

a publication of the Middle Tennessee State University Honors College

# collage

a journal of creative expression

Volume III Spring 2006





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a journal of creative expression  
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Middle Tennessee State University Honors College

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# | letter from the editor

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It is such an honor for me to serve as the editor-in-chief of *Collage* the last semester of my senior year. For me, this magazine represents so many things—hard work, dedication, inspiration, creativity, teamwork, friendship.

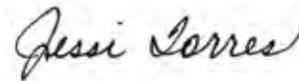
What makes an undertaking such as this possible is the people behind it. Dean Philip Mathis has trusted me every step of the way. Never once did he question my ability to produce this magazine. His resolute resolve that I could accomplish this task has been the quiet force behind the magazine's success this semester.

Dr. Connelly and the Advisory Board have provided immeasurable expertise. Marsha Powers took a fledgling editor and guided her through the production process to help create an effective leader. I would like to thank her for her willingness to use her many talents to make *Collage* an exceptional magazine.

I would especially like to thank my family members for their ceaseless confidence in me. My parents and brothers still sustain me even in my adult years. And, I can't even count how many times my husband and daughter have said, "We are so proud of you." With the steadfast support of the people I love most in the world, it would be hard to fail at anything.

*Collage* exists to promote artistic freedom among the student body of MTSU. This semester, we have seen outstanding literary and visual work from our impressively imaginative students. It is an honor for me to present our newest issue of *Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression*.

Thank you for your support and faithful readership,



Jessi Torres  
Editor-in-Chief

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photography

- 4 Country Boy  
troy dixon
- 4 Morning Cup of Joe  
renata skousen
- 6 Ozone Falls  
eric blevins
- 7 Bad Hair Day  
erin sporer
- 7 The Blur  
brittney n. searles
- 9 Smoke on the Water  
jerrica jones
- 9 Mediterranean Summer  
rebecca boucher
- 10-11 Mountain Folk of Peru  
john michael cassidy
- 14 Moment  
justin chadwick
- 14 Endless  
justin chadwick
- 25 Lake City, Colorado  
joy dement
- 26 Irish Faith  
rebecca boucher
- 26 Candelabra  
katie morris
- 30 Maíz de Peru  
john michael cassidy

fashion

digital art

play

mixed media

- 6 Disfunction  
denise johnson
- 16-18 The Ironing  
dawn andreoni
- 19 Eudamonia  
john hreha
- 21 Peacock Expressions  
adrienne owens

paintings

- 19 Simple Direction  
anna m. fitzgerald
- 21 Sunrise on the River  
christina chappars
- 22-23 Dark Night of the Soul  
deborah j. kolp
- 28 Tentacle  
mark kane
- 28 Untitled  
erin muehe

poems

- 5 But  
alexis mcgraw
- 8 A Rubric for Getting Published  
jesse trew
- 15 Liminal Daybreak  
pam manley davis
- 15 Contractions in Contradictions  
christopher beeson
- 20 Who's That  
rachel laforte
- 24 In the Arms of Nature  
marina patrao
- 27 Ode to Friendship  
sarafina a. croft
- 27 Someday  
julie deardorff
- 29 Aesthete's Foot  
stephen trageser

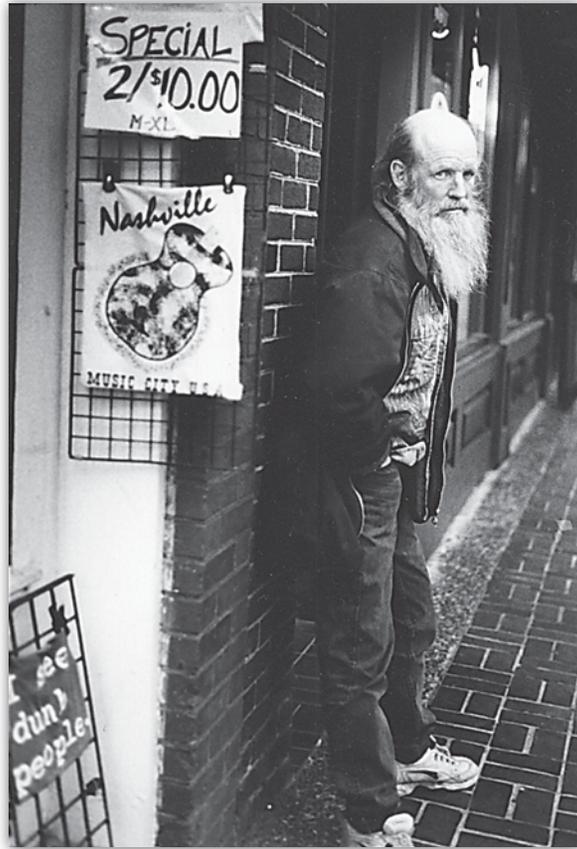
non-fiction

- 12-13 Death of Innocence  
joseph m. quarles

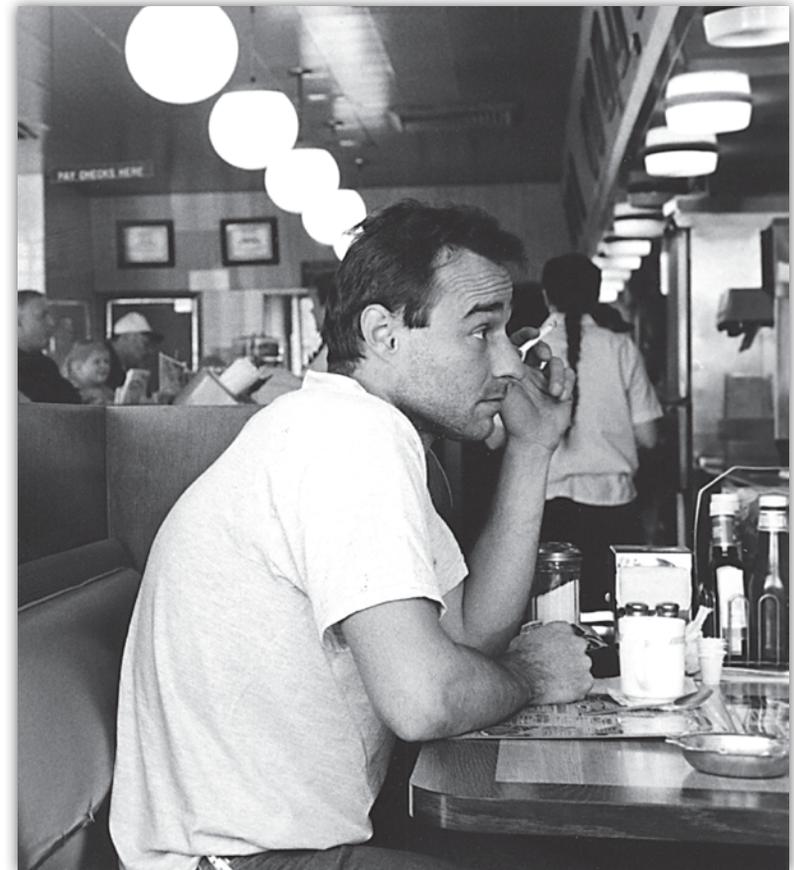
- 31 contributor bios
- 32 staff bios/photo



