Volume 10 2018

ME
Multicultural Echoes

Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures
California State University, Chico

10th ANNIVERSARY

ME

Multicultural Echoes

VOLUME 10

2018

The cover art this year is designed by CSU, Chico alumna Minjee Kim. Entitled Happy 10th Anniversary, the artist says: "This 10th anniversary of the magazine celebrates not only a very special occasion, but more importantly it congratulates the unique individuals who made *Multicultural Echoes* possible in its first decade. Best wishes to the ME family as we celebrate this meaningful milestone marking creativity, dedication, and hard work. Cheers and many more to come. Happy Anniversary!"

ME: Multicultural Echoes literary magazine was founded in 2008 by Char Prieto alongside a group of faculty and students from the Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures at California State University, Chico. The journal's purpose is to promote diversity, tolerance, languages and cultures, intellectual growth and creativity, and to help authors share and publish their works.

ME: MULTICULTURAL ECHOES • SPRING 2018

DEDICATION

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

January 15, 1929 - April 4, 1968

IN MEMORIAM

Martin Luther King Jr. was a social activist who played a key role in the American civil rights movement from the mid-1950s until his assassination in 1968. Dr. King held a deep love for humanity and worked to eradicate racism, poverty, and war. He sought equality and human rights not only for African Americans, but for all humankind, the economically disadvantaged and all victims of injustice through peaceful protest. He was the driving force behind watershed events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the 1963 March on Washington, which helped bring about landmark legislation such as the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 and is remembered each year on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a U.S. federal holiday since 1986. This year is the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr's death. His legacy is still present in the fabric of the United States as well as in the rest of the world. *Multicultural Echoes* literary magazine honors Dr. King's life and legacy and remembers his teachings, to build a more peaceful, just, and humane world. 2018 is a year of resistance and solidarity, a historic and tumultuous year. In today's political climate, the legacy of Martin Luther King has never been more relevant and important as Dr. King worked tirelessly for peace and justice to fight racism, prejudice and sexism.

KAREN SORSBY
April 15,1943 - December 30, 2017
In Memoriam

This issue is dedicated to Dr. Karen Sorsby, a professor emerita at the Department of International Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, CSU, Chico who passed on December 30, 2017. Karen Sorsby became a member of the department in 1993 and retired in 2016. A world traveler and an intellectual, she studied French in France and Spanish in Spain. She had master's degrees from the University of Paris-Sorbonne and the University of Cincinnati and a Ph.D. in French from UC Davis. She authored the book *Representations of the Body in French Renaissance Poetry* and as well as several scholarly articles. Besides her scholarship on the French Renaissance, she worked on the history of the Mosquito Coast based on her late husband's research. Sorsby was the CSU, Chico French Club Faculty Advisor, and an editor for the *ME: Multicultural Echoes* Literary Magazine. Since 2007 when the ME magazine was started, she worked diligently to make the publication possible and coined the name of this magazine *ME: Multicultural Echoes.* We are very grateful to her for her work and persistent efforts. She was a great colleague and we are deeply saddened by her loss. She will be missed. RIP.

TAYLOR BONORA
November 21, 1993 - February 27, 2018
In Memoriam

Taylor Bonora was a Spanish and Communication Sciences and Disorders major at CSU, Chico. She was a member of Phi Sigma Iota, The International Foreign Language Honor Society. As an honor student, Taylor served the Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures in many aspects, as a student of Spanish and a PSI officer. She was a secretary/treasurer of the honor society in 2015 and president in 2016. She was the emcee of the PSI induction ceremony in 2016 and 2017. She presented grant proposals to Associated Students for the funding of *ME: Multicultural Echoes* literary magazine in 2015 and 2016. Both were granted. She was the emcee for a myriad of cultural events sponsored by PSI. In 2016 she received the Phi Sigma Iota Collegiate Member Scholarship and the Bix Whitcomb Study Abroad Award. Taylor was an outstanding person, she was always ready to help, with a charismatic smile. We cannot find the words to express our sadness for such a loss. Our department is very thankful for the years she was with us. Taylor is gone and she will be will be greatly missed, but she will always be with us, part of our memory. RIP dear Taylor.

A message from the founder of *Multicultural Echoes* literary magazine

Welcome!

Back in 2007, the impetus for the debut of *ME: Multicultural Echoes* literary magazine was embraced by the chair of the Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Dr. Patricia Black. The faculty of the department also welcomed the project as a natural extension and addition to Chico State's educational goals, and as such, a star was born in 2009! It has been more fruitful than we ever imagined, and we are excited to commemorate ten years of creative works from the Chico State campus and community. Since literature, poetry, and art in our history have always reflected the times in which they were created, these ten years of shepherding by professors, students and community members have fashioned a space to present human preoccupations. In addition, this artistic platform has served as a springboard to learn about languages and cultures, making a deep imprint in the literary and art world. This decade has been rewarding and stunning. It is my hope, as director of the magazine, that CSU, Chico will continue the tradition of encouraging writers and artists to exhibit their extraordinary and timely words and works freely. We are looking forward to celebrating the years to come of *ME: Multicultural Echoes*. I extend my sincere thanks to all those who have made the literary magazine possible for an entire decade.

Happy reading!

Char Prieto

Char Prieto, founder, editor and adviser of *Multicultural Echoes* literary magazine

Très chers lecteurs:

Dear readers,

We are very happy to announce the tenth issue of CSU Chico's literary magazine, *ME: Multicultural Echoes*. Echoes of ourselves and others, to us and the world, these contributions all seek to communicate in the myriad of voices of human experience. Just like Baudelaire, the 19th century French poet who revolutionized the poetic subject, voice, and form, whose words I echoed in my greeting, we seek to convey truth, fiction, and the gray area in between. Reading these lines and reading between the lines, we announce to everyone: here is *ME: Multicultural Echoes*. We hope that these pages will continue to echo in you, the reader, as well as echo your experience back to us.

Avec mes plus sincères sentiments,

Patricia E. Black

Chair, Department of International Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

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ARABIC

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خواطر فاطمة

Fatima Zahra Taleb

الحياة قصيرة فقررت أن أعيشها لآخر دقيقة. أعيشها بهدوء وطمأنينة. ولكن ما هو الهدوء والطمأنينة التي أبحث عنها؟ فهاتان الكلمتان لا تتوافقان مع كلمة الحياة. الحياة كلمة ثلاثية الابعاد، لمّا تنظر إليها تراها عميقة وغامضة ولا تعرف ما في باطنها. كلّ يوم حينما تستيقظ وتنظر الى هذه الكلمة تراها بشكل آخر مختلف على الشكل الذي رأيته عليها في اليوم السابق. فهل تظن أنت أن كلمة الحياة بإمكانها العيش في سلام وإوآم مع كلمتا الطمأنينة والهدوء؟ أخبرني من فضلك.

Butterfly
Shichuan Teng

CHINESE

Prosperity

365时光环线

Shichuan Teng

铁子又一次烂醉如泥，深夜才从酒吧里出来，一边摇摇晃晃，一边嘴里还打着酒嗝。

离小莉的车祸过去一年了，他却还没能走出心中 的阴影。每次闭上眼，他总会梦见那天小莉在马路对面朝他挥手的样子，朝他跑来的样子，还有那 辆突然飞驰而过的轿车。。。那“砰”的一声巨响，让他一次次从撕心裂肺般的痛苦 中惊醒。

“嘟——”一辆公交车停在了路边，静静等待着乘客。铁子连路线都没看，上车随便找了个位置坐下。 酒意在胸中翻腾，铁子不知不觉就睡着了。

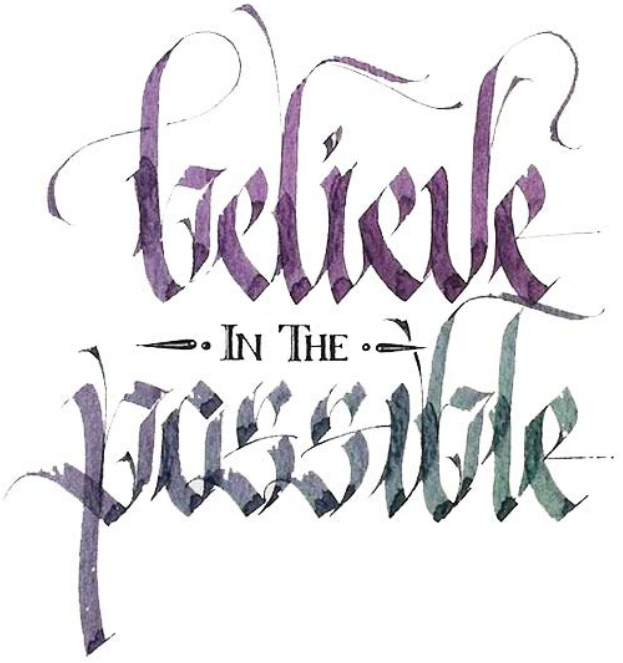
“各位乘客，终点站到了，感谢您乘坐K365时。。。”铁子迷迷糊糊地下了车，睁着朦胧的眼睛想辨认自己在何地。突然听见好像有人在喊他的名字。 “铁子！铁子！”

马路对面，小莉看到了铁子，兴奋地朝他挥 手，穿过马路跑了过来。一辆轿车疾驰而过。 铁子睁大了眼，跑过去撞倒了小莉，两人翻滚着从轿车的车轮边 逃脱。

“喂！走路不长眼睛啊！”轿车的主人骂骂咧咧地下车，一脸 后怕。小莉在铁子的怀里，惊魂未定地冲他吐了吐舌头。 铁子愣愣地抱着小莉，看着眼前那张朝思暮想的脸。一不小心，嘴里又打了个酒嗝。

K365时光环线：正向行驶一圈，乘客可回到365天后；反向 行驶一圈，乘客可回到 365天前。出没不定时，相见有缘人。

ENGLISH



Lament for the Demise of my Grandmother an ink on paper

Clark Colahan

When your hard disk, or gone-in-a-flash drive, or portal to the cyber cloud
Has been upgraded out of existence,
Then no server will read those ephemeral emails that kept you in glancing touch.
My father's mother, Bertha Mayer, died when I was about ten.
At dinner her son proclaimed with cosmic bitterness, as though it were my fault,
"You no longer have a grandmother,"
But I wondered which of the two women he meant.

I had known her little, and she became only someone in holiday family photos,
Always black and white, as though the lack of color formed part of her character,
Stern, as it seemed in imagined retrospect.
Correctly dressed, of careful demeanor, almost announcing her pure German ancestry.
Sensible, formal shoes and hair. Financial responsibility on display.
You could tell she had been the village post-mistress, store keeper and restaurant owner.
Before marrying she had been a school marm, and the notes on her high school chemistry class
Were publishable. Intelligence in the service of immigrant practicality.

So I almost couldn't believe it
When my mother told me that Bertha's favorite joke asked the question,
"Which part of herself should a young woman cover if she meets the plumber while walking
back to her room naked after taking a bath?
Her face!"

Her daughter, Pauline, was so much sprung from her blood and brain
That she shared her every thought with her,
But, confusingly, in endless letters from perennial jobs in distant tropical countries
And the Women's Air Corps in Europe.

Pauline intensely wanted to marry, or so she passionately wrote,
And industriously dated,
In order to raise a family "fully alive," as she put it, like the one she grew up in,
But when all was said and done and she had disciplined her youth into circumspect statements of principle,
And second helpings of ice cream at church socials,
She took her mother's advice to avoid the drudgery of family tasks,
Or at least that was my own mother's memory of what Pauline told her.
Others said the over-achieving world traveler
Simply turned down the offers she got as not up to standards.

Who knows who may have managed to remember things so as to save her own dignity?
Bertha felt hard work was as natural as breathing.
Her Irish-American husband Frank, equally absent from my memory,
Longed to have time to read, I'm told, and to talk freely about it all,
As a relief from having his nose kept to the German grindstone.

When her eldest son married my mother in Venezuela,
The two women had never met, yet Bertha wrote her,
"I'm sending you this little apron, a gift of love, initiating you into married life. I'm a bit old-fashioned, but I always like to wear an apron. When I was a little girl we wore white pinafores to school over little wool dresses, aprons trimmed in hand-crocheted lace or embroidery, and all my life I've liked aprons.... Hope I will be an understanding and not an interfering mother, and pray to God to help me, and also ask him to bless you both 'my children' and to bring you both much happiness now and in the future.
Here abounds maternal warmth
With no distancing reserve or nagging admonitions,
But rather a full-hearted endorsement of the joys of domesticity.
Yet without that embracing letter,
That ink on airmail paper still intact and bearing witness that all this long ago did happen,
I would have never known my grandmother
Or given thought to the contradictions in the legend
Fashioned to fit the needs of her children.

P.S.
In the late afternoon light of Pauline's fading life
She steadfastly placed an old photograph on her piano.
She stands in the radiant light atop Brenner Pass, between Italy and Austria,
Holding hands with a kindly-looking young man,
And their uniforms match.
Why she returned alone from the war she never said, and no one dared to ask.

Scratch, lithograph
Mercedes Matta

My Country, Tis of Thee

Robin Dizard

Back in 1953 Time ran a story about wealthy Iranians who abused a very young servant, killing her by packing red peppers into her. (Into her where? Rectum?) Cold war porn! I cannot ever forget something so gruesome. Did I know about Mohammed Mossadegh's election or the American-led coup that sent him into exile and reinstated the Shah in that year? Doubtful. I was fourteen. Boys and fashion interested me much more than news, even though I read whatever I found lying around the house. Most of the girls I knew talked about shoes, and Home Arts, and which couples had done a French kiss. I never breathed a word about red peppers to anyone.

When I was seventeen, ready to start college, I had earned exactly fifty dollars as counselor-in-training at a summer camp in Vermont. I needed to find a ride home to Maryland that cost very little. Asking around, I found out I could hitch a ride home to Maryland very inexpensively with a counselor from Iran who lived in Washington, D.C. The camp leaders were Quakers who hired counselors from all over the world as a way to foster international understanding. So of course there was a man from Iran. Let's call the Iranian man Farshid Ramazania. I met him for the first time after the campers had gone home; he was a bit older than me, and had never joined other counselors in days-off amusements like Saturday square dances or summer stock theatre in Woodstock. He was generous, and let me have a ride in exchange for paying a share of the gasoline. There are long—or there were—long stretches of roadway between Vermont and Maryland. Sometimes the road seems endless. I suppose I was asleep when all of a sudden the boring ride on the Bladensburg road ended with a siren wail: a Maryland trooper was pulling us over.

After some talk and a write-up for a warning, the officer signaled we could go. I was mystified about why we got stopped. Farshid explained. The explanation lasted right up until we pulled up at my house. The trooper suspected something, Farshid told me, because of me. Wha-at? Quaker righteousness and indignation surged up. It happened because I am white? I could not believe that color, white or brown, would have been the reason to stop anyone's car. I improvised other interpretations. The policeman said he was giving Farshid a "friendly warning" about one taillight being out, so why did Farshid doubt that was the reason? Nothing was wrong with that tail light, Farshid said, though the trooper might have kicked

it. And did I notice how the trooper put his hand onto his holster when I leaned forward to get my wallet from the glove compartment, when he asked me to show my identification?

"No, I mean, why would he do that?"

"He might have thought you had a gun."

"But why would he?"

" I look dark-- darker than you. They always have suspicions in such cases. Maybe he thought you were my accomplice—or my captive."

"Farshid, how do you think up all this? How come you knew right away that the trooper wasn't really making a traffic stop? I never had the faintest idea."

Farshid sighed.

"I come from Iran. Do you know what that means? What has happened there? Just three years ago?"

"No."

"I will tell you then. There was a government led by a great man, Mohammed Mossadegh, and this government was planning to lift many people from poverty, introduce social reforms, end disease and backwardness by making the oil revenue from the wells there into the property of the people—instead of being the property of ARAMCO and before them, the British. You understand?"

"Yes, it would be a revolution."

"Well, not exactly. A parliament had been elected into office, and the parliament chose Mossadegh for the Prime Minister because he promised that the foreign oil companies would be made to leave, so the oil would belong to the people. That frightened the oil companies, and it frightened their puppet, the king. The king, in Persian we call him a Shah, left his throne and fled abroad. We thought he would never return. And my father was a friend of Mossadegh; he was in the cabinet. Then your country sent secret agents, C.I.A. agents, to create a counter-revolution. They plotted against the elected government, raised political turmoil, started riots in the streets, and then invited the Shah back, put him on the throne, and they set up secret police, the SAVAK, to keep him in power. The secret police hunted anyone who had supported the former government. We had to flee for our lives."

"Is that why you are in the States now, Farshid? Why your father works here, now?"

"Yes, we are refugees, but at least we can try to work from here to get justice

for our countrymen."

"Farshid, I think that's terrible. The overthrow, I mean, and making you leave overnight. And that's why you have experience with police pretending to arrest you, but then not doing it, isn't it? Because of how you had to escape from Iran." I could not (I was a nice girl!) bring myself to mention the secret police, let alone child-maids tortured to death with hot peppers. Still, as a child of the cold war era I had heard (overheard, actually) refugee Czechs, Latvians and Greeks whisper about surveillance, lost children walking the roads, and secret murders. (But I was still wrapped in US propaganda; I know that because I remember thinking in my first college class in Political Science –only a month later--that at least one democracy, ours, has no foundational myths. America is the Exception.) Farshid was pulling off a veil I wore without knowing.

"Yes, but it is not just police---remember it is your government that sent secret agents to undermine an independent nation's elected government---and then they lied about the overthrow, and pretended it was purely Iranians who managed the coup."

Never did I see Farshid Ramazania again.

Once again, though, I needed a ride, this time from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to make a surprise visit to Washington at Thanksgiving in 1958. The Crimson ran a column where rides were posted, so I telephoned a certain number. A Harvard student answered, yes, I could have a ride. I would need to pay him fifty dollars. His last name was Roosevelt—a fact I took in, but dismissed. A coincidence. We started in a blizzard, four boys and me jammed into an old car. Snow was thinning by the time we reached a wall surrounding a private neighborhood in Greenwich, Connecticut. Admitted by the man in charge of the gate, we drove into the cobblestone courtyard of a gigantic imitation French chateau. The family was away, but a servant let us in, and showed us into a huge living room carpeted in white wool so thick I nearly stumbled in it. "This is where his girlfriend lives. She is a Reynolds: –you know, aluminum and tobacco," muttered the boy who had sat beside me in the back seat.

"We are going to divide up now," said Kermit. I'm picking up my new car—it's a VW beetle, they let me garage it here, and it's very small, so it'll just be me and one passenger. You will come with me," he said. And so I parted from the others, and went off into the night beside a Roosevelt. Our next stop, Kermit said, would be his grandmother's apartment in New York.

When I saw that the apartment was at least four floors in a skyscraper, I began to think Kermit was one of the Roosevelts. Then I asked if it would be all right for me to telephone home. The telephone was in a huge bathroom furnished with a larger than life-size portrait of Theodore Roosevelt—and a room-sized safe, door open, with lots of silverware thrown inside. I called: "HI! Daddy, it's me! Guess where I am?"

