Questions for Trey Moore
“A Book Said Dream and I Do” by Barbara Ras
A Conversation with Mobi Warren
“A Tale of Two High School Dropouts” by Cyndi Hopper

Collaboration in Literature & Arts
UTSA English Department & Voices de la Luna
Poetry & Arts Places in San Antonio

A poem … begins as a lump in the throat, a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a lovesickness. … It finds the thought and the thought finds the words.  

Robert Frost (1874–1963)

BOTANICAL GARDENS—33 acres of formal gardens, pools, fountains, and natural areas; Native Texas Area, South Center Periscope.

www.sabot.org

CARVER COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER—Traces its historic roots back some 85 years. Facility is both a gallery for contemporary art exhibits and a theater for performing artists.

www.thecarver.org

GUADALUPE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER—Dedicated to the development, preservation, and promotion of Mexican-American arts.

www.guadalupeculturalarts.org

INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES—The Institute is concerned with the people who produced Texas events—people who created the robust kaleidoscope that is Texas today. www.texancultures.com

JAZZ AT THE LANDING—NPR’s acclaimed radio show, Riverwalk Jazz, is produced in San Antonio at The Landing, one of the country’s oldest jazz clubs. www.riverwalkjazz.org

LA VILLITA—This restored Mexican village captures charm of the past amid narrow streets and authentic adobe houses with arts and crafts shops. www.lavillita.com

MAJESTIC THEATER—Opened in 1929; restored in 1989 as a performing arts center, the Majestic is said to be one of the finest “atmospheric” theaters ever built. www.themajestic.com/theatre.htm

MCNAY ART MUSEUM—The mission of the McNay Art Museum is to maintain an art museum on the premises of the estate of Mrs. McNay for the advancement and enjoyment of modern and early art for the educational advantage of the public. www.mcNayArt.org.

MEXICAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE—Exhibits of contemporary Mexican artists. portal.sre.gob.mx/culturamexsaing/


SAN ANTONIO OPERA—The opera currently performs at the Municipal Auditorium, while the Lila Cockrell Theater undergoes a renovation. www.saopera.com.

SAN PEDRO PLAYHOUSE—Call the Box Office for tickets and more information: (210) 733-7258, www.sanpedroplayhouse.com.

SAN ANTONIO SYMPHONY—The mission of the San Antonio Symphony is to inspire, educate, & entertain the people of, and visitors to, San Antonio and South Texas through the performance of live music. www.sasymphony.org.

SOUTHWEST SCHOOL OF ART—Housed in restored city’s only remaining example of French Provincial architecture. Craft Center established alternative art school at site in 1971. www.swschool.org

WITTE MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND SCIENCE—Extensive exhibits covering natural history and natural science of the Texas dioramas of Texas flora and wildlife. Rebuilt on grounds are four early Texas houses and furnished log cabin. www.wittemuseum.org

Poetry Venues

Please see the Events section on page 44.
Cover Page Art

Ode to Van Morrison
Guardian of the Moon
Acrylic Painting by Stevie Kesner Ricks
Anne Parker

The painting Ode to Van Morrison Guardian of the Moon by Texas artist Stevie Kesner Ricks opens a window into personal visions that resonate with echoes of diverse artistic environments. This painting is in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Chris J Weber of San Antonio.

For the last four decades, Kesner Ricks has traveled the world observing cultures and ecosystems, and then created her personal visions of perceived mysteries from Egypt, Peru, China, Japan, New Zealand, Ireland, Italy, Turkey, England, and Greece. Her art has been exhibited in cities across the US, including Chicago, Houston, Detroit, and Reno. She has been a featured artist in international exhibitions in Latin America, including specifically a series of solo and group shows in Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia following a year-long sojourn in Brazil.

The work of Kesner Ricks is held by more than 600 private and corporate collections throughout the U.S. and abroad. Ford Motor Company, Alcoa, and DuPont are among her corporate clients. Kesner Ricks lives and paints in Boerne, Texas where she also maintains a studio.

Voices de la Luna
A Quarterly Poetry & Arts Magazine

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A Letter from the Editors
Mo H Saidi and James Brandenburg

The long election season finally ended on 2 November 2010. For specialists in psephology, the scientific study of elections, there are plenty of races, diverse angles, and surprising outcomes in it to study. Voices de la Luna: A Quarterly Poetry & Arts Magazine finds the whole process bewildering. None of the usual pundits forecast two years ago that after Obama’s dynamic rise with “Yes We Can,” the country would later shift drastically away from his party. Poets are patiently observant; we heave a deep sigh and wait until another social tsunami moves the country forward.

Meanwhile Voices de la Luna is thriving, thanks to our supportive board of directors and advisors and our dedicated staff and editors. In our third year of existence, we continue publishing the magazine in four formats: 1. Hardcopy, 2. Webpage, 3. eMagazine, and 4. Digital Reader. The three electronic versions are accessible without a fee; the hardcopy is mailed only to paid subscribers.

Our current publication schedule puts distribution into the December holiday season and conflicts with National Poetry Month in April. Therefore, effective immediately, we are scheduling quarterly publication on 15 January, 15 April, 15 July, and 15 October. In order to implement the new schedule, we have postponed the 15 December 2010 issue by one month to 15 January 2011.

Audiences at poetry venues in San Antonio are growing. The monthly poetry venue at The Twig Bookstore hosted by Floyd Lamrouex is doing well, and a good student group from Clark High School is participating in our monthly poetry and arts venue at Barnes & Noble at The Shops of La Cantera. Almost seventy people came there in October 2010 when Dr. Carmen Tafolla, recipient of the America’s Award in Children and Adult Literature, was the featured poet of the month. We would like to thank Dr. Tafolla, Ms. Caren Creech, the manager at B & N, and Mrs. Anne K. Parker, the chairperson of the poetry and arts event for performing, hosting, and staging such a successful evening of poetry.

Here is some important news: Voices de la Luna and the UTSA English Department have agreed to collaborate to advance poetry and literature in San Antonio. We are grateful to Dr. Bridget Drinka, the Chair of the English Department for negotiating this agreement. Dr. Laura Davenport, an instructor of Creative Writing at UTSA and a high school English teacher, and Debra Pena, a doctoral student and instructor in the English Department, will join the editorial staff and the board of directors of Voices de la Luna as of 15 January 2011. Davenport will serve as Copy Editor and Pena as Associate Editor for prose. In return, Voices de la Luna will dedicate several pages in both hardcopy and digital formats in every quarterly publication to the UTSA English Department, so they can publish faculty, staff, and student work there. The staff of Sagebrush Review is also invited to collaborate with Voices Editors and the Technical Director to construct and assign these pages appropriate names and titles.

Because we believe poetry heals minds, and arts advance the quality of life, we strive to continue with the magazine’s publication, to stage poetry and prose workshops, and to present monthly poetry readings and workshops for youth, high school students, homeless people, and inmates at the Bexar County Detention Center.
Featured Poem

“A Book Said Dream and I Do”
from The Last Skin by Barbara Ras*

There were feathers and the light that passed through feathers. There were birds that made the feathers and the sun that made the light.
The feathers of the birds made the air soft, softer than the quiet in a cocoon waiting for wings, stiller than the stare of a hooded falcon.
But no falcons in this green made by the passage of parents. No, not parents, parrots flying through slow sleep casting green rays to light the long dream.
If skin, dew would have drenched it, but dust hung in space like the stoppage of time itself, which, after dancing with parrots, had said, Thank you. I’ll rest now.
It’s not too late to say the parrot light was thick enough to part with a hand, and the feathers softening the path, fallen after so much touching of cheeks, were red, hibiscus red split by veins of flight now at the end of flying.
Despite the halt of time, the feathers trusted red and believed indolence would fill the long dream, until the book shut and time began again to hurt.

*B Barbara Ras was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1949, and educated at Simmons College and at the University of Oregon where she received an MFA in Creative Writing. Her first collection of poems, Bite Every Sorrow (LSU Press, 1998), was chosen by C. K. Williams to receive the 1997 Walt Whitman Award. Bite Every Sorrow was subsequently awarded the Kate Tufts Discovery Award. In 1999, Ras was named Georgia Poet of the Year. Her other books of poetry include One Hidden Stuff (2006) and The Last Skin (2010). Ras has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference. She has taught at writing programs across the country and has been on the faculty of the M.F.A. Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. Ras currently lives in San Antonio and directs Trinity University Press.

2010 Nobel Prize Winner in Literature
Mario Vargas Llosa
Maria-Eugenia Cossío-Ameduri

When the spokesman for the Nobel Prize Foundation announced that this year’s winner was the Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa, he explained that Vargas Llosa was chosen for “his cartography of the structures of power, and his trenchant images of the individual’s resistance, revolt and defeat.”

Born in 1936, in Arequipa, Peru, Vargas Llosa is one of those controversial and complex individuals he writes about. Politically speaking, he leaned to the left in his youth, but in 1990 he ran for president of Peru as a conservative. His falling out with fellow writer and friend García Márquez caused a commotion when in 1976 he punched him in the eye and since then refused to let his masterful essay on García Márquez’ work, Historia de un Deicidio, be reprinted.

A most prolific and versatile Latin-American writer, Vargas Llosa has published more than 50 literary works. Besides being a journalist, he has written short stories, novels, plays, essays, literary criticism and even children’s books.

As a writer he is always stretching, reaching and exploring different narrative genres, never confining himself to the genre he is writing in. His essays and literary criticism on Flaubert, Victor Hugo, Juan Carlos Onetti and García Márquez are splendid because, in addition to his in-depth analysis of the texts, he uses his broad erudition to illuminate them. Each one of his works is a reflection on the art of the narrative. His political journalism has been abundant and many times controversial as his book Diary about Iraq exemplifies.

As a novelist, he has not been afraid of experimenting with different narrative genres or voices. Consequently, he does not repeat himself. From the very beginning his novels have been structurally intricate, with inner monologues and constant goings back and forth in time and space, using also different voices and points of view. Unlike García Márquez, his novels are “realistic,” exposing the violence always present in Latin America.

Each novel is original, belonging to either a different genre or having a challenging structure. His first novel is the quasi autobiographical The Time of the Hero, set in a school with the same name as the one he attended. It became a sensation because it depicts a military world with no heroes, where only violence and astuteness count if you want to survive. This was followed by the publication of The Green House, which is mostly the story of a brothel, told in a fragmented narrative that reflects the fragmentation of life itself.

Since then he has published many novels, some better realized than others. I have personally enjoyed his humorous novels like Captain Pantaja and the Special Service, which illustrates that in Latin America sexual “services” can be very well organized if the right person is in charge, and Aunt Julia and the Script-writer, which is loosely based on his own courtship. Thoroughly enjoyable as well are his mystery novels, Who Killed Palomino Molero, in which the investigation exposes the corruption in society, and Death in the Andes, where the mystery of the three disappeared men serves as counterpoint to the constant threat of the Sendero Luminoso terrorists. I found his erotic novels, In Praise of the Step Mother, The Notebooks of Don Rigoberto and The Bad Girl, delightful and fun to read. His political novel, The Feast of the Goat, on dictator Rafael Trujillo’s last days, is impeccably researched and gripping, but his encyclopedic novel The Way to Paradise is overwrought with too much erudition that slows the reading.

A very well deserved winner of the Nobel and many other prizes because of his monumental and admirable opus, Vargas Llosa is a true man of letters. As one of his many readers, I can say that reading his books has always been a rewarding experience because I have been intellectually challenged and many times mesmerized by the tour de force of his narrative.
Mo H. Saidi: You emphasize that you are a poet and fourth generation carpenter; do you believe with Gabriel García Márquez that “ultimately, literature is nothing but carpentry”?

Trey Moore: For me, carpentry is part of my ancestral heritage and roots. Building houses was grounding for me as I put myself through graduate school and experienced the world in a very tactile way. There is a sense of accomplishment that writing and building share when an idea develops into a beautiful object, but carpentry requires that you know where you are going, and for me, writing leads me into the unknown, into self-discovery.

You paint, produce films, perform instrumental music, and sing. Which genre garners your most intense passion?

Singing is a natural and invigorating form of expression that happens without much thought; whistling or humming melodies in moments of daydream, some poems, such as “ant, moth, faithless by design” etc., come directly from this process. I pay a lot of attention to melody and rhythm in my poems, and they are truly expressed during my performances. In some ways, the film process is a higher form of communicating, and I love the imagistic montages of the 20s; Sergei Eisenstein’s books have been a real blessing. I have to listen to what form the work or voice wants to take, sometimes the poem is not big enough, or the film too large, or the painting too silent. I move between these medias to express myself fully. Painting is a wonderful release and an emotive exercise that allows me to document place, which is very important to my writing. Paintings stand side by side in my journals with my writing, so the reader actually gets a truer sense of my process … emotions, memories, images, and place.

Sometimes your poetry seems insecure and wondrous. Are you happy with your life?

Insecurity and wonder are matters of interpretation. I am constantly growing and my emotions grow with me. My pursuit is wisdom, which means being handed one impossible situation after another and having the patience not to move quickly into judgment. I realized early that there are no right answers and that felt like a great mountain lifted from my shoulders. I’m only human, and accept those limitations wondrously. Yes, I am very happy with my life.

Who is Felice Moore to whom you dedicated your latest book of poetry, Some Will Play the Cello?

My grandmother Felice Moore was the most influential person in my life. While I was shaping and writing this poetic novella, my grandmother was moving into the last stage of her life. Part of the reason I returned to San Antonio was to be with her; we shared so much, her hopes and failures, her life, our ancestors’ stories, jokes. She loved to laugh, and above all else she was a deep, deep thinker. She passed before the book was published, but I read all the poems about her and our family to her. She was a great advocate of the arts and communication. A graduate of Brackenridge High School, she was offered a scholarship to study opera in New York during the 30s, but decided she wanted a family and stayed in San Antonio. She was well-known around the city singing the gospel circuit. She sang in English, German, French, and Spanish. I believe a love for art was the connection that she recognized in me.

In several poems you write about homeless people; why are you interested in them?

My poetry is about inclusion; I am capturing the connectedness of all things. The homeless are a living reminder that I live in an unjust society that tolerates brothers and sisters without clothes, without shelter. It is morally corrupting to pretend the homeless do not exist. Some Will Play the Cello is all about witnessing the world we live in with all its grand contradictions. One of the most profound experiences of my life was teaching a group of recovering homeless men and women at Safe Haven. If we can remove the distance, the arrogance, there’s a lot to learn.

In “Dinner Seat: Between Kitchen and Expectation,” you are bewildered by the waiter looking at you. Why?

Actually in the happening, which I poetically transposed, she is talking to the cook through the little window into the kitchen. It is the cook that is staring at her and won’t speak. She gets frustrated and angry. I was seated at the bar, front row seats for this small movie, this vignette. I had been a cook during my undergraduate studies at UT Austin, and suddenly I was transported to all those years in the kitchen. I missed this closeness, the dynamics of interaction between management, wait staff, cooks, and bussers. I wanted to write about all that is not talked about when we get our food, all the lives present in their wholeness. This was one of the motivations for writing this novella; I did not want a collection of poems, I anted poems that sang and shouted with their own voices. So when I began thinking about where a single, working man spends his time, I thought…convenience stores, restaurants, work … that’s where I took the audience. Many poems in the

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book happen in convenience stores, and if we slow down, which is counter to the idea of this type of commercial space, we see the human drama.

You believe a true artist is not intimidated by the idea of failure. Have you ever failed in anything? How did you deal with it?

Oh yeah, I fail all the time. It’s one of the most natural experiences humanity can share in; we are always failing. Of course, we continue with life. We dust ourselves off. Frank Sinatra’s song comes to mind, “I’ve been a puppet, a poet, a pauper, a pawn, and a king.” I believe that failure leads to success. An artist, a true artist, is not thinking about audience or what will work, or how to do this or that; that’s turning art into marketing, advertising, mimicry, flattery, sentimentality, nostalgia. An artist, in my opinion, is someone willing to take risks, to challenge their understanding, to challenge what is comfortable and discover something about themselves in the process. That discovery might become apparent much later, sometimes years later, that’s fine. Life isn’t about immediate results. I’ll admit, there are whole file cabinets full of half born projects, hundreds of pages of writings, hours of film, etc... but I keep going, and what I find is that through this process I have grown in deep ways, truer to the journey, both internally and externally.

Unfortunately in the U.S. speaking another language is still considered somewhat suspect, while most people in the rest of the industrialized world are at least bilingual. What is your position on bilingual education and on teaching foreign languages in public school? Do you speak and write a second language?

Communication is the foundation for an open society. Speaking one language is ethnocentric, but believing that only one language should be spoken or “understood” is so behind the times. This is a global world, like it or not. Speaking multiple languages is a survival skill. My great-grandmother taught bilingual education at Collins Gardens Elementary (San Antonio) from 1926-55. So that’s our history and I speak Spanish quite well.

You write about your ancestors who came to Texas from Germany and Mexico. The U.S. is a nation of immigrants, and the concept of legal immigration is pretty recent. Do you believe we should find a way to include the millions of people who live and work in this country but have no legal status?