4



**Country Boy**  
troy dixon  
black and white photography



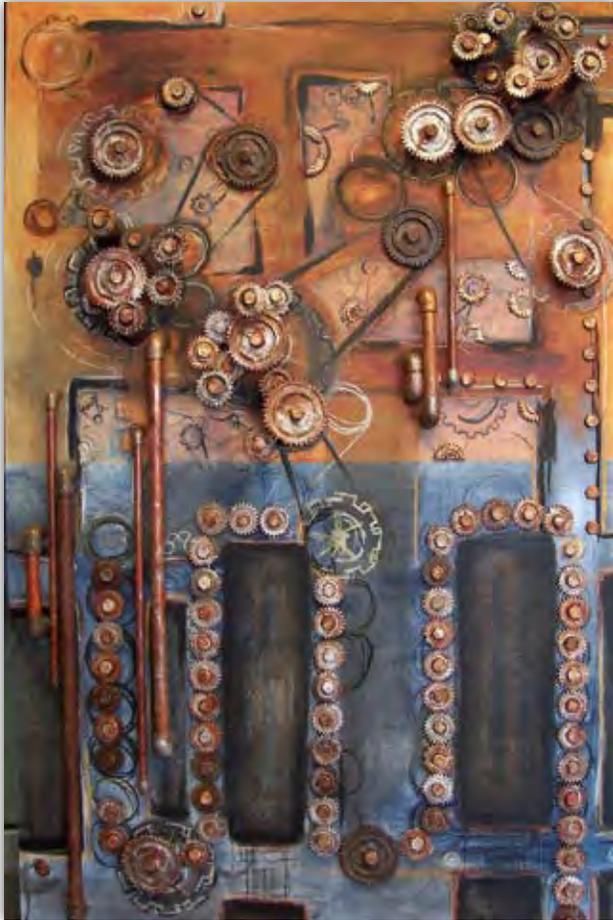
**Morning Cup of Joe**  
renata skousen  
black and white photography

## **But**

alexis mcgraw

I'm tired but helplessly awake  
I'm strong but in a fragile state  
I have so much to say but silence is the same  
I fall asleep on silk but awake with scars  
I walk freely but behind bars  
I stride forward but only two steps back  
I'm in your arms but love I lack  
I'm sick but in perfect health  
I have nothing but so much wealth  
I am silent but screaming loud  
I'm conceited but not proud  
I'm your enemy but I am kind  
My eyes are open but I am blind  
I say yes but I really mean no  
I have my job but nothing to show  
I'm very sincere but I lied  
I am working but I do not try  
My shackles are broken but hands not free  
I make my own rules but tend to plea  
I smile but I am so sad  
I am angelic but oh so bad  
I seek but mostly wait  
I am on time but often late  
I am successful but ashamed  
I am innocent but the one to blame  
I laugh but cry at night  
I am passive but love to fight

# 6



**Disfunction**  
denise johnson  
mixed media

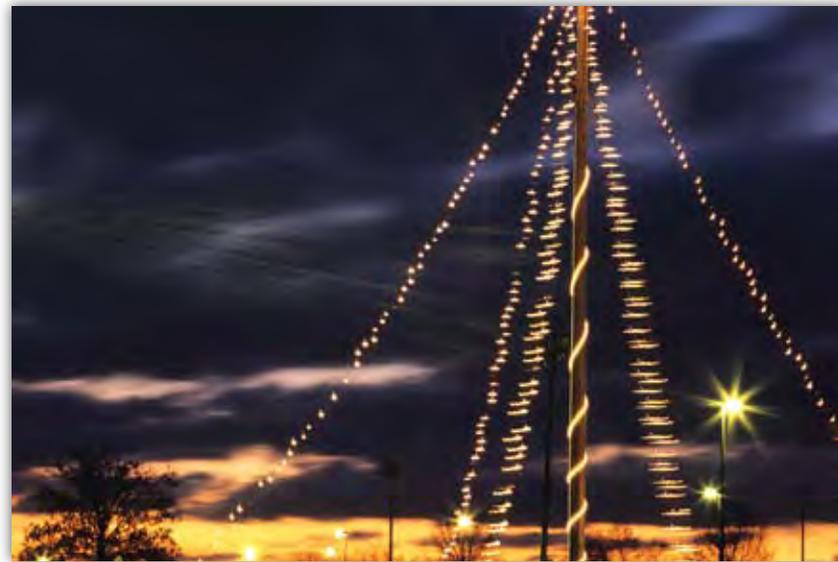


**Ozone Falls**  
eric blevins  
color photography



**Bad Hair Day**  
erin sporer  
black and white photography

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**The Blur**  
brittney n. searles  
color photography

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## A Rubric for Getting Published

jesse trew

Something nice  
That sounds okay,  
Nothing that  
Might seem risqué.  
No dicey jabs  
Or sharp insights  
On the parasitic nature  
Of contemporary life.  
That isn't right.  
It's just too much.  
Some people could be reading this  
While they are eating lunch.  
A lunch that's paid  
With credit cards  
At a local restaurant  
That's driven to in noisome cars.  
You've gone too far already.  
Please try to keep your pencil steady.  
Uplift, excite, and entertain.  
Don't preach your hate.  
Don't spread disdain.  
The readers could get turned away.  
They may feel guilt,  
Remorse, or sadder,  
They may realize  
Their actions matter.



