

ISSUE
26

COLLAGE

★ ★ a Journal of ★ ★ ★
CREATIVE EXPRESSION

FALL
2017



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IN MEMORIAM

by Kimi Conro

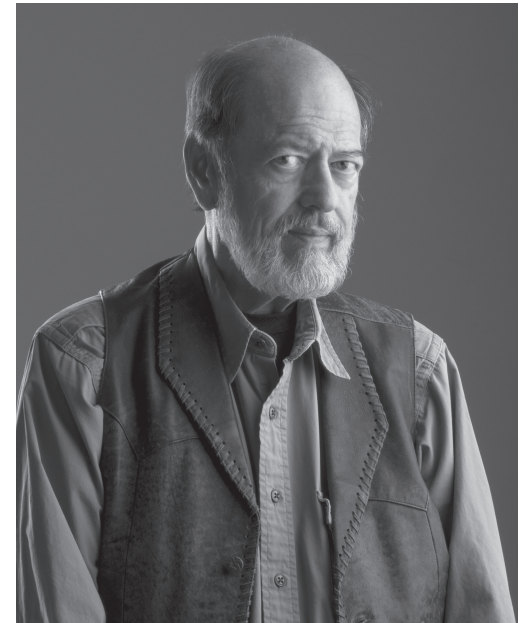
Tom Jimison was the nurturer. Like a bird to its young, he fed his students on a steady diet of creative and contagious inspiration—the inevitable yield of his unique flavor of teaching. He infused each class and one-on-one discussion with a lifelong telling of his many adventures in photography, and laced his critiques of student work with a pragmatic yet kind method of evaluation.

Students who have stood under the lamp of his keen eyes' scrutiny can attest that there was nothing more rewarding than to earn the coveted stamp of his praise—that simple, starred sticky note on the back of a print.

The outstanding technical and artistic prowess of this humble instructor paved the path for countless pupils to pursue their passions. In his unassuming way, Tom Jimison nudged each student who passed through the MTSU Photography Department to look, to see, to feel, to interpret, and to create what could be engendered by no other: pure art from one's own spirit. As one such student so moved and inspired, I stand among hundreds as a product of his kind, guiding heart.

Tom Jimison will forever remain a fixture in the halls of the photography building and, more effectively, the hearts of all who roamed and learned in them.

You are cherished and greatly missed, Mr. J. Yet your spirit lives on. Thank you for bestowing the gifts of art and passion to all who knew you.



Tom Jimison 1942 - 2017

COLLAGE

★ a Journal of
**CREATIVE
EXPRESSION**

PROSE & SHORT PLAYS

ART ISSUE **26** **FALL** **2017** **ART**

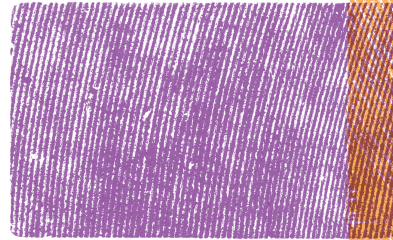
**POETRY & SONG
LYRICS**

PHOTOGRAPHY

LETTER FROM *The* EDITOR

There is something invincible about art. Unlike human progress, its activity never ceases, and this endless operation strikes an imperative yet dulcet chord in the hearts of those who listen. For those disenchanted with the world or self, art in its myriad forms induces passion, beauty, reflection, and hope. Whether through written word or imagery, song or craftsmanship, art brings life and color to an otherwise dull and tedious existence, and in doing so, becomes a necessity for all—be they artistically inclined or otherwise. Open for all to interpret, art does not discriminate; it truly is the universal experience of a universal language. As an emblem of our existence, there is nothing more innately human than art, and it exists across time as a most worthy and meaningful endeavor.

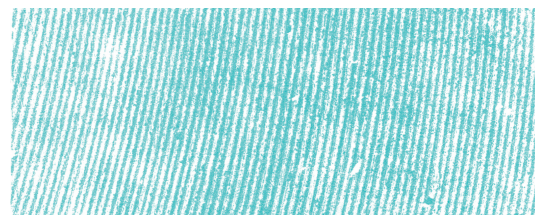
All of these realities combined make art simply irresistible, and I firmly believe that life without art would be hardly worth living. Its status, necessity, and universality thus woven, there is one remaining thread connecting art to humanity: its accessibility.



It is therefore of the utmost value that *Collage* exists as the medium through which art is tangibly expressed in our vibrant community. Through dedication to open expression and promotion of exceptional literary and visual artworks, *Collage* has for decades upheld and perpetuated what is integral to a rich and democratic coexistence. And for this, I am honored to join the ranks of those who have served as its Editor in Chief. My vision for *Collage* continues to be the preservation of the life and color induced by artistic expression. Through my tenure in this role, I am resolved to advance *Collage* to the height of its value for not only our eager community but also simply for the sake of art. I thank all those who have worked alongside me this semester, and earnestly await the next!

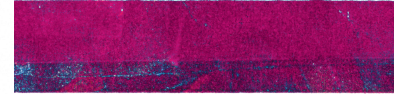
KIMI CONRO

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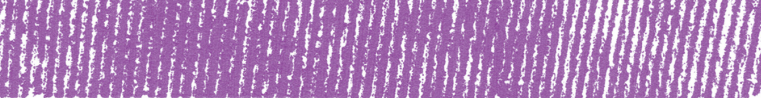
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WICKED WHISPERING WITCHES

Julian Jennison

poetry

Wicked whispering witches wind up with witch friends
Wanting worries and woe to go wander at ends
Their will will will wonders with white wisps of water
And will wake all the woods with their whoops and their hollers

The wreaking rotters wrought rot from their rinds
And wrapped rats, raw and rare, with ripe rapturous words
And when the witches whispered words to the windy winter night
The wind would whisper back with words equally slight

“But why,” one would wonder, “would witches work with such winds?”
“Why would witches want wind whipping warmth from their work?”
Well witches as these want warmth to work away
Leaving woods wild and wet as they wait and waylay

For witches as these, which are witches of the west
Want worlds to be wicked and won over with pests
And while they watch as their world withers out
The witches wither with it without a whisper or shout

For while witches are wicked and wrought with wrong ways
They will wallow with wonder at their rapturous wake
Without words they will wander to the width of their whole
As the whole world whittles away while swallowing them whole



FIREFLY

Karlie Tankersley

oil on board, 8" x 10"



THE RAILROAD

Jacob Jones

digital photography



TENSION

Caitlyn Osborne Parris

poetry

The silence of the moon slowly encroaching—
enlivening
the sun's already brilliant gaze.
The two, so long, separated
dichotomy of night and day
broken
united into one.
I, breathless, fell
shouting inside,
“My God!”
And the tears of horror and joy
fled down my face at this—
beautiful and terrifying.
Here it was, the tension.
Nature, teaching me,
once again,
how to live in it.



THE LANDSCAPE OF HISTORY

Whitney Wilkerson

collaged pieces of screen prints on fabric and paper

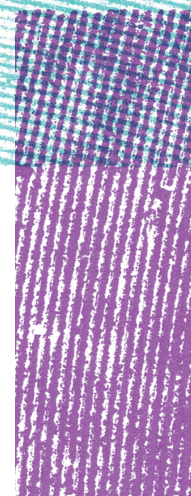
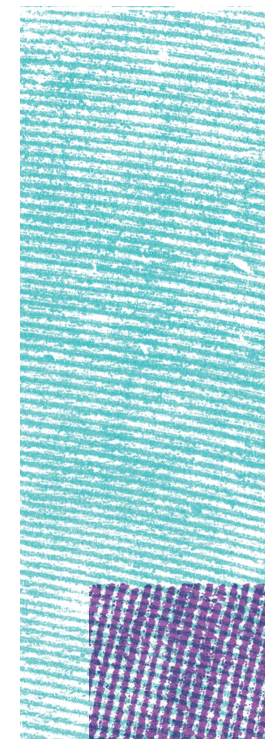
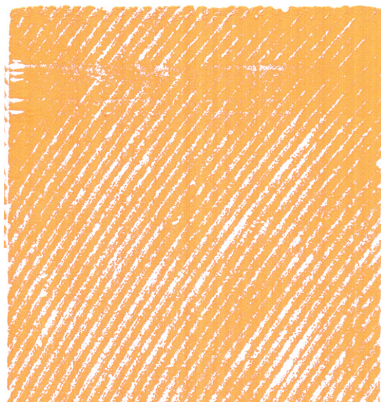
ALMOND BARK TREES

Heaven Morrow

poetry

If Almond Bark did grow on trees
Then Bubble Gum would grow on leaves
and Pixy Stix dust would act as pollen
with Chocolate heartwood they'd grow tall and
birds would nest up in the boughs
To get a taste of those sweet flowers
Licorice roots would grow down deep
And provide earthworms with sucrose treats.