After a quick supper in the kitchen (it was the maid's night off they explained), Kermit and I headed south once more. Why Kermit picked me for his sole passenger mystified me—after all, he had a girlfriend already and she could give him everything he wanted-- but decided I could help most by talking at length and as amusingly as possible. The point was to keep Kermit awake. After a long time we reached the Bladensburg Road, and I had reached nearly the bottom of the conversational ragbag. Then I remembered Farshid.

"Here's something you might not know about, Kermit," I began. I told about the British and American-led coup, the oil companies, and the refugees. I told about the violent tactics of the Shah's secret police. I told about overthrow of a democratically elected government. Kermit stayed awake. He asked no questions, however he did say I should find a different ride back to Cambridge.

Several weeks later I met Kermit on the steps of Memorial Chapel in Harvard Yard. I handed him fifty dollars. I never saw him again.

Years further on, an article in The Nation revealed that the C.I.A. coup that brought Mohammed Reza Pahlevi back to the throne of the Shah was code-named Project Ajax. The leader was Kermit Roosevelt Jr., Theodore Roosevelt's grandson. Kermit's father.

A Word for the Birds

Bethany Fitch

How trivial the life for the birds
Angelic sunsets in liquid colors
Brazen bold and beautiful
Flight coaxes ethereal wandering
Beholding the mountains calling the sun
"Come rest in my embrace"
Peace and slumber there she finds
Snow winks her eye and sheds tears of joy at her coming
Gracefully she drifts on cloaks of gold and amber
To her opposite
Ne'er heard again
Her absence is present
Until
The moon glowing
Entraps eyes to ghostly beauty
Such is seen midst life in nest and feather

Woman of Juchitán

Prairie Francia

Oh Woman of Juchitán
Your hair is long, your braids are tight
Flowers adorn your crown as they adorn
the blouse on your back
You are vibrant, colorful and bright
Attraction to you is that of a hummingbird
desiring a suckle of sweet nectar
You are the essence of provocative
with your come-hither eyes
You are the essence of sensuality
with your welcoming arms and
caressing touch

When you move the Earth moves
When you weep the rivers fill
Your laugh is like thunder
Your smile is infectious
When your heart pulses, we feel its beat
No one is so bold as you
Your shoulders are straight,
your head is held high
When you enter a room,
eyes lift, ears open, brows raise and heads turn
When you speak, we must listen
Native is your tongue,
bilingual because you choose
You hold true to your roots, Zapotec Warrior
Indígena to the core
You are the guardian of truth and right
For this, you will fight
by your man's side, on the front lines
With fist clinched tight and a
broomstick in your hand, your voice is heard,

"¡ Viva la vida! ¡Viva Juchitán!"

In a land, dry and hot
Where the wind carries the dust
Sweat on your brow
Skin browned by heat burning from above
In the market place you peddle your goods
Yelling, "¡ The best you can get, is right here!"
Amongst your friends, you drink cervezas with the best of them

Your ancestors watch over you as
you mourn and honor their memory
Your blessings are many
You are mother, lover and wife
The giver of life
Fruitful in all that you do
Fertility comes from your womb
You multiply children just as you
multiply the abundance of the home
Bountiful blossoms grow from your chest
There is no truer partner than you
You make hay while the sun is shine
You set up shop before the sun has shown

Jutchitán woman
No man should ever be so lucky than to call you his own
You inspire the likes of Frida and
Excite the senses of Rivera
To emulate you is to embrace you
To know you is to love you
We see you and we want to be you
¡ Salud unto you, Juchitán Woman!

My Garden Door

Dan Freed

What is it about a door that takes you from one place to another? Closed doors keeping you out and open doors that invite you in. The bravery it takes to touch the latch, or the willingness to accept the invitation. Doors are very personal....

As you pass through, it promises the excitement of a new experience, a mystical quest of stepping into the unknown, making a new friend, or gaining a new understanding, the fear of leaving something behind never to be seen again.

Every garden deserves a proper door, creating a distinct transition from the crush of a relentless world. It's a point of transition, a magical opening that only I know exists. Here there is a freedom, a peace, a point of view, a unity with something quite extraordinary.

In my garden I'm touched by its secrets. Stepping beyond my limitations and artificial boundaries, and remembering what I have forgotten. To share, to care, to love.... To be filled and to be full. To hold this place close and not let it be forgotten... again.

My garden door leads to a place where the sun shines, the rain falls, and there is an energy that I cannot begin to understand, but only feel. It is a protected place where you can hear the stillness of it all.

I sometimes share the secret of my garden door and point in its direction. If you are drawn to that place, you will be welcome, and there all the secrets will be yours, to hold and care for, with the only request that you always remember what you knew, but had forgotten.

It Is Not Easy

Kenneth Fries

It is not easy
to let something go
even if the time is right
and you know it is

– my wooden boat, hand-built
with a long-time friend
languishes in the garage

– important loves, now memory
and friendships far away
the passing years

But then all life is sorrowful
the Buddha said
or maybe it was Bob

which brings me to this
sunlit afternoon with writing friends
Day of all Saints

how the myriad of Saints
mostly kept themselves
in shadow and silence

until the Church
proclaimed them public
in a kind but clumsy way

carved them in stone
or porcelain or gold,
so their remarkable lives

might endure and inspire us
(the Church sought
our gratitude in the bargain)

but we did not know the Saints
so we did not sear them into song,
as we can and do

with love affirmed
writing friends around the table
open boat upon the sea

Break
Brett Day

It Just Came to Me
Kenneth Fries

it just came to me

among myriad blessings of Chico
we delight in bright red and gold
Chinese pistachio trees that line the Midway,
in pistachio ice cream sold at old Schubert's
ice cream parlor (since 1938), with further delight
so many good friends enjoy these treasures

Whoosh!

the sound of a door closing, or a door opening
the sound of exhale, relief, or sudden laughter bursting
from the infant, in his manger, tickled by his first goose feather,
a genial donkey standing by. May he have a good start: butternut squash
on a wooden platter, love of life and all living things, a thin line of cool pistachio
trickling down his chin

The Light Was Good
Kenneth Fries

The light was good
for writing at my desk
window open to the north
but I rolled the pencil
long hours
between my fingers
finding words
for my quiet delirium

I was naked on the cliff
above the river
roiling over jagged rocks
dreams of drowning
in the angry sea
of plastic bags, boats of silver
turnip greens tangled
tossed aside

When I Touch You

Kenneth Fries

On a good day
if I paint with words
my world opens

It seems to happen
words that live alone
bleed into each other

like paints on a palette
or blue-gold water colors
brushed on paper

Bottom of the pyramid
Pale cobalt evening sky
Somewhere else

Honey mustard on the tongue
when I touch you
love and lust are one

Immoral Tales:
Nepotism, Power-mongering and the new Borgias

Eugenio Frongia

Rodrigo Borgia, Alexander VI, a Spanish Pope of the Renaissance, was easily the most corrupt pope of any time. He had three sons, Cesare, Goffredo and Giovanni Borgia, and one daughter, Lucrezia Borgia. The father broke all rules, sacred and profane, and used his power, often illegally and criminally, to put his children and friends in positions of wealth and power, so that he might, ultimately, exert his own power over friend and foe, at home and abroad.

The concept and the practice of shameless and criminal "nepotism" is historically rooted in the behavior of this family. Interfering with due process of law, circumventing and bypassing established order, was one of the characteristics of the Borgia clan. Even skilled administrators among the Borgias, never passed up an opportunity to promote their families and friends. Rodrigo, even as a churchman, established a reputation as a ladies man. Lechery was both attitude and practice. Rampant nepotism among the Borgias was a strategy for extending and exerting family control over business, politics, real estate holdings, social influence and marriages. The Borgias controlled the Church, the State, and a vast portion of the financial world surrounding them. Rodrigo secured, not always by legitimate means, castles, bishoprics, money. He appointed his children, especially Cesare and Lucrezia, to key positions, regardless of merit.

Rodrigo, as a Cardinal and a candidate for the top spot in the Church, the Papacy, exerted his power to influence the outcome of the election. In 1492, Rodrigo Borgia at last became Pope Alexander VI, enlisting the support of the Spanish Crown, Ferdinand and Isabel, whom he had supported in previous dealings, and bribing the conclave electors. Papal Rome in the Renaissance was venal and it can be said that Rodrigo Borgia bought the Papacy. As Pope, he indulged in hedonism and flaunted wealth; he fabricated his own truths and superimposed his own modus operandi on the traditional mores of Christianity. His children became the main holders and beneficiaries of his ill-gotten power and wealth. Cesare became a Cardinal, then a Duke with his own dukedom. So did another son. Lucrezia Borgia was used as a pawn in multiple power and influence games.

Consumed by secular pursuits of power, wealth, lust and nepotism, Alexander VI is the only High Renaissance Pope not to have left a significant mark in the Arts, the Humanities and Science, unlike Pius II (Piccolòmini), Leo X (Mèdici), Julis II (Ròvere) and others. The Borgias came to a bad end, caught

in the very web of corruption, cruelty, nepotism and arrogance they had spun. An undefinable sense of poetic justice brought them down.

This immoral, yet intriguing, tale, sounds awkwardly contemporary and familiar. It is so because there is some constancy in human nature and human affairs and history tends to repeat itself. From the Vatican to the White House, from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century, it may seem a stretch, but this immoral tale of nepotism is now unfolding on the stage of the American democracy with remarkable and frightening similarity. Donald Trump, the new Rodrigo Borgia, likewise, has no interest in, or understanding of, the arts, humanities and the practical aspects of science and intends to defund the NEA, the NEH and the NIH and is bent on setting back, or destroying, the environment, by gutting the EPA and abolishing regulations that protect and benefit the environment.

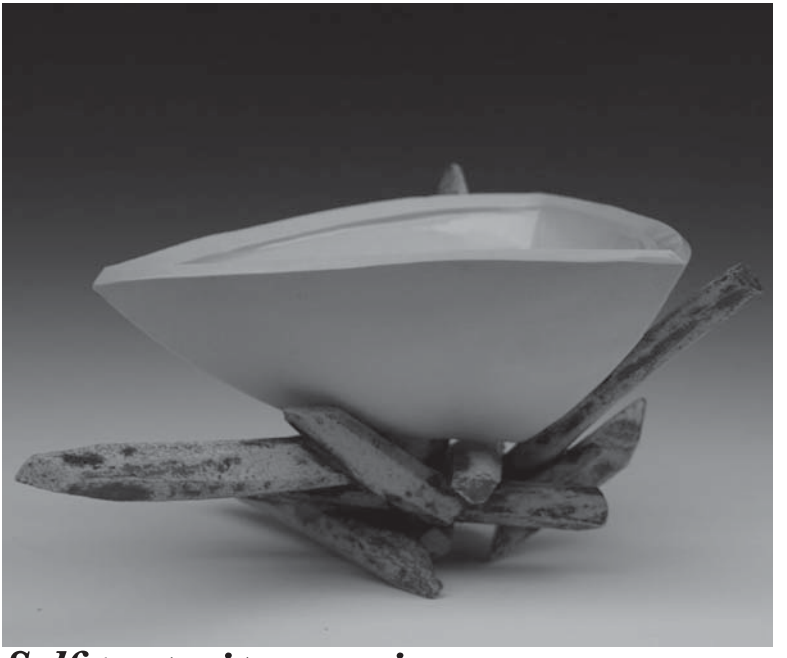
With Pope Borgia, Trump shares another disturbing trait: erratic behavior. The most authoritative historian of the High Renaissance in Italy, Francisco Guicciardini, in his *A History of Italy*, describes Rodrigo Borgia as a man driven by the demon of mutability: "But after this work of reform had been under way for a few days, ...the Pope set aside his good intentions ...and returned more uncontrolledly than ever to those ideas and actions with which he had consumed his years up to that time."

Trump's family members, son-in-law Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Don Trump Jr. and Eric Trump are telling parallels, especially of Cesare, Lucrezia and Giovanni Borgia, all power grabbers, wealth and influence seekers, puppets in the hands of Donald Trump, the new Rodrigo Borgia. The political lesson from this immoral tale is: Americans, be very worried about your civil rights, the future of your children, your wallets, your Medicare and your Social Security, your health care and the air you breathe. Four years of this pseudo-fascism is unconscionable, eight years irreparable. We may wake up to find out that the nightmare has become reality. Most of all, be actively vigilant about your democracy. For those who want to see and understand, the writing is on the wall.

Borgia-like criminal nepotism, anti-democratic and un-American megalomania, Bannon-instigated and unconstitutional ultra-right ideology, are undermining the America that has inspired and led the free world in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The American citizens must rise against the Trumpian malaise sweeping the land and use the state of right and the state of law to stop it. As free citizens, when the appropriate time comes, they must go to the ballot box and obliterate the tyrant.

The Yellow Brick Road
Eugenio Frongia

Is life like a yellow brick road that leads to Oz,
That a throng of undoubting people journey upon,
Their fervent hopes entrusted to Someone
Whose likeness bears no resemblance to any of us?
Following the damsel's steps, many a Tin Man,
Put their faith in the Wizard and his art,
Hoping, beyond hope, for a loving, gentle heart
And every other gift that makes us human.
And many, in Dorothy's lead, a Cowardly Lion
Dream themselves, as if by magic, brave,
Trusting that, once in Oz, the Wizard will save
And lead believers to an eternal Zion.
Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion, alas,
Find brain, courage, heart, in themselves, not Oz!



Self portrait, ceramic
Katie Applebaum

Exile

To Cseslaw Milosz, Nobel Prize for Poetry

Eugenio Frongia

Exile is
Living the life of the un-self,
Condemned to dwell
In the land
Where you will be
A stranger forever,
From which there is no return,
Where the distance
Between the heart and the mind
Cannot be abridged
By the fastest craft
Traveling at the speed of light.
The self imposed by others,
Dogma, prejudice, blind faith,
Is a "faraway land",
Where, like a prodigal son,
Man has squandered
The only bread of life,
And now pines, vainly,
Even for the acorns of the pigs.
Live
In the tranquil dwelling
Of your self,
Where death will come
To award you the final freedom.

And the Sun Stood Still
Summer Solstice 2017

Eugenio Frongia

In the Spring of 1944,
Pear trees and cherry trees
Blossomed in the walkways
Of Auschwitz,
Unconscious,
Silent,
Indifferent
To the slaughter of children,
Women, men.
In 2017,
In the Summertime,
The magnolias bloom,
The willow trees
Explode with leafy green
And line the streets
Of American ghettos
And urban slums,
Or suburban boulevards,
And the willows do not weep
At the sudden explosions
Of guns or cries of terror,
As black or brown
Young men, women and children
Are captured, or shot dead,
By ICE-hearted Herod thugs
Or uniformed executioners
Of relentless hatreds and prejudices.
And we, the people,
Like pear trees or cherry trees
In the sidewalks of Auschwitz and
Mauthausen,
Carry on and stand by,
Silently,
While the new Nazis
Sharpen their tools,
At noontime,
In the Panic hour,
And prepare the fences and the walls,
For this vast
Animal Farm.
In the quiet hours
Of this Summer dawn,

I despair
Of our common fate.

Laughter

Eugenio Frongia

Today,
After 8.3 miles of hiking
On the Muddy Hollow trail,
Looking at the Pacific,
The newly-blossomed irises
And the California poppies,
My mind racing
Much ahead of my feet,
I have concluded
That you committed suicide
Because
You stopped laughing
At 78 years of age,
One month before your birthday.
And now,
When the inevitable memory
Draws me back to the times
That we spent together,
Particularly the later years
Of our incipient old age,
Overlooking the placid waters
Of Lake Lugano,
Framed by the smiling slopes
Of verdant mountains,
Or crossing the Italian Lakes,
Festive with nature
And the genius of human presence,
I tell myself,
Helpless
In front of the finality of your gesture,
"Why, the news of the day
would have been something
Worth laughing together,
The sharp razor of your wit
Applied to the multiplying human foibles,
Your quotes of Tuscan satirists
Eliciting an explosion of laughter,
Turning heads in wonder
In the promenades of Varese,
As to whether
We were mentally fit."
In the abysmal void of your absence,

I keep inquiring for reasons,
And I think to myself
That there still remained
A comfortable reservoir of life
And plenty to laugh.
But only you know the why!
And, as we, then, puzzled
In front of statues of unknown gods,
And placed yellow roses
At the foot of the simulacrum of Destiny,
Now I am comforted
By the thought of your ashes,
Scattered over the Versilian Coast
And lulled by the eternal voice of the Sea,
Where Keats, Byron and Montale
Came to worship the Muses,
And Shelley found peace and fame
In a watery grave.

Amerikkka

María González

Amerikkka,
people see me brown
then they ask,
are you Alaskan?
are you Chikanes?
are you Filipiniko?
are you Mexikan?
are you Nikaragùan?
Let me ask you Amerikkka,
does it really matter?
But yes,
I am Mexikan,
I am Asiakan,
I am Afrikan
and yes!
I am white
Surprise!
Amerikkka
see and feel
the color
of my skin.
Amerikkka
why to ask
the color
of my identity?
Amerikkka
why to ask
if I am
brown, red,
yellow or black?
Do you ask
the moon
are you blue
or white?
Do you ask
the sun
are you red,
brown or white?
My answer
to you Amerikkka;
I am the golden child
of Quetzalcoatl
and Tonantzin.
I am brown as
Mother Earth,
I am the golden child
of many Suns and Moons.
Amerikkka,
I am the broken mirror
of your past,
I am the broken mirror
of your present,
I am the broken mirror
of your future!
Amerikkka,
Let me smell
my humanness
in you!
Amerikkka,
I smell all faces,
I cry your sorrows,
I feel your pains,
because
I am you
Amerikkka!

Suffering
Graciela Hernández

He paints in yellow, red, white, and black,
To forget about his sorrows,
Gray as a thunderstorm,
Red always reflecting his life,
Waiting for the day this ends,
Where there can be freedom,
With no regard for people's opinion,
Until then he will have to deal with this memory

Catch of the Day
Brett Day

So This Is California
after Ted Kooser

Emily Huso

The interstate to Palm Springs inks with a long stroke
over the hills, the loose cursive
scrawling behind, words and names
obscure in the constant back and forth.
So this is California. A Friday
afternoon: September. Stopped up
in the weekly congestion,
a CHP parked at every exit.
Within a cluster of windmills,
heads spinning over dead grass, litter and sand,
the earth guzzled six gallons of lighter fluid
and leapt up to catch a match.
You feel like that; you feel like igniting,
like letting the hungry flames
consume your past's dried remains, like being
no more than black stubble by the road.
Hissing with foam or flaky with charcoal
or carrying a sunburnt hobo on your back
while he makes eye contact with every driver, daring
someone to stare back. You feel like
staring. You feel like jumping out of the car
and begging from the burnt grass. You stare ahead
instead and watch the brake lights blinking
starlike over muted words, over nameless people.

