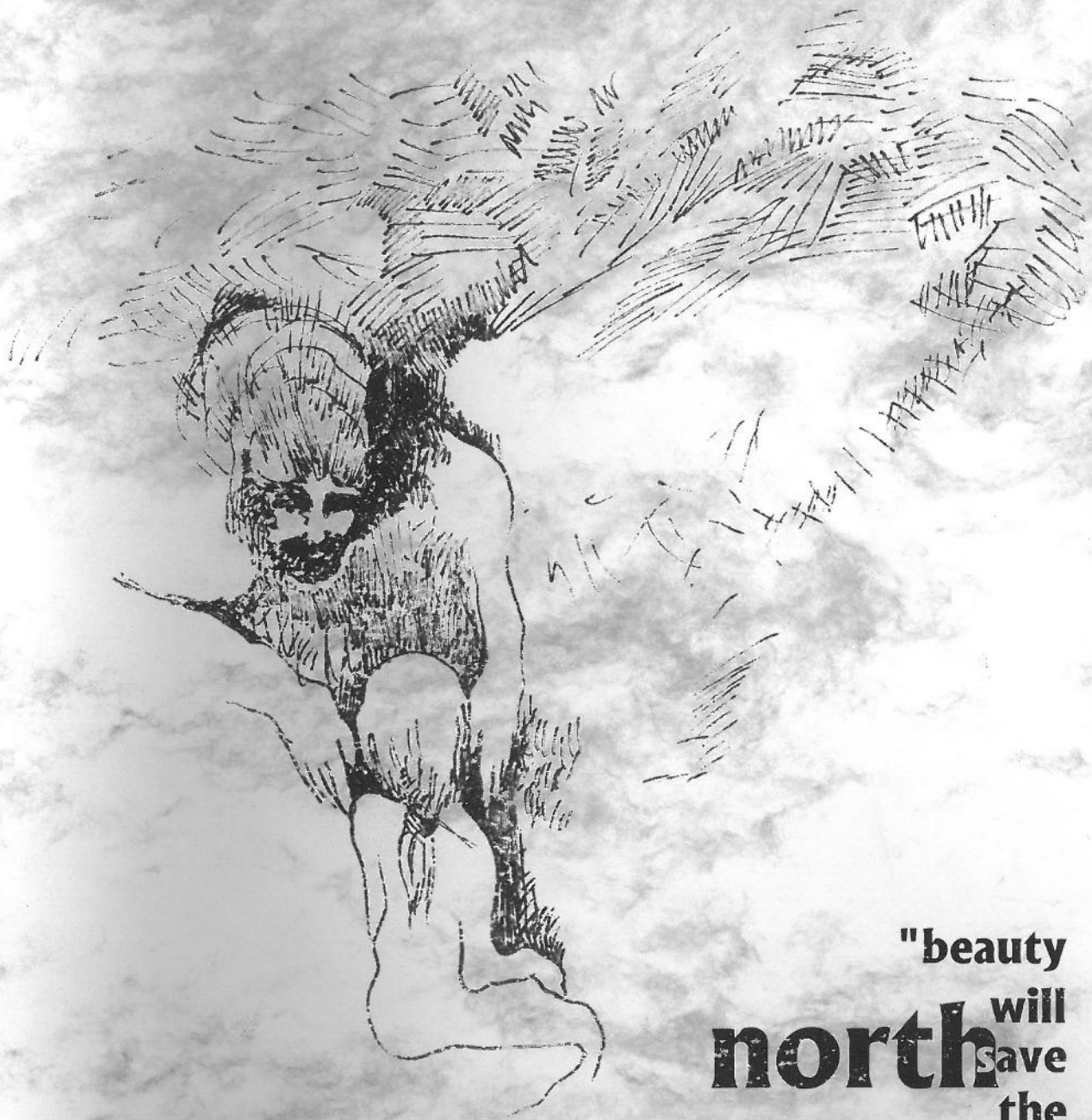


*Warning!*  
*This text will deconstruct in 4,*  
*3,*  
*2,*  
*fish*



"beauty  
will  
**north** save  
the  
world"



# north

winter & spring 2002, vol 4.1

**“beauty will save the world”**

Editors:

*Glenn Clifton*

*Jeremy Mesiano-Crookston*

*James A. Overton*

*Mark Sentesy*

North is the annual literary journal of the College of the Humanities  
at Carleton University, 300 Paterson Hall,  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6.

For more information contact James at [joverton@chat.carleton.ca](mailto:joverton@chat.carleton.ca)

Thanks to all our contributors and supporters  
for encouraging this tradition to take root.

Cover Art:

*Tom Pokinko*

Layout and Design:

*James A. Overton*

---

---

## Editor's Note

Out of the frenzy of mid-winter conversations, a theme emerged which we hoped would give this journal some focus. "*Beauty will save the world.*" We announced it to the seminar classes with a certain shyness, as if afraid someone would laugh. Our hope was that the phrase was general, yet provocative; for all of us were willing to listen to the words "save the world." We were all willing to follow those words to see where they were going, without being quite able to say why we thought the world needed saving.

We still don't know if we should have done it. One school of thought says it was arrogant of us. Maybe we were trying to make our efforts sound holy. As if we represented a kind of authentic politics, a politics of

conversation, secretly operating behind the world of power. As if not only poets, but artists and genuine scholars as well were the "unacknowledged legislators of the world." As if the creative products that grew out of 4 years of reading the classics, the poetry and prose that leapt like a stealthy laugh out the side of our philosophical studies, could answer all the guns of the twentieth century. As if one idea, or one beautiful image, could creep through conversations carried out in bars, crawl along the secret web of companionship, through generations, until the god returned to the temple.

One school of thought says this was arrogant. The other says it is exactly what we have left to hope for.

*Glenn, Mark, Jeremy, and James*

---

## Table of Contents

*Mark Sentesy*  
Nike

<i>Jeremy Mesiano-Crookston</i>	
Scholars	1
An Essay On Language	2
Zen Male Sexuality	2
Number 3	3
<i>Saleema Nawaz</i>	
invective	4
<i>Parul Shah</i>	
Untitled	5
<i>Michelle Miller</i>	
Trivial Pursuit	6
<i>James A. Overton</i>	
The Black Economy	8
Spinning	9
<i>Mike Tallim</i>	
The Beach	10
Paradise	11
<i>Aaron Gordon</i>	
The Night I Watched	
A Jane Austen Movie	
And Ate Fourteen Pooris	12

*Mark Sentesy*  
The Subterranean Ruins of the Lovely  
(14)

---

---

<i>Timothy L. Brownlee</i>	
Scenes from Kant: One	15
<i>Jamie Bradley</i>	
Untitled	17
<i>Meredith Humphrey</i>	
Pilate Questions Plato's Puppies	18
<i>Paul Harvey</i>	
Untitled	20
Untitled	21
	<i>Tom Pokinko</i>
	Man, Woman
	(21)
<i>Joe Kirby</i>	
What is Beauty?	22
	<i>James A. Overton</i>
Beauty is What?	23
	<i>Bonita Slunder</i>
	Inuit Sculpture
	(24)
<i>Bonita Slunder</i>	
cecilia	25
joshua	25
<i>Glenn Clifton</i>	
Troubled	26
This Morning's Fall	27
Therapy	28
<i>Bindu Suresh</i>	
The Moment Before	
You Reached Me	30

---

---

*Tom Pokinko*  
Untitled 34

*Katherine Narraway*  
Brokenness 38

*Julee Moroz*  
If Life is Water, What is Snow? 40

*Sasha*  
Untitled 45

*Mark Sentesy*  
Aphorisms 47  
Untitled 49  
Having just found a home 50

*Mark Sentesy*  
Time Machine  
(52)

*José Rodriguez*  
Blind Man's Bluff 53  
A Parable 54

*Glenn Clifton*  
A Counter-Parable 56

*Tom Pokinko*  
Workers  
(58)

Contributors 59

*Mark Sentesy*  
Fallen Angel

---

---





*Jeremy Mesiano-Crookston*

Scholars

My scholars live in bone-dark nights.  
In dark rain-shade of dead straw nights;  
swearing spitting joyful blessed holy noise.  
Noise to blanket, stretching light and shaking  
across the dull brown beautiful worlds.  
We make things quiet, holy sacramental quiet.  
Quiet as the hollow veins, as rich drops upon  
the desert sands.  
Quiet as the bone-dark tombs.

My scholars breathe in dust,  
walking worn and trodden ways  
in worn and trodden shoes.  
Happily soak paper crumbs and run dry-bodied  
through the whipping, wholesome rain,  
laughing madly, screaming joyful thought.  
    (the towers oh the Holy towers! Holy thoughts  
    of divine caffeine smoke sex thoughts. Sex  
    sweat holy.)

To live in drowsy crystal hearts of  
gilded-crystal lamps.  
To give off the light that seeds the fields,  
the light that kills Moloch the Mighty.

Bid them come soon to the world,  
To the crowds of marchers steel-heeled flashing proud.  
Who stagger-step on sucking paths.  
Wear bleak smoke ooze  
of piddling memory.  
Squeeze gray smear grit from penciled footpaths.  
Long days under endless solemn skies.

Bid them come and soak the world in flame.

Untitled

I long for time to pass swiftly  
for the moment to be memory  
for my vision to vanish.