Maybe if trees were made of candy
The world'd find them much more handy
but all they make is sweet breath, sadly.





SET FREE

Heather Stokes

oil on canvas



ACT 40, SCENE 285: PRAYING... AGAIN

Noëlle Dederer

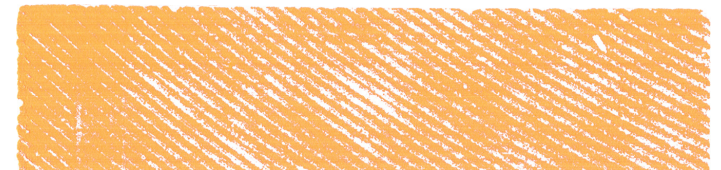
briefcase, light, string, fabric, wood, and metal



INTERMITTENT BICKERING

Noëlle Dederer

wood, resin, light, metal, roses, poems, and china



LYNCHING SELFIE

StarShield Lortie

poetry



You had your picture taken with bodies, bodies that were beaten, drowned in rivers, burned alive, dragged down old roads by their hands, dismembered, or some combination of them all before they hung, creaking from trees, or poles, or gallows specially built for the occasion. In the pictures, you are smiling, smiling like you just won the lottery, certain your invincibility would absolve you of any culpability for a world you helped create. Someone turned those pictures into ten-cent postcards that you sent to your friends up North and out West, souvenirs of your self-imposed superiority. Your legacy, now a collector's item on eBay, shows you holding hands with your high-school date, fingers casually vining together as the bodies hung—silent, separate, properly shamed—

against a dark sky. Your grandchildren find the actual photo in the family picture box, sit both oblivious to and uncomfortable with the smiles and the poses and the stories of what life was like back then. You never told them they would have the same choices to make—what to believe about other people, what friends to surround themselves with, what dress to wear on a Saturday night date. Instead you put those pictures, a testament to your youth and immature choices, in an old shoebox that sat on a shelf in the coat closet until you forgot that you had any part of any of it. You never imagined your grandchildren, with the help of the internet, would make you the reluctant spokesperson of an unrepentant human history.

STEVE

Kenny Page

multi-block woodcut on kozo, 24" x 30"



MY SLEEPING BEAUTY

Rachel Rosson

poetry

I've loved you from the first moment I knew,
Nothing more than my mind's recognition of you,
As a tiny child—
A sleeping babe.

I wanted you to play dolls with me,
I wanted you to push me endlessly on the swing,
A swiftly growing child—
Alone in the warm summer shade.

I wanted you to be there for each special or difficult moment,
I couldn't understand why you turned me away then,
Barely still a child—
Lost in a whirl, called 9th grade.

I wanted to call you, when I couldn't stand up or see straight,
I needed salvation and a ride home, but was so ashamed,
No longer a child—
Frightened, drunk, and underage.

I wanted so badly to cry into your soft cotton t-shirt,
As I tipped-toed away from him at sunrise, feeling lower than dirt,
Losing the innocence of a child—
Regrets building with age.

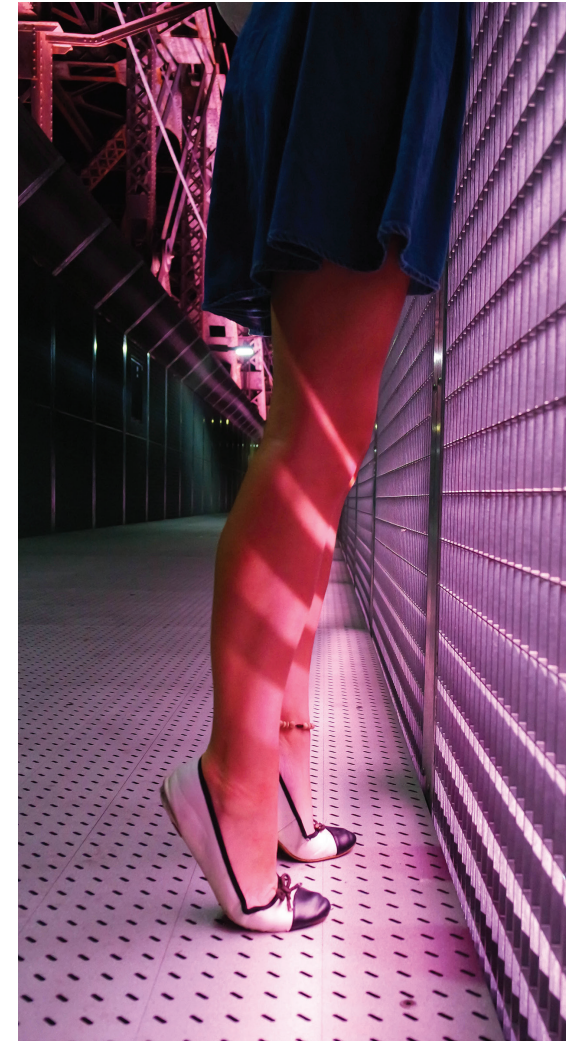
I wanted you to be there, when I walked down the aisle,
To look out and see you, front row with a pleased smile,
Happy for your beloved child—
Who finally forgave.

For telling me long ago that you never really wanted me,
For giving up on him and leaving us quietly,
I miss what I couldn't see as a child—
Who thought not of fear and pain.

Yet, with all that there has been—the
highs, the lows,
Disappointment, empty years, and lonely halls,
I always have and always will—be your child—
For I live the life—*you* gave.

So, as you lie there, with tubes and machines,
beeping all around,
Pale as snow, void of life, nearly heaven bound....

My dear sleeping beauty, your body may go to the ground,
But my love for you will live on, through that familiar sound—
silence that surrounds.