Brazil

Kurtus Locke

Antonio Carlos Jobim's
Brazil plays gently
On the scratchy
Unbalanced record player
Lying beside all the
Broken and useless technology,
This gentle sound will be
The only thing that works
In the world of just one.
As he slips away into
A thick onset of fog
So thick he can cut
A fluffy slab of marshmallow
Out in a circle to
Spread on his toast.
He sinks deep down
Into the darkness of night
As the overwhelming
Thick fog consumes
All that he is.
As he slips away,
His night owl
Wings take flight
Gliding up to the air
And through a the thick
Mist as it thins over
Deep blue peaks turning
Paler by the sun.
At the top well above
Anything natural, living
He can see the sun
Cast off its light
Into the foggy depths
Where brightness turns
Everything to shadows.
Lonely there he hears
This distant and fading
Woman's voice crying out
His name as if she is
Being carried off
Somewhere beneath
The thick marshmallow
White, ominous fog.
He decides to dive back down
Into the fog of the
Restless night's sleep
In search of this
Familiar voice becoming
Clearer and clearer
The closer he flies to
Her.
He sees her there
Floating off in
A cubex suspended cage:
There she is;
She is his lover,
His soul mate,
The empty missing
Piece of his heart
Put back, to be
Finally if
He is brave enough to
Set her free.
Instantly impeded,
Blocked off,
Torn from her as
Dark monolithic
Obstacles spring forth,
Break through and
Fly up out of the ground

Tearing up everything green
The skyscrapers push up
To the endless sky
Wiping a once beautiful,
Yesterday's fertile land:
Now completely barren and cleaned.
He must flap his wings
Fly higher than
Icarus made of
Silver metal which now
Begins to thicken
As he dives down
In between the
Slabs of industrialization
And toward her
Crying voice.
He can see her clearly now
Trapped in the cubic
Solid, cold steel cage
Kept afloat high
Above the ground
With thick steel chains.
Each chain is held
By a baby faced man
With a sort of physical
Deformity externalized
From that which breeds
With an untrue heart,
There are lots of them
Dressed in different
Meaningless rags:
They quickly flee as
He lands on the ground
Just to save her.
The last one is not afraid
The shogun beast that
Breathes purple and blue fire
He holds steadfast
The phallic spear
Rushing to kill
The silver longsword
Drawn and ready
He ducks turns
Slices the shoulder where
The consuming fire
Burns the escaping wound,
He takes up the spear
Meant to trap and kill
With endless aggression,
Violence without skill;
He turns it back on
The shogun's last fearful glare.
There is no more cage now,
No fog, no marshmallow toast
As he joins her beneath
The white silk gentle
See-through sheet as they
Roll about making love,
Becoming one another
Living outside each other's bodies
While everything slowly slips away
They find themselves on top
A whole sky of peachy keen
Sunshine morning goodness
Taken up to the sky,
The heart of one another.
The scrub jay lands
On the last tree of the
Cold stone blue city shadows
Turning slowly orange the onset
A sea of deep red minnows
Swims in as the annoying squawks

Turn to the buzzing of
His phone which gets louder as it
Yanks him awake into
The bright yellow morning
Of the world and out of
The dreams of a hero.

From the Normal School Poll 2 NO3G

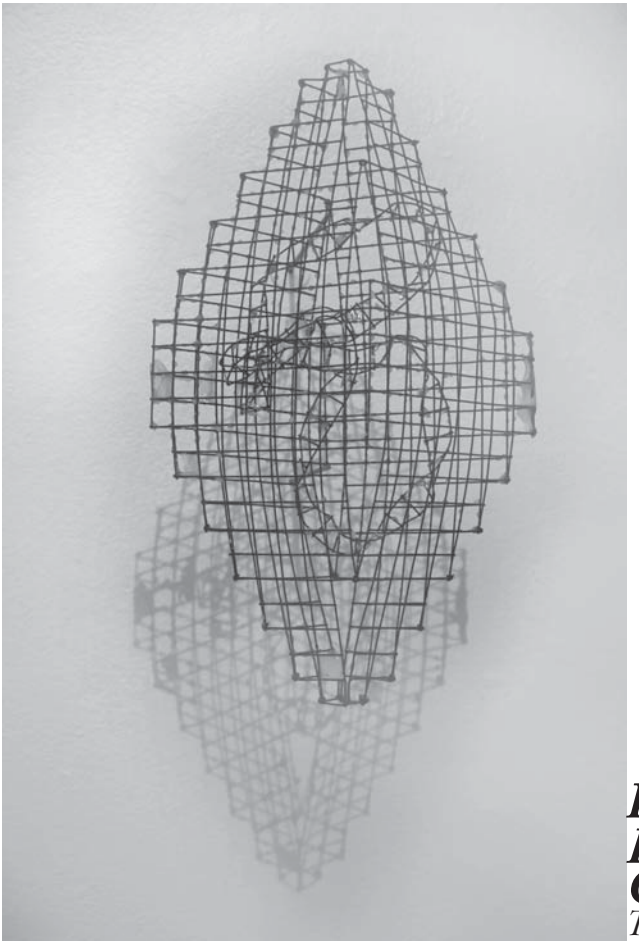
Tatiana Stevens

Possibility

Kurtus Locke

Possibly the worst fear
Is to die alone
With no one to love
With no one to love you.
Possibly the worst fear
Is to leave behind
No legacy here.
No one to hold,
No one to remember,
No familiar voice,
To hear; say your name.
Possibly the worst fear
Is to live alone
When all else loved
Has died and become the earth.
Possibly the worst fear
Will play out and become
A horrifying reality.
Possibly the worst fear
Will haunt like a specter
Just like a faint but persistent whisp
In your soul's deepest gravity.
Possibly the biggest fear
Is to let go,
To remember,
To accept the possibility
Of the biggest fear.
To accept the possibility
That the biggest fear
Is also the best accomplishment
Survived and lived through.
To accept the possibility
That fear is a power
That governs and controls
And to turn that most feared
Into that almost closely accepted
Is one's most challenging moment.
Facing these fears and
Accepting them for what they are,
What they were once,
Terrible pain is
Often difficult
To live through
All by yourself.
All you really have is yourself
If you choose to make it that way
Because of the biggest fear.
You are going to die alone.
Unless there is a huge mushroom
Growing in the orange sherbert stained glass sky
Or there is a world ender,
The big one,
An asteroid or comet
That obliterates us all
Or the black hole at the middle of things
Opens up and sucks us all into spaghetti
An atom's width in circumference:
Everyone will probably really die alone.
But there is bravery in being alone,
There is stoicism in being
Alone.
There can still
Be a courageous world
Inside oneself alone,
Despite the biggest fear.
That which reaches outward:
Looking for love in everything, hopeful.
Possibly the biggest fear

Is that which makes you forget
Everything worth loving:
Everything that has been, taken.
Everything that has been, given.
All of the fear and pain
That still makes life even more worth living
And shares the knowledge
That there is still sunshine
Far above the clouds of rain.



Pyrococcus Furiosus Sugar Glass Analysis
Travis Wood

The Woodcarver

Kurtus Locke

There is this idea behind Japanese architecture called Wabi-Sabi which is a celebration of the slight imperfections in the structures that reside both inside and outside the self. In this idea something's imperfection gives it unique characteristics that only exist where the veneer resides. Just like the structures in Japan carved from wood we too have a way of carving out our own existence. This is our own personal narrative that can only be finished upon our death is formed through life, in our own experiences both good and bad. Much like the Wabi-Sabi, our own lives are filled with slight or possibly extreme imperfections that construct the narrative of who we are.

A good quote from Robert Burton's *Artists of the Floating World* encapsulates the panic one is often faced with when living in between what one has already existentially carved out or how to use the remaining wood of the soul yet to be carved. "Faced with the task of reinventing himself, while working through the baggage of his past, he is literally and metaphorically caught in between different worlds, an archetypal floater" (Burton 37). There is an inherent sense when structuring one's own life narrative that when unrealized and uncontrolled spins one into a panic because one hopes to control the narrative future, to avoid the imperfections, the mistakes of the past. Both selves remain trapped in this instance because both struggle to control inevitability and infinite possibility; that which cannot be controlled, that which shapes who we were and who we one day will be.

It is most difficult to face these imperfections when they always seem to find us wherever we find ourselves in the moment. One clings to both pleasant and painful narratives because these narratives arguably shape us. Ultimately we cling to both the pleasant and the unpleasant because of the human flight or fight response, one either hopes to seek an experience or avoid it and it is in this area that there is no middle ground. When you have had a pleasant experience it is simplistic, endorphins are released and you are experiencing abnormal brain chemistry. Therefore your perception of the actual event as it occurred in the moment is unclear because the mind is experiencing pleasure in its extremity. When you experience an unpleasant experience your synapses fire more quickly, you become fearful, panic and anxiety driven, scared and a range of many different feelings that make you seek to avoid suffering. When one experiences displeasure

on this other extreme arguably one is not experiencing normal brain chemistry so again perception of the actual event is skewed.

There can be no middle ground that exists in the moment because of our own brain's ability to change its chemistry in either the offensive or defensive regard. This is wrong. One should question one's own perception at all times, to embrace the suffering and question the pleasure because one's own mind is manipulated by the moment. This is possibly the hardest thing to do, to admire the imperfections on all scales and to question the general idea of perfection and the impossibility it bears. There is a passage in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*: *Song of Myself III* that criticizes this backward and forward panic ridden means of thinking: "But I do not talk of the beginning or the end. There was never any more inception than there is now, Nor any more youth or age than there is now, And will never be any more perfection than there is now, Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now" (Whitman).

Existentially, we all are forced to reside in the now, quite possibly this is our connection to the infinite, our disconnect. That we can strive toward the infinite while living in the finite reality. It is in the realization of the moment that we can strive to accept the past; its pleasures, its pain. It is in this acceptance of the now, no matter how imperfect, that we can begin to strive toward the infinite future and all of its endless possibilities both good and bad. Through these slight imperfections, shine outwardly, the light of our being and we ought to want that light to shine limitlessly, not to be kept as a candle in the overbearing anxieties of our past and our future.

Dreams

George McClendon

Balloons of many colors
tied to foot of
anniversary bed
hover, celebrate our marital dream.
What if we.....
then we could.....
wouldn't it be wonderful?
Have a dream together
as newlyweds do.
Dreams, air in balloons,
raise us from trials
connect future and now.
When we have lost our bounce
deflated, defeated, depressed.
Rough spots-punctured- patched
We rise again
And again
And again
And again
And again

Heavenly Oaks

George McClendon

Familiar path, my walk
along Chico Creek.
As sun filters through leaves on high,
oaks reach arms to heaven,
then to one another
form a sacred canopy
under which I stand in awe.
A couple joins me there,
raised eyes join mine,
form our own canopy of sight.
Side by side we stand like oak trees
In empathic resonance.
Then we continue our path
in silence.

Nunc et Semper
Now and Always
George McClendon

Hazel, your eight- month hand
touches my beard
Hazel, your eight-month eyes
pierce my eighty- two heart.
In common
we have
precious
NOW
your beginning time
my ending time.
You and I
feast our eyes on one another
touch and are touched.
I want to change
become childlike
born again and again
share your healing presence
as you share mine
no fear of what might be
let's stay in touch
even if only hand
to beard.

Geo and Violet
Carol McClendon

The First Time I Went to Ireland

Tommy McGuan

I'm Irish, but I'm also fourth generation American. So in other words, I'm not Irish enough to really be Irish. A lot of my family talks about being Irish, but a majority of us have actually never even been to Ireland. Like many Americans, my nationality is so far from being what my last name suggests, that when I visit the "motherland" I'm more of a tourist, than a citizen.

However, that hasn't stopped me from always glorifying the country. My senior year of high school, I had a watch with two clocks in it. I set one clock for the time in the US and the second for the time in Dublin and would always tell people that I would one day go to the wonderfully green country.

I would watch the Olympics and cheer for the Irish teams. I would listen to Irish songs and think to myself "these are the songs of the rolling hills in my country." I would look up pictures of the countryside and set them as the background for my phone and computer.

I was so set on this country and truly believed that this was where I belonged. I painted this picture of what it was. I expected as soon as I landed my last name, "McGuan", would be heard and I would be brought through the country with open arms as a fellow Irishman. These expectations grew in my mind. Every few weeks, something new and more exciting about the country would pop in my head.

Then finally, after four and a half years of college and 22 years of life, I was on my way to Ireland! To see the country I had dreamed so much about, to experience another way of life, to return to the motherland!

I'll never forget getting off the plane, walking to the front of the airport to get on a bus to my hostel. I looked around the airport, expecting someone to come and help me find my way. I thought to myself, surely they'll realize I've been waiting my whole life for this moment. Surely they'll come take care of me soon.

It took me about ten minutes to finally realize, no one had any clue who I was. Because why should they?

This thing I had built up in my mind for years came crashing down. I couldn't comprehend how I had been so wrong for so long, but I still expected something to be waiting for me. That was until I finally arrived at my hostel and checked in. The man at the front desk asked for my last name and I said "McGuan"

and then proceeded to tell him with a big smirk on my face "Yup! It's Irish, I'm here visiting the country."

To which he responded without looking up from his computer screen "McGuan? I think that's more of a Scottish name."

At that exact moment, the wind had left my sails. Everything I knew was a lie, because in my mind the Irish man at the front desk of a hostel must know be an expert on this. I had booked a ticket to Ireland, when it should have been Scotland.

Untitled
Daniel Theobald

Second Language

Christine Montgomery

Sometimes
When I speak Spanish
My teeth brick up.
I can feel the mortar grit start to seal
A crack in the roof of my mouth.
And none of this is coming from my mouth
Or my tongue or even my brain
It's deeper. In my soul.
Where the bones are weakish and embarrassed.
My deepest inside folds sour green
Stomach sizzles, forcing the thaw.
All I want is to say it right.
To make sense.
So I wait and I try again
Con toda la sal que desvanece el mar.

Over the River and Through the Woods

Marie Fox

Still Offering

Christine Montgomery

There's a tree
At the school where I work
An old Red Oak.
Her bark tightly knit
She stays clean.
Not like those cheeky cork trees in the park.
Her limbs stretch up
Black lines on a white paper sky.
She has stood over seventy years of middle school kids.
She's watching now, a kid on crutches with a slumpy backpack, dirt under his fingernails
And Band-Aids.
He doesn't even notice her cage of arms protecting him.
Lately she has good days and bad.
Some say she has rot inside.
And
She has lost her sister. The two trees used to intertwine.
Cut down in January cold.
They laid two sections of her sister's trunk on the west playfield
Right in front of her.
Like the legs of a giant civil war soldier.
She can feel the cold against that side.
The slice of heat, come summer, will be worse.
This tree brings me to a hollow feeling
That connects
When I drive home to see my mom.
I wonder how much my mom feels the cold spot that used to be her sister.
Or how much the swelling hurts her arm.
She too is tired from holding us kids for seventy years.
But we don't talk about the worry.
Because they are magnificent; my mom and this tree.
Standing in the quiet.
Still offering.
Knowing
That soon they will be cut down.

Ever-Growing

Allie Mueting

"Let's go out this way," Mom urged, pointing to the front door, not out of fear, but of habit.

She carried these Greek superstitions—leaving out the same door in which she entered, and the other way around—because of her father's heritage. Her mother however, instilled a logical, and, dare I say cynical view of the world, resulting in her doing and not thinking about these practices.

My father used to roll his eyes at these habits.

He thought these actions illogical, foolish even, and she found his ignorance to others' upbringings the same. After twenty-three years, she found the strength to put her needs first, his senseless, backhanded remarks finally too much, and told him to move out. She would never wish ill upon him, however. To think negatively curses both parties—one with the desired outcome, and the other with guilt. So, she stays kind and patient to all.

Now, in her very own home, a beautiful, Spanish-influenced, suburban house in a gated Southern California community at the foothills of dusty mountains, she plants flowers. Most of the yard gets considerable sunlight, and she nourishes the flora that requires constant warmth and sunshine. We garden together, laughing about the ants that crawl on our arms and the wiggling pill bugs that find themselves on the patio, while we are elbow deep in the Earth. Bees find their way to our treasures, sharing in the beauty, and cherishing their gift of nectar. When my siblings and I had been given the chore of gardening with our father, we had lived in Illinois, and planting season was frigid and the ground was hard. Then, Mom knew better than to offer her help, and she stayed inside—he told us she wasn't good at gardening, in fact no one knew how to garden to his specifications.

She's lived in her house for about three years now. Young lemon trees bloomed on the side wall, still short and bulking up, but bearing fruit nonetheless. Flowers in orange and yellow and white and pink kept our little orchard company when we couldn't. Sprawling, green groundcover flooded the corners and elevated areas of the backyard, and began creeping up the wall.

"I heard that rose bushes are harder to maintain," She breathed while handling the young, twiggy beginnings of the plant, "but we'll give it a shot." She winked.

Her optimism and thirst for adventure were new to me, but I could feel that it was natural for her. The qualities must've been buried—just needed nourishment.

Three weeks later, while back at school, I would receive a text message with a picture of a lush, rose-clad bush with the accompanying message, "the bush we planted bloomed!!" It was still skinny and developing, but clearly loved.

Tales of Cheese on E. 7th
Brett Day

Walk in the Woods

Max Myers

there was something remarkable in the woods
something majestically spiritual
and I the child in this mystery slowly walk
beneath the towering trees' silent canopy
my ears listen to the shaded voices
trickling stream, scurrying startled rabbit
I walk on past magical, dream invoking toad stools
over aged paths that once were trod by others
bodies that moved thru these sacred woods long ago
these worn paths are a comfort to my feet
wondering, intentionally being, present and firm
my life one with the natural world about me
the scent of the deep woods consumes me
here I ponder the Creator
celebrating, learning to love the woods
crafted in mystical awareness
embedded in my soul

Love

Max Myers

what could stand in the way of love
where would there be room for dispassion
for vague intent, half felt promise, silence
love is light surrounding all it touches
an exponential expression of God
the very goodwill graced to life
the key to eternity, serenity
this gift of love

Spirit
Max Myers

how astounding the human spirit
formed by Angelic Heavens' whim
delivered in faith and hopes prospect
from stumbling childrens inquiring look
the short time turns to form and being
oh great indeed is man going forth
shaking the ground with intent
with vision and courage pulsing
rears up peering at the stars
his fortune in the waiting
rich in heart and unfailing in spirit
beats loud the will to live
thrives in the desire to love
I am humbled in man's presence
blessed to walk among the living

Mercy
Max Myers

are there any among the living
who by their merit are free
having no need for mercy
lacking conscience, compassion
or in callousness blinded
such men do not exist
for to exist one knows the need
to be compassionate
to be forgiving and give mercy
where mercy is needed
such is the nature of the living
the very core of love
the very heart of humankind

Do I matter?

Nona Nahalea

as a child, my grandma mattered to me
as a teenager, my friends mattered to me
as a wife, my husband mattered to me
as a mother, my children matter to me
When you feel the love deeply, it matters.
in my dreams, i am standing on the beach
i hear the waves breaking and
watch the water cascade over my feet
and soak the sand before rolling back to the calm ocean
I am at peace.
my hand is old and has wrinkles now
down, down, down into the darkness
Does it matter that I mattered?