Because each time I speak it  
recount it  
revive it  
its sting seems sharper  
the lights appear dimmer  
my mind simmers as it tries to remember  
but instead dismembers  
the event that transpired  
last night  
last evening  
the day in its weaning.

There are far too many meanings  
for the words that are spoken  
not written  
not stoned in on paper  
but draped, instead, in the mind  
Forgotten, Forgotten -  
only with time.

*Michelle Miller*

Trivial Pursuit

It is, of course, just a game.  
Just two, or three, or more of us  
in a darkened room  
Employing our plans of action  
    I advance  
    She retreats  
And we manipulate our own tokens.

The goal is to envelope the status pieces,  
    To feel them snug inside  
Where they belong, pink red and blue and purple  
    in pink  
and, slowly at first, then faster and faster still  
we make our way to the end, to our sweet reward  
knowing We are the best in the room.

But we come, all of us.  
More or less at the same time  
to the end, which is often just  
    The beginning  
As one giant game often becomes  
An All Night Marathon.

We break only to eat, drink and clean the mess  
    wash our faces, dry our hands.

We're Good.  
We've practiced, alone in our room,  
with other groups.  
Confident because we always come  
    Out

On top.

We sweat.  
Anticipating the moment when  
We blow  
    The dice  
Kiss the tumblers in our hands  
And fondling our men  
We bring it off,  
Win the game  
    (You're the Champ! You're the King!)  
while others scramble to catch up  
(although some know from the start they'll never make it  
and resign themselves to the bathroom for a shower massage  
to ease the pain of losing).

After the game, a feast.  
We've worked up quite an appetite,  
jaws aching from orally exposing knowledge  
Hands cramp from making a loose fist  
and eager to start over  
With different partners  
    different positions.

James A. Overton

## The Black Economy

*2001 was a year of massive growth for the new old economy. Despite a looming recession, frequent breakdowns in peace talks led bonds and public holdings to set new records on all the major indices. Losses in real wages lead to an expansion in the consumer class, and both private and public sectors were able to meet increased production needs. Multinational corporations made advances in the erosion of the privacy and rationality of customer-employees, while continuing to push back recent increases in autonomy stemming from information technologies. Government and the military industrial complex enhanced the distribution infrastructure significantly over this period, maintaining all time lows on major accountability indices. Small businesses and start-ups made spectacular gains, giving confidence to international investors.*

*Experts agree that the black economy has doubled its value over the last year, with the most significant gains made during the fourth quarter. The global nature of production, consumption, and trade has never been more clear. Despite rumours of compassion, 2002 is expected*

*to surpass all previous forecasts. President Bush has assured the world that America and its allies will make any sacrifice necessary to maintain their central role in the new old economy.*

If fear were something you could grow in your garden, reap and ship to the market, a cash crop. Something drained from silos into trains, dragged along tracks to factories, smelted and refined to remove the dross of doubt and mercy. It would be alloyed with steel, aluminum, titanium, mixed with cordite, napalm, and uranium, wrapped around our soldiers, or handed them in phallic forms. They would send the excess overseas, selling it for the lowest prices, to any bidder, at the highest costs; expanding international trade, encouraging growth. We could understand war exactly as Smith understood us, as Bush understands us. *(Except that it's is something, if you give it away, you end up having more... Except that we'd still be stunned by a lone man, a scared tank, in a red square...)* Terrorist armies would clash by night; negotiating the distribution of fear.

## Spinning

Please remember that he didn't expect it to be easy. But as the front wheels slipped, the back wheels broke loose, and the slow spin down the wet hill too fast in the falling snow in the oncoming lane came, when the flood of emotions didn't and no life not even fear flashed, only bitterness at one more embarrassing loss of control, he wondered, wondered, why it all had to be this hard.

The railing held but the axle bent. He discovered once more the unthinking trying-to-make-you-feel-better kindness in eyes, when your day has been worse, when there's no harm done but money. He rediscovered the heavy apathy that buzzes in phone-lines out of distant call-centres; an inertia that would have carried him through the steel wires, sailing like the snow, falling on cedars. He felt pragmatic calluses blister between his mind's eye and the fading world. And he felt the tug of one more shining black bead on his rosary regret.

It didn't have to be easy; it just had to seem worthwhile, just once in a while. He remembered again the night

of the lost keys, the midnight hunt through the still park, when the snow crunched like styrofoam, and the ice chimed like beer bottles. He knew it was everywhere. He'd read that book. Sometimes he'd try to build moments of total attention, watching and waiting, to start waiting to start seeing. But when it happened it wasn't experience. Just an instant of frustrations taking root like weeds in an inbred, overripe, cultivated garden. Nothing other than the first sip of this season's self-loathing.

If I, if he, could boil down that bile into some sticky residue, at least he could make biting post-modern taffy. If he could render it solid, spit it up and study it, then maybe he could tease out a solution. If I could feel the things I see instead of just seeing the things I should feel, it might all begin to work out. Because the problem hasn't been finding the right place or time, but being the right person when it comes. On the first day of all this strife and that sweat and those tears, spinning slowly through snowflakes should be gently sublime.

*Mike Tallim*

The Beach

Red rhythms cut through the air  
gliding on the waves of a Spanish band  
and we dance, your slender figure  
embraced by abrasive arms  
of one you just met;  
and paradise, it seems,  
is somewhere between the waves  
which crash on the beach  
and where you stand  
and move right now.

*What is paradise*

you ask as the music fades out  
and the waves go to sleep.  
The sand in your toes  
seems a bit less real  
as the stars and the sand  
become akin to one another  
and time stops  
like a wave caught  
in its own reflection.

we sit in the tide  
foreign bodies to an unfamiliar land  
your question lingering in the air  
even more potent than this salt sea breeze.

Are you expecting an answer  
for you'll get none from me.  
You just smile,  
say there was no question  
and accept the waves which crash  
against your coral skin.



## Paradise

It's a rooftop obsession  
On a god-forsaken night;  
Masochists with pens  
Find the oddest hiding spots.

The light is too poor to write in,  
And too bright to ignore  
And the sweat in my palms  
Makes my pen slip

There's a flash of light  
When I jerk my neck,  
And though I know  
It's just nerves in my head,  
I'll pretend it was a shooting star  
And the mosquitoes on my knee  
Really mean no harm.

Aaron Gordon

## The Night I Watched A Jane Austen Movie And Ate Fourteen Pooris<sup>1</sup>

My dearest R---m,

I was much inspired by dinner last night, and as I lay sleeping my stomach carried on where the evening left off. Although I slept, my stomach was still caught up in the throws of a dance. As I drifted deeper in sleep the strangest dream came upon me and I found myself at that same country ball I had witnessed this very evening and yet, instead of the gentry and fine ladies, I found myself surrounded by fourteen pooris,<sup>2</sup> all so magnificent that they would not have been out of place even at the most austere regalia held in the British Empire. If you think it strange that I was not uncomfortable amidst these culinary delights I can only defend my ease and say that their figures, equal in size to my own although more round, reminded me much of Aristophanes' natural lovers and that in a dream world this is reason enough to feel no ill will in such company. It was clear from their dress and ease in conversation and dancing that each poori present was the model of good breeding.

Although I mentioned that I was not uncomfortable amongst these edible revellers, I was ill at ease in my own constitution having, I fear, eaten too much at dinner. I made my way to a chesterfield not too near the dancing and planted myself there with as much care as a gardener would take transplanting a rose wilting in the heat to a more shady

locale. I must admit, my dear friend, that I felt rather wilted myself as my stomach groaned and pushed against my corset. Something of this must have appeared on my face for an elderly gentleman poori near at hand (do not ask how I distinguished age amongst these rotund delights as I can only argue that in this dream my sleeping mind was able to make distinctions which in the waking light I cannot reason out myself but only recall) asked if I was well or if I found the occasion not to my liking. I could only respond that I was feeling a tad carminative and that my countenance did not reflect what I believed to be a grand evening. Two young girls near by must have overheard that comment and they, having that level of knowledge which the wiser among us say is a dangerous thing and having acquired enough Latin as to mislead them and allow their enthusiasm to speak in place of wit, crowded round me and begged me to sing. I declined the request saying that I was not up to such activity and feared that if I allowed any wind to pass from my stomach to cheeks it would be less musical than otherwise and would certainly hang a cloud over the evening.

"Come, come now!" said the elderly gentleman who first inquired after my well being, "Why not grace us with a song?"

I explained that I had, as I knew now by the rumbling emanating from beneath

my corset, eaten more than I should have on this particular occasion and must decline their request. An eavesdropper nearby, an elderly lady of good distinction and appearance or so I gleaned by the amount of paint and jewels she used to conceal her face and bosom, snipped that gluttony was no less an evil today as it was in the time of the church fathers and that Prudence was the only defence against such vice. Taken aback by such an attack on my character I rose to my own defence but was overcome by a severe cramp in my stomach and had the wind knocked out of me. As I regained myself and began again my defence, I was quieted by the intrusion of a passing young and jaunty cavalier who took it upon himself to come to my aid against such accusations:

"Gluttony," decried that cavalier, "is the sin of the common folk and a vice bred out of the upper classes with the coming of the Normans. Liberty with food, dance and drink was the celebration of life amongst the gentry. Did not Jesus turn the water into wine so that good people could enjoy themselves and dance at the wedding of Cana? Good taste (continued the cavalier), that inherent and expensive trait which the English

nobleman possess, allows one to enjoy the entertainment which a good feast provides." Being quite proud of himself, the cavalier waltzed off in his lime-green overcoat and canary yellow top hat having, he believed, rescued me from my adversary.