Smoke on the Water  
jerrica jones  
color photography

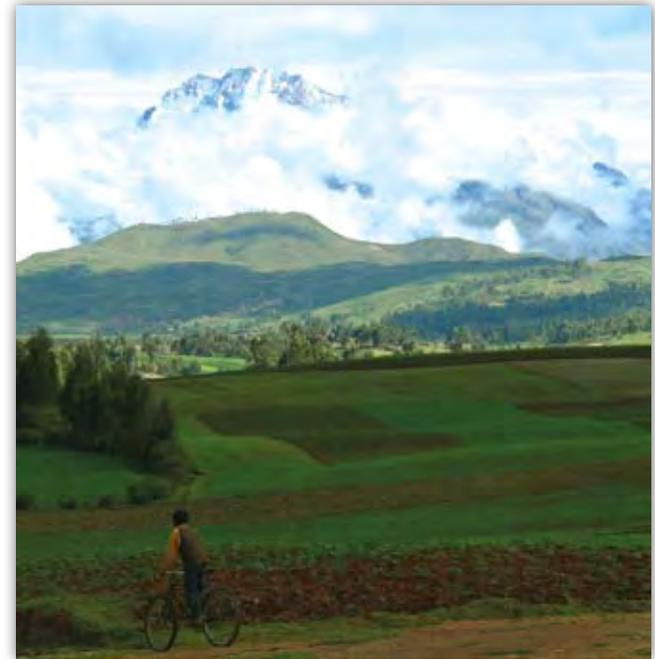


Mediterranean Summer  
rebecca boucher  
color photography

Mountain Folk of Peru

john michael cassidy

color photography series



clockwise from top  
Andean Highlands  
Chincho Knitters



clockwise from top  
Steps of Korikancha  
El Mercado Pisac  
Señora Rio Urubamba



## Death of Innocence

Joseph M. Quarles

There are many things that people can recall in maturity that happened to them in their youth. Some have mostly good memories and a few bad ones bestowed on them by life in general. These bad moments can be comprised of fights with parents, troubles at school, or an overbearing supervisor at a dead-end job. They can set the stage for behavior and thinking processes for the majority of life. My childhood experiences did indeed set me onto some specific paths. They also had a profound effect on my development. This is the story of one of the major traumatic events in my early childhood and the long-term effects it had on me.

It was the summer I went back to Argentina to visit my mother's family. I was eleven, and my pestering little sister was eight years old. My sister Christie and I bickered quite a bit on a regular basis. My mother spent a great deal of time separating us to keep us from fighting. She would curse in English and Spanish, swearing that we would send her to an early grave.

We were staying with my grandparents in the city of Rosario. They spoiled us every time we came to see them. One day, my mother decided that we would go visit some cousins of ours. We hitched a ride on a garishly-painted bus and journeyed into the foothills of the Andes Mountains.

During the exhausting trip into the mountains I was subjected to, not only my sister's typical behavior, but also to the crowded conditions on the bus. It was hot, loud, and dusty. Some passengers even brought animals with them. I became very acquainted with the odiferous goat that sat next to me. Even after he tried to eat my shoelaces, the diversion was a welcome respite from the grinding racket of the bus winding its way up the treacherous trail, and the sweaty, loud people crowding all around us.

My visit with my cousins went pretty much as I expected. The whole village came to the conclusion that I was the worst *futbol* player ever. I also had a run-in with a cantankerous

llama. After I fed a whole box of crackers to that miscreant creature, it spit an enormous ball of cracker goop from about six feet away and hit me square in the face. Of course, the entire village knew about the incident by the time we left.

We caught the same bus back home. I had grabbed the window seat before my sister, and she was complaining. She obviously did not like being next to a cage of loudly clucking chickens. The bus was bouncing around a bend when suddenly it geared down hard and slid to a stop. Everybody bounced off the seats and started yelling. I peered through the grimy window into the dust and saw some military vehicles. I squinted harder and saw at least ten soldiers milling around a crude road block.

An officer stepped up into the bus, looking very agitated, and began to shout loudly in Spanish. He then gestured for us to get off. The passengers jumped up and attempted a mass exit. We all stumbled out onto the ground. My sister nearly fell down the steps.

Meanwhile, the driver had been yanked out of the bus and forced to unlock the cargo hold. A couple of soldiers were pulling and throwing all kinds of boxes onto the ground. I stood openmouthed as they threw our luggage into the dust. About five minutes later, the officer yelled an order, and the soldiers began shoving people onto the ground. They had everybody lie down in the grass in a spread-eagle position. I was right between Mom and my little sister.

I stayed still, but Christie would not have it. She was actually looking around smiling, her dimpled face upturned almost cherublike in its inquisitive innocence. I remember her straight, blonde hair pooling and spilling over her shoulders. We were getting really dirty lying there. Her blue jumper with stitched-on flowers was coated in dust. Christie did not mind the dirt. She was having fun.

"What's goin' on—are they makin' a movie? We're gonna be famous," she said.

I began to really get scared. My mother had warned us to not speak any English at all. She did not want anyone knowing we had come from the United States. People had

been disappearing, and she was very paranoid. I could feel a cold ball of fear in my stomach. I knew I had to stop my sister's squirming. "What can I do?" I thought. My mind was racing. I could hear the soldiers yelling at someone. I turned my head and looked at my mother. She was shivering. Her hairdo was coming apart. Her brunette tresses partially obscured her face, but I could see her neck. I could actually see it throb. Her blood must have been pumping furiously. Her fingers were dug into the soil, and her knuckles were turning white. I turned back to my sister. An idea then popped into my head.