Elegy to Taylor

Char Prieto

O Taylor! Our Taylor! Now you are gone

One crisp winter day
Stole your youth
Broke your dreams
And the cold wind
Took your last gasp of breath away

O Taylor! Our Taylor! Now you are gone

But no.
You are not gone
You will remain with us
In every step we take
Your charismatic smile
Will forever endure
The sound of the bells
Of the Trinity tower
Will bring your presence
And in the spring
By the Rose Garden
Your silhouette will shine

O Taylor! Our Taylor! Now you are gone

The campus
Academe
The trees
The creek you so much loved
Sing with sorrow
Mourning the caresses of your footsteps

And at dawn
When the musical sound of the wind
Comes this way
Brings the perfume of your soul
Now at peaceful rest

O Taylor! Our Taylor! You are still with us!

Taylor Bonora
Taylor Bonora

He Had a Dream

Char Prieto

He came from the Southern lands
Of America
On a white winter day
Amidst cold winds he arrived
Among prejudice he grew
Surrounded by persecution
A segregated childhood
Not without pain

But he had a dream

On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial
In D.C.
One day in August nineteen sixty-three
He said, "I have a dream"

And he talked of slavery and injustice
Calling to end the long night of captivity
Segregation, and discrimination
The lines of poverty for some
And prosperity for others

And he spoke about the slums and ghettos of the cities

Nineteen sixty-three was the beginning
Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana
And all lands in America

He still has a dream

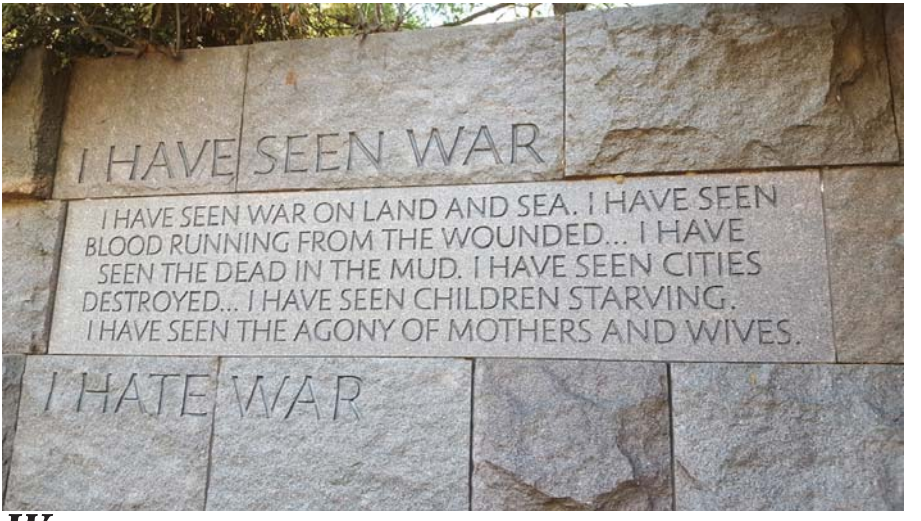
A dream deeply rooted in the American dream
Where all are created equal

Where there is not injustice and oppression for none
But justice, tolerance and peace for all
A symphony of sisterhood and brotherhood

Colorado, California, Tennessee, Mississippi, Indiana
Israel, Palestine, Cuba, Iraq, and North Korea
Black, white, yellow, blue, red
Jews and Gentiles
Protestants and Catholics
Muslims and Atheists
Will join hands and sing

Is your dream today reality?
Let it ring
Let Freedom Ring
Ring
Ring

Ring...



War
Char Prieto

A message for TH

Roze Sabino

Her secret message to him waited quietly
inside the envelope left under the rug,
undelivered.
It was the day before Thanksgiving.
He was supposed to come by but he didn't.
The little envelope waited there,
flat, lonely in the dark, pressed hopeful and helpless
under the rug's one heavy wing.
She, meantime, was baking 500 degrees
inside, with anxiety and anticipation
stuffing the little black hole in her heart.
But he? He wasn't missing what
he already did or didn't want to know.
Three days after Thanksgiving
he came by after she had given up hope.
But because she liked to start and finish things
she handed to him the little orange envelope,
with a puzzle she had written cut-up in
words getting a little dry and stale.
Attached, a picture of a flirty looking turkey
Wearing a pilgrim hat held an apple,
(laughable turkey temptation.)
He smiled, teeth gleaming
like white kernels of corn.
She didn't know what to make of his reaction.
All she knew is that she wanted the envelope in his hands
for she liked to start and finish things.
Part of her ached and wished badly
that he'd look at the black and white apple in
the pictured flirty turkey's claw and impulsively color it red,
delicious color of desire.

The red apple looking irresistible, he'd want her after he assembled the puzzle:
"I want to be with you again...badly!"
And yet another part of her no longer cared
as if making her wait had caused
some damage to destroy her illusion.
But as she liked to start and finish things
she still wanted to have
that little damage of a truth made possible
And that message finally read, finally
delivered.

Portal, ceramic
Katie Applebaum

Escape

Charlotte Torquato

I can't escape
I can't escape
And I can't wait
For you to come around
I'm falling hard
Like a house made of cards
And I can't seem to stop
Fallin' for you
I've been waiting for a long good time
I can't keep it in God knows I've tried
I'm ready to just let go and fly, just fly
I can't wait for the moment when I look in your eyes
And tell you all of the things I've been keeping inside
Whenever you smile,
My head spins around and around
I've never had this feeling for anyone else
It's like you've stolen my heart and you've casted a spell
Looks like I've gone crazy,
But I don't want to fall hard just like I did for anyone else
I can't escape
I can't escape
By now I've lost all my senses,
Starting to feel like I'm drowning
I can't get enough of everything that you do
My world just flips upside down
And I can't stop
Fallin' for you
I've got this tornado in my head
Always got you on my mind but it's just pretend
Something about the words you never ever said

ITALIAN

Una conversazione sulla Sicilia

Samuel Cremo

Per spiegare l'unicità della Sicilia, si deve cominciare dal suo passato, dalla sua storia e dalla sua posizione centrale nel Mediterraneo. Vari gruppi diversi dominarono l'isola, tra i quali ci furono i greci, i romani, gli arabi, i normanni, gli svevi, i francesi e gli spagnoli. Tutte queste culture marcarono l'isola con le loro presenze, e insieme con i primi governi unitari d'Italia, portarono alla situazione attuale specifica di arretratezza economica e criminalità organizzata. Ciononostante, alcuni martiri della lotta antimafiosa, consapevoli del rischio che correvano, si sacrificarono per provare la colpevolezza dei mafiosi e metterli in prigione. Un tempo al centro del mondo antico e patria di un grande esodo verso le Americhe, la Sicilia, è diventata oggi la destinazione di una nuova migrazione storica proveniente dall'Africa e dal Medioriente. Tutte queste contraddizioni rispecchiano l'assialitá dell'isola: la sua posizione tra l'Europa, l'Africa e l'Asia, tra l'America e l'Europa e tra la criminalità e l'eroismo. Tutti questi punti convergono in un unico centro.

In passato, sotto la dominazione araba, l'agricoltura (specialmente l'agrumicoltura), la scienza, l'ingegneria e l'architettura fiorirono. Dagli arabi, il dominio della Sicilia passò nelle mani dei Normanni, e del loro re, Federico II, detto stupor mundi. Molti intellettuali (scienziati, scrittori, architetti, ingegneri e artisti) continuarono a vivere e lavorare in Sicilia, grazie alla continuazione della tolleranza religiosa praticata dagli arabi. La corte reale patrocinò il movimento letterario che prese il nome di Scuola Siciliana. La poesia della scuola, con una lingua ispirata dall'itineranza della corte e dal soggetto dell'amore, influì sulla scrittura del fiorentino Dante Alighieri considerato "padre" dell'italiano moderno. Dopo la morte di Federico II la Sicilia entrò in un periodo di graduale decadenza sotto l'occupazione di varie dinastie francesi e spagnole (Angioni, Aragonesi, Asburgo e Borboni). Sotto gli Spagnoli, la Sicilia divenne una provincia povera, periferica e sfruttata da quell'impero.

Purtroppo le cose non migliorarono nemmeno dopo l'unificazione dell'Italia che anzi perpetuò la crisi economica nel sud, dove l'industria e l'agricoltura rimasero sottosviluppate e non potevano competere con quelle del nord d'Italia. L'economia meridionale non poteva nemmeno sostenere l'aumento della sua popolazione. La domanda di manodopera negli Stati Uniti

e in Sudamerica incoraggiò così molti giovani siciliani a emigrare. La massiccia emigrazione devastò ancor di più l'economia e il tessuto sociale dell'isola. Nei piccoli paesi rimasero solo le donne, i bambini e i vecchi. Questa emorragia non si fermò nemmeno durante il dopoguerra quando però i siciliani preferirono emigrare nel nord d'Italia, nella città del cosiddetto triangolo industriale (Milano, Torino, Genova) o nei paesi del ricco nord Europa (Germania, Francia, Belgio, Olanda). In tempi più recenti, la Sicilia è diventata l'approdo di una massiccia emigrazione dai paesi del Nordafrica o del Medioriente. In Sicilia arrivano migliaia di profughi bisognosi che intendono poi continuare il loro viaggio verso Francia, Germania e Inghilterra dove hanno la speranza di trovare lavoro. Questa trasformazione afferma che la Sicilia è ancora un importante personaggio nel Mediterraneo e in Europa.

La storia del sottosviluppo dell'economia, la conseguente esistenza di una classe proprietaria terriera e l'assenza del potere statale centrale sono alcune fra tante circostanze storiche che contribuirono alla nascita della mafia siciliana, che agli inizi nacque come forza di polizia privata dei grandi proprietari terrieri dell'isola. Questa mafia non era quella che presentano i film di Coppola o Scorsese, ma quasi uno stato parallelo a quello ufficiale. Oggi la mafia controlla il commercio illecito, come il traffico della droga, l'estorsione, l'edilizia abusiva ecc. ma si è anche infiltrata nel settore finanziario, dove gode della protezione di politici e ufficiali corrotti. Molte persone coraggiose hanno rischiato la loro vita e si sono sacrificate per opporsi al potere mafioso e minarlo alla base.

Una di queste persone fu Giovanni Falcone. Giudice e magistrato, Falcone e il suo collega Borsellino realizzarono insieme il maxiprocesso, in cui la giustizia italiana riuscì a condannare centinaia di mafiosi imputati. A causa delle minacce della mafia, Falcone visse una vita tragicamente limitata e temeva costantemente per la sua vita e quella di sua moglie, Francesca Morvillo. Da parte sua, Francesca Morvillo, anche lei magistrato, non permise mai che queste minacce la separassero del marito. Ma alla fine, dopo aver vinto nel maxiprocesso e essere riusciti a far condannare molti mafiosi, Falcone e Morvillo furono uccisi nella strage di Capaci, il 23 maggio 1992. A distanza di pochi mesi anche Paolo Borsellino fu ucciso con ben cinque uomini della sua scorta. Sebbene questi paladini siano morti per fare giustizia, con il loro lavoro e sublime sacrificio colpirono la mafia e la indebolirono in maniera decisiva.

La Sicilia, nel centro del Mediterraneo, ha avuto molti ruoli diversi ed è passata attraverso una lunga catena di influenze e dominazioni straniere. Queste condizioni hanno contribuito al carattere unico dei siciliani e della cultura della Sicilia. Da centro culturale del Mediterraneo sotto gli imperi arabi e normanni, a regione arretrata e impoverita dell'Europa, la traiettoria dell'isola è stata il risultato di una serie di confluenze geografiche e storiche. Queste cause hanno anche prodotto i siciliani, complessi e vari come la loro storia. Certamente, la Sicilia continuerà a essere nel centro di importanti eventi mondiali. Purtroppo, la disparità tra il sud e il nord d'Italia è ancora grande, poiché ogni governo italiano ha finora fallito nei numerosi tentativi di risolvere definitivamente la questione meridionale. Parlando poi di Europa unita, la produzione economica europea è sempre più concentrata nei paesi del nord come la Germania. Questi paesi ricchi attraggono migranti e rifugiati dal resto del mondo però, come sempre, essi non affrontano le loro responsabilità, facendo pesare la crisi economica più fortemente sulle spalle dei paesi dell'Europa meridionale come Grecia e Italia.

Italian Shakespearean Actress
Sandy Adams

Sicilia sconosciuta

Isha Mundahl

Sebbene il resto del mondo consideri la Sicilia come una delle regioni d'Italia, la Sicilia è un'isola ben distinta, esposta da secoli ad influenze diverse. Il risultato di secoli di dominazioni diverse è un'isola ricca di storia, dialetti, specialità culinarie e manifestazioni religiose. I Siciliani sono una popolazione unica, che fu influenzata dalle civiltà greca, romana, araba e normanna.

La posizione geografica della Sicilia nel centro del Mediterraneo insieme alle sue risorse naturali rese l'isola molto desiderata. In molti la conquistarono e la sfruttarono.

Una delle civiltà più importanti nella storia della Sicilia fu quella araba. Gli Arabi portarono con sé degli atteggiamenti tolleranti e non trattarono l'isola e la sua gente da predatori. Infatti, sotto gli Arabi, la Sicilia fiorì non solo nel campo economico e scientifico, ma anche in quello letterario e artistico. La tolleranza di quella dominazione permise alla cultura siciliana di essere diversa e molto interessante.

Dopo gli Arabi venne il regno di Federico II sotto il cui regno la cultura, la letteratura, l'arte, e le scienze continuarono a rafforzarsi e a svilupparsi. Fu sotto Federico II che la Sicilia coltivò la sua identità e la sua influenza letterarie grazie al nascere della cosiddetta Scuola Siciliana. La Scuola Siciliana fu un movimento letterario all'interno del quale scrittori e poeti cominciarono ad usare una lingua comune nelle loro opere. Siccome la corte di Federico II era itinerante, spostandosi nel sud d'Italia, i letterati della corte furono esposti ai termini di altri idiomi che si fusero con la lingua sicula, la lingua parlata dai siciliani. Avvenne così che la Scuola Siciliana segnò il distacco dalla tradizione scritta in latino, lingua che la gente ormai non usava più nel parlato, e influenzò poeti di altre regioni d'Italia, primo fra tutti Dante Alighieri, il padre della lingua italiana.

Purtroppo, con la morte di Federico II la Sicilia cominciò a declinare. Varie dinastie come quelle degli Angioini, gli Aragonesi, gli Asburgo, e i Borboni occuparono la Sicilia e ne sfruttarono le risorse in maniera vergognosa, diversamente da quanto avevano fatto gli Arabi prima di loro. Il declino economico causato da tutte queste occupazioni si aggravò sempre di più e l'isola non fu più in grado di produrre abbastanza prodotti agricoli da sfamare i suoi

abitanti. Tra la fine del 19° secolo e gli inizi del 20° secolo le condizioni di estrema miseria, le scarse opportunità di lavoro produssero una vera e propria fuga di massa dall'isola. Come tanti emigranti anche i siciliani se ne andarono negli Stati Uniti dove c'era la promessa di un lavoro e di una vita migliori. Sebbene gli Stati Uniti non fossero un paradiso, come gli agenti dell'emigrazione avevano fatto credere loro, per molti Siciliani, soprattutto per i loro figli, la vita cambiò in meglio. Sappiamo che invece, nel secondo dopoguerra dalla Sicilia molti emigrarono andando nel nord d'Italia, in città come Milano, Torino e Genova o anche nei paesi del nord d'Europa quali Germania, Francia, Belgio e Olanda.

Con i disordini sociali e politici che seguirono il dopoguerra, la Sicilia era in uno stato delicato e non è una sorpresa che un'organizzazione come la mafia poté prosperarvi. Nel 19° secolo la mafia era nata come una sorta di polizia privata per i grandi proprietari terrieri. In seguito, per la mancanza di politiche adeguate da parte del governo dell'Italia unita, la mafia estese sempre di più il suo raggio di potere fino a diventare ai giorni nostri la cosiddetta "mafia dei colletti bianchi", un'organizzazione con forti agganci al potere politico di Roma. Secondo lo scrittore siciliano Leonardo Sciascia alcuni aspetti della religione cattolica, praticata da molti Siciliani, rispecchiano i rapporti di potere nella mafia. Infatti a volte, quando un mafioso muore, la gente organizza una grande processione in suo onore come fosse un santo patrono.

È importante ricordare che moltissimi uomini e donne rischiarono e persero le loro vite lottando contro la mafia, fra questi i nomi più famosi sono il giudice Paolo Borsellino e il magistrato Giovanni Falcone. Il 23 maggio 1992 Giovanni Falcone, sua moglie Francesca Morvillo e cinque uomini della loro scorta passavano in macchina sull'autostrada che li riportava a casa dall'aeroporto di Palermo. Una bomba scoppiò all'altezza del paese di Capaci e Falcone, sua moglie e tre agenti rimasero uccisi. Qualche mese dopo, il 19 luglio 1992, Paolo Borsellino fu ucciso in un altro attentato di mano mafiosa con ben cinque uomini della sua scorta.

Questi due eroi di giustizia furono presi di mira dalla mafia per aver osato opporsi ad essa. Grazie a loro infatti si era tenuto a Palermo in un'aula bunker il famoso maxiprocesso contro tanti accusati della mafia. Francesca Morvillo era stata magistrato dei minorenni e aveva sposato Falcone nonostante il rischio. A causa del loro coinvolgimento nella lotta contro la mafia i due vissero una vita blindata. Ai tempi del maxiprocesso dovettero abitare nel carcere dell'isola

dell'Asinara per essere protetti. Giovanni Falcone non poteva fare le piccole cose quotidiane come vedere gli amici, fare una passeggiata, andare dal barbiere. Disse che non voleva avere figli perché non voleva mettere al mondo degli orfani. Capì che la sua vita poteva finire in qualsiasi momento e che anche la vita di sua moglie e della sua famiglia era in costante pericolo. Giovanni Falcone e Paolo Borsellino sono entrambi ricordati come delle persone meravigliose, dei veri e propri eroi che sacrificarono le loro vite per il bene più alto della giustizia e della nazione italiana. Dopotutto grazie al maxiprocesso tanti membri della mafia furono finalmente incarcerati, cominciando dal loro capo Totò Riina.

Queste frammenti della storia della Sicilia rispecchiano purtroppo una realtà tragica dell'isola. Quando si pensa alla Sicilia, si pensa probabilmente alla mafia o alla povertà che causò tanta emigrazione. Ma non dobbiamo dimenticare la Sicilia ha molto di più da offrire; noi americani non sentiamo mai parlare delle sue caratteristiche bellissime, come la gente ospitale, il cibo squisito, i panorami stupendi e i resti artistici di questa sua storia complessa e affascinante.