LOOKING

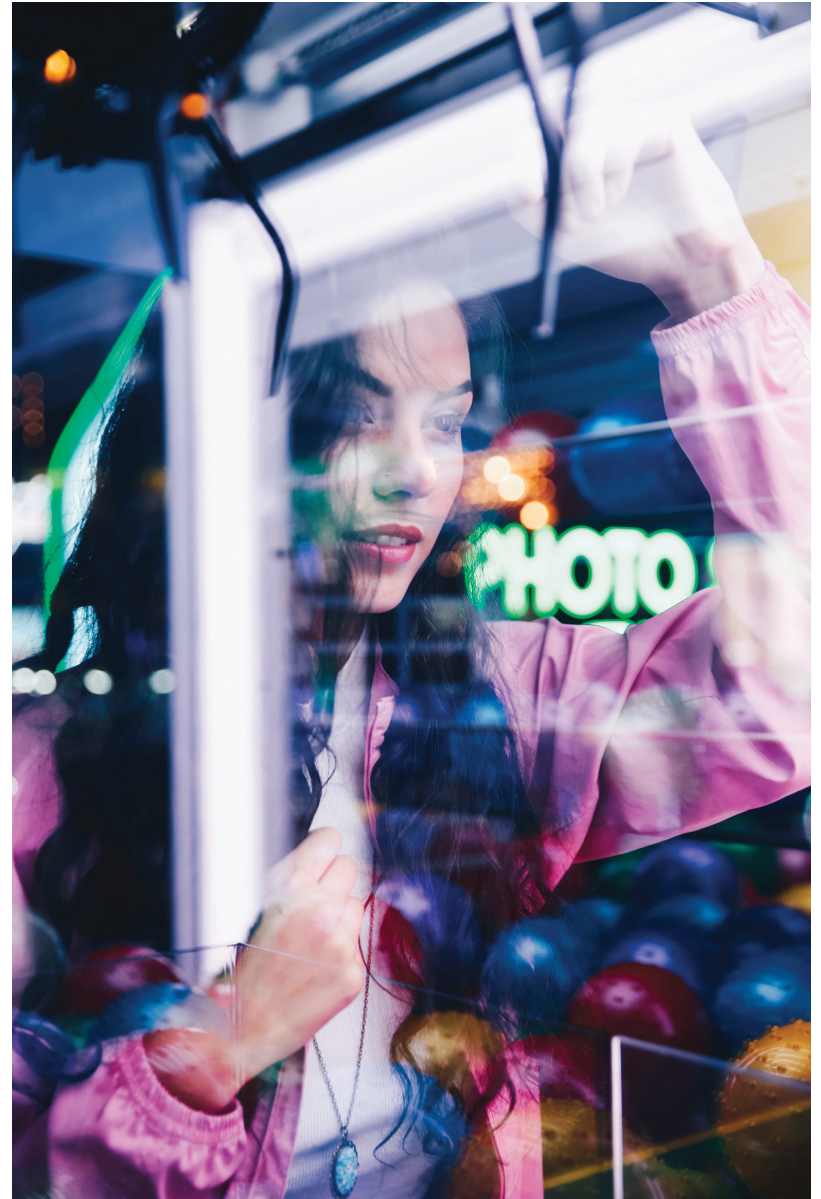
Vann Tate

digital photography

AGAINST THE STORM

Anthony Bukengolts

digital photography



PLAYING GAMES

Ambre Rogue

digital photography

SOMETHING NOTHING COFFEE

Joshua Tilton

prose



They looked sore against the landscape, at least in his eyes. They sat sheltered in the shade of the umbrella that draped over the glass coffee table, the cup in front of him half-full of a hard native brew. On her side, some delicate, expensive Mochachialatto or something. The harder it is to pronounce, the better it's supposed to taste. It was their last day in "paradise—" her words. He was proud of how he'd done so far, walking day in and day out—glancing at ancient ruins, speaking silent prayers in front of altars and old mosaics. Paying for them, too.

He looked around at the crumbling wall atop which the coffee shop had taken up residence. The wall had been turned into a walking tour through the remains of the Old City, and the vacant homes and boarded up windows had been overrun by T-shirt salesmen and artisan craft shops. The city was an awkward blend of ancient and modern, except now you didn't think about how the Jews had built it, Arabs had inhabited it, crusading Christians had taken it for God, and now it was split among the lot of them. No, now you walked through the roughshod, cobbled streets without picturing the blood pouring through its cracks and crevices. And, you can get coffee with your pretty wife while the local boys sunbathe on the rock face cordoned off from visitors.

She was pretty though, and the way she carried a smile made him almost forget what she looked like when they were alone and forced to talk or not talk. They'd been married nearly a decade now, and only in the last few years had he

learned the difference between not saying anything and saying nothing. He looked at her, at the way the sheer blue dress draped over her shoulders and the slim straps dangled the cloth across her delicate chest. Her legs, long and sun-touched, were crossed in a restless quiet. The dress was light but still decent, and the deep blue strips down her thighs dared you to trace them. He noticed where she was looking now, and he shifted in his seat.

"...only in the last few years had he learned the difference between not saying anything and saying nothing."

He thought at first she'd been looking out over the shimmering waters of the Med, with the gulls diligently circling for their next meal, but her eyes were lower. There, at the edge of the walls that had repelled every kind of person, the boys were basking shirtless in the golden sunlight. Age and heritage had bronzed their skin. He had probably seen but not noticed the homes they'd come from, improvised and squeezed between ancient buildings that defied renovation. It wasn't defiling the history as much as surviving alongside it, and for that, he couldn't help but admire them.

He'd seen the look in her eyes before, at some altar where she'd whispered a hopeful prayer and dropped a coin into a metal collection plate. It was a surprising turn for them—neither had been particularly religious once they left \

their homes. He couldn't even say if she was Catholic or not, just that she wished there was God somewhere but couldn't make sense of Him. This was supposed to be something like a cathartic trip, to give the big guy upstairs a chance. He'd come along not for Him, but for her. Maybe God would hold them together, bridge the gap between them and make them whole again, but when he saw the way she looked at the fading visage of a deity on the wall, he felt jealous. And, he felt it come right back when he saw her eyes give that same look to the young men lying on the rocks.

"Mary," he said.

"Hm?" Her gaze lingered for a moment before turning back to look at him.

"How's the coffee?" said Joe.

"Oh." Her eyes fluttered for a moment.

"Um, it's good."

"Good?"


"Yes," she nodded. "Really good. And yours?"

"Fine."

"Didn't I tell you? They make it better here."

He chuckled and looked down at the mug, the few small grounds that had seeped through the filter, bobbing and swirling, little black specks enveloped by the thick warmth of the dark liquid.

"What are you thinking about?" She broke the silence which was otherwise uninterrupted, save for the



occasional siren or small laughter from the street six stories below. They were poised over the balcony, leaning on the metal railing that separated them from a quick death. He was holding, with cupped hands, a cup of the instant coffee mix the hotel had left for them, and even though it was from Israel, it tasted like any other hotel instant coffee mix.

He smiled wide. “Well, I can’t just come right out and say it, now can I?”

“Oh,” she grinned, “but that would make it so much easier.”

“Not too easy?”

“Maybe...” They stood quiet, and quietly together. The fading horizon struck hues of orange and pale blue across the open sky. The sun had just sunk over the horizon, and you could still see its effects without actually seeing what caused it. This struck him as insightful and representative, and he would have said something.

“Joe, I need to tell you.” She was looking out over the sea, the fading light playing with colors on her soft skin. He raised an eyebrow and watched her. “I need to tell you, because it’s important to me, and you’re important to me, and I’m trying to figure out how they play together.”

His gaze sharpened. “Am I competing with something now?”

“Joe, I...” A tear started to well up in the corner of her eye. “What...what would you think of me? I know we’ve shared this for a long time, but...”

“Shared what?” He sounded more hostile than he meant to.

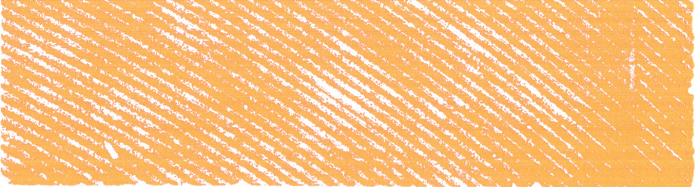
“Our...I don’t know, our nothing.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” She didn’t respond, but choked back a tear and kept looking forward, outward. The light was fading quickly, and the wind had picked up so that stray hairs flipped back and forth on her cheek. For a while neither spoke, until Joe finally broke it with some snide comment about the coffee. Really, she told him, it tasted much better when you get it authentic, and she’d heard of this place that really puts in all the effort to make it real and tasteful and simply good, the way he liked it.

They’d go there at the end of the trip, and he could taste the coffee the way it was supposed to be made, the kind you make when you really believe that the beans were there to be pressed into a drink and enjoyed, a real pleasure. They’d have some then, if he came with her now. She promised.