Nods of agreement were wagged from all those that had heard the young cavalier's speech. The young and round girls once again chattered for a song and the good gentleman *poori* echoed this request with his cane upon the floor like a judge in a court room. At this point, my good and understanding R---m, my patience and corset could take no more. With great resolution and relief I let fly the most wonderful song: strong and rounded like the *poori* that inspired it. Like a mighty *toot* from a full wind-orchestra, all the ladies who heard that first, solo note fanned themselves quiet taken while the gentlemen wept, turning their faces with embarrassment at their own reaction.

Needless to say, dearest R---m, if I was not sleeping soundly at this point in my dream I slept much more soundly thereafter.<sup>3</sup>

1 The latter claim a feat unmatched in (Indian) history. R. Raghunathan

2 *Poori* is an Indian delight of dough, flattened, rounded and about the size of a hefty sized man's hand that puffs up like a whoopie cushion when fried...delicious.

3 I would like to thank, and thus pass the blame for this story from myself onto Aldous Huxley for putting me on to the sweet sound of the word 'carminative', Jane Austen for providing the written material for such a long video and Mrs. Raghunathan for the food which ultimately supplied this story with its characters.



Timothy L. Brownlee

## Scenes from Kant: One

"This infinite, pure inner feeling does indeed come into possession of its object; but this does not make its appearance in conceptual form, not as something comprehended, and appears therefore as something alien. What we have here, then, is the inward movement of the pure heart which *feels* itself."

G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Spirit, trans. Miller, p. 131.

That cold feeling again. You must know how it is. The lonely one that rattles your insides. The soaked streets. Your drenched and shrunken soul maybe roaming the pages of news sheets, the channels, resting at the bottom of sentimental songs. The ache for a return. The momentary satisfaction of sleep.

Yet, we all find this place. The rain lets up for an hour or two as the evening settles in, maybe a little breeze scuttles the damp off for a while. The glimpse of the sun's final fiveoclock reflection off storefronts, the glint of the first streetlight. An illegible marquee. We all find this place.

That familiar scent of damp wool before the lights go down. Tickets growing softer in moist palms, the vague gaze before the show starts as

the room fills up. And maybe now the shivering stops for the first time. A warmth growing slow as the lights taper off again.

Now the images. The small shudders of the screen, suspended at the front. Of a stage? Indeed. This is our theatre. Indeed. But the screen never rises. The soft rattle of the projector. We are never blessed with silence. But the images. Oh my.

They are balanced. All at first a little unclear, but the edges sharpen slowly. An outdoor scene I think. Must be afternoon, the sun low but still infectious and strong. The camera work a little unsteady. Perhaps intentionally so. The focus never consistent. The tall grass coming in and out of the foreground, and always the sunlight, a perpetual reminder. And the figures. In the autumn maybe, sweater-weather. The occasional shimmer of hair strands, moving a little in the tall grass. We all see ourselves. To some the appearances more distant. We're all a little younger in our memory. A far off recollection. But recollection none the less. All assembling the images, putting together the scene. And as you turn from the screen for a moment, you see them.

All captivated. Maybe a smile

building on their lips. Maybe a little tear growing for the fall. It all depends on your approach. The incredible fondness with which we see ourselves. The perspective of reflection. And that feeling building, bit by bit. A warmth we can only recollect, now growing inside—In you too. And maybe a melody welling up slow. Orchestral but calm, one sound rising and falling within itself. Tension/release. Jesus can't you feel it? No tugging at conscience. Tension/release. Nothing to fear. Christ can't you feel it?

But there's no contact. We're never ready. The feeling never spills over. (Some impossible demand.) No

grasping for hands. No contact—We sit separate. And then the images stop. A moment of calm before the lights come up. And maybe the feeling stays a little. Doors opening and a shower starting to trickle, the feeling lingers. The rain intensifying now. The fall home like into a daydream, a circling swift and certain. But the feeling stays. That perfect second of darkness and calm as your head hits the pillow. The silence of abandoned streets sounds a quiet knell that resonates in our minds, in our placid sleep all night until morning swallows us, and we awaken, cold again.

*Jamie Bradley*

Untitled

I can never fall asleep on shoulders  
Or while feeling lips like spiders  
Navigating the ribs of ears  
Or with draping thighs  
Like the symmetrical edges of cupboard doors  
That appear to be touching but encourage questions  
I am ever incorrigible  
And maintain my teenage zeal  
Like a difficult trophy atrophying on a shelf  
When I am grown old  
And the last of my love is snuffed out like a cigarette  
(as I interpret from a few movies,  
and the testaments of domesticated grandfathers)  
When pattern replaces eagerness  
And my love is a Golden Section based on  
A scientific method of engagement  
I hope they'll have founded a clinic  
-it should bear the name of T.S. Eliot-  
Where antiquated poets are reupholstered  
And returned to the world like gadflies  
To rend the limbs of future Venuses  
And buzz about the arrogant pricks  
Pacing the subterranean ruins of the lovely

Pilate Questions Plato's Puppies

The whole is shattered:  
Venn diagrams of truth disperse  
(The whisper of the quests for big "t" truth  
And noble, but panicked attempts to reverse  
The spread all end in abandon.)  
We chase the tail of a single truth  
With the pearls (or prestige) in mind;  
We leave the ninety-nine for the one  
But then, upon returning, find  
The flock has scattered

Have we found the cause in all our travels,  
Tripping down logic's treadmill way,  
Pulling and tearing as truth unravels  
Like Plato's puppies in play?

Where did this rampant run begin?  
Did Adam pull the thread through sin?

"Words of balding priests!" chants the mass  
And then they put on trial  
Why the priests are not yet hairless  
(They've been balding for a while)



True philosophers are priests are  
Each a dying race  
Not the way the crowd is crying  
But in that their aim  
Is a certain kind of dying

The great minds, thinking what they Ought  
To the snarling sophist beasts are  
Stooping to proclaim:  
"Truth is not a game  
But the Good."

Meanwhile the priest smiles in this thought  
Truth is not a game  
But a Name

*Paul Harvey*

Untitled

death  
is the woman I should not love

betrothed since birth  
I have loved her with every breath  
every smile  
that she makes beautiful and brief

a sunset  
that lasted forever  
would be ordinary

in child's games:  
"mommy had a baby and her  
head popped off"

we popped heads  
we left piles of heads across  
two provinces and three states

the heads  
smiled yellow  
at the happy children  
playing  
with the heads  
of dandelions

I chopped up worms  
burned caterpillars  
shot my brother  
died elaborately  
and repeatedly

in games

what people do  
when she is standing near

the flailing panic  
the tears  
the relief from pain  
the peace  
the inheritance

but I'll do none of these  
we joke together  
death laughs with me  
she is my fiancée  
she is irresistible

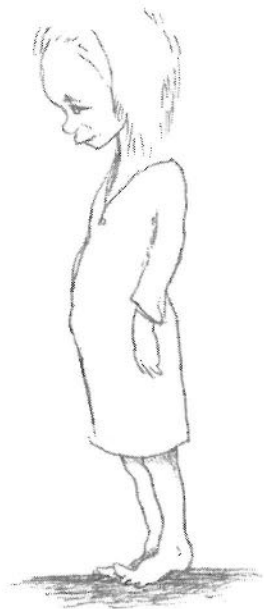
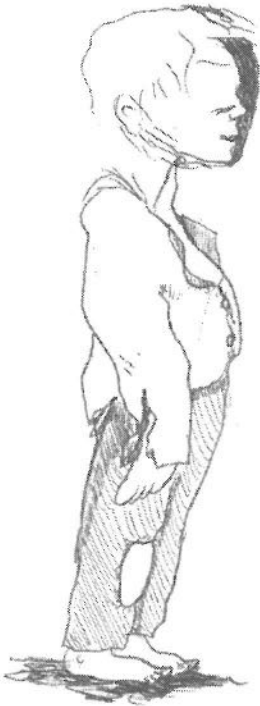
death  
is simply the end of my poems  
no need to find more words  
express inexpressible joys  
to woo and tease my love  
who makes all brevity and beauty

this poem will end  
without the usual dissatisfaction  
I won't see imperfections  
I won't need to write another poem  
to find joy again

no longer

## Untitled

lips chapped  
but still whistling  
watching writing waiting  
wanting a poem of headlights  
streaking across wet windshield  
from the back seat  
in a darkness inside a car in a rain  
in bursts,  
freely doodling words  
of passing streetlights  
and companions for hours and hours  
on a familiar road



## What is Beauty?

I think women are beautiful. I think sunsets are beautiful. I think music is beautiful. What am I referring to when I use the same word to describe these startlingly different things? I derive pleasure from each of these things. That is not enough, however, for sometimes I derive pleasure from things that I would not call beautiful. No one ever says that a sensation of touch, smell, or taste is beautiful – beauty applies only to the senses of seeing and hearing, but we still derive pleasure from eating sweet food.

Why do I derive pleasure from sensing beautiful things? There are two possible answers to that question. The first is that I derive pleasure from sensing beautiful things because the thing itself *is* beautiful, and sensing things that *are* beautiful gives me pleasure. The second is that I call beautiful such things that I derive pleasure from, and there is nothing intrinsic in the object worthy of praise. I find neither of these answers satisfying.

