not quite as happy—  
Nor as loud.  
His cage locked for a while now  
No, he hasn't flown free.  
The little one found him silent  
And swiftly opens the door.  
Curiously he slowly perks up  
Closing his eyes  
And gently hops from his small cage.  
Almost too afraid to fly.  
Wings beating frantically  
As he begins to fall  
“Fly” the little one calls  
As he falls to the floor  
—“You have wings”—  
The bird slowly begins to rise  
And another feather drops.

## “SISTER” – SAMUEL POULK

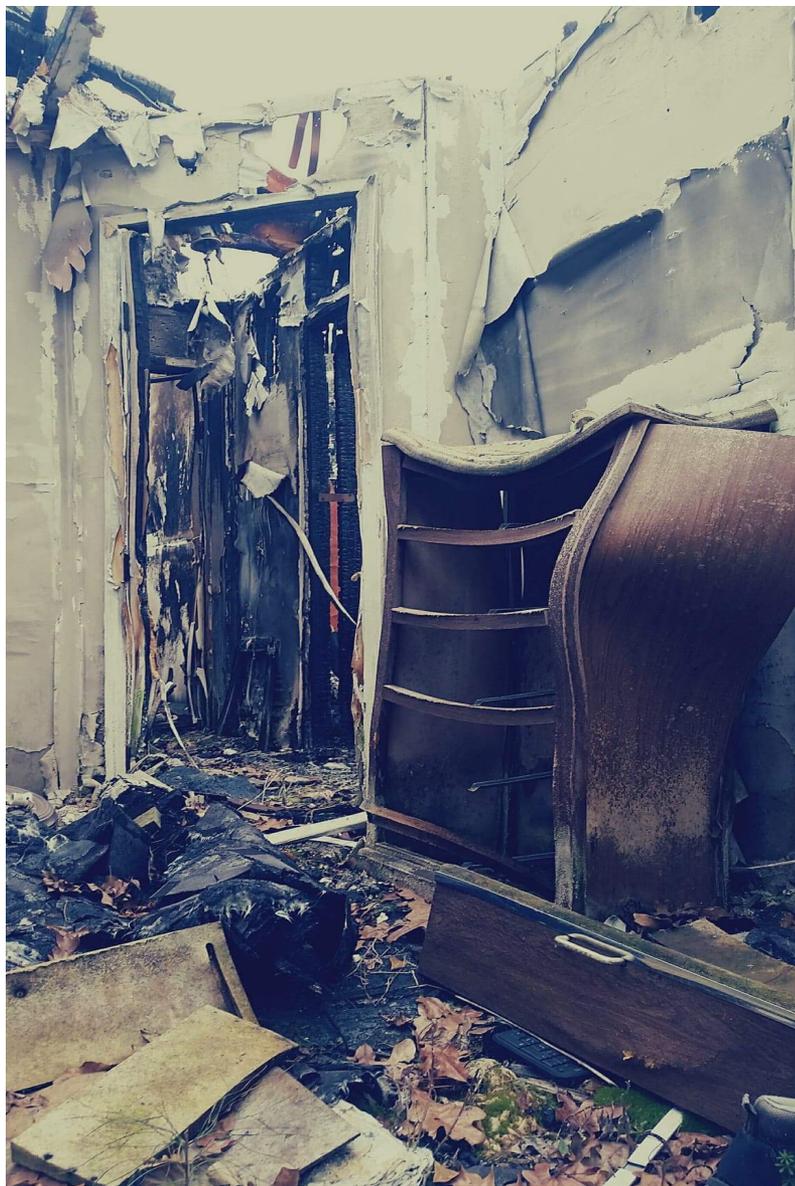
You want to know my sister  
She is a lovely girl  
She loves our birds  
Father’s birds  
She loves giving to her friends  
She would teach them during Sunday school  
She loves many things

Everybody likes Lizzie  
She has a radiant glow  
And is so favorable  
She always knows  
Knows how to humor you

Especially Father, she always humors Father  
Until he took her birds  
Then we saw Lizzie  
My darling Lizzie  
Axe in hand  
Scarlet droplets running across her hands, dripping  
I saw her for the first time

It made sense now  
Why she was so – perfect  
She, unrestricted  
She could do no wrong  
After all, she felt no wrong

**PHOTO BY: JON MILLER**



Melting Dresser

**“LOOKING THROUGH A TEMPERED VIEW”  
– SAMUEL POULK**

Looking through a child’s toy  
To see a tempered view, of the eternal world in a tube  
The blue is peppered over a crimson ground  
Like salted snow – it melts away  
There are fewer now, but more will spawn  
Social spores begin shifting around  
A royal shade will bleed for control  
But its color becomes contorted then mangled again

They are mad – stuck inside  
And begging for a shape or pattern  
But only lie together, just a broken jigsaw puzzle  
Sometimes, it looks like an uncanny valley  
That cures the broken shapes and colors  
It mirrors its way through the bog and marsh  
And past the windows through the cones  
To find a home on the empty prairie  
Where all the others melt away

## “ANALYSIS” – HOLLY GUTHRIE

Taking baby steps toward destruction. Tearing it down. There is no paradise to find. I am programmed to seek it in vain. It's a state of mind. Not being. Following words set down by scholars. Maps to righteousness. Roads to riches. Bridges to the other side of nowhere.