Immigration is a huge issue. There needs to be a worker visa status for undocumented workers, because they are being exploited and this exploitation invites criminal elements on both sides of the border. I do not like the border wall; it’s hypocrisy. I went to Canada in August; there is no border wall. It would serve all citizens of the U.S. if we could concentrate on all that is right and honest about our relationship with Mexico. America needs to recognize that we have benefited from our relationship with Mexico in a lot of ways for hundreds of years. Just look at the migrant labor policies from WWII to present, and the naturalization of populations after the colonization of the West. There’s a lot of dirty business in the past with which we have not yet come to terms. We still have a lot of work to do, just living up to the preamble of our Constitution.

What do you think about the Tea Party movement, about their influence on the arts?

I don’t think about the Tea Party too much, the selfishness and vehemence of their message excludes me from their movement or dialog. Oh yeah and I vote. I don’t need to speculate about the arts, they’re in bad shape, and it hasn’t changed on either side. The elephant in the room is that a culture without art is dying. All my work is to bring art back to children, back to schools, back to communities, and I will never stop this work.

I just returned from Africa, a continent of many beliefs. Are you a non-believer or a born-again Christian?

I do not rely on labels to describe my spiritual understanding. I have lived with indigenous people; traveled to South East Asia to study Buddhism; read the Koran, the Vedas, the Popol Vul, and creation myths from many cultures. They are powerful forms of identity that offer answers and questions for the human experience. I am Christian in faith and upbringing. I am definitely NOT a born-again Christian. I am definitely NOT a non-believer. Paraphrasing Jung, it is my job to understand the power of my ancestral heritage, not to exclude it, repress it, demonize it. I must search out and discover what is healing, question it deeply, and find my own spiritual path.

Thank you very much for your time.

The Writer’s Near Death Experience

Fyodor Dostoyevsky and the Firing Squad

Fyodor Dostoyevsky was sentenced to death for plotting against the Russian state. The evidence: He’d been part of a group of young intellectuals who got together and discussed utopian socialist ideas and read books that had been specifically banned by the Imperial Court of Czar Nicholas. In addition, they disagreed with Russia’s political system of absolute monarchy. They also thought the economic system that upheld serfdom was a bad one.

The revolutions of 1848, which swept through France, Germany, Austria, and other parts of Europe during the previous year, made the czar nervous, so he rounded up progressive thinkers and put them in prison. Dostoyevsky, already a famous writer, was a member of the Petrashevsky Circle, one of the groups that met to discuss radical liberal ideas. In the spring, he and other members of the circle were put in jail, and on this day (Nov 16) 161 years ago he was condemned to death.

The following month, Dostoyevsky was taken out to face a firing squad. In the middle of winter before Christmas, he and his fellow condemned were taken to a public square. Then the retreat was sounded on the drums, but an order from the Czar was read, commuting the death sentence to eight years of hard labor in a Siberian work camp. In the end he served only four years.

Dostoyevsky lived more than three decades after he appeared before his executioners, writing novels like Crime and Punishment (1866), The Idiot (1868), The Possessed (1872), and The Brothers Karamazov (1880). In The House of the Dead (1862) he wrote, “The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons.”
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Collaboration in Literature & Arts

UTSA English Department and Voices de la Luna

Starting with the 15 January 2011 issue, Voices de la Luna: A Quarterly Poetry & Arts Magazine will begin collaborating with the English Department at UTSA to publish and promote poetry, literature and arts in San Antonio. The editors and staff of Voices de la Luna are proud to make this announcement and are grateful to Dr. Bridget Drinka, the Chairwoman of the English Department for her leadership in this matter, making the collaboration possible. The magazine will reflect the department’s invaluable community and educational services in San Antonio and the South Texas communities by providing dedicated pages in the hardcopy and electronic formats of the magazine.

Note from Dr. Drinka’s 3 November 2010 Email
I am so pleased that all went so well at your meeting on November 2. I am happy that we now have this solid connection with Voices de la Luna, and I look forward to seeing the effects of our faculty and students’ contributions. I share your appreciation for the work that Laura and Debra will do. They are both very busy, and I know that they only have so much time to spare. But I’m also sure that they regard this as a great opportunity, and will both do a wonderful job.

Report from the 2 November 2010 Joint Meeting
Thank you so much for the good meeting of your colleagues from the UTSA English Department with Voices de la Luna staff; here is the summary of how we will collaborate:
1. Mrs. Debra Pena, a doctoral candidate and instructor at the UTSA is willing to be the “Associate Editor for Prose.” Mo will forward eligible prose articles to Debra for review.
2. Dr. Laura Davenport, an instructor at the UTSA, will be a “Copy Editor,” mainly for prose work, and review the articles sent to her electronically by the Co-Editors. She will participate in editorial committee meetings, and has agreed to be nominated as a member to the board of directors of Voices de la Luna, where she will represent English department’s concerns and interests.
3. Voices de la Luna will set aside several pages of the magazine: hardcopy, webpage, digital reader, and of the eMagazine versions, to exclusive use for poetry, prose, and educational material from the UTSA English Department.
4. Voices de la Luna will dedicate a section of its webpage to Sagebrush Journal and provide as many drop-down pages below the designated icon as determined to be necessary by the journal’s editors in each quarterly update.
5. Voices de la Luna will promote literary activities and venues of the UTSA English Dept and install well noticeable links/references in all its four formats of the magazine.
6. Voices de la Luna will work, if they will, with the staff of Sagebrush Review to promote and help them build the assigned electronic pages in the Voices de la Luna four formats.
7. Voices de la Luna will dedicate at least one of the monthly Poetry and Arts venues at B & N at The Shops of La Cantera to the UTSA English Dept and its faculty and students.

UTSA English Department
CREATIVE WRITING READING SERIES

The UTSA Creative Writing Reading Series was inaugurated in 1983 when Carolyn Forché read on a Friday afternoon to a room of 100 people. Over the years the series has hosted such writers as Mary Oliver, Ernest Gaines, Tobias Wolff, Denise Levertov, Alberto Ríos, Pat Mora, Diane Wakoski, Edward Hirsch, and many other poets and fiction writers who not only give public readings but also visit classes and meet with students about their writing. We’ve had as many as twelve readings by visiting writers in a year but have settled on three or four annually as an ideal number. This reading series is made possible through the generosity of our Donors.

BELINDA ACOSTA
Friday, January 21st (7:30 pm)
An Austin-based journalist, Belinda Acosta has written reviews and features on books, film, and the arts, in addition to a weekly media column (“TV Eye”) for the Austin Chronicle. Her work has appeared in Poets & Writers, Latino USA, AlterNet, and other publications. A Michener Fellow at the University of Texas at Austin, she received her MFA in Writing in 1997. Damas, Dramas, and Ana Ruiz (Grand Central Publishing, 2009) is her first novel. Her second novel, Sisters, Strangers, and Starting Over, was published in 2010. This reading is sponsored in conjunction with The Macondo Foundation, which works with dedicated and compassionate writers who view their work and talents as part of a larger task of community-building and non-violent social change. To learn more about Macondo’s Writing Workshops, Grants and Residencies, visit them at: http://www.macondoworkshop.org.

KEVIN CLARK
Friday, February 25th (7:30 pm)
Kevin Clark’s second collection of poetry, Self-Portrait with Expletives, won the 2009 Pleiades Press contest and was published in the Lena-Miles Wever Todd Poetry Series in 2010. His first book of poems, In the Evening of No Warning (New Issues Press, 2002), earned a grant from the Academy of American Poets. He has also published three chapbooks, and his poems, essays, and reviews have appeared in such journals as the Georgia, Iowa, and Antioch Reviews, Gulf Coast, Ploughshares, and Crazyhorse. Pearson Longman publishes his poetry writing textbook, The Mind’s Eye. He teaches at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo and at the Rainier Writing Workshop, a low-residency MFA program in Tacoma.

Free Parking is available for all Reading Series Events at the 1604 Campus in unmarked spaces in Lot #5. For more info, please visit: http://www.utsa.edu/creativewriting/index.html.
I shuddered when Olivia, who is writing her dissertation
on dialectics of the self in Gloria Anzaldua, announced she found him
lovely. “Lovely?” I cried, professional composure shot,
my image of Frost collapsing suddenly as the Great Stone Face
on Cannon Mountain, the craggy Old Man fallen in shards
to the ground. True, this was not on par with the vandalizing
of his house in Vermont, Homer Noble Farm’s wicker chairs,
wooden tables, dressers smashed and thrown into the fire to keep
the place warm while thirty kids swilled a hundred and fifty
cans of Bud with a dozen bottles of Jack Daniel’s, and threw up
on the floor. After all, Olivia wasn’t saying she didn’t like
the poems, but lovely? A word my mother detested as phoney,
like someone holding a pinky straight out while drinking tea,
the sort of word my grandmother used when vaguely praising
a Bartok piece, or a play she didn’t understand. Like people
saying, “How interesting,” when what they really mean is, “Spare me
the details,” or, “Could we change the subject.” So when
I asked Olivia what she meant by “lovely” and she talked about
the lush, long vowel sounds, I wondered why I’d felt stabbed,
until I remembered my father’s lying in the ICU, the fat respirator
tube jammed down his throat, the whoosh of forced breath
fogging the glassed-in-room, and my stroking his forehead while
my father, whom I’d never seen cry, began to leak tears down
his chiseled face. Finally, not knowing what more to do, I stood
by the window staring out at the New Hampshire pines
and began reciting one of his favorite poems: “I must go down
to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky.” He started
to jerk, whole body spasms under the sheets, more tears carving
runnels down his cheeks, and I knew he wanted me to recite
“Stopping By Woods,” his most-loved poem and maybe mine too,
but I couldn’t. I couldn’t turn from that window looking
out at the trees beyond the parking lot, the words to the one
poem I’ve known by heart for decades buried somewhere
below my throat. He died the next day. Maybe that was why
I asked the class if we could recite it, if perhaps some of them
had it memorized, and Denise and Lupe and Nathaniel actually
said they had. So we chanted it, the other eight of us
reading from the Norton’s crisp, white pages, but when we came
to the ending, not a single student needed to look down
as we sang the last stanza all together. I can’t explain it, but for once
something dark and deep entered among us in the shivery
air-conditioned room. As if we were all one self and yet still alone
in the cold, and wanting to stay. When we talked again,
we talked until I had to stand up, open the door, and tell them
to leave, say it was past time for their dinners and
all the lovely, nagging promises waiting for them to keep.
News & Views
Susan B. Anthony Goes to Prison
Because She Registered to Vote
From Wikipedia

It was in 1872 that Susan B. Anthony voted, almost 50 years before the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote. Four days earlier, Anthony and three of her sisters had gone to a voter registration office in a barbershop and demanded to register. She had followed all of the protocol, including spending the 30 days prior to the election in the district where she planned to vote.

There were three young men serving as the voting registrars, and Anthony announced her intention to vote. She quoted from the Constitution and the recently passed 14th Amendment, which guaranteed voting rights to all men, regardless of race, and which began: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” In her thinking, women were citizens too, and so they shouldn’t be denied the right to vote.

The men were not impressed with this argument. They were much more impressed when she announced: “If you refuse us our rights as citizens, I will bring charges against you in criminal court, and I will sue each of you personally for large, exemplary damages! I know I can win. I have Judge Selden as a lawyer. There is any amount of money to back me, and if I have to, I will push to the ‘last ditch’ in both courts.” They didn’t know what to do, but finally agreed to let the women register, figuring that it would take the matter out of their hands.

So on a November day in 1872, Susan B. Anthony voted, supporting the politicians that she thought were most sympathetic to the cause of women’s suffrage.

On November 18th, a young man, a deputy marshal, came to her door and arrested her. She said later: “In the car he took out his pocketbook to pay fare. I asked if he did that in his official capacity. He said yes; he was obliged to pay the fare of any criminal he arrested. Well, that was the first cents worth I ever had from Uncle Sam.”

She finally had a full trial in June of 1873, for which occasion she got a new bonnet trimmed in blue silk. The courtroom was packed. Anthony had a great lawyer, Henry Selden, who was confident of his ability to win her case. He argued: “If the same act had been done by her brother under the same circumstances, the act would have been not only innocent, but honorable and laudable; but having been done by a woman it is said to be a crime. The crime therefore consists not in the act done, but in the simple fact that the person doing it was a woman and not a man. I believe this is the first instance in which a woman has been arraigned in a criminal court, merely on account of her sex.” He argued that the 14th Amendment should guarantee her the right to vote, and finally pointed out that even if it didn’t, she had believed that it did, and therefore was not breaking the law.

But the judge, Ward Hunt, had pre-decided the case. Anthony described him as “a small-brained, pale-faced, prim-looking man, enveloped in a faultless black suit and a snowy white tie.” He refused to let Anthony be called as a witness in her own defense. After the prosecution’s final response, Judge Hunt pulled out a piece of paper that he had already written up and read aloud his opinion, which was that she had broken the law. He concluded: “Upon this evidence I suppose there is no question for the jury and that the jury should be directed to find a verdict of guilty.” The clerk entered a verdict of guilty, and the jury never got to deliberate the case, never got a chance to talk at all. Hunt claimed that he had the right to do that, because, he said, a trial by jury “exists only in respect of a disputed fact.” In his opinion, there was nothing disputed about this trial.

Susan B. Anthony lost the trial, but she continued to campaign for women’s suffrage. She died in 1906. Thirteen years later, women were finally able to vote legally.

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Born on 15 January 1929

Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was an American clergyman, activist, and prominent leader in the African American civil rights movement. He is best known for being an iconic figure in the advancement of civil rights in the United States and around the world, using nonviolent methods following the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. King is often presented as a heroic leader in the history of modern American liberalism.

A Baptist minister, King became a civil rights activist early in his career. He led the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, serving as its first president. King’s efforts led to the 1963 March on Washington, where King delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech. There, he expanded American values to include the vision of a color blind society, and established his reputation as one of the greatest orators in American history.

In 1964, King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his work to end racial segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other nonviolent means. By the time of his death in 1968, he had refocused his efforts on ending poverty and stopping the Vietnam War.

King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and Congressional Gold Medal in 2004; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was established as a U.S. national holiday in 1986.
The Miscarriage of Justice in Texas
Why should you care about Anthony Graves?
from http://www.anthonygraves.org

Anthony Graves and the Rule of Law

The murders took place in the small town of Somerville, Texas, in 1992. The victims were: Bobbie Davis, 45 years old; Nicole Davis, 16; and four little children: D’Nitra, 9; Brittany, 6; Lea Erin, 5; and Jason, 4. Three weapons were used: a knife, a hammer, and a .22 calibre gun. To cover up the killings the house was set on fire.

Soon afterwards one Robert Carter, father of one of the victims, was arrested. He confessed to having taken part in the killings. In a trial in 1994 he was sentenced to death.

The trial of Anthony Graves also took place in 1994. The main witness for the prosecution was Carter, who named Graves as his accomplice. The jury gave Graves the death penalty.

But after the trial Carter took back his testimony, and said that he had lied about Graves, under pressure from the prosecutor. Carter kept on saying this up until his last statement, before he was executed on May 31, 2000: “Anthony Graves had nothing to do with it. I lied on him in court.”

And during the years more and more people—lawyers, reporters, law students and judges—have begun to realize that there might be something very wrong in the case against Anthony Graves. A father of three, a man with no violent past, and with no discernible motive for taking part in these murders.

There was definitely something very wrong with the trial in 1994 where Graves was sentenced to death. After it was established that the prosecutor kept vital facts from the defense team, the federal 5th Circuit Court decided on March 3, 2006 to award Anthony Graves a new trial.

This trial is set to begin in February 2011, in Graves’ hometown Brenham, in Washington County, Texas. It ought to attract the attention of a lot of people. It is an important trial not only for Anthony Graves but also for Texas, and indeed for the United States. In fact it concerns everybody, regardless of nationality, ethnicity or political convictions, who wants to see the rule of law upheld.

We behind this website and its material are friends, both from the United States and from Europe, of Anthony Graves and his family.

We are not telling you that Anthony Graves is innocent. All we ask you is to have a look at the facts that are collected in this material and then ask yourself how you would judge the case. Are there any doubts about the guilt of Anthony Graves? Are you concerned about the outcome of the trial in Brenham in 2011?

Anthony Graves Becomes 12th Death Row Inmate Exonerated in Texas
from http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org

Anthony Graves (pictured) was released from a Texas prison on October 27 after Washington-Burleson County District Attorney Bill Parham filed a motion to dismiss all charges that had resulted in Graves being sent to death row 16 years ago. Graves was convicted in 1994 of assisting Robert Carter in multiple murders in 1992. There was no physical evidence linking Graves to the crime, and his conviction relied primarily on Carter’s testimony that Graves was his accomplice. Two weeks before Carter was scheduled to be executed in 2000, he provided a statement saying he lied about Graves’s involvement in the crime. He repeated that statement minutes before his execution. In 2006, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit overturned Graves’s conviction and ordered a new trial after finding that prosecutors elicited false statements and withheld testimony that could have influenced the jurors. After D.A. Parham began to reassemble the case and review the evidence, he hired former Harris County assistant district attorney Kelly Siegler as a special prosecutor. Siegler soon realized that making a case against Graves would be impossible: “After months of investigation and talking to every witness who’s ever been involved in this case, and people who’ve never been talked to before, after looking under every rock we could find, we found not one piece of credible evidence that links Anthony Graves to the commission of this capital murder. This is not a case where the evidence went south with time or witnesses passed away or we just couldn’t make the case anymore. He is an innocent man,” Siegler said.

Graves is the 12th person to be exonerated from Texas’s death row since 1973 and the 139th such person in the country. Only Florida and Illinois have had more exonerations during this time. When Illinois had their 13th exoneration, the governor declared a moratorium on executions that continues to this day.