One of the boys had stood up, the youngest by the look of him. He took off his shoes, and carefully made his way over to the edge of the rocks. They were both looking now, watching silently together as his compatriots clapped and whistled at him. He looked back at them; nervously inching his toes closer to the sheer cliff.

Mary leaned forward in her seat. Looking below, there were rocks sprinkled through the water but in large clumps so you could avoid them if you knew the way down. The boy shook his head, changing his mind and backing away. The boys cheered louder, jeering him now. He looked almost as if he were about to cry.



“For a while neither spoke, until Joe finally broke it with some snide comment about the coffee.”

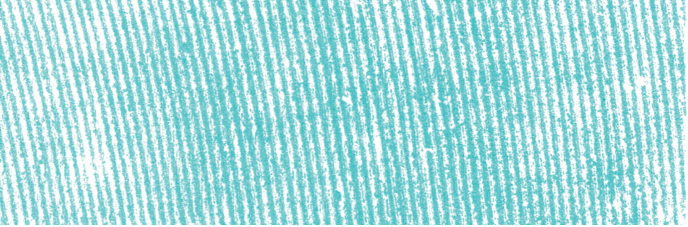
Something changed in the air, and suddenly, the boys looked much younger than they had been. They looked like the children they were, not the soon-to-be men that shirked their responsibilities to lie out in the sun. It’s one of those things that every person experiences once or twice in a lifetime, where everybody there can just notice and observe in a shared reverie. It’s something you can’t explain, but you feel that you have to, and you can’t. And, it tears you up and puts you back together before you realize you’re any different.

Mary stood up and cheered at him. Cheered at the little boy. All of the ones on the rocks turned quickly to the lady in the blue dress that was urging him on. Joe shifted in his seat and looked around at the other tourists who were watching the spectacle silently. She clapped alone, shouting encouragements and smiling that big contagious smile that sucked you in. He smiled back, and his eyes grew big, bigger than you’d think was real anymore.

The young boy sucked in his belly, puffed out his chest, and launched himself over the edge. Mary threw her hands up into the air and started laughing.

“Mary,” Joe said, “please.” Her eyes didn’t lose their excitement but turned to look at him, locked on his for a moment. There was a splash.

Continue on page 14



“Give me this, Joe.” And with that, she turned back, craning her neck to watch the white foam at the bottom circle for a fleeting moment. A few yards away, the boy’s head popped out of the water. She was cheering again, clapping, and the tourists were chuckling to themselves at her, the American. She laughed, clasped her hands in front of her chest, and grinned. The boy’s eyes went straight to where she was, and even from that distance you could see the flush in his cheeks. She laughed and turned back to the table, sitting down without looking at him.

“What?” she said, eyes forward.

“Everyone’s looking,” said Joe, glaring at her.

“Why can’t you let me have this, Joe?”

“Have what?”

“Joe!”

Joe glanced at the tables around them. “Don’t make a scene. And I quickly think we’re reaching the point where you have to make a decision.”

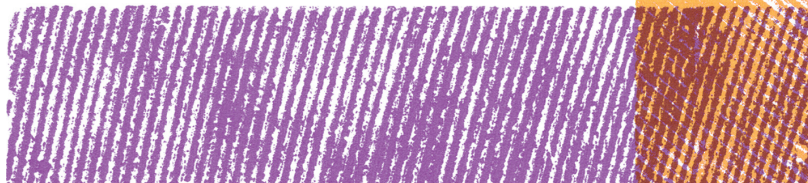
“Me? Make a decision?”

Don’t put this on my plate, Joe.”

“Your boys are calling to you.”

“What?” She looked back over, and the ones who’d been lying on their backs, shirtless and tan and young, were waving their arms towards her, beckoning her to them. She broke into another of her glaring smiles, and she blushed.

Joe soured. “I think they want you to join them.” She looked out at them, considering. “Well?”



A tear started to pool in the corner of her eye again, and she looked from them to him, and back again. She chuckled, reached down to her wrist, unbuckled her watch, and placed it in her purse. Then, without a glance, she rose and walked forward. As she ducked under the railing, they started to cheer. They were urging her onward, closer to the edge of the rock wall.

The coffee really tasted awful, but he couldn’t tell her that. Honestly, it tasted more like dirt than decent coffee. Everyone tells you that things will be better here, because it’s the Med, and the Med is beautiful and fruitful, and the people who work, work hard. It was supposed to taste good just because they’d bought it by the sea and they’d travelled so long just to reach the Promised Land.

When she jumped, time didn’t stand still like he’d thought it would, like he’d hoped it would. Her sheer dress fluttered around her in a perfect, temporary beauty, and her arms hung high at her shoulders. And her smile—that big, beautiful smile. It was the closest thing to God.

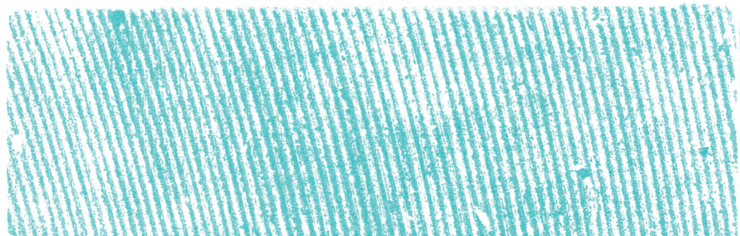
When she broke the surface, he reached for his ring and a hundred-dollar bill, placing both in her purse. She would be well taken care of by the boys cheering on the shore. He turned, walked away and said nothing. ■



IMMERSE

John Peden

digital photography



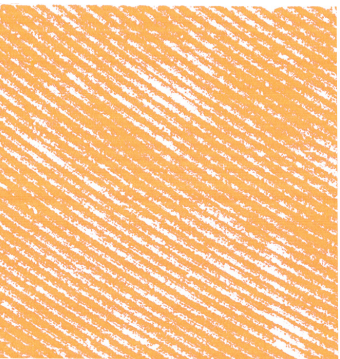
QUINTESSENCE

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HALF DOME

Jessica Rigsby
digital photography



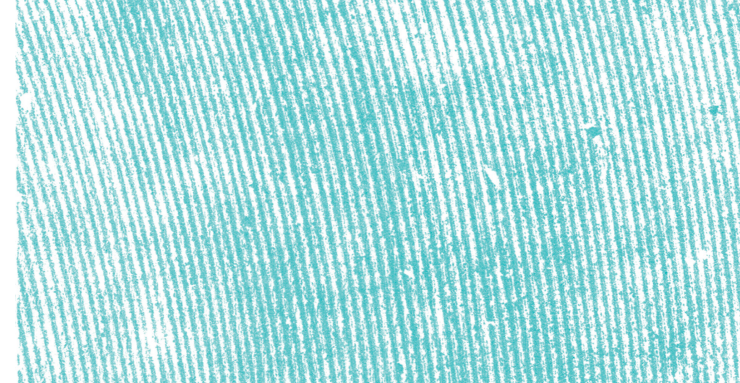
DISTORTION

Cesar Pita
ceramics



PEEK A BOO

Stephanie Van Horn
digital photography



MOTHER, MOVING BUT STANDING STILL

Beizar Aradini

hand embroidered, thread (series)