*There is no reason?*

It's some huge cosmic joke. An experiment. Ants in an ant farm. Place your bets on which one will escape. Build the fastest. Work the hardest. Die last. Losing days and weeks and months and, oh, God, not years. To uncertainty. Indecision. Pondering. Imagining the answer. Can't remember the question.

*Why not just be?*

And love. Hold onto something that feels real. Because in the end there is only feeling. And love. And you. And me. And in the end that's enough. *Isn't it?* I could spend my eternity. Never seeing what's right in front of me. Think I'll just stop here. And have a look around. Right on this spot. Not forward. Not backward. Just right here. Right now.

*There it is.*

**DRAWING BY: RICHARD CURTIS**



Venus of Walmart

## “EXPEDITION” – HOLLY GUTHRIE

40 years gone  
must've walked 10,000 miles  
treads are worn smooth as stones  
the only tangible thing to show  
for half a lifetime of fervent contemplation  
perhaps another 40 years  
and a new pair of sneakers  
to retrace my steps  
at a slower pace  
with less determination to reach the end of the race  
that shouldn't be a race at all  
but only a stroll through a garden of thought  
that changes with the seasons  
like the conclusions I came to in the first 40 years

## “ROUTINE STOP” – SHAQUILLE HOLLEY

What seems to be the problem officer? (Damn what did you do?)  
all of my lights work and this here is my car.  
I'm not who you're looking for  
I don't even fit the description I mean –  
yes I'm black but I swear it wasn't me  
Mr. Officer I'm looking for my license and registration but your  
light of interrogation is burning through my lenses  
you act like you know I did it (where's my damn papers?)  
Your voice is like an earthquake on my island trembling my body  
I'm trying to comply but I heard the story of Mike Brown  
Sandra Bland Jerame Reid Tamir Rice  
and me dying has crossed my mind a thousand times  
I don't wanna be a hastage on twitter a picture on a shirt in some  
fucking clouds. (please don't shoot)  
Officer there's nothing in here I'm not trying to be difficult  
but I have rights and I said you can't look in my car sir.  
You tell me to get out the vehicle your commands paralyze  
my body but my mind races (please don't shoot)  
Officer I said I don't have a weapon you pat me down  
anyways removing my shoes and socks  
all this for a failure to signal? one wrong move  
turns me into a statistic another nigger off yours roads  
your quota met for the month.

# DRAWINGS BY: RICHARD CURTIS



Four Noble Truths of South Georgia

## **“VOICES OF CONFUSION” – DAVID SLAUGHTER**

Two voices,  
In darkness collide  
Like crashing waves.  
The thoughts  
with ebb and flow  
          continue on  
                  for days.

They never sleep;  
they never rest;  
never will one win.  
This ever constant argument,  
that stays,  
resides,  
within.

## **“STRINGS” – AUSTIN ROBERTS**

I speak softly to ease your suffering,  
But your viper tongue slashes and tears at my soul  
Many have left you long ago

## **“THE BEAST OF WILD AND DEEP”**

### **– JILL GUTHRIE**

The forest, dark and deep, and lovely.  
And the mist that falls softly against your skin  
and shivers up my spine.  
Like I'm not alone.  
Like someone is watching me.  
The monsters of the wood –  
I've yet to know if they're friends or evil.  
Calling from the distance –  
closer, farther.  
Reaching into the dark, covered  
solace of my chest and releasing  
the wild being that resides there.  
Free.  
The cover of the trees tells me I'm home,  
and the whispers of quiet welcome me.  
I shall council with the beasts  
and determine their loyalty.  
But first I must sit and draw in the breath of the place.  
Waiting, watching. Coming closer –  
closer to what?  
The crow's hollow cry solidifies my being,  
and I am one with the pulse of the green around me;  
the bark that pulls off in my hand,  
the babbling stream buried behind the tree line.  
The wild calls are arresting.  
Startling, comforting.  
If I cannot claim the place, the place has claimed me.  
I belong to the forest,  
All it shadows and all it lights.

## “MEDUSA” – LAURA ALEXANDER

She is beautiful and kind,  
Her silky white skin glowing,  
Golden hair so long and flowing

But an evil spell from Athena  
Places an everlasting spell  
If you speak to Medusa you will know so well.

She is now evil and scary  
Her skin so green everyone looks away,  
For her hair hissing snakes come out to play.

Her powers are nonexistent,  
Athena has them all,  
For Medusa knew, loving the wrong man, she would fall.

Medusa is ugly for eternal life,  
Everyone stares in horror and disgust,  
For Medusa begs Athena to undo the spell it's a must.