McNay Art Museum
6000 North New Braunfels, San Antonio, Texas 78209
210.805.1767
http://www.mcnayart.org

Upcoming Exhibitions
ARTMATTERS 14: Sandy Skoglund: The Cocktail Party
February 16 – May 8, 2011
The fourteenth presentation in the museum’s ARTMATTERS series of works by contemporary artists, the McNay presents Sandy Skoglund’s surreal sculptural installation The Cocktail Party.

New Image Sculpture
February 16 – May 8, 2011
New Image Sculpture assembles the work of an intergenerational group of emerging and mid-career artists who freely borrow from the worlds of ethnographic and material culture, folk art, fashion, hobby crafts, DIY, and the shelves of home improvement stores.
Healing & Arts
A Conversation with Mobi Warren
James Brandenburg

James Brandenburg: At what age did you begin writing poetry? What inspired you?
Mobi Warren: When I was in first grade, a second grade neighbor told me they were writing poems. I remember being astonished to learn that ordinary people, including children, could write poems. I longed to be in second grade so I could learn how to do that. All I really knew at the time were Dr. Seuss and Mother Goose rhymes and A Child’s Garden of Verses (a book I deeply loved), but I had this sense that poetry was a vast and important world, and I wanted to be part of it. My first real poem didn’t get written until I was 8 or 9—a simple piece about world peace and the death of my beloved cat, Professor. In 8th grade at Pat Neff Junior High in San Antonio, my English teacher, Robert Sosa, suggested I do a term paper on Homer’s Iliad. I read Robert Graves’ translation and only managed to read the first four books before the paper was due. I didn’t have a clue about the universal themes or overarching story, but the raw force of the language mesmerized me. That sense of poetry as vital and beautiful sound, something to be read aloud, took root, as did a passion for things Ancient Greek.

Did you study literature? Where did you receive your degrees?
I took a few literature courses as an undergrad at UT Austin where I was an Ancient Greek major. I spent a semester reading and translating the fragments of Sappho … but the Vietnam War was raging, and I reached a point where I felt it was more important to work to end the war … I left UT in my junior year and spent three years in Paris, France as a volunteer with the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation, led by the activist monk Thich Nhat Hanh, one of Vietnam’s most loved poets. So I received a mentorship in poetry rooted in a Buddhist sensibility. I didn’t become the Classics professor I originally set out to become (my Masters is in Multidisciplinary Sciences from Incarnate Word), but I continue to read Sappho for instruction— her voice is so clean, so intimate.

Do you teach poetry writing to your elementary students? What kinds of exercises do you use with them?
One of the most effective writing exercises I’ve used with 4th and 5th graders is to have them adopt a spot of earth on the playground, move into silence, and simply observe whatever is there—a leaf, a pebble, an ant—and then write about it. That connection to earth really opens things up. One year I had a troubled student who had been evacuated with her mother from New Orleans after they lost everything in Hurricane Katrina. Here was a child who had witnessed the devastating violence of that storm and its aftermath, and yet when she sat on that little spot of ground, her heart opened, and she wrote: Cover me with your leaves, tree/Cover me with your grass, ground/Cover me with your cloud, sky/Cover me with anything ‘cause/Mother Earth loves all creatures/Mother Nature, cover me with your creatures. Her poem became a kind of anthem for our class and later in the year when she moved away, another child wrote a poem that said: Brittany’s poem is so important to me/It’s like an everlasting bubble gum/Even though she has moved away/The excitement and flavor is still there. When you see things like that in the classroom, you really understand the transformative power of poetry. Young people naturally get this, and they are hungry to have their voices acknowledged.

Talk about how you connect your adult students to nature through the writing of poetry. What kinds of exercises do you use?
Sitting quietly on the earth works for adults, too. On the First Sunday Haiku Hikes I lead out at Government Canyon, we walk silently on the rocky trails and stop to write while sitting on Earth’s limestone bones. Listening to the voices of water, bird, creaking juniper, even insistent mosquito—one encounters the original sources of human language. I love the hike’s culmination when hikers share their tiny poems by reading them aloud. There’s this wonderful sense that we are not just reading our poems for human ears, but we are reading them to trees and spiders, to lace licti and sleeping coyotes. With gratitude, we return the recent pearls of human language to the larger, far older web of language that is the living Earth.

Do you have a regular schedule, time and place where you write?
I wish! Teaching elementary school absorbs a lot of energy, so during the school year I don’t keep to any regular schedule. I write when I can. In the summer, I commit to a rhythm of writing 3-4 hours a day. I do almost all my writing on a laptop in my living room where my worktable is set up. I face a big window where I can look out at the cedar elms, hackberries, and live oaks in my backyard. The presence of trees has always helped root my writing, and tree imagery often weaves into my poems. Most of my writing takes place at that worktable, but a good chunk of it also takes place on my runs. I do a lot of revision work while running. I don’t set out intending to do any kind of writing work, it just naturally bubbles up. All those good endorphins, no doubt.

Many poets believe that poetry changes lives and can touch people’s emotions in a very profound way. What do you believe to be the purpose of writing poetry? What drives you?
I know that poetry sustains and moves me, and in essential ways helps make me who I am. I cannot imagine life without it. For me poetry is about discovering and unveiling connections through the potent vehicle of language—connections to self and other until the very notion of self and other dissolves. I am a very minor, local poet, more interested really in encouraging others in the community to try their hand at writing because I know that poetry teaches us how to live authentically, how to grieve and celebrate fully.

Does writing poetry have any therapeutic value for you?
I don’t tend to think of my own poetry in therapeutic terms, though I know that others … Mary Oliver and Mark Doty in particular have had a truly healing effect on me, whether or not I was looking for healing. And writing poems about the deaths of my grandmother, mother, and best friend helped me find kernels of beauty in grief, helped me travel through the black hole of grief to a place of gratitude.
The grief I am having the hardest time coming to grips with these days is how humans are unraveling the systems of life on earth—climate change caused by our burning fossil fuels, the polluting and squandering of water sources, the mass extinctions of animals and plants. The two things that keep me sane in the face of so much loss are running and poetry. I experience running as a kind of poetry in motion, and I definitely find it therapeutic—medicine for body, mind, and soul. One great thing about distance running is you can use marathons to raise funds for causes you are passionate about … it’s not so easy to raise funds by writing poems, but one can raise awareness. I have this idea of writing a series of poems based on my runs that I envision being a kind of medicine poetry for the planet.

What about the poetry community in San Antonio?
It is incredible—so many fine poets to learn from, be mentored and inspired by. I owe a debt of gratitude to Naomi Shihab Nye and Wendy Barker for helping my own writing along. Jim LaVilla-Havelin puts together an amazing National Poetry Month every year, and I’m grateful for workshops at Gemini Ink—I’m still digesting kernels of poetry wisdom from Pattianne Rogers and Arthur Sze. There is a great affiliation for poetry in San Antonio and best of all, we benefit by living in a bilingual and multicultural city. I get excited when I see Spanish and English language traditions cross-pollinate to create a poetry that is uniquely San Antonio … and a huge thanks to Voices de la Luna for getting so many poems and poetry conversations in print!

Do twitter, cell phones and cruising the Internet have a negative impact on young people’s ability to relate to poetry?
There is something rather haiku like in crafting condensed messages on Twitter, and a lot of poetry is being shared and circulated on Internet sites and blogs. I think social media and the Internet offer a lot of opportunities to connect young people with poetry.

How would you advise writers who want to see their poetry in print?
I’m probably not the best person to ask, as I have not been as dedicated as I might have been in getting my own work published. But I would say: attend writing workshops that interest you—the feedback they provide helps you grow as a writer and puts you in touch with the writing community. Read other poets daily. Embrace the discipline of revisions. The most important thing is to share your work. Share your poems at free mic venues, print them on postcards and send as gifts to folks you know, e-mail or twitter them. A poem you have written may be exactly what one other person needs. Sharing engenders feedback and support. You find out what works, what doesn’t. An alchemy starts taking place that transforms you from unpublished poet to published poet. At least, that has been my own experience.

Additional Information:
Haiku Hikes take place on the first Sunday of most months at Government Canyon State Natural Area. For information, go to: http://www.friendsofgc.org/schedule.html
Warren co-organizes the annual poetry reading, Words for Birds, during National Poetry Month in April, that celebrates our feathered friends at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. Warren’s website http://350SanAntonio.org was created to build local awareness and solutions on climate change: it offers a poetry section that welcomes submissions of poems that address climate change and environmental concerns.

Phantom
Mobi Warren

The double trunks of an oak shared a long kiss,
a Rodin embrace in bark.
Lightning struck and one trunk smoldered to a black shell.
Sap blistered to crust
the color of turmeric,
bright yellow root, spice to staunch bleeding.

A soldier lost both legs, was placed
on a pile of corpses like a cord of wood,
when he heard a woman’s voice plead
Not yet.

His hand reached for the ribbon
of that voice, and he lived.
The voice without a body traveled to him
from the seam between life and death, woody-scented, pungent.

Autumn Song
Philip Terman

Now that the leaves have achieved
their riotous colors, and are scattering
back to their original condition of soil,
now that the nests are all visible---

I can study what it means
to be perfectly balanced, how
to shelter my bowl of emptiness,
how to wait for my bird to return.

*Philip Terman’s five collections of poems include The House of Sages, Book of the Unbroken Days, and, most recently, Rabbi of the Air. His poems and essays have appeared in many journals and anthologies, including Poetry magazine, the Kenyon Review, the Georgia Review, and Blood to Remember: American Poets Respond to the Holocaust. He has received the Sow’s Ear Chapbook Award, the Kenneth Patchen Award from Pig Iron Press, and the Anna Davidson Rosenberg Award for Poems on the Jewish Experience. He is a co-director of the Chautauqua Writers’ Festival and teaches creative writing at Clarion University of Pennsylvania.
Music & Poetry
Bob Dylan Is a Poet, Artist, and Song Writer

Bob Dylan: “I’m a poet, and I know it”

In 2004, a *Newsweek* magazine article called Bob Dylan “the most influential cultural figure now alive,” and with good reason. He has released more than forty albums in the last four decades, and created some of the most memorable anthems of the twentieth century, classics such as “The Times They Are A-Changin’,” “Like a Rolling Stone,” and “Blowin’ in the Wind.”

While Dylan’s place in the pantheon of American musicians is cemented, there is one question that has confounded music and literary critics for the entirety of Dylan’s career: Should Bob Dylan be considered a songwriter or a poet? Dylan was asked that very question at a press conference in 1965, when he famously said, “I think of myself more as a song-and-dance man.”

The debate has raged on ever since, and even intensified in 2004, when Internet rumors swirled about Dylan’s nomination for a Nobel Prize in Literature, and five well-hyped books were released almost simultaneously: *Dylan’s Visions of Sin*, by Oxford professor of poetry Christopher Ricks, who makes the case for Dylan as a poet; *Lyrics: 1962-2001*, a collection of Dylan’s songs presented in printed form; *Chronicles*, the first volume of Dylan’s memoir; *Keys to the Rain*, a 724-page Bob Dylan encyclopedia; and *Studio A*, an anthology about Dylan by such esteemed writers as Allen Ginsberg, Joyce Carol Oates, Rick Moody, and Barry Hannah.

Christopher Ricks, who has also penned books about T. S. Eliot and John Keats, argues that Dylan’s lyrics not only qualify as poetry, but that Dylan is among the finest poets of all time, on the same level as Milton, Keats, and Tennyson. He points to Dylan’s mastery of rhymes that are often startling and perfectly judged. For example, this pairing from “Idiot Wind,” released in 1975:

Idiot wind, blowing like a circle around my skull,
   From the Grand Coulee Dam to the Capitol

The problem many critics have with calling song lyrics poetry is that songs are only fully realized in performance. It takes the lyrics, music, and voice working in tandem to unpack the power of a song, whereas a poem ideally stands up by itself, on the page, controlling its own timing and internal music. Dylan’s lyrics, and most especially his creative rhyme-making, may only work, as critic Ian Hamilton has written, with “Bob’s barbed-wire tonsils in support.”

It is indisputable, though, that Dylan has been influenced a great deal by poetry. He counts Arthur Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine alongside Woody Guthrie as his most important forebears. He took his stage name, Bob Dylan, from Welsh poet Dylan Thomas (his real name is Robert Allen Zimmerman). He described himself once as a “sixties troubadour,” and when he talks about songwriting, he can sometimes sound like a professor of literature: “I can create several orbits that travel and intersect each other and are set up in a metaphysical way.”

His work has also veered purposefully into poetry. In 1966, he wrote a book of poems and prose called *Tarantula*. Many of the liner notes from his 1960s albums were written as epitaphs. And his songwriting is peppered with literary references. Consider, for example, these lyrics from “Desolation Row,” released on 1965’s *Highway 61 Revisited*:

Praise be to Nero’s Neptune
   The Titanic sails at dawn
   And everybody’s shouting
   “Which Side Are You On?”
   And Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot
   Fighting in the captain’s tower
   While calypso singers laugh at them
   And fishermen hold flowers

Professor Ricks is not the only scholar who considers Dylan a great American poet. Dylan has been nominated for a Nobel Prize in Literature every year since 1996, and the lyrics to his song “Mr. Tambourine Man” appeared in the Norton Introduction to Literature.

*Un bel di, vedremo Madam Butterfly*  
*from wikipedia.com*

Madame Butterfly is an opera in three acts (originally two acts) by Giacomo Puccini, with libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. Puccini based his opera in part on the short story “Madame Butterfly” (1898) by John Luther Long, which had been dramatized by David Belasco.

Butterfly is a staple of the standard operatic repertoire for companies around the world and ranks as Number 1 in Opera America’s list of the 20 most-performed operas in North America. The most popular aria of the opera is “Un bel di, Vedremo,” translated into English:

One good day, we will see  
A rising of smoke  
Over the far horizon on the sea  
And then the ship appears  
And then the ship is white  
It enters into the port, it rumbles its salute.

Do you see it? He is coming!  
I don’t go down to meet him, not I.  
I stay upon the edge of the hill  
And I wait a long time  
but I do not grow weary of the long wait.

to see the aria visit URL:  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Z3-yBIDckY  
or visit the video at:  
www.voicesdelaluna.com
The art of photography refers to photographs that are created in accordance with the creative vision of the photographer as artist. Fine art photography stands in contrast to photojournalism, which provides visual support for stories, mainly in the print media, and commercial photography, the primary focus of which is to sell products or services. However, there are no universally accepted definitions of the related terms “art photography,” “artistic photography,” and “fine art photography,” as exemplified by definitions found in reference books, in scholarly articles, and or on the Web.

In a recent trip to the southern five countries of Africa, he produced a collection of mesmerizing photographs, which may be viewed at www.voicesdelaluna.com. Here are two samples from the collection: 1. Elephants Crossing the River, 2. A Male Lion in Kruger National Park:

*Mr. Bill McGuire is a retired healthcare executive, who had been a staff photographer many years ago for the yearbook, magazine and newspaper at his undergraduate alma mater, the University of Notre Dame. His photos were taken with a Sony Alpha 700 DSLR and Sony lenses ranging from 18mm to 500mm.

Based in Alpine, Texas, German native Barbel Helmert presents two separate series using two different media: Giclee prints and assemblages. Their common thread is the artist’s attention to detail, texture, and composition. The juxtaposition of opposite forces characterizes her work. Here are two samples of her work at Gallery Nord: Untitled No. 1 and Untitled No.5:

During World War II, Monroe got a job at an aircraft factory called Radioplane, where she sprayed glue on fabrics and inspected and folded parachutes. She was working at the factory when a group of photographers showed up to take pictures of women working for the war effort. The photographers noticed her right away, and they persuaded her to become a model. She bleached her hair and began to appear on the covers of magazines. She died just nine years after that first big success, but her life has been an inspiration to many writers. She has been the subject of more than 300 biographies, including a partially fictionalized biography by Norman Mailer.
Poetry & Art Therapy

Art Making, Imagery & Chronic Pain
Maripat Munley, RN, MPH. ATR-BC

Often, people with chronic pain do not exhibit “expected” outward signs of pain such as increased heart rate, profuse sweating, or high blood pressure. In fact, other effects such as increased sensitivity to pain, avoidance of social interaction, eating disorders, increased irritability, depression, and loss of energy or interest in previously enjoyed activities are sometimes present. Alternately, patients may appear stoic with limited evidence of external pain, which is attributed to the absence of physiological sympathetic response due to chronic, unremitting pain. However, with the successful treatment of clients’ chronic pain there is a remarkable, rapid disappearance of the physical and psychological symptoms described above. These symptoms, common markers of chronic pain, and their reduction are readily recognizable in client art-making and their responses to their images.

Pain is encoded mentally in images and is often difficult to verbally translate—to express. Because clients often describe their pain in imagery (feels like a knife, or a burning fire etc.), assessing the value of the physical and psychological treatments being provided often proves problematic. However, imagery can provide a window into the clients’ experience of chronic pain, response to treatment, and assist care providers in assessing their clients’ experience of chronic pain. Texas does not license art therapists directly, but practitioners with licenses in related fields such as Marriage and Family Counselors (LMFT) or Professional Counselors (LPC) may apply to have the credential of Art Therapist (AT) added to their license. Without licensure of some kind, art therapists cannot receive third party reimbursement and this makes it difficult for agencies to use them as outside consultants.