The first does not account for why different people call different things beautiful. One could answer this problem by saying that only the wise are capable of judging beauty well, such that everyone who is not wise is mistaken when he calls something beautiful; however, there is still a

problem with this answer.

Every fool thinks that he is wise; as such, every fool would think that he was a good judge of beauty. How would the wise know that they are actually wise, considering that the fools think that they are wise as well? Would even higher wise men judge that lesser men are wise? How does the higher wise man know that he is wise? If he *just knows* that he is wise, he is no different from the fools who *just know* that they are wise. If his wisdom is only to *know* that he is not wise, like Socrates, then he could not judge beauty well.

The second answer is unsatisfying because this is not the definition we commonly apply to beauty. To say something is “beautiful” is *not* the same thing as to say “I derive pleasure from this.” When I call a woman beautiful, I am not just making that judgement for myself – I am implying that *everyone* should also find her beautiful. I do not think we have meaningless words. If the word “beauty” was the same as the words “I like” then we would not bother having a word for it. A word is something that one person can say and another person understand – it applies to some common experience; therefore, because when we use the word we are making a general claim based on a

specific experience, beauty must be more than just individual pleasure in sensing.

Personally, I think that the truth about beauty lies between the two extremes. Insofar as we are all human beings and have the same nature, we will find the same things beautiful; for instance, by our biology, we find

symmetrical faces more beautiful than asymmetrical ones. I like the Back-Street Boys and you like Mozart. Perhaps there are some things that we think are beautiful through our reason, such that any rational creature in the universe would agree with us – this beauty would be true no matter what.

*James A. Overton*

### Beauty is What?

Any rational creature in the universe would agree that the stronger the dichotomy the greater the need to escape it. Outside the extremes of beauty *in itself* and beauty *in my eyes* is the third possibility: that there is true beauty, for a while, in a place, for those who see.

When I call a woman beautiful I am not forming those words for the first time. She is not the origin, not the end, not the only, not the one.

When I speak of the beautiful I am speaking neither as the fool nor the wise

man; I was not born yesterday, I do not know the eternal, but I live a history.

The third answer is that some things are beautiful in the way they touch others, in their stories and in their contexts. Beauty does not have to live in the subject or the object; what they share is the relation between the seer and the seen.

This is how I can know that you too love this sunset. This is why we both find women beautiful.



*Bontia Slunder*

cecilia

outside

my sister is like a seal on land  
flabby cumbersome slow  
cheap fur coat molted in places  
bark-like laughter from a tiny round mouth  
a moist hole in blubber  
covered by oily skin

inside

she is like a seal in the water  
intelligent curious alert  
nose in a book  
breathing knowledge  
eating wisdom  
fat fingers embroider exquisite landscapes  
knit warm woolen socks  
gifts  
for friends she doesn't have

joshua

joshua

my friend  
tell your stories in stone  
carve  
solid images  
into the prison walls  
with ineffaceable etching  
make the cuts deep  
but keep the lines soft  
like your heart.

## Glenn Clifton

### Troubled

My friend smiled at me after a few drinks. "You and I," he said, "we're both dealing with the same problem as artists. We have to overcome the fact that we had happy childhoods." And I laughed. But I was upset, even though it was the kind of thing I might have said myself. But walking later, in private, it seemed dangerous, utterly dangerous the way we got together in public and commiserated, laughing about ourselves without discussion. The way we put the issue to rest with our laughter and called it "socializing." The way that when we were together in public we chose to make ourselves irrelevant, drinking our way to the point where our passions were funny.

When I got home, I decided to call my friend but he wasn't back from the bar yet. So I left him a message. I was excited and could hardly believe my own courage, because whatever I said, I knew he would hear it. There was no way to adjust my speech as I went along, to watch for his reactions and rephrase things that were too honest and raised his eyebrows. My hands were shaking when I dialed.

"Never fear, James," I said. "We may not have the dark closets, the narrow rotten fake wood panel hallways of an abused childhood to stumble down, each footstep a courageous poem, each sharp word cutting us as it spills across our tongues. No, our tongues may not be in constant pain, trying to lick ourselves clean until all that is left by the erosion of words is an adult genius who has "come through it all." We may not have this modern conceit of the artist. But I just watched the news today and something else blew up, and they didn't even take the time to tell me what the fighting was over. Now my parents, they were good. They raised me to live and to meander towards happiness without needing to be kept afloat by an industry of violence, an industry that sends me to bed at night knowing that at least the people who blew up today were not me, and didn't speak my language. My mom, she always listened well. And me, I'm learning to listen too. And there's an awful lot of listening to be done right now. My friend, you can't watch the news tonight and tell me we're not artists."



## This Morning's Fall

I'm marching out  
with my shoelaces un done  
hoping to fall back in  
to humility-

yes,

I've been flying too long,  
an enormous bird  
so ill-proportioned that gravity  
can't find a centre to grab hold of

screaching back  
with in a tiny

and forth  
sky.

Yes,

I'm going to unravel my wings,  
make them into some kind of  
wire trap, hoping  
to stumble back into  
humility.

They say that sometimes,  
some people will try  
to stay empty, in the  
hopes that God  
will fill them.

And when I knock on your door,  
I'm sure not thinking about anything.

Look down at my feet, my love.  
Then back up at my awkward smile.

Your brow furrows, pulling  
your eyes together in sympathy.  
That's gravity.

## Therapy

When we went to family therapy, they told us: you have to be open. You have to say everything. If you feel a feeling, even just a little one, speak it out, they told us. Talk about your anger, and before you know it, your tongue will roll down out of the mountains of repression and you will be speaking your love!

They furnished us with examples, too. The first time we came there were other families hugging each other and crying, walking through the room they had filled with their love, circling around and finding each other again just to embrace all over. Their love was a sea that had been damned up by something, and the therapist had pulled that something out of them, tossing it into the wastebasket. And while they hugged the therapist presided over all of it, smiling with a kindly, brown-bearded sort of satisfaction.

So we tried it. There was much screaming and then some crying and at one point my brother slammed the door. My sister refused to come, until she suddenly came, and spoke out loud for a 60 dollar hour about why she didn't want to come. I stayed mostly quiet. My parents listened as best they could, with pursed lips and tense eyes that let us know that it was our fault they were being made to pay for therapy and listen to our side of the story. But eventually the therapist got

to them too. My mom looked like she was going over a bump in the road as her throat gave little jumps and choked on suggestions that she had been a bad parent. (The therapist, of course, never used the words "bad parent." Probably because he found it more effective to let it hang over their heads.) My father just furrowed his brow, like a confused businessman seeing a bill. The therapist rarely said anything.

There was also some hugging, of course, and my mom cried a little, though not so much as those brochure people. "Do only what is right for you," he said, "not everyone needs, or is ready for, the same things. After all," he didn't say, "even heaven has levels."

Eventually, therapy ended and we went home. And there was a lot more quiet around our house, because we had had so much of talking and we didn't want to use our voices any more. And I thought, what a clever therapist, to work us to exhaustion so we could never fight again.

But soon my parents noticed that no one was talking. The silence in the house became an unspoken problem. Then, one day, my brother and sister had a small argument. Immediately, my father was down their throats trying to shovel out more words. He told them to talk, not to argue. His commandment to talk produced a pleasant, controlled scene in which my brother and sister were

compelled to hug as a curtain call. My father was pleased- he rubbed his chin and smiled.

The next day I broke a jar accidentally, and again the shovel of confession came out, and both my parents were like spectators angry at a delay, dancing around me expecting words. So I had to produce some words, about why I had broken the jar on purpose, and as soon as I pronounced the word "anger" I knew they had me. It's okay to be angry, they said, and carried on from there. Which was a way of showing they were patient with me. More patient, of course, than I had been with the jar.

Soon my brother got in on the action. He told my dad that they needed to talk. My father looked puzzled for a second, before he recovered his therapeutic look at scratched his chin as he got up. I noticed he had started growing a beard. My brother talked to him about some small thing my dad had done, and soon they had finished with a hug. But it didn't end there. My sister started taking my mom up on things she didn't even remember doing. My brother started asking my sister for the real reasons why they fought. My mother started finding hidden motivations in my father. And then she

forgave him. That was the crown of love that she added to her own head; she showed that she had the grace to forgive him, and he became her slave until he could find something in her that needed forgiveness too. My brother started forgiving my mother. My father forgave us all at dinner. My sister started forgiving me. I had never been very good at guessing people's motives, so I stood at the bottom of the food chain. I had to forgive the dog. After a few days, someone was accused and forgiven nearly every meal. We couldn't even meet each other in the hall without an open, non-judgmental discussion about someone's lack of self-knowledge ensuing. And someone was always forgiven. There was no use fighting the accusations- for that meant you were repressing something- so it was always best to declare your guilt. If you couldn't remember what you had done wrong, you had to make it up. But no matter what, we never spoke about these rules.

I went to bed every night feeling like everyone else was cleaner than me. Before, I thought, we were fighting together. You could feel the anger around you, like warm blood. But now, it's every man for himself.

## *Bindu Suresh*

### The Moment Before You Reached Me

The day of my life I regret most?

You are in bed beside me. At any moment, I expect you to pull out a carefully rolled cigarette, grey and narrow, and light it with a silver lighter. You would smoke calmly and gain the blunted looks of a seasoned dictator, or a prison guard, as you interrogated me further.

Not any day, I say finally. I'm glad to have lived them all.