FAMILY TIES

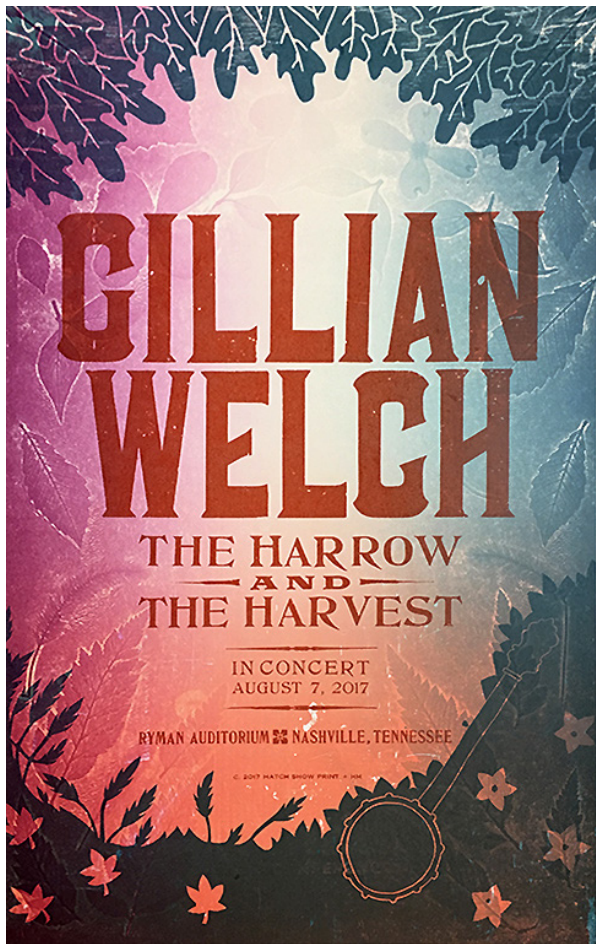
Beizar Aradini

hand embroidered, thread (series)



FROM COLLAGE TO LEGENDARY PRINTSHOP: MTSU ALUMNA HEATHER MOULDER

Feature story by Destiny Seaton



Gillian Welch Poster by Heather Moulder, Letterpress

Every morning, when 30-year-old Heather M. Moulder steps into work, she is transported 138 years back in time.

Hatch Show Print has been cranking out letterpress posters since 1879 for a wide variety of artists and subjects ranging from Goo Goo Dolls to Dolly Parton to toilets. Moulder has the rewarding job of being a “designer-printer” for this retro-style printing company.

When a client comes to the massive store in downtown Nashville, Tenn., they bring their desired content to a designer such as Moulder. Next, the poster is designed, approved, and hand-printed with 100-year-old type and unique hand-carved images. The process can take up to three days.

One might wonder why, in 2017, someone would want to wait three days for a poster they could print in minutes from a computer. According to Moulder, in a digital age, “people crave handmade,” and the ability to “feel and smell the ink”

Moulder, from the small town of Woodbury, Tenn., learned the essential skills at MTSU needed to provide the people of Nashville with the original posters that they crave.



Letterpress Piece by Heather Moulder



Letterpress Piece by Heather Moulder

Moulder attended MTSU from Fall 2005 to Spring 2011. A graphic design major at first, she also decided to major in printmaking after doing her internship at Hatch Show Print. An internship at a place so well-known seemed like an unattainable goal for Moulder until she met Brad Vetter, a former employee.

Vetter was a visiting artist at MTSU who also happened to run the internship program at the legendary letterpress shop. He helped Moulder realize that an internship there was something that could be a reality. Once there, she discovered that the long-time manager of the shop was an MTSU alumnus, Jim Sherraden. Sherraden managed Hatch Show Print for over 30 years before handing over the job to Celene Aubry. He now works at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, where he works with Hatch Show Print History and prints in the archives department.

“people crave handmade,” and the ability to “feel and smell the ink”

Now, in an effort to sustain the decades long connection between the 138-year-old shop and her alma mater, Moulder encourages current MTSU art students to apply for internships at Hatch Show Print. The company has four to five internship sessions a year that she leads.

She loves working with the interns because she not only gets to help them create something new, she learns from them as well. New interns get to exchange unique perspectives and processes with each other while carving new images that will find a place among the thousands lining the walls from floor to ceiling.

Moulder enjoys seeing the work of fellow artists, which is why she was so fond of *Collage*. She loved flipping through the magazine, seeing her peers’ work in print and seeing her own



Heather Moulder at Hatch Show Print in Nashville, Tennessee. Photography by MTSU alumnus Dan Lewis.



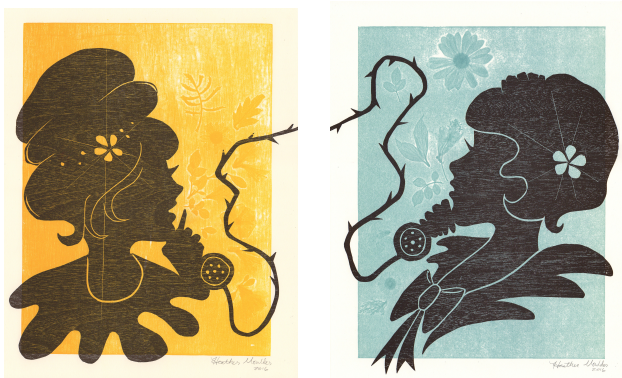
Gillian Welch Poster by Heather Moulder, Letterpress

work accompanying theirs. To Moulder, being published in *Collage* was “something extra special” that gave her inspiration and helped hone her resume for future opportunities.

“Being published in *Collage* made making a resume way less intimidating,” Moulder said. As well as making posters for some of her favorite artists, such as Gillian Welch, Moulder is currently working on her own music career. She also just rescued an antique letterpress of her own, and she cannot wait to see what that has in store. As for the future, Moulder plans to stick around at Hatch Show Print, where she has over 100 years of inspiration surrounding her daily. ■



Letterpress Piece by Heather Moulder



Letterpress Pieces by Heather Moulder

DISCOVERING SOUTHERN WRITER AND PHOTOGRAPHER EUDORA WELTY

Feature story by Megan Donelson

In January 2017, I was given the opportunity to work as a research assistant with the primary task of putting together an exhibition of rare books by Mississippi author Eudora Welty.



Painting of Eudora Welty by Mildred Nungester Wolfe, 1988

The materials for the exhibit would come from the collection of Dr. J. Lee Owen, a retired pediatrician who had practiced medicine in Jackson, Miss., for 50 years. Since Jackson was also Welty's home, Owen and his wife Sophia were familiar with Welty's work. For his birthday, Dr. Owen received a copy of Welty's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Optimist's Daughter*,

signed by the author to him. By Dr. Owen's own account, he was "hooked." He began to collect first editions and rare printings of Welty's work, many of them signed by the author herself.

My first step was to get to know Eudora Welty. I read Suzanne Marrs's biography of her, and dove into Welty's writing, devouring *The Optimist's Daughter*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *One Writer's Beginnings*, and many of her short stories.



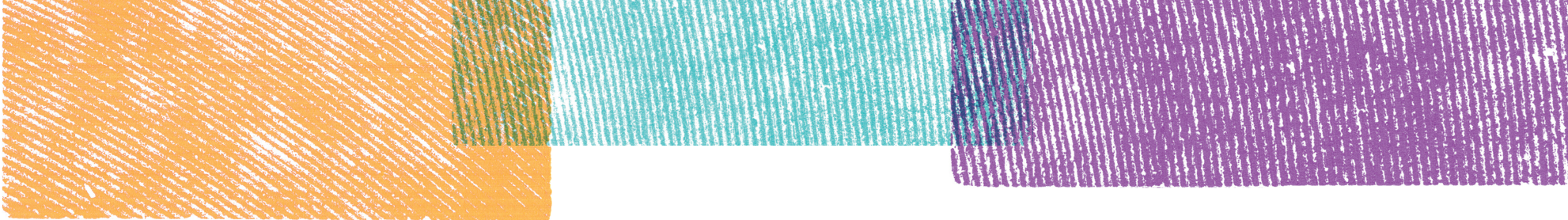
Photograph by Eudora Welty, "Mother and Child," 1935

Welty is known for her many literary awards, including the Pulitzer Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the French Legion of Honor, among others. Most readers note that her characters come to life on the page. Welty attributed this to her keen power of observation, which was intricately related with her work as a photographer. She worked for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the early 1930s, and many of her most famous photographs were taken during her travels for the WPA.