The following images provide examples of art-making imagery employed within this population:

Art Directive: “Draw Your Pain.” A client created this image to describe the effects of pain associated with her terminal brain cancer. She said she felt “completely tied up and unable to function” due to her experience of chronic pain.

Note: She was especially generous and felt she was “giving service,” even in her last months of life, because she knew her art would be on the workbook cover that the University was using to train physicians around the country to care for clients with chronic pain.

Art directive: “Draw Your Pain”: This drawing was obtained from a woman resting outside the operating room while awaiting a surgical procedure. She drew herself as “just red pain in the bed,” with a black head demonstrating her “terrible headaches.” She reported the gray scribble near her head as her “depression,” and the black scribble alongside her body as her “thoughts of suicide.” This art imagery demonstrates how a person’s entire identity becomes their pain, and afforded an immediate window into her serious emotional state, as well as her need for immediate psychological care.

Art directive: “Draw Your Pain”: The triangle in the first mandala suggests how pain intruded upon the artist’s “center.” The second mandala portrays “an old 45 record” to express pain reduction after repeated ganglion nerve blocks. The patient explained, “the grooves on the record get smoother and older as the pain diminishes.” Circular drawings may also help the artist elicit the relaxation response (the reverse of the fight or flight response caused by pain), which reduces blood pressure, pulse rate, and muscle tension and thus, alters their experience of pain.

Art directive: “Draw Your Pain”: (Next Page Top) Upon intake into the Chronic Pain Program, the artist symbolized herself as a “fort” being bombarded by fiery cannon balls and arrows, and described the flag as a “self symbol.” It is easy to see a representation of her sense of isolation, withdrawal, and self protection. In the second drawing, (Next Page Underneath), after positive response to treatment and diminished pain, the artist described the cottage as a “self symbol.” The entire picture yields a calmer, more soothing appearance, but still suggests a tendency toward isolation and self protection via the ample fence, closed door, and curtains on the windows.
Note the significant difference in the art of the same artist in response to the Art directive: “Draw A Person Picking an Apple From a Tree.” The drawing underneath was completed before treatment, and on the image at the top right following successful pain management. The Formal Elements Art Therapy Scale (FEATS) was used to estimate on a scale of 1-5 the presence of: Prominence of Color, Color Fit, Actual Energy (needed to make the art), Implied Energy (energy evident in the picture), Space, Integration, Logic, Realism, Problem-solving, Developmental Level, Details, Line Quality, Person, Perseveration, and Rotation. Even without the scale there is an obvious, positive visual change in the artist’s work and reflects a reduction in the experience of pain. The decrease in pain permits deeper engagement in the art-making and the artist’s sense of the value of her treatment to her sense of well being.

Art-making therapy elicits the clients’ responses to their imagery, provides a unique opportunity to connect the physical and psychological experience of chronic pain, builds an understanding of self in relation to the pain process, and enables the expression of that experience to caregivers. Art Therapy is routinely used to:

* Define and describe pain
* Develop individual pain scales based upon their own images
* Estimate pain intensity over time to evaluate responses to medication and surgical treatments.
* Identify strategies to reduce pain and pain medication dependence
* Use images to distance themselves from their pain
* Complement traditional medical/surgical treatments by using personal imagery to increase their understanding of treatment processes and visualize the benefit anticipated
* Use their own images to elicit the relaxation response
* Identify feelings and develop an awareness of the mind-body relationship coupled with pain
* Recognize what increases and decreases their pain
* Engage personal healing processes to improve body image and self-esteem and reduce the sense of isolation

Questions about this article may be referred to the author at mpmunley@gamil.com
Select Poems—Part I
Youth Poems

Ode to the Awkward Silence
Christian Bushman

The way you make things intrigue me
The feelings you bring me are limitless,
The blush you give takes all belief
That leaves the room in quietness.

I love your way, you know it all
The wisdom you speak, knows no bound
You give me knowledge with no sound
And yet leave me in great appall.

But with your wisdom then comes doubt
The love you want will make you wait
Your heart fills up and dries in drought
And the silence you keep becomes your pain.

More intrinsic than that I’d say,
It’s more than just a wait, its pain
It’s nice to know you aren’t alone
The silence gives answers y’know

I’d rather sit with confidence
Now it’s okay for it to be
It tells me there’s thought in solace
And a good friend in times of need.

The 2009 Blues
Jackson Green

How blue can you get?
The news stations report death every day
You lose every time you make a bet
Our enemies try to kill our people in every way

Unemployment is at an all time high
The Feds won’t let states enforce their laws
Radicals fight over a “peaceful” man in the sky
People won’t stop their petty brawls

How blue can you get?
The great musicians are now old and dying
Greedy Wall Street stock brokers are caught and upset
If the Founding Fathers saw this country now, they’d be crying.

Ode to Ducky
(An unusual ode)
Juan Gutierrez

Yellow horse of the water kingdom,
assisting in my daily cleansing.
Never leaving me to face the horrors of the water alone.
You never demand much of me, only just a nibble of this and a bite of that pigeon bread.
Your orange beak tears the bread apart with fierce aggression.
Yet you have never hurt me with that same bite. A true friend.
Friends have come and gone.
Family passed away leaving me
With tears, but you have been by my side through all the pain.
Your smile gives me hope when I am left to drown by my parents.
You’re the only one who seems to understand my fear and stand beside me and fight the very same fear that makes me tremble.
It’s been you and me against the world and I wouldn’t change a single thing my friend. My brother, my one and only rubber ducky.

The 13th floor
Megan Prew

Running through the halls, my mind screaming
Everyone around me seems to think none of this is real,
This world we’re walking through, this terror.
Are they all in some sort of dream together?
Am I the ONLY one awake right now?
…It gets quiet…
Everyone stops moving.
Did they see something I didn’t?
I’m the only one alive right now aren’t I?
Are all these zombies out to get me?
… It’s cold…
I see this red flashing light, getting closer and closer.
I could feel the presence of something coming towards me.
I had reached the 13th floor.
**Revenge of Poe**  
(an original “last-line first-line” poem)  
*Nathan McFarland*

Quoth the raven, “Never more!”

“Never more” is what I said when I left him, thought him dead upon the floor.  
Asleep back in my tree, I was wakened by a tap at my door.

“Caw! Who can it be at this time of night?” said I with a heart full of fright.  
I flung wide the door, a tree branch swaying in the wind, and nothing more.

“Well, almost had me, but I am not afraid!” a voice from the window.

“Oh, really now, fine feathered fowl, how about a taste of my blade?”

Within the hour, upon Poe’s plate,  
sat a fine roasted raven, he just couldn’t wait.  
“Never More shall you fill me with fright,  
for on you I shall be dining tonight!”

And so, with a hand full of raven quills,  
Poe began writing more stories full of thrills and chills!

No Raven ever messed with Poe again,  
nor dove nor crow nor even a hen.  
Yet still it haunts him, deep in his mind,  
but that is a story for another time.

**This Curse We Call LOVE**  
(an original “first-line last-line poem”)  
*Regina Zamora*

To comprehend this curse that I call love  
Undisputed fight between two hearts  
Because there is no victor, no winner  
Just two hearts waiting to start  
You say no love is greater than yours  
To see you walk away is not easy  
But harder than walking through closed doors

**Rain (a haiku poem)**  
*Regina Zamora*

dry air becomes moist  
smell of water fills my nose  
rain falls around me

**FORTUNE COOKIE**  
*Alexander Tamez*

I remember that  
Won’t ever do that again  
Shoulda… nevermind

**Summer: a Haiku**  
*Ashley Webb*

With the trees blowing  
The loud breeze silencing us  
Silence was now free

**Flora: a Haiku**  
*Bailey Stoller*

Velvet soft petals,  
Raindrops dripping off the edges,  
dancing in the wind.

**Haiku**  
*Blake Acuna*

Blue hue fills the sky  
The air around, warm to skin  
The dirt whispers green

**Frost Bite**  
*Chelsea Orth*

Leaves are dying off  
winter season has arrived  
shoot, I have frost bite
Select Poems—Part III

Airmen  
PW Covington

When the sailor at the infantry,  
cannoneer or Marine  
Looks skyward or to starlight seeking  
peaceful or serene—  
The heavens hold a respite from  
their Earth-locked toil  
And cloud and sky-built terraces  
rise o’er bloody sea and soil  
Those who wear wings of gold and  
steel and soar above those  
plains  
Can tell of perils heaven holds, and  
of a thousand niggling  
things  
Them who take to wing to fight, in  
story day or moonless  
night  
Dream of fireballs and muffled calls  
and fleeting final sights  
Coffins oft’ don’t make it home  
from burial at air  
Gravity gives no reprieve; their  
battle can’t be fair  
Our killing comes as a savage beast,  
no gentlemanly duel  
Chivalry is left aground with other  
Earth-borne fools  
Only Airmen know all the fear and  
feeling of their war  
While others bless or curse them—  
still the engines roar  
When the Soldier, pressed in Hell,  
looks to Heaven for escape  
Oft’ is the Airman that brings Angels  
in, and opens Hade’s gate.

Passages Not Proof  
Roberto Bonazzi

Lucid light of nothing’s edge through vaulted windows.  
In The Scream we hear The Other.  
Tepid passages for a ravaged moon.  
Only wisdom knows how ignorant one remains.

Recovery  
Anne McGrady

They thought that she would die  
faced with this disappointment,  
that she would simply fold her wings  
and plunge toward earth,  
a fragile, feather song  
about to end.  
They had not known her  
days ago when blessings came  
like bluebird pairs,  
and her determination grew  
from seeds of doubt,  
and flocks of friends.  
And so, as rumors spread  
of how her world was caving in,  
she found the essence of her flight  
within her heart,  
then faced the sky  
and caught the wind.

Thinking Again about God  
Bonnie Lyons

If you were dying, I’d pray.  
beg God to spare you,  
bargain, promise  
to be better. This is ridiculous,  
my rational brain knows.  
If there is a God who can intervene,  
then God is a monster. Who but a monster  
would permit the cruelty and slaughter  
we call history? Still, how did  
nothing ever become something?  
Nothing is nothing is nothing.  
Zampano, the brute strongman in La Strada  
was right: “What’s to think?” Shut up and rejoice.

Winter: A Haiku  
Natalie Koehn (Clark High School)

With a swift sweet breeze  
The goosebumps cover my arms  
And shivers attack.
The Spell of Bahuichivo  
Rebecca Burroughs

The train’s late.
Or as they say about themselves:
it’ll arrive
in Mexican time.

Waiting, the Copper Canyon occupation.
So, I sit and draw conclusions:

a superficial outline
of this remote village
and the children unkempt,
worn clothing, ever-fresh grins,
gambling with little rocks
(their largest inheritance)
hand-wrested from this soil,
who set aside their quart buckets
of mangoes and manzanas.

later selling what sweetness they possess
for a more desirable hardness.

Now, crawling or bent over, they circle
me and my sketch,
not as critics
or zopilotes,
but as Tarahumara Indians
worshipping the magic
of this moment together
all too soon shadowed
by approaching gray puffs
of cinder-filled responsibilities.

Reflection on Cartography & Reason’s
Over-reliance Upon It
Robert Wynne

Maps
rely
on edges
to keep steady rain
from pooling in Portland, in
the Congo or on the legend. It’s like chess
the way we parse out space to know if movement is safe

enough for even one small heart, a trusting pawn strafed
every day in unnamed lands, directionless
and without explanation
from the fickle brain
which hedges,
denies,
maps.

More Poems From Voices Editors

Midnight Train Through Mullin  
Valerie Martin Bailey

Nothing much ever happened in Mullin.
A new chicken coop would be called
a “building boom.”
Life there was as predictable
as the midnight train that rumbled through
Grandpa’s back field every night.
It was the only exciting thing that
ever came through the little
Texas town, and I never tired
of waiting for it—a muffled throb
in the distance, then the
bone-jarring rattle of box cars
and flat cars pounding the worn tracks,
shaking the ground
till Grandma’s dishes trembled in
the cupboard and the farmhouse windows
rattled in their frames.
It passed the barn with two short blasts,
then a long mournful whistle.
Its melancholy wail always stirred
a sense of sadness in me;
it seemed to prophesy separations,
loneliness, and tears to come.
I think the train knew the young folks would
leave Mullin to take a chance on life
in the big cities. I wonder
if the midnight train still rolls
through Mullin and laments their loss

French Cuisine  
Joan Seifert

The man’s day, a futile effort.
his wares had not appealed;
He plods home, yearns for a bolster,
tells of many downs, with chin low.

He seeks his femme’s “There, there,”
begs an understanding smile
and tonight his comfort food, s’il vous plaît—
her sweet mousse au chocolat
made with much more butter and sugar
than the recipe dares call for.

The femme considers;
such is the man’s condition.
She sighs, stirs ardent—est l’amour.
And after mousse au chocolat
steamed and sugary, sweet and hot,
she dares much, much more sugar—

Tomorrow? A new day, he grins.
Select Poems—Part IV
International Poems

The Poem
Carmen Cristina Wolf *

Listen to what is empty within phrases
Lend a voice to the thoughts
and let the words think.

To write and to offer
all doubts in their certainty
in the loneness of endeavor
and their never tiring eagerness.

The page’s pervasive joy.

Sometimes, at night I rethink the world
I pull it with one of its threads
and it leads me through its maze

Nothing pulls more than a poem
Peeping through the door
The millenarian letters’ enigma.

El Poema
Carmen Cristina Wolf

Escuchar los espacios de las frases
el pensamiento hable y las palabras piensen

Escribir y mostrar
en solitaria y única constancia
el cortejo de dudas y su incansable afán
regocijar la página

A veces, en las noches vuelvo a pensar el mundo
lo tomo por alguno de sus hilos, paseo su laberinto

Nada más atrayente que un poema
asomado en la puerta
enigma de letras milenarias

* Carmen Christina Wolf is a poet, essay writer and editor
born in Caracas, Venezuela. A lawyer with Superior Studies in
Latin American Literature. A sample of her poetry appears in
the book La Mujer Rota(Primer Foro Internacional de Poesía),
Literalia Editores México 2008; and in numerous newspapers
and magazines. She is Director of Cármina Editores, President
of the Circle of Venezuela’s Writers Biography and poems trans-
lated by: Carlos Armando Figueroed Planchart

Revival
Antonieta Madrid *

The tense barking reminded me that I should wake up
You are that gloved ghost who broke time
I’m that rootless vegetable who was dying under the sun
I accused you of arrogance
of inconsistency
of misanthropy
and even of madness
I could laugh at a world that never smiles
To renounce the imprecise
(that was my defense against the metallic age)
Now, your shadow becomes my truth
With you, I rescue my wilderness
I look at the symmetrical garden
I draw, with a little branch, your portrait
I invent you
My loves make you grow
You were before the creation

Resurgimiento
Antonieta Madrid

Los tirantes ladridos me recordaron que debía despertar
Eras aquel fantasma enguantado que rompió el tiempo
Yo, ese vegetal sin raíces que agonizaba bajo el sol
Te acusé de soberbia
de inconsecuencia
de misantropía
y hasta de locura
Pude reírme de un mundo que no sonreía
Renunciar a lo impreciso
(Era mi defensa contra el siglo metálico)
Hoy, tu sombra se convierte en mi verdad
Rescato contigo mi desierto
Miro el simétrico jardín
Dibujo con una ramita tu retrato
Te invento
Mi amor te dilata
Ya eras anterior a la creación

* Antonieta Madrid was born in Valera, Venezuela. She taught
Latin American literature at the School of Arts UCAB, Masters
in Contemporary Latin American Literature at Simon Bolivar
University, BA in Education (UCV, 1963-68). Her works, trans-
lated into several languages (English, German, French, Italian,
Modern Greek, and Serbian-Croat), are part of numerous an-
thologies and are studied in national universities and abroad.
**Beside Me**  
*Hejo Müller (Germany)*

The moon already slipped  
below the surface  
and the seven stars (Pleiades)  
the middle of the night prevails:  
the hour strikes twelve  
but here I lie alone...  

(SAPPHO)

she lies  
naked  
beside me

In bright splendor  
the moon  
smiles

The joys  
of heaven  
tear me apart

Savor this bliss  
Sappho  
beside me...

---

**Untitled**  
*Lucia (Mexico)*

I am a whisper  
just an echo  
being dragged by the night.

I get caught in the letters of your name  
in the abyss of your eyes

I’m breathing until the silence  
wake up.

Soy un murmullo  
solo un eco  
siendo arrastrado por la noche

Me enredo en la letras de tu nombre  
en el abismo de tus ojos

Respiro hasta que el silencio despierte.

---

**Poems in English and Spanish**  
*Voices Editor Maria Gabriela Madrid*

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**Sueños**  
*Maria Gabriela Madrid*

Laberintos fantásticos entrelazan tus deseos  
Flores silvestres regadas por el agua cristalina caída del cielo  
Laberintos fantásticos entrelazan tus miedos  
Cavernas oscuras, húmedas donde sobrevuelan los murciélagos  
Entrelazan tus carencias  
Raíces transplantadas temen al olvido, al silencio propio y ajeno

Laberintos fantásticos entrelazan tus pasiones  
Río de rosas alumbra el amor pleno  
Entrelazan tus traumas  
Vida lugubre sin ánimo de vuelo donde las  
Cáscaras de marfil y espinas recubren tu suelo

Sueños

Laberintos fantásticos entrelazan tus anhelos  
Sueños dormidos anhelan despertar y repuntar al cielo.  
Escaleras en ascenso y flores violetas esperan que  
laberintos fantásticos entrelacen tus deseos, miedos, carencias,  
pasiones, traumas y anhelos.