"Christie! Listen to me. We're gonna play a game. If you can sit still better than me, I'll let you sit by the window," I whispered to her.

"I don't believe you! You never do what you say. You gotta promise, and don't cross your fingers," she said, frowning at me.

"I swear ta God! But we gotta start right now," I hissed at her.

Shortly after that, I heard a lot of shouting coming from the back row of people. I was afraid to look. I then heard what sounded like a fight. Someone ran past us. I heard a series of loud pops. It sounded just like firecrackers. Reflexively, I looked up at the sound of the gunshots. Right on the heels of the automatic weapons fire, I heard a high-pitched scream. I saw a teenage boy running and then abruptly start to stagger. He hit the ground hard. He was bleeding profusely. Two soldiers ran up and yanked the boy up roughly by the arms. As they dragged him to the back of a truck, I noticed his leg was dangling at an odd angle, and his head was nodding back and forth limply. I could see a dark trail in the dirt, like splattered paint.

I was absolutely paralyzed with terror. I thought for sure they were going to shoot every one of us. I wanted to scream but could not. I felt overwhelmed with horror, as if I were drowning in dark, suffocating waters of paralyzing fear and could not seem to save myself. I was the rabbit in the headlights of an oncoming car.

I waited for an eternity. Then I heard someone barking out orders. Suddenly I felt the grass tickling me, and I

inhaled sharply. My mother jumped to her feet and dragged us up. They had told us to get on the bus and leave immediately. A rush of people stormed the door. We were nearly trampled getting in. My mother jammed us into a seat. I felt a sharp punch to my arm. I turned and looked at my aggravated sister.

"You promised—you said I could sit by the window!" she said hotly.

I switched with her. She looked very red-faced. My mother was as white as a ghost and staring straight ahead, her mouth set in a grimace. I sat there on the edge of the seat and thought of the great divide between my sister and me. I looked at the heavyset woman across the aisle. She was crying quietly, her tears leaving shiny tracks in the dust on her round face. I remember wondering if it was her son. I then vomited all over myself. Nobody said anything.

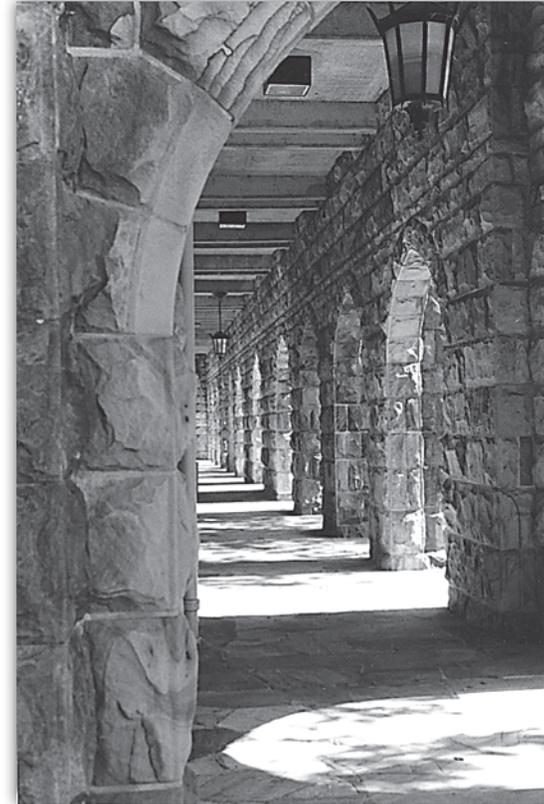
I have remembered many incidents of fear over the years. I have had outbursts of rage against the universe and its presumed machinations against me. I have been stabbed, shot at, and beaten unconscious. Nothing has compared to those incidents in South America. I had been shown my mortality at the age of eleven, as well my mother's and my sister's. In an instant of political unrest and violence against the individual, I was marked. I have not trusted people, or the government, since.

I have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and a chronic depressive disorder. I have been at war all my life. In my mind, I never really left Argentina. I have realized after all these years that I cannot let those horrid events run my life. After years of therapy, I am healing. I have learned to handle incredible stress and to know what is really important in life. Simple things mean a lot to me. Things like sunsets, the wind in the trees, and sometimes just sitting and reading a good novel, but most important of all—my son's innocent laughter. I laugh with him, and inside I am a little boy again.

14



**Moment**  
justin chadwick  
black and white photography



**Endless**  
justin chadwick  
black and white photography

### Liminal Daybreak

pam manley davis

Midair I join the elm leaf  
just shaken free after a tousele  
with a summer storm. Whirling  
on tiptoes in an upward gust  
I snag air currents with an eagle  
and slice cumulous clouds  
above the Sargasso Sea. A  
liberated feather drifts to me  
tossing sluggishly on a bed of  
sargassum reeds, swatting passing  
fancies as untenable as opaque  
recollections of the coming day.  
Elbow-perched I squint  
at the dew-eyed morning  
through my window as the elm leaf  
settles on the sill.

### Contractions in Contradictions

christopher beeson

A blank space covered with marks.  
An empty lot with nowhere to park.  
Shelves of products that don't have a price.  
Confetti that's designed to be sliced.  
Infectious disease that cures the ill.  
Stimulants that can keep you still.  
Blinding lights can help you see.  
Oxygen makes it hard to breathe.  
Money is printed when the end is near.  
Killing yourself to find there was nothing to fear.  
Convincing God to give it all up.  
Drinking water from a hole in a cup.  
Staying awake to see how long you can sleep.  
Throwing away just to keep.  
Shutting down the system to start it up again.  
Being let into heaven after your greatest sin.

## The Ironing

dawn andreoni

10-minute scene from a play

*A small kitchen of a small house. A woman, Mother, stands alone ironing clothing. She is a middle-aged woman, neat and attractive. She irons the clothing, then folds it meticulously, painstakingly neat, piling the folded clothes beside her. There are a table and four chairs, behind which there are a countertop and cabinets, a sink and a refrigerator. The sound of a door, then a girl, Daughter, enters.*

DAUGHTER. Hey, Mom. I'm home.