One of Welty's greatest contributions to American literature was her philosophy on how place influences the writer. She objected to the way critics often characterized Southern writers' places of birth as a limitation. Welty had no use for these stereotypes and saw place as a tool that the writer could use to explore the universal concerns of all human beings: love, family, and the passage of time.

Based on what I had learned, I created an exhibit that showcased a variety of Welty's passions. It represented Welty in all of her roles: writer, teacher, traveler, philosopher, and beloved friend.

After developing an understanding of Welty's work and its significance, I familiarized myself with Dr. Owen's collection. I traveled to Welty's hometown with Honors College Associate Dean Philip E. Phillips, his wife Sharmila Patel, and Honors College Event Coordinator Susan Lyons.



Home of Eudora Welty, Jackson, Mississippi

We visited Welty's home on Pinehurst Street; the family moved into the house when Welty was sixteen years old, and she lived there for the rest of her life. We were honored to be given a private tour by Mary Alice White, one of Welty's nieces, who shared personal memories of her beloved aunt along the way. Walking through the house brought to life the mental images I



Left to Right: Dr. M. Kreyling, M. Donelson, Dr. J. Owen & Dr. P. Phillips

had formed of Welty. I could imagine her visiting with friends in the front room, shuffling through drafts on the dining room table, or rearranging the books that covered every flat surface to make room for visitors to sit down. The lavish garden bears a striking resemblance to one described in *The Optimist's Daughter*. We were in awe of the small details of Welty's everyday life that had been preserved, and we felt her presence throughout the house.

Another important stop was the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, where Mary Alice White and archivist Forrest Galey helped us select images to use in our exhibit, including family photos and Welty's famous photographs of rural Mississippians. Ms. Galey shared her own memories of Welty's sense of humor, and with each story Welty seemed less like a mythic figure of literary greatness and more like a friend. Before leaving, we visited Welty's grave, which is not far from her home. Her headstone is inscribed with a quotation from *The Optimist's Daughter*. For her life, any life, she had to believe, was nothing but the continuity of its love.

On the day the exhibit opened, I spoke briefly, giving the audience a general idea of the themes they would encounter and pointing out some highlights. Dr. Owen also told the story of how he began collecting Welty's works, and Vanderbilt professor Michael Kreyling spoke on Welty's literary career, focusing on the development of her persona as revealed in the many iconic portraits of her.

Through my work, I received a wonderful gift—learning about Eudora Welty's life and work. I hope to use what I have learned to design future events for students to learn more about great American writers. Eudora Welty was a gifted writer, but her greatest gift was the ability to see connections—between past and present, between her small town and global controversies, between herself and her readers. Her artistic vision and compassionate way of living is an example to us all. ■



Display from Eudora Welty Exhibit



BIRTHDAY PARTY

StarShield Lortie

poetry

The day I turned ten
my grandfather died
arguing over a parking spot.

A heart attack someone said.
I imagined his heart bursting out
of his chest, beating him with bloody fists.

As the days drew out
and the house filled with grieving relatives
and the hushed tones of their voices, I missed him.

I didn't feel fear
or wonder about my mortality,
but it was clear everyone forgot my birthday.

The cake Gramma made
sat unfinished on the kitchen counter
as I was shuffled out of the way with the other kids.

An older cousin talked about souls,
but couldn't answer my repeated questions
about life, death, and where Grandpa really was.

I told him I wasn't afraid because
a week earlier, in the early morning mist,
I saw an angel in my room and I was at peace.



UNTITLED

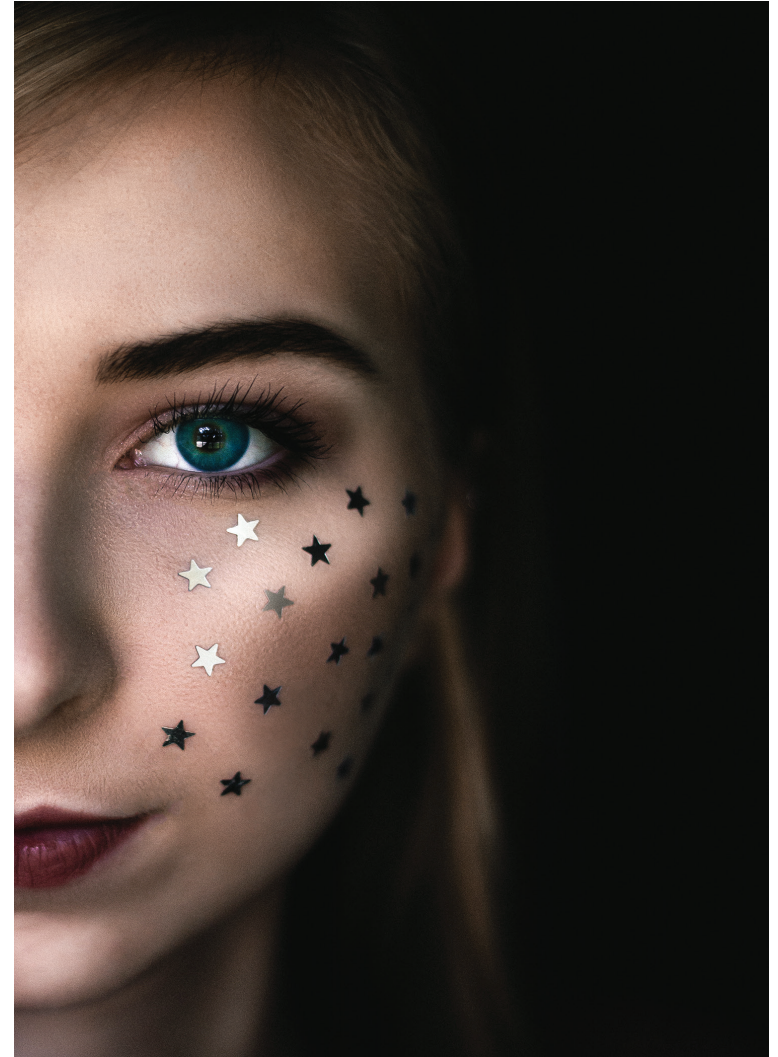
Jessica Rose

oil paint, 11"x16"

After that, the adults wouldn't
let me shuffle down the line by the coffin
at the funeral, so I stopped talking to everyone except him.

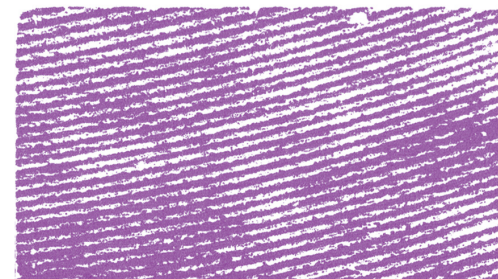
Later, Mom told me Grandpa
was out shopping for my birthday present.
I listened stoically, wondered if she wanted an apology.

The awkward silences between
the rest of the family and I faded away
but Gramma never celebrated my birthday again.



STARS

Lindsey Wilson
digital photography



ROBIN'S EGG SOAP

Lucy Haston

poetry

The quiet bathroom with the cold tiles
and the rose-colored bathtub
was a pristine little sanctuary
for considerably younger me.

The tall cabinets held stiff white towels
with a soft, soapy scent
and comforting heaviness
for those wrapped inside.

I'd explore each and every shallow drawer
of matches and lipsticks
in their tiny paper books
and black plastic tubes.

My mother would knock, then come inside
to find me rummaging,
mouth rimmed with red
like the stain of popsicles.

She'd wipe my mouth with a damp rag,
then kneel before me
to apply the palest pink
and show me how to blot.

I'd watch her face and decipher the mouth
that was sitting halfway
between a grimace
and an amused smirk.

Her shoulders shimmered from garden work,
and her top soil manicure
was a familiar sight,
but different all the time.

Her sun spotted chest, pale, almost creping,
uncannily resembled
the Robin's egg soap
in the silver soap dish.