Sueños.

---

**Dreams**  
*Maria Gabriela Madrid*

Fantastic labyrinths interlace your desires  
Wild flowers watered by the crystalline fallen water of the sky  
Fantastic Labyrinths interlace your fears  
Dark, humid caverns where bats fly over  
Interlace your Lacks  
Transplanted roots fear of oblivion, of own and foreign silence

Fantastic labyrinths interlace your Passions  
River of roses flare up the full love  
Interlace your traumas  
Lugubrious life without fortitude of flight where  
Ivory eggshells and thorns to coat your ground

Dreams

Fantastic labyrinths interlace your wishes  
Asleep dreams gasps to wake up and to flight to the sky  
Ascended stairs and violets flowers awaits where  
Fantastic labyrinths interlace your desires, fears, lacks,  
passions, traumas and wishes.

Dreams
Select Poems–Part V

Who’s Going to the Party? (For Chebo)

Dario Benitez

We are not who we are.
Oh, how I love Jesus,
Jesus with his crown of thorns,
Jesus with his sad face,
Jesus with his downcast eyes.

We give our labor, not to our house,
nor to our cars, or friends, or cares.
We keep little for our brothers, or sisters.
It goes to our work.

We scrub the floor with our souls,
telework when we can.

When we wake up, we don’t recognize ourselves.
We ask:

“Who’s that person in the mirror?”
“Who’s that lady?”
“Where are the children?”

Somebody texted me the other day:

“Party at Joe’s, 7 PM, free drinks, you’re invited.”

Who are these ghosts that keep texting me,
inviting me to parties; ready to celebrate?

There is a white Corvette somewhere,
behind someone’s house, sitting, locked,
with broken police tapes on the doors.
Nice car. Who will drive it now?

“Poetry makes the most complex and musical use of language.
It’s hard
to give it up once you’ve discovered its amplitude,”
says Alice Fulton.

I agree with the part about “It’s hard to give it up…”
the rest is talk.

Poetry makes the world go round.

Goodbye, brother.

Floating

Assef Al-Jundi

A jar floating in the river has river in it—Rumi

In forever
one can mark a slice,
pick a section,
select a segment.
Put “Enter” on one side,
“Exit” on the other.

Go in knowing only
eternity,
being innocent
in matters of time. Needing
nothing more than mother’s milk.

Find
distance
between start and finish
arbitrarily divided
and subdivided
with orbital scales.

Four thirty five in the afternoon.
Touch it
from both sides.
Still forever.
Where else is it going to go?

Coming Home from the Hospital
after My Son’s Birth

Jim Daniels

The chimney next door tilts
precarious, just
like it did yesterday.

In the street, a red sports-
car revs and stalls.
good for a laugh.

I wipe my tears.
I strum a very tiny
air guitar.
Select Poems—Part VI

What’s Left
Marian Aitches

Last night, ice in the birdbath—
impatiens shuddering under the shroud
my husband pulled over their heads
before he climbed the stairs and placed
his cool body next to mine, skin dry
from cold-front air, no water from the gulf
today.

Yesterday, the work of rebel insurgents
escalated in Basrah. Fifteen dead.
Only three officially counted.
Fifteen humans colder than the water
in the birdbath, deader than their mothers’
spirits today, dried blood, bodies
rigid as I write these words of no
comfort.

What’s left is memory, a homeland—
the place where Aziz Shihab says
children of all faiths
every evening in cool air
used to go outside, exchange desserts
after dinner around the table,
sharing what they ate from their mothers’
hands.

Blinded
Rhonda L. King

Went thinking that the way was clear
Lead by ignorance…held by fear
Naïvely sought though motives pure
The want became both curse and cure

With caution disputed pursued greater depths
And the want became greater with every step
Smugly rejected appeals to restrain
Waned good intentions but the hunger remained

Emotions were seared, as desire surged
Pursued with relent, to all that was urged
Once treasured truths…were now compromised
Not cognizant of slow demise

The lamp had dimmed as morals paled
Pure motives lost, in self betrayal
Numb and devoid of known absolute
Then finally yielded, to the Lord’s stern rebuke.

In Flight
Jennifer K. Sweeney

The Himalayan legend says
there are beautiful white birds
that live completely in flight.
They are born in the air,

must learn to fly before falling
and die also in their flying.
Maybe you have been born
into such a life

with the bottom dropping out.
Maybe gravity is claiming you
and you feel
ghost-scripted.

For the one who lives inside the fall,
the sky beneath the sky of all.

Always There For Me!
Frances Reed

When the world comes crashing in
And chaos rules my mind,
I turn my heart to You, Lord
And pure sweet peace I find.
You lift me out of sorrow and
Comfort me in pain.
You heal and cleanse me
Like cool refreshing rain.
In times of darkness when
Things aren’t going right,
You lift me even higher and
Fill me with delight.
You hear my every prayer.
You answer every plea.
I’m safe because I know
You are always there for me.

A Toast to the Hunter
Michaela Brennan Willroth

Here’s to the hunter who walks through the fields
A friend at his side, a dog at his heels,
His legs cry for mercy, each muscle is sore
As he recalls other hunts, so long before
With his father, who taught him to be careful and true
To the rules of the hunt, to shoot only “on cue”
The lessons he learned as he hunted with Dad
About friends, about patience, were the best to be had
“A boy must be brave, don’t complain of the cold,
Respect other hunters, and do as you are told”
Now the hunter remembers and he loves how it feels
To have a friend at his side and a good dog at his heels.
Poetry as Therapy

Using Poetry Therapy with Clients

Susan Wirth Fusco, Ph.D., LMHC, CPT, CADAC

After 23 years of marriage, my marriage fell apart. During a two-year period of unrelenting divorce wranglings, I battled my own spiraling depression, and the surfaced of an alcohol addiction, fed my need to escape the reality of the life-draining pain. There were countless rehabs, in-patient, out-patient clinics, therapies galore, addiction residences, daily AA meetings—and I have now found serenity, coming on almost two decades of abstinence.

Beginning in the early 1990s, I began my training as a Credentialed Alchohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (CADAC), a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), and Credentialed Poetry Therapist (CPT); I also completed my second Master’s degree in Counseling Psychology and Mental Health Counseling, and am writing my second doctoral dissertation on Poetry and Healing, Shaun McNiff, Senior Advisor, Lesley University, Cambridge, MA.

During all my internships for the last 20 years, I zeroed in on working with clients with addictions. As many readers might surmise, wherever I was working—whether in prisons, hospitals, homeless shelters, safe houses for women and children with abuse issues of all kinds, facilitating groups of children or the elderly, literacy groups and more—you name it, the disease of addiction would insidiously rear its ugly head.

My poetry is for those still struggling with addiction issues, as well as for that lucky one out of ten who has found serenity. I welcome expressive arts therapists and therapists in general to use these poems for educational purposes.

Never Lost, Just Misplaced

Susan Wirth Fusco

What have I never lost?

Well—lost my dignity from time to time—

my poise
my judgment
my scruples
my mind.

But that which I have never lost?

The belief in my capacity
to renew
to rebuild
to decorate
And otherwise
to consecrate myself

To the illimitable challenges ahead.

The Guest House

Susan Wirth Fusco

A visitor,
A sinewy line,
enters
through the front door,
unafraid, like any other guest.

A black line of depression—
Hopelessness, Sorrow, Grief
Helplessness—
enters any or every room.

Felicitous guest,
unwelcome stranger,
Depression wanders along and through
unknowing corridors, familiar hallways, and unsuspecting
paths,
into spaces and places where it is not invited, not expected.

Unpredictable, sometimes spontaneous comings and goings,
I have learned that depression walks everywhere,
enters all rooms.
Courteously knocking? No, there’s a
transcendentally
passing through—through iron doors, wooden doors,
locked doors, gated passageways.

And I have been advised
to embrace its journeying,
dealing with, and conversing with,
its many faces.

The faces of depression show no fear;
They delight in watching me build fences and defenses.
They know that their own powers increase
by my
sidestepping nearsightedness.

No, I shall confront depression
in whatever room it chooses to visit.
I shall deal with it.
Face to Face.

Written 10/23/05; Published 8/06

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Cracks in the Shell
Michaud L. Lamrouex

I have bipolar disorder—a mental illness defined by the lows of depression when suicide seems like a viable option to end the emotional and psychic pain, and the highs of mania where reality breaks and I think I can fly off roofs like birds. Constant turmoil, an endless whirlwind, a miasma of emotions always swirling just below the surface of my psyche. I create a shell, an affectation of normalcy, that I try not to let others see through. Sometimes the shell cracks, the facade fractures. Astute, compassionate friends catch a glimpse of the anguish within. They know something isn’t right... they ask if I’m OK? My standard response is “yes, I’m hanging in there,” as I try to fill the revealing rifts and fissures; complete the facade once again, all the while just hanging onto my sanity, one emotional misstep from a total meltdown, mere thoughts away from harming myself. Fortunately, the cracks and fractures are few, I’ve become adept at displaying a flawless front—a smooth deception—or that may simply be a delusion on my part, a delusion that helps me survive, as I hang onto my sanity by faith, in defiance of the truth roiling within.

My Rose Shall Grow from Concrete
Anonymous

Lying there, staring at the ceiling, shaking, knowing that the white coats are snickering, snarling, and whispering amongst themselves. What is this woman’s problem? No, there is no compassion here for the woman who can’t learn how not to drink. The hospital staff is neglectful. The flies on the ceiling buzz and land, finding a resting place where I can find none. Again. It happened again, and I am powerless. This insidious disease does push-ups on the concrete. And there is no room for my rose to grow. Not yet. Not this time ’round.

Reflections on AIDS
RL

Everyone who has been through this remembers. remembers the exact time and date of their diagnosis. I remember it as a time when I died, and a new me was forced to start living.

Was I sad? Yes. I was crushed. Devastated. Every ounce of my being had been weighted with a deep new feeling of dread. I thought my world was over. I cried at this sudden onslaught of mortality. I was wrong, but at the time it was what I thought.

No two cases are exactly alike. I had just moved back here after spending a considerable amount of time out of state, and even though I moved back and lived with “family,” I had never felt so utterly alone. I could have easily been the guy who finds out he’s HIV positive and kills himself. Since my diagnosis, do not think the thought hasn’t presented itself—often.

Denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance, the five stages of grief. Denial came fast—“No, this can’t be happening to me; I’ve always been so careful.” Not careful enough.

Anger is still clear and present. First, I was angry at myself: “How did I let this happen to me?” Second came the anger I felt toward the person who infected me: “How could he have knowingly done this to me? Does he even know he’s HIV positive? GOD, I HATE YOU!!!”

There wasn’t much to bargain. As far as I was concerned, the HIV had all the chips, and I was in no position to bargain. But that was then, and this is now. I’ve bargained and negotiated with myself and came to the realization that the HIV held nothing on me. Still doesn’t. Depression still grips me; well, at this point in my life it does. That is to be expected, and I refuse to fall victim to depression. Often I feel like a fly trapped in a spider’s web, struggling to break free but becoming more entangled as I do so. My own personal Catch-22.

Acceptance. I’m on the brink. I’m talking about being HIV positive, so I must have accepted being HIV positive, right? Have I? Really? It doesn’t feel like it, not yet, but I can feel it, I’m close. I can say I’m HIV positive—I don’t want to say it to anyone in particular, and I’m not ready to “own it”—but I can say I am HIV positive.

Forgive me for not fully accepting myself yet. It’ll come to me. When I’m done grieving the life I once had, I am sure I’ll have accepted myself. I can only say to my friends, “Thank you for being here for me and thank you for your quick acceptance of my new situation. I appreciate you, but remember I have to accept myself as I am first. I know you love me, but please give me some time.”
**Poetry & Dreams**

**Poetry, Dream and Interpretation**

**Client X**

**History:** Client X was sexually abused as a child; that abuse included his own parents selling him for prostitution. After 20 years in therapy, Client X is coming to terms with these childhood issues. He states that looking at his dreams and expressing his feelings through writing poetry have turned his life around. Below is a dream that took place in 2007, and a poem written at the same time. At the time of the dream, Client X was having a relationship with a married man. After having the dream, Client X broke off the relationship with the married man.

**Dream (December 2007):** It was in the paper and on TV. Love triangle gone wrong. OG has been shot. Caught having sex with another man’s wife. The husband caught OG in the act. He shot OG, shot his wife, and then shot himself. There was an elaborate funeral. Very formal. Lots of people showed up, and I was handing out a poem. OG’s picture was on the bottom of the poem. The poem and picture looked like something the family had put out. I did not visit the body; instead, I went to the kids, and they all three hugged me. End of dream.

**Interpretation:** Sometimes it is interesting to look back at past dreams and take another look at them. The above dream is such a dream. In his objective life, Client X had been having an affair with OG, a married man. OG was using Client X to help with his business, to cook for him, to buy clothes and pick out his wardrobe, and OG was paying him very little money. Client X made decisions about OG’s purchase of houses, the purchase of furniture, how to decorate and landscape his house, and how to raise OG’s and his wife’s children. The wife was disconnected and did not provide the basic needs for the children; for example, she neither cooked for them nor put food on the table for them. Nor did the wife meet any of OG’s emotional, physical, or sexual needs.

Client X was living his life through OG. When Client X met OG’s needs, his needs were also met. OG was having multiple affairs, and he needed Client X’s approval for the women he was whoring around with. This was a prime example of co-dependency. In therapy sessions, the therapist pointed out to Client X the issues of co-dependency and abuse; still, Client X continued in the abusive relationship. It was the dream of the love triangle gone wrong that changed Client X’s attitude. In the dream, OG had been shot, and OG’s death signified the end of the relationship.

Swiss psychiatrist C.G. Jung asserts “Death means the total extinction of consciousness and the complete stagnation of psychic life, so far as this is capable of consciousness.” As in the case of Client X and OG, death marks the absolute conclusion of their relationship in its current manifestation. For Client X, the death of OG has psychological powers; death dematerialized the relationship and liberated the ascensional powers of Client X’s spirit. On a subjective level, OG, perhaps, represents Client X’s negative shadow, and that part of his negative shadow. At a symbolic level, death indicates a change in the relationship between Client X and OG. When the therapist discussed the various meanings of death with Client X, the idea of a change in the relationship made sense to Client X. He believed that the unconscious was telling him to end this relationship—to change his attitude toward OG and toward himself.

After the dream, Client X broke off the relationship with OG for almost three years. During this time, OG sought reconciliation, but Client X, knowing that OG still wanted to use and abuse him, had changed his attitude toward OG. Following three years of separation, Client X agreed to speak to OG. By this time, OG’s wife had divorced him, and OG was desperate for help; however, Client X now valued himself, was self-sufficient, and was able to set boundaries for their relationship.

Client X now visits with OG on occasion, but is no longer involved in a co-dependent relationship. OG has had to accept Client X’s new attitude and says, “My, but you have really changed. You are cruel toward me.” Client X says, “Yes, I have changed, but I am not cruel. I have decided, however, that I am going to be kind to you because no one has ever been kind to you. I will help you get your house in order so that you can then depend on yourself. I will see you once a week as a friend, but I will no longer work for you, nor will I carry your problems and your needs anymore.” The client’s poem sums up his change in attitude toward himself and toward OG.

**Disturbed Mind**

*by Ulrike Rowe*
C.G. Jung & Arts

Deconstruction and Reconstruction

Al Drymala

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

These opening lines of Yeats’ poem, “The Second Coming,” carry a special relevance in our current times, these so-called “end times.” They strike a chord deep within as we simply look around us. Indeed, things are falling apart, and the center is not holding. Anarchy is loosed, our innocence drowned, conviction seems lacking, and passionate intensity is certainly filling some of our worst tendencies. We can’t help but ask—what is happening?

The late Edward Edinger, one of the foremost American Jungian analysts, saw the apocalyptic literature and movements of our time as intimations of a deep transformation going on in the collective psyche. In his book, The Archetype of the Apocalypse, he describes the apocalypse as “the momentous event of the coming of the Self into conscious realization … the shattering of the world as it has been, followed by its reconstitution.” (Note: Jung’s notion of the Self refers to the guiding image of unity and totality within the unconscious; he also referred to the Self as the divine within and the inner God-image.) As this destruction-reconstruction is happening on a collective level, the same dynamic is happening on an individual level. “End of the world” dreams are commonplace, complete with earthquakes, nuclear bombs, floods, and so on. They are very unsettling for the dreamer, and often very frightening. On one level, the dreams can be a reflection of how the collective upheaval is affecting one’s personal life. On another level, the dreams illustrate a parallel pattern of deconstruction and reconstruction in the individual that is a normal part of psychic life. To keep one’s bearings in the midst of internal upheavals, it can be life-saving to ponder the insights of C.G. Jung regarding these unconscious processes. Especially helpful are his perspectives about individuation and the suffering of the soul.