Italian Port
Tom Adams

Il mio bisnonno

Jacob Salvo

Una persona, il cui lavoro e la cui vita mi ispirano ancora oggi, è il mio bisnonno paterno che si chiamava Carlo Salvo. Purtroppo, Carlo è morto nel 2008, quando io avevo nove anni. Benché, avessi solo nove anni il mio rapporto con lui, le sue storie e le opportunità che Carlo ha dato alla mia famiglia, mi ispirano ad avere successo adesso che sono uno studente all'università di Chico e nel futuro, quando intraprenderò la mia carriera.
Carlo era nato a Sant'Agata di Militello, un piccolo paese vicino alla cittadina di Cefalù in Sicilia. Sin da bambino Carlo aveva lavorato con suo padre Cristoforo e i suoi fratelli in una fattoria che produceva verdure. Ma Cristoforo era un uomo violento e crudele. Per quella ragione e per le condizioni di miseria in cui viveva la loro famiglia, un giorno, Carlo ed i suoi fratelli decisero che era necessario lasciare l'Italia ed emigrare negli Stati Uniti. Con l'aiuto della mafia siciliana, Carlo arrivò a New York dove non capiva una parola d'inglese nè sapeva nulla della cultura americana.

Senza perdersi d'animo Carlo cercò subito un lavoro. Non gli importava di che lavoro si trattasse. Il suo desiderio era di aiutare i suoi fratelli con i soldi gudagnati e realizzare il sogno americano. Purtroppo non gli fu facile trovare lavoro. A molti americani non piacevano gli immigranti italiani. C'erano molti pregiudizi contro di loro. Alcuni amici del mio bisnonno fingevano di essere irlandesi per evitare il razzismo contro gli italiani. Ma con la sua carnagione scura Carlo non poteva fingersi irlandese. La vita negli Stati Uniti sembrava senza speranza.

Nonostante questo il mio bisnonno non perse mai il suo ottimismo e finalmente qualcuno lo assunse come operaio di un cantiere navale dove però il lavoro era pericoloso. Nel cantiere le condizioni di lavoro erano così difficili che molti operai avevano degli infortuni e rimanevano gravemente feriti e a volte perfino uccisi. Anche lo stipendio era molto misero. Carlo non poteva comprarsi niente di importante, i soldi gli bastavano per sopravvivere. Di solito il mio bisnonno mangiava solo un pasto al giorno. Ma non si lamentava mai.

Col passare del tempo Carlo trovò delle occupazioni migliori sia come condizioni che come stipendio. E alla fine Carlo si ritrovò ad essere capo di una falegnameria. Carlo si era finalmente realizzato. Poteva comprarsi molte cose,

prendersi delle ferie e perfino permettersi di mandare suo figlio all'università. Suo figlio, mio nonno Antonio, si è laureato all'università di Hofstra proprio perché Carlo lavorò così tanto.

Il mio bisnonno era un uomo stoico. Era tranquillo e tutta la gente che lo conosceva voleva essergli amico. Carlo non chiese mai di essere rispettato, il rispetto se lo meritava con le sue azioni. Carlo pensava che la famiglia sia la cosa più importante di questo mondo. Ogni giorno, prima di uscire di casa, dava un bacio a sua moglie, Bambina Fiore, e a ognuno dei suoi figli. La sua famiglia era la sua motivazione di vita. Lavorava sodo ogni giorno per dare alla sua famiglia una vita migliore.

Malgrado Carlo non fosse famoso o ricco sfondato, per me lui è una fonte d'ispirazione. Da lui ho imparato che non è necessario essere il migliore, ma è importante fare del proprio meglio. Lavorando sodo ed essendo gentili proprio come Carlo ognuno può diventare l'artefice della propria vita.

Contemplative
Dennis Gier

Un'estate indimenticabile

Brunella Windsor

Sabrina si ricordava di quell'estate di tanti anni fa come di un periodo magico. Aveva superato l'esame finale di pianoforte principale al conservatorio di Palermo dopo anni di tribolazioni, frustrazioni e perfino alcuni periodi di profonda depressione che avevano preoccupato i suoi genitori. Anni in cui lo studio accanito aveva compensato la sua grande sfortuna di avere incontrato tanti insegnanti incompetent e megalomani. Dopo l'esibizione del diploma i professori le avevano fatto i complimenti per la sensibilità del tocco e l'intelligenza dell'interpretazione. Ma a Sabrina avere tagliato quel traguardo bastava già per toccare il cielo con un dito. Era a Palermo ospite di sua sorella, con tutta un'estate davanti a lei. E la sensazione di un'immensa felicità che le dilatava piacevolmente il petto ad ogni respiro. Le estate migliori, pensava Sabrina, sono proprio quelle che si aprono davanti a noi dopo uno sforzo così intenso. Alcuni giorni dopo l'esame, informati mamma e papà del successo, era partita con una brigata di alcuni vecchi amici del liceo per le spiaggie della Calabria. Due macchine, quattro ragazze e tre ragazzi, tanta allegria, pochi soldi. Qualcuno aveva detto di avere un amico a Cosenza che Ii avrebbe ospitati tutti. Sembrava un po' troppo bello per essere vero. Ma siccome a tutti l'idea piaceva tantissimo, nessuno aveva osato fare troppe domande. In fondo l'estate era fatta per vivere avventure spensierate. Lungo la strada si erano fermati a Taormina, dormendo nell'albergo più squallido in cui Sabrina fosse mai stata senza che lo squallore avesse però potuto scalfire l'entusiamso del gruppo. Finalmente la banda era arrivata a Cosenza e Mirella, quella che aveva l'amico con villa sul mare, suggerì di andare sul lungomare dove c'era un baretto che lei conosceva benissimo e di aspettare lì l'arrivo di Raffaele, il suo amico. Quando finalmente quest'ultimo arrivò lo sconcerto fu generale. Raffaele doveva avere sui quarant'anni e teneva per mano una coppia di bambini. Non era certo un coetaneo di quel gruppo di ventenni. Giacomo e Sabrina, lanciarono delle occhiatacce a Mirella che ancora una volta si era dimostrata la solita superficalona di cui in fondo era meglio non fidarsi. Stare a casa di un quarantenne con figli non era quello che gli amici si aspettavano. E che avrebbe detto sua moglie? In realtà si scoprì presto che la moglie non c'era e Raffaele dimostrò subito di essere molto alla mano e sinceramente affabile. Aveva dei bellissimi occhi azzurri, una barba corta leggermente brizzolata ed era vestito in modo molto informale: pantaloni di lino bianco sgualcitissimi con sahariana dello stesso tessuto e colore. Ai ragazzi fece un po' l'effetto di un principe arabo del ventesimo secolo, ampiamente occidentalizzato. Dopo un gelato e

tante chiacchiere Raffaele aveva subito conquistato il gruppo con le sue domande genuinamente interessate alle loro vite, ai loro studi. Nel suo modo di parlare c'era un che di fanciullesco che disarmava. E sprigionava un entusiasmo contagioso. Era anche evidente che i suoi figli, Tommaso e Chiara, di 8 e 5 anni, lo adoravano e se ne stavano tranquilli mentre lui li teneva in braccio o carezzava loro la testa con grande dolcezza. Pagato il conto e presi accordi su come ritrovarsi una volta riprese le macchine, la comitiva si mise in marcia. Mirella era salita sulla macchina di Raffaele che faceva da apripista. Non fu difficile arrivare alla villa di Raffaele che era davvero molto grande, su due piani e in riva al mare. Gli amici cominciarono a rimangiarsi le critiche fatte prima a Mirella. L'avventura prometteva un lieto fine. Dopo la sistemazione nelle stanze e una doccia veloce Raffaele propose di andare tutti quanti a mangiare in una pizzeria delle vicinanze. Lì tra altre chiacchiere, risate, battute la comitiva cominciò davvero a legare. Si scoprì che Raffaele era appassionato d'opera e quando tutti in coro gli dissero che Sabrina era una pianista appena diplomata lui la guardò sinceramente ammirato. Da quel momento sembrò che fra i due si fosse aperto un canale di comunicazione privilegiato con al centro la musica. Gli altri si sentirono un po' esclusi e li lasciarono presto perdere. I bambini andarono a giocare fuori sulla terrazza della pizzeria. Ormai avvolti da una nuvola ovattata che li separava dal resto dell'universo, Sabrina e Raffaele finirono per scendere in spiaggia e sdraiarsi sulla sabbia ad ascoltare il mare, a guardare le stele, a parlare di musica, libri e film. Nei giorni che seguirono fu chiaro a tutti che i due si erano presi una bella cotta. Ormai andavano in giro tenendosi per mano e le occhiate languide che si scambiavano erano quasi imbarazzanti. Stranamente però nessuno osava scherzare sulla cosa. Forse il fatto che Raffaele fosse tanto più grande non lo incoraggiava. Ma era anche vero che nessuno aveva mai visto Sabrina in quello stato. Dov'era finita la sua grinta robusta, la sua energia vulcanica? Nessuno l'aveva mai vista così silenziosa e passiva. Dovunque si andasse, qualunque cosa si facesse a Sabrina bastava essere a fianco di Raffaele, tenerlo per la mano, guardarlo negli occhi. La cosa era decisamente seria.

Alla fine del soggiorno a Cosenza invece di ritornare a Palermo con gli amici Sabrina decise infatti di rientrare nel suo appartamento fiorentino dove viveva con altre due studentesse che però erano via per tutta l'estate. A Firenze sarebbe stato più facile continuare a vedere Raffaele che aveva promesso di andarla a trovare al più presto possibile, compatibilmente con i suoi impegni di lavoro e di genitore. Furono dei fine settimana indimenticabili. Raffaele arrivava il venerdì sera molto tardi e ripartiva la domenica pomeriggio. A quell'epoca Firenze d'estate era uno scenario perfetto per quell'amore tranquillo. I due amanti si lasciavno trasportare da

quel fiume maestoso che non accettava argini, che non conosceva chiuse. Sabrina non si era mai sentita così donna, completa e soddisfatta. Aveva avuto tante storie ma solo ora si rendeva conto di non aver mai conosciuto l'amore. Con Raffaele non sentiva nessun bisogno se non quello di vederlo arrivare ogni venerdì alla stazione e camminargli a fianco, mano nella mano per quei due giorni incantati. Lui la portava in piccole trattorie tranquille, sembrava conoscerle tutte. Le faceva dei regali senza mai imbarazzarla. Sembrava evocarli piuttosto che comprarli. Raffaele era un uomo dolce e avvolgente. Quando la guardava con quei suoi occhi color del mare il tempo si arrestava in un momento di indicibile bellezza. Le sue mani calde e morbide sapevano carezzarla con tenerezza appassionata. A Sabrina pareva di vivere un sogno dove in assenza di gravità la materia di tutte le dimensioni fluttuava libera e felice. Ma soprattutto per la prima volta Sabrina si piaceva, credeva a quell'uomo che le diceva che era bella, che toccava i suoi capelli biondi come seta delicata e che diceva di sentrsi naufragare nei suoi grandi occhi verdi. Spariti del tutto dubbi, timori, incertezze. Né sentiva il bisogno di cimentarsi in discussioni intellettuali, in dimostrazioni di erudizione. Sabrina non aveva dubbi che quella fosse la felicità. A volte per aiutare Raffaele con quella crudele distanza che li separava si incontravano a Roma. Entrambi arrivavano tardi nella capitale e si ritrovavano in un albergo vicino a Piazza di Spagna dove si amavano con dolcezza per ore prima di addormentarsi esausti. La giornate romane piacevano ancora di più a Sabrina perché a Roma non temeva di incontrare qualcuno che la conoscesse.

Venne il tempo delle domande e dei progetti sul futuro perché, si sa, mentre la viviamo vorremmo sempre prolungare la felicità. Raffaele aveva detto a Sabrina che amava moltissimo i suoi figli e che non avrebbe mai potuto vivere senza di loro. Per il momento lui e la moglie vivevano ancora sotto lo stesso tetto. All'epoca il divorzio dalla moglie avrebbe significato non potere più vivere con i suoi figli, vederli secondo le modalità stabilite da un giudice. E visto che Raffaele non parlava mai della moglie Sabrina aveva capito che era un argomento da evitare. D'altro canto Sabrina cominciava a tormentarsi sul come come avrebbe potuto presentare Raffaele ai suoi genitori. Si immaginava le urla del padre e le scenate della madre. Sentiva già i crampi allo stomaco. E una volta finite l'università pensava davvero di andare a vivere a Cosenza per vivere con Raffaele? Lasciare l'amata Firenze sembrava difficile a Sabrina almeno quanto a Raffaele lasciare i suoi figli.

L'estate era finita. L'anno universitario stava per ricominciare: Sabrina doveva rimettersi a studiare. Imrpovvisamente la vita si rifaceva sentire con le sue esigenze imperiose che di colpo annullarono la poesia della trascorsa estate. A volte alla stazione nel salutarlo dal binario a Sabrina scendevano lacrime copiose e

irrefrenabili che le telefonate durante la settimana non riuscivano a far dimenticare. Fu in quello stesso autunno che Sabrina cominciò a frequentare un gruppo di gente di età e nazionalità diverse che si riuniva regolarmente per praticare la meditazione e discutere di testi esoterici. Con loro si sentiva bene. Erano piacevoli e molto interessanti. Spesso organizzavano anche delle attività o delle gite nei fine settimana. Alcuni di loro erano venuti a studiare arte a Firenze e a Sabrina piaceva molto ascoltarli e condividere con loro osservazioni stimolanti. Uno di quei fine settimana in cui il gruppo doveva andare a Siena concideva con la venuta di Raffaele. Sabrina chiese se lo poteva portare alla gita ma le risposero che le attività del gruppo erano aperte solo ai membri. Sabrina rimase un po' delusa ma alla fine pensò che lei e Raffaele bastavano a se stessi. Invece, stranamente, la domenica della gita Sabrina non potè fare a meno di essere distratta: pensava a quel gruppo di fratelli elettivi con cui si sentiva così spensierata e per la prima volta rimpianse di non essere con loro a causa di Raffaele. Fu anche la prima volta che si sentì sollevata alla sua partenza. Sapendo dove il gruppo sarebbe andato a cena li raggiunse in tutta fretta e trascorse una serata meravigliosa. Quando Raffaele telefonò non la trovò in casa.

Ancora adesso, a distanza di tutti quegli anni, felicemente sposata e madre di due figli, Sabrina si chiedeva chi o che cosa le avesse mai dato la forza il giorno dopo di chiamare Raffaele e dirgli che era finita, che non si sarebbero mai più rivisti. Mai Sabrina era stata così decisa. Mai aveva preso una decisione con tanta rapidità, lei che il fratello aveva soprannominato "Amleto" per i suoi dubbi e le sue incertezze nel fare programmi, perfino nel decidere cosa mangiare o cosa mettersi. In realtà Sabrina non aveva dovuto prendere una decisione: era la decisione che l'aveva afferrata d'improvviso. Se l'era ritrovata dentro senza che questa si fosse mai fatta annunciare. Nessun preavviso. Il frutto maturo di un seme sconosciuto.

I giorni che seguirono non furono però ugualmente facili. Lo strappo era stato lacerante come se le avessero estratto il cuore dal petto con un colpo secco. Sabrina soffriva senza anestesia. Raffaele provò a chiamarla diverse volte. Lei aveva dato ordine tassativo di dire che non c'era. Le sue coinquiline rimanevano ammutolite e la guardavano giudicanti. Ma fu anche il dolore più veloce a guarire. Quel gruppo di nuovi amici le dava molta forza. La sua vita in divenire la chiamava con voce forte e sana. E arrivò il momento in cui Sabrina si disse che l'aveva scampata proprio bella: che futuro poteva avere con un uomo sposato che non avrebbe mai divorziato, lasciato i figli e nemmeno Cosenza? Ringraziò di avere avuto le risorse per superare quell'esperienza, per capire che gli uomini sposati è meglio lasciarli perdere!

JAPANESE


勇気

Courage

お化けと宇宙人

Joshua Atwal

　艶々のお化けは、宇宙人の運転者を見て、午後11時に親友に嘘をついた。艶々のお化けは宇宙人を見続けていた。

「宇宙人は急いでいるようだ。」
「なぜ宇宙人は急いでいましたか。」艶々のお化けは、悪い印象をうけた。
「どこまで自転車でいきますか。」

　艶々のお化けは宇宙人に会いにきた。そして、艶 々のお化けは彼に向かって走りだした。早く走った、、、 。早く、早く、走って行った。早く走った、、、。早く走って、彼の視界はぼやけてしまった。お化けは冷たく硬い地面に転んだ。

　しかし、彼はさっとあたりを見ることができなかった。視界は暗くはなかった。彼は目を覚ましたが、まだ外にいて暗かった。彼の心は葛藤（かっとう）し、彼の体は痛んだ。彼は何が起こったのかを思い出すのに苦労した。あれはすべて夢であったにちがいないが、この夢はどれくらい彼を傷つけることができるのだろうか？

(終わり)

鏡よ鏡

Chris Bartulo

艶々のこの鏡はとてもきれいでした。多くの人はこの鏡が欲しいとおもっています。

このかがみにはひみつがありました。それは鏡を見ると自分のお化けが見えることでした。艶々の鏡のひみつはまだありました。だれ一人としてだれがどこから持って来たのかしらなかったのです。じつは宇宙人が鏡をこのせかいに持ってきたのです。

だれかは「鬼が自転車に乗って持って来た」と思 っていました。どちらにせよ艶々の鏡はパンドラボクスのようで自分のしゅごれいをうつしました。おにやお化けやかい物や時々あくまも見えました。でも、決して人をきずつけませんでした。

だれかは鏡はわるいと思い、だれかは、鏡は未来を見せるからいいと思いました。どうであろうと、かがみはいきつづけました。

ブルブル

Hannah Gordon

秋のゆうぐれはとても寒いから一番すき。
秋の綺麗な色はいきをのむほどだ。
そして、ハロウェーンが大好きデス。
寒いし、くうきがビリリとしている。
秋にパリパリの落ち葉にとびこむのもいい。
秋は私にとって特別な季節デス。

Berry Stained Splinter

Mercedes Matta

春

Chris Huntington

私の好きなきせつは春です。

冬にかれたあらゆるしょくぶつがいきかえって、
またみどりになります。

花がさいているきせつのほうが好きです。
すべてがまたカラフルになるから。

雨が降っている間に、気分がおちつくのもすばらしいです。雨の夜の後、早く起きるのが好きです。しぜんを楽しめるから。

Dreams
Carissa Hernández

春が来た

Savannah Jakell

春 の 午後 が 好きです。
涼しくて、少しはださむいけれど、
日中は温かいです。
しずか だけど、
動物 の こえ は のどか に ひびきます。

春がくるまえには、なかまと いっしょに
いろいろなじゅんびをします。
私たちは、せんこう の「動物の はんしょく」と
「害虫」と「 手術法」の勉強を一年中しますが、
春は カリフォルニアの いたるところに行って、
学会などに参加します。
それも楽しいです。