MOTHER. Hi, sweetie. How was school?

DAUGHTER. Okay. *(She sets her school things down.)* The garden hose was running.

MOTHER. Well, did you turn it off?

DAUGHTER. Of course. *(She goes to the refrigerator and opens the door a crack. She hesitates, and then she closes the door without looking in.)*

MOTHER. Thank you. *(Muses.)* The hose . . . Your sister must have been playing in the sprinkler.

DAUGHTER. There's a big puddle by the door. I stepped in it and got my shoes all muddy.

MOTHER. *(Looks immediately at the floor.)* You didn't track any in, did you?

DAUGHTER. No, I took my shoes off at the door. But I could have. You should punish her.

MOTHER. Oh, hush. *(Begins to iron the final article of clothing.)*

DAUGHTER. If I had left the water on, I'd never hear the end of it! She gets away with everything.

MOTHER. Hey now, what kind of talk is that? *(Finishes and folds the last of the ironing.)* Well then, I'm glad you're here. Watch

your sister; I'm going to the store to pick up something for dinner.

DAUGHTER. But Mom! I was going to go over to Jennifer's house, remember? This is exactly what I was talking about.

MOTHER. *(Fed up.)* Jennifer is going to have to wait until tomorrow. Someone needs to be home to keep an eye on your sister. *(Puts on her coat and grabs her purse, checking the wallet. Her tone softens.)* Make sure she doesn't flood us out of house and home. I will be gone for about a half-hour, 45 minutes tops. Get a good start on your homework, okay, sweetie? I can help you while I fix supper.

DAUGHTER. But I haven't been over to Jennifer's in two weeks! You said you would take us to the movies last week, but you didn't—

MOTHER. That's enough. You see Jennifer every day after school at your band practice.

DAUGHTER. Oh, Mom, that doesn't count. We can't talk or anything, just sit and play music. Besides, she's all the way in the horn section, and I'm—

MOTHER. *(With motherly firmness.)* I know, I know; you are in the middle of the flutes. Look, honey, I'm sorry, but I've got to get to the store and home in decent time to get supper ready. *(To herself.)* Your father has been working so hard lately; it's the least I can do to have a meal waiting for him when he gets home. *(Turns her attention back to her daughter.)* Thank you so much for watching your sister. Tomorrow, I promise, Jennifer can come over. We'll go to the swimming pool or something. *(She shoots an apologetic smile at her daughter and begins to exit.)*

DAUGHTER. *(Aside.)* You never remember.

*Mother exits. Daughter sits at the small table and pouts but reluctantly begins to do homework. After a moment, Sister enters.*

SISTER. *(Looks around the room.)* Where'd Mom go?

DAUGHTER. *(Impatiently.)* To the store. *(With sisterly viciousness.)* Boy, are you going to get it when she gets home.

SISTER. Oh yeah? Why's that?

DAUGHTER. (*Triumphantly.*) 'Cause you didn't turn off the water after playing with the hose.

SISTER. I didn't even play in the sprinkler today!

DAUGHTER. So it's been on all night, too? Ooo, Mom's really going to be angry. The puddle out there is huge.

SISTER. No, I turned the water off yesterday. Yep, I know I did because Mom had to turn the water on to water the plants earlier.

DAUGHTER. Oh, shut up.

SISTER. (*After a moment.*) Where's Dad?

DAUGHTER. He's not home yet. (*She looks longingly at her watch.*)

SISTER. (*Follows her sister's gaze, trying to see the time.*) Oh. (*Pauses. Daughter returns to her homework.*) I want to go to Ruth's house.

DAUGHTER. You can't.

SISTER. Why not?

DAUGHTER. (*Flaring.*) Because I have to watch you, and I'm here, so you have to be too! (*Stops at the sound of her voice. Softens her tone.*) Besides, Mom will be home soon, and she'll want you here for supper.

SISTER. (*Whining.*) I want to eat at Ruth's house. Their food is better. (*Daughter glares. Sister lowers her eyes before continuing.*) They have real suppers, not just sandwiches and stew and stupid stuff like that.

DAUGHTER. (*Distressed.*) Don't you dare say stuff like that in front of Mom and Dad! Dad's been home late every day for the past month thanks to your—(*Stops abruptly at the sound of the door.*)

*Sister, pouting, takes the moment to escape her sister's lecture. Mother reenters. Her manner is slightly off, her walk slower.*

DAUGHTER. (*Checks her watch, warily.*) Where's the food, Mom? (*Hesitates.*) Did you forget something? (*She waits a moment for a response. Getting none, she turns back to her homework.*)

MOTHER. (*Distracted.*) Hmm . . . What? Food? (*Her eye catches the ironing board and, with a small smile, approaches it. Her voice is delighted, like a child's.*) Who did the ironing?

DAUGHTER. (*Looks up reluctantly.*) You did, Mom.

MOTHER. That was so sweet of you.

DAUGHTER. (*Insistent.*) But I didn't do it, Mom. You did.

MOTHER. (*A bit angry.*) Come on, now, who did the ironing?

DAUGHTER. (*Uneasy.*) You did. (*She fidgets in her chair, trying unsuccessfully to concentrate on her homework and ignore her mother.*)

MOTHER. (*Anger rising.*) No, I didn't! Now tell me who did the ironing.

DAUGHTER. (*Frightened, she rises slowly from the chair and stands behind it in the manner of dealing with a wild animal.*) Mom! You did it just before you left.

MOTHER. Don't say that!

*Father enters. His cheap brown suit is disheveled, as is everything about him. He walks in wearily but with a duck step.*

FATHER. Hey, there's a huge puddle—(*He stops short when he sees his wife and daughter.*) What's going on?

MOTHER. (*Angry and confused.*) Who did the ironing?!

DAUGHTER. You did, Mommy! I swear it; you did it just before you left—

FATHER. (*Interrupting.*) Now hold on. (*Looks at his daughter.*) Tell the truth: Who did the ironing?

DAUGHTER. (*Upset.*) Mom did. (*Yells, despite herself, to pass the possible blame.*) Why don't you just remember?