Individuation is the process of becoming oneself, of actualizing one’s true self and living out one’s more complete personality—one’s wholeness. Jung understood that each of us has an inner potential, a pattern for our lives that strives to become actualized. Think of Dorothy’s yellow brick road and all her adventures. In theory, that sounds like a wonderful thing. However, in real life, it can be a terrible ordeal and involve enormous suffering at times, especially as we get stuck in life, or lost, or when it is simply time to move to the next level. Jung linked the suffering experienced in an individual’s first half of life with problems of transitioning into adulthood. Each of us has to face the myriad challenges of leaving

Continued on page 30
of leaving home (on so many different levels), making the adaptations necessary to get along with others, finding a career and life partner, creating a family, and so on. Our own particular vulnerabilities and potentialities are touched in this experience, and we each develop a unique set of complexes—"hot buttons" in our personalities—the charged centers in our psyche that get us emotionally involved with life.

Jung said that to have complexes is normal. In a sense, they are the building blocks of the personality. Jung understood that it is difficult to maintain one’s balance, and that one or another of the complexes can take over the direction of one’s life; ultimately demanding so much time and energy that it cuts a person off from the inner creative life. This is his definition of neurosis—individuation that has been taken over by a one-sidedness in the personality, such that contact with the living source of the unconscious has been compromised in some way. Indeed, the inner well becomes so overgrown with briars and brambles, or even perhaps luxurious vines and vegetation, that the living water is not reachable. The inner princess is under a spell and is locked inside a glass coffin or held captive on a glass mountain; the inner prince is cursed and has become a frog, or a fox, or a bear, or an ass. Sometimes, one simply notices that energy is being stolen away by some unknown thief. Then, the task is to make contact with the thief and discover its intention. The fairy tale of the Golden Bird, for example, is just such a tale.

To see if we can discover some clues about how to reconnect with the unconscious when it has become more distant from conscious life, we’ll look at the fairy tale of the Golden Bird in the next issue of Voices in more detail. In the meantime, keep an eye out for the rough beast that slouches towards Bethlehem to be reborn! Our individual turmoil is also a part of this larger dynamic—a microcosm of the macrocosm—so we will need to examine this collective process in due time as well.

*Drymala is a certified therapist with a degree in Counseling. Currently he is working toward a Diplomat as Jungian Analyst at the Research and Training Centre in Depth Psychology which is headquartered in Zürich, Switzerland.

The Birthday of Two Noetic Men
12 February 1809
from Wikipedia & The Writer’s Almanac

Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin were born on exactly the same day in 1809. Abraham Lincoln was born near Hodgenville, Kentucky (1809). Though he’s generally considered possibly the greatest president in our country’s history, fairly little is known about his early life. Unlike most presidents, he never wrote any memoirs. We know that he was born in a log cabin and had barely a year of traditional schooling. His mother died when he was nine, and he spent much of his adolescence working with an ax. But when he was in his early 20s, Lincoln apparently decided to make himself into a respectable man. Residents of the town of New Salem, Illinois, said that they remembered Lincoln just appearing in their town one day. People remembered him because he was one of the tallest people anyone had ever seen, about 6 foot 4, and the pants that he wore were so short that they didn’t even cover his ankles.

Charles Darwin was born in Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England. On the famous voyage to the southern tip of South America when he was only 22, Darwin brought with him a book called Principles of Geology by Sir Charles Lyell, which suggested that the earth was millions of years old. And along the journey, Darwin got a chance to explore the Galapagos Islands. These islands were spaced far enough apart that the animals on them had evolved over time into different species. It took him a long time to publish his findings, mainly because he was afraid of being attacked as an atheist. But about 20 years after he first came up with the idea, he published his book On the Origin of Species (1859).

Abraham Lincoln served as the 16th President of the United States from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. He successfully led the country through its greatest internal crisis, the American Civil War, preserved the Union, and ended slavery. Reared in a poor family on the western frontier, he was mostly self-educated. He became a country lawyer, an Illinois state legislator, and a one-term member of the United States House of Representatives, but failed in two attempts at a seat in the United States Senate. He was an affectionate, though often absent, husband, and father of four children.

Lincoln was an outspoken opponent of the expansion of slavery in the United States, which he deftly articulated in his campaign debates and speeches. As a result, he secured the Republican nomination and was elected president in 1860. As president he concentrated on the military and political dimensions of the war effort, always seeking to reunify the nation after the secession of the eleven Confederate States of America. He vigorously exercised unprecedented war powers, including the arrest and detention, without trial, of thousands of suspected secessionists. He issued his Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, and promoted the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, abolishing slavery.

Charles Robert Darwin established that all species of life have descended over time from common ancestry, and proposed the scientific theory that this branching pattern of evolution resulted from a process that he called natural selection. He published his theory with compelling evidence for evolution in his 1859 book On the Origin of Species.
Middle & High School Dropout Crisis in U.S.

The Tale of Two Dropout Students

Communities in Schools (CIS) Is Getting Involved

Cyndi Hopper

Nearly 6.2 million students in the United States between the ages of 16 and 24 dropped out of high school in 2007, fueling the persistent high-school dropout crisis. The total represents 16 percent of all people in the United States in that age range in 2007. For the second consecutive year the percentage of students earning a standard diploma in four years declined, from 69.2 percent in 2006 to 68.8 percent in 2007, according to an analysis in “Diplomas Count 2010.” That translates to 11,000 fewer graduates in 2007 than in 2006.

At its peak in 1969, the national graduation rate was 77 percent. Between 1994 and 2003, the state’s graduation rate increased by almost 11 percentage points (from 56.0 to 66.8 percent). Initially around 55 percent in the early 1990s, the graduation rate in Texas rose to about 60 percent before stagnating during the latter part of the decade. Since 1999, graduation rates have generally been on the rise, although there are signs that improvements have leveled off in the most recent years for which data are available.

The Tale of Two Local Students:

Case No. 1: Debra was in her junior year when she and her mother were evicted from their apartment. Neither she nor her single mother had any income to provide the necessities for her to continue schooling. Making a living became the first item in their struggle to survive.

Case No. 2: The oldest of five siblings, Sam started working the day he turned 14. His income was very important to his family, but he started to fall behind in school. By the time Sam turned 16 he wanted to drop out.

The Communities In Schools (CIS) network is a federation of independent 501(c)(3) organizations in 27 states and the District of Columbia that work to address the dropout epidemic. In the 1960s, on the streets of New York City, youth worker Bill Milliken and his colleagues launched a series of nontraditional “street academies,” with backing from major corporations like Union Carbide and American Express, and in the late sixties from the White House.

One of the corporate donors to Milliken’s academies in New York City helped him develop a safety net so underserved youth could get the assistance they needed to stay in school. That was the beginning of CIS. The CIS founders decided to bring the community resources inside a public school building, where they are accessible, coordinated and accountable. The Mission of Communities In Schools (CIS) is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

Communities In Schools of San Antonio was established in 1985 by a group of concerned community leaders to address our city’s high dropout rate. The founders’ vision was to provide a positive environment for at-risk students, insuring their access to educational opportunities, social services, and support services. By developing positive self-esteem, confidence, and respect, CIS-SA helps to realize the ultimate goal of young people graduating from high school and going on to reach their highest potential as successful citizens, positive contributors to the community and full participants in society.

CIS-SA believes every child needs and deserves “Five Basic Life Tools” to be successful: A safe place to learn and grow; a chance to give back to peers and the community; a personal one-on-one relationship with a caring adult; a healthy start and a healthy future; and a marketable skill to use upon graduation.

This mission is meeting with success: The CIS-SA websites indicates that their organization with 117 qualified staff is involved in 60 schools in the area and they got involved with 8,050 potential dropout cases in the 2008-2009 school year. The stay-in-school rate of this group was an astounding 98%, with a graduation rate of 92%, and 69% improvement in attendance. For more information, please visit http://cissa.org.

Love, Sex, Work, and Happiness

What Makes People Happiest?

from www.timesdigest.nytimes.com

A quick experiment. Before proceeding to the next paragraph, let your mind wander wherever it wants to go. And now, welcome back for the hypothesis of our experiment: Wherever your mind went: the South Seas, your job, your lunch, your unpaid bills—that daydreaming is not likely to make you as happy as will focusing intensely on the rest of this column. Using an iPhone app called trackyourhappiness, psychologists at Harvard contacted people around the world at random intervals to ask how they were feeling, what they were doing, and what they were thinking. The least surprising finding, based on a quarter-million responses from more than 2,200 people, was that the happiest people in the world were the ones in the midst of enjoying sex. Or at least they were enjoying it until the iPhone interrupted.

When asked to rate their feelings on a scale of zero to 100, with 100 being “very good,” the people having sex gave an average rating of 90. That was a good 15 points higher than the next-best activity, exercising, which was followed closely by conversation, listening to music, taking a walk, eating, praying and meditating, cooking, shopping, taking care of one’s children and reading. Near the bottom of the list were personal grooming, commuting and working.
San Antonio Artist Chuck Ramirez Dies from Injuries Received in Bicycle Accident

San Antonio Artist Chuck Ramirez, 48, who was known for his large-scale photography and sculptural installations, died at Brooke Army Medical Center on 8 November 2010. Riding his bicycle in San Antonio’s Southtown he had an accident that caused him to fly over the handlebars. Ramirez was rushed to BAMC with severe head trauma and died there.

His pieces have a unique way of investigating the rituals and forms of everyday life; they are charged with metaphors of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion. His work has been shown extensively throughout the United States and abroad. In 2002 Ramirez represented Texas in the International Art Work in Paris, with 17 large-scale photographs of items referencing food laid bare on the artist’s signature sterile white background.

Ramirez was an untiring leader and motivator of San Antonio’s arts community. According to Bill FitzGibbons, President of Blue Star Contemporary Arts Center, it was Ramirez’ dedication that assured Blue Star didn’t go out of business. Ramirez often offered a helping hand to other arts centers in San Antonio. Last year he partnered with Texas Public Radio at Luminaria: Arts Night San Antonio, where his art was also exhibited.

In recent years, Ramirez had started serving as an artistic ambassador of San Antonio. Dr. Angelika Jansen of the San Antonio-Dresden Alliance praised him for creating unequalled levels of enthusiasm in art and civic leaders in Berlin, Dresden, and Gorlitz, Germany, where he accompanied Texan artists traveling with the bi-national “Border Art” project.

Friends and community leaders paid their respects at a memorial gathering in November. They agreed that his life was like a comet—still going up when he disappeared. But he had already cheated death twice—living with HIV for years and surviving open-heart surgery—and knew it well; Ramirez not only remembered his mortality but transcended it.

San Antonio Symphony
Highlights of the 2010-2011 Season
http://www.sasymphony.org

Jan 28 & 29, 2011
Wagner Rienzi Overture &
Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 3
Christopher Seaman, conductor
Jeffrey Swann, piano

February 11 & 12, 2011
Beethoven/Weingartner Grosse Fuge
Vivaldi Guitar Concerto in D major
Sebastian Lang-Lessing, conductor
Ricardo Cobo, guitar

February 25 & 26, 2011
Sinatra with Steve Lippia
Ken-David Masur, conductor

A San Antonio Composer’s New Work
Sarabande for String Quintet
Daniel Parker*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dMWZVgCk8Y

The Sarabande is a dance in triple meter widely used by Baroque composers—Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frederic Handel and others. The dance is characterized by the dragging of one’s foot during the second and third beats.

First mentioned in a poem written by Panamanian, Fernando Guzmán Mexia in 1539, the “zarabanda” was a popular dance in the Spanish colonies. But, when it made its way back to Spanish courts it was banned as an obscenity. It re-emerged in the 18th century as the Baroque sarabande, which was a slower and more stately version of the zarabanda.

The sarabande form was revived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by composers such as Debussy, Satie, Vaughan Williams (in Job) and Benjamin Britten (in the Simple Symphony). The sarabande inspired the title of Ingmar Bergman’s last film, Saraband (2003).

Yngwie Johann Malmsteen’s Concerto Suite for Electric Guitar and Orchestra contains a section called Sarabande. It draws influences from the original, fast Spanish zarabanda. Even soprano, Sarah Brightman has made her own version named “SarahBande.”

Mr. Parker’s 4 minute Sarabande for String Quintet follows the more stately tempo of the Baroque sarabande while the middle section revisits the racier, “zarabanda.” Sarabande was written, performed and recorded on Mr. Parker’s computer.

* Mr. Parker is at home conducting opera, symphonic works and ballet. He founded the Hartford Chamber Orchestra in 1970 and was its Music Director for 15 years. Under Mr. Parker’s leadership the HCO became the third largest chamber orchestra in the U.S. heralded for its unique programming and high caliber music making. In 1977 Mr. Parker was appointed as Conductor of the Hartford Ballet. During his 7-year tenure Mr. Parker conducted many works in the standard ballet repertoire highlighted by critically acclaimed performances of Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet and Carl Orff’s Carmina Burana.

Carmen Burana.
Editors’ Poems

For Lovers
Josie Mixon

A seductive breeze remains constant
On an evening made for lovers
Reflections of night falling on the surface of the water
Showing a kaleidoscope of illuminating color
The music of romance whispers along
Inviting the lovers to kiss and kiss and kiss
An envious gander calls out
And his soul mate responds to his demanding cry
She glides across the darkened water
A wake resembling a bridal veil following behind
Surrounding cypress hovering closer
Listening in on the lovers’ thoughts
Turtles emerging slowly
One by one
A blushing audience is captivated
By romance
And the lovers kiss and kiss and kiss
Wishing this night will never end
A seductive breeze remains constant
On an evening made for lovers

When Silence Dies
James Brandenburg

Words wrap around our silence
filling the void
until there is only sawdust
in empty space
silence escapes our grasp
choking on raspy sounds
hiding under tiny cat paws.

Finally words
disappear
drowning
in the misty fog.
Can it be that mist
has a voice
infinitesimal droplets
ringing in our ears?

What happens
when there is
nothing more
to say
when there is
nothing more
to hear
when quiet and stillness
no longer
claim our reverence?

Then silence dies.

The Beginning
Mo H Saidi

On a sunny day after the big storm, a bearded man holding a staff walks on the animal trail a disheveled woman with bare chest paces behind.

Dusty and lean they follow the track
the man pauses, turns his head and calls
the woman stops and keeps her distance.

The dung of wild sheep, goats, and horses
on the ground suggests that there must be a spring ahead, and they hasten their steps.

They climb to the brow of a hill and see
an oasis thick with palms and olive trees
they run towards the spring and wash and drink.

A stream meanders through the field
feeds cedar trees, grass, and wild wheat.
The breeze is cool, the land green.

Sun warms the man’s face, the woman’s chest. In the valley, goats, doves, and rabbits galore; wild flowers dance in the wind.

There away from Heaven, no angel or devil
to be seen, but apples and pears hang on twigs
they are free to eat and drink and make love.
* from a long poem, “The Earth”

Morning
Lou Taylor

Never has brushing my teeth
Been so exciting
A small creature
Emerged from the drain
Slow, torpid, half awake
A baby roach?
But look, it has
A stinger
It’s a bee
As surprised by the light
As I am by its presence
What do I do?
I can’t crush a creature
Who has survived the
Perils of plumbing
I wrap it gently in
A wash cloth
And release it outside the door
No longer a sleepy, torpid Creature, it soars
To the oak tree
Blessed beginning for a new day
Given wings of hope
On the buffet two photographs in sepia lie side by side in front of the decanter. Records not of what has been done, but of what has been lost. Objects that haunt the imagination, that whet the desire to fathom the history of a family I arrived too late to know. Aunt Mary, my mother Agnes’ oldest sister. First born, and therefore solely deserving of the photographic record of his daughter that an immigrant carpenter sacrificed to provide. The year of the portrait is 1921, the year of her marriage. The husband-to-be is Albert Planch, a hard-drinking blonde-haired Irish boy from the north end of Albany, New York. The only bridesmaid is Edna Hogan, consumptive, a gaunt and bony farm girl from Hoosick Falls. But these are details that other memories intrude, for in the portrait Mary stands in profile, alone. Her dark brown hair is bobbed and shines with brilliantine. There is a look of gentle confidence about the eyes. Her cheek is full and smooth, the lips set in a self-reliant pout with chin raised jauntily to the world. The heavy silver bangle earring just touches a frilly boa draped over the dark velvet figure of her applique coat.

The other picture is what is left of a wedding photo torn in half. The jagged edge of the paper blazes like lightening. It speaks silently in that special language of broken things. Mary and Edna wear veils and hold bouquets of white flowers. The women stare apprehensively at the camera as if shocked by the sudden absence of Albert and his anonymous groomsmen. Albert’s actual departure would come a bit later, perhaps a result of the unwanted arrival of a son, or just the ennui that is the certain peril of young romance.

In the gloom of a late summer dusk an apparition of dried hair, withered cheeks, and searching eyes draws near to me. “Al, Al, … yuh finally come back!” Bewildered, embarrassed, I offer quietly, “No, no. It’s me … it’s Dave.” “Eddie. Eddie. Is that you?” her voice rises in fretful hope that the boy who stands before her might be the little one lost so many years before. The heavy scent of scotch surrounds me. I draw back a pace or two. “No. No. It’s me. Dave.” The figure moves a bit from side to side, silently staring. “It’s me. It’s Dave. Agnes’ boy. Agnes’ boy,” I say again and yet again into a silence that forty years of abandonment and one dead son can bring.

Senora Luz María Monreal leans over the small rock grotto in her front yard. She pours the coffee can of water onto the red roses growing there, touches them with fingers that have outlived trees and walls and five of her six siblings. She raises her eyes to the skies filled with fat greying clouds, and wipes her hands on the patched apron. Ninety-six at last birthday, and her baby sister only eighty-one. She crosses herself and whispers, “Gracias.” She is sure the prayers to the Virgin’s grotto are what have kept her here. What rescued, too, her five-year-old from constant asthma attacks that disappeared once the grotto was built. She waters the roses in summer, lays artificial flowers there in winter, whispers her prayers.