You love me very genuinely. You would put out your cigarette and drape your arm around my shoulders in grand, lover fashion, like in one of your photographs. You would press your forehead to mine, and watch my eyes retreat.

What I tell you is not true. But I must, cannot be less than contrived with you. There are days when I would much rather have been dead, but this you will not know.

She did this every three or four days, visit Mark. His building was just out of the student ghetto near campus. The

apartments were old enough to be fashionable, with sturdy black metal railings that twisted around themselves and up the stairs under thick, wooden banisters. The walls were a stark white, a remnant from the sixties when this place would have seemed institutional; the floors were made of a resounding wood.

Mark's apartment was on the fourth floor. She imagined his double bed, big white blankets askew, the bars of the metal headboard gold with white knobs at the ends, the pots in the small kitchen with the flies all around, no dishes, just pots. She placed Mark in the middle of the door frame between the bedroom and the kitchen. In this picture, he was smiling at her, unanimated. His lips were thin, his cheekbones high; his eyes were scrunched at the corners from the strain. He looked like a clown- Mark never smiled like that.

She pounded up the stairs, precisely, putting the same amount of weight on each heavy step. Mark would be in the studio, not in the bedroom, and definitely not in the kitchen. He only slept in the bedroom when she, or another woman, was there.

Mark was in the doorway of the apartment when she reached the head of the stairs, had seen her black hair and white stockings from the street. He smiled at her as if scoffing, as if noting something, but not without friendliness. She smiled back with her eyes and walked through the door nearly touching him, Mark not moving.

"Come see what I've drawn," was the first thing he said. His hand touched the white sleeve of her blouse at her shoulder before delicately moving down to the bend of her elbow and then to her hand, which he held much like a brother would.

They walked down the hall, turned right at the kitchen, not left, into a studio with sun and easels and paints, impeccably messy.

Mark drew things that weren't real. Bowls, curtains, entire rooms with no one in them. There is wind, blowing the curtains, and sun, on the well-shadowed beds and walls, and the thought that someone might live there, walking in from the painting next to it, but that's a meadow, a landscape, without bugs.

She looked slightly up to him, she was nearly as tall, smiled, with her eyes again, squeezed his hand, and let go. She looked back to the painting- long lines falling and resembling a stream, hair, a goddess. She liked his colours. He had

excellent eyes for colour, for what goes together, what looks beautiful. She liked seeing these colours, splayed. She looked out of the window, looked all the way down, revelled in how high up she was. She was not an impassive lover.

She is in his lap, not on, but in, her legs wrapped around his waist, his under hers. Her black heeled shoes are clunked on the floor near the bed, her old-fashioned white stockings that go thigh-high are still on, Mark likes them. Her skirt is pushed up to her waist. Mark is looking at her, red-faced, impatient. She is taking her time, going too slowly.

She is unbuttoning her shirt. "Faster," he snaps. She looks down at the buttons, undoes them unskilfully and inartistically. There is colour in her cheeks. She looks up, but not at him- at the corners of his eyes, and at his nose. She is naked in his arms, in his legs.

She still resents him for this.

She is reminded of her second year genetics professor shouting behind her ear, "Unzip! Faster! There's only four!" to transcribe the genetic sequence, decode it, faster, as fast as a ribosome, as if it were a computer file and she a series of 0s and 1s.

They made love passionately. Mark clutched Alison as if he needed her more.

The first living things they got to study in science class in the seventh grade were small amoebas in petri dishes full of sugar solution. Alison was excited. Her teacher had promised them at the beginning of the year that they would do this, look at the protozoans that if cut in half, turned into two.

She wants to see it move. Really, really move. She is curious to see if she can move it. She takes a pencil, carefully puts it close to the amoeba's tail, and watches it scurry away. She moves more suddenly, but still not quickly enough. This time, she takes two pencils, tricks the amoeba back and forth, and traps it in a corner of the dish. She lightly draws the pencil against amoeba-flesh, can feel it screaming- like a pitchfork down her back, but there's no comparison, she feels so bad.

They are sitting on a bench, in a garden, and she is laughing. John has brought his camera, a large, black, professional camera, for those who spend their lives trapping things, but he has not brought this to remember her. This is how he will remember her.

He moves off the bench to the grass at her feet, as stealthy as a snake, wanting

to surprise and capture her around all these things- the sun, her smile- that are so alive.

He is kneeling on the grass. The park is small, foreign, European. He can imagine women sitting where Alison is, imposed over her, a double exposed film. They are in large crinoline dresses with white fans, hiding from the sun and from their men, who flirt playfully and ardently with flowers, smiles, and poetry.

John looks through the lens, and can see only her. There is a hedge behind the bench, and flowers all around, pink and yellow and purple, and red cement near the pond with no fish. The world is sunny; the water is still, yet full of sound, and Alison is smiling. Her hair is shining, in waves to her shoulders, and her eyes are glittering, expectantly, indulgently.

She remains obligingly still, but in his mind he can see her move. He can see her toss her hair back so it falls entirely behind her shoulders, the sun against one of her cheeks, a view of one eye. He sees himself next to her, wide-eyed, wide-set eyes, arm bent over the bench near her own arm, drinking her in as if he were a hummingbird, and feeling her draw, draw, and keep him.

He wants to see her smiling this way forever. Indulging forever, open, arms

across the back of the bench, forever.  
He'll take the next best thing- he clicks  
the shutter closed.

She blinks.

I want three things, and these things are  
tearing me into three pieces.

I want to wake this man beside me,  
shake him by the shoulder with all the  
force in my eyes, drop my arm as his  
eyes open, snuggle close to him, and get  
him to talk, convincing with the timbre  
of love, into my ears as I fall asleep.

I want to bend my knees up, close to  
my breasts, place my hands flat against  
his chest, and push, push with my eyes  
screamed shut until he falls off, *roll over*,

*roll over*, onto the hard floor not so far  
down, splayed as if dead and outlined in  
chalk but still sleeping, dark curl over  
dark eye.

I want to look, look at him coldly.

Today more than usual I can feel how  
soft he is, and how warm, so unlike  
cold, hard, far men in the streets, in my  
mind.

Instead, I do what I have done before,  
what I have done countless times. This  
time I take my sweater, my fish, put  
earrings in my ears, and leave the rest as  
a gift, an apology.

I extricate myself. I dress, walk down  
the stairs with dull thuds, and step out  
onto the street, a flurry of white  
stockings and hard shoes.

Tom Pokinko

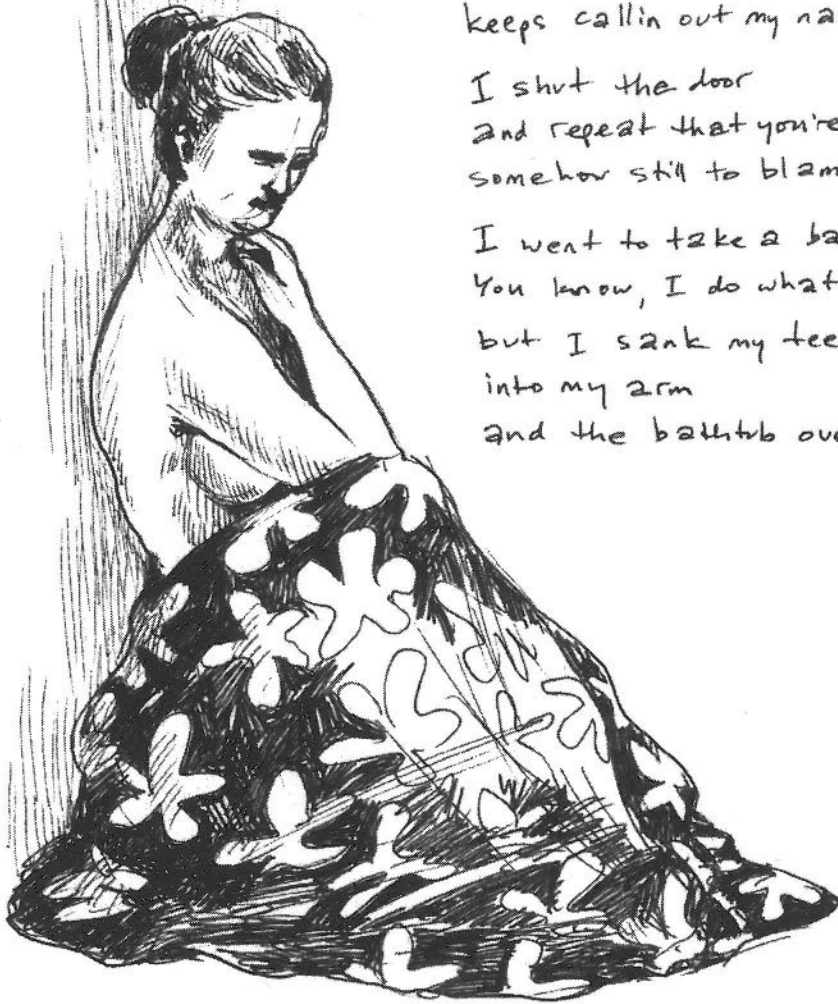
Untitled



I've seen mystics, I've seen  
zealots  
I've seen harlots by the  
dozen  
I went to look for Jezus Christ  
I found his second cousin...

I been kickin dust  
Since half past two  
I been eyein this here freedom,  
Gotta thousand books to read  
But I can't get moved to read 'em...





old maria in the alleyway  
keeps callin out my name,

I shut the door  
and repeat that you're  
somehow still to blame...