REINCARNATION

Morgan Ruth
alcohol marker

TEXAS

Chrissy Petrone

poetry

I've never been to Texas
but I know how he feels.

I know when my arms reach
around him, hands barely touch
on firm, heavy shoulders.

The dark sweep of black curls
tickles as we sleep, entangled, on
Tennessee summer afternoons.

I've never been to Texas
but when I hear him speak
I do not think of cowboys, nor
snake-wranglin' men

but of long lost, coffee colored gazes,
the haze of dusty setting suns,
and the barren, deserted lands,
set ablaze by liquid copper,
turquoise and gold.

I've never been to Texas
but he sings with his best twang,
drunk on love and the big blue moon.

George Strait on the air,
"Well excuse me, but I think you've got my chair..."

I have never been to Texas.
But I want to go.

To drive my way into him,
soft and slow.

To call him home.



Q

Cynthia Sullivan
oil on canvas, woven

BILL'S CHAIR

Meghan Kreger

etching



BIG BAD WOLF

Iska Frosh

acrylic

MICROCOSM

Olivia Powell

poetry

The perfume family lives in my mother's vanity.
Seven-year-old me would visit every night
that she would dry and comb my hair.
I always had to fix them—bring
them back to the right spot.
Dad next to Mom next to
sister brother & baby.
Tallest to smallest.
My mother must not—
could not—have known that
they were a family. Perhaps, thought
they belonged scattered across the surface
of the dark, hardwood world—alone, all of them.
Or maybe, they all simply drifted apart on their own.

OMMA (엄마)

Dana Tri

oils on clay board



DEATH OF A VOICE

Mitchell Lawrence

poetry

A piece of me died today
And though he met a peaceful end,
There is a missing piece of me
That I can never mend.

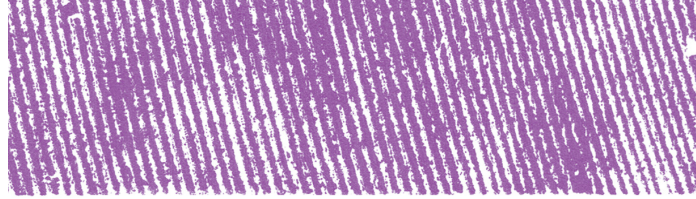
A voice that I grew up with,
That healed my broken heart,
Quietly extinguished
Like a candle in the dark.

The background to the memories,
All the many I hold dear,
Changed forever in my mind
By the voice—now lost—I hear.

A piece of me I never knew
And a piece that never knew me,
Vanished from this Earth
Nevermore to sing or be.

In days there'll be a funeral,
Where I and a million more
Will bury the voice that healed our souls
The days that they were sore.

Though I lost a piece of me,
His music will remain.
And thankfully I can call on it
When I'll need him again.



MANDUCA SEXTA

Josie Dowd

linoleum block print, printmaking



HIS WAR PAINT

Brooke Adams

digital photography





BEHIND THE ROPES

Ambre Rogue

digital photography



VIKINGS

Christopher Banyai

pen and ink



WAITING ON MR. DARCY

Haydin Oechsle

digital photography

ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON

Sammye Sanford

digital photography



HALF AND HALF

Anthony Bukengolts

digital photography





CONTAINED LILY POND

Whitney Wilkerson

wood block print



MOTHER SUN

Virginia Holmes

acrylic

CONFESSIONS OF A VACATIONING BINGE DRINKER

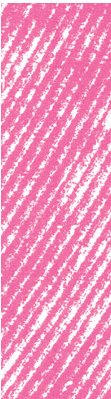
Chrissy Petrone

poetry

I miss getting drunk
in the woods,
trees casting reaching fingers
in the shadows of roasting fire, aiming
to dip branch tips into milky-star patterns.
All along, katydids
sing me their desperate love songs.
And we talk about how small,
we all
are.

But age
does
that funny
thing, changes
memories—
making the
mundane
endearing, so
maybe,
it's not the
getting drunk
I miss.

Or perhaps
It's the 'we'
who are
so small
and yet
still we lose touch
not talking in years,
disappearing just like
katydids
when summer
ends.



I miss getting drunk
on the patio of an empty bar
in San Diego,
in October.
With the deep blush of the setting sun
filtering through my lashes,
legs crossing with little grace,
shaking my head with a grin, at
a man, whom I've never loved, and he's
watching me with the moon caught in his eyes.

I miss getting drunk
on the beach,
taking a swig of warm beer,
thigh-high waves make
gentle passes,
hiding swaying intoxication.
Sand army crawling into dark body corners.
Laughing as my skin reddens,
peels, browns
to a delicious crisp.

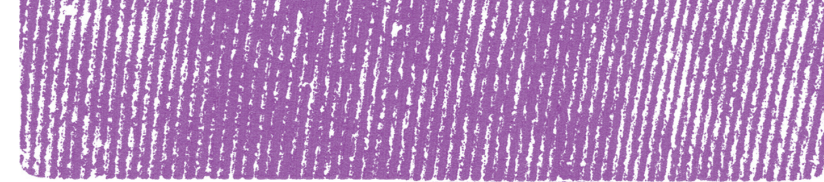
Maybe,
it's that
moon-eyed man
in San Diego
looking at me
like
I am God.

Or maybe
at least, I think,
I just
miss
days on the beach
under
a sun hotter
than
mine.



4 PM

Martin Davies
digital photography



ARIZONA SUMMER SUN

Rhane Craun

poetry

Mom and dad used to love dancing.
They loved it so much the floors would shake,
hooting and hollering pierced through drywall,
and I would lie awake, happy for mom and dad.

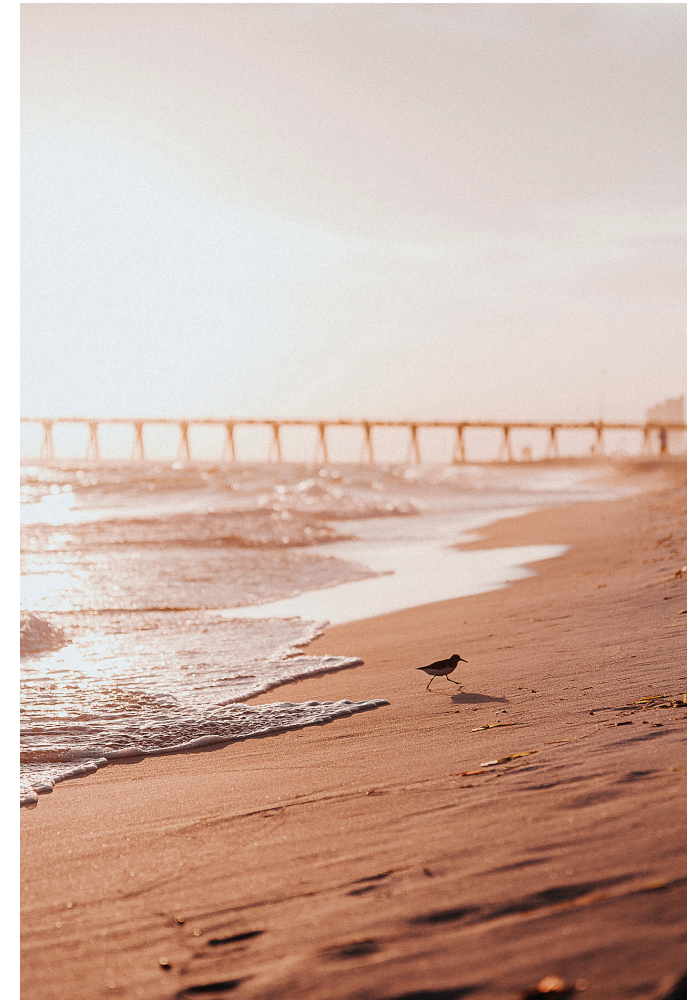
Each evening was an unchanging routine—
tucked into bed with a kiss from mother,
the door closes, the lights go out,
lulled by the sound of lovers dancing.