春に どこかへ 出かけて、
ふうけいがをかくのも好きです。
雪どけのにおい がすがすがしいです。

だから、春が大好きです。

冬と私

Salma Reyes

私は冬が一番好きです。
なぜならカラスが故郷の近くに集まるから。
そして私はカラスがとても好きだから。

それに冬は私の家族のことをよく思う。
冬に私の兄さんの家族といっしょにディズニーランドに
行くし、兄さんと妹といっしょにマリオカートをする。

私は冬に生まれたからかもしれない。
だからか冬が一番好きです。

Shanghai Nightfall

Shichuan Teng

ある日の出来事

Michael Riser

　昔々、つやつやの宇宙人はある公園を散歩していた。猫を見て、子供を見て、自分が乗っている自転車を見た。

「あっ、なにそれ?」と言った。
「ちょっと変だな。」
「運転士がいないけど進んでいる。」
そのおり、お化けさんは自転車の席から飛び出した。宇宙人さんは本当にビックリした。
お化けさんは「おはよう!」と言って、笑顔を向けた。
彼の頭は円くて軽そうだった。
　また話し始めた。
「宇宙人さん、今日どこまで歩いていくの?」
でも宇宙人さんはまだ怖かった。
全然日本語を覚えていなかった。
お化けさんは、
「今日は話せないのか。わかった。じゃね。」と言 った。そして空気に消えた。
彼の自転車は離れた。
そこで子供は宇宙人さんのところに来た。

「おじさん、白い顔ですね!」と言った。
「お化けに見えますね!」
　宇宙人さんはトボトボとお店まで歩いて、酒を買って、彼の家に帰った。

楽しい秋

Ariana Sanchez

私は秋が一番好きです。
なぜならさむいから。

それにあついコーヒーをのんだり
美味しい食べ物をたべたりできるから。

私は可愛いセーターを着たい。
私は秋が好き。

私の誕生日もあるんです。
両親といっしょにディズニーランドに行くのも好きなんです。

理由

Erik Semenchuk

私は春が大好きです。
本当に好き。
木々が再び葉を育て始め、
雪が山から溶けて川に流れ、
そして花が咲く。

春に私はたくさんの活動をしています。
例えば友達とハイキングをしたり、
花の写真を撮ったりします。

でもいつも秋と冬には落ち込んでしまい、
私はそれが嫌いです。

だからこれが私が春を最も愛している理由です。
私は春が外で行う活動のように暖かく感じる。

このようにして春のすべてが感じられる。

大切なもの

Maika Shibayama

私の大切な物は家族です。
私の母の名前は陽子です。母はとても厳しい人でした。私は毎日怒られていま した。しかし、今、母は空の上で私をいつも見守ってくれています。そして、母の教えはいつも私の心の中にあります。私の父の名前は貴行です。父は仕事熱心な人です。いつもそれに関して不満に思っていましたが、父が一生懸命働いてくれるお陰で、私は、自分が挑戦した いことが出来ています。なかなか、感謝の気持ちを伝える機会がありませんが、伝えられる時に、沢山の感謝を伝えたいです。

私の祖父母はまだ元気に過ごしています。結構な高齢であるにも関わらず、元 気に過ごしてくれていることはとてもありがたいです。日本にいるときは、月に一度は必ず会っています。みな、私に会うと元気が出る、若返ると言ってくれます。私の存在がおじいちゃんとおばあちゃん達を元気にしていると思うと嬉しいです。日本に帰ったら、アメリカの自炊生活で習得した料理をみんなに作ってあげたいです。

私の大切なものは家族のみんなです。
いつも、私の味方でいてくれる家族のみんな。
感謝の気持ちで一杯です。
ありがとう。

PORTUGUESE

Internação

Rochelle Bagatini

Me colocaram numa sala fechada
Nunca mais ouvi a voz da minha mãe
Me isolaram de todos
Vieram me buscar
Me tocaram
Mas eu não estava lá
Corri e me tranquei noutra sala
Eles derrubaram
Eu me vinguei
Porque eu não estava mais lá
Vou ou fico?
Dou ou deixo?
Vento ou assopro?
Choque ou vara?
Rezo ou grito?
Faço ou torço?
Meço ou deixo?
Toco ou respeito
Paixão ou prisão
Tardo ou cedo?

O resgate

Rochelle Bagatini

Ele corria pelo meio da rua olhando fixo o vidro de trás do carro, de repente parou. Como um daqueles atletas olímpicos que arremessam bolas de metal, torceu o tronco, a mão direita segurava uma pedra grande, o braço esquerdo à frente servia de alavanca com o cotovelo elevado em bico, o braço direito acompanhava o giro violento da cintura, ganhando força e velocidade com o ódio e o peso da pedra. Não esqueço seus olhos apertados de míope, eu queria que ele percebesse que eu o via, pensei em dar um tchauzinho, quando notei a pedra crescendo na minha direção. Minha mãe se assustou com o estrondo, soltou um grito agudo, quase bateu no contêiner de lixo. A pedra atingiu em cheio o vidro; ele tinha boa mira, mas isso a gente já sabia. Eu disse pra ela seguir, acelera, acelera, acelera, o pé bem fundo desentranhava um zumbido rouco do motor no milzinho. Fiz um escudo com o banco do carro, mas meu olhar escapava pela borda. Enxergava-o aos pedaços, através da teia formada pelo vidro quebrado, baixou os braços batendo com força nas laterais, como quando não conseguia o strike. Vaca, volta aqui, sua puta! Piranha louca, eu vou te pegar! As luzes do bairro foram acendendo como vagalumes na madrugada. O vidro retalhado seguiu firme com a gente, por uns duzentos quilômetros.

Paramos em um posto de gasolina quando o tanque estava quase vazio. Eu me ofereci para buscar água e alguma coisa para comer, imaginava que ela queria evitar sair do carro naquele estado. Voltei com pastéis fritos, refri e água, cigarros, e a chave do banheiro, que segundo a balconista ficava num local cavernoso atrás do posto. Pedi também um pouco de gelo e levei num duplo saco plástico. Me assustei quando a vi através do vidro do carro, porque até aquele momento eu não tinha me fixado no rosto dela. Ela se olhava no pequeno espelho do motorista. Sorriu para mim quando entrei com as coisas, aquele sorriso torto foi o sol numa noite escura.

"Quer que eu pergunte onde tem um hospital perto daqui? Posso ver também se consigo um celular emprestado."

Ela passou as costas dos dedos no meu rosto, pegou delicadamente meu queixo, virou de um lado para outro e ergueu-o alinhando nossos olhares.

"Ficaremos bem, querida."

"O banheiro é ali atrás, essa é a chave", apontei pro breu atrás do posto e entreguei para ela uma espécie de chaveiro, um grande retângulo de madeira

cavoucado com a palavra feminino. Ela se deteve um momento sentindo com a ponta dos dedos os cortes na madeira. Decidi acompanhá-la até o banheiro porque senti que cada instante daquela noite deveria ser compartilhado, e também porque eu achava que ela precisava de mim, e isso era raro.

Abri a porta e tranquei por dentro. Ela prendeu o cabelo todo no topo da cabeça, um imenso coque no formato de um abacaxi a coroava, abaixou-se na pia e parou por um instante, segurou-se com ambas as mãos na porcelana branca. Perguntei se ela precisava de ajuda, mas em seguida abriu a torneira e começou a se lavar. Eu tentava lembrar seu tom de pele e seus traços. Pegou da minha mão a sacola com gelo que pingava no concreto irregular, colocou sobre o olho. Entramos cada qual numa baia de sanitários, eu ficaria ali até a hora que ela decidisse. Sem querer, cochilei. Despertei no susto com alguém batendo na porta e perguntando o que estava acontecendo, se deveria chamar a polícia. Já estamos saindo, gritei. Minha mãe deu sinal puxando a descarga, eu saí na frente, ela veio atrás de cabeça baixa com o saco no olho. Por fim, a senhora, que não sei de que canto saiu, desistiu de falar, ficou lá parada com a boca aberta.

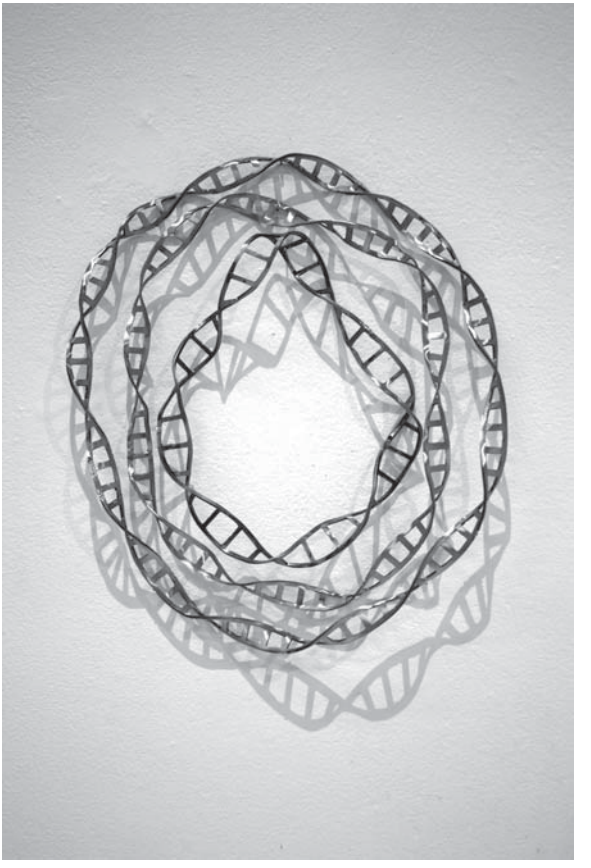
Comemos e bebemos no carro, ela fumou; fazia muitos anos que não a via fumar. Eu gostava do hálito que ela tinha na época em que fumava. Se eu tivesse idade teria pedido para dirigir enquanto ela dormia. Lembrei de uma coberta que coloquei no porta-malas, uma coberta velha que descobri num depósito na garagem de casa, junto com outras tantas coisas que meu pai não doava; ele nunca queria se desfazer de nada. Eu coloquei a coberta no carro para o caso de um dia ter que resgatar um cachorro. Uma vez meu pai atropelou um cachorro na estrada; eu tinha cinco anos, vi o pobre rodando com as pernas para cima no meio da faixa, os olhinhos apavorados de quem tinha se dado mal, contorcia-se, depois debatia-se para tentar se virar. Minha mãe sugeriu pararmos, mas meu pai disse que não tinha nenhum pano no carro para enrolar o bicho e, pelo impacto da batida, ele já era, com sorte o próximo carro seria sua misericórdia. Busquei a coberta no bagageiro. Baixamos os bancos, travamos as portas e dividimos o pano, ainda fiquei um tempo olhando para ela, o rosto tinha murchado, adormeci.

Quando acordei ela não estava no carro. Eu saí correndo na direção do bar, gritando pela minha mãe como uma criança recém abandonada, como se ela pudesse querer fugir também de mim. Que alívio foi vê-la ao longe conversando com a moça do balcão. Fui ao seu encontro disfarçando o arroubo anterior. Ela me abraçou forte, beijou minha testa, e disse que nós teríamos um cachorro. Um cachorro resgatado ela frisou bem, falou devagar todas as sílabas: res ga ta do.

Vem e vão

Rochelle Bagatini

Visto a busca
A pele preta
A gordura
Visto a idade
A roupa velha
A ditadura
Visto a feiura
Outro sexo
A carne crua
Nos olhos raiva
Nojo
Aflição
Indiferença
Medo
Indignação
Fogo trocado
Na multidão
Da rua
Vem e vão



Circular DNA Analysis

Travis Wood

O azul dos olhos negros de Ana Paula

Gustavo Melo Czekster

Em certa noite, vovó disse que, antes de morrer, a vida inteira das pessoas acontece de novo diante dos seus olhos. Eu sentia sono, mas a presença de vovó nos pés da cama deixava-me elétrica. Perguntei como podia saber se a minha vida não estava acontecendo naquele exato instante. Ela virou para a janela e, pela primeira vez, vi o mar no fundo dos seus olhos, um breve segundo em que o azul venceu o negro das pupilas. Vovó suspirou com leveza, e disse que eu saberia o momento.

Agora, despedaçando ao retornar para casa, só consigo lembrar que não senti medo nenhum quando abandonei a minha vida.

Aconteceu há pouco tempo. O ronronar constante dentro do ouvido começou três meses antes do dia em que fugi. Visitei muitos médicos, mas eles foram incapazes de definir o nome da doença. Com o passar das semanas, o som cresceu até tomar conta da audição, o barulho de estática passando a acompanhar meus passos. Disseram que estava surda, mas, na verdade, eu ouvia; o problema era o som do mar inexistente que vinha junto com as palavras, confundindo-se entre elas.

O sábado nublado tremia na janela do apartamento. Estava inquieta, o barulho do mar era insuportável. Hoje tudo o que ouço é este ruído, chamado marulhar, uma palavra tão bonita como a corrida do siri sobre a areia. Olhei o espelho, e as rugas surgiram. Lembrei da vovó; engraçado, era o seu rosto que aparecia quando olhava o espelho. Recordei a época em que dormia no quarto ao lado e ouvia seus passos indo e vindo, da parede à janela. Lembro também de soluços abafados, semelhantes a gritos de gaivotas. Gostava da vovó, mas a amaria mais se não tivesse tanto medo do segredo escondido pelos seus olhos negros. Somente na noite anterior à nossa primeira viagem para a praia, ela veio ao meu quarto para dizer o que éramos. Hoje sei que vovó demorou para reconhecer o nosso destino mútuo, repleto de sal e rugido.

Vovó brincou com meus cabelos. Ana Paula, disse, acariciando as sílabas, fazendo o nome ondular na penumbra do quarto. Esperei em silêncio. Senti que vovó queria dizer algo que iria modificar a minha vida, então esperei. Por três vezes ela disse o meu nome, e três vezes desistiu. Dormi com a sua mão ossuda passando nos meus cabelos; senti como se algo estivesse dançando entre os fios, uma criatura feita de mosaico, com os movimentos furtivos de quem se esconde.

Encarei os olhos negros refletidos no espelho; eram resistentes, ásperos, olhos de quem sabe sofrer. Aos setenta e oito anos, sabia muitas coisas. Entretanto, nos últimos dias sentia, junto com o mar nos ouvidos, uma forte vontade pressionando o meu peito. A insatisfação ia e vinha, em ondas crescentes: os dias em que estava insatisfeita eram repletos de fúria, gestos violentos, risadas irônicas; sentada no sofá de casa, sentia a raiva crescendo, arrastando tudo ao redor. Os dias posteriores eram preenchidos por angústia, choro e desprezo. Minhas lágrimas tinham gosto salgado, misto de areia e mariscos; eram o mar se esvaindo.

A primeira e última vez que tive medo de vovó foi quando chegamos na praia, no final da tarde seguinte. Ela segurou a minha mão com força. Perguntou se eu conseguia ver, se estava sentindo. Tudo o que enxergava eram as escamas dos peixes brilhando em meio às ondas. Encarei vovó e seu sorriso luminoso. A fronte estava repleta de gotículas de suor, que se misturavam com as lágrimas, escorrendo pelo queixo em filetes de ouro. O corpo enrugado estremecia, os poros liberando água aos borbotões. Perguntei se estava passando bem. Vovó sorriu com dificuldade e respondeu que não, não estava nem um pouco bem. Pensei em chamar mamãe, mas vovó abaixou-se, segurando meus ombros. Disse que me amava e prometeu que logo estaríamos juntas. Beijou minha testa e afastou-se. Sabia que ela ia morrer, seus lábios avisaram; mesmo assim não me movi, contemplando a figura esguia deslocando-se sobre os grãos de areia, por entre conchas abandonadas.

Na frente do espelho, uma forte sensação de despegamento, como se a alma tivesse deixado o corpo. Segurei a pia e acho que gemi, sentindo o tonitroar das ondas correndo de norte a sul; ao erguer a cabeça, gritei ao ver os olhos azuis, cor de água de piscina. As pupilas pretas estavam em turbilhão, sacudidas por um redemoinho; podia distinguir palavras em meio ao caleidoscópio das águas, e nelas estava descrito o motivo pelo qual minhas velas foram desfraldadas. Vomitei no espelho, na pia, na parede. Mesmo o vômito parecia azulado. Tive medo de tomar banho, receei desfazer-me como uma estátua de sal.

Não lembro o que pensei quando vi vovó entrando no mar. Sabia que ela ia morrer, mas aquele conhecimento não perturbou, nem mesmo chamei meus pais, atarefados junto ao carro. Simplesmente fiquei na areia, vendo vovó entrar nas águas, a primeira onda tocando seus pés, subindo em espiral. Em alguns momentos, senti inveja. Em outros, saudade, mas sabia que voltaríamos a nos ver. Vovó tinha prometido, e ela não gostava de quebrar promessas.

Ao sair do banheiro, abandonei o corpo, deixando-o seguir a maré.

Desisti de lutar contra a minha sina de onda. Depois de segundos de imobilidade, as pernas mexeram sozinhas, os braços assumiram movimentos próprios, e o barulho do mar diminuiu nos meus ouvidos. Fechei a porta da casa e parti sem saber para onde ia, mas sabendo que, onde chegasse, seria o lugar correto.

Vovó entrou no mar. A água estava pela cintura quando abanou. Podia jurar que havia um sorriso nos seus lábios. Abanei de volta, ela continuou avançando. A sua cabeça foi ficando cada vez mais distante, perdendo-se com o sol no horizonte, até desaparecer em uma onda mais forte.

Um dia depois de ter abandonado a vida, estava diante do mar; o ritmo das ondas do oceano demorou segundos para se adequar ao meu compasso interno. O sol deitava no final do céu, espalhando seus cabelos sobre o mar. Larguei as sandálias e aspirei profundamente aquele cheiro tão semelhante ao da minha pele.

Uma menina construía um castelo de areia, mas a construção estava fadada ao fim tão logo a maré avançasse. Ela aproximou-se, curiosa, e vi seus olhos negros escondendo o azul. Da mesma forma que vovó, entendi o seu destino, entendi que um dia ela estaria no meu lugar. Sentei na areia, ao lado do castelo em ruínas, e acariciei seus cabelos, futuras algas onde os peixes dançariam. Juntas como logo ficaríamos, sentindo-me parte dela assim como ela era parte minha, contemplamos o pôr-do-sol. Apesar de não estar quente, eu suava com intensidade, liberando minhas células molhadas.

Quando as águas enrubesceram no estertor da luz solar, deixei de resistir. Levantei e caminhei até o mar. A primeira onda tocou a sola dos meus pés. O corpo arrepiou ao reconhecer a sua origem. Cada passo me deixava mais próxima de mim mesma. Mariscos corriam entre os dedos, a espuma das ondas travou contato com meus joelhos. Ignorando arrepios de medo e expectativa, olhei para baixo, e não me espantei ao perceber que os pés já tinham desaparecido, peixes brincando no seu lugar.

A água estava na linha da cintura quando abanei para a menina. Gostaria de que ela estivesse mais próxima, assim poderia ver a cor azul dos meus olhos. Ela abanou; ao longe, pessoas retiravam coisas de um carro, sem me dar atenção. Continuei andando. Uma onda aproximou-se, a espuma igual aos meus cabelos. Esperei o reencontro com vovó, fechando os olhos onde o azul escorria com lentidão em gotas de sal, juntando-se à sua casa.

Amor em pequena crônica

Roze Sabino

Para viver um grande amor é preciso estar preparada para muita felicidade e alguma dor.

E alguma dor.