I went to take a bath  
You know, I do what I am told,  
but I sank my teeth  
into my arm  
and the bathtub overflowed...





*Katherine Narraway*

Brokenness

1.

Despite the beliefs of the ancients  
a broken car is still  
beautiful  
not for all the ways  
it was once a car  
    but for its weight  
    warm against the earth.

Likewise a puzzle  
is more precious  
in pieces  
for all its fragments  
carry  
an intricate delight.

For all the ways  
a puzzle shows  
things cannot be  
    the same shape  
    to fit together.

For all the ways we can dance  
in the fragments of a life -

Until we choose to see  
only function  
and lose the hope  
from which love unfolds  
    new  
    before us.

2.

Truth, of course, is that love  
makes the spaces  
between hands so warm  
and the separation  
of bodies  
so hard.

Love, of course, is more important  
for all the ways it makes you smile  
and dance  
not in how it sometimes  
makes you cry.

We do not live for tears  
but for the way  
they are also  
warm as hearts.

We fill the spaces in one another  
with love of the beauty  
of our own brokenness.

It is impossible to love  
something whole -  
there is no place  
to put your hands.

## *Julee Moroz*

### If Life is Water, What is Snow?

I am now an old woman who likes to split wood. The activity provides me with a sense of timelessness, pierced by the chopping sound like that of a slow metronome, but I have come to appreciate that the secret to youth is to make the seconds longer. So, I split wood and clear my mind, savouring the exertion. The droplets of moisture bead and fall on my plaid jacket, yet I am total in my activity.

Even so, memories flit back to me, especially now that I have lived and am alone. I split wood, and my mind is punctuated by the drone of dialogue and images. There is no chronology; my life is not a line. It is more of a sphere. I like to think of it as a snowball. With a rock in it.

I'm still melting the snowball over the fire.

\*\*\*\*\*

I was sure that there was life inside me. I laid back in anticipation, a pillow under my hips. It had to be the right moment for conception. He was in the washroom, cleaning. He had no idea the agony I was in, how badly I wanted this to work. I felt that he was counting on it failing for a few months yet.

Later when I got up, I could not help the elation that buoyed me. The surety I felt was bound to make me anxious for

the next weeks to come, until I could be sure. It would be agony not to test myself twice a day. I knew that this was ridiculous.

I remembered those very thoughts sixteen days later as the two lines filled in on the stick. I had been right after all. Now the joy could begin in earnest, and I could live as I had been meant to live.

The next few weeks were full of surprises. First Michael broke his leg. He was laid up in bed, and I was fighting exhaustion, trying to stay awake. The housework remained undone, but it did not dispel our anticipation. With Michael at home resting, he was able to consider fully the meaning of the baby growing inside of me, of his future obligations, of the joy our family would soon know. Those weeks spent on our bed were some of the best weeks we had known as a couple.

These days were lazy, luxurious, sensual, full of skin and duvets in sunlight; breakfasts in bed, glossing over pregnancy books and children's names. The Sears catalogue, the Ikea catalogue, the fliers from every department store for hundreds of kilometers, all were stacked precariously around the bed, ready for steady thumbing of soon-to-be parents. Did our baby have any idea of our happiness

then?

When Michael went back to work, he found that helping hands had been few. The stacks of papers on his desk meant that I would not see him for eighteen hours a day, while he sat long into the shadows of his cubicle. When he came home, he could hardly see straight, and so that last thing he wanted to do was glance over catalogues and baby names.

My work was simple at the local department store. I had asked to be transferred to the infant section, so filled with longing was I every time I walked by, it was all I could to tear myself away. It worked out well for the store that I took so much care in aligning the little socks, keeping all of the diaper shirts neat. It was as if I was tucking my baby's clothes with love into the dresser day after day.

The ladies that came by to shop loved it when I started to show. The highlight of my day was being at work, questioned by the other mothers who came in, eager to have me talk about what I was feeling. The store had a sisterhood growing within its walls. Luckily, it stayed pretty quiet and, as long as the sales stayed steady, no questions were asked. I was a good worker, held up by a growing sisterhood of banding uteruses. Michael was pleased once I started to show and he had visible evidence of the baby. This way he felt validated in showing my stomach affection and love; a love that he still shared with me, or that part of me above my maternal

breasts. His kisses were lavish, his breath sweet. The scent of him lingered on my neck long while he was working, so often was he nuzzling me when at home.

This was the way we spent these days, and they were marvelous. But in my eighth month, my mother fell and broke her hip. And it felt like we all continued to fall for a long time to come.

\*\*\*\*\*

My most peaceful moments are those staring out the living room window, watching the snow drifting downwards against the background of cobalt sky. The trees are bare but mighty in their vulnerability. The quiet of winter is beyond the quiet of my body in its stillest moments; it is a barrier to reality. I cannot hear the moving stillness, I cannot feel the breath of cool snow, I cannot see the earth in its sleep. All I can sense is my own breath against the window pane, as the only effect in a world I do not watch. In those moments I have my only rest. In those moments, I can contemplate the diffusion of my mother's soul.

I ask myself what is it to live and to progress? Is progression an illusion of the decay of time? What are the memories that whisper behind me, that remind me how to feel when I am withdrawn, when I forget her? Can I create the essence of my mother's voice by recalling the sound of her singing, the warmth moist of her breath, the

connection from her mouth to myself? What can I do with a memory?

The memory of my mother is connected to the vision of falling snow. It is that image of peacefulness that has allowed me to accept the loss of my mother's person, yet to be sure of her continued personal existence. I spend a great deal of time considering how that can be, why I believe it to be so. When I begin to think about how things are, and how they got here, I think about the other days of snow. I think about the day Mother broke her hip coming down my front steps.

They were slippery. Mom and I were going shopping for the baby for the first time, and we were filled with excitement. Neither one of us were careful enough in the weather, and I had half skipped down the stairs. Mom wasn't so lucky. When I tried to help her up, the pain of her broken hip caused her to collapse again, sliding down the rest of the stairs and bringing me with her. I called an ambulance for the both of us.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's because of time and change that that which changes must be deemed to be untrue. Only the eternal can be true; the rest of us are all in passing. What happens to us never really real. I was never really meant to be a mother. To be a mother and then not to be a mother means that being a mother was never really true. It was passing, it was flawed. That is, I was flawed. And in

my flaw, I lost my sense of true self. Where do I find the true Meredith amongst the fallacy?

Michael doesn't understand this. It doesn't seem to matter that I don't blame him for that. It's really just moot point. But what it means is that my expressiveness has also failed me in this moment, leaving me completely and utterly alone. I turn around and around in this empty, white room, waiting to see is there anybody there, and I keep turning . . .

"Meredith?"

"Oh, hi Mom, how are you feeling?" She squeezed my hand resting on the hospital bed.

"I'm fine dear, would you fix my pillow? There. . . Just fine, sweetheart. How are you?" The conversation remained empty; as did everything else.

I could only nod at whatever my mother was saying. Blink. Somehow my heart manages to beat still.

\*\*\*\*\*

In our apartment there are broken shards of glass. I don't know how they have gotten there, but they seem to have come from my Christmas china. At least two plates. The paint is chipped in the wall; actually, there is a nasty gash.

I finger the glazed remnants of the Christmas tree. I remember seeing this pattern in the window at the factory outlet. The store was all lit up for December. The evening was a caress, and the snowflakes were falling lightly against my shoulders. There was a



salesperson arranging another display, and everything within the store spoke of order. The lighting was even and ordered, the displays were symmetrical and matched, the flooring was a perfect grid. I'm not so sure that I wanted the china so much as the order.

"Meredith. What happened? Are you hurt?" Michael rushed into the room. "I heard something shatter." He bent down as though to pick me up. I didn't want to be babied and brushed him away. I walked to straighten the plate at the other end of the table.

"Of course not, I'm fine. Really. I guess I must have slipped while I was setting the table . . ."

Michael was picking up the broken pieces of glass. "With the Christmas dishes? Why would you be setting the Christmas dishes in July?"

There was no answer. The air reeked of his stale exasperation.

\*\*\*\*\*

Later I am choking on my injured, inflated sense of self-importance. My rampant emotions are now dispassionately still. Joy is replaced by a wretched, twisted, anguished suffocation. It's in my bones, it's in my joints, the disease is wholly consuming. My mind turns in vicious circles of replay, deny, replay, deny, what happened, what happened, what happened. . . ? Tears are drowning my sighs while angered veins maintain the flow of blood. A crystalline rigidity settles upon me until such time may

freedom in death be done.

\*\*\*\*\*

It never occurred to me until today that my wretched state of the heart could be relinquished to God. I festered over the state of my soul, seeping with indecision. Like a lost boat, I had been tipping this way and then that, filling each side with extreme emotion, yet hoping to empty them both. Excessive love was battled by excessive hate, and I considered that the more strongly I strove to nurture those feelings of hate, that the more intensely grew those feelings of love.

I considered that if I could stop this incessant resistance, I could let the waters of emotion wash away and be done with them all. The hatred was dulling, but the love was absolutely searing. I decreed to acquire a state of equanimity. My intentions were good, but nevertheless it seemed I did not have the power within myself to do this well. Breaking the dam between love and hate meant that my emotions were much more common and thus not easily dismissed as unreal.