Mom would get up early—dad, always late.
She would clean the house before work,
broken glass and household goods strewn about,
relics of excitement from the night before.

I remember one particular morning
finding Jesus broken before me,
He and His cross removed from the wall,
shattered, in a thousand pieces on the floor.

Mom didn't clean the house that morning.
She told me she loved me and left the house early,
out into the Arizona summer sun,
wearing a charcoal, wool turtleneck.

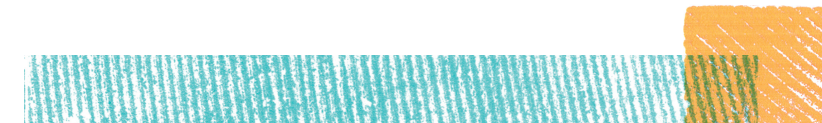
Dad left a few days later and didn't come back,
Mom wore turtlenecks for a few weeks more,
and at night there was no more sound of dancing.
Just a solemn silence to keep me up at night.



BEACH BIRD

Lindsey Wilson

digital photography





UNTITLED

Olivia Reidl

india ink, watercolor, and technical pens

GRAVEYARD OF DREAMS

Sammye Sanford

digital photography



UNCONTAINED

Karlie Tankersley

oil on canvas, 5' x 3'





THE FLYING TRAPEZE

Emily James

watercolors and bleach on watercolor paper



UNHAPPY ENDING

Sarah Rodriguez

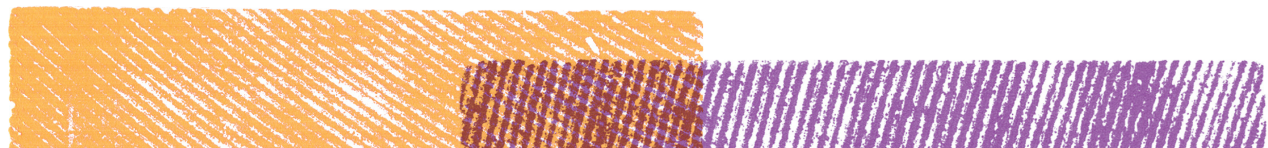
film photography



VICTROLA

Sarah Rodriguez

film photography





EPITHETS

Rachel Lingerfelt

poetry

I had this feeling today
Like I was being watched by you the way you used to
Sit and stare at me
Smiling cleverly like I knew the joke you made

On the edge of turning around to see you
I remembered that it wasn't worth the worry
I put my head down and closed my eyes
I cried
But not like I used to

I counted the footsteps away from me
One two three four
Til forty-six and you never looked back once
I counted the words to a song that sings of you
So many
Barely a refuge

Once in the middle of trying to say I loved you
I choked on the absence I felt in breaths
I was lost in your
Something
Your sometimes
Your somehow
Saying I loved you to hear a coughed-up reply

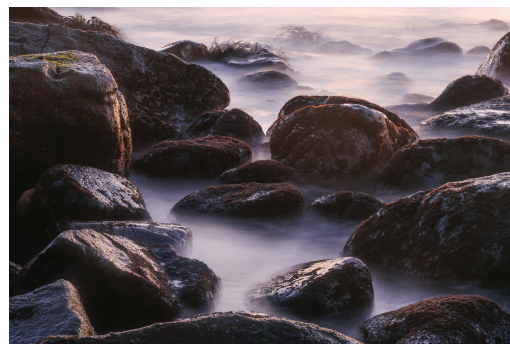
Half-lit smoke inhalation
Fingernails digging into my palms
Driving with the windows down screaming to the voicemail
It's been months
Why aren't you over it
Why can't it just be easier
Why do I keep falling back

I remember the last day
As clearly as the first
Both are burned into my memory for this lifetime
I remember being told about the sadness
That lingers in your bed for months
It never occurred to me that it was not just a feeling

TIMING

Brooke Fitzwater

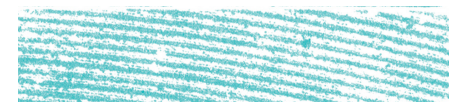
digital photography



WHISPER OF A COMPOSISCAN

Jessica Byerly

scan of various materials, digital photography

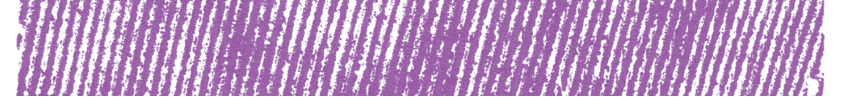




POLITICAL JUDGEMENTS

Ahib Hauter

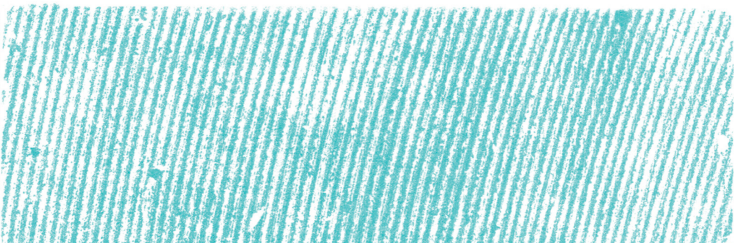
oil on canvas



AFRO-MILLENNIALS "EMPOWERMENT"

Anthony Alexander

digital photography





ISSUE 26 | FALL 2017

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building
1737 Blue Raider Drive
Room 224. Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

ABOUT COLLAGE

Collage is a biannual publication of the Middle Tennessee State University Honors College. All submissions are reviewed anonymously and selected by a student editorial staff. The materials published by *Collage* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the *Collage* staff, Honors College, MTSU student body, staff, or administrators. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized in any form without written permission from the editor or advisor of *Collage*. Inquiries should be addressed to *Collage*, Middle Tennessee State University, 1301 East Main Street, Box 267, Murfreesboro, TN, 37132.

POLICY STATEMENT

Collage: A Journal of Creative Expression is an arts and literary magazine featuring submitted work chosen by a volunteer staff in a blind grading process. The staff attempts to choose the best work without regard for theme or authorship. Although *Collage* is a publication of the University Honors College, staff members and submitters are not required to be Honors students. Staff members are selected each semester from a pool of applicants and must have at least a 3.0 GPA and two recommendations.

Middle Tennessee State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. See our full policy at www.mtsu.edu/titleix.

SUBMIT TO COLLAGE

Collage accepts submissions year-round. Submission forms and guidelines are available at mtsu.edu/collage/. Creative work, such as art, photography, short stories, essays, short plays, song lyrics, and poetry, may be submitted digitally to mtsu.edu/collage/ or may be turned in at the *Collage* office, Honors 224, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Submissions are accepted from MTSU students and recent graduates.

CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Each semester, four submissions receive Creative Expression Awards, one from each major category: art, photography, poetry, and prose. Literature winners receive the Martha Hixon Creative Expression Award, and visual winners receive the Lon Nuell Creative Expression Award. Winners receive \$50 awards.



FAMILY TIES SERIES

Beizar Aradini



QUINTESSENCE

Haydin Oechsle



LYNCHING SELFIE

StarShield Lortie



SOMETHING NOTHING COFFEE

Joshua Tilton

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Gold Medalist Certificates

2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017

Silver Crown Awards

2007, 2008, and 2011

Gold Crown Awards

2012, 2013, and 2015

PRODUCTION

Technology

Adobe InDesign CC | Adobe Illustrator CC
Adobe Photoshop CC | Apple Macintosh Platform
Windows Platform

Typography

Futura Std. | Adobe Garamond Pro

Paper

100 lb. Athens Silk Cover | 80 lb. Athens Silk Text

Binding

Saddle Stitch

Printing

Falcon Press of Nashville, Tennessee printed approximately 2,000 copies of *Collage*.

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**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