“The Virgin, the grey-haired son, now 70, calls out. “Come inside before the rains hit, before you get soaked.” She follows, with one glance back, one last whispered phrase at the Virgen-cita. The son is protective but not too fearful of the rain. He knows her strength. Knows she raised the six younger siblings when she was just a teen and all of them alone. Cared for them till they were grown, vowed to never leave them unprotected, watched them into death, and perhaps beyond. He knows she will not leave this life as long as even one of them is here.

He holds the screen door open, tunes the radio back to her favorite --polkitas, absorbs her quiet grace that fills the house. After she is settled in her couch, he wanders out to the grotto, spellbound by its endurance, so much like his mother’s. He stares, wonders, doubts.

Then his lips part, and he begins to pray with all the faith that he can muster. The greatest test of meaning still ahead, the promise never taken lightly. The call this hour fresh inside his head, freezing all his senses. The last orphaned sibling, hospitalized. The thread of his own loss hangs thinly. He pleads with every breath from lungs no longer asthmatic, pleading for someone—his baby sister, only eighty-one faithfully protected years old. Her breath, his mother’s own. He knows the vow did not come lightly. He knows also that it will not leave alone.

I thought I had just seen something out of the corner of my eye, but then I realized, with the cherry red slithering out of my side like a serpent, that there was no time to comfort myself with knowledge of what the fleeting shadows were. Time was of dire consequence here.

I could recall the sharp, moonlit silver with the merciless hand that made it glide with such grace and power, and the piercing of my own flesh; the red snake had been born that very moment. I placed my hand over the wound to cease its writhing and fighting to escape, but even then I could see its ruby scales oozing from between my fingers. The infinitely long body trailed behind me, a traitor as it led him straight to me. It seemed to claw at my flesh like the dagger that sank into my side, bringing unimaginable pain as it fought for the freedom it so desired. For every inch of the serpent that left me, the weaker I grew.

My breathing quickened, each inhale a heavy stone that brought about extreme fatigue. I couldn’t go on. I fell to the ground and my hand slid away from the wound, and the red snake delighted in unobstructed freedom. It had won, for the glistening scales of crimson in the early dawn had mocked me, a sad, pitiful farewell. The assassin’s footsteps grew near, a melancholy rhythm as they shuffled across the liquid rose petals.

The silver dagger in his hand hummed an eager melody of death, while in a chorus the red snake sang of freedom, and my heart sang for mercy. A crimson tail and the thorn of silver knowledge of what the fleeting shadows were. Time was of dire consequence here.

My last breath, like the tears of crystal that fell from his mad dened, painful eyes was soft and sorrowful, so too were the stuttering last words, each a symphony that touched our hearts; We both knew there could have been a happy ending in this.

“I’m sorry. So sorry.”
For a long time my grandfather Jack was a mystery to me. Few are the actual recollections I have of him, even though we shared the same house for the last declining decade of his life. Yet those sparse memories are the most vivid of my childhood. I see Jack struggling to rise from his chair near the downstairs front door. I hear the heavy footfalls of his wide-stanced gait as he lumbers toward the unheated bedroom behind my grandmother’s kitchen. In my memory the echoes of his angry curses still sound in long-vanished rooms.

Where my grandfather’s anger came from I do not know with certainty. Years after his death my mother told me that her father-in-law had been very wild as a youth, and that his marriage to my grandmother, a woman several years his senior, had been an effort by the family to tame Jack’s ferocity. But when my mother told me this her own memory had been clouded by ninety years of living, nearly thirty of which had been spent at war with her mother-in-law. So time and the emptiness that comes with having outlasted one’s enemies may have clouded her recollection.

I do know that from his early youth Jack had been a real toper. Indeed, at his wake I remember old Tighe, a drinking buddy from the American Lithuanian Club, telling the story of Jack’s once dipping into jars of new elderberry wine my great grandmother had put up in her cellar.

“Jesus,” says Tighe in a breathless whisper, his eyes wide and rheumy with remembrance and new drink. “When he was just a little guy even, th’ kid goes down there half loaded with some farmers’ matches an’ a bit of a candle an’ tries to reseal th’ bottles so’s his ma won’t catch on. But he don’t know that there’s air in ‘em jars when he melts the wax or whatever. Pretty soon, they’re blowin’ up underneath th’ old lady’s bedroom in th’ middle of th’ night! Then she’s scared and won’t go down there fer days in case a jar explodes when she gets close to it. An’ yah know, his ma never did find out what made them jars explode.” The constant tremor that moves Tighe’s pig-pink head from side to side increases in amplitude.

“Damn me, if he was never that lucky again in his whole life!”

Huddling over Tighe, my father and his brother share a quiet chuckle well out of earshot of my grandmother and aunt crying at the bier. They wept for three days of the wake, and at the graveside their tears flowed even faster than the dark torrents of November. They wept for three days of the wake, and at the graveside their tears flowed even faster than the dark torrents of November. Then all the crying stopped. Jack’s meager bed and wardrobe were dispatched to the Salvation Army, and his name was never again mentioned in the house that three generations of our family shared.

And yet for me Jack is more than an angry alcoholic, for if we care to acknowledge it, experience teaches that others close to us defy the simple labels. We share with them the web of hopes and fears that befuddle our own hearts. For us they can never be just a son, just a mother, just a drunk. As I have grown older, I have come to wonder if I, like Jack, can be “so incensed by the vile things.”

My earliest memory of Jack dates to when I was five or six. In a kitchen redolent with the salty sweet aroma of roasting beef, my younger cousin and I are ushered to the table, our chins close above its dented grease-green metal edge. An important mystery of the adult world is about to be revealed. Jack, resplendent in sleeveless undershirt, sits close at the head of the table, his face dominated by a nose as massive and angular as the head of a splitter’s maul. The jawline is broad enough to complement that nose and makes his head look as though it were a wedge struck haphazardly from a larger piece of granite. Up close we can discern the pink and grey patina of his weathered neck and cheeks. Before him is a plate heaped with steaming beef fat. Against the crackles spread like spider webs across the porcelain glaze the rinds bubble dark brown, their pearly inner surfaces glistening in all the colors of the rainbow. Great slabs of yellow cheese rim the edge of the platter.

“Here, c’mon, eat this. It’ll make men outta yah!”

My cousin suddenly clamps his mouth shut and starts to whimper, but I am older and shrug off the enticement of his tears. I will not cry and manage a lung full of air sour with the odors of whiskey and stale sweat before the quivering forklift is shoved against my lips. I bite down hard, as I imagine a man would, chew a bit and swallow. But there is no mystery. There is only the insipid taste of gristle. I want no more. I try the cheese, but its sharpness stings my tongue and my eyes tear. I back away from the table as Jack turns from me, silent, dismissive. It is as though we both understand that I have not measured up to a man’s world, and I am angry at myself and at Jack for he has shown me that I am too soft and gentle yet and cannot see the beauty of strong and savage things.

It is the last year of Jack’s life. March rain turns a long grey twilight blue-black as I watch wind-driven water ripple against the thin panes of the bay window. I fancy myself grown now, capable of seizing the chance to understand what part of me belongs to Jack. At my back, the warm kitchen fills with the bustle and chirp of my grandmother and aunt as they move about preparing supper. Yet beneath the comforting aromas of the warming meal lurks the sharp odor of pine bleach. It is a hint to my youthful understanding that what is not approved must be ruthlessly scoured away. Still my heart is buoyed when Jack appears at the front door, drenched and sober from the road. With heavy step he moves past me without a glance. I wait, listen cautiously, hopefully, but in the kitchen, recriminations begin. The floors are wet, the voice too loud, the demand for dinner too early and too often made.

“Shh, shhh, the boy’ll hear.”

I turn to see Jack, at bay, turning to his wife and daughter, crying with a heart that must speak loudly and at once, “So what if he does! Let him know what he’s in for too … someday!”

“Now look, you! You’ve made him cry!”

The women’s angry shrieks surpass Jack’s sputtering thunder. Again and again their sharply scolding voices harry him; to me he seems a dying bull tormented by the sword. The door to his unheated bedroom behind the stove slams shut, and I am left alone staring at my reflection in the dark window glass.

Sunday night. In celebration of St. Patrick, Jack’s been gone two days. Every light in the house is lit, and I am at my.
the siren song diminishing as it nears our house. Hidden behind a chair shoved against an upstairs window, I hear the footfalls of firemen thundering on the porch below. Later, in the living room downstairs, I want to hide again. But there is no sanctuary large enough now to shelter me behind the sofa or beneath the bay window. I watch as Jack’s shroud-covered body, strapped to a board, is levered from the undertaker’s gurney and carried through the narrow doorway into the night.

In the years since that November Sunday, Jack has become for me an object of terrible beauty, evoking a strange mixture of pity and envy. Buffeted by fortune, Jack saw the world only through the narrow prism of his rage and followed that vision, unflinchingly, to the end.

**Persian Marchers: A Novel**  
**Chapter Five**  
**Mo H Saidi**

Tehran’s tree-studded Pahlavi Street used to be rimmed with western style cafés, shops, and restaurants where people would gather for evening drinks, dinner, and dancing. Almost fifteen miles long, Pahlavi Street begins at Tajrish Square in northern Tehran, among the foothills of Alburz Mountains, and meanders down the hillside, crossing downtown and continuing towards the south side of Tehran. It finally ends at Railroad Square, near Tehran’s main train station. Rows of tall maples on both sides of the street separate the sidewalks from the six-lane road. Water gurgles down the runnels between the tree lines along each sidewalk. Cool breezes in summer and golden maple leaves in autumn invite pedestrian traffic. The upper part of the street was at that time a popular place for young couples to take an evening stroll. They enjoyed the shady public parks surrounding the numerous shops, hotels, and restaurants.

Cyrus planned to spend that evening with several friends and classmates from Tehran Medical School. Among the 300 classmates in Cyrus’s medical school class of 1967, there were forty-five practicing and 173 non-practicing Shiites, thirty-four agnostics, nineteen atheists, five Buddhists, sixteen Jewish students, four Christians and three Baha’is. The practicing Shiites had been the most vocal group; they were particularly keen to harass and criticize the Baha’is. Seldom did Cyrus, who was a well-known agnostic, involve himself in religious discussions; he would especially avoid arguing with practicing Shiites; they tended to leave little room for constructive dialogue.

He enjoyed his friendship with Tooraj profoundly, because they were both left-leaning student activists and always shared revolutionary literature and books dealing with political ideology. Although he was an agnostic Jew, Tooraj cared more about general social issues than about the narrow topic of the Jewish community’s struggles to survive the periodic onslaught of Iranian clergy against his minority religion. He believed democracy would ultimately provide the best protection for all groups, large or small, and to that end he was very active in the progressive student movement. He was well respected and popular among his classmates.

“My forefathers came to Persia eons before the Moslems invaded the Persian Empire,” Tooraj would often say. He claimed that Iranian Jews were among the oldest native groups of the

Continued from page 35

acustomed space on the overstuffed sofa, my feet not quite reaching the floor. The women move from room to room whispering words hard-edged with fear.

“Oh, he’s over at Kavanaugh’s, sleepin’ it off, probably.”

“Tom Kehoe saw ‘im at the ALC Saturday afternoon. Said he was in no shape to come home. Said he probably was afraid to anyway.”

In the brightness the familiar living room has become cavernous, its dusty walls and stained ceiling violently beaten back. Car brakes squeal and light flashes across the window curtains’ deep folds making them appear like thick white bars set against the black night. Men’s voices rumble cautiously as their foot-steps shake the porch. The knob rattles a bit, turns slowly, then the door swings wide revealing Jack, white-faced, slack-jawed, with outstretched hands grasping the jamb. He lifts one shaking foot onto the threshold and rises, braced from behind by old Tighe and the cabdriver. Struggling, they lower him deep into the flattened cushion of his chair just inside the door. Jack raises his elbows high onto the armsrests so that his outstretched forearms are nearly on a level with his chin. Then his head droops forward. Old Tighe straightens up. With an apologetic grimace he offers, “Had a bit much at the ALC, he did.”

Carefully watching the carpet Tighe pivots about and makes for the open door. The cabdriver follows him, and they vanish into the night.

Jack sits Lincolnesque in a stupor until the call to supper comes. My father and uncle approach, gently pull him upright. They try to move him away from the chair, but his weight is too much for them. All three are borne down toward the tray table. In slow motion I see Jack sit down upon the bottom tray and hear the sharp crack of its cut lace wooden edge breaking off. The furies in the kitchen who’ve been silent until now are roused.

“Oh, look what he’s done! My mother’s table!”

“Oh, whatever he touches he turns to rubbish.”

“You’ll see! You’ll get that fixed. You’ll have Andrulis do it. Dirty drunken old man, you’ll pay for this!”

The warm days of summer arrive. In the few months following his retirement from the road, Jack has become for me a worrisome presence lurking about the neighborhood. At any moment of the late afternoon he’s liable to appear, silent, wooden-faced, ham-fisted, his cane tapping fitfully on the pavement as he makes his way home from the ALC. I am always on the lookout. When I catch sight of him, I escape to my bedroom, there to fear the slow staccato of his step along the porch, the crash of the front door slamming shut, the tempest from which no one in the house can find shelter. Even when he is not at home, I feel the weight of his heavy step and thunderous voice. As the days advance, my heart grows angry at the burden.

When the last storm comes, it is strangely brief. A few curses slamming shut, the tempest from which no one in the house can find shelter. Even when he is not at home, I feel the weight of his heavy step and thunderous voice. As the days advance, my heart grows angry at the burden.

That silence lasts into late November. The long shadows of a Sunday afternoon steal quietly across cold gray pavement when the screaming of women explodes in the hallway. Then comes the stumbling rush down the stairs, the hurried phone call and
country who arrived from the North some four millennia ago. A large Jewish contingent first settled in Ecbatana and Susa in southwest Persia around 700 B.C., after a failed uprising against their brutal Assyrian overlords. More Jews came to western Persia some two hundred years later when Cyrus the Great freed thousands of them from slavery in Babylon.

“We were instrumental in the rise of the Achaemenian Empire,” Tooraj would proudly remind his friends, “We worked in the farms, built the roads and ran the trading centers of the empire.”

Tooraj felt Persian first, Jewish second, and would always insist that the Jews in ancient Persia were liked, respected, and their temples always protected.

“Our elders were seen as the muse of the ancient Persian Empire,” he would argue, “and our men held high positions in a government which guaranteed freedom of religion, movement, marriage, and occupation.”

The winds of war stormed the land barbarians armed with swords the zealots with their stern faith attacked the Empire, fought suicidal war scorched the cities, destroyed the temples severed the tongues, repressed the music and arts.

Tooraj had made a reservation at Sorrento, a popular café and discotheque on Pahlavi Street. Cyrus and Tooraj joined six other classmates at a round table near a window overlooking a picturesque view of trees and water. Inside the café, western jazz music played softly in the dim light. They ordered cocktails and appetizers while they recalled their years at medical school, especially the tough times everybody suffered through in that horrid anatomy course. They also remembered the good times, the picnics in the parks and the trips to the shore of the Caspian Sea.

Soon the place filled up with stylish, middle-aged couples and cheerful groups of young people. Three simply dressed men in their twenties settled at a nearby table. Next to them was a body mentioned politics or the Iranian economy. Finally, Cyrus changed the subject, much to the relief of the others.

“How much do you earn in the U.S.?” he asked Cyrus.

“Enough to cover my expenses, and then some.”

Tooraj laughed, “Now tell us, how much tax you pay to your Uncle Sam?”

“A lot! I suppose more than all of you here together.”

“I don’t pay much,” Tooraj confessed, “As long as I take care of my tax inspector’s children, he takes care of my taxes.”

Their attention was drawn to two armed policemen who had entered the café and proceeded to circle around the tables, staring at every guest. A minute later two men in plain clothes joined them. After a short conversation, the policemen strode to the table where the three young men were drinking tea and conversing quietly. One policeman ordered them to stand up and raise their hands over their heads. At first, the young men tried to ignore the command and stayed put, but when the plainclothesmen joined the group and threatened to arrest them right there in the café, they obeyed. The policemen went through their pockets and collected a pile of cassette tapes and a stack of printed sheets. As he sorted through the papers, several black and white photos of Ayatollah Khomeini fell on the floor; he picked them up and put them in a folder, missing only one, which had slipped underneath Cyrus’s chair. The winds of war stormed the land barbarians armed with swords the zealots with their stern faith attacked the Empire, fought suicidal war scorched the cities, destroyed the temples severed the tongues, repressed the music and arts.

Tooraj watched him fold the photo and slide it into his pocket.

A second classmate joined him, and they left the café in a hurry. Tooraj was disappointed by their sudden departure and changed the subject, much to the relief of the others.

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The winds of war stormed the land barbarians armed with swords the zealots with their stern faith attacked the Empire, fought suicidal war scorched the cities, destroyed the temples severed the tongues, repressed the music and arts.
Voices de la Luna, 15 January 2011

Maryam and Habib were eating dinner when Cyrus returned.

Cyrus shrugged, “They won’t search you or me. We look too prosperous.” He pointed to his silk Hermes tie and to Tooraj’s well-tailored Italian suit.