E quando o amor por qualquer razão que seja acabe, é preciso seguir adiante e reservar o coracão para ser algum dia de novo amante. E levar a história daquele amor de antes dentro de si, e fazê-lo amor de novo com um novo amor mais tarde, ou sem alguém ao principio, e conviver então somente com o amor próprio e tão propício. E enquanto isto, que se sinta com muita sorte por ter vivido um amor com paixão e entender que ainda que ele haja ido, continua sim e nunca não, pelo fato irrecusável de ter sido vivido, trazendo felicidade, dor e alguma aprendizagem. Porém o enredo e a verdade de um grande amor nunca se repete, nunca, só seu sentimento prossigue em todas as pequenas e grandes histórias de amor que se vive.

Tropicana
Sophia Vannucci

RUSSIAN

Молитва

Andrew Gates

Родное солнышко,
Жизнь нам дающее,
Где же та силушка
Вперед ведущая...
Благодарю тебя
За свет и за тепло.
Но вот потерянным
Мне стало вдруг оно...
Благослови наш дом
Вдали от Родины,
Дай любви Матушке...
И к нам вернись потом .
Прошу, нам помоги
Понять, как в мире жить.
Дай нам энергии,
Чтоб засиять как ты!
Родное солнышко...
Благослови... Любить!

Папе

Yana Gates

Несовершенное,
Необрамленное,
Стихотворение.
Простая куча слов.
Тебе подарено
И адресовано.
Посвящено оно
Только тебе.
Без рифмы, логики
Просто набором слов.
Наверно хочется
Хоть подражать тебе.
В твоих талантищах
Или талантиках.
Сижу пишу тебе
В бумажках, фантиках...
Тобой подарено
Мне было знание
О том как надо жить,
Решения принимать.
О том как взвешивать
И как выравнивать
Поступки смелые,
Ошибки разные.
Ты научил меня
Еще терпению,
Успокоению и
Незабвению,
То есть сознанию
Спокойномыслию и
Размышлению
Многостороннему.
Пусть было трудно мне
В те годы юности, да и сейчас...понять
Все те примудрости.
Но мне хотелось их
Употребить порой
Не лишь в теории,
А в жизни, в практике.
Вот и живем теперь
На разных берегах.
Но мысли, знания
Они как мостики,
Соединяют нас,
Пусть без общения,
Зато на практике.
Могу я действовать.
Могу спокойней быть.
И мужа радовать,
Не истерить ему,
Хотя там есть, порой.
Могу других понять
Или попробовать.
Детей своих любить,
Хотя бы изредка:)
Вот объясняю им
Что-то из мудрого
И вижу свет порой
В глазах и головах.
Может и им тогда
Лет в тридцать с чем-нибудь
Поймется что-нибудь
И для чего-нибудь.
Ну а пока,
Еще не поздно мне
Я развиваюсь тут,

Когда мгновения есть.
Пою и радуюсь,
Гуляю, бегаю.
Недалеко ушла
От моих семи лет:)
Читаю больше я.

Порой пишу сама...
И вот о чем сказать
Давно пришла пора.
Благодарю тебя
За все те знания
Что так впитала я
И что мне жизнь дают.
Жизнь много лучшую,
Чем что могла бы быть.
Благодарю тебя,
Я рада Яной быть.
В твой день рождения
В стихотворении
Пытаюсь выразить
Я мысль глубокую...
Надеюсь, счастлив ты
Идти своим путём,
И рад ты опыту,
Тобой пройденому.
Надеюсь, счастлив ты
Тем Александром быть,
Каким ты должен был
В течении жизни стать.
Надеюсь, цели есть
И есть желания
Идти вперед еще
В саморазвитие.
Нет сожаления
Или стязания,
А только радости.
Радость от знания
О том куда идешь,
И что тебя там ждет,
И с кем ты будешь там,
Куда твой путь ведет!
Не бойся прошлого
И настоящего,
Думай о будущем
И четко строй его.
И все получится,

Все нарисуется,
И образуется,
Реализуется!
Как ты учил меня
Образ в главе иметь
И не бросать его,
Пока не выполнить!
Тогда достигнешь ты
Чего делаешь ты!
Напоминаю лишь, вдруг
Ты забыл чуть-чуть:)
Ты Александром был,
Ты Александром стал,
И столько знания
Ты всем нам передал.
Забудь теперь про нас.
Иди своим путём.
И что нужнее тебе-
Того достигни ты!
Летом увидимся,
Крепко обнимимся,
И жизнь продолжится

Опять своим путём.
Я рада называть
Тебя своим отцом,
Я рада что могу,
Хотя бы иногда,
Писать стихи... или ...
Что-то подобное.
Пап, с днём рождения
В стихотворении
Скажу: люблю тебя!
Благодарю тебя!

Bike Thru Sunflowers
Tom Adams

SPANISH

Confesiones chiapanecas

Vianney Bernabé

La mirada aficionada hacia el fregadero
y quisiera por un momento disfrutar
el paisaje del cerro de mi lindo y querido Chiapas.
el bebé corre
la ropa colgada
la olla hierve
Nuestra casa Señor, por fortuna no se derrumbó a causa del sismo.
¿Está ahí señor?
¿Me escucha?
El sismo dejó a muchos desafortunados
pero hemos triunfado
hemos sobrevivido
somos chiapanecos
¡hasta el fin!
Cuando me siento a solas sé que usted está Señor
lo veo en los cerros de los altos
nunca nos ha dejado
el bebé corre
la ropa seca
la olla hierve
Y la mirada desde el fregadero
quisiera disfrutar de su paisaje Señor de mi lindo y querido Chiapas.
¿no nos da la libertad de ser mujer sin este peso?

Oda al olfato

Vianney Bernabé

Hay vida dentro de mí
no por el tambor que siento en mi corazón
sino por el olfato que me permite
oler la magia de la vida
Sé que se aproxima el invierno
el olfato me lo dice
fríos mis pulmones en la mañana
olor a leña en la noche
Oda al olfato en esta ocasión
que me deja respirar la magia de la vida
la primavera y el olor a pasto fresco
los árboles enamorados y sus hijos coloridos
El verano vendrá una vez más
y la magia radiará en las noches cálidas
el alma, la playa, el río y la montaña.
es la temporada del amor
Vuelve el otoño y es un amor profundo
las hojas doradas, el coro de las aves
el olor a amanecer fresco
y las ardillas preparándose para el invierno
Sé que hay vida dentro de mí
no por el tambor de mi corazón
sino por el poder de sentir la magia
que ofrece esta linda y querida vida

Haiku
Tyler Doman

Porter-Ann Doman
El amor por mi hija
Luz y alegría

Oh Yea
Matt Bateson

Untitled

Adolfo Cisneros

Lentamente la tarde
empieza a alejarse
solo
todavía
no sé
si soy
pájaro
tormenta
o
canto

Sakura Cherry Blossoms

Maika Shibayima

Séptima semana en Madrid (1965)

Clark Colahan

Bebes vino, Clark, es buen vino.
Bien, digo yo, y vamos a cantar
Hasta que suba con clamor al alto del cielo
Nuestro himno a este vino sin par.

Viva el buen vino español, que no hay mejor.
Y viva la Mancha da vino por agua.
Vino, el de San Martino, suavísimo licor.
Vino de Ocaña, la mejor cosa de España.

Si bien advierte la antigua sentencia,
Pan a hartura y vino a mesura,
Y sin duda hay borrachos en Portugal y Francia.
No te preocupes y bebe con soltura.

Aquí no los hay a quien siempre les falte el vaso.
¿Por qué? No sé. Es que tragamos
Para alegrarnos y charlar y cuidar el aceite y el queso.
Y el dolor de tripa -sea de corazón- embotar.

¡Otro jarro de vino y no pongas agua!
Sí, sí, vino y verdad sin aguar.
Pues ya rey, religión y ésta del río
Iban siempre a malo mezclar.

El buen vino torcido, vinagre se hizo,
Mas nunca volvió a ser vino.
Flamenco metido en un castizo laberinto,
Salió Isabel la esposa de Franco.

¡Anda! ¿Qué gritas? Esto pensado,
Bendices el vaso con viejo aserto:
Tanto monja, monja tanto
El tinto como el blanco.

Nueva oportunidad

Greggory N. Elias

El día está fresco
los pájaros cantan
el rocío de la mañana gotea de cada rama
cayendo sobre la tierra
la brisa de la aurora llena tus pulmones
con vida y oportunidad
Mira el cielo
sonríe al sol
abrázate a ti misma
y disfruta de la vida
porque eres amada

Mi media naranja
¿Por qué te amo?
Las razones son demasiadas
No siempre te veo delante de mí
pero siempre te siento
En el aire
en el calor del sol
y en mi corazón
Tu voz me trae felicidad
Tenerte es una bendición
y como el cuerpo necesita comida
yo te necesito para alimentar mi alma
La primera vez que te vi
yo supe que eras mi media naranja
Siempre te amaré.

Espiga del sur

Gerardo Elte

Es cierto, eres parte del bosque, del río y del lago,
también es cierto que creciste a la sombra del humo
del volcán,
que te mojaste con la fría lluvia
y que te alimentaste del corazón del copihue
Pero no eres bosque, río ni lluvia,
ni tampoco copihue,
aun cuando tus mejillas adquieren su rojo tono
al seducirte.
Simplemente no eres un árbol entre tanto verde,
tampoco eres el agua que se pierde en la condensación del
sol abrasador,
ni eres ceniza volcánica que escapa al cielo;
no eres piel que se entumece ni fruta de una temporada.
No, no eres nada de eso.
Tú eres la espiga de trigo,
dorada y rubia que crece en medio del bosque;
eres la particularidad en medio de tanta belleza,
Eres la espiga que el viento Puelche puede doblar,
pero no quebrar,
la espiga que tiene la sencillez de transformar en brisa
la fuerza del aire.
Eres la espiga que es promesa de pan en mi mesa,
fecundidad de la tierra regada con cada lágrima pasada.
Eres vida en el hemisferio sur y eres amor en mi corazón.

Cuando septiembre se viste de esperanza

Gustavo Gac-Artigas

Hace poco tiempo
una escritora amiga, desde Canadá, me preguntó:
Gustavo, ¿qué te gusta del mes de septiembre?
Y para responderle, como es mi costumbre, viajé.
Viajé en el espacio
y viajé en mi mente y en la imaginación
por los septiembres de mi vida,
incluyendo un cierto negro septiembre
por allá por el año de 1973 en mi país.
Al final, al final de este viaje por la vida
descubrí que, pese a todo, ¡me gusta septiembre!
De septiembre en Chile me gusta que amanezca más temprano.
Que el canto de los pájaros entre por la ventana.
Que Nicanor Parra cumpla 103 años y diga "Viva la cordillera de los Andes, muera la cordillera de la costa".
Me gusta que a pesar de un 11 de septiembre que no me gusta
Mi pueblo se levantó y hoy vivimos en democracia.
Me gusta que no me guste que algunos intenten destruir el mes de septiembre.
Me gusta que el 18 en una fonda con piso de tierra
Una campesina de mi pueblo baile una cueca.
Me gusta septiembre porque los volantines visten el cielo de norte a sur
desde el brillante volantín de seda multicolor
hasta el humilde chonchón de papel de diario
y la felicidad brilla igualitaria en los ojos de los niños de mi pueblo.
Me gusta que pese al pasar del tiempo
Un chileno se acuerde que existe en septiembre un mes de esperanza.
Me gusta septiembre porque resuenan en mis oídos las sabias palabras de Violeta Parra:
"Me gustan los estudiantes, jardín de nuestra alegría, son aves que no se asustan de animal ni policía".
Me gusta septiembre en Chile cuando los estudiantes se toman las calles exigiendo una educación gratuita y de calidad.

Me gusta septiembre en los Estados Unidos cuando los soñadores están en las calles de Washington DC, New York y San Francisco exigiendo el derecho a la vida y los sueños.
Me gusta septiembre porque fue un mes de septiembre que, en París, me encontré con el amor.
Y finalmente, lo que más me gusta es que septiembre no sea octubre y que todavía no nos descubrían.

The ANJL in the Sumatran Tiger
Kristin "ANJL" Doeblin

A Nicanor

Gustavo Gac-Artigas

5 de septiembre de 1914 - 23 de enero del 2018

Murió el poeta
Falso.
Murió un gran poeta
Falso.
Los poetas no mueren
desaparecen en un verso.

103 años se demoró Nicanor en su travesía por este mundo
y esta madrugada no dijo como otro,
voy y vuelvo,
nos dijo,
me quedo,
me quedo y no vuelvo.

La negra Ester está bailando una cueca con Nicanor
Viola, la viola eterna le da la bienvenida
Pablo le ofrece Isla Negra
Las cruces echó a volar
sus campanas
el dolor de Chile no cabe en la página vacía.

No es un tiempo de silencio
es un tiempo de fiesta
de alegría
de dar 103 pasos por el poema
y regresar a la eternidad.

Aquella tarde

María González

Aquella tarde de domingo veraniego me encontraba en mi apartamento y como de costumbre tomaba el té de las cinco de la tarde, acomodada en aquel sillón cómodo aunque un poco torturado por los años y el uso. El sillón--- que por cierto me lo había regalado la abuela unos años antes de morir y que había estado con la familia por varias generaciones, ahora yo lo gozaba, además, me recordaba algo familiar y muy humano de mi infancia. Desde afuera llegaba la algarabía de unos chiquillos que insistentemente perseguían a un perrito que había perdido su rumbo. --¡Ale, ale perro! ¿Qué acaso ya no te quieren en casa? ¿Es que se han cansado de darte de comer? ---Vociferaba uno de los niños que corría tras el perrito sin dueño. Todo esto sucedía cuando de pronto me fijé en el encabezado del diario de la tarde donde se avisaba a la población de la existencia de una banda de rufianes que cometían fraude contra ancianos y niños incautos. Sin darle mucha importancia a la noticia de defraudadores, pasé a leer las noticias internacionales, donde claro se hablaba de la guerra contra un país enemigo y de otras malas noticias, porque claro los diarios se hicieron para darnos malas noticias, no buenas, ¿te has fijado lector? Guerra, guerra, esa palabra la había oído ya tantas veces. Creo que la primera vez que la oí fue cuando se hablaba de la amenaza del bloque soviético y la guerra de los misiles. ¿Hasta cuándo aprenderemos a vivir sin guerra? -Todavía no hemos aprendido a vivir sin ella; no nos hemos cansado de ver cuerpos mutilados, madres sollozando y niños huérfanos-. Después de un rato y cansada de la lectura del diario, opté por salir a la calle a dar una vuelta por el centro comercial que se encontraba a unos pasos de mi pequeño apartamento. Al salir a la calle, sentí en el rostro la suave brisa marina, respiré profundamente para recibir aire puro en mis pulmones que por la edad y el duro trabajo que había hecho toda mi vida estaban algo gastados. Se sentía bien respirar aire puro y disfrutar de todo lo que me ofrecía esta pequeña ciudad costera a la que me había decidido mudar después de haber vivido casi toda mi vida en la gran metrópoli. Así iba caminando hundida en mis propios pensamientos, cuando de pronto me alertó el claxon de un coche que pasaba a alta velocidad por la calle de la Moneda. Al levantar el rostro me fijé en un pequeño que se encontraba frente a un aparador de la juguetería El Inocente. El niño contaba unas monedas que traía en el puño de su mano, seguro que

deseaba ese balón que se veía en el aparador, tan nuevo y redondo. Yo, ya había llegado a la esquina donde se hallaba la juguetería y decidí pararme para encender un cigarrillo. El niño parecía decidirse entrar a la juguetería cuando dando un medio giro, y antes de entrar en la juguetería, el niño se percató de un anciano que pedía limosna al otro lado de la calle. El niño dudó unos segundos...—compraré el balón, o se lo doy a ese anciano que parece está muy necesitado, y además parece que.... que... ¡está ciego! ¡Oh, pobre hombre! Y yo, pensando en un juguete cuando hay gente que no tiene ni para comer. Tomando la decisión, el niño corrió hacia donde se hallaba el anciano ciego parado pidiendo caridad bajo el farol de la calle. Mientras tanto una dama muy elegante se bajaba de su coche dando un golpe algo fuerte a la puerta. El niño se fijó en la dama y creyó reconocerla pero como iba deprisa a hacer su buena obra no le puso más atención. Feliz el niño de saber que hacía una buena obra depositó sus monedas en el recipiente que llevaba el anciano. Apenas había depositado las monedas el niño, y la dama de cerrar la puerta de su coche, el anciano hizo una reverencia a la dama que pasaba de largo sin ponerle ninguna atención al invidente. De pronto el anciano quitándose el sombrero la saludó ceremoniosamente. ¡Qué sorpresa se llevó el peque! Perpleja, por todo lo que acababa de presenciar, decidí asistir al niño y desenmascarar al mendigo, pero en eso me detuvo un oficial del orden, regañándome por cruzar la calle sin la precaución debida. Ya para esto el niño había reconocido a la dama que se acababa de bajar del auto, ---sí, sí, claro, es ella, doña Benigna la madre de uno de mis compañeros de clase, por cierto el más odiado, no por ser rico sino por llorón y creído. --- Yo trataba de explicarle al oficial lo que acababa de ocurrirle al niño pero el oficial no me hacía caso, hasta que molesta por la falta de interés en el suceso del niño que tuve que gritarle, y a gritos le informé todo lo que acababa de suceder. Después de unos minutos el policía por fin me hizo caso, disculpándose por no haberme hecho caso inmediatamente, diciéndome luego --hubiera capturado a dos de la banda de defraudadores que estaba azotando a nuestra pequeña ciudad. Precisamente venía tras ellos pero por el tráfico no pude capturarlos, pero bueno creo que ya es demasiado tarde, perdóneme por haberme portado tan prepotente con usted. No hay cuidado le dije al oficial, aunque por dentro lo estaba bautizando por lo torpe que se había comportado. Ya para eso el niño se nos había acercado para decirle al oficial lo que le acababa de ocurrir. El oficial tomó nota de lo ocurrido, pero antes de marcharse nos dijo que ya se sabía quiénes eran los rufianes. Entre ellos estaba doña Benigna y su marido. ¡Sí, así como lo oyen, doña

Benigna la dama de sociedad, la respetada dama de la iglesia y madre del niño más engreído de la escuela, era la jefa de la banda y junto con la sabandija de su marido eran parte de la banda de estafadores! El niño no podía creerlo y mucho menos yo. En fin, el oficial se fue en dirección a dónde se sabía residían estos vividores. De pronto el chiquillo empezó a llorar y le pregunté, y ahora, a ti ¿qué te pasa? - ¡Ay señor mi mami, mi mami me va a pegar! - mas,... ¿por qué te va a pegar tu mamá? - ¡ Ay pues, pues porque el dinero era para comprarle leche a mi hermanito! - pero, ¿cómo te ibas a gastar el dinero de la leche en un juguete? ¡Pequeño rufián! Sí, hace mucho tiempo que tengo ganas de un juguete, sabe nunca tenemos para juguetes, somos muy pobres y yo siempre he querido un balón para jugar al fútbol con los otros peques del barrio, ¡ay, ay, ic, ic, ic! Condolida por el mocoso, decidí sacar unos billetes de mi bolso y dárselos. ¿Suficiente? le pregunté. Sí gracias, gracias me alcanza para la leche y para el balón, gracias otra vez. El chico se alejó en la dirección que supuse vivía, no quise indagar porque a la mejor me llevaba otra decepción. Así que volví a la seguridad de mi apartamento donde me esperaba de nuevo la lectura, pero ya no seguiría con la lectura del diario. Una vez más giré hacia donde acababa de ocurrir toda la escena de la tarde. Ya hacía un poco de frío, pues había caído la tarde y empezaban las luces de la ciudad a titiritar cuando inicié el regreso a casa. En el trayecto fui pensando en las grandes sorpresas que nos da la vida. Ya frente a mi apartamento vi que los niños que perseguían al perrito sin dueño, se habían recogido a sus hogares, por fin pude atar cabos. Seguro que el perro que seguían los chicos por la tarde, era de la dama estafadora, seguro se le escapó del coche, o lo dejaría irse al ver que los acababan de descubrir. ¡Vaya usted a saber lector! ¡Ver para creerlo!