From having everything in the world,  
A princess by name,  
The Greek queen is now shamed.

## “A SUMMER LOVE” – KATY HANSCOMB

Have you ever thought about it like this?  
That as the days drag on longer  
And the waves say goodbye to the moon  
That the only thing missing is a sweet kiss.

Who knows where this wild ride may take us  
Where the butterflies are in peak  
And the red robins sit patiently  
Waiting on the wires of the last school bus.

The rich greens of the breathless trees  
Dried out from the wake of the sun  
A pile of books for a planned read  
Hiding away from the winds slight breeze.

The longing for the summer heat  
Quickly replaced by the love for another.

**PHOTO BY: DAVID ALLIO**



Copepod 19

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## **“WALTER” – SPENCER DEPOALA**

Adventurous, stubborn, relentless, distracted  
Lena Younger (mama), Travis Younger (son)  
Ruth Younger (wife), new ideas, Travis Younger  
Sad, stressed, hopeful  
Money, new friends, bigger house  
Rejection, failure, mama  
Hope and dreams equals stress  
His self will be successful, a bigger house, new job  
Lives in New York with hope  
Younger

## **“HAIKU” – SPENCER DEPOALA**

Soldiers die  
Children cry  
Peace is fragile  
Silent cries for freedom follow

## “EOS” – RHETTA WEEKS

*Eos, Greek goddess of Dawn, awakes one morning to find a handsome prince. She wishes to marry him, and asks Zeus for the gift of eternal life so that they might be together. Unfortunately, she does not ask for the gift of eternal youth. The prince lives forever, but shrinks and becomes a cricket. Eos places him in a basket in a corner of her palace, where he remains forever. She continues to wake the world each morning with her touch.*

Nature awoke only by her touch,  
Tinted by the subtle cerulean of dawn,  
Soft pinks and dew-sprinkled trees.  
One morning, a prince appears,  
Handsome and devastatingly mortal.  
The dawn begs the sky for eternal life,  
So that the prince might share every dawn with her.  
Years came and went in the blink of an eye,  
Delightful, but without youth.  
The prince, shrunken and shriveled before her eyes,  
As his youth slipped away, he became a cricket.  
Her rosy fingers placed him in a basket,  
Which he had shrunk small enough to fit,  
In a dark corner of her palace,  
Until he began to chirp for eternity.  
Her features still glow, rosy and bright,  
To awake the sleeping world.

## “BLACK SWAN” – RHETTA WEEKS

Blisters and broken toenails,  
Taping and tapering, but none of it hides the ugliness.  
When the illusion of beauty is gone along with the satin shoes,  
I am all that is left.  
If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, my beholder yells “5, 6, 7,  
8!”

My arms replaced by wings,  
Wings that pull me down until I am buried deep enough so that I  
cannot be found.  
My heart races at the speed of which I must complete 32 fouettés,  
The pressure builds and stifles my once elongated movements,  
Causing my beholder to yell and pull at my mangled limbs.

The dirt and mass which once surrounded me has given way,  
Crumbling as I crawl to the surface,  
And I crawl until the tension in my neck and the twist in my ankles  
fade,  
And I have ascended.  
I fly high now, flanked by creatures of feather and white

I enter from the middle wing, the corps singing a chorus of  
“Merde!”  
I shock even devilish Siegfried, as if he truly cannot believe the  
sight of the girl before him  
I receive the most generous of applause and accolades for my  
portrayal,  
Even though the audience does not know it is neither a  
performance nor a guise,  
But what beautiful Odette has finally become.

## “TELL YOUR STORY” – DAVID KIRBY

As you walk by the river with your friend and tell stories,  
at some point you say, “I told that one before, didn’t I?”  
and your friend says, “You did, but I like that story,  
and besides, you never tell it the same way twice.”  
So tell your story. Sonny Rollins had an apartment  
on Grand Street near the river but was reluctant  
to play his saxophone there because he didn’t want  
to bother his neighbors, so he started practicing  
on the Williamsburg Bridge, where he could play  
as loud as he wanted, 15 and 16 hours a day,  
all year round. He was joined sometimes by other  
saxophonists, by Steve Lacy and Jackie McLean,  
and they’d imitate what they heard and try  
to play it back louder. Lacy recalls, “On the bridge  
there was this din, a really high level of sound  
from boats and cars and subways and helicopters  
and airplanes. Sonny played into it. I couldn’t  
hear myself but I could hear Sonny.” Zola said  
if you ask me what I came into this life to do,  
I will tell you: I came to live out loud.  
So tell your story. Tell it on this steel-blue day,  
send it out on the glad air that floats over  
the murderous masculine sea. Tell it well,  
and this winsome sky will stroke and caress you,  
this stepmother world throw affectionate arms  
around your neck, as if over one she can yet  
save and bless. Jackie McLean says,  
“I’ve seen Sonny blow some of those tugboat flats  
and sharps and have the tugboat answer him.”  
Tell your story, then, and await the world’s reply.