While Tooraj maneuvered the car through the dense traffic back to Maryam’s house, he kept cursing. “Damn this rotten police state! Damn the Shah and his tyrannical government! You can’t have a drink in this town without being watched by that stupid Big Brother.”

Cyrus was surprised by the deep anger at the system Tooraj’s sudden outburst displayed, but he said nothing.

“You should be glad you are not living here!” continued Tooraj. “I can hardly take the weight of this oppression anymore. We can’t even chat among ourselves. Look, if we had democracy here, if we could debate our problems in the open, if we could read and write intelligently, we wouldn’t have to worry about Ayatollah Khomeini and his followers.”

Cyrus was puzzled by Tooraj’s interpretation of the incident at the café. “What about those young men? For all we know, they might be involved in the bombing campaign.”

Tooraj continued ranting. “I hate to tell you, but for many people, that’s the only way left to air their opposition against the Shah. We have no freedom of speech, no independent media, and no real political parties to join. Meanwhile the mullahs have the security of their mosques. That’s why people are planting bombs in banks. In this country, there is no other way to vent your frustration. We are all living in a big, ugly prison.”

“Well, judging by the radio and the newspaper, the Shah appears to be misjudging the situation completely.”

“As long as the Shah doesn’t leave any room for ordinary political activity, violence will continue to overtake our society. And violence will ruin everything.” Tooraj turned to Cyrus, expecting a comment, but his friend was deep in thought. Tooraj gave him an elbow, “What are you thinking about?”

“About our own days in politics. Just think, it was only fifteen years ago when you and I marched with other university students to the bazaar, demanding free elections. The Shah was there then, and the Shah is here now.”

“Sadly, you’re right. This man is not going to give up any power. He loves his throne and will crush any opposition.”

“Who do you think will fill the gap in case the Shah’s government really loses control?”

“By decimating liberals and socialists, the Shah has created a dangerous vacuum and thus he is indirectly supporting the clergy. Nothing they have done so far gives any indication that they believe in civil liberty. Actually, they are the ones who should be watched very carefully, not students or intellectuals. But this ignoramus of a Shah doesn’t get it!”

“Perhaps he does not mind the clergy.” speculated Cyrus. Perhaps he’s a devoted Shiite at heart. At any rate, he’s severely suppressing the progressive political forces.”

There was a long, sad silence between the two friends, until Cyrus spoke, “Let’s talk about something else, how about our families?”

Tooraj laughed bitterly, “You’re right. Maybe our children or our grandchildren will experience freedom and happiness in this country.”

Maryam and Habib were eating dinner when Cyrus returned. Habib was surprised to see him home so early.

Cyrus interrupted. “Who set that bomb?”

“Well, it could have been anybody from a long list of revolutionaries.”

Bahram was bursting with eagerness to bring Cyrus up to date on the clandestine anti-Shah activities of various leftist groups and radical Islamists.

“You cannot imagine how much is going on here. Underneath the apparently calm surface of our nation, you will find plenty of violence and turmoil.”

“You mean there are many angry people who will actually sabotage government offices?”

“More than that, it has become a real uprising against the Shah!”

“That is difficult to believe. This Shah has been unpopular for decades and yet his government survives!”

“You must believe me, this time it’s really serious.”

“A few bombs won’t unravel his power.”

“Let me tell you, bombs are only one element in a systematic campaign to dethrone the Shah.”

Cyrus was amused by the Bahram’s fervor, “You sound like me when I was a freshman in college and thought the Shah’s days were numbered.”

“Listen! Today is different!” Bahram insisted. “Only one week ago there was an uprising in the city of Tabriz where anti-Shah demonstrators occupied every single police station. They disarmed the entire police force and demanded an end to martial law and the release of political prisoners.”

“And then the Shah’s soldiers came and chased them out, right?”

“But that cannot stop more uprisings elsewhere. Have you heard that the theology students in the city of Qum marched to City Hall and demanded an official investigation into the killing of innocent bystanders by soldiers during the Tabriz uprising.”

“And who would investigate that?” Cyrus asked.

“I don’t know. But we need and demand serious democratic reforms and a fair judiciary.”

Bahram dug into his briefcase, pulled out a pile of papers, and waived them in Cyrus’s face. “Just look at this! Students in Tabriz have taken photographs and collected eyewitness accounts of the army attacking unarmed students and innocent civilians. A national underground network of students working for democracy is distributing these pictures and reports all over the country, even overseas. Just look at this!”

Cyrus stared at the photographs. Tanks were charging straight into columns of unarmed people. Soldiers were firing grenade launchers into crowds of young men and women. The last picture

Continue on page 40
Everyone knew who he was. His name was Riley O’Connor, but he was known as Jade.

“I don’t know if I could do it, but he did the right thing,” men confessed to their wives who shuddered thinking of the awful choice a man had to make. “If he had anything that could be called luck, it would be that they didn’t have no children.”

Boys played like they were Jade. “I don’t want to do it but it’s what I have to do,” they said, their make-believe six-shooters aimed at a friend’s heart. Sometimes they killed Indians with sticks that were make-believe knives like the one Jade had.

The settlement was too small to have a name or a street, just footpaths called Barefoot and Moccasin Streets. It was a place on the freight wagon trail between San Antonio and El Paso, a track that narrowed to the springs like a river narrowed to its source and then threaded out again as travelers chose the shortest, smoothest, easiest or safest way and those depended on the Indians, the weather, and the time of year.

Where the trail narrowed people had pulled close, held together by fear. The trail ran past a store, a church, a saloon, a post office and all those sinners needed a church. It was a free country.

“Odell had married for the fifth or sixth time. He had a daughter by his last wife, who was his own mother. He was known as Jade.

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The store supplied wagon trains, cavalry patrols, scouts, adventurers, outlaws, cowmen. One cowman, called the general by his cowboys and the Big Augur in the settlement, built a house near the store for his wife, daughters, teenage boy, and his stove-up father, Shep, so they would be safer during Indian raids. One daughter had been killed by Indians. One son just curled up and died; no one knew why. Cletis, the teenager who survived, lived in town with his mother but carried messages to the bare wood, dirt-floored house that was his father’s headquarters. The general visited them when he came in a wagon for supplies, accompanied by a few cowboys for his protection and their chance to toss a few drinks and bounce the whore.

Another cowman was called El Jefe by his pistoleros who spoke with a Spanish accent. Proper names were scarce between the Devil’s River and the Pecos. Jefe built a house for his wife, young children and his wife’s parents on the other side of the trail from the general, and lived in a rag house near the chuck wagon. Their cowboys needed a place to howl and that meant a saloon with a shack in the back. Trail traffic required a blacksmith shop, and all those sinners needed a church. It was a free country.
Genetic Aspects of Human Evolution

Africa’s genetic secrets unlocked

From Wikipedia & an article by Victoria Gill
Science reporter, BBC News
http://news.bbc.co.uk

Human evolution is the origin and evolution of Homo sapiens as a distinct species from other hominids, great apes and placental mammals. Scientists have estimated that humans branched off from their common ancestor with chimpanzees—the only other living hominins—about 5–7 million years ago. Several species of Homo evolved and are now extinct. These include Homo erectus, which inhabited Asia, and Homo neanderthalensis, which inhabited Europe. Archaic Homo sapiens evolved between 400,000 and 250,000 years ago.

The dominant view among scientists concerning the origin of anatomically modern humans is the “Out of Africa” or recent African origin hypothesis, which argues that H. sapiens arose in Africa and migrated out of the continent around 50,000 to 100,000 years ago, replacing populations of H. erectus in Asia and H. neanderthalensis in Europe. DNA sequence analysis of existing populations can provide phylogenies that can be mapped onto geographic distribution. A genetic map of Africa—the continent from which all modern humans originate—has provided in formation about its huge diversity of language and culture. It is the result of the largest African genetic study ever undertaken.

The work revealed the continent to be the most genetically diverse place on earth, and identified descendents of our earliest human ancestors. The international team of scientists describe their 10-year study in the Journal of Science. The team, led by Sarah Tishkoff from the University of Pennsylvania, studied genetic material from 121 African populations. They collected over 3,000 samples, and identified 14 “ancestral population clusters.” These are groups of populations with common genetic ancestry, who share ethnicity and similarities in both their culture and the properties of their languages.

“This is a spectacular insight into the history of African populations and therefore the history of mankind,” said Muntaser Ibrahim, a researcher from the University of Khartoum, who was also involved in the study. The team looked at individual ancestry, or genetic similarities in their samples, by comparing the frequencies of more than 1,000 DNA markers—sections of the DNA code that are known to reveal common genetic heritage.

“In the past, [geneticists] studied just a few Africans, and suggested they were representative of the continent, but we’ve found that no population is representative of all of this diversity,” said Dr Tishkoff.

“Our goal has been to do research that will benefit Africans,” she said. “I hope this will set the stage for future genomics research there, and future biomedical research.”

The completion of the study could enable such research, allowing the link between genes and disease to be properly studied.

“The genetic variants we’ve identified may play a role in disease susceptibility and the different ways in which people respond to drugs,” Dr Tishkoff explained. Her team had to gather genetic samples from some of the continent’s most remote communities to extract the important information from blood samples, they

Persian Marchers.....continued from page 38
showed ravaged bodies strewn over deserted and blood stained streets.

Bahram grabbed Cyrus’s arm and pleaded with him.
“Hide them somewhere in your suitcase; take them with you to the U.S. and show them to the authorities and the media.”
“How many people were killed?”
“I don’t know yet, but the list of dead will be published in the underground papers soon.”
“It really sounds like the students are well organized.”
“Indeed they are, and this time many underground anti-Shah groups, such as the Iranian National Front, constitutional democrats and Marxist students, are fighting together.”
“How about the supporters of Khomeini?”
“They are only a small group, but you cannot believe how brave they are! That makes them really useful.”
“Come on, Marxism doesn’t mix well with religion, are you sure of this alliance?”
“That old principle doesn’t apply in Iran,” Bahram countered, “As the old proverb says, ‘The enemy of your enemy is my friend.’ They are mixing well with us, so far.”

Cyrus remembered Habib’s earlier comment, “The mullahs are going to destroy our country. First they will bring down the Shah, and then they will take care of all those sadly misinformed leftist parties.”

to be continued in the next issue
have to be “spun down,” using a centrifuge to produce a pellet containing the DNA.

“In the most remote areas, we used a centrifuge that plugged into a car battery,” Dr Tishkoff recalled.

Largely as a result of these difficulties, a large amount of the group’s data comes from populations that have never previously been studied genetically. “This is the first time we have had the genetic data to reconstruct migration events”

Sarah Tishkoff of the University of Pennsylvania says that this allows the map to provide an entirely new link between biology, existing anthropology, and linguistic information. The research also located the origin of modern human migration in southwestern Africa, near the coastal border of Namibia and Angola. This is based on the widely accepted theory that the highest level of genetic diversity is in the oldest population—the one that has had the longest to evolve. The site is the homeland of the indigenous San communities.

Dr Tishkoff explained, “It’s not surprising but it’s a very neat finding because the San have already been shown to have the oldest genetic lineages, suggesting they may be descendents of a population ancestral to all modern humans.”

The data has revealed a great deal about the history of the continent. “This is the first time we have had the genetic data to reconstruct migration events,” Dr Tishkoff commented. Her team, which represented a variety of academic disciplines, showed how genetic and linguistic diversity have co-evolved. This analysis revealed some surprises.

“The Masai people [in Kenya], for example, have maintained their traditional language and pastoral lifestyle, but genetically they’ve mixed a lot with populations from Ethiopia [who speak a different language],” said Dr Tishkoff.

The researchers also took samples from four African American populations, and traced their African ancestry. This was, as expected, mostly pinned down to West Africa. Mark Thomas from the Department of Genetics, Evolution, and Environment at UCL praised the study, and said that the level of diversity discovered was “broadly what we would expect.” He added that because the origins of African American ancestry can be seen “all the way from Senegal down to Angola, it will be a long time before a DNA test will be able to identify someone’s ancestral origin. That’s despite the ridiculous claims of some of these DNA testing companies.”

Submissions

General Guidelines

Voices de la Luna: A Quarterly Poetry & Arts Magazine accepts English language submissions from writers all over the world, publishing quarterly in print and on-line. Publication dates are 15 January, 15 April, 15 July, and 15 October 2011. Submissions must be received one month prior to publication date to be considered for the next issue.

Because of the format limitations, following are the types of admissions that Voices de la Luna can accept.

Prose

Short fiction pieces of up to 1200 words. Please submit fiction to Debra Pena at debra.pena@utsa.edu

Poetry

Up to 3 original poems per month per writer, 28 (or fewer) lines of no more than 60 characters each.

We believe it is up to the poet to break longer lines in the way that s/he sees fit. Please submit poetry to Joan Seifert at Joans@voicesdelaluna.com

Youth Prose and Poetry

Youth submissions must include the writer’s name, age, name of school, and grade level. The consent form on the website must be sent with your submission.

Please note that youth writers must not yet have graduated high school and be no more than 18 years old. Please submit to voicesyoutheditor@gmail.com

General Submissions Guidelines:

1. Submissions are accepted only by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word or similar format for Mac users.

2. Include your name, e-mail address, mailing address, and telephone number on each poem submitted, and on the first page of each prose manuscript.

3. Brief biographical notes help us understand who we are reaching. However, contributors’ notes will not be published. Work will be selected for publication based solely on literary quality and the way each individual piece of writing meets our current needs.

4. Simultaneous submissions are acceptable as long as we are informed by e-mail immediately (with title and submission date) if you need to withdraw the work from our consideration.

5. Submissions may have been previously published, as long as the writer provides that information and currently holds the rights. If work has been translated, include the translator’s name for credit. In some cases, we may publish short poems in both languages side-by-side.

6. We do not pay contributors. We contact writers only if work has been accepted, letting them know that their piece will appear in the up-coming issue. This notification will come immediately before an issue goes to print, not sooner.

African High School Students

by Brigitte B. Saidi
Established in 1988, Pecan Grove Press is sponsored by The Louis J. Blume Library of St. Mary’s University. The press publishes books and chapbooks of fine poetry and, very rarely, short works of prose. PGP also publishes a regular chapbook series for students at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, Texas.

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Your language in sleep, scrim, from another place. Splatter of mucus, grunt. Not laughter laced through a late dinner—candles, calamari, wine. All night, all day, squares aligned. Twenty by twenty, shadow and angles. Four and twenty blackbirds flutter, litter inside your brainpan.

To order the book from Pecan Grove Press:
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Notes & Videos

Voices de la Luna
Is Pleased to Congratulate Dr. Carmen Tafolla for Receiving The Américas Award for Children’s and Adult Literature Given by the the United States Department of Education National Resource Center

The Américas Award is given in recognition of U.S. works of fiction, poetry, folklore, or selected non-fiction (from picture books to works for young adults) published in the previous year in English or Spanish that authentically and engagingly portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United States. For more information, please visit: http://www4.uwm.edu/clacs/aa/index.cfm; to view Dr. Carmen acceptance speech, please view: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8VvtTdStVJQ.
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Voices de la Luna
and
Barnes & Noble
Annoucne their Joint Monthly Poetry Workshop, Reading, and Open Mic
at La Cantera Barnes & Noble
Every 4th Wednesday – 6 to 9 PM
Poetry & Art Events
San Antonio Recurring Venues

DISCLAIMER: All venue information listed has been provided by third parties. These venues have not been verified. It is the sole responsibility of parties interested in attending these venues to verify the validity of the post.


2nd Tuesdays 7-9 pm – Awaken the Sleeping Poet at the Twig, 200 E. Grayson, Ste. 124, Pearl Brewery (210) 826-6411, Featured poets & open mic. Host: Floyd Lamrouex

Tuesdays 6–9 pm – Jazz Poet Society – Guadalupe Street Coffee, 1320 Guadalupe St.– (210) 573-5115. Bring poetry and songs and work with other poets and songwriters to present works on stage. A drum circle accompanies poets.


Tuesdays 10:30 pm – Puro Slam–The Heights–9315 N. Broadway (just north of 410). Weekly open mic certified by the National Poetry Slam allows poets to deliver their work and get heckled. DJ Donnie Dee spins before and after the show. Sign up begins at 9:30 pm. Slam begins @ 10:30 pm. For more information visit www.puroslam.com.

1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7–9 pm – Barnes & Noble, Ingram Festival, 6065 NW Loop 410 (same side as Ingram mall). Features and open mic. 210-522-1340. Host: Josie Mixon.

Every Fourth Wednesday - Barnes & Noble, The Shops at La Cantera15900, La Cantera Parkway Bldg 27 San Antonio, TX 78256. Host: Voices de la Luna:
6 PM Poetry Workshop
7 PM Featured Guest
8 PM Open Mic

Thursdays 6:30-9:30 pm – South Presa Bar and Grill – Open mic: poetry, music, and storytelling Host: Andi

Last Thursday of Each Month 7–9 pm– Awaken the Sleeping Poet – Features and open mic – Northwoods Barnes & Noble,–18030 HWY 281 N, Suite #140 (281 & 1604)–(210) 490-0411. Host: Floyd Lamrouex

2nd Saturday 7–9 pm – Gallista –Features and open mic, Gallista Gallery and Art Studio, 1913 S. Flores – (210) 212-8606. Host: Thom E.

3rd Saturday 2–4 pm – San Antonio Poets Association – Monthly at Bethany Congregational Church–500 Pilgrim Dr.

Book Reading/Signings

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