MOTHER. Stop it! Stop saying that! Peter, thank God. (*She turns wildly to her husband.*) Who did the ironing?

DAUGHTER. (*Now that she has started, she cannot hold herself back.*) I saw you! I saw you! With my own eyes! (*Hysterically, to keep from crying.*) I did nothing. You stood right there and ironed all the clothes, and I came in from school. And my feet were wet 'cause you forgot the water, and I was mad 'cause you forgot Jennifer again, and I didn't help you at all! I didn't even offer to fold the clothes, and you didn't even try to make me this time. You did it—you, Mommy! So stop yelling at me. Why do you keep—

MOTHER. (*Initially shocked by her daughter's outburst, she has been slowly withdrawing into herself until she bursts out.*) Quiet! No more!

*Daughter immediately becomes quiet, wide-eyed with fear. She is about to cry, but when she looks into her mother's eyes, she does not recognize her. Mother has shrunk back from the sound of her own voice, her eyes darting as though looking for an escape. Daughter does not cry but looks plaintively at her mother, as if trying to pull her out of herself.*

FATHER. (*Interrupts the moment of silence to take charge. There is no shock in him, only sorrowful understanding.*) Come on, honey. (*He reaches out to his wife.*)

MOTHER. (*Recoils, terrified.*) No! Not until someone tells me the truth! Who keeps doing this? Is everyone losing their minds?

FATHER. (*With increasing urgency.*) Shh, honey, you're yelling. (*Interrupts her denial, trying to be light.*) We'll sort out this whole silly mess, c'mon. (*His attempt has fallen flat; he sighs and pleads.*) Just come with me, darling. (*He looks to his daughter, though he continues to speak to his wife.*) I promise it's all right. (*He has eased his way across the stage to her side now, and he puts his arm around her—in support and restraint.*)

MOTHER. (*Falters at his touch.*) I didn't do it! I would know if I did. Wouldn't I? Why wouldn't I? Tell me I didn't. Tell me the truth.

FATHER. (*Firmly.*) Come with me, honey. (*So as not to let Daughter hear.*) Please.

*At this last plea, Mother lets herself be led away. Father gently pulls Mother offstage as Mother protests and fights tears. Daughter, exhausted, sinks back into her chair. Sister reenters.*

SISTER. (*Frightened—she has likely been watching, unseen by all.*) Are Mom and Dad fighting?

DAUGHTER. (*Tired, shaking, but calm—she has collected herself.*) No.

SISTER. (*Demanding, unable to fully understand the situation.*) What did you do?

DAUGHTER. (*Looks intently at her sister.*) Nothing. (*Looks away and speaks to herself, but her sister listens closely.*) I didn't help her at all.

SISTER. (*Distressed.*) Is Mommy—

DAUGHTER. (*Quickly interrupts.*) Don't.

SISTER. But what will happen if—

DAUGHTER. No. (*The two stare at one another.*) You want something to eat?

*Sister nods and slips weakly into a chair at the table, and Daughter stands determinedly. She opens the cupboards, all visibly empty, and searches diligently until she finds some crackers. Daughter gives some to her sister and some to herself. They sit quietly eating.*

*Curtain.*

**Simple Direction**  
anna m. fitzgerald  
oil paint on canvas



**Eudamonia**  
john hreha  
digital art



**Who's That**

rachel laforte

Your daughter isn't the same person as  
his girlfriend, who's not the same  
as her lab partner, who's different  
from their employee, who's sort of  
like this girl I used to know,  
With shiny golden locks that  
flounce around her  
Creamy porcelain cheeks and  
rosebud lips.  
That girl, the one they all  
claim as their own is  
Me,  
the one with tired eyes,  
a frown and despair written across her face.  
This girl works so hard to  
be who you expect her to be that  
when someone asks,  
"Who's that?" the answer is  
"Whoever you want."

Peacock Expressions  
adrienne owens  
fashion design, dress



Sunrise on the River  
christina chappars  
water color painting



Dark Night of the Soul

deborah j. kolp

oil paint layered on silver and gold leaf

clockwise from top left

- Gluttony
- Pride
- Envy



clockwise from top left  
Luxury  
Wrath  
Greed  
Sloth

## In the Arms of Nature

marina patrao

Sunlight streams in through the windows  
Dancing patterns on my bed  
Playing games with the leaves  
Radiating my life

The breeze passes by me  
Gently ruffling my hair  
Carrying smells of the past and present  
Guiding me to old memories

Water drips softly  
Forming puddles in the tub  
See my reflection staring up at me  
Transporting me to a far-off land

The green grass warm under my bare feet  
Little buds sprouting all over  
Heralding a new life  
I live again

Tree tops resplendent in their verdant lushness  
Billows of clouds enfold them  
Soft hues kiss them  
Throw out mystifying shadows

Light and dark grapple for space  
One wins now, then another.  
Chasing each other all the time  
Casting shadows in my life

Nature is me and I, Nature  
We are entwined infinitely  
Living proof of an eternity  
That survives forever



Lake City, Colorado  
joy dement  
black and white photography series



26

Irish Faith  
rebecca boucher  
color photography



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Candelabra  
katie morris  
color photography

## Ode to Friendship

sarafina a. croff

What of inspirations?  
Are they found in blue skies?  
In Van Gogh's *Starry Night*?  
They are found in the brownest eyes, yours.  
Among these, and even more.

Emotions such as liberty.  
Words, like let there be.  
Be still, I tell my beating heart.  
Be firm, I tell my dancing eyes.  
Be quiet, I tell my laughing lips.

What about desires?  
Are they realized behind closed doors?  
Are they truly liberated by opiates and liqueur?  
No, mingled with prayers.  
To the God of the good, the perfect.

Ah! So what of passion?  
Is it the fire of a blazing star?  
Perhaps, dreams of silhouettes  
Floating along the margins of sanity.  
The profound Romeo and Juliet.

Yet, I say, passion is the sound of laughter.  
Playful banter between comrades  
Sharing a meal passing time over a glass of wine.  
Passion is a play on emotions and words  
Best left unsaid.  
Best left undone.