Instant Relatives

Char Prieto

¡Que soledad! Este es un mundo totalmente caótico, aislado y solitario. Una vida austera y sola donde la amistad y lazos familiares casi ya no existen. Sí, claro, nos reunimos con la familia y visitamos amigos por navidad y el día de Acción de Gracias, pero el resto del año estamos solos. Cuando la tristeza se acumula y ya no se puede más, me voy de compras. Y mis tiendas favoritas son las de segunda mano. Allí paso mis horas de tristeza y me pongo aún más triste al darme cuenta de lo afortunada que soy, ya que veo que mucha gente visita este tipo de negocios no por pasar el tiempo, como yo, ni para encontrar tesoros, sino porque en realidad no tiene dinero para comprar ropa o muebles nuevos. Ver a esta gente es deprimente y estremecedor. Pero entre dicho desconsuelo y depresión me dirijo hacia mi lugar favorito de la tienda: la sección de fotos antiguas que hay en una cesta de paja encima de una mesa. Arriba del cesto se ve un letrero que dice: "Instant Relatives." Mis dedos marchan por el fajo de fotos en blanco y negro con un borde de puntilla amarillenta. Algunas ya están rasgadas y amarillentas por el paso del tiempo. Ante mí circulan señores de miradas celestes, con bigotes, pelo engominado y sombreros de copa, bellas señoritas sonrientes y familias numerosas, con vestidos largos y oscuros posando para el fotógrafo. Me pongo tan nostálgica y triste que a veces las imágenes desaparecen y se nublan por causa de mis lágrimas. Me siento afligida y acongojada por tanta soledad y al darme cuenta de que esta es mi verdadera familia, my instant relatives, como bien dice el letrero encima de la cesta. Las fotos se pueden comprar por 25 céntimos cada una. Aunque numerosas veces he tenido la tentación, nunca he comprado una foto del cesto. Me da coraje y pena a la vez llevarme alguna de las fotos. Coraje cuando pienso que algún pariente desalmado haya tenido tan poco corazón de tirar las fotografías de sus parientes, esos recuerdos familiares, en el contenedor de Salvation Army. Pena de pensar lo solitaria que está alguna gente hasta el punto de tener que comprar esas fotos de desconocidos para tener una familia instantánea. Y por último, siento un gran remordimiento de que al comprar yo algunas de estas fotos, deje a algún pobre solitario como yo, huérfano y sin esa familia instantánea. Por eso, después de ojear todas las fotos, cuidadosamente las vuelvo a dejar donde estaban, durmiendo en el cesto. Después de acariciar con mis dedos cada una de las fotografías, me pongo a pensar que quizás alguien como yo, solitario y deprimido, tal vez tenga la urgencia de vez en cuando, de huir de su soledad para encontrarse rodeado de esos familiares instantáneos en blanco y negro.

Más puerco, más problemas

Crystal Trujillo

Jony - "You're going to school again? This is becoming an everyday habit."
Crystal - "I have to reach the masses to cure cultural curses and clarify medical misinformation."
Jony - "Bueno Amor, háblame en español que no te entiendo."
Crystal - "Toda la gente en este mundo está comiendo cosas que le hacen mal al cuerpo."
Jony - "Si pero mi abuelita me enseñó "Más azúcar más amor..."
Crystal - "Más amor? No creo, más inflamación, grasa y dolor."
Jony - "En esta nación comen puerco y jamón, mientras miran deportes con pelotas hechas de piel de cerdo, que contradicción."
Crystal - "Exactamente por eso necesito educarme para hacer ver a la gente que necesita mejor nutrición."
Jony - "Así los hospitales estarían más vacíos."
Crystal - "Y tendríamos más tiempo para reunirnos con nuestros amigos."

Encuentra tu llave

Jonatan Vall

No demores tu verdad con mentiras. Si no te paras por algo verdadero te caerás por cualquier cosa, usa tu cuerpo, mente y tu buena voluntad para alcanzar lo que realmente buscas.

No te aferres a lo rápido y practica ni la comodidad ni la simpleza. Recuerda que es imposible detener el tiempo, el sol sube y baja, aprovecha el hoy, tu tiempo real. Como el pasto crece verde fuera de tu ventana esfuérzate a abrir tu puerta...

Camina hacia el árbol de la vida y alcanzarás a ver en una gota de rocío nuestras huellas detrás de nosotros desvaneciéndose y siendo borradas por el viento. Sólo busquemos lo que necesitamos para alcanzar lo que está más allá de esta realidad.

Despleguemos nuestras alas y animémonos a volar alto, para llegar más allá de lo mundano.

Hurricane Sandy

Dan Freed

Contributors' Biographies

Sandy Adams is a retired occupational therapist who began painting a few years ago, using watercolors and acrylics. Her favorite subject is portraits and full-body poses which presents endless opportunity to explore what's become a passion, art and painting. She believes each of us has artistic talent, good instruction and practice.

Thomas Adams enjoys drawing and watercolor. One source of his inspiration are old photographs taken by his grandfather when he was a boy in New Mexico. Tom is a retired water resources planner. Many years earlier he served in the Peace Corps in the Republic of Chad.

Katie Applebaum, from Magalia, CA, is a CSU Chico Bachelor of Fine Arts student with an emphasis in ceramics "My process is collection. Everything surrounding me is influence. I collect different shapes, forms and elements until I have enough input to create a whole memory, a clay vessel."

Joshua Atwal is married to his absolutely amazing wife, Brady. Together they are dedicated globe trotters with a never-ending thirst for travel and adventure. Joshua will be officially graduating in the Fall of 2017 with B.A. in Communication Studies: Public Affairs, and a minor in Japanese Language.

Rochelle Bagatini is Brazilian. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Advertising and a Master's degree in Literature, with a focus on Creative Writing.

Christopher Bartulo is a sophomore at Chico State who is double-majoring in International Relations and in Economics. On campus, he is active in the Filipino American Student Organization, International Neighbors, and Chico State Pride. He enjoys learning about other cultures having been very interested in Eastern Europe and Latin America and hopes to travel to many countries to see the different cultures.

Matt Bateson is a student at CSU Chico in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program.

Vianney Bernabé was born and raised in Los Angeles, California to immigrant parents from Mexico City. She graduated from CSU Chico in 2015 with a double degree in Political Science and Spanish Language. Her interests include Spanish linguistics, poetry, essay writing and international travel.

Adolfo Cisneros was born in Peru. He is an Associate Professor at Bradley University. He has participated in poetry readings in the USA and abroad. He has also published some poems and short stories in *Torre de Papel.* At this time he is working in an anthology of his own poems.

Clark Colahan is a retired professor of Spanish and Anderson Professor of Humanities at Whitman College. Among his many books and articles are his translation of Cervantes' works and his edition of the poetry and essays about colonial New Mexican authors.

Samuel Cremo, a senior majoring in Spanish and minoring in Italian, was formerly the president of the Chico Italian Academic Organization (CIAO) and the Marxist Student Association (MSA). He is a member of the Phi Sigma Iota foreign language honor society. He has been published in *Multicultural Echoes* and in the newspaper *Socialist Appeal.*

Gustavo Czekster holds a master's degree in Comparative Literature and he is currently pursuing a doctorate in Creative Writing. He is the author of the short story books *The Shattered Man* (2011) and *No Tomorrow* (2017).

Brett Day is from San Diego. He started to make artwork based on environmental issues and agriculture in the areas surrounding Chico. With a background in drawing and painting he prefers to work with woodcut relief printmaking. He is in the CSU Chico BFA program with an emphasis on printmaking.

Robin Dizard is a retired English and American Studies professor who divides her time between Massachusetts and California. She grew up in Maryland. Her published work concentrates on literary criticism and reflections on a lifetime spent as a teacher.

Kristin "ANJL" Doeblin has always had a passion for art -- beginning with graffiti and transitioning to murals and portraits. Based in Brooklyn, New York since 2006, she is also an accomplished martial artist in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and works towards environmental sustainability and making the world a peaceful place for all.

Tyler Doman is a senior at Chico State. He is the president of Chico Crop Science and Horticulture Club, a twenty-year volunteer for the Butte County Special Olympics, a full time student, working two jobs, and a husband and father. His haiku is dedicated to his daughter, Porter-Ann.

Greggory Elias is a Chico State student majoring in business ownership/ entrepreneurship and minoring in Spanish. After graduation he hopes to use his studies in business and his Spanish speaking skills to open his own business.

Bethany Fitch is a pre-nursing student from Cottonwood, California. One day she hopes to be a traveling nurse so that she can see other parts of the world.

Marie Fox is a CSU Chico student earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drawing, and Bachelor's degree in Art Education. Her artwork, while rooted in drawing, explores many disciplines to communicate ideas of home, legacy, and memory.

Prairie Francia is in the final year of finishing her BA in Latin American Studies at Chico State. In LAST 110 they recently studied the courageous women of Juchitán de Zaragoza and in LAST 495 they read revolutionary poems by Pablo Neruda. This is where she drew her inspiration for her poem, *Woman of Juchitán.*

Dan Freed is an engineer/designer and self-taught woodworker who developed his skills over a lifetime of exploring. He covets the quiet moments in the shop when the combination of hand work, creativity, sawdust, inspiration, and sweat provides an escape to a place where the world has balance. He lives in New Jersey.

Kenneth Fries likes to set down stories, work with words and images. His poetry is always playful, prayerful, often with a nautical motif. *Watershed* has published several of Ken's poems. He intends to publish a collection of poems under the title *Sing Boats and Water.*

Eugenio Frongia is an Emeritus Professor at CSU, Chico where he directed the Italian Program for twenty years and was chair of the Department of International Languages, Literatures, and Cultures for eight years. He is a published author of books and scores of articles. He writes poetry and prose and has contributed to ME since the beginning, issue number ONE.

Gustavo Gac-Artigas is a Chilean writer, theater director, and member of the North American Academy of the Spanish Language. He is a contributor to *ViceVersa* digital magazine and *Le Monde Diplomatique*. His most recent novel is *And All of Us Were Actors, A Century of Light and Shadow*.

Andrew E. Gates earned AAs in History and English from Bakersfield College in 2010. After teaching English in St. Petersburg, Russia, he went on to earn his BA in English Studies at CSU, Chico where he is currently in the English Literature Master's program. His interests include Russian and American Literature with an emphasis on Russian émigré authors.

Yana Gates grew up in St. Petersburg where she sang away her youth in the TV and Radio Choir. She earned degrees in Social Work and Children's Psychology at State Pedagogical University, A.C. Pushkin. She moved to California in 2009 and enjoys dabbling in the arts in her free time.

Dennis Gier is an award winning artist in painting and photography and works in several mediums, including watercolor, oil, pen and ink drawings, and black and white photography. His themes are the figure, landscapes, abstractions, and street photography. He has exhibited his works in the U.S., Europe, and Asia.

Hannah Gordon is a 20-year-old student from the Sacramento Valley. She has been taking Japanese since her freshman year of high school, but wanted to learn it from a younger age. She has a passion for the arts as well, and hopes to submit an illustration with her next contribution.

Carissa Hernández is a first-year student at Chico State majoring in Communication Design. She hopes to inspire others by designing and managing websites for companies in order to reach out to consumers in many different demographics in an impactful way.

Graciela Hernández was born and raised in LA. At CSU Chico, she is majoring in Social Work because she has been through rough times and she would like to help others. After traveling the world she plans on getting a master's degree.

Chris Huntington is a fourth-year student at CSU Chico, who is studying Computer Science. He was born and raised in Sacramento, but now lives in Chico.

Emily Huso is a first-year English graduate student at Chico State, where she is pursuing the creative writing pattern. She is a staff writer for *Upgraded Living* and an assistant editor at *The Tishman Review*. Emily lived in various cities in Southern California before moving to Chico last year.

Kurtus Locke is a senior at CSU, Chico, a writer who focuses on prose, poetry, life philosophy and academic discourse. He is an English Studies and English Education major.

Mercedes Matta grew up in Sonora, CA and currently lives in Chico. She is an undergraduate at CSU Chico, in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program focusing on printmaking, primarily lithography and intaglio. She draws, paints, prints and makes digital art.

Carol McClendon is a retired middle school teacher of English from Santa Cruz, CA, a former Peace Corps Volunteer who served in the Philippines, and a "life long learner." As a student in the Chico State Elder College and Butte College, she has pursued her interest in the arts.

George McClendon was a Benedictine monk in Oklahoma. He has practiced psychotherapy and spiritual guidance, trained mental health professionals, and conducted workshops. Currently he teaches meditation and contemplation through Osher at CSUC. He has published two books: *Heaven's Call to Earthy Spirituality* and *She Asked Who I Was Really*.

Tommy McGuan is a former Chico State student and athlete. After completing his Bachelors in History, Tommy found his way back to Los Angeles to pursue his passion of writing and standup comedy. He can be seen performing stand up throughout Los Angeles and occasionally on tour.

Christine Montgomery teaches middle school kids History against their will. She loves to write with her friend and muse, Rosemary. They write volumes of useless drivel at Blackbird Café and enjoy telling each other just that. Until they find a gem.

Allie Mueting is a current second-year undergraduate student at Chico State studying English literature. She is heavily involved on campus with passions ranging from the English Society to ultimate Frisbee. She explores creative writing with this debut piece entitled, "Ever-Growing" inspired by her mother.

Isha Mundahl is a psychology major minoring in Italian. In addition to Italian, Isha speaks Dutch fluently, and studied French for four years, reflecting a true love and appreciation for languages and cultures other than her own.

Max Myers has published four books and is working on a new one called *A Walk in the Woods. Living in Oregon House*, he spends much of his time tending honey bees and selling honey, propolis and wax and gives presentations about the importance of pollinators.

Nona Nahalea has lived in Chico for 30+ years. She retired in 2017 and looks forward to learning a second language and exploring her creative side through art and music. She also enjoys volunteering in the community.

Char Prieto was born in Spain, educated in Paris, London and imported to the US--meaning she belongs to many countries. This is a foreshadowing of what would eventually obsess her writing and psyche: the negotiation of identity. Her trips around the globe are the inspiration for her creative works.

Salma Reyes is an university student who really loves anime and manga. She majors in journalism and minors in Japanese. Her hometown is McFarland.

Michael Riser is a returning student, fiction writer, poet, journalist, and editor. His work has appeared at *IGN*, *Pantheon*, and *Solarcide*, and in *Sheepshead Review*, *UNC Charlotte's Sanskrit*, and several print anthologies. He loves Japanese more than eating or sleeping, and his study of it has frequently deprived him of the opportunity for both.

Jacob Salvo, a sophomore majoring in Economics and International Relations, is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa and Delta Chi. His love for Italian comes from his fascination for languages and his heritage. He has studied Spanish and believes learning languages is quintessential to broadening one's world and stimulating the mind.

Erik Semenchuk is a fourth-year student at Chico State. He studies communications but enjoys taking Japanese as a hobby and potentially a minor. Outside of class he enjoys singing, photography, and cooking delicious food. In the future, Erik wishes to just have a good time!

De'Andre Shaw is from Los Angeles majoring in Exercise Physiology. He aspires to be a successful screenwriter. He always loved creating short stories and screenplays since High school.

Maika Shibayama is a year-long exchange student from Nagoya, Japan. Her major is linguistics. She is learning English, Korean, Chinese, and Spanish. She often travels overseas, and her favorite places are Taiwan, Singapore and Italy.

Tatiana Stevens was born 1993, in Palo Alto, California. She is working towards a Bachelors of Fine Arts Degree in Printmaking, and Bachelors of Arts Degree in Art History at CSU, Chico. The screen prints pictured are included in an ongoing exploration of race, diversity, and inclusivity within our campus community.

Fatima Zahra Taleb was born in Morocco, educated in Boston, Massachusetts she moved to Chico, California where she teaches Arabic at CSU Chico. She is interested in multicultural topics and her writings have been influenced by her cultural background and by her many travels.

Daniel Theobald is an exchange student from Germany. He created his photo in a photography class at Chico State inspired by Phi Sigma Iota, the international foreign language honor society. He re-created the shape of some faces with the language they speak. "It was so much fun!" Daniel says.

Charlotte Torquato is an undeclared major and has interests in working with children and music. She was born in Brazil and lived in Hawaii for the first twelve years of her life. Her free time consists of singing, playing instruments and spending time with her friends and family.

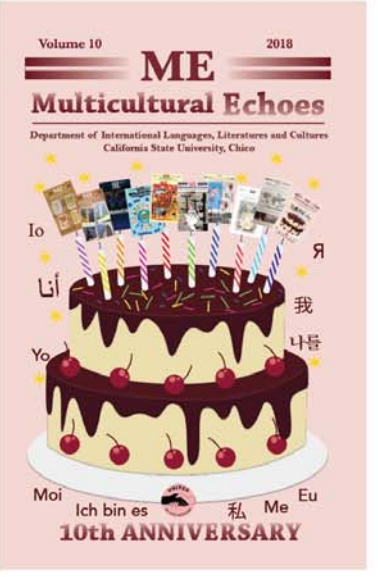
Crystal Trujillo is a future dietitian, currently at CSU Chico. She has many talents that allow her to be a loving, strong and dedicated woman. She speaks up for truth and justice. Her food/health ministry is targeted at healing and building up individuals as well as families.

Jonatan Vall has been writing poetry for most of his life, and has been published in his hometown of Rosario, Argentina. He overcame many struggles, including two near fatal head injuries and 15 days in two comas. He enjoys sports, dancing, singing, and being social.

Sophia Vannucci is a twelve-year-old fascinated by nature and culture and how the world is represented through the eyes of others. She first gained a love for arts and languages from her Brazilian mother. She hopes to encourage kids to find beauty around us.

Brunella Windsor has been teaching Italian and French at California State University of Chico since 1992. She is passionate about teaching because she firmly believes in education. She also loves traveling, the arts, good friends, and good food.

Travis Wood, from San Diego, is a BFA in sculptural studio art, primarily working with glass juxtaposed with metal to evoke a sense of fragility and permanence. He uses his art to direct attention toward the various unstable relationships humans have with nature, currently exploring how we perceive archival microorganisms.



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