Peace settled over me as soon as I remarked on the place of God as mediator between my self that was good, and my self that was dying. If I abandoned my quest for control and left it in the able hands of God, then my fate would be meted out with a greater acceptance and lesser anguish. I strove to stop considering my emotions altogether, to let them fall where they

may, and make contemplation of God's goodness the primary focus of my thoughts. I found that contemplating God was the path to equanimity, for in my contemplation of Him the scales of love and hate fell away completely. In this freedom, I found the happiness I earlier thought I could control. It came upon me of an accord other than my own. I found that it was not for me to decide upon the proper path, rather for me to walk calmly the path that God had chosen for me. I had no control over my life, only control over the way in which I approached it.

My soul began to know a peace for which it had been yearning these years; since I first set my heart with longing on bearing a child. I considered now that children were not for humans to create, but for humans to bear the providence of God's plan, and bear that which He set upon them so knowingly.

\*\*\*\*\*

The wood is piled neatly. I pause. Somehow I recalled it from nowhere, these two lines I had jotted down so long ago. Were they written for this moment? What guided my hand such that the words strung together could

carry my soul? I had never known my own child, delivered from my own body, but I had known my own words, come from somewhere else.

Deliverer of divine into the hearts of humans, bear unto us the strength and wisdom necessary to acquire the knowledge to do right in the sacred. Bless us with the gifts bestowed upon us that we may receive them and give many thanks for the wonders made possible by them.

I am remembering this thing that I wrote, saying it to myself. Today has been one of those beautiful winter days. I sit. Everything is blanketed and buffeted in the insular purity of sunlit snow. The flurries have calmed, the flakes now sailing onto my fallen axe, maintaining their crystalline form on metal blade. I close my eyes. Sound has been suspended in the icy matrix. I can no longer hear even my own breathing, and I fall back. The axe lies just a few inches from my face, and I thank it as though a friend, for bringing me the peacefulness of these last days. Stillness here in the woods is perfect and complete. The seconds have become longer, the snow is drifting slower, and the metronome is quiet. No window pane could collect my breath.

Untitled

This is the scar the girls get  
a little bit different

Not like the kind the boys  
made under the slide  
grade five  
with jackknives in their arms.  
You not allowed to  
be a blood brother.

First there were the skirts  
and then the lace trim they found on your panties

and besides those were boy scars  
they were making  
bright, and red, and shining.

Girls, they said  
were all too much afraid of blood  
to use jackknives.

Later you grew out in strange places  
the day they caught you  
in lipstick  
"what's next" they said "breasts?"  
it had to stop.  
They banned you from the rumble  
banished you to spectator  
and walked you home  
their bloody noses sopped  
by your mother

(One of them a split lipstick  
-a true battle scar.)



## Mark Sentesy

### Aphorisms

§1 *Geometry* - Two points give you a straight line. You need two principles to have meaning, but a meaning without breadth or depth.

§2 *Postmodernism* - is a discussion of tools.

§3 *Advertising* - I overheard a man on the bus saying "Isn't it convenient that women sell everything? It's too awkward to train men to find men attractive."

§4 *Material* - Anyone who experiences memory outside of himself, in objects, thinks materially. A materialist, however, must populate his soul with things from outside, by mastering them - his soul is only power.

§5 *Unrequited love* - Only desire can satisfy desire.

§6 *Finitude* - Death makes you aware of what you do not share with others.

§7 *Critique of existentialism* - The existential consciousness is the attempt to make the soul into a movement of mourning. But as though it were trying to mourn a World War, what it mourns and cannot understand is terrifying. The mourning must be pure, so it tries to forget everything else. The

mystery at the centre of the soul is reduced to death. It forgets that mourning comes to an end, melancholy ends, and it accuses itself for wanting to fall into life, by calling it inauthenticity.

§8 *The origin of the world* - Lying on the ground in anguish, the orphan shouted "Love, come and get me!" And later, when he and his lust were asleep, it did.

§9 *Authorship* - To "write your life" is not to dictate what it is, but to make it story, to make it memorable. A monument is memory in body.

§10 *On sensation and compassion* - Sensing happens on the very limit of senses, like touch happens on the limit of skin. To experience sensation is to experience one's death. To experience another's soul is like one's own death.

Replace death with transcendence.  
Replace transcendence with community.  
Replace community with memory.  
Replace memory with God.

§11 *Metaphysics* - is the study of how *thought* is being.

§12 *Knowledge* - The word "know" has two meanings in our culture: familiarity and alienation. The ground of both is memory.

§13 *Descartes in Holland* - One day, the man's horse turned to him and said "You're as lonely in your body as you are imperfect before God."

He fell off in shock, and missed what the horse said next, which was "To escape your loneliness you want your memory to vanish and become will. But remembering, habit, and instinct are what connect your mind with your body."

§14 *A sage asks a donkey about essence* - One day, unable to understand the *daimon* of the Greeks, a sage asked a donkey "Excuse me, Ass, but could you please tell me the difference between 'carrying' and 'being'?"

"Sure," said the donkey. "How do I carry?"

After walking for a while in silence, the sage thanked the donkey and sat down, watching the donkey disappear over the hill.

§15 *A Platonic image of knowledge* - The eye is a cavity, and to see its object, the eye must have the same shape as it does. To learn is to open the soul to the *whole* object.

§16 *Knowledge* - is a synonym for health.

§17 *Memory* - Without memory, thought cannot exist: it is the principle, or ground of the activity of thinking. Thinking happens, as it were, on our memory, which makes it possible to

link thoughts together, to concentrate. The substance of the *cogito* is memory.

But memory is neither passive nor active. It is not a storehouse: you can't carry an event across the yard and put it safely on a marked shelf in the shed. Nor is it merely an endless blackboard on which you scribble unconsciously as you walk the street, for often unpredictable memories are clearer to you than others; it is often difficult to recall the proper progression of experiences and thoughts; lastly, internal memories permeate and are used by thought. If memories were music they would be the music of the spheres.

§18 *Thought* - Consciousness may be a function of memory. Why? It is useful to order memories. To communicate is also to order.

§19 *Enchantment* - Disposition is God-given; God and memory are inseparable. Everything enchanted invokes memory.

§20 *Past and present* - When someone tells a good story, he usually slips from the past tense into the present tense.

§21 *Two principles* - One: Thought produces all images. Their forms are generated by their meanings. Two: The image is opaque but gives thought. The form makes thought make meaning.

Why should one come before the other? For minds that are nourished by metaphors: does an animal act, or

react? But the whole forest is a single action - the animal must practice non-action to be part of it.

§22 *Truth* - The lover said to the fool, "The greatest thing I know is that truth is obvious; it is *self-evident*. Truth is always the *principle* of thought."

The fool replied, "Do you have to beg her for it?"

The lover said, "If I accepted anything given out of pity, the only truth would be my wretchedness."

§23 *The flute player* - A flute player asked the sage "What is music that I can play it for a host of kings, but cannot play for my beloved?"

The sage answered "Desire and fear have the same objects. When they are apart, both make you eloquent - therefore logical. But when they are together they are like the snakes on the head of Medusa. They are like a storm buffeting a rudderless boat."

The flute player went away distraught, and when she returned, she said "If my beloved touches me I go quiet and begin to play."

### Untitled

The other day in the car  
my father told me  
he was lonely.

said my closest  
companion.

I said I don't know anything  
about companionship  
either

but  
he wants  
to be  
your friend.

## Having just found a home

Dear Tara ~

[first try]

Your card is beautiful.  
Inexplicable.

The language of thanks here is private.

[second try]

my  
every word  
keeps  
urgency

from the page.

[third try]

Feasting is for revellers, and I've been drunk for

Almost a month now. My professor today pleading  
that no-one restrain the force  
of argument  
or think there's no danger snarling  
in any book -  
we want intoxication he said.



[fourth try]

I feast and get robbed, throw money at drink and food  
my new home slowly filling still needing  
wall hangings and a drum I need more shelves,  
a stereo to fill the silvery

acoustic room when I don't want to play  
sheets and blankets for the bed.

All my furniture are like obliging quiet animals  
Slowly gathering around  
finding a good place to sit for my mattress is on the floor  
and I  
see them speaking together  
in the other room.

[fifth try]

so quiet night.

My patio faces away from the cobblestone  
pedestrian street downtown.  
Sound has directions like light, but  
sloppy as paint  
splashing blue here yellow and green close together  
on the windows.

Sleep moves too  
like walking makes circles in the mind  
with the feet.  
1:20, I'm going to sleep.



Beauty: the proper conformity of the parts to the whole;

## *José Rodríguez*

### Blind Man's Bluff

I saw a bird today. A crow, sitting on top of the building roof that you can see if you look out of the far right window in the Hum lounge. It was hunkered down beside another, all fluffed out with its plumage to lessen the wind. The two were close, touching by the wing, and their heads were connected by beak – I suppose to increase the warm air they were getting into their lungs and thus to lessen the demands of internal energy expenditure.

A woman and a man were fighting in the tunnels today. I watched them for a time, yelling at each other. The man, raising his voice as the woman screeched back. Then there was silence. I can't tell you what they said, as I understand neither Arabic nor silence. But then the woman started to cry, and the man hung his head and slumped his shoulders. The two embraced and just stood there, saying nothing, and begging forgiveness. Somber and silent, the two slowly walked away, down the tunnels, looking at the floor, each

tightly holding the other's hand – perhaps each trying to convince the other that they were still a loyal mate, so that they could continue their mutual association and eventually fulfill the genetic desire for immortality.

I saw a woman today. She was reading quietly, and then smiled as I walked into the room. Have you ever seen a sunrise in an airplane? This is what I was reminded of when she smiled. The room was gray, ripped carpet, with poor, half working pot-lights that guttered and fizzed as the odd bug met its maker approaching the divine glow. Then she went back to her reading, a smirk, innocent and happy, still on her face. I stood there for a second, for a minute, I can't recall which...

Then I sat in a chair, to read some Boethius – staring at the drab white page, and trying to remember where all the beauty in the world had gone.

## A Parable

A long time ago, there was no Garden.

There was only the desolate plain, ruled over by the Iron Dragon.

The Iron Dragon was called the Iron Dragon, not because he was made of Iron, but because he loved Iron more than anything else in the world.

This made life very difficult for the Golden Children, because though the Iron Dragon would be very careful not to step on the Iron Children, he went out of his way to crush, crunch, kill, maim and do all other sorts of nasty and unpleasant things to the Golden Children.

One Day, two Golden Warriors rose up and challenged the Iron Dragon.

The warriors had two golden weapons that they had forged in order to fight the Iron Dragon. They fought and battled for many years, until finally it ended.

For though the Iron Dragon realized that while he would probably win the fight in the end, the battle was taking up too much of his naptime.

So the Iron Dragon made a deal with the two Golden Warriors. They would be allowed to plant a Garden, and build a wall around it, and therein all the Golden Children could stay, safe from the Iron Dragon, and play all day long.

However,  
They had to plant the Garden near the Iron Dragon's tail, so that periodically the Iron Dragon could thrash his tail against the walls, just to remind the Golden Children that he was still the Boss.

Their task completed, the two Golden Warriors slipped away into the night, without so much as a good-bye, confident that the Golden Children would always remember them as their saviours.

Not terribly long ago, there was a Garden.

It was planted in the desolate plain beside a great and snoring Iron Dragon, who was catching up on his naptime. The Garden was whole and pristine, guarded by its high walls from the belches of fire that the Iron Dragon sometimes gave off in his Iron Dragon dreams.

Safe inside, the Golden Children played all day long.

One Day, the Iron Dragon woke up.

Upset, cranky, and a little annoyed at the laughter and playing going on in the Garden beside him, as well as the complaints he was hearing from his Iron Children – the Iron Dragon struck the Garden with his tail, shaking the walls with impressive tremors.

The Golden Children ignored him.

The Iron Dragon got mad.

Heaving his great bulk up, the Iron Dragon strode across the desolate plain and stood in front of the Sun, to force the Golden Children to remember he was Boss. The sight was impressive, but the Golden Children continued to ignore him, although the Garden had become a little less vibrant – for the sunlight had been cut off.

The Iron Dragon got really, really mad.

On the verge of smashing the Garden asunder with his mighty tail, a great warrior, the Steel Knight, stayed the Iron Dragon's wrath. With his forged weapons, he appeased the Iron Dragon, making a deal with him. The Iron Dragon could plant a seed within the Garden, one that would grow as needed to remind the Golden Children who really was Boss.

The Iron Dragon wanted more – he wanted some of his other children to enter the Garden so that they wouldn't complain to him anymore.

The Steel Knight thought about this for some time, and realized that a very great many children would not want to come into the Garden anyways, because they found the Golden Children weird and strange.

So he agreed.

The Golden Children soon realized what was going on, especially when the new seed was planted. It sprouted immediately, giving off a strange perfume to the Garden and filling it with unfamiliar flowers. Some children liked this newness, some did not, but they would have to become accustomed to it – as it was what was going to happen, regardless.

But they were now more completely aware of the Iron Dragon, and came to the equally painful realization that the Iron Dragon was Boss.

Appeased, the Iron Dragon went back to his nap, and the Steel Knight took up a vigil on the Garden, not certain what would happen next, but ready to appease the Iron Dragon when next he awoke.

The Golden Children, well they could no longer be called such, for the first Iron Child would soon enter the Garden –

Changing it, but not changing it, and this could be for good,  
or for ill.

*Glenn Clifton*

### A Counter-Parable

Everything happened in the story above, just as the chronicler told us.

And then an iron child was born into the garden. Some of the children laughed. Some of the children said, we have seen children like you when we stood on top of our walls and looked down. We have seen you wallowing in iron, but we have made no effort to help you; there is only so much room in the garden and only those who belong deserve to be there. It is always so *frustrating* to have to be around iron people, some of them said, and it would be so much trouble to actually have to *prove* to the iron people that it is better to be gold, when we all already know how much better it is- we are so much shinier! So who would bother putting in the effort? Righteousness consists in standing still!

These were not all of the golden children, but they were many of them. Enough to make gold highly unfashionable outside of the garden. For this was the dragon's true victory: that even though gold *really was* better than iron, the iron dragon provoked so much laughter that the golden children spent their time laughing at him, and they forgot all the reasons *why* gold was better than iron. They began to believe more in appearing to be gold than in actually being pure- and some of them painted over their skin, which was shiny but not uniformly gold, with a dull golden paint.

The result of this was that they forgot there was a difference between a child who wore an iron helmet, and a child that was made of iron all the way to his heart.

In short, they forgot that no one begins life pure and golden. It takes a great deal of time- perhaps even all of one's time- to *accomplish* purity. And as with all accomplishments, someone who truly achieved purity would be both proud and thankful, which is precisely the opposite of being self-righteous.

But some of them did remember this.

And of those, some of them looked at the iron child, and then at their watches, and they shook their heads and said "it can't be done."

And some of them tried.



TOM  
POKINKO



## Contributors

### Bindu Suresh

Bindu Suresh artifex astutus verborum est.

### Glenn Clifton

Glenn is trying to remember to be thankful.

### Aaron Gordon

Gordon/ Aaron A. (1979-:o)

50% polyphyletic

50% polynya

50% pong (blend)

cold rinse (hand wash)

air dry (hand dry)

do not iron (hand iron)

flame retardant (hand retardant)

(note: known'em all my life. good guy. swears by him i does. Endnote)

### James A. Overton

James loves analytic philosophy, mathematics, science, and technology, but somehow he is still human enough to question and to cry.

### Julee Moroz

Julee Moroz is in second year at the College. Sometimes she feels 'old,' but not always. She once introduced herself to Margaret Atwood as an aspiring writer and philosopher, at which point she was honoured with the sly tweaking of Ms. Atwood's parched lips. Julee does not have sly, parched lips.

### Tom Pokinko

Finished 4<sup>th</sup> year, out in the world, tryin to draw his way through the mind parade's whirl...

### **José Rodriguez**

A fair time ago, far, far away, two people had a special "hug".

9 months later, a shape that in no way can be connected to me popped up.

Then, about 19ish years later, I let my brain puke on some keys, and there we have it.

Thanks for helping with the cleanup folks.

### **Jeremy Mesiano-Crookston**

A 4<sup>th</sup> year Hum student, Jeremy has a way with words. Unfortunately, that way is wrong and he gets lost sometimes. Differing electronic spellcheckers suggest calling him "Maison-Crackdown", or "Messianic-Crookston". For all intents and purposes, both will do fine.

### **Mike Tallim**

Mike Tallim is a first year humanities student who is, as far as anyone can tell, mostly harmless. Getting into the collage by fluke chance, his greatest hope right now is that no one realizes until well after his graduation. Mike enjoys writing, hiking, talking and drinking, and if any reader would like to join him in any one of these activities, they would more than welcome.

### **Mark Sentesy**

Mark Sentesy swore that he would dedicate his life to the beautiful, the obvious and the mad. Now he is celebrating the consequences. [Bust of Diderot] "This life-sized terracotta bust of the French philosopher still bears the marks of the sculptor's hands as he modelled the wet clay." That is a metaphor.

### **Parul Shah**

Parul's days have been marked by much confusion over her name. Parul (Pa-rule) n. 1. Bengali for the name of a unique flower 2. According to her parents, it means rosebud. 3. Some have taken the liberty of dropping the "r," thereby rendering Parul Paul - a male whose name means "little one" 4. It has now taken to be pronounced like "parle" in French. Again, while the meaning of "parle"- to talk- suits Parul's character, it is also wrong. Parul has, however, contributed to this mispronunciation, partially because she too has forgotten how to pronounce her name, and therefore, does not mind if people wish to call her by it. For a correct pronunciation, however, Parul insists that you call her mother or contact Prof. Srinivasan.

## Paul Harvey

[Red hair. Soft spoken. Fine chap. -Eds.]

## Paul Douglas Harvey

So much has already been said about Paul Douglas Harvey;

## Timothy L. Brownlee

Timothy L. Brownlee sometimes misses suburban autumn nights, the feel of gravel under tires, the first day of school, the vague expanse of a world completely unknown. He is grateful for the demons that sit on our shoulders (whose weight is both the greatest and least). He continues to prefer vinyl and headphones.

## Bonita Slunder

Bonita Slunder is the author of three novels, numerous magazine and newspaper articles, and collection of poetry entitled *Strong But Sleeping Spirits*. She is an award winning screenwriter and film producer and a former literary agent. She is enjoying her first year at the College of the Humanities, Carleton University, Ottawa.

## Sasha



## Selfless Contributors

Jamie Bradley

Joe Kirby

Michelle Miller

Katherine Narraway

Meredith Humphrey