## Someday

julie deardorff

We spend our lives  
Preparing to live.  
Dormant and waiting.  
Waiting, waiting.  
For Someday to come  
And take us away.  
Too late do we realize:  
Someday starts today.

28



Tentacle  
mark kane  
latex acrylic painting



Untitled  
erin muehe  
oil painting on canvas

## Aesthete's Foot

stephen trageser

A blank page glares at me in impotent rage,  
Powerlessly accepting the humiliation  
As I smear his face black with ink.  
If looks could kill.  
“How dare you defile my pure,  
Proud, symbolic being?  
With your petty musings,  
You devastate the majesty of  
The uncreated. You artists,”  
He vituperates venomously,  
“With vapid glee,  
You seek to define and categorize  
The smallest burp,  
The merest blemish,  
And preserve them for all time.

“At every opportunity you go chipping mercilessly at the  
Uncarved block, looking for the Elephant that was  
Never there to begin with. What about the promise of  
The undefined,  
The unrefined,  
The potential,  
The possibility,  
The future?  
Must you replace every question mark  
With an exclamation point?”

And with that, I draw a small Elephant  
Over his mouth, saying to myself  
As much as to him:  
“Without the Elephant that was never there,  
Who would recognize the uncarved block?  
And more importantly,  
Who would pay to look at a blank piece of paper?”

Maíz de Peru  
john michael cassidy  
color photography series

30



clockwise from top left  
Chicha Blanca  
Colores del Mercado Pisac  
Largest Kernels in the World  
Maíz y Queso

# | contributor bios

**Dawn Andreoni** attended Franklin College Switzerland in Lugano, Switzerland, before transferring to MTSU to pursue a degree in the recording industry. Andreoni is a resident of the present and never knows what she has planned until she is in the middle of it.

**Christopher Beeson** is a bright-eyed freshman from Bristol, Tenn. This is his first published work.

**Eric Blevins** has a degree in recording industry and is currently studying photography at MTSU. He is active in the student organization Students for Environmental Action. His favorite photographic subjects are people and nature. He hopes to soon integrate his activism and art by documenting the destruction of Appalachia by mountaintop removal coal mining.

**Rebecca Boucher** is a senior psychology major from Cookeville, Tenn. She plans to enroll in a women's studies graduate program in the fall.

**John Michael Cassidy** is a senior recreation and leisure services (outdoor recreation) major from south Nashville, Tenn. Cassidy has a passion for outdoor recreation activities, flora and fauna, geography, and a variety of cultures. He plans to travel extensively in Latin America and incorporate outdoor recreation and traveling into his career after college.

**Justin Chadwick** is a digital animation major from Manchester, Tenn. He is a senior and plans on going into the digital animation field.

**Christina Chappars** is a junior transfer student from the University of Memphis. Her work has been on display in Memphis' Arts in the Park and the MidSouth Fair. Chappars is an aerospace major and plans to have a career as a flight dispatcher.

**Sarafina A. Croft** is a senior double majoring in electronic media journalism and Spanish. She is also the president of the McNair Challenger Alliance student organization, as well as being a McNair scholar. She plans to earn a Ph.D., teach at a university and become a fiction writer.

**Pam Manley Davis** is a doctoral student in English. She lives with her husband, Doug, and son, Philip, in Murfreesboro.

**Julie Deardorff** is a criminal justice major from Maryville, Tenn. She has been published on poetry.com. She isn't quite sure what she wants to do with her life at present; she only knows that she does not want to be bored. More info on Deardorff can be found on facebook.com.

**Joy Dement** is a senior majoring in mass communication with a photography emphasis and minoring in psychology and agriculture. Her work was displayed in the 2005 student photography exhibition and will also be displayed in the 2006 student show. Her plans for the future include entering the field of photography and attending graduate school, which will enable her to teach photography at the university level or pursue a photography career.

**Troy Dixon** is from Rockford, Tenn., but his parents currently live in Knoxville. He likes light and enjoys mono recordings but not as much as stereo.

**Anna M. Fitzgerald** is an art education major from Cameron, N.C. Fitzgerald has been a strong environmental activist at MTSU and is a director of the Southern Girls Rock & Roll Camp. She plans to eventually pursue her doctorate in visual studies.

**John Hreha** is a senior media design major from Tullahoma, Tenn. Hreha designs graphics and layouts for Sidelines and also freelances in the Middle Tennessee area.

**Denise Johnson** is a senior painting major from Wisconsin. Johnson is interested in pursuing a career in art therapy or medical-related work, particularly in the field of research for prosthetics.

**Jerrica Jones** is a freshman media design and graphics major from Hendersonville, Tenn.

**Mark Kane** is a senior painting major from New Zealand. Kane plays on the MTSU rugby team and plans to graduate in December.

**Deborah J. Kolp** is an art education major who lives in Murfreesboro. She has shown her work at several exhibits and views painting as an opportunity to visually express the particulars of personal spirituality set within the context of a theosophical worldview reaching back from ancient-modern to postmodern times.

**Rachel LaForte** is in her second semester as an English major. LaForte has lived in Rutherford County all her life. She hopes to complete her degree and continue publishing her work.

**Alexis McGraw** is a freshman who is currently deciding between a recording industry or advertising major. She is from Kansas and decided to attend MTSU for its school of mass communication. She has been previously published and lists music and poetry as her favorite hobbies.

**Katie Morris** is a senior electronic media communication major with an emphasis in photography. She grew up in Franklin, Tenn., and plans to move to Houston, Texas, after graduation.

**Erin Muehe** is a studio art major with a concentration in painting from Dallas, Texas. Muehe was a member of the Student Art Alliance. She will be graduating in December and has plans to attend graduate school next fall.

**Adrienne Owens** is a senior textiles, merchandising and design major, concentrating in apparel design. Owens was also a winner for the TXMD department's denim jacket design contest, and her jacket will be auctioned off at a denim jacket contest in Dallas, Texas, this April. She plans to open a bridal and formal boutique in Nashville, Tenn.

**Marina Patrao** is a graduate student from India studying mass communication. She has been in this country since fall 2004 and has had works published in magazines in India as well as on poetry.com. Patrao considers poetry to be a harnessing of the flow of emotion. She plans to try documentary-making after she graduates.

**Joseph M. Quarles** is a nursing major from Murfreesboro. His first love has always been writing. He has traveled overseas and in the U.S. Someday he would love to be a serious writer. He plans to work in health care until his dreams are realized.

**Brittney N. Searles** is a junior majoring in photography and minoring in art. She plans to open a personal art and photography studio after graduation.

**Renata Skousen** is a senior photography major from Murfreesboro. Originally from Utah, Skousen plans to pursue a studio career after she graduates this May.

**Erin Sporer** is a graphic design major from Memphis, Tenn. Since transferring schools and changing her major, she hopes to someday graduate from college.

**Stephen Trageser** is a junior recording industry major and Murfreesboro native. He has been diagnosed terminally cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs. He has a nice collection of hats and will leave you one in his will if you make him breakfast.

**Jesse Trew** is a junior English major from Nashville, Tenn. He has ambitions for after college.

# staff bios

32

**Liz Beeson**, assistant visual arts editor, is a senior mass communication student focusing in journalism with a graphic design concentration. She is minoring in art and business communication and holds a 3.5 GPA. She is currently head of the Student Programming and Events Board on campus, actively involved as a member of Kappa Delta sorority, and is part of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. Beeson will graduate in May and plans to pursue a career in publication design and layout. In her free time, Beeson enjoys surrounding herself with amazingly fabulous friends and obsessing over music and film.

**Dana Clark**, online editor, is a senior mass communication major concentrating in graphic communication. She is minoring in art and marketing and holds a 3.8 GPA. Clark currently aids in layout/production for Mainstreet Media, which prints her hometown's community newspaper, The Wilson Post. She is the graphic designer for the monthly newspaper, Mature Lifestyles. After graduating in August, she plans to continue her career in publication design and hopes to become a designer for a magazine. Clark currently lives in Murfreesboro.

**Carolyn Crawford**, assistant literature arts editor, is unable to release any personal information at this time because she is currently negotiating the sale of her life story. She is hoping that the resulting made-for-TV movie will keep her in chocolate and books for the rest of her life.

**Jessica Dinkins**, designer, is from Murfreesboro. She graduates in May with two degrees—one in Spanish and the other in media design. She and her fiancé, whom she will marry June 3, plan to move to Spain in September to teach English to elementary-school children. Dinkins and her future husband want to see the world God created before returning to Middle Tennessee to settle down. Eventually, Dinkins wants to work for a Spanish-language magazine.

**Alex Ingalls**, editorial review staff, was raised in a traveling circus with her two brothers. Her father is a lion tamer, and her mother is a trapeze artist. Until recently she was moonlighting in the freak show as the bearded lady. Since attending MTSU, she has shaved her beard and chosen Spanish as her major and art as her minor. Using her beard as her disguise, she plans to go undercover with the CIA after graduation.



Back row: Megan Vaughan, Jessy Yancey, Jessica Dinkins, Dana Clark, Audrey Weddington, Alex Ingalls  
Front Row: Liz Beeson, Melissa Spoonamore, Jessi Torres, Amy Powers, Ashley Sherwood, Carolyn Crawford

**Amy Powers**, editorial review staff, is a freshman electronic media production major and English minor who is praying to maintain her 4.0 GPA. Thanks to her position with *Collage*, her involvement with Alpha Omega, her job at Cope, and, not to mention school, she did not have enough time to write an intriguing bio about herself.

**Ashley Sherwood**, editorial review staff, is a sophomore from Mount Juliet, Tenn. She is majoring in journalism with a concentration in media design and graphics, and working on two minors—art and marketing. Her goal after graduation is to move to New York City and design layouts for a magazine.

**Melissa Spoonamore**, editorial review staff, is a senior journalism major minoring in English and education. She chose to do her internship at *Collage* this semester, and she had a great time while learning many skills that will help her in her future career as a journalist. She has a passion for writing in all genres, including poetry and creative writing, and also enjoys photography and art. After graduating in December, she hopes to join a magazine staff as a writer. She possibly plans to re-enroll at MTSU to receive a licensure to teach English for grades 7-12. She believes that her career possibilities are endless, therefore her future hopes and dreams include: being the editor of a magazine, creating and running a new magazine, being a best-selling author, and writing children's books.

**Jessi Torres**, editor-in-chief, is a journalism major, minoring in Spanish and English. She is a member of the Honors College and the Phi Kappa Phi honor society. Torres studies traditional Korean Tae Kwon Do with her husband, Eliot, and daughter, Isabel. After graduating in May, she plans to work as a freelance writer. She lives in Antioch, Tenn.

**Megan Vaughan**, visual arts editor, is a junior mass communication student majoring in photography and minoring in both international relations and entrepreneurship. After she graduates in May 2007, she plans to go to graduate school for advertising.

**Audrey Weddington**, editorial review staff, hails from Murfreesboro. She is double majoring in Spanish and advertising, and minoring in marketing. Her interests include Hispanic cultures, antiques and cigars. She plans to graduate in May 2007 and work in the field of mass communication.

**Jessy Yancey**, literature arts editor, is a senior journalism major from Red Boiling Springs, Tenn. She is minoring in English and business communication and holds a 3.7 GPA. She plans to graduate in August as long as nothing goes awry. In addition to working for *Collage*, she writes and copy edits for Sidelines and works at the Walker Library. She loves writing, reading books for fun instead of for class, and traveling.

To submit to *Collage*:

*Collage* is now accepting submissions all year. Please check the submission guidelines for details. Deadlines for each publication will be posted on the website. Each submission must have a completed submission form. Submissions are turned in at the *Collage* office, Paul W. Martin, Sr. Honors Building, Rm. 224 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., or by mail. Submissions will NOT be accepted over the internet. Please go to [www.mtsu.edu/~collage](http://www.mtsu.edu/~collage) for the submission forms and latest *Collage* information. You must be an MTSU student to submit